

# Public Document Pack



To: Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice Convener; Councillors Allard, Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Fairfull, Grant, McLeod, Radley, MacGregor and Mrs Stewart and Ms Danielle Barclay (Parent Representative - Nursery / Primary), Mr Doug Haywood (Teacher Representative - Primary Schools), 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) and Mrs Hilda Smith (Church of Scotland representative).

Town House,  
ABERDEEN, 9 September 2024

## **EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE**

The Members of the **EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE** are requested to meet in the **Council Chamber - Town House** on **TUESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2024 at 10.00am**. This is a hybrid meeting and Members may also attend remotely.

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

ALAN THOMSON  
INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER - GOVERNANCE

### **BUSINESS**

#### **NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS**

1.1 There are no items of urgent business at this time

#### **DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS**

2.1 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 2 July 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 McLeod

That Committee:-

1. notes the number of privately educated children at independent schools in Aberdeen. The latest estimate is approximately 2530;
2. notes the number of state secondary schools in Aberdeen that are at full capacity is 2;
3. notes the number of state secondary schools in Aberdeen at 90 – 100% capacity is 4;
4. notes the policy of the UK Labour government to apply VAT on private school fees;
5. notes the report from the Institute of Fiscal Studies that, as a result of this, between 3% and 7% of privately educated children may be forced to leave and look for places in state schools. If this figure is correct then that equates to between 75 and 175 pupils looking to be placed in Aberdeen schools; and
6. instructs the Executive Director Families and Communities to bring back a report within one cycle about any arrangements regarding these placements and an analysis of the impact of this Labour policy.

## **REFERRALS FROM COUNCIL, COMMITTEES & SUB COMMITTEES**

8.1 There are no referrals at this time

## **PERFORMANCE AND RISK**

9.1 Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan - F&C/24/266  
(Pages 27 - 118)

- 9.2 Performance Management Framework Report - CORS/24/274 (Pages 119 - 144)
- 9.3 Inspection Reporting - F&C/24/267 (Pages 145 - 208)

## **EDUCATION**

- 10.1 Music Service Update - F&C/24/212 (Pages 209 - 222)
- 10.2 School Age Childcare Policy - F&C/24/235 (Pages 223 - 244)
- 10.3 Community Learning and Development Plan - F&C/24/269 (Pages 245 - 302)
- 10.4 School Estate Plan Annual Update - F&C/24/265 (Pages 303 - 344)
- 10.5 Denominational Primary Schools Feasibility Study - F&C/24/264 (Pages 345 - 356)

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

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

- 11.1 Children's Social Work Statistics - F&C/24/270 (Pages 357 - 372)

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

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Steph Dunsmuir, [sdunsmuir@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:sdunsmuir@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

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## EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 2 July 2024. Minute of Meeting of the EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Greig, Convener; and Councillors Allard, Blake, Brooks, Copland (as substitute for Councillor Radley), Grant (for articles 10 to 15), Henrickson (as substitute for Councillor Hazel Cameron), Hutchison (as substitute for Councillor Fairfull), Lawrence (as substitute for Councillor Grant for articles 1 to 9), McLeod, Nicoll (as substitute for Councillor Mennie), MacGregor, Mrs Stewart and Yuill (as substitute for Councillor Bouse). External Members:- Ms Danielle Barclay (Parent Representative - Nursery / Primary) (for articles 1 to 12), Mr Doug Haywood (as substitute for Miss Pamela Scott) (for articles 1 to 12), Ms Jacqueline Munro (Teacher Representative - Secondary Schools) (for articles 1 to 12) (for articles 1 to 12), Dr Alison Murray (Parent Representative - Secondary) (for articles 1 to 12), Mr John Murray (Roman Catholic Religious Representative) (for articles 1 to 12) and Mrs Hilda Smith (Church of Scotland representative) (for articles 4 to 12).

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. There were no declarations of interest nor transparency statements made at this juncture.

### MINUTE OF MEETING OF 30 APRIL 2024

2. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 30 April 2024 for approval.

#### The Committee resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

### COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

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

Members asked a number of questions on the planner and it was noted that the Aberdeen City Parent Forum had expected that the denominational schools report (item 23 on the planner) would be on the agenda for this meeting and there was concern around the consultation process. Officers clarified that the report on the outline business case was due to Committee at the September meeting, and that the matter was currently at the informal consultation stage.

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**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that officers would remove reference to 'Interim' from the posts mentioned in the planner items;
- (ii) to note that officers would issue communication to parents in denominational schools to advise of the process to be undertaken, including reassurance that no decisions had been taken at this point in the process;
- (iii) to agree to remove items 11 (Education and Children's Services Reforms) and 14 (Sunnybank School Relocation of Additional Services – Options Appraisal) for the reasons outlined in the planner; and
- (iv) to otherwise note the planner.

**NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR KATE BLAKE**

4. The Committee had before it a notice of motion by Councillor Blake, in the following terms:-

That the Committee:-

- (a) 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";
- (b) notes that the National Parent Forum of Scotland is a statutory consultee mentioned by name in the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 – Gaelic provisions;
- (c) 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;
- (d) 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;
- (e) 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;
- (f) 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

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- Aberdeen at a national policy level and to also ask for clarification around any potential impact on Gaelic Medium Education; and
- (g) 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.

**At this juncture there was a short recess to allow Councillor Blake and the Convener to discuss a potential amendment by the Convener, after which the following alternative wording was proposed which combined part of Councillor Blake's motion and part of the Convener's potential amendment.**

That the Committee:-

- (a) agree that strong parental engagement is important to educational outcomes and note 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";
- (b) agree that Aberdeen City Council supports representation of parental voice from a wide range of perspectives and experiences and recognises the benefits of improving engagement with traditionally underrepresented groups, such as parents and carers from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who have children with additional support needs;
- (c) acknowledge that the establishment of the new parent assembly, which will have around 100 members, will provide fresh opportunity for addressing historic challenges around engagement in the city and across Scotland;
- (d) agree that the membership should aim to reflect diversity in Scotland, including parents, carers and families with an interest in Gaelic and Gaelic Medium Education (GME); those with children with additional support needs (ASN), neurodiversity, and those from minority ethnic backgrounds;
- (e) instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to write to the Cabinet Secretary seeking assurance that members of the National Parent Forum of Scotland will be involved in the new parent assembly; and that parental voice and diversity in the city will be enhanced through the new model; and
- (f) appreciate the contribution that parental engagement makes in Aberdeen and instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to continue to engage with parents and carers in the city to promote and develop parental engagement.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning was due to meet with Connect in the next two weeks and would share an update with the Aberdeen City Parent Forum after the meeting; and
- (ii) to adopt the amended motion.

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**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK/ACCESSIBILITY AND BEHAVIOUR  
PROGRESS REPORT - FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES - CORS/24/194**

5. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which presented (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.

With reference to article 7 of the minute of its previous meeting, the Committee also received a presentation at this juncture from Mr Mike Paul, Bucksburn Academy, on Maybo training.

Members asked a number of questions on the report and the presentation.

**The report recommended:-**

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

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to thank Mr Paul for his presentation on Maybo;
- (ii) to note that officers would circulate information to Members outwith the meeting on the numbers included in Quintile 2, and would also reflect this in the National Improvement Framework report to be presented to Committee in September; and
- (iii) to otherwise note the report.

**INSPECTION REPORTING - F&C/24/192**

6. The Committee had before it a report by the 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 settings since the last meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note the content of the report; and
- (b) instruct 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.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations.



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**APPROACHES TO QUALITY IMPROVEMENT - F&C/24/195**

7. With reference to article 11 of the minute of its meeting of 4 July 2023, the Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which detailed how Aberdeen City schools and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings would be supported to improve performance against the Core Quality Indicators used by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) and The Care Inspectorate.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note the content of the report;
- (b) instruct 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;
- (c) instruct 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
- (d) instruct 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.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations.

**CONSULTATION REPORTS: PROPOSED CATCHMENT AREA CHANGES FOR HAZLEHEAD ACADEMY, GREENBRAE SCHOOL AND SCOTSTOWN SCHOOL - F&C/24/196**

8. With reference to article 8 of the minute of its meeting of 21 March 2023 and article 10 of the minute of its meeting of 21 November 2023, the Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which provided an update 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.

Members asked a number of questions on the report.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note 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;
- (b) agree to implement changes to the existing Countesswells and Hazlehead secondary school catchment areas, as defined within Map 2 in the consultation

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- 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
- (c) agree 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.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that officers would ask Roads colleagues to provide information on the criteria which was considered for safe walking routes to schools and would circulate this to Members outwith the meeting; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

**EASTER IN THE CITY PROGRAMME 2024 - F&C/24/189**

9. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which shared a high level evaluation of the Easter in the City programme 2024 and sought delegated authority to design and deliver a programme for the upcoming school holiday periods (autumn 2024 and spring 2025). The report advised that the summer 2024 programme was currently live and evaluation on the impact of the programme would be reported to committee following delivery.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note the high level evaluation of the Easter in the City programme;
- (b) instruct the 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
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to report to Committee on the impact of the summer, autumn (2024) and spring (2025) programmes following delivery.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that officers would provide further detail in future reports as to any overlap between the priority group categories; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

**FREE SCHOOL MEALS ANNUAL UPDATE - F&C/24/180**

10. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which presented the annual update on Free School Meals and sought approval to implement a school meals pre-order app for all Secondary Schools in the city.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

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- (a) note the progress in Free School Meal provision and actions to continue increasing uptake;
- (b) 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
- (c) 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.

**At this juncture, Councillor Grant advised, for reasons of transparency, that his son was in primary 7 and would be moving up to St Machar Academy, but he did not feel this amounted to an interest which needed to be declared, and advised that he would be remaining in the meeting.**

The Convener, seconded by Councillor Allard, moved:-

That the Committee:-

- (a) welcomes the progress made in improving uptake in Free School Meals in the city and actions to continue increasing uptake and thanks officers, schools and families for the continued effort;
- (b) agrees officers' recommendations;
- (c) notes that officers' service update, in November 2023, stated that '...no further work on designing and planning solutions for increasing the capacity of school kitchens and dining spaces will be undertaken, until details of any further capital grant and revenue funding from Scottish Government to support the rollout are known and until the required implementation date for the provision of free school meals to Primary 6 and 7 pupils is confirmed'; and
- (d) agrees that it is imperative that this Committee presses the Scottish Government to deliver on making primary school meals universally free and therefore instructs the Executive Director of Families and Communities, in consultation with the Convener and Vice Convener of the Education and Children's Services Committee to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Education to seek an urgent update and confirmation from the Scottish Government on when it plans to implement universal free school meals, up to primary 7, in full.

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

That the Committee:-

- (a) welcomes the progress made in improving uptake in Free School Meals in the city and actions to continue increasing uptake and thanks officers, schools and families for the continued effort;
- (b) agrees officers' recommendations;
- (c) notes that officers' service update, in November 2023, stated that '...no further work on designing and planning solutions for increasing the capacity of school kitchens and dining spaces will be undertaken, until details of any further capital grant and revenue funding from Scottish Government to support the rollout are

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- known and until the required implementation date for the provision of free school meals to Primary 6 and 7 pupils is confirmed';
- (d) agrees that the commitment to implement universal free school meals was a flagship policy of the Scottish Government when it came to power in 2021 and that failure to deliver this in full, during a cost-of-living crisis, would represent a bitter broken promise for struggling Aberdeen families and children in primaries 6 and 7; and
- (e) agrees that it is imperative that this committee presses the Scottish Government to deliver on making primary school meals universally free and therefore instructs the Executive Director of Families and Communities to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Education to seek an urgent update and confirmation from the Scottish Government on when it plans to implement universal free school meals, up to primary 7, in full.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (14) – the Convener; Councillors Allard, Copland, Henrickson, Hutchison, MacGregor, Nicoll, Mrs Stewart and Yuill; and Ms Barclay, Ms Munro, Dr Murray, Mr Murray and Mrs Smith; for the amendment (4) – Councillors Blake, Brooks, Grant and McLeod; declined to vote (1) – Mr Haywood.

**The Committee resolved:-**  
to adopt the motion.

### **EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE DELIVERY PLAN 2024-26 - F&C/24/181**

11. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which provided an update on the progress and outcomes of the improvement activities and actions in the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2022-24, and sought approval for an updated Delivery Plan for 2024-26, in line with the Council's statutory duties to prepare and publish a plan.

**The report recommended:-**  
that the Committee –

- (a) note the report on the progress and outcomes of the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2022-24;
- (ii) welcome 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;
- (iii) approve the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26 and instruct 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;
- (iv) instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to work in partnership with the Health Determinants Research Collaborative (HDRC) to align the planned

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- Early Learning and Childcare longitudinal study research with the next statutory consultation with Parents and Carers in June 2025; and
- (v) instruct 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.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations.

**HEALTHY WEIGHT - CFS/24/188**

12. With reference to article 5 of the minute of its meeting of 20 February 2024, the Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which sought approval to progress work to increase the number of children and young people who were of a healthy weight by taking a whole system approach.

Members asked a number of questions of the Executive Director and Professor Phil Mackie, Consultant in Public Health, NHS Grampian, who was in attendance for the item.

**During the discussion, Councillor Yuill made a transparency statement in relation to his membership of the Board of NHS Grampian, however he did not consider that this amounted to a declaration which would require him to leave the meeting.**

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note the work undertaken to learn from published research and local data;
- (b) endorse the proposed whole systems approach;
- (c) 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, noting that officers could prepare a report if this was felt necessary depending on the outcomes from the event; and
- (d) instruct the Executive Director Families and Communities to report progress within one calendar year.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that if Members were interested in attending the event on 30 August, they could contact the Executive Director Families and Communities to express their interest; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

**At this juncture, the External Members left the meeting.**

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**LEARNING DISABILITIES, AUTISM AND NEURODIVERGENCE BILL - CFS/24/193**

13. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which provided an update on the introduction of the Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill and its implications for services in Aberdeen City.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note the report and the intentions of the Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence (LDAN) Bill; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer Children's Social Work & Family Support/Chief Social Work Officer to provide an update on progress of the Bill as appropriate.

**The Committee:-**

- (i) to note that the Chief Officer Children's Social Work and Family Support would liaise with Health and Social Care Partnership colleagues as to (a) whether the Autism Plan would require to be updated in the interim; and (b) the uptake in respect of the annual health checks offered for people with learning disabilities; and would provide this information to Members outwith the meeting via service update; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

**EDGE OF CARE PILOTS - CFS/24/197**

14. With reference to article 13 of the minute of its meeting of 4 July 2023, the Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which provided an update on the progress of the 'Edge of Care' Pilots being delivered in Lochside and Northfield Academies and the proposed next steps.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note the progress and learning captured by the Edge of Care Pilots;
- (b) note 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; and
- (c) instruct the Executive Director Families and Communities to incorporate the learning from the Edge of Care Pilots within the developing Family Support Model.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that the Chief Officer Children's Social Work and Family Support would keep Members apprised of the funding allocation within future reports; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

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**FAMILY SUPPORT MODEL - F&C/24/191**

15. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which sought 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.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note the work undertaken to date to learn from published research and local data;
- (b) approve the high level Development Plan available in Appendix A; and
- (c) and 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.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations.

- **COUNCILLOR MARTIN GREIG, Convener**

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	<b>EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER</b> The Business Planner details the reports which have been instructed by the Committee as well as reports which the Functions expect to be submitting for the calendar year.								
2	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
3	<b>17 September 2024</b>								
4	National Children with Disabilities Thematic Inspection	To present an update		Carol Davie	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1	D	The Care Inspectorate have delayed publication of the report to ensure an accessible version of the report is published at the same time. The Care Inspectorate have indicated that the report will be published 'mid-August'. The report will be brought to the November Committee.
5	CSW Workforce Planning	To present an update		Ali McAlpine	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1	D	The draft of the Audit Scotland best value audit into workforce is awaited, and officers are keen to consider its recommendations before submitting their workforce plan, to ensure alignment.
6	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		
7	Denominational Primary Schools Feasibility Study (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, 1.1.2 and 1.1.5		
8	Performance Management Framework Report	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		
9	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		
10	Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan	This report will cover the instruction from EODC 25/11/21 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Education to present an annual report on the progress of care experienced children and young people to the Committee, commencing in September 2022, and will also cover the yearly self evaluation.		Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
11	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		





	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
2	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.		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
26	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		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
27	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		
28	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		
29	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		
30									
31	<b>18 February 2025</b>								
32	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data Insights	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
33	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		
34	Autumn in the City Programme	E&CS 02/07/24 - to instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to report to Committee on the impact of the Autumn 2024 programme following delivery	First meeting in 2025	Sharon Skene	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
35	<b>29 April 2025</b>								



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
2	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.  E&CS 02/07/24 - to 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		Andy Campbell	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
42	Education Climate Change Annual Report	E&CS 30/04/2024 - (i) to instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to report back on progress via committee report within one calendar year and (ii) to instruct the 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		Stuart Craig	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
43	Approaches to Quality Improvement	EC&S 02/07/24 - to instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to review the impact of arrangements on evaluations of core Quality Indicators over school session 2024/25, amending approaches as required, and report back to Committee with any proposed changes to arrangements in advance of the 2025/26 school session		Shona Milne	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
44	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data Insights	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
45	Healthy Weight	E&CS 02/07/24 - to instruct the Executive Director Families and Communities to report progress within one calendar year on the whole systems approach		Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1 / 1.1.2		
46	Spring in the City Programme	E&CS 02/07/24 - to instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to report to Committee on the impact of the Spring 2025 programme following delivery		Sharon Skene	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
47	Health and Wellbeing	E&CS 30/04/24 - to instruct the 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 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		Emma Powell	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
48									
49	<b>16 September 2025</b>								
50	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data Insights	Corporate Services	1.1.3		

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
2	Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan	To present the plan		Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
51	School Estate Plan Annual Update	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to present an annual update to the School Estate Plan to the Education and Children's Services Committee, commencing from September 2023, to report on progress with the agreed actions and to update these as appropriate, in light of the most recently available data.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.2 and 1.1.5		
52	Community Learning and Development Plan	E&CS 12/09/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning 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		
53	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		
54	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		
55									
56	<b>25 November 2025</b>								
57	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data Insights	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
58	Education and Children's Services Committee Annual Effectiveness Report	To present the annual effectiveness report		Steph Dunsmuir	Governance	Corporate Services	GD 8.5		
59	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		
60	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		
61	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		
62	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.		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
63	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		
64	<b>2026</b>								
65	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	1.1.1		







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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children’s Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	17 September 2024
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/24/266
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Shona Milne
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to implement the refreshed Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan for 2024/25 following submission of the Self-Evaluation and Plan to the Scottish Government.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the content of the service Self-Evaluation and Plan contained in Appendix A;
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to implement the proposed Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan 24/25;
- 2.3 instructs the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to maintain a review of the 24/25 Plan in light of any impacting national legislative or policy provisions through the education reform agendas and advise Committee of any required changes in due course.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan is a statutory submission to the Scottish Government that requires to be provided by the end of September each year. The document brings together an analysis of a range of data sets and resultant areas for improvement in keeping with the Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc.2000 legislation and guidance. The documentation attached reflects updated Statutory Guidance.
- 3.2 Current national guidance on the management of Scottish Attainment Challenge funding has once again led to the inclusion of amended Stretch Aims

in the Plan. These stretch aims and the proposed priorities for improvement have been scrutinised by Education Scotland who endorsed the direction of travel. Officers propose to continue to keep members of the Education and Children's Services Committee sighted on progress through the now well established tracking appendix linked to Performance Reports.

- 3.3 Staff from across the Education Service have collectively considered data trends to conclude a high level analysis in order to determine next steps. This analysis is informed by and informs school improvement priorities and the Children's Services Plan. The Strategy Board plays a role in reviewing the draft documentation prior to it being presented to Committee for approval. This approach ensures that the interconnection of Council business is reflected in the final Plan presented for Committee approval.
- 3.4 There is considerable evidence that the Quality Improvement Framework is improving central oversight of the quality of provision and clarifying expectations. There is a need to continue to review arrangements, and the consistent application of arrangements, on a yearly basis.
- 3.5 There is evidence that some middle leaders seeking headships have not fully developed their skills in improvement planning and this area needs to be addressed. In general, the quality of improvement planning is improving. There are examples of middle leaders lacking the confidence to lead a school when there is a vacant head teacher post. This significantly diminishes the capacity of the central team. This will be addressed through our Middle Leadership programme over 2024/25.
- 3.6 There is evidence that most school leaders make effective use of data dashboards and most staff have increased confidence in identifying the gap at class, faculty and school level. Professional learning in this area will continue in session 24/25. Data across ACEL (Achievement in Curriculum for Excellence Levels) is generally improving, attainment at the senior phase will be further reviewed when Insight is published in September given the broader range of courses available to young people in our schools.
- 3.7 We set ambitious stretch aims in 2022/23 but did not envisage the increase in school roll. The increase in roll has resulted in an increase in staff new to the authority and in the majority of cases these are newly qualified staff. There are some challenges recruiting to some secondary specialisms. We continue to be one of the authorities with the lowest average age of staff (37). We are not currently meeting all of our stretch aims however improved tracking, moderation, more stable school population and understanding of data should lead to a further uplift in data for session 24/25.
- 3.8 It is encouraging to see that mental health outcomes are in line with or above national in most measures and that our young people's health is improving. The development of the Family Support Model, and implementation of our agreed Behaviour Plan should bring increased readiness for learning in some.
- 3.9 Our professional learning offer is well received. Although there is evidence that the offer from a range of internal and external partners is becoming more

aligned, there is still work to do to help better understand the elements that make the greatest difference. This will be developed further over 2024/25.

- 3.10 Across the local authority there is an inclusive learning culture. Almost all young people have access to a curriculum which meets their needs and are supported well in order to achieve. A small number of young people are currently on a flexible pathway. The widening curriculum on offer at both school and through ABZ Campus is supporting all young people to access appropriate pathways in order to secure positive destinations on leaving school. There may be a need to undertake a thematic review of the provision of flexible pathways following work being undertaken by the Education Psychology Service to understand the effectiveness of arrangements for those with additional support needs.
- 3.11 There is a need to continue to review arrangements, and the consistent application of arrangements, on a yearly basis. The Thematic Review being undertaken by HMle on arrangements to improve quality in schools may identify further areas for consideration.
- 3.12 Members will note that officers have tried to streamline the number of areas for improvement and development over session 2024/25. This is in recognition of the need to focus on the variation across our ELC settings and schools and deliver against the already approved Behaviour Plan.
- 3.13 Coming together as a new cluster (with the Library and Information Service and Community Learning and Development) has provided the opportunity to create a refreshed vision and values to support cross service working and establish shared working practices. Following extensive consultation with all staff our vision of Inspiring communities to learn and grow together has been established with the values of Equality Ambition, Respect and Nurture. All the services we offer will be evaluating using these shared values to ensure a level of consistency across all services. Young people will be consulted on how the vision and values are presented.



- 3.14 It is proposed that this vision be used to help shape the 2025/26 evaluation and plan more fully.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000 requires that, as the Education Authority, Aberdeen City Council has a duty to:
- Enhance equity and promote a reduction in inequalities of educational outcome experienced by pupils because of socio-economic disadvantage.
  - Endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education with a view to achieving the strategic priorities of the National Improvement Framework.
  - Undertake annual planning and reporting and annual school improvement planning to address the four priorities of the National Improvement Framework
  - Ensure strategic decisions are taken with due regard as to how they will address, or help to address, the disparity of educational outcomes which exist between the most and least disadvantaged and at the same time raise attainment for all.
- 5.2 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 ("the 2014 Act") places further duties on local authorities and other bodies to more actively collaborate and take action to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers.

## 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?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Risk of not improving outcomes for learners	Changes to our provision and service delivery will enable primary prevention and early intervention thereby reducing potential risk.	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	Non-compliance with legislation, financial	Mitigated by services being	L	Yes

	claims, and legal challenge (tribunals).	realigned to better meet the needs of our young people in Aberdeen City and prevent escalation of need.		
<b>Operational</b>	Staff are overwhelmed, which leads to low morale as staff feel unable to meet the educational and well-being needs of young people.	Mitigated by staff engagement on the draft National Improvement Framework and the ongoing commitment to delivering high quality professional learning for staff to ensure that they meet their statutory duties under the relevant Acts.	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	Risk of not having sufficient resource.	Mitigated by realigning service delivery and resource through the National Improvement Framework to better meet the needs of our young people in Aberdeen City and make best use of Officer time.	L	yes
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a reputational risk to the Council	Data scrutiny and reporting enhance the Council's reputation for transparency and accountability	L	Yes

<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Risk of lack of awareness of environmental/climate issues.	Mitigated by breadth and scope of Curriculum for Excellence.	L	Yes
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## 8. OUTCOMES

<u><a href="#">COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</a></u>	
<b>Impact of Report</b>	
<p><b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b></p> <p>Our partnership aims to ensure that every young person in our city is provided with educational opportunities and support that will give them the best possible start in life.</p>	<p>The education service self-evaluation and improvement plan is well positioned to support a closing of the poverty related attainment gap.</p>
<u><a href="#">Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</a></u>	
<p>Prosperous People</p>	<p>The detail within this report supports the delivery of Children &amp; Young People Stretch Outcomes 4 to 9 in the refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan.</p>
<p><b>Regional and City Strategies</b></p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p> <p>National Improvement Framework Plan</p>	<p>The universal provision of education is fully aligned to the Prevention Strategy and a key partner to the Children's Services Plan.</p>

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	NA

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None



## 11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix A–Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Evaluation and Plan

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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# Evaluation of the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan 2023/24



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## Context

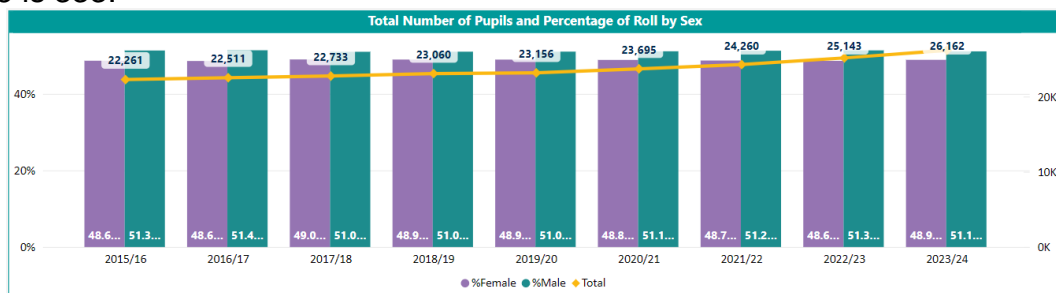
The Scottish Government launched the National Improvement Framework for Scottish education in January 2016. The Framework is central to the Scottish Government's commitment to raising attainment for all and closing the poverty related attainment gap. The Education (Scotland) Act 2016 Act amended the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000 ("the 2000 Act") to place the National Improvement Framework (NIF) on a statutory footing and introduced requirements for local authorities and schools to plan and report on the measures that they are taking to address the key priorities of the NIF. This evaluation and plan has been structured to take account of the associated statutory guidance.

This evaluation and plan has drawn on the Community Planning [Population Needs Assessment](#) and aims to complement our partnership [Children's Services Plan](#) which acts as the children's section of the [Local Outcome Improvement Plan](#) and our shared Strategic Plan. Our Children's Services Board routinely take stock of and report progress, through for example our [Child Poverty Action Plan](#), Children's Services Plan [Annual Report](#) and evaluation of progress against [The Promise](#). This evaluation and plan considers the implications of this evaluative activity on the priorities for the education service rather than repeat the analysis contained within already published reports.



## Reflections from the Chief Education Officer

Session 2023/24 has seen the Local Authority welcome over 1000 additional children and young people into our schools. As might be anticipated this has resulted in pressure on school places within the city centre in particular. The uncertainty around demand has made realising additional capacity challenging and led to an increase in school placement appeals from 167 in session 22/23 to 236 in session 23/24 which has impacted on the capacity of the central team. The forecast number for session 24/25 is 333.



Despite the pressure, schools have responded positively, working with the central team to increase capacity by thinking creatively in order to maximise space and the use of resources to ensure that all children and young people have been placed. All secondary schools have increased their S1 intake for the 2024/25 school session in response to particular challenges in placing children of secondary school age.

The Education Service continues to work closely with Corporate Landlord to ensure that the [School Estate Plan](#) helps ensure adequate and efficient provision of school places. The considerable increase in school roll of late has made longer term forecasting challenging and a drop in the child population is predicted in the longer term.

Children celebrated their first day at the new £23million Greyhope School and Community Hub in Torry in November 2023 and we look forward to opening the new Riverbank School over the 2024/25 school session. The service has also been involved in making plans to address the finding of [RAAC](#) in three school buildings and supporting families who require to be rehomed for their safety due to the finding of RAAC in their homes.



In addition to the Council's on-going commitment to the provision of high quality educational environments, this year has seen investment in our specialist provision from valued partners. New outdoor facilities for pupils at Orchard Brae School were delivered thanks to the school's collaboration with Fairhurst, a UK wide engineering consultancy, and 20 other partner organisations in Aberdeen.



With increased pressure on Council resources, there has been continued work to ensure the best use of resource, with yearly reviews of how effectively our Early Learning and Childcare [delivery models](#) meet demand from parents to ensure efficiency. From August 2024, 3 ELC settings will be moving to delivering a term-time model of provision (Monday to Friday 9am-3pm) to take account of how families are choosing to access their entitlement. Ongoing monitoring and review of delivery models is helping ensure that we meet the needs of families and achieve best value.

We continue to focus on improving quality. Our Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) offer continues to provide choice for families with 53 Local Authority ELC settings, 41 Funded Provider settings and 63 childminders working in partnership to deliver flexible funded ELC entitlement for 3-5 year olds and eligible 2 year old children. Over the course of session 23/24, the education service has both [reviewed progress](#) and established a refreshed [Delivery Plan](#) to guide our work over the next two years.

### 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
-  Community Partnerships
-  Transitions
-  Family Support



In 2023/24, 98.72% of our eligible pre-school population and 78.92% of our eligible ante pre-school population were placed in ELC. Following the ELC application and admissions process, 1283 new children have been offered ELC places for session 2024/25. This is a slight decrease on the 1418 places offered last year and could be the first indication of the predicted drop in demand due to a lowering birthrate. In response the service will pilot a system to allow families to pay to top up their allocation of 1140 in two settings where capacity allows to help determine next steps.

79.5% of all ELC applications over 2023/24 were offered their 1st choice of ELC placement. There remain challenges in recruiting quality ELC staff at all levels and the service is working closely with the employability team to support placements from those coming back into work as well as continuing to deliver successful Foundation and Modern Apprenticeship programmes. A programme of management training has been developed and delivered for ELC Managers and there is evidence of impact on inspection outcomes.



Staffing across our schools remained fairly consistent throughout the year, however we continue to find it hard to recruit to a number of secondary specialisms and access to supply staff is limited resulting in school leaders covering classes for long periods. Classroom practice can be variable and our focus for next year will continue to be on improving learning, teaching and assessment through our professional learning offer.

Throughout the school session there has been a change in leadership in over 20% of our schools. Senior manager recruitment has been challenging over the school session and this is mirrored nationally. We have further developed our Middle Leadership, Readiness for Headship and Into Headship courses to try to increase the number of quality applicants for leadership positions although central team members are still required to cover some vacant posts. There is some evidence of the positive impact of these courses on the calibre of applicants for headteacher posts within the city but further work to do in collaboration with national agencies and head teachers. We continue to monitor the impact of our work designed to develop leadership capacity and capability.

We have had a significant focus on trying to address the variation across our ELC settings and schools and now evaluate the impact of quality improvement arrangements prior to a new academic session.

The average Care Inspectorate gradings for ELC provision have increased across all Quality Indicators (QIs), suggesting that the professional learning on leadership has impacted positively on inspection outcomes. However, there is evidence of the need to focus on the leadership of play and learning.

We benefited from a [Collaborative Improvement Visit](#) focussed on ELC and have used the learning from the visit to support our planning. The external team provided robust challenge and ideas for improvement which informed our very successful ELC Learning Festival in February and continue to inform our planning. All actions from the subsequent [Action Plan](#) have been transferred into our National Improvement Framework Plan for 2024/25. Following on from the visit, the Early Years Team is working closely with Education Scotland to develop and deliver further training for managers on the quality of play and learning during session 24/25. Our [ELC Quality Improvement Framework](#) has been updated to reflect the slightly amended focus. We can track the impact of our professional learning, and in particular the support of Locality Leads, on more positive inspection outcomes.

Similar review arrangements are in place for schools. The Framework has guided a far more proportionate approach to quality improvement; however, capacity issues have impacted on the consistency of application across localities in the primary sector as members of the central team have covered vacant head teacher posts. These challenges had a disproportionate impact on one locality, and this has triggered a review of the working arrangements.



Although the sample size for comparison is small, there is evidence of improved inspection outcomes 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 focus on accountability is beginning to have impact. There is generally positive movement up the [support categories](#) allocated to schools, although the evidence is less compelling than that available for ELC. 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.

There is emerging evidence of the positive impact of involving members of secondary school leadership teams in quality improvement activities beyond their own secondary schools, the scale of the challenge across secondary is greater than for primary colleagues. Widening the quality improvement team members to include a cross section of senior leaders is benefitting the school being visited and the individual team members home school by building a shared understanding of what high quality looks like and building capacity across our schools. It is hoped that maintaining this arrangement will help release central capacity not covering vacant head teacher posts.

The school [Quality Improvement Framework](#) has been amended in advance of the new school session to broaden the evidence base gathered during visits to help us monitor the impact of our work against an agreed Behaviour Plan, working arrangements to remove single points of failure and more intensive arrangements for those yet to evaluate as good or better.

During Session 23/24, key quality indicators were focussed on as part of the professional learning and leadership offer, alongside responsive professional learning from the ASN Central Team, Orchard Brae, the Educational Psychology Service and the ASN & Outreach Service. Although a comprehensive offer is in place and becoming more aligned, joint planning across the various 'providers' would support more effective monitoring of impact.

Over the course of the academic session, 111 live universal sessions were offered. The Grassroots (GPLP) programme continued this session delivered by classroom teachers, with programmes focussing on Numeracy, Sensory Stories and Circuits, Understanding ADHD and An Anti-Racist Ethos. Feedback for these sessions remained positive with evaluations highlighting the benefits of practical examples to take back into the classroom and opportunities to work with colleagues across the city.

The book groups run by our Orchard Brae Outreach Teacher were very well received, with requests to continue this next session. Some of the attendees have plans to develop book groups within their own settings following on from this learning opportunity.

## Professional Learning and Leadership 23/24



At the end of the academic session 23/24, an Audit was sent out to all schools for staff at all levels to complete. In response to the question, "What are the key professional learning priorities for you/your school/sector next session?" - 78.6% of responses categorised within "Inclusive Practices" mention supporting learners with ASN in classrooms, with almost 30% referencing the CIRCLE framework directly, this has been built into our offer for 2024/25.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment, Curriculum and requests related to the Behaviour Action Plan, including staff wellbeing were among the top requests for professional learning and development next session. This correlates with quality improvement audit responses from the central team with 50% of officers responding to the question "What are the key priorities for professional learning to support our

school based colleagues and impact positively on our children and young people?” referencing training requirements linked to the Behaviour Action Plan. Currently, there are plans in place to address all of the professional development actions within the behaviour action plan via synchronous and asynchronous means throughout the upcoming academic session.

The service continues to work closely with the Data and Insights Team to ensure that our school staff have access to accessible information to support improvement. The various dashboards in place ensure access to consistent data when offering challenge during data discussions with senior leaders throughout the school year. Despite professional learning in the use of the dashboards, there is variation in how they are used at school level. In order to increase consistency across schools’ central officers will increase expectations around use of the dashboards to inform regular data discussions.

There are highly effective governance arrangements in place. Members scrutinise the work of the service against agreed [Plans](#) at the Education and Children’s Services Committee. For the second year running the Local Government Benchmarking data shows Aberdeen City’s Children’s Services are the most improved. The focus on improvement will be maintained as there is still much to do by the Council and wider Community Planning Partnership.



We have successfully worked to broaden the curriculum offer for young people in our secondary schools. Approximately 900 applications from secondary pupils were made for the 31 [ABZ Campus](#) courses running for the first time in 2023/34. 392 places were taken by 372 young people from Aberdeen City secondary schools, equating to approximately 36 places per school. Tracking and survey evidence suggests that there is no negative impact on attainment from travelling to other schools and this will be the subject to further review following the publication of Insight in September. Work has been ongoing with local partners to develop Phase 2 for the 2024/25 school session.

Phase 2 will see an increase to 54 courses from August 2024 including access to 14 new ‘anytime’ courses. Phase 3 aims to further increase the number of courses available, develop work experience opportunities to complement foundation apprenticeships and to work with schools to support their increasing of the offer available at school level through the development of new courses. This includes the

introduction of certificated First Aid courses for senior phase cohorts following a successful test in 2 secondary schools over 2023/24.

<p><b>Column A (Monday/Wednesday offerings)</b></p> <p><b>SCQF Level 7:</b> Advanced Higher Biology (Aberdeen Grammar) Advanced Higher English (Aberdeen Grammar) Advanced Higher Modern Studies (Aberdeen Grammar) Advanced Higher Physics (St Machar)</p> <p><b>SCQF Level 6:</b> Higher Computing Science (Aberdeen Grammar) Higher Dance (City Move) Higher Health and Food Technology (Aberdeen Grammar) FA Business S&amp;B (NESCC CH) FA Creative &amp; Digital Media (NESCC CH) FA Scientific Technologies - 1 Year (NESCC CH) FA Scientific Technologies - 2 Year (NESCC CH) FA Social Services: Children and Young People (Aberdeen Grammar) FA Social Services and Healthcare (St Machar &amp; NESCC CH) Higher Hairdressing (Aberdeen)</p> <p><b>SCQF Level 5 or below:</b> National 4 Dance (City Move) National 4 Modern Studies (Aberdeen Grammar) National 4/5 Gaelic (Aberdeen) FA Construction Level 4 (NESCC Athol) FA Construction Level 4 (St Machar) FA Hospitality Level 4 (NESCC CH)</p>	<p><b>Column B (Tuesday/Thursday offerings)</b></p> <p><b>SCQF Level 7:</b> Advanced Higher Chemistry (St Machar) Advanced Higher Drama (Aberdeen Grammar) Advanced Higher Geography (Aberdeen Grammar) Advanced Higher History (Aberdeen Grammar) Advanced Higher Physics Education (Aberdeen Grammar) Advanced Higher Physics (Aberdeen Grammar) Advanced Higher Spanish (Aberdeen Grammar)</p> <p><b>SCQF Level 6:</b> Higher Administration (St Machar) Higher ISOL (Aberdeen) FA Social Services: Children and Young People (Aberdeen Grammar) FA Social Services and Healthcare (Aberdeen Grammar) FA Accountancy (NESCC Athol) FA Engineering Systems - 2 Year (NESCC Athol) New Scientific Technologies (Aberdeen)</p> <p><b>SCQF Level 5 or below:</b> National 4/5 Skills (Aberdeen) FA Construction Level 4 (NESCC Athol)</p>	<p><b>Column C (Monday/Wednesday offerings)</b></p> <p><b>SCQF Level 5:</b> Advanced Higher Business Management (Aberdeen Grammar) Advanced Higher Engineering Science (Aberdeen Grammar) Advanced Higher French (Aberdeen Grammar) Advanced Higher Spanish (Aberdeen Grammar)</p> <p><b>SCQF Level 4:</b> Higher Games (Aberdeen Grammar) FA Social Services: Children and Young People (Bridge of Don) FA Social Services and Healthcare (Aberdeen Grammar)</p> <p><b>SCQF Level 4/5:</b> Cooking (Aberdeen Grammar)</p> <p><b>Column D (Tuesday/Thursday offerings)</b></p> <p><b>SCQF Level 7:</b> Advanced Higher Chemistry (Aberdeen Grammar)</p> <p><b>SCQF Level 6:</b> Higher Accounting (Aberdeen Grammar) FA Social Services: Children and Young People (St Machar) FA Social Services and Healthcare (Aberdeen Grammar)</p> <p><b>Column E (Monday/Wednesday offerings)</b></p> <p><b>SCQF Level 2:</b> Advanced Higher Computing Science (Aberdeen Grammar)</p> <p><b>Column F (Monday/Wednesday offerings)</b></p> <p><b>SCQF Level 7:</b> National 4/5 Gaelic (Aberdeen) National 4/5 Spanish (Aberdeen) National 4/5 French (Aberdeen) National 4/5 German (Aberdeen) National 4/5 Italian (Aberdeen) National 4/5 Japanese (Aberdeen) National 4/5 Korean (Aberdeen) National 4/5 Mandarin (Aberdeen) National 4/5 Russian (Aberdeen) National 4/5 Urdu (Aberdeen)</p> <p><b>SCQF Level 6:</b> Higher Computing Science (Aberdeen Grammar) Higher Dance (City Move) Higher Health and Food Technology (Aberdeen Grammar) FA Business S&amp;B (NESCC CH) FA Creative &amp; 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We continue to monitor levels of pupil health and wellbeing carefully and there is evidence that our arrangements are effective for almost all of our pupils. The most recent [Mental Health and Wellbeing Surveys](#) demonstrate improvements in almost all areas compared to the previous two years of data sets. We have a reduction in levels of pupils with low mood and at risk of depression and see increases in self-confidence levels. We are either tracking alongside national data or performing better than the reported Scottish average.

Reports of self-harming and happiness with appearance have both improved in this year's data, including with our 'Did Not Disclose' gender group, and with girls. However, there are indications that despite the positive movement, we are not yet sufficiently addressing the gradient for those who are more impacted by poverty and those who did not disclose their gender. In addition, our cohort of S4 girls (our S3 group last year) are continuing to show poorer self-reporting of mental health outcomes. This is the cohort that would have been most directly impacted by Covid school and community closures. There are wider impacts and considerations when thinking about this cohort, some of them will be leaving school at the end of this year. As well as school community supports, services such as Skills Development Scotland alongside school pastoral care and school staff will work in partnership to plan for positive destinations and pathways beyond school. We will continue to implement the SHINE survey next session as this allows us to benchmark our progress against the national picture, but in collaboration with the Children's Services Board attempt to find a means of measuring the health gradient to further improve our longer term planning.

Promoting positive [behaviour](#) has been a key focus this session. The vast majority of children and young people continue to behave well in our schools, with findings not dissimilar from those outlined in The Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research Report, published by Scottish Government in November 2023. The service has worked collaboratively with trade union colleagues to develop a shared [Behaviour Plan](#) to support improved behaviour in our schools. All staff will receive de-escalation training in session 2024/25 and there will be designated trainers in place for each Associated Schools Group (ASG) to ensure sustainability. Progress against the plan will continue to be [reported](#) to the [Education and Children's Services Committee](#).

The service has made considerable progress in ensuring the information available to [Armed Forces](#) families takes account of the new legislative duties and, having an identified lead is allowing us to accelerate progress rather than awaiting review

periods. The school application process has been updated to include UK Armed Forces data capture and we continue to work with other Clusters to establish armed forces champions to take forward accreditation activities and maintain our gold accreditation status. When a new family is identified the officer with responsibility for Armed Forces contacts the family and signposts to supports and funding available. We now plan to have better promoted Armed Forces information for families including signposting to funding via the ACC website in place early in session 24/25.

Ensuring the effective participation of children and young people remains a focus. The [Youth Climate Change Group](#) continues to represent the voice of young people of Aberdeen at national and local events, including at the Education Scotland Learning for Sustainability group. The group continue to support schools to undertake sustainability projects and promote their successes. 14 schools are now recognised as ECO schools. The service has been working to prepare for the implementation of the UNCRC for a number of years and welcomed the incorporation of the Bill into Scots Law from 16 July. School teams have ensured pupil voice is evident in school policies and procedures and provide child friendly versions of policies and plans. Following our early adoption of a child friendly complaints process, we are well positioned to implement the agreed national approach.

The Education Service continues to work well with officers from across the organisation and local partners to plan and deliver popular 'In the City' holiday programmes to support families during Summer, Autumn and Easter school holidays. Evaluations from children and young people are consistently positive with an average enjoyment rate of 9.6/10. Priority groups were well represented, and an accessibility adjusted programme delivered by We Too, Early Intervention services and Sport Aberdeen.



The Music Service has continued to evaluate how well they are expanding the provision of music tuition, increasing more equitable access and providing greater opportunities for students to perform individually and in partnership with other groups in the city.

The success of the Big Sing 2023 was built upon further this session with all P4s again coming together to sing at the Duthie Park. The event was well received by parents and families and plans are already in place to have a bigger and more international event next session.



Our out of school care service secured funding (Improving School Age Childcare Spaces) to support improvements in 4 of our settings.

Cornhill now benefits from direct access to an outdoor play area and new storage units for their play equipment.



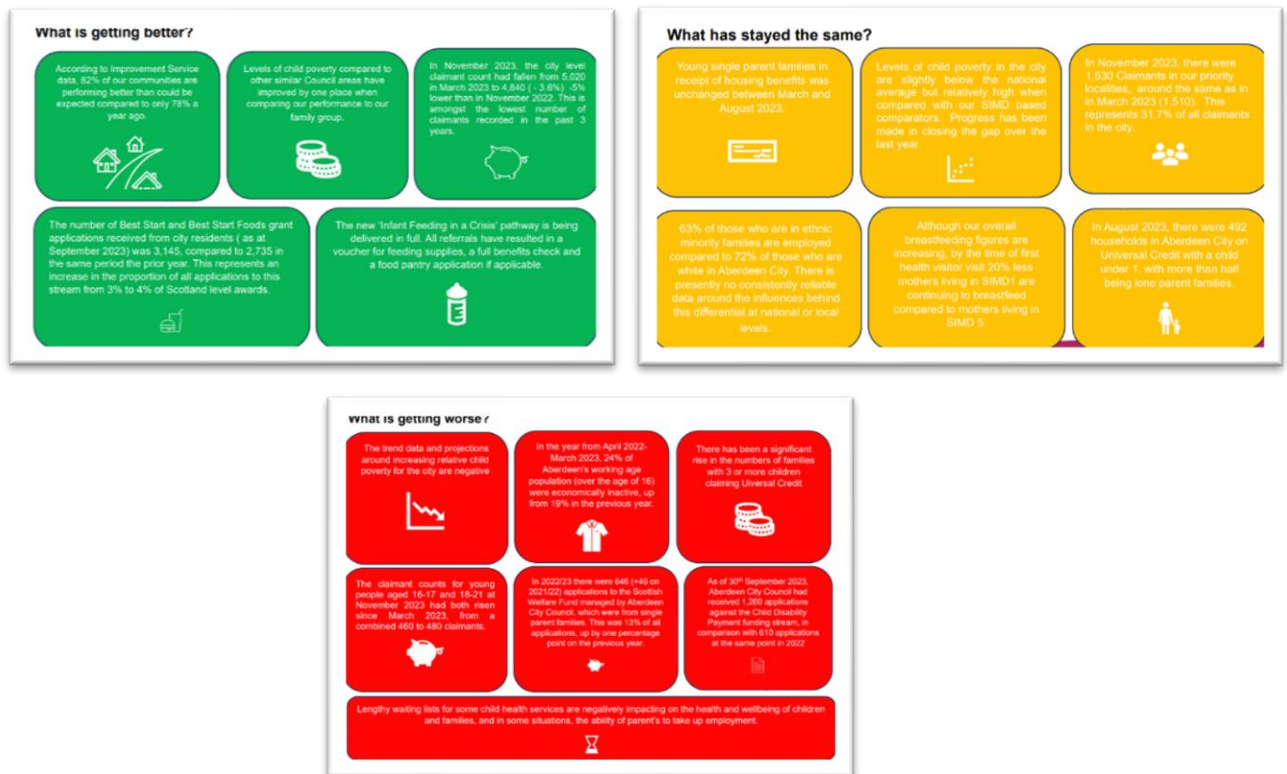
Kirkhill now benefits from a bright and airy playroom and kitchen allowing children and staff to prepare interesting snacks. They also now have a secure outdoor area which is easily accessed and secure storage.

In Orchard Brae the funding allowed the service to create a relaxed room, to support our learners with the most complex needs, with secure outdoor area allowing free flow at all times.

Muirfield received improved outdoor lighting to ensure the outdoor spaces can be used all year round. The increased storage has also helped them to organise loose parts and maximise the outdoor play space.



The cost of living crisis continues to impact on our families and we recognise that we cannot address poverty in isolation. The service continues to be an active member of the Children's Services Board who recently took stock of the current situation in their [Annual Report](#).



The data shows that poverty continues to impact on our families and that this is likely to continue. There is emerging evidence that families are increasingly accessing their entitlements, and this is encouraging, particularly given our investment in Money Advisors through Scottish Attainment Challenge resource. The scale of the challenge is equally clear. There is a need to continue to carefully target those groups most likely to be impacted by poverty wherever possible and continue to increase our knowledge and support of them.

The recent engagement to inform the development of the LOIP has suggested citizens seek more opportunities to get involved in decision making and ways of knowing "[where to raise my voice for my community](#)". This will be considered as we develop our model of Family Support.

The disparity in outcomes evident from the review, largely determined by SIMD quintile is of concern. Despite some evidence of progress across SIMD 2 and 3, outcomes for those in SIMD 1 are by far the poorest. Lengthy waiting lists for some child health services are negatively impacting on the health and wellbeing of children and families, and in some situations, the ability of parents to take up employment.

There is a risk that the gap between those living in SIMD 1 and their neighbours increases. The direct link with poverty and mental health outcomes is clear. There is a need for targeted work to address the needs of those living in SIMD 1 and this learning is shaping the development of our [Family Support Model](#). We have successfully gained national Pathfinder status for this work and are progressing [Plans](#)



at pace. The model will ultimately absorb our two [Edge of Care](#) pilots designed to support work around keeping The Promise. Work has begun on developing the model further to provide support for young people in the St Machar ASG.

Our partnerships with community groups are strengthening. Our schools have continued to benefit from generosity and support from a range of partners. Working alongside its local charity partner, Abernecessities and HMP Addlewell in West Lothian, Aberdeen-based Sodexo Energy & Resources has gifted Northfield Academy pupils refurbished bikes. The Academy has provided the team at HMP Addlewell with a further 13 bikes for reconditioning and is benefiting from an on-going partnership with Sodexo Energy & Resources.



A Doric book about a naughty herring gull has been written by pupils at Riverbank School. 'Summer, e Magic Scurry', tells the story of a herring gull that does all the things a 'scurry' –the Doric word for a gull – usually does, but then, using magic, takes the Primary 5F pupils on an adventure to various places. The pupils were able to create their Doric book thanks to Aberdeen City Council's Creative Fund programme and supported by writer Jackie Ross and illustrator Aaron Gale from Doric Books.



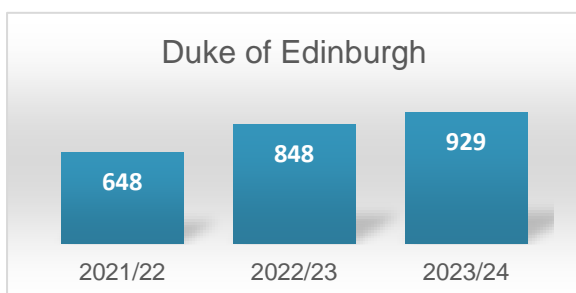
The Men's Shed has funded and constructed a poly-tunnel in the grounds of Forehill School in order to create a space for the children to grow plants, fruit and vegetables. The space is being now being used to support intergenerational community activity.



Dietetics students from Robert Gordon University (RGU) have partnered with Seaton Primary School to teach pupils how to cook quick, tasty meals and snacks while learning about the key nutritional benefits of a healthy relationship with food.



The five-week pilot project with primary seven children has been supported by charity Abernecessities and is the first of its kind for students of RGU's Dietetics course.



The number of young people participating in Duke of Edinburgh Awards has increased steadily over the last 3 years providing young people with experience of volunteering, developing new skills and the opportunity to participate in expeditions



A number of our incredible young people have secured national awards this year. Hafsa Ahmad (on the left), a senior pupil from St Machar Academy achieved the top grade in Higher Biology in Scotland and was presented with an award from the Royal Society of Biology.

Robyn Rodgers (on the right), a Northfield Academy S5 pupil, is the Scottish winner of Level 2 French of the prestigious Anthea Bell Prize for Young Translators 2024. Over 16,000 pupils in the UK took part in the creative translation competition, which was across four levels in five languages (French, Spanish, German, Italian and



Mandarin), covering all year groups at secondary school from age 11 to 18 years old.

I am very proud of our Service and how it continues to improve. The challenges of decreasing resource mean that there is an ongoing need to work more collaboratively towards a self-improving system to ensure improvement. I appreciate the skills and expertise of staff across the Service, across the wider organisation and partners who have committed, and continue to commit to the education service.

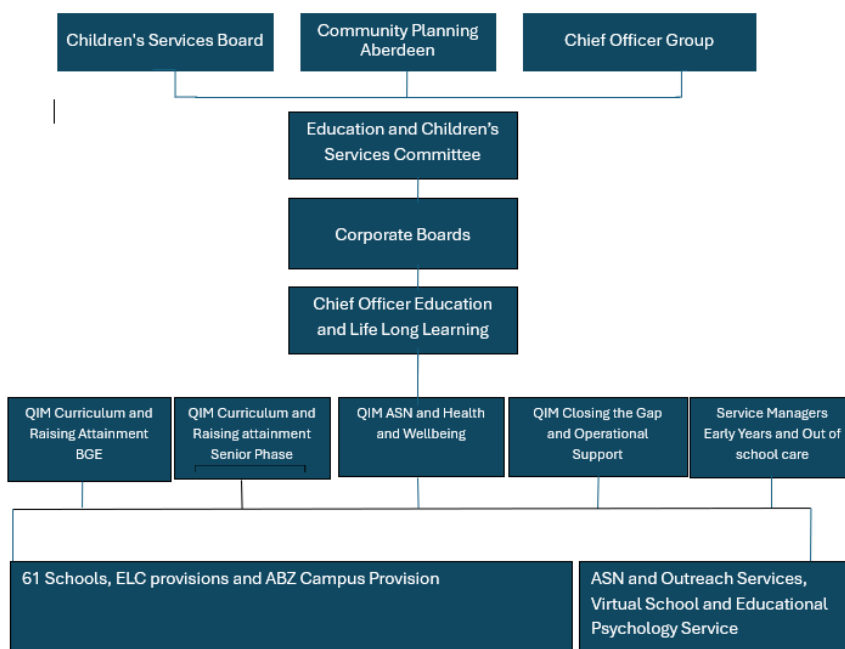
## Key achievements of the last year

- Successfully enrolled over 1000 new children and young people into our schools over the academic session
- 32 ELC Modern Apprenticeships supported to complete their apprenticeship and have now moved into the ELC workforce.
- Improved rate of sign off following return visit from HMIE in our Primary Schools
- ELC learning festival brought 85% of local authority staff together to hear key messages and participate in successful Manager/Senior training sessions.
- First Local Authority in Scotland to pilot ELC Certificate in Outdoor Practice, a new accredited qualification. 19 practitioners are on track to complete this in September 2024.
- Pupil from St Machar Academy was named Foundation Apprentice of the year, and a Northfield Academy pupil won the prestigious Anthea Bell prize for translation from Oxford University.
- Positive feedback from HIME (His Majesty's Inspectors of Education) following the Community Learning and Development Inspection
- ABZ Campus Phase 1 fully implemented and Phase 2 ready to be implemented from August 2024.
- Secured a high-tech centre for higher and advanced higher computing students in One Hub for use as part of ABZ Campus.
- Pilot of the Northern Lights programme complete providing us with the feedback to allow us to move to upgrading Wi-Fi and interactive teaching boards in all schools, providing all staff and pupils with a single password to access all services and offering one to one laptops from P6 – S6 during session 2024/25
- Educational Psychology service presented approach to the roll out of Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) and ELSA ASN to a national Educational Psychology Conference highlighting the good practice in the authority.
- Equity Network established and regularly has 70% school representation at both online and face to face meetings. Successful adoption of the Equity Plan tracker by all schools.
- All secondary schools have a member of staff trained in Mentors in Violence Protection.
- Secured funding to develop outdoor spaces from the Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces (ISACS) Fund.
- Increased in the number of HMIE Associate Assessors from 2 to 10. These leaders will work closely with the central team to help build capacity within the system.

- Successfully delivered training in the teaching of writing to our third cohort of schools, supported by Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative.
- Increased the number of learners participating in the Duke of Edinburgh awards from 848 in 2022/23 to 929 in 2023/24



## Governance



Each Quality Improvement Manager oversees a strategic remit and retains operational oversight of the performance of a group of education settings/targeted services in collaboration with the Quality Improvement Officer team.

Partnership improvement work is predominantly coordinated through the Attainment and Transition to Adulthood Improvement Group which reports to the Children's Services Board. In real terms however, this encompasses a range of healthy partnerships including those with the Wood Foundation, with the Developing the Young Workforce Board and with Further and Higher Education partners as we respond to the Logan Report through the Aberdeen Computing Collaborative and continue our development of ABZ Campus.

As well as external scrutiny from inspection agencies, the Corporate Board structure monitors data and seeks assurance on education performance, the Performance Board is currently carefully monitoring the attainment of our senior phase learners who live in SIMD 2 and 3. Elected Members and external members scrutinise performance through Council Committees. In addition, partnership scrutiny is available through Community Planning Aberdeen and the Aberdeen City Executive Group (Chief Officers Group) for Public Protection.

Over session 23/24 around 18.3% of all schools benefited from engagement with His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) and all schools were subject to internal scrutiny arrangements. External scrutiny ranged from ongoing engagement, return inspection visits, engagement through short and full model inspections and thematic reviews. A healthy appetite for scrutiny is believed to be a key strength of the service.

In addition to this we welcomed a collaborative improvement visit involving colleagues from other local authorities, the support arm of Education Scotland, ADES and HMIe. Feedback was invaluable in supporting the setting of next steps and offering useful suggestions to increase challenge and improve staff engagement at all levels.

## ACC Foundations: Organisational Design

The Council organisational structure continues to drive innovation and more integrated working practices. A refreshed organisational structure, agreed by Council in March 2024, sees the Cluster welcome the Library and Information Service and Community Learning and Development Service into the Education and Lifelong Learning Cluster.

It was important to establish a collective identity for the Education and Lifelong Learning Cluster and all staff were involved in creating a shared vision and values through a series of engagement events.

### Vision for Education and Lifelong Learning - Inspiring communities to learn and grow together

#### Values:

- Ambition
- Equality
- Nurture
- Respect

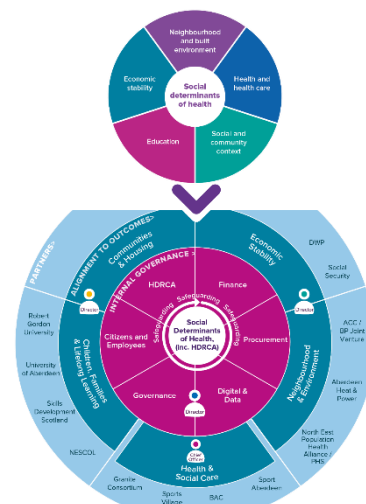
The vision and values will be central to the work of the cluster and used to evaluate practice and help ensure consistency of purpose. The new Cluster provides the opportunity to look at the learning needs of children and families more holistically as we build on our Edge of Care Pilots and develop our model of Family Support.

The Education and Lifelong Learning Cluster now sits within the Families and Communities Function alongside Children's Social Work, Housing and Corporate Landlord. This new grouping is providing opportunities to more carefully consider the determinates of population health on our families and communities.

## ACC Foundations: People Management

Head Teachers continue to see their responsibilities as extending beyond their own school community, particularly in response to the need to address variation. All 48 primary Head Teachers have been part of the evaluation team in at least one other school and almost all primary Deputy Head Teachers have had the opportunity to participate in a school quality improvement visit. 9 of our secondary Head Teachers and 31 secondary Deputy Head Teachers have contributed to quality improvement activity. The model provides valuable professional development for team members and has been received positively by schools and staff involved in the visits. There is now a need to ensure that these arrangements offer more equal opportunities for challenge as well as support. School Leaders continue to make considerable contributions to service and partnership improvement activity.

We currently have 5 Senior Leaders completing the Into Headship programme for '23-'24 with 4 already having secured Head Teacher roles within Aberdeen City.



Almost all staff undertaking our Readiness for Into Headship and Into Headship courses in session 22/23 have secured senior leadership positions within the city or Aberdeenshire supporting succession planning for the leadership in our schools. Feedback on delivery is positive with almost all staff looking to progress on through each level.

We are pleased to offer 7 schools the opportunity to engage with 'Winning Scotland' to support the development of resilience, ambition and versatility in pupils. This qualification achieves credits at Masters Level 11.



During session 23/24 a new Education Scotland programme 'Leadership in Professional Learning' was piloted in Aberdeen. 37 DHTs and HTs were involved in the high-quality training to improve theory and build personal action plans. A national event was held in June 24 where a HT and DHT were asked to share very good practice in their primary setting. This provided excellent opportunities to learn from other settings across Scotland. In session 23/24 an additional 8 leaders were successful in securing Associate Assessor positions with HMle. These leaders will be used to support the Quality Improvement visits and to mentor new or inexperienced Head Teachers.

The positive trend in attendees from both secondary and specialist settings in all Middle Leadership groups this session demonstrates the appetite for professional learning in leadership and management. A similar programme is planned for session 24/25.

The Universal Services continue to pool resources to support children and families in greatest need and have invested time in building relationships further. Plans to progress the establishment of our Bairn's House within the Links Hub are progressing well, and this will provide opportunities to strengthen multiagency practice further as we develop our Family Support Model.

The service continues to value weekly meetings with Trade Unions and benefits from shared working groups and collaboration on key documentation to support the workforce. Officers have invested considerable time in agreeing a Behaviour Action Plan to be progressed over the 2024/25 academic session.

## ACC Foundations: Technology

### Northern Lights Programme

Our Northern Lights programme, which aims to deliver access to additional digital tools for learning and teaching whilst seamlessly connecting data systems, completed a successful test in 2 schools over 2023/24. All staff and learners in St Machar Academy and Woodside Primary now have access to Microsoft devices, they all have a single sign-on to access all applications and training on the new learning environment has begun with our training partners, Hable .

Learning from the test schools has been used to help design the roll out to all other schools which will begin in August 2024 with all schools being transitioned by December 2025. The roll out of devices and the new digital learning environment runs in parallel with a commitment to improve connectivity and update all classroom smart panels, providing our pupils and staff with access to state of the art technology to support delivery of the curriculum.



Volunteer digital champions have been identified in all our schools; these staff members will help to drive change in their own schools. The education team and technical team meet regularly to ensure the programme remains on track and any issues are resolved quickly. The wider programme including Wi-Fi and whiteboard upgrades will continue with a completion date of Summer 2025.

The new digital environment provides numerous new learning opportunities. Over session 24/25 there will be a focus on building the capacity of staff in the new tools and understanding how AI can be used to support learning.

### Update to Request for Assistance

An updated request for assistance portal has been developed. The refreshed portal has been through all the testing stages and will be ready to launch in August 2024. This final version will provide families and professionals with summaries of the types of support on offer and the ability to make a personal or professional referral.

Once live, the system will be reviewed annually and updated based on feedback from users.



## ACC Foundations: Partner Alliances

### Aberdeen Computing Collaborative

A digital event was held for over 1000 teaching and support staff which included workshops from RGU and representation from Aberdeen University. The event had Computing Science inputs for Early Stages and Upper Stages Primary focused on growing interest in the subject. The exit survey for the event, completed by 50% of attendees, showed that 86.5% rated the sessions offered as very good or excellent.



Professional learning materials for Early and First level Computing Science have been developed for use from August 2024.

NPA courses for Games Design and Esports are now available in St Machar Academy as part of the work to broaden subject uptake. NPA Cybersecurity is available in all schools through ABZ Campus. During 24/25 work will continue to promote and spread this practice more widely across the city.

Esports NPA	Entries	Pass Rate
Level 4	4	100.00%
Level 5	9	100.00%
Level 6	3	100.00%

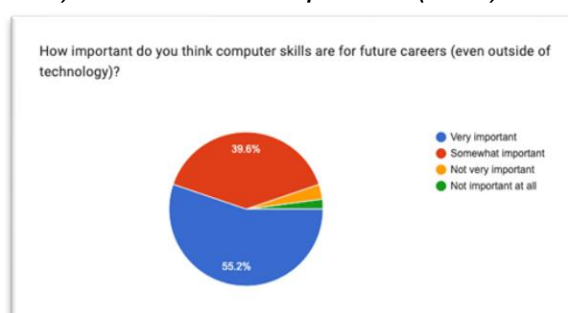
Games Design NPA	Entries	Pass Rate
Level 4	15	66.67%
Level 5	54	85.19%
Level 6	18	100.00%

Cybersecurity NPA	Entries	Pass Rate
Level 4	29	65.52%
Level 5	50	24.00%

2023/24 Session Forecast Results

A survey of attitudes to and experiences of Computing Science and Digital was shared with secondary pupils to help inform next steps. Most of the responses indicated that our young people believe computer skills are *very important* (55.3%) or *somewhat important* (40%) for future careers.



There was interest in extra-curricular computing clubs from 47.6% of respondents committing an interest and 28.6% expressing that they may be interested. This confirms our strategy to introduce more computing clubs in collaboration with Aberdeen Computing Collaborative, CodeClub, FIRST and other partners.

A partnership with FIRST Tech Challenge has been made available to all secondary schools with a focus on Computing Science staff. The offer includes a bursary of £999 for robotics equipment. To date three schools have expressed interest in the offer and they will be supported to access the bursary.

Gender imbalance is an issue identified for action. 31.2% of survey responses were from females. Comments identified that some girls feel isolated or like an “anomaly” in their Computing Science classes. Encouraging more girls into Computing Science is an important area of focus.

The survey also highlights areas for improvement in the delivery of Computing Science education, with respondents wanting more hands-on activities (64%), learning about technology in the real world (including social media, games) (52%), applying computer skills to real world problems (51%) and having more opportunities to work collaboratively on projects (34%). These areas will be considered in the professional learning offered to Computing Science staff in session 2024/25.

Our partnership with Aberdeen Computing Collaborative has established a Computing Science outreach space at OneTech Hub which is equipped with computing equipment for a range of activities. This space will be available from August 2024 for all schools and collaborative partners.



## **Excelerate**

Excelerate is an investment by The Wood Foundation to empower system change in education, providing opportunities for school leaders, practitioners, and industry and community to connect and collaborate to develop learning experiences which allow young people to thrive in school in order to effectively prepare them for the future.

Excelerate continues to support Bucksburn, Dyce, Harlaw, Northfield, Oldmachar and St. Machar Academies develop approaches across learning, teaching and assessment, partnerships, raising attainment and achievement, and curriculum. Each school is focusing on an aspect of development related to their unique context. Below is just a sample of the improvement activity that is being supported through our partnership with The Wood Foundation.

As part of a recent refresh of their language of skills, Oldmachar Academy have been focusing on Oracy to support effective communication. Through the Excelerate connection, staff have been provided with training from Oracy Cambridge, and young people in the Broad General Education (BGE) now have one period of Oracy per week. This is giving young people confidence in effective communication, as was in evidence through their recent Youth & Philanthropy Initiative Final in February 2024.

Northfield Academy have used the Excelerate connection to visit XP Doncaster on a number of occasions. In March 2023, they embarked on a community visit including

parents, young people and staff to review whether the 'Crew' model might be something that could support improvements in culture and ethos at the school. This led to the introduction of a new S1 model; a 'home' room for each S1 class, an increased amount of time taught by one teacher to increase positive relationships, and a residential experience at the start of the academic session to help build relationships. During a recent HMIE visit, inspectors made the following comment:- *'The school's new model for S1, 'Crew', is an emerging success. Young people involved are highly motivated and feel that this provides a safe experience for them to develop key skills'*.

Early evidence comparing S1 in 2023-24 with 2022-23 shows signs of improvement, particularly in reducing levels of exclusion and building agency. There is a sense that Crew is making a difference and this is supported by our [Northfield Advisors](#).

Bucksburn Academy continue to utilise the Excelerate connection across a range of improvement areas including learning and teaching, and curriculum. They make full use of their Business and Community Support Officer (BCSO) who was a panel member at Offshore Europe in September 2023, promoting business/school partnerships and the opportunities for both in such connections. The BCSO role has encouraged partner-activity across all of the Excelerate schools, bringing in 52 new partner organisations during 2023-24 resulting in over 350 hours of partner-led school activities.

The intention is that the experiences and training from the Excelerate schools will not only benefit those schools, but provide opportunities for staff to share their expertise and knowledge to benefit the entirety of the eleven secondary school communities in Aberdeen City.

## **On-going partnerships with parents and carers**

The City Parent Forum is very active and since moving to online, almost all parent councils are regularly represented. The Parent Forum make a very positive contribution to the Education and Children's Services Committee and is now seeking feedback from parents directly to help shape Council policy.

Central staff continue to be invited to Parent Forum meetings to update on committee business and seek feedback on key issues coming through other feedback channels e.g. social media, complaints and compliments.

Of those parents/carers expressing an opinion within HMIE surveying, 86.8% are satisfied with the education offered in our schools.

All formal complaints are dealt with promptly with every effort made to resolve them at the lowest possible level in order to maintain positive relationships between families and school.

Our refreshed parent involvement and engagement plan developed in consultation with our city wide parent forum will be presented to committee in November.

## NIF Strategic Priorities

### Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education

All children and young people have a voice in decisions that affect them, including in how they learn and we continue to work to amplify participation and voice. Through our robust (internal) quality improvement processes and through HMIe inspections, we are able to identify and share best practice. Pupil voice is both sought to inform and is included within school improvement plans with a number of our schools creating and sharing accessible 'child-friendly' versions of their school improvement plans with their school communities.

Our schools offer a range of pupil voice groups to provide our children and young people an active voice in shaping both their school experience and to inform and support school improvement. These routinely include school councils, eco groups, health and wellbeing groups, digital (champions), library groups etc.

A range of tools, including focus groups to surveys, are used to elicit the voice of our children and young people. Their contribution in shaping the updated Local Outcome Improvement Plan and recent health and wellbeing surveys have helped guide strategic next steps.



A significant number of our schools (45) are actively engaged in the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award. This award places children's rights at the centre of school life and supports schools to develop a range of approaches to ensure that children and young people are better able to learn about, access and enjoy a broad range of rights. Several of our schools successfully achieved accreditation at a range of levels (from Bronze to Gold) this year.



Following the restrictions in place over the last few years, our young people are now seeking more ambitious and challenging experiences as shown by the two examples from Bucksburn Academy below.

Nine pupils from Bucksburn Academy experienced a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to take part in a two-week scientific expedition to Greenland.

Pupils, whose ages range from 14 to 16 years old, were selected from over 120 applicants in the school to take part in The Polar Academy, a charity that aims to have a lifelong transformative



impact on the pupils and families it works with, building role models that inspire others around them through respect, dignity, self-belief, connections, and kindness.

Whilst on expedition the young team conducted a range of scientific experiments including Environmental DNA (eDNA) which is DNA shed by organisms into the environment and used to monitor wildlife, LiDAR - an application of lasers which creates a 3D representation of the surface of the earth and snow density reporting and subsequently presented their findings to Oxford and Cambridge Universities and the Scott Polar Research Institute.

In May 2024 nine young people from Bucksburn took part in a week long voyage with the Ocean Youth Trust based in Greenock.

The Voyage took place on Alba Explorer, a 72ft ocean-going racing yacht with 6 experienced Staff and the Bucksburn staff and young people. They sailed from Greenock up the West Coast around the islands ending their voyage in Oban.



The crew spent time in a confined environment with unpredictable weather conditions. They were required to work hard, participating fully at all times in sailing the vessel and taking their turn in cooking and other domestic chores. The sailors slept in bunks on the boat and did not set foot on land till the end of the voyage.

The young people were a credit to themselves, their families and the school, embracing every task with enthusiasm and learning so much about resilience,

perseverance, team work, responsibility, safe working practices, technical sailing and every dimension of living on a Sailing boat.

Young people's comments included ,

*"The week away sailing with OYT Scotland was one of the most amazing weeks of my life. Everyone worked so hard to safely control the boat and complete the voyage, and I learned so many new skills. I would love to go back on board one day."*



*"An amazing week away with the Ocean Youth Trust Scotland. I saw views of Scotland I never knew existed and pushed myself beyond what I thought I could do. I Would recommend this to anyone who is debating going. It's an experience that is unforgettable, and has impacted me in so many ways"*

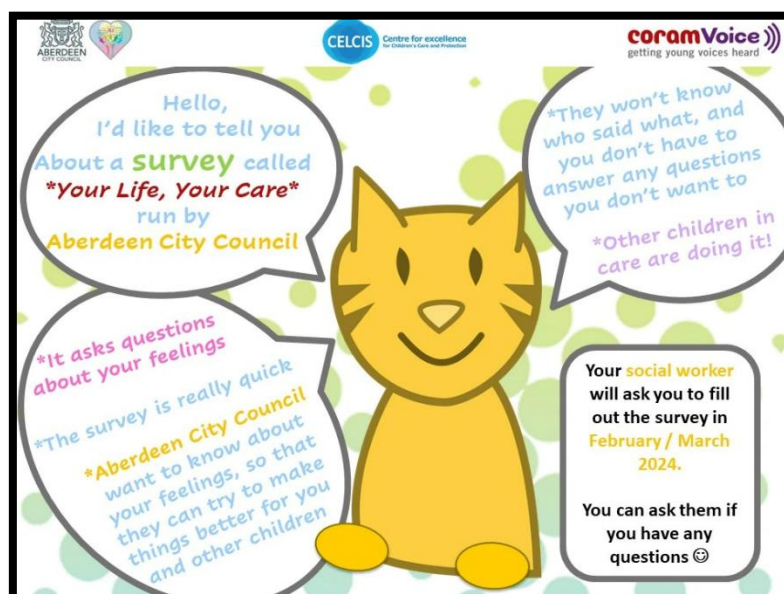
*One parent stated, 'I have never seen my daughter so elated and truly excited as she was when we picked her up on Friday evening; she was full of genuine enthusiasm and clearly had enjoyed every minute of the trip and couldn't wait to share her experiences with us. It has been so valuable for her to have this time away, make new friends, work as a team, push herself, and reflect on what is important to her, knowing that she can rise to challenges and hopefully succeed, or at least to come away positive if things don't work out. These are all such significant 'life lessons' and I am sure will stand her in good stead over the coming years.'*

Aberdeen City Council is currently involved in piloting the 'One Good Adult' resource developed in partnership with NES, Scottish Government and Children in Scotland. Senior Leaders and Service Managers are encouraged to make reference to this as part of the application and interview process and a series of engagement sessions were held in schools to gather feedback and to inform our approach to implementing this within our recruitment processes for adults working in our schools. The children and young people involved in these engagement sessions developed a range of questions about the areas that they felt were important linked to the themes of:

- Mental Health
- Be(ing) Kind
- Open-mindedness
- Equality and Inclusion
- Reliability
- Encouraging Success

This has provided children and young people with an opportunity to influence decision-making and support the appointment of staff in our schools and senior roles across the Local Authority where applicants often comment that the panel of children presents the toughest challenge. Children and young people form a panel in all head teacher recruitment processes. Pupil panels were also part of the recruitment process for the Executive Director Families and Communities, the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning and other senior Council positions.

During 23/24 our service worked closely with Social Work colleagues, on behalf of the Children's Services Board, to implement the **'BRIGHT SPOTS'** programme.



The **'Bright Spots,'** programme aims to provide an opportunity for children and young people to share their experiences of care, their life beyond care and how they feel about their lives. CELCIS and Corum Voice are currently analysing the responses to provide us with a report later in 2024. Listening to the views of children and young people should help to identify and promote examples of positive outcomes for children and young people and of promising practice. What our children and young people tell us will be utilised at a strategic level, in terms of planning and commissioning. However, it will also have a relevance at a practice level and provide insight how we collectively provide opportunities to improve experiences during session 24/25 and beyond.

Children's rights are embedded in the Aberdeen City Council Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process. As part of our decision-making processes, we routinely consider the impact of any proposals taken to full council/council committees and, where appropriate, seek the views of children and young people to inform and influence our strategies, proposals and plans.

Work will continue across all schools during session 24/25 to increase learner voice and to ensure children's rights are embedded across school policy and practice. Consideration is given, and opportunities routinely planned and delivered, to ensure that children and young people are provided with appropriate mechanisms to influence decision-making regarding (Education) service design and delivery.

## NIF Strategic Priorities

### Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

#### Improving Mental Health

The mental health of our children and young people is improving. All settings continue to participate in the Schools Health and wellbeing Improvement Network ([SHINE](#)) mental wellbeing survey and the ACC Physical Health and Wellbeing survey to support our understanding of the needs of P6/7 and Secondary learners across our settings. This year's surveys had higher completion rates by learners: over 500 for SHINE and almost an additional 2000 for the Physical Health Surveys. The interventions provided and work undertaken across our settings has led to an improved data picture. Positive improvements were seen in a number of areas compared to the previous two survey returns (March 2022 & November 2022). Of particular interest were the following:

- reduction of pupils reporting low mood and at risk of depression
- improvements in the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) which measures mental health difficulties
- increases in reported self-confidence levels and optimism
- improvements in physical health
- improvements in feelings of safety, inclusion, good health, aspects of sleep, and being listened to.

Generally, Aberdeen City outcomes now sit above national comparator data. Two previous areas of concern for Aberdeen, reports of self-harming, and happiness with appearance have both improved this year. The 'Did Not Disclose' gender, and 'Girls' gender groups both showed improvements on previous surveys in these areas.

There are other areas the data directs us to consider further:

- the gap between the Family Affluence Scale Groups (low, medium and high) even though each group is showing an improved position
- how to increase positivity towards school (especially at the transition between primary and secondary stages), although improvements against feelings of pressure in relation to schoolwork, and higher reporting of liking school were reported
- the expected poorer mental health and wellbeing of girls with a focus on our cohort of S4 girls (our S3 group last year) who are continuing to show poorer self-reporting in mental health measures relative to their peers in other stages, and their male counterparts
- increased use of technology and devices including its impact on sleep, and going to bed later
- how to support and encourage secondary pupils to eat breakfast
- continuing work with the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership to address slight increases in the number of pupils trying of e-cigarettes/vapes and other substances

The Educational Psychology Service will be working to support the cohort of S4, now S5 girls. All secondary schools will be offered an Early Intervention Consultation to discuss and explore their unique setting and context in relation to their data for the S5 girls. This allows for a contextual approach drawing on resources and relationships already in place. EPS training packages, such as Emotion Coaching, Emotionally



Based School Non-Attendance and Teenage Brain Development will be offered, or a tailored programme as required, depending on data and each school's needs. School leaders have access to SHINE reports through a PowerBi dashboard to help illustrate local trends for their settings. This trend data enables individual schools and Associated School Groups Partnerships to identify positive changes and areas for inclusion in School Improvement Plans for 2024/25.

## Improving Physical Health

The 'Big Run' held in October 2023 resulted in 88% of primary schools committing to providing a form of Daily Mile to increase daily activity levels during the school day. This was an improvement from 40% pre-event. The national average is 50%.



Boccia training has been rolled out across the city, with some school groups taking this forward in local festivals:

- number of schools: 28
- number of young leaders: 93
- number of volunteers: 17
- number of clubs: 18
- number of festivals: 9 (includes our ASN festivals)



The Aberdeen Physical Education , Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) group continue to work to address 3 key areas outlined within the Children's Services Plan. Early indication shows improvement in all areas with the final results being reviewed by the group in September 2024. Going forward PEPASS have changed their name to include the term School Sport, providing clarity to all members. In 2024/25 the group will focus on supporting schools to achieve Sport Scotland Sport Awards, as part of a holistic approach to reviewing PEPASS provision.

A steering group focussed on the structure and delivery of Primary School football resulted in Active Schools taking over as lead partner from August 2024 to ensure

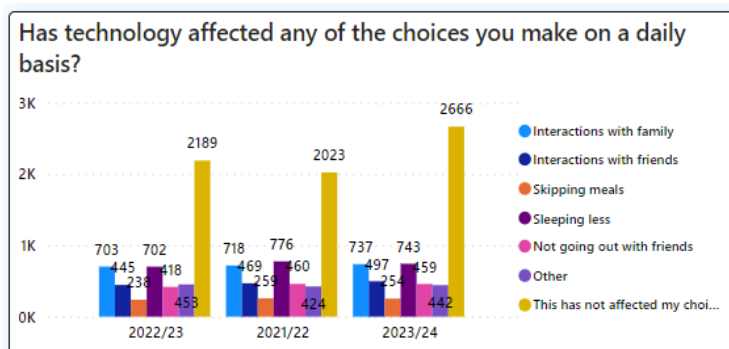


equitable and inclusive approaches are taken to support more participants, more of the time. New terms of reference have ensured that Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust (AFCCT) and ACC remain supportive partners.

Ahead of AFC Community Trust Day on Saturday 17 February, 10 pupils from St Machar Academy were given the unique opportunity to design a football shirt to be worn by Dons

players in the warm-up ahead of their match against Hibernian and sold in the AFC Club Shop in the run-up to Trust Day 2024.

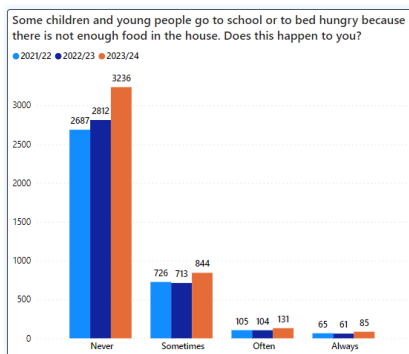
The physical wellbeing survey highlighted an increase in the time spent on technology with **28%** (27% in 2022) stating that they spend more than 6 hours on technology at the weekend. 946 of these are Primary stage learners.



As this is a slight increase on last year in terms of time spent on technology, consideration should be given for encouraging healthy choices for learners, and their families.

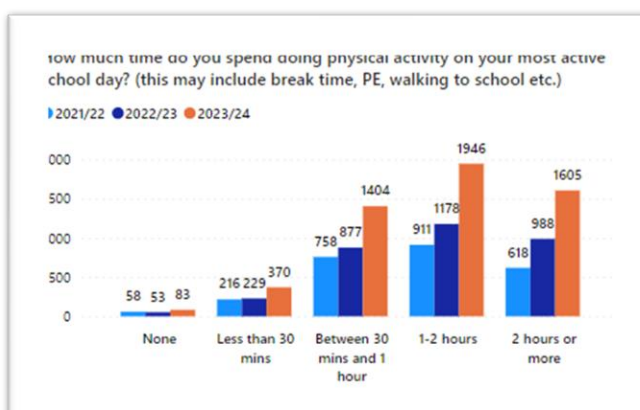
### Food and Drink

The physical wellbeing survey told us that there are times where children and young people do not have the right access to food to meet their nutritional needs. **3%**, **238** (compared 3.7%, 256 in 2022). Learners who completed the survey reported that they often or always went to bed hungry because there was not enough food at home. Continued review of this data at local level will help us identify where food parcels, foodbanks, breakfast clubs and other such resources would help us address this and target our support. Work in this area will be further supported by the research and planning being undertaken for the healthy weight project.



### Physical Health and Body Image

NHS physical activity guidelines suggest that on average children and young people between 5 – 18 should aim for at least 60 minutes of moderate or vigorous intensity, physical activity a day across the week. **61%** (69% last year) of learners who completed this survey meet the national health standards set above. This was higher for primary pupils than secondary, evidencing the need for us to continue focusing on increased physical activity at the early stages of pupil development and considering a range of options and opportunities at Secondary.

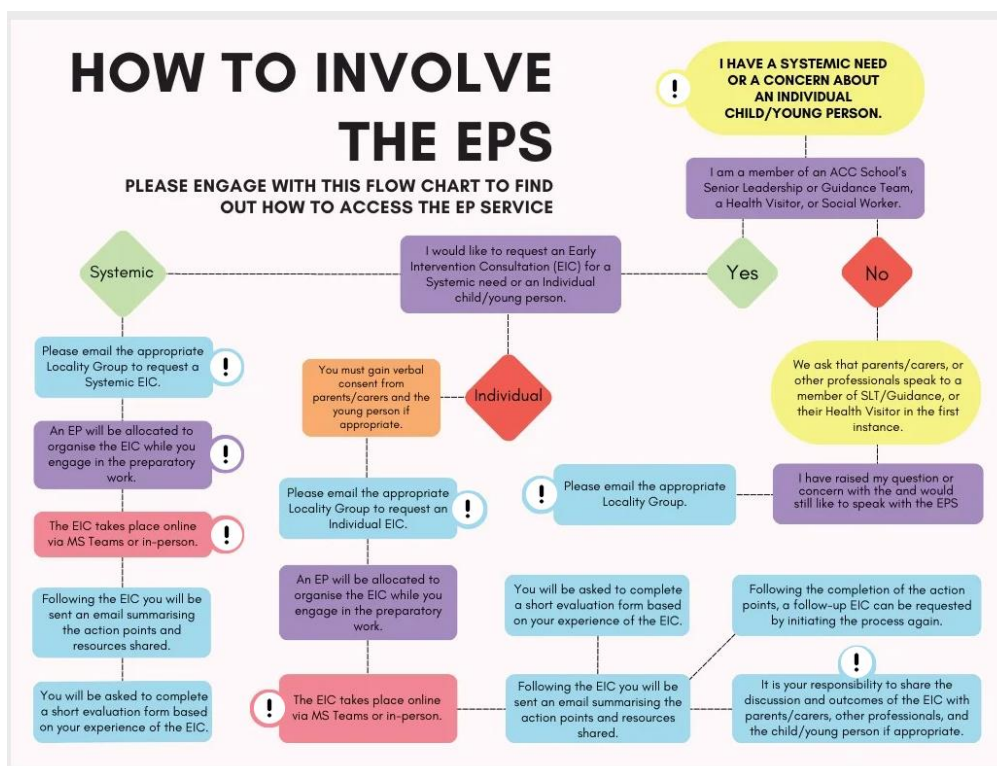


77% (75%, 71% at earlier data points) of learners feel positive or very positive about their body image, showing a further increase of 2% from November 2022. As with the mental wellbeing survey, however 23% (25%, 29%) of learners reported that most of the time they felt negative or very negative about their body image. Out of the 538 pupils who stated they felt very negative about their body image, 109 of those pupils were in Primary School. Being Me a programme to promote positive body image has been running in 7 Primary schools across the city targeting P5 and P6. Schools have reported positive impacts from the first cohorts and this may have contributed to the reduction in the number of young people feeling negative about body image.

Sessions on each of the issues raised will be planned through the Stronger Families series, communications with families, and school or ASG level events to support.

### Educational Psychology Service

During session 23/24 the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) developed new operational guidance to support improved engagement with senior leaders in schools and clarify roles and responsibilities. This guidance has been welcomed by school staff.



In addition to individual parent/carer meetings the team have been working closely with parent/carer groups to share the support available to families through the digital hub and through referral at school level.

A new digital system has been developed for case work allowing the team to update records securely and digitally whilst working remotely in schools. This will increase flexibility for psychologists allowing them to have greater impact in schools, and to complete better evaluation of universal and targeted/specialist EPS involvement. This system has been developed and tested throughout session 23/24 and will be fully live for session 24/25.

The EPS support schools at the universal level through a variety of means, not just training packages. Early Intervention Consultations (EICS) increased in 23-24 by 164, with 641 taking place over the year, with positive evaluations, including praising the ease in organising these, quick availability to psychological perspectives, and feeling empowered to take forward strategies and ideas generated. Coaching continues to be offered, and although the number of practitioners in schools taking this offer up remains modest, 6 staff members, evaluations are highly positive regarding impact on individual practitioners and their practice and wellbeing. The Dee Locality drew together and piloted a programme for learners with additional needs in mainstream and this was positively received. The materials and accompanying information will be available across all localities for 24-25.

In session 23/24 the EP service increased the training offers available to school staff, including new offers of Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA), Executive Functions, Teenage Brain Development. These new packages have been well received, with growing interest and positive feedback, all training offers contain follow-up implementation coaching for the setting.

Further investment in the ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) programme has taken place, increasing the number of ELSA trained staff in schools and ELCs to over 50. This programme has received positive evaluations and cohort 4 will run in session 24/25. Additionally, an ASN ELSA programme was created and piloted, to develop ELSAs with 'Emotionally Connected' expertise in class teams working with some of the most vulnerable children across the city. This had an introductory cohort of 11 (reduced by staff absence). This was very positively evaluated by those in attendance, and using the ELSA model, career long support and development for those trained will continue.

Training by the EPS of school staff as 'companions' in the Seasons for Growth programme (a programme to support bereavement, loss and change) has increased the number of learners receiving support in school by 56 this year to 147. These training packages will inform the priority area of the EPS to work alongside key partners to assist schools in supporting the needs of all learners but new materials and packages are also being developed.

New guidance and materials are being developed to support the Education Service Dyscalculia guidance to align with the national pathway which the EPS are working on alongside the ASN & Outreach Service. Materials will also be developed around Mediated Learning (MLE). Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) ensuring that learning support across settings is appropriately tailored, motivating and challenging for all learners.

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) continues to develop their own skills and expertise in the area of trauma informed practice. In 2024/25 they will work to embed this across their universal offers, with specialist Early Intervention Consultations (EICs), locality or setting specific work, and training and coaching support. The EPS continues to examine and interrogate their own practice, structures, theories and approaches to ensure they are meeting the needs of all stakeholders, as well as fulfilling their statutory requirement and ensuring they meet the standards of proficiency required for practice by the Health and Care Professionals Council & British Psychological Service regulatory bodies.

In response to the changes in legal status of UNCRC and The Promise, the EPS has collated and developed resources for accessing and capturing the voices of Children and Young People in Consultations and practice. These resources will guide EPS practice alongside operational guidance to support consistent and supportive practice in the involvement of Children and Young People. As well as centring learners and their voices, the EPS will be developing practice to ensure they are meeting and contributing to national EP anti-racist work and can support wider Education & Lifelong Learning colleagues with this. Locally ACC EPS are developing guidance for the E&LL service in supporting refugees and displaced families.

The EP service is involved in analysis of data around incidents and near misses in school and offering targeted support to senior leadership teams alongside QIOs in school where appropriate.

During session 24/25 the service will be undertaking a review of the support available to learners with additional support needs. This will involve focus groups of staff, trade unions, parents and young people, surveys of school staff, semi-structured interviews with school SLT and a case study from each Locality area. Results of the review with recommendations will be shared with Education and Children's Services committee in November 2024 and influence planning for session 25/26. Areas highlighted will inform the priority area of the EPS to work alongside key partners to assist schools in supporting the needs of all learners.

## **Environments**

ASN and Outreach Service delivers universal, targeted and specialist, personalised support within three contexts: Aberdeen School for the Deaf (ASfD), Links Hub ELC and Outreach Support. The latter includes Child's Planning Support, Dyslexia Outreach, English as an Additional Language (EAL), Hearing Support, Vision Support and Wellbeing Support.

Standardised tracking formats are now in use across the Outreach Service, with all teams either trialling or having embedded them. This has built a much clearer picture of attainment and achievement however, work is ongoing with regards to standardising approaches and understanding achievement of a target/level across Outreach teams.

The majority of learners supported by the Wellbeing team are exceeding or meeting individual targets. Where learners are not yet meeting these targets, the majority (58%) identify barriers related to attendance and engagement; these will be key priority areas for improving outcomes during 2024-2025. The minority of learners in the Vision Support team are achieving at least one of their individual targets. Using the Curriculum framework for visually impaired (CFVI) indicators, tracking has identified Literacy, Communication and Technology as key areas for support looking ahead to 2024-2025.

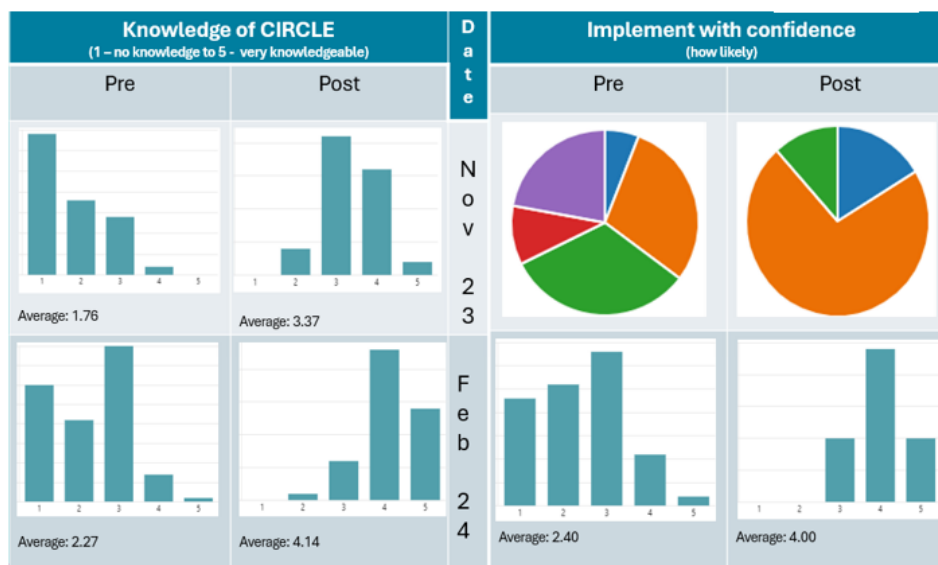
Almost all primary schools have participated in The Whole-School Dyslexia Development programme; developing the secondary sector offer has been an improvement priority during session 2023-2024. Following the success of the 'Dyslexia Champions' programme, a series of professional learning workshops has been created to meet identified/requested stakeholder needs; these have had a positive impact on practitioner knowledge and understanding and on confidence

levels. These will continue to be delivered in session 2024/25 along with work targeted to support probationer teachers.

EAL tracking evidences that learners progress from Level 1 (New to English) to Level 2 (Early Acquisition) within six to nine months (on average): this refers to learners mostly benefiting from group English as an Additional Language (EAL) input and individualised support where appropriate. SQA Qualifications in English for speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) continue to be supported at National 2 – 5 and Higher levels. This session 87 learners were supported, across 9 Secondary Schools (supported both on-site as well as at ABZ Campus). Dedicated BGE S3 ESOL classes have resulted in learners having a clear pathway to ESOL; with almost all learners progressing to senior phase ESOL.

### Circle Framework

School Circle Framework leads continue to support implementation of the Circle Framework in order to improve the quality and accessibility of learning environments. All schools have engaged in the development with between 60 and 70% of schools attending each online network meeting. Qualitative feedback from Quality Improvement visits indicate that there has been impact, with an improved quality of learning environments reported in Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland inspection reports. Staff confidence and knowledge continues to grow.



During session 23/24 we increased our partnership working with the NHS Speech and language service through delivering joint sessions and ensuring there is consistency of language and appearance of learning environments. Further collaboration with Speech and Language, health visitors and other allied health professionals is planned for session 24/25

### **Working as a partnership to support health and wellbeing**

Education, Health and Social Work colleagues are meeting regularly to look at how skill sets complement each other and to identify areas of overlap or opportunities to co-locate in order to provide more effective early intervention services for young people and families. This work will continue to be developed as we move towards implementation of our Family Support Model across one targeted community.

The recent Children's Services Board Annual report identified a need for focus on healthy weight, and following a period of research and planning, the partnership intends to come together on the 30<sup>th</sup> August to start consideration of how we can best take a whole systems approach to healthy weight.

# NIF Strategic Priorities

## Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people

The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) funding continues to provide support for children and young people impacted by poverty. The SAC mission is to use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty by reducing the attainment gap between Scotland's wealthiest and most deprived students. Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is allocated directly to schools and is targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap with a particular focus on improving outcomes in health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy.

Quality Improvement Officers review annual school improvement plans including the How Good is Our School? Quality Indicator 3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement and equity for all learners. Head Teachers record the impact of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) clearly and explicitly in the school's Standards and Quality Report. This allows the service to access an overview of the interventions in place.

A new equity planning and tracking format was implemented in 2023 and is monitored as part of the Quality Improvement Framework. Evidence can be seen that most schools are becoming more confident in ensuring plans demonstrate a clear understanding of context through improved interrogation and interpretation of data. Increasingly, interventions are time specific and being tracked more regularly with signs of greater confidence to adopt, adapt or abandon if desired progress is not being made.

**Equity Planning Proforma – 2024/2025**

This additional information is designed to help you when planning for equity and use of your pupil equity fund. The mission of the Scottish Attainment Challenge is to use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap.

Pupil Equity Fund, National Operational Guidance 2023, Scottish Government.

There are many ways in which you will be planning for equity which is not directly linked to Pupil Equity Funding in your school, and we would encourage you to record these within your Equity/PEF plan.

**All Equity plans should,**

- include a clear rationale for Pupil Equity Fund spend, based on robust contextual analysis, be evidence/data informed and context based – what is your identified poverty-related attainment gap. Ensure you are using a poverty lens.
- describe what you do to mitigate against Costs of the School Day.
- illustrate ways in which you engage with stakeholders e.g., Participatory Budget/Pupil Voice.
- contain ambitious and SMART aims and outcomes.
- clearly identify expected impact.
- have clearly identified measures – how will you know your change is leading to improvement?
- include baseline data
- clearly identify interventions, activities and approaches which are additional to universal provision and provide support for children/young people affected by poverty – the right support for the right child at the right time.
- ensure interventions/approaches planned are clearly linked to rationale and poverty-related gap.
- demonstrate use of evidence-based improvement methodology e.g., Qi, if appropriate
- include clear roles and responsibilities for implementation.
- identify planned opportunities to review progress towards expected impact.
- include clear quality assurance processes.

It is good practice to consider including the following,

- evidence of collaboration between schools, clusters, partners etc.
- evidence of longer-term planning (more than one academic year).
- links with Aberdeen City's strategic plans.

Your school's full PEF allocation must be planned for, including any underspend from 2023/2024.

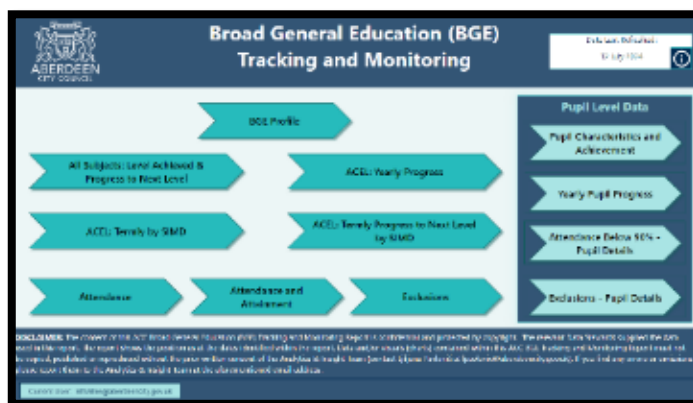
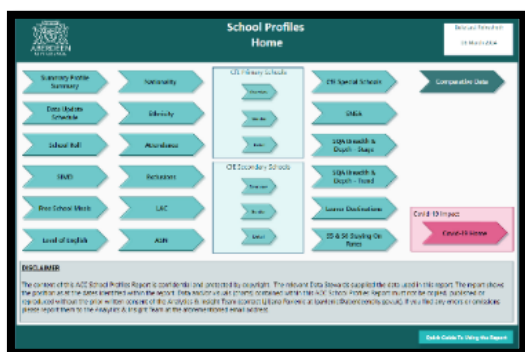
Remember everything which is funded through Pupil Equity Funding must be included within your plan BUT not all equity interventions and approaches will have a financial cost associated with them.

Attainment Fund Rationale <i>Improve attendance</i>		Amount of Fund <i>£12035</i>	
What is the rationale behind your identified actions? What are your gaps?			
Rationale/Baseline data – link to original measures. Focus on poverty related attainment gap (use of SIMD/FME or other indicator).			
Expected Impact	Interventions Planned	Measure of Success (Triangulation of Evidence/QI Methodology)	Impact on learners Ongoing evaluation Dec/June
<p>Intervention What are we trying to improve?</p> <p>What is the change? Who? What? By when? By how much? Focus on Children and Young People</p> <p>Be succinct – clear baseline statements.</p>	<p>How does this intervention tie in with your rationale?</p> <p>What will this look like? What interventions are planned? Who is involved? Frequency of support?</p>	<p>How will evidence be gathered – data, views, direct observations?</p> <p>Variety of types of data (most relevant to outcome), wider equity measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who is responsible?</li> <li>How often will progress be monitored?</li> <li>What is the timescale?</li> <li>Are you making use of any improvement Methodology?</li> </ul>	<p>What has been the impact?</p> <p>Ensure regular monitoring and review is planned for. Who is responsible? Consider monitoring plans in here. IMPACT on children and young people</p>

Rationale What poverty-related attainment gap are you trying to address? This does not all have to have a PEF cost.			Amount of Fund allocated (if appropriate) £
What is the rationale behind your identified actions? why this is a priority? What are your gaps?			
Expected Impact	Interventions Planned	Measure of Success (Triangulation of Evidence/QI Methodology)	Impact on learners Ongoing evaluation Dec/June
<p>(What is the expected impact on outcomes for children and young people)</p> <p>If this links to a SIP priority, please reference</p> <p>Intervention (links with SIP priority)</p> <p>What are we trying to improve? Your aims should be specific and targeted i.e. increase in Y to Z, include baseline data. SMART Aims and outcomes.</p> <p>who will experience the change? By how much is it going to change? / by when?</p>	<p>(What is the intervention? How will it be delivered? Who is responsible?)</p> <p>How does this intervention tie in with your rationale? what will change?</p>	<p>How will evidence be gathered – data, views, direct observations?</p>	<p>(What has been the actual impact/outcome, in particular for the targeted group of learners.) (What data/evidence shows the impact of the project/intervention? Refer to outcome statement. Did you achieve what you set out?)</p> <p>What has been the impact? Have you met your original expected impact?</p>



Updated school profiles and a new PowerBi Broad General Education tool, help school leaders drill down into data by SIMD profile and by demographic information and cohort. As a result, Head Teachers have easier access to information allowing them to determine the gap in their school by identifying target groups/pupils experiencing disadvantage. The use of these tools will be monitored over session 2024/25 to help improve consistency.



At authority wide meetings over session 2023/24, several sessions have focused on effective use of data, case studies, attendance and opportunities to have professional dialogue whilst building knowledge and confidence. Head Teachers have also benefitted from sharing good practice with colleagues in a similar sector as well as across an Associated School Group.

There is now an established ACC Equity Network Teams channel which has been designed to be a place for practitioners involved in improving outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty to access information, guidance and support to promote equity. All Head Teachers are members of this channel and can request access for relevant members of their staff teams. The Equity Network, led by the Attainment Advisor has been attended by most schools. The Attainment Advisor also provides tailored follow-up online and in-person sessions relating to individual contexts and uptake of these sessions has been good, with the majority of schools engaging. Regular consultation with and feedback to senior leaders in the central team, ensures meaningful content is shaped and delivered.

PEF budget monitoring is facilitated by regular meetings between Head Teachers and Finance Department who also provide regular budget monitoring reports. School leaders have regular meetings with their finance link in order to ensure shared understanding of budget position. Training in the finance system is offered to new Head Teachers as part of the Head Teacher induction programme and additional training is offered on any updates to the system. These meetings along with the established equity network meetings support the monitoring of equity plans and ensure spending is in line with policy.

The equity tracker provides central officers with an overview of school interventions and this is discussed as part of quality improvement visits. The Education Service report on the outcomes in its National Improvement Framework which is reported annually to the Education and Children's Services Committee. The Education and Children's Services Committee also receive regular attainment and performance updates.

## Preventing families from experiencing poverty wherever possible

A culture of collaboration across the organisation continues to support our learners and families well. Schools continue to address child poverty at school level with a range of approaches in place to mitigate the impact of the cost of living crisis on families. We continue to work with other services across the Council and other agencies to share data and information on child poverty appropriately. During session 2024/25 all schools will have a cost of the school day position statement known by whole school community to further share the supports available at school level.



Schools provide free breakfast provision/clubs, promotion of the uptake of free school meals, clothing grants and other benefits, school uniform and clothing swaps, partnerships with foodbanks and signpost families to the financial inclusion team. We routinely evaluate the impact of arrangements in order to secure continuous improvement. Close collaboration and joined up working with our Money Advisors and workers who support families in their homes means children and families are able to be signposted to the most appropriate source of support and interventions are more timely and effective.

Money advisors offer support to a considerable number of parents, carers and families providing free, impartial and confidential advice on aspects of their personal financial situation. This includes helping families access benefits, tax credits, grants and sources of support such as access to emergency funds and food banks when needed. As this is a confidential service, specific quantitative data is not available. Data from an online benefits calculator shows that 6402 families have used the calculator, of which 5328 families were entitled to previously unclaimed benefits. The financial inclusion team have created electronic and hard copies of support booklets signposting available support for children at different ages and stages – early years, primary school, secondary school and staying on in education. As work continues to address root causes of poverty, positive impact includes the reduction in child poverty and material deprivation as well as enhancing child development and learning.

The Support for Families Information Booklet is shared 3 times per year electronically through school communication channels and hard copies are available in schools for staff to issue e.g. to new families enrolling. Data from the weeks before and following the issue of the booklet in July 2024 shows the impact of targeting this information directly to families:

Base Line Data (2 July to 9 July)

- 91 calculations started.
- 30 calculations completed.
- £15,301.26 per week of new benefits.
- 80% of the completed calculations showed an entitlement to benefits.

The week following the email (10 July to 16 July)

- 1268 calculations started.
- 549 calculations completed.
- £135,458.20 per week of new benefits.
- 98.5% of the completed calculations showed an entitlement to benefits.

Money advisors can also help parents to deal with creditors, negotiate payment plans, apply for insolvency options, and access emergency funds or food banks if needed. This can have a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people in the following ways:

- reduced child poverty and material deprivation
- improved child wellbeing and happiness
- enhanced child development and learning
- increased child participation and inclusion
- strengthened family relationships and resilience
- prevented or resolved family breakdown and homelessness

Feedback from parents has been very positive, *“Financial Inclusion Team are a life saver! I found the team so wonderful my only suggestion is they continue the excellent work. I was taken from despair to hope by the financial inclusion team.”*

An initial discussion has been undertaken with colleagues in other services as part of the proposed pilot of the Low Income Family Tracker( LIFT ) dashboard which would enable the local authority to make best use of employability, benefit and health data in identifying those families in greatest need. This would enable us to target specific offers of support through schools and ELC provisions in particular postcode areas where there is an identified need.

During session 2023/24 Scottish Attainment Challenge funded Family Learning, Youth Work and Pathways Advocates .

Pathways Advocates have supported 248 vulnerable young people. Of these young people, 202 are care experienced. The number of young people supported in each of the 11 schools has differed according to identified need with the number supported ranging from 9 to 57 per school. As the Pathways Advocate role is currently 0.2FTE for all schools, prioritisation has been required for those schools with greatest need, Through the termly quality assurance visits, discussions about young people have resulted in bespoke and tailored interventions including support for families and advice on the appropriateness of current plans. Attendance, positive relationships and progress in school are tracked for each young person, with these fluctuating across the session for differing reasons and often signalling a need for intervention. Of the 27 young people who have been closed to the Pathways Advocate, 25 have moved into a positive destination with the other 2 who have been identified as moving into a negative destination, having identified supports beyond school through Skills Development Scotland.

Our overall positive destination figures include those looked after in other local authority areas and as such unable to access the regular support of the team. Consideration of this will form part of our review of the tracking and support available

to all care experienced and looked after young people as this group (those based out with the Local Authority) have the poorest outcomes.

Building on the successes of this year funding allocation for Pathway Advocates has been increased for next session with all schools having a minimum of 0.2FTE and additional resource being allocated proportionally based on need.

Scottish Attainment Challenge Funding has meant family learning was accessible directly through each of the 11 Associated School Groups (ASGs), with 1:1 family support being available alongside a wide variety of city-wide, universal courses and activities which are available to all parent/caregivers across Aberdeen. Opportunities were designed to improve knowledge around specific themes, encourage peer connections, reduce isolation, develop skills and confidence as well as provide support in hugely challenging times.

Almost all (96% 2023/24 data) of all registered learners share that their confidence levels increase due to their engagement with the service and almost all (96% 2023/24 data) report gaining new knowledge and skills. There is clear evidence that the targeted and inclusive programmes delivered by Family Learning improve life chances and effectively enable parents to develop their parenting skills, helping to enable families to give their child the best start in life.

In addition to the family learning targeted support was offered to young people on flexible learning pathways by youth workers, delivered in schools and community settings, this is highly valued by young people, parents and teachers. Through this work young people are engaging with staff and achieving positive health outcomes and achieving accreditation through Dynamic Youth Awards.

As a result of the positive impact we will continue to invest in this area during session 24/25.

## **Delivery of The Promise**

As a partnership, we routinely evaluate our progress against the Promise to help determine next steps. Our edge of care pilots established in 22/23 have continued to support young people and families in need. Staff from social work, education and partner agencies were empowered to think creatively about how family needs could be met holistically. Staff adopted a relational and trauma informed approach from the outset ensuring strong and trusting relationships were developed with key members of staff supporting families to engage with the interventions on offer through each of the services.

Although the number of young people engaging varies at any single point 68 have been supported since the start of the project. For these young people there has been a marked decrease in the number of police concern reports and in the area where the pilots have run there has been a decrease in the number of young people who have been accommodated. During session 23/24 progress has been hampered due to issues with recruitment. The fixed term nature of the resource has resulted in staff moving to more permanent roles in other services. This has been detrimental to

families leaving them without the established trusted relationship which is crucial to the success of the project.

The learning from the edge of care pilots and intensive work undertaken by Youth Workers and Family Learning Workers as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge will be taken into planning for the [Family Support](#) Model with a review being undertaken of the roles and responsibilities to ensure we have the correct staff skills set available to support learners and families.

## Implementation of the revised Anti bullying policy

Our revised Anti-Bullying Policy was approved in July 2023 and shared with Head Teachers in September 2023. In early 2024 a session was run to allow colleagues to share practice to support their development of local school policies.

Data is reviewed monthly and trends and anomalies are identified and shared with Quality Improvement Managers to support conversations with senior leaders in schools. During session 23/24 schools have been more consistent in their reporting making effective use of the Bullying and Equalities module on SEEMiS. This has resulted in an increase in the number of incidents being recorded however there is now a broader spread of schools which reflects the more robust and systematic arrangements in place.

	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24
May	12	23	8	27	20	50
June	14	21	11	50	25	71
July		3		5		8
August	3	6	12	13	15	19
September	9	30	47	42	56	72
October	8	15	28	16	36	31
November	13	25	34	33	47	58
December	12	22	8	19	20	41
January	21	28	22	29	43	57
February	16	24	19	31	35	55
March	18	42	27	38	45	80
April	6	12	12	22	18	34
Total	132	251	228	325	360	576

Throughout 23/24 staff have engaged in professional learning on offer developing their skills and experience in dealing with and responding to bullying incidents. Several schools have provided QR codes which enable pupils to make disclosures quickly and discretely. Pupil surveys show there is greater awareness of key adults and where to go to if there is a need to report. we will continue to review the impact of the policy and share successes across the service.

In line with national guidance, all secondary schools will now register on the Equally Safe in School website and incidents of gender based violence will be tracked and reviewed as part of the ongoing audits into bullying incidents over session 2024/25. Schools will be asked to review their Relationships and Sexual Health and Parenthood curriculum to ensure it includes learning about equalities and gender based violence.

All secondary schools have staff and young people trained in the Mentors Against Violence programme and schools are at various stages of implementation. 4 schools have fully implemented the programme, 3 are currently refreshing the programme and

the remainder planning to implement during session 24/25. The primary version of the programme is almost ready for release and we have asked to be considered as an early adopter for 24/25.

To support increased awareness of the impact of trauma on young people all staff in schools will undertake the NHS national trauma training with all staff completing foundation and intermediate during session 24/25. Undertaking this training will support greater understanding of the issues impacting on young people who have experienced trauma in their life and how best to support individuals and families.

## **Systems to support LGBTQIA+ community in school**

Throughout 23/24 we have engaged with various partners to support the promotion of equality and diversity in our schools. We currently have 2 Secondary Schools who have achieved the Silver Award and 3 other schools who have achieved the Bronze Charter Award. This has resulted in the increased confidence amongst staff to support the LGBTQ community. Our data indicates that schools have in place more effective systems to support LGBTQ students now. The number of perceived bullying incidents involving actual perceived sexual orientation/homophobic/Bi-phobic has reduced to 28 for 2023/24 compared to 192 in 2022/23.

Central officers continue to support schools to engage with TIE (Time for Inclusive Education). There are 345 registered users across over 50 schools/Education settings. 245 education staff have completed Stage 1 of the E-Learning module 'Delivering LGBT Inclusive Education' and another 18 have started the module. We will continue to monitor the impact of this resource and support staff to enrol.



At the end of March 2024, facilitators from 4 Pillars delivered a training session on raising awareness of LGBTQ issues with teaching staff. The training will be rolled out over the next 12 months. It is anticipated that the programme will train 140 teachers who will transfer their knowledge and skills across their schools. We will continue to monitor the input and impact of the training programme.



## **Increase provision of ELC to those from low income households**

We continue to work with the Scottish Government Data Pipeline to help us identify eligible 2s families. Once identified the families are sent information about eligible 2s and how to apply. Based on the data shared with the local authority 456 were shared

and currently the service supports 205 eligible 2s in our provisions. This is a 12% increase on numbers from 2022/2023.

## NIF Strategic Priorities

### Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

A centrally organised interactive workshop on effective learning and teaching delivered in September was well received by Head Teachers and used to support Head Teacher engagement events throughout the session. The session exemplified national expectations and clarified the role of the Head Teacher in leading the development of learning, teaching and assessment in our schools.

Our focus on improving learning and teaching is also now a feature of collaborative work across partner Local Authorities within the Northern Alliance. A regional plan is in place to support Local Authorities to learn from each other and benefit from economies of scale where appropriate. A senior officer (primary Head Teacher) has been appointed to work with leads from other local authorities to develop a learning and teaching toolkit to support staff development in schools. This resource is on track to be published in September 2024.

The developing toolkit is targeting the identified priorities of Ownership of Learning, Pace and Challenge, Differentiation, Effective Use of Data and Experiences, Interactions and Environments in the first instance, with the opportunity to add further elements over time. The toolkit will provide a set of professional learning and self-evaluation resources to support improved learning, teaching and assessment across the curriculum with a key focus on literacy and numeracy skills.

Staff have delivered the Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative's (CYPIC) approach to supporting improvement in writing to 16 schools across ACC, primarily at the P4 stage with 11 of these schools then receiving additional training for their P3 – P7 teachers ensuring the spread and scale of the approach is consistent and of high quality. All staff who have attended the training were more confident in their understanding of the key aspects of the Quality Improvement Journey, using data to inform practice and involving their children in the assessment, feedback and interpreting data process.

When comparing data from each of the 16 schools that have taken part in the programme, almost all schools have shown a rise, some significant, in the percentage of children on track for writing at first level at the end of P4, when compared with data from the end of P3 for the same cohort of children. Qualitative data shows that all children involved in the programme were more positive about their writing experiences post programme and feedback from recent Education Scotland inspections, where the CYPIC approach has been implemented, showed an improved understanding of assessing writing & achievement of a level in writing. Nationally, leads continue to liaise and meet with other local authorities and Education Scotland colleagues, analysing data and planning future development.

Staff across 2 ASGs were offered training focusing initially on the pedagogy of writing followed by assessment & moderation inputs and a final Q&A session with Education Scotland colleagues. The majority of staff found these sessions beneficial and will continue shared work across ASGs to ensure consistency in teacher judgement in writing.

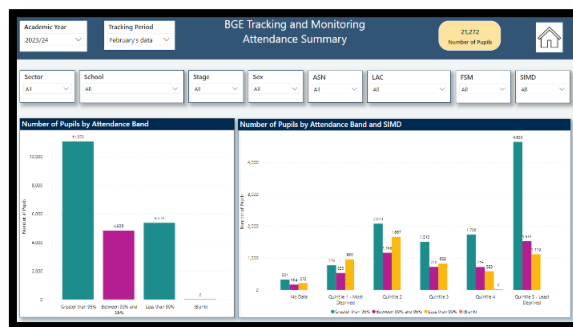


A Writing Skills Progression focus group has been formed from colleagues across sectors and localities, to work collaboratively on a digital framework to support planning, teaching and assessment of writing skills. The group have looked outwardly to other local authorities and inwards, ensuring consultation with schools across the city on the text types taught in preparation for the forthcoming work planned.

This work will feed into the Literacy plan being developed across the local authority during session 24/25.

## School Attendance Levels

Updated Guidance on Managing & Promoting Pupil Attendance was circulated to all schools in July 2023. A new, improved, flow chart is included to ensure a consistent approach is adopted across ACC settings. Quality Improvement visits are used to monitor compliance and to ensure consistency in approach. An updated PowerBi Broad General Education Tracking & Monitoring system provides a platform to monitor attendance easily.



Following our analysis of the issues impacting school attendance, and taking into consideration Education Scotland's Improving Attendance in Scotland Report (November 2023, updated April 2024), Aberdeen City Council Guidance on Managing and Promoting Pupil Attendance has been further reviewed and reissued to all schools.

Percentage Attendance	Days absent	Impact on learning
95% or above	2 days	Little or no impact on learning
90% or above	6 days	Minor impact on learning
85% or above	11 days	Significant impact on learning
80% or above	17 days	Major impact on learning

At an in-person Head Teacher meeting in February 2024 attended by almost all school leaders, a presentation from the Education Scotland Attainment Advisor included an analysis of the factors influencing non-attendance, effective use of data and a range of strategies for schools to explore to support attendance. Two experienced Head Teachers also shared their school approaches to promoting school attendance with the group. Recently published Education Scotland Learning resources have been shared with all Head Teachers for use in their own settings. Following the issue of the updated parent guidance there was an increase in attendance with levels reaching a high of 93.9% in the week beginning 15 May 2024. The guidance will be reissued at the beginning of each term.

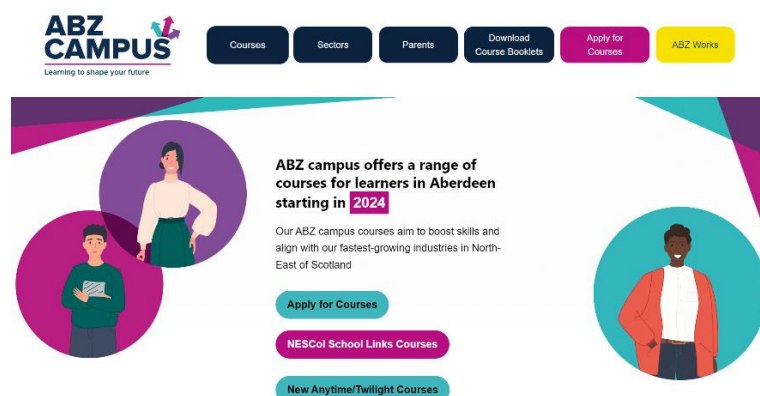
## NIF Strategic Priorities

### Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

#### ABZ Campus

Following the launch of Phase 1 of ABZ Campus in Session 2023-24, planning swiftly commenced for the introduction of Phase 2 in 2024-25. As part of planning, key additions to ABZ Campus through Phase 2 were:-

- An increase in the range and scope of school-based and partner-led courses from 31 2023/24 to 54 2024/25.
- An introduction to greater regional working between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.
- An introduction of a new suite of 14 anytime/twilight courses to be available across Aberdeen City and 'Shire young people, delivered by partners and schools.
- Continued commitment to the importance of listening to our young people and their experiences of our ABZ Campus Courses
- The piloting of an ASN Employability experience for young people with more complex needs



For session 2024-25, we have successfully increased the range of courses through ABZ Campus.

Session	School Delivered Courses	Partner Delivered Courses	NESCOL HNC Courses	Foundation Apprenticeship Courses (variety of delivery partners)
2023-24 (Phase 1)	22	1	3	17
2024-25 (Phase 2)	27	1	3	21

Over 1200 applications were received for the 54 Phase 2 ABZ Campus courses offered for session 2024-25, an increase in applications of around 300. This resulted in a total of 846 places offered with 56 young people currently on a waiting list for high-demand courses.

An overview can be found in the table below:-

Applications Accepted/ Places Offered	
NESCol (FA and HNC)	211
ABZ Campus (excluding NESCOL FA & HNC)	568
Anytime/Twilight (ACC Applicants)	28
Anytime/Twilight (Aberdeenshire Applicants)	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>846</b>

An introductory meeting was held between Lochside and Portlethen Academies to explore how far common curriculum planning could open up choices for young people in both schools. Subsequent work included collaboration on timetabling and curriculum between the respective Depute Head Teachers of each school.

Aberdeenshire Council have developed an effective Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) delivery programme. For Phase 2 of ABZ Campus, two Foundation Apprenticeships will be offered for young people in Aberdeen City but delivered by Aberdeenshire Council FA staff. These will be Construction Foundation Apprenticeships, and placed at Northfield and Lochside Academies. As of May, 24 young people were registered to take part. This responds to the demand for construction course places from young people within Aberdeen City.

Feedback from young people and from schools has identified the need for a solution for young people to be able to choose courses that can be studied on a twilight or anytime basis. Information from schools suggests this is due in part to the increased pressure on some young people to contribute to family income and in part due to the appetite for learning that some young people have. As a response, a group of partners and school staff developed a series of options on an anytime/twilight basis which 28 young people intend to participate in.

ABZ ANYTIME/TWILIGHT COURSES BY LEVEL

**Anytime Courses**

**SCQF Level 7**  
 History Advanced Higher (Aberdeen City)  
 Modern Studies Advanced Higher (Aberdeen City)  
 Online Art & Design Portfolio Development (Robert Gordon University)  
 Environmental Awareness (SRUC)  
 Access Course in Physics – Engineering (University of Aberdeen)  
 Access Course in Chemistry (University of Aberdeen)

**SCQF Level 6**  
 Local Food Production (SRUC)

**SCQF Level 5/4**  
 Veterinary Terminology (SRUC)

**SCQF Level 5**  
 Equine (SRUC)  
 Horticulture (SRUC)  
 Investigation into Modern Agriculture (SRUC)  
 The Principles of Animal Care (SRUC)

**Twilight Courses**

**SCQF Level 4**  
 Higher Computing Science (RGC Online)  
 Higher Applications of Mathematics (RGC Online)

Partners: Bon Accord Care, aberlour, Aberdeen City Council, North East Scotland College, CITYMOVES, Skills Development Scotland, GLAMCANDY, UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN, ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN, DYW, NORTH EAST SCOTLAND, ROBERT GORDON'S COLLEGE ONLINE, SRUC, Aberdeenshire COUNCIL.

Regular reporting on our progress with [ABZ Campus](#) evidences how we continue to listen to our young people about their experiences of ABZ Campus. Work to broaden the offer will continue in session 24/25 in addition to the consideration of further partnerships with local business in order to offer bespoke work experience packages for young people.

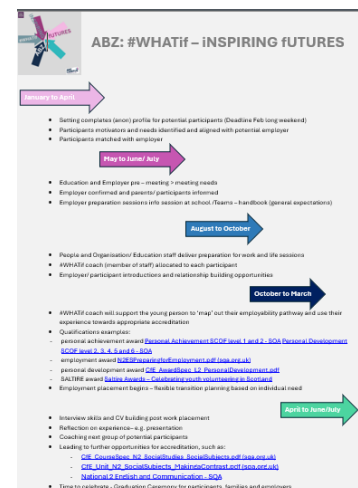
During session 24/25 the service will be working with colleagues from Aberdeenshire, DYW ( Developing the Young Workforce) northeast, employability teams, SDS (Skills Development Scotland) and local employers to develop more meaningful work experience sessions for young people across Grampian region. This work will be

linked to the Regional Economic Strategy and look to support growth sector industries in the northeast whilst ensuring positive destinations for our young people.

## Pathways for those with additional support needs

A wide network has been established to support the development of the #WHATif (Inspiring Futures ) pathway pilot. The pilot will offer 5+ participants the opportunity to develop and apply life and employability skills in a workplace which is of relevance to their personal motivators, skill sets and future aspirations. These include Aberdeen North Foodbank, King’s Church Foodbank Warehouse, The Bridge Cafe, Dyce ELC, Dyce Primary, Instant Neighbour and Bon Accord Care – Kingswood Court Day Centre.

This flow has been developed with colleagues from Education and People, Organisation & Development reflecting how the pilot will be delivered. Final logistics are now being addressed and connections between candidates and employers finalised with significant support from school staff and input from parents/families.



## Developing routes into healthcare

NHS Grampian teamed up with St Machar Academy, taking inspiration from American ‘Career Academies’, to give young people a taste of healthcare careers and build the workforce of the future and NHS Scotland Youth Academy.

As part of its Plan for the Future, NHS Grampian is committed to developing the potential local workforce and being an ‘anchor’ organisation, by offering opportunities to attract and keep people in North East Scotland. The Practice Education team have been making this a reality by developing St Machar Healthcare+. A classroom at the Aberdeen secondary school has been transformed into a space where young people can learn more about the range of careers available in healthcare and get hands-on experience in a simulated environment.



## ACC Foundations: Outcomes for Excellence

### Progress against Stretch Aims (2025/26) and targets

Stretch aims and trajectories for individual groups are included in the graphs and tables later in this report.

Our school rolls continue to increase with a 4% increase this year on top of the increase from last session. Many families have English as a second language and we would expect to see this show in short term data. Our city is changing in demographic and we now have 11% of families for whom English is not their first language at population level. For the 2023-24, there was an increase from 23.2% (2022-23) to 24.1% of young people in S4-S6 where English was not their 'first' language. This compares to 17.8% in 2019-20.



Learners in our P4 cohort and S4 cohort are those who transitioned during the pandemic and although they have been targeted with interventions, their attainment remains below that of previous cohorts. Work will continue with this group in order to close the gap.

Unvalidated ACEL tracking data for 23/24 shows improvement on pre-pandemic levels. The improvement anticipated over the 2023/24 academic session has been achieved by learners in most cases.

Attainment for our Looked After cohort has dropped in all cases, however this is impacted by the fact we are working with a smaller cohort and changes in attainment for a small number can change percentages significantly. There is a need to work with out of authority provisions to improve tracking information gathered and review our current arrangements for supporting those who experience care.

On the following pages, *Previous* gives the validated percentage level achieved for session 2022/23 for Aberdeen City and *National* the mean value across Scotland. These values are from the published data: [Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence \(CfE\) Levels \(ACEL\)](#).

*Trajectory* values provide a “direction of travel” for improvement as we move towards overall stretch aims. Education Scotland has asked that this be shown as a range with upper and lower values.

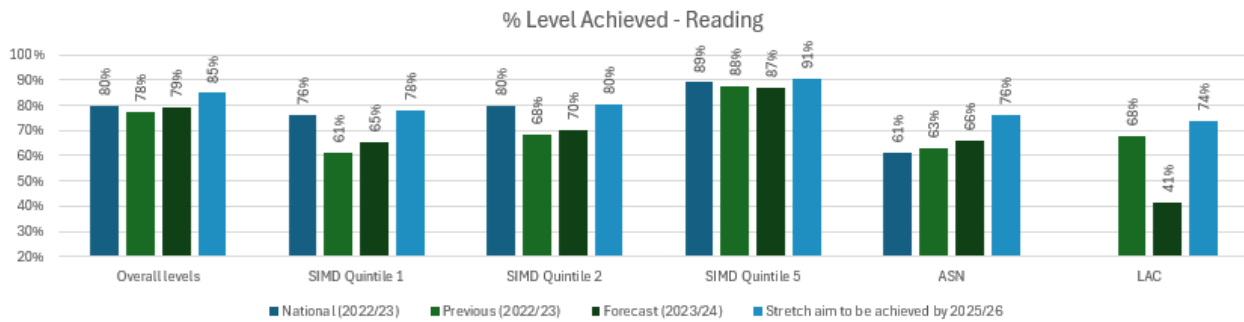
*Forecast* provides indicative 2023/24 performance based on pre-validation data and this is subject to change as final quality assurance checks are undertaken and the attainment release from Insight in September 2024

## ACEL Reading

**Stretch Aim** - 85% of learners will achieve predicted levels by 2026.

We are within the trajectory for 23/24 with level achieved at 79% overall. As a result of this we have amended our trajectories for session 24/25 to reflect the progress required. The forecast for Q1 (Quintile 1) and Q5 (Quintile 5) indicates that the gap has decreased from 26% to 21.6% and overall levels are 1% below the national level for session 22/23. During session 24/25 our improvement team will continue to work with schools on a programme of moderation to develop greater confidence in level achieved judgements. Increasing the reach of talkboost and early talkboost along with the proposed city wide literacy plan, will support improvement. The dip in attainment for looked after children triggers a need to review the impact of tracking and support arrangements in place for this group.

**Trajectory for 2024/25** – Between 81% and 82% of learners will achieve predicted levels by the end of school session 24/25.



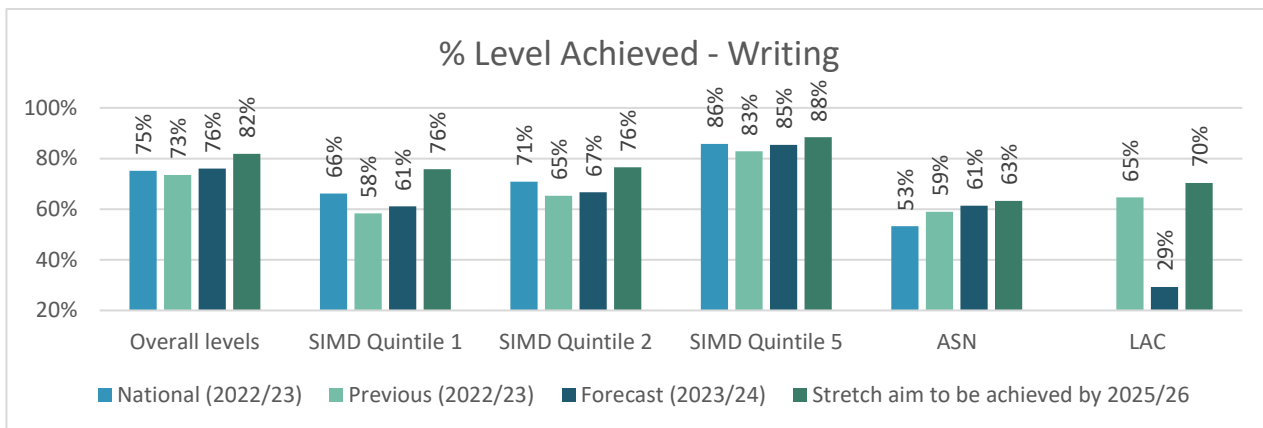
	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
National (2022/23)	80%	76%	80%	89%	-13pp	61%	
Previous (2022/23)	78%	61%	68%	88%	-26pp	63%	68%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(79% - 80%)	(64% - 67%)	(71% - 72%)	(88% - 89%)	23pp to -21pp	(66% - 67%)	(70% - 71%)
Forecast (2023/24)	79%	65%	70%	87%	-21.6pp	66%	41%
Trajectory (2024/25)	(81% - 82%)	(68% - 71%)	(73% - 75%)	(87% - 88%)	17pp to -19pp	(69% - 71%)	(70% - 71%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 24/25	(1% - 3%)	(3% - 7%)	(3% - 5%)	(0% - 3%)		(3% - 6%)	(2% - 3%)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	85%	78%	80%	91%	-13pp	76%	74%

## ACEL Writing

**Stretch Aim** - 82% of learners will achieve predicted levels by 2026.

We have exceeded our trajectory for this session, attainment has increased from 73% to 76% overall. This increase is partially due to the targeted writing project undertaken with P4 pupils, a programme which was expanded to 10 additional schools in 2023/24. Work continues with the Northern Alliance to develop a writing skills progression pathway. In addition the Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officer team will support moderation activities in schools with the highest numbers of learners in Quintile 1 and Quintile 2 in P4 to support improvement in attainment session 24/25. The dip in attainment for looked after children triggers a need to review the impact of tracking and support arrangements in place for this group.

**Trajectory for 2024/25** – Between 77% and 82% of learners will achieve predicted levels by the end of school session 24/25.



**ACEL P1, P4, P7 Writing Combined**

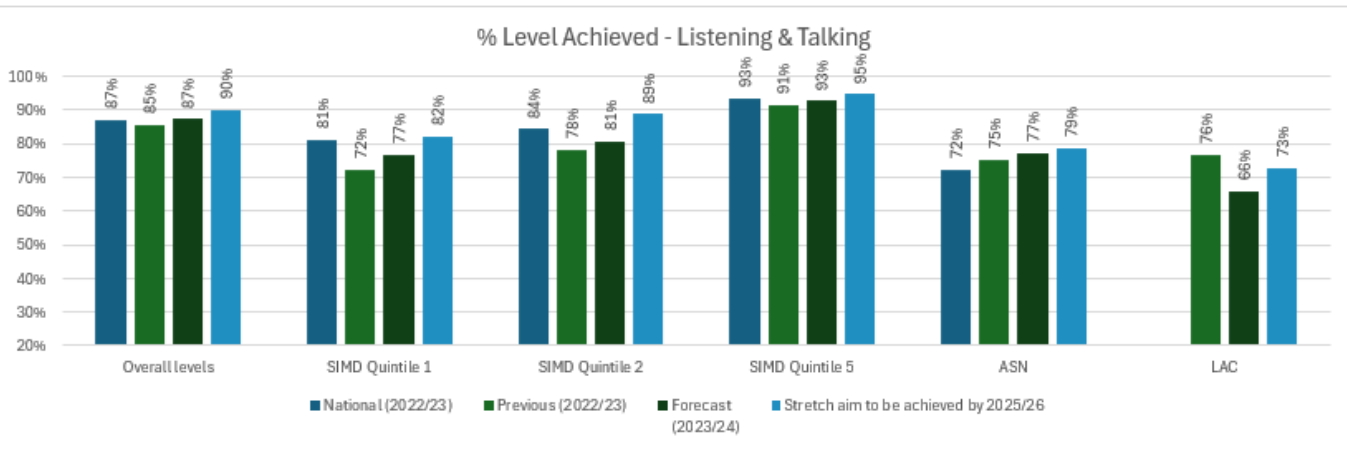
	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
National (2022/23)	75%	66%	71%	86%	-19.5pp	53%	
Previous (2022/23)	73%	58%	65%	83%	-25pp	59%	65%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(74% - 75%)	(62% - 63%)	(67% - 68%)	(84% - 85%)	23pp to -21pp	(60% - 62%)	(67% - 70%)
Forecast (2023/24)	76%	61%	67%	85%	-22.1pp	61%	29%
Trajectory (2024/25)	(78% - 79%)	(65% - 69%)	(70% - 72%)	(86% - 87%)	18pp to -21pp	(61% - 62%)	(67% - 70%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 24/25	(1% - 3%)	(3% - 7%)	(3% - 4%)	(0% - 1%)		(0% - 1%)	(2% - 3%)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	82%	76%	76%	88%	-13pp	63%	70%

## ACEL Listening and Talking

**Stretch Aim** - 90% of learners will achieve predicted levels by 2026

Attainment is forecast to increase from 85% session 22/23 to 87% session 23/24. The increase in school population, increase in the number of those with English as a second language and prevalence of speech and language difficulties has impacted on the level of improvement, however we have achieved our trajectory for this measure. As a result of this, we have altered our trajectory for session 24/25 to reflect the improvement required to meet our stretch aim for 2025/26. There is a need to target supports to the P5 year group in session 24/25 as well as reintroduce more targeted use of Talkboost and Early Talkboost resources in the Nursery – P3 year groups

**Trajectory for 2024/25** – Between 88% and 89% of learners will achieve predicted levels by the end of school session 24/25.



	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
National (2022/23)	87%	81%	84%	93%	-12pp	72%	
Previous (2022/23)	85%	72%	78%	91%	-19pp	75%	76%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(86% - 87%)	(74% - 75%)	(80% - 81%)	(92% - 93%)	-23pp to -21pp	(76% - 77%)	(76% - 77%)
Forecast (2023/24)	87%	77%	81%	93%	-16.0pp	77%	66%
Trajectory (2024/25)	(88% - 89%)	(79% - 80%)	(83% - 85%)	(93% - 94%)	-14pp to -14pp	(78% - 79%)	(66% - 67%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 24/25	(0% - 1%)	(2% - 2%)	(3% - 4%)	(0% - 1%)		(0% - 1%)	(0% - 0%)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	90%	82%	89%	95%	-13pp	79%	73%

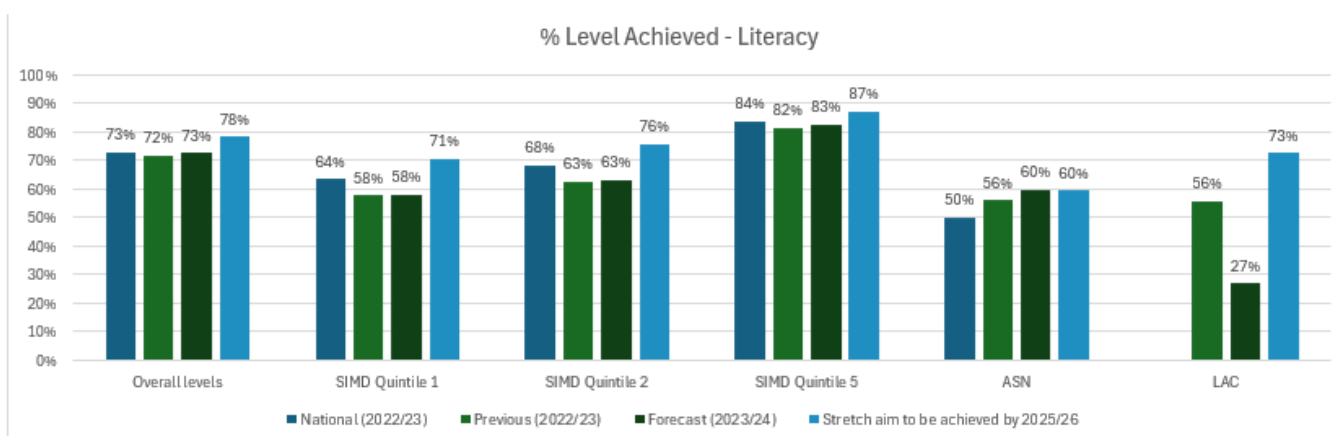


## ACEL Literacy Combined

**Stretch Aim** - 78% of learners will achieve predicted levels by 2026

Attainment in Literacy has risen from 72% in 22/23 to 73% in 23/24. Although we have made progress, we have not reached our target trajectory of between 75% and 78%. The combined attainment is impacted by the issues described for each element above and trajectories have been amended to reflect our current context. The Gap between Q1 and Q5 has widened by a small margin. There is a need for considerable focus to be given to the moderation practices of those schools supporting the highest proportion of children living in Q1 and Q2. Work with the CYPIC on writing will increase attainment in the P4 and there is a need for intensive work with those in P5 in order to address the dip in attainment for this year group. The drop in attainment for our Looked after Children (LAC) cohort is consistent across all measures and triggers a need to review tracking and support arrangements.

**Trajectory for 2024/25** – Between 74% and 76% of learners will achieve predicted levels by the end of school session 24/25.



ACEL P1, P4, P7 Literacy Combined

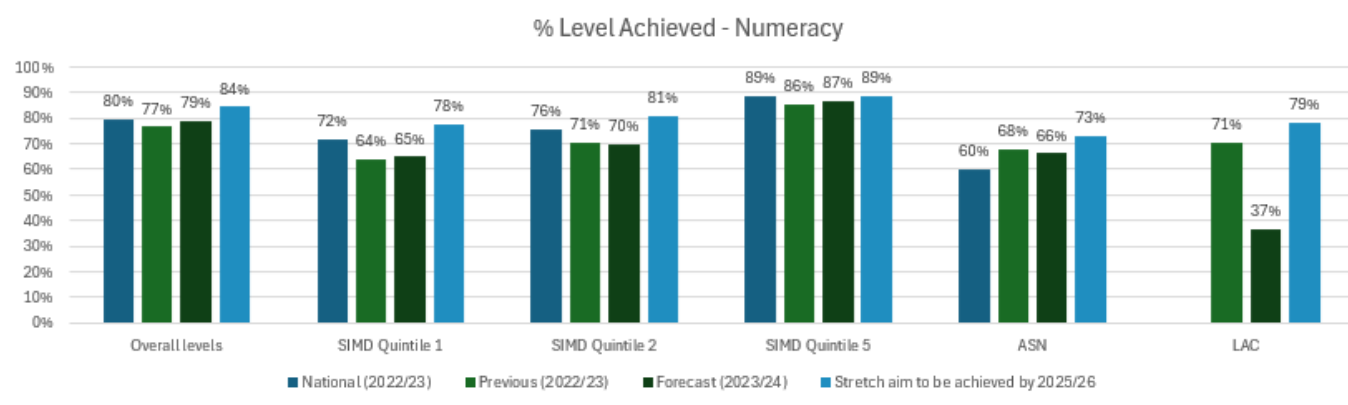
	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
National (2022/23)	73%	64%	68%	84%	-20pp	50%	
Previous (2022/23)	72%	58%	63%	82%	-24pp	56%	56%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(73% - 74%)	(61% - 62%)	(65% - 67%)	(83% - 84%)	23pp to -21pp	(57% - 58%)	(59% - 63%)
Forecast (2023/24)	73%	58%	63%	83%	-24.6pp	60%	27%
Trajectory (2024/25)	(74% - 75%)	(61% - 63%)	(66% - 68%)	(84% - 85%)	22pp to -23pp	(61% - 62%)	(59% - 63%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 24/25	(1% - 2%)	(3% - 4%)	(3% - 4%)	(0% - 1%)		(1% - 2%)	(2% - 6%)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	78%	71%	76%	87%	-17pp	60%	73%

## ACEL Numeracy

**Stretch Aim** - 84% of learners will achieve predicted levels by 2026

The forecast for 23/24 shows we have improved on 22/23 levels in numeracy overall. The gap between Q1 and Q5 has increased and there is a need to focus on those learners in Q1 and Q2. Interventions will be targeted in order to close the gap as part of a city wide plan to improve numeracy with a focus on transition points. During session 24/25 we will review our planning for numeracy and look to focus on early intervention targeting pupils in P5 initially. In addition to this a numeracy working group will be established to review the curriculum on offer at BGE and senior phase.

**Trajectory for 2024/25** – Between 80% and 82% of learners will achieve predicted levels by the end of school session 24/25.



ACEL P1, P4, P7 Numeracy Combined

	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
National (2022/23)	80%	72%	76%	89%	-17.0pp	60%	
Previous (2022/23)	77%	64%	71%	86%	-21pp	68%	71%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(79% - 80%)	(67% - 69%)	(74% - 75%)	(86% - 87%)	23pp to -21pp	(65% - 67%)	(73% - 75%)
Forecast (2023/24)	79%	65%	70%	87%	-22.1pp	66%	37%
Trajectory (2024/25)	(80% - 82%)	(68% - 72%)	(72% - 76%)	(87% - 88%)	16pp to -19pp	(68% - 70%)	(73% - 75%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 24/25	(1% - 2%)	(2% - 6%)	(2% - 5%)	(0% - 1%)		(1% - 3%)	(2% - 3%)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	84%	78%	81%	89%	-11pp	73%	79%

## SQA results for session 23/24

The SQA release at this time only represents a partial picture of the success of our young people. Increasing numbers now opt to take wider, less traditional SCQF courses and the full impact of the success of these only really becomes available when INSIGHT data is published in mid-September. For example, last year, young people achieved success in over 1,200 additional courses at Levels, 5, 6 and 7 (including Foundation Apprenticeships). Our forecast is that the broadening of curriculum offer and introduction of ABZ Campus will have extended the number and range of these courses in 2024, with a projection of in excess of 1800.

## High Level Analysis

There were 4,675 young people in the senior phase of our secondary schools at the point of school census in September 2023. This is 210 more than the census of September 2022 (4,465).

The number of presentations at National 5 increased to **11,236** in 2024 from 10,660 in 2023, an increase of 576 and the highest number on record for the local authority. At National 5, the A-C pass rate for 2024 was **73.3%**. This has decreased from 74.6% in 2023. The National pass rate has decreased by 1.6% from 2023 and currently sits at 77.2%. Aberdeen City results follow the national trend. Our relative position at National 5 (when comparing our results with the other Local Authorities) has increased by 1. We are now sitting 26<sup>th</sup> out of 32 Local Authorities, but have a higher proportion of entries than others.

The number of presentations at Higher increased to **5,944** in 2024 from 5,689 in 2023, an increase of 255 and the highest number on record for the local authority. At Higher, the A-C pass rate for 2024 was **73.59%**. This represents a decrease from 75.02% in 2023. The National pass rate has decreased by 2.2% from 2023 and currently sits at 74.9%. Aberdeen City results follows the national trend. Our relative position at Higher (when comparing our results with the other Local Authorities) has increased by 6. We are now sitting at 14<sup>th</sup> out of 32 Local Authorities, with an increased number of entries.

The number of presentations at Advanced Higher increased to **889** in 2024 from 815 in 2023, an increase of 74 and the highest number on record for the local authority. At Advanced Higher, the A-C pass rate for 2024 was **72.33%**, a decrease from 79.51% in 2023. The National pass rate has decreased by 4.3% from 2023 and currently sits at 75.3%. Broadly, Aberdeen City results follow the national trend, but we need to understand our larger dip more fully. Our relative position at Advanced Higher (when comparing our results of the other Local Authorities) is now sitting at 16<sup>th</sup> out of 32, a fall of 8, but with an increased number of entries.

A-C Attainment (%)		
National 5	Higher	Advanced Higher
73.29%	73.59%	72.33%
(2023) 74.68%	(2023) 75.02%	(2023) 79.51%

At National 5, **35.58%** of presentations achieved an A grade in 2024, a decrease from 36.27% in 2023. At Higher **31.56%** of presentations achieved an A grade in 2024, a

decrease from 34.22% in 2023. At Advanced Higher, **29.47%** of presentations achieved an A grade, a decrease from 32.39% in 2023.

A Attainment (%)		
National 5	Higher	Advanced Higher
35.58%	31.56%	29.47%
(2023) 36.27%	(2023) 34.22%	(2023) 32.39%

As outlined, schools presented a record number of National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher presentations in 2024. Although there is a corresponding increase in school roll, there is evidence of a continued steady increase in the number of presentations for SQA awards per pupil. This rise demonstrates increasing ambition for young people across the school community amongst school staff, parents and carers and importantly young people.

At National 5 in S4, the per pupil presentation increased to **5.49** in 2024 from 5.22 in 2023, an increase of 0.27. At Higher in S5, the per pupil presentation maintained at **3.68** in 2024 from the same figure in 2023. At Advanced Higher in S6, the per pupil presentation increased to **1** in 2024 from 0.95 in 2023, an increase of 0.05.

Average Attainment Per Pupil		
National 5 in S4	Higher in S5	Advanced Higher in S6
5.49	3.68	1
(2023) 5.22	(2023) 3.68	(2023) 0.95

## Highlights

### National 5

- Our National 5 results placed our percentage A passes at 14<sup>th</sup> out of 32 local authorities (down four places from 2023), and our A-C passes at 26<sup>th</sup> out of 32 local authorities (up one place from 2023).

### Selected National 5 Highlights by Subject

- 1,482 young people in S4 took National 5 English with 42.11% achieving an A pass and 86.44% achieving A-C.
- 379 young people in S4 took National 5 Business Management with 36.94% achieving an A pass and 77.84% achieving A-C.
- 891 young people in S4 took National 5 Maths with 49.27% achieving an A pass and 72.28% achieving A-C.
- 548 young people in S4 took National 5 Physical Education with 41.06% achieving an A pass and 90.42% achieving A-C.
- 190 young people in S4 took National 5 Music with 43.16% achieving an A pass and 84.21% achieving A-C.

### Higher

- Our Higher results placed our percentage A passes at 5<sup>th</sup> out of 32 local authorities (up one place from 2023), and our A-C passes at 14<sup>th</sup> out of 32 local authorities (up six places from 2023).

#### Selected Higher Highlights by subject

- 389 young people were presented for Higher Biology with 31.88% achieving an A pass and 74.4% achieving A-C.
- 1,034 young people were presented for Higher English with 27.18% achieving an A pass and 72.44% achieving A-C.
- 673 young people were presented for Higher Maths with 42.94% achieving an A pass and 70.43 achieving A-C.
- 141 young people were presented for Higher Music with 38.30% achieving A pass and 86.52% achieving A-C.

#### Advanced Higher

- Our Advanced Higher results placed our percentage A passes at 6<sup>th</sup> out of 32 local authorities (up one place from 2023), and our A-C passes 16<sup>th</sup> out of 32 local authorities (down 8 places from 2023).

#### Selected Advanced Higher Highlights by subject

45 young people sat Advanced Higher English in Aberdeen City s

This is only part of the qualification picture for our young people and we will be reviewing once we have access to all the wider qualifications when INSIGHT is published in September.

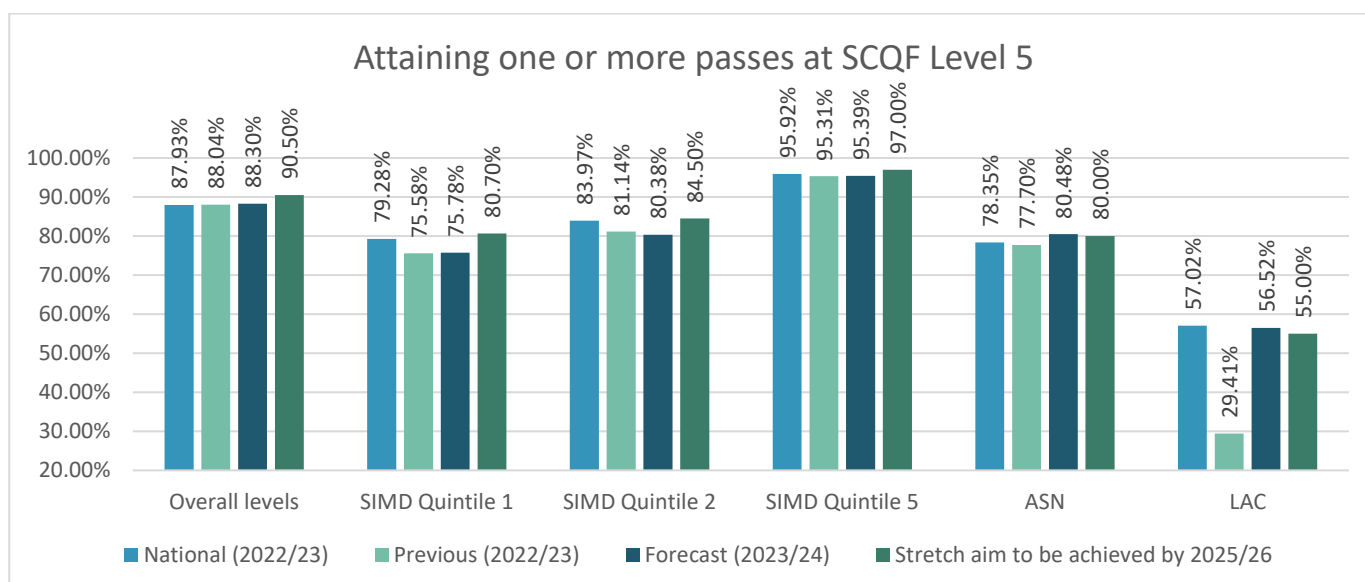
Schools with 80% passing at A-C and all at A-D.

## SCQF Level 5

**Stretch Aim** – 90.5% of all young people will attain 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 5 by 2026.

As a key benchmark of success, 1 or more at SCQF Level 5 remains a key indicator for attainment in our schools for leavers. The data shows pandemic impacts for the most disadvantaged learners and schools are working to narrow this gap between Q1 to Q5, moving from a forecast of 19.61pp to at least 18.61 percentage points for 2024/25. Attainment for ASN is above our upper trajectory and for looked after children has improved at this level however we need to consider the number of young people this relates to.

**Target for 2024/25** – Between 88.8% and 89.3% of young people will attain 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 5 by the end of 24/25.



**Proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more pass at SCQF level 5 based on Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations**

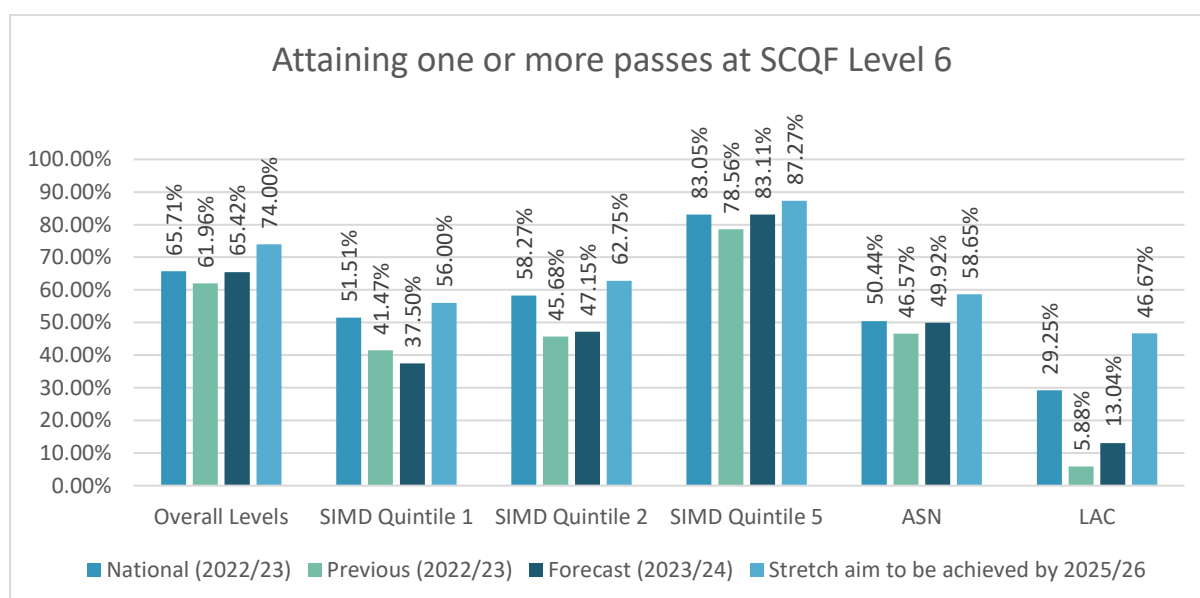
	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
National (2022/23)	87.93%	79.28%	83.97%	95.92%	16.64%	78.35%	57.02%
Previous (2022/23)	88.04%	75.58%	81.14%	95.31%	19.73%	77.70%	29.41%
Trajectory to be achieved over 2023/24	(89.00% - 89.50%)	(76.50% - 77.50%)	(81.50% - 82.50%)	(94.50% - 95.50%)	(-18.00pp to -18.00pp)	(79.00% - 80.00%)	(36.00% - 40.00%)
Forecast (2023/24)	88.30%	75.78%	80.38%	95.39%	-19.61pp	80.48%	56.52%
Trajectory to be achieved over 2024/25	(88.80% - 89.30%)	(76.78% - 78.28%)	(81.38% - 82.63%)	(95.39% - 96.59%)	(-18.61pp to -18.31pp)	(80.48% - 80.48%)	(56.52% - 56.52%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 24/25	(0.5pp - 1.00pp)	(1.0pp - 2.50pp)	(1.0pp - 2.25pp)	(0.0pp - 1.20pp)		(0.0pp - 0.00pp)	(0.0pp - 0.00pp)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	90.50%	80.70%	84.50%	97.00%	16.30pp	80.00%	55.00%

## SCQF Level 6

**Stretch Aim** - 74% of all young people will attain 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 6 by 2026.

1 or more pass at SCQF Level 6 is a key attainment indicator, and can serve to demonstrate breadth of course offer across schools. During 2023-24 and for the coming year, secondary schools will continue to develop a broader curriculum offer and this, combined with the ongoing work of ABZ Campus, should see progress made against stretch aims in this measure. Further broadening of the curriculum at school level will be a focus for session 2024/25 and this will reduce the gap between Q1 and Q5 from 45.61 percentage points to 42.61pp by 2024/25.

**Target for 2024/25** – Between 66.42% and 70.42% of young people will attain 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 6 by the end of 24/25.



Proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more pass at SCQF level 6 based on the Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations

	Overall Levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1-Q5	ASN	LAC
National (2022/23)	65.71%	51.51%	58.27%	83.05%	-31.54pp	50.44%	29.25%
Previous (2022/23)	61.96%	41.47%	45.68%	78.56%	-37.09pp	46.57%	5.88%
Trajectory to be achieved over 2023/24	(65.00% - 68.00%)	(41.00% - 44.50%)	(49.00% - 53.00%)	(84.00% - 84.75%)	(-43.00pp to -40.25pp)	(48.00% - 51.00%)	(22.00% - 27.67%)
Forecast (2023/24)	65.42%	37.50%	47.15%	83.11%	-45.61pp	49.92%	13.04%
Trajectory to be achieved over 2024/25	(66.42% - 70.42%)	(41.50% - 47.50%)	(50.15% - 56.15%)	(84.11% - 85.11%)	(-42.61pp to -37.61pp)	(50.92% - 54.92%)	(15.04% - 30.04%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 24/25	(1.0pp - 5.00pp)	(4.0pp - 10.00pp)	(3.0pp - 9.00pp)	(1.0pp - 2.00pp)		(1.0pp - 5.00pp)	(2.0pp - 17.00pp)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	74.00%	56.00%	62.75%	87.27%	31.27pp	58.65%	46.67%

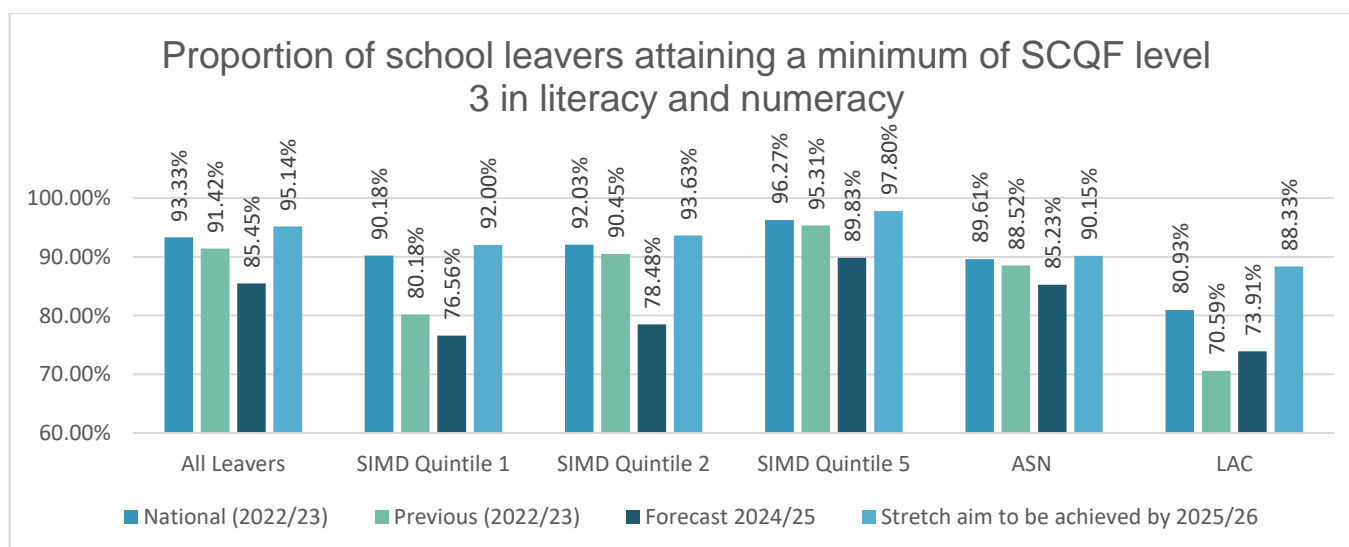


## SCQF Level 3 in Literacy & numeracy

**Stretch Aim** – 95.14% of all young people will attain a minimum of SCQF Level 3 in literacy and numeracy by 2026.

Positive attainment in Literacy and Numeracy is an important benchmark feature of success in the Senior Phase in schools. There is confidence that attainment in this area will improve towards the stated targets and reduce the gap between Q1 and Q5 in the coming years. Accurate forecasting relies on consistent data being available. In readiness for results in August 2024, the SQA announced changes to the way they would provide data, removing incomplete entries, and this has clouded the ability to provide such a forecast. The figure of 85.45% represents what is known, and that is as far as the forecast will take us. However, there is confidence that the final figure will exceed this and be more broadly in line with targets.

**Target for 2024/25** – Between 87.45% and 90.95% of young people will attain a minimum of SCQF Level 3 in literacy and numeracy by the end of school session 24/25.



\* forecast is impacted by the changes to the way SQA made data available for August 2024.

	All Leavers	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
National (2022/23)	93.33%	90.18%	92.03%	96.27%	8.05%	89.61%	80.93%
Previous (2022/23)	91.42%	80.18%	90.45%	95.31%	6.12%	88.52%	70.59%
Trajectory to be achieved over 2023/24	(94.64% - 94.76%)	(91.57% - 91.67%)	(93.13% - 93.35%)	(97.14% - 97.36%)	(-5.57pp to -5.57pp)	(89.15% - 89.15%)	(83.33% - 83.33%)
Forecast 2023/24	85.45%	76.56%	78.48%	89.83%	-13.27pp	85.23%	73.91%
Trajectory to be achieved over 2024/25	(87.45% - 90.95%)	(77.56% - 84.56%)	(79.48% - 81.48%)	(89.83% - 90.05%)	(-12.27pp to -5.49pp)	(85.23% - 85.73%)	(73.91% - 76.91%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 24/25	(2.0pp - 5.50pp)	(1.0pp - 8.00pp)	(1.0pp - 3.00pp)	(0.0pp - 0.22pp)		(0.0pp - 0.50pp)	(0.0pp - 3.00pp)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	95.14%	92.00%	93.63%	97.80%	5.80pp	90.15%	88.33%

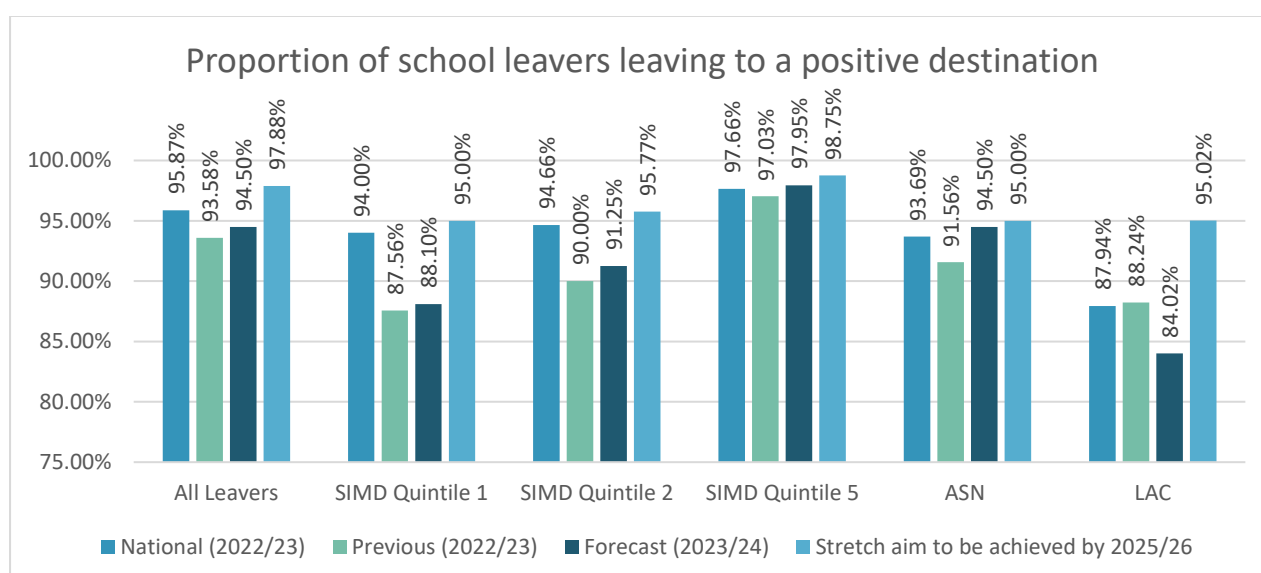
\* forecast is impacted by the changes to the way SQA made data available for August 2024.

## Proportion of leavers entering Positive Destinations

**Stretch Aim** – 97.88% of young people will be achieving a positive destination by 2026.

This is an important yet challenging stretch aim as we look to support all of our young people into a positive and sustained destination on leaving school. Our forecast for 23/24, following the immediate post-pandemic period, is predicting a small increase in the positive destination figures (94.50% from 93.58%), however, as distance grows from the pandemic and work with schools to improve pathway planning progresses, there is growing confidence that the target of between 96.21% and 96.55% by the end of session 2024/25 is within reach.

**Target for 2023/24** – Between 96.21% and 96.55% of young people will enter an initial positive destination by the end of school session 24/25.



Proportion of school leavers leaving to a positive destination

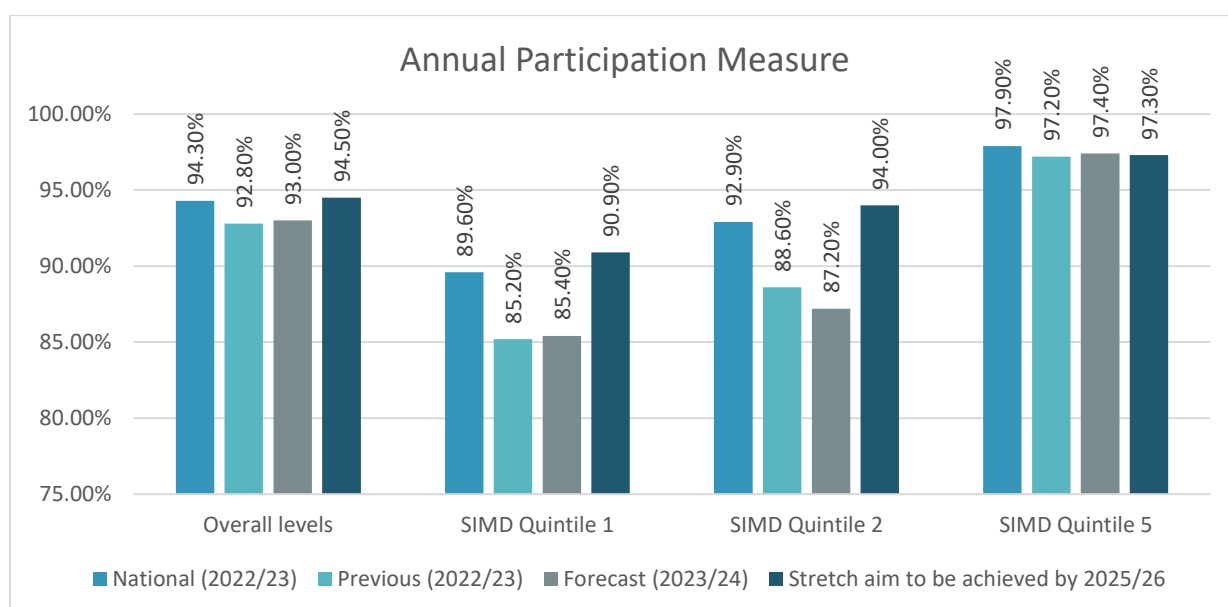
	All Leavers	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
National (2022/23)	95.87%	94.00%	94.66%	97.66%	-3.66pp	93.69%	87.94%
Previous (2022/23)	93.58%	87.56%	90.00%	97.03%	-9.47pp	91.56%	88.24%
Trajectory to be achieved over 2023/24	(96.21% - 96.55%)	(93.71% - 93.97%)	(95.35% - 95.44%)	(98.08% - 98.22%)	(-4.38pp to -4.25pp)	(94.58% - 94.67%)	(85.85% - 87.69%)
Forecast (2023/24)	94.50%	88.10%	91.25%	97.95%	-9.85pp	94.50%	84.02%
Trajectory to be achieved over 2024/25	(94.83% - 96.17%)	(90.10% - 92.10%)	(91.75% - 93.77%)	(98.08% - 98.42%)	(-7.98pp to -6.32pp)	(94.58% - 94.84%)	(85.85% - 90.02%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 24/25	(0.3pp - 1.67pp)	(2.0pp - 4.00pp)	(0.5pp - 2.52pp)	(0.1pp - 0.47pp)		(0.1pp - 0.34pp)	(1.8pp - 6.00pp)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	97.88%	95.00%	95.77%	98.75%	3.75%	95.00%	95.02%

## Participation

**Stretch Aim** – 94.5% of all young people will be participating in education, employment, or training by 2026.

This measure takes a slightly different perspective to the Positive Destination figure (see above) and forecast data identifies that 2023/24 saw some progress made (93.00%) from the 2022/23 figure of 92.80%, providing confidence that the target for 2024/25 is achievable. Continued work to support schools in pathway planning will further spread good practice across schools.

**Target for 2023/24** – Between 93.38% - 93.77% of young people will be participating in education, employment, or training by the end of school session 24/25.



Percentage participation of 16-19 olds participating in education, employment or training based on the Annual Participation Measure produced by Skills Development Scotland by 2026

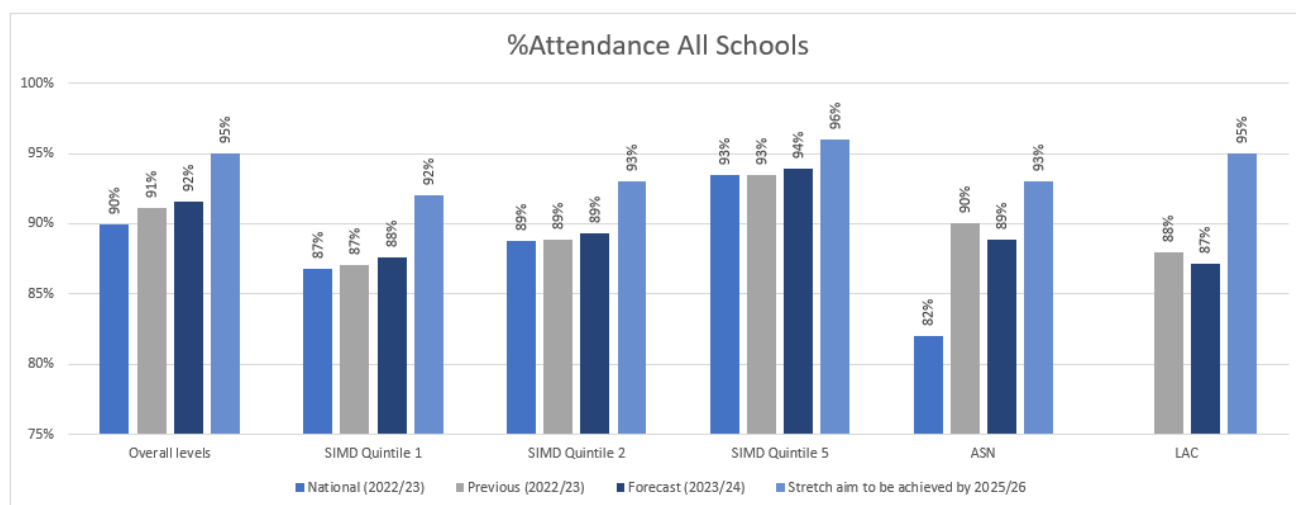
	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5
National (2022/23)	94.30%	89.60%	92.90%	97.90%	8.30%
Previous (2022/23)	92.80%	85.20%	88.60%	97.20%	12.00%
Trajectory to be achieved over 2023/24	(93.38% - 93.73%)	(86.38% - 88.20%)	(88.37% - 90.00%)	(97.40% - 97.40%)	(-11.02pp to - 9.20pp)
Forecast (2023/24)	93.00%	85.40%	87.20%	97.40%	12.00%
Trajectory to be achieved over 2024/25	(93.38% - 93.77%)	(86.38% - 88.10%)	(88.37% - 91.20%)	(97.40% - 97.40%)	(-11.02pp to - 9.30pp)
Improvement (percentage point) for 23/24	(0.4pp - 0.77pp)	(1.0pp - 2.70pp)	(1.2pp - 4.00pp)	(0.0pp - 0.00pp)	
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	94.50%	90.90%	94.00%	97.30%	6.40%

## Attendance

**Stretch Aim** - 95% of all children and young people will attend school regularly by 2026

Effective risk assessments have helped improve pupil levels of attendance at school as indicated in our unvalidated data. Our Guidance on Managing and Promoting Pupil Attendance has been reviewed and further revised to take account of updated national guidance. Most schools have had a relentless focus on supporting attendance. Attendance was the focus of a Head Teacher meeting in February 2024 providing an opportunity for the Assessment Advisor to share the national picture as well as the sharing of interventions currently supporting improvement in schools within the authority. Officers will continue to apply greater scrutiny to the reasons associated with absence in order to identify any patterns, to help improve levels further. Associated School Groups are reviewing trends and working together to develop interventions to improve attendance across communities. Attendance in Aberdeen city compares favourably to other cities.

**Target for 2024/25** – Between 92% and 94% of all children and young people will attend school regularly by the end of school session 24/25.



	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
National (2022/23)	90%	87%	89%	93%	-7pp	82%	
Previous (2022/23)	91%	87%	89%	93%	-6pp	90%	88%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(92% - 93%)	(88% - 89%)	(89% - 90%)	(93% - 94%)	(-4pp to -5pp)	(90% - 91%)	(90% - 91%)
Forecast (2023/24)	92%	88%	89%	94%	-6pp	89%	87%
Trajectory to be achieved over 2024/25	(92% - 93%)	(89% - 91%)	(90% - 91%)	(94% - 96%)	(-5pp to -5pp)	(89% - 90%)	(94% - 103%)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	95%	92%	93%	96%	-4pp	93%	95%

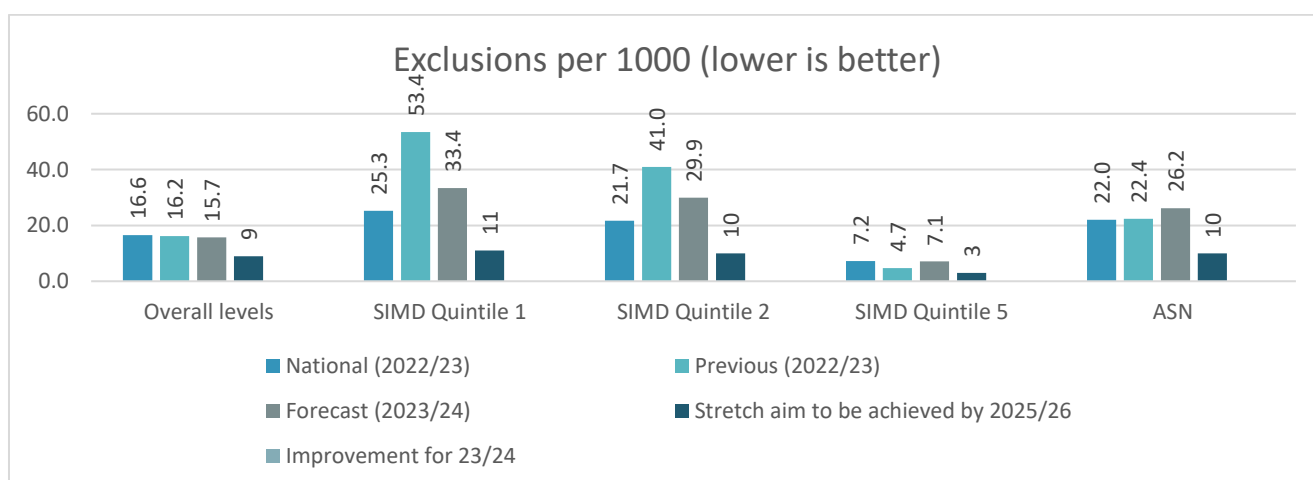
## Exclusion

**Stretch Aim** - 95% of all children and young people will attend school regularly by 2026

Exclusion data shows that we are forecast to be 15.7 per 1000 which remains lower than the 22/23 levels of 16.2 per 1000. The length of any exclusion continues to be short. Our Supporting Learners: Minimising Exclusion Policy was reviewed in session 23/24, considering a slightly different post pandemic context being experienced nationally.

Exclusion levels for Looked After Children have increased. We can conclude that our current arrangements are not sufficient and will review arrangements. In the meantime officers will apply greater scrutiny to the reasons associated with exclusions to identify any patterns and interventions, to help reduce these. Q1 and Q2 exclusions have reduced but further improvement is required to achieve our stretch aim. This will be a key consideration as we develop our model of Family Support.

**Target for 2024/25** – Reduce exclusions to between 12.1 and 14.1 per 1000 pupils by the end of school session 24/25.



Number of pupils excluded per 1000 pupils (all schools)

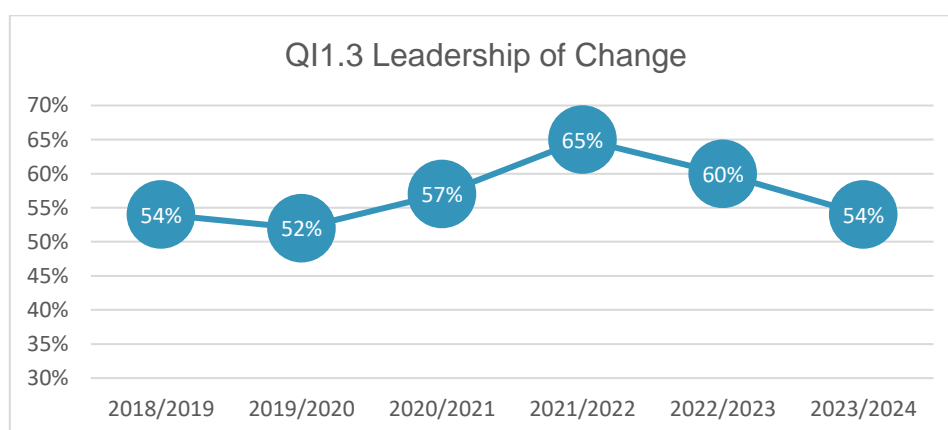
	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
National (2022/23)	16.6	25.3	21.7	7.2	-18.1	22.0	78.0
Previous (2022/23)	16.2	53.4	41.0	4.7	48.7	22.4	194.59
Trajectory (2023/24)	(14.1 - 12.1)	(20.7 - 25.4)	(20.0 - 24.0)	(6.3 - 5.6)		(24.9 - 23.6)	(77.7 - 59.4)
Forecast (2023/24)	15.7	33.4	29.9	7.1	26.3	26.2	226.8
Trajectory (2024/25)	(14.1 - 12.1)	(20.7 - 25.4)	(20.0 - 24.0)	(6.3 - 5.6)		(24.9 - 23.6)	(77.7 - 59.4)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	9	11	10	3	8	10	30
Improvement for 23/24	(1.6 - 3.6)	(6.4 - 11.1)	(5.9 - 9.9)	(0.8 - 1.5)		(5pp - 10pp)	(15pp - 35pp)

## Core Quality Indicators Leadership of Change

**Stretch Aim** - 85% of all schools will self-evaluate QI1.3 Leadership of Change at good or better by 2026.

We continue to see significant changes in our leadership teams across the city with 21% of our Head Teachers either new to the role of Head Teacher or new to the school this session, Quality Indicator 1.3 Leadership of Change has dipped by 6% (3 schools) with 54% of evaluations rated Good or above in 23/24. This reflects the changing landscape of schools at this time. Work continues with our middle leadership group and this is realising increased numbers of leaders coming through the system with a greater understanding of this core QI. This, along with our newly developed Head Teacher induction programme, will support an increase in evaluations in this area in session 24/25.

**Target for 2024/25** – 70% of schools will self-evaluate QI1.3 Leadership of Change at good or better by the end of school session 24/25.

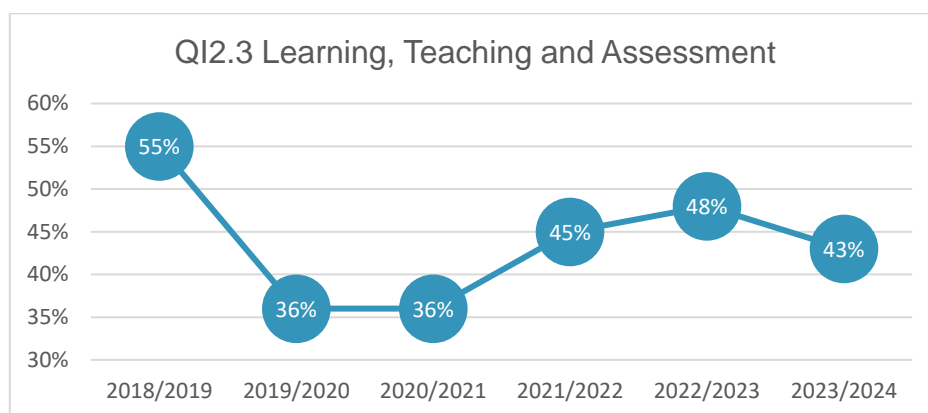


## Learning, Teaching and Assessment

**Stretch Aim** - 80% of our schools will self-evaluate QI2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment at good or better by 2026.

The quality of learning, teaching and assessment continues to be an area of focus for all schools. The targeted professional learning throughout 23/24 has resulted in an improved understanding of the national standard and school evaluations align with support categories. This, along with the large turnover in leadership, has resulted in a drop from 48% to 43% (a change in 2 schools) in the number of schools self-evaluating as good or better. Revised quality improvement activity, continued targeted professional learning and work with the Northern Alliance on the learning and teaching toolkit will support improvement in this area and move us towards our aspirational stretch aim.

**Target for 2024/25** – 65% of our schools will self-evaluate QI2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment at good or better by the end of school session 24/25.



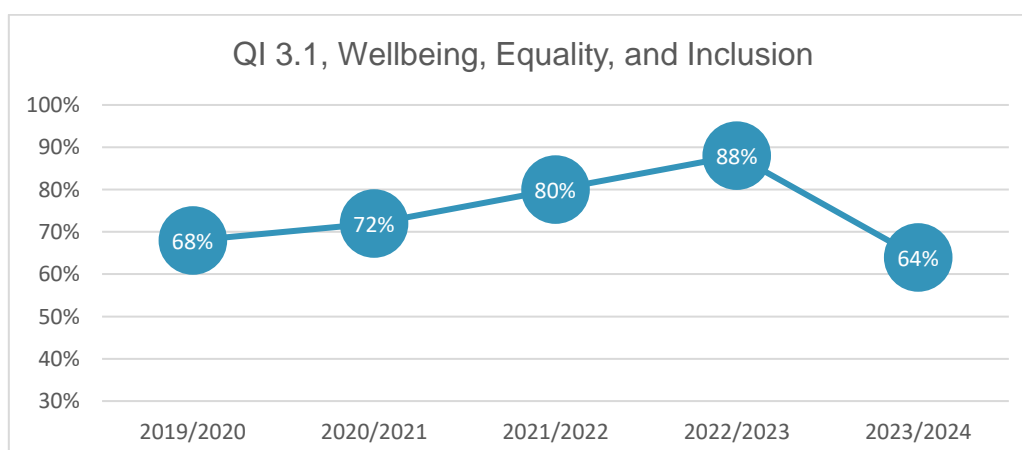
## Wellbeing, Equality, and Inclusion

**Stretch Aim** - 100% of schools will evaluate QI 3.1 at good or better by 2026.

### Self-Evaluations of QI 3.1, Wellbeing, Equality, and Inclusion

Over the last 4 years there has been a strong focus on 3.1 in all schools resulting in a positive trend. Changes in leadership in schools and external validation from HMIE has identified that some evaluations were not in line with national standards in one area of the city in particular and as such, we have seen a dip in evaluations from good to satisfactory in 11 schools across the city, resulting in a drop from 88% to 64% of schools evaluating good or better. This aligns with our quality improvement categories and we are confident that through targeted professional learning and moderation across schools, we will be able to recover the loss experienced this session and continue to move towards our aspirational stretch aim of 100% of schools self-evaluating good or better by June 2026.

**Target for 2024/25** – 90% of schools will evaluate QI 3.1 at good or better by the end of school session 24/25.



## External Evaluation of Core Quality Indicators

Although there were a limited number of schools visited (6) during session 23/24 the assessments made serve as useful benchmarking of trend data in the context of external evaluation. At academic year end, averaged scores of Good (4) for Aberdeen City, against each of the individual QI evaluations conducted reflected the outcomes below:

Quality of Primary, Secondary and Special School Education Provision ( Education Scotland) - % Averaged Inspection Score of Good by Core Quality Indicator

Year	Leadership of change	Learning, teaching and assessment	Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Raising attainment and achievement	Overall Quality Indicator Outcome
2023/24	91.7%	75.0%	112.5%	79.2%	84.4%
2022/23	80.0%	68.0%	75.0%	75.0%	78.8%

The percentage value of 112.5% indicates that we are performing beyond an average of Good in this measure.

This data, based on our aggregated capacity for improvement, is suggestive that, at least in the context of this limited external evaluation, work being delivered through the current Quality Improvement Framework, and lessons learned over the course of the inspection year, are delivering some gains.

### So how well do we improve outcomes for all?

There is considerable evidence that the Quality Improvement Framework is improving central oversight of the quality of provision and clarifying expectations. There is a need to continue to review arrangements, and the consistent application of arrangements, on a yearly basis.

There is evidence that some middle leaders seeking headships have not fully developed their skills in improvement planning and this area and this area needs to be addressed. In general, the quality of improvement planning is improving. There are examples of middle leaders lacking the confidence to lead a school when there is a vacant head teacher post. This significantly diminishes the capacity of the central team. This will be addressed through our Middle Leadership programme over 2024/25.

There is evidence that most school leaders make effective use of data dashboards and most staff have increased confidence in identifying the gap at class, faculty and school level. Professional learning in this area will continue in session 24/25. Data across ACEL is generally improving, attainment at the senior phase will be further reviewed when Insight is published in September given the broader range of courses available to young people in our schools.

We set ambitious stretch aims in 2022/23 but did not envisage the increase in school roll. The increase in roll has resulted in an increase in staff new to the authority and in



the majority of cases these are newly qualified staff, there are some challenges recruiting to some secondary specialisms. We continue to be one of the authorities with the lowest average age of staff (37). We are not currently meeting all of our stretch aims however improved tracking, moderation, more stable school population and understanding of data should lead to a further uplift in data for session 24/25.

It is encouraging to see that mental health outcomes are in line with or above national in most measures and that our young people's health is improving. The development of the Family Support Model, and implementation of our agreed Behaviour Plan should bring increased readiness for learning in some.

Our professional learning offer is well received. Although there is evidence of the offer from a range of internal and external partners is becoming more aligned, there is still work to do to help better understand the elements that make the greatest difference. This will be developed further over 2024/25.

Across the local authority there is an inclusive learning culture. Almost all young people have access to a curriculum which meets their needs and are supported well in order to achieve. A small number of young people are currently on a flexible pathway. The widening curriculum on offer at both school and through ABZ Campus is supporting all young people to access appropriate pathways in order to secure positive destinations on leaving school. There may be a need to undertake a thematic review of the provision of flexible pathways following work being undertaken by the Education Psychology Service to understand the effectiveness of arrangements for those with additional support needs .

Historical stay on rates are now being challenged and there has been an increase in the number of young people continuing in school S4 to S5 from 81% in 2018/19 to 83% in 2022/23 and for learners staying from S4 to S6 from 48% in 2018/19 to 52% in 2022/23. Increasing the breadth of the curriculum on offer should see this increase further during session 2024/25.

The following section outlines our plans for next session.

# High Level Plan 2022-26

## Excellence

## Equity

### Strategic Priorities

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the leadership of change in schools</li> <li>• Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in schools</li> <li>• Continue to improve the quality of universal health and wellbeing supports in response to changes in need</li> <li>• Increase the voice of children and young people in the design and delivery of services that directly and indirectly affect them</li> <li>• Deliver a broader range of senior phase learner pathways aligned to growth areas</li> <li>• Improve the delivery of Computer Science from 3-18 and beyond</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the quality of environments/supports for those with additional support needs</li> <li>• Reshape the Virtual School to ensure that those on the edge of care and those who are care experienced achieve at the highest levels in keeping with The Promise</li> <li>• Close the poverty related attainment gap</li> <li>• Prevent families from experiencing poverty wherever possible</li> <li>• Partnership delivery of the Family Support Model in keeping with The Promise</li> <li>• Review the Anti-bullying policy</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

### Strategic Enablers

Workforce	Data	Standards	Partnership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High quality professional learning for all</li> <li>• Senior and Middle Leadership development</li> <li>• Continue to support staff health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Monitor workforce levels to ensure our capacity to deliver for children and families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to develop School Profiles</li> <li>• Implement improved tracking and reporting</li> <li>• Collaborate with partners to join data sets when beneficial to do so</li> <li>• Increase central oversight of tracking data and PEF impact measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear expectations around the Core Quality Indicators</li> <li>• Continually improve central Quality Improvement approaches</li> <li>• Maintain approaches to collaborative improvement across the city</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan</li> <li>• Delivery of neurodevelopmental pathway</li> <li>• More closely align the universal services of health and education</li> </ul>

## Strategic Delivery Plan Session 25/26

### Excellence

#### Stretch Aims and targets for 25/26

- ✦ 85% of all schools will self- evaluate Quality Indicator1.3 (leadership of change) at good or better by 2026 (current baseline 54% and target for 24/25 70%)
- ✦ 80% of all school will self-evaluate Quality Indicator 2.3 (learning teaching and Assessment) at good or better by 2026 (current baseline 43% and target for 24/25 65% )
- ✦ 85% of pupils will achieve Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (ACEL )reading (P1,4 and 7 combined) by 2026 (forecast baseline 79% and target for 24/25 81% - 82%)
- ✦ 82% of pupils will achieve ACEL writing (P1, 4 and 7 combined) by 2026 (forecast baseline 76% and target for 24/25 77% – 82%)
- ✦ 90% of pupils will achieve ACEL Listening and Talking (P1, 4 and 7 combined) by 2026.(forecast baseline 87% and target for 23/24 88%-89%)
- ✦ 84% of pupils will achieve ACEL Numeracy (P1, 4 and 7 combined) by 2026. (forecast baseline 79% and target for 24/25 80% - 82%)
- ✦ 78% of pupils will achieve ACEL Literacy (P1, P4 and P7 combined) by 2026 (forecast baseline 73% and target for 24/25 74%-76%)
- ✦ Increase the proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)level 5 to 90.5% by 2026. Current baseline 88.3% and target for 24/25 set at 88.8%-89.3%
- ✦ Increase the proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more at SCQF Level 6 to 74% by 2026. Current baseline 65.42% and target for 24/25 set at 66.42%-70.42%%
- ✦ Increase the proportion of school leavers attaining a minimum of SCQF L3 in literacy and numeracy to 95% by 2026. Current baseline 85.45% and target for 24/25 87.45% - 90.95%
- ✦ Increase the proportion of school leavers entering an initial positive destination to 97.88% by 2026. Current baseline 94.5% and target for 24/25 set at 96.21% -96.55%
- ✦ Increase the participation of 16-19 year olds in education, employment or training based on Annual Participation Measure to 94.5% by 2026. Current baseline 93% and target for 24/25 set at 93.38%-93.77%

Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures
<b>Improve the leadership of change in schools</b>			
Build leadership capacity and capability through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a coordinated professional learning programme</li> <li>• involvement of middle leaders in quality assurance arrangements</li> <li>• analysis of surveys of staff, parents and learners to inform Quality Improvement activity</li> </ul>	All QIMs, supporting Associate Assessors and ESO	August	Improvement in QI 1.3 (Baseline 54% and Target 70%)
<b>Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment and curriculum in schools</b>			
Continue to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment (pace, and challenge) by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collaborating with the Regional Improvement Collaborative to publish the Toolkit</li> <li>• the phased deployment of additional digital tools and a new digital identity</li> <li>• continued roll out of the national improvement in writing programme.</li> <li>• developing and testing an approach to improve numeracy curriculum with a focus on transitions</li> <li>• development of a city wide literacy offer for children, young people and adult learners</li> <li>• working with practitioners to develop an ELC standard to support improvement in pedagogical understanding</li> <li>• ensure a robust application of the new tracking system and use of the digital data tools with an</li> </ul>	QIM (curriculum BGE)  QIO (Digital)  QIM (CtG) QIO  QIO (Curriculum)  QIM team	Ongoing  August 2024  August 2024  June 2025	Improvement of core QI 2.3 (baseline 43% and target 65%)  Improvement in CYPIC and ACEL writing data (baseline 70.3% and target 72%)  Improvement in numeracy ACEL data, particularly at transition points  Published literacy offer available for citizens and city voice survey showing that it is known about  Increase in the levels awarded for quality of play and learning in inspections (baseline 86.2% and target 90%)

increased focus on care experienced children and young people			Increase attainment for care experienced children and young people.
<b>Continue to improve the quality of universal health and wellbeing supports</b>			
<p>Improve health and wellbeing support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continuing to encourage children and young people to be more physically active including those with sensory and other identified needs</li> <li>Shaping and delivering a whole system approach to the healthy weight of children and young people in partnership with others</li> </ul>	QIM (HWB), PEPAS	Ongoing	<p>Increased number of opportunities for children and young people to be more physically active (baseline 1,151 sessions and target 1300) Engagement as a percentage of school roll (baseline 33% target 40%)</p> <p>Reduced number of children and young people reported as not being of healthy weight</p>
<b>Increase the voice of children and young people in the design and delivery of services that directly and indirectly affect them</b>			
<p>Ensure children and young people are involved in decision-making and that we respond to what children and young people tell us they want and need including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continuing to work in collaboration with the Youth Climate Group to work towards Net Zero</li> <li>continuing to engage with Aberdeen Youth Movement</li> </ul>	All QIO (Net Zero)	Ongoing	Increased opportunities to inform strategic decision making across the organisation
<b>Deliver a broader range of senior phase learner pathways aligned to growth areas</b>			
<p>Deliver a broader range of learning pathways through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>delivery of Phase 2 of ABZ Campus</li> <li>continuing to develop pathways to support those with a range of additional support needs</li> </ul>	QIM (PD), DO QIM (PD), DO		Increase in the range of courses available (baseline 54 and target 66)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensuring that the school curriculum is ideally matched to pupil needs</li> <li>opportunities for CLPL for Computing Science Secondary Staff and staff across BGE</li> </ul>			Improvement in destinations(Baseline 94.5% target 96.5%) and participation (Baseline 93% target 93.77%) data
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<b>Equity</b>
Stretch Aims
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† 100% of schools will evaluate QI3.1 at good or better by 2026. (current baseline 64% and target for 24/25 90%)</li> <li>† 95% of all children will attend school regularly by 2026. Current baseline 92% and target for session 2023/24 (92%-94%)</li> <li>† Reduce levels of exclusion to 9 per 1000 pupils by 2026. Current baseline 15.7 per 1000 and target for 24/25 (14.1 -12.1 per 1000)</li> </ul>

Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures
<b>Improve the quality of environments/supports for those with additional support needs</b>			
Improve the quality of environments and supports by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing to implement our accessibility plan</li> <li>On-going roll out of the Circle Framework</li> <li>Evaluate the impact of the Educational Psychology Service on school practice to determine next steps</li> <li>Delivery of the Behaviour Plan</li> <li>Review the provision for supporting learners need</li> <li>Targeted use of TalkBoost</li> </ul>	QIO (ASN), ESO  QIM (HWB), (RA) ESOs	Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing	Increased attendance at Circle training sessions (baseline 70% target 80%)  All staff in schools trained to trauma level 1 All staff trained in de-escalation training  Increase number of settings providing bespoke nurture support  Reduction in the number of incidents reported in schools by 10% (baseline 1168)
<b>Close the poverty related attainment gap</b>			

<p>Help address the gap and gradient through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• working with HTs to monitor the impact of PEF interventions</li> <li>• asking every school to have a cost of the school day position statement known by the whole school community</li> <li>• maintaining our focus on attendance levels and termly communication to parents and carers</li> </ul>	<p>QIM (CtG) QIMs/QIOs  QIM(CtG)  QIMs/QIOs</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Increased attainment as a result of interventions</p> <p>All schools have a cost of the school day position statement in school handbook</p> <p>Increase in attendance from baseline (92 – 93% )</p>
<p><b>Prevent families from experiencing poverty wherever possible</b></p>			
<p>Continue to work in collaboration to address the root cause of poverty through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• targeting families most in need of our help by sharing data</li> <li>• the provision of Money Advisors</li> <li>• working with the third sector to support foodbanks and uniform swaps and target families in need of assistance</li> </ul>	<p>QIM (CtG)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>All data sharing agreements in place</p> <p>Increased number of benefits claimed through Money Advisors etc baseline (benefit checks 163 benefit claims 54 )</p>
<p><b>Partnership Delivery of the Family Support Model in keeping with the Promise</b></p>			
<p>Delivery of The Promise through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviewing oversight arrangements for those who are cared for out of authority</li> <li>• expanding our Edge of Care pilots to St Machar</li> <li>• supporting the development of our Family Support Model test and aligning SAC resource</li> <li>• implementing our Request for Assistance</li> </ul>	<p>QIMs  QIMs</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Reduce the number of young people going into care</p> <p>Increase support for families and young people on the edge of care</p> <p>Raise the attainment of our Care Experienced young people</p>

			<p>Targeted and accessible support available to families. Families report that they are able to access support when they need it</p> <p>Improved data sharing between third sector and services to reduce overlap of support</p>
<b>Addressing inequality</b>			
<p>Continue to address inequality by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>all secondary schools registering with Equally Safe at School and ensure key staff complete the e-module</li> <li>secondary schools to review their RSHP curriculum</li> <li>continuing to support all secondary schools to establish effective systems to support LGBTQIA+ community in school</li> <li>primary schools to pilot primary Mentors Against Violence programme and full roll out across secondary</li> </ul>	<p>QIO (Equity)</p> <p>QIO (Equality)</p>	<p>August 2024</p>	<p>Reduction in number of children and young people reporting low confidence, self-esteem (baseline P6/7 - 12% and target 9%; baseline S1-6 – 15% and target 11%)</p> <p>Reduction in the number of incidents and near misses in schools (baseline 1168)</p>

**Strategic Enablers**

<b>Workforce - Programme/projects</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>From when</b>	<b>Measures</b>
<b>High quality professional learning for all</b>			



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain an agile professional learning programme for all ELC and school staff based on both QI outcomes and audits of need</li> <li>• Continue to increase opportunities for collaboration at secondary subject level</li> <li>• Establish an ELC support worker network</li> <li>• Where possible, support staff to gain statutory qualifications in order to realise career progression and promotion and improve the staffing pipeline</li> <li>• Continue to work towards implementation of the Behaviour Action Plan</li> </ul>	<p>QIMs (ESO PD)</p> <p>QIM team</p>	<p>August 2024</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Improvement in Core QI 2.3 (baseline 43% target 65%)</p> <p>School Self Evaluation reporting an improved curriculum offer.</p> <p>Increase in number of subject networks established (baseline 3)</p> <p>Improved quality of care and learning CI gradings ( 86.2% - 90%)</p> <p>All staff gained qualifications within the specified timescale to improve pipeline into ELC</p> <p>Reduction in the number of incidents in schools (baseline 1168)</p>
<b>Senior and Middle Leadership development</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to deliver a programme for Middle Leaders to enhance leadership skills including offering a mentor</li> <li>• Engage with external professional learning opportunities to improve leadership capacity</li> <li>• Increase opportunities for middle leaders to participate in Quality Improvement activity</li> <li>• Deliver newly appointed HT programme and review implementation</li> </ul>	<p>QIO Learning Teaching and Assessment and HT Leadership Group QIM (Curriculum Senior Phase) ESO (PD)</p>	<p>August 2024</p> <p>August 2024</p>	<p>Improvement in core Quality Indicators 1.3 (baseline 54% target 74%)</p> <p>% of staff progressing through the Middle Leaders programme to senior leadership positions</p> <p>Improved quality of SLT applications and appointments.</p> <p>All members of SLT allocated a role in Quality Improvement Visits</p>

			Improved knowledge of authority policies and procedures  Reduction in the operation support required by central officers
<b>Continue to support staff health and wellbeing</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver staff wellbeing surveys</li> <li>• Continue to signpost staff to corporate supports for health and wellbeing and highlight case studies</li> <li>• Monitor compliance in the application of corporate staffing policies</li> </ul>	QIM (HWB) ESOs	August 2024 – bi-annual survey	Improvement in staff wellbeing and related responses  Reduction in number of staff absences
<b>Monitor workforce levels to ensure our capacity to deliver for children and families</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor recruitment to ensure swift identification of any issues to be addressed.</li> <li>• Build in performance management and absence reporting expectations for HT network and DHT network (CLPL planned)</li> </ul>	QIM (CtG) / EY Service Managers	Ongoing	Maintain high levels of staffing  Pre and post evaluations demonstrate an increase in understanding of policies and procedures
<b>Continue to develop School Profiles</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate the consistency of effective use of school profiles and ensure access for all</li> </ul>	QIMs/QIOs/	Ongoing	100% of data discussions reference power Bi tools as part of Quality Improvement  More robust dialogue with HTs / SLT about data – data discussions / QI visits / SLT level
<b>Implement improved tracking and reporting</b>			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory data training sessions for senior leaders which includes BGE tracker, H&amp;WB data, School Profiles, etc this should also cover analysis of data and planning next steps, and transition at all levels</li> <li>• Data training for all staff to ensure accountability through the system</li> <li>• City wide programme of moderation including work with university to ensure alignment with undergraduate training programme</li> </ul>	<p>QIM (curriculum BGE)</p> <p>QIM (CtG)</p> <p>QIM (PD)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>August 2024</p>	<p>Improvement in closing the gap measures</p> <p>Improvement in QI 1.3 and confidence in the data to ensure early intervention to support raising attainment</p> <p>Increased confidence levels of all staff setting targets based on data analysis – questions to be built into data discussion for all levels</p>
<p><b>Collaborate with partners to join data sets when beneficial to do so</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve data sharing processes to support planning and implementation of interventions e.g. PEPASS, Health</li> </ul>	<p>ESO ( HWB)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Improvement in all core QIs</p>
<p><b>Increase central oversight of tracking data and PEF impact measures</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to monitor the use of the Equity tracker and provide support through the Equity Network sessions</li> </ul>	<p>QIM (CtG)</p>	<p>Ongoing from August 2024</p>	<p>Consistent tracking of PEF data and improvement in closing the gap measures</p> <p>Increased consistency of tracking PEF interventions and confidence in analysis of this</p>
<p>Partnership - Programme/projects</p>	<p>Lead</p>	<p>From when</p>	<p>Measures</p>
<p><b>Clear expectations around the Core Quality Indicators</b></p>			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the refreshed Quality Improvement Framework to help improve standards against the core Quality Indicators</li> </ul>	QIMs	August 2024	Improvement in all core QIs
<b>Continually improve central Quality Improvement approaches</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement quality improvement calendar (QIC) which provides well planned, focused quality improvement activity</li> </ul>	QIMs/QIOs	Ongoing	Robust quality improvement processes involving all members of school SLT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate the effectiveness of activities within the QIC to determine next steps</li> </ul>	QIMs/QIOs	Ongoing	Improvement in all core QIs
<b>Maintain approaches to collaborative improvement across the city</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant</li> <li>Align partnership forum activity with the family support model building on good practice in existence</li> <li>Refresh trio model and involve the Associate Assessors in supporting quality improvement activity.</li> <li>Review and develop collaboration with locality leads / QI team</li> <li>Improved transition across the city</li> </ul>	QIM (CtG)  QIM (CtG)		<p>Families report information assessable and easy to access</p> <p>Improvement in closing the gap measures - reduction in duplication of support</p> <p>Increase in the number of schools moving from Category 3 to Category 2</p> <p>Increased support and challenge across the system</p> <p>Improved alignment across expectations from care Inspectorate and HMle</p> <p>Consistency of approaches, meet minimum expectations and build on good practice EY-P1, across stages and P7-S1</p>
Partnership - Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures

<b>Delivery of Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the parent forum to improve communication between schools and parents and increase parental engagement</li> <li>• Stronger family series to be further developed</li> <li>• Develop and implement the Parental Involvement &amp; Engagement Plan</li> </ul>	<p>QIM (HWB), ESO</p> <p>ESO</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Consistent communication with parents and carers.</p> <p>Key themes linked to wellbeing survey and support improved attendance, reduction in screen time and increased confidence around body image</p> <p>Refreshed Parental Involvement &amp; Engagement plan from 2024</p>
<b>Delivery of neurodevelopmental pathway</b>			
<p><i>This is now being addressed within the Children's Services plan and led by the Children's Services Board</i></p>			
<b>More closely align the universal services of health and education</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and capitalise on opportunities for co-location and co-delivery of services for children and families</li> </ul>	<p>QIM (HWB), ASN and Outreach</p>	<p>October 2024</p>	<p>On-going reduction in number of requests for assistance</p>

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children’s Services
<b>DATE</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Performance Management Framework
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CORS/24/274
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS</b>	Andy MacDonald/Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICERS</b>	Martin Murchie/Shona Milne/Graeme Simpson
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Alex Paterson
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.3

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To present Committee with the status of key quarterly and annual performance measures relating to the Education and Lifelong Learning and Children’s and Families Clusters.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

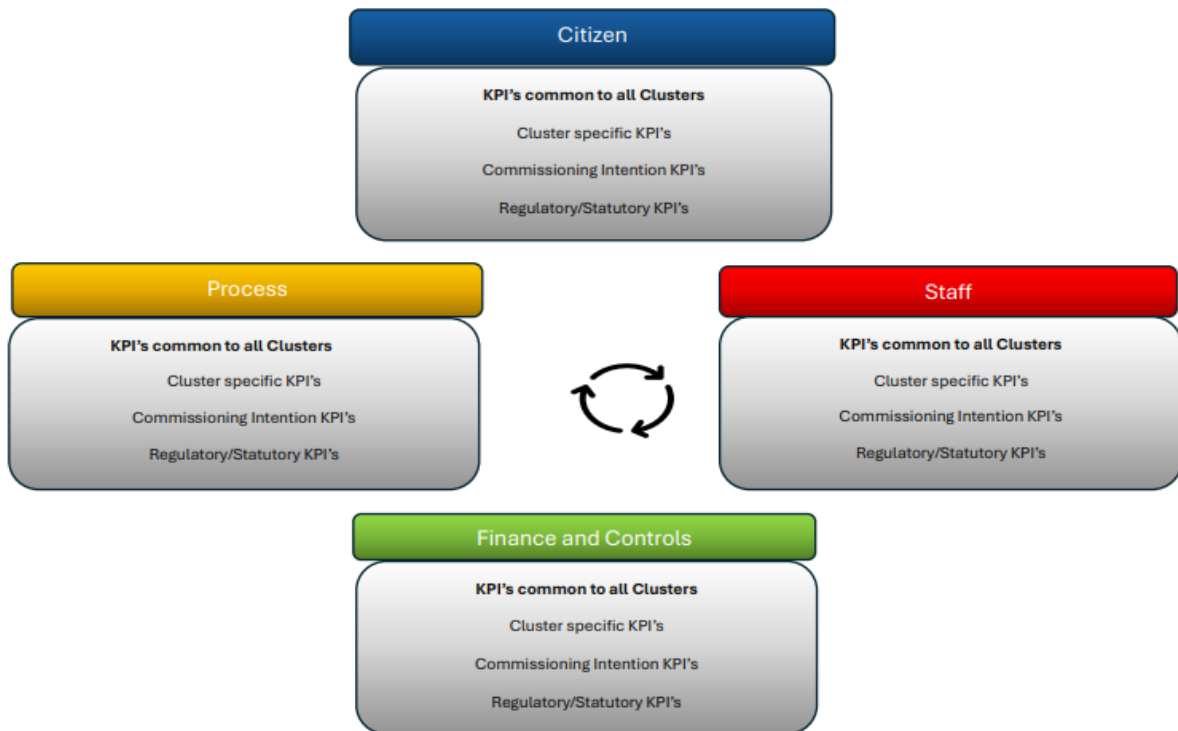
2.1 That the Committee note the report and provide comments and observations on the information contained in the report appendix.

**3. CURRENT SITUATION**

**Report Structure and Content**

- 3.1 The Council’s refreshed Performance Management Framework for 2024/25 was agreed at the meeting of Council on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2024
- 3.2 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 [2024-25.Council Delivery Plan](#) ( the Plan) that was agreed by Council on the 6th of March 2024.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 Appendix A reflects the in-year content against the Plan, alongside a number of nationally benchmarked datasets from more recent publications.
- 3.5 Reporting against the refreshed Plan, including updating of Service Standards agreed at that meeting, is incorporated within Performance Management Framework reports to each of the relevant Council Committees.





- 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. The proposed frequency of reporting is highlighted within the Appendix.
- 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.



- 3.8 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 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024 is now largely completed.
- 3.9 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
-  More than 20% out with 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?
<b>Strategic</b>	None	NA	NA	NA
<b>Compliance</b>	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
<b>Operational</b>	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
<b>Financial</b>	No significant financial risks.	Overview data on specific limited aspects of the cluster's financial performance is provided within this report	L	Yes

<b>Reputational</b>	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
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	None	NA	NA	NA

## 8. OUTCOMES

<u><a href="#">Council Delivery Plan</a></u>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<p><u><a href="#">Aberdeen City Council Partnership Agreement</a></u></p> <p>Improving Educational Choices</p> <p>Creating Better Learning Environments</p> <p>Caring for Young People</p>	<p>This report supports the following key Council priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices.</li> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- Promote the number of apprenticeships on offer through the council.</li> <li>- Work to ensure that every school community provides a safe and respectful environment for young people and staff.</li> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- Work with the Scottish Government to expand free early learning and childcare to one- and two-year-olds from low-income households.</li> <li>- 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</li> </ul>

	<p>- Ensure local education services identify young people with mental health problems and help them get early support and help, where appropriate, to transfer to adult services.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Aberdeen City Local Outcomes Plan April 2024 Refresh</u></a></p>	
<p>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes (Children and Young People)</p>	<p>The detail within Performance Management reporting to this Committee evidences how Families and Communities delivery leads, contributes to, or influences, each of the Children &amp; Young People Stretch Outcomes in the refreshed LOIP. This includes the following Outcomes:</p> <p><b>95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27–30-month review by 2026.</b></p> <p><b>90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026.</b></p> <p><b>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.</b></p> <p><b>95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 &amp; 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</b></p> <p><b>83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026</b></p> <p><b>100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination</b></p>
<p>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes (Adults)</p>	<p>Families and Communities services, through the Improvement Project Aims below contribute to achievement of Outcome 11 - <b>Reduce the rate of both alcohol related deaths and drug related deaths by 10% by 2026</b></p> <p><i>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 ;</i></p> <p><i>Reduce the % of 13–15-year-olds reported as using each sub group of drug by 50% and cannabis by 20% by 2026.</i></p>

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; <i>100% of decisions which impact on children and young people are informed by them by 2026</i> contributes to, or influences Outcome 16:  <b>50% of people report they feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026.</b>
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	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 & Lifelong Learning and Children's Social Work Service's contributions to the City's Children's Services Plan, along with both regional Economic and Skills strategies.

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	It was confirmed by Chief Officer, Martin Murchie, on 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2024 that no Integrated Impact Assessment is required for this report
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required for this report.
<b>Other</b>	No additional impact assessments have been completed for this report.

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Performance Management Framework Update 2024-25 -CORS/24/232  
Council Delivery Plan 2024-25 – COM/24/060

## 11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Education & Lifelong Learning and Children's and Families Performance Summary Dashboard

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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## Appendix A - Performance Management Framework Report – Education and Lifelong Learning/Children’s Social Work and Family Support Clusters

### Education and Lifelong Learning

#### 1. Citizen

**Table 1. Service Level Measures – 2024-25 Service Standards ( Education)**



Performance Measure	Year to Date Value	2024/25 Target	Status	Long Trend - Annual
We will meet all eligible requests for early learning and childcare placements within one month.	100%	100%		
We will meet all mainstream requests for a primary and secondary school placement within one month.	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' in formal evaluations of core Quality Indicators by Education Scotland	84.4%	100%		
We will work to ensure that school attendance is as good or better than the national average.	NA	=/> 91.2%*	NA	NA
We will process requests for additional support to meet the wellbeing needs of children and young people within 40 days	100%	100%		

\*based on national data for 2023/24

**Table 2. Service Level Measures – 2024-25 Service Standards ( Lifelong Learning)**

Performance Measure	Year to Date Value	2024/25 Annual Target	YTD Status	Long Trend - Annual
We will provide CLD services to a level that achieves a rating of good or better through external inspection.	100%	100%		
We will ensure library Item Requests are satisfied within 21 days - YTD	81.6%	100%		

**Table 3. Service Level Quarterly Measure – Library Services**

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarterly Target	Quarterly Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
% of library Item Requests satisfied within 21 days	71.7%	71.8%	79.4%	81.6%	100%		

**Service Commentary – Service Standards**

The metric suite above offers evidence against the Service Level Standards which were agreed at the Budget meeting of Council on 6th March 2024, and apply to the current academic year. In some instances, the phrasing around these may differ marginally from that expressed in the Appendix of the budget 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

As at the end of July 2024, the rolling 12-month average score for Care Inspectorate (CI) evaluations, were continuously improved on those reported to the July meeting of this Committee when the average Overall QI score figure was 94.5%. 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.

For the first time since reporting activity through these measures, three Organiser outcomes fully match the Standard as an average score for service delivered by both Local Authority and Partner Providers, although there is some scope for improvement against the Care, Play and Learning Organiser. These calculations exclude the limited number of CI publications released in August 2024, that are referenced in the Inspection report to this Committee.

Percentage of Care Inspectorate Evaluations of Core Quality Indicators receiving an average score of Good ( 12 month rolling average to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024)

Care Inspectorate Core Quality Indicators					
Core Quality Indicator Scope	How good is our care, play and learning?	How good is our setting?	How good is our leadership?	How good is our staff team?	Overall Quality Indicator Outcome

Percentage of assessments achieving National Standard (average score of Good)	95.5%	100%	100%	100%	98.9%
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Inspection reporting

There have been no publications of Education Scotland inspection activity within the current academic year to date. Table 3. below offers averaged scoring data covering the currently available 12 month rolling data, ( at 2023/24 academic year end) provision of which was agreed at the July meeting of this Committee.

Attendance Data

At this point in time, there is only provisional data available for the 2024/25 session year but the full academic 2023/24 information is reflected below at Chart 2.

Library Item Requests

The figure for Item Requests is on a consistent upwards trend and is anticipated to move closer to the Standards target over the course of 2024/25

**Table 4. Service Level Measure – 2023/24 Annual Academic Year Indicator -Quality of Primary, Secondary and Special School Education Provision ( Education Scotland) - % Averaged Inspection Score Of Good 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	91.7%	75.0%	112.5% *	79.2%	84.4%
2022/23	80.0%	85.0%	75.0%	75.0%	78.8%

**Service Commentary Table 4.**

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, with 6 school inspections in the current year, and 7 in the latter, and with proportionately fewer Organiser evaluations and full model inspections being undertaken in 2023/24. ( 20 Organiser areas were assessed in 2022/23, and 16 in 2023/24.)

The 2023/24 data shows a general increase in averaged scores of Good for 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. The latter Organiser demonstrates that evaluations from inspection activity, on average, are performing at a level which exceeds the equivalent scoring of Good (4)

Additional learning from, and improvement planning against, evaluations of two schools which scored less well for the Learning, Teaching and Assessment and Raising Attainment Organisers was outlined in previous Inspections Reports to Committee.

\* An evaluation of Good (the Standard) is equivalent to a numerical score of 4 and an average score of 100%. Evaluations above this level (5- Very Good and 6 - Excellent) can potentially raise both the numerical score and average score beyond the Standard outlined above. This is reflected in evaluations of the Ensuring Wellbeing Organiser for the 2023/24 academic year, where the numerical equivalent score was 4.3, outstripping the Standard score of 4/Good.

**Table 5. Corporate Measures – 2024-25 Cluster Level Indicators (Quarterly)**

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	2024/25 Target	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
Total No. complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Education & Lifelong Learning	13	31	33	33 *			↓
% of complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) – Education & Lifelong Learning	61.5%	58.1%	78.8%	75.8% *	75.0%	✓	↑
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) – Education & Lifelong Learning	23.1%	16.1%	6.1%	9.1% *			↑
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) – Education & Lifelong Learning	0	3	2	1 *			

### Service Commentary

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) has developed the [SPSO Child Friendly Complaints Principles](#) and Guidance, aligning with our Model Complaints Handling Procedure. This supports children's rights under the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024, ensuring their needs are central in public service complaints procedure. Aberdeen City Council was an early adopter, and collaborator with SPSO, in the development of these national principles.

\* Data from Lifelong Learning services are now included in these metrics



## 2. Process

### National Benchmark Indicator - Interim Participation Measure for 16–19-year-olds

Chart 1. Interim Participation Snapshot for 16–19-year-olds ( May 2024) by Benchmarks – Adjusted for Unknown Destinations

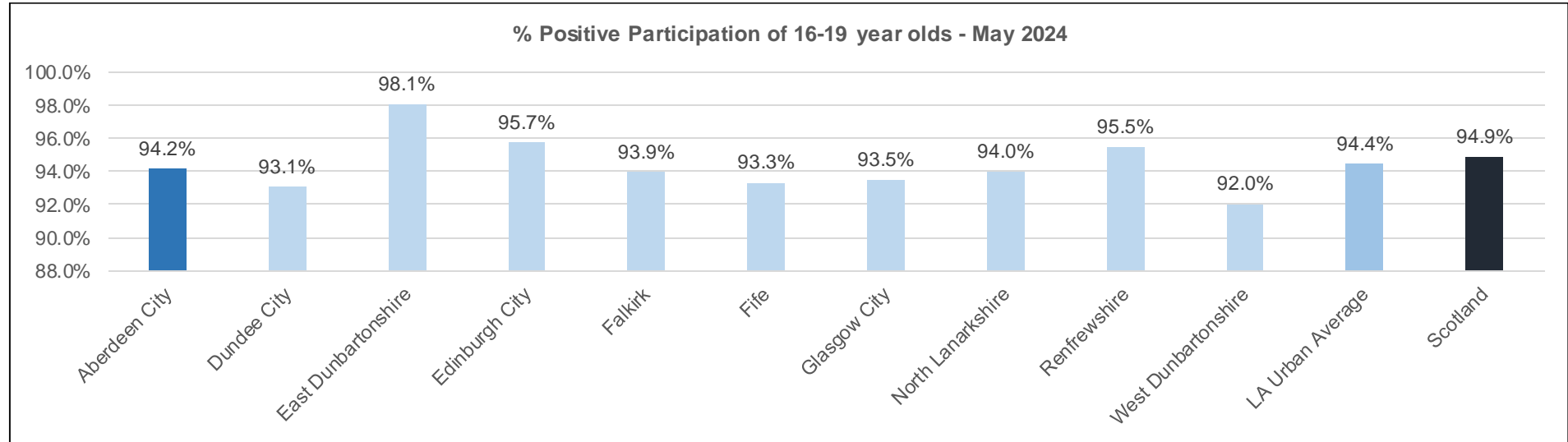


Table 6. Interim Participation Snapshot for 16–19-year-olds ( May 2024) - Status Breakdown by Destination, Aberdeen City

Year	Overall Participation	School Pupil	Higher Education	Further Education	Employment	Training and Development	Unemployed Seeking	Unemployed Not Seeking	Unconfirmed
May 2024	90.7%	39.5%	19.4%	10.7%	19.6%	1.6%	3.4%	2.2%	3.6%
May 2023	91.1%	40.1%	18.1%	11.0%	20.1%	1.8%	3.1%	2.3%	3.5%
May 2022	89.5%	41.2%	18.9%	10.4%	17.1%	1.9%	3.1%	2.4%	5.0%

### Service Commentary

This strategic level measure is jointly delivered by City Development & Regeneration, Education & Lifelong Learning and Children's Social Work and Families Clusters, alongside a series of other internal ( e.g. People and Citizen Cluster) and external partners, including Skills Development Scotland which acts as the regional lead for this outcome.

The [Developing the Young Workforce Update](#) report considered at the June 2024 meeting of the Staff Governance Committee outlined the Council's approach and direct contributions to meeting the Young Persons Guarantee as an employer, through Foundation and Modern Apprenticeship opportunities, and support of Care Experienced Young People Internships.

The Employability Pathway Programme, commenced in June 2023, also supports those young people who may have otherwise made the decision to leave school with limited qualifications, or a clear positive destination, with access to vocational work experience options.

#### Chart 1.

Overall, the outcomes for Aberdeen City are in line with the majority of its Urban Geography Local Authority comparators, and only just lower than the National figure, and the Urban Average. There is limited statistically significant change in either the absolute value of this Measure from May 2023, or the City's position relative to the benchmark authorities presented in this chart

These data are locally adjusted to exclude those 16–19-year-olds where an Unconfirmed Status was recorded from the SDS surveying, As at May 2024, this particular Status represented 3.6% of the estimated survey cohort ( 267 individuals) which was slightly higher than the Urban Average and Scotland levels. It is understood that this position in part arises from the relative geographical mobility of the City's young people, which influences the ability to gain insight into the outcomes of those moving out of the City for employment/training, and/or out with Scotland.

#### Table 6.

In terms of data significance ( change of +/-1 percentage point or more), only the year-on-year movement against Higher Education represents a variation that would be regarded as a material change in destinations for this age group .At the same time, the long-term average trends for Overall participation, Higher Education, and Employment all show positive directions of travel that carry significance.

Some judgement around the material impact of these trends ( and those noted across the suite of Destinations) should be exercised when taking into account the impact of the reduction in the percentage of those young people whose destination was Unconfirmed as the % margins of change across the entire suite can be small and, as a consequence, may be influenced by the proportion of Unconfirmed Destinations.

Prior analysis of data around the Unconfirmed Destinations cohort between the various national data streams and timelines, is suggestive that a greater proportion of these individuals are likely to be in a positive, rather than 'negative' destination.

**Table 7. Service Level Measures – 2022-23 Annual Academic Year Indicator - Sustained School Leaver Destinations (%)**

Academic Year	Total in Positive Destination	Higher Education	Further Education	Training	Employment	Voluntary Work	Personal Skills Development	Unemployed Not Seeking	Unemployed Seeking	Not known
2022/23	90.1%	40.8%	24.2%	1.1%	23.0%	0.6%	0.3%	4.6%	3.1%	2.2%
2021/22	90.8%	39.9%	24.3%	1.7%	24.0%	0.4%	0.6%	4.7%	2.5%	2.0%

**Service Commentary Table 7.**Data Description

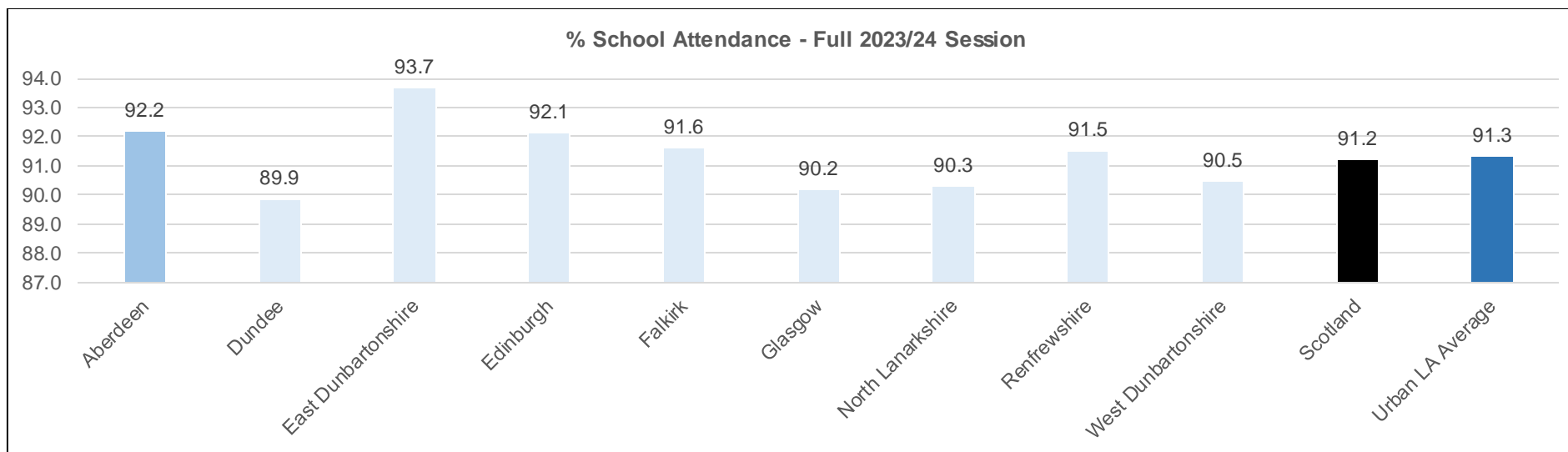
School Leavers Sustained Destinations, conducted by Skills Development Scotland and published in July of each year, subsequent to conclusion of the prior academic year, reflects the survey destination outcomes of school leavers from the previous academic year at a survey point some nine months post the end of Summer term.

Analysis

The Sustained Leavers Destination data, as with that for Initial Destinations reported above, shows statistically limited year-on-year variation in either the proportion of school leavers in a sustained positive destination overall or the spread of outcomes. Leavers moving into Higher and Further Education in combination, remains the City's most prevalent destination at 65% of all leavers, placing Aberdeen City in second position for all Scottish Local Authorities.

As a destination, Employment remains at a level which is below that of most other authorities but with the retention of the long-term pattern where a greater proportion of leavers are employed between the two sample points (Initial and Sustained Destinations) for these measures. This is suggestive of a migration from Initial education related destinations, which can be influenced by the availability of job opportunities that may present themselves over the course of the six months between survey points, and/or that were not considered at the initial point of leaving.

**Chart 2. National School Attendance Measure 2023-24 – Full Academic Year**



### Service Commentary Chart 2

End of 2023/24 session year pupil attendance overall for Aberdeen City sat above that of the majority of its natural benchmark authorities, the Urban Geography Average and the National figure with a similar pattern being observed against each of the three school types. Averaged data is presented in these tables 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.

This data serves as a local baseline in the context of the newly added Service Standard around school attendance above, and informs actions reflected within Aberdeen City Council's National Improvement Framework Plan for 2024/25.

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

## 3. Staff

### Corporate Measures – 2024/25 Service Level Indicators

#### Table 8, Establishment ( Education and Lifelong Learning)

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Establishment actual FTE – Education and Lifelong Learning)	3,078	3,147	3,148	3,248		

**Table 9. Accidents and Incidents ( Education and Lifelong Learning)**

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
H&S Employee Reportable Accidents by Cluster – Education and Lifelong Learning	3	3	5	2		
H&S Employee Non-Reportable Accidents by Cluster – Education and Lifelong Learning	127	256	416	286		

**Service Commentary Table 9.**

Having experienced a peak in Quarter 4 which in part, follows historical data trends, the number of accidents and incidents recorded against the Cluster fell significantly in the most recent quarter.







On interrogation of the Quarter 1 data, and comparing this with prior years, it appears that the collaborative work with schools and Trades Unions to ensure additional accuracy of, and engagement with, the Council's reporting systems, may consequentially set higher baselines for recorded accidents and incidents for each quarterly period in 2024/25 than in most previous years, but this can only be tested in full as each new tranche of data becomes available.

Service and corporate Health and Safety management teams, alongside Trades Union representatives consistently monitor accident/incident data in the context of the joint Health and Safety forum, with scrutiny oversight being delivered through the Council's Director-led corporate Performance Board on a monthly basis.

The Corporate Health and Safety Quarterly Update report considered at the meeting of the [Staff Governance Committee](#) on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024 offered detailed analysis of accident and near miss data across Clusters and at Primary and Secondary school levels.

Aligned, and associated, with the additional clarity being provided to front line services/employees around recording and reporting of incidents, the Service is currently taking cognisance of the Scottish Government's recent release of the [National action plan on relationships and behaviour in schools: 2024 - 2027](#), This will ensure that the current Aberdeen City Council Behaviour Action Plan, which pre-dates this publication, effectively captures and mirrors those government expectations outlined for the development of positive and respectful relationships between teaching staff and pupils, and ensures the increased safety of staff, pupils, parents and others engaging with the Service across the full range of educational settings.

**Table 10. Absence Due to Illness (Education and Lifelong Learning) 12 month rolling average**

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 1 Corporate Figure	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Education and Lifelong Learning (12-month rolling figure at quarter end)	7.2	7.3	6.9	6.6	7.0		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Primary and Secondary Schools (12-month rolling figure at quarter end)	7.0	7.2	7.0	6.5	7.0		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Early Learning and Childcare (12-month rolling figure at quarter end)	9.8	9.3	9.3	8.9	7.0		

**Table 11. Absence Due to Illness ( Education and Lifelong Learning) Monthly Average**

Management Measure	April 2024/25	May 2024/25	June 2024/25
	Value	Value	Value
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Education and Lifelong Learning (monthly)	1.15	1.41	1.31
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Primary and Secondary Schools ( monthly)	1.15	1.39	1.30
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Early Learning and Childcare (monthly)	1.52	1.89	1,77

## Service Commentary

### Table 10.

Levels of employee absence due to illness are showing an improving quarterly trend that, taking account of natural seasonal variations, indicates some material impacts are being evidenced from both Service Management's focus on actions to support employees back to work after periods of illness, and as a result of corporate workstreams around this theme.

Across the four quarterly periods, the pace of change around Early Learning and Childcare settings is marginally better ( - 9.1 %) than that of the Cluster as a whole, ( -8.3%) and the improvement rate in schools ( -7.6%) but the number of days absence, having started at a higher baseline, still exceeds both of these comparators, and is reducing at a slower pace than the Corporate figure, affecting the Status of ELC absence.

This latter dynamic is, in part, a consequence of intensive corporate improvement activity around absence in other service areas which, traditionally, have had the highest levels of absence in the Council, and which are above ELC levels. This work is producing reductions in the corporate figure

Absence data throughout this report reflects robust calculations of FTE based absence but with recognition that minimal variances in accuracy can arise in longitudinal and service comparisons where part time/variable hours working contracts are more common. The impact of this technical/statistical issue has been assessed as producing a marginal inflationary effect on absence levels within Services where a greater proportion of these types of contract are appropriate to effective service delivery.


### Table 11.

These newly introduced reporting metrics calculate the averaged working days lost due to sickness absence each month per employee. This is calculated by dividing the total number of working days lost due to sickness absence during the respective month by the average of all FTE staff employed during that same month. This data captures management level information that offers Services more immediate additional evidence and tracking against the effectiveness of management actions

NB. Members are asked to note the commentary around absence management data at the conclusion of this document

## 4. Finance & Controls

### Table 12. Staff Expenditure ( Education and Lifelong Learning)

Performance Indicator	Quarter 1 2024/25		Quarter 2 2024/25		Quarter 3 2024/25		Quarter 4 2024/25	
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status
Staff Expenditure – % spend to YTD budget profile – Education and Lifelong Learning *	26.75%							

### Service Commentary Table 12.

The Management Commentary provided within the Q1 2024/25 budget report to the Finance and Resources Committee on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August 2024, noted the financial position of the Service overall.

Within this commentary, reflection on the sustained 18-month period of inflation of school rolls, although this no longer appears to be on a continually upwards trend, and costs relating to long term absence, are highlighted. This latter pressure, and absence levels overall ( as noted in Table 14 above) are being actively addressed by the Service, and there are expectations that this will lead to closer expenditure to budget profile ratios over the course of the financial year.





\* 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 ( Quarterly)

#### 5. Citizen

Table 13. Complaints Handling

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Status	2024/25 Target	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
Total No. of Complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Children’s Social Work	10	11	8	12			
% of Complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) - Children’s Social Work	40%	63.6%	100.0%	75.0%		75%	











% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work	0%	9.1%	37.5%	41.7%			
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work	0	0	0	0			

### Service Commentary Table 13.









The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) has developed the [SPSO Child Friendly Complaints Principles](#) and Guidance, aligning with our Model Complaints Handling Procedure. This supports children's rights under the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024, ensuring their needs are central in public service complaints procedure.

**Table 14. Service Level Standards 2024/25 ( Children's Social Work)**

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Status	2024/25 Target	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
% of care provided in Council children's homes, fostering and adoption services achieve a care standard of Good or better	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	
We will ensure care provided by the Council's fostering service achieves a care standard of good or better through regulatory inspections.	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	
We will ensure care provided by the Council's adoption service achieves a care standard of good or better through regulatory inspections.	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	
% of children open to Children's Social Work supported to live at home, where safe to do so	75%	75%	75%	75%		75%	

## 6. Process

**Table 15. Service Level Standards 2024/25 ( Children's Social Work)**

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Status	2024/25 Target	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
% of initial screenings undertaken, and action decided, on new referrals within 7 days.	97%	97%	99%	98%		100%	
% initial Child Protection Planning Meetings held within timescale	65%	71%	32%	53%		80%	
% of Care experienced children and young people with three or more placements in 12 months	2%	1%	1%	2%		7.5%	
% Care Experienced Children and Young People with a pathway plan by the age of 15 years	67%	68%	73%	77%		95%	

### Service Commentary Table 15.

#### Screenings and CPPM Timescales

The importance of undertaking initial screenings in a timely manner is critical to ensuring that those referrals which indicate a children and young people are at significant risk are responded to in a timely manner. The volume and complexity of demand presented to CSW has been sustained over a number of years and continues to place a burden on our Intake Services.

Every effort is made to ensure Child Protection Planning Meetings (CPPM) are held in timescale. There are a number of factors that impact on the performance including the availability of professionals from a range of agencies and more importantly the availability of family members. Naturally such availability is impacted by holiday periods. All children considered at a CPPM have a multi-agency safety plan in place ensuring their protection until a CPPM is held.

#### Pathway Plans

The recent focus around improving the accuracy of recording of pathway plan implementation is producing an improving trend against this measure. This system related influence on the data will continue to be monitored with a view to raising the recorded proportion of CEYP with a pathway plan further.

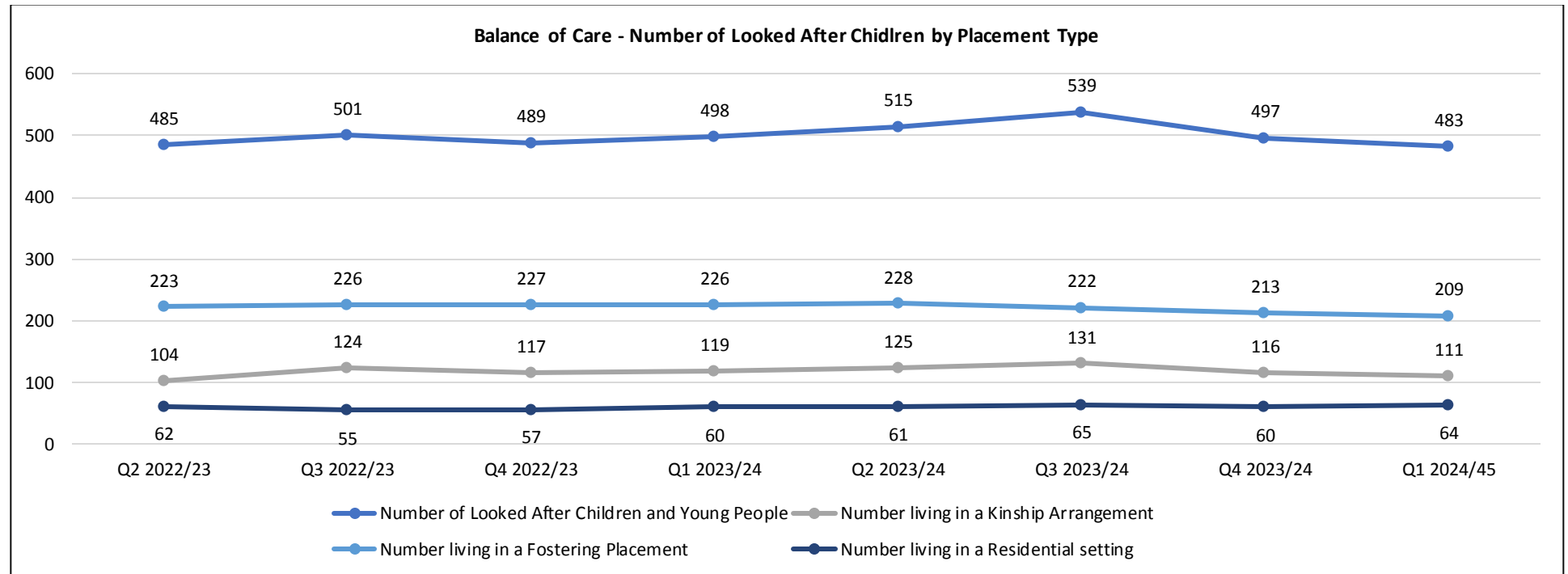
#### New Standards Reporting

Data reporting against a further three new Service Standards in 2024/25: 'We will work to maintain or increase the current number of foster carers', 'We will ensure all joint interviews are undertaken utilising the Scottish Child Interview Model' and 'We will undertake an initial age assessments within 2 weeks of

unaccompanied asylum-seeking individuals who identify as being under 18 years where there is a dispute to their age.' will be offered on an annual basis at conclusion of the year.

This is currently considered the most appropriate frequency of reporting for these measures in terms of both intelligence to be gained from the data and effective scrutiny, but the Service will monitor management level information against these Standards over the course of the year to gain assurance around the projected year-end outcomes against targets. The forthcoming CSWO Annual Report will provide an extended commentary around Service Standards and performance measures linked to Children's Social Work delivery.

**Chart 3 Service Level Measures – Average Number of Looked After Children and Young People by Placement Type Timeseries**



**Table 16. Balance of Care -% of Looked After Children by Placement (Rolling 12-month average by Quarter)**

Period	% Looked After living in a Kinship Arrangement	% Looked After Children living in a Fostering Placement	% Looked After Children living in a Residential setting
Q1 2022/23	21.0%	45.4%	11.5%
Q1 2023/24	23.5%	45.7%	11.9%
Q1 2024/25	23.7%	42.9%	12.3%

**Service Commentary Chart 3 and Table 16**

The overall numbers of Looked After Children, and the data around the balance of care between Kinship and Fostering and placements are showing continuous linear improvement on a 12-month rolling trend. Taking account of the natural variations in the number of children requiring to be Looked After from one quarter to another, this rolling data evidences on-going progress towards the Service's strategic objective around resetting the Balance of Care for our most vulnerable young people.

The priority for the CSW service remains where it is safe to do so we will work to keep children within their family network. Where this is not possible we work tirelessly to ensure that children remain within their local communities. However, a shortage of high quality, local placements is providing significant challenges. Nationally the recruitment of foster carers is a challenge. Locally we encouragingly have seen an upturn in the level of interest from local people to become foster carers. However, this upturn remains below what our need is.

This, in turn, can mean that children are placed in residential settings or in expensive out of authority placements. Additionally, Scotland has seen a sharp increase in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Young People both through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) and spontaneous arrivals. Unaccompanied young people arriving in Aberdeen require a range of placements - foster care, residential, supported accommodation, and varying types of tenancies. Whilst we strive to ensure all children grow up loved, safe and respected the challenges presented by the gap in the number of foster carers required and the changing complexities of children and young people requiring care and protection is seeing a small increase in the number of children placed in residential care.

**7. Staff**

**Table 17. Establishment Levels**

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Establishment actual FTE – Children’s Social Work	344.1	342.0	335.8	343.63		

**Table 18. Accidents and Incidents**

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Status	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter – Children’s Social Work	0	0	0	0		
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter - Children’s Social Work	1	0	3	0		

**Table 19. Absence Due to Illness ( Children’s Social Work) 12 month rolling average**

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 1 2024/25 Corporate Figure	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Children’s Social Work	8.2	8.1	6.9	6.0	7.0		

**Table 20. Absence Due to Illness ( Children’s Social Work) Monthly Average**

Management Measure	April 2024/25	May 2024/25	June 2024/25
	Value	Value	Value
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Children’s Social Work (monthly)	1.16	1.28	1.13

**Service Commentary**


**Table 19.**  
Levels of employee absence due to illness are showing an improving quarterly trend that, taking account of natural seasonal variations, indicates some material impacts are being evidenced from both Service Management’s focus on actions to support employees back to work after periods of illness, and as a result of corporate activities around this theme.

**Table 20.**  
This newly introduced reporting metric calculates the averaged working days lost due to sickness absence each month per employee. This is calculated by dividing the total number of working days lost due to sickness absence during the respective month by the average of all FTE staff employed during that same month. This information aids management teams to evaluate the more immediate impacts of improvement activity against absence management, although this increased frequency is a little more sensitive to natural variation from one reporting period to another.

NB. Members are asked to note the commentary around absence management data at the conclusion of this document

**8. Finance & Controls**

**Table 21. Staff Expenditure ( Children’ Social Work)**

Performance Indicator	Quarter 1 2024/25		Quarter 2 2024/25		Quarter 3 2024/25		Quarter 4 2024/25	
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status
Staff Expenditure – % spend to YTD budget profile – Children’s Social Work	31.4%							

**Service Commentary**

**Table 21.**

The Management Commentary section of the Quarter 1 2024/25 Budget report to Finance and Resources Committee on the 21<sup>st</sup> August, outlined (i) a continued and potentially an extended period of pressure on staff expenditure arising from the increased levels of need and vulnerability amongst our children and young people, a legacy issue from the past four years, and (ii) the consequences of meeting the often significant demands on specialist staff arising from supporting the young asylum/refugee community, the size of which, although now more stable, continues to require considerable inputs by Children's Social Work teams on a sustained basis.

\* 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**




- Target Setting: Where no target is applied against Service Standards, the 'Business-as-Usual' objective is that these services will be delivered on a consistent basis within the available resource.
- Data Trend Directions: Unless stated to the contrary, Long-Term Data Trends are based against the average of 12 monthly, 4 quarterly and 3 annual consecutive periods, respectively.
- Absence Management:





An element of caution requires to be applied around interpretation of the trend data relating to increases in absence data around those services with smaller FTE complements as a minimal number of medium to long term absences can materially affect the average working days lost at Service levels.

It is also useful to appreciate that 12 month rolling data may not reflect the immediacy of effect that is delivered through the implementation of management actions within individual quarterly periods.

- Staff Costs: Staffing costs referred to throughout this Appendix exclude adjustments for the corporate vacancy factor.

Long Term Data Trends

	Improving/Increasing
	No or Limited Change/Stable
	Getting Worse/Decreasing

PI Status	
	Alert (figure more than 20% out with target and being actively pursued)
	Warning (figure between 5% and 20% out with target and being monitored)
	OK (figure within target or better)
	Data Only



## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children’s Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	17 September 2024
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Inspection Reporting
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/24/267
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne/ Graeme Simpson
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Shona Milne / Graeme Simpson
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	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 published 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 approved at committee in July 2024.

### 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 for academic session 2024/25 was approved by the Education and Children's Services Committee in July 2024.

### 3.2 **National Thematic Inspection: Local authority approaches to support school improvement**

Education Scotland are undertaking a national thematic inspection of the approaches taken to support school improvement. A team of 2 inspectors will be visiting Aberdeen on September 17 and 18 to gather evidence on the following themes:

- How do local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through implementing effective improvement planning and standards and quality reporting?
- How do local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through self-evaluation and quality assurance?
- How do local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through professional learning?
- How do local authorities deliver universal support and challenge for all schools, and/or targeted support for specific schools to improve the quality of education?

The inspection team will speak to central staff and focus groups of head teachers, teachers, Elected Members and representatives from professional associations.

Findings from the national report will be shared once published.

### 3.3 **Education Scotland Inspection of Midstocket Playgroup**

In May 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate visited Midstocket Playgroup, a funded provider based in the Rosemount Learning Centre. During the visit, inspectors talked to parents/carers and children, and worked closely with the manager and practitioners.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the setting's work.

- Children who are curious and resilient problem- solvers, who enjoy their interesting experiences at nursery and in their local area very much.
- Highly positive, supportive, and nurturing relationships between parents, practitioners and children. The hardworking team share their passion for outdoor learning with children and families. There is a strong sense of community and belonging.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the manager and a representative from Aberdeen City Council.

- As planned, develop further approaches for planning, observing and monitoring the progress children make in their learning. Observations should clearly identify children’s skills, and fully inform the planning of all spaces, experiences and interactions. Practitioners should ensure all learning experiences and spaces build effectively on what children already know and can do.
- Continue to improve approaches to self-evaluation. The manager should now engage practitioners, parents and children to evaluate and develop further their work.

Nursery Class Quality Indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	Satisfactory (3)
Learning, teaching and assessment	Satisfactory (3)
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and Inclusion	Satisfactory (3)
Securing children’s progress	Satisfactory (3)

The Care Inspectorate awarded the following Grades.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Good (4)
How good is our setting?	Adequate (3)
How good is our leadership?	Good (4)
How good is our staff team?	Good (4)

Inspectors from Education Scotland are confident that the playgroup has the capacity to continue to improve and will make no more visits in connection with this inspection.

As a result of the Care Inspectorate’s findings there will be ongoing support and challenge in relation to improvements in the setting. The setting will remain within **Category 2** of the Quality Improvement Framework and the Locality Lead will offer support to the manager and team to meet their improvement priorities.

A copy of the action plan can be found at Appendix G.

**3.4 Further Inspection of Heathryburn ELC.** Heathryburn is a Local Authority ELC provision. In May 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate conducted a return inspection of the setting. Although inspecting at the same time, each inspection team published their findings independently.

Education Scotland inspectors identified clear evidence of improvements in planning and delivering learning experiences in both the ELC and the early stages of the school. They recognised the positive impact of increased support and guidance provided by the senior leadership team on the quality

of interactions between staff and children. They found the requirement for robust self-evaluation has been addressed and were confident the head teacher and staff had clear evidence of the strengths and development needs of the setting enabling them to continue to improve. The team noted that the school had made clear progress since the original visit in November 2023 and were confident this would continue. Inspectors will not return to the setting and have asked for a report on progress from the local authority in 12 months.

Education Scotland do not issue grades on a return inspection, however the Care Inspectorate categorised the visit as a full inspection and awarded the following grades:

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation Sept '23	Recent Evaluation May 24
How good is our care, play and learning?	Weak (2)	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)
How good is our leadership?	Weak (2)	Good (4)
How good is our staff team?	Weak(2)	Adequate (3)

The Care Inspectorate noted that staff were friendly, caring and fostered positive relationships with families. Staff knew children well, care and support had improved but was not yet fully consistent signalling a need to continue to develop staff skills. Improvements to planning has improved children's experiences. Inspectors were pleased with the improvements in the environment and now feel that children access a more welcoming play space. Quality assurance practices had been improved and are now effectively improving children's outcomes and experiences. The staff were pleased that their hard work had been recognised and understand that they are at the early stages of improvement and that the changes now require to be fully embedded.

The ELC was in **Category 3** prior to the inspection and will remain in **Category 3** until we are satisfied that all priorities are fully embedded. The team will receive regular visits and support from the Locality Lead and QIO who will provide challenge, monitor progress and gather evidence to inform the progress report to be sent to Education Scotland in 12 months.

The link to the full Care Inspectorate report can be found [here](#)

The link to the Education Scotland Report can be found [here](#)

### 3.5 Education Scotland Inspection of Community Learning and Development (CLD)

Education Scotland visited the local authority week beginning 13 May 2024. Inspectors talked to learners and community representatives, CLD leaders, managers, staff, volunteers, and other key stakeholders to help evaluate the effectiveness of Aberdeen City's CLD partnerships' approach to self-evaluation and planning for improvement, and consider progress made against identified priorities in the CLD plan.

Inspectors found that senior leaders and partners have a clear understanding of the needs of learners and communities across the city. The alignment of priorities across the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP), Health and Social Care Partnership and Children's Services Board is helping to demonstrate CLD's effective contribution to key priorities in Aberdeen. Thematic and project partnership work is well-developed and based on increasing understanding of each other's roles and expertise. The use of regular evaluation is helping the service improve learning programmes and training opportunities are supporting staff to develop the skills required to meet changing needs.

Work with partners is well developed with data and intelligence sharing helping to identify and target changing needs in the community. Inspectors noted that the data for all measures of engagement is higher than pre pandemic figures demonstrating the increased reach of the service.

Those facing additional challenges in their lives such as illness, disability, bereavement and the effects of poverty are supported well by CLD providers. Staff and volunteers offer a wide range of adult learning opportunities and are skilled in encouraging local people to participate, this is reducing social isolation and loneliness for many. Adults undertaking community payback orders are supported well by staff to improve their life skills helping many of these learners be more optimistic about their futures.

Well-supported volunteers are helping displaced Ukrainian refugees to socialise and maintain important aspects of their culture and language. The work done with partners and volunteers to establish the Ukrainian Hub at Rosemount was highlighted as an example of highly effective community development and support to volunteers and this will be shared further nationally as an Education Scotland effective practice case study.

The Family Learning Team and their partners work well together to provide families facing challenges with the support they need when they need it. The 'Fit Like?' programme is providing early intervention and effective, bespoke whole-family support.

There is a clear focus on alleviating the impacts of poverty through training and employability programmes and money and benefits advice across a range of partners. English for speakers of other languages learners are successfully using the communication skills they are gaining in other contexts.

Targeted support to young people on flexible learning pathways by youth workers, delivered in schools and community settings, is highly valued by young people, parents and teachers.

Two areas for improvement were noted:

- The strategic leadership and governance of CLD requires improvement. There is insufficient collective ownership by partners of the governance and planning for CLD. As a result, senior leaders do not have clear strategic oversight. Staff and partners do not see the 2021-24 CLD plan as being a principal focus of their work. There is not yet sufficient input

or influence from community representatives or young people and adult learners in CLD strategic planning. Shared self-evaluation across partners is not yet embedded. Taking a more joined-up approach could support more efficient use of resources and avoid any duplication of effort. It may also help to develop a fuller understanding of the impact of CLD.

- Whilst a broad range of learner data is captured and reported, this is not yet analysed in context or against targets. There is a need to set clear, shared measures of success across all CLD partners. Consistent sharing of data from the full range of partners involved in delivering CLD would help to demonstrate further its impact.

The whole CLD team were delighted with the positive feedback and areas of progress identified. Education Scotland will not return for a further visit. They have requested a Local Authority progress report against the action point identified within 12 months. The report can be found [here](#).

### 3.6 **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.

3.7 Where a setting has been subject to a return visit from the Care Inspectorate, we have included the date of their previous visit and the gradings for reference.

3.8 **Countesswells ELC**, a Local Authority setting, received an unannounced inspection on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024. This was the first inspection since opening in August 2023. Inspectors found that children were cared for by nurturing and friendly staff and that staff work well together to ensure children's experience across the day is positive and that they are safe. The bright, airy, and spacious environment was recognised as a strength, as was the support and encouragement children were given to ensure they were actively involved in leading their learning. Inspectors noted that the service is well led highlighting the motivation and enthusiasm of the manager.

Self-evaluation and quality assurance procedures are well developed.

<b>Aspect being inspected</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
How good is our care, play and learning?	Good (4)
How good is our setting?	Good (4)
How good is our leadership?	Good (4)
How good is our staff team?	Good (4)

The newly formed team are delighted with the inspection feedback and have clear plans in place outlining how they will continue to develop the setting. The Locality Lead will continue to offer support, and the setting will move from **Category 3** (because it was a new setting) to **Category 2** to ensure ongoing support for the relatively new team.

The link to the full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.9 **Little Acorns**, an NHS Funded Provider setting based in the grounds of Cornhill hospital, received an unannounced Care Inspectorate inspection on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Inspectors noted that children were very well supported by staff who were consistently responsive to their needs. Little Acorns has established very good connections with the wider community, resulting in a range of positive experiences for the children. The team, along with the support of families, had worked hard to develop the wooded area into a rich play and learning environment for the children. Inspectors identified that the manager leads the service very well and is committed to developing the service by empowering the staff team and creating many opportunities for families. The children and families are supported by a motivated and skilled staff team who worked closely with each other to provide high quality, inclusive experiences for all children.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation June 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 Little Acorns are delighted with the very positive report and will continue to work together to provide high quality experiences for children and their families.

Little Acorns will remain in **Category 1** of the Quality Improvement Framework. The full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.10 **Riverbank ELC**, a Local Authority setting, received an unannounced visit from the Care Inspectorate on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024. Inspectors noted that the improvements identified during the last inspection had been maintained. Staff provided children with cuddles, reassurance and praise. Inspectors reported that families were welcomed into the playroom during arrival and departure times. Inspectors noted that opportunities to explore and extend literacy and numeracy should be further developed, alongside developing approaches to gaining the meaningful views of families and children.

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation April '23	Recent Evaluation May 24
How good is our care, play and learning?	Weak (2)	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)	Adequate (3)
How good is our leadership?	Weak (2)	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Weak (2)	Adequate (3)

The team are pleased that the improvements made have been recognised and will continue to work to the plan to realise further improvements.

Riverbank was in **Category 3** prior to the inspection and will remain in **Category 3** until we are satisfied that all improvements are fully embedded. A copy of the action plan can be found in Appendix A  
A copy of the full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.11 **Kirkhill ELC**, a Local Authority setting, received an unannounced visit from the Care Inspectorate on the 14, 15 May 2024 with a return on the 17 May. During the visit inspectors spent time talking to children and staff, observed children’s experiences and reviewed policy documents. Parent feedback was limited as only 5 responses were received.

Aspect being inspected	Previous Evaluation July '23	Recent Evaluation May 24
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)	Good (4))
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)

Concerns were raised with the HT and the central team during lunch service on the first day of inspection around supervision of the lunches. Children leaving the table whilst still eating were a choking risk and one child picked food off the floor. Inspectors agreed to give the setting time to review procedures and arranged to return on the Friday to reinspect the lunchtime routine. Prior to the inspectors returning on Friday 17 May the recently appointed HT, who is also the nursery manager, reviewed practice and updated the procedures to establish improved routines around mealtimes. She ensured all staff were fully briefed and monitored the lunch service personally to ensure new procedures and routines were followed. The same approach was taken in relation to procedures around completion of medication forms. When inspectors returned, they were assured by the actions that had been taken to address the concerns.

Inspectors identified that children experienced kind and caring interactions from staff and significant improvements in the physical environment with children having access to well maintained and organised spaces and a wide range of good quality resources. They noted however that quality assurance processes should be further developed to support the improvement of the service and suggested that the deployment of staff be considered as staff were not always effectively deployed to meet the changing play and personal needs of the children throughout the day

The locality lead will continue to visit the ELC fortnightly to ensure new procedures and routines are being maintained .

The ELC was in **Category 3** prior to the inspection and will remain in **Category 3** until we are satisfied that all procedures are fully embedded. They will receive regular visits and fortnightly support from the Locality Lead who will provide challenge and monitor progress.



A copy of the action plan can be found at Appendix B. The full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.12 **Muirfield ELC**, a Local Authority setting, received an unannounced visit from the Care Inspectorate on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024. The inspectors commented on recent challenges in relation to staffing and felt that the team had worked hard to minimise the impact on children.

They noted that children were cared for by staff who knew them well and used kind, nurturing approaches. Although ongoing improvements to the environment supported positive play experiences, more development was still required, particularly outdoors. Inspectors noted improvements around safety and commented the new procedures developed by the service were effective. It was noted that quality assurance processes were developing, and the team were able to identify where practice could be improved, and the management team had a clear and realistic plan of how to achieve this.

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation Nov '23	Recent Evaluation May 24
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?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)

Although the setting has made some good progress over the past 6 months work is still required in order to overtake identified priorities.

Muirfield will remain in **Category 3** of the Quality Improvement Framework receiving regular support and challenge and fortnightly visits from the locality lead until we are satisfied that all improvements are fully embedded in practice.

A copy of the plan can be found at Appendix C The full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.13 **J Puddleducks**, a funded provider setting based in the Dyce area of Aberdeen, received an unannounced visit from Care Inspectorate on 30 April and 1 May 2024. Inspectors noted that children benefitted from warm and nurturing interactions from staff and were having fun while playing indoors and outdoors during their time at the service. The environment promoted children's choice and supported them in leading their own play. Staff were committed to promoting positive outcomes for children; however, time and support is required to develop skills, knowledge and understanding for less experienced staff.

A system of self-evaluation, quality assurance and planning for improvement had been implemented and had led to some improvements within the environment however managers require to develop this further to achieve consistent and sustainable improvements across the service.

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation May 23	Recent Evaluation May 24
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
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)	Adequate (3)

Staff are pleased that their work around improving the service had been recognised however there needs to be a continued focus on self-evaluation to ensure continuous improvement .

The Locality Lead Officer will support the service through regular visits and contact to offer support and challenge.

Puddleducks will move from **Category 3** to **Category 2** of the Quality Improvement Framework.

A copy of the plan can be found at Appendix D

The full report can be read [here](#)

- 3.14 **Danestone ELC**, a Local Authority setting, received an unannounced inspection from Care Inspectorate in May 2024. During the inspection major concerns were raised in relation to children's health, safety and wellbeing. These concerns were reported to the Local Authority. In response to this the locality lead and a practitioner from Autism Outreach were based in the setting full time until the end of term and supported staff to develop a detailed plan which was submitted within 24 hours of receiving the concerns reporting the immediate actions that had been taken to address the health and safety requirements. Representatives from the local authority continue to support the setting.

Inspectors found that children were not always supported to maintain high standards of infection prevention and control practices and that staff did not always demonstrate an understanding, or recognise, or respond appropriately to children's individual needs. Some families reported not experiencing a warm and welcoming ethos. Most children had fun at points during the day and enjoyed playing with their friends and the outdoor space. Most staff interactions did not sustain children's interests or extend their learning

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation May 2024
How good is our care, play and learning?	Weak (2)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)
How good is our leadership?	Weak (2)
How good is our staff team?	Weak (2)

Prior to the unannounced visit the setting was in **Category 2** of the Quality Improvement Framework however following the inspection they will move to **Category 3**.

The setting will continue to have weekly visits from the Locality Lead to model practice and offer intensive support to ensure they meet all of the remaining areas for improvement. The QIO will oversee the action plan through regular support and challenge meetings with the Head Teacher and members of Senior management in the setting.

Copies of the initial and ongoing action plan can be found at Appendix E The full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.15 **Forehill ELC**, a Local Authority setting, received an unannounced inspection from Care Inspectorate in June 24. Inspectors reported that children were happy, confident and settled and were leaders of their own play and learning. Daily access to fresh air and outdoor experiences supported children's health and wellbeing. They found the staff team worked well together to meet children's needs, and used their skills and knowledge to ensure good quality outcomes for children. Quality assurance and improvement planning processes could be further developed to support effective evaluation and reflection.

Aspect being inspected	Previous Evaluation Aug 23	Recent Evaluation June 24
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)

Staff are pleased that the improvements made have been recognised and will continue to develop their approach to self-evaluation and improvement. The setting will remain in **Category 2** of the Quality Improvement Framework to ensure their improvement journey continues. The full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.16 **Dyce ELC**, a Local Authority setting, received an unannounced 2 day inspection in June 2024. Inspectors reported that children were happy and having fun playing with their friends and staff. Staff were caring, respectful and provided comfort and reassurance to support children's wellbeing. Children could choose to play indoors or outdoors throughout most of the day as both areas were accessible and were well staffed. Early literacy and numeracy development was encouraged by staff in children's play and learning. Spaces for children met their development needs and play areas were interesting and inviting. Families were meaningfully involved in influencing change within the setting with increasing opportunities available for children. Staff communicated very well with each other and worked well together. Observation and assessment of children's learning continued to be an area of improvement identified by the service.

Aspect being inspected	Previous Evaluation Sept 21	Recent Evaluation June 24
How good is our care, play and learning?	Good (4)	Good (4)

How good is our setting?	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
How good is our leadership?	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
How good is our staff team?	Very Good (5)	Very Good (5)

The team are delighted with the very positive inspection feedback and will continue to offer the high quality experiences for children and their families as well as continuing to work on their identified priorities.

Dyce ELC will remain in **Category 1** of the Quality Improvement Framework and will share their successes with other settings across the city. The full report can be read [here](#)

### 3.17 **Thematic Review of Disabled Children & Young People.**

The Care Inspectorate have concluded their national thematic review in relation to Disabled Children and Young People. Aberdeen City was one of four local authority areas where the Care Inspectorate undertook a “deeper dive.” This activity involved a range of inspection activities including file reading, meeting with children, young people, and families in receipt of support/services, as well as meeting with relevant staff. The findings of these deeper dive activities will inform the final report although not be attributed to the specific local authority.

The Care Inspectorate have provided verbal feedback on their findings of their inspection activity at a local level. This will support our ongoing improvement work as well as our preparation for a future Joint Inspection of Services to Children and Young People in need of Care and Protection. In addition, the learning will feed into the statutory Children’s Services Plan. The final report was due to be published by the Care Inspectorate in May 2024 but has been deferred until ‘mid-August’ to ensure it is published at the same time as an easy read/accessible version.

### 3.18 **Thematic Review in relation to Care Experienced Young People**

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April the Local Authority, as the lead agency, was notified by the Care Inspectorate that they were undertaking a national thematic review of the experiences of young people leaving care in Scotland and the extent to which their rights are upheld. The review will run from April 2024 with a report being published in November 2024.

All 32 local partnerships were asked to complete a survey. The Corporate Parenting Group had oversight of this, but it required input from Health; Housing; Education as well as Children’s Social Work. This had to be submitted by **22 May 2024**. The self-evaluation survey will support our ongoing improvement work as well as our preparation for a future Joint Inspection of Services to Children and Young People in need of Care and Protection. In addition, the learning will feed into the statutory Children’s Services Plan.

In addition to the survey the Thematic Review will also include:

- a literature review, including any national research and publications and additional published reports.
- feedback from focus groups with scrutiny partners, a professional interest group and regulated care service inspectors.

- analysis of relevant national data.

A “deeper dive” across four local authority areas will be undertaken. The following key elements will form this part of the thematic review.

- a focused meeting with the lead professionals for five selected young people in each area: this will combine a case discussion with access to records.
- individual meetings with the five young people
- focus groups of senior leaders, champions boards and corporate parenting boards.
- a review of relevant local documentation.

The thematic review will result in the publication of a single national overview report in November 2024. The report will identify what is working well across Scotland but also whether anything is getting in the way of best practice drawing on the perspectives of young people, families, and staff supporting care experienced young people.

### 3.19 Thematic Review in relation to Social Work Governance

On the 15 July, the Care Inspectorate announced they were undertaking a national review of social work governance and assurance. The aim is to gain an overview of approaches to ensuring governance and assurance arrangements are in place in order to provide public assurance that social work duties are being appropriately discharged. The review will explore how staff are supported to carry out their roles and broach any concerns. The review will consider the extent to which social work leaders influence decision making and have strategic oversight of significant risk relating to key areas of legislative responsibility including adults, children and justice.

The approach of the review will involve the undernoted activities, a timeline for which is set out in the document attached at the end of this briefing.

- A national staff survey, focussing on front line social work staff and their first line managers. (Each local authority will be provided with a copy of the staff survey results to support any local improvement activity),
- Review of core documents that demonstrate governance and assurance approaches,
- A structured interview with a few core staff from each local authority area, including Chief Social Work Officers,
- Three themed focus groups, where each local authority will be invited to send two middle or senior managers.

The Care Inspectorate have intimated that the approach will be proportionate, mindful of the impact inspection activity has on staff. The Care Inspectorate will produce a single national report in spring 2025. While they will not be evaluating partnerships on their performance, they will report on what is working well across Scotland, identifying potential areas for improvement.

#### 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?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Risk of not improving outcomes for learners	Positive engagement with Inspection agencies and sharing learning across the system where appropriate.	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Positive engagement with Inspection agencies and sharing learning across the system where appropriate.	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	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
<b>Financial</b>	No risks identified			
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a	High levels of assurance are taken	L	Yes

	reputational risk to the Council	Quality Improvement and Inspection visits		
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No risks identified			

## 8. OUTCOMES

<u><a href="#">COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</a></u>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<p><b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b></p> <p>Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices.</p> <p>Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.</p>	<p>External scrutiny provides helpful assurance that there is sufficient focus on helping young people recover from the pandemic and that the school self-evaluation and improvement plan is well positioned to support a closing of the poverty related attainment gap.</p>
<u><a href="#">Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</a></u>	
<p>Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p>	<p>Engagement with inspectors provides an opportunity to learn from national best practice and validate self-evaluation evidence available. The support and challenge received by Inspectors helps to shape improvement plans for the coming sessions in keeping with the LOIP stretch aims.</p>
<p><b>Regional and City Strategies</b></p> <p>Regional Cultural Strategy</p> <p>Prevention Strategy</p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p> <p>National Improvement Framework Plan</p>	<p>Engagement with the Inspectorate is fully aligned to the city prevention strategy. Work to address poverty and improvement in the Children's services plan, the Child Poverty Action Plan and the National Improvement Framework Plan is also supported through external scrutiny.</p>

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

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

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## 11. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Riverbank CI Action Plan  
Appendix B - Kirkhill CI Action Plan  
Appendix C - Muirfield CI Action Plan  
Appendix D - Puddleducks CI Action Plan  
Appendix E - Danestone Initial Action Plan  
Appendix F – Danestone CI Action Plan  
Appendix G – Midsocket Action Plan

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

<b>Name</b>	Shona Milne/Graeme Simpson
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Areas for improvement	Action required	Stakeholders & timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG
<b>How good is our care, play and learning? 1.1 Nurturing care and support &amp; 1.3 Play and learning</b>					
Ensure children's overall wellbeing is supported through effective use of personal planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review and make amendments to personal plans to ensure that they are user friendly and updates are clear to read</li> <li>- Staff to engage in self-evaluation and research the information that is recorded in high quality personal plans to inform changes to our processes</li> <li>- Personal plan monitoring to be RAG rated in order of priority and completion of actions- document to be created and used</li> </ul>	<p>05.08.2024 SEYP &amp; HT</p> <p>10.06.2024 All staff</p> <p>01.05.2024 SEYP &amp; HT</p> <p>All staff</p>	Children will have detailed personal plans which will be regularly reviewed and updated with staff and families. The detailed plans will be used by all staff and shared with relevant professionals to ensure there is a consistent approach shared for better outcomes for each individual child.	<p>10.06.2024- Staff have engaged with self-evaluations to indicate the information that they agree is important to be shared within a child's personal plan- SEYP will create a new personal plan format and clear guidance on how to complete these will be created and identified before the new intake of children in August 2024.</p> <p>01.08.2024 – New personal plans are now being used for all children, staff have given the feedback that they find the new format more user friendly and easier to identify information. We will seek parent feedback after the new intake of children have transitioned into the ELC setting. The new format has provided staff the opportunity to be able to clearly identify any additional supports that may be required for each individual.</p>	<p>10/06/2024</p> <p>05/08/2024</p>

<p>Effective use of planning and child observations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff to be given refresher training on evaluative language</li> <li>- Create an example of a high quality observation for staff to reflect on</li> <li>- SEYP to quality assure SEESAW observations and ensure that there is relevant information within the contents and next steps are being identified and followed</li> <li>- Staff to indicate next steps for children individually and use this information to plan for future activities and learning</li> <li>- Planning board to be utilised by the whole team to show continuous provision, responsive &amp; intentional planning</li> <li>- Key workers to meet termly with key children's parents to discuss learning developments and next steps, creating a link between home and nursery learning opportunities</li> </ul>	<p>08.07.2024 SEYP</p> <p>08.07.2024 All Staff</p> <p>26.08.2024 KW</p>	<p>Children will benefit from relaxed, play experiences which are well planned around their individual needs and extend their learning in a way which is personal to them. These being shared with families will allow the further extension of learning opportunities at home and promote a consistent approach to care and learning.</p>	<p>01.08.2024 – SEYP has evaluated the current key worker system and has renewed it so that each EYP has less key children that they are responsible for, allowing EYPs to have better time management and be able to provide high quality detailed observations and plan for next steps for each individual child.</p> <p>01.08.2024 - SEYP created an exemplar observation with all ELC. The exemplar shares how to ensure we are providing high quality observations for the children, indicating the child's interests and engagement, the learning that has taken place and next steps.</p> <p>14.08.2024- EYPs have now been using the new observations format, they have sought out feedback from SEYP and continue to evaluate their observations.</p>	<p>08/07/2024</p>
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<p>Staff interactions to be meaningful and support learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff to be upskilled and have opportunities to engage in meaningful interactions and play experiences</li> <li>- Staff deployment and area zones to be followed consistently to ensure adequate staffing available for interactions across the setting</li> <li>- HT, LLO &amp; SEYP's to complete staff practice observations and share feedback with staff, highlighting any potential training needs.</li> <li>- Children's learning and next steps will inform planned activities and learning interactions</li> <li>- All staff to be responsive to children's needs: HT &amp; SEYP to engage in reflective conversations with staff about interactions and ensuring that they are not just task-based</li> </ul>	<p>26.08.2024 SEYP</p> <p>10.06.2024 SEYP All Staff</p> <p>09.09.2024 HT, SEYP &amp; LLO</p> <p>24.06.2024 KW</p>		<p>01.08.2024 – In preparation for the upcoming change of hours provided, a new deployment rota has been created by SEYP to ensure there is adequate staffing across the setting throughout the day. The new rota allows each zone to be supported by an EYP for the full duration of the day with SW's available for additional support and fulfilling daily duties such as nappy changing, snacks etc. Rota allows staff to remain within their zone for one week, allowing time to gauge children's interests and scaffold their learning through a variety of offered play experiences. Areas of interest and learning developments will be shared between staff at the end of each session to inform opportunities provided the following day.</p>	<p>01/08/2024</p>
<p><b>How good is our setting? 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities</b></p>					

<p>Ensure children experience high quality facilities, the provider, manager and staff should ensure that the environment provides a well-furnished, comfortable and homely place for children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff to be given new lead roles for area developments, using CIRCLE framework to audit the opportunities provided and children's engagement with the area and resources</li> <li>- Staff to be reminded to use the zone checklists at the beginnings and ends of day and held accountable for doing so</li> <li>- Staff should use the planning documents to provide opportunities, experiences and provocations for the children to engage with</li> </ul>	<p>01.05.2024 SEYP</p> <p>03.06.2024 SEYP</p>	<p>Children's learning, play and wellbeing needs will be met. Children will have access to a comfortable well furnished, well-resourced environment.</p>	<p>May 2024- All staff have been given areas of development within the setting to ensure the areas are improved and well resourced</p> <p>03.06.2024- All staff were reminded of the use of Zone checklists. SEYP regularly reviews the checklists to ensure they are being completed/amended as appropriate</p>	<p>01/08/2024</p> <p>15/08/2024- Circle framework to be utilised by staff in deployment areas to evaluate resources and learning available</p>
<p>Ensure the environment is literacy and numeracy rich with opportunities for the children to engage in learning through play experiences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Audit of resources to support literacy and numeracy development</li> <li>- Staff to utilise their CIRCLE training and resources to evaluate the setting and resources provided</li> <li>- Children's learning and next steps to be clearly identified within their SEESAW profile</li> </ul>	<p>29.07.2024 All Staff</p>			
<p>Ensure that there is a smooth transition as we transition to a new routine of offering 9am - 3pm attendance for all children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular team discussions about the changes to delivery</li> <li>- Full staff team including HT, SEYP and LLO to participate in discussions about the new routine</li> <li>- Liaise with parents to ensure that we are supporting each child individually to transition to the new hours</li> <li>- Continue to evaluate how the new routine is having an impact and reflect on the</li> </ul>	<p>05.07.2024 SEYP, HT, LLO &amp; All Staff</p> <p>09.09.2024 SEYP, HT</p> <p>All Staff</p>		<p>01.08.2024 New routine has been shared with ELC staff and LLO. No concerns raised. ELC staff are trialling the new routine over the quieter summer break to highlight any potential changes that may need to be made in preparation for the new term.</p>	<p>15/08/2024- Planning and preparation complete- new routine pending</p>

	positives and negatives to further develop				
<b>How good is our leadership? - 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well</b>					
To ensure quality care and experiences for children, quality assurance and self-evaluation should be embedded into practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased staff observation to be undertaken by SLT to identify any areas for development and training / support required.</li> <li>- SEYP to reintroduce one to one Support and Supervision meetings once monthly for all staff</li> <li>- Develop better strategies for parents and children engaging with self-evaluations</li> <li>- Ensure information from self-evaluations are used to inform changes</li> <li>- Re-visit vision, values and aims and update as appropriate in collaboration with staff, children and families</li> <li>- Continue with regular staff meetings: as the hours delivered changes we will introduce more frequent and more focused meetings in relation with self-evaluation</li> <li>- The team to engage more frequently with planning, tracking and monitoring.</li> </ul>	<p>09.09.2024 SEYP &amp; HT</p> <p>26.08.2024 SEYP</p> <p>03.06.2024 SEYP &amp; HT</p> <p>09.09.2024 SEYP &amp; HT</p>	Children and families are meaningfully involved and influence changes within the setting Quality assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement plans, lead to high quality care and support for all children and their families	<p>03.06.2024 Parents are now engaging with SEESAW as a communication tool - Self-Evaluations have been sent out to parents as a google form via SEESAW which has seen an improved number of responses from before. We will continue to review how parents engage with self-evaluations through this platform.</p> <p>16.07.2024- We have created an improvement tree located within the ELC entrance where we will evidence actions taken from staff, children and parents feedback and self-evaluations. The "You said, we did" approach will allow service users to clearly see how the team have acted on feedback. During transition meetings</p>	<p>31/07/2024- staff and parents</p> <p>15/08/2024- Children</p>

				<p>with new families, staff will highlight the improvement tree and encourage parents to contribute regularly.</p> <p>31.07.2024 – SEYP has created a clear plan and focus for weekly meetings (Wednesday's) for the remainder of the year, ensuring there is a clear understanding of what is expected at each team meeting, with each week have a different challenge question for self-evaluation. Feedback from these meetings will inform future improvement actions and evaluate current progress and improvement.</p> <p>During each weekly meeting, there will be time set aside for planning, allowing the full team to contribute to the planning and share ideas and areas for development for individual children.</p>	
<b>How good is our staff team? – 4.3 Staff deployment</b>					

<p>Ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with children across the day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planning board to be utilised by all staff to share outcomes for children and next steps.</li> <li>- SEYP to review staff deployment zones before the changes to hours are introduced</li> <li>- Review of the environment and deployment to cater for the increase in children present when the new hours change</li> <li>- Utilise the cloakroom area to create a fourth zone</li> </ul>	<p>05.07.2024 All Staff 29.07.2024 SEYP</p>	<p>Children will be supported by staff who are knowledgeable and fully aware of their care and learning needs and are able to communicate effectively in order to promote these, improving outcomes for children and families.</p>	<p>03.06.2024- Staff have engaged in informal conversations about how they would like to set up the setting for the changes- discussions about utilising the cloakroom as a fourth zone and what this would look like - what activities would be offered, how it would be managed around drop off and collection times etc. This will be reviewed and discussed again at the next team meeting 11.06.2024</p> <p>03.06.2024- SEYP reviewed rota due to staff movement - If changes are made to rota SEYP indicated this daily on the whiteboard to ensure all zones/ duties are covered with relevant staffing</p> <p>01.08.2024 – In preparation for the upcoming change of hours provided, a new deployment rota has been created by SEYP to ensure there is adequate staffing across the setting throughout the day. The new rota allows each zone to be supported by an EYP for the full duration of the day with SW 's</p>	<p>01/08/2024</p>
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				available for additional support and fulfilling daily duties such as nappy changing, snacks etc.	
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**Key**

HT – Head Teacher & Registered Manager

SEYP – Senior Early Years Practitioner

LL – Locality Lead Officer

KW – Key Workers

SW – Support Workers

EYP – Early Years Practitioner

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Areas for improvement	Action required	Timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion	Rag rating
<b>How good is our care play and learning? 1.1 Nurturing care and support &amp; 1.3 Play and learning</b>					
Lunchtime routine	Procedures in place – revisited and understood by all staff	Immediately	Children will be effectively supported during lunchtime and kept safe	Staff meeting Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> May at 4pm Lead by HT and attended by all present staff ( MS and TS did not attend). Procedures emailed to all staff	
Lunchtime staffing	Rota adapted to ensure staffing is more consistent and staff capability can be observed more effectively.	Immediately	Children will be effectively supported during lunchtime and kept safe	This is in place. Changes prior to Summer holidays have been done gradually so staff can be monitored.	
Lunchroom – other activities	Sand and Water to be closed at 11am and art and craft also closed and resources placed	Starting 17 <sup>th</sup> May	Lunchtime will be a calm, safe and enjoyable experience	This is in place and is being	

Appendix B – Kirkhill CI Action Plan

	out of reach of children while lunch is going on.			monitored by SEYPs.	
Medication – some forms had not been signed by parents after administration. - Some medication forms had been filed incorrectly.	Where medication is administered, this will be recorded on the register on the iPad to highlight this to the person in charge of pick up. The form will also be added to the pick-up clip board. Effective quality assurance will highlight any issues regarding medication paper work and forms.	Starting June 2024	All forms will be signed by parents when medication is administered.  All paperwork will be completed and filed correctly to ensure the safety of all children.	All forms are now signed by parents.	
Resources to promote literacy and numeracy	Self-evaluation (Circle Literacy and Numeracy Audits) of each area of the environment will be carried out and areas will be developed accordingly.	Nov 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children will develop literacy and numeracy skills appropriately in all areas of the nursery.</li> <li>• Staff will be more knowledgeable and therefore more effective promoting numeracy and literacy</li> </ul>		
Staff interactions with pupils	Senior staff will regularly carry out playroom observations to monitor staff interactions and identify next steps for individual staff.	Oct 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children will experience quality interactions to further develop their learning and support progression.</li> <li>• Staff will be more aware of their role in a child's play and progressing learning.</li> </ul>		

Appendix B – Kirkhill CI Action Plan

<p>Planning process requires further development</p>	<p>Staff will continue to be supported to engage with the new planning system. Quality assurance will identify where further improvements are required and these will be acted upon.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children will be engaged in quality learning experiences which promote curiosity , creativity and inquiry.</li> <li>• Staff will be more confident with responsive and intentional planning processes.</li> </ul>	<p>SEYPs led staff in planning session during Aug in service.</p>	
<p>Online journals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some children had limited entries and next steps were not identified.</li> <li>- Some parents could not access their child's profile</li> </ul>	<p>Quality assurance will monitor how many quality entries are made for each child and that necessary next steps are recorded and supported.</p> <p>Parents will be supported to access their child's learning journal. This will be built into the induction process going forward.</p>	<p>Starting Aug 24</p>	<p>An appropriate number of records will be added to each child's online journal along with appropriate next steps which support progression of learning.</p> <p>Parents will all have access to their child's online journal and be encouraged to contribute entries from home learning and comments from ELC posts.</p>	<p>SEYPs started more closely monitoring the number of entries beginning July 24.</p> <p>New parents are now supported to access online journals during inductions.</p>	
<p>Community links</p>	<p>Nursery staff will consider how to make best use of the community when planning learning experiences.</p>	<p>Starting Aug 24</p>	<p>Community links will be built into children's learning experiences.</p>	<p>This was considered when planning as a staff</p>	

					on August in service.	
<b>How good is our setting? 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities.</b>						
Resources to promote literacy and numeracy	Self-evaluation (Circle Literacy and Numeracy Audits) of each area of the environment will be carried out and areas will be developed accordingly.	Nov 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children will develop literacy and numeracy skills appropriately in all areas of the nursery.</li> <li>Staff will be more knowledgeable and therefore more effective promoting numeracy and literacy</li> </ul>			
<b>How good is our leadership? - 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well</b>						
Vision, values and aims to be embedded in practice	Staff to use this language with children and families.	Aug 24 onwards	The vision, values and aims will be evident in practice.			

Appendix B – Kirkhill CI Action Plan

	e.g during planned activities, snack, lunch times etc.				
Self-evaluation requires formalisation	Self-evaluation will be carried out regularly using the 'Care Inspectorate: 'Quality framework for daycare children, childminding and school-aged children'	Aug 24 onwards	Self-evaluation will identify where improvements are required and this will impact positively on outcomes for children.		
Quality assurance	A robust quality assurance calendar will be followed and next steps for improvements identified on an ongoing basis.	Aug 24 onwards	Systems will be in place and embedded in practice to promote high quality outcomes for children and families.	New calendar in place. Aug 24	
<b>How good is our staff team? – 4.3 Staff deployment</b>					
Monitoring of staff practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff 1-2-1 meetings to be continued to ensure that individual support is offered, and that staff practice is developing.</li> <li>Observations of staff practice will be undertaken with clear focus and detailed feedback, next steps and support provided</li> </ul>	Stated April 2024	All staff will be competent and following relevant guidance and procedures.		



Appendix B – Kirkhill CI Action Plan

	by SEYPs and manager.				
Staff deployment at times was ineffective to meet children's needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff duties rota adapted to ensure staffing is more consistent where it is needed, and staff capability can be observed more effectively.</li> </ul>	Immediately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children's needs are being met effectively.</li> <li>Staff will be more confident to move where they are needed and communicate this more effectively to team members.</li> <li>Staff will have a more effective overview of the setting and be able to act accordingly.</li> </ul>	Rotas are now created so that staff are completing the same duties for a longer period of time.	

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## Appendix C - Muirfield Action Plan 2024-25

Areas for improvement	Action required	Stakeholders & timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and review/confirmed completion	RAG Rating
<b>How good is our care play and learning? 1.1 Nurturing care and support &amp; 1.3 Play and learning</b>					
<p>a) Ensure all staff are aware of and understand the information within the personal plans and use this to effectively to meet each child's health, welfare, and safety needs.</p> <p>b) Ensure all staff understand and follow all procedures for the safe storage, recording and administration of medication.</p>	<p>IEPs will be created to identify specific targets that will be tracked.</p> <p>Attainment data and QA discussions will evidence impact of interventions</p>	Dec 2023	<p>ELC Team will identify promptly, children who have barriers to learning and require additional support.</p> <p>Increase the provision of high-quality personalised support through effective staged intervention processes to meet learners needs.</p>	<p>All key workers completed personal plan audit detailing how strategies for individual children will be transferred into practice to support play and learning. Audit completed 17/11/23. Key workers shared audit with team to ensure consistent understanding of approaches. Personal Plans reviewed and updated accordingly as part of QA calendar.</p> <p>Key children and strategies discussed and shared at fortnightly team meetings.</p> <p>Key Worker highlights individual children's needs. This will be shared with all supply staff to ensure all staff have a clear overview of individual needs and how to respond to these (completed 08/01/23). Head Teacher reviewed key aspects of updated Medication Policy with team. Simplified flow chart of Medication procedures and correct forms completed also revised with team (17/11/23 and 23/01/23). SEYP provides additional time out for all staff to reread new Medication Policy and sign to show understanding.</p> <p>Medication audits in QA Calendar.</p>	

## Appendix C - Muirfield Action Plan 2024-25

				<p>Care Plans reviewed and signed by parents each term.</p> <p>Head Teacher completes random medication checks to ensure correct medication procedures are being followed at all times.</p> <p>Staff trained on how to write an IEP.</p>	
<p>a) Ensure that children’s handwashing is effectively supervised and supported; and</p> <p>b) Have robust arrangements in place to ensure that children are protected through secure entry to the premises.</p>	<p>Quality assurance observations undertaken by Head Teacher and SEYP will show that staff are actively implementing the policy and procedure to ensure children are safe and health.</p>	<p>Dec 2023</p>	<p>Staff will understand and implement the appropriate procedures to ensure children are safe and healthy.</p>	<p>Staff Rota documents member of staff responsible for supervising handwashing at lunch, tea and snack times.</p> <p>All staff aware of importance of ensuring good handwashing routines.</p> <p>Cleaning schedules in place to ensure hygiene throughout ELC.</p> <p>Staff rota documents staff member responsible for ensuring secure entry to the premises.</p> <p>Updated Missing Child Policy details procedures that staff follow to ensure children are protected through secure entry to the premises.</p> <p>All staff understand that any visitor should report to the main office to sign in.</p>	

## Appendix C - Muirfield Action Plan 2024-25

				<p>** Additional action following CI inspection 28th February 2024</p> <p>Revisit routines and staffs role in supporting supervision to ensure effective handwashing,</p> <p>Standard operating procedure audits (including handwashing) added to annual quality assurance calendar and completed by the SEYP for individual staff. Staff will be provided with individual feedback.</p>	
<p>To ensure that practice protects and promotes positive outcomes for children, meets regulatory requirements and SSSC expectations, the provider should develop robust quality assurance practices. This should include, but not be limited to:</p> <p>a) Regular support and supervision of staff.</p>	<p>We will create an interactive improvement planning wall which clearly identifies our priorities and the progress we are making towards this.</p> <p>We will include creative and manageable ways to gather feedback from parents on our key priorities and HGIOELC core QI's.</p> <p>Our Improvement wall will clearly identify key priorities of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Planning for learning</li> <li>- quality interactions</li> <li>- Quality Environments both inside and out Environment</li> </ul>	<p>Embedded August 2024</p>	<p>Quality Assurance Calendar for session 2023-2024 will provide planned evaluation activities to monitor the progress of our improvement agenda and evaluate our practice against HGIOELC QI's.</p> <p>All stakeholders will be aware of our Improvement Plan and progress made and will be involved in evaluating our provision.</p>	<p>Quality Assurance Calendar will evidence QA focus. Evidence from QA activities and feedback will show continuous self-evaluation of practice linked to HGIOELC QI's and key improvement priorities.</p> <p>Progress will be displayed, visually on our Improvement Wall.</p> <p>Feedback from our stakeholder self-evaluations will show parents understand and help shape our improvement journey.</p> <p>Staff self-evaluation will show a shared understanding of our improvement journey.</p>	

## Appendix C - Muirfield Action Plan 2024-25

b) Audits of all records and practice.				Staff will have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in our improvement journey.  Quality Assurance visits will evidence the improvements in practice.	
	Staff will complete feedback forms after each visit to other settings that highlight how their visit will impact on practice and support improvement focus area.	Dec 24	SLT and SEYP's will ensure opportunities for staff to look outwards in order to review and refresh their pedagogical knowledge and learn from best practice.  Focus on planning, learning environment, interactions.	HT, SEYP to identify ELC settings to visit. SEYP to give staff members improvement focus areas and responsibilities. Staff will provide feedback from visits to other settings and will share developments on findings. SLT will support staff to identify relevant settings to visit. Realising the Ambition focus as staff team.	
To promote children's learning and development, the provider should ensure all staff have the skills and knowledge to plan for child centred, responsive learning, and support this with high quality observations and interactions.	Children will have consistent opportunities to lead their own learning.  Staff will be confident in identifying next steps in learning for children and this will then be evidenced in our planning, children's seesaw, displays and in personal plans.	Feb 25	Children will take more ownership and lead their own learning. They will have opportunities to display their learning in various ways including increased use of technology.	New staff team (August 2024) means consistent key workers are provided to all children. This provides families with a designated staff member who will ensure all personal plans are relevant and up to date.  Regular staff meetings are more manageable which allows staff to plan for all children as a team.	
	Create a planning format which has an equal balance of intentional and responsive. Ensure that all staff are confident in using the planning format to support all learners.  SEYP to ensure that all staff are providing experiences which align with the focussed	Feb 25	Children will be offered a variety of exciting learning opportunities which are relevant to their interests and stages of development.	Consistent staff team will now allow for permanent key worker groups within the classroom who will identify areas of next steps in learning for their key children	

## Appendix C - Muirfield Action Plan 2024-25

	learning intentions for that cycle. Ensuring that all children within the setting benefit from high quality learning experiences.		Children will be given appropriate support from staff to ensure that high quality learning experiences are accessible to all learners.	Regular staff planning meetings will ensure that we have a whole staff team approach to planning for our learners.  Liasing with other relevant agencies to ensure that all children have strategies used when planning for their learning  Regular Quality assurance to identify areas for improvement	
	Quality of observations to be more consistent and updated frequently.	Feb 25	All children within the setting will receive regular communication with home to allow for higher levels of engagement between nursery and home.	*Training was given to core staff previously (Feb 2024) which can be revisited if needed.  *Staff team changes in August 2024 have meant that a stronger, more consistent team has been created. Experienced EYPs have joined the staffing team and are available to offer support to existing staff where needed. Permanent, experienced SEYP now present to model good practice and support to staff whilst also maintaining high levels of quality assurance.	
	Opportunities for development in Literacy, language and Numeracy skills to be present in all areas of the classroom and outdoors.	Feb 25	Children will be given more opportunities to develop their skills in literacy, language and numeracy which will raise attainment in these areas.	Numeracy and literacy planners have been created to highlight the opportunities that are currently present throughout the classroom and to also provide examples of ways to develop further experiences.  Staff given areas to develop/enhance within the	

**Appendix C - Muirfield Action Plan 2024-25**

				classroom and taking lead on providing opportunities for literacy, language and numeracy within those areas.	
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Areas for improvement	Action required	Stakeholders & timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG
<b>How good is our care, play and learning? 1.1 Nurturing care and support &amp; 1.3 Play and learning</b>					
.In order to promote children's overall wellbeing, personal plans should be developed until they all contain sufficient information on children's needs and detail strategies on how they will be met.	<p>We are going to have our Acc development officer review personal plans with us to suggest any tweaks or improvements that could be made to ensure that all relevant information is recorded.</p> <p>Build time into the staffs weekly rota to ensure that they have time to ensure all updates ( no matter how small or obvious) are recorded in the child info sheets.</p>	<p>Nursery Manager</p> <p>All staff</p> <p>Acc development officer</p> <p>End of June 2024</p>	<p>Children will be cared for by staff who have comprehensive, detailed and up to date information on that child and ways to meet their specific needs. Meaning they can provide the best care to meet each child's individual needs.</p>	<p>Care Packs</p> <p>Audits to ensure care packs are regularly updated.</p>	
<p>In order to promote progression in children's learning and development, the manager should ensure that all staff have sufficient skills and understanding of children's learning and development. This will include increasing competence and confidence in skilled interactions to extend play and learning.</p>	<p>As we had recently taken on new staff to provide extra support for current staff, these staff were very new at the point of inspection, 4 staff in post two weeks. They are still working through their basic nursery induction and the common induction resource. It is unrealistic to think that staff that new to the sector would perform well under inspection conditions, though they did very well.</p> <p>We will continue to train them to the same standard as our current staff that have been in post for longer and that Care inspectorate were very happy with their interactions, this will take time but will be ongoing as training should be.</p> <p>We have been working with more experienced staff on accessing training that would benefit them to extend their knowledge.</p> <p>We are also introducing peer training, we are very fortunate to have some staff who are very highly skilled in certain aspects of practice and we plan to capitalise on this expertise by having these staff deliver small workshops on how they do these areas so well ensuring that best practice is shared throughout the nursery.</p>	<p>Nursery management team</p> <p>All staff</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Children will be supported by highly skilled and confident staff who can extend and deepen their learning and experiences.</p>	<p>Room/ staff monitoring</p> <p>Peer monitoring</p> <p>Induction packs</p> <p>Common induction resource</p> <p>Tna forms</p> <p>Personal Development plans</p> <p>Training packs</p>	



	<p>The assistant manager is now deployed in each room one day per week to support staff and help with role modelling, training, monitoring etc to build staff capabilities.</p> <p>The one staff member who we did have concerns about has now been placed on performance improvement following inspection.</p>	<p>Assistant Manager - ongoing</p> <p>Mnagement team – actioned but ongoing assessment</p>		<p>Appraisals</p> <p>Room and peer monitorings</p> <p>Self evaluation</p>	
<p>In order to promote safe and high quality care for children the provider must ensure that systems are in place to support staff in developing knowledge and understanding of their role and to promote staff wellbeing.</p>	<p>Staff training has and always will be a huge priority at J.Puddleducks and will continue to be, it takes time to build staff knowledge and confidence in a role and we will not rush that. Staff will be adequately trained using the common induction resource and our own induction pack.</p> <p>We were aware that staff had felt under significant pressure before and during inspection as rooms were quite often leaving paperwork until the last minute or failing to upload observations from notes for significant periods of time, meaning that every time a room was audited or when inspection was imminent staff suddenly felt that they then had a lot of paperwork to get into the right places etc.</p> <p>This had started to be improved upon with our new quality assurance and self evaluation systems but was not yet running seamlessly as the system had only begun in January.</p> <p>We spoke with staff in detail about how we could make this easier or more manageable for them and stop them getting behind, then feeling stressed to catch up and we have agreed upon a weekly check on all basic paperwork like observations being uploaded etc, if staff complete this they are eligible for a half day off per week.</p> <p>We have then put other things in place such as time outs for staff to get time to complete paperwork, this was in place before but staff often forgot about them or didn't use them effectively so we have supported staff with helping them use these effectively and look at time management etc.</p>	<p>Nursery management team</p> <p>All staff</p> <p>Actions completed but auditing and checking will be ongoing.</p>	<p>Children will have absolutely up to date information recorded and in place so that all planning etc can be meaningful and meet their current developmental needs.</p> <p>Staff will be happy and enjoy their job leading to high staff retention and a happy team which will have positive impacts in the consistency and standard of care for the children.</p>	<p>Staff training packs</p> <p>Staff induction packs</p> <p>Weekly audits</p> <p>Monthly room audits</p> <p>Staff wellbeing questionnaires</p> <p>Observations, next steps, planning documents</p>	

**Key**

HT – Head Teacher & Registered Manager

PT – Principal Teacher

SEYP – Senior Early Years Practitioner

LL – Locality Lead Officer

KW – Key Workers

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## Emergency Action Plan to Address Safety Concerns

### Contributors

Fiona Lawrie (Locality Team Leader)	Lyndsay Taylor (Head Teacher)	Alex Polanska (Autism Outreach)
Carol Main (Locality Lead Officer)	Ruth Rose (Nursery Manager/Principal Teacher)	Susan Blair (Depute Head Teacher)

Area of Concern	Action to Address Concern	By When	Progress			By Whom
			R	A	G	
How the provider will ensure that the staff are supporting children’s safety at all times?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Authority support to create robust action plan to address areas of concern</li> </ul>	30 May 2024				Fiona Lawrie Carol Main Lyndsay Taylor Susan Blair Ruth Rose Alex Polanska  Nursery Team
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal Teacher to be removed from ratios to allow supervision over nursery</li> </ul>	30 May 2024				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PT will be supported by authority with an intensive nursery induction. Additional mentoring will be provided by DHT</li> </ul>	5 July 2024				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff briefed on safety concerns and understand the expectation as a member of the team to ensure the safety of all children at all times</li> </ul>	30 May 2024				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual meetings will be held with every member of staff team following on from the briefing to ensure full understanding of concerns and the expectations moving forward. Informal Counselling will be used to support this process in the first instance.</li> </ul>	5 July 2024				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use <u>SIMOA</u> practice notes for discussions with staff around children’s safety. The principles from SIMOA have been used as a base for discussions around children’s safety.</li> </ul>	5 July 2024				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daily SLT visits to follow-up on actions</li> </ul>					

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular LLO drop-ins to follow-up actions and monitor progress. LLO based themselves in the setting from 11.6.24 until the end of term.</li> </ul>	<p>5 July 2024</p> <p>11 June 2024</p>		
	<p><b>Environment/Drop-Off and Pick-up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protocol to be created to ensure that children are supervised by experienced/permanent staff at all times</li> <li>Staff Rota will be reviewed to better support deployment of staff across the setting to ensure safety at all times</li> <li>Refresh drop-off and pick-up procedures to better welcome families into the nursery in a nurturing and safe manner.</li> </ul>	<p>31 May 2024</p> <p>5 July 2024</p> <p>4 July 2024</p>		
	<p><b>Food Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protocol to be created to ensure that lunchtime routines support children’s safety when eating</li> </ul>	<p>3 May 2024</p>		
	<p><b>Meeting Children’s Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Autism Outreach EYP to support full time in nursery until summer to ensure the needs of all children are being met. To build confidence and capacity in staff through modelling and coaching.</li> <li>Daily briefings will allow timely evaluation to impact positive changes within the setting.</li> <li>Review of sensory supports and safe space within the setting link to <u>Education Scotland</u></li> <li>Evaluation of strategies used to support individual children and an understanding of any factor which may impact children’s wellbeing. To ensure all staff are confident in using and evaluating strategies</li> </ul>	<p>7 May 2024</p> <p>5 July 2024</p> <p>5 July 2024</p> <p>5 July 2024</p>		



Appendix E – Danestone CI Emergency Action Plan

	<p>and that this is reflected in individual risk assessment/PEEP/Personal plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intentional planning to promote Nursery Values and what they look like at Danestone. The new term learning intentions will be based around Wellbeing indicators. <a href="https://www.gov.scot/publications/shanarri/pages/wellbeing-wheel/">https://www.gov.scot/publications/shanarri/pages/wellbeing-wheel/</a></li> </ul>	5 July 2024		
	<p><b>Hygiene/Infection Control</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Toilets rota to be created to support regular checks to maintain hygiene standards. This check will include checking all resources are stored safely and the environment is clean.</li> <li>Intentional Planning will be created around hand hygiene. Children to lead in creating signage within the toilet to prompt handwashing and understand steps involved</li> <li>All staff to prompt proper handwashing at all times but specifically after using the toilet, before/after eating and following outdoor/messy play</li> </ul>	<p>30 May 2024</p> <p>7 June 2024</p> <p>30 May 2024</p>		

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How Good is our Care, Plan and Learning							
Improvement Outcomes What do we hope to achieve?	Measures of Success How will we know this has been achieved? <i>What evidence will we have?</i>	Actions Required What do we need to do?	Timescales	Resources Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)	R	A	G
<b>Requirement 1</b>							
Staff are knowledgeable about the individual care needs of children and this is used to keep children safe.	Children have detailed personal plans which contain the strategies needed to meet their care and learning needs.  Personal Plans will be fully implemented by the staff team, ensuring children receive consistent, high quality, personalised care which keeps them safe, nurturing and respected.	Timetable individual meetings with all nursery staff to review Personal Plans and Risk Assessments used to support children.  Minutes of daily briefing and staff meetings will be maintained to ensure information is available to all staff.	5 July 24	Locality Lead and Nursery Team			
	All Personal Plans will be shared with the Leadership Team for Quality Assurance.  All chronologies will be quality assured weekly by Nursery Leadership.  Minutes of weekly briefings will align with chronologies and SLT samples these weekly/monthly to quality assure.	Personal plans will be moderated by SLT to ensure they are robust and time will be protected for staff to familiarize themselves with these.  All staff will review Personal Plans of returners on the Inset Day and share strategies for key children. All staff will have allocated admin in the weekly planning and updates to plans/strategies will be shared with wider team through morning briefings.  Each child will have a chronology which tracks strategies identified to support their needs. These will be updated regularly and reviewed weekly to measure success or edited to better meet children's needs. Updates will be shared through daily briefings.	By end of August  26 August 24  By end of August	Nursery Team and Leadership Team  Nursery Team and Leadership Team  Nursery Team and Leadership Team			

Hazardous items are inaccessible to children.	Children will be protected from harm and hazardous items are safely stored.	<p>Immediate audit of nursery to be carried out to ensure all hazardous items are out of reach of children.</p> <p>A rota will be in place to ensure the nursery toilet areas are checked every hour and regularly throughout the session.</p> <p>Health &amp; Safety will be the first item on all meeting agenda and a review of staff remits and responsibilities to ensure this is a priority for all will take place weekly at staff meetings. A record of all meetings will be kept</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring by senior staff will be in place to ensure standards are maintained.</p>	<p>By 30 May 2024</p> <p>By 31 May 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p>	<p>Nursery Team and Leadership Team</p> <p>Principal Teacher</p> <p>Nursery Leadership Team</p>	
Staff supervise and support children effectively to prevent them coming to harm.	<p>Children benefit from a safe learning environment and with a consistent approach at drop off/pick-up times.</p> <p>Daily checklists completed as part of the evaluation process for staff and children.</p> <p>Further consultation will all member of the nursery community will evidence impact along with daily monitoring by nursery leaders.</p>	<p>Zoning of nursery, supports effective deployment of staff to supervise and support children's safety. Daily safety evaluations will be modelled by LLO and supported by senior leaders to evaluate the nursery environment before children arrive.</p> <p>On arrival, children will participate in the risk assessment process with a member of the nursery staff.</p> <p>The sign-in sheet will be edited to allow easier record keeping where pupils have had sun cream applied at home. A daily record sheet will be maintained for repeated application and an allocated member of staff will be responsible for this.</p> <p>A new protocol for Drop off/Pick Up will be created with the nursery community which supports the monitoring of adults visiting the setting and the safety of children at these busy times.</p> <p>During warm weather a water station will be in place in the nursery garden to ensure children have access to water at all times. Staff will encourage and monitor children to ensure they are hydrated.</p>	<p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 3 June 2024</p>	<p>Locality Lead and Nursery Team</p> <p>Nursery Team and Children</p> <p>Nursery Team and Leadership Team</p> <p>Nursery Team and Leadership Team</p> <p>Nursery Team and Leadership Team</p>	
	Coaching approaches have been used to improve staff confidence and competency in supporting children effectively.	This will be continued into next session using a combination of coaching, professional development sessions and learning walks both within the setting and in partnership with others. This will be incorporated within the Nursery Annual Calendar	By end of August 2024	Nursery Team and Leadership Team	
Children are well supervised and not left in play areas unattended.	Children will be safe and secure in their learning environment as staff are aware of staff	Door alarms will be used to alert staff to any children exiting the space.	<p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>5 July 2024</p>		

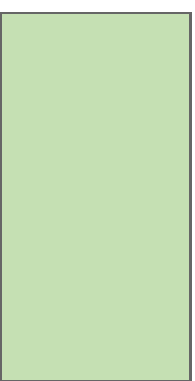
	deployment and safety expectations.	Radios will support the effective deployment of staff to allow for safe movement of children throughout the setting. Nursery leaders will monitor this on a daily basis.	By 5 July 2024	Nursery Team and Leadership Team	
	Children's understanding of safety will be supported by the development of a new nursery value and character.	Nursery values will be updated to introduce 'Safe' and involve the children in creating a character to support their understanding of safety and keeping safe in nursery.  Use of care Inspectorate improvement programs to support staff development. This will be planned within the Annual Calendar. <a href="#">Early learning and childcare improvement programme   Care Inspectorate Hub</a>	By end of Term 1 2024  By December 2024  By May 2025	Nursery Team and Leadership Team	
A plan is in place to monitor staff practice and further develop staff knowledge and skills to identify risks for children and act when needed	Nursery Annual Calendar will provide an overview of all training and staff development to ensure children needs are met.  All training will include a confidence survey for staff and will then feed into Leadership Quality Assurance to evaluate impact.	Individual coaching will take place for staff to enhance their awareness of monitoring all children by Locality Lead  A member of the nursery leadership team will quality assure all personal plans. This will include observing the impact of strategies to support children. This will be done through Learning Walks and observations.  CRD sessions with Wellbeing Team will increase staff understanding of behaviour as a form of communication, increase confidence in supporting children effectively and building an effective and supportive staff team.	By 5 July 2024  Sessions delivered on 30 April 2024 14 May 2024 4 June 2024	Locality Lead and Nursery Team  Karen Gebbie Smith (Trainer)	
	Nursery Annual Calendar will provide an overview of all training and staff development.	Training through Health and Safety colleagues of ACC will support staff to monitor groups of children in a wide space and assessing risk.  CRD sessions with Wellbeing Team will increase staff understanding of behaviour as a form of communication, increase confidence in supporting children effectively and building an effective and supportive staff team.	By end of Term 1 2024  By Sept/Oct 2024	Caroline Duguid and nursery Team  Karen Gebbie Smith (Trainer)	
<b>Requirement 2</b>					
Children's up-to-date care and support needs are included within their personal plan and staff use	Children have detailed personal plans which contain the strategies needed to meet their care and learning needs.	All Personal Plans updated in Term 4 with Key Worker meeting with family members.  Individual meetings scheduled with all nursery staff to review Personal Plans and Risk Assessments used to support children.	By 5 July 2024  By 5 July 2024	Nursery Team  Locality Lead and Nursery Team	

<p>this information to provide effective support.</p>	<p>Record of meeting will be kept and signed off by all staff and SLT</p> <p>Timetable of coaching sessions</p> <p>Feedback from nursery community will measure impact of changes to ensure the meet the needs of children and families.</p>	<p>Specialist staff from ASN service will provide coaching opportunities to ensure staff are effectively supporting children using identified strategies.</p> <p>Daily briefings will be in place to highlight changes to identified strategies for individual children.</p> <p>A new protocol for Drop off/Pick Up will be created with the nursery community to ensure a warm welcome is received by all visitors to the nursery and children are supported through this transition.</p>	<p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p>	<p>ASN EYP and Nursery Team</p> <p>Nursery Leadership</p> <p>Nursery Team and Leadership Team</p>	<p style="background-color: #d9ead3;"></p>
<p>Quality Assurance by the Leadership team will ensure strategies continue to provide effective support for children an evolve with their needs.</p> <p>All personal plans will be signed off by a member of leadership to ensure consistency and, once written, are regularly reviewed throughout the session.</p> <p>Peer moderation both within the setting and with colleagues from across the authority.</p> <p><u>Drop Off/Pick Up</u> Baseline information from sample of parents attending focus group.</p> <p>Feedback from parents, staff and children to refresh process</p>	<p>Information within Personal Plan will be reviewed regularly with children, families, other professionals and relevant staff. Through this, appropriate next steps and strategies will be identified based on individual needs and reflect children’s choices and wishes.</p> <p>Next steps and strategies will be used by staff to ensure consistency and continuity for all children.</p> <p>Planned opportunities will be available for staff to moderate Personal Plan, both internally and across partner settings. In additions, staff swaps will be facilitated to allow professional development of the team specifically on implementing strategies effectively with children.</p> <p><u>Drop off/Pick up</u> Parent Forum will be held to evaluate and improve the Pick-up and drop-off experience for children and families.</p> <p>Discussion with children about their experience and suggestions for improvement will be facilitated.</p> <p>Nursery handbook will be updated with new procedures and shared with families prior to the summer holidays</p> <p>Discussion with children about their experience: things that are going well and any further changes they would like to see.</p>	<p>Information within Personal Plan will be reviewed regularly with children, families, other professionals and relevant staff. Through this, appropriate next steps and strategies will be identified based on individual needs and reflect children’s choices and wishes.</p> <p>Next steps and strategies will be used by staff to ensure consistency and continuity for all children.</p> <p>Planned opportunities will be available for staff to moderate Personal Plan, both internally and across partner settings. In additions, staff swaps will be facilitated to allow professional development of the team specifically on implementing strategies effectively with children.</p> <p><u>Drop off/Pick up</u> Parent Forum will be held to evaluate and improve the Pick-up and drop-off experience for children and families.</p> <p>Discussion with children about their experience and suggestions for improvement will be facilitated.</p> <p>Nursery handbook will be updated with new procedures and shared with families prior to the summer holidays</p> <p>Discussion with children about their experience: things that are going well and any further changes they would like to see.</p>	<p>By 19 August 24</p> <p>Weekly meetings commencing June 24</p> <p>By Term 2 and Term 4</p> <p>By June 2024</p> <p>By June 2024</p> <p>By July 2024</p> <p>September 2024</p>	<p>Nursery Team and Leadership Team</p> <p>Nursery Team and Leadership Team</p> <p>Nursery Team and Leadership Team</p> <p>SLT and families</p> <p>Nursery team and nursery children</p> <p>All families, children and staff</p> <p>SLT and nursery Team</p>	<p style="background-color: #f4cccc;"></p>

	Evaluate impact or changes and consultation process	<p>Parent feedback form will be shared with all families</p> <p>SEYP and SLT will quality assure the experience through observation and professional discussion to highlight any further points for improvement. This will continue at the beginning of every term to ensure impact is sustained. Consultation with families and children will also be part of this process.</p>	<p>By September 2024</p> <p>QA procedures in September 24, November 24, January 25 and May 25</p>	Nursery Leadership Team	
Staff are well informed about the children attending and use this information to provide individualised and responsive care relevant to their needs.	<p>Children's needs will be understood by all staff and met on a daily basis.</p> <p>A log is kept to ensure all staff are well informed about children needs.</p> <p>Senior Leaders will monitor these daily/ weekly/ monthly through observations, to ensure they are up to date and used effectively.</p>	<p>Individual meetings with all nursery staff will take place to review Personal Plans and Risk Assessments used to support children.</p> <p>A one-page summary for every child will be accessible for all staff to ensure familiarity with children needs. This will also be used to brief relief staff about children's needs. Maintaining this record be the responsibility of the key worker and quality assured by the leadership team</p> <p>Induction checklists will be reviewed to ensure all new and relief members of staff have accessed relevant information</p>	<p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p>	<p>Locality Lead</p> <p>Principal Teacher and Nursery Team</p> <p>Nursery Leadership Team</p>	
Children are provided with warmth, comfort, and compassion	<p>Children will feel nurtured and cared for at all times within the nursery.</p> <p>A member of SLT will be at all pick-up and drop-off times to provide warm and nurturing interactions.</p> <p>Daily monitoring by leadership team through observations. Formal and Informal feedback from children and families will ensure the impact of nurturing interactions</p>	<p>Children will be given a warm welcome when they arrive in the morning and when they move between areas throughout the day.</p> <p>Nursery Staff will work and interact with children at their level and this will also modelled by SLT/Locality Lead/ASN EYP and staff provided with immediate feedback if required.</p> <p>Nursery Meetings will ensure expectations of staff are clear and individual discussions will take place where issues are observed and informal counselling introduced</p> <p>Additional comfort and care will be provided at moments of distress, if instigated by a child or if needed. Effective strategies will be shared at daily briefings e.g. supports provided to children struggling with the transition into nursery in the morning.</p> <p>Professional Development sessions will support staff to ensure this is embedded within all interactions moving forward.</p>	<p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By Term 4 2024/25</p>	<p>SLT and nursery Team</p> <p>SLT and nursery Team</p> <p>SLT and nursery Team</p> <p>Nursery Leadership Team</p> <p>Karen Gebbie Smith</p>	

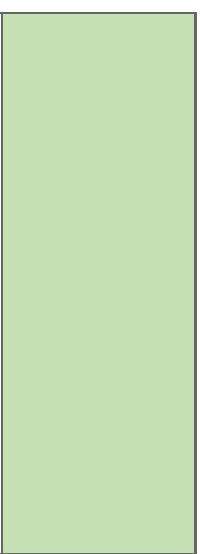
	VIPs will be identified weekly and awarded to children who are displaying the nursery values.	V.I.P certificates will be awarded to children who demonstrate these values or caring and kindness in their daily interactions. Record of VIPs will be kept and photographs taken to celebrate winners	By 5 July 2024 and ongoing	Principal Teacher	
Children are well supported in their personal care including when going to the toilet and handwashing.	<p>Children care needs are understood by all staff and support strategies are recorded within their Personal Plan. Children feel supported at all times in nursery.</p> <p>Updates are shared through daily briefings</p> <p>Reminders are given in daily briefing and leaders observe this daily</p>	<p>Clear information will be recorded in children's Personal Plan to ensure staff are aware of their level of independence for toileting. This will be updated as children become more independent and information shared at the morning briefing/communication book so all staff are aware of changes.</p> <p>All staff will understand who requires additional support, what that looks like and how we are teaching the children the skills to become more independent. This information will be kept in the one-page guide.</p> <p>New staff/relief staff will be offered training and modelling to ensure they are aware of the correct support to provide for children.</p> <p>Handwashing will be prompted throughout the day by nursery staff who will monitor children to ensure this is done thoroughly. Tissues will be available for children throughout the setting</p>	<p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p>	<p>Nursery Team and Leadership Team</p> <p>Nursery Team and Leadership Team</p> <p>Nursery Team and Leadership Team</p> <p>Nursery Team and Leadership Team</p>	
<b>Requirement 3</b>					
Children are effectively supervised and supported by staff during meal and snack times.	<p>Children dietary requirements are clearly recorded and understood by all staff. Children feel supported during snack and mealtimes to develop their skills, to eat safely and to enjoy the experience.</p> <p>Daily observation by Leadership Team. This will be fed-back to staff as part of daily briefings or individually when required.</p>	<p>A new lunchtime protocol will be created to ensure children have an enjoyable and relaxed experience. Staff have been consulted on this along with ACC colleagues to identify a more successful routine.</p> <p>A member of staff will be at each lunch/snack table and individual children will have extra support if required. The server will ensure that all children know where to sit and tables are numbered to help this. The floating member of staff along with all lunch helpers will prompt and support children to wash hands before and after eating.</p> <p>Radios will be used to support safe movement of the children to and from mealtimes</p> <p>Staff deployment will support all children appropriately, ensuring those who require extra support receive this. Areas of the nursery will be closed to allow for safe management of lunchtime routines. A rota and deployment schedule will allow for this to be monitored.</p>	<p>By May 24</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p>	<p>Locality Lead, SLT and Nursery Team</p> <p>Principal Teacher and Nursery Team</p> <p>Locality Lead and Principal Teacher</p> <p>Principal Teacher and Nursery Team</p>	



<p>Meals and snacks are a time for supporting children's independence, skills and social development and learning.</p>	<p>Daily observation by Nursery Leadership Team. This will be fed-back to staff as part of daily briefings.</p> <p>Peer observations will support staff in developing their skills in effectively promoting key skills.</p>	<p>Staff will promote and model positive interaction while supporting pupils through this routine.</p> <p>Positive interaction between adults and children will support children's language and communication This will ensure children have opportunities to support the set-up of lunchtime, make choices about what they eat for lunch/snack and have opportunities to serve themselves.</p>	<p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p> <p>By 5 July 2024</p>	<p>Principal Teacher and Nursery Team</p> <p>Principal Teacher and Nursery Team</p> <p>Principal Teacher and Nursery Team</p>	
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**How Good is Our Setting**

<b>Improvement Outcomes</b> <b>What do we hope to achieve?</b>	<b>Measures of Success</b> <b>How will we know this has been achieved?</b> <i>What evidence will we have?</i>	<b>Actions Required</b> <b>What do we need to do?</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Resources</b> <b>Who and what is required?</b> <b>(including cost/fund)</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>G</b>
<b>Requirement 1</b>							
Children are effectively supervised and supported to wash hands following best practice guidance.	Children understand the routine of washing and feel supported by staff where they are still learning.  Senior staff will monitor this regularly throughout the nursery session.	All staff will support children with gently reminders to wash their hands when required and praise will be offered when this is done independently or when support is given to friends. Staff will ensure that children are follow best practice for handwashing and teaching them why it is important.  Handwashing will be included within intentional planning to develop this skill in children. Appropriate resourced will support children to understand why it is important.  Children's Personal Plans will include up to date information about any support they require with care/toileting routines and this will be known by the nursery team. Individual meetings will ensure this is the case.	5 July 2024  5 July 2024  5 July 2024	Nursery Team and SLT  Nursery Team and SLT  Nursery Team and SLT			
Toilets and hand wash facilities for children are clean, and in a presentable state for children to use.	Children are involved in evaluating their environment to ensure it is kept safe and clean. This is supported effectively by all staff.  Senior staff will monitor the use of this rota on a daily basis to ensure standards are maintained.	A staff rota will be used to ensure the toilet areas are checked regularly during the nursery session. When needed they will be cleaned thoroughly to ensure a safe environment for children. In addition to this, nursery staff will check these areas throughout the session to ensure any issues are identified quickly and addressed in a timely manner.  Any additional issues identified through SLT monitoring will be addressed immediately and staff updated both individually and through the team daily briefing	5 July 2024  5 July 2024	Nursery Team and SLT  Nursery Team and SLT			
Staff understand and implement safe and effective infection	Children access a clear and safe environment which is maintain by	All staff have refreshed their knowledge of the Care Inspectorate Infection Prevention and Control Policy as well as Danestone Nursery policy. Copies were sent to all individuals by email, a copy has been uploaded to the shared drive.	5 July 2024	Nursery Team and SLT			

<p>prevention and control practices.</p>	<p>staff throughout the session.</p> <p>Meeting led by SLT will confirm staff have refreshed their knowledge and have a clear understanding. Daily monitoring will further evidence this.</p> <p>A log is kept by nursery leadership to track which policy have been read and understood.</p>	<p>A hardcopy of Infection Control policies is kept in the nursery floor by the leadership team to ensure that new/relief staff are inducted with procedures and understand how to support children effectively.</p>	<p>5 July 2024</p>	<p>SLT</p>	
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Midstocket Playgroup - Improvement plan following inspection – August 2024					
Area for improvement 1	To support children’s play and learning the manager and staff should ensure the environment is well resourced and inviting for children.				
	Action required & stakeholders involved	Timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG Rating
<p>Staff should consider the quality and organisation of resources to enhance the indoor and outdoor environments, making them homely and welcoming. Review and identify resources requiring action or replacement.</p> <p>Revisit use and layout of building to identify ways of minimising challenges to the flow of play group sessions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and replace outdoor resources and equipment with suitable and natural materials appropriate for outdoor use</li> <li>Declutter the outdoor and indoor space and remove excess plastic toys and equipment</li> <li>Upgrade the outdoor access to toilet and sink area</li> <li>Indoor environment purpose: Staff will regularly observe levels of engagement within the setting to ensure a high level of learning is taking place.</li> </ul>	<p>October/ November 2024</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Durable resources will replace uninviting plastic materials . Improved infection prevention control outdoors. Reconfiguring the indoor space and repairing the small indoor sink area will result in a calm, homely , warm and inviting environment.</li> <li>Upgraded toilets accessed immediately off courtyard will significantly improve the flow of playgroup sessions as currently challenged by lengthy distance to take children upstairs within the building to access toilets.</li> <li>Decluttering will make it easier for children to self select resources and</li> </ul>		

			<p>engage in play and learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children will benefit from focused resources based on their interests. This will develop their learning through curiosity and questioning.</li> </ul>		
<b>Area for improvement 2</b>	To support children’s safety, the provider should ensure a full review of the setting identifying where all potential risks and hazards may exist for children and take appropriate action to address these.				
	<b>Action required &amp; stakeholders involved</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Desired outcomes for children</b>	<b>Evidence and confirmed completion</b>	<b>RAG Rating</b>
Gates including one at child height, meant there was a potential for children to leave the area unsupervised or for unauthorised persons to enter.	Suitable gates that only adults can use to access the courtyard and which will be closed during sessions will be sourced. A new bottom gate to the courtyard will also be installed.	October 2024	<p>Children will be able to play in a safe, enclosed outdoor space and will not be in potential contact with unauthorised persons.</p> <p>All gates will also be at a height where children are unable to leave the area unsupervised.</p>	Blacksmith has been contacted to supply and fit secure gates that are only adults can access.	

Appendix G - Midstocket CI Action Plan

			Gates will be secure during sessions and inaccessible to children.		
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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children’s Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	17 September 2024
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Music Service
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/24/212
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Beth Edwards
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 At the Education and Children’s Services Committee on 12th September 2023, the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning was instructed to continue to extend opportunities for music making through partnership working between the Music Service and Aberdeen City Music School and others; and report back on progress within one calendar year. This report provides an evaluative overview of the progress made over the 2023/24 academic session.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 instructs the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to continue to extend opportunities for music making through partnership working between the Music Service and Aberdeen City Music School and others; and
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to report back on progress in one calendar year

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

#### **Collaboration and Performance**

- 3.1 Members requested that the service continue to extend opportunities for music making through partnership working between the Music Service and Aberdeen City Music School and others.
- 3.2 Following the success of the Music Service Festive Concert in December 2022, the Music Service has established festive concerts as an annual feature of the Music Service calendar. Demand for tickets, coupled with the value to performers from this formal performance opportunity triggered the decision to split the concert over two evenings in order to include an increasing number of ensembles. As a result of these changes, the number of children performing in our festive concert increased from around 300 in 2022 to over 400 in 2023.

- 3.3 The service has also introduced an annual Spring Concert, again over two nights. The decision to introduce a Spring Concert was in response from feedback from pupils, parents and staff who shared that they wanted additional rehearsal and performance opportunities to take place across the year. Both the Festive and Spring Concerts offer an opportunity for the Music Service to be joined by pupils from Aberdeen City Music School, with Music School and Music Service pupils coming together to perform in the finale.
- 3.4 This joint working has enabled pupils of all standards to perform together, with less experienced learners being able to be inspired by those working at more advanced levels.
- 3.5 In addition to our newly established collaboration with the Music School, we were also joined by learners from the Scottish Culture and Traditions Youth Ensemble for the Spring Concerts, following our partnership project with them in a number of schools. The partnership project involved traditional music tutors spending a week 'in residence' at St Peter's School, Ashley Road School, Riverbank School, Cornhill School and Sunnybank School. The children in the upper stages of these schools had the opportunity to learn penny whistle, Scots song, clarsach and trad guitar, with each week culminating in performances to peers and families. The pupils made clear musical progress across each week with many children expressing the desire to continue learning a musical instrument. The performance as part of the Spring Concert, was an opportunity to celebrate this partnership working and for Music Service pupils to showcase their learning of traditional tunes. We are building on this by looking to run the project again in the 24-25 academic year linked to our established programme of ceilidhs. Taking this approach enabled the service to reach over 1500 children. To build on this success and increase knowledge of traditional music the service is offering a new ensemble, named Folk Collective, where children who play any instrument are invited to learn traditional tunes from Scotland and further afield.
- 3.6 Following the success of the Big Sing in 2022/23, the Aberdeen Big Sing 2023/24 took place at Duthie Park, with all Primary 4s in the city coming together to sing as one big choir of over 3000 children. The number of songs performed was increased and there were performances in both British Sign Language and Makaton. The songs were accompanied by an orchestra made up of pupils from Aberdeen City Music Service and Robert Gordon's College. The performance also featured pupils from Ashley Road School Woodwind Project, and Robert Gordon's College Pipe Band. Feedback from the event has been exceptionally positive, with it now being a keenly anticipated part of the education service calendar.
- 3.7 The Ashley Road Woodwind project ran during session 23/24 involving 90 Primary 5 pupils who received tuition on woodwind instruments. The project was extremely successful, with pupils having the opportunity to perform at three concerts. The Music Service's Wind Band Programme will continue to expand, with a new cohort of learners joining the Ashley Road Woodwind Project, and new projects being launched in Riverbank School and Charleston School. Members of the Music Service staff team travelled to Fort William in June 2024 to see the work of Highlife Highland Music Instructors who run similar band

projects in schools there. Plans are under development for pupils from Aberdeen City and Highland to perform together during the 24-25 academic year.

- 3.8 In order to increase the number of collaborative opportunities as per the committee instruction, The Scottish Young Musician Competition has now become an annual event. Following on from the success of the 2023 competition, the service introduced a Junior Young Musician Competition in 2024 to allow younger pupils to be able to have the opportunity to compete. The finals of the Junior and Senior competitions were held at the Cowdray Hall and the number of entrants rose from 30 to 67. The winner of the Senior competition had the opportunity to compete at the national final which was held at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in May.
- 3.9 In October 2023, the Music Service arranged three locality concerts. These took place at Woodside School, Muirfield School and Lochside Academy and featured pupils from across the Don, West and Dee localities. The concerts were well attended and featured a range of solo and ensemble performances from pupils from various stages of their musical journeys. These locality concerts provide an ideal opportunity to give our children and young people an early opportunity to perform in advance of performance at a bigger stage at either our Festive or Spring concerts.
- 3.10 In May 2024 a Wind Band performed at Pittodrie as part of the Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust Day, a first for the Service. This opportunity proved incredibly popular with pupils, with the band comprising of around 200 young musicians attending the stadium. The pupils performed an arrangement of Northern Lights of Old Aberdeen at the start of the game and during the second half, as well as having an opportunity to watch the match. We hope to perform at sports events in the future due to the popularity of this opportunity and await confirmation regarding specific events.
- 3.11 A percussion project has been running in a number of schools since August. In order to showcase their work the group performed at the SPECTRA festival in February 2024 using drum sticks that they had painted themselves with glow-in-the-dark paint. This performance was in a prominent location outside the Cowdray Hall and attracted a large crowd which was made up of both families and SPECTRA festival-goers.
- 3.12 At the start of the year, our older pupils had the opportunity to perform on stage at the Music Hall as part of a Blazin' Fiddles concert. The pupils rehearsed for this during their summer holidays and performed at a high standard. This group of pupils received numerous performance opportunities subsequently, including at an Education Scotland Creative Learning Event, the ACC Star Awards, Headteacher Meetings, the Lord Provost's Burns Supper and the Invest Aberdeen conference dinner.
- 3.13 Partnership working with Charanga (music teaching software) continues. There have been regular, well attended, Charanga training sessions for primary and secondary teachers who want to develop their knowledge and skills. Charanga is being used on a regular basis by around 75% of primary schools in the city.

- 3.14 The service has worked with Aberdeen Performing Arts to create a range of opportunities for pupils. This has included opportunities for pupils to sit in on sound checks for bands including Manran and Talisk, providing a chance for pupils to meet band members and ask questions as well as hearing performances.
- 3.15 In June, Aberdeen Performing Arts ran the Light the Blue Festival. A member of Music Service staff worked alongside drama and dance practitioners as part of the Light the Blue school residency at Skene Square School. This was a pilot project which saw pupils across the school engage in expressive arts activities which culminated in a performance for families at the end of the week. In addition, The Music Service Junior String Ensemble performed as part of the Light the Blue Family Arts Day which took place at Union Terrace Gardens.
- 3.16 The Music Service also performed at the Big Gig at the Music Hall. This was a concert that involved the Music Service Intermediate Wind Band, Scottish Culture and Traditions Youth Ensemble and Big Noise Torry. The Intermediate Wind Band performed three pieces to open the concert, and then the wind players were joined by Music Service string pupils and pupils from the other ensembles to play in a massed finale.
- 3.17 The Grampian Hospitals' Christmas Carol Concert took place at the Music Hall in December 2023 and the service provided a primary school choir and a string quartet for the event.
- 3.18 The Music Service Youth Orchestra performed at the Lemon Tree as part of the Aberdeen Jazz Festival in March 2024.
- 3.19 Our activities as part of the 'In the City' programme continued, with fully booked activities in the October, Easter and Summer holidays. These activities were delivered by Music Service staff to pupils aged 5-11. Each Music Instructor ran a session on their specialist instrument (e.g. violin) with pupils having the opportunity to play a number of instruments across the course of the programme. The programme culminated in performances for parents and carers, including a ceilidh where family members were encouraged to dance together.
- 3.20 The service introduced a new concert for school leavers. This took place in June at the Cowdray Hall and gave the pupils moving on from secondary education an opportunity to prepare a final performance for family and friends. The pupils introduced the concert themselves, and many of them shared their thoughts on the positive impact that their involvement with the Music Service had had on their educational journey. Amongst the performers, a number stated that they would be going on to study music further, with some young people undertaking a degree course in Music (BMus), Acting and Performance and Music with Computing. Other pupils stated that they are leaving to study courses including Law, Mechanical Engineering and Primary Teaching but all hope to continue music making.

3.21 The service continues to seek feedback from parents, carers and pupils. One way that feedback is gathered is through an annual survey (please see Table 1 in appendix). The results are used to shape the annual Service Improvement Plan. The comments on the survey from this year include:

*'My child has made great progress and I appreciate all the effort that you have put in.'* *'The organisation of many events has been fantastic and my child's Music Instructor is wonderful.'*

*'We cannot thank our Music Instructor enough for his fantastic teaching and encouragement. He is a huge asset to the service. Many thanks for providing these wonderful opportunities for our children.'*

*'The quality of teaching appears to be quite high. Teaching competence is very good and the teacher has established a good relationship with my child to help nurture their love of music.'*

*'The opportunity to play as part of an ensemble has inspired them to play again, and practise more.'*

*'Setting up of parents evening was an excellent move forwards.'*

*'Reaching the final of Junior Young Musician was an amazing experience.'*

*'The support given for competition (Scottish Young Musician) was tremendous and hugely appreciated'*

*'The opportunities for ensemble and performance have been great. I'm delighted that my child will be able to meet regularly with intermediate wind band after the summer. Music is his main extra-curricular interest. Thank you.'*

*'My son truly enjoyed playing clarinet during school sessions and band practice. It's lovely to see his confidence build up. Keep offering the services to all kids as they love it.'*

*'My daughter has enjoyed all the performances, but particularly playing at the Beach Ballroom at Christmas and Easter. The music service staff are all amazing, enthusiastic and encouraging. Thank you for all the opportunities that have been offered and we look forward to next year!'*

3.23 The Music Service hopes to increase the overall survey response rate both in general and from particular ASGs in 2024-25 in order to strengthen the data gathered. The Music Service will do this by moving from holding a central parents' evening to locality parents' evenings where parents/carers will have the opportunity to access a device to complete the survey.

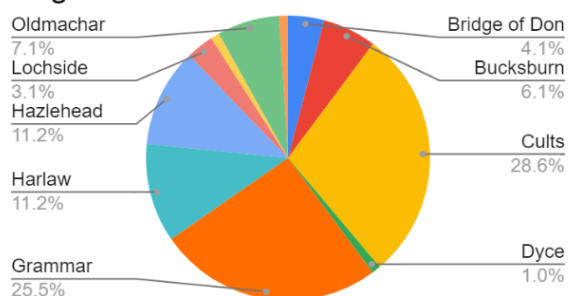
## **PERFORMANCE**

3.24 The Music Service continues to aim to offer high quality tuition to as many children and young people as possible. Pupil numbers are currently sitting at 2057 pupils receiving tuition in a small group/individually on a weekly basis. Pupil numbers have remained steady over the past two academic years. The

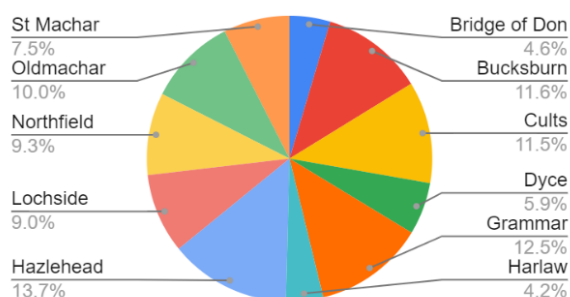
number of pupils engaging in whole class vocal and instrumental programmes continues to be over 5000 over the course of the academic year.

3.25 The charts below show the distribution of Music Service across Associated School Groups in August 2020 and in June 2024. This data shows continued progress towards the aim to offer tuition on a more equitable basis across the city.

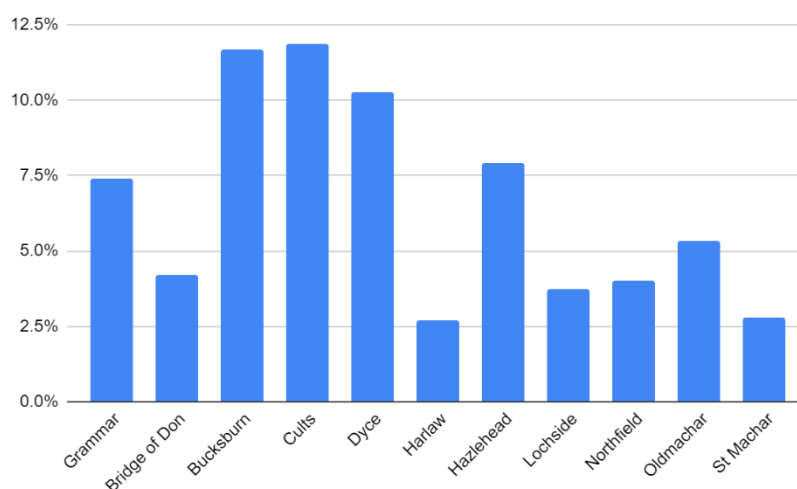
August 2020



June 2024



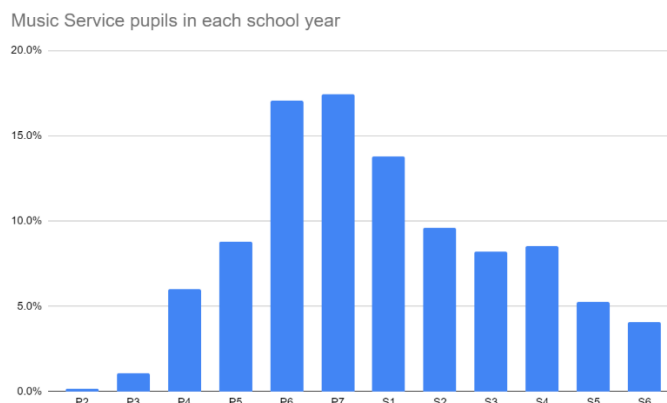
3.26 The chart below shows the percentage of children in each ASG roll receiving individual and small group tuition. It should be noted that the service aims to offer tuition on each instrument at secondary level and this can mean that some of the ASGs with smaller pupil numbers receive proportionally higher teaching allocations than other schools.



3.27 The Music Service continues to target provision strategically with the aim of increasing pupils recruitment and pupil retention in target schools where it has been identified that there is scope for improvement.

3.28 The Music Service aims to increase and maintain the number of children learning instruments that are considered to be 'rare'/'shortage', such as French horn, double bass, oboe and bassoon in order to create balanced ensembles (please find the number of children and young people learning to play each instrument in table 2 in the appendix).

- 3.29 The chart below shows distribution of Music Service pupils by school year as of August 2024. The higher number of pupils in P6-S1 reflect the influx of new pupils that started an instrument after the Covid pandemic.



- 3.30 As Music Instructors recruit and start new pupils at the start of the academic year we are expecting to see increased numbers in Primary 4 and 5, which are the usual starting points for tuition, and also in S4 as we see pupils start lessons as part of their National 5 music course.
- 3.31 The Music Service is putting measures in place to provide further support for pupils transitioning to secondary school, as this is often a point where many stop learning an instrument. A transition project was piloted in June 2024 with Oldmachar Academy and Danestone Primary School. This saw primary and secondary pupils rehearsing and performing together which gave primary pupils the opportunity to see what level they can aspire to and also gave them an insight into musical opportunities at secondary level.

### 3.32 PLANS FOR 2024/25

Due to the popularity of Music Centre ensembles in the 23-24 session the Music Service is expanding the number of ensembles on offer and increasing the frequency of rehearsals. As of August 2024, the service will be offering the following ensembles:

- Junior Wind Band
- Intermediate Wind Band
- Junior Strings
- Intermediate Strings
- Lower Strings Ensemble
- Folk Collective
- Guitar Ensemble
- Piping Ensemble
- Junior Choir
- Senior Choir
- Adult Choir
- Advanced Instrumental Ensemble/Senior Orchestra

- 3.33 Many of these ensembles will run on a weekly basis with the re-introduction of Music Centre activities on Saturdays. This is a significant increase in the number of rehearsals in comparison to the 23-24 session. The increased number of rehearsals will provide more time for our pupils to develop their

musical skills and also further opportunities for them to form friendships with others from across the city.

- 3.34 The service will work closely with pupils to develop a refreshed Music Centre uniform which pupils can wear whilst performing. This will help develop the identity of each group.
- 3.35 A number of performances have already been planned for the 24-25 session. These include a joint project between the Music Service, Charanga and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra (RSNO) in September 2024 at the Music Hall where pupils will have the opportunity to perform alongside members of the orchestra.
- 3.36 The Music Service staff will continue to develop their offer of ceilidhs for primary schools. Plans are underway for a St Andrew's Day Ceilidh for the children who attend the Music Centre.
- 3.37 The service will continue to offer a programme of Festive Concerts, Spring Concerts, Locality Concerts, Leavers' Concerts, Lunchbreak Concerts and the Scottish Young Musician Competition at both junior and senior level.
- 3.38 The service looks to continue and develop our partnerships with organisations such as Aberdeen Performing Arts and Aberdeen Jazz Festival in order to continue to offer performance and development opportunities for young people.
- 3.39 The service is looking to increase the number of teaching hours provided in Orchard Brae School and Aberdeen School for the Deaf with new options for children to receive vocal and woodwind instruction. The service will continue to run the work funded by the Youth Music Initiative in Orchard Brae School which will see musicians in residence in the school work with pupils of all ages and we hope to provide more regular performances throughout the year. The service will continue to offer performances to the children at Ashgrove Nursery on a regular basis.
- 3.40 The service worked with partners to source tickets for pupils to attend a number of concerts in the 23-24 academic year and this is something that we will continue to do in order to ensure that young people are able to be inspired by professional performers.
- 3.41 The Big Sing is now firmly established as an annual event. In order to strengthen links with other curricular areas the event in 2025 will include singing in other languages and we hope to link with our twin cities to increase the reach of the event and to provide further opportunities for collaboration. The service hopes to use technology to link pupils together from different countries. The theme of the Big Sing will be travel and the sea in order to link in with the programme of events taking place for Tall Ships Aberdeen.
- 3.42 The Music Service will be performing as part of Tall Ships Aberdeen with plans developing for a new composition to be commissioned to celebrate the event. This piece would become part of the legacy for the event as it would be able to be performed again in the future.



#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The expansion of music service activity and more equitable distribution of tuition across the City assists the Education Authority in fulfilling its duty to secure that the education we provide is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of our children and young people to their fullest potential.

#### 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

#### 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	No significant risks identified		L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	No significant risks identified		L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	No significant risks identified		L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	No significant risks identified		L	Yes
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a	There will be regular quality improvement visits to the service with support being offered to any underperforming tutor	L	Yes

	reputational risk to the Council			
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No significant risks identified		L	<b>Yes</b>

## 8 OUTCOMES

<b>Council Delivery Plan 2024</b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>  <a href="#"><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></a>	The Council's Delivery Plan states that the Music Service continues to work to maximise uptake, establish a Music Centre and welcome families back to concerts to celebrate the musical skills of our pupils. This report reinforces this aim and furthers it by offering increased rehearsal and performance opportunities for pupils.
<a href="#"><u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u></a>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	This report supports the LOIP Key Driver 7.1 Improving pathways to education, employment and training for identified groups (including disability, ASN, term time leavers and those from priority neighbourhoods) because it supports the Music Service giving additional musical opportunities for children and young people through more rehearsal and performance opportunities led by the Music Service and in conjunction with partners.
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	The universal provision of education is fully aligned to the Prevention Strategy and a key partner to the Children's Services Plan

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## 11. APPENDICIES

Appendix A – Data tables

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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**Table 1 – Survey Results**

<b>Number of survey responses:</b>	200 (9.7% of Music Service parents/carers)		
<b>Age of child:</b>	Sector:	No of responses	percentage
	Primary	100	50%
	Secondary	100	50%
<b>Which Associated School Group the respondent's children attend</b>	ASG	No of Responses	% of Responses
	Aberdeen Grammar ASG	41	20.5%
	Bridge of Don ASG	8	4.0%
	Bucksburn ASG	19	9.5%
	Cults ASG	40	20.0%
	Dyce ASG	12	6.0%
	Harlaw ASG	7	3.5%
	Hazlehead ASG	25	12.5%
	Lochside ASG	11	5.5%
	Northfield ASG	12	6.0%
	Oldmachar ASG	20	10.0%
St Machar ASG	5	2.5%	
<b>Instrument learnt:</b>	Instrument		Number of Pupils
	Bagpipes/chanter		6
	Brass:trumpet/cornet/French horn/tuba/euphonium/trombone/tenor horn/baritone horn		50
	Guitar, Bass Guitar , Ukulele		22
	Lower strings:cello/double bass		9
	Percussion/Drum Kit		22
	Piano		12
	Upper strings violin/viola		24
	Voice /Singing		8
	Woodwind clarinet/flute/oboe/bassoon/saxophone/recorder		29
	More than one child learning multiple instruments		18
<b>How long has your child been learning their instrument:</b>	Under one year	64	32%
	2-3 years	81	40.50%
	4 years or more	55	27.50%
<b>On a scale of 1-10, how much does your child enjoy their music tuition?</b>	Score	Count of Score	Percentage
	1	1	0.5%
	2	0	0%
	3	1	0.5%
	4	2	1%
	5	4	2.0%
	6	10	5.0%
7	17	8.5%	

Appendix A – Data

	8	31	15.5%
	9	32	16%
	10	102	51%
	Most (82.5%) of responses rated the child's level of enjoyment as 8 out of 10 or above		
<b>Does the Music Service offer enough performance opportunities for your child?</b>	Yes: 163 (81.5%) No: 37 (18.5%)		

**Table 2- No of children playing each instrument**

Baritone	8
Bass Guitar	11
Bassoon	10
Cello	99
Chanter/bagpipes	34
Clarinet	88
Cornet	47
Double Bass	13
Euphonium	8
Flugel horn	1
Flute	108
French horn	34
Guitar	245
Oboe	17
Percussion/drum kit	300
Piano	160
Recorder	8
Saxophone	109
Tenor Horn	26
Trombone	65
Trumpet	163
Tuba	7
Ukulele	14
Viola	32
Violin	342
Voice	108
	<b>2057</b>

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	17 September 2024
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	School Age Childcare Policy
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/24/235
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHORS</b>	Louise Beaton and Mark Duguid
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1 and 1.1.5

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval for the reviewed and refreshed Aberdeen City Council School Age Childcare Policy, as per the instruction from Committee on 20 February 2024 ([CFS/24/014](#)).

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the work undertaken with key stakeholders to review and refresh the Aberdeen City Council Out of School Care Policy, in line with national policy and updated guidance, and;
- 2.2 Approves the School Age Childcare Policy and the Agreement (Appendices 1 and 2), which have been reviewed for approval by the Council's Policy Group and Risk Board.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

#### **Background**

- 3.1 School Age Childcare services play a vital role within our communities, offering a variety of options which families can rely on to support their childcare needs before and after school, and during the school holidays. It is not currently a statutory service, like Early Learning and Childcare, however it is a crucial service for many families who rely on it to enable them to work or study and it contributes positively to the economic development of the city as well as helping improve outcomes for children and young people.
- 3.2 Following the implementation of Early Learning and Childcare expansion, we have seen a natural increase in demand for School Age Childcare, as parents and carers look to secure continuity of wraparound childcare when their children

start Primary School. In our recent Early Learning and Childcare consultation with Parents and Carers (June 2023), 45.2% of respondents indicated that they will require School Age Childcare when their child(ren) start Primary School.

- 3.3 Registered School Age Childcare provisions are regulated by the Care Inspectorate and are subject to ongoing inspection. Inspections in Aberdeen continue to be positive with almost all provisions receiving an average grading of 4 (Good) or better.

### **School Age Childcare Delivery Framework 2023**

- 3.4 The National Framework for Delivery of School Age Childcare was published by the Scottish Government in October 2023, along with a Children's Charter for School Age Childcare, including a specific Charter for School Age Childcare in Aberdeen.

- 3.5 The National Delivery Framework outlines the Scottish Government's School Age Childcare commitments and the action areas for the next 3 years. Its key policy drivers are: Tackling child poverty; and improving outcomes for children and families, with the Framework highlighting that an expanded childcare offering for school age childcare is crucial to the national mission to tackle child poverty, to promote family wellbeing, drive greater gender equality and to #Keep The Promise to our care experienced children.

### **Supply and Demand**

- 3.6 We regularly monitor supply and demand across the city and work with our external School Age Childcare partners to support the establishment of new services, where viable, following feasibility studies. Sometimes the uptake of spaces does not match the initial interest noted by local families. However, we continue to monitor this situation closely.

- 3.7 A map has been created to provide a visual overview of where School Age Childcare is located across the [city](#)

### **School Age Childcare Policy and Agreement**

- 3.8 The purpose of the policy (please see Appendix 1) is to promote improvement and embed quality within provision in Aberdeen, and to establish links between School Age Childcare and other local and national strategies and policies: e.g. *Realising the Ambition*; *Best Start: Strategic Early Learning and School Age Childcare plan for Scotland 2022-26*; *School Age Childcare Delivery Framework 2023*; GIRFEC Practice Statement - Child's Plan 2023; Care Inspectorate SIMOA (Safety, Inspect, Monitor, Observe, Act); and Space To Grow: Indoor/outdoor settings. It seeks to develop innovative and inclusive services in partnership with communities, schools, parents and carers, children and young people and a wide range of external agencies.
- 3.9 Aberdeen City Council's policy is that all schools will work with parents and School Age Childcare providers to ensure access to suitable locations, to establish and support School Age Childcare where there is sufficient parental demand and where it is viable and cost effective.



- 3.10 A key feature of this policy is to work with existing and future partners to best meet the needs of children, families and communities, including school communities.
- 3.11 This policy ensures access to high quality registered services for all children regardless of need, background or ability as set out in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and it acknowledges the significance of children's rights, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 which was approved by the UK Government in 1991 and adopted by Aberdeen City Council in 1996.
- 3.12 In order to deliver a high quality provision, a School Age Childcare Agreement will be completed for each venue with local arrangements being taken into consideration. The document (please see Appendix 2) will be made available to School Age Childcare providers on the Council website.
- 3.13 The policy includes:
- Structure and Delivery of School Age Childcare.
  - Local Authority and Stakeholder responsibilities.
  - Good Practice Guidelines, including access to premises and resources, and communication.
  - Promotion of School Age Childcare.
  - School Age Childcare Policy Agreement.
- 3.14 The policy replaces the previous Out of School Care Policy (2017) and includes general updates required and inclusion onto the corporate Council template.
- 3.15 The policy has been reviewed for approval by the Council's Policy Group and Risk Board.

### **Engagement with Key Stakeholders**

- 3.16 It was important to engage and consult with key stakeholders associated with the provision of School Age Childcare, operating within buildings owned and/or managed by Aberdeen City Council, as part of the refresh of the policy process.
- 3.17 This included School Age Childcare providers, staff working in settings, Head Teachers and Heads of Establishments, community colleagues, facilities colleagues and parents and carers.
- 3.18 All stakeholders were sent a copy of the previous Out of School Care policy (2017) and were given the opportunity to attend an online or in-person focus group meeting to discuss, review and suggest any changes required for updating the new policy.
- 3.19 Once the initial period of engagement was completed, the policy was updated to reflect feedback and suggestions from all participants. A draft was then shared with all focus group attendees in the first instance, giving each stakeholder the opportunity to review feedback made by other stakeholders and to make any further comments.

- 3.20 We then collated all further suggested amendments and updated the draft policy accordingly. Finally, we consulted more widely with all stakeholders, including parents and carers, for a period of 3 weeks before finalising the draft policy for Policy Group, Risk Board and Committee approval.

### **Engagement with Parents and Carers**

- 3.21 As part of our statutory duties under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, we are required to consult with parents and carers every two years on the provision of daycare of children's services. The Early Learning and Childcare team consulted with parents and carers in December 2023 and January 2024 on the provision of School Age Childcare in Aberdeen. The consultation received a total of 549 responses after 5 weeks (+1% from 2021).
- 3.22 The findings from our recent School Age Childcare consultation with parents and carers, as reported to Committee in February 2024, have also informed the refresh of the Aberdeen City Council School Age Childcare Policy.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Unlike Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), School Age Childcare is not currently a statutory service. However, under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Aberdeen City Council is responsible for engaging and consulting with parents and carers on a regular basis (minimum of every 2 years) on the provision of daycare of children's services delivered locally and this includes School Age Childcare. We continue to meet our statutory obligations in relation to this duty.

## **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The funding secured from Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces (ISACS) fund has been invested in outdoor spaces at four settings, enhancing spaces and outdoor play and learning opportunities. Across all School Age Childcare settings, good use is also made of outdoor and green spaces where practicable and where feasible to do so.
- 6.2 The provision of School Age Childcare within local communities has environmental benefits if less travel is made by car and more active travel taken.
- 6.3 School Age Childcare providers should be mindful of environmental considerations and ensure that lights are switched off and taps turned off after use in their registered space.

## 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?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	No risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Compliance</b>	No risks identified	N/A	L	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Operational</b>	Risk of not attracting enough new practitioners into the workforce.	Mitigated through the ongoing activities being undertaken to support workforce development.	L	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Risk of building a financially unsustainable model.	<p>School Age Childcare is currently an accessible but paid for service, with discounts available for families on lower incomes using Aberdeen City Council operated provision. Officers regularly monitor supply and demand in order to maximise resources and achieve best value.</p> <p>We have been careful to build our School Age Childcare services gradually to ensure it meets demand but is also sustainable. For example, delivering services for children from more than one school.</p>	M	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk of not delivering on legal obligations	There are currently no statutory obligations to deliver School Age Childcare. However, we try to ensure we	L	<b>Yes</b>

		meet demand, where viable.		
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A

## 8. OUTCOMES

<u><b>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</b></u>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the policy statement “Work with the Scottish Government to expand free early learning and childcare to one and two year-olds from low-income households.”</p> <p>The provision of funded Early Learning and Childcare has the potential to be transformational for many families, but especially for those with the lowest incomes in the city.</p> <p>The provision of School Age Childcare is required in order to meet the continued need for wraparound care once children start to attend Primary School. This is backed up by 45.2% of respondents, in our recent Early Learning and Childcare consultation with Parents and Carers (June 2023), who indicated that they will require School Age Childcare when their child(ren) start Primary School.</p>
<u><b>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</b></u>	
Economy	<p>The School Age Childcare Policy and delivery of School Age Childcare in Aberdeen will continue to have a positive impact on this priority theme and will help to deliver the LOIP.</p> <p>The provision of School Age Childcare supports more families to take up employment and training opportunities, thus also helping to reduce poverty. This will contribute to the Stretch Outcome to achieve a 74% employment rate for Aberdeen City by 2026</p> <p>In addition, we have introduced a Modern Apprenticeship position into our School Age Childcare staffing structure. This involves training young people to become Playworkers as part of our ‘Grow Our Own’ workforce strategy. This is a new</p>

	<p>role in our Local Authority School Age Childcare settings and provides a positive destination and career pathway for our young people as well as strengthening our workforce. We currently have 4 Modern Apprenticeships working across the city.</p>
<p>People</p>	<p>The School Age Childcare Policy and delivery of School Age Childcare in Aberdeen will continue to have a positive impact on this priority theme and will help to deliver the LOIP.</p> <p>The policy will support the achievement of LOIP objectives to make Aberdeen a place where all children and young people can grow up loved, safe and respected so that they can all realise their full potential.</p> <p>School Age Childcare can improve long term outcomes for children and families.</p>
<p>Place</p>	<p>The School Age Childcare Policy and delivery of School Age Childcare in Aberdeen will continue to have a positive impact on this priority theme and will help to deliver the LOIP.</p> <p>The increase in funded ELC is designed to enable more families to take up employment and training opportunities, thus reducing poverty. More hours are now available in Local Authority ELC settings and Funded Provider ELC settings are now an option for many families who could not afford this previously.</p> <p>This means that there is also a need to ensure sufficient School Age Childcare is available to support families when their children go to Primary School.</p> <p>The policy will contribute to what we can do even more to promote and improve the positive qualities of Aberdeen as a place to live, work, and visit.</p>
<p><b>Regional and City Strategies</b></p> <p>Strategic Development Plan</p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the Strategic Development Plan by supporting the workforce. The provision of high quality School Age Childcare will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support families to take up employment and training opportunities;</li> </ol>

National Improvement Framework Plan	<p>2. Develop the Young Workforce; and 3. Support business to recruit and retain staff.</p> <p>The Delivery Framework for School Age Childcare is aligned to the Children’s Services Plan and the National Improvement Framework Plan and work to address poverty in the Child Poverty Action Plan.</p>
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## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	Previous Integrated Impact Assessment relating to the provision of School Age Childcare has been reviewed and no changes are required.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required. As no personal information will be shared.
<b>Other</b>	None

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Scottish Government: National Framework for School Age Childcare

## 11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 – School Age Childcare Policy (Draft)

11.2 Appendix 2 – School Age Childcare Agreement (Draft)

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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**Aberdeen City Council**  
**School Age Childcare (SAC) Policy**



## Document Control

<b>Approval Date</b>	17 September 2024 (TBC)
<b>Implementation Date</b>	23 September 2024 (TBC)
<b>Policy Number</b>	Assurance Team to confirm
<b>Policy Author/s and Owner</b>	Service Manager – Early Years Chief Officer Education & Lifelong Learning, Families & Communities
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Education and Children’s Services Committee
<b>Scheduled Review</b>	Annual
<b>Date and Changes:</b> This Policy replaces the previous Out of School Care Policy (2017) and includes general updates required and inclusion onto the corporate template.	



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## 1. Why does the Council need this Policy?

- 1.1 Aberdeen City Council recognises that School Age Childcare services play a vital role within our communities, offering a variety of options which families can rely on to support their childcare needs before and after school, and during the school holidays. It is not currently a statutory service, like Early Learning and Childcare, however it is a crucial service for many families who rely on it to enable them to work or study and it contributes positively to the economic development of the city as well as helping to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- 1.2 Following the implementation of Early Learning and Childcare expansion, we have seen a natural increase in demand for School Age Childcare, as parents and carers look to secure continuity of wraparound childcare when their children start Primary School. In our most recent Early Learning and Childcare consultation with Parents and Carers (June 2023), 45.2% of respondents indicated that they will require School Age Childcare when their child(ren) starts Primary School.
- 1.3 Aberdeen City Council's policy is that all schools, will work with parents and School Age Childcare providers to provide a suitable location, to establish and support School Age Childcare, where there is sufficient parental demand and where it is viable and cost effective.
- 1.4 This policy ensures access to high quality registered services for all children regardless of need, background or ability as set out in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and it acknowledges the significance of children's rights, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 which was approved by the UK Government in 1991 and adopted by Aberdeen City Council in 1996.
- 1.5 The purpose of this policy is to promote improvement and embed quality within provision in Aberdeen, and to establish links between School Age Childcare and other local and national strategies and policies: e.g. *Realising the Ambition; Best Start: Strategic Early Learning and School Age Childcare plan for Scotland 2022-26; School Age Childcare Delivery Framework 2023; GIRFEC Practice Statement - Child's Plan – 2023; Care Inspectorate SIMOA (Safety, Inspect, Monitor, Observe, Act): Space To Grow: Indoor/outdoor settings*. It seeks to develop innovative and inclusive services in partnership with communities, schools, parents and carers, children and young people and a wide range of external agencies.
- 1.6 A key feature of this policy is to work with existing and future partners to best meet the needs of children, families and communities, including school communities.
- 1.7 This policy expresses a commitment to regularly engage with children to ensure that the following six principles of the National Children's Charter for School Age Childcare in Scotland are respected:
  - Kindness
  - Community

- Fairness
- Happiness
- Fun
- Choice

## 2. Application and Scope Statement

- 2.1 This policy applies to the provision of School Age Childcare in Aberdeen City Council owned/managed buildings.

## 3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 Overall responsibility for managing this policy is held by the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning.
- 3.2 The Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord also has responsibility for maintaining buildings, facilities management services and health and safety standards.
- 3.3 Registered School Age Childcare provisions are regulated by the Care Inspectorate and are subject to ongoing inspection to ensure they offer a quality service and meet the needs of children and young people attending.
- 3.4 Any instances of non-compliance with the policy should be reported to the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning.
- 3.5 Feedback on the policy should be communicated to the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning.

## 4. Supporting Procedures and Documentation

- 4.1 In order to deliver a high quality provision a School Age Childcare Agreement will be completed for each venue with local arrangements being taken into consideration. The document is available to download on the Council's website: [www.add-link once approved and uploaded.](#)
- 4.2 The National Framework for Delivery of School Age Childcare was published by the Scottish Government in October 2023, along with a Children's Charter for School Age Childcare, including a specific Charter for School Age Childcare in Aberdeen.
- 4.3 The National Delivery Framework outlines the Scottish Government's School Age Childcare commitments and the action areas for the next 3 years. Its key policy drivers are: Tackling child poverty; and improving outcomes for children and families, with

the Framework highlighting that an expanded childcare offering for School Age Childcare is crucial to the national mission to tackle child poverty, to promote family wellbeing, drive greater gender equality and to #Keep The Promise to our care experienced children.

4.4 The Vision is for a rights based, dynamic School Age Childcare offer for children and young people, which supports choice and growth, enabling families and communities to reach their full potential.

4.5 Further Supporting Documentation:

- Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
- United Nations Convention on the Child (UNCRC)
- The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Aberdeen City Council Corporate Booking Policy

## 5. About this Policy

5.1 **Structure and Delivery of School Age Childcare:**

Aberdeen City Council Education and Lifelong Learning Service oversees the delivery, support and sustainability of School Age Childcare in all Associated School Groups (ASGs). It will continue to support the development of services as mixed models of provision, with private, parent run and local authority managed services and will make best use of the wide range of resources available to support provision. High quality, flexible and affordable School Age Childcare requires commitment from a number of stakeholders in order to promote the support and development of services.

5.2 **The Local Authority will, and encourage all stakeholders to:**

1. Promote the value of high quality provision as part of the wider Local Outcome Improvement Plan and Children's Services Plan priorities.
2. Support the development of high quality School Age Childcare as a priority to meet the Health and Social Care Standards: My support, my life (2017) up to the age of 16.
3. Acknowledge the contribution to the economic development of the city made by School Age Childcare by continuing to provide access to Local Authority owned/managed establishments for a nominal fee to external service providers.
4. Ensure that School Age Childcare services are developed following consultation with children, parents and carers.
5. Ensure that establishments and providers jointly participate in planning to deliver year round provision that meet the requirements of the Care Inspectorate, Environmental Health and other regulatory bodies.

6. Ensure that effective communication systems are in place to allow regular and positive discussion between School Age Childcare providers, heads of educational and community establishments, and other significant stakeholders.
7. Promote School Age Childcare provision as a positive aspect of the wider school community.
8. Ensure that each child's School Age Childcare experience promotes positive outcomes, effective interventions and constructive learning and development in line with Curriculum for Excellence four capacities to enable them to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

### 5.3 Good Practice Guidelines

#### **Access to Premises**

For a nominal fee (currently £500 per location per annum in 2024/25), Aberdeen City Council will provide Priority of Access to booking Council premises (in line with the Corporate Booking Policy). Aberdeen City Council reserves the right to vary the provision of appropriate accommodation for School Age Childcare provision within local authority premises, in order to meet the changing needs of schools and establishments over time. As far as is possible, access to non-Local Authority managed premises should be negotiated with the same elements present as below (section 5.4).

#### **Communication**

In line with the Agreement in Appendix 1, the appointed member of staff – Head, Depute Head or Manager of Establishment - and the Manager of the School Age Childcare provision will meet on a regular basis to monitor and review any pertinent procedures regarding shared use of the premises as well as discussing any issues arising. These meetings can be informal but should take place at least once per term.

In order to encourage better two-way communication and to help with safeguarding of the children, it is recommended that the School Age Childcare provider should provide the school office with a list of children registered to attend their setting. This list should be updated accordingly throughout the school year.

All children attending the provision will have a Personal Plan in place which pays full regard to GIRFEC Practice Statement - Child's Plan – 2023. In relation to multi-agency working, it may be beneficial to have a staff member involved in any review meetings, where appropriate, to maintain a consistent approach between the school and School Age Childcare provision. This should be in consultation with parents and carers.

#### **Access to Resources**

The provision may require access to some essential resources in order to deliver its services to the highest standard and in line with Care Inspectorate requirements. Through negotiation, and as far as possible, the provision may be able to share school / centre equipment. Should equipment be shared School Age Childcare providers

should make arrangements for payment for materials used and, within resource limitations, contribute to the replenishment, refurbishment and replacement of equipment.

5.4 **The School Age Childcare Agreement (Appendix 1):** ensures shared resource protocols are in place. A minimum requirement should include reference to the use of:

- Photocopier (Occasional use where available).
- Physical Play and Equipment, where negotiated, or provision of suitable storage for providers own resources.
- Areas for art, music, games and quiet time as per Care Inspectorate registration.
- Noticeboard for information and legal notices with dedicated area for display of children's work.
- Staff rest areas.
- Appropriate toilet areas, including disabled access.
- Use of suitable area for snack preparation.
- Use of dishwasher, if available, with clear responsibilities for emptying and filling etc.
- Janitorial and cleaning arrangements, with emergency contact numbers provided to all School Age Childcare managers.
- Registered Space in line with Care Inspectorate requirements including: confidential meeting and storage space.

The School Age Childcare provision is entitled to standard cleaning arrangements as part of the Local Authority let which should be flexible and responsive to the needs of the provision, in particular to holiday periods, within the limitations of available resources.

The Manager of the School Age Childcare provision should be a designated fob holder for the school / centre, due to the out of hours nature of the provision and should be fully briefed on security arrangements and fire detections system.

As part of the Local Authority let agreement, the provision should be entitled to utilise janitorial services for reporting faults, repairs and general maintenance as required, as well as any health and safety issues.

Janitorial services are responsible for weekly Fire Alarm testing at each site and will communicate with the School Age Childcare provider when testing takes place. The School Age Childcare provision is responsible for preparing an emergency fire evacuation plan (EFAP) and for implementing fire drill procedures in line with Care Inspectorate requirements to test this EFAP. However, janitorial services are happy to provide support with Fire Drills on a termly basis.

Where use is negotiated, the School Age Childcare provider will be responsible for replacing items damaged or broken within its setting e.g. Gym equipment/loose parts. The school / centre remains responsible for large items of maintenance and repair.

## **5.5 Promotion of School Age Childcare**

Providing School Age Childcare is seen as a key service and can influence parents and carers choice of school. Schools should promote their School Age Childcare provision on a regular basis by the following means:

1. Advertise the provision by distributing information leaflets through the school bag mail outs, in the school newsletter and on school notice boards;
2. Include the provision in any site visits and give information to potential new pupils / parents and carers;
3. Include the provision in the P1 new starts programme by inviting the managers to attend induction and open days, where appropriate.
4. Promote and publicise the service through regular updates to the Parent Council and PTA; Inform the PTA about the strict guidelines that registered providers must adhere to.
5. Enable the providers to host open days / evenings for parents coinciding with the school's parent- consultation days / evenings.

## **6. Risk**

- 6.1 **Compliance Risk:** This policy will support mitigation and compliance with Health and Safety guidelines and Care Inspectorate requirements.
- 6.2 **Operational Risk:** The policy relates to the provision of registered School Age Childcare provision. By doing so ensures that third party organisations operating from Council premises are regulated by Care Inspectorate and have appropriate safeguarding measures in place for children, young people, staff and volunteers.
- 6.3 **Reputational Risk:** The policy sets out standards and requirements to ensure that a consistent approach is adhered to by all stakeholders and will therefore minimise customer complaints.

## 7. Environmental Considerations

- 7.1 The funding secured from Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces (ISACS) fund has been invested in outdoor spaces at four settings, enhancing spaces and outdoor play and learning opportunities. Across all School Age Childcare settings, good use is also made of outdoor and green spaces where practicable and where feasible to do so.
- 7.2 The provision of School Age Childcare within local communities has environmental benefits if less travel is made by car and more active travel taken.
- 7.3 School Age Childcare providers should be mindful of environmental considerations and ensure that lights are switched off and taps turned off after use in their registered space.

## 8. Policy Performance

- 8.1 The provision of School Age Childcare can be measured by the total number of places available across the city and by monitoring supply and demand. Registered School Age Childcare provisions are regulated by the Care Inspectorate and are subject to ongoing inspection to ensure they offer a quality service and meet the needs of children and young people attending.
- 8.2 Performance will also be measured by customer satisfaction surveys and reduction of risk, for example the reduction in complaints that Aberdeen City Council and School Age Providers receive in relation to availability of School Age Childcare places.

## 9. Design and Delivery

The provision of high quality School Age Childcare will help to deliver the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP). The policy is aligned to support the achievement of LOIP objectives:

- To make Aberdeen a place where all children and young people can grow up loved, safe and respected so that they can all realise their full potential.
- To achieve a 74% employment rate for Aberdeen City by 2026. The provision of School Age Childcare supports more families to take up employment and training opportunities, thus also helping to reduce poverty.



## 10. Housekeeping and Maintenance

- 10.1 This policy replaces all other policies relating to School Age Childcare (Formerly referred to as Out of School Care). The Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

## 11. Communication and Distribution

- 11.1 The policy will be shared and communicated with key stakeholders including: School Age Childcare providers and staff; Heads of School and Community Establishments; Facilities Colleagues; and Parents and Carers. This policy will be available for citizens to access/review on the Aberdeen City Council website.

## 12. Information Management

- 12.1 A map has been created to provide a visual overview of where School Age Childcare is located across the city and this will be updated regularly.

School Aged Childcare – Google My Maps

- 12.2 Regular monitoring of supply and demand across the city and annual audit of number of available places.
- 12.3 The information generated by the application of the policy will be managed in accordance with the Council's Corporate Information Policy and supporting procedures.

## 13. Definitions and Understanding this policy

- 13.1 **ACC :** Aberdeen City Council
- ASG :** Associated School Group (Secondary School Zone)
- Customer :** All school age children who access School Age Childcare, and their parents, carers and families.
- ELC :** Early Learning and Childcare
- External Provider:** Any registered School Age Childcare provider (out with Aberdeen City Council) which delivers School Age Childcare.
- SAC:** School Age Childcare

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## Aberdeen City Council School Age Childcare Agreement

A School Age Childcare Agreement will be completed for each venue with local arrangements being taken into consideration and a typical agreement is illustrated below as an example.

Location of service	
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In order to deliver high quality, flexible and affordable School Age Childcare provision, which meets the needs of children, parents, carers, and represents an important element within the learning and development of all children, any new or existing service requires a commitment to joint working.

Signatories agree to adhere to the School Age Childcare Policy and Good Practice Guidelines with all parties involved in the provision of School Age Childcare agreeing to:

1. Provide suitable premises equipped with sufficient age appropriate furniture, which meets the childcare needs of families within the local community.
2. Acknowledge School Age Childcare provision as a play and learning environment which promotes children's development within the four capacities - to enable each child or young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor.
3. Provide priority of access within Aberdeen City Council educational and community establishments for the purpose of delivering School Age Childcare, with appropriate set-up / dismantle time, including janitorial services.
4. Agree the use of shared spaces within lets in advance of the new school year, in line with internal lets. This should include holidays, in-service days, parents evenings and other extracurricular activities. A date should be agreed for the annual agreement review by both the Head or Manager of the establishment and the manager of the School Age Childcare provision .
5. If a registered shared space is required by the school or community, an alternative suitable area within the school or community building must be made available for the duration of the session this space must be registered for occasional use.
6. Support providers to access suitable community premises for the purpose of School Age Childcare development and delivery. (See Good Practice Guidelines)
7. When possible a confidential meeting space for the purpose of meeting parents, supporting staff inductions / support and supervision sessions.
8. Provide, as a minimum, access to suitable facilities for safe preparation to provide a nutritious snack. This should meet risk benefit assessments, food safety legal requirements and include adequate space and secure storage of perishable and non-perishable foodstuffs.
9. Use of dishwasher, if available, and clear guidance on responsibilities of usage.
10. Provide reasonable solutions for the secure storage of equipment and service documentation, children's files and seasonal resources.
11. Promote positive relationships throughout the school / centre management and community. (See Promotion of School Age Childcare).

Provider	Signed	Date

Head of Establishment	Signed	Date

	1 <sup>st</sup> Annual Review	2 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Review	3 <sup>rd</sup> Annual Review	4 <sup>th</sup> Annual Review
Signed				
Date				
Signed				
Date				

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children’s Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	17 September 2024
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Community Learning and Development (CLD) Plan
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/24/269
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Margaret Stewart
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update on the outcome of the CLD Review, on progress towards delivery of the Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024 and share a proposed interim Plan for 2024-25.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee

- 2.1 Note the content of the CLD review and the recommended outcomes to be realised;
- 2.2 Note the progress made towards delivery of the Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024;
- 2.3 Approve the proposed interim Plan; and
- 2.4 Instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to present an updated 2 year CLD Plan to the Education and Children’s Services Committee in September 2025.

### 3. CURRENT NATIONAL CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Scottish Government Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships, Community Learning and Development, places a number of obligations on Community Planning Partnerships and Local Authorities in respect of Community Learning and Development (CLD) including the establishment of 3 yearly Community Learning and Development Plans.
- 3.2 The responsibility for meeting The Requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations (2013) ( the CLD Regulations) rests with

the Local Authority as a whole. Within Aberdeen City Council, CLD Services comprise Community Development, Youth Work, Adult Learning and Family Learning and now sit within the Education and Lifelong Learning Cluster.

- 3.3 Local authorities cannot meet the requirements of the CLD Regulations without engaging with other partners, learners and community groups and organisations. Such engagement is carried out in accordance with [CLD values and principles](#). As a result, work to develop and evaluate progress is undertaken in partnership with a range of others.
- 3.4 As part of wider education reform work, the Minister for Higher and Further Education; and Minister for Veterans announced on 5 December 2023 an independent review of CLD provision across Scotland. The independent [Review](#) of Community Learning and Development (CLD) was published in July 2024. Given the need to ensure that national guidance is taken into account in statutory CLD Plans, and that we await information on how Scottish Government will respond to the recommendations, there was a need to consider interim arrangements for CLD statutory planning. Review findings are organised around 4 key themes - Visibility and Awareness, Accessibility and Availability, Support and Learning and Pathways and progression.
- 3.5 **Visibility and Awareness:** The national Review found the visibility of CLD is limited due to the term not being understood and often fragmented delivery provision. Some CLD staff are being integrated into services across a local authority and losing the identity. The Review found that the landscape in Scotland is confused and there is a need for an overarching narrative which sets out the Scottish Government's vision for education framing it as a Lifelong Learning Journey.
- 3.6 **Availability and Accessibility:** The review found there is divergence in approach across all local authorities. The review found the main barriers to accessing CLD were location of services and public transport links. CLD learners want services that are local and no or low cost in welcoming and safe community spaces. Funding for CLD across Scotland is reducing and the evidence gathered suggests the need for a review of funding across all learning in general.
- 3.7 There is evidence in some areas where Scottish Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity Funding has been used successfully to fund Youth work in school with positive impact on learners.
- 3.8 ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) provision was highlighted as a concern due to the variability of the offer, versus the number of citizens who require the support.
- 3.9 **Learning and Support:** The standard of CLD learning opportunities being delivered by dedicated CLD staff and volunteers were found to be generally very good. The review found the HMIE framework to be helpful in supporting managers to self-assess, evaluate and report on quality and improvement priorities. There is a call for a more risk based approach to inspections to free time up for more strategic inspections on issues impacting all providers.

3.10 **Pathways and Progression:** The review highlights the need to be clearer on what it is CLD is setting out to deliver and sharing the successes in order to do this. CLD services would benefit from a national shared and measurement framework. Learners receive awards through work with CLD and there is a need to consider how these could be aligned to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework.

3.11 The review makes a number of recommendations and details the outcomes the Independent reviewer believes are required by 2026. These outcomes are that:

- There is a clearly discernible strategic direction being set for CLD, covering all its elements, at both the national and sub national levels;
- Learners and potential learners are aware of the opportunities presented by CLD, and can access those that they wish to undertake in a way that meets their needs;
- The design and delivery of CLD strategies and plans is informed by input sought from learners and potential learners;
- CLD enjoys good recognition amongst learners, potential learners, decision-makers and budget-holders as an approach to tackling a wide range of (sometimes interrelated) social and educational challenges, which spans three core elements – Youth Work, Adult Learning (including ESOL and family learning), and Community Development/Empowerment;
- Those involved in CLD are fully aware of the outcomes they are setting out to deliver;
- There is a consistent approach to gathering data and reporting on outcomes which allows for an overall national picture to become clear;
- That learner progress and awards can be better mapped to the Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework;
- That decision-makers, budget-holders and planners have a comprehensive picture of the need for CLD, and are regularly horizon scanning to be well-placed to adapt should that become necessary. roles and responsibilities, including accountability, are clearly established and transparently set out, with the legislative underpinning for CLD supporting this as required;
- CLD workers and volunteers are widely recognised as effectively qualified, experienced and trained, with qualified CLD staff enjoying parity of esteem with similarly qualified counterparts, such as teachers and social workers; and
- That there is a recognised career pathway – mapped to qualifications – for those working in CLD, including the opportunity to move into senior education management roles within Local Authorities and also, for volunteers who wish to move into CLD as a career.

3.12 The Review then outlines the outcomes to be achieved by the end of the next Scottish Parliament

- There is a steady pipeline of people entering the CLD workforce, both as staff and volunteers, which reflects an increasingly diverse Scottish population;

- There is a more systematic approach to improving learners' and potential learners' awareness of and accessibility to CLD learning opportunities;
  - There is a greater consistency across CLD providers in terms of delivery and workforce planning, with regular opportunities for sharing and learning from good practice across the country;
  - Project and programme delivery plans for CLD activities have the stability and predictability of funding to allow them to be sure that the medium to longer-term interventions often required in CLD can be delivered; and
  - That CLD's role within Scotland's overall Lifelong Learning system of education is fully recognised and is reflected in terms of the balance of government spending
- 3.13 The timing of the publication of the Review limited the extent to which it could inform statutory CLD Plans. As a result, education authorities were encouraged to consider setting an interim one year plan for 2024/25, and publish a 2 year Plan in September 2025. It was proposed that Education Authorities carry forward any outstanding actions from existing plans and reflect significant changes or learning within their interim one year Plan.
- 3.14 **CURRENT SITUATION ACROSS ABERDEEN CITY**  
The current Aberdeen City Council Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024 was developed in line with national expectations and approved by the former Operational Delivery Committee on 16 September 2021. CLD reported their progress in delivering year 2 of the Plan to the Education and Children's Services Committee in September 2023.
- 3.15 Since establishment of the Plan, CLD and partners have worked hard to deliver against the Plan, whilst taking account of the rapidly changing context. The service is delighted that the quality of their work was recognised in the recent Education Scotland Inspection Report. Proposed next steps from the recent Inspection have been built into the Interim Plan.
- 3.16 HMIE noted that the CLD Plan is closely aligned to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, and that CLD Practitioners played a critical role in helping communities shape highly relevant Locality Plans published in April 2024. The content of the refreshed Locality Plans has been considered in developing the Interim Plan for 2024-25.
- 3.17 The CLD team have undertaken an evaluation of progress against the full CLD Plan 2021-24 in order to identify areas for further action over the lifetime of the Interim Plan for 2024/25. The full evaluation is available in Appendix A with key successes including:
- Establishing a kinship worker who has worked with individual families to bridge the gap between the kinship team and supports available across the city.
  - 96% of learners have shared that their confidence has increased following engagement with family learning
  - Most learners on the 2 ESOL for care courses run in partnership with Bon Accord Care secured paid placements.



- Working in partnership with Shmu (Station House Media Unit), 62 adults facing personal challenges were supported with 23 going on to secure positive destinations in education or employment.
- The healthy minds team has successfully supported learners who face social isolation through activities within the community and within Cornhill Hospital with almost all reporting increased confidence.
- Support for ESOL has expanded to meet demand with over 200 learners currently being supported. Learners are being supported to set up learner managed support groups to improve mental health and reduce social isolation.
- Funded Projects supported 686 volunteers who contributed 103,711 hours of volunteering time
- We now have 3 community resilience groups across the city in Cults, Culter and Bridge of Don. These groups will support the community in the face of adverse weather and other civil contingency events.

3.18 The evaluation has helped to identify areas for continued focus and inclusion in the Interim Plan including:

- Continue to improve data sharing and joint planning between youth work and employability providers.
- Further develop multi agency response to The Promise, including Edge of Care pilots as we develop our model of Family Support
- Further develop city wide CLD partners contribution to the Family Support Model and explore how commissioned services contribute to the Family Support Model
- Further develop opportunities for Learner's Voice, the voice and experiences of learners, to shape future provision and priorities and use this to influence service delivery, and the development of a sense of agency
- Ensure community learning providers are encouraged and supported to contribute to the future libraries model and the development and delivery of a City adult literacies strategy
- Continue to tackle health inequalities through effective adult and family learning
- Develop actions to more effectively measure and demonstrate the impact of CLD interventions on communities.
- Develop and embed shared self-evaluation across partners and consistent sharing of data to develop a fuller understanding of the impact of CLD, which could better inform the use of resources
- Further progress improvements to strategic governance and decision making in CLD by senior leaders and CLD partners. This should include CLD partners setting and jointly monitoring shared measures of success and ensuring that one strategic group has strategic oversight of all aspects of CLD across the whole plan
- Ensure there is sufficient input or influence from community representatives, young people and adult learners in CLD strategic planning

- 3.19 The Interim Plan, contained in Appendix B, outlines the intended focus of the CLD service over 2024/25.
- 3.20 The CLD Service will present an evaluation of delivery of their Interim Plan, alongside a proposed 2 year Plan for approval in September 2025.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The Requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013 place duties upon the Authority in relation to the process to be undertaken in securing community learning and development including a requirement to publish plans every 3 years containing information about the provision of CLD.

#### 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no environmental implications

#### 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Risk of not delivering against statutory requirements.	Mitigated by establishing and reporting progress against the CLD Plan	L	<b>yes</b>
<b>Compliance</b>	Risk of not complying with CLD regulations.	Mitigated by embedded self-evaluation by CLD teams and staff CPD	L	<b>yes</b>
<b>Operational</b>	Risk of not working to the national policy goals given the changing	Mitigated by being agile and responsive to changes in the needs of the community	L	<b>yes</b>

	context in the city.			
<b>Financial</b>	Risk of not using resource most effectively to support communities	Mitigated by delivering against the CLD Plan and by remaining alert to unanticipated challenges facing those we serve and responding proactively.	L	<b>yes</b>
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk of not delivering a strong CLD provision for city residents	Mitigated by having a clear and well scrutinised plan	L	<b>yes</b>
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Risk of not complying with local and national NetZero target	Mitigated by proactive measures to manage resources	L	<b>yes</b>

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</u></b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<p><b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b></p> <p>A City of Opportunity</p> <p>Empowering Communities</p>	<p><i>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement:-</i></p> <p><i>Sharing the progress against the Community Learning and Development Plan aims to increase awareness of the scope of CLD provision and the impacts delivered through the plan as well as ensuring effective, responsible and inclusive delivery against the CLD plan contributing to a City of Opportunity and Empowering Communities.</i></p>
<b><u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u></b>	
<p>Prosperous Economy</p> <p>Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p><i>Sharing the progress against Community Learning and Development Plan aims to increase awareness of the scope of CLD provision and the impacts delivered through the plan as well as ensuring effective, responsible and inclusive delivery against the CLD plan contributing to:</i></p> <p><i>1. No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026.</i></p>

	2. 400 unemployed Aberdeen City residents supported into Fair Work by 2026.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p><i>Sharing the progress against the Community Learning and Development Plan aims to increase awareness of the scope of CLD provision and the impacts delivered through the plan as well as ensuring effective, responsible and inclusive delivery against the CLD plan contributing to</i></p> <p>Prosperous people (Children and Young people):</p> <p>5.2 Increasing children's knowledge and understanding of their own physical and mental wellbeing and take an early intervention and prevention approach.</p> <p>7.1 Improving pathways to education, employment and training for all our children</p> <p>8. 83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.</p> <p>9. 100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination</p> <p>Prosperous People (adults):</p> <p>11.1 Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups.</p> <p>11.2 Provide individuals and communities with the social resources needed to reduce feelings of loneliness and social isolation.</p> <p>11.3 Encouraging adoption of healthier lifestyles through a whole family approach.</p>
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	<p><i>Sharing the progress against the Community Learning and Development Plan aims to increase awareness of the scope of CLD provision and the impacts delivered through the plan as well as ensuring effective, responsible and inclusive delivery against the CLD plan contributing to Prosperous Place:</i></p> <p>13.2 Contributing to the delivery of Aberdeen Adapts by developing a bottom up approach to community resilience to encourage greater ownership and independent action towards understanding communities' risks from climate change and adapting to them.</p> <p>15.1 Increasing the diversity, quality and use of Aberdeen's green spaces by facilitating community participation in them to restore nature and increase people's satisfaction, health, and wellbeing</p>
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	

Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024 Children's Services Plan Community Empowerment Strategy	<i>The proposals within this report support the Community Learning and Development plan 2021-2024 and subsequent plans.</i>
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## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	An Integrated Impact Assessment has been created
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 [Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024](#)

## 11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A – Progress against the CLD Plan 2021-2024
- 11.2 Appendix B – Interim Plan 2024-25
- 11.3 Appendix C – Case Studies

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

<b>Name</b>	Margaret Stewart
<b>Title</b>	
<b>Email Address</b>	
<b>Tel</b>	

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## Appendix A:

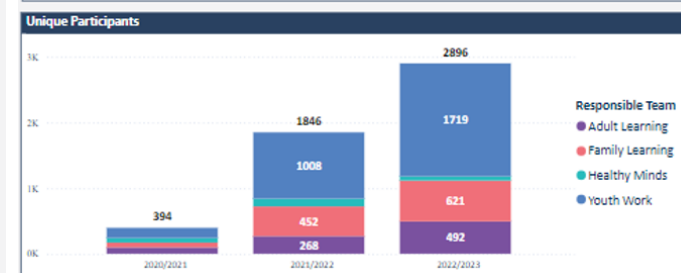
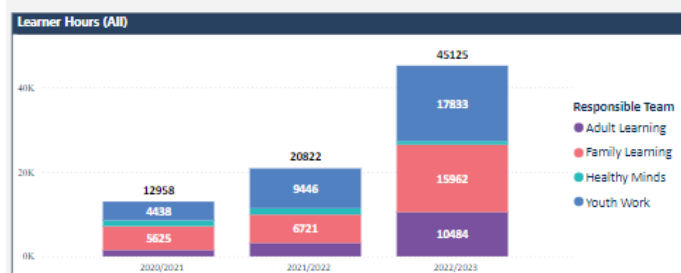
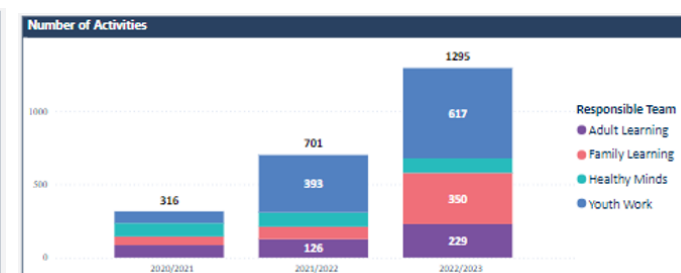
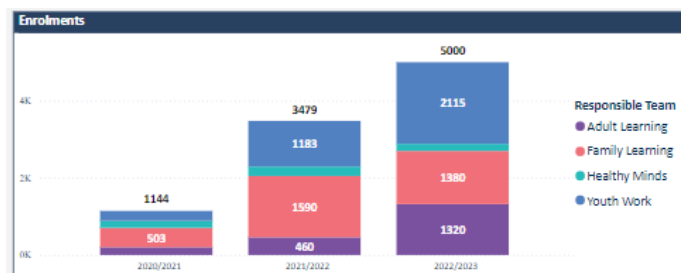
### Learning changes lives for the better – Progress against the CLD Plan 2021-2024

This report aims to capture the progress made in Aberdeen in delivering against the 'outcomes' of the Community Learning and Development 2021 – 2024 CLD Plan by updating on the information provided in the CLD Plan Report 2023.

Targeted CLD provision across the city is focused on addressing poverty and disadvantage for individuals and groups in local communities, and improving life chances through building community capacity and delivering a learning offer for young people and adults

CLD PARTNERS HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEEDS OF LEARNERS AND COMMUNITIES ACROSS ABERDEEN. PARTNERS SHARE DATA AND LOCAL INTELLIGENCE WELL TO HELP IDENTIFY CHANGING NEEDS

HIS MAJESTY'S INSPECTORS OF EDUCATION, MAY 2024



CLD Plan 21-24	The impact of what we have done together	RAG	Next steps
<b>Priority 1 - Youth Work</b>			
<b>Improving Outcomes for Young People</b>			
The key purpose of community learning & development is empowering people, in this case young people, individually or collectively, to make positive changes in their lives and in their communities through learning. By working in partnership with young people we know we are creating a learning process which contributes to improving their life chances			
<p><b>Support young people to gain the employability skills required for the world of work. This will increase the number of young people leaving school into a positive destination, especially those from priority areas.</b></p>	<p>Youth Work providers across Aberdeen City Council, commissioned services and third sector organisations continue to contribute well to the development of employability skills of young people. The ShmuTRAIN Positive Progressions programme targets and engages young people who have been identified as being unlikely to secure a positive destination, in 2021-24, 108 young people (16-25 years) participated. Over half (60%) of participants subsequently moved on into positive destinations (8 into work, 11 into education and 36 into training). Most (91%) participants report an increase in their health and wellbeing, aspirations and job search skills and reported positive job search skills rose from 73% in 2021/22 to 100% in 22/23 and in 23/24.</p> <p>Shmu Training Academy Summer Programme has supported 63 young people from 2021-24. The majority (65%) of participants secured a positive next step (16 re-engaged with education, 5 moved onto further training and 15 progressed on to college).</p> <p>93 young people took part in Foyer Reach in 2021-24. A few (20%) of participants secured a positive next step (14 moved into further education or training and 4 into work). This programme is targeted at young people furthest from the job market and some will have moved into volunteering, or progressed to other Foyer (or Partner) self-development/employability courses</p> <p>57 young people took part in the Prince's Trust programme. Less than half (32%) of participants secured a positive next step (29 moved into positive destinations, including 8 into employment).</p> <p>385 young people have participated in Fairer Aberdeen employability support programmes during 2021-24, with the majority 84% (323) securing an immediate positive outcome and now in education, training or employment.</p> <p><b>Outcome summary:</b> This work is well targeted and flexible ensuring that those young people most vulnerable and furthest away from the job market are encouraged to develop new skills and supported to progress aspects of wellbeing, integration and any barriers they experience in reaching their potential. However, not all programmes achieve anticipated outcomes and this could be improved through the better sharing of data and joint planning. This area will be maintained as the service considers how their offer can be fully aligned with our emerging model of Family Support.</p>		<p>Improve data sharing and joint planning between youth work and employability providers.</p>



Work with school leavers to develop their employability skills.

**Award Schemes:** Youth workers offer young people opportunities to improve confidence levels, build resilience, learn new skills and feel more optimistic for the future by gaining recognition for their achievements through SCQF accredited Youth Scotland Awards. The number of young people gaining a youth award has increased year on year. During 2023/24 337 children and young people achieved a youth award, up from 118 in 2022-23.

Of those who achieved a Dynamic Youth Award:

- Most (82%) (44% in 22/23) said they have a more positive view of themselves
- Most (81%) (49% in 22/23) said they were better at solving problems and making decisions
- Most (78%) (60% in 22/23) said they were better at working with others to achieve a task
- Most (80%) (47% in 22/23) said they were better at listening and talking to others
- The majority (62%) said they were better at friendship, trust and accepting others
- Most (78%) (42% in 22/23) said they felt more valued as members of their community

The majority of pupils who took part in the Hi5 award said that they had improved their ability to join in activities; work better with others, gained more skills, discovered new things and generally felt better about themselves.

Of those who achieved a Hi5:

- Most (80%) said they joined in more activities
- Most (81%) said they were better at working with others
- Most (81%) said they had gained more skills
- Most (83%) said they had discovered new things
- The majority (78%) said they felt better about themselves

The Awards are now being used by partners with wider appreciation of how the Awards can support delivery of flexible learning pathways. However, across youth work programmes not all children and young people taking part in youth work activities are given the opportunity to gain national awards. There is a need to extend the knowledge of youth workers around what awards could suit the groups they are working with and consider how they could be introduced. Our data tells us that those young people in SIMD 1 and 2 are least likely to take up these opportunities and there is a need to ensure equity in the use of awards.

**Outcome summary:**

Some young people are developing skills, confidence and accreditation through award schemes but not all children and young people taking part in youth work activities are given the opportunity to gain national awards. Young people's skills and achievements, gained both within and out with school, are not consistently recognised, captured and celebrated. There is a need to consider how CLD providers can best work with secondary schools to support the tracking of these achievements and increase use of the awards by youth workers.

There is a need to consider how CLD providers can best work with secondary schools to track uptake.

Extend the knowledge of youth workers around what awards could suit the groups they are working with and consider how they could be introduced (with a particular focus on SIMD 1&2).

<p><b>Support young people's mental and physical wellbeing and increase the number of young people who report that they feel mentally well</b></p> <p>Page 25</p>	<p><b>Developing life skills and resilience:</b> The CLD Youth Team has worked with schools and other partners to identify those pupils at risk of, or already impacted by, poor mental health and provide those young people with the support they require. As a result, transition programmes for Primary 6 and 7's are being delivered in almost all ASGs and these include Transition after-school clubs in partnership with Active Schools and school staff to support a smooth transition to secondary school. The youth team continue to provide 1-1 support, award and small group work, drop-in sessions at lunchtime/breakfast clubs to allow young people to socialise in a safe environment with trusted adults.</p> <p>Data and evaluations strongly support the provision of youth work in schools. Strong partnership between school, youth workers and other partners is enriching the learning offer for young people. Work will continue to align this provision with the Family Support Model over session 2024/25.</p> <p><b>Outcome Summary:</b> CLD Youth Work is now embedded within most primary and secondary schools and children and young people are benefitting from the opportunities provided by youth workers to gain skills, develop confidence and improve wellbeing. Our recent evaluation of the offer confirms it is relevant and meeting the needs of young people. SHINE survey results evidence that on the whole, the mental health of our young people is improving. <a href="#">Education Recovery and Scottish Equity Funded project report.</a></p>		
<p><b>Work with partners from the Family Wellbeing Hubs to provide early intervention support to children, young people and families.</b></p>	<p><b>Collaboration with Fit Like!:</b> CLD Family Learning's approach and provision supports families through intensive 1-1 support, group work provision and mental health counselling as well as offering guidance and support to access other services. As of June 2024, The Family Learning team are currently working with 30 Fit Like families, (up from 24 in 2023) with a further 18 Fit Like families on our waiting list. The team continues to be guided by CLD principles and the high standard of practice Family Learning is known for, benefiting from the additional advantage of referring back to, or working in partnership with other agencies aligned to Fit Like to tailor the 'best fit' for families.</p> <p><b>Case Study – Family Learning – Fit Like! (Appendix C page 2)</b></p> <p><b>Outcome Summary</b> The 'Fit Like?' programme is aligning resources and providing effective bespoke whole family support, at an early stage, to prevent children and families from requiring higher levels of support</p>		

. **Youth Participation:** CLD youth workers have successfully continued to support and develop youth participation through Aberdeen Youth Movement (AYM). AYM, a youth led group, encourages active engagement of young people aged 12-25 across the city. Key achievements include:

- One member of AYM was the key speaker at the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman report launch in Edinburgh.
- The AYM Steering Group meets quarterly with ACC Leaders
- Three AYM members represent young people on the local Disability Equity Partnership and are exploring how to create a youth-friendly deaf arm.
- AYM collaborates with six local Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) members and promoted the SYP elections, where 1224 young people voted. They deliver roadshows and events in city academies on youth participation and Scottish youth politics.
- AYM runs the Youth Action Grants group, distributing £50,000 across youth projects, benefiting 1407 young people.
- AYM works with the Community Development team to involve young people in the Priority Neighbourhood Partnership (PNP) process and attend PNP meetings.
- AYM also attends the Community Council Forum (CCF) to update on AYM and engage more young people in CCF.
- Two AYM members are part of the Fairer Aberdeen Fund, Participatory Budgeting steering group.
- Five AYM members are on the Health Improvement Fund Screening panel for 2024.

AYM have identified and successfully progressed 3 key campaigns this year leading to improved relationships between uniformed organisations and young people, the development of a community centre toolkit for re-engagement with young people and a guide on social media.

**Case study – Aberdeen Youth Movement, Social Media (please see Appendix C page 4)**

**Scottish Youth Parliament:** For the first time in 14 years the Scottish Youth Parliament held a Sitting in Aberdeen in October 2023 with 82 young people from across Scotland participating. Most (88.5%) of the young people attending rated the event as 'very good' or 'good'.

**Outcome Summary:**

Effective youth participation forums are now influencing strategic priorities in Aberdeen including the cost of living, approach to budget consultation, city and beach master planning. The Council is committed to continuing to take account of the needs and wants of our children and young people.

Promote and deliver diversionary activities for young people with an enhanced focus on the priority areas.

**Developing diversionary opportunities for young people:** CLD Funded Community Projects (Aberdeen Lads Club, Fersands Community Project, Middlefield Community Project, and shmu) provide a range of diversionary activities for young people across priority areas. Over 2021-24 these projects supported 2,841 children and young people with 1,080 young people participating in diversionary activities and 1,549 reporting that their confidence and resilience had increased.

The CLD youth work team have delivered a programme of activities for young people over the summer and community projects have offered a wide range of diversionary activities in priority neighbourhoods. The CLD youth work team have sustained regular StreetWork sessions with young people most at risk of engaging in negative behaviours. CLD youth work and community development workers have established a network of more than 30 providers of potential activities for young people in the city centre and are in the early stages of developing an offer. Work is ongoing to maintain and develop existing community based youth clubs and, working with community volunteers, to start new ones in several areas.

The Youth Connections group (ACC Youth Work, Police Scotland and the Community Safety Team) plan a coordinated approach to diverting young people away from risk taking behaviours in the city centre.

**Shmu:** In the period 2023-24, 297 young people participated in media related activities. 6 young people identified as Young Carers participated in a short-term project and achieved an SCQF Level 2 Award (Hi5 Awards). Through shmu BFI Youth project, 20 young people have completed a Level 5 National Progression Award in Film and Media. Young people who participate in shmu Youth Media Project are regular community radio volunteers. This volunteering commitment is recognised through young people being registered for Saltire Awards. Three participants have secured their 500 hour certificate, with many others having secured different levels.

**Developing the Youth Work Providers Network:** The CLD Youth Work team worked with partners to establish a Youth Work Providers' Network in 2022 where information about diversionary activities is shared and gaps identified. There are 31 organisations on the Youth Network mailing list. The purpose of the Network is to improve communication between services, have a better understanding of what partners can offer and what they are doing, share examples of good practice and funding and training opportunities.

*The youth work providers network is effectively sharing information to better support the young people they work with. The network is also helping members to collaborate on new projects. As a result, youth providers are better informed about each other's work and are finding ways to improve the offer for young people.*

**His Majesty's Inspectors of Education, May 2024**

**Outcome Summary:**

Children and young people are taking part in a range of social, recreational and educational activities that diverts them away from antisocial behaviour in their communities. There is a higher level of provision in priority areas and there is a need to increase the number of diversionary activities and safe spaces for young people in other

Consider how to spread the provision of youth groups more fully across the city.

neighbourhoods, including in the city centre.

**Youth work in schools:** Youth Work is embedded in primary and secondary schools. A refined learning offer and improved referral process have been developed. The offer includes one to one support, enhanced support for transition from P7 to S1, SQA-approved youth awards such as Hi5 and Dynamic Youth, break-time drop-ins, the Leadership programme and Confidence to Cook (C2C) classes.

*'Targeted support to young people on flexible learning pathways by youth workers, delivered in schools and community settings, is highly valued by young people, parents and teachers. Young people are engaging with staff and achieving positive health outcomes and achieving accreditation through Dynamic Youth Awards. Most of the young people participating in the Confidence to Cook programme have improved their confidence and their ability to work with others.'*

**His Majesty's Inspectors of Education, May 2024**

*'The Bridge of Don Academy drop-in youth service is effectively supporting young people, at risk of social isolation, to build their confidence, communication and team working skills. A few members are gaining Saltire Awards. The drop-in service is offered each year to S1 young people identified as needing support. As a result, young people are more settled in school and are able to engage better in learning.'*

**His Majesty's Inspectors of Education, May 2024**

**Outcome Summary:**

Resources are being effectively used to provide timely interventions to children and young people. Referral processes have been developed that allow partners to refer quickly and easily. Partnerships between schools and CLD have improved, and the former are recognising the contribution youth work and family learning can make to support children and young people. The increase in the number of youth workers in primary and secondary schools is improving equity of opportunity. Children and young people are being supported by youth workers to develop skills and capacities that are improving their wellbeing.

**Edge of Care pilots as a response to The Promise:** Youth Workers in schools are an integral part of our emerging model of Family Support aligned to The Promise. The Youth Work and Family Learning Teams have committed 6 staff (4 youth workers and 2 Family Learning staff) to the multi-agency Edge of Care pilots. 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. Education Scotland and the ACC Youth Work team worked on an adapted version of the national Promise Award to make it more suitable for youth work providers across Scotland. The award was delivered in 2023 to 21 members of the youth work team; everyone who took part passed.

*'Youth Work staff delivering the pilot Promise Project are building trusted relationships with young people resulting in improvements in behaviour and self-esteem.'*

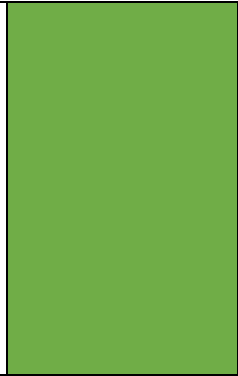
**His Majesty's Inspectors of Education, May 2024**

Work in partnership with primary and secondary schools, with a focus on priority areas, to support improvements relating to the National Improvement Framework priorities

**Case study: The Promise Project (Appendix C page 6)**

**Outcome Summary**

The continued increase in the number of youth workers in primary and secondary schools is improving equity of opportunity. Children and young people are being supported by youth workers to develop skills and capacities that are improving their wellbeing. Children and young people on the edge of care from Lochside and Northfield ASG's are receiving an enhanced offer of support from a range of partners.



## Priority 2 - Adult learning

### Improving Outcomes for Adults

Adult Learning offers a range of learning opportunities which supports learners to become more resilient and able to cope with changes within their lives. Learning opportunities which are well designed and based on the needs of the individual or group, with clear progression routes for learners. Adult Learning drives the development of an improved personal skills base, increases the focus on achieving better outcomes for communities and improved life chances.

**Families are supported to raise attainment and build their capacity and resilience**

POIP 4.1  
Ensuring  
Families  
Receive the  
Parenting and  
family support  
they need

**Early intervention work with families:** CLD Family Learning is a citywide provision that promotes family learning, personal and socio-economic resilience, and challenges educational disadvantage to improve overall wellbeing. In 2023-24, to date (June 24), Family Learning have delivered 277 activities across the city to 464 participants. This equates to 8355 Learner Hours (registered) and 14325 Total Learner Hours including children.

**Kinship:** In September 2023, the Family Learning Kinship Development Officer post was created to strengthen the partnership between Family Learning and Kinship Social Work. Since then, an 'I'm a Kinship Parent' course, a Kinship Drop-In session, and a summer holiday program for kinship families have been developed. The Development Officer has supported over 10 kinship families with specific needs and bridged the gap between the kinship team and wider Tier 1/Tier 2 supports that are in place, predominantly via the Fit Like Family Wellbeing Team. A Summer Activity Program for kinship families was rolled out in 2024 including input from Creative Learning's Geronimo, Shmu and Adventure Aberdeen.

**ASN Support:** Family Learning has increased support for ASN families, creating peer support groups in Northfield, St Machar, and Bridge of Don, with plans to expand to Lochside. Groups are open to any parent/carer supporting a child with ASN, regardless of a diagnosis. Parents/carers attending these groups can be hesitant to engage with new services as they are anxious about being judged and can feel overwhelmed by the support options available to them. These groups allow parents/carers to discuss challenges, receive support, and connect with partner organisations. Bringing services to the group helps break down barriers and facilitate access to wider support.

**Northfield Partnership Forum Funding:** In late 2023 the Northfield Partnership Forum commissioned Family Learning to provide a range of supports for families with additional support needs in the area, these included:

- Staff training and Family Chill Out sessions in partnership with SensationALL
- A residential trip to Cromdale Outdoor Centre with Adventure Aberdeen
- Provide fuel, food support through Iceland, Asda and Aldi vouchers
- Provide basic necessities such as clothing and homeware
- Essential childcare provision via the Scottish Childminder Association
- Deep cleaning and support for the maintenance of homes
- Family Learning activities including Supper & Science in partnership with Aberdeen Science Centre
- Hosting three community events alongside multiple partners, where families were able to try a variety of new cultural activities, reduce social isolation and receive free food.

**Supper and Science Expansion:** Supper and Science is a successful program run in partnership with Aberdeen Science Centre and Northfield Academy. It combines cooking and science activities for families. Due to its success, it has been replicated in St Machar Academy as a transition activity for P7 students. Plans are underway to expand it further.

**Self-Care in the Outdoors:** Self-Care in the Outdoors is a program created in partnership between a Family Learning Development Worker and a Healthy Minds Community Learning Worker. It uses craft and the outdoor environment to promote mental health and well-being. Digital recordings of Progressive Muscle Relaxation and Loving Kindness relaxation techniques are shared with the group and regular daily use encouraged to promote the value of self-care. A 6-week pilot with parents/carers from Manor Park School was evaluated highly by learners and school SMT and is now being rolled out across the city.

**Teens and Tweens Work:** Since 2021, Family Learning has expanded its provision to include children up to Primary 7 age. Staff have developed their knowledge of older children and appropriate parenting strategies and have adapted the courses on offer to parents/carers. Courses include a sleep course for tweens and one to build stronger relationships with tween aged children.

**Dons Families Together** In 2024, Family Learning partnered with Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust for the Dons Families Together program. The program engaged vulnerable families with activities, provided hot meals, and linked them with support organisations. A Family Learning Development Worker supported the group, creating a strong link between the two organisations. Family Learning families have since accessed games and activities provided by Pittodrie.

**Outdoor First Aid and Fire Pit Training** During the Covid pandemic, Family Learning adapted to include outdoor learning as a core element of their delivery. In 2024, staff completed Outdoor First Aid and Fire Pit



training to expand their outdoor learning program.

**CLD Funded Community Projects** provide valuable support for families, young people, and children in priority areas. Supports include Early Learning, After School Clubs, Family Support, Adult Learning, Youth Work, Community Capacity building and access to free food. Funded Projects also provide direct support to help families facing issues such as fuel poverty, welfare reform, and social exclusion. Over 3,600 families (and 3,676 children and young people) have been supported over 21/24. 686 volunteers have contributed 103,711 volunteer hours. These projects enhance Community Learning and Development provision in priority neighbourhoods.

**Fairer Aberdeen support for families:** The Fairer Aberdeen Programme funds a range of organisations providing support to families, including Middlefield Youth Hub, HomeStart, ACIS Youth Counselling, Befriend A Child, Choices, ACC Creative Learning Geronimo, CFINE, Pathways, CAB, and community flats in Tillydrone, Seaton and Cummings Park. 1,074 parents and families with more complex needs were supported in this way over 21/24. Key successes include:

- 1,125 adults and 689 young people accessed counselling services through Fairer Aberdeen funded organisations.
- A total of 2,404 people took part in employability programmes through community groups, developing skills across the employability ready pipeline, 736 (31%) of those people moved into work. 13,156 people received money and income maximisation advice, with 3,847 of them receiving a total financial gain of £10,572,737 the equivalent of a gain of £2,748 per person.

**Close collaboration with education:** Since 2021, the CLD Family Learning team have recruited a Family Learning Development Officer and between 8-10 Development Workers, initially via Education Recovery Funding and now through Strategic Equity Funding. Almost all (96% 2023/24 data) registered learners report increased confidence and new knowledge and skills. There is clear evidence that the targeted and inclusive programmes delivered by Family Learning improve life chances and effectively enable parents to develop their parenting skills, helping to enable families to give their child the best start in life. The team and colleagues plan to align family learning and youth work approaches with the model of Family Support in keeping with The Promise and develop Education Scotland's Promise Award.

**Responding to emerging need:** The increased cost of living continues to have a direct impact on many of the families supported by the CLD Family Learning team. The team helps families overcome the most basic barriers of food, fuel and financial poverty as well as support for the mental health complexities they face. The team continues to be agile in approach and guided by families, ensuring that their basic needs are met before engaging in further learning programmes.

*'ACC CLD Family Learning staff provide targeted one to one and group support to parents facing challenges in their lives. Parents value the compassionate and constructive support they receive, resulting in improvements in their confidence, self-esteem and general mental health'.*

**His Majesty's Inspectors of Education, May 2024**

**Outcome Summary**

In many instances families have required support to meet their basic needs before being able to progress to other areas of learning. Partnership working, and how that sustains whole family support, has been a strength in meeting families' needs and building resilience. Recognising that families have the biggest impact on their child's development and learning, this work contributes to increasing attainment across the city, by addressing barriers that families face and building their confidence in their involvement in their child's learning.

Align family learning and youth work approaches with the model of Family Support and increase use of The Promise Award

Develop and deliver targeted learning package for those whose employment opportunities have been hardest hit by Covid-19

**Targeted employability programmes across partners:** Adult Learning in partnership with Bon Accord care have delivered 2 ESOL for the Care Sector courses 2023/24 which resulted in either employment or paid placements for most learners. Individual learning plans and one to one meetings are supporting adult learners in the creative writing group to set and manage their goals. This is helping learners to progress and be more confident to try new things.

**Reducing re-offending through skills development:** The CLD Adult Learning team work in partnership with Community Payback Order team and the Social Work Criminal Justice team, to offer a learning programme as part of the client's payback order. The focus is to expand opportunities and alternative coping strategies with the aim of reducing re-offending and custodial sentences.

54 learners have accessed skills development at Spring Garden sites which include:

- Mixed group and a women's group– literacy, ICT, health and wellbeing, life skills, confidence building, core skills SVQ
- Problem solving courts – mixed learning, tailored to meet the individual needs of the learners

Adults undertaking community payback orders are supported well by adult learning workers to improve their life skills. This includes literacy and numeracy skills but also exploring aspects such as building positive relationships with others. This is helping many of these learners to be more optimistic about their futures. All learners are offered accredited learning, at the end of their Community Payback Order they have also have the opportunity to attend classes within the community.

*'Adults undertaking community payback orders are supported well by adult learning workers to improve their life skills. This includes literacy and numeracy skills but also exploring aspects such as building positive relationships with others. This is helping many of these learners to be more optimistic about their futures and consider how they can progress in their lives.'*

Adult learning staff to work with their partners to see if data analysis can provide evidence of their positive impact and contribution to helping to reduce re-offending

**His Majesty's Inspectors of Education, May 2024**

Spring Garden has been developing really positively. Initially building relationships with both the Women's cafe attendees and the staff, using critical thinking exercises and fun activities, such as quizzes and reflective exercises, whilst promoting what adult learning entails and what we can offer to support learners.

**Case study: Problem Solving Courts – Bail Supervision (Appendix C page 8)**

**shmu adult services**

shmu programmes support adults facing personal challenges, including shmu adult volunteers, by offering practical and emotional support through structured one-to-one sessions, as well as ad-hoc support and a range of wellbeing and social activities for them to participate in. They provide wellbeing opportunities to community members through shmu weekly Wellbeing Café and shmu regular Wellbeing Walk. They are increasing the groups of people they work with, including more work with the asylum seeking and refugee community, as well as individuals who are neurodivergent or have additional learning and support needs.

Shmu supported 62 individuals in the 2023-24 period. 23 individuals reduced their risk taking and/or offending behaviour as a result of engagement with shmu programmes, and 23 participants secured a positive destination of either employment, education, training or volunteering.

**Outcome Summary**

These employability interventions have been successful in supporting individuals to increase in confidence and learn new skills. Learning and employability pathways have been central for those taking part in short term projects, this has led to accreditation, volunteering and employment. As work continues through the delivery of the CLD plan there continues to be a need to define and promote clear learning pathways across different providers to ensure that we maximise the impact of available resource.

**Improve the Mental Wellbeing of adults in our communities**

LOIP Stretch Outcome 11. Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026

**Adult Mental Wellbeing in the community:** The CLD Healthy Minds team supported 173 adults with a diagnosed mental illness to access learning opportunities over the last 3 years. All learners received 1-1 support to develop a personal learning plan which is regularly reviewed and evaluated. Learners also took part in various groups (210 learning opportunities over the 3 years) with most reporting an increase in their confidence and skills. Most learners moved onto other opportunities including employment, volunteering, further education and community groups. Over 2023/24, 56 learners (55% new to the service) benefited from 998 learning hours

*“It has made me more willing and enthusiastic about participating in community based groups and activities. Something I was very reluctant about previously.” – Healthy Minds learner*

*“I liked being around people that speak about interesting things. Seeing animals, being in the fresh air, things that I wouldn't normally do.”*

*“I feel that my confidence is ok at the moment, sometimes I surprise myself by being more confident than I thought.”*

*“I'm not scared to try new things anymore. Much less anxious.”*

*“Taking better care of myself.”*

*“It has made me feel more confident in group settings.”*

*“The tutors took the time to go round everyone and even though I am quiet, I got the right amount of attention.”*

The Healthy Minds creative writing group at Rosemount Community Centre supports learners who have experienced social isolation and mental health issues. The trusted relationships between the members and the tutors are helping learners to develop and share their work. Regular one to one meetings with staff ensure a continued focus on progress and achieving goals. Harlaw Academy, acting as the Scottish Qualifications Authority centre, is facilitating learners to undertake a qualification, which they would not otherwise have access to. All learners report an increase in their confidence and most (80%) have improved their knowledge and skills. In June 2024, 7 learners have been supported to complete an SQA Level 5 award in Creative Writing in conjunction with Harlaw Academy and 4 are completing an SQA level 3 award - Working Together. In 2023/24, 22 evaluations were returned and showed almost all (94%) believed their confidence had improved and the majority (82%) had improved skills.

Tutor provision at the Blair secure forensic unit in Cornhill hospital is effectively supporting a group of vulnerable learners. Funded through the NHS, the CLD Healthy Minds team provide a tutor 12 hours per week. Activities are learner led across a range of interests, including core skills. Sessions help learners to structure their day, to stay motivated and to maintain their mental health and reduce anxiety. Core skills gained through the programme helps a few learners to resettle in the community where appropriate. 17 patients have been supported since

May 2021 with almost all (96%) reporting improved confidence and almost all (92%) report improved skills. A further 13 patients have been supported by the Healthy Minds team in the community this year equating to 301 learning hours. A few learners continue their learning within the unit while others are regularly attending community opportunities. One learner completed an adult achievement award and an SQA qualification in volunteering. The team have increased accredited learning this year by 50% and plan on increasing this by a further 30% next year.

**Case study – Healthy Minds (Appendix C page 9)**

**Outcome Summary:**

Healthy Minds targeted learning offer in the community and in the forensic unit at Cornhill is helping adults with a diagnosed mental illness to aid their own recovery. Most report an increase in confidence and skills and move on to volunteering opportunities, employment, other learning opportunities or groups within their own community. Learners report that they take better care of themselves and are more able to do things on their own.

**Equip Adult Learners to meet key challenges and transitions in their lives – to include Digital inclusion, literacy, numeracy, ESOL and financial resilience.**

LOIP Stretch Outcome 11. To have a healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026

**ESOL:** This year, there has been a rise in ESOL learners, with over 200 enrolled in 24 core classes ranging from pre-literacy to intermediate level and 138 on the waiting list. Given demand, 4 tutors undertook training to become an SQA assessor last year and this has helped increase the numbers of classes offered. The tutors have benefited from in-house CPD and training sessions on topics such as: Dyslexia, using AI to help lesson planning, using Book Creator in the classroom and teaching grammar. They have also completed a digital self-evaluation using the framework developed by Education Scotland as part of Improving Digital Practice within CLD. The results of this self-evaluation will be used to help guide future training and identify ways to further incorporate digital skills and literacy into our classes.

*'ESOL learners are gaining a wide range of skills that meet their needs. They enjoy learning English in the classes run by the CLD service. Many have built friendships within the groups and are more confident. Learners are successfully using the communication skills they are gaining in their wider lives. This includes speaking to their children's schools, using transport and seeking medical services. Many are using the skills and, in some cases, qualifications they are gaining to find work or move onto further learning or volunteering. The pace and challenge set by staff is appropriate and enables the learners to progress well'*  
**His Majesty's Inspectors of Education, May 2024**

Following increased tutor capacity, the short course offering has been expanded to include specialised short courses including two 4-week handwriting support courses and a 6-week communication focused short course. With upcoming courses focusing on: employability; reading and phonics; small talk and communication; reading in context (which sees the learners exploring sites of interest around Aberdeen whilst developing reading skills) as well as two parent and child courses aimed at developing reading and speaking skills for both the parent and child over school holiday periods. Learners have been closely involved in the developing of these short courses, which initially came about following feedback received at a learner focus group in April. This also identified learners who would like to get involved in the running of activities, which will be facilitated by funding received from the Youth Activities Small Grant Fund. There has also been closer collaboration between classes and teachers over the year, with groups combining for visits to the Art Gallery and Duthie Park.

The adult learning team have completed an extensive Learners Voice exercise with ESOL learners, using the feedback to improve and extend practise. ESOL learners told us they want more opportunities to practice their English and to develop their understanding of Scottish culture.

All learners are encouraged to gain an SQA qualification in literacy Nat 1 or ESOL Nat 2. In response to requests from learners and staff, we are in the process of establishing an SQA in Tenancy, which covers both the tenant and landlord's rights and responsibilities.

**Empowering our Gypsy Traveller community:** With the upgraded Gypsy Traveller site re opened, the Adult Learning team are engaging with 21 families, a regular food pantry has been established in partnership with CFine, a young parent group has been set up, an under-fives group to support transition from home to nursery.

Find ways to respond positively to the huge increase in the number of Asylum seekers requiring ESOL support. Likely to increase further before end of calendar year.

Staff have undertaken training to support health issues within the community. Support to access other services in partnership with Social Security Scotland and the Gypsy Traveller Liaison Officer. Offer of literacies support for adults and teenagers with the option of SQA accreditation,

**Increasing digital skills:** The Fairer Aberdeen Fund supports Silver City Surfers to provide support to older people to learn how to use computers and the internet safely, and shmuCommunity Media, including community newsletters which are delivered across the priority areas, and community radio, which includes weekly community shows for each priority area. During 2023-24:

- 300 older people were supported to develop digital skills.
- 352 people were involved in producing community media and
- 400 people participated in training and skills development.

*'ESOL partners have established open and collaborative ways of working through and responding to the sudden arrival of people fleeing war in Ukraine. Partners effectively share information and resources and regularly review services. Their collaborative approach is helping to ensure that learners are signposted to the most appropriate support.'* - His Majesty's Inspectors of Education, May 2024

**ESOL subgroup:** ESOL partners have established open and collaborative ways of working through responding to the sudden arrival of people fleeing war in Ukraine. Partners effectively share information and resources and regularly review services. Their collaborative approach is helping to ensure that learners are signposted to the most appropriate support.

The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) sub group has been crucial in effectively co-ordinating our response to the significant influx of new learners by coordinating the ESOL response to Afghan and Ukrainian Learners ensuring all who presented were assessed and signposted to the appropriate service for appropriate level learning,

**Outcome Summary:**

CLD partners provide a wide range of effective opportunities to improve life chances and support learners to thrive, succeed and learn new skills. This is helping to support participants' social, emotional and physical wellbeing. Across learning programmes, most participants are gaining new knowledge and skills. There is a need to further define and promote learner pathways across different providers.

**Develop and support outdoor learning initiatives**

**Outdoor learning:** The Family Learning team promotes outdoor learning and wellbeing. The team provides creative outdoor learning experiences that connect children and families, assessing risk, building resilience, confidence, and skills through activities and play. Outdoor sessions are delivered in each locality through Geronimo, Time to Play, Coastal Project, Wellbeing Walks and RE-Wilding Outdoor Education sessions, In the City holiday provision, Pop-ups in local parks as well as families accessing residential in Cullen looking at environmental issues and the impact humans have on the climate. The team has supported approximately 563 families to access outdoor learning opportunities. The team also completed training in First Aid in the Outdoors and Fire Pit training.

**Outdoor Learning at The Grove – Hazlehead:** The CLD Healthy Minds team continues to encourage and enable partner agencies to access the Grove site. Volunteering opportunities at the Grove continue to be developed in partnership with other agencies. The resource has enabled successful delivery of a variety of courses including:

- 7 (up from 4 last year) Grow and Learn in Nature (GLiN) employability focused courses – outcomes for learners include return to paid employment and volunteer posts.
- One Seed Forward (OSF) continue to deliver a programme of courses, one strand focusing on basic gardening skills and the other on community gardening, with ongoing support provided to engage with existing community gardens and to set up new ones.
- Healthy Minds delivered a monthly environmental group in partnership with ACC Ranger Service focusing on mental wellbeing and open to mental health agencies across the city
- Adult Learning is in the early stages of developing opportunities for Asylum seekers and refugees to access outdoor space at the Grove.

**Outcome Summary:**

Opportunities for outdoor learning are maximised across all adult learning groups, recognising the benefits of connecting with the city green spaces for integration, skills development, play and mental health and wellbeing.



<p><b>Increase focus on accredited qualifications and development of Progression Routes</b></p>	<p><b>Learner Accreditation and progression routes:</b> The number of adults completing accredited awards dropped significantly in 2023/24. The Adult Learning team have delivered SQA assessor and verifiers training to the wider CLD team increasing capacity to offer accredited learning again. (16 new assessors and 3 new verifiers)</p> <p>There is a need to extend the knowledge of CLD staff and partners around what awards could suit the groups they are working with and consider how they could be introduced more consistently.</p> <p><b>Outcome Summary:</b> Recognition of learning through accredited learning opportunities offer clear pathways for progression and give learners confidence in the value and credibility of their learning. There is a need now to build on the increasing number of staff and partners across the city who can assess and verify for SQA to ensure there will be more opportunities available for our learners now and in the future.</p>		<p>To extend SQA training to internal and external partners to extend the accreditation offer and progression routes</p>
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Community Development

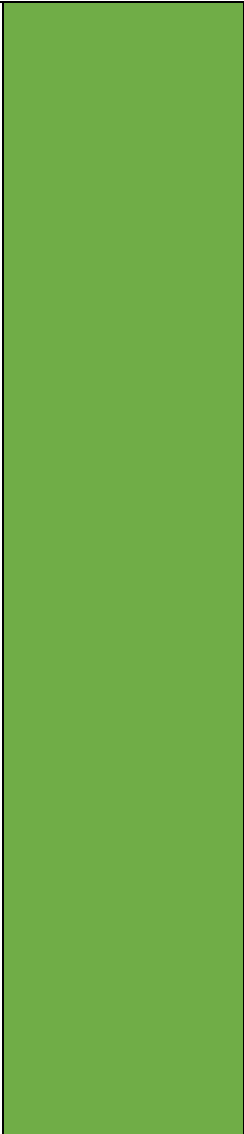

**Building Stronger Communities**

CLD Partners support communities to take action to respond to disadvantage, to build on community strengths and to have a say in decisions which affect them. Community reps are valued as equal partners at all levels of community & locality planning, all working towards building stronger, more influential, resilient communities.

<p><b>Provide capacity building support to communities to create, develop and sustain programmes and activities which address emerging priorities and provide increased opportunities for citizens</b></p>	<p><b>Building community capacity:</b> Ambitious community organisations and committed volunteers provide a wide range of services and programmes that support community members very effectively. They are instrumental in taking forward essential, needs-focused provision in many local areas. They support local people well on a wide range of issues. CLD partners are effective in supporting learners, community activists and volunteers to gain skills that match their aims and ambitions. This is helping to improve the life chances of disadvantaged individuals and groups in local communities and across identified groups</p> <p><i>'The ACC Community Development Team has worked successfully with partners and volunteers to establish a Ukrainian Hub based at Rosemount Learning Centre. This is an example of highly effective community development, and support to volunteers.'</i> <b>His Majesty's Inspectors of Education, May 2024</b></p> <p><b>Case Study: Ukrainian Community Hub (Appendix C page 11)</b></p> <p><b>CLD Funded projects;</b> Through CLD Funded Projects and the Fairer Aberdeen Fund a range of organisations provide programmes of activities and support in communities. During 2021-24 Funded Projects supported 8,945 people and 686 volunteers contributed 103,711 hours of volunteering time, and the Fairer Aberdeen programme supported 131,473 people and 2,209 volunteers contributed over 398,000 hours of volunteering time with a value of £5.9m.</p>		<p>With partners and communities, co-create a clear, consistent, readily available training offer to help build capacity to deliver opportunities and services to meet the needs of their community</p>
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<p>Emerging priorities being not detailed in the original plan:  <b>Welcoming New Scots and refugees</b>  <b>Cost of Living Crisis</b>  <b>Warm Spaces</b></p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 274</p>	<p><b>Case Study: Middlefield Community Project (Appendix C page 13)</b></p> <p><i>'Learners and volunteers at shmu contribute to the wider community of Aberdeen and beyond through delivering radio programmes. Learners are supported effectively by staff to gain the confidence and skills to present regular shows. They cover a wide range of topics from mental health to LGBTQi+ to community challenges. Feedback from listeners show how valued this is. The volunteers themselves appreciate the inclusive and welcoming support they receive from the shmu team. Many of the learners and volunteers face additional challenges in their lives, such as poor health or disability. Their involvement at shmu is raising self-esteem and self-worth. Participants feel valued and for many this is life changing and for a few lifesaving'. His Majesty's Inspectors of Education, May 2024</i></p> <p><b>shmu Community Development</b> work aims to engage disadvantaged and marginalised communities through access to cultural and creative media, providing access to platforms that allow people and communities to share their experiences, challenges and successes</p> <p>Their projects and activities encourage community members to develop skills to populate the community media platforms they facilitate, including a radio station, podcasts, magazines, TV &amp; film, and websites. These platforms are used as vehicles for personal and collective change, supporting skills development, active citizenship, community capacity building and development.</p> <p>In the period 2023-24, 147 volunteers were involved in shmu communities' work, contributing over 21,000 hours of volunteer time. Community editorial teams produced 21 different community magazines, across 7 regeneration areas of Aberdeen, delivered to almost 80,000 households. We engaged over 900 participants through shmu communities work and worked with 195 partner groups and organisations in the process.</p> <p><b>Outcome summary:</b>  Capacity building support is enabling and empowering local people to develop the skills and confidence to further develop programmes of activities that are making a difference to their communities. CLD partners now need to consider how they can use the data and other information they each gather to better demonstrate their collective impact and progress over time.</p>		<p>CLD partners now need to consider how they can use the data and other information they each gather to better demonstrate their collective impact and progress over time</p>
<p><b>Support the creation and development of social enterprise and community wealth building</b></p>	<p><b>Enabling community wealth building in our most disadvantaged communities:</b> A multi-agency project led by Business Gateway has successfully helped 53 people transition into self-employment helping them reduce their reliance on financial benefit, such as Universal Credit.</p> <p>Key to this success was the deployment of dedicated community business advisors, targeted collaboration for funding resources, and strategic partnerships with ecosystem partners. The project fosters economic growth, empowers citizens, and provided a replicable model for tackling unemployment through self-employment initiatives. Stakeholders tell us that more support is needed to navigate the asset transfer process and there has been limited progress in developing community social enterprises.</p>		<p>Awareness raising to increase take-up</p> <p>Develop a clear plan and actions to support the</p>

	<p><b>Outcome summary:</b> Partners are working well together to ensure local people, particularly in our priority communities are aware of and supported to access opportunities</p>		development of community enterprises and community asset transfers
<p>Ensure Community Planning partners work closely with people and communities to improve our collective understanding of strengths, needs and opportunities</p>	<p><b>Empowering communities through more effective engagement:</b> A few enthusiastic and committed community representatives receive valued and effective support from community development staff and partners. They are improving their networking skills and are ready to make positive impacts in their community through locality planning. Priority Neighbourhood Partnership meetings are now planned in advance and can be attended either in person or online, thereby reducing barriers to participation. Agenda setting meetings ensure that the agenda reflects issues of relevance to the community.</p> <p>Community Learning and Development partners continue to support those active within their communities to develop their skills, knowledge &amp; understanding of the wider needs of the community and build the capacity of the community This is enabling increasing numbers to participate more effectively in groups such as Locality Empowerment Groups (LEGs), Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships (PNPs), Fairer Aberdeen Board and other community bodies to take charge of their outcomes and make a positive impact..</p> <p>The Fairer Aberdeen Board includes 7 volunteers from priority areas and 2 from the Civic Forum. The community representatives are supported through the Regeneration Matters Group which meets monthly and are involved in monitoring funded initiatives and considering their impact on issues that affect all the priority areas. During 2024 the Fairer Aberdeen Board is working with the Aberdeen Youth Movement to increase the representation of young people on the Board.</p> <p>Funded Community Projects continue to support community involvement in priority areas.</p> <p><b>Outcome Summary:</b> A few community representatives are benefitting from targeted support to participate in locality planning. There is a need to ensure an increasing emphasis on platforming people with lived experience of inequality.</p>		CLD Partners should broaden the base of community participation & engagement to ensure that community groups include people with lived experience of inequality and disadvantage
<p>Further, develop a clear and coherent framework to support volunteers and volunteering within</p>	<p><b>Strengthening Volunteer capacity:</b> Local Third Sector Interface ACVO provide and continue to develop a flexible variety of means to access volunteering, support volunteers and match volunteers to opportunities to ensure that our city and communities benefit from the crucial help people provide through volunteering.</p> <p>CLD partners support those active within their communities to develop their skills, knowledge &amp; understanding of the wider needs of the community and work alongside communities to develop programmes of activities/learning opportunities within their community. Community development workers are proactive in working within some communities to create awareness of volunteering opportunities in their local community and supporting local people to take on volunteer roles in community groups and programmes.</p>		

<p><b>communities and across community groups and organisations</b></p>	<p>ACVO facilitate the Aberdeen Volunteer Co-ordinators Network (447 volunteer involving organisation contacts) and over 70,500 people regularly volunteer in Aberdeen, contributing an amazing collective total of over 4.4 million hours of help for people and communities.</p> <p>in July 2024 both Aberdeen City Council and NHS Grampian signed up to the Volunteer Charter and the revamped <a href="#">Volunteer Aberdeen website</a> launched. The site lists hundreds of volunteering opportunities available across Aberdeen.</p> <p>Funded CLD Projects and the Fairer Aberdeen Fund supports a range of organisations that support volunteers. Funded Projects supported 686 volunteers who contributed 103,711 hours of volunteering time. The Fairer Aberdeen programme supported 2,209 volunteers who contributed over 398,000 hours of volunteering time with a value of £5.9m.</p> <p>Effective training programmes are designed and delivered around the needs of the community groups and the personal development needs of volunteers to sustain and enhance provision in almost all settings. Most volunteers report increased confidence and skills and that the training is beneficial and enabling them to move on to other opportunities.</p> <p><b>Come And Network (CAN) Day:</b> The Community Development Team works effectively with partners to identify and deliver training opportunities to support volunteer development. For example, the Come and Network Event 2023 helped raise awareness of volunteering opportunities, volunteer development needs and development opportunities. Planning for the 2024 event is underway and is being driven by a survey of need which closes at the end of the month. CLD partners are currently testing ways to widen access to volunteering opportunities through approaches such as micro-volunteering.</p> <p><b>Outcome summary:</b>          Across CLD providers, staff support citizens well to become volunteers and share their knowledge and experience with others, to take action to respond to disadvantage and to build on community strengths. These volunteers are more confident and are rightly proud of how they are contributing to their communities.. Volunteers are valued as equal partners, all working towards building stronger, more influential, resilient communities.          There is a need to more effectively measure and demonstrate the impact of community volunteering on individuals and our communities and to consider how those with challenging lived experience can be better supported to develop a sense of agency and take more active and influential roles in their communities.</p>		
<p><b>Develop and implement a training and development programme to ensure best practice</b></p>	<p><b>Training and Development for staff, partners and communities;</b> Building on the successful programme of training opportunities for staff and community representatives across the community planning partnership which promoted awareness of and effective use of the National Standards of Community Engagement, for citizen facing staff and community organisations a working group of community learning partners and community representatives is co- designing a training for trainers programme to be rolled out later in the year.</p>		

<p>is adopted across partners, informed by the National Standards for Community Engagement</p>	<p>The Localities Team are also developing training for community groups in using the Model for Improvement (as adapted by Community Planning Aberdeen)</p> <p><b>Outcome summary:</b> A few staff and community members are benefitting from carefully designed and delivered training which is improving their understanding and practice in engaging with communities, there is scope to consolidate the learning from the successful pilot training programme and extend it to a wider audience across the partnership.</p>		
<p>Support communities to develop and contribute to local projects which tackle poverty (food, fuel, and benefit maximisation) and focus projects on those most effected by Covid 19 e.g., young people, minority ethnic communities, disabled people, and how they can be supported</p>	<p><b>Tackling poverty together:</b> Effective community development is providing communities with the support required to enable them to create and deliver local solutions to poverty related issues. This is enhancing skills which are being effectively applied and bringing about local improvements and building community capacity. Provision developed by community groups such as the Cubby in Cummings Park and Seaton Community Hub is making a real difference in the lives of local people.</p> <p>The Fairer Aberdeen Programme funds community and third sector initiatives tackling poverty – 2,404 people took part in employability programmes and 736 people moved into work. 13,156 people received money and income maximisation advice, with 3,847 of them receiving a total financial gain of £10,572,737 the equivalent of £2,748 per person. 1,740 tonnes of free food was distributed, the equivalent of 5.4M meals.</p> <p>Feedback from organisations funded through the Fairer Aberdeen Fund and CLD consistently show the value they bring to supporting communities to develop projects that tackle poverty and support the most vulnerable people. The Fairer Aberdeen Fund supports CFINE to develop community pantries and community food outlets. There are currently 35 pantries and community food outlets and 255 community organisations receiving FareShare food, and over 7,600 people benefitting from Mobile Cooperative Vehicle services.</p> <p><b>Outcome summary:</b> Effective capacity building support is enabling and empowering communities to deliver solutions to effects of poverty and many groups are delivering high quality services based on community need</p>		<p>Continue support to established and emerging groups to develop the capacity to meet local needs</p>
<p>Harness the increased levels of community volunteering to build greater</p>	<p><b>Community resilience:</b> A third community resilience group has been established with Groups now in Cults, Culter, and Bridge of Don.</p> <p>Presentations have been given to community council groups from Seaton and Rosehill &amp; Stockethill as well as the Fittie community development trust following their expression of interest and commitment to setting up resilience groups. Rosehill &amp; Stockethill have taken part in winter 2023 in a joint venture with NHS Grampian and ACC where salt and pavement gritters have been supplied with the aim to reduce slips trips falls and</p>		<p>Continue to work with stakeholders to develop training and resources and share learning,</p>

<p><b>resilience - support communities to develop resilience plans and groups</b></p>	<p>hospital admissions. Seaton and Fittie were provided with community resilience leaflets and delivered these to residents to help them in preparation for winter. A Community Resilience Conference for the Grampian Area was held in October 2023 with approximately 100 attendees. All the established and some new interested groups attended the conference</p> <p>Work is continuing to engage and establish additional resilience groups alongside communities to develop and embed community resilience plans to enable them to be fully resilient in the face of weather events and other civil contingencies incidents</p> <p><b>Outcome summary:</b> Enthusiastic and capable volunteers in a few communities in Aberdeen are successfully developing the capacity to make a difference in times of emergency through a well-planned programme of development opportunities with the intent of extending this learning to a wider range of local communities. Opportunities have been hampered due to lack of dedicated resource to deliver this aim. However, work has progressed</p>		<p>skills and knowledge across organisations</p>
<p><b>Support community management/ownership of green spaces and the development of food growing spaces and projects</b></p>	<p><b>Developing green spaces:</b> Effective development of a green space network of communities and partnerships is empowering communities to establish, take responsibility and run their local green spaces leading to more local engagement and an increase in volunteering and community pride</p> <p><b>Outcome summary:</b> Across Aberdeen local people are actively engaged in the planning, design and delivery of local environmental and community space projects which are making a difference to the quality of life in their localities</p>		<p>Continue to support groups to develop new initiatives</p>
<p><b>Neighbourhood planning - develop toolkits and training to strengthen community's capacity to produce their own neighbourhood plans</b></p>	<p>Through LOIP improvement project 16.7 a working group has now co-designed, with community representatives, a web-based toolkit with a focus on community engagement, this will also include resource from the Child Rights improvement project 16.1. This is still currently in the design stage.</p>		<p>Support taking forward LOIP 16.6</p>

## Appendix B:

### Learning changes lives for the better – CLD Plan 2024-2025

#### Context

The publication of [Learning: For All. For Life. A report from the Independent Review of Community Learning and Development \(CLD\) - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#) is likely to impact on future priorities for the Aberdeen CLD Plan. In the interim period, the Scottish Government issued guidance that “education authorities may :-

- carry forward much of the content of their existing plans and only reflect significant changes which have impacted communities and learners;
- once the Independent Review of CLD is published, undertake a more substantial learner and partner consultation and update their 2024-2027 plans accordingly.

As a result, the Plan detailed below covers the period 2024/25. In the first 6 months of 2025 we will undertake a more substantial learner and partner consultation, taking into account outcomes from the Independent Review of CLD process and identified areas for continuous improvement, to inform and create a more detailed Plan for the final two years of the 2024-2027 CLD Plan.

#### The Interim CLD Plan 2024/25

The priority outcomes from the [CLD Plan 2021-24](#) continue to be relevant. Work on these agreed outcomes will continue with cognisance taken of emerging priorities outlined below. Specific next steps have been concluded following evaluation of our 2021-2024 CLD Plan.

The outcomes from the 2021-2024 which will be continued and maintained pending update are identified below along with a note of any emerging priorities highlighted in colour.

#### Established Youth Work Outcomes from CLD Plan 21-24

- Support young people to gain the employability skills required for the world of work. This will increase the number of young people leaving school into a positive destination, especially those from priority areas. Work with school leavers to develop their employability skills.
- Support young people’s mental and physical wellbeing and increase the number of young people who report that they feel mentally well.
- Work with partners from the Family Wellbeing Hubs to provide early intervention support to children, young people and families.
- Support Community Planning Aberdeen’s work to promote and protect Children’s Rights.

- Promote and deliver diversionary activities for young people with an enhanced focus on the priority areas (including extending the provision of youth clubs more fully across the city).
- Work in partnership with primary and secondary schools, with a focus on priority areas, to support improvements relating to the National Improvement Framework priorities

### Emerging Priorities Youth Work

- Continue to improve data sharing and joint planning between youth work, employability providers and secondary schools.
- Further develop multi agency response to The Promise, including Edge of Care pilots.

### Established Adult and Family Learning Outcomes from CLD Plan 21-24

- Families are supported to raise attainment and build their capacity and resilience
- Develop and deliver targeted learning package for those whose employment opportunities have been hardest hit by Covid-19, and:-Emerging priorities not detailed in the plan:
  - -Welcoming New Scots
  - -Cost of Living Crisis
  - -Warm Spaces
- Improve the Mental Wellbeing of adults in our communities
- Equip Adult Learners to meet key challenges and transitions in their lives – to include Digital inclusion, literacy, numeracy, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and financial resilience [and health literacy](#)
- Develop and support outdoor learning initiatives
- Increase focus on accredited qualifications and development of Progression Routes including (linkage to ABZ Works/Campus)
- 

### Emerging Priorities Adult Learning

- Further develop city wide CLD partners' contribution to the Family Support Model and explore how commissioned services contribute to the Family Support Model
- Adult learning staff to work with their partners to see if data analysis can provide evidence of their positive impact and contribution to helping to reduce re-offending



- Further develop opportunities for Learner’s Voice, the voice and experiences of learners, to shape future provision and priorities and use this to influence service delivery, and the development of a sense of agency
- Ensure community learning providers are encouraged and supported to contribute to the future libraries model and the development and delivery of an approach to developing literacy
- Tackling health inequalities through effective adult and family learning

### **Established Community Development Outcomes from CLD Plan 21-24**

- Provide capacity building support to communities to create, develop and sustain programmes and activities which address emerging priorities and provide increased opportunities for citizens
- Support the creation and development of social enterprise and community wealth building
- Ensure Community Planning partners work closely with people and communities to improve our collective understanding of strengths, needs and opportunities
- Further, develop a clear and coherent framework to support volunteers and volunteering within communities and across community groups and organisations
- Develop and implement a training and development programme to ensure best practice is adopted across partners, informed by the National Standards for Community Engagement.
- Support communities to develop and contribute to local projects which tackle poverty (food, fuel, and benefit maximisation) - need to focus projects on those most affected by Covid 19 e.g., young people, minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities, and how they can be supported
- Harness the increased levels of community volunteering to build greater resilience - support communities to develop resilience plans and groups
- Support community management/ownership of green spaces and the development of food growing spaces and projects
- Neighbourhood planning - develop toolkits and training to strengthen community’s capacity to produce their own neighbourhood plans

### **Emerging Priorities Community Development**

- Develop actions to more effectively measure and demonstrate the impact of CLD interventions on communities.



**Areas for development, from HMIE progress visit**

We continue to review and are developing improved strategic governance arrangements. These will be further refined and tested with partners, learners and communities during 2025 and included in the 2025-27 CLD Plan Update

- Senior leaders and CLD partners to work together to improve the strategic governance and decision making in CLD - this should include CLD partners setting and jointly monitoring shared measures of success and ensuring that one strategic group has strategic oversight of all aspects of CLD across the whole plan.
- Ensure there is sufficient input or influence from community representatives, young people and adult learners in CLD strategic planning.
- Develop and embed shared self-evaluation across partners and consistent sharing of data to develop a fuller understanding of the impact of CLD, which could better inform the use of resources.

**Continued Youth Work Outcomes (from CLD Plan 21-24)**

What are we going to do	Lead	From When	Measures
Support young people to gain the employability skills required for the world of work. This will increase the number of young people leaving school into a positive destination, especially those from priority areas. Work with school leavers to develop their employability skills.	shmu ACC	Continuing	Positive destination figures are increased.  Skills Development Scotland (SDS) figures – number of young people not in education, employment or training decreases
Support young people’s mental and physical wellbeing and increase the number of young people who report that they feel mentally well.	ACC Community Projects	Continuing	An increased number of young people report that they feel mentally well and/or their mental health is improving.
Work with partners from the Family Wellbeing Hubs to provide early intervention support to children, young people and families.	Fit Like Family Wellbeing Team	Continuing	An increased number of young people report that they feel mentally well and/or their mental health is improving.

Support Community Planning Aberdeen's work to promote and protect Children's Rights.	ACC Youth Work team Aberdeen Youth Network	Continuing	Improved engagement in consultations and decision making from young people.
Promote and deliver diversionary activities for young people with an enhanced focus on the priority areas.	Police Scotland ACC Youth Work team ACC Community Development	Continuing	Increased number of diversionary activities available  Increased number of community-run diversionary activities
Work in partnership with primary and secondary schools, with a focus on priority areas, to support improvements relating to the National Improvement Framework priorities	ACC Youth Work team  Education	Continuing	Using a range of evaluative methods, young people report that their mental wellbeing is improving  Number of young people attaining accreditation

### Emerging Priorities Youth Work

Continue to improve data sharing and joint planning between youth work and employability providers and secondary schools.	ACC ABZWorks SDS Schools	Developing	Demonstrating how improved use of data and joint planning creates efficiencies and addresses need
Further develop multi agency response to The Promise, including Edge of Care pilots (EoCP).	ACC	Developing	Partners report they can better contribute to the Promise and EoCP

### Continued Adult and Family Learning Outcomes (from CLD Plan 21-24)

What are we going to do	Lead	From When	Measures
Families are supported to raise attainment and build their capacity and resilience	Family and Adult Learning Teams	Continuing	Increased confidence and resilience in parents/carers

	PEEP (Parents as Early Education Partners) Funded projects Fit Like Family Wellbeing Team		Parents/carer report increased ability to support their own and their children's learning and development
Develop and deliver targeted learning package for those whose employment opportunities have been hardest hit by Covid-19, and:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Emerging priorities not detailed in the plan:</li> <li>○ Welcoming New Scots</li> <li>○ Cost of Living Crisis</li> <li>○ Warm Spaces</li> </ul>	ACC Family Learning  ACC Adult Learning  Funded Community Projects	Continuing	Monitoring Learners Journeys  Number of participants Number of programmes offered  Positive outcomes reported
Improve the Mental Wellbeing of adults in our communities	ACC Health Minds Team	Continuing	No. of learners moving on to positive destinations No. of accredited awards achieved No. of Learners No. of volunteers and peer mentors No. of volunteer awards achieved No. of learning and volunteer plans No of sessions offered No of Participants 90% of participants report improved wellbeing
Equip Adult Learners to meet key challenges and transitions in their lives – to include Digital inclusion, literacy, numeracy, ESOL and financial resilience and health literacy	ACC Adult Learning ABZWorks Adult Learning Providers Network	Continuing	Positive outcome reported Development of network – meetings/identification of SMART targets Identify CLD KPI's to be addressed by Professional Network
Develop and support outdoor learning initiatives	ACC, Healthy Minds, Adult and Family Learning teams	Continuing	Maintain the number of groups taking place outdoors
Increase focus on accredited qualifications and development of Progression Routes including (linkage to ABZ Works/Campus)	Adult Learning Providers' Network	Continuing	Number of accredited awards being achieved Increase in Adult Learning partners awareness of learner pathways

<b>Emerging Priorities Adult Learning</b>			
Further develop city wide CLD partners contribution to the Family Support Model (FSM) and explore how commissioned services contribute to the Family Support Model	All ACCCLD teams Social Work Education Funded Community Projects	Continuing	Number of CLD partners contributing to the FSM and its evaluation framework
Adult learning staff to work with their partners to see if data analysis can provide evidence of their positive impact and contribution to helping to reduce re-offending	ACC Adult Learning Social Work	Developing	Mechanisms are established to share data on the re-offending rates of learners
Further develop opportunities for Learner's Voice, the voice and experiences of learners, to shape future provision and priorities and use this to influence service delivery, and the development of a sense of agency	ACC Family Learning and Adult Learning SHMU	Continuing	Number of learner voice opportunities
Ensure community learning providers are encouraged and supported to contribute to the future libraries model and the development and delivery of a City adult literacies plan	ACC Adult learning Library and Information Services Education	Developing	Creation of a city wide literacy plan
Tackling health inequalities through effective adult and family learning	ACC Adult and Family Learning	Developing	Increasing the number of activities focused on tackling health inequalities

<b>Continued Community Development Outcomes (from CLD Plan 21-24)</b>			
<b>What are we going to do</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>From When</b>	<b>Measures</b>

Provide capacity building support to communities to create, develop and sustain programmes and activities which address emerging priorities and provide increased opportunities for citizens	ACC ACVO (Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations)	Continuing	Community groups learning programmes are successful and engaging more individuals
Support the creation and development of social enterprise and community wealth building	ACC Community Development Wider CLD partners ACVO ACC City Growth	Continuing	Number of community social enterprises Number of community asset transfers
Ensure Community Planning partners work closely with people and communities to improve our collective understanding of strengths, needs and opportunities	AHSCP (Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership); ACC Locality Planning, Community Development & FAF (Fairer Aberdeen Fund) Teams	Continuing	Communities report that they are confident in using different tools to identify ways to enhance their local area and community
Further, develop a clear and coherent framework to support volunteers and volunteering within communities and across community groups and organisations	ACVO ACC	Continuing	Number of volunteers and volunteer hours contributed through Fairer Aberdeen Programme, Funded Community Projects and other CLD providers  Increase of registered opportunities and uptake of volunteering opportunities.
Develop and implement a training and development programme to ensure best practice is adopted across partners, informed by the National Standards for Community Engagement.	ACC Locality Planning team SCDC (Scottish Community Development Centre) AHSCP Community Empowerment Group	Continuing	Number of participants  Number reporting positive feedback

Support communities to develop and contribute to local projects which tackle poverty (food, fuel, and benefit maximisation) - need to focus projects on those most affected by increased life pressures such as: Cost of Living, migration; young people, minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities, and how they can be supported	ACC CFINE ACVO	Continuing	Number of distinct projects  Reports on positive outcomes
Harness the increased levels of community volunteering to build greater resilience - support communities to develop resilience plans and groups	ACVO ACC Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Continuing	Number of communities who have a resilience plan. Number of active resilience groups
Support community management/ownership of green spaces and the development of food growing spaces and projects	CFINE ACC	Continuing	Instances of support provided Number of community managed green spaces
Neighbourhood planning - develop toolkits and training to strengthen community's capacity to produce their own neighbourhood plans	AH&SCP	Continuing	Toolkit developed Number of trainings offered Number of individuals successfully upskilled
<b>Emerging Priorities Community Development</b>			
Develop actions to more effectively measure and demonstrate the impact of CLD interventions on communities.	ACC FAF Funded Community Projects	Developing	Agree a set of measures to address this

### Areas for development, from HMIE progress visit

Senior leaders and CLD partners to work together to improve the strategic governance and decision making in CLD - this should	ACC CLD partners	Developing	Governance developed and model tested
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include CLD partners setting and jointly monitoring shared measures of success and ensuring that one strategic group has strategic oversight of all aspects of CLD across the whole plan.			Feedback from HMIE
Ensure there is sufficient input or influence from community representatives, young people and adult learners in CLD <b>strategic planning</b> .	ACC CLD partners	Sept 24	Representation across CLD areas from learners and community members Extent to which community representatives feel they can influence CLD strategic planning Level on ladder of empowerment captured for those involved
Develop and embed shared self-evaluation across partners and consistent sharing of data to develop a fuller understanding of the impact of CLD, which could better inform the use of resources.	ACC CLD partners	Sept 24	Number of CLD partners involved in shared self-evaluation Number of CLD partners sharing data to inform CLD plan and use of resources.

### Update plan for 2025 – 2027

Undertake a more substantial learner and partner consultation and update the 2024-2027 plans accordingly, to reflect the impact of the review outcomes along with the outcomes from the more extensive consultation process	ACC	Jan 25	Updated CLD plan 24-27 Number of CLD partners and learners involved in CLD plan 2024-27 Level on ladder of empowerment captured for those involved
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**COMMUNITY LEARNING &  
DEVELOPMENT**

**CASE STUDIES  
2023/24**

**YOUTH WORK**

**ADULT LEARNING**

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**





## Family Learning - Fit Like Family Wellbeing Service Input 2024

**Outcome: Work with partners from the Family Wellbeing Hubs to provide early intervention support to children, young people and families.**

*“Family Learning have the capacity to be flexible to suit the needs of a family, they have a wide variety of supports they can offer, and this encourages positive engagement from the beginning. They fully support and adhere to the guidelines for early intervention and their positive input often supports families to reduce their risk of escalation to statutory services.” - Children 1st*

The Fit Like Family Wellbeing Team are a collection of support services in Aberdeen working with families to support mental health and wellbeing, offering whole family support.

As part of the Fit Like team, Family Learning offer targeted support and learning around parenting models, managing family life, additional support needs and building peer connections whilst connecting families into existing universal community provisions and a variety of local services.

The Initial Conversation with families starts by gaining a whole-family picture of the needs of the family. These phone calls can be lengthy, and often can be quite emotionally sensitive, focusing on where the family have identified a need for support and how Fit Like Family Wellbeing can help.

Families who are referred to Family Learning will be allocated when a worker becomes available, this will be for 1:1 direct support with a target of support being in place in 16 weeks due to current waiting lists/capacity. We have a separate waiting list for groupwork which can also be included in referral outcomes if applicable.

Family Learning staff attend weekly Huddles that take place in three areas of the city although they are accessible online. The Huddles focus on linking all the different service professionals together, they are a good opportunity to grow professional networks and vital partnership working.

### Family Learning - Fit Like Family Wellbeing Service Input 2024

Prior to Family Learning's involvement with Fit Like, we were a relatively small team of 7 now grown to 23 (11 staff members are allocated through Scottish Equity Funding/Whole Family Wellbeing Fund provision). The expansion of the offer to families has resulted in a 33% increase in the number of them being supported in April 2022 compared to 2021, this continues to grow in 2024. Of the 109 families currently receiving direct 1:1 support from Family Learning in July 2024, 34 have been referred through Fit Like Family Wellbeing Service. Of the 32 families who are currently on our waiting list for 1:1 support, 13 are families who have been referred through the Fit Like Hubs pathway.

Since our partnership with Fit Like began, we have been identified as valuable contributors to projects including Education Recovery Grant, The Promise Pilot, and the Kinship Project Charter. This expansion has increased the staff base of the Family Learning team and increased the volume and value of our CLD voice across the city.

The Family Learning team have 34 Fit Like families currently receiving 1:1 direct support. We have 13 Fit Like families on our current waiting list (July 2024). We are working alongside other Fit Like partners where appropriate, to ensure that adequate scaffolding is in place for families to prevent escalation to Tier 3 in line with Aberdeen City's GIRFEC Model of Tiered Intervention.



## Social Media and Aberdeen Youth Movement (AYM)

**Outcome: Support Community Planning Aberdeen's work to promote and protect Children's Rights.**

When AYM was set up, one of the key asks to the group is how do they represent and engage with the 32,000 12-25 year olds within the city in an authentic and youth friendly way. It was agreed that AYM should create such a social media platform that would engage with young people, provide a place to share information and gain views. The aim was for the AYM logo and posts to be a kitemark, recognised by young people within the city as being trustworthy and credible. It was agreed that to be authentic there needed to be a shift from adults writing posts for young people to young people taking control of these platforms.

*"Don't let the adults loose on social media that is for young people. "Adults need to recognise where their skills start and end and collectively with young people work together on common goals" – youth worker*

All the AYM posts are produced by the AYM members and the role of the staff is to support safeguarding ensuring anything produced is legal and won't cause offence. By empowering the young people to come up with solutions, take control and ownership and develop social media posts that were 100% by young people for young people AYM took a key step in its development as an authentic youth empowerment group.

Numbers have spiked since the young people took over the posts with people liking and reposting. AYM posts have been shared by and used by other local authorities and Scottish wide third sector organisations which demonstrates the strength of the posts made by the group.

AYM created a video for International Women's Day, in the first 2 days, the video had 982 plays on Instagram and 711 plays on the AYM twitter account!

### Social Media and Aberdeen Youth Movement (AYM)

**General Elections** - AYM created 3 youth friendly videos to promote registration and the photo ID campaign amongst a younger demographic in partnership with the ACC elections Team. Over the first 7 days of the videos being released they had a total of 14,185 views across Twitter/X, Instagram and YouTube. 22.5% of people who watched the videos rewatched them on Instagram.

To gather the views of young people within the city to help shape the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) key priorities for the next 2 years the six SYP members used social media and gathered the following over 4 days:

- 88 respondents aged 12-25 engaged via a Social Media Campaign
- 99% respondents lived, worked or studied in Aberdeen
- Top 3 issues they highlighted were

(a) Invest in and protect youth work services

(b) increase mental health training and support

(c) use a housing first approach to address homelessness

- Quote “Better mental health training would reduce the risk for younger generations to reach mental health crisis levels”
- Quote “I feel Aberdeen should have more activities in town and around that teens will be able to have fun in instead of walking up and down Union Street every day”
- Data captured and recorded to inform work across the AYM key priorities.

**<https://linktr.ee/aberdeenyouthmovement>**



## The Promise Project

**Outcome: Support young people’s mental and physical wellbeing and increase the number of young people who report that they feel mentally well.**

The Promise Projects are multi-agency partnerships that work with care experienced young people. The projects include young people that are looked after at home, looked after away from home and were previously looked after. An important principle within our project is “Children grow up to be loved, safe and respected”.

Each young person is supported to work towards their own personal achievements, both in and out of school. The project work with young people builds their confidence, supports returning to education and with attendance, in securing post school positive destinations and developing emotional literacy. Sessions with young people are in small groups or in 1:1 sessions generally once a week unless there is a need for multiple sessions.

The Promise Pilot team at Northfield Academy is made up of youth workers, family learning workers, social workers and education practitioners who have worked with 16 young people, with 3 having progressed to the point where they access only universal support, 2 have moved on to a positive destination, with one securing employment and the other advancing to further education. Others have been moved on to alternative support pathways or continue to work with Promise staff.

One young person lacked opportunities for socialising, developing social skills and meeting young people at school. Youth work and social work staff worked together to support a weekly small horse-riding group, and then supported the transition to, and the first term at, the links course at NESCOL. The young person was supported to travel independently and to make friends within the group. This has very much been a team effort. The young person with the support of Craiguelea and the multi-agency team, has now moved onto a full-time course at NESCOL, made friends, is independently getting to college and is positive about their future.

### The Promise Project

Having the youth work team within the project provides more safe and trusted adults in school for the vulnerable young people and enhances the bespoke learning opportunities available. The promise staff come from different professional backgrounds with unique approaches, that work well together, this has benefitted the young people involved.

“The youth team as part of the Pilot Project has been essential to its success, setting a template for future multidisciplinary working in schools.” – Family Resource Worker

“Hey Symone just wanted to let you know I have a full-time job in a nursery would you be able to write me a reference please?” - Promise young person (16 years)



# Problem Solving Courts – Bail Supervision

**Outcome: Develop and deliver a targeted learning package for those whose employment opportunities have been hardest hit by Covid-19**

Participants who are given bail supervision by the courts and are required to attend Spring Garden social work three times per week can access Adult Learning as one of the three weekly contact sessions. This provides an opportunity for participants on bail supervision to work with Adult Learning tutors to improve core skills and ICT, gain SQA qualifications, progress with employability and further advance life skills. This engagement with education develops confidence, builds agency and sets individuals on a personal improvement trajectory, aiming to help break cycles in reoffending.

Learners start by discussing and identifying their own learning goals with tutors, they break down the steps towards these goals and get going. These have included one learner working towards their ICT core skills level 3 SQA qualification, another working on creative art and writing, with others focussing on employability or improving their life skills. Due to the often chaotic lifestyles of the learners, engagement can be varied within the sessions. Often other needs such as access to food or other matters are to be addressed before learning can take place.

From this pilot group:

- A was supported to apply to college, although not successful in the application it developed his confidence enough to make plans for future steps
- B improved confidence to begin college and improved creative writing and drawing skills
- C began SQA core skills and completed tasks up to assessment standard.
- D successfully applied for Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card
- E attended and developed confidence in organising and attending upcoming appointments.





### Healthy Minds – Community Support

**Outcome: Improve the Mental Wellbeing of adults in our communities.**

*“One of the best things was learning that I can grow my skills and grow as a person.”*

M was referred to Healthy Minds by her psychologist as she was nearing the end of her treatment and the need for a progression route was identified to prevent regression. A Healthy Minds worker met with M and her referrer to ascertain if the Healthy Minds service was appropriate and to start to tease out potential goals. As this was a vulnerable point in her recovery, the referrer decided to continue contact until a relationship was established with Healthy Minds to ensure a smooth transition.

The Healthy Minds worker allowed time to build their relationship, as M had difficulties building trust and any potential opportunities were only progressed once relationships had been established between M and the worker and support levels agreed. M had a wide range of interests and was open to suggestions giving her worker plenty to work with.

M identified gaps in her IT and cooking skills as things that she wanted to work on. Fortunately, we were able to use the local community centre to deliver 1-1 sessions in both subjects, using our Development Worker. These focused on her specific needs, building up confidence alongside skills.

M progressed to small groups with the Adult Learning team supporting her to further develop her IT skills in a learner centred way. The Healthy Minds team secured funding to enable work with a small group of parents focusing on adapting recipes for their children to encourage a wider, more balanced diet. This allowed M to grow in confidence and develop friendships, as well as feel more positive about meeting her family's needs.

### Healthy Minds – Community Support

M also attended short courses with CFINE that reflected her interests and set of new challenges with bigger groups and unfamiliar settings. Although not always easy, this helped her see her progress and gave her the motivation to keep building on it.

Volunteering was the next step, with M supporting an event with the Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership and also got involved with the Community Development team who recognised M's potential and worked with her to get more involved with her local community. At this point Healthy Minds felt that their support was no longer necessary.

M's experience with Healthy Minds has inspired a family member to self-refer, recognising the impact this work has had on M and seeing the same potential for themselves.

Self-motivation and a successful partnership approach were key to M's progression. M's desire for a better life alongside positive flexible partnership working enabled M to take the next step at the right time, relevant next steps were available, crucially at the right level of challenge allowing her to be stretched but not to break. Although M feels that her recovery journey is far from complete she is keen and able to give back to her community, and in addition to the work with the Community Development team she would like to start a youth music group in the area.

***“I'm not scared to try new things or meet new people anymore. I feel more confident and assertive to get what I want and need.”***



## Ukrainian Community Hub Outcome: Provide capacity building

**Outcome: Provide capacity building support to communities to create, develop and sustain programmes and activities which address emerging priorities and provide increased opportunities for citizens**

*“With the support of Aberdonians and the City Council, we are able to run the Ukrainian Hub and host the Ukrainian School in the Rosemount Community Learning Centre, helping hundreds of refugees and supporting over 100 children in adjusting to their new lives in Scotland.”*

- (Daria Shapovalova, chair of the Ukrainian Community Hub Association)

Aberdeen City Council worked with local community planning partners to support the UK Government’s Homes for Ukrainians and the Scottish Government’s Super Sponsor programmes. Initially around 1800 Ukrainian Refugees arrived in Aberdeen.

Responding to the Ukrainian crisis in 2022 involved the relocation of vulnerable displaced individuals and families to Aberdeen, some with family visas and others under the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme. Challenges for individuals and families included varying degrees of trauma and mental health distress associated with being displaced when fleeing from war including acute social, language and economic obstacles.

Welcoming Hubs were established in hotels to provide resettlement support and developed the Ukrainian Hub, approximately 25 Ukrainian volunteers were recruited to help with food and clothing donations, translation, welcoming, developing a programme and establishing a Steering group (which became the Ukrainian Association SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation)). The Ukrainian Community Hub co-produced the provision of Employability and ESOL services, Skills Development Scotland Drop-Ins for young people aged 16 to 18.5 years old English classes taught by volunteer teachers, ESOL assessments, financial inclusion services, orientation activities (Countryside Ranger outings), free bus passes and phone cards,

### Ukrainian Community Hub Outcome: Provide capacity building

Police Scotland community engagement and war crime reporting support, Mindfulness Crafts, Citizens Advice and legal drop-ins, bus trips (e.g. Edinburgh National Museum). Additionally, support was provided for mental health which was achieved through the CLD team sitting down with the Ukrainians in a real crisis to work towards co-produced solutions which became the To Be OK In Anyway Project to support traumatised Ukrainian women and men through a qualified Ukrainian Psychiatrist and Yoga Therapist (employed by the Ukrainian Association). Before Ukrainian children are allocated to schools, multi sports activities were organised weekly (through Active Schools and Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust) to help the children stay active and engaged. Dance and music classes, all provided by Ukrainians, were also set up.

Notably a Ukrainian Tae Kwon Do World Champion volunteered to provide free classes on Sundays to children. Overall, the Ukrainian Community Hub played a crucial role in enhancing the coordination and effectiveness of ESOL and Employability services for Ukrainian refugees, ultimately improving their chances of successful integration.

“In June 2024, 64.5% of Ukrainian households report themselves as self-reliant when it comes to the support of their family and children including access to education, with a further 15% stating they are close to self-reliance. 5% of the community have reported urgent need for support in this area, though this could relate to family dynamics rather than access to education.” (Sheona Bell –Refugee Project Manager)



## Middlefield Community Project

**Outcome: Provide capacity building support to communities to create, develop and sustain programmes and activities which address emerging priorities and provide increased opportunities for citizens**

125 young people were supported and took part in activities that increase skills, confidence and resilience. 96% reported that their confidence has increased and they feel they can influence decision making.

Middlefield Community Project supports adults, families, children and young people in one of the most disadvantaged areas of the city. They deliver childcare and early years, after school clubs, holiday activities playschemes, family support, adult learning, youth work, and community capacity building. They provide support on fuel poverty and access to free food, financial inclusion, employment, health and wellbeing, isolation social exclusion, and volunteering.

Many people are experiencing financial difficulties, and the project has given out 3,600 food parcels and 300 meals over the year. They supported 150 low-income families through the year and were successful in getting support from The Giving Tree and Northsound Cash for Kids, providing Christmas presents for over 300 children. Two parent and toddler groups ran through the year, with parents attending adult learning classes and the wellbeing café. Some parents required additional support through structured interventions to develop confidence. 60 adults took part in CLD activities, and 40 reported improved mental health and wellbeing outcomes.

The men's group meets weekly, engaging in social, informal, and educational activities as well as excursions. The Bike Hub has generated a lot of interest, providing basic bike repair and maintenance training in partnership with Sustrans. Families who have received bikes are now going out for family cycle rides, improving intergenerational relationships.

### Middlefield Community Project

Work has developed with a group of older people from local sheltered accommodation, supporting them to identify issues and be more involved in decision-making in their building and the local community. Professionals working with them have reported a big increase in their self-esteem and confidence. A group of young people with autism, find some youth sessions too loud or busy. They have worked with some of the elderly group and provided activities and a Christmas buffet for them. Both groups got a lot out of this and enjoyed communicating and learning from each other.

Young people plan their activities in the Youth Hub and are supported to engage in learning and development programmes and to plan for their futures. They continue to work with schools to support those with difficulties and ensure learning plans are in place. 125 young people (10-18 yrs) were involved in CLD activity, as well as 100 children (5-9 yrs). 120 young people took part in diversionary activities, and 10 school leavers took part in employability-related programmes. 10 young people moved on to positive destinations (education, employment, training, or volunteering). 5 youth workers took part in 20 training sessions.

**Over the year, 21 volunteers participated, contributing 3,280 hours of volunteer time. They all took part in training sessions, have volunteer plans in place, and received volunteer awards.**



## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children’s Services
<b>DATE</b>	17 September 2024
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	School Estate Plan Annual Update 2024
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/24/265
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Stephen Booth
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Andrew Jones
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.5

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents the 2024 annual update to the School Estate Plan, providing updates on progress with implementation of the Plan, and highlighting new priorities which have emerged since the School Estate Plan was first approved in September 2022.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the updates to the School Estate Plan which are provided at Appendix A of this report; and:
- 2.2 Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to continue to implement the School Estate Plan in accordance with the updated timeline, presented within Appendix A of this report;
- 2.3 Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a review of spaces currently available within schools for supporting pupils with additional support needs, and in consultation with the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning, to report back to the Committee with recommendations for improving such spaces where this is required;
- 2.4 Agrees the intended scope of the proposed asset review in Northfield to include all public assets and instruct the Chief Officer Corporate Landlord to proceed with this review and to commence engagement with all partners working in the wider Northfield area

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 At its meeting on 8 September 2022, the former Education Operational Delivery Committee approved the Council’s School Estate Plan, and instructed officers to *“present an annual update to the School Estate Plan to the Education and*

*Children's Services Committee, commencing from September 2023, to report on progress with the agreed actions and to update these as appropriate". This report seeks to fulfil that instruction, and provides the annual update for 2024.*

- 3.2 The update to the School Estate Plan, included at Appendix A of this report, provides information on progress to date with the actions and instructions which have been agreed within the School Estate Plan, and highlights further priorities for action which have been identified during the course of the last year. These new priorities are summarised below.

#### Review of Northfield Academy and Northfield Primary Schools

- 3.3 At its meeting in February 2024, after considering a report which provided details on the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) within parts of the Northfield Academy building, the Committee agreed 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"*

- 3.4 At the same meeting in February 2024, after considering a report on the findings of the feasibility study on the future of the primary schools in Northfield, the Committee instructed the Chief Officer, Corporate Landlord to:

*"carry out further work to identify potential future options for improving and consolidating primary school provision in the Northfield ASG, alongside the planned review of the long term future of Northfield Academy, and to include an update on progress within the annual update to the School Estate Plan in September 2024."*

- 3.5 In response to the above instructions, officers carried out initial scoping work to determine the best approach to reviewing the requirements for future primary and secondary school provision for the Northfield area, and concluded that there would be benefit in carrying out a wider review of all of the Council's public building assets in Northfield, and not only the schools. This would allow a more complete picture to be developed of the public services currently being delivered within this community, and how these will require to be delivered in future, to meet the needs of the community within the context of limited additional resources.
- 3.6 Officers therefore recommend that a full area-wide review of public buildings is carried out for the wider Northfield area (which would include the communities of Middlefield, Mastrick, Cummings Park, Northfield and Heathryfold).
- 3.7 A review of other Council owned assets in the area, alongside the schools, will allow for a wider range of potential options to be considered, including opportunities to deliver future services in a far more integrated way. This would be in keeping with the Future Libraries Report presented to the Communities,



Housing and Public Protection Committee (F&C/24/240) on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Taking a place-based approach to service delivery provides opportunities for more holistic support to families and communities, for example by delivering a range of services from the same building, and ensuring that the right services are available at the right time and in the right place, to bring about more positive outcomes.

- 3.8 A Strategic Outline Case has been drafted to set out the intended scope of the proposed asset review, and the approach to be taken, and it is recommended that the Committee instructs officers to proceed with this review over the coming months. A copy of the Strategic Outline Case is included at Appendix B. The anticipated timescale for carrying out the review and reporting back to the Committee on its findings, is included within the updated implementation timeline at Appendix A of this report.

#### Review of spaces in schools for children with Additional Support Needs (ASN)

- 3.9 At its meeting in April 2024, after considering a report on behaviour in schools, the Committee agreed 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.”*

- 3.10 In response to this instruction, a new priority has been added to the School Estate Plan, to consider the options for improving the provision and suitability of spaces in schools for supporting pupils with additional support needs. This is reflected in the updated plan at Appendix A below.
- 3.11 Officers within the Corporate Landlord cluster will work collaboratively with colleagues in Education and Lifelong Learning to progress this new priority, which will be closely linked to the outcomes of the behaviour action plan report, which is due to be presented to the Committee at its meeting in November 2024.
- 3.12 Any recommendations on changes to spaces in schools for ASN purposes will need to align with and be guided by the recommendations presented within the behaviour action plan, to ensure that physical ASN spaces in schools in the future are fully fit for purpose and able to support the intended model of service delivery. The proposed timescale for reporting back on this priority, as outlined in the updated implementation plan at Appendix A, is therefore intended to follow on from the behaviour action plan report, and any subsequent decisions to be taken at the November committee meeting.

#### Re-Prioritisation of Resources

- 3.13 Given the need to progress the two new priorities outlined above over the course of the next year, officers have made some adjustments to the implementation dates for the following two existing projects in the school estate plan, which are not required to be progressed immediately. This will allow

staffing resources to be freed up and allocated to the Northfield asset review and review of ASN spaces:

- 3.14 The feasibility study to identify options for long term secondary school provision at Grandhome, Oldmachar and Bridge of Don (Priority NA1), which was scheduled to be under way from Summer/Autumn 2024, has not yet started. The progress with the development of new housing at Grandhome has been slower than originally anticipated, which means that any new secondary school places in this area of the city to serve the new development will not be required in the short to medium term. It is therefore recommended that the feasibility study is not taken forwards at this time. Officers will continue to engage with the developers and monitor forecast pupil numbers, and any required action will be reported through future updates to the School Estate Plan.
- 3.15 Secondly, a feasibility study on the long term secondary school provision for Bucksburn and Dyce (Priority NA2) was completed in Summer 2024, and an outline business case to present the findings of this is due to be presented to the Committee in November 2024. Considering that any options identified in the outline business case will focus on the longer term provision, and therefore any recommended actions are unlikely to be required to be implemented in the short term, it is recommended that reporting on this is postponed until Summer 2025. This will help to free up resources in the short term to focus on the Northfield asset review and the review of ASN spaces in schools.
- 3.16 In summary, it is recommended that the Committee instructs officers to continue to implement the updated School Estate Plan, in line with the revised timeline for implementation, as outlined in the update report at Appendix A below.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The School Estate Plan will continue to be implemented using funding which has been allocated for this purpose within the General Fund capital programme. There are no further direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that it shall be the duty of every education authority to secure that there is made for their area adequate and efficient provision of school education.
- 5.2 Section 17 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that it shall be the duty of an education authority in the performance of their functions under sections 1 to 6 of the Act, to provide for their area, sufficient accommodation in public schools and other educational establishments under their management to enable them to perform their said functions. In addition, an education authority shall maintain and keep efficient every public school, and other educational establishment under their management, and shall from time to time provide such additional accommodation as may be necessary to enable them to perform their functions under the Act and may, provide, alter, improve,

enlarge, equip and maintain schools and other educational establishments within their area.

- 5.3 The identified priorities for developing the school estate outlined in the updated School Estate Plan are in fulfilment of the above duties incumbent upon the Education Authority.
- 5.4 A proposal to make changes to a school, including closing, relocating or opening a school, is subject to consultation in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Formal consultations will require to be carried out for any proposals to make these types of changes to schools, and consideration of this has been given in the recommendations arising from the School Estate Plan.
- 5.5 The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 requires local authorities to prepare and keep under review an accessibility strategy for increasing the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in the curriculum; improving the physical environment of schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which pupils with a disability are able to take advantage of education and improving communication with pupils with a disability. In taking account of the Accessibility Plan, the School Estate Plan assists the Education Authority to realise these statutory aims.

## **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The School Estate Plan outlines the approaches which will be taken to bring about positive impacts on the environment in the future, through reducing carbon emissions from the existing school estate and from future new build schools to contribute to the Council's net zero carbon ambitions, and through ensuring improved resource efficiency by rationalising the school estate where appropriate.
- 6.2 All new build and refurbishment projects are compliant with the Council's Building Performance policy, and through the location and design of new buildings we will seek to promote active and sustainable travel to school.
- 6.3 Designing new schools for the future presents opportunities to make positive impacts on other aspects of the natural environment, including, for example, making space for nature through sustainable approaches to landscaping, avoiding over-use of synthetic materials in school grounds, and providing space for food growing initiatives. Officers will continue to work closely with colleagues in Environmental Planning when designing new and refurbished outdoor spaces, to ensure consideration is given to these important factors.
- 6.4 However it is also recognised that carrying out physical changes to the school estate, such as removing surplus capacity or constructing new buildings, could potentially result in a negative impact on the environment, for example through disturbance to habitats and roosting animals, or affecting existing open spaces. Any such activity will be planned carefully to minimise any such negative impacts wherever possible.

## 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	No significant risks identified			
<b>Compliance</b>	<p>(1) Failure to plan effectively for the school estate, leading to the Council being unable to fulfil its duty to make adequate and efficient provision</p> <p>(2) Failure to consult formally with stakeholders on changes to schools would be in breach of legislation</p>	<p>1) The School Estate Plan sets out updated priorities for the school estate and proposals for continually monitoring and updating plans to ensure adequate and efficient provision is maintained</p> <p>(2) Any proposed changes to schools arising from the School Estate Plan will incorporate full statutory consultation to ensure compliance with legislation</p>	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Failure to engage and consult with communities on the future of the school estate which serves them, could lead to a breakdown in relationships with community members. Some proposals about the future of the school estate may not be popular with	The School Estate Plan emphasises an approach which places community engagement and consultation at the centre	L	Yes

	some stakeholders			
<b>Financial</b>	No significant risks identified			
<b>Reputational</b>	Failure to engage and consult with communities on the future of the school estate which serves them, could lead to reputational damage for the Council. Some proposals about the future of the school estate may not be popular with some stakeholders	The School Estate Plan emphasises an approach which places community engagement and consultation at the centre	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Development of the school estate and the addition of new school capacity may lead to increased carbon emissions	Climate risks and the need for the school estate to contribute to the Council's net zero carbon emissions targets will be embedded into planning and decision making.	L	Yes

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</u></b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<p><b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b></p> <p><b><u><a href="#">Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</a></u></b></p>	<p>The updated School Estate Plan supports the delivery of the following policy statements:</p> <p><u>A City of Opportunity</u></p> <p>Policy Statement 2 - Review and invest in our school estate, ensuring all of Aberdeen's schools are fit for the educational needs and the challenges</p>

	<p>of the 21st century. The report seeks Committee's approval of the School Estate Plan.</p> <p><u>A Prosperous City</u>  Policy Statement 8 - Seek to buy goods, services and food locally whenever possible, subject to complying with the law and public tendering requirements. Opportunities to do this will be considered for all Capital Projects.</p>
<p><a href="#">Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</a></p>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The updated School Estate Plan supports the delivery of Stretch Outcome 8 in the LOIP – Child friendly city where all decisions which impact children and young people will be informed by them by 2026. The School Estate Plan sets out how all stakeholders including children and young people will be consulted on proposals to make changes to the school estate.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The updated School Estate Plan supports the delivery of Stretch Outcome 13 in the LOIP – Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen’s carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate. The School Estate Plan sets out the approach which will be taken to reduce carbon emissions from the school estate.
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	The School Estate Plan will support the delivery of the Council’s Property and Estates Strategy (currently in draft).

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	Previous Integrated Impact Assessment (Stage 1) relating to the School Estate Plan has been reviewed and no changes required.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	No other assessments required

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Education Operational Delivery Committee, 8 September 2022: [Agenda Item 14: School Estate Plan 2022](#).
- 10.2 Communities, Housing & Public Protection Committee, 5 September 2024: [Agenda Item 11.3: Aberdeen's Future Library and Information Service Model](#)

## 11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A: School Estate Plan Annual Update September 2023
- 11.2 Appendix B: Strategic Outline Case – Northfield Area Asset Review

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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## Appendix A

# Aberdeen City Council School Estate Plan

## Annual Update September 2024

### 1. Introduction

Aberdeen City Council's School Estate Plan, approved by the former Education Operational Delivery Committee in September 2022, included an instruction to officers "*to present an annual update to the School Estate Plan to the Education and Children's Services Committee, commencing from September 2023, to report on progress with the agreed actions and to update these as appropriate*".

This annual update report therefore provides information on progress to date with the actions and instructions which were agreed within the School Estate Plan, and provides further recommendations as appropriate, to help ensure that Aberdeen City's school estate can continue to be developed and improved, in line with the principles of the School Estate Plan.

The full School Estate Plan, approved in September 2022, can be accessed [here](#).

This report provides updates to the following key elements which form part of the School Estate Plan:

- The **Action Plan** which sets out the proposed practical actions and decisions which need to be taken to address the identified priorities for individual assets and areas of the city;
- The **Implementation Plan** which provides detail on the anticipated timescales for carrying out the actions identified within the Action Plan.

## 2. Updated Action Plan

### Update On Existing Projects

- The updated action plan below includes a summary of the projects identified within the School Estate Plan, and provides information on the current status of any previous Committee instructions which are associated with these. It also includes any revised or new recommendations on further priorities and actions which need to be taken to continue developing the school estate. Projects which were reported in last year's annual update as completed, have been removed from the Action Plan.

Area / ASG / School	SEP Priority	SEP Objective	Previous Committee Decisions	Current Status	Update
City-wide Strategic Priorities	A1: There is a requirement to reduce carbon emissions from the school estate	Net zero carbon emissions through the Council's assets and operations by 2045	08/09/22: Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to adopt an approach which favours the improvement and repurposing of existing assets, over the construction of new school buildings, where this is appropriate, and to ensure that where new school buildings are required, these are designed from the outset, to comply with the low carbon criteria set out within the Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP), and where appropriate, with the Net Zero Public Sector Buildings Standard. <b>(Recommendation A1)</b>	On Track (Ongoing)	Feasibility studies carried out in the past year have focused on improving and repurposing existing assets. The specification and brief for our new school buildings has been updated to reflect LEIP criteria. The planned new Hazlehead Academy building will comply with LEIP criteria.
	A2: We need an efficient estate, with over-provision and under-provision of school places kept to a minimum	All new primary schools to be constructed with a minimum pupil capacity of 434, and all new secondary schools to be constructed with a minimum pupil capacity of 1000	08/09/22: Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to ensure that all new primary schools are designed with a minimum pupil capacity of 434, and all new secondary schools are designed with a minimum pupil capacity of 1000, in order to support high quality learning and teaching. <b>(Recommendation A2)</b>	On Track (Ongoing)	Plans for new schools continue to be based on these minimum capacity requirements.

	<p><b>A3:</b> Some existing schools are operating significantly under capacity, and are forecast to remain under capacity, due to population changes over time</p>	<p>Future capacity of all operational schools to be managed, with a target to maintain occupancy levels at a minimum of 80% of available capacity, to ensure the efficiency and sustainability of the school estate</p>	<p>08/09/22: Notes that potential changes in pupil population across the city are likely to require a reduction in the number of operational schools over the next 10 years, and that within this and future editions of the School Estate Plan, officers will bring forward specific options and recommendations for making changes to the school estate to ensure optimum efficiency and sustainability of the estate as a whole. <b>(Recommendation A3)</b></p>	<p>On Track (Ongoing)</p>	<p>Work undertaken to date within the School Estate Plan, and any future recommendations will continue to be focused on maintaining school occupancy levels at 80% to 95% where possible</p>
	<p><b>A4:</b> Where there is spare capacity within schools, in the short to medium term this may be better utilised by other appropriate services</p>	<p>Short to medium term spare capacity within schools to be used flexibly and creatively to ensure efficiency and sustainability of the estate, where appropriate to do so</p>	<p>08/09/22: Notes that where appropriate, officers will seek opportunities to make use of available capacity within schools for other purposes, including the delivery of additional services, in order to make efficient use of available space within the estate which also benefits local communities. <b>(Recommendation A4)</b></p>	<p>On Track (Ongoing)</p>	<p>Officers will continue to consider options for repurposing spaces for other uses where this is appropriate.</p>
	<p><b>A5:</b> the Council has made a commitment through the Schools Accessibility Plan, to improve signage in schools</p>	<p>Augmentative and alternative signage to be provided in all schools where required</p>	<p>08/09/22: Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a review of signage in all schools and upgrade / replace signage where required to improve accessibility for all users and agrees to refer this to the budget process. <b>(Recommendation A5)</b></p>	<p>Delayed (In Progress)</p>	<p>A set of minimum standards for school signage has been drafted based on advice from a specialist consultant. This has been shared with schools and requirements for individual buildings to enable them to meet the minimum standard are now being collated. New signage will then be procured and installed on a priority basis, from October 2024 onwards.</p>

		<b>A6:</b> Plans for the school estate need to be continually reviewed using the latest available data	The School Estate Plan to be updated regularly based on the latest available school roll forecast and other key data	<i>08/09/22:</i> Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to present a delivery plan for implementing the agreed actions in this report to the next meeting of the Education and Children’s Services Committee, and thereafter, to present an annual update to the School Estate Plan to the Education and Children’s Services Committee, commencing from September 2023, to report on progress with the agreed actions and to update these as appropriate, in light of the most recently available data. <b>(Recommendation A6)</b>	<b>On Track (In Progress)</b>	This updated Action Plan and the updated Implementation Plan below fulfil the requirement to provide an annual update to the Committee.
<b>City-wide Priorities: Denominational Primary Schools</b>	St Peter’s RC School, St Joseph’s RC School and Holy Family RC School	<b>RC1:</b> Poor suitability and lack of capacity at St Joseph’s RC School, and forecast excess capacity at St Peter’s School and Holy Family School	Ensure sufficient and sustainable long term denominational primary school provision for the city	<i>08/09/22:</i> Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for ensuring appropriate and sustainable long term denominational primary school provision for the city to meet forecast demand, and report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations. <b>(Recommendation RC1)</b>	<b>On Track (In Progress)</b>	The feasibility study was completed in Summer 2024. A separate report on this Priority is due to be presented to the Committee in September 2024.
<b>North Area Priorities</b>	Grandhome / Oldmachar / Bridge of Don	<b>NA1:</b> Requirement for secondary school provision for Grandhome / potential over supply of places across Grandhome, Oldmachar and Bridge of Don	Reduce the predicted long term excess secondary school capacity in Grandhome, Oldmachar and Bridge of Don	<i>08/09/22:</i> Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for reducing the predicted long term excess secondary school capacity in Grandhome, Oldmachar and Bridge of Don, and report back with an outline business case for consideration by the Education and Children’s Services	<b>Timescale Revised (Not Yet Started)</b>	The feasibility study was scheduled to be carried out in Summer/Autumn 2024. It is recommended that the feasibility study is not progressed at this time, as any new secondary provision is not expected to be required in the short to medium term. Officers

				Committee. <b>(Recommendation NA1)</b>		will continue to monitor numbers and progress with the Grandhome development and will provide further updates to the Committee as appropriate.
	Bucksburn / Dyce	<b>NA2:</b> Forecast long term lack of capacity at Bucksburn Academy / low pupil numbers at Dyce Academy	Ensure sufficient and sustainable long term secondary school provision for Bucksburn and Dyce	<i>08/09/22:</i> Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for ensuring appropriate long term secondary school provision for Bucksburn and Dyce, and report back with an outline business case for consideration by the Education and Children’s Services Committee. <b>(Recommendation NA2)</b>	<b>Timescale Revised (In Progress)</b>	The feasibility study was completed in Summer 2024. An outline business case was scheduled to be presented to the Committee in November 2024. To help free up resources to focus on the proposed review of ASN spaces and review of assets in Northfield, the target date for reporting the outline business case has been revised to Summer/Autumn 2025.
<b>Central Area Priorities</b>	Victorian School buildings	<b>CA1:</b> Issues with suitability and capacity of Victorian School buildings	Ensure sufficient school places are available within city centre schools and improve the suitability of Victorian school buildings	<i>08/09/22:</i> Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and options appraisal to improve the suitability, accessibility and capacity levels of Victorian schools within Aberdeen City, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations and estimated costs. <b>(Recommendation CA1)</b>	<b>On Track (In Progress)</b>	The Feasibility Study is currently under way, and the findings are due to be presented in an outline business case in January / February 2025.
<b>Bucksburn ASG Priorities</b>	Bucksburn Academy	<b>B1:</b> Requirement to increase capacity at Bucksburn Academy in the medium term	Ensure sufficient capacity at Bucksburn Academy in the medium term	<i>08/09/22:</i> Notes that officers have completed a feasibility study on the proposed permanent extension to Bucksburn Academy, and instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to report back	<b>On Track (In Progress)</b>	Design work for the new extension is continuing, and a full business case is targeted for being presented for

				to the Finance and Resources Committee with an outline business case for consideration. <b>(Recommendation B1)</b>		committee approval in Spring 2025
	Brimmond School	<b>B2:</b> Additional primary school provision likely to be required for Bucksburn / Newhills	Ensure sufficient primary school places will be available to serve the new communities in Bucksburn / Newhills	<i>08/09/22:</i> Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to engage with developers to track progress with the Bucksburn / Newhills developments, in order to determine options and appropriate timing for new primary school provision to serve the new housing developments, and to report back to the City Growth & Resources Committee with an outline business case. <b>(Recommendation B2)</b>  <i>04/07/23:</i> to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out a statutory public consultation on the proposal to establish a new primary school at Bucksburn/Newhills, and on proposed changes to the existing school catchment area for Brimmond School, to create a new catchment area which would be served by the proposed new school.	On Track (In Progress)	It was reported to the Committee in February 2024 that there was no immediate requirement to start work on constructing a new school to serve the Newhills development area. Officers are continuing to monitor progress with the development and its impact on pupil numbers at Brimmond School, and will bring forward plans for a consultation on the new primary school provision at the appropriate time.
Oldmachar ASG Priorities	New Grandhome primary provision	<b>O1:</b> New primary school provision may be required to meet forecast demand from new Grandhome community	Ensure sufficient and sustainable primary school places will be available to serve the new Grandhome community	<i>08/09/22:</i> Notes that officers are currently engaging with developers to track progress with the Grandhome development, to determine any requirements for new primary school provision and to relieve forecast pressure on pupil numbers at Forehill School. <b>(Recommendation O1)</b>	On Track (Ongoing)	Officers are continuing to monitor progress with the Grandhome development and will bring forward plans for new primary school provision as and when required.
	Greenbrae School	<b>O4:</b> Dual zone issue with Balmedie School in	Remove dual zone issue with Balmedie School	<i>12/09/23:</i> Instructs the Chief Officer (Corporate Landlord) to carry out a public consultation on	Complete	A consultation was carried out in Spring 2024, after which the

		Aberdeenshire, which creates ambiguity		<p>a proposal to alter the school catchment area for Greenbrae School, so that it aligns with the city boundary. (<b>Recommendation O4</b>)</p> <p><i>02/07/24:</i> Agrees to implement changes to the catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School, ...with effect from 1 August 2024</p>		Committee agreed to implement the proposed changes to the catchment area from August 2024.
	Danestone School / Glashieburn School / Middleton Park School	<b>O3:</b> Forecast combined over-provision of pupil places at Danestone School, Glashieburn School and Middleton Park School	Reduce predicted excess capacity in primary schools in the Oldmachar ASG	<p><i>08/09/22:</i> Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for reducing the number of primary schools in the Oldmachar ASG, in order to minimise potential excess pupil capacity, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee as appropriate. (<b>Recommendation O3</b>)</p> <p><i>12/09/23:</i> Instructs the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out further work to identify potential future options for improving and consolidating primary school provision in the Oldmachar ASG, alongside the planned work to review secondary school provision in this area of the city, and to report back to the Committee with recommendations and next steps as appropriate.</p>	<b>Timescale Revised (In Progress)</b>	The Committee agreed in September 2023 to instruct officers to consider options for the primary schools alongside Priority NA1, which will assess future secondary school requirements for Oldmachar, Bridge of Don and Grandhome. As noted for Priority NA1 above, it is recommended that this work is paused, to help free up resources to focus on the proposed review of ASN spaces and review of assets in Northfield. Officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers and provide further updates to the Committee as appropriate.
<b>Bridge of Don ASG Priorities</b>	Scotstown School / Braehead School	<b>BD1:</b> Short term excess capacity at Scotstown School and lack of capacity at Braehead School	Ensure appropriate balance of provision across Scotstown School and Braehead School	<i>08/09/22:</i> Notes that officers will continue to monitor forecast rolls at Braehead School and Scotstown School, and that any required actions will be reported in future updates to the School	<b>On Track (Ongoing)</b>	Officers have assessed that no further action is required at this time, however they will continue to monitor pupil numbers at these

				Estate Plan. <b>(Recommendation BD1)</b>		schools and report back to Committee with recommendations in future as required.
	Scotstown School	<b>BD2:</b> Dual zone issue with Balmedie School in Aberdeenshire, which creates ambiguity	Remove dual zone issue with Balmedie School	<p>12/09/23: Instructs the Chief Officer (Corporate Landlord) to carry out a public consultation on a proposal to alter the school catchment area for Scotstown School, so that it aligns with the city boundary. <b>(Recommendation BD2)</b></p> <p>02/07/24: Agrees to implement changes to the catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School, ...with effect from 1 August 2024</p>	Complete	A consultation was carried out in Spring 2024, after which the Committee agreed to implement the proposed changes to the catchment area from August 2024.
St Machar ASG Priorities	Riverbank School	<b>S1:</b> New school building at Tillydrone under way to replace Riverbank School, which will provide additional pupil capacity which is no longer required by Riverbank School.	Consider options to avoid potential excess capacity at the new school	08/09/22: Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out an options appraisal on potential uses of the additional capacity to be provided by the new school at Tillydrone, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations as appropriate. <b>(Recommendation S1)</b>	On Track (In progress)	Officers are currently assessing the options for future use of available space at the new Riverbank School building, and are due to report back to the Committee with recommendations in November 2024.
	Sunnybank School	<b>S2:</b> Forecast lack of capacity at Sunnybank School	Ensure sufficient capacity is available at Sunnybank School for rising pupil numbers	08/09/22: Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to consider the options for relocating other services accommodated within the Sunnybank School building, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations. <b>(Recommendation S2)</b>	On Hold (Not Yet Started)	Latest pupil roll figures indicate that there is currently no significant pressure on classroom space at Sunnybank School, so to avoid unnecessary disruption, the proposal to relocate services has not been progressed. Officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers and provide updates to the Committee as required.



	St Machar Academy	<b>S3:</b> Requirement for investment in outdoor space at St Machar Academy	Ensure there is sufficient and good quality outdoor space available at St Machar Academy	<i>08/09/22:</i> Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study to consider the options for the removal of unused modular classroom buildings at St Machar Academy, and for carrying out general improvements to the outdoor space at the school, and to present a costed outline business case to the Finance and Resources Committee for consideration. <b>(Recommendation S3)</b>	On Track (In Progress)	The feasibility study was completed and an outline business case was approved by Committee in May 2024. Work has started on site to remove the unused modular buildings and to make way for the planned outdoor space improvements.
Northfield ASG Priorities	Westpark School and Heathryburn School	<b>N1:</b> Forecast lack of capacity at Heathryburn School and over-provision of places at Westpark School in the short to medium term	Ensure appropriate balance of provision across Westpark School and Heathryburn School in the short to medium term and in the longer term to accommodate pupils generated by the planned Greenferns development	<i>08/09/22:</i> Notes that officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at Westpark School and Heathryburn School, considering the likely long term impact of the planned new Greenferns development, and that recommendations as required will be included in future updates to the School Estate Plan. <b>(Recommendation N1)</b>	On Track (Ongoing)	Latest forecast data indicates that the pressure on space at Heathryburn School has reduced, so no further action is required at this time. However officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at the school and report back to Committee with recommendations in future as required.
	All Northfield primary schools	<b>N2:</b> Forecast combined over-provision of pupil places at primary schools in Northfield	Reduce predicted excess capacity in primary schools in Northfield ASG	<i>08/09/22:</i> Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for reducing the number of primary schools in the Northfield ASG, in order to minimise excess pupil capacity, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations as appropriate. <b>(Recommendation N2)</b>	On Track (In Progress)	As detailed below, a new priority (N3) has been identified with a recommendation for officers to undertake a wider review of the schools and other public buildings in Northfield, which will address the issues covered by this priority. To avoid any confusion or duplication, this priority has been removed from the

						timeline below and combined with Priority N3.
Hazlehead ASG Priorities	Hazlehead Academy / Countesswells secondary provision	<b>HH1:</b> Concerns about condition and suitability of Hazlehead Academy building / requirement for new secondary school provision to serve Countesswells	Improve the condition and suitability of the Hazlehead Academy building and ensure there is sufficient secondary school provision to serve Hazlehead and Countesswells	<p>08/09/22: Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to assess the feasibility of creating new secondary school provision to serve the communities of Hazlehead and Countesswells, to put this forward to the Scottish Government as a priority project for funding in Phase 3 of the Learning Estate Investment Programme, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with an update on the outcomes of the funding bid and recommendations on next steps. (<b>Recommendation HH1</b>)</p> <p>02/07/24: 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; and:</p> <p>Agrees to implement changes to the existing Countesswells and Hazlehead secondary school catchment areas, ...to create a new catchment area which will be served by the new Hazlehead Academy, with effect from 1 August 2027;</p>	On Track (In Progress)	<p>Council agreed in December 2023 to proceed with the construction of the planned new school building at Hazlehead, and the Committee agreed in July 2024 to implement changes to the catchment area for Hazlehead Academy, to include the communities of Countesswells and Kingswells, with effect from August 2027. Design work for the planned new school building at Hazlehead is currently in progress.</p>
	Countesswells School	<b>HH2:</b> Additional pupil capacity may be required in the future to accommodate pupils from the new	Ensure there is sufficient school capacity available to accommodate future pupil numbers likely to	<p>08/09/22: Notes that officers will continue to monitor the situation with the housing development at Countesswells and will bring forward recommendations as</p>		On Track (Ongoing)

		Countesswells development.	be generated by the Countesswells development	appropriate regarding requirements for additional primary school capacity to serve the development, in future annual updates to the School Estate Plan <b>(Recommendation HH2)</b>		pupil numbers at the school and report back to Committee with recommendations in future as required.
	Hazlehead School	<b>HH3:</b> Possible increase in pupil numbers which may result in Hazlehead School exceeding its available pupil capacity	Ensure there will be sufficient capacity at Hazlehead School to accommodate pupil numbers	08/09/22: Notes that officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at Hazlehead School and will include any required recommendations for action in future updates to the School Estate Plan. <b>(Recommendation HH3)</b>	On Track (Ongoing)	Officers have assessed that no further action is required at this time, however they will continue to monitor pupil numbers at the school and report back to Committee with recommendations in future as required.
Aberdeen Grammar ASG Priorities	Aberdeen Grammar School	<b>AG1:</b> Possible further additional capacity requirements at Aberdeen Grammar School	Ensure there will be sufficient capacity at Aberdeen Grammar School to accommodate pupil numbers	08/09/22: Notes that officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at Aberdeen Grammar School and will include any required recommendations for action in future updates to the School Estate Plan. <b>(Recommendation AG1)</b>	On Track (Ongoing)	Funding has been included within the Capital Programme to assist with creating additional space for learning and teaching to accommodate rising pupil numbers at the school. This work will be taken forwards over the next year.
	Mile End School	<b>AG2:</b> Pupil numbers at Mile End School are over the school's stated capacity and are likely to rise again from August 2022.	Ensure there is sufficient capacity at Mile End School to accommodate pupil numbers	08/09/22: Notes that officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at Mile End School, and include any required recommendations in future annual updates to the School Estate Plan. <b>(Recommendation AG2)</b>	On Track (Ongoing)	Latest forecast data indicates that the pressure on space at Mile End School has reduced, so no further action is required at this time. However officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at the school and report back to Committee with recommendations in future as required.
Harlaw ASG Priorities		<b>H2:</b> Harlaw Academy is expected to exceed its capacity, and the age	Identify costed options for future improvements to the	08/09/22: Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a	On Track (In Progress)	The feasibility study was completed and an outline business case

		and layout of the building present challenges for effective curriculum delivery	suitability of the Harlaw Academy building and to ensure the school will have sufficient capacity to accommodate future pupil numbers	feasibility study to identify potential future options for improving the condition and suitability of the Harlaw Academy building, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations and costs. <b>(Recommendation H2)</b>		was approved by Committee in May 2024. Design work for the planned improvements at the school is currently in progress.
	Ferryhill School	<b>H3:</b> Insufficient dining space and issues with building layout creates difficulties for ELC provision, flow of pupils and supervision of children	Ensure there is sufficient dining capacity, appropriate ELC facilities, and that the layout of the building is suitable	<i>08/09/22:</i> Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study to identify potential options for improving the dining capacity, layout and ELC facilities at Ferryhill School, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations and costs. <b>(Recommendation H3)</b>	On Track (In Progress)	The feasibility study was completed and an outline business case was approved by Committee in May 2024. Design work for the planned improvements at the school is currently under way.
<b>Cults ASG Priorities</b>	Cults Academy	<b>C1:</b> Possible further additional capacity requirements at Cults Academy	Ensure there will be sufficient capacity at Cults Academy to accommodate pupil numbers	<i>08/09/22:</i> Notes that officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at Cults Academy, and include any required recommendations in future annual updates to the School Estate Plan. <b>(Recommendation C1)</b>	On Track (Ongoing)	Opportunities for reconfiguring spaces within the school to provide additional capacity for learning and teaching have been identified, and plans are being progressed by officers, with a view to these being funded by developer contributions which have been received by the Council. Officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at the school and will bring forward recommendations for further action as and when required

	Culter School	<b>C2:</b> Forecast over-provision of places at Culter School	Ensure sufficient and sustainable primary school provision for the Peterculter community	<i>08/09/22:</i> Notes that officers will monitor pupil numbers and use of space at Culter School, and consider options for alternative use of any available space, with any recommendations to be included in future updates to the School Estate Plan as appropriate. <b>(Recommendation C2)</b>	On Track (Ongoing)	Officers have assessed that no further action is required at this time, however they will continue to assess opportunities for making use of any excess space at the school and will report back to Committee with recommendations in future as required.
<b>Lochside ASG Priorities</b>	Loirston Loch	<b>L1:</b> New primary school places required to serve new housing at Loirston Loch	Ensure sufficient and sustainable primary school places are available to serve the new Loirston Loch development	<i>08/09/22:</i> 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. <b>(Recommendation L1)</b>	On Hold (Not Yet Started)	It was reported to the Committee in February 2024 that there has been limited progress with the Loirston Loch development to date, which means any required additional school capacity is not likely to be required for some time. Officers will continue to monitor progress with the proposed new development to determine when would be the optimum time to commence the feasibility study.

## New Priorities and Recommendations – September 2024

### Facilities to support pupils with Additional Support Needs

At its meeting in April 2024, the Committee instructed 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”.

### Review of Northfield Academy and Northfield Primary Schools

To fulfil the Committee’s instructions relating to the future of Northfield Academy and each of the primary schools in the Northfield ASG, officers have recommended that a wider review of all public buildings within the Northfield area should be undertaken, to identify opportunities for consolidating buildings and improving the range of Council services available to this community.

It is therefore recommended that the following two new priorities are added to the School Estate Action Plan:

Area / ASG / School		Issue	Objective	Proposed Action	Resource Requirement	Priority
		<i>Where are we now?</i>	<i>Where do we want to be?</i>	<i>How do we get there? It is recommended that the Committee:</i>	<i>What additional resource is needed to carry out the proposed action?</i>	<i>How soon does the Objective need to be fully realised?</i>
<b>City-wide Strategic Priorities</b>		<b>A7:</b> There is a requirement to evaluate the provision of physical spaces in our schools which support pupils with additional support needs	Consider options for improving the provision and suitability of spaces in schools for supporting pupils with additional support needs	Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a review of spaces currently available within schools for supporting pupils with additional support needs, and in consultation with the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning, to report back to the Committee with recommendations for improving such spaces where this is required.	No additional resource required (if lower priority projects are placed on hold as detailed above)	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>Northfield ASG Priorities</b>	<b>Northfield Academy and Northfield ASG Primary Schools</b>	<b>N3:</b> There is a presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) within the Northfield Academy building, and a forecast combined over-provision of pupil places at primary schools in the Northfield ASG	Provide a solution to address the presence of RAAC within the Northfield Academy building, and reduce predicted excess capacity in primary schools in the Northfield ASG	Agrees the intended scope of the proposed asset review in Northfield to include all public assets and instruct the Chief Officer Corporate Landlord to proceed with this review and to commence engagement with all partners working in the wider Northfield area	No additional resource required (if lower priority projects are placed on hold as detailed above). Costs of feasibility study to be met from existing budgets.	Short Term (1-2 years)

The proposed timescales for bringing forward recommendations for future action on these new priorities are included within the updated implementation plan in Section 3 below.

### 3. Updated Implementation Plan

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

Recommendation / Key Tasks & Milestones	Current Status	Updated Indicative Timescale
<b><u>Projects Completed in the Last Year</u></b>		
<b>O4 / BD2 – Changes to catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School</b>	<b>Complete</b>	
<i>Statutory Consultation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of recommendations (date TBC)</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Implement Decisions</i>	<i>Complete</i>	

<b><u>Projects In Progress</u></b>		
<b>HH1 - Hazlehead / Countesswells Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)</b>	<b>On Track (In Progress)</b>	
<i>Develop and submit LEIP funding application</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<b><i>Deadline for LEIP application</i></b>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment &amp; Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<b><i>F&amp;R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC</i></b>	<i>Complete</i>	
<b><i>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC &amp; consultation proposal</i></b>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Full Business Case* - Contract Close</i>		<i>2024-2025</i>
<b><i>*Implement decisions</i></b>		<i>Winter 2027</i>
<b>A5 - Review signage in all schools</b>	<b>Delayed (In Progress)</b>	



<i>Research / project scoping</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Survey schools</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Implement Changes</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>Autumn 24</i>
<b>B2 - Bucksburn / Newhills additional primary provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)</b>	<b>On Track (In Progress)</b>	
<i>Planning &amp; Preparation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Feasibility Study &amp; Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<b><i>F&amp;R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC</i></b>	<i>Complete</i>	
<b><i>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC &amp; consultation proposal</i></b>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Statutory Consultation</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<i>ECS Committee Meeting – consider consultation feedback &amp; confirm decision on implementing proposals</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<b>NA2 - Bucksburn &amp; Dyce Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)</b>	<b>Timescale Revised (In Progress)</b>	<b>Winter 23/24 - Autumn 24</b>
<i>Planning &amp; Preparation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment &amp; Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Develop OBC</i>		<i>Spring/Summer 2025</i>
<b><i>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC &amp; consultation proposal (date TBC)</i></b>		<b><i>July 2025</i></b>
<b><i>F&amp;R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC (date TBC)</i></b>		<b><i>August 2025</i></b>
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<b>B1 - Bucksburn Academy Extension - Outline Business Case (OBC)</b>	<b>On Track (In Progress)</b>	

<i>Update and finalise OBC</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Capital Funding Allocated at Council Budget Meeting</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	<i>In progress</i>	<i>2024-2025</i>
<b><i>F&amp;R Committee Meeting - approval of Full Business Case</i></b>		<b><i>Spring 2025</i></b>
<i>Final Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>		<b><i>March 2025</i></b>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		<i>Spring 2027</i>
<b>CA1 - Victorian School Building Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)</b>	<b>On Track (In Progress)</b>	<b>Winter 22/23 - Spring 24</b>
<i>Planning &amp; Preparation / Analysis &amp; Research</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Feasibility Study &amp; Accessibility Assessments</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>Autumn/Winter 23/24</i>
<i>Develop OBC</i>		<i>Winter/Spring 24</i>
<b><i>F&amp;R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC (date TBC)</i></b>		<b><i>Winter 24/25</i></b>
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>		<i>2025-2026</i>
<i>Final Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>		<b><i>March 2026</i></b>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<b>H2 - Harlaw Academy Condition &amp; Suitability Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)</b>	<b>On Track (In Progress)</b>	
<i>Planning &amp; Preparation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Feasibility Study &amp; Accessibility Assessment</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<b><i>F&amp;R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC</i></b>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>2024-2025</i>
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>		<i>March 2025</i>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		<i>Autumn 2026</i>
<b>S3 - St Machar Academy Outdoor Space Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)</b>	<b>On Track (In Progress)</b>	
<i>Planning &amp; Preparation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Feasibility Study &amp; Accessibility Assessment</i>	<i>Complete</i>	

<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<b><i>F&amp;R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC</i></b>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>Autumn 2025</i>
<b>H3 - Ferryhill School Suitability Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)</b>	<b>On Track (In Progress)</b>	
<i>Planning &amp; Preparation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Feasibility Study &amp; Accessibility Assessment</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<b><i>F&amp;R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC</i></b>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>2024-2025</i>
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>		<i>March 2025</i>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		<i>Autumn/Winter 2026</i>
<b>RC1 - Denominational Primary Schools Feasibility - Outline Business Case (OBC)</b>	<b>On Track (In Progress)</b>	
<i>Planning &amp; Preparation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment &amp; Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<b><i>F&amp;R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC</i></b>		<i>TBC</i>
<b><i>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC &amp; consultation proposal</i></b>		<i>TBC</i>
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		<i>TBC</i>
<b>St Peters' RC School Refurbishment</b>	<b>On Track (In Progress)</b>	
<i>Feasibility Study</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<i>Outline Business Case - develop</i>	<i>Complete</i>	
<b><i>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC</i></b>	<i>Complete</i>	
<b><i>F&amp;R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC</i></b>	<i>Complete</i>	

<b>Full Council Meeting - approval of OBC</b>	Complete	
<b>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</b>	Complete	
<i>Decant of pupils to former Riverbank School building</i>		Summer 2025 – Autumn/Winter 2026
<i>Refurbishment of St Peter's School</i>		Summer 2025 – Autumn / Winter 2026
<i>Pupils return to refurbished St Peter's School</i>		Autumn/Winter 2026
<b>S1 - Riverbank School Excess Capacity - Options Appraisal</b>	<b>On Track (Not Yet Started)</b>	
<i>Options appraisal</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	Summer 2024
<i>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of recommendations (date TBC)</i>		November 2024
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		TBC

### Projects On Hold

<b>Projects On Hold</b>		
<b>L1 - Loirston Loch Additional Primary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)</b>	<b>On Hold (Not Yet Started)</b>	
<i>Planning &amp; Preparation</i>		TBC
<i>Feasibility Study &amp; Stakeholder Engagement</i>		TBC
<i>Develop OBC</i>		TBC
<b>F&amp;R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC (date TBC)</b>		TBC
<b>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC &amp; consultation proposal</b>		TBC
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>		TBC
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>		TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>		TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		TBC
<b>S2 - Sunnybank School Relocation of Additional Services - Options Appraisal</b>	<b>On Hold (Not Yet Started)</b>	
<i>Planning &amp; Preparation</i>		TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		TBC

<b>Projects Not Yet Started</b>		
<b>NA1 - Grandhome / Oldmachar / Bridge of Don Secondary Provision AND O3: Oldmachar ASG Primary Schools - Outline Business Case (OBC)</b>	<b>Timescale Revised (Not Yet Started)</b>	
<i>Planning &amp; Preparation</i>		TBC
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Study &amp; Stakeholder Engagement</i>		TBC
<i>Develop OBC</i>		TBC
<b>F&amp;R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC (date TBC)</b>		TBC
<b>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC &amp; consultation proposal (date TBC)</b>		TBC
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>		TBC
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>		TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>		TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		TBC

<b>Newly Identified Projects (subject to Committee approval)</b>		
<b>A7 – Review of spaces for Additional Support Needs</b>	<b>Pending Approval</b>	
<i>Planning and Preparation</i>		Autumn 2024
<i>Review of Spaces in Schools</i>		Winter 24 to Spring 25
<b>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of recommendations</b>		<b>July 2025</b>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		TBC
<b>N3: Northfield Academy, Northfield Primary Schools and Wider Asset Review</b>	<b>Pending Approval</b>	
<i>Planning &amp; Preparation</i>		Autumn 2024
<i>Feasibility Study &amp; Stakeholder Engagement</i>		Winter/Spring 2025
<i>Develop OBC</i>		Spring/Summer 2025
<b>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC &amp; consultation proposal</b>		<b>September 2025</b>
<b>F&amp;R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC</b>		<b>November 2025</b>
<i>Statutory Consultation</i>		TBC

<b><i>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of recommendations</i></b>		<i>March 2026</i>
<i>Full Business Case* - Develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>		<i>2026/27</i>
<b><i>Final Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i></b>		<i>March 2027</i>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		<i>TBC</i>

# Strategic Outline Case

<b>Project Name</b>	Northfield Area Asset Review		
<b>Sponsoring Cluster</b>	Corporate Landlord		
<b>Senior Responsible Officer</b>	Stephen Booth		
<b>Gateway Review by Sponsoring Cluster</b> The Sponsoring Cluster must confirm their support for the project and, crucially, have the resources necessary to deliver the project to conclusion.	Strategic Outline Case agreed	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Project scope modified – further options?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Pilot exercise to test assumptions	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Postpone or abandon	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

[Find further guidance in the ACC Project Management Toolkit online](#)

The Strategic Outline Case template should be used for projects expected to cost over £250,000.  
 For projects expected to cost up to £250,000, please use the [Project Proposal template](#).

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## 1. Project Overview

Briefly describe the basic project concept.

It is proposed that a detailed review of Council owned non-domestic assets within the Northfield area should be undertaken, to identify opportunities for consolidation of assets, to help reduce costs, and improve Council services to the area.

The review will follow on from a feasibility study undertaken in 2023, which focused on the primary schools within Northfield and the potential for reducing excess pupil capacity within these. The feasibility study did not lead to any conclusive recommendations, and officers were instructed by ECS Committee in February 2024 to carry out further work to identify potential future options for primary school provision in Northfield, alongside a review of the long term future for Northfield Academy.

Initial scoping work in response to this instruction led officers to conclude that a wider review of all Council assets in Northfield\*, and not only the schools, should be carried out to help maximise the potential for consolidating assets and improving wider Council services in the area.

\*The area to be reviewed includes the localities of Middlefield, Mastrick, Cummings Park, Northfield and Heathryfold, and for the purposes of this document will hereafter collectively be referred to as 'the Northfield area'. A map of the area to be reviewed along with a list of the assets likely to be in scope is shown at Appendix 1.

## 2. Business Aims, Needs, Objectives and Constraints

Provide an overview of the sponsoring organisation and explain how the project is strategically placed to contribute to the delivery of organisational goals within the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and the Local Development Plan (LDP).

By identifying the options for consolidating assets within the Northfield area, the project will support the delivery of Stretch Outcome 13 in the LOIP – Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate. Reducing the number of operational buildings within the area, and particularly removing older buildings which are less efficient to run, will help to reduce the overall carbon emissions from the estate.

Explain how the project supports the existing policies and strategies of the organisation and will assist in achieving the business goals, strategic aims and business plans of the organisation.

The project will support the overall delivery of the School Estate Plan, approved by Committee in September 2022. In turn the School Estate Plan acts as a strategic implementation plan for the Council's Property and Estates Strategy.

Implementing the actions from the School Estate Plan as instructed by Committee will help to ensure that the school estate is effectively managed, and can continue to support and contribute to the delivery of high quality services for children and young people, and for wider school communities.

Reviewing other asset types within Northfield alongside the schools will help contribute towards reducing costs associated with the operation of Council buildings. Where appropriate, links will be made to other relevant feasibility studies and reviews relating to assets within the review area (eg. future depots strategy).

Establish a compelling case for change based on business needs, eg demand for services, deficiencies in existing provision etc. Where are we now and where do we need to get to?



Certain primary schools within the Northfield Associated Schools Group (ASG) are located in close proximity to each other, including Bramble Brae and Manor Park Schools, which are less than one mile apart. Pupil numbers at Bramble Brae School are expected to fall to 65% of its capacity from 2028, whilst the occupancy level at Manor Park School is expected to fall to 55%, and the roll at Muirfield School is predicted to fall to as low as 27% of its available capacity within that timescale.

In light of the forecast decline in pupil numbers at these schools, there is a requirement to consider the options for reducing the number of primary schools in the Northfield ASG, to help ensure that pupil rolls at the schools in this area can be maintained at sustainable levels in the medium to long term.

At Northfield Academy, Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) has been found to be present with the roof structure in various locations around the school site. Whilst there were no immediate safety concerns reported by the specialist engineers who inspected and tested the roof panels in the school, officers were instructed by ECS Committee in February 2024, to carry out a detailed options appraisal for the long term future of the school, with a view to providing a solution to address the presence of RAAC within the building.

A review of other Council owned assets in the area, alongside the schools, will allow for a wider range of options to be considered, in terms of consolidating buildings and offering services in different ways, which will help to maximise the potential savings and improvements which could be achieved.

The review will focus on:

- Current asset utilisation and future service requirements
- Building running costs and annual maintenance costs
- Building condition and suitability (including backlog maintenance and ability to meet net zero ambitions)
- Opportunities for asset rationalisation, to better meet future service requirements and reduce overall costs
- Opportunities to create a new school community campus to incorporate a range of services which would support asset rationalisation
- Viability of progressing options in relation to capital spend required against revenue savings.
- Non property revenue cost impacts (e.g. staffing models/ travel costs etc.)

Identify any constraints, eg timing issues, legal requirements, professional standards, planning constraints. Any linkages and interdependencies with other programmes and projects should be explained, especially where the proposed project is intended to contribute to shared outcomes across multiple Clusters.

The review will be limited to non-residential, operational properties only within the review area – as defined within the map and assets list at Appendix 1 of this document.

It is likely that pupil numbers in Northfield will increase as a result of planned new housing development at Greenferns, which falls within the catchment area for Westpark School and Northfield Academy. The numbers of pupils expected to be generated by the Greenferns development will therefore need to be taken into account when considering the options for the Northfield ASG.

There is currently no allocation within the Council's capital programme to support the construction of any new assets in Northfield, should this be proposed to support the closure and consolidation of existing assets. Any identified options which involve new construction projects will therefore be subject to the identification of appropriate funding sources to deliver them.

### 3. Stakeholder Issues

Identify the key stakeholders and explain their involvement. Indicate their level of commitment to the project as specifically as possible. Describe any consultations held or still required. Are there any outstanding stakeholder issues?

There are several stakeholder groups who will have an interest in the outcomes of the assets review, including people who live in Northfield, parents of all schools, local elected members, MPs and MSPs, community councils, and also the staff and pupils within the schools affected.

The School Estate Plan sets out a commitment to engage with all stakeholder groups from an early stage, so that views and feedback about the available options can be gathered and considered prior to any decisions being taken.

Any recommendations to close schools or change the arrangements for primary school provision will also require formal statutory public consultation, before any final decisions on making changes can be taken.

### 4. Management and Implementation

Give a preliminary indication of the proposed project management structure and key personnel. Is any consultancy support likely to be required? Identify accommodation, staff and Trade Union issues. Describe any legal, contractual or procurement issues. Are there any important outstanding management/implementation considerations?

The review of assets will be led by Corporate Landlord.

### 5. Consideration of Options

Provide an initial list of options identified that could meet the objectives and briefly describe their main features (consider variations in scale, quality, technique, location, timing etc).

NB: A preferred option should not be identified before options have been developed and appraised more fully at the Outline Business Case stage.

Detail any planned or agreed dates, milestones, completion dates, required delivery deadlines or other time constraints on the project or the affected business areas.

None identified at this stage. The project will focus on a review of the assets which may generate potential options for consolidation. A feasibility study would then be required to explore those options further.

### 6. Costs, Benefits and Risks

Provide broad estimates of the capital and revenue costs of the project. If financial savings are anticipated, explain their nature and quantify them broadly. Describe the non-monetary costs that are expected to arise. Set down the spending objectives as specifically as possible at this stage to describe clearly what the organisation is seeking to achieve in terms of targeted outcomes and provide the basis for post project evaluation. So, the key question to answer is '**why are we undertaking this project?**' in terms of:

- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Economy
- Compliance
- Replacement

The review of assets will be carried out from within existing staff and financial resources.

Identify the benefits, both monetary and non-monetary, in relation to the agreed scope and key service requirements for the project. The benefits can be direct (Aberdeen City Council) and indirect (eg Integration Joint Board).

The review may identify opportunities for consolidating buildings, which will ultimately help to reduce any inefficiencies associated with the current condition and utilisation of assets, and reduce the overall cost of running the estate. It also has the potential to bring about improvements to service delivery, through achieving efficiencies in the deployment of staff and resources across a smaller number of buildings.

Removing older, inefficient buildings will also help to contribute to the Council's net-zero carbon ambitions.

Identify the main risks – business (political, reputational) service (design, operational, finance) and external (legislation, inflation) risks, in relation to the agreed scope and key service requirements for the project. Identify any potential mitigation measures.

As stated above, the project is unfunded and any options are likely to have capital cost implications. Appropriate funding will need to be identified to allow any preferred option to be taken forwards.

## 7. Funding and Affordability

Outline the estimated phasing of cash requirements. Identify the expected sources of funding and the degree to which the funders are committed. Indicate the current cash provision for the project (if any) and the additional resources that are likely to be required. State any particular concerns over affordability.

The review of assets will be carried out from within existing staff and financial resources. Any options are likely to have capital cost implications, and appropriate funding will need to be identified to allow any preferred option to be taken forwards.

State the cost, and identify the budget, to develop the project to prepare an Outline Business Case.

Following the review, the total cost of carrying out a feasibility study to develop any identified options is estimated at £40,000. This cost can be met from the allocation within the current Capital Programme for School Estate Plan feasibility studies..

The cost of implementing any changes will be dependent on which option is taken forwards as the preferred option, and detail on this will be provided within the outline business case.

## 8. Assumptions

Document the high-level assumptions that have been made during the development of the business case and any other unanswered questions that may be significant. Refer to the Supplementary Guidance on Optimism Bias and detail the assumptions you have made in constructing the costs and business case.

[Green Book Supplementary Guidance Optimism Bias \(gov.uk webpage\)](#) (under 'Other Guidance and Reference Documents')

N/A

## 9. Document Revision History

Version	Reason	By	Date
0.1	First draft for officer consultation	AJ	04/06/24
1.0	Amended draft (added detail on scope including Appendix 1) following officer comments	AJ	19/06/24



The list below highlights the Council owned assets located within the Northfield area along with an estimate of their annual running costs, for consideration for a placed based review of the Northfield area.

File No.	Property / Address	Property Type	Condition Rating	Suitability Rating	Annual Running Cost
106	<b>Mastrick Library Greenfern Road Mastrick Aberdeen AB16 6TR</b>	<b>Library</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>£36,109</b>
1063	<b>Social Care &amp; Wellbeing Records Store Unit B Whitemyres Avenue Mastrick Industrial Estate Aberdeen AB16 6HQ</b>	<b>Premises (Commercial)</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>£13,650</b>
1063	<b>Records Storage Facility Unit A Whitemyres Avenue Mastrick Industrial Estate Aberdeen City AB16 6HQ</b>	<b>Premises (Commercial)</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>£18,925</b>
134	<b>Mastrick Housing Office Spey Road Mastrick Aberdeen AB16 6SF</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>£65,656</b>
1456	<b>Hillylands - Community Special Needs 2 Croft Road Mastrick Aberdeen AB16 6RB</b>	<b>Rehabilitation Centre</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>£19,933</b>
1458	<b>Len Ironside Centre Mastrick Drive Aberdeen AB16 6UE</b>	<b>Day Centre- Disabled</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>£217,366</b>
1462	<b>Westpark School (formerly Westerton) Cruden Crescent Northfield Aberdeen AB16 7JD</b>	<b>School-Primary</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>£306,081</b>
1481	<b>Muirfield School Mastrick Drive Mastrick Aberdeen AB16 6UE</b>	<b>School-Primary</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>£299,580</b>
1483	<b>Northfield Academy Granitehill Place Northfield Aberdeen AB16 7AU</b>	<b>School-Secondary</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>£1,232,404</b>
1534	<b>The Quarry Centre 35 Cummings Park Crescent Aberdeen AB16 7AS</b>	<b>Family Centre</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>£170,499</b>
1634	<b>Quarryhill Primary School Birkhall Parade Mastrick Aberdeen AB16 5QT</b>	<b>School-Primary</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>£254,335</b>
1636	<b>Bramble Brae Primary School Cummings Park Drive Aberdeen AB16 7BL</b>	<b>School-Primary</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>£313,410</b>
1697	<b>House 11 Craigendarroch Place Aberdeen AB16 5SE</b>	<b>Group Home</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>£2,747</b>
1749	<b>Community Equipment OT Store Unit C/D Whitemyres Avenue Mastrick Aberdeen AB16 6HQ</b>	<b>Premises (Commercial)</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>£14,672</b>
1758	<b>Manor Park School Danestone Circle Northfield Aberdeen AB16 7YB</b>	<b>School-Primary</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>£1,145,456</b>
1829	<b>Marchburn Childrens Home 8 Marchburn Road Aberdeen AB16 7NN</b>	<b>Childrens Home</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>£58,055</b>
1850	<b>House 233 Birkhall Parade 233 Birkhall Parade Mastrick Aberdeen AB16 5QT</b>	<b>Group Home</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>£32,656</b>
1876	<b>Williamson Family Centre Mastrick Close Mastrick Aberdeen AB16 6XZ</b>	<b>Family Centre</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>£87,631</b>
1889	<b>Mastrick Community Centre Greenfern Road Mastrick Aberdeen AB16 6TR</b>	<b>Community Centre (Leased)</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>£54,717</b>

19	<b>Middlefield Community Project Lord Provost Henry E Rae Community Centre Manor Avenue Aberdeen AB16 7UR</b>	<b>Community Centre (Leased)</b>	B	A	<b>£153,305</b>
1911	<b>Day Care Centre Kingswood Court Invercauld Road Aberdeen AB16 5RX</b>	<b>Day Centre- Elderly</b>	A	A	<b>£178,874</b>
1913	<b>Stocket Parade Hostel 16 Stocket Parade Aberdeen AB16 5QN</b>	<b>Group Home</b>	B	A	<b>£60,835</b>
1920	<b>Northfield Community Centre Byron Square Northfield Aberdeen AB16 7LL</b>	<b>Community Centre (Leased)</b>	B	B	<b>£48,439</b>
1924	<b>Mastrick Area Social Work Office Greenfern Road Mastrick Aberdeen AB16 6SH</b>	<b>Office</b>	B	A	<b>£65,801</b>
240	<b>Northfield Swimming Pool &amp; Fitness Centre Kettlehills Crescent Northfield Aberdeen AB16 5PL</b>	<b>Swimming Pool</b>	A	A	<b>£115,965</b>
247	<b>Northfield Outdoor Sports Centre Provost Fraser Drive Northfield Aberdeen AB16 5TL</b>	<b>Outdoor Sports Facility</b>	B	B	<b>£1,580</b>
2908	<b>Cummings Park Learning Centre Cummings Park Crescent Northfield Aberdeen AB16 7AR</b>	<b>Community Learning Centre</b>	B	B	<b>£64,274</b>
3144	<b>Heathryburn Primary School Davidson Drive Aberdeen AB16 7FQ</b>	<b>School-Primary</b>	A	A	<b>£1,169,572</b>
3236	<b>Aberdeen Treasure Hub Granitehill Road Aberdeen AB16 7AX</b>	<b>Depot</b>	A	A	<b>£328,824</b>
3248	<b>Orchard Brae School Howes Road Aberdeen AB16 7RW</b>	<b>School-ASN</b>	A	A	<b>£460,439</b>
3364	<b>Cummings Park Nursery Cumming Park Crescent Aberdeen AB16 7AS</b>	<b>School-Nursery</b>	A	A	<b>£11,377</b>
36	<b>Depot Cairnwell Drive Mastrick Aberdeen AB16 5ND</b>	<b>Depot</b>	B	B	<b>£42,789</b>
83	<b>Cummings Park Community Flat 122 Cummings Park Drive Northfield Aberdeen AB16 7BB</b>	<b>Community Flat</b>	B	A	<b>£490</b>

Key

Blue = Sport Aberdeen Assets

Orange = Assets which are potentially out of scope for the review, and which will be determined in the early stages of the project

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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services
<b>DATE</b>	17 September 2024
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Denominational Primary Schools – Feasibility Study
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/24/264
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Stephen Booth
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Andrew Jones
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1; 1.1.2; 1.1.5

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the outcomes of a recent feasibility study to assess the options for the long term future of denominational primary school provision in the City, and provides a recommendation for next steps. It also includes the findings of a stakeholder engagement exercise carried out to support the feasibility study.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the contents of the report, and instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to continue to monitor forecast pupil numbers for the three denominational primary schools, and to include recommendations in next year's annual school estate plan update report, on any required actions to be taken to ensure that the city's denominational primary school provision continues to be appropriate to meet the expected demand for pupil places.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 At its meeting of 8 September 2022, the Committee approved the School Estate Plan, and as part of this instructed officers to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement exercise, to identify options for ensuring appropriate and sustainable long term denominational primary school provision for the city to meet forecast demand, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations.
- 3.2 This instruction was in response to figures presented within the School Estate Plan in 2022 which indicated a predicted increase in excess pupil capacity across the three denominational primary schools (St Peter's RC School, St Joseph's RC School, and Holy Family RC School) in the future. Actual school roll data to 2021/22 had validated this position and confirmed that 2 of the RC

primary schools had seen a relatively steady school roll since 2015, and one a declining school roll since 2015.

- 3.3 A feasibility study was carried out between April and June 2024, to identify potential options for ensuring appropriate and sustainable long term denominational primary school provision in Aberdeen, to meet forecast demand. This included a stakeholder engagement exercise, in which members of school communities were invited to submit their comments on the options available, and the potential impact of these options. The stakeholder engagement was conducted using an online survey, to which there were 1,321 responses submitted.
- 3.4 Appendix A contains a summary of the findings from the feasibility study, which has already been shared separately with parents at the three denominational primary schools.

#### Next Steps for Denominational Primary School Provision

- 3.5 When the feasibility study was first instructed through the School Estate Plan in 2022, school roll forecasts at that time indicated that, following the completion of the project to improve and extend the facilities for St Peter's RC School (where capacity will be increased), there would be significant excess capacity across the three denominational primary schools. The feasibility study therefore focused on the possibilities of reducing the overall future capacity of these schools, to avoid any inefficiency.
- 3.6 Since that time, fluctuations in pupil numbers across parts of the school estate, which were beginning to emerge at the time of writing the School Estate Plan and which could not be predicted by the school roll forecasts, have continued to create challenges for school estate planning. Aberdeen City welcomed an additional 1,000 pupils to our schools over session 2023/24. Fluctuations in school roll have been particularly evident in schools with surplus capacity, as families moving to the area have been advised of available school places. As a result, pupil numbers at our denominational primary schools have increased significantly in the last two years.
- 3.7 These fluctuations are thought to be due to a number of unexpected demographic changes, including increases over the last two years in the number of international students enrolling at the universities in the city, and who have moved to Aberdeen with their families, therefore requiring school places for their children. Increases in the numbers of international refugees being welcomed to Aberdeen over this time period has also impacted on pupil numbers. The denominational schools were particularly affected by these changes, as the spare capacity which was previously available in these schools was used to offer places to incoming families where their zoned non-denominational schools were unable to accommodate them, or who were keen to secure faith based education.
- 3.8 Whilst these additional families have impacted on pupil numbers in our denominational schools over the last two years, and are therefore likely to continue to have some impact on school rolls whilst those children remain in

the system, the extent to which these factors will affect pupil numbers in five years' time and beyond, is much less clear. Recent changes in UK law relating to international students' rights to settle here with their families, are likely to reduce the impact that student populations will have on pupil numbers in the future, and it is not possible to predict whether similar numbers of international refugees will be welcomed to Aberdeen in future years. These could therefore be seen as 'short-term' factors which are affecting our current school populations, but which may have less of an impact on our schools in the future.

- 3.9 Given that our school roll forecasts (and particularly the forecasts for the denominational schools) rely on trends in actual pupil enrolments over recent years, to predict the likely pupil numbers in future years, there is a concern that the latest forecast figures will be subject to a greater margin of error than would normally be expected, as the data calculations will have been influenced by the above short-term factors, which may not actually be at play in the future.
- 3.10 This means that predicting future required capacity levels for the denominational schools, and recommending actions to achieve those levels, has temporarily become more challenging. Whilst it may be the case that pupil numbers will decline once the above short term factors are no longer at play, which could then lead to recommendations to reduce future capacity, it is not possible to confirm at this stage whether that will happen, or when it will happen.
- 3.11 In addition to the recent increases in pupil numbers described above, the confirmation earlier this year from the UK government that independent school fees will no longer be exempt from VAT, may have a further impact on future pupil numbers in Aberdeen's local authority schools. The increased costs associated with independent school places may result in parents, who would otherwise have enrolled their children at an independent school, choosing to enrol them at a local authority school instead. This may result in actual pupil numbers in some of our schools in the coming years being higher than the forecast figures.
- 3.12 This is an emerging issue and its true impact is likely to become more clear over the next one to two years, after which it will be possible for future forecasts to account for any changes in the pattern of parental choices with regard to independent schools, but in the short term, the likely impact is unclear.
- 3.13 Aside from considering the options for reducing excess capacity across the denominational primary schools, the feasibility study also focused on opportunities to make improvements to the existing facilities within the school buildings. Due to the current uncertainty with future capacity requirements described above, it is not possible to make recommendations at this stage for long term and significant capital investment in the existing buildings, given that there may be a requirement in future to make changes to one or more of the buildings to reduce the overall capacity. Officers will however continue to monitor the condition and suitability of the existing buildings, and ensure that the necessary maintenance, repairs and any essential improvements are carried out, as would be the case with all other buildings in the school estate.

- 3.14 Taking all of the above into consideration, it is recommended that no action is taken at this stage to make any changes to the future capacity of the three denominational primary schools, but that officers are instructed to continue to monitor pupil numbers and forecasts, and to bring forward recommendations within next year's annual School Estate Plan update report, should the available data at that time indicate that any action is required to maintain an appropriate level of provision for denominational primary education.

#### Catholic Secondary School Provision

- 3.15 The online survey which was used to gather stakeholder feedback during the feasibility study, whilst focusing predominantly on the future of the three denominational primary schools, also included a question to help gain an understanding of the level of potential demand that there would be for a Roman Catholic secondary school in Aberdeen. The specific question included within the survey was:

*“Given the choice, would you send your child to your local secondary school, or to a city wide Roman Catholic secondary school?”*

- 3.16 Of the 1,321 responses to the online survey which were submitted, 1,081 (82%) of these indicated a preference for a city wide Roman Catholic secondary school. 208 respondents (16%) indicated that their preference would be to send their child to their local secondary school, whilst 32 respondents (2%) did not answer this question.
- 3.17 Of the 1,081 respondents who indicated a preference for a Catholic secondary school in Aberdeen, 730 (71%) of these confirmed that they were parents of current pre-school, primary or secondary school aged children, and that they live within an Aberdeen City postcode area.
- 3.18 Of all of the respondents who indicated a preference for a Catholic secondary school in Aberdeen, 814 (75%) of these confirmed that their child held a Baptism certificate. 239 respondents (22%) indicated that their child did not hold a Baptism certificate, whilst 28 respondents (3%) did not answer this question.
- 3.19 Roman Catholic Education is currently available to secondary school pupils in the form of weekly after school tuition, which is held at Harlaw Academy and available to pupils from all Aberdeen City secondary schools. These classes were stopped in October 2023 as no pupils were attending, but the classes have been reinstated from August 2024, with seven pupils attending.
- 3.20 Based on the above survey results, and given that the Council has made a commitment to any new secondary school having a minimum capacity of 1000 pupil places, it is unlikely that there would be sufficient demand from parents to support the creation of a new Roman Catholic secondary school in Aberdeen.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

## 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

## 7. RISK

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

### Management Of Risk

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	No significant risks identified			
<b>Compliance</b>	Risk that the Council is seen to make significant changes to schools without considering the available school roll forecast data.	The recommendation to take no action at this time demonstrates that full consideration has been given to the available forecast data.	L	<b>Yes</b>

<b>Operational</b>	Failure to engage and consult with communities on the future of the school estate which serves them, could lead to a breakdown in relationships with community members. Proposals to close schools may not be popular with some stakeholders	An engagement exercise has been undertaken with stakeholders and the findings of this have been included within the report for Members to consider.	L	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Financial</b>	No significant risks identified			<b>Yes/No</b>
<b>Reputational</b>	Failure to engage and consult with communities on the future of the school estate which serves them, could lead to reputational damage for the Council. Proposals to close schools may not be popular with some stakeholders	An engagement exercise has been undertaken and the findings of this have been included within the report for Members to consider.		<b>Yes/No</b>
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Taking no immediate action on reducing the number of denominational primary schools will not provide opportunities for reducing	The recommendation to keep pupil numbers at the denominational primary schools under review, and for officers to report back with recommendations in the future, may provide additional opportunities to	L	<b>Yes</b>

	carbon emissions from the school estate	contribute to reducing carbon emissions.		
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## 8. OUTCOMES

<b>Council Delivery Plan 2024</b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>  <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	<p>The recommendations within this report support the delivery of the following policy statements:</p> <p><u>A City of Opportunity</u>            Policy Statement 2 - Review and invest in our school estate, ensuring all of Aberdeen's schools are fit for the educational needs and the challenges of the 21st century. The report considers the options for providing improved facilities for denominational primary schools in the future.</p>
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	<p>This project forms part of the School Estate Plan which will support the delivery of the Council's Property and Estates Strategy and the Net Zero Routemap for Aberdeen City.</p>

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	No other assessments required

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Education Operational Delivery Committee, 8 September 2022: [School Estate Plan 2022](#) (RES/22/184)

## 11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A: Denominational Primary Schools Feasibility Study: End of Feasibility Study Report

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

<b>Name</b>	Andrew Jones
<b>Title</b>	Service Manager
<b>Email Address</b>	ajones@aberdeencity.gov.uk

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## **Appendix A**

### **Denominational Primary Schools Feasibility Study April to June 2024**

#### **End of Feasibility Study Report July 2024**

##### **Introduction**

The Council carried out a feasibility study between April and June 2024, to identify potential options for ensuring appropriate and sustainable long term denominational primary school provision in Aberdeen, to meet forecast demand. A summary of the brief for the feasibility study is included below. To help inform the outcomes of the feasibility study, comments and feedback were invited from school communities on the options available, and the potential impact of these options.

This paper provides a summary of the feedback received from stakeholders, and the key themes which have emerged from the feasibility study.

##### **Feasibility Study Summary**

The study involved a detailed review of the existing denominational primary school sites, focusing in particular on St Joseph's RC School and Holy Family RC School, given that plans are already under way to improve and increase the size of the St Peter's RC School building. Data was gathered on each school's circumstances, including building layout, condition, accessibility, overall size of the site, and how spaces are currently being used. This information was used to assess the available options for potentially reducing the overall future pupil capacity within our denominational primary schools, including any options for closing one or more of the existing school buildings, to reduce any excess pupil capacity.

Alongside this, architects were instructed to review opportunities for making improvements to the existing school facilities, including options to extend and / or refurbish the buildings.

This work is helping to identify a number of potentially viable options for improving the condition and suitability of our denominational primary school estate, whilst also minimising any excess pupil capacity in the future, to ensure they can continue to be run as efficiently as possible.

Analysis of the information gathered during the feasibility study will be used to help assess all available options, and the impact these may have on stakeholders and school communities. This will assist in the development of an outline business case, to set out the advantages and disadvantages, and any cost implications of each option, before finally recommending a preferred option to be taken forwards.

##### **Feedback from Stakeholders**

The feedback submitted by stakeholders throughout the feasibility study has been invaluable, and has been used to help shape the direction of the study and in assessing how viable each option is likely to be.

The key messages from stakeholders which have helped to influence the study include:

- The value placed on denominational schools for their role in developing moral values, ethics and discipline
- The importance of faith education and support for religious principals which are provided by the schools
- The schools are highly regarded for providing very good quality education and having high quality teaching staff
- The schools are valued for supporting cultural diversity and inclusivity
- The importance of the ethos and environment, sense of belonging, and sense of community provided by the schools
- The assertion that the denominational schools benefit from being open to people of all faiths, and focus on different beliefs

Comments received through the stakeholder survey also included:

- A strong feeling that the schools should be refurbished and improved, and not closed
- Concerns from parents about increased travel time and cost, if one of the schools was to close
- That closing a school would reduce the level of parental choice over school placings
- Concerns that the Council's school roll forecasts may not be accurate and that there is limited spare capacity available in the existing schools.

### **Emerging Priorities**

Taking into account the information gathered from the site investigations, and the important messages from stakeholder feedback, the following key priorities have emerged, which will help to inform the development of an outline business case:

- **Maintaining access to denominational schools in the City**

The stakeholder feedback has made it clear that significant value is placed on the role of denominational primary schools in delivering high quality learning and teaching, and also in supporting children's moral and personal development. Options presented within the business case will therefore need to ensure that children in any part of the city continue to have an opportunity to attend a denominational primary school in the future.

- **Condition and Suitability of the school buildings**

The site investigations and feedback from stakeholders have confirmed and supported the requirement to make improvements to the condition and suitability of the facilities, particularly at St Joseph's RC School, if these are to continue operating in the future. Options presented in the business case will need to take this into account.

- **School Roll Forecasts**

It is acknowledged that any recommendations to reduce future capacity within the denominational primary schools will require to be based on up to date and robust information about the likely numbers of pupils who will be attending the schools in the future. The outline business case will therefore take into account the latest available school roll forecast figures, and their reliability when identifying any preferred option to be taken forwards.

### **Next Steps**

A report on the outcomes of the feasibility study and recommendations for next steps will be presented to the Education and Children's Services Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

## **Feasibility Study Brief**

Below is a summary of the Feasibility Study Brief, outlining the objectives for the project and the options which were to be considered during the feasibility study.

### **Project Objectives**

The options identified through this feasibility study must be aimed at achieving the following:

- A reduction in the overall number of denominational primary school places within the city, so that the total number of places across the denominational estate remains no higher than 868 (i.e. equivalent to two 2-stream schools)
- An overall revenue saving in terms of building running costs
- Solutions to the challenges brought about by the condition and suitability of St Joseph's School and Holy Family School.

The options identified in this feasibility study should take into consideration the instruction issued by Council in December 2023, for officers to proceed with plans for the improvement and expansion of the St Peter's School site, which will result in an increase in the number of places at the school from 217 to 434. Given that this instruction is in place, any proposed options generated from the feasibility study should not result in any changes to the number of places available at St Peter's School which will be brought about by the separate St Peter's project.

Similarly, given that the St Peter's project will result in improvements to the condition and suitability of that school, there is no requirement within this feasibility study to provide options for improvements to the St Peter's site.

### **Options to be included in the Feasibility Study (not exhaustive)**

To achieve the objectives outlined in section 2 above, the following options should be considered in the Feasibility Study. Within these options it may be necessary to include several sub-options, which consider the various combinations of action which could be taken:

#### **Options relating to reducing capacity**

- Close one school, and re-align catchment areas to provide pupils with places at each of the two remaining schools
- Merge two schools into one existing building, and close the other building

#### **Options relating to improving condition and suitability (St Joseph's School and Holy Family School)**

- Carry out refurbishment and repairs to improve the condition and suitability of the existing buildings
- Rebuild existing buildings on their current site to provide improved facilities
- Rebuild existing buildings on an alternative site (if suitable sites are available) to provide improved facilities
- Relocate schools to alternative existing site(s) within the city, which offer improved facilities

### **Questions to be considered by the Feasibility Study**

The feasibility study will address the following key questions, and a final report will be provided at the end of the study which sets out the answers to these questions:

The feasibility study should address the following key questions:

What are the benefits / dis-benefits of potentially closing each school site?

(St Joseph's School and Holy Family School)

- Consider costs / savings, benefits / dis-benefits of closing each site
- Consider impact on carbon emissions and contribution to the Council's net-zero ambitions
- How could the existing catchment areas be realigned to account for the closure of the school?

Which would be the optimal site to be retained and to 'host' a merger with another school?

- Consider running costs, CO2 emissions, accessibility, sustainable travel

- Consider the size of the building and the capacity it offers
- Requirements for improvement / refurbishment of building
- Look at forecast rolls and capacity of existing sites to accommodate future pupil numbers
- Consider benefits / dis-benefits of merging each combination of schools

What are the benefits of refurbishing an existing building vs. rebuilding the school to bring about improved facilities?

- Consider the extent of improvement required and cost benefit of refurbishment vs. rebuild
- Consider impact on carbon emissions and contribution to the Council's net-zero ambitions
- Likelihood of planning consent
- Likely timescales for refurbishment vs. demolition and construction
- Likely temporary arrangements for accommodating pupils during refurbishment or demolition and construction

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	17 September 2024
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2022-23.
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/24/270
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Graeme Simpson
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Graeme Simpson
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.3, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To share the Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2022-23 report and provide a commentary on the performance of Aberdeen City Council compared with the national position.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 Note that care experienced children and those children who need protection in Aberdeen City, are, predominantly, receiving care and protection in line with national averages;
- 2.2 Note that where performance differs from national averages, there are improvement plans in place; and
- 2.3 Instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to update the Education and Children's Services Committee on the 2023/24 Statistical Report following its publication in Spring 2025.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Aberdeen City stands up positively in most respects with the national picture reported in the three reports Child Protection, Looked After and Secure Care. 2022-23. [National Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland: 2022 to 2023 \("the report"\)](#). This is an annual retrospective report reporting on data relating to Child Protection activity and activity in relation to Looked After Children.
- 3.2 The report contains extensive statistical information using snapshot data as at 31 July 2023 in line with Scottish Government reporting, from which we have identified the following areas of interest:

Where Aberdeen City is broadly in-line with the national average:

- Children registered on the Child Protection Register with a previous registration period which occurred more than two years ago
- Neglect and Parental Mental Health are the predominant concerns recorded when a child's name is placed on the Child Protection Register
- Reducing rate per 1,000 of looked after children and young people
- Proportion of looked after children in secure care
- Majority of looked after children are living in the local community

Where Aberdeen City differs from the national average:

- Rate of registrations of children on the child protection register is higher
- Proportion of children looked after with a disability is higher
- Rate of children receiving Continuing Care is lower
- Proportion of children receiving Aftercare is higher
- Proportion of children looked after at home or with kin is lower
- Proportion of children placed in foster care is higher

3.3 The Scottish Government are proposing to extend the breadth of data included in the annual report. Going forward this will include data in relation to 'Brothers and Sisters' as well as children considered via Care & Risk Management processes.

### **3.4 CHILD PROTECTION**

3.4.1 On 31 July 2023, 2,094 children were on the Child Protection Register in Scotland. This is a 4% increase on the number of reported on 31 July 2022 (2,019). On 31 July 2022, there were 115 children's names appearing on Aberdeen City's Child Protection Register, and 112 children's names appearing on 31 July 2023.

3.4.2 The published Local Authority Child Protection Statistics benchmarking tool illustrates that across our comparator authorities on 31 July 2023, there has been an increase of 0.7% in the number of children appearing on the Child Protection Register compared with 31 July 2022. Aberdeen City's comparator authorities, are City of Edinburgh, Dundee City, South Ayrshire, Argyll & Bute, and Renfrewshire.

3.4.3 On 31 July 2023, Scotland's rate per 1,000 children on the Child Protection Register was 2.3. This is a slight increase from 2022 (2.2 per 1,000). On 31 July 2023, Aberdeen City's rate per 1,000 children on the Child Protection Register was 3.1 per 1000, a slight decrease from 2022 (3.2 per 1,000). Comparator Authorities rate of registration on 31 July 2023 was 1.8 per 1000, see Figure 1.

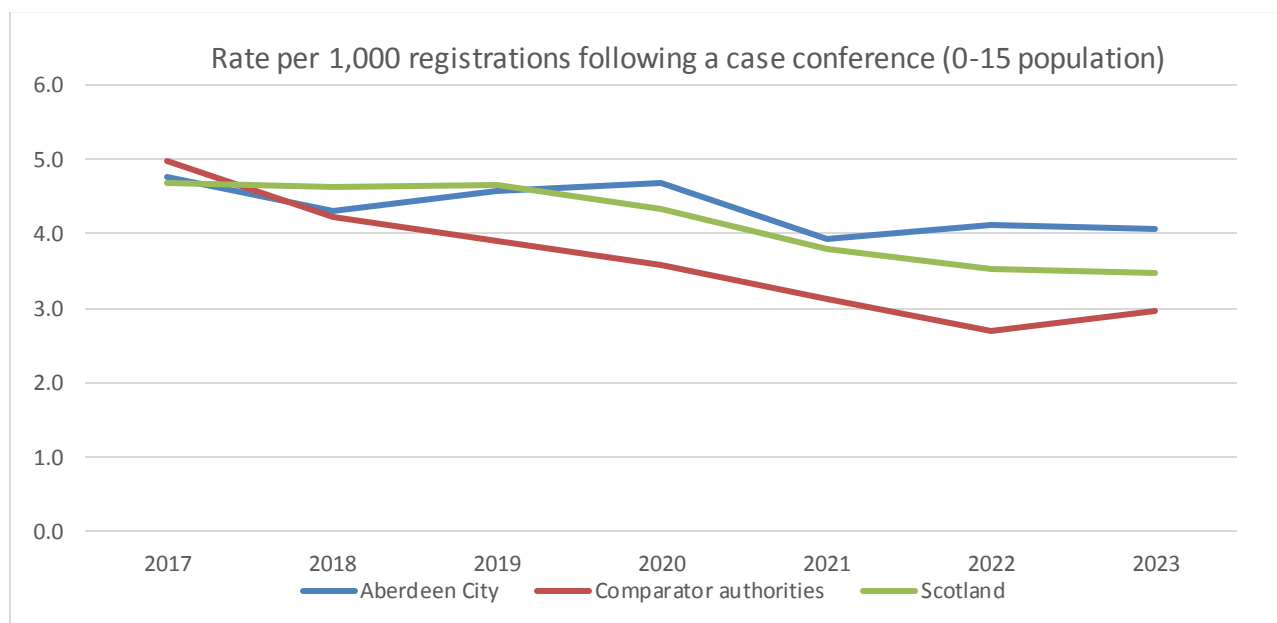
3.4.4 Placing a child's name on the Child Protection Register is a significant decision in a child's life. Such a decision will always be based on individual circumstances and the professional judgement of the multi-agency team around the family. Our local data tells us that in 2022 – 2023, 93% of children subject to an initial Child Protection Planning Meeting were placed on the Child Protection Register. The high conversion rate demonstrates that our threshold for deciding to convene an initial Child Protection Planning Meeting is aligned

to our thinking within that subsequent meeting, that the threshold is met to record the child's name on the CPR.

3.4.5 The concept of significant harm is one which is framed by professional experience and judgement. We recognise that within discussions focussed around risk, professionals seek to do all they can to mitigate against future harm. Whilst registration is a recognition of the need for multi-agency child protection planning it is not the process itself that is the factor that will reduce risk. We also know that parents can feel shame and judged by the decision to place their child's name on the Child Protection Register (CPR). In recognition of this and of Aberdeen City's higher rate per 1000 children on the CPR, we would like all professionals to be clear that registration is necessary, ie that we are only utilising Child Protection Registration for children where there is a clear risk of 'significant harm' and a multi-agency child protection plan is required to protect the child or young person.

3.4.6 With this in mind, an event on 'Collectively meeting the Needs of our Children and Young People' held on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024 was attended by over 140 professionals from across the partnership. Central to this event was developing a more consistent understanding of the concept of 'significant harm'. Feedback from those who attended was very positive and highlighted the need for further work to progress on thresholds for child protection intervention. A report on this will be presented to the next Child Protection Committee (CPC) for their consideration and agreement on next steps.

Figure 1



3.4.7 Figure 2 below shows the number of children who were registered in Aberdeen City between the period of 1 August 2022 – 31 July 2023 (263), the proportion of children who had a previous registration period (23%) and duration since the last registration period. This is an increase from 18% for the period 1 August

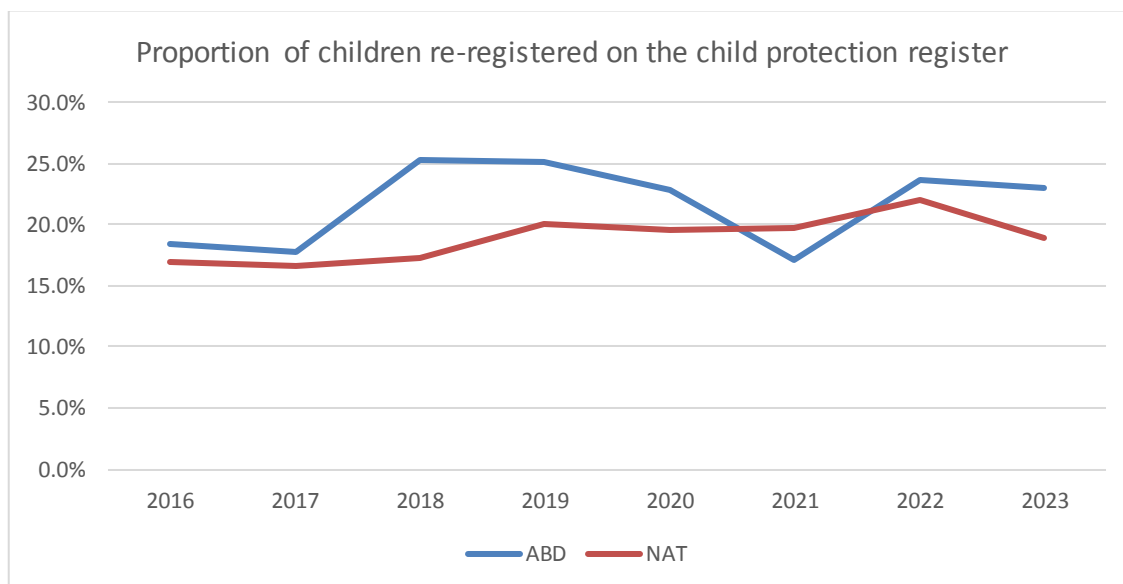
2021 – 31 July 2022 (42 children of 235 had a previous registration period). On 31 July 2023, 19% of children across Scotland had a previous registration period, a fall from 22% on 31 July 2022.

3.4.8 11% of Aberdeen City’s children registered in 2022-2023 had a previous registration period which occurred more than 2 years ago. This is on a par with Scotland’s re-registration data which highlights 12% of children on the register have had a previous re-registration period occurring more than 2 years ago.

Figure 2 – Aberdeen City Registrations & Re-registrations

	2022/ 2023	% of Children re- registered
Number of Children placed on the CPR in Aberdeen City	263	
Children placed on the CPR with a previous registration in the previous:		
0 – 3 months	3	1%
4 – 6 months	9	3%
7 – 12 months	8	3%
13 – 24 months	12	4%
More than 2 years	28	11%
Total number of Children placed on the CPR in Aberdeen City with a previous registration period between 0 months – more than 2 years ago	60	23%

Figure 3



3.4.9 Predominant factors that result in children’s names being placed on the Child Protection Register in Aberdeen City over the course of 2022 – 2023 relate to parental mental health (including substance misuse), neglect and emotional abuse. An analysis of re-registration data told us that all but one child was re-registered under a different category of concern when they were re-registered



illustrating an appropriate response to the multiple and various categories of registration.

3.4.10 Across Scotland, domestic abuse, neglect, and parental mental health are most recorded concerns at registration.

### 3.5 Looked after Children

3.5.1 The national [report](#), reports there has been a 2% decrease in the number of Looked After Children in Scotland from 2022, to 2023. In Aberdeen City there was a marginal increase during that same period (487 in July 2022 snapshot to 500 in July 2023).

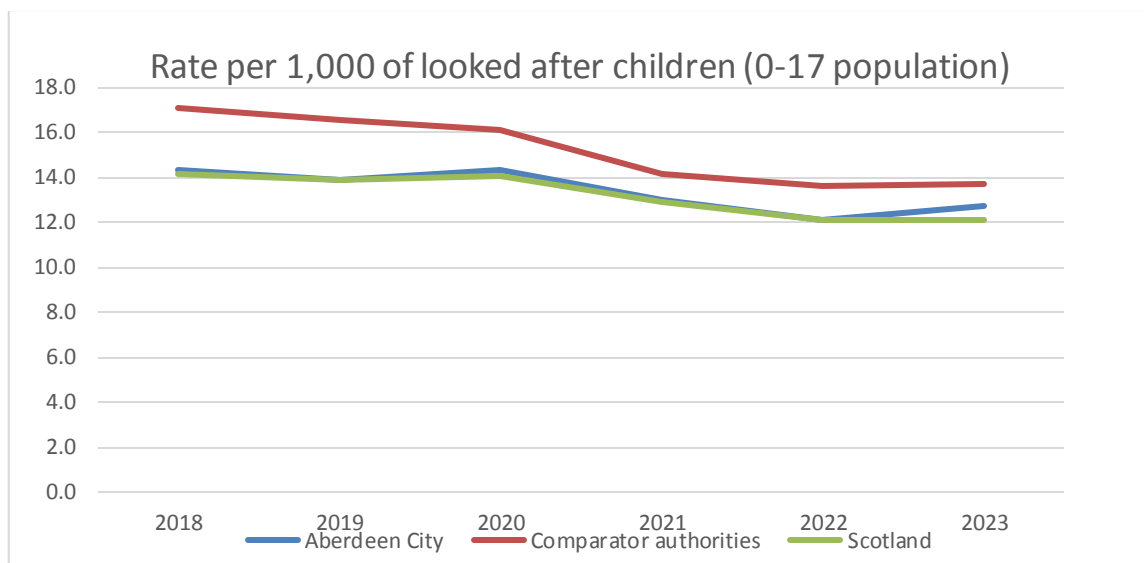
3.5.2 Like all local authorities Aberdeen City has received a number of young people claiming asylum via the National Transfer scheme. All young people transferred to Aberdeen via this route are deemed looked after children. In addition Aberdeen City has been a dispersal city for asylum seeking adults a number of whom have claimed to be under 18 years of age following their arrival in Aberdeen. If, following an age assessment, there is reason to believe the individual could be under 18, in line with National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021, statutory legislative responsibilities are placed on the local authority that this group also become *looked after* children. See Table below 23 UASYP (Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Young People) were given looked after status in ACC in 2023.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
How many asylum claims were for children the local authority were responsible for?	1	0	2	14	21
How many age assessments were undertaken	1	0	0	5	10
How many of these age assessments resulted in the individual being assessed as a child?	1	0	0	5	7

\*data up till July 2023

3.5.2 Figure 4 illustrates that the rate of looked after children per 1,000 population (0-17 years) is steadily reducing nationally (to 12.1), in comparator authorities (to 13.6) and locally (to 12.2). So Aberdeen City continues to be in line with the national trend and slightly lower than our comparator authorities.

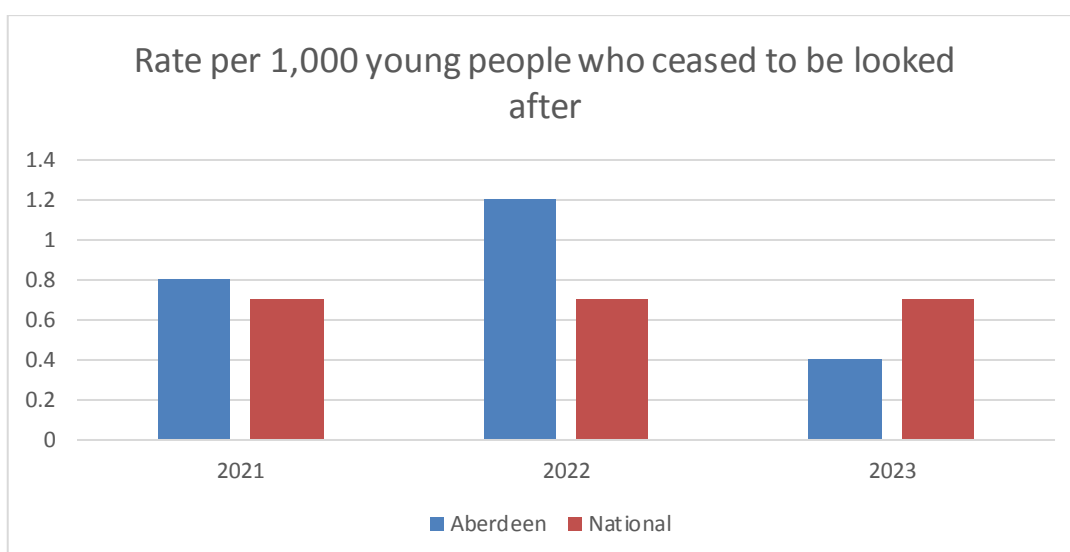
Figure 4



3.5.3 The number of children who started to be looked after in Aberdeen City during 2022-23 was 138, this was an increase from 100 in the previous year. This increase was slightly above the national trend which highlighted an increase to 3,004 from 2,909 in the previous year's national report. This variation also will have been impacted by the number of UASYP who arrived in Aberdeen.

3.5.4 The number of children who ceased to be looked after during 2022-23 is down 12% since 2021-22 (3,730) and down 31% since 2012-13 (4,731). In Aberdeen City during 2022-23, the rate was 0.4, per 1,000 young people which was down from the 1.2 per 1000 in the previous year. See Table 1.12 in [CSW Statistics Additional Tables](#). The table below highlighted that there will be monthly/annual fluctuations however the overall trend in Aberdeen City shows a decline in the number of looked after children.

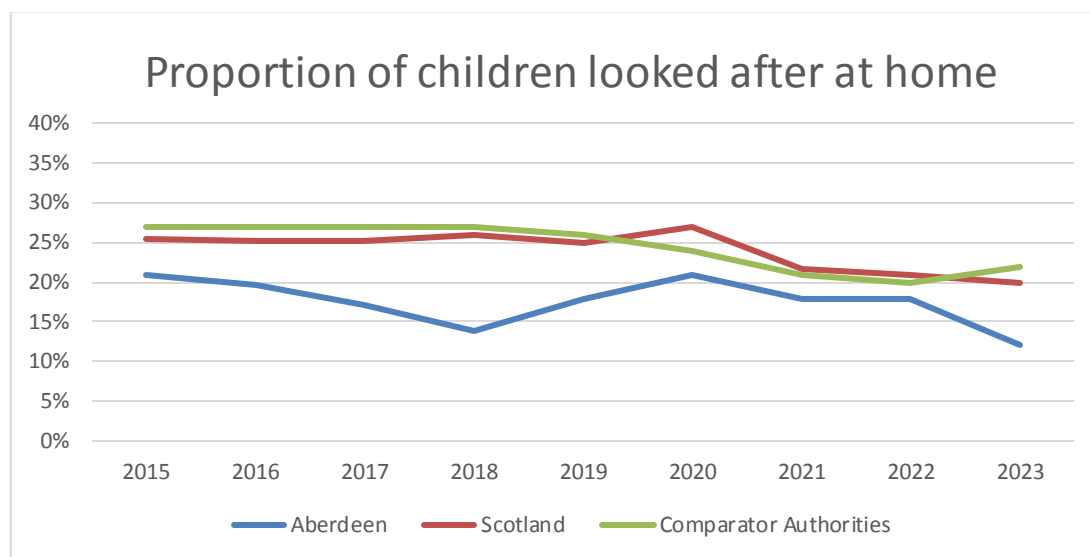
Figure 5



- 3.5.5 The 2020 [Independent Care Review report -The Promise](#) reemphasised that legal measures to secure children's care should only be utilised where there is no alternative. This aspiration was echoed in the [2023 Children's Hearing System Review report](#). It is consequently anticipated that the numbers of Looked After Children will continue to reduce in the coming years. This reduction does not reflect a reduction in demand but rather a need for all agencies to think differently about how they support children, young people and families without the need for statutory intervention. This is in recognition that the use of compulsion with regard to care and protection of children can compromise the very fabric of family life which by nature is diverse and unique and therefore formal legislative measures should be utilised appropriately and proportionally.
- 3.5.6 Historically, Aberdeen City have been known for a high conversion rate from referral to hearing. This is indicative of the fact that we only refer children to the Reporter when we are clear that there are grounds for as well as a need to have compulsory measures of supervision of children. Whilst our high conversion rate has fallen slightly over this reporting period, Aberdeen City's conversion rate is still one of the highest nationally.
- 3.5.7 The national report identifies the percentage of looked after children living in the various settings. In 2023, the majority of Looked After Children (86%) were placed in the community settings – kinship care 34%; foster care 32% and 20% were looked after at home. A smaller proportion of Looked After Children (10%) were placed in residential accommodation.
- 3.5.8 In Aberdeen City, the proportion of all Looked After Children placed in the community as at 31 July 2023 was 80%. Our balance of care was kinship care 24%; foster carer 44% and 12% were looked after at home. There were 13% of looked after children who were cared for in a residential setting. This includes local authority residential care settings.
- 3.5.9 Aligned to the national trend, locally there has been a decrease in the proportion of Looked After Children living at home. However, as can be seen in Figure 6, there was a fairly significant gap in 2018 which had narrowed over 2021/2022 but has increased again in the July 2023 snapshot, at 12% compared with 20% nationally and 22% in comparator authorities.
- 3.5.10 Looked after children with three or more placements has reduced since 2021 in Aberdeen City, from 7% to 4% in 2022 and 5% in 2023. Across Scotland and in comparator authorities it has been 4% since 2020 and hence Aberdeen is now more aligned to the national picture. This remains an area that is kept under close scrutiny and aligns to our work on Brothers and Sisters.
- 3.5.11 Alongside our strongly embedded approach to the core principle of minimum intervention as illustrated in our conversion rate for compulsory measures of supervision within referrals to the Children's Hearing System, in the city we have over a number of years worked to further embed a relational approach to our practice. Both these factors have mitigated our need for compulsory orders. We will continue to track this data and the outcomes for children living at home

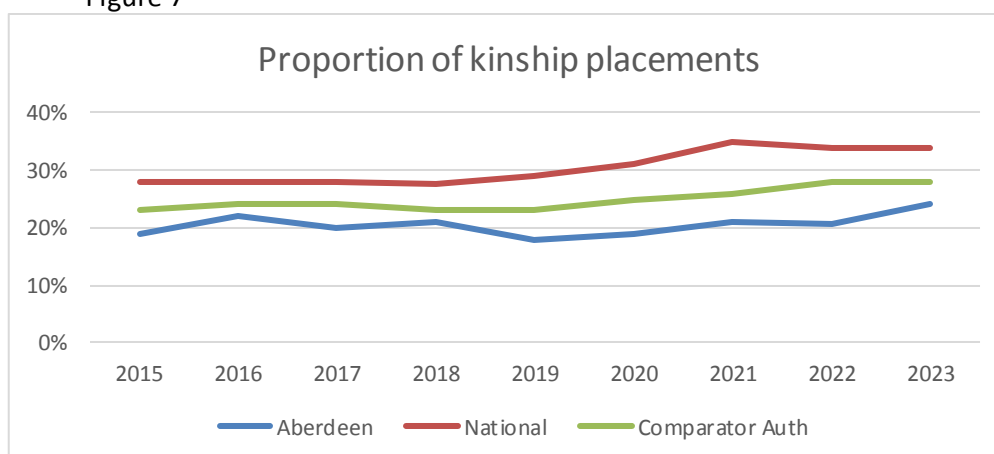
to ensure effective consideration continues to be given to the utilisation of compulsory orders.

Figure 6



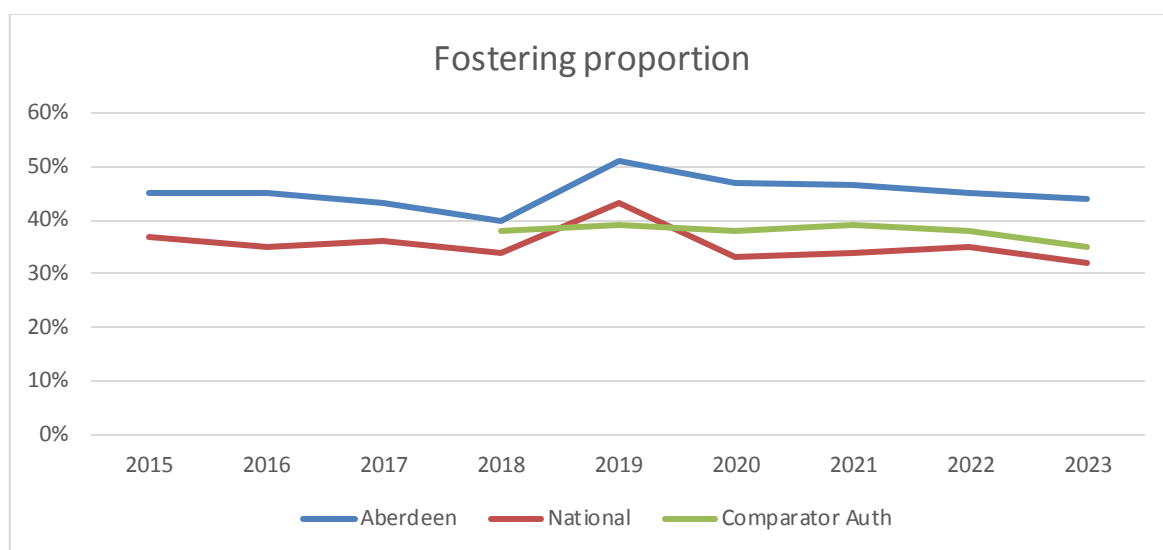
3.5.10 Nationally the proportion of Kinship placements has increased over the past few years to 34% in 2023 (Figure 7). Locally the report highlights a positive increase in the proportion of children looked after by friends or relatives in 2022/23. It has increased by 3% to 24% as seen on Figure 5. This increase aligns with our commitment to support children to remain within their family network when they cannot be cared for by their parents. It also reflects our use of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund to strengthen our support offer to kinship carers. It also recognises our work with partners as set out in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (Reduce by 5% the No. of children entering the care system by 2024 and Increase by 100% the No. of partners supporting kinship carers by 2023).

Figure 7



3.5.12 As noted Aberdeen City has a higher proportion of looked after children placed in foster care. While this trend is decreasing over time, it reduced by 1% between 2022 and 2023, closing this gap remains a priority as set out in the LOIP and the statutory Children's Services Plan 2023 -23.

Figure 8

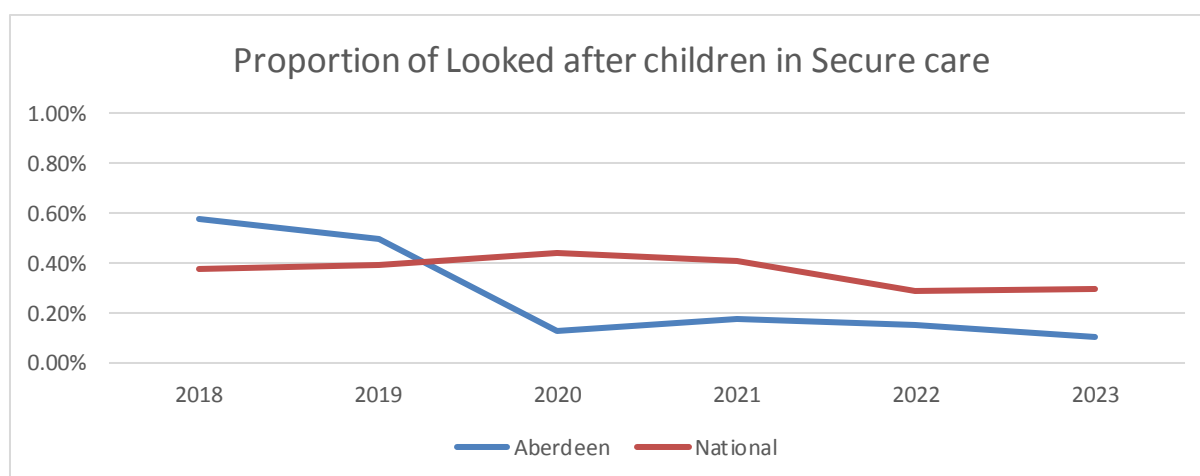


### 3.6 Secure Care

3.6.1 The number of children in secure care is very low and is less than 1% of the looked after population and has been so for 10 years. Looking at averages across calendar years (see Figure 8), Aberdeen City is below the national percentage reported for the past three years.

3.6.2 The Care Inspectorate undertook a Thematic Review in relation to children in and on the edges of secure care. It recognised that a more robust and integrated multi-agency approach is needed to reduce the risk of children entering into secure care and to support them better as they exit. A report on the findings of the Report was presented to Committee on [20 February 2024](#). Work is being taken forward by the Corporate Parenting Group at a local level to drive the recommendations. The report however recognised that Scottish Government funding is required to action many of the findings.

Figure 8



3.6.3 Aberdeen City welcomes the move by the Scottish Government to end the placement of 16- and 17-year-olds in adult prisons. Instead, the young people

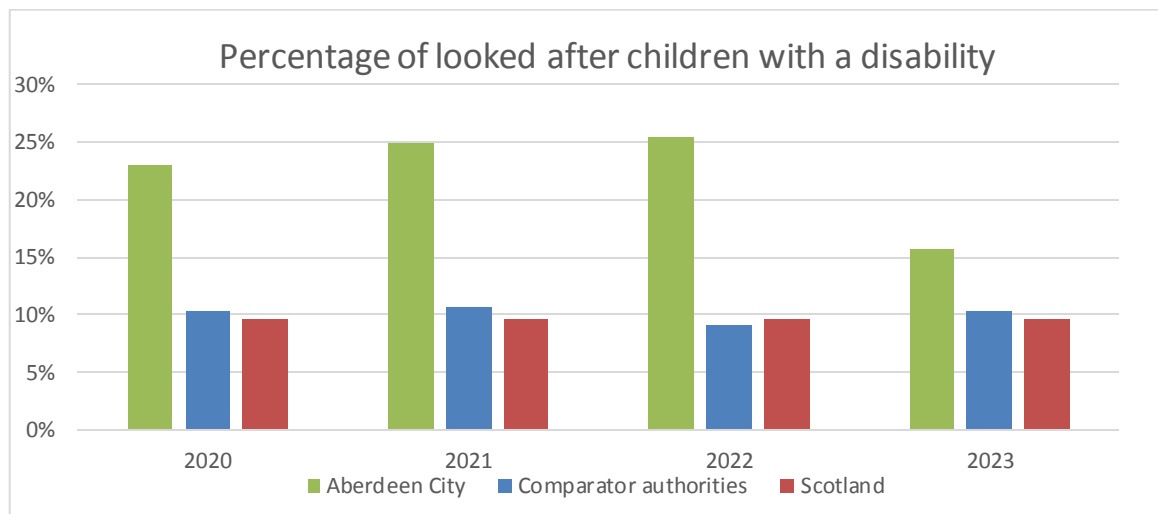
will be more appropriately cared for within a residential secure setting. This change may see an increase in the number of children placed in secure care in subsequent years.

### 3.7 Children with a Disability

3.7.1 Aberdeen City has a larger proportion of looked after children with a disability compared with Scotland and comparator authorities. That said the number and proportion reduced from 122 (25%) in 2022 to 79 (16%) in July 2023. Scotland had 10% of looked after children in both these years. Comparator authorities had 9% and 10% consecutively. See Figure 9.

3.7.2 This is a new category of data reporting. Work has been initiated to interrogate this further to get a better understanding of both the fluctuations and variations in the Aberdeen City data. It is anticipated that the reduction in the current year is due to changes in the transfer and reconciliation of data as we transferred to our new D365 case management system. In October 2022, we revised our system to capture information on disabilities, our revised data collation on disability to record yes/no/not known/not yet assessed. We however recognise that the data still indicates Aberdeen City is an outlier. As such we will liaise with comparative authorities to better understand our divergence and to identify any learning. An update on this activity will be provided as part of next year's report.

Figure 9

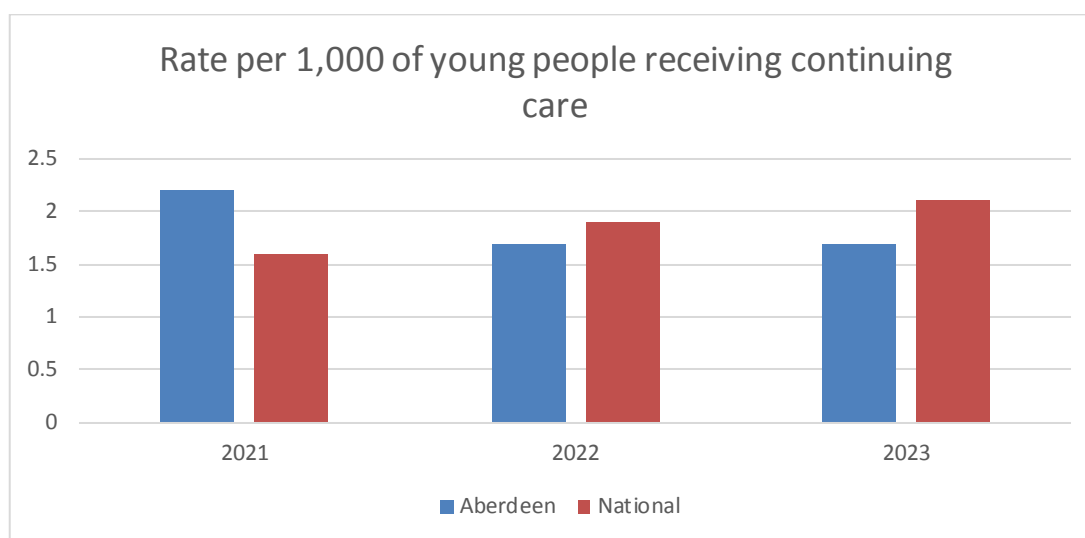


### 3.8 Continuing Care and After Care

3.8.1 During 2022-23, 777 children across Scotland were receiving continuing care, which is 2.1 per 1,000 young people, this is an increase from 1.9/1000 in 2021-22. In Aberdeen City during 2022-23, 31 young people (1.7/1000) were

receiving continuing care, which was exactly the same as in 2021-22. See Table 1.13 in [CSW Statistics Additional Tables](#)

Figure 10



3.8.2 The proportion of children receiving after care in Aberdeen City in 2023 was 201 out of 276 eligible, this is 73%. This is higher than the National proportion of 4151 out of 8517 eligible young people (49%) See Table 4.7 in [CSW Statistics Additional Tables](#). This is a decrease for Aberdeen from 82% in the previous year and from 50% nationally.

### 3.9 Aims and next steps

3.9.1 Resetting our 'balance of care' is a longer term aim, set out in Aberdeen City's refreshed Children's Services Plan 2023-26 and Aberdeen City's Corporate Parenting Plan 2023-2026 both of which were presented to committee earlier in 2023.

3.9.2 Addressing the balance of care is a challenge we share with many local and comparative local authority partnerships. Strategic plans seek to address this. We have also established constructive relationships with some of our comparator local authorities to explore whether there is learning we want to share and capture.

3.9.3 We are committed to supporting children and young people to remain within their families and communities where it is safe to do so and returning Looked After Children and young people to placements in the City where such is in their best interests. In line with The Promise, we are endeavouring to keep brothers and sisters together. Where we cannot, we ensure that we review this decision and that children are connected to the people who are important to them.

## 4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, the costs associated with care for children out with their family are significant. Reducing

the proportion of children being looked after in out of authority foster and residential placements will be positively significant.

## 5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## 6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications from this report.

## 7 RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Many of the improvements required to support more children to be looked after at home or kinship as part of the requirements of Plan 21-24. These are already built into a variety of strategic plans. It is expected that gaps will emerge as the Council and partners scrutinise the requirements of Plan 21-24 in detail.	The Child Protection Committee, Children's Services Board and Community Planning Management Group have oversight of the delivery of the relevant aspects of strategic plans in this respect. They are ensuring that the terms of Plan 21-24 are incorporated into current and future strategic planning.	M	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	No significant related risks.	Services across all multi-agency partners are aware of legislative requirements and ensure compliance	L	Yes



<b>Operational</b>	Care experienced children and young people are a vulnerable cohort whose needs require to be recognised and met. Competing resource demands may have an impact	These are duties which have been incorporated across existing structures and will be consolidated in practice	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	That the number of children having to be looked after away from home continues to remain high leading to poorer outcomes and higher resource costs.	Plan 21-24 and various strategic plans are in place to address these issues	L	Yes
<b>Reputational</b>	Organisational failings in relation to child protection can bring significant media interest and scrutiny of services delivered to children and young people.	The public can be assured that: the Council ensures compliance with legal requirements, national standards and guidance; partners respond to self and external scrutiny; and identified areas for improvement are addressed.	M	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Not applicable for this report			

## 8 OUTCOMES

<u><a href="#">COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 24-25</a></u>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
	The information in this report has no impact on the Council Delivery Plan.
<u><a href="#">WorkinginPartnershipPolicyStatement.pdf (aberdeencity.gov.uk)</a></u>	
<u><a href="#">Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan (refresh April 2024)</a></u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>The report seeks to provide an update on how ACC compares with National 'performance' in Child Protection and Care Experienced children. This links with Corporate Parenting activities, including the following improvement project within the LOIP:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>For the Child Protection programme, in particular stretch outcomes 4, 5, and 6 with the following key drivers:</p> <p>4.1 Ensuring that families receive the parenting and family support they need</p> <p>4.2 Keeping Children Safe</p> <p>5.2 Increasing children's knowledge and understanding of their own physical and mental wellbeing and take an early intervention and prevention approach</p> <p>6.2 Supporting attainment of balance of care where children are able to remain more often at home and or with kin.</p>

## 9 IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	It was confirmed by Chief Officer, Graeme Simpson on 10.07.2024 that no Integrated Impact Assessment was required.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	Not required

## 10 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 [Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2022-23](#)
- 10.2 [Children's Services Strategic Plan 2023-26](#)
- 10.3 [Aberdeen City Corporate Parenting Plan 2023-26](#)
- 10.4 [Aberdeen City Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2022/2023](#) (Page 14)

## 11 APPENDICES - NONE

## 12 REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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