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To: Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice Convener; Councillors Allard, Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Fairfull, Grant, MacGregor, McLeod, Radley 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, 10 February 2025

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, 18 FEBRUARY 2025 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

B U S I N E S S

NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

- 1.1 There are no items of urgent business at this time

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

- 2.1 There are no items of exempt business

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

- 3.1 Members are requested to intimate any declarations of interest

DEPUTATIONS

- 4.1 There are no requests for deputation at this time

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 5.1 Minute of Meeting of 26 November 2024 - for approval (Pages 5 - 16)

COMMITTEE PLANNER

- 6.1 Committee Business Planner (Pages 17 - 24)

NOTICES OF MOTION

- 7.1 There are no Notices of Motion at this time

REFERRALS FROM COUNCIL, COMMITTEES & SUB COMMITTEES

- 8.1 There are no referrals at this time

PERFORMANCE AND RISK

- 9.1 Performance Management Framework/National Improvement Framework Progress Update - CORS/25/035 (Pages 25 - 80)

- 9.2 Inspection Reporting - F&C/25/029 (Pages 81 - 112)

EDUCATION

- 10.1 Options to Rationalise Early Learning and Childcare Settings - F&C/25/001 (Pages 113 - 128)

- 10.2 UNCRC Plan - F&C/25/024 (Pages 129 - 140)

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

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- 11.1 The Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024 - F&C/25/011 (Pages 141 - 154)

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

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

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EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 26 November 2024. Minute of Meeting of the EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Greig, Convener; and Councillors Allard, Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Fairfull, Grant, MacGregor, McLeod, McRae (as substitute for Councillor Mennie) and Radley. External Members:- Mr Doug Haywood (Teacher Representative - Primary Schools) (for articles 1 to 12, Ms Jacqueline Munro (Teacher Representative - Secondary Schools) (for articles 1 to 6 and 8 to 12), Dr Alison Murray (Parent Representative - Secondary) (for articles 1 to 12) and Mr John Murray (Roman Catholic Religious Representative) (for articles 1 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. The following declarations and transparency statements were intimated:-

- Councillor Blake made a transparency statement in respect of item 10.2 (Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan) as she had two children who attended local authority schools;
- Councillor Grant made a transparency statement to advise that he had children at Riverbank School and St Machar Academy;
- Dr Murray made a transparency statement that she ran a peer support group and had a child who had additional support needs and
- Mr Murray made a transparency statement he had two grandchildren who attended St Joseph's RC School and his daughter was a teacher at the school.

None of the above Members considered that these amounted to interests which required declarations to be made.

- Ms Munro declared an interest in item 9.4 (Inspection Reporting) due to her employment at Harlaw Academy and advised that she would withdraw from the meeting for that item and would not participate in any deliberation or discussion.

MINUTE OF MEETING OF 17 SEPTEMBER 2024

2. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 18 September 2024 for approval.

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The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the correction to Dr Murray's transparency statement in respect of item 10.4 (School Estate Plan), namely that she had a child who attended private school, rather than primary school; and
- (ii) to otherwise 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.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the reason outlined in the planner for the delay to item 8 (Corporate Parenting Annual Report) and that the Chief Officer – Children's Social Work and Family Support had advised that he expected the report to be presented to Committee in early 2025;
- (ii) to note that the updates on the behaviour action plan would be presented as part of the regular performance reports; and
- (iii) to otherwise note the planner.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK/NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK PROGRESS UPDATE - CORS/24/338

4. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Corporate Services which presented (a) the status of key quarterly and annual performance measures relating to the Education and Lifelong Learning and Children's and Families Clusters; (b) early reflections against the initial release of 2024 Senior Phase attainment and achievement data through the Insight benchmarking tool; and (c) a progress update against the 2024/25 National Improvement Framework for Aberdeen City Council.

The report recommended:-

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

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Executive Director – Families and Communities would arrange for information to be issued to Members outwith the meeting on the provision of mentoring in various schools;
- (ii) in relation to page 43 of the report, and the figures which demonstrated that employment remained at a level which was below that of most other authorities, to note that Members had suggested it would be helpful to have a comparison with figures for other local authorities with universities and colleges; and
- (iii) to otherwise note the report.

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**EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ANNUAL EFFECTIVENESS
REPORT - CORS/24/276**

5. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Corporate Services which presented the annual report of the Education and Children's Services Committee to enable Members to provide comment on the data contained within.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

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

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

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

That the Committee –

- (a) note the annual report of the Education and Children's Services Committee;
- (b) note that, at the September 2024 meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee, the will of the Committee was seriously undermined by the Convener when he referred the final decision to Full Council, in relation to the Denominational Primary Schools Feasibility Study; and
- (c) agree that this Committee is not at its most effective when the will of Committee, its External Members and communities are ignored.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (8) – the Convener; and Councillors Allard, Bouse, Hazel Cameron, Fairfull, MacGregor, McRae and Radley; for the amendment (8) – Councillors Blake, Brooks, Grant and McLeod; and Mr Haywood, Ms Munro, Dr Murray and Mr Murray.

There being an equality of votes, in terms of Standing Order 32.7, the Convener exercised his casting vote in favour of the motion.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the motion.

CLUSTER RISK REGISTERS AND ASSURANCE MAPS - F&C/24/344

6. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which presented the cluster Risk Registers and Assurance Maps in accordance with the Education and Children's Services Committee Terms of Reference

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to provide assurance that risks were being managed effectively within the Education and Lifelong Learning and Children's Social Work and Family Support Clusters.

During discussion of the report, Councillor Radley made a transparency statement as she was a Council-appointed Board member of the Governors of Oakbank School.

The report recommended:-

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

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the feedback from Members that some control actions might need to be reviewed to demonstrate the drive in the risk register to resolve the specific issue (an example given was the "Risk that the number of Senior Leadership vacancies leads to staff in posts that are not of required quality");
- (ii) to note that officers had undertaken to consider the feedback from Members that it would be helpful for the matrix to reflect the previous year's situation to allow for comparison and a clearer understanding of which risks had been effectively mitigated;
- (iii) in relation to page 119 of the report and the risk "The perception of failure to record incidents of violence and aggressive behaviour against school staff", to note that the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning had undertaken to amend the wording to reflect that the while the behaviour plan had been developed completely, it was still being implemented, and so the entirety of the action was not yet complete;
- (iv) to note the feedback from Members in relation to the phrasing of the risk "Child Migration including unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people (UASC) and all families requiring resettlement or with no recourse to public funds" and that the Chief Officer – Children's Social Work and Family Services had undertaken to review this wording for the next report;
- (v) in relation to the control actions for the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry (SCAI) risk, to note that the Chief Officer – Children's Social Work and Family Services had undertaken to ensure that details were up to date in respect of those actions still to be closed off, but to note that the risk would likely be carried forward due to the timescales in relation to the Inquiry; and
- (vi) to otherwise note the report.

In accordance with her declaration of interest made under article 1, Ms Munro left the meeting at this juncture, and took no part in the consideration of the following item.

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INSPECTION REPORTING - F&C/24/321

7. 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 published since the last meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

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

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that updates on Harlaw Academy would be provided every second meeting, as per the updates on Northfield Academy;
- (ii) to note that the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning would issue a service update to Members outwith the meeting on what individual schools were implementing or had implemented in respect of mobile phones in the classroom;
- (iii) to note the content of the report;
- (iv) to 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 approved at Committee in July 2024;
- (v) to support and encourage the Harlaw Academy improvement journey, instruct the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to issue a service update to Members in early to mid January 2025 with information on the timeline for actioning the three priorities; and agree that this information would be incorporated into the scheduled inspection reporting update to Committee on 18 February 2025;
- (vi) to note that Education Scotland said in their letter of 19 November that *“There have been very few improvements across the school since the last further inspection.”* This was despite intensive support from the central education team. And to instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to review where opportunities were missed to identify the lack of progress, whether changes needed to be made to processes, procedures or the quality improvement framework and to report this back to Committee as part of the reset of the Quality Improvement Framework in July 2025; and
- (vii) to note that *“Young people are achieving at lower levels at Harlaw Academy across almost all national measures compared to learners with similar needs and backgrounds across Scotland”* and that the action plan identified reducing the number of presentations for young people at S4 from 8 to 6 courses to improve attainment and bring in line with national guidance. In light of this, to instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to issue a service update on the curriculum structure across the senior phase within secondary schools on

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attainment of the two year / eight course model across the city and consider whether there was a need to issue guidance to all local authority secondary schools.

SUMMER IN THE CITY PROGRAMME 2024 - F&C/24/318

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which presented a high level evaluation of the Summer in the City programme 2024.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the high level evaluation of the Summer in the City programme; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to report to Committee on the impact of the Autumn (2024) and Spring (2025) programmes through service update following delivery.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN - F&C/24/315

9. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which sought approval for the refreshed Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan (PIE) 2024-2027.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the evaluation of the Council's current state;
- (b) approve the new Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to report progress through the regular updates provided to Committee on progress towards delivery of the National Improvement Framework Plan.

RIVERBANK SCHOOL EXCESS CAPACITY OPTIONS - F&C/24/329

10. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which provided an assessment of the options available for making use of anticipated excess capacity at the new replacement Riverbank School building, which was expected to open in Spring 2025.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

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- (a) approve the proposal to relocate the Autism Outreach Service from the Ashgrove Children's Centre building, and to establish an Early Intervention Space at the new Riverbank School building, as outlined under Option 3 at Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to continue to monitor pupil numbers and use of space at the new Riverbank School building and to provide updates on any further action required in the future, through the annual School Estate Plan update reports.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to approve and welcome the proposal to relocate the Autism Outreach Service from the Ashgrove Children's Centre building, and to establish an Early Intervention Space at the new Riverbank School building, as outlined under Option 3 Appendix 1 of the report;
- (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to write to the parents of Riverbank Primary to confirm the timeline for the completion of school, the decant of St Peter's Primary to the existing school building and the plans for Autism Outreach Service; and
- (iii) to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to continue to monitor pupil numbers at Riverbank and the adjacent primary schools Sunnybank and St Peter's, the use of space at the new Riverbank School building and to provide updates on any further action required in the future, through the annual School Estate Plan update reports.

BEHAVIOUR ACTION PLAN - F&C/24/322

11. With reference to article 7 of the minute of its meeting of 30 April 2024, the Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which responded to the instruction to the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to review the adequacy of the current allocation of pupil support staffing and provision of specialist placements across the city; consider the output and report options for consideration back to the Education and Children's Services Committee within three cycles.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the continued hard work undertaken by Aberdeen City schools to provide creative, learner-centred support for learners across the city;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to develop a proposed operating model for a cost neutral time limited Early Intervention provision, to be based at Riverbank School for up to 10 primary children, and bring a firmer proposal to Committee for approval within 2 Committee cycles;
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to work with Head Teachers to identify a solution that will allow Pupil Support Assistants to be released for professional learning; and

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- (d) instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to append a summary of progress against the Additional Support for Learning (ASL) Review recommendations and a summary of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Additional Support for Learning to the report being presented to Committee within two cycles.

During discussion of the report, Dr Murray made a transparency statement as her son had attended the language unit in Primary 1 and Primary 2.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Executive Director – Families and Communities had advised that the required additional support for learning information for parents and carers was available on the Council website, and that she would confirm that this was still the case;
- (ii) in relation to the chart on page 281 of the agenda pack (Percentage of Multiagency / Child's Plan by Associated School Group), to note that the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning had undertaken to review the data for Lochside Academy to ensure it was correct;
- (iii) to note that the Executive Director – Families and Communities would provide Ms Munro with the link to the Devolved School Management Scheme which provided details around the allocation of pupil support assistants to schools; and
- (iv) to approve the recommendations.

LEARNING OUTCOMES FROM CARE INSPECTORATE THEMATIC REVIEW - DISABLED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICES - F&C/24/330

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which provided an update on the findings of the Care Inspectorate Thematic Review, August 2024, in relation to Disabled Children and Young People's experiences of Social Work Services and of the actions being taken by the service to address the findings.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the Thematic Review;
- (b) approve the Action Plan (at Appendix A) developed to address findings and instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to report progress on delivering on the Key Findings in Autumn 2025; and
- (c) note that multi-agency learning from this Thematic Review would be used to inform the refresh of the Children's Services Plan.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

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At this juncture, the External Members left the meeting.

CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24 - F&C/24/334

13. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which presented the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for the year 2023/24. The report provided information on the role and responsibilities exercised by the Chief Social Work Officer; the delivery of statutory social work services and decision making in the period; and a progress report on key areas of social work provision within Aberdeen City.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the contents of the annual report, set out at Appendix 1.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Chief Officer – Children's Social Work and Family Support would circulate information to Members outwith the meeting on the Aberdeen Suicide Delivery Forum;
- (ii) to note that the Chief Officer – Children's Social Work and Family Support would circulate a service update to Members in respect of No Recourse to Public Funds and Support for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children; and
- (iii) to otherwise note the report.

KEEPING THE PROMISE - YEAR 3 EVALUATION - F&C/24/337

14. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which set out progress with the implementation of the Scottish Government's Plan 21-24 to keep The Promise.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the local progress made in Year Three of Plan 21-24 as outlined in the appendix report (Appendix 1);
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Children's Social Work and Family Support to provide a report to Committee on the delivery plan for Plan 24-30 when it was published and on the proposed reporting arrangements for delivery of the plan; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Children's Social Work and Family Support to provide a report to Committee updating the partnership's Corporate Parenting Plan to take account of the delivery plan for Plan 24-30 and for this to include the voice and views of Aberdeen City's care experienced children and young people.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

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ABERDEEN CITY'S CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24 - F&C/24/312

15. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which presented Aberdeen City's Child Protection Committee (CPC) Annual Report 2023-24 to provide assurance that the work of the CPC was effectively helping reduce risks to children and young people.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the content of the CPC's Annual Report 2023-24, including the conclusion of the Child Protection Programme 2021-2024; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to provide Committee with a further report in November 2025 detailing the continuing impact and effectiveness of partnership work in relation to child protection.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request that officers ensure there was less use of acronyms in next year's report; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL WORK: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2024-2030) - F&C/24/331

16. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which presented a Children's Social Work Workforce Plan (set out at Appendix A) designed to build the capacity needed to meet demand based on analysis of current and future need.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note that the Workforce Plan available in Appendix A aligned with the vision, values and goals of the Children's Social Work service, and was in line with the Children's Services Plan 2023-2026;
- (b) note the focus on employee wellbeing as a necessary component to ensure the workforce grows in confidence and competence to meet the increasingly complex needs of the most vulnerable children and their families;
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Children's Social Work and Family Support to align the service Learning and Development programme to the workforce plan; and
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer - Children's Social Work and Family Support to present an evaluation of progress against the workforce plan to Committee in 2027.

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The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that officers would build a 'how we will do it' column into the workforce plan;
 - (ii) to note that the potential impacts of the national social work agency were currently unclear but that the Chief Officer – Children's Social Work and Family Support would bring detail to Committee on this once clarity was available; and
 - (iii) to approve the recommendations.
- **COUNCILLOR MARTIN GREIG, Convener**

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER The Business Planner details the reports which have been instructed by the Committee as well as reports which the Functions expect to be submitting for the calendar year.								
2	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
3	18 February 2025								
4	Performance Management Framework / National Improvement Framework Update	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data Insights	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
5	UNCRC Plan	E&CS 24/01/23 - to instruct the Chief Education Officer to present a refreshed Local Authority Plan for implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child to the Education and Children's Services Committee following receipt of the anticipated Statutory Guidance in 2023	Statutory Guidance was published in September 2024, therefore officers will report to Committee in February 2025	Matt Reid	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
6	Options to Rationalise Early Learning and Childcare settings	To present an update		Louise Beaton	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1 and 1.2		
7	Children's Care and Justice Bill	To present an update		Andrea McGill	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1.1 and 2.2		
8	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		
9	29 April 2025								
10	Children's Services Plan - Annual Update	E&CS 21/03/23 - to instruct the Director Children's and Family Services to ensure that yearly progress reports are presented to Committee & thereafter for approval by the Community Planning Management Board over the lifetime of the Plan. E&CS 04/07/23 - to instruct the Director Children's and Family Services to report progress in developing a Family Support Model and progress on the impact of delivering improved multi-agency support to Kinship Carers through the Children's Services Plan annual progress report. E&CS 20/02/24 - to note the current plans to provide appropriate accommodation, support and intervention to meet the needs of this vulnerable group of children and young people; and instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to provide an annual update through the Children's Services Plan Annual Report. E&CS 20/02/24 - to request that the Chief Social Work Officer provides Members with an update on progress to deliver a Bairs Hoose within the Annual Child Protection Committee Report and within the annual update to Aberdeen City's Children's Services Plan. E&CS 30/04/24 - to instruct the Director Families and Communities to consider the findings of the health & wellbeing annual report and plan next steps as part of work being taken forward through the Children's Services Plan and associated National Improvement Framework Plan		Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1		

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	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									
11	Corporate Parenting Annual Report / Keeping the Promise Delivery Plan	To present the Corporate Parenting Annual Report for assurance E&CS 26/11/24 - (i) to instruct the Chief Officer - Children's Social Work & Family Support to provide a report to Committee on the delivery plan for Plan 24-30 when it was published and on the proposed reporting arrangements for delivery of the plan; and (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer - Children's Social Work and Family Support to provide a report to Committee updating the partnership's Corporate Parenting Plan to take account of the delivery plan for Plan 24-30 and for this to include the voice and views of Aberdeen City's care experienced children and young people		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
12	Early Intervention Provision - Riverbank School	E&CS 26/11/24 - (i) to instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to develop a proposed operating model for a cost neutral time limited Early Intervention provision, to be based at Riverbank School, for up to 10 primary children, and bring a firmer proposal to Committee for approval within two cycles; and (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to append a summary of progress against the Additional Support for Learning Review recommendations and a summary of the Parliamentary Inquiry into ASL to the report being presented within two cycles		Emma Powell / Shona Milne	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
13	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 update on Northfield Academy / Harlaw Academy		Shona Milne	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.6		
14	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data Insights	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
15	24 June 2025								
16	ABZCampus	E&CS 30/04/2024 - (i) to instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to report back on progress including a full review of the impact of Pathways Advocates within one calendar year; and to note that officers would however investigate the possibility of bringing an interim evaluation of the impact of Pathways Advocates to Committee, or potentially bringing the full evaluation at an earlier stage than 2025; and (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to report back with a method for providing an overview of participation and achievements in ABZCampus		Mark Jones	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
17	Bucksburn & Dyce Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (NA2)	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for ensuring appropriate long term secondary school provision for Bucksburn and Dyce, and report back with an outline business case for consideration by the Education and Children's Services Committee. E&CS 20/02/24 - Approval of revised School Estate timeline E&CS 17/09/24 - the Committee agreed a revised programme for implementing projects within the School Estate Plan. The revised programme includes an updated timescale for the submission of an outline business case for secondary school provision at Dyce and Bucksburn, which would be expected to be submitted to the Committee for approval on 24/06/25		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		

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	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
2									
18	Review of Spaces - Support for Pupils with Additional Support Needs	E&CS 17/09/24 - to instruct 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		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
19	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		
20	Children's Social Work Statistics	E&CS 17/09/24 - to instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to update the Committee on the 2023/24 Statistical Report following its publication in Spring 2025		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
21	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		
22	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		Matt Reid	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
23	Approaches to Quality Improvement	E&CS 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 E&CS 26/11/24 - (re Harlaw Academy inspection) to instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to review where opportunities were missed to identify the lack of progress, whether changes needed to be made to processes, procedures or the Quality Improvement framework and to report back to Committee as part of the reset of the QI Framework in June 2025		Shona Milne	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
24	Bairns Hoose updates / visit	E&CS 30/04/24 - (i) to instruct the Chief Officer, Children's Social Work and Family Support / Chief Social Work Officer to provide an update on progress as appropriate during 2024/25; and (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer, Children's Social Work and Family Support / Chief Social Work Officer to arrange a visit for Elected Members to view the Bairns Hoose upon completion of the build.		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		

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2									
25	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data Insights	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
26	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		
27	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		
28	16 September 2025								
29	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update 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		
30	Learning outcomes from Care Inspectorate Thematic Review – Disabled Children and Young People's experiences of Social Work Services	E&CS 26/11/24 -to approve the action plan at appendix A of the report developed to address findings and to instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to report progress on delivering on the key findings in Autumn 2025		Carol Davie	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
31	Northfield Asset Review	E&CS 17/09/24 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to proceed with a review of all public building assets in Northfield, which will include an assessment of options for the future of the primary schools. It is anticipated that the findings of this review will be presented to the Committee on 16 September 2025		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.2 and 1.1.5		
32	Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan (NIF)	To present the 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. E&CS 26/11/24 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Education & Lifelong Learning to report progress on the Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan through the regular updates on progress towards delivery of the NIF		Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1		

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2	School Estate Plan Annual Update	<p>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.</p> <p>Council 02/10/24 - to instruct 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</p> <p>E&CS 26/11/24 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to continue to monitor pupil numbers at Riverbank and the adjacent primary schools Sunnybank and St Peter's, the use of space at the new Riverbank building, and to provide updates on any further action required in the future through the annual School Estate Plan update report</p>		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.2 and 1.1.5		
33									
34	Northfield Academy, Northfield Primary Schools and Wider Asset Review - approval of Outline Business Case and consultation proposal	E&CS 17/09/24 - (i) to agree the intended scope of the proposed asset review in Northfield to include all public assets, and to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to proceed with the review and to commence engagement with all partners working in the wider Northfield area; (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to work closely with the Northfield Community throughout this process to ensure community empowerment and resilience was prioritised in all stages of planning; to instruct the Chief Officer to work with the Northfield Advisory Group to invite and support their guidance in shaping improvements and outcomes		Andrew Jones/Shona Milne	Corporate Landlord / Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
35	Music Service Update	E&CS 17/09/24 - (i) to note that officers would include data about tuition at primary school level broken down by school in the next report; and (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to report back on progress in one calendar year		Beth Edwards / Shona Milne	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
36	Community Learning and Development Plan	E&CS 17/09/24 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to present an updated 2 year CLD Plan to Committee in September 2025		Margaret Stewart	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
37	School Age Childcare Policy	E&CS 17/09/24 - to approve the School Age Childcare Policy. Policy to be reviewed on an annual basis - report may not be required, show no changes be needed to policy		Louise Beaton	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1 and 1.1.5		
38	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		
39	Inspection Reporting	<p>A standing item (if required) to report on the outcome of inspections and any changes in the approach of inspection agencies</p> <p>To include update on Northfield Academy / Harlaw Academy</p>		Shona Milne	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.6		

[illegible]

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2									
50									
51	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		
52	Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26 / 2026-28	E&CS 02/07/24 - to 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	June 2026	Louise Beaton / Fiona Lawrie	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
53	Accessibility Plan	E&CS 12/09/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Education to present an updated Accessibility Plan to the Education and Children's Services Committee within 3 calendar years.		Mhairi Shewan	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.5		
54									
55	Children's Social Work - Workforce Development Plan	E&CS 26/11/24 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Children's Social Work and Family Services to present an evaluation of progress against the workforce plan to Committee in 2027		Ali McAlpine	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
56									
57	Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill	ODC 17/01/19 - To instruct that annual reports be submitted on the progress of implementation of the Autism Action Plan. Reported 5 March 2020 and will then be annually, however 2021 was delayed to May due to pandemic impact. Was reported to former Operational Delivery Committee on 31 August 2022, thereafter annually. E&CS 02/07/24 - to instruct the Chief Officer Children's Social Work and Family Support to provide an update on progress of the Bill as appropriate		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1.1		An update will be provided to Committee once the Bill has concluded Stage 2 of the Parliamentary process. Officers are unable to provide a date for reporting back at this time as it is dependent on Parliament
58									
59	Grandhome / Oldmachar / Bridge of Don Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (NA1) / Oldmachar ASG primary school provision	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for reducing the predicted long term excess secondary school capacity in Grandhome, Oldmachar and Bridge of Don, and report back with an outline business case for consideration by the Education and Children's Services Committee. E&CS 12/09/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out further work to identify potential future options for improving and consolidating primary school provision in the Oldmachar ASG, alongside the planned work to review secondary school provision in this area of the city, and to report back to the Committee with recommendations and next steps as appropriate. E&CS 20/02/24 - Approval of revised School Estate timeline E&CS 19/09/24 - Annual School Estate Plan update advised project had not yet commenced. Reporting dates to be confirmed		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		Not yet commenced, as per decision at E&CS on 17/09/24 (School Estate Plan Annual Update)

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2									
60	Consultation on proposed new school at Bucksburn / Newhills	EC&S 04/07/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out a statutory public consultation on the proposal to establish a new primary school at Bucksburn / Newhills, and on proposed changes to the existing school catchment area for Brimmond School, to create a new catchment areas which would be served by the proposed new school; to provide Members with a firm date for the statutory consultation and to report the date to the next Committee meeting; and to report back to the Committee on the outcomes of the consultation at the first available meeting following conclusion of the consultation process. E&CS 12/09/23 - in relation to the proposal to establish a new primary school at Bucksburn / Newhills, and on proposed changes to the catchment area for Brimmond School, to note that the statutory consultation for the proposed new school at Bucksburn / Newhills will be carried out from 5 February 2024 to 22 March 2024. To note in the School Estate Plan that the Committee would consider consultation feedback & confirm decision on implementing proposals in July 2024 E&CS 20/02/24 - approval of revised School Estate timeline - dates for carrying out the consultation to be confirmed E&CS 17/09/24 - approval of School Estate Plan		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		It remains officers' assessment that there is no immediate requirement to undertake a consultation on a proposed new school at Newhills, and so no specific dates for this have been included in the latest approved update to the School Estate Plan implementation timeline. Officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers and the likely requirement for a new school, and will bring forward recommendations to the Committee as and when required
61	Loirston Loch Additional Primary Provision - Outline Business Case (L1)	E&CS 12/09/23 - Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for creating the required additional school capacity to serve the planned Loirston Loch development, and report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations as appropriate.(Recommendation L1) E&CS 20/02/24 - Revised school estate timeline approved. No immediate requirement for this, revisit post 2024 E&CS 17/09/24 - Project currently on hold (as per annual School Estate Plan update)		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.5		On hold as per decision at E&CS on 17/09/24 (School Estate Plan Annual Update)

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	18 February 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Performance Management Framework/National Improvement Framework Progress Update
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/25/035
EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS	Andy MacDonald/Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICERS	Martin Murchie/Shona Milne/Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Alex Paterson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.3

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present Committee with (a) the status of key quarterly and annual performance measures relating to the Education and Lifelong Learning and Children's and Families Clusters, (b) early reflections against the initial release of Curriculum for Excellence data pending further releases through the Broad General Education Benchmarking Tool, and (c) a Progress Update around Aberdeen City Council's National Improvement Framework Plan 2024/25.

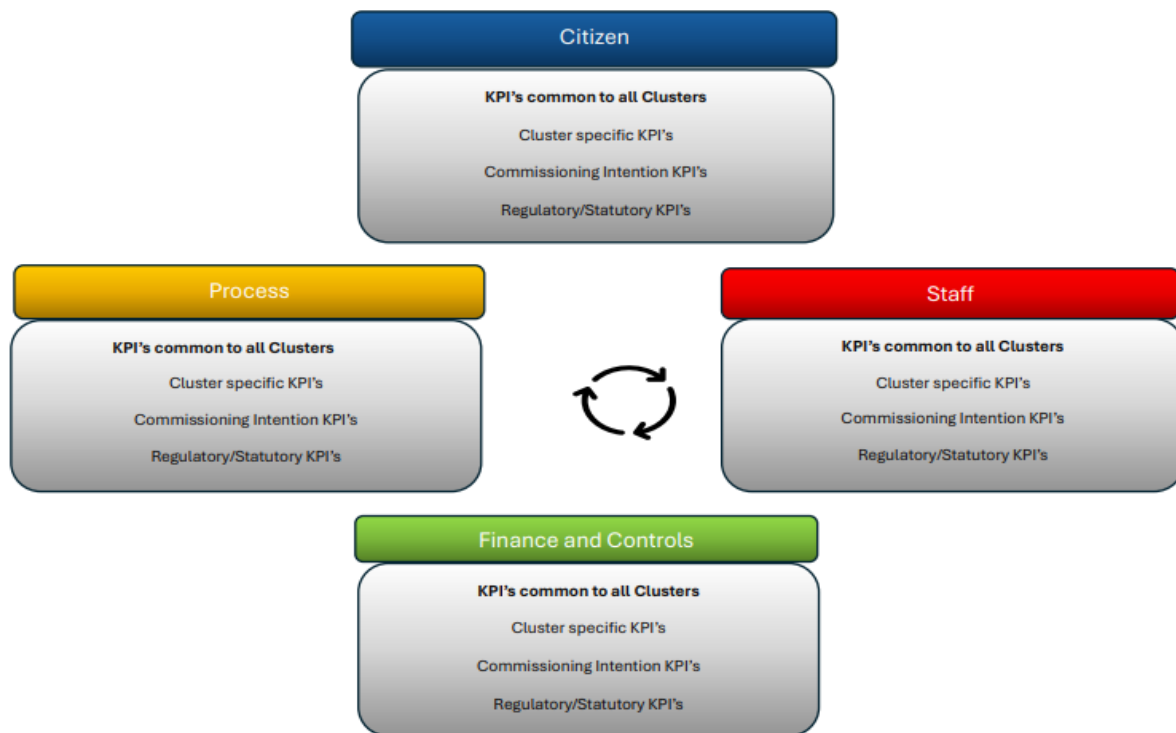
2. RECOMMENDATION

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

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Report Structure

- 3.1 The Council's refreshed Performance Management Framework for 2024/25 was agreed at the meeting of Council on 21st 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 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.



Report Content

3.4 Appendix A reflects the in-year performance against the Plan, including corporate and service level measures, alongside a number of nationally benchmarked datasets from more recent publications. It also incorporates reflection against, and metrics aligned to Service Standards set for the current financial year.

3.5 Within the Summary Dashboard the following symbols are used:

Performance Measures

Traffic Light Icon



On target or within 5% of target or benchmarked outcome.



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



More than 20% out with target or benchmarked outcome and being actively pursued



Data only – target not appropriate or benchmarked outcome not available

3.6 Appendix B offers early analysis, and highlights, from the recent national data release against Curriculum for Excellence achievement by our young people in 2023/24. This will be followed in due course by the provision of additional analytical and interpretative capacity for education authorities through the national Broad General Education Benchmarking Tool.

3.7 An interim progress update against Aberdeen City Council's 2024/25 National

Improvement Framework Plan is made available through Appendix C

- 3.8 In order to support scrutiny of progress against actions outlined in the Behaviour Plan, which are encompassed in the current National Improvement Framework Plan, early developmental metrics have begun to be incorporated within the Progress Update.
- 3.9 Incident and Near Miss data are also presently reported in detail on a regular basis through the Staff Governance Committee within the Quarterly Health and Safety Update reports.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct environmental implications arising out of this report

7. RISK

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

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) <small>*taking into account controls/control actions</small>	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic	None	NA	NA	NA
Compliance	No significant legal risks.	Publication of service performance information in the public domain ensures that the Council is meeting its legal obligations in the context of Best value reporting.	L	Yes
Operational	No significant operational risks.	Oversight by Members of core employee health and safety/attendance data supports the Council's obligations as an employer	L	Yes

Financial	No significant financial risks.	Overview data on specific limited aspects of the cluster's financial performance is provided within this report	L	Yes
Reputational	No significant reputational risks.	Reporting of service performance to Members and in the public domain serves to enhance the Council's reputation for transparency and accountability.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	None	NA	NA	NA

8. OUTCOMES

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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with the Scottish Government to expand free early learning and childcare to one- and two-year-olds from low-income households. - Continue to seek to support young people to receive care in Aberdeen, through fostering, adoption and other services and seek to reduce “out of authority” placements - Ensure local education services identify young people with mental health problems and help them get early support and help, where appropriate, to transfer to adult services.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcomes Plan April 2024 Refresh</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes (Children and Young People)	<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 & Young People Stretch Outcomes in the refreshed LOIP. This includes the following Outcomes:</p> <p>3. 95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27–30-month review by 2026.</p> <p>4. 90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026.</p> <p>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>5. 95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 & 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p> <p>6. 83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026</p> <p>7. 100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination</p>
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes (Adults)	<p>Families and Communities services, through the Improvement Project Aims below contribute to achievement of Outcome 11 - Reduce the rate of both alcohol related deaths and drug related deaths by 10% by 2026</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	<p>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:</p> <p>50% of people report they feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026.</p>
Regional and City Strategies	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	It was confirmed by Chief Officer, Martin Murchie, on 3 rd January 2025 that no Integrated Impact Assessment is required for this report
Data Protection Impact Assessment	A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required for this report.
Other	No additional impact assessments have been completed for this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Education & Children’s Services Committee Corporate
Performance Summary Dashboard
Appendix B – Curriculum for Excellence 2023/24 Achievement Summary
Appendix C - Aberdeen City Council’s 2024/25 National Improvement
Framework Plan Interim Progress Update

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix A – Corporate Performance Management Framework Report – Education and Children’s Services Committee

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
% of all eligible requests for early learning and childcare placements met within one month of request receipt	100%	100%	✓	▬
% of all mainstream requests for a primary and secondary school placement within one month of request receipt	100%	100%	✓	▬
% of ACC managed/funded Early Learning and Childcare settings achieving an average evaluation of ‘Good’ (the National Standard) in formal inspections of core Quality Indicators by the Care Inspectorate ^	97.8%	100%	✓	↑
% of Primary, secondary, and special schools achieving an average evaluation of ‘Good’ in formal inspections of core Quality Indicators by Education Scotland ^	93.8%	100%	⚠	↑
% school attendance levels (in comparison with national attendance levels)	92.1%	> 91.2%*	✓	▬
% of requests for additional support to meet the wellbeing needs of children and young people which are processed within 40 days	100%	100%	✓	▬

^ 12 month rolling figure *Based on national data calculations for 2023/24.

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 report to enable conversion of the statements in the Standards for presentation as reportable measures. The detailed evidence below provide additional analysis around areas of interest arising from the Service Standards related data.

Education Scotland Inspections – Primary and Secondary Schools

There has been an additional publication of Education Scotland inspection activity in the current academic year since the previous report to November Committee. This publication recorded that the Service Standard across both the individual organisers evaluated, and for the Overall Quality Indicator average, was met.

The rolling 12-month figure of 93.8% is above the figure reported to the previous meeting (91.7%), and in advance of the figure for the same rolling period in 2023 (82.0%). Of the four inspections conducted (and published) in the current academic year, three of these fully met or exceeded the Service Standard, offering an academic year to date average % score of 97.5%

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

Performance Measure	Year to Date Value	Status	Long Trend - Annual
We will provide CLD services to a level that achieves a rating of good or better through external inspection.	100%	✓	▬
We will ensure library Item Requests are satisfied within 21 days – 12 month rolling value	74.3%	✓	↑

Table 3. Service Level Measure - Quality of Early Learning Centre Provision (Care Inspectorate)

Care Inspectorate Core Quality Indicators 2024 Calendar Year					
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) *	91.4%	97.9%	99.3%	100.0%	97.8%

Metric Descriptor

The grading template from inspection activity above is designed to highlight the capacity for improvement against core areas of evaluation (as described within the Care Inspectorate, and legislative guidance) which supports and informs the wider inspection process.

Each Quality Indicator sub-total, and the overall figure, presents the average gradings from all inspection activity represented as a percentage based on comparison with the benchmark score of Good (which equates to the National Standard.) A percentage figure of 100% indicates that, in aggregate, gradings are equivalent to National Standard expectations and where the figure is above this, it indicates that the average outcome is above that implied by the Standard.

In this latter circumstance, this generally indicates that a greater number of evaluations were graded as Good but also with a higher number of gradings which exceeded the National Standard benchmark with gradings of Very Good or Excellent.

Service Commentary - Table 3

As at December 2024, the rolling 12-month average score for Care Inspectorate (CI) evaluations, (equivalent to the 2024 calendar year) were improved on those reported to the July meeting of this Committee when the Overall QI (OQI) score figure was 94.5% and similar to each of the two reported rolling periods when the overall figure was 98.9%.

Average scoring against the Staff indicator evaluations fully met the National Standard, with assessments of Care, Play and Learning environments being slightly below the Service Standard based expectations. The service continues to focus on this area. The scoring of Settings and Leadership organisers were slightly below and above those reported to the previous meeting of this Committee. Comparisons with the 2023 calendar year, although using a marginally different methodology, shows that the outcomes from each organiser, and the overall scoring of inspections (90.5%) are improved in a range between 3 and 8 percentage points.

This data encompasses published inspections against 43 settings with the average scores of both local authority and partner provider settings being comparative to each other. An additional six inspections were published in November and December, four of which attained outcomes of Good or better across all four Indicator themes, fully achieving or exceeding the National Standard, with an overall average QI score of 97.7% across the six settings.

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

Table 4. Service Level Quarterly Measure – Library Services









Performance Measure	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Quarter 3 2024/25	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	
% of library Item Requests satisfied within 21 days (YTD)	73.1%	75.9%	74.3%	

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

Performance Measure	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Quarter 3 2024/25	2024/25 Target	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value			
Total No. complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Education & Lifelong Learning	33	16	30			
% of complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) – Education & Lifelong Learning	75.8%	75.0%	73.3%	75.0%		
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) – Education & Lifelong Learning	9.1%	0.0%	6.7%			
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) – Education & Lifelong Learning	1	3	5			


Service Commentary

Table 5

The Quarter 3 outcome for complaints received is in line with that in most quarters over the previous two years, with the exception of Quarter 2 outcomes where, as a result of the extended school holiday period, the number of complaints are consistently lower.

Complaints resolution within timescale has been on an upwards trend over the past four quarters with a fiscal YTD average of 74.5% that is greater than in most previous years. The proportion of complaints upheld in the current fiscal year sits at 6.3%, around half of the number and % outcome for the same period in 2023/24.

Table 6. Service Level Measure - Visits in Person to Library Service Premises

Performance Measure	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Quarter 3 2024/25	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	
Total Number of visits in person to library service premises	135,708	140,364	140,027	

Service Commentary

Table 6

Visits in person to Library Service premises have been on a continuous upwards trend (taking account of seasonal influences) for a period of more than 2 years.

The value of visits at Quarter 3, with the exception of the previous quarter, was the highest in the post pandemic period, at just under 25,000 greater (+21.3%) than in the same period in 2023/24 and just under 35.0% greater than Quarter 3 data for 2022/23. The year-on-year change between Quarter 3 outcomes is the highest recorded to date for this 10 year measure during periods of operation unaffected by pandemic restrictions.

2. Process

Interim Participation Snapshot for 16-19 year olds – December 2024 release

Chart 1. Interim Participation Snapshot for 16–19-year-olds. Participation Levels by Urban Local Authority Benchmarks

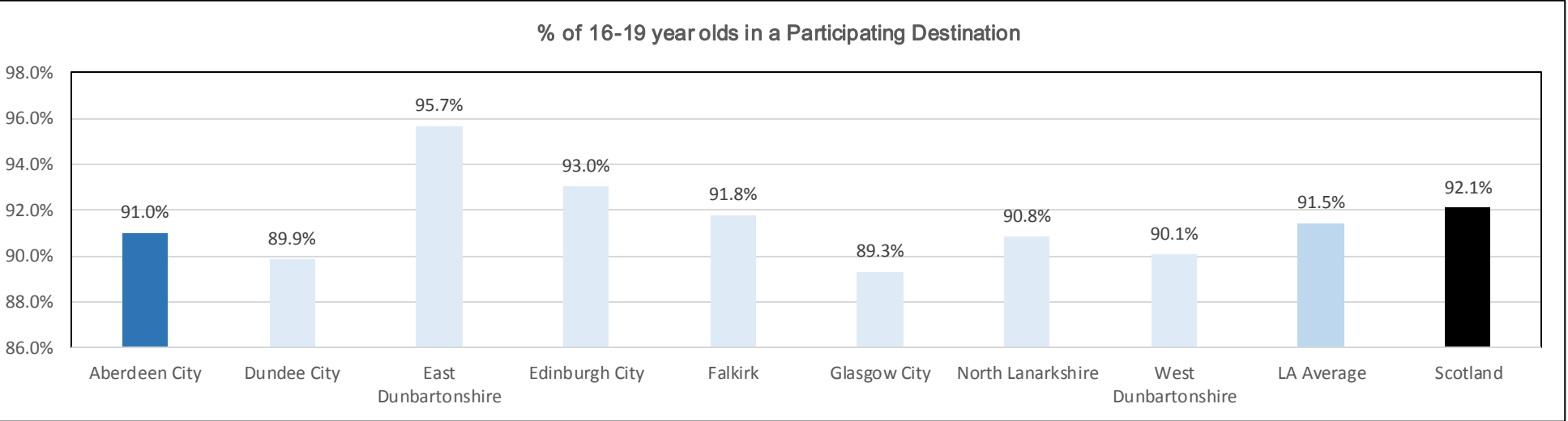
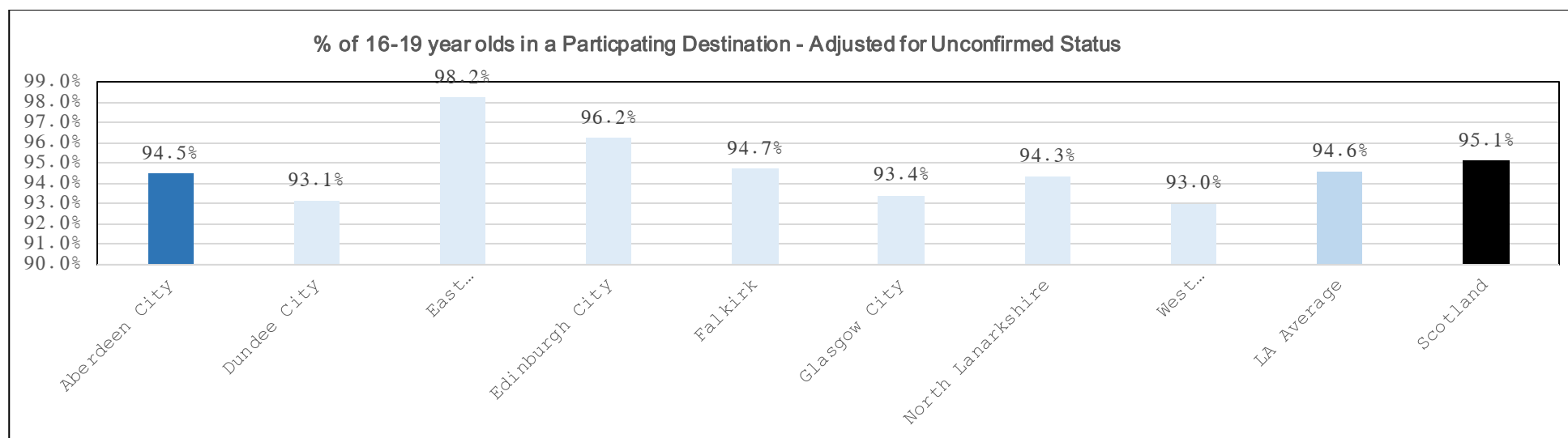


Chart 2. Interim Participation Snapshot for 16–19-year-olds, Participation Levels by Urban Local Authority Benchmarks – Adjusted for Unconfirmed Status



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's Cluster) and external partners, including Skills Development Scotland which acts as the regional co-ordinator for this outcome.

Charts 1 and 2

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. There are some limited positive changes in the absolute and or adjusted values for these measures from December 2023, and with that reported to the September meeting of this Committee (May 2024 release). However, there has been a gain in quartile position relative to both the benchmark authorities presented in this chart and in comparison with all Scottish local authorities.

Table 7. Interim Participation Measure for 16-19 year olds, (December) – Status Breakdown (%), Aberdeen City

Year	Overall Participation	School Pupil	Higher Education	Further Education	Employment	Training and Development	Unemployed Seeking	Unemployed Not Seeking	Unconfirmed
2024	91.0%	32.5%	23.0%	11.6%	22.2%	1.7%	3.2%	2.2%	3.6%
2023	90.1%	31.8%	25.3%	12.1%	18.9%	2.0%	2.6%	2.3%	5.0%
2022	88.1%	33.1%	24.0%	12.6%	14.4%	4.0%	2.6%	2.4%	6.9%
2021	87.9%	33.6%	24.3%	12.6%	15.3%	2.1%	3.3%	2.3%	6.4%

Service Commentary

Table 7

In terms of significance, the year-on-year movement against Overall Participation, Higher Education and Employment each represent variations that would be considered a material change in destinations for this age group, along with an improvement in the tracking of destinations. This latter issue has been subject to recent improvement activity within schools, and in conjunction with Skills Development Scotland.

In combination, participation in education forms the overwhelming majority destination for 16-19 years olds (67.1%) Although this proportion has dropped over the timeline of this dataset it remains ahead of the national figure of 64.% This change has been 'off-set' by a substantial and continuous rise in those in Employment with Aberdeen more closely matching the Scotland outcome of 25.8%

The % of those not in a participation destination (Unemployed and seeking/not seeking employment combined) sits at 5.4%, both slightly above that in 2023 and in the context of the national figure (4.8%) The commentary provided within the PMF report to the September meeting of this Committee outlined a series of improvement projects/actions linked to reducing the number of 16-19 year olds not in a participation destination.

In this context, each new cohort of 16-19 year olds (and a rising number of individuals) presents differing needs and levels of support and the timeline for delivering outcome related improvement, particularly among those who are furthest from the employment market in skillsets, may only be delivered across more than the single 6 or 12 month periods between these national publications.

Table 8. School Attendance Measure 2024-25 – Academic Year to Date

School Type	% Present Openings	% Authorised Openings	% Unauthorised Openings	% Exclusions Openings	% Total Absence
Primary	93.3%	4.7%	2.0%	0.00%	6.7%
Secondary	90.3%	6.5%	3.1%	0.06%	9.7%
Special	89.1%	9.4%	1.4%	0.00%	10.9%
All Phases	92.1%	5.4%	2.4%	0.02%	7.9%

Service Commentary

Table 8

This data serves as a local baseline in the context of the 2024/25 annual Service Standard around school attendance which will be reported against at conclusion of the academic year.

There are limited changes in the proportion and number of attendances from that reported to the November 2024 meeting of this Committee. The rate of attendance overall is slightly reduced from 92.9% at conclusion of Term 1 to 92.1% (92.2% for the 2023/24 academic year) with an increase in the percentage of Authorised Absence (+1 percentage point for All Phases) across each phase being the main influence.

Unauthorised Absence levels for each phase are marginally lower than those reported previously, reducing from 2.7% for All Phases at Term 1 to a current figure of 2.4%. Exclusion rates for All Phases remain unchanged from the November report data and are consistent with those captured in previous datasets.

3. Staff

Corporate Measures – 2024/25 Service Level Indicators

Table 9. Establishment (Education and Lifelong Learning)







Performance Measure	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Quarter 3 2024/25	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value		
Establishment actual FTE – Education and Lifelong Learning)	3,248	3,233	3,258		

Table 10. Accidents and Incidents (Education and Lifelong Learning)

Performance Measure	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Quarter 3 2024/25	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value		
H&S Employee Reportable Accidents by Cluster – Education and Lifelong Learning	2	2	2		
H&S Employee Non-Reportable Accidents by Cluster – Education and Lifelong Learning	286	228	403		

Service Commentary

Table 10

It was noted in the September PMF report of this Committee that officers had an expectation that ‘the collaborative work with schools and Trades Unions to ensure additional accuracy of, and engagement with, the Council’s reporting accident and incident systems, may consequentially set higher baselines for recorded accidents and incidents for each quarterly period in 2024/25 than in most previous years’

This has now been evidenced in two consecutive quarters, although the figure for Quarter 2 was lower than the current quarter as it included the extended Summer school holiday period. The Staff Governance Committee at the meeting below instructed that Health and Safety colleagues provide an assessment of the statistical effect of holiday periods on recorded incident levels at a future meeting.

The [Health and Safety Report Appendix](#) attached to the Corporate Quarterly Health and Safety report, considered at the meeting of the Staff Governance Committee on 18th November 2024 offered detailed analysis of accident and near miss data across Clusters and at Primary and Secondary school levels.

Table 11. Absence Due to Illness (Education and Lifelong Learning) 12 month rolling average.







Performance Measure	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Quarter 3 2024/25	Quarter 3 Corporate Figure	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	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)	6.2	5.3	4.9	4.65		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Primary and Secondary Schools (12-month rolling figure at quarter end) *	6.4	5.8	5.5	4.65		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Early Learning and Childcare (12-month rolling figure at quarter end)	7.95	6.1	5.25	4.65		

Table 12. Absence Due to Illness (Education and Lifelong Learning) Monthly Average

Management Measure	October 2024/25	November 2024/25	December 2024/25
	Value	Value	Value
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Education and Lifelong Learning (in-month)	2.19	2.61	1.71

Service Commentary

Tables 11 and 12.

Levels of employee absence due to illness are showing an improving quarterly trend that, taking account of natural seasonal variations, indicates 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 data and operational workstreams around this theme.

Work around constructing new system-based absence data at an individual school level is currently being progressed which will offer a revised benchmark for the measure around Primary and Secondary Schools. It is anticipated that this will reduce the recorded levels of absence against this metric to a level that is lower than the corporate level outcome.




Currently, the developmental monthly management data, based on the 18 establishments/staff cohorts incorporated to date, indicates an outcome of 1.06 days average absence per FTE within schools for the fiscal YTD in-month measure, based on staff directly attributed to, and managed within schools. This is lower than the corporate YTD level figure of 1.24 days absence per calendar month,

The available in-month trend data for schools over the past nine months also indicates that absences are regularly lower than the corporate figure, with seven of these months recording an outcome better than the organisation level figure. This is expected to feed through to future 12 month rolling data comparisons.

N.B. Month to month data is particularly statistically sensitive to limited changes in baseline drivers and is offered only as supportive management information on this basis..

4. Finance & Controls

Table 13. 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%		51.3%		76.2%			

Service Commentary

Table 13

At Quarter 3 Staff Expenditure to budget profile was marginally above expectations, although this was within the Status tolerances set within this report (see legend at the end of this document) The variance from profile across each of the quarters to date has been reducing slightly as a result of in-year budget management actions,

At the same time, the Management Commentary provided within the Q3 2024/25 budget report to the Finance and Resources Committee on the 12th of February, outlined the financial position of children's services overall. It noted a year-end forecast of a significant overspend against the full year budget for the Cluster, incorporating that related to staff costs, because of demand pressures (e.g., increases in school rolls at session year start and in term registrations)

* 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








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Children’s Social Work and Family Support

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

5. Citizen

Table 15. Complaints Handling

Performance Measure	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Quarter 3 2024/25	Status	2024/25 Target	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value			
Total No. of Complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Children’s Social Work	12	11	11			
% of Complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) - Children’s Social Work	75.0%	90.9%	81.8%		75%	
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Children’s Social Work	41.7%	0%	0%			
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Children’s Social Work	0	0	0			

Service Commentary

Table 15.

The number of complaints in Quarter 3 was similar to that in each prior quarter, with similar a improving quarterly trend in the proportion of complaints resolved within the required timescale to that for Education and Lifelong Learning. The fiscal YTD outcome for complaints resolution is 82.4% which is above each of the prior comparable YTD outcomes to date.

While, positively, there has not been any complaints upheld in Quarter 3 for a second consecutive period, learning has still been identified where possible, showing that feedback has been taken on board and processes have been improved where possible.

Table 16. Service Level Standards 2024/25 (Children’s Social Work)

Performance Measure	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Quarter 3 2024/25	Status	2024/25 Target	Long Trend Quarterly
	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%	▬
We will ensure care provided by the Council's fostering service achieves a care standard of good or better through regulatory inspections.	100%	100%	100%	✓	100%	▬
We will ensure care provided by the Council's adoption service achieves a care standard of good or better through regulatory inspections.	100%	100%	100%	✓	100%	▬
% of children open to Children's Social Work supported to live at home, where safe to do so	75%	75%	74%	✓	75%	▬

6. Process

Table 17. Service Level Standards 2024/25 (Children's Social Work)

Performance Measure	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Quarter 3 2024/25	Status	2024/25 Target	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value			
% of initial screenings undertaken, and action decided, on new referrals within 7 days.	98%	98%	98%	✓	100%	▬
% initial Child Protection Planning Meetings held within timescale	53%	67%	50%	⛔	80%	↓
% of Care experienced children and young people with three or more placements in 12 months	2%	5%	4%	✓	<7.5%	↓
% Care Experienced Children and Young People (CECYP) with a pathway plan by the age of 15 years	58%	74%	81%	⚠	95%	↑

Service Commentary Table 17.

Screening Timelines

As noted in the report to the previous meeting of this Committee, 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. This measure continues to perform at a very high level from quarter to quarter.

Child Protection Meeting Timelines

Whilst every effort is made to ensure Child Protection Planning Meetings (CPPM) are held timeously, all children considered at a CPPM have a multi-agency safety plan in place ensuring their protection until a CPPM is held. A primary reason for the timescale not being kept is to ensure the participation and engagement of family members. As a partnership we are undertaking a deeper dive on the reasons for not bringing cases to a Child Protection Planning meeting within the expected timescale to explore whether there are system or process changes required to support our performance. The timescales linked to CPPM become extended over the course of the winter festive period as availability of staff, is restricted and gathering/provision of necessary inputs are slowed. Findings of the deeper dive will feed into the Child Protection Committee's performance and quality assurance activity.

Placements

Although on a rising trend, the proportion of Care Experienced Children & Young People with more than three or more placements in 12 months includes a relatively small number of individuals and includes those where the transition between placements represents rapid positive movement from temporary arrangements to more permanent or suitable guardianship placements as well as those where there is some element of break-down in the placement,

Pathway Plans

The recent focus around improving the accuracy of recording of pathway plan implementation is producing a strong improving trend against this measure. The initial system related influence on the data is being addressed through additional guidance/support for inputting teams but continues to be monitored with a view to raising the recorded proportion of CEYP with a pathway plan further as the impact of this recently introduced guidance takes full effect.

Chart 3. Service Level Measures – Number of Looked After Children and Young People Timeseries by Placement Type and Continuing Care Placements

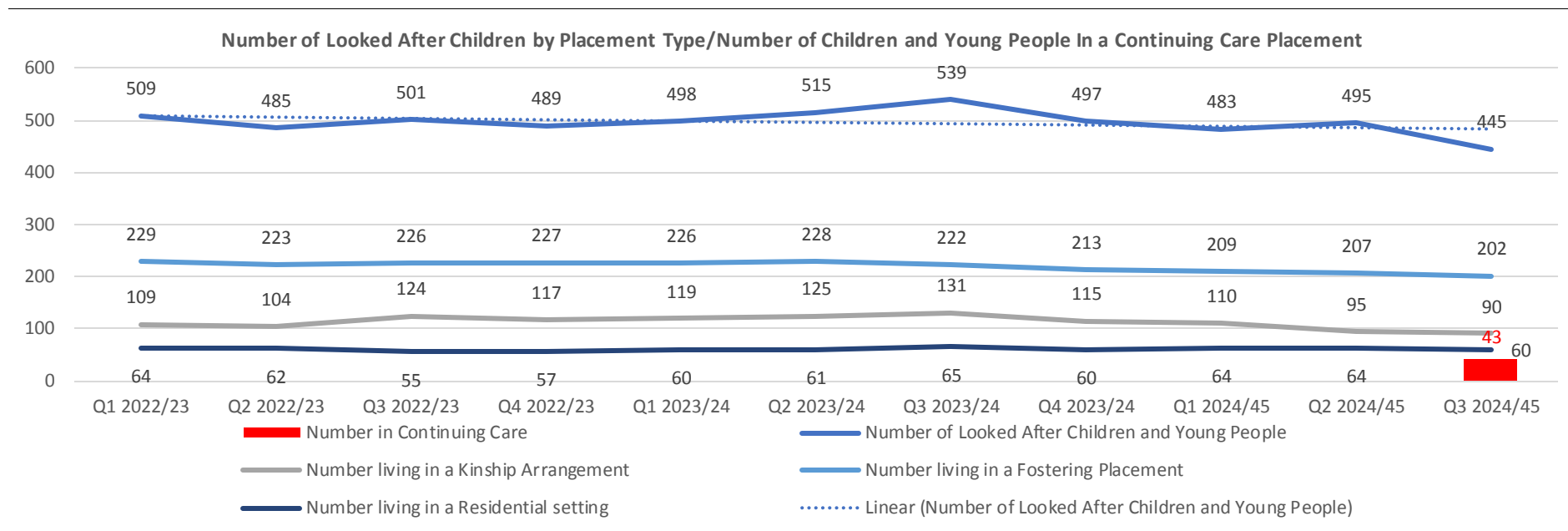


Table 18. Balance of Care -% of Looked After Children by Placement Type (Rolling 12-month average by Quarter)

Period	% Looked After living in a Kinship Arrangement	% Looked After Children living in a Fostering Placement	% Looked After Children living in a Residential setting
Q3 2022/23	22.3	45.1	12.0
Q3 2023/24	24.1	44.3	11.9
Q3 2024/25	21.6	43.4	12.6

Service Commentary

Chart 3 – Looked After Children

Late 2024 presented an opportunity for management and users to complete a further point in time evaluation of the robustness of information and analysis provided by the system, supplementing the on-going adjustments undertaken over the course of the first 24 months of operation.

This has resulted in additional alignment of Committee reporting with national data recording. As a consequence of this, it was recognised that children living within Continuing Care arrangements were being wrongly included within the total number of looked after children.

Continuing Care provides the opportunity for young people aged 16 – 21 years, to have a graduated transition from care. Aligned to the Staying Put Policy it enables young people aged 16+ to remain in their care placement up to the age of 21 years. Although they remain in the same kinship, foster or residential placement they are not classified as being ‘looked after’. The costs associated with their care remain the same. This accounts for the noticeable drop in looked after numbers in the above table. We have added as a separate data set in Chart 2 to record and highlight the number of young people living in a continuing care arrangement (shown in red).

As a consequence, some caution needs to be exercised around direct comparisons with data prior to the current quarterly period. Notwithstanding this adjustment, the long term trend indications for looked after children and those living in both Kinship and Fostering placements are in line with the strategic direction of travel set out for the balance of care for Looked After Children, whilst the proportion and number of those in Residential placements remain largely similar to those in previous quarters and years.

Table 18 – Looked After Children

Data within this table provides averaged % outcomes for similar quarterly periods over a three-year timeline enabling tracking of general trends in the provision of care for Looked After Children by the main types of placements.

7. Staff

Corporate Measures – 2024/25 Service Level Indicators

Table 19. Establishment Levels



Performance Measure	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Quarter 3 2024/25	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value		
Establishment actual FTE – Children’s Social Work	343.63	354.77	354.22		

Table 20. Accidents and Incidents

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

Table 21. Absence Due to Illness (Children's Social Work) 12 month rolling average.



Performance Measure	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Quarter 3 2024/25	Quarter 3 2024/25 Corporate Figure	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value			
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Children's Social Work	5.3	3.9	3.6	4.7		

Table 22. Absence Due to Illness (Children's Social Work) Monthly

Management Measure	October 2024/25	November 2024/25	December 2024/25
	Value	Value	Value
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE within month – Children's Social Work (monthly)	3.41	3.62	1.65

Service Commentary

Table 21




Levels of employee absence due to illness are showing an improving quarterly trend that, taking account of natural seasonal variations, indicates 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 data and operational activity around this theme.

Table 22

Month to month data is particularly statistically sensitive to limited changes in baseline drivers and is offered only as supportive management information on this basis.

8. Finance & Controls

Table 23. 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%		54.4%		81.3%			

Service Commentary

Table 23

At Quarter 3 Staff Expenditure to budget profile was above target, by a similar margin to that noted against both of the prior quarters

The Management Commentary provided within the Q3 2024/25 budget report to the Finance and Resources Committee on the 12th of February, outlined the financial position of the children's services overall, and for Children's Social Work, It noted a year-end forecast of a significant overspend against the full year budget for the Cluster, incorporating that related to staff costs, due to demand pressures from positive net migration (e.g. on-going support for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, refugee families and young people.) There is also a general increase in case work arising from rising population profiles and the extent of support needed by four children and young people.




* 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 3 monthly, quarterly and annual consecutive periods, respectively.
- Absence Management: (i) 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 contracts are appropriate to effective service delivery. (ii) 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.

- 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% below 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

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APPENDIX B

National Benchmark Measures – Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) 2023/24, Aberdeen City

Introduction

The following offers an initial evaluation of data relating to the Achievement of Curriculum Levels in 2023/24 derived from the publication of this information on 10th December 2024, focusing on the core measures at primary and secondary (S3 -Third Level or better) stages. These link directly to Aberdeen City's current National Improvement Framework Plan, and the National Performance Benchmark Measures for education.

Context of Achievement

Alongside the quality of teaching, the most influential drivers of pupil engagement, and subsequently overall achievement, relate to attendance levels, relative poverty and English Language skills. In 2023/24, Aberdeen City had a consistently high level of pupil attendance in both phases and a relatively small proportion of pupils in the Most Deprived quintile (just over 10% of all pupils in most stages captured in this document). The impact of this latter influence on measurable change is described in the Data Variability paragraph below.

Aberdeen City in the 2023/24 academic year had a significantly greater proportion of Broad Education pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) than most education authorities, varying from 19.1% in primary schools to 17.2% in secondary phases. EAL was the largest single contributing factor to the number of pupils with Additional Support Needs (ASN) in the city with over 4,100 pupils in this category.

In general terms, the proportion of pupils recorded as having English as an Additional Language was around twice that of the national levels. This, based on current understandings, was a strong endemic influence on the differentials between outcomes for Literacy and Numeracy noted across the majority of measures.

The relative impacts of each of these factors on 2023/24 achievement will be better understood, and contextualised against benchmarks, through the process of advanced data analysis by the Service and Data Insights colleagues on the release of additional Broad General Education Toolkit information.

Traffic Light Visualisation

Across the sections below, covering Curriculum for Excellence datasets, the following 'traffic light' legends are applied to define movement of 2023/24 academic year values in comparison with 2022/23 outcomes.

The application of these legends is based on variations in datasets of $> \pm 1$ percentage points, which takes some account of purely statistically based influences, such as changes in cohort characteristics (see below) and proportional levels of deprivation. These aids are offered to visually assist interpretation of the data contained in these sections. Data-based 'traffic lighting' does not automatically infer change that has had a material impact on educational outcomes.

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

Data Variability within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) Quintile Data

In regards to the interpretation of data tables 2,3, 5 and 6 below, caution should be exercised in comparative analysis between SIMD groupings, both in-year, and between years, as the cohort sizes vary significantly and proportionately reduce moving down deprivation quintiles (SIMD 5 to 1) and this can influence the extent of % change.

In general, the outcomes for smaller cohorts, and changes in these numbers from one year to another, can be more statistically sensitive to the performance of a relatively low number of pupils, resulting in % variations that exceed the impact of the same number of pupils achieving the similar educational outcomes in the largest SIMD cohort (SIMD 5)

1. Achievement in Primary 1,4 and 7 Combined

Key Findings

- The percentage of primary school pupils achieving the expected Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels for both Literacy and Numeracy in 2023/24 was higher than in 2022/23 and was the highest to date for these core organiser measures. This mirrors the national landscape.
- The year-on-year and three year improvement rate for Literacy is the stronger of the two core organisers and is closing the distance to Numeracy outcomes. This trend also mirrors the national landscape.

Table 1. P1,4 and 7 Combined by Curriculum Organisers, Aberdeen City

Aberdeen	Organiser	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Short Trend - Annual	Long Trend - Annual
P1, P4 and P7 combined	Literacy	69	71	73	↑	↑
P1, P4 and P7 combined	Numeracy	77	78	79	↑	↑

2. Achievement in the Context of Deprivation, P 1,4 and 7 Combined

Key Findings

- The proportion of P1,4 and 7 (Combined) pupils achieving the expected levels in both Literacy and Numeracy has risen across almost every SIMD Quintile on 2022/23.

- Literacy achievement is demonstrating slightly greater, and more consistent improvement in comparison with Numeracy but overall is showing lower achievement levels across the five Quintiles

Table 2. P1,4 and 7 Combined outcomes by Curriculum Organisers and SIMD Quintile , Aberdeen City

Year	SIMD	Literacy	Numeracy
2023/24	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	60	68
	SIMD Quintile 2	65	72
	SIMD Quintile 3	72	78
	SIMD Quintile 4	77	83
	SIMD Quintile 5- least deprived	83	87
	Local Authority Total	73	79
2022/23	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	57	65
	SIMD Quintile 2	63	71
	SIMD Quintile 3	69	76
	SIMD Quintile 4	76	81
	SIMD Quintile 5- least deprived	81	86
	Local Authority Total	71	78
2021/22	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	58	66
	SIMD Quintile 2	61	69
	SIMD Quintile 3	64	72
	SIMD Quintile 4	74	82
	SIMD Quintile 5- least deprived	79	87
	Local Authority Total	63	72

3. Closing the Poverty Related Achievement Gap, P1, 4 and 7 Combined

Key Findings

- The gap between the proportion of primary school pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) from the Most and Least deprived areas who achieved the expected level in Literacy remained at 23 percentage points in 2023/24 but was slightly lower than in most years prior to 2021/22.
- The gap between the proportion of primary school pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) from the Most and Least deprived areas who achieved their expected level in Numeracy narrowed from 20 percentage points in 2022/23 to 19 percentage points in 2023/24.





Table 3. P1,4&7 (Combined) – Percentage Point Distances to Least Deprived Quintile by Curriculum Organisers and SIMD Quintile, Aberdeen City

Year	SIMD	Literacy	Numeracy
2023/24	SIMD Quintile 1- Most Deprived	-23	-19
	SIMD Quintile 2	-18	-15
	SIMD Quintile 3	-11	-9
	SIMD Quintile 4	-6	-4
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		
2022/23	SIMD Quintile 1- Most Deprived	-23	-20
	SIMD Quintile 2	-18	-15
	SIMD Quintile 3	-11	-10
	SIMD Quintile 4	-5	-5
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		
2021/22	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	-21	-21
	SIMD Quintile 2	-18	-17
	SIMD Quintile 3	-15	-15
	SIMD Quintile 4	-4	-4
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		
2018/19	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	-24	-20
	SIMD Quintile 2	-18	-14
	SIMD Quintile 3	-13	-9
	SIMD Quintile 4	-4	-4

Secondary Phase**4. Achievement Secondary (Senior 3 pupils – Third Level or better)****Key Findings**

- For S3 pupils, the proportions achieving Third Level or better for Literacy, and Numeracy were marginally lower than in 2022/23 across both organisers but within the statistical tolerances outlined above which suggests that there is limited educational impact to be interpreted from this variation,

Table 4. S3 (Third Level or better) outcomes by Levels achieved and Curriculum Organisers – Aberdeen City

Aberdeen	Organiser	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Short Trend - Annual	Long Trend - Annual
S3 Third Level or Better	Literacy	80	82	81		
S3 Third Level or Better	Numeracy	89	90	89		

5. National Benchmark Measure Achievement in the Context of Deprivation – S3 Third Level or better, Aberdeen City**Key Findings**

- Outcomes across a majority of SIMD quintiles, and for Literacy overall, were marginally lower than in 2022/23. However, the % of pupils achieving the expected levels within the two most deprived quintiles individually, and in combination were the highest values to date in 2022/23. Nonetheless, the outcome for the SIMD 2 quintile represented a more significant year-on-year change.
- Numeracy achievement in 2022/24 overall, and across some SIMD quintiles, dipped in comparison with 2022/23. Although both SIMD 2 and 3 fell by roughly similar margins, the outcome for the SIMD 3 cohort represents the more significant trend in that this a second consecutive year of reduced achievement, and the 2022/23 figure for SIMD 2 was a high tide mark for this measure

Table 5. S3 (Third Level or Better) by SIMD Quintile, Aberdeen City

Year	SIMD	Literacy	Numeracy
2023/24	SIMD Quintile 1 - most deprived	63	77
	SIMD Quintile 2	71	83

	SIMD Quintile 3	80	84
	SIMD Quintile 4	87	90
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived	91	97
	Local Authority Total	81	89
2022/23	SIMD Quintile 1 - most deprived	65	76
	SIMD Quintile 2	77	87
	SIMD Quintile 3	78	87
	SIMD Quintile 4	86	90
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived	92	96
	Local Authority Total	82	90
2021/22	SIMD Quintile 1 - most deprived	63	77
	SIMD Quintile 2	76	83
	SIMD Quintile 3	79	89
	SIMD Quintile 4	84	93
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived	89	95
	Local Authority Total	80	89

6. National Benchmark Measure - Closing the Poverty Related Attainment Gap, (S3 Third Level or better), Aberdeen City

Key Findings

- The gap between the proportion of S3 pupils from the Most and Least deprived areas who achieved Third Level or better in Literacy in 2023/24 was similar to that in 2022/23.
- The gap between the proportion of S3 pupils from the Most and Least deprived areas who achieved Third Level or better in Numeracy in 2022/23 was unchanged.
- For both Literacy and Numeracy, the 2023/24 gaps between the Most and Least Deprived were substantially lower than in the years prior to 2021/22. Data from 2018/19, the last prior year where assessments were conducted is included in this table as a means of demonstrating this trend

Table 6. S3 Third Level or better, Percentage Point Distances to the Least Deprived Quintile, (SIMD) Aberdeen City

Year	SIMD	Literacy	Numeracy
2023/24	SIMD Quintile 1 - Most Deprived	-28	-20
	SIMD Quintile 2	-20	-14
	SIMD Quintile 3	-11	-13
	SIMD Quintile 4	-4	-7
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		
2022/23	SIMD Quintile 1 - Most Deprived	-28	-20
	SIMD Quintile 2	-15	-9
	SIMD Quintile 3	-14	-9
	SIMD Quintile 4	-6	-6
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		
2021/22	SIMD Quintile 1 - most deprived	-26	-19
	SIMD Quintile 2	-13	-13
	SIMD Quintile 3	-14	-6
	SIMD Quintile 4	-5	-3
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		
2018/19	SIMD Quintile 1 - most deprived	-31	-35
	SIMD Quintile 2	-20	-19
	SIMD Quintile 3	-14	-14
	SIMD Quintile 4	-7	-4
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		

No data is applied against SIMD 5 outcomes as this measure reflects the attainment gap between SIMD 5 and that of other SIMD quintiles

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Appendix C - National Improvement Framework Update

Programme/ project	Update February	RAG
Improve Leadership of Change in schools		
<p>Build leadership capacity and capability through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a coordinated professional learning programme involvement of middle leaders in quality assurance arrangements analysis of surveys of staff, parents and learners to inform Quality Improvement (QI) activity 	<p>An audit of School Improvement Plans (SIPs) has identified common themes within school improvement priorities. This information was shared with school leaders to encourage them to collaborate with colleagues to plan for improvement.</p> <p>Surveys issued to individual staff members and to school leaders in January 2025 will help shape the professional learning offer for 2025/26.</p> <p>The involvement of more middle leaders in the newly restructured Quality Improvement visits has highlighted a training need around purposeful observations and using evaluative language. Professional learning will be developed by the QI Team and offered to schools.</p> <p>A selection of Category 3 schools will participate in surveys for staff and parents in Terms 3 and 4. Information from these surveys will be used to triangulate evidence gathered during Quality Improvement visits and other QI activities.</p> <p>All staff have access to Maybo eLearning modules as part of the bespoke package created through the local Authority Behaviour Plan.</p>	
Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in schools		
<p>Continue to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment (pace, and challenge) by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> collaborating with the Regional Improvement Collaborative to publish the Toolkit 	<p>The Northern Alliance, Learning Teaching and Assessment toolkit has been populated with helpful local resources and supports Head Teachers (HTs) to access high quality materials to support effective staff development, interest in the toolkit continues to increase. The funded ACC Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) officers have been using the toolkit with schools to support staff understanding of pace, challenge and differentiation. Currently 10 schools are engaging with the toolkit, and 161 individual self-evaluations have been completed and are now providing Senior Leadership Teams (SLTs) with valuable baseline data.</p> <p>LTA officers spoke at the recent HT meeting to share their work more widely and are organising face to face training to support schools to make effective use of the toolkit. The LTA officers have also participated in a national online session LTA Toolkit: A Guided Tour.</p> <p>The Northern Alliance officers will each host an online professional learning session on each of the 6 themes for SLTs from Jan – March 2025. Guidance on how to use the toolkit to support improvement will form part of the revised Quality Improvement Framework in July 2025.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the phased deployment of additional digital tools and a new digital identity 	<p>15 primary schools and 3 secondary schools are now accessing new devices and education identity.</p> <p>Wave 2 has been planned which covers all remaining schools and runs to end of October 2025. This requires two primary schools each week to be transitioned to the new education environment. Secondary schools will commence in May 2025 with one each week until the beginning of September 2025. In total 49 schools and services will be onboarded including the central team.</p> <p>Training resources have been updated to allow staff to select a learning pathway dependent on their level of confidence with technology. These</p>	

	resources will be available from January onwards.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continued roll out of the national improvement in writing programme. 	<p>Cohort 4 schools have now benefited from the Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) writing training. Spread and Scale training to all Cohort 1 – 3 schools has also been delivered, including input from colleagues across the city, incorporating EAL & Dyslexia Service. Support visits have taken place for all cohort 4 schools. Cohort 5 training will start in February 2025 with an additional Spread and Scale series of sessions planned. An introductory session has also been planned for delivery to all probationers across ACC.</p> <p>One school from within cohort 4 has already noted a significant increase in their P4 attainment in writing with predicted attainment increasing by 27%. Further school support visits are planned for term 3 to interrogate the data prior to the final data uplift in term 4. Cohorts 6 & 7 schools will be identified by the end of term 3 and offered training for session 25/26.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing and testing an approach to improve the numeracy curriculum with a focus on transitions 	<p>An online portal has been developed with resources to support P7-S1 transition, ACC Maths Staff, Family Learning and Adult Learning. This will go live internally by end of term 2 with external links due to be made available during term 3 for Adult and Family Learning.</p> <p>Work is ongoing to identify the training needs of staff, including Community Learning and Development staff, to ensure that that parents and carers are well supported as they further develop their skills to support their child/ren in numeracy.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> development of a city wide literacy offer for children, young people and adult learners 	<p>Objective to create a joined up, central learning offer which provides a progression for staff to guide them and ensure pace, challenge and differentiation was agreed, with further research on the most appropriate platform for this still required. Early identification of Literacy difficulties will be pivotal to the success of the project therefore time has been spent discussing the quickest, best and most efficient mechanism for this initial identification. Further work with ELC colleagues is underway to determine how best to extend 'Stay & Play' into P1. Baseline data has been gathered and agreed with the group.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> working with practitioners to develop an ELC standard to support improvement in pedagogical understanding 	<p>Session three of four of the Pedagogical Leadership programme was delivered by Education Scotland in December. The sessions have been very well attended with over 60 participants, in leadership roles, from Local Authority and Funded Provider settings across the city. Following each session colleagues from Education Scotland take account of feedback to inform the next session.</p> <p>To date the feedback has been extremely positive with the majority of participants evaluating the event as very good. The content of the course and the opportunity to network and participate in reflective discussions have been highlighted as the most beneficial. Most participants have strongly agreed that these sessions will have an impact on their role as leaders and look forward to supporting their teams.</p> <p>Education Scotland have been impressed by the high number of participants and their commitment to attending all sessions. They have now offered Aberdeen the opportunity to take part in a new programme that they have developed which extends the Pedagogical Leadership offer to include coaching. Education Scotland have offered up to 25 places for leaders attending the Pedagogical Leadership course. Each leader would receive 3 coaching sessions between February and the end of March with dates and</p>	

	times to be agreed between themselves and their allocated ESA. The focus of the coaching would be pedagogical leadership although the specific topic/area of focus will be identified by participants.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure a robust application of the new tracking system and use of the digital data tools with an increased focus on care experienced children and young people 	<p>Our 11 secondary schools have all now introduced pupil tracking and, with some variation, are able to extract robust tracking summary data from the new system.</p> <p>Work is underway to ensure that the individual school view includes both 'home' school tracking and where young people are being 'hosted' in a neighbouring school. It is anticipated that this will be in place within the next few months. Work is on-going to establish central oversight of the data from all 11 secondaries.</p> <p>'Fields' have been added to the tracker to ensure that SIMD and care experience can be tracked both by the individual school and by the Virtual School. However, this work remains at an early stage.</p>	
Continue to improve the quality of universal health and wellbeing supports		
Continue to encourage children and young people to be more physically active, including those with sensory and other identified needs.	<p>The PEPASS (Physical Education, Physical Activity and School Sport) group continue to meet regularly to share data and identify priorities across the city.</p> <p>The group are continuing to collaborate with schools to support their achievement of a bronze, silver or gold Sport Scotland Award. To date 27 schools are in the process or have achieved an award (2 in development, 5 achieving Bronze, 12 achieving Silver, 4 in the process of achieving Gold and 4 with Gold complete).</p>	
Shaping and delivering a whole system approach to the healthy weight of children and young people in partnership with others	<p>A report from the launch event has been shared with all stakeholders and officers have engaged with 80 students from Robert Gordon University's Sport Science Faculty, sharing the whole system approach as an example of a real life challenge in the workplace. Students were asked to provide feedback and potential ideas for change. A governance structure has been developed and a strategic network group (SNG) has been established.</p> <p>The SNG comprises of leaders from various council clusters, Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership NHS Grampian, Higher Education and the third sector. The Group intend to meet in February and March to system map provision across the city. The group have also been tasked with the development of the vision and associated Action Plan.</p>	
Increase the voice of children and young people in the design and delivery of services		
<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"> continuing to work in collaboration with the Youth 	<p>Collaborative workshops, co-designed between ETZ Ltd and the Aberdeen Youth Climate Change group, took place on 11th and 18th November. The sessions were attended by 12 young people from 4 city secondary schools. Work has begun, in collaboration with an ETZ Ltd commissioned artist team, on their ideas and designs for the final artworks.</p> <p>A Google Classroom "class" has been created to enable ongoing dialogue between the young people, ETZ Ltd and the artist team as they work to finalise their ideas and designs ahead of their public showcase.</p> <p>All monies have been distributed to ASGs and formats for reporting have been established. The group continues to manage eco requests from other</p>	

Climate Group to work towards Net Zero	areas of the council and is currently looking to work with the catering team to support school eco groups to manage vegetable planters.	
Continuing to engage with Aberdeen Youth Movement	<p>Aberdeen Youth Movement supported ACC engagement with school pupils and the budget options, capturing pupils' views and understanding of the impact potential budget options would have on their lives at Dyce, Bridge of Don, Lochside, and Oldmachar Academies and Aberdeen Grammar School. 390 pupils participated in the consultation sessions.</p> <p>Both the Young Ambassadors (10-16 yrs) and Aberdeen Youth Movement (16-25 yrs) have been working on engagement around the forthcoming Tall Ships, with the Young Ambassadors delivering Fish and Ships workshops with a focus on environmental issues and promoting circular economy concepts, and Aberdeen Youth Movement starting a social media awareness campaign demystifying Tall Ships as a way to connect young people to volunteering opportunities.</p>	
Deliver a broader range of senior phase learner pathways aligned to growth areas		
<p>Deliver a broader range of learning pathways through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> delivery of Phase 2 of ABZ Campus 	<p>Phase 2 ABZ Campus courses are now mid-way through delivery with 746 pupils currently on courses. ABZ Campus Courses Tracking reports for tracking period 1 have been completed and shared with 'home' school, parents and carers. We continue to run Employability with 9 young people benefitting from this offer.</p> <p>We plan to carry out our annual focus groups and survey of young people in January to gather their views on their experiences of courses. Planning for Phase 3 of ABZ Campus is well under way. Meetings have taken place with all partners to discuss a finalised course choice programme which will be shared with stakeholders earlier in the new year. Draft course choice booklets for the 'daytime' offer and Anytime and Twilight courses will be published in December.</p> <p>Meetings have also taken place with five different local authorities who have reached out to find out more about ABZ Campus. We hope that we can benefit from this opportunity to collaborate and potentially share virtual/ anytime deliver in future.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue developing pathways to support those with a range of additional support needs 	<p>Young people in the ABZ #WHATif course have had inputs on ACC culture and values from HR, Inclusion, Equalities and Diversity (and their rights) from an Equalities officer and interviewed a Headteacher regarding effective leadership. They have also prepared for their work placements with a volunteer co-ordinator from Instant Neighbour and benefited from advice on supports available in their next steps from ABZ Works. These inputs allow for the generation of evidence towards the Personal Development Award (PDA): Myself and Work and/or PDA: Self Awareness unit and the Employability Award.</p> <p>In January, students will seek to complete the Personal Development Award. This will include the Self and Community unit and anything outstanding from Practical Abilities, Self and Work and Self-Awareness that wasn't captured during the first two terms.</p> <p>Once the PDA is complete a single unit 'Enterprise Skills' will allow for the certification of the additional NPA Employability and Enterprise qualification. This is available at SCQF 3-6 depending on the lowest level achieved in</p>	

	each of the units. If successful students will gain two full qualifications (the Personal Development Award and National Progression Award) and a short Award. There may be opportunities to do other enhancements such as First Aid or Food Hygiene certification.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring that the school curriculum is ideally matched to pupil needs 	<p>Broad work around curriculum in the Senior Phase continues through the collective work of ABZ Campus (see above) and through opportunities for professional learning.</p> <p>Professional Learning on curriculum and attainment has continued through bespoke work with secondary schools, through a recent Head Teacher input on <i>Excelerate</i> and through the delivery of the second running of <i>An Introduction to Timetabling</i>.</p> <p>Work to review the work placements in conjunction with ABZ Works has continued and is reaching conclusion with next steps to be agreed. At this point it is unlikely that a broader work placements system will be in place ready for Phase 3 of ABZ Campus due to staff absence.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> opportunities for CLPL for Computing Science Secondary Staff and staff across BGE 	In November 2024, Computing Science staff from across the city met for professional learning relating to National Progression Awards and other qualifications. This was delivered in partnership with Scottish Teachers Advancing Computing Science from the University of Glasgow. Resources for aspects of the computing science experiences and outcomes, using Adobe Express, and online sessions to become Adobe Creative Educators were shared with schools.	
Improve the quality of environments/supports for those with additional support needs		
<p>Improve the quality of environments and supports by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing to implement our accessibility plan 	The Educational Psychology Service has developed their 'Spotlight' resource for Schools supporting learners with additional support needs in mainstream schools. This has been piloted in the Dee locality and is in the process of being spread across the other Educational Psychology Service teams in the city who will further test the changes prior to further roll out to all schools.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing roll out of the Child Inclusion Research into Curriculum Learning Education (CIRCLE) Framework 	<p>The impact of the CIRCLE Framework is now visible in the majority of settings in the city and bespoke support is being offered to those who are at an early stage of implementation. The framework is impacting the quality of universal and targeted support by empowering staff in schools to look inward and apply creativity to meet the needs of learners in their setting. With time having been invested in embedding CIRCLE, we can now tailor the framework for both Operational and Strategic gain, with events through both of these lenses being delivered in early 2025.</p> <p>CIRCLE – Operational will continue to ensure the framework is understood and used successfully in school settings. CIRCLE – Strategic will support leadership teams to use the framework when ensuring and visualising quality indicators and standards for teaching and learning.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the impact of the Educational Psychology Service on school practice to determine next Educational Psychology Service 	<p>The Educational Psychology Service continue to gather data on the impact of their service delivery and their data working group are putting in place new processes to further improve this.</p> <p>Impact data from the Emotional Literacy Support Assistants programme continues to be strong. The increased capacity of the Educational Psychology Service team has allowed for new training packages to be created with follow-up in-person implementation coaching. Data continues to be gathered from these new offers, with further adjustments to how to ensure more impact data.</p>	

	<p>Having successfully filled all vacancies; the service has been able to undertake an increased number of Early Intervention Consultations & Systemic Early Intervention Consultations (641 over 2023/24 academic year compared to 571 in the previous year). Feedback gathered on Early Intervention Consultations remains positive. The average rating out of 7 (7 being the highest) is over 6, with a rating of 6 out of 7 that the situation will improve following the Early Intervention Consultation.</p> <p>Schools most frequently request support in Self-Regulation (Self-regulation refers to the ability to control your behaviour and manage your thoughts and emotions in appropriate ways, learners who have developed self-regulation skills are able to assess whether their behaviour is appropriate and can redirect themselves as needed), Autism Spectrum Condition (a neurological and developmental condition that affects how people interact with others, communicate, learn, and behave, it is considered a spectrum as there is a wide variance as to how this presents and impacts on learners),</p> <p>Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (which used to be referred to as school refusal or emotionally based school avoidance. It is used to describe learners who experience challenges in attending school due to negative feelings [such as anxiety]. It may result in a learner: avoiding or prolonging getting dressed in the mornings; refusing to leave the house, and/ or transport method to school; showing physical and emotional signs of distress; being reluctant to attend school for the whole week; or being unable to attend school at all.),</p> <p>Anxiety (a feeling of unease, worry, or fear that can interfere with a learner's daily life. It is a natural human emotion, but excessive and unmanageable worry can affect both their brains and bodies)., and Trauma. Requests for support in Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance & Trauma (Learners who suffer from traumatic stress are those who have been exposed to one or more traumas and <i>develop reactions</i> that persist and affect their daily lives whether these events are ongoing or have ended) have increased on the previous year.</p> <p>An Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance digital training package has been accessed by 8 schools (Aberdeen Grammar, Cults, Dyce, Hazlehead & St Machar Academies & Airyhall, Glashieburn, & Kingsford Primaries) who have begun the implementation process, - conducted exploratory systemic Early Intervention Consultations, completed the digital training and had at least one follow-up implementation coaching session.</p> <p>This year has seen an increase in the number of staff, from across 12 settings – 4 Early Learning & Childcare, 1 Secondary & 7 Primary, exploring restorative approaches through the Educational Psychology Service's Emotion Coaching programme. Emotion Coaching provides both a restorative approach, support for emotional literacy, and supports development of relational approaches across the whole school.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of the Behaviour Plan 	<p>Planned professional learning has taken place for individuals and for trainers. Feedback has been positive, and future training is planned for this term.</p> <p>The data and safeguarding stakeholder groups continue to work effectively together to produce guidance for schools and facilitate the sharing of good practice.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the provision for supporting learners need 	<p>The Educational Psychology Service undertook the Exploration of Learners Needs survey which was reported at committee in November 2024. A group of professionals has been established to look at the operational model for the test of change proposed for Riverbank.</p>	

	Training for support staff has been reviewed and will be shared with stakeholders for comment in February 2025.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Targeted use of TalkBoost	Talkboost and Early Talkboost continue to be delivered in partnership with NHS Speech and Language Therapy as part of our service level agreement.	
Close the poverty related attainment gap		
Help address the gap and gradient through: <ul style="list-style-type: none">working with HTs to monitor the impact of Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) interventions	Central officers continue to review Equity Trackers with schools as part of QI visits, data discussions and attainment reviews. Support from the Attainment Adviser has supported school staff in the completion of these and in identifying the most appropriate measures and outcomes. Effective use of Equity Trackers is supporting schools to identify which interventions are most effective and which should be reviewed.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">asking every school to have a cost of the school day position statement known by the whole school community	Cost of the School Day remains a focus for all schools, with an expectation that there are no curricular costs for any learner in our schools. Through the termly equity network meetings school staff and Equity leads are being supported to develop Cost of the School Day position statements with their own school community to ensure these reflect the unique needs of each school community.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">maintaining our focus on attendance levels and termly communication to parents and carers	Revised attendance guidance was shared with parents in December via the Parent Newsletter. Attendance is key to attainment and continues to be monitored and discussed termly with school SLT at attainment discussions.	
Prevent families from experiencing poverty wherever possible		
Continue to work in collaboration to address the root cause of poverty through: <ul style="list-style-type: none">targeting families most in need of our help by sharing data	300 tickets for the Panto were issued to children and families who attend schools in areas of deprivation, this offer includes a free programme, gift and a snack. This offer was carefully designed by Aberdeen Performing Arts to ensure there was no stigma attached to the uptake of the free offer. Schools worked with a range of voluntary organisations across the city to ensure no child missed out on a gift at Christmas.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">the provision of Money Advisors	Parents and carers continue to be signposted to the support provided by money advisors which may include support with debt management, benefit advice and support to claim benefits. Data from April 2024 to December 2024 shows the following: Debt Cases 67 Total debts of £438,769.75 Benefit Checks 188 Benefit Claims 42 Financial Gains £257,731.52 Benefit Challenges 2	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">working with the third sector to support foodbanks and uniform swaps and target families in need of assistance	Local charities have continued to expand their offer of winter coats to identified schools across the city. Uniform swaps are available to all in most schools to ensure no stigma is attached to using this support. Schools are working with foodbanks to ensure families in need are signposted to the most appropriate source of support and some schools are collecting food to support foodbanks where this is appropriate for the context of the school.	
Partnership Delivery of the Family Support Model in keeping with the Promise		
Delivery of The Promise through:	Working in partnership with social work colleagues, officers are continuing to explore reasons for young people moving into placements out of	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reviewing oversight arrangements for those who are cared for out of authority 	<p>authority in order to establish systems or changes to current practice which could reduce the numbers of young people cared for out with the local authority.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> expanding our Edge of Care pilots to St Machar 	<p>Both Northfield and Lochside Associated School Group pilots have continued to support children, young people and families. Teams in both ASG's continue to undertake collaborative Continuous Professional Learning and have completed the Beacon House 4 module training - 'Developmental Trauma for Professionals'.</p> <p>The team has met to map out the next steps for supporting in St Machar building out from the experiences at Lochside and Northfield.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> supporting the development of our Family Support Model test 	<p>The lead has been appointed, and work has begun with key stakeholders to plan the implementation of test of change.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implementing our Request for Assistance 	<p>Following a review of the system requirements and the nature of the data to be processed, IT colleagues are bringing the development of the new Request for Assistance process in-house.</p> <p>IT colleagues hope to provide an update w/b 13 January on when in-house development work can begin. Once this has been confirmed, development resources can be transitioned from the current developer to the in-house team.</p>	
Addressing inequality		
<p>Continue to address inequality by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all secondary schools registering with Equally Safe at School and ensure key staff complete the e-module 	<p>In line with national guidance, all secondary schools are reviewing existing programmes with a view to registering on the Equally Safe in School website. Bucksburn Academy are engaging with Equally Safe at School (ESAS) as one of the Pilot schools. The experiences from this will support further schools' participation with the programme. Officers have been in contact with ESAS with a view to presenting an overview of their service at a future HT meeting.</p> <p>Schools will record incidences of gender based violence using SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module (BEM). All incidents of gender based violence will be tracked and reviewed as part of the ongoing audits into bullying incidents over session 2024/25. This will support the collection, monitoring and review of the data.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> secondary schools to review their RSHP curriculum 	<p>Schools are reviewing their Relationships and Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) curriculum to ensure it includes learning about equalities and gender-based violence.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continuing to support all secondary schools to establish effective systems to support LGBTQIA+ community in school 	<p>Schools continue to engage with Time for Inclusive Education. 400 teaching staff across 55 education settings have completed Stage 1 of the E-Learning Module. 3 Schools are involved in Stage 2 professional learning. 1 School has completed all the outcomes and there will be a further offer in January 2025.</p> <p>Schools continue to participate and work through the LGBT Charter programme. Aberdeen Grammar School and St Machar Academy have both achieved Silver. Additionally, 4 schools have achieved Bronze, and 2 schools are to start the journey. 4 Pillars have delivered LGBT training to 140 staff ensuring that there are key staff in our schools who are well placed to</p>	

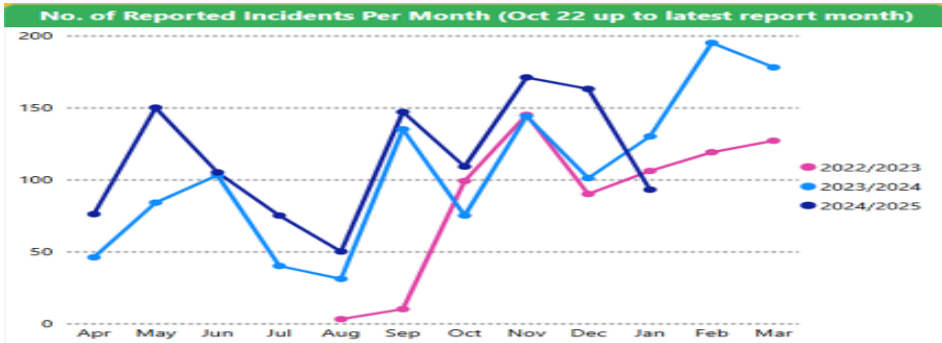
	support our LGBTQIA+ communities. Trained staff will deliver in their own schools and across the city ensuring sustainability beyond any purchased programme.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> primary schools to pilot primary Mentors Against Violence programme and full roll out across secondary 	<p>A Scottish Government pilot of a primary version of Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) is currently running in selected central belt schools; this will be rolled out nationally in session 25/26.</p> <p>ACC MVP trainers are supporting the independent sector running an MVP training course at Robert Gordon's College in January 2025 with space for 10 new ACC staff members to attend.</p>	
High quality professional learning for all		
<p>Maintain an agile professional learning programme for all ELC and school staff based on both QI outcomes and audits of need</p> <p>Continue to increase opportunities for collaboration at secondary subject level</p> <p>Establish an ELC support worker network</p> <p>Where possible, support staff to gain statutory qualifications in order to realise career progression and promotion and improve the staffing pipeline</p>	<p>Professional learning continues to be planned based on needs identified through Quality Improvement visits and inspection evidence.</p> <p>A programme of digital professional learning opportunities including work with Hable, Sumdog, Canva, TextHelp and SMART Technologies is ongoing, allowing staff to upskill and supporting the roll out of the Northern Lights project.</p> <p>Work continues on the Behaviour Action Plan, with 177 practitioners engaging with work on Being Restorative and 30 practitioners completing a Train the Trainer Keeping Trauma in Mind programme. Work with Maybo continues to progress, with around 1500 staff accessing e-Module online learning, face to face sessions on the November and February inset days and the commencement of the Train the Trainer programme to build capacity and support across the city.</p> <p>We are continuing to use ACC Learn to provide access to e-Learning opportunities, including two new supporting children with healthcare needs courses for staff and senior leaders.</p> <p>The Educational Psychology Service continue to offer the highly rated and regarded Emotional Literacy Support Assistants programme for support staff, including an Additional Support Needs Emotional Literacy Support Assistants cohort. All support staff involved receive career long Educational Psychology Service supervision of 12 hours per year as part of this programme for ongoing support and development of their skills to work on learners Emotional Literacy.</p> <p>The Educational Psychology Service continues to offer training on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotionally based School Non-Attendance Emotion Coaching Executive Functions Teenage Brain Development Seasons for Growth <p>The Educational Psychology Service are developing parent and family offers to train staff who work with families suffering from bereavement, loss and change to allow them to better support their children impacted in these areas.</p>	
Senior and Middle Leadership development		
Continue to deliver a programme for Middle Leaders to enhance leadership skills	The CLPL (Career Long Professional Learning) courses for early phase Middle Leaders continue to be very popular with all 5 sessions being very well attended. There is a clear cohort choosing to prioritise attendance at every session which is supporting consistency in their development.	

Engage with external professional learning opportunities to improve leadership capacity	<p>The most experienced Middle Leaders groups have attended 4 leadership sessions. Attendance is very good and high-quality, enthusiastic professional dialogue is effectively supporting leadership development. Attendees have benefitted from being assigned an ACC Head Teacher to coach them through a 360 self-evaluation and create a personal leadership action plan.</p> <p>10 of our Middle Leaders continue to progress through the Into Headship qualification. They are being well-supported by a HT who has recently completed the process. They are now halfway through gaining their qualification with their first academic assignment already submitted.</p>	
<p>Increase opportunities for middle leaders to participate in Quality Improvement activity</p> <p>Deliver newly appointed HT programme and review implementation</p>	<p>All middle leaders in school continue to have the opportunity to participate in quality improvement visits in their Trio or Quad. This has been extended to senior Early Years Practitioners in ELC ensuring specific actions for ELC are actioned timeously. Middle leaders report they see this opportunity as impactful and high quality professional learning.</p> <p>The newly appointed head teacher programme continues to be delivered when a new HT or acting HT takes up post.</p>	
Continue to support staff health and wellbeing		
<p>Deliver staff wellbeing surveys</p> <p>Continue to signpost staff to corporate supports for health and wellbeing and highlight case studies</p> <p>Monitor compliance in the application of corporate staffing policies</p>	<p>177 staff took part in Being Restorative training during the November in-set day. This was delivered by Education Scotland; a further 6 sessions will be delivered across the two in-set days.</p> <p>We have 30 members of staff trained as trainers for Keeping Trauma in Mind – they will cascade this training within their settings.</p> <p>SAMH/Penumbra continue to support our Senior pupils by delivering Suicide Prevention & Self-Harm sessions. Harlaw and Cults Academy are completed. Bucksburn and Aberdeen Grammar are planned for Term 3 of this session.</p> <p>The Educational Psychology Service offer Coaching, accessible to all school staff, and also Systemic EICs for Middle and Senior Leaders to discuss key issues or areas of practice relevant to them to find shared solutions, or support.</p>	
Monitor workforce to ensure our capacity to deliver for children and families		
<p>Monitor recruitment to ensure swift identification of any issues to be addressed.</p> <p>Build in performance management and absence reporting expectations for HT network and DHT network (CLPL planned)</p>	<p>The QIM (Quality Improvement Manager) with responsibility for staffing continues to monitor ongoing requests to recruit and work with schools, and colleagues in Talent to identify any emerging issues and address these quickly.</p> <p>Dates for training around performance and absence management will be confirmed with People & Citizen Services colleagues for 2025. Workforce planning for session 2024/25 has begun, taking account of any possible budget decisions which may be taken.</p>	
Continue to develop School Profiles		
Evaluate the consistency of effective use of school profiles	Data discussions in November 2024 between Quality improvement Officers (QIO) and school leaders demonstrated a continued spread of knowledge and understanding of school profiles. More experienced school leaders use the data contained within their school profile as a professional learning tool	

and ensure access for all	for their staff, increasing their understanding of data. The QIO team will continue to support understanding of school profiles through planned data discussions in February and May 2025.	
Implement improved tracking and reporting		
<p>Mandatory data training sessions for senior leaders which includes BGE (Broad General Education) tracker, Health & Wellbeing data, School Profiles, etc this should also cover analysis of data and planning next steps, and transition at all levels</p> <p>Data training for all staff to ensure accountability through the system</p> <p>City wide programme of moderation including work with university to ensure alignment with undergraduate training programme</p>	<p>As part of the Quality Improvement Visit time data is interrogated at class, faculty and school level with relevant staff in school.</p> <p>Senior Leaders can request Systemic Early Intervention Consultations from the Educational Psychology Service to support their data analysis or explore how to gather data for their Improvement Plans in relation to key aspects of performance at any point through the school year.</p> <p>A Moderation presentation has been developed for use by all settings to ensure a shared understanding of the moderation cycle. Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officers (QAMSOs) may support schools and ASGs in the delivery of this presentation and subsequent development work.</p>	
Collaborate with partners to join data sets when beneficial to do so		
Improve data sharing processes to ensure that all relevant data can be shared to support planning and implementation of interventions e.g. PEPAS, Health	A data sharing agreement is in place with Sport Aberdeen and has been agreed by all partners to allow data to be shared safely and the impact of interventions tracked more effectively.	
Increase central oversight of tracking data and PEF impact measures		
Continue to monitor the use of the Equity tracker and provide support through the Equity Network sessions	<p>Equity Trackers are reviewed by central officers as part of school QI visits with sampling of trackers carried out by the Attainment Adviser and QIM Closing the Gap.</p> <p>Equity Trackers are a standing item on the agenda for the Equity Network and support is available for individual schools from the central team and the Attainment Adviser. There is a need to fully embed these to ensure maximum impact .</p>	
Clear expectations around the Core Quality Indicators		
Implement the refreshed Quality Improvement Framework to help improve standards against the core Quality Indicators	<p>Central officers will continue to work collaboratively with schools and Associate Assessors to implement and evaluate the refreshed Quality Improvement Framework which was approved at Education and Children's Services committee in July 2024.</p> <p>This will allow further improvements to be presented to committee in July 2025.</p>	

Continually improve central Quality Improvement approaches		
Implement Quality Improvement Calendar (QIC) which provides well planned, focused quality improvement activity	The Quality Improvement Calendar continues to support schools to plan their own improvement activities in line with centralised activity. The QIC for 2025/26 is being developed and will be shared with school leaders before the Easter break. This will further ensure that all schools/services are fully informed, allowing for efficient planning for next session. Next session's QIC will include a Building Capacity page, outlining all professional learning opportunities for the session. The QIC will continue to be a live document.	
Evaluate the effectiveness of activities within the QIC to determine next steps	All activities contained within the calendar are being evaluated at the time of delivery and will be evaluated again in 6 months to evaluate the ongoing impact on our schools.	
Maintain approaches to collaborative improvement across the city		
<p>Continue to support delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant</p> <p>Align partnership forum activity with the family support model building on good practice in existence</p> <p>Refresh trio model and involve the Associate Assessors in supporting quality improvement activity.</p> <p>Review and develop collaboration with locality leads / QI team</p> <p>Improved transition across the city</p>	<p>All schools identify armed forces families at the application stage and offer support at local level.</p> <p>Officers are working with neighbouring local authorities to ensure the Covenant is known to all. Funding opportunities for projects will continue to be shared with all schools supporting armed forces children.</p> <p>The refreshed primary trios are working well providing less experienced HTs with mentors to support improvement. The monthly meetings are providing both support and challenge around self-evaluation and allowing Headteachers to develop relationships built on trust.</p> <p>Secondary Quads are meeting regularly with their assigned Associate Assessor. This structure is ensuring more intense support and challenge during Quality Improvement Visits as colleagues have a greater knowledge of each other's schools.</p> <p>Locality leads are working closely with the QIO team to ensure consistency in support and challenge across the early level.</p> <p>Literacy and numeracy progressions continue to be developed to support key transitions.</p>	
Delivery of Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan		
<p>Work with the parent forum to improve communication between schools and parents and increase parental engagement</p> <p>Stronger family series to be further developed</p>	<p>Officers have consulted city wide parent forum on the roll out of the behaviour plan and any other issues related to schools. Parent forum chairs and officers communicate frequently to address issues relating to communication in a timely manner.</p> <p>A single digital resource for parents is being prepared to be launched in Spring 2025. This will streamline the information available on the Parent Learning Hub and ACC central website.</p> <p>Planned Stronger Families Series session content was shared with the parent forum and adapted according to the feedback. This is now being accessed through guest ACC learn website. Content has been closely aligned to service priorities and the self-identified needs of parents and carers.</p>	
Develop and implement the Parental	The new Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan was approved by committee in November. An underlying action plan is now being used by	

Involvement & Engagement Plan	<p>officers to meet the priorities which were outlined. Communication has taken precedence as highlighted by committee members.</p> <p>The Educational Psychology Service have improved working with families in their Standards, Quality and Improvement plan and a new Educational Psychology Service working group has been established to make developments in this area, such as increased resources for families and taster training videos on key areas. Engagement with key partners in this area will be made to advance this work.</p>	
Accessibility Update		
Augmentative and alternative signage at learner appropriate height	The standard for school signage has been shared to schools across Aberdeen City and the school estates teams, schools are currently being supported to meet the minimum requirements.	
Consider suitability, accessibility and capacity within Victorian schools through feasibility study and options appraisal	The findings of the feasibility study, along with summaries of the feedback received from stakeholders, will be included within an Outline Business Case, which will be presented to the Council's Education and Children's Services Committee and Finance and Resources Committee in Spring 2025	
CIRCLE framework training delivered with partners across settings including use of Up and Away to support understanding of environments to meet needs.	Please see earlier update on CIRCLE.	
Develop guidance to meet a range of sensory needs	A bespoke Sensory Ambassador programme has been created for 2024-25 and includes book study, master classes and network meetings. A Sensory Advisory Group has been established to agree the programme and support materials. This group is made by professionals from Education, NHS and third sector partner SensationALL. A Padlet of resources including a bespoke sensory questionnaire, has been produced to support Ambassadors within their own schools.	
Child's planning format which is accessible for learners	Pilot is ongoing.	
Empower children and young people to have their voice heard when experiencing child protection processes through effective use of alternative communication systems	Bucksburn Academy ASN Wing continue to work towards achieving Makaton friendly status with members of staff identified to undertake Makaton, and Talker training. Orchard Brae School staff are part of a national group, developing materials to support practitioners build their knowledge and skills to support pupil voice and agency for those learners with complex additional support needs	
Access to information through a single digital source of information for parents, carers and disabled young people	Single source website being developed in partnership with all stakeholders including young people, parents, Education, Social work and Health	
Implement "One Good Adult" programme	Implemented	
Ensure summary information regarding additional support needs is accessible and available in a variety of formats in accordance with legislation	This will be taken into account when developing the website above.	
Behaviour Plan		
<p>Improve the consistency of incident reporting by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing to investigate how to send an 	<p>Work is continuing on developing a system of automation.</p> <p>Guidance has been developed which has taken cognisance of Included, Engaged and Involved part 3 (IEI 3).</p>	

<p>automatic notification to staff through Core HR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the guidance flowchart to further exemplify expectations of the manager/employee post incident discussion to correctly determine if the incident is reportable through Core HR • Ensuring appropriate linkage to Prejudice Incident Reporting arrangements which will have to be reviewed following publication of national guidance on Preventing and Responding to Racism and Racist incidents. • Reviewing arrangements further in light of the National Behaviour Plan (to include clear definitions when Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2 and Respect for All has been refreshed) 	<p>All definitions have been updated, are clear and have accompanying how to and when to information. This has been shared with the Safeguarding group to allow for comment and will be out to schools in January.</p>
<p>Gain further assurance around the knowledge of/compliance with agreed policies by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-designing a mandatory E-Learning module for all staff to cover key policies and procedures with TUs to include Person Centred Risk Assessment, Incident Reporting, Exclusion, Health and Safety and Whistleblowing (this will be subject to further review following publication of refreshed Included, Engaged and Involved) • Implementing E-Learning module as part of induction arrangements/mandatory yearly training and reporting compliance to ECS Committee 	<p>The e learning module continues to be available to all staff through the ACC Learn platform. An audit of staff still to complete is being undertaken and will be shared with schools by the end of January. This data will be provided to committee next cycle.</p> <p>An Induction programme for staff has been drafted in consultation with the safeguarding group. This includes all mandatory training and training logs are being designed to track compliance.</p> <p>All schools have updated their health and safety policies.</p> <p>Incident Recording and reporting</p>  <p>The trend data evidences a phase shift in incident reporting and recording linked to the early implementation stages of the Behaviour Plan around increased policy compliance and understanding.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Health and Safety policy exemplar template to include incident reporting and expected collaboration with TU H&S reps • All schools to update their Health and Safety policy in keeping with local exemplar • All schools to add a Health and Safety place holder in whole staff meeting agendas • Short Health and Safety briefings to be developed in collaboration with Trade Unions and posted on the Edu-Sharepoint site 	<p>Data for January 2025 is a partial reflection of recorded incidents which is updated over the course of the early weeks of the subsequent month as administrative system inputting is completed.</p> <p>Health and Safety Incident and Near Miss information is currently scrutinised in detail through the joint management/TU forum, and in the context of quarterly reporting through the Staff Governance Committee.</p> <p>Data from Quarter 2 2024/25 is reflected in the attached link Health and Safety Report Appendix, and the collation of related training uptake information is currently being developed</p>
<p>Refresh Behaviour and Relationship policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools to provide the central team with copies of current policies by May 2024 • Undertake an audit of what is working well with regard to nurturing approaches by the end of October 2024 • Engage in peer learning around risk assessment, managing bullying, distressing and violent incidents (including support for pupils and parents) in keeping with the National Plan • All schools to table the National Plan with key stakeholders when published • Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT) safeguarding group to develop an agreement and guidance note for schools based on the refreshed Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2 including relevant definitions • Each school community to lead a local refresh of their Behaviour/Relationship 	<p>The safeguarding group (comprising of officers, school staff and trade unions) continues to meet fortnightly.</p> <p>A copy of the updated guidance <i>supporting learners a relational and rights focused approach to physical intervention and seclusion</i> which incorporates Included, Engaged and Involved Pt3 has been circulated to Safeguarding group and LNCT members for comment before full release to schools (February 2025). The new guidance will be shared with school staff during the February In-service day.</p> <p>Each action is being delivered within timescales.</p>

<p>Policy to reflect changes in refreshed Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2 in collaboration with and through consultation with stakeholders (parents, school staff, young people and recognised Trade Unions). Policies to include agreement of how policy effectiveness will be monitored and reflect national best practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of school behaviour policies to be considered as part of quality assurance arrangements for 2024/25 through the updated Quality Improvement Framework in July 2024 	
<p>Ensure robust provision of risk assessments by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a generic staff risk assessment into the general school risk assessment process (this will be subject to review when the refreshed Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2 is published) • Make an accessible whole school stress risk assessment approach available to support the monitoring of staff wellbeing (and include reference to this in the Health and Safety guidance) • Collaboratively reviewing and updating Person Centred Risk Assessment guidance to include escalation arrangements, FAQs, the frequency of review alongside considerations of how best to provide targeted support to the young person during this period 	<p>A generic risk assessment has been shared with all schools and will be updated regularly. The health and safety team are creating a central site to gather all school risk assessments.</p> <p>An approach to stress risk assessment is in development and will be worked on with trade unions and the headteacher group.</p> <p>The e-module will provide guidance on the creation and review of Person Centred Risk Assessment (PCRAs) and this will be accompanied by written guidance. The module has been published, and the guidance is currently being developed. This new guidance will include reference to grab and go PCRAs which provide key information for supply staff working in a school.</p> <p>Debrief guidance has been agreed and has been distributed to schools.</p> <p>Quality assurance of PCRAs continues to be reviewed during quality improvement visits .</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance to shape post-incident discussion to encourage reflection and discourage blame (link to debrief guidance) • Quality Assurance process over 2024/25 to include sampling of Person Centred Risk Assessment processes 	
<p>Supporting staff by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating the impact of the whistleblowing form to determine next steps by July 2024 • Regularly reminding staff of corporate wellbeing supports through the education newsletter • Developing debrief guidance (including decompression time) to be agreed at LNCT and issued by July 2024 • Clarifying location of Education Scotland resources to support improvement at school level • Clarifying how schools should enable Police investigations • Resilience training offered to schools through Winning Scotland / Able-Futures 	<p>Corporate wellbeing supports are shared through the education wellbeing newsletter to ensure all staff in schools have access to all supports available. Education will be part of the corporate pulse checks in relation to health and wellbeing.</p> <p>We are awaiting information on the publication of resources to support improvement in relationships at school level. Guidance on enabling police investigations will be discussed as part of the safeguarding group activity.</p> <p>8 schools have signed up for the offer of resilience training from Winning Scotland following a presentation at an HT meeting (St Machar Academy, Countesswells Primary, Kingsford Primary, Bucksburn Academy, Cults Academy, Airyhall Primary, Lochside Academy and Hazlehead Primary).</p> <p>Able futures continues to be offered to individuals through the regular newsletter and staff who access rate the support offered highly.</p>
<p>Further build the capacity/capability of staff by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to deliver Compassionate and Connected Communities • Continued focus on the CIRCLE framework • Continuing to roll out CALM theory (de-escalation) training to all school communities • Continuing to offer bespoke training through the Educational Psychology Service • Reviewing the programme of Professional Learning/Thinglinks to 	<p>A professional learning offer that blends Maybo and CALM training to support staff has been devised. This will be rolled out as part of the in-service day offer in February. CALM trainers continue to support individuals and schools when required.</p> <p>Officers have also resourced a suite of learning opportunities that will be available on both February in service days. This will include input from Educational Psychology Service, Complex Additional Support Needs Teacher, Autism Outreach and the ASN central team.</p> <p>A Sensory Ambassador programme has been developed, to gain and share deeper knowledge, skills and confidence regarding sensory considerations to enable 'sensory smart' schools.</p> <p>Restorative practice sessions with Education Scotland were undertaken by Brimmond, Stoneywood, Kittybrewster, Manor Park and Holy Family schools in November in service days.</p>

<p>increase the range of professional learning opportunities for all school staff by August</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing to work with head teacher colleagues to develop and implement a spending proposal for £33,000 received from Scottish Government for staff training by the end of May Programme of restorative practice training being put in place from August 2024 Implement Restorative Justice training (currently being negotiated) Consider PSE review as part of National Improvement Planning 2024/25 	
<p>Improve knowledge of the legislative framework by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-designing a Webinar on the legal framework with Trade Unions Launching the Webinar and ensuring its availability to all school staff 	<p>The exclusion webinar providing legal advice is available to all schools. This is the first in a series of webinars being developed to support schools with legislation.</p>
<p>Ensure effective mechanisms are in place to support continuous improvement by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing the Terms of Reference of the Safeguarding School Staff group in collaboration with the Trade Unions and the Health and Safety team (a further review in light of the National Behaviour Plan may be required) Establishing a Terms of Reference for the Incident Reporting Group in collaboration with the Trade Unions and Health and Safety team in light of the National Behaviour Plan. Commit to long term support of the nominated head teacher group to 	<p>The terms of reference for the safeguarding and Incident reporting group have been updated and agreed with all stakeholders.</p> <p>The HT group has continued with a focus on the new provision at Riverbank.</p> <p>A directory of support is currently under construction by a Complex Additional Support Needs Teacher from Orchard Brae.</p>

shape our use of resources to support those with a range of wellbeing and ASN needs.	
<p>Continue to focus on a positive culture by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking all head teachers to provide evidence of current arrangements for listening to staff and commit to keeping arrangements under review • Continuing to distribute wellbeing survey to staff (Trade Unions to help promote completion) • Collaborative review of learning from the staff wellbeing surveys with Trade Unions • Head teachers, central staff and Trade Unions to all encourage open and blame free reporting in all establishments • Trade Unions and central officers to exemplify expectations around respectful relationships and interactions for all staff 	<p>This has been gathered and will be used to share best practice across the local authority, informal feedback from our recent Thematic Inspection of the Education Service was complementary of our positive culture.</p> <p>Corporate wellbeing surveys will be distributed, the latest survey closed on Tuesday 14 January and once collated feedback will be shared with TUs as part of the safeguarding meeting. All managers are aware of the need to promote open and blame free reporting of incidents</p>
<p>Engagement with parents and carers on behaviour and relationships by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tabling this Action Plan with the City-Wide Parent Forum for comment • Tabling the National Plan at Parent Council meetings • Actively involving parents/carers in the review of Behaviour/Relationship policies • Work with Trade Unions to better understand the levels of violence from parents and carers and establish a protocol for staff who face aggression from parents and carers 	<p>The Chief Officer has a standing item on all parent forum meetings to update on progress of the plan. Representatives then share these updates at their local meetings to ensure the information is disseminated across the whole parent body.</p> <p>A working group of TUs, parent representatives and central officers has been established</p>
Committee business	The review of the Devolved School Management scheme is planned for 2025.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Devolved School Management scheme as planned • Take the agreed Action Plan through the Education and Children's Services Committee and report any impact on recruitment • Review the plan regularly in light of any updated national guidance • External review of our Whistleblowing Policy 	<p>All staff continue to have access to the corporate whistle blowing policy.</p>
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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	18 February 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Inspection Reporting
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/25/029
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne/Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Shona Milne/Graeme Simpson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.6

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report details the outcome of inspection reports published by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) and The Care Inspectorate 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;
- 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; and
- 2.3 Instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to utilise learning from the National Thematic Report: Local authority approaches to support school improvement to inform the development of the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Plan and Quality Improvement Framework for 2025/26.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Education Service utilises 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*.

3.2 Education Scotland Inspection of Cornhill School and Nursery Class

In September 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate visited Cornhill School and Nursery Class to undertake a short model inspection. During the visit they talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The very effective leadership team who provide strong direction to the school and nursery. They have created a very warm, inclusive, and nurturing ethos where all children feel genuinely included and enjoy their learning.
- The highly skilled staff team who work well together to provide motivating learning experiences across a range of environments. As a result, children engage very enthusiastically in their learning and make very good progress.
- Staff plan very effectively to meet the learning needs of all children across the school. Very effective partnership working ensures that all children benefit from a wide range of enhanced interventions to support their progress in learning.
- Children who are kind and courteous and thrive in their school community. They are proud of their school and demonstrate a very strong commitment to achieve the best that they can.
- The strong approach to tracking children's progress across the school and nursery.

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

- Staff should continue with plans to develop progression pathways and tracking of progress across all curricular areas.
- In the primary school, senior leaders should review approaches to planning for children with part-time timetables.
- In the nursery, practitioners should review the use of space and resources to reflect the changing needs of the children.

Cornhill School was evaluated as Very Good across the quality indicators

Primary School Quality Indicators	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	Very Good (5)
Raising attainment and achievement	Very Good (5)

Cornhill staff are delighted that their hard work to develop an inclusive ethos has been recognised. Inspectors were particularly impressed with the multi-agency work in place to ensure the needs of all learners are met.

The school was in Category 2 prior to the Inspection and will now move into Category 1. The team will be given the opportunity to share their practice with others through Headteacher meetings and the ongoing work of the quality improvement trios.

Cornhill ELC was evaluated as Good across the quality indicators by the Education Scotland Team.

Nursery Class Quality Indicators	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	Good (4)
Securing children's progress	Good (4)

Care Inspectorate evaluations of Cornhill ELC Provision were also positive.

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

Staff in the ELC were happy with the Inspectors findings and particularly pleased that the nurturing approaches were highlighted as a positive by both inspecting bodies. Inspectors reported that the setting was well led, and parents and children were involved in identifying and evaluation improvements.

The ELC was in Category 1 prior to the inspection and will remain in Category 1. The good practice highlighted will be shared with other settings across the city through planned ELC update sessions and offering opportunities for other practitioners to visit and talk to the team.

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

3.4 Education Scotland Further Inspection of Dyce Academy

A team of HMIE inspectors first inspected Dyce Academy in January 2023, with a letter published in April 2023. The key priorities identified during the first inspection were to improve attainment; develop robust monitoring and tracking systems and work to improve the quality and challenge within learning and teaching.

A return visit by HMIE inspectors to Dyce Academy took place in October 2024, with the letter published on 4th February 2025. During this return visit, inspectors found a stronger culture of aspiration across the school, more effective systems to monitor progress and improve outcomes for young people and, with leadership from the headteacher, saw a significant drive to improve the quality and consistency of learners' experiences. The recognition of the progress made by the school is really pleasing, and that the priority areas

relating to monitoring and tracking and learning and teaching have been overtaken.

The final priority area focused on raising attainment. Inspectors found that the whole school strategy to monitor attainment of young people is well understood across the school and that staff are using data more effectively to target strategies to improve young people's attainment. However, it is recognised that although young people's attainment is beginning to improve in a few areas, more time is needed for the school's work to impact positively on improving the attainment of all young people.

The headteacher has created an action plan to drive further gains in attainment for young people at Dyce Academy. In summary, these include:

- Continue to improve the reliability of data in S1-S3
- Improving Literacy at Level 6 and Numeracy at Levels 5 and 6 within the senior phase
- Sustain the improvements in attainment at level 5 in S4
- Improving attainment in S5 and S6 with more young people gaining level 6 qualifications (breadth and depth measures)
- Targeting improvement for identified groups of learners in S4, S5 and S6

HMIE inspectors acknowledge that progress has been made and have confirmed that they will ask for a report on progress for Dyce Academy from the local authority within twenty-three months of the inspection. This is to allow the school time to demonstrate further attainment gains for young people.

The action plan can be found in Appendix A

The letter to parents following the visit can be found [here](#).

3.5 Education Scotland Inspection of Mile End School and Nursery Class

In November 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Mile End Primary School and Nursery Class to undertake a short model inspection. During the visit Inspectors talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

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

- The positive relationships evident between children and between children and staff across the school and nursery. This supports them to engage well in their learning.
- Teachers across the school ensure children experience effectively planned learning across the curriculum. All staff work well together to improve learning outcomes for children, including those with who require additional support with their learning.
- The effective approaches to tracking and monitoring children's attainment and achievements across the school.

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

- Staff across the school and nursery should continue to improve the consistency of approaches to high-quality learning and teaching.
- Staff should increase opportunities for children across the school and nursery to extend and apply their learning in a broader range of real-life contexts
- Staff in the nursery should continue to develop newly introduced approaches to tracking children's progress across early level.

Mile End School was evaluated Good for both quality indicators

Primary School Quality Indicators	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	Good (4)
Raising attainment and achievement	Good (4)

Mile End staff are pleased inspectors could see the impact of work taken forward through their improvement plan and that effective tracking systems were recognised.

The school was in **Category 2** prior to the Inspection and will now move into **Category 1**. Staff will be given the opportunity to share the positives highlighted by the inspection team through ongoing quality improvement activity.

Mile End ELC was evaluated as satisfactory across the quality indicators by the Education Scotland Team.

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

Staff feel that the report accurately reflects where they are on their improvement journey. Changes to key staff, both seniors and DHT, over the last 2 years has impacted on progress made. Although clear systems for planning and assessment are in place, they are not yet fully embedded and so just beginning to support staff to have a greater understanding of children's attainment and next steps. Inspectors noted their confidence that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so will make no more visits in connection with this inspection.

The ELC was in **Category 2** of the Quality Improvement Framework and will remain there following the inspection. The locality lead will work closely with the Senior Leadership Team and ELC team to support the implementation of the action plans already in place. ELC staff will be given the opportunity to visit settings with grades of good or better in order to support improvement.

The ELC action plan is at Appendix B
The full report can be found [here](#)

3.6 Harlaw Academy Update

Harlaw Academy have made positive progress on addressing the three priorities from the recent HMle letter relating to leadership and improvement, learning and teaching and raising attainment. A full self-evaluation and improvement plan has now been created to build upon the *Plan on a Page* work by the school community.

Stakeholders including young people and staff are now regularly involved in working and focus groups to agree how best to take forward improvement activity. Appointments have been made to key middle and senior leadership team vacancies and roles and responsibilities have been clarified.

Staff continue to work on individual action plans related to their own professional development and a programme of quality professional learning from HMle Associate Assessors has been developed and will be delivered from January 2025.

The new tracking system to monitor progress and intervene to support young people is embedding, with improved access to quality data. The planned changes to the curriculum structure in S4 are being implemented through consultation with stakeholders and will be introduced when the timetable changes in June 2025.

A [service update](#) with further detail, as requested by Committee in November, was published in mid-January 2025.

3.7 Care Inspectorate Inspections

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 **Great Western @ Broomhill**, a funded provider setting in the Broomhill area of Aberdeen, received an unannounced inspection on 29th and 30th October 2024. Inspectors noted that children were cared for by nurturing, supportive staff, who knew them well, in a welcoming, secure environment. Children were happy and enjoyed varied play opportunities. Staff supported children in their play and were being supported to further develop their skills in planning for, and extending, learning opportunities for children. Continuous improvement helped promote developmentally appropriate play spaces for children. Quality assurance practices effectively identified areas for improvement. These were actioned and evaluated for effectiveness. Children were cared for by a consistent staff team who worked well together. The Care Inspectors evaluated the service as follows:

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

The team 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 universal support, as the setting will remain in **Category 1** of the Quality Improvement Framework.

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

- 3.9 **Hanover Street ELC**, a Local Authority setting in Hanover Street School, received an unannounced inspection on the 19th and 20th October 2024. Inspectors reported that children were settled and happily engaged in play and learning. They received nurturing care and support from staff who knew them well. Children mostly led their own play through a well-balanced mix of activities and play experiences. The staff team were very motivated and enthusiastic about their roles and were keen to continue to take on training to develop their practice. Inspectors noted that the setting should continue to reflect on the environment both indoors and outside to ensure the children are accessing a very good range of resources to support their play and learning and offer challenge where appropriate and consider how they collate their self-evaluation information to allow the team to successfully measure the impact of developments. The Care Inspectorate evaluated the service as follows:

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation Nov'23	Recent Evaluation Nov 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?	Good (4)	Very Good (5)

The team at Hanover Street are delighted with the very positive report and will continue to work together to provide high quality experiences for children and their families.

Hanover Street ELC will move from **Category 2 to Category 1** of the Quality Improvement Framework and be given the opportunity share their practice with others through ELC manager meetings.

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

- 3.10 **Kingswellies Nursery**, a Funded Provider setting located in the Kingswells area of Aberdeen, received an unannounced inspection from the Care Inspectorate which took place between the 22nd and 24th November 2024. Inspectors noted that staff knew children well and generally used caring, nurturing approaches in their interactions with children. The children were supported well during mealtimes and personal care routines. Most children were happy and engaged in their play. Staff supported children in their play. however, it was noted that some opportunities to support children to extend their learning were missed. Children were cared for in a welcoming environment, with age-appropriate play spaces. Most quality assurance practices were effective in supporting positive outcomes for children. These could be developed further to more consistently identify areas for improvement.

The staff team were well-supported and worked effectively together. The Care Inspectorate evaluated the service as follows:

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

The team are pleased with the feedback and will continue to work on their established plan to realise further improvements. The Locality Lead will continue to offer universal support, as the setting will remain in **Category 1** of the Quality Improvement Framework.

A copy of the full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.11 **Little Clouds Nursery**, a Funded Provider setting in the Nigg area of Aberdeen, received an unannounced inspection between 5th and 7th November 2024. Inspectors noted that children were cared for by staff who knew them well. and they experienced positive, caring relationships with the adults caring for them. All staff were dedicated and keen to improve outcomes for children.

However, inspectors noted that children's play experiences were not supported sufficiently to encourage them to follow their interests and promote suitable learning. Play activities were too often adult led and some were not age or stage appropriate. Infection prevention and control practices were identified which could affect the health and safety of children. Quality assurance practices were not effectively identifying areas for improvement. The Care Inspectorate evaluated the service as follows:

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Weak (2)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)

The Locality Lead will support the service to improve, and a detailed action plan will be created to ensure all areas are addressed. The setting will be issued a Service Improvement Period (SIP) letter and will take part in the Care Inspectorate Improvement Programme. The service will move from **Category 2** to **Category 3** of the Quality Improvement Framework.

An action plan can be found at Appendix C.

A copy of the full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.12 **Kaimhill ELC**, a Local Authority setting in Kaimhill School, received an unannounced inspection on 4 and 5 December 2024. Inspectors noted that children were very well supported by staff who were consistently responsive to their needs. Good quality child led play, learning and development

opportunities were available to children throughout the day. Children enjoyed regular outdoor play which supported both their physical and mental positive wellbeing. There was a clear commitment across the team to continual improvement which helped to ensure consistent high-quality care, support and learning. Children were supported by a motivated and skilled staff team who worked together to provide high quality, inclusive experiences for all children. The Care Inspectorate evaluated the service as follows:

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

The staff team were delighted that their strengths had been recognised and will continue to drive improvement plans to ensure positive outcomes for the children and families. Kaimhill will move from **Category 2** to **Category 1** of the Quality Improvement Framework.

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

- 3.13 **Greyhope ELC**, a Local Authority setting in Greyhope School, received an unannounced inspection between 7th and 9th October 2024. Inspectors noted that overall, children were settled, happy and enjoyed their time at nursery. Many had made good friendships and enjoyed laughing and playing together. Children enjoyed playing outdoors in all weathers and were supported to dress suitably for the weather conditions. Play and learning opportunities should now continue to be developed to promote children with challenge and develop their skills. Strong leadership within the service promoted a culture of continuous improvement. Staff were committed to developing their skills and knowledge.

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation Oct23	Recent Evaluation Oct 24
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Adequate(3)
How good is our setting?	Adequate(3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)

This was the first inspection since moving to a new setting and inspectors noted that staff and children are settling well into the new building and are looking forward to further developing the service. There had been a number of changes to the staff team between the inspections with 5 members moving on to other settings including one of the senior EYPs. The senior leaders attended the pedagogical leadership training from Education Scotland, and this will be followed up with support from the locality leads. Self-evaluation had improved since the last visit and families and children are now more routinely involved in providing feedback. Although there was evidence of increased challenge to extend and deepen learning this was not yet consistent with all practitioners,

and this continues to be an area for improvement. During feedback inspectors shared that they had confidence in the leadership and the plan in place to realise further improvements.

Greyhope ELC will remain in Category 3 of the Quality Improvement Framework to support the changes required to develop the service.

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

The updated action plan can be found at Appendix D.

- 3.14 Kittybrewster ELC, a Local Authority setting in Kittybrewster School, received an unannounced inspection in January 2025. Inspectors noted that children experienced caring and loving interactions. Their care needs were met by staff who knew them well. They were cared for in a spacious and well considered environment with direct access to outdoors. Children enjoyed appetising and nutritious snacks and meals in a calm and unhurried environment. Staff worked well as a team and were committed to improving their practice and developing the service. Self-evaluation and quality assurance processes led to improved outcomes for children.

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation May 23	Recent Evaluation Jan 25
How good is our care, play and learning?	Weak (2)	Adequate(3)
How good is our setting?	Good (4)	Good (4)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)
How good is our staff team?	Weak(2)	Good (4)

Staff will continue to develop their planning approaches to ensure children experience depth and challenge in their learning. Personal plans will be further developed to enable staff to fully meet the needs of all individual children. Kittybrewster ELC will remain in **Category 3** of the Quality Improvement Framework to support processes to be embedded as they continue with their improvement journey.

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

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve. Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *Taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Risk of not improving outcomes for learners	Positive engagement with Inspection agencies and sharing learning across the system where appropriate.	L	Yes
Compliance	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Positive engagement with Inspection agencies and sharing learning across the system where appropriate.	L	Yes
Operational	Risk that schools/ELC settings do not accurately identify the areas for improvement that will make the greatest difference to learners	Quality assurance arrangements in place to validate self-evaluation gradings	L	Yes
Financial	No risks identified			
Reputational	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a reputational risk to the Council	High levels of assurance are taken Quality Improvement and Inspection visits	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum	

choice and implement progressive choices. Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.	External scrutiny provides helpful assurance that there is sufficient focus on helping young people recover from the pandemic and that the school self-evaluation and improvement plan is well positioned to support a closing of the poverty related attainment gap.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.	Engagement with 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.
Regional and City Strategies Regional Cultural Strategy Prevention Strategy Children's Services Plan National Improvement Framework Plan	Engagement with the Inspectorate is fully aligned to the city prevention strategy. Work to address poverty and improvement in the Children's services plan, the Child Poverty Action Plan and the National Improvement Framework Plan is also supported through external scrutiny.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

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

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Dyce Academy action plan
Appendix B – Mile End ELC action plan
Appendix C – Little Clouds action plan
Appendix D – Greyhope action plan

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix A - DYCE ACADEMY HMIE ACTION PLAN 2024-2026

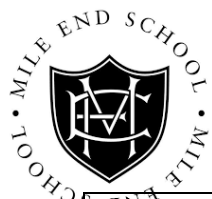
	Inspection Letter Identified Priority	Action Plan	Outcomes
1	There is a need to improve the reliability of data about young people's attainment in S1-S3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Robust moderation work will be in place both externally and internally across all subject areas, including across P7-S1 for literacy and numeracy. - Classroom observation to focus on moderated units of work. - Tracking of progression with attainment in all subject areas from S3 into S4. - Tracking progress between levels using 'PupilTracking' allows for more accurate assessment of attainment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moderation will identify any improvement that is required in the learning, teaching and assessment materials being used to assess attainment across S1-S3, improving the validity and reliability of the assessment evidence and attainment of young people - SLT and authority supported observations will provide quality assurance evidence that the moderation work is leading to improvements in learning, teaching and assessment in S1-S3 - Greater correlation between S3 attainment data and S4 attainment data will validate the reliability of attainment across S1-S3. - Tracking progress within a level will allow for more reliable assessment of young people's attainment within S1-S3.
2	There is a need to improve young people's literacy and numeracy in the senior phase. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In S4 maintain improvements with L5 Literacy - In S5 & S6 improve attainment with L6 literacy - In S4 improve attainment with L5 Numeracy - In S5 & S6 improve attainment with L6 Numeracy 	<p><u>Literacy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prioritise Literacy assessment at the highest possible level prior to the exams for all borderline pupils. - Pilot approach for pupils not doing H English to pursue L6 Literacy through their work in Social Subjects with support from the English team. - Bespoke L6 Literacy course offered in S5 & S6 from 2024-25 onwards. - Develop input to subject choice process to increase uptake of H English and L6 Literacy <p><u>Numeracy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use S3 course to identify pupils into either Applications of Maths or Maths, or both at the start of S4 to support a focused approach throughout S4. - Focused numeracy period in S4 to support completion and assessment prior to exam diet in May for as many pupils as possible at the highest possible level. Prioritise borderline pupils. - Bespoke L6 Numeracy course offered in S5 & S6 from 2024-25 onwards. - Develop input to subject choice process to increase uptake of H Maths and L6 Numeracy - Introduction of Higher Applications of Maths to provide further progression routes. - Targeted homework programme to be implemented to support remediation following prelim outcomes. - ACC providing subject specific CPL to support improvement in L&T in Maths and Numeracy February Inservice 2025. 	<p><u>Literacy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve attainment by maximising Literacy attainment at all levels and increasing presentations - Increase progression routes for pupils to achieve L6 Literacy outwith Higher English increasing presentations <p><u>Numeracy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Earlier coursing and dedicated numeracy focus will support improvements in attainment in numeracy - Improve attainment by maximising numeracy attainment at all levels and increasing presentations - Increase progression routes for pupils to achieve L6 Numeracy outwith Higher Maths, through introduction of Higher Applications of Maths and L6 Numeracy. - Incorporate use of planned, targeted homework activities throughout year to support consolidation and remediation leading to improved attainment. - Bespoke professional learning for the faculty to support learning and teaching approaches, and supported quality assurance of implementation will ensure improvements are being embedded, leading to improved attainment. <p><u>Literacy & Numeracy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce withdrawals from L5 and L6 literacy and numeracy leading to increased presentations. - Improved attainment through use of targeted interventions. - Quality assurance through SLT lesson observations will ensure improvements are embedded across literacy and numeracy leading to improved attainment.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Faculty QA – lesson observation cycle to be supported by Maths Specialists from AGS. - Adoption of resources from ACC Multiply Portal to support improvements in L&T. <p><u>Literacy & Numeracy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application of Presentation Policy following estimate diet to support increase in presentation numbers. - Use of Faculty Tracker and Interventions - Ongoing moderation work to extend to Literacy/Numeracy to continue to build confidence levels and validate assessment. - Improvements to learning and teaching to drive improved attainment – pace and challenge focus 	
3	<p>There is a need to improve the attainment data of Senior Phase pupils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sustain improvements in attainment achieved in S4 - Improve the attainment data of S5 pupils - Build on improvements in attainment S6 at level 6 - Improve attainment of lower 20% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further embed use of progression trackers during subject choice discussions, and implement greater scrutiny over subject choice on a pupil by pupil basis. - Introduction of wider achievement courses in each stage of the SP – Leadership in S4 and S6 and First Aid in S5 & S6 - Remove the study period in S5 and S6 Higher courses from session 2025-26 allowing for 5 taught periods for each course. - Mentoring to be introduced for targeted pupils based on evidence gathered through robust tracking. - Consistent application of presentation policy. Additional scrutiny to be incorporated into course change process. - SLT lesson observations will focus on pace and challenge. Faculty and individual self-evaluation will also be completed in order to establish baseline. - CPL will be implemented to address needs identified through evaluation – use of skilled questioning, use of ICT to support differentiation, use of differentiated success criteria to provide appropriate challenge for all learners. Second SLT observation cycle will look to ensure improvements are being embedded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This will add rigour to our subject choice processes ensuring we are as ambitious for our learners as possible with our coursing at all stages. - By adding greater breadth of attainment through wider achievement courses we are supporting the wider skills development of our young people whilst raising their overall attainment. - By adding 20% more teaching time to our Higher courses we are giving greater support and guidance to our learners which will support consolidation and should positively impact attainment across all subject areas. -Targeted support provision and encouragement for those youngsters who are facing additional challenge or who are borderline with their attainment will support greater engagement with learning and subsequently attainment. -The additional rigour brought through the presentation policy will support our ambition for our learners and keep a focus on presentation levels. - Ongoing whole school CPL on learning and teaching will target areas of development that have been identified and evidence of impact in the classroom will be evidenced in our observation cycle. Improved learning and teaching practice will support our raising attainment agenda.
4	<p>There is a need to improve the attainment of young people affected by socio-economic disadvantage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focused tracking of attainment of FSM pupils throughout the BGE and Senior Phase at all levels and across all subject areas - Mentoring offered to PEF pupils to support in run up to exam diet - Study packs to be made available to all FSM pupils. - Revision materials made available to all FSM pupils through use of ACHIEVE and SCHOLAR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data collation has given real clarity to where our gap for FSM pupils all sit and awareness will be raised and careful tracking will be monitored to allow for planned interventions to be put in place where necessary to support improved attainment for this cohort of pupils. - Additional support will be made available to our FSM pupils and they will be encouraged to engage with this through the mentoring provision that will be made available.



Early Learning and Childcare Setting					
Improvement Outcomes	Measures of Success	Actions Required	Timescales	Resources	R A G
What do we hope to achieve?	How will we know this has been achieved? <i>What evidence will we have?</i>	What do we need to do?		Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)	
1.2 Leadership of Learning – NIF Priority - Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the center of education					
More involvement and sharing of practice within our own wider school setting and other settings and professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links built up with Trio School nursery staff. • Practice shared and ideas and discussions had on a professional level. • Minutes of meetings, records of discussions kept • EYPs to be given the opportunity to visit other settings during school holidays • Develop more links with school opportunities for celebrating achievement–POW, values awards, assembly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships of SEYPs put into place. • SEYPs meet termly to discuss improvements and share innovative practice • EYP/SW visits arranged to other settings during holidays • Attend city wide training • Participate in termly SEYP locality meetings 	By June 25	SEYP Lead	

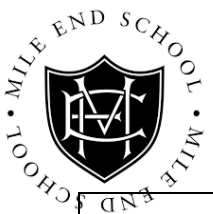
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment – NIF Priority - Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy					
<p>New planning format created to ensure both intentional planning and responsive planning is relevant, adapting to pupil need. Planning bundles linked to school context for learning Our Worlds</p> <p>Embed and monitor new planning to ensure and record coverage across the curriculum .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using city format for planning – intentional planning and responsive planning Journey of learning can be seen in Seesaw shared with parents Planning linked to Our World contexts for learning Children can share the story of their learning in discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHT and SEYP training in new city planning format Staff meeting to introduce city wide planning format Weekly senior/DHT meeting to ensure shared understanding and knowledge of planning Develop staff responsibility structure for senior to mentor/quality assure EYP and support worker Senior/EYP fortnightly check in to quality assure planning Ongoing reviews of planning by DHT/SEYP 	<p>Sept 24</p> <p>Sept 24</p> <p>Ongoing from Oct 24</p> <p>Nov 24</p> <p>In-service</p> <p>Complete embedded by June 25</p>	<p>DHT Lead</p> <p>SEYPs support then lead to EYP/SW</p>	
<p>Staff quality interactions with the children focusing on learning, curiosity,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement checklist to highlight criteria to evidence quality interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-service to look at what makes a quality interaction, using Realising The Ambition, Setting The Table. 	<p>May in-service</p> <p>May In Service</p>	<p>DHT Lead</p> <p>SEYPs support then lead to EYP/SW</p>	



confidence and creativity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From intentional planning, staff will observe and form next steps for next intentional planning block. Responsive planning adapting interactions to increase learner engagement/involvement. Observation of staff and EYPs on the floor by DHT and SEYPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop checklist linked to Leuven scale for engagement/involvement 			
<p>With knowledge and information from new planning in place, establish and review new individualized tracking system for every child in literacy, numeracy and HWB</p> <p>Develop use of Seesaw to share children's progress with parents/carers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking of Literacy, numeracy and HWB for every child. Tracking individuals for developmental milestones for every child Keyworkers able to discuss child's learning and targets/next steps Information on next steps shared with parents through Seesaw Seesaw posts monitored by SEYP/DHT to ensure quality of posts focusing on learning, pupil voice and parental engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a system to track progress for literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing Adopt ACC tracking overviews for recording developmental milestones for every child. Develop staff understanding of early level curriculum through intentional planning. Time given to staff to discuss targets for individuals with SEYPs Establish clear expectations for Seesaw posts focused on learning, pupil voice and parental engagement. 'Ask Me' statements 	<p>Introduce Feb 25 In Service</p> <p>Embed all by June 25</p> <p>Nov 24</p>	<p>DHT Lead</p> <p>SEYPs support then lead to EYP/SW</p>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termly review of selection of individual trackers and See saw profiles by DHT/SEYPs • Intervention tracker created to monitor interventions and plans across nursery children 	will be used to encourage parental engagement and family learning.			
3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, equality and inclusion					
<p>Better understanding of presenting behaviours for staff and children.</p> <p>Staff to feel confident in adapting the environment and interactions to support children who are experiencing big emotions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are checking in daily to identify their emotion • Children are learning strategies through use of the Zones of Regulation in the context of Colour Monster stories to understand and name their feelings and actions • Children are better able to effectively regulate/co-regulate using strategies in an age appropriate way • Up, Up and Away toolkit is effectively being used to identify possible modifications to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce daily emotional check in linked to zones of regulation through Colour Monster stories. • Introduce a variety of emotion through story and discuss appropriate response to a range of emotions using colour monster storybooks as stimulus. • Introduce the Up, Up and Away Circle toolkit to understand behaviour. Using the toolkit to identify possible adaptations environment to improve learning, teaching and assessment. – physical environment, social environment, routine, motivation and skills • Implement toolkit for individual children who are presenting with behaviours that could be supported through the toolkit. 	<p>Nov 24</p> <p>Sept 24</p> <p>May in-service 25</p> <p>May 25 onwards</p>	<p>SEYP Lead</p> <p>DHT Lead</p> <p>SEYPs support then lead to EYP/SW</p>	



	learning environment to support positive interactions				
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Improvement Action Plan

Action Plan 1

Name of Setting: Little Clouds Nursery

Areas for improvement	Action required	Stakeholders & timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and review/confirmed completion	RAG Rating
How good is our care play and learning? 1.1 Nurturing care and support & 1.3 Play and learning					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provider must have a robust plan in place which details how the service will provide quality play and learning opportunities that are child-led, meaningful and sufficiently challenging. Support children's learning and development the provider should ensure that children access a range of balanced, stimulating and child focused play experiences 					
a) Ensure all staff have sufficient knowledge and understanding of child development and how to support children's learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff meetings will have dates/themes planned in advance to provide relevant training. 	Management	Children will be supported by reflective staff who endeavour to provide quality learning experiences. Children's learning experiences will be catered to their individual needs, preferences, age and stage of development. Children will have the opportunity to experience stimulating and inviting learning experiences based on their interests.	Communication issued to all staff and displayed. 16/12/2024	G
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff meetings will be used effectively to develop staff' continuous professional development/build understanding on planning and curriculums and guidance through interactive in-house sessions. Offer further training opportunities for staff to deepen their understanding of aspects of play and learning, such as schemas. 	Management		Meeting agenda's, training content, ongoing monitoring of implementation & practice. Ongoing	R
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locality lead to provide training on quality interactions. 	Locality Lead, Management, Pre-School Staff		25/11/2024	G
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff in a leadership role to attend 'Observation and Communication for Improvement' training, provided by Care Inspectorate to help develop an understanding which will then be shared with the team. 	Management, Room Leads, Assistant Room Leads		Staff to share their learning and implement this. Audits of observations to show progress.	A

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Improvement Action Plan

<p>that effectively support children's learning.</p> <p>c) Ensuring children regularly access a balance of spontaneous and planned play experiences as part of their day.</p> <p>d) Ensure children are provided with activities that are age and stage appropriate.</p> <p>e) Ensure activities and play experiences provide sufficient challenge and</p>			<p>Children will be supported by staff who are committed to self-evaluation in order to improve practice.</p> <p>Children will be supported by staff who share the same vision, values and aims for learning and assessment.</p> <p>Children will feel inspired to learn through engaging with staff who promote their learning needs.</p> <p>Children will be supported by a staff team who works well together to meet the outcomes for all children through continuous evaluation.</p> <p>Children will be cared for in an environment that promotes continuous improvement and self-</p>	<p>23rd/24th January 2025 – Rory attended. 23rd, course cancelled 24th.</p> <p>13th/14th February 2025 – Emma Anderson & Gillian Reid attending.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide staff with 'I can statements' and provide them with an initial introduction to how these can be used. 	Management		Ongoing monitoring of next steps in observations.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a better system for the tracking of next steps. 	Management, All Staff		<p>Next steps form to feature in planning packs.</p> <p>24th February 2025</p> <p>Check with leads at weekly planning meetings that these are getting used for planning for children.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss and go over Leuven scale with staff team to support their understanding of levels of well-being and engagement. 	Management, All Staff		<p>Leuven scale to be discussed at staff meeting and encourage staff to identify where we could add this for self-evaluation in relation to children's well-being & involvement.</p> <p>24th March 2025</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide outdoorwear for staff to ensure they are equipped for all weathers, providing proper engagement with the children when outdoors. 	Provider, Management		<p>Once provided, monitor if interactions and level of engagement outdoors have improved.</p>	

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engagement to promote children's learning, curiosity and creativity.			reflection in order to improve the service. Children will be supported by knowledgeable staff who are committed to engaging in experiences to further their learning to improve practice.	Carry out spot checks on staff' outwear.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop system for documenting PLODs. 	Management, All Staff		31 st March 2025 Once form is created, ensure this is being signed off when auditing planning. Ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a more universal planning structure to support staff with their understanding of planning and assessment and roll this out. 	Management, All Staff		Structure to be developed and rolled out to all rooms. 14 th February 2025 Monitoring of this within each room and any changes required to improve it. Audit of planning and recording to identify positive outcome for children. Ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange networking with other settings for staff specifically with settings performing well within play & learning to support and develop understanding further. 	Locality Lead, Management, All Staff		Banana Moon International contacted to organise a visit – no date. Cherry Tree – Abi, Becca & Gillian attended on 21 st November 2024. Notes taken for any proposed changes. Ongoing	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management to work closely with leads to support the development of planning through weekly meetings and regular mentoring/coaching opportunities. 	Management, Room Leads, Assistant Room Leads		Staff will bring planning, next steps, PLOD's and share planned activities. Meetings to start W/C 17 th February.	Red
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning packs to be created for all staff which will include CfE, RtA, GIRFEC, CI framework, 'I can' statements etc. 	Management		Packs created and handed out. 7 th February 2025.	Red
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management to attend the 4-session pedagogical leadership training provided by Education Scotland to support continuous improvement. 	Management		Sessions complete by 22 nd January 2025. Discuss learning and any changes required by 10 th February. Roll out changes. Ongoing	Amber
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management to attend ELC Improvement Programme provided by Care Inspectorate to support continuous improvement. 	Management		Sessions complete by 18 th March. Discuss learning and any changes required by 24 th March 2025.	Amber
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve peer review process for all staff to assess one another on activities, interactions, experiences and spaces to identify areas of improvement and build confidence. Room Lead/Assistant Room Lead support staff to do so and report to management weekly. 	Management/Room Leads/Assistant Room Leads All Staff		Peer review form to be updated by 24 th February 2025. Process to be rolled out to staff by 28 th February. Areas for improvement identified. Ongoing	Red

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop more in-depth processes for reviewing planning and assessment. 	Management		<p>Initial review and adaptations to audit for planning and assessment.</p> <p>3rd March 2025.</p> <p>Audits to be completed every 3 months</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
How good is our setting? 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities					
The provider must ensure children are cared for in an environment which is clean and hygienic, and they are protected by sufficient infection, prevention and control measures.					
<p>a) Ensure all staff are sufficiently trained, skilled and knowledgeable in infection, prevention and control procedures and guidance.</p> <p>b) Ensure all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in keeping the environment clean and free from hazards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt nappy changing stations, ensuring they are refurbished and resealed to reduce infection control concerns. 	Management/Maintenance	<p>Children will have access to a safe and clean environment. Children will be supported in understanding the importance of good hygiene. Children will feel welcomed into a clean environment by competent and knowledgeable staff. The environment will be well maintained and equipped for the needs of all children attending the setting.</p>	<p>Adaptions completed on 22nd November 2025</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring.</p>	G
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisit infection control guidance, highlighting areas where staff require more knowledge and understanding. 	Management		<p>Notes taken on guidance.</p> <p>Completed on 11th November 2025.</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring.</p>	G
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide red dust pans and brushes for nappy changing areas to remove sand/grit/dirt before cleaning. 	Management/All Staff		<p>Purchased and in place by 18th November 2025.</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring.</p>	G
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase additional steriliser for dummies – Moonbeams sleep room. 	Provider/Management		<p>Steriliser provided and in use by 15th November 2025.</p>	G

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c) Ensure that quality assurance of infection prevention and control practices consistently identifies areas for improvement, and that these are actioned promptly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff to develop a deeper understanding of infection control practices through regular training, assessments and quiz style activities. 	All staff		Training scheduled for staff meeting in January 2025.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handwashing resources and videos to be shared with staff, children and parents. 	Management/All Staff/Parents/Children		Meeting required rescheduling – February 2025.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handwashing resources and videos to be shared with staff, children and parents. 			Issue by 7 th March 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff to be re-inducted regarding their roles and expectations concerning infection control, practices should be regularly monitored and issues immediately rectified, including nappy changing and toileting. 	Management		Re-induction planned for February 2025 staff meeting.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop better systems for conducting and monitoring cleaning through producing more user friendly and clear expectations of cleanliness such as rotas and/or checklists ensuring they reflect infection control guidance. 	Management		Monitoring ongoing.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spot checks conducted daily and recorded, feedback given. 			New rotas created and provided to all staff. 2 nd December 2024.	G
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring/conducting spot checks. Ongoing. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spot checks introduced 11th November 2025 – originally 4x daily, now reduced to 2x daily. January 2025. 	Management			G
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing monitoring. 				

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share Rose Lodge outbreak with staff to ensure they understand the severity of poor infection control practices. 	Management/All Staff		Feature at February 2025 staff meeting.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop staff knowledge on safe sleeping by issuing guidance to reflect on current practice. 	All Staff		Staff to provide notes/identify steps not taken for outbreak to occur.	
				Issue by 10 th March	
How good is our leadership? - 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well					
To support quality care experiences for children, the provider should improve quality assurance and self-evaluation and embed this into practice.					
a) Ensuring children and families are meaningfully involved and influence changes within the setting. b) Ensuring quality assurance, self-evaluation and improvement plans lead to high quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review aims and objectives with staff, children and their families to develop our ethos and implement a shared vision. 	Management, All staff, Families	Children will feel listened to and supported in an environment where all individuals share the same aims, values and vision. Children will have access to environment that is committed to continuous improvement and development. Children will be supported by	April 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share guidance with parents regarding coming into the setting. 	Management/All Staff/Parents		April 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a more streamlined approach to care plans and chronologies to make them more user friendly 	Management, All staff		Initial review March 2025.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management to evaluate and monitor quality assurance processes to create a more cohesive system that can be understood by everyone. Management to develop a more detailed quality assurance calendar. 	Management All staff		QA calendar created for January 2025.	
				Ongoing changes as and when required.	
				Ongoing reflection to ensure it is robust.	

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care and support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add CI framework to the bottom of monitoring records.		reflective, engaging and proactive staff who aim to provide the best start in life. Children will be cared for in a clean, relaxed, and engaging atmosphere.	December 2024	G
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide staff with more opportunities to develop their reflection and self-evaluation skills through training (ACC learn) and scheduled staff meetings.	Management All staff		Ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Management to conduct monitoring regularly for infection control (handwashing), play and learning, resources and routine.	Management		Daily spot checks as well as planned monthly monitoring. Ongoing	
How good is our staff team? – 4.3 Staff deployment					
To support children's wellbeing, learning and development, the provider should ensure staff develop skills, knowledge and					
a) Ensuring children have a safe environment to play and learn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance the use of individualised support plans to ensure all requirements are appropriate to specific staff.	Management/All Staff	Children will be supported by staff who are aware of their roles, responsibilities and work-based goals. Children and staff are supported by a management team who aim to engage effectively and provide quality learning experiences for all.		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Management to mentor and coach team leads to build their confidence within their roles, which can then be shared with practitioners/trainees once leads are more confident.	Management/All Staff		Management have been present to support in moments which has involved giving feedback. January 2025 Ongoing coaching/mentoring to continue to be implemented.	

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Action Plan

Name of Setting: **Greyhope School Nursery**

Areas for improvement	Action required	Stakeholders & timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and review/confirmed completion	RAG Rating
How good is our care play and learning? 1.3 Play and learning					
<p>To enable children to receive high quality care, play, learning and development opportunities, the provider, manager and staff should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to:</p> <p>Provide more challenge to children in their learning</p> <p>Extend and deepen children's learning further.</p>	Continue to develop the learning environment to engage children in learning and to promote curiosity. Learning areas are developed and maintained to support high-quality continuous play and learning.	All Staff Nov 2024 then ongoing	All children are more engaged and curious in their learning.	Setting observations and audits	
	Weekly staff collaborative planning will provide an increased focus on literacy and numeracy; and increased opportunity to extend and deepen children's learning.	All Staff Jan 2025	All children have more opportunities to extend and deepen their learning; and to develop their literacy and numeracy.	Planning documentation Observations of children	
	Staff will use ACC progression frameworks as part of their daily practice to extend and provide challenge in learning experiences; and to identify next steps for learners.	All Staff Jan 2025	All children will experience greater challenge and depth in their learning.		
	Staff, including the manager and Senior Early Years Practitioner, will engage in professional learning and with other settings to increase knowledge and understanding of high-quality play and learning and how to plan for this.	All Staff Nov 2024 then ongoing	All children experience high-quality play and learning experiences on a more consistent basis.	Evidence of staff professional learning and reflection	
	Fortnightly staff 1-1s will support colleagues to develop their confidence with the above. Mentoring will take place in tandem with 1-1 meetings.	All Staff Feb 2025		1-1 meeting and mentoring documents	
	Self-evaluation activity focused on the quality of children's learning will take place as scheduled in a quality assurance calendar.	All Staff Feb 2025		QA calendar and self-evaluation evidence	
	Yearly overview of adult-initiated planning will be refreshed to support practitioners to develop their understanding of the early level curriculum.	All Staff Jul 2025	All children experience greater breadth and relevance of learning from across the curriculum.	Planning documentation	

Areas for improvement	Action required	Stakeholders & timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and review/confirmed completion	RAG Rating
How good is our care play and learning? 1.3 Play and learning					
To ensure children experience high quality learning and development, the provider and manager should:	Through professional learning and collaboration , staff members will develop their knowledge and understanding of how to observe, accurately assess and identify next steps children's learning and development.	All Staff Ongoing in 2025	All children will experience greater challenge and depth in their learning.	Planning documentation	
Ensure that observation and assessment of children's individual learning supports and identifies progress.	Regular high-quality observations are undertaken for all children. To support progress, these will include next steps and will be captured and shared with parents and carers via a digital platform.	All Staff Feb 2025	Recorded observations more accurately evidence the progress made by children.	Observations of children	
How good is our staff team? 4.3 Staff deployment					
To meet the needs of all children, the provider and manager should:	The manager and other promoted staff create and foster a proactive culture within the staff team which ensures that any additional support required by children is identified and effective support is provided.	All Staff Jan 2025 then ongoing	All children receive the support they require during every session.	Setting and staff observations Personal plans and enhanced care plans	
Ensure staff are skilled and confident in taking a proactive approach to identifying when children may require extra support and that this is then implemented in an effective way.	Qualified members of the staff team are deployed in a way which provides sufficient experience both indoors and outdoors . Staff deployment will be discussed prior to and during each session to ensure shared understanding of arrangements.	All Staff Jan 2025		Setting observations Team meeting minutes	
	Gaps in specific skills are identified and addressed though staff practice observations, ongoing staff dialogue, mentoring and 1-1 meetings.	All Staff Feb 2025	There is increased quality and consistency of support provided by colleagues across the staff team.	Staff observations 1-1 meeting and mentoring documents	
	Through proactively engaging with other services and agencies , staff members will increase their knowledge of how to support children's development and wellbeing.	All Staff Ongoing in 2025		Evidence of partner engagement 1-1 meeting and mentoring documents	

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	18 February 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Report on Options to Rationalise Early Learning and Childcare Settings
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/25/001
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Louise Beaton
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1 & 1.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present options to the Education and Children's Services Committee on rationalising Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings in order to meet demand, maximise resources and achieve best value.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 considers the options presented and approves the amended Early Learning and Childcare delivery models, set out in Appendix 2 of this report, from August 2025, based on demand.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 As part of our statutory duties under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, we are required to consult with parents and carers every two years on the provision of ELC. The Early Years team consulted with parents and carers in June 2023 and the results were reported to Committee. [ELC Consultation with Parents and Carers 2023](#)

- 3.2 Responses did not indicate a need to amend our approach to the provision of a mixed model of ELC across the city. On that basis, the review of delivery models to rationalise our offer has sought to maintain a mixed model of ELC across Associated School Groups (ASGs) to ensure families continue to have choice. Officers will consult with parents and carers again in Spring 2025.

Review of Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Models

- 3.3 One of the key actions in our ELC Delivery Plan 2024-26 is to continue to monitor demand across the city and in individual ASGs. This is in order to meet the needs of families and to achieve best value. Recent detailed work on capacities shows that, similar to previous years, we continue to have an oversupply of 'afternoon' places available and Officers have taken this learning

into account in planning proposed delivery models for 2025/26. The team continue to receive applications for ELC placements on a daily basis as families move into the city and care has been taken to factor this into proposals.

- 3.4 We know from parent and carer feedback that while a large majority of respondents (79.4%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the range of ELC providers and models within their local area/Associated Schools Group (ASG); and (75.8%) were able to secure a funded ELC place in their local area/ ASG, some delivery models continue to be more popular than others and there are slight changes in demand across each ASG.
- 3.5 We also know that the number of ELC age children (age two to five years) in Scotland is seven per cent lower in 2022 than was projected at the beginning of ELC expansion, and is expected to continue to fall over the next 10 years (*National Records of Scotland (NRS) population projections*). This may have an impact on demand for ELC places in the longer term although the number of children attending currently is remaining stable due to the number of new families making Aberdeen their home.
- 3.6 At the time of the ELC Parent and Carer Consultation in 2023, term-time, full-day and fully flexible placements were most popular. For half day placements, morning places continue to be more highly sought after than afternoon places, with afternoon placements the least popular out of all the delivery models. This has been triangulated through recent work on ELC capacities (Appendix 1).
- 3.7 As a result of this analysis, we have identified two ELC settings across two ASGs which could change from an 8am-6pm all year round model (which offers either full day or 5 long mornings and 5 long afternoon placements), to a fully 9am-3pm term time model. These are:
- Greyhope School ELC (Lochside ASG) – 53 places (including 5 x Eligible 2's places)
 - Quarryhill School ELC (Northfield ASG) – 48 places
- 3.8 A number of other Local Authority settings continue to operate under capacity, particularly in the afternoon sessions of the 8am-6pm all year round model:
- Cults – currently operating at between 33-52% capacity in afternoons. And between 45-60% in holiday periods.
 - Heathryburn – currently operating at between 30-35% capacity in afternoons. Holiday attendance has increased to 75% capacity by moving to morning sessions only (in consultation with families).
 - Kingsford – currently operating at between 30-50% capacity in afternoons. And between 10-66% in holiday periods.
 - Kirkhill – currently operating at between 33-50% capacity in afternoons. And between 10-50% in holiday periods.
 - Loirston – currently operating at between 42-58% capacity in afternoons. And between 20-70% in holiday periods.
 - Tullos – currently operating at between 22-35% capacity in afternoons. And between 10-25% in holiday periods.

- 3.9 Within these ELC settings, we do not propose to change current delivery models, as we would not have enough places to move to a fully 9am-3pm term-time model. It would also remove some of the ELC options delivered across each of our ASGs which we have given a commitment to offering. We therefore propose to keep the numbers at each of these settings under review meantime, and realign the number of places offered in the mornings and afternoons, where possible, to balance attendance. Based on current uptake, this would have minimal impact on our service delivery. In order to maximise resources and achieve best value, Officers will also closely monitor staffing levels and recruitment requests for those ELC settings operating under capacity.
- 3.10 Holiday uptake has increased again in 2023-24, compared to in 2021-22 and 2022-23, however attendance remains significantly lower than during term time weeks. In order to accurately demonstrate and quantify this, Officers monitor attendance numbers on a daily basis during holiday periods. 30 ELC settings were open during the 2024 summer holiday period (-4 from 2023) and they were requested to submit their attendance figures on a daily basis. In the majority of cases, ELC settings operated at 50% or less and the actual numbers were lower than the estimated numbers, which were based on ELC settings speaking to parents and carers in advance of holiday period about their intentions. In the most recent October holiday period, three ELC settings opened in the mornings only, following consultation with their families.
- 3.11 In putting forward these proposals, based on current supply and demand data, Officers have considered the full ELC offer across each ASG with all areas still having a good mix of 8am-6pm all year round ELC provision and 9am-3pm term time provision (Appendix 2). Our ELC Funded Providers also continue to offer fully flexible funded ELC across the city and can meet the needs of families who require wrap around care and additional hours.
- 3.12 It is proposed that the amended delivery models outlined are implemented from August 2025 and that applications for ELC placements be opened before the end of February 2025, in keeping with established practice and enabling effective forward planning by families.
- 3.13 There will be no staffing changes in the remainder of the current 2024-25 session. Officers will work with People & Citizen Services and Trade Union colleagues to consider any impacts on ELC staff contracts, as a result of the proposed changes to some of the ELC models, in advance of the new ELC session commencing in August 2025. Any necessary reductions in staffing, as a result of reduced staffing allocations, will be achieved by natural wastage in the first instance, e.g. through staff turnover and by not filling vacancies.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Aberdeen City Council, as primary guarantor of quality and key enabler of flexibility and choice, is currently funded by the Scottish Government to deliver ELC, as part of Grant Aided Expenditure (GAE).
- 4.2 Officers continue to work with finance colleagues to ensure that our plans work towards realisation of a sustainable ELC provision. The options presented in

this report will help to achieve best value by rationalising ELC settings to match the Scottish Government Grant, if approved. (£216,000 per annum).

- 4.3 Reciprocal arrangements are in place via a Cross Boundary Agreement with Aberdeenshire Council. This means that an equal number of ELC places will be provided by each neighbouring Local Authority. For example, if Aberdeen City Council provide more funded ELC places than Aberdeenshire Council, the additional places will be recharged to Aberdeenshire Council in line with the Reconciliation and Payments part of the Cross Boundary Agreement on a termly basis. This ensures equity and best value for both Authorities, whilst offering flexibility and choice to families from both Authorities.
- 4.4 The selling of ELC places pilot at Culter School ELC is currently generating additional income for the Council.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The expansion of ELC has brought a number of duties on the Local Authority under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014:
- The provision of 1140 hours of Early Learning and Childcare for eligible two year olds and all three and four year olds.
 - Aberdeen City Council will retain the statutory responsibility for ensuring that funded ELC entitlement is available to all eligible children in the city.
 - Aberdeen City Council will continue to be the primary guarantor of quality and key enabler of flexibility and choice, ensuring that there is a range of options for all families in the city.
 - Aberdeen City Council is responsible for engaging and consulting with parents and carers on a regular basis (minimum of every 2 years) on the provision of ELC delivered locally.
 - Aberdeen City Council is responsible for preparing and publishing an Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan every 2 years.
- 5.2 The proposed amended Early Learning and Childcare delivery models, based on demand, will assist the Council to continue to develop and deliver high quality ELC in the city.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified. A cornerstone of the ELC expansion programme was the investment in outdoor learning, and this is keenly reflected in the establishment of two new outdoor nurseries at Duthie Park and at Hazlehead. Both have an outdoor focus in their education and provision, but each will offer unique and varied experiences for children, families, staff and the wider communities. The establishment of the two new outdoor nurseries is a first for Aberdeen city and a pioneering provision for the Early Years sector. Across all ELC settings, good use is also made of outdoor and green spaces where practicable and feasible to do so.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	Risk of not meeting statutory obligations around 1140 hours.	Mitigated through delivery of the Expansion Programme and subsequent monitoring of supply and demand of ELC places.	L	Yes
Operational	Risk of not attracting enough new practitioners into the workforce.	Mitigated through the ongoing activities being undertaken to support workforce development, as outlined in ELC Delivery Plan 2024-26.	L	Yes
Financial	Risk of building a financially unsustainable model.	Care has been taken to redesign ELC around improving quality rather than simply doubling to reflect the additional hours and a more sustainable staffing model has been put in place. Officers are monitoring supply and demand on an annual basis in order to maximise resources and achieve best value.	M	Yes
Reputational	Risk of not delivering on legal obligations	Mitigated through delivery of the Expansion Programme and subsequent monitoring of supply	L	Yes

		and demand of ELC places.		
Environment / Climate	No risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the policy statement “<i>Aberdeen – A place where all people can prosper</i>”.</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, and will contribute to our high level priority to reduce child poverty.</p>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
74% employment rate for Aberdeen City by 2026 (Stretch Outcome 2)	<p>The Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26 will continue to have a positive impact on this priority theme and will help to deliver the LOIP.</p> <p>The workforce has increased significantly in order to deliver the increase in ELC provision and will not be detrimentally impacted by the proposals contained within this report.</p> <p>63 Aberdeen City Council employees retrained as Early Years Practitioners over 3 cohorts of a Retraining Programme, gaining an SVQ Level 3 qualification. We also recruited 110 Early Learning and Childcare Support Workers.</p> <p>In addition, we introduced a Modern Apprenticeship position into our ELC staffing structure. This involves training young people to become Early Years Practitioners as part of our ‘Grow Our Own’ workforce strategy. This is a new role in our Local Authority ELC settings and provides a positive destination and career pathway for our young people as well as strengthening our workforce. We currently have 28 Modern Apprenticeships working across the city.</p> <p>There will be ongoing opportunities to join the Early Learning and Childcare workforce in Aberdeen and to retrain, to upskill and for career progression.</p>

95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27-30 month review by 2026 (Stretch Outcome 3)	<p>Our work in partnership with families and communities including through a Peep offer in all settings as part of a partnership Family Support offer will support children to reach their expected milestones. It will also increase the number of parents and carers who have awareness of how to support their children's learning and development at home.</p> <p>Furthermore, every child who attends Early Learning and Childcare over a lunchtime period receives a minimum of one free meal per session attended as part of their statutory entitlement, as well as a portion of milk and fruit or vegetables daily via the Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme.</p> <p>Early Learning and Childcare can improve long term outcomes for children and families.</p>
95% of children, living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1&2), will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026 (Stretch Outcome 6)	<p>The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare has contributed positively to supporting positive destinations.</p> <p>We have introduced a Modern Apprenticeship (MA) position into our ELC staffing structure. This involves training young people to become Early Years Practitioners as part of our 'Grow Our Own' workforce strategy. This is a new role in our Local Authority ELC settings and provides a positive destination and career pathway for our young people as well as strengthening our workforce. We currently have 28 Modern Apprenticeships working across the city and are in the process of recruiting 4 new MA's.</p>
<p>Regional and City Strategies</p> <p>Strategic Development Plan</p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p> <p>National Improvement Framework Plan</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the Strategic Development Plan by supporting the workforce. The provision of high quality Early Learning and Childcare will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support families to take up employment and training opportunities; 2. Develop the Young Workforce; and 3. Support business to recruit and retain staff. <p>The Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26 is aligned to the Children's Services Plan and the National Improvement Framework Plan and work to address poverty in the Child Poverty Action Plan.</p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Previous Integrated Impact Assessment relating to the provision of Early Learning and Childcare has been reviewed and no changes are required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required as no personal information will be shared.
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Best Start: Strategic Early Learning and School Age Childcare Plan for Scotland 2022-26 (Scottish Government: October 2022)
- 10.2 Aberdeen City Council Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Analysis of uptake of ELC Placements – January 2025
- 11.2 Appendix 2 – Early Learning and Childcare Models Proposed from August 2025

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix 1 - Analysis of uptake of ELC Placements January 2025

Associated Schools Group	High level analysis
Aberdeen Grammar	<p>There is an overprovision of afternoon ELC placements (600 hours model), otherwise provision matches demand.</p> <p>No changes are proposed.</p>
Bridge of Don	<p>Provision matches demand. There are currently 15 available places still to be utilised and this is thought to offer sufficient flexibility.</p> <p>No changes are proposed.</p>
Bucksburn	<p>There is an overprovision of afternoon ELC placements with around 34 afternoon placements not being utilised on average per day. This is thought to offer sufficient flexibility.</p> <p>No changes are proposed.</p>
Cults	<p>There continues to be an overprovision of afternoon ELC placements with around 40 places not being utilised on average per day.</p> <p>We have addressed overprovision of afternoon spaces by reducing the numbers of places available at Cults and realigning the number of places offered in the mornings and afternoons to balance attendance.</p> <p>At Culter, we have commenced a pilot to sell surplus ELC places. Eight families are now purchasing additional sessions (approximately 18 sessions per week).</p> <p>No changes are proposed. We will continue to monitor uptake across the ASG.</p>
Dyce	<p>There is a slight overprovision of afternoon ELC placements with around 10 afternoon placements not being utilised on average per day.</p> <p>No changes are proposed.</p>
Harlaw	<p>There is an overprovision of afternoon ELC placements with around 30 afternoon placements not being utilised on average per day. This is thought to offer sufficient flexibility.</p>

	No changes are proposed.
Hazlehead	<p>There is an overprovision of afternoon ELC placements with around 28 afternoon placements not being utilised on average per day. This is thought to offer sufficient flexibility.</p> <p>No changes are proposed.</p>
Lochside	<p>There is an overprovision of afternoon ELC placements with around 100 afternoon placements not being utilised on average per day.</p> <p>We have addressed overprovision of afternoon spaces by reducing the number of places available at Loirston and Tullos and realigning the number of places offered in the mornings and afternoons to balance attendance. We will continue to monitor this.</p> <p>It is proposed that Greyhope moves to delivering a fully 9-3pm offer.</p> <p>No further changes are proposed at this time. We anticipate new housing developments in the Cove area is likely to increase future demand for places.</p>
Northfield	<p>There is an overprovision of afternoon ELC placements with around 60 afternoon placements not being utilised on average per day. There is high demand for full day (9-3pm) placements.</p> <p>It is proposed that Quarryhill moves to delivering a 9-3pm offer.</p> <p>We have already reduced the numbers at Heathryburn and have realigned the number of places offered in the mornings and afternoons to balance attendance. Uptake remains low in afternoons. However, attendance was maximised to around 75% capacity during recent holiday periods (Summer and October 2024) by offering morning only placements, in consultation with families.</p>
Oldmachar	<p>There is an overprovision of afternoon ELC placements with around 30 afternoon placements not being fully utilised on average per day.</p> <p>We have already reduced the numbers at Forehill and Greenbrae and have realigned the number of places offered in the mornings and afternoons to balance attendance.</p> <p>No further changes are proposed. We will continue to monitor uptake across the ASG.</p>

St Machar	<p>Provision matches demand. There are currently 20 available places still to be utilised and this is thought to offer sufficient flexibility.</p> <p>No changes are proposed.</p>
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Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Models from August 2025

ELC SETTING	ELC MODELS 2025/2026
Aberdeen Grammar ASG	
Ashley Road School	9am-3pm Term Time
Gilcomstoun Gaelic Unit	9am-3pm Term Time
Gilcomstoun School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Mile End School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Skene Square School	9am-3pm Term Time
St Joseph's RC School	600 hours Term Time (3 hour 10 minutes) AMor PM
Bridge of Don ASG	
Braehead School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Scotstoun School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Bucksburn ASG	
Brimmond School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Kingswells School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Stoneywood School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Cults ASG	
Culter School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Cults School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Milltimber School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Dyce ASG	
Dyce School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days) 9am-3pm x Term Time
Harlaw ASG	
Broomhill School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Ferryhill School	9am-3pm x Term Time

Hanover Street School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Kaimhill School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Hazlehead ASG	
Airyhall School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Countesswells School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Fernielea School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Hazlehead School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Kingsford School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
	9am-3pm x Term Time
Lochside ASG	
Abbotswell School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Charleston School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Greyhope School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Kirkhill School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
	9am-3pm x Term Time
Loirston School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Tullos School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Northfield ASG	
Heathryburn	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Holy Family School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Manor Park School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Muirfield School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Quarryhill School	9am-3pm x Term Time
West Park School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Old Machar ASG	
Danestone School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Forehill School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Glashieburn School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Greenbrae School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Middleton Park School	9am-3pm Term Time

St Machar ASG	
Cornhill School	8am-6pm x 46 week (AMor PM only)
	9am-3pm x Term Time
Kittybrewster School	8am-6pm x 46 week (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
Riverbank School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Seaton School	9am-3pm x Term Time
Sunnybank School	9am-3pm x Term Time
	600 hours Term Time (3 hour 10 minutes) AMor PM
The Links Nursery, Regent Walk	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
	9am-3pm x Term Time
Woodside School	8am-6pm x 46 weeks (AMor PM or 2 and half days)
	9am-3pm x Term Time
City Wide	
Duthie Park Outdoor Nursery	8am-6pm x 46 week (AMor PM only)
Hazlehead Outdoor Nursery	9am-3pm Term Time
Orchard Brae	9am-3pm Term Time

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	18 February 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	UNCRC Plan
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/25/024
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Matt Reid
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present a refreshed Local Authority Plan for implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) now that Statutory Guidance on Parts 2 and 3 of the Act have been published.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 2.1 endorses the UNCRC Plan to support Council's on-going compliance with the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024; and
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to routinely update the Plan based on on-going review of legal judgements and advise Committee of any required changes to the Plan through a Service Update.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Aberdeen City Council has been working towards implementation of the UNCRC for a considerable period of time. Progress was most recently reported in [2023](#) through the Children's Rights Report prepared to comply with previous duties outlined in Section 2 of the Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 3.2 The assessment of progress and associated Action Plan prepared in 2023 drew from a range of published documentation in the absence of Statutory Guidance, including documentation from the Improvement Service and Third Sector providers. In keeping with the direction of travel outlined in CFS/23/022, the publication of Statutory Guidance in late 2024 triggered a review of the Plan.
- 3.3 The UNCRC (incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 received Royal Assent on 16 January 2024. Section 6 of the Act came into force on 16 July 2024. Section 6 placed a duty on public authorities not to act incompatibly with the 'UNCRC

requirements' as defined by section 1 and the schedule of the Act. Section 6(1) states that,

"It is unlawful (subject to [subsection \(4\)](#)) for a public authority to act, or fail to act, in connection with a relevant function in a way which is incompatible with the UNCRC requirements."

- 3.4 Section 6 (5)(a) states that, for the purposes of that section, the term 'public authority' includes, in particular:
- i. the Scottish Ministers
 - ii. a court or tribunal
 - iii. any person certain of whose functions are functions of a public nature
- 3.5 Section 19 of the Act provides a list of authorities, including Local Authorities, who must ensure compliance and for whom there is a future statutory reporting responsibility under section 18 of the Act. This replaces the duties outlined in Section 2 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The new duty requires the listed authority to publish, as soon as practicable after the end of each reporting period with the first period beginning 16 July 2024 and ending on 31 March 2026, a report every three years to detail:
1. Action taken during the reporting period to ensure compatibility with the UNCRC requirements as defined by the Act.
 2. Action taken to secure better or further effect of children's rights.
 3. Actions it intends to take in the next three-year reporting period to ensure compatibility with the UNCRC requirements as defined by the Act.
 4. Actions it intends to take to secure better or give further effect to children's rights.
- 3.6. A "standard" Report and a "child friendly" adaption must be published and submitted to Scottish Ministers, and listed Authorities (such as NHS Grampian and Aberdeen City Council) are permitted to publish joint reports.
- 3.7 All published guidance continues to outline that full realisation of children's rights will only be possible through proactivity on the part of all public services, not solely those that work directly with children and young people given that services that impact on parents and carers will also indirectly impact on the rights of the children of those parents and carers. As a result, consideration of the UNCRC requires to be evident across the delivery of all public services. This approach has strongly influenced the approach taken by the Local Authority to date.
- 3.8 In September 2024, Scottish Government published Statutory Guidance on Parts 2 and 3 of the Act. The guidance on [Part 2](#) aims to support public authorities, and other organisations, to take a children's human rights approach to service delivery and act in a manner that is compatible with the UNCRC.

- 3.9 The Guidance on [Part 3](#), aims to support local authorities in their understanding, implementation and operation of Part 3 of the Act, which relates to statutory reporting duties.

KEY MESSAGES FROM THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE

- 3.10 The UNCRC provides a (children's) rights-based framework to uphold the rights of children and young people and to take their views into account in decisions that affect them (both directly and indirectly). This includes policy, practice, service delivery and within budget-making decisions.
- 3.11 Duties extend beyond traditionally considered areas such as education and children's services and into areas such as housing, transport, environment, culture, planning, leisure and sport. It also extends to services delivered through partner organisations who are commissioned or procured by public authorities.
- 3.12 The need for clear leadership and coordination between services and partners is identified as crucial. Additionally, the guidance outlines the need for there to be a firm commitment to the meaningful empowerment and participation of children and young people.
- 3.13 There are four articles in the UNCRC that are seen as special. They are known as the "General Principles" and they help to interpret all the other articles of the Convention. These articles are considered to be so essential that if they are violated, this will have an impact on all other rights. These "General Principles" are:
- Non-discrimination (Article 2)
 - Best interest of the child (Article 3)
 - Right to life, survival and development (Article 6)
 - Right to be heard (Article 12)
- 3.14 As stated in the Scottish Government's guidance "Guidance on taking a children's rights approach' (Jan 2024), *"For example, if the right to life, survival and development is not protected then it can be difficult to protect other rights such as the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to participation or the right to an education. All rights are mutually reinforcing and interlinked. Children's civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights as expressed within the UNCRC all have equal status. Therefore, no rights should be held in higher regard or seen as more important than others. Whilst the General Principles are a useful lens through which to consider children's rights, they should be taken into account in conjunction with all rights and not considered primary, with other rights (outlined in the UNCRC) seen as secondary. Considered together, the general principles help to construct a perception of children and childhood, one where they are equal to their adult counterparts. The general principles contribute to the enhancement of a positive attitude towards children and their rights."* (Page 8).

OUR PREPAREDNESS

- 3.15 Considerable work has been undertaken to ensure compatibility with the Part 2 over a number of years. Achievements to date include a comprehensive

training programme made available across the Council, children's rights being embedded into our Integrated Impact Assessment arrangements which inform political decision making around budget and policy, work outlined in the Children's Rights Reports (including that published in [2023](#)), work outlined in the [Children's Services Board Plan](#) and associated [Annual Reports](#), Child Poverty Reports, on-going work to support [unaccompanied asylum seeking children](#), the considerable work to establish a local [Bairns Hoose](#) and delivery against [The Promise](#) amongst many others. There is considerable evidence that the Council recognises how different policies impact on children's rights and that a children's human rights approach is being taken. This work must be maintained.

- 3.16 Good mechanisms are in place to take stock on the impact of our policies on children and young people. As a result of our established approaches to 'taking stock', work is currently being progressed on both our [Family Support](#) and [Future Libraries](#) Model given the needs and wants of communities differ considerably across the city. Both of these initiatives will help ensure that we continue to place children's rights at the heart of our policies, and give better effect to children's rights.
- 3.17 As a Community Planning Partnership, we are now establishing whole system approaches when we identify a vulnerability, for example through our whole system approach to [Healthy Weight](#). This work will be further strengthened through our engagement with the Marmot Place initiative and be central to considerations as we establish the next 10 year Local Outcome Improvement Plan.
- 3.18 Considerable work has been undertaken to ensure the meaningful participation of children and young people through for example our Masterplanning at the Beach and the centrality of voice in our ABZ Campus work. In addition, a number of systems to test the strength of our arrangements are now well established, through for example our yearly [Health and Wellbeing survey](#) and most recent Bright Spots survey work outlined in our [Promise](#) Report. Work to ensure meaningful participation will need to continue.
- 3.19 The consideration of children's rights has become well embedded within our work as a Local Authority and increasingly is becoming better embedded as a wider Community Planning Partnership. The statutory guidance has been considered by the Children's Services Board and Community Planning Aberdeen Board and agreement reached to report our progress through our Children's Rights Report jointly with NHS Grampian in order to strengthen our work further.
- 3.20 Officers conclude that work to date has greatly supported our preparedness. The content of the Statutory Guidance on Part 2 had largely been predicted by officers continuing to review the full range of published guidance. However, there are considerable unknowns around how the courts may interpret the legislation and this could have implications for all public authorities. This uncertainty means that officers will require to review the outcome of any legal proceedings brought by any party nationally on an on-going basis to determine if any local changes are required.

- 3.21 The Statutory Guidance (Part 2) outlines that in the event that a public authority is thought to have acted in a manner inconsistent with the UNCRC, a child (or advocate acting on a child's behalf) can challenge the actions of that public authority via a judicial route (Section 7) and seek a remedy for the purported unlawful act.
- 3.22 The Bill includes an express provision requiring a court or tribunal to take the view of the child as to the effectiveness of the remedy or relief proposed. A few important caveats to highlight are that proceedings are to generally be raised within one year of the alleged unlawful act taking place (Section 7(9)), though this only begins at the point the child turns 18 in the event that the act occurred while the child was under the age of 18. In any case, a specific provision is included in Section 7(12) to allow for the court or tribunal to exercise its discretion to bring an action outwith the one-year time-bar if it is "equitable to do so".
- 3.23 To date, this has been untested in Scottish courts and as a result, there remains a high degree of uncertainty regarding what legal proceedings will look like in practice and the implications of any decisions on public authorities. Given the very high degree of uncertainty, Officers propose that the Plan be kept under continuous review so that any learning from court decisions can be taken into account if/where required.
- 3.24 The duties outlined in the Statutory Guidance on Part 3 replace those which helped shape the 2023 Children's Rights Report. Reporting expectations for Local Authorities are broadly in line with previous duties derived from the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Mechanisms to publish [Child Friendly](#) versions of key documentations are already in place and should now be consistently utilised.
- 3.25 The first Children's Rights Report under the UNCRC (incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 will be embedded into our Children's Services Board Annual Report/Plan in 2026 to ensure that the interconnection between policy areas help strengthen reporting arrangements.

UNCRC PLAN

- 3.26 The updated UNCRC Plan (Appendix A), has been created following careful consideration of the recently published Statutory Guidance on Part(s) 2 and 3 of the UNCRC (incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024, while also considering the "General Principles" of the UNCRC, alongside the totality of the Convention. Although very good progress has been made, officers are suggesting that work continues to ensure some areas are built upon further.
- 3.27 The plan has been reviewed in-line with the tools and guidance contained within the Statutory Guidance, particularly in considering the application of the Section 6 duty which makes it unlawful for public authorities to act in a way which is incompatible with the UNCRC requirements.

- 3.28 Based on what is known, the Plan in Appendix A will help Aberdeen City Council continue to take all reasonable steps to uphold our responsibilities under the Act, place children's rights at the centre of our actions and mitigate against incompatibility which may result in legal recourse.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Article 4 of the UNCRC states that all public authorities shall “undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures of implementation” to realise the rights of children.
- 4.2 Scottish Government [guidance](#) asserts that budgeting for children's rights raises considerations such as:
- How an overall budget is formulated and ensuring there are enough resources to deliver services and programmes essential to upholding children's rights.
 - The extent to which available resources are applied on the basis of 'best value' principles such as reducing waste and ensuring best value duties are implemented throughout the expenditure of the budget.
 - How children are meaningfully involved in the budgetary decision-making processes.
- 4.3 Failure to ensure compliance with the Act could result in considerable financial cost to the local authority should legal redress be sought and, additionally, if compensation is required as a result of legal process. Children's Rights are fully considered within Integrated Impact Assessment arrangements currently in place and arrangements are in place to ensure that children and young people meaningfully participate in the budget process.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Failure to comply with the duties outlined in the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 presents significant risk to the Council in meeting its statutory obligations as described in the Act and exposure to potential legal remedy.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No environmental impacts identified.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Risk of not changing our local systems to reflect changes in national legislation.	Delivery of the Children's Services Plan, UNCRC Plan, Family Support Model and regular review of the appropriateness of relevant Plan to ensure maximum impact.	L	Yes
Compliance	Non-compliance would place us in breach of legislation and expose the local authority to potential legal challenge.	Mitigated through implementation of UNCRC to ensure systems and processes are aligned to statutory guidance.	L	Yes
Operational	Staff feel unable to access the support required by some young people.	Mitigated by basing a multi-disciplinary team around the family and child.	L	Yes
Financial	Incompatibility with recommended guidance regarding child rights budgeting.	Participatory approaches to engaging children and young people in budget decisions through face-to-face engagement sessions and online simulator. Continue to test new approaches to ensure that all groups of young people, including the most vulnerable, have their voices heard.	L	Yes

	Potential financial implications of legal costs and damages if non-compliant.	Continued work to ensure compliance as identified in UNCRC plan to mitigate against legal action. Budget decisions considered against context of UNCRC and with regards to impact on families and vulnerable young people and interlinked nature of budget saving options. Data from health determinants used to explore proportional impacts.		
Reputational	Risk of reputational damage through non-compliance/fulfilment of statutory duties as detailed in UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024	Mitigated through ongoing monitoring and review of UNCRC plan to ensure we are fully compliant with statutory duties.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	None			

8. OUTCOMES

Council Delivery Plan 2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	This report highlights how the UNCRC is helping to shape the service delivery model for children and young people and supporting the commitment to a transparent, accessible and accountable Council.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The implementation plan detailed within this report supports the delivery of Prosperous People (Children & Young People) Stretch Outcomes 3 to 8 in the refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

	<p>This includes:</p> <p>3. 95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27-30 month review by 2026.</p> <p>4. 90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026.</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>6. 95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 & 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p> <p>7. 83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.</p> <p>8. 100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination.</p>
Regional and City Strategies	This work features in the Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan for 2022 – 26 and the Children's Services Plan.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix A - UNCRC Implementation Plan

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Matt Reid
Title	(Acting) Quality Improvement Officer
Email Address	Matreid@aberdeencitycouncil.gov.uk

UNCRC Plan

Area of focus	Actions Required	By when
Leadership & Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build on training already delivered, People and Citizen Services to signpost staff to the Scottish Government developed e-Learning module 'Introduction to Children's Rights (Stakeholder Edition)'. and/or explore the need for an ACC Human Rights Learn module for all staff as part of induction arrangements. To build on training already delivered, People and Citizen Services to embed UNCRC training for newly elected and re-elected Members as part of the induction process. ECMT to continue to ensure that all strategic and corporate plans make explicit reference to human rights and are informed by meaningful participation. Governance to review the Council Scheme of Governance, Strategy Board to review Corporate Board Terms of Reference (ToR) and all Community Planning Outcome Group Chairs to review established ToR to check compatibility with human rights legislation. Policy Review Group to continue to ensure that the UNCRC and other Human Rights Legislation are fully taken account of as policies and strategies are established/refreshed. Legal team to support on-going review of statutory processes in light of untested judicial processes. Commercial and Procurement to ensure that commissioning processes align with statutory guidance (Part 2) Continued focus on prevention and early intervention through on-going development of the Family Support Model, Future Libraries Model and Bairns Hoose as outlined in established Plans. Continue to improve alignment between child and adult services as outlined in established Plans. 	By March 2026
Participation of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Planning to conclude work to develop and promote use of a 'Participation Toolkit' to help all services meaningfully engage with children and young people and keep this updated based on national best practice. Children's Services Board to map established participatory opportunities in order to establish a sustainable approach that maximises meaningful participation in decision making and ensures a consistent feedback loop. Children's Social Work to continue to test the 'Lundy model' to inform next steps. 	By December 2025
Empowerment of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECMT to utilise digital tools to ensure that Child Friendly/Easy Read versions of new policies and plans are developed and published. Corporate Communications to make use of existing platforms to promote access to Child Friendly/Easy Read information. 	By March 2025

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Communications to develop a 'Child-Friendly' webpage for sharing of relevant and accessible information for children and young people and inviting feedback. • Customer Feedback to evaluate how widely the national child friendly complaints process has been utilised to inform next steps. 	
Measuring and reporting progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data and Insights to continue to lead work to better illustrate 'the gap' and 'the gradient' to enable effective targeting of resources through statutory plans. • Children's Services Board to lead the establishment of a multi-agency request for assistance process as part of the Family Support Model. • Equalities Team to establish a mechanism to extract data from Integrated Impact Assessments to measure the impact of the due consideration given to children's rights. • Establishment of cloud-based repository to gather data and case studies to support future reporting responsibilities as detailed in Part 3 of the statutory guidance. • Children's Services Board to lead development and publication of a Children's Rights report and easy read version in-line with requirements including the establishment of indicators to measure and report progress. 	By March 2026
Children's rights budgeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECMT to continue to commission Aberdeen Youth Movement to engage children and young people as part of the budget protocol. • Education and Lifelong Learning and Children's Social work to continue to utilise opportunities for young people to allocate funds where possible. • ECMT to evaluate the budget simulation tool to establish next steps with consideration given to the non-statutory guidance contained within 'Guidance on taking a children's human rights approach' (Jan 2024, Pg 18 - 22). 	By March 2026

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	18 February 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	The Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/25/011
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Eleanor Shepherd
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrea McGill
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1.1 & 2.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Report seeks to provide the committee with assurance that as far as is currently possible the relevant planning and scoping activity is being progressed to fully consider the implementation of the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024 received Royal assent in June 2024;
- 2.2 note the implications on systems, processes and resources, as far as they are currently known, of the enactment of the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024;
- 2.3 note the action plan document attached as Appendix 1;
- 2.4 note that the ending of placing children in Young Offender Institutions came into effect in August 2024; and
- 2.5 instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to provide Committee with a Service Update in the planning for implementation of the Act once the plan for enactment and associated funding is made known by the Scottish Government.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 The Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024 (the Act) received Royal Assent in June 2024. The Act makes provision about the care of children (who are not involved in the criminal justice system) and the treatment of children within the criminal justice system, as well as the interrelationship between the

care system and the criminal justice system. [Children \(Care and Justice\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024](#)

- 3.1.2 The legislation has the intention of ensuring the better integration of national policy with legislation which aims to improve systems which protect, intervene and where necessary accommodate children. Reflected in **Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)**; findings of The Independent Care Review, The Promise and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The implementation of the Act will progress over the next 16-month period, with full enactment expected by March 2026.

3.2 Overview of the Children (Care & Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024

- 3.2.1 The legislation contains a series of measures aimed at improving children's experiences of the care and justice systems, whether victims, witnesses or children who have caused harm. The Act has the following progressive intentions;

- Improve opportunities for prevention and early intervention
- Systems are age and stage appropriate and rights respecting
- Equal access to the children's hearings system, safeguarding all children in the justice system, including victims
- Age of Referral to Principal Reporter raised to 18 for all referral grounds
- Secure accommodation replaces Young Offenders Institutions (YOI) for 16/17-year-olds (from August 2024) for children remanded or sentenced to custody
- Children placed in secure accommodation through a remand or sentencing pathway will be considered Looked After Children
- Children in secure accommodation through remand or sentenced pathway will be able to remain in secure accommodation past age 18 but not beyond 19 where assessed as suitable and appropriate
- Secure transportation standards and regulation to be developed
- Cross-border placements are better regulated and matched to children's needs
- Children will no longer be held in police cells, where a child is being kept for the next court day this will be in a "place of safety"

- 3.2.2 Part 1 of the Act deals with aspects of the children's hearings system, with the main change being the meaning of "child". This will mean all under 18-year-olds, will be children for the purposes of the children's hearings system, without any distinction made between children over 16, who are subject to compulsory supervision orders and those who are not.

- 3.2.3 Other changes made by Part 1 relate to:

- Placing a duty on children's hearings to have due regard to the effects of trauma on children;
- Changes to conditions required for use of Movement Restrictions Conditions (MRC's)
- Allowing prohibitions to be part of Compulsory Supervision Orders (CSOs) with Panel members able to attach prohibitions in the following categories:
 - i. prohibition on a child entering a specified place or description of places

- ii. prohibition on the child approaching, communicating with or attempting to approach or communicate (directly or indirectly) with a specified person or class of person
 - Placing a duty on the Principal Reporter to inform people harmed by a child referred to children's hearing of their right to request information about the disposal of a child's case.
 - Providing support to persons in the children's hearings system, providing guidance for children after they turn 18 up to age 19 years
- 3.2.4 The above measures will ensure that children are able to access systems designed with their needs in mind. The age of referral to the Scottish Children Reporters Administration (SCRA) on both offence and welfare-based grounds, will be raised to 17.5 years. Raising the age of referral for all children has the aim of preventing 16- and 17-year-olds not on a Compulsory Supervision Order (CSO) entering the adult justice system.
- 3.2.5 The majority of children in conflict with the law have experienced developmental trauma, abuse and other adversities. This change will ensure all children have the same protections. Provisions will continue for some children to be dealt with through the Criminal Justice System, with the discretion of Lord Advocate and Procurator Fiscal being retained to begin criminal proceedings to prosecute children in court.

3.3 Secure Accommodation

- 3.3.1 UNCRC Article 40(3) (b) provides that *state parties shall establish measures for dealing with children in conflict with the law without resorting to judicial proceedings, providing that human rights and legal safeguards are fully respected* and where judicial proceedings are required, *these should take place in a child-specific institution and international human rights standards require that separate and specialist child justice systems must be established, different to the criminal systems applicable to adults;*
- 3.3.2 The Act will ensure that responses to children where their liberty must be deprived is proportionate, age appropriate and focused on the needs and best interests of the child. The Act ensures practice is aligned with UNCRC intentions and when children are deprived of their liberty, placements in Secure Accommodation are accessed, the option of a YOI removed.
- 3.3.3 *Children who require the care and protection of secure accommodation for reason of remand or sentence will be afforded the same protections and rights as any child in secure accommodation and be treated as a looked after child with accompanying aftercare entitlements should they be a "care leaver".* The requirement for a child to leave secure accommodation at 18 will, in certain circumstances, cease.
- 3.3.4 The use of Youth Offender Institutions (YOI) ended in August 2024 with any under 18s in YOI, moved into secure accommodation. These children will now have the statutory status of Looked After Children and the duties to them which this confers up to the age of 26 years. No child can be placed in YOI for any reason and any child who is sentenced or remanded to custody is placed in secure accommodation. The child's local authority is responsible for sourcing

the placement and arranging secure transport. The Scottish Government have committed to funding court imposed secure placements until the end of March 2025. Beyond this date funding arrangements are unclear. At a cost of circa £7,500 per week this poses a significant risk to local authorities.

- 3.3.5 There were no Aberdeen children in the transfer group and no incidences of a 16/17-year-old being remanded to a YOI for circa 3 years. Our use of secure accommodation placements has followed the Chief Social Work Officer route, relating to a small number of young people whose needs for safe containment are reflected in care planning approaches. Data for December 2024 indicated two children in secure accommodation with one child placed in secure care due to concerns relating to their welfare.
- 3.3.6 At a national level there is anecdotal evidence that since the change in relation to the use of YOIs was enacted in August 2024, there has been an increase in Courts giving active consideration to the use of secure care. Given the lack of long term funding arrangements for these placements, as noted, this places significant financial pressure on local authorities. Additionally, while the principle of enabling some young people to remain in secure care beyond their 18th birthday is supported, the funding for these placements has not been resolved.

3.4 Support to Victims

- 3.4.1 The Act places a statutory duty on Scottish Ministers to provide support, by way of a single point of contact for all victims. There are also additional measures available through the Children's Hearing System aimed at providing enhanced protective and preventative measures. The Principal Reporter will have enhanced discretion to share information with person or persons harmed by a child referred to the Children's Hearing System.
- 3.4.2 This discretion needs to be balanced with protecting the rights and welfare of the child who has caused harm. The guidance of how this will work in practice is still awaited and will be critical to ensuring the needs of both groups are adequately protected.

3.5 Cross Border Placements

- 3.5.1 Cross Border Placements refers to the practice of children, from mainly English Local Authorities, who are unable to access a suitable placement in their jurisdiction, leading to them being placed with a provider in Scotland. The legislation enhances safeguards and regulatory frameworks in these placement arrangements. There are no private providers operating within Aberdeen City offering cross-border placements.
- 3.5.2 Evidence presented to the Independent Care Review and reflected in The Promise, suggested that the funding model for providers to accept children from other parts of the UK cannot be sustained. This recognised that it was not in the children's best interests to be transported to an unknown place with no connections or relationships. Such placements can result in children being separated and distanced from their families, peers, community support networks and services. This adversely impacts on planning for the child and their ability to maintain meaningful relationships.

3.6 So what - Implications and Intentions

- 3.6.1 The intentions of this Act are part of a progression of policy measures intended to ensure that justice systems which deal with children recognise their distinct needs (and those of young people aged 18 years, moving into early adulthood.) The Act contains wide ranging measures to ensure age-appropriate justice is delivered, ensuring children in Scotland are kept out of prison and supporting safe, proven care-based alternatives. In terms of the implications for Children's and Justice Social Work, the following are being anticipated:
- more 16 and 17-year-olds referred to the Scottish Children's Reporters Administration (SCRA)
 - Panel members can instruct a local authority to provide support and guidance post 18 years but not beyond 19 years in some cases.
 - More young people will be considered care leavers and qualify for Aftercare support and pathway planning guidance from Children's Social Work;
- 3.6.2 The above implications will place new and significant additional demand and financial spend to support the needs of this group of children. The allocation of funding to local authorities to support the enactment of this legislation is still to be determined by the Scottish Government. This is limiting the extent to which local planning can be progressed. The range of responses to this group needs to be supported by a local action and implementation plan (Summary Action Plan Appendix 1) . Work has been progressed to map out the key areas of activity and change that will be required. This is being developed in collaboration with colleagues in Justice Social Work but also via the very positive links we have established with the Children and Young People's Centre for Justice who are supporting the Scottish Government to develop practice guidance to accompany the Act.
- 3.6.3 The focus for change includes but is not limited to;
- Scoping Early and Effective Intervention options for 16/17-year-olds
 - Workforce development needs of Children and Justice Social Work and partners needs has been initiated with above in mind, while aware of national drivers still to be determined
 - We anticipate many of the 16/17-year-olds referred to SCRA will have higher levels of support need and require assessments of these needs within a context of understanding and managing risk.
- 3.6.4 During the development of this legislation, there have been local dissemination activities with the objective of assisting the multi-agency partnership to be prepared for changes incumbent from the legislation. This activity continues with the following;
- Further dissemination of key messages and practice actions utilising in person and practice note updates, tracked against full implementation;
 - Briefing sessions for leaders and managers across the multi-agency partnership with enhanced focus on Children's and Justice Social Work
 - Presentation to Children Service Board
 - Action planning log initiated and shared with Chief Officer
 - Development of Improvement Charter work based on the intentions of the legislation, which has tested systems readiness

- Information gathering of data around 16/17-year-olds currently involved in both Children and Adult systems and attempts at forecast levels of demand by inclusion of data re 16/17-year-olds homelessness needs.
- 3.6.5 Scottish Government have not indicated the level of funding local authorities will receive to enact the many and significant additional duties. Due to linked related activity around the future of Children's Hearings partners in SCRA and Children's Hearing Scotland we are aware of the additional resource allocation which may be awarded to them to fulfil additional functions. So far this is not the case for local authorities.
- 3.6.6 In the consultation phase of this Act the Scottish Government undertook national forecasting activity which has been challenged by Social Work Scotland and CoSLA as being inaccurate. This activity is understood to be ongoing.
- 3.6.7. To support planning for the enactment of the Act, we have further developed our local data. Combined Justice Social Work and Children's Social Work data tells us that for 2022-2024;
- Bail Supervision Order was not used as a measure for any 16/17-year-old
 - 5 Reports for Court were undertaken for 16/17-year-old young people
 - Outcomes from those 5 reports; 1 child was remitted to the children hearing; 4 were admonished
 - One 16/17-year-old was made subject to a Community Payback Order in 2023/24
 - 39 occurrences of children cited to appear in court from police custody or on undertaking in the period 1st April 2024 to 29th November 2024.
 - 10 instances of children being kept in police custody for next court day, 9 of these children were care experienced
 - 50% of the above group were diverted from prosecution
 - In the period October 2023 – September 2024 133 children were referred to SCRA on offence grounds. There were no Children's Hearings arranged in respect of offence grounds
 - 52 16–17-year-olds (59 referrals) were jointly reported to SCRA and Crown Officer Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) 31 were referred to the Reporter and 21 were retained by COPFS

3.7 Summary and Next Steps

- 3.7.1 This legislation will leverage significant and transformational change predominantly, but not exclusively, in relation to the legal responses to how the needs of 16- & 17-year-olds who are in conflict with the law are supported. The legislation will ensure fewer children will be dealt with in adult justice systems. These transformational suites of measures will align legal systems with the needs and developmental responses linked to childhood and the need for children to be protected and not prosecuted.
- 3.7.2 An implementation plan has been developed and will be overseen by Senior Managers from Children and Justice Social Work. This plan will continue to evolve and be reviewed as the practice guidance that will accompany the Act is developed. The Children's Services Board will receive further reports on the

planning for enacting the Act as the Scottish Government's plan for implementation becomes clearer.

- 3.7.3 Key actions currently focus on delivering awareness raising sessions for key groups of the multi-agency workforce. Our planning has identified workforce development needs. There will be a need to update and modify local practice guidance and processes to align to the Act taking account of the Scottish Government's implementation plan. This has already been done in response to the positive move away from placing 16- and 17-year-olds in Young Offender Institutions. Our implementation plan includes scoping of how additional interventions could be developed in response to the complex and intensive support needs of this group.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. The Scottish Government plans to enact the Act are currently unclear. Whether the Act will be enacted all at once or on a staged basis is unclear. The detail of what needs to be delivered by the Local Authority in terms of this legislation is not clear. Additionally, whether the funding the Scottish Government provides local authorities will be sufficient to ensure they can deliver on the new and significant new duties is currently not known.
- 4.2 Currently aspects of the grant provided to local authority Justice Social Work services covers the needs of 16- & 17-year-olds who come before the Courts. How we respond to the needs of this group, taking account of the duties set out in the Act, is a continuing focus of discussion at a local and national level. There is knowledge and skills across both Children's and Justice Social work which need to come together to ensure we effectively respond to the needs of this group of children.
- 4.3 While the Scottish Government have agreed to directly fund the placement of any child who is sentenced or remanded to secure care, this commitment is only assured until 31 March 2025. Beyond this date funding arrangements are unclear. We also are mindful that the Courts may be more willing to place a child in secure care increasing the financial risk. This data is being tracked at a Scottish Government level.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024 is new legislation. The legislation has replaced and/ or amended aspects of primary legislation which frame the operation of the Children's Hearings. These will impact on referral systems and processes within children's social work and across the multi-agency partnership and Justice Social Work. There is now a legal duty to consider how we meet the needs of children in conflict with the law and those who need care and protection up to 18 years old.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) articles are primary drivers	Staff workforce development to offer knowledge and information in operationalising rights in practice.	L	Yes
Compliance	No significant risk identified at this time. Funding to support delivery of the new duties set out in the Act is unclear and may impact on our capacity to deliver on the new expectations.	Services across all multi-agency partners will be aware of the key messages and requirements and ensure compliance. We continue through professional associations to advocate the need for adequate funding to support the financial settlement.	L	Yes
Operational	Partnership practice, process and systems adaption will be identified and actioned to realise our duties	Action and implementation planning and development with Leadership supports to ensure awareness of new duties; capacity and responses are in place. We have identified areas of development for the workforce and this will be addressed as the guidance that will accompany the legislation is published.	L	Yes
Financial	There is currently an absence of clarification on the plan for implementation and funding from Scottish Government on all parts of the Act which impact on Local Authority provision including	We continue through professional associations to advocate the need for adequate funding to support the financial settlement.	H	No

	placement costs e.g. secure remand and sentence costs.			
Reputational	Children in conflict with the law can bring significant media interest and scrutiny of services delivered to children and young people. It is important that services have the resource required to ensure they can deliver early and effective support to children and families.	A draft implementation plan has been developed. This includes scoping of how additional interventions could be developed in response to the complex and intensive support needs of this group.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risk identified	N/A	N/A	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

Council Delivery Plan 2024			
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement			Impact of Report
Working in Partnership for Aberdeen			<i><u>Influence the experience of discrimination and disadvantage experienced by children in conflict with the law</u></i>
Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026			
Prosperous Outcomes	People	Stretch	<i>The proposals within the report support Stretch Outcomes 5/7 of the LOIP 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. 7. 83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026. The report serves to outline how children are defined in reference to UNCRC and consequently will be better protected and receive system specific supports should they conflict with the law or have welfare needs leading to referral to SCRA. There will be no young people remanded to YOI; more young people should be able to access preventative support should they conflict with the law. The experience of victims of crime will improve with additional safeguarding</i>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not Required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2024/5/contents>
<https://www.cycj.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Children-Care-and-Justice-Scotland-Act-Briefing-Paper-1-Updated.pdf>

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 attached.

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix 1

Children (Care and Justice) Act 2024

Summary Action Plan January 2025 - March 2026

Action Plan scope on following key themes;

- Workforce skills, knowledge, awareness
- Partnership, planning and commissioning
- Legislation, local procedure, guidance, process change

What we need to consider	What we will do	When will we do this
<p>Support understanding and incremental consolidation into their practice of Children’s Social Work and Justice Social Work and partnership Workforce in terms of knowledge, awareness, skills and confidence in response to this legislation;</p> <p>Relationship with SCRA and Children’s hearings; Legislative process change in what is required by CHS;</p> <p><i>Increase in referrals to reporter for all grounds and a reduction in the number of children in court at summary level.</i></p> <p><i>Expectation of higher tariff of offence types being referred to Reporter.</i></p>	<p>Produce, disseminate materials and arrange sessions re; workforce guidance materials on implications on practice of.</p> <p><i>Age of referral to Principal Reporter to increase to 18 (17 ½ in effect) on all grounds. All under 18s will be eligible for referral on ALL grounds. No new grounds have been added as result of this legislation.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Communicate date of commencement of this element of the Act once known.2. Meeting with Police to agree template for EEI referrals3. Initial briefing note shared in 2023, latest update September 2024, updates will continue as required, addressing the	<p><i>Build on earlier implementation actions from March 2024 and progress with a calendar of dates from February 2025 until March 2026, addressing each of these themes 1-3 a-g.</i></p>

<p><i>Workforce to understand the legislation to be able to respond to the change above</i> <i>Place of safety</i></p> <p><i>To end inequality of right to a solicitor.</i> <i>Notification to local authority of child in police custody.</i> <i>Childs parent or carer will also be alerted that child is in legal custody</i> <i>Current practice is that the local authority is informed of a child in custody, clarity of who receives notification and actions required needed.</i></p>	<p>technical aspects of these three significant amendments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Movement Restriction Conditions - MRCs b. Prohibitions to CSOs. c. New duty on children's hearing to have regard for the effects of trauma on the child d. Supervision or guidance post 18 use of appropriate place of safety and remove children from police cells. e. Solicitors for those being interviewed – 16/17 year olds will no longer be able to waive the right to having a solicitor present when being interviewed at police station. f. Meet bimonthly with Snr JSW and CSW leads to collate, analyse data, identify planning and resource implications and agree what is in local scope for change plan. g. Scope with Police Partnership Team what could be considered an alternative to use of Police Custody and a local option for place of safety. 	<p><i>Locally produced Children's Rights materials, accessible by Children who may be considered for these supports a-e by October 2025.</i></p> <p><i>January 2025-January 2026</i></p> <p><i>March 2025-September 2026</i></p>
<p>What has changed in how we respond to young people where there are high levels of concern for their safety and the safety of others; Secure Accommodation Authorisations</p> <p>New criteria for secure accommodation authorisations is reflected in local processes;</p>	<p>Update CSW officer guidance on authorisation of secure placements; ensure that tests for restriction and deprivation of liberty are understood by Children's Social Work.</p> <p>Update Secure Guidance and process</p>	<p><i>Awaiting the production of National Guidance and clarity on funding provisions by Scottish Govt for Secure placements.</i> <i>Share with Chief Social Work Officer and Snr Management Teams March /April 2025</i></p>

<p>Provision of Secure accommodation post 18 years. <i>Children detained in secure accommodation for any reason will be treated as a looked after child and given the associated rights</i></p> <p>Planning and resource development scoping given the changes to definition of secure accommodation allowing a person can remain in secure post 18 but not beyond 19. Intention is to prevent the cliff edge moments for children. <i>Children may remain in secure accommodation post 18 if placed there via remand or sentenced pathway. Scottish Government not committed to funding remand places post March 2025</i> therefore potential significant financial impact for LA. All children in secure accommodation via remand or custody pathway become looked after children regardless of length of stay.</p>	<p>Change in conditions for secure accommodation intended to decouple use of MRCs from need for secure accommodation. All other measures likely to have to have been considered prior to consideration for secure accommodation including MRCs therefore use of MRCs may increase as a result.</p> <p>Share findings and recommendations from National Work strands <i>Reimagining Secure Care</i></p>	<p><i>Identify and scope local demand link to draft planning and resource implications March 2025.</i></p> <p><i>Review local guidance and Process in scope by June 2026 and identify partner support to begin amendments</i></p> <p><i>Consider financial modelling and await further instruction from Chief Social Work Officer April 2025, when SWS may have offered clarity to Chief Social Work Officers as to their role and financial implications.</i></p>
<p>Support to Victims</p> <p>Requirement for Principal Reporter to inform person harmed of their right to request information (with certain exceptions) and enhances the information that can be shared.</p>	<p>Possible Impact</p> <p>Enhanced information shared could lead to increased reports of non-compliance with conditions of CSO.</p>	<p>Action for SCRA <i>CSW Liaison with Principal Reporter at 6 weekly liaison and also as part of Youth Justice sub group monitoring function, planned impact note to Children Service Board by June 2025, quarterly updates to follow until March 2026 to clarify and describe progress of Children's Hearings Redesign work.</i></p>

<p>Single point of contact (SPOC) to be created to provide information and support for people who have been harmed where the child's case is dealt with via the hearing system.</p>		
<p>Nationally lead provisions. (Secure Transport Review; Cross Border Placement Regulations.; Welfare of children in criminal proceedings; Changes the definition of a child for the purposes of criminal proceedings)</p>	<p>Whole Systems Approach Lead Officer will assume a strategic leadership role in attending the National Youth Justice Improvement Group and disseminating their guidance along with guidance produced directly by Scottish Govt in the implementation of the legislation.</p>	<p><i>January 2025-March 2026 and under review in terms of the national implementation calendar.</i></p>