

# Public Document Pack



To: Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice Convener; Councillors Allard, Blake, Buchanan, 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, 16 June 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, 24 JUNE 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 Members are requested to determine that any exempt business be considered with the press and public excluded

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS**

- 3.1 Members are requested to intimate any declarations of interest

## **DEPUTATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no requests for deputation at this time

## **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

- 5.1 Minute of Meeting of 29 April 2025 - for approval (Pages 5 - 12)

## **COMMITTEE PLANNER**

- 6.1 Committee Business Planner (Pages 13 - 20)

## **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/March 2025 Insight Release Summary Report - CORS/25/161 (Pages 21 - 52)
- 9.2 Approaches to Quality Improvement - F&C/25/151 (Pages 53 - 112)
- 9.3 Inspection Reporting - F&C/25/154 (Pages 113 - 190)

## **EDUCATION**

- 10.1 2024/25 Education Climate Change Report - F&C/25/144 (Pages 191 - 214)
- 10.2 Free School Meals Annual Update - F&C/25/092 (Pages 215 - 226)
- 10.3 Whole System Approach to Healthy Weight - F&C/25/152 (Pages 227 - 238)
- 10.4 Incidents and Behaviour Action Plan Progress - F&C/25/153 (Pages 239 - 268)

- 10.5 Health & Wellbeing Report - F&C/25/155 (Pages 269 - 322)
- 10.6 Review of Spaces for Additional Support Needs - F&C/25/158 (Pages 323 - 332)
- 10.7 Bucksburn and Dyce Long Term Secondary School Provision: Outline Business Case - F&C/25/159 (Pages 333 - 342)
- 10.8 ABZCampus - F&C/25/150 (Pages 343 - 356)
- 10.9 Ukrainian School Partnerships project - International Travel - F&C/25/128 (Pages 357 - 362)

### **EDUCATION - EXEMPT INFORMATION**

- 11.1 Bucksburn and Dyce Long Term Secondary School Provision: Outline Business Case - F&C/25/159 - Exempt Appendix (Pages 363 - 388)
- 11.2 ABZ Campus - F&C/25/150 - Exempt Appendix (Pages 389 - 400)

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

### **CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

- 12.1 Bairns Hoose Update - F&C/25/157 (Pages 401 - 412)
- 12.2 Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2023-24 - F&C/25/160 (Pages 413 - 430)

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

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

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## EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 29 April 2025. Minute of Meeting of the EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice-Convener; Councillor David Cameron, the Lord Provost (as substitute for Councillor Bouse); and Councillors Allard, Blake, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Fairfull, MacGregor, Malik (as substitute for Councillor Grant) McLeod, Radley and Mrs Stewart. External Members:- Ms Danielle Barclay (Parent Representative Nursery/Primary (for article 13) Mr Doug Haywood (Teacher Representative - Primary Schools for articles 1 to 13), Ms Jacqueline Munro (Teacher Representative - Secondary Schools for articles 1 to 13), Dr Alison Murray (Parent Representative - Secondary for articles 1 to 13) Mr John Murray (Roman Catholic Religious Representative for articles 1 to 13); and Mrs Hilda Smith (Church of Scotland Representative for articles 8 to 13)

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.

### NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

1. The Convener advised that there was an urgent motion from himself and the Vice Convener. He had also accepted an urgent notice of motion by Councillor Blake, Dr Murray and Mrs Barclay onto the agenda as a matter of urgency in terms of Section 50B(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, and advised that they would be considered at the appropriate point.

### DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

2. The Convener proposed that the Committee consider item 11.1 (Victorian Schools Programme: Outline Business Case Exempt Appendix ), with the press and public excluded from the meeting.

#### **The Committee resolved:-**

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

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

3. The following transparency statements were intimated:-

- Dr Murray made a transparency statement in relation to item 10.1 (Early Intervention Service), as she had a child who had additional support needs.

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- Councillor Blake made a transparency statement in respect of item 10.2 (International Travel - Music Service Trip to Regensburg) as she had two children who attended the music service;
- Councillor McLeod also made a transparency statement in respect of item 10.2 as he was previously a coordinator for the service;
- The Vice Convener made a transparency statement in respect of item 10.3 (Victorian Schools Programme: Outline Business Case) as her child attended one of the Victorian schools;
- Councillor Malik also made a transparency statement in respect of item 10.3 as he had two grandchildren who attended one of the Victorian schools;
- Mr Murray also made a transparency statement in respect of item 10.3, as he had two grandchildren who attended St Joseph's RC School and his daughter was a teacher at the school; and
- Ms Munro and Mr Haywood also made transparency statements in regards to 10.3, as they were both teachers at one of the Victorian schools.

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

#### **MINUTE OF MEETING OF 18 FEBRUARY 2025**

4. The Committee had before it the minute of the previous meeting of 18 February 2025, for approval.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the minute as a correct record.

#### **COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER**

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

**The Committee resolved:-**

to note the committee business planner.

#### **URGENT NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR GREIG & COUNCILLOR MENNIE**

6. The Committee had before it an urgent notice of motion by the Convener and Vice Convener in the following terms:-

That the Committee:-

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Instruct the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to provide a report to the next meeting of Education and Children's Services to Members with a broad overview of the ongoing preventative work to tackle behaviour issues in schools, including progress against the national Behaviour Action Plan, any specific trends in respect of incidents, and any comparator figures with other local authorities if available.

The Convener moved, seconded by the Vice Convener:-

That the Committee approve the urgent notice of motion.

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

That the Committee instructs the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to produce a report to the meeting of Council on 20 August 2025 with a broad overview of the ongoing preventative work to tackle behaviour issues in schools, including progress against the national Behaviour Action Plan, any specific trends in respect of incidents, and any comparator figures with other local authorities if available.

On a division, there voted – for the motion (10) – the Convener, the Vice Convener, Councillor Cameron, the Lord Provost and Councillors Allard, Hazel Cameron, Fairfull, MacGregor and Radley and Dr Murray and Mr Murray – for the amendment (6) Councillors Blake, Brooks, Malik, McLeod and Mrs Stewart and Mr Regmi – declined to vote (2) – Mr Haywood and Ms Munro.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to adopt the motion.

**URGENT NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR BLAKE, MRS BARCLAY, DR MURRAY**

7. The Committee had before it an urgent notice of motion by Councillor Blake, Mrs Barclay and Dr Murray in the following terms:-

That the Committee -

1. note that the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 came into force on 1 April 2025 and made the PVG scheme mandatory for everyone carrying out a regulated role with children and vulnerable adults;
2. note the importance of PVGs to safeguarding our young people
3. note that Connect and Volunteer Scotland have provided guidance to parent councils and this has raised more question and concerns
4. note that Aberdeen parent councils and PTAs who already struggle to get parental engagement are concerned by the ramifications of the changes on their operations including volunteer recruitment for school events, the additional administrative burden, and cost.

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5. instruct the Executive Director of Families and Communities to write to the Cabinet Secretary of Education and Skills to ask for an extension of the grace deadline for parent groups and provide additional guidance including scenario planning to parent councils; and
6. instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning after consultation with the Interim Chief Officer - Governance to write to parent councils to confirm the date of requirement to have PVG checks in place.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the urgent notice of motion.

**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK/NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK PROGRESS UPDATE - CORS/25/079**

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Data Insights, Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning and the Chief Officer - Children's Social Work and Family Support, which presented 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, and (b) a Progress Update around Aberdeen City Council's National Improvement Framework Plan 2024/25.

**The report recommended:-**

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

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to request that information on pupil attendance pre COVID, be included in future reports;
- (ii) to request that officers clarify the staff expenditure costs at page 33, table 13, quarter 4 of the report and send this information to the Lord Provost by way of email;
- (iii) for future reporting, to request that more information is included in relations to trends; and
- (iv) to note the report.

**ABERDEEN CITY INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24 - F&C/25/078**

9. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning, which outlined work undertaken by the Children's Services Board over 2024/25. The report also proposed changes to the agreed Aberdeen City Integrated Children's Services Strategic Plan to support Community Planning Partners to positively respond to changes in published data and national policy.

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**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note the progress made in delivering the Aberdeen City Integrated Children's Services Strategic Plan from April 2024 to date;
- (b) note the changes evident in data sets released over the reporting period;
- (c) approve the Aberdeen City Integrated Children's Services Strategic Plan Annual Report 2023/24;
- (d) delegate authority to the Executive Director Families and Communities to submit the Annual Report to the Community Planning Aberdeen Board for ratification; and
- (e) delegate authority to the Executive Director Families and Communities to submit the Annual Report to Scottish Government pending approval from the Community Planning Aberdeen Board.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that a report would be brought to a future committee with information on child to adult transitions, which would summarise the work that had been progressed;
- (ii) to request that the use of appropriate wording be reviewed within the Aberdeen City Integrated Children's Services Strategic Plan Annual Report, specifically the use of the word obesity;
- (iii) in relation to the number of young people between the ages of 11-25 and the local suicide rate, that information be included in a future report on work that was being undertaken to try and prevent suicides; and
- (iv) to approve the recommendations.

**INSPECTION REPORTING - F&C/25/081**

**10.** The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning, which provided details on 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.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) notes the contents of the report;
- (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; and
- (c) instruct 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.

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**The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations.

**EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICE - F&C/25/074**

11. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning, which presented a proposed operating model for a cost neutral time limited Early Intervention service, to be based at Riverbank School for up to 10 primary children and to share a summary of progress against the recommendations from 'Support for Learning: All our Children and Their Potential' (Angela Morgan, 2020) known as the Morgan Review.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) instruct the Chief Officer Education & Lifelong Learning to progress with a time limited (12 months) Early Intervention Service Test of Change at Riverbank School for younger primary school pupils, operational August 2025;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer Education & Lifelong Learning to report back on progress in 2 committee cycles from commencement of service; and
- (c) to instruct the Chief Officer Education & Lifelong Learning to report a full evaluation of the Test of Change within 4 committee cycles from commencement of service'.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to approve the recommendations;
- (ii) to note that children attending the Early Intervention Service would have no/limited participation in their home school preventing them effectively accessing their education at that school; and
- (iii) to instruct the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to ensure that transport would be provided if found to be required in order for families to benefit from the intervention.

**INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL - MUSIC SERVICE TRIP TO REGENSBURG - F&C/25/082**

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning, which sought approval for travel to Regensburg by officers to support pupils in June 2025.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee approve travel for two officers to attend Regensburg in June 2025, and the estimated spend set out at section 4.1 of the report, with the purpose of the visit to support pupils to perform in Regensburg Citizen's Festival.

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**The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendation.

**VICTORIAN SCHOOLS PROGRAMME: OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE - F&C/25/080**

**13.** The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord, which presented the completed Outline Business Case for the proposed Victorian Schools Programme, detailed options and estimated costs and timescales for improving the suitability of the city's Victorian school buildings.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee -

- (a) note the preferred option for taking forwards the Victorian Schools programme, as detailed within the Outline Business Case at Appendix A of this report; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to incorporate the preferred option and programming and cost implications for the Victorian Schools Programme into the development of the School Estate Plan annual update report, to be presented to this Committee in September 2025.

The Convener moved, seconded by the Vice Convener:-

That the Committee approve the recommendations in the report.

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

That the Committee –

1. Reaffirm the commitment to ensuring that the whole school estate, including Aberdeen's Victorian Schools, benefits from strategic investment and improved educational facilities;
2. Note that capacity issues had been prioritised in the methodology. Agree Hanover Street primary which according to the school roll forecast had the most significant capacity issues of the Victorian schools currently and by 2030 should be in scope;
3. Agrees that any decision to approve a preferred option without understanding its effect on the School Estate plan could have significant financial and practical implications for other vital projects contained within the plan; and
4. Agree not to approve a preferred option until such time as officers can set out clearly any potential implications and instructs officers to report to the September committee meeting to ensure that members have all of the information required to make a fully informed decision.

On a division, there voted – for the motion (11) – the Convener, the Vice Convener, Councillor David Cameron, the Lord Provost and Councillors Allard, Hazel Cameron, Fairfull, MacGregor and Radley, Mr Murray, Mr Regmi and Mrs Smith – for the amendment (7) – Councillors Blake, Brooks, Malik, McLeod and Mrs Stewart and Ms Barclay and Dr Murray – declined to vote (2) – Mr Haywood and Ms Munro.

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**The Committee resolved:-**

to adopt the motion and therefore approve the recommendations.

**VICTORIAN SCHOOLS OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE - EXEMPT APPENDICES**

14. The Committee had before it an exempt appendix relating to the Victorian Schools Outline Business Case report. (Article 13 of this minute refers).

**The Committee resolved:-**

to note the information contained within the exempt appendix.

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

**CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT - F&C/25/083**

15. With reference to article 16 of the minute of the meeting of 23 May 2023, the Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer - Children's Social Work and Family Support, which provided Committee with an overview of Corporate Parenting activity not reported previously and presented a High Level Promise Plan which took account of expectations within Plan 24-30, also reflected the voices of our care experienced children and young people.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note the findings of the Bright Spots Report (October 2024);
- (b) approve the High Level Promise Plan in Appendix A; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to update Committee on progress against the High Level Promise Plan within one calendar year.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) in relation to a presentation by a care experienced young person, to request that the Chief Officer - Children's Social Work and Family Support share the link to the presentation with all Councillors;
- (ii) to note that the Chief Officer - Children's Social Work and Family Support would engage with the new Participation Officer regarding obtaining young people's views and details of experiences, and to investigate the possibility of engagement with elected members regarding their experiences;
- (iii) to note that the Chief Officer - Children's Social Work and Family Support would also investigate an approach for engagement with Elected Members and the Promise Scotland; and
- (iv) to approve the recommendations.

- **COUNCILLOR MARTIN GREIG, Convener**



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	<b>EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER</b> The Business Planner details the reports which have been instructed by the Committee as well as reports which the Functions expect to be submitting for the calendar year.								
2	<b>Report Title</b>		<b>Update</b>	<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Chief Officer</b>	<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Terms of Reference</b>	<b>Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T</b>	<b>Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred</b>
3	<b>24 June 2025</b>								
4	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		
5	Incidents and Behaviour Action Plan Progress	E&CS 29/04/2025 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to provide a report to the next meeting of Education and Children's Services to Members with a broad overview of the ongoing preventative work to tackle behaviour issues in schools, including progress against the national Behaviour Action Plan, any specific trends in respect of incidents, and any comparator figures with other local authorities if available.		Shona Milne	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.2		
6	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		
7	Ukrainian School Partnerships project – International Travel	To seek approval for a teacher from Ferryhill School to travel to Krakow in Poland as part of the British Council UK-Ukraine School Partnerships project on Reading for Pleasure		Caroline Johnstone	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	2.1.1 and General Delegation 5		
8	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		
9	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		
10	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		

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	Report Title		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	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		
12	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		
13	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		
14	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.  E&CS 18/02/25 - in relation to the deep dive being undertaken in respect of the reasons for not bringing cases to the Child Protection Planning meeting within the expected timescales, to note that an update on this work could be provided in the Bairns Hoose report, due to Committee in June 2025		Ali McAlpine	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
15	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data Insights	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
16	Whole System Approach to 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		Niki Paterson	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1 / 1.1.2		

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	Report Title		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	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		
17									
18	16 September 2025								
19	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		
20	Review of Adoption Allowance Scheme	To present the update of the Adoption Allowance Scheme for agreement		Isabel McDonnell	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	GD 8.1		
21	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		
22	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  E&CS 18/02/25 - to note that officers would ensure that the Community Council was included in the engagement		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.2 and 1.1.5		
23	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  E&CS 29/04/25 - in relation to the number of young people between the ages of 11-25 and the local suicide rate, that information be included in a future report on work that was being undertaken to try and prevent suicides		Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1		

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	Report Title		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	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&amp;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> <p>E&amp;CS 29/04/25 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to incorporate the preferred option and programming and cost implications for the Victorian Schools Programme into the development of the School Estate Plan annual update report, to be presented to this Committee in September 2025</p>		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.2 and 1.1.5		
24									
25	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		
26	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		
27	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		
28	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, should no changes be needed to policy		Louise Beaton	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1 and 1.1.5	R	The Policy Group have reviewed the policy and do not consider that it requires any further update at this time and therefore will not require to be reported to Committee in September 2025. The policy will therefore now be reviewed again in September 2026 and will be moved to that date on the business planner
29	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		

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2	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		
30									
31	25 November 2025								
32	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data Insights	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
33	Expanding & Strengthening Youth Participation in Global Decision-Making (Notice of Motion by Cllr Macdonald)	Council 28/04/25 - to endorse the spirit of the Pact for the Future; and to instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to bring a report to a future meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee outlining what the Council can do to promote the involvement of our young people in expanding and strengthening youth participation in global decision-making.		Shona Milne	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	TBC		
34	Minimising Exclusion Policy	To present the revised exclusion policy for approval	Officers anticipate updated national guidance by summer 2025 and will look to take a refreshed policy to Committee when they have considered the guidance	Mhairi Shewan	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.5		
35	Corporate Parenting Annual Report	To present the Corporate Parenting Annual Report for assurance		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
36	Family Support Model - engagement	E&CS 17/09/24 - to note that the Executive Director had suggested that the report due to be presented to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee in November on a detailed phased implementation plan reflecting plans for internal zoning of the Central Library and testing of the Library and Information Service as an integral part of the emerging model of Family Support which would incorporate plans for ongoing engagement with communities and groups could also be presented to the November meeting of this Committee if it was felt this would be beneficial		Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
37	Cluster Risk Registers and Assurance Maps	To report on the cluster risk registers  E&CS 26/11/24 - to note that (a) 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; (b) that some control actions may need to be reviewed to demonstrate the drive in the risk register to resolve the specific issue; and (c) that the phrasing of the risk 'Child Migration including unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people and all families requiring resettlement or with no recourse to public funds' would be reviewed for the next report		Graeme Simpson / Shona Milne	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.4		
38	Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report	To present the Chief Social Work Officer annual report.		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.5		

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2	Child Protection Committee Annual Report	E&CS 26/11/24 - (i) to 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; and (ii) to request that officers ensure that there was less use of acronyms in the next report		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
39	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		
40									
41	2026								
42	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		
43	Progress on Early Intervention Service Test of Change at Riverbank School	E&CS 29/04/2025 - (i)to instruct the Chief Officer Education & Lifelong Learning to progress with a time limited (12 months) Early Intervention Service Test of Change at Riverbank School for younger primary school pupils, operational August 2025; (ii)to instruct the Chief Officer Education & Lifelong Learning to report back on progress in 2 committee cycles from commencement of service	Possibly January 2026	Emma Powell	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
44	Corporate Parenting Annual Report / Progress on Promise Plan	E&CS 29/04/25 - to instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to update Committee on progress against the High Level Promise Plan within one calendar year		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
45	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.	April 2026	Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
46	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		
47	Early Intervention Service Test of Change - Full Evaluation	E&CS 29/04/25 - (iii)to instruct the Chief Officer Education & Lifelong Learning to report a full evaluation of the Test of Change within 4 committee cycles from commencement of service	Possibly June 2026	Emma Powell	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
48	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		

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2									
49									
50	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		
51									
52	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
53	Child to Adult Transitions	E&CS 29/04/25 - to note that a report would be brought to a future committee with information on child to adult transitions, which would summarise the work that had been progressed		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		A service update will be provided later this month to Members which will advise on a date for a full report to come back to ECS Committee later in the year
54	The Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024	E&CS 18/02/25 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Children's Social Work and Family Support to report to this committee once the plan for enactment and associated funding was made known by the Scottish Government		Graeme Simpson / Andrea McGill	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
55									
56	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									
57	Consultation on proposed new school at Bucksburn / Newhills	<p>EC&amp;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.</p> <p>E&amp;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 &amp; confirm decision on implementing proposals in July 2024</p> <p>E&amp;CS 20/02/24 - approval of revised School Estate timeline - dates for carrying out the consultation to be confirmed</p> <p>E&amp;CS 17/09/24 - approval of School Estate Plan</p>		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
58	Loirston Loch Additional Primary Provision - Outline Business Case (L1)	<p>E&amp;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)</p> <p>E&amp;CS 20/02/24 - Revised school estate timeline approved. No immediate requirement for this, revisit post 2024</p> <p>E&amp;CS 17/09/24 - Project currently on hold (as per annual School Estate Plan update)</p>		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)



<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Performance Management Framework/March 2025 Insight Release Summary Report
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CORS/25/161
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS</b>	Andy MacDonald/Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICERS</b>	Martin Murchie/Shona Milne/Graeme Simpson
<b>REPORT AUTHOR(S)</b>	Alex Paterson
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.3

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present Committee with (a) the status of key annual/annualised performance and service standard measures relating to the Education and Lifelong Learning and Children's Social Work and Family Support Clusters, and (b) a summary analysis of school leaver attainment and achievement derived from the Insight release in March 2025.

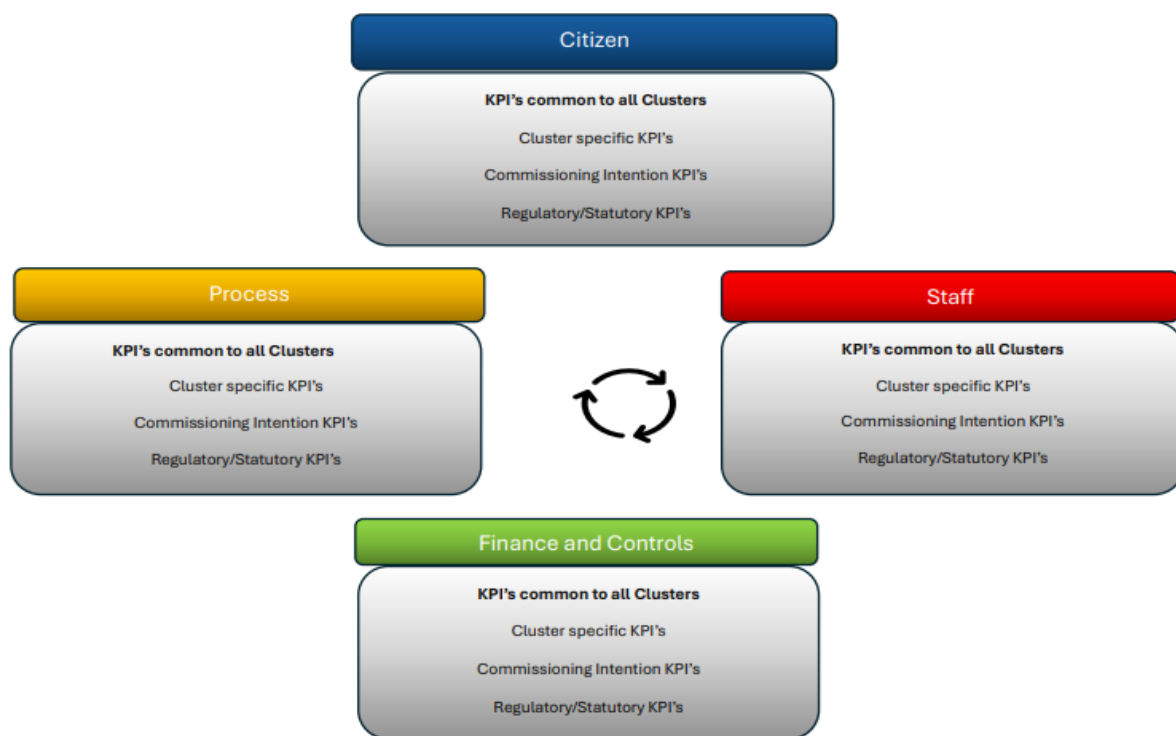
## 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 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 21<sup>st</sup> August 2024.
- 3.2 Performance Management Framework Reporting against in-house delivery directly contributing to, or enabling delivery against, the City's Local Outcome Improvement Plan, (LOIP) has informed development of successive Council Delivery Plans, including the [2024-25.Council Delivery Plan](#) ( the Plan) that was agreed by Council on the 6th of March 2024.
- 3.3 The 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 end of year performance against the Plan, including corporate and service level measures, alongside a number of nationally benchmarked datasets from more recent publications.
- 3.5 It also incorporates commentary and reflection against, and metrics aligned to, Service Standards and Statutory Performance Indicators set for the 2024/25 financial year.
- 3.6 This represents a conclusion to, and summing up of, service level Performance Management Framework measures throughout the 2024/25 fiscal period, including those quarterly measures which were reflected on in the previous report but, at the time, contained incomplete data.
- 3.7 As instructed at the meeting of the Committee in April 2025, extended trend datasets, and commentaries, covering the majority of measures are incorporated within the Appendix through the provision of information on performance over three annual periods.
- 3.8 Presentation and analysis of the wider range of operational, and strategic, level performance measures covering the work of both Clusters will be contained within (a) the standing Council Delivery Plan Annual Report to Council and (b) the 2025/26 National Improvement Framework Plan, and Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report to future meetings of this Committee.
- 3.9 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

3.10 Appendix B captures summary analysis of school leaver attainment and achievement derived from the Insight release in March 2025.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

#### 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct environmental implications arising out of this report

#### 7. RISK

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

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic	None	NA	NA	NA
Compliance	No significant legal risks.	Publication of service performance information in the public domain ensures that the Council is meeting its legal obligations in the context of Best value reporting.	L	Yes

<b>Operational</b>	No significant operational risks.	Oversight by Members of core employee health and safety/attendance data supports the Council's obligations as an employer	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	No significant financial risks.	Overview data on specific limited aspects of the cluster's financial performance is provided within this report	L	Yes
<b>Reputational</b>	No significant reputational risks.	Reporting of service performance to Members and in the public domain serves to enhance the Council's reputation for transparency and accountability.	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	None	NA	NA	NA

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>Council Delivery Plan</u></b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b><u>Aberdeen City Council Partnership Agreement</u></b>  Improving Educational Choices           Creating Better Learning Environments    Caring for Young People	This report supports the following key Council priorities:  - 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

	<p>looked-after young people, those in kinship care and those with additional support needs such as autism, developmental disorders or mental health problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with the Scottish Government to expand free early learning and childcare to one- and two-year-olds from low-income households.</li> <li>- Continue to seek to support young people to receive care in Aberdeen, through fostering, adoption and other services and seek to reduce “out of authority” placements</li> <li>- 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.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u><a href="#">Aberdeen City Local Outcomes Plan April 2024 Refresh</a></u></b></p>	
<p>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes (Children and Young People)</p>	<p>The detail within Performance Management reporting to this Committee evidences how Families and Communities delivery leads, contributes to, or influences, each of the Children &amp; Young People Stretch Outcomes in the refreshed LOIP. This includes the following Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>3. 95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27–30-month review by 2026.</b></li> <li><b>4. 90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026.</b></li> <li><b>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.</b></li> <li><b>6. 95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 &amp; 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</b></li> <li><b>7. 83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026</b></li> <li><b>8. 100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination</b></li> </ul>

Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes (Adults)	<p>Families and Communities services, through the Improvement Project Aims below contribute to achievement of Outcome 11 - <b>Reduce the rate of both alcohol related deaths and drug related deaths by 10% by 2026</b></p> <p><i>Reduce the average age from 14 to 12 at which children are identified as requiring preventative support to mitigate the risk of future harm in relation to drug and alcohol use by 2026 and ;</i></p> <p><i>Reduce the % of 13–15-year-olds reported as using each sub group of drug by 50% and cannabis by 20% by 2026.</i></p>
Community Empowerment Stretch Outcomes	<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><b>50% of people report they feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026.</b></p>
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	<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 &amp; 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
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	It was confirmed by Chief Officer, Martin Murchie, on 28 <sup>th</sup> April 2025 that no Integrated Impact Assessment is required for this report
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required for this report.
<b>Other</b>	No additional impact assessments have been completed for this report.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

## **11. APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Education & Children’s Services Committee Corporate  
Performance Summary Dashboard  
Appendix B - March 2025 Insight Release Summary

## **12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS**

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## Appendix A – Corporate Performance Management Framework Report – Education and Children’s Services Committee, June 2025

### Education and Lifelong Learning

#### 1. Citizen

**Table 1. Service Level Measures – Service Standards (Education – 12 month rolling Year)**

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 ^	99.3%	100%	✓	↑
% of Primary, secondary, and special schools achieving an average evaluation of ‘Good’ in formal inspections of core Quality Indicators by Education Scotland ^	98.4%	100%	✓	↑
% school attendance levels (in comparison with national attendance levels)	92.3%	> 90.3%*	✓	↑
% 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 data to the end of May 2025 \* Based on official national data release for 2023/24

#### Service Commentary








##### Care Inspectorate

There were a further three publications of inspections of ACC funded provision in May 2025, each of which achieved average gradings of ‘Good’ across the four Organisers, and four publications of inspections of funded providers each of which achieved average gradings of ‘Good’ across all Organisers. This has maintained the above Standard to above 98% on a rolling 12-month trend.

### Education Scotland

With further inspections having been published since the April meeting of this Committee, the % of evaluations with an average grading of Good over the rolling period has risen to 98.4%. The figures reported to the February and April meetings of this Committee were 93.8% and 96.8% respectively. At the comparative snapshot point in 2024, the rolling figure was 84.5%

**Table 2. Complaints Handling ( Fiscal Year)**

Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25 Target	Status	Long Trend - Annual
	Value	Value	Value			
Total No. complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Education & Lifelong Learning	115	110	112			
% of complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) – Education & Lifelong Learning	73.0%	70.9%	75.9%	75.0%		
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) – Education & Lifelong Learning	15.7%	12.7%	8.0%			
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) – Education & Lifelong Learning	14	10	20			

### Service Commentary

With a stable annual position in the number of complaints, the proportion of these which are being responded to within the necessary timescale has met the corporate target after a series of years where it fell marginally short. Across the full scope of complaints handling, covering each of the four measures, the Cluster is performing at its highest level over the timeline of these corporate performance metrics,

For completeness on the Quarter 4 data previously reported to Committee in April, the Cluster received 33 complaints, of which 78.8% were responded to within timescale and 12.1% had at least one point upheld

**Table 3. Statutory Performance Indicator - Quality of Early Learning Centre Provision (Care Inspectorate – Fiscal Year)**

	Care Inspectorate Core Quality Indicators Fiscal Years					
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
2024-25	Percentage of assessments of Quality Indicators achieving a grading of adequate or better	92.7%	89.7%	95.0%	95.0%	93.1%
2023-24	Percentage of assessments of Quality Indicators achieving a grading of adequate or better	84.6%	84.6%	88.5%	88.0%	78.6%
2022-23	Percentage of assessments of Quality Indicators achieving a grading of adequate or better	85.7%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%

**Table 4. Statutory Performance Indicator - Quality of Early Learning Centre Provision (Education Scotland)**

	Education Scotland Core Quality Indicators Fiscal Years					
Year	Core Quality Indicator Scope	Leadership of change	Learning, teaching and assessment	Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Securing children's progress	Overall Quality Indicator Outcome
2024-25	Percentage of assessments of Quality Indicators achieving a grading of satisfactory or better	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
2023-24	Percentage of assessments of Quality Indicators achieving a grading of satisfactory or better	100.0%	60.0%	100.0%	66.7%	75.0%
2022-23	Percentage of assessments of Quality Indicators achieving a grading of satisfactory or better	100.0%	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%	83.3%

### Service Commentary – Tables 3 and 4



In combination, the % of assessments of Quality Indicators in 2024/25 by the Care Inspectorate (CI) and Education Scotland (ES) which were either Adequate ( or better) or Satisfactory ( or better) was 93.5% in comparison with 83.2% in 2023/24, and 90.0% in 2022/23.

Overall, CI outcomes for local authority provision ( 95.1%) was slightly above that of partner providers, (91.0%) where assessments of the quality of (a) Play, Care and Learning and (b) Settings, were weaker than those for Aberdeen City Council delivered services.



These measures, forming part of the Council's annual Statutory Performance Indicator suite are both static in nature and distinct from the Average Evaluation data above which captures the Education Authority's capacity for continuous improvement on an on-going basis against the local Service Standards set for 2024/25, although both datasets contribute to an understanding of the progress being made in the context of formal inspection regimes.

This data is based on the totality of inspection activity and includes circumstances where more than one inspection of a setting has occurred within the monitoring period, as opposed to the **most recent** gradings calculations which are used within the averages above and are also utilised by both inspection agencies.

**Table 5. Service Level Measures – Service Standards (Lifelong Learning)**

Performance Measure	Year to Date Value	Status	Long Trend
We will ensure library Item Requests are satisfied within 21 days – 12 month rolling value ( to May 2025)	73.6%		

**Table 6. Service Standards Annual Measure – Library Item Requests**

Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Status	Long Trend - Annual
	Value	Value	Value		
% of library Item Requests satisfied within 21 days	78.3%	75.1%	73.5%		

### Service Commentary – Table 6

The proportion of item requests met within 21 days has reduced marginally in 2024/25 but remains within the target set for this measure. This is against a background of substantive increases in the number of requests arising from enhanced digital accessibility to this service. In 2022/23, the number of submitted Requests were just over 4,000, and in 2023/24 this figure was 51,717. In 2024/25, this rose further to 57,375 of which 42,176 were addressed within timescale.

## 2. Process

**Table 7. Statutory Performance Indicators – Library Service Visits**

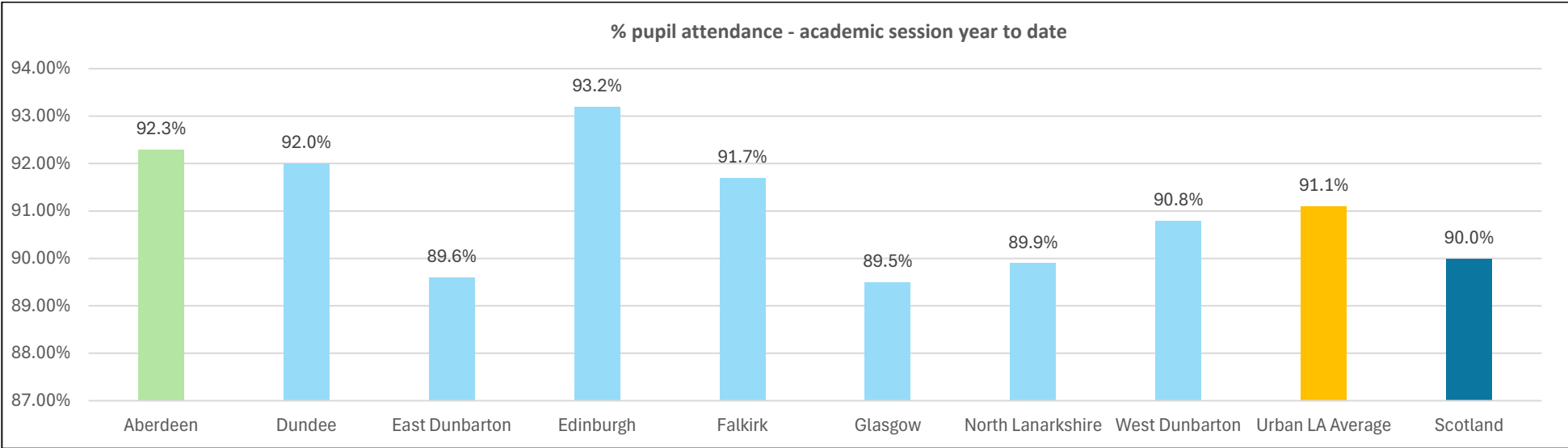
Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Long Trend - Annual
	Value	Value	Value	
Number of visits in person to library services premises	403,320	488,652	556,016	↑
Number of virtual visits to library services	1,245,127	1,259,684	1,160,939	↓
Number of visits to library services ( in-person and virtual combined)	1,648,447	1,748,336	1,716,559	↑

### Service Commentary – Table 7

In combination, the number of overall visits to Library services, and those in person, are on an upwards trend, with some migration between Virtual Visits to physical use being evident. This has been driven by an enhanced variety of engagement and participation programming, alongside venues acting increasingly as community support hubs offering a widened range of personal development opportunities and literacy themed activities for adults and children.

In association with, but distinct from these visits based measures, the number of Library Issues ( i.e. books and other products) is on a similar trajectory with 446,786 issues in 2024/25, slightly higher than in 2023/24 and a c. 4% improvement on the 2022/23 figure of 430,424. The Service also supports accessibility to the digital realm, particularly for those experiencing exclusion, through hardware and Wi-fi networks within its premises, and outreach activity which is not specifically reflected within these Statutory Performance Indicators.

Chart 1. School Attendance Measure - Percentage of attendance ( Urban Local Authorities) 2024/25 year to date



Service Commentary – Chart 1

Supplementing the 2023/24 Official Statistics data which was reflected against in the previous report to this Committee, the above table captures the currently available year to date information on pupil attendance across all phases, derived from the continuous national pupil absence dataset,

Although not directly comparable with the former dataset, this management level information is suggestive of a small increase in pupil attendance levels in the year to date for Aberdeen City which is consistent with the general trend both nationally and amongst most comparators against the 2023/24 academic year.

The City is placed 5<sup>th</sup> of all Scottish Local Authorities for this measure and has attendance levels that are marginally higher than the average (92.2%) for the separate deprivation related LGBF Family Group, being just behind East Renfrewshire, East Dunbartonshire and Aberdeenshire.



Comparatively, the current attendance levels, across the Urban LA Group and nationally are lower than those experienced in the academic year immediately prior to the pandemic ( 2018/19) by between 1-3 percentage points, with Aberdeen’s position being around 1 p.p. below that baseline year whilst the Group and national averages show reductions of c. 2 and 3 percentage points respectively.

Source: Education Analytical Services, Scottish Government, Confirmed data as at 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2025





### 3. Staff

#### Corporate Measures – Service Level Indicators

**Table 8. Establishment (Education and Lifelong Learning)**

Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Status	Long Trend - Annual
	Value	Value	Value		
Establishment actual FTE – Education and Lifelong Learning)	3,122	3,171	3,270		

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

Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Status	Long Trend - Annual
	Value	Value	Value		
H&S Employee Reportable Accidents/Incidents by Cluster – Education and Lifelong Learning	9	12	10		
H&S Employee Non-Reportable Accidents/Incidents by Cluster – Education and Lifelong Learning	793	944	1,396		



#### Service Commentary - Table 9

The rising trend in recorded Non-Reportable accidents/incidents would be consistent with the previous impact narratives laid out against improvements in the management, and recording of these events within schools, with material increases in the number of recorded events being evident from commencement of the current academic year when additional guidance was implemented.

From current understanding, similar patterns of uplifts in these data within other local authorities have been evidenced subsequent to the introduction of enhanced and/or more robust reporting metadata, although additional analysis at conclusion of the current academic year will be necessary to gain a holistic overview of the material influences behind this increase.

Additional detail around Service interventions related to Behaviour Plan actions, and enhancing the Service's management of Incidents related to pupil behaviour are reflected within a separate report to this Committee.

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





Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Corporate Figure	Status	Long Trend - Annual
	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 year-end)	5.9	6.6	5.3	4.8		

**Service Commentary – Table 10**

For the purpose of direct compatibility between years and given the limitations of back-dated information under the revised absence data management framework, these figures utilise the systematic data structures available at the commencement of each year.

These figures are not comparable with the quarterly data which has most recently featured in Performance Management Framework reporting which will inform future scrutiny of absence management but re-enforce the underlying trend of reducing levels of absence across the Cluster.

**4. Finance & Controls****Table 11. 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%		102.1%	



### Service Commentary - Table 11

The Management Commentary provided within the Q4 2024/25 budget report to the Finance and Resources Committee on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025 , outlined the financial position of the children's services overall, and for the Education and Lifelong Learning Cluster, It noted the unaudited accounts position against the full year budget and additional demand pressures arising from school roll based inflationary factors.

There is also a general increase in additional support demands arising from our children and young people overall, which reflects the legacies around social and other deficits that, from needs based data, have expanded over the course of the recent past. At the same time, these cost pressures were mitigated as far as possible by underspends and cost reductions in other areas of the service.








\* 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. The outcomes from this exercise will be reflected in the Council's Audited Accounts

## Children's Social Work and Family Support

### Corporate Measures – Cluster Level Indicators (Annual)

#### 5. Citizen

Table 12. Complaints Handling

Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Status	2024/25 Target	Long Trend Annual
	Value	Value	Value			
Total No. of Complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work	32	39	45			
% of Complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work	84.4%	66.7%	77.8%		75%	
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work	25%	5.1%	17.8%			
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work	0	0	1			

**Service Commentary - Table 12**

Whilst the number of complaints received has risen slightly, the % that are responded to within timescale has improved from 2023/24 when the performance fell below target. There has been a pattern of increasing consistency in the Cluster's performance across the complaints handling suite in terms of the number of complaints ( which is relatively low in the context of other front-facing delivery) and processing of these, within quarterly trends, although this experienced an outlying dip in Quarter 4 of 2024/25,

**6. Process**

**Table 13. Service Level Standards 2024/25 (Children's Social Work) 12 month average to fiscal year end**

Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Status	2024/25 Target	Long Trend Annual
	Value	Value	Value			
% of children open to Children's Social Work supported to live at home, where safe to do so		75%	75%	✓	75%	▬
% of initial screenings undertaken, and action decided, on new referrals within 7 days.	64%^	98%	97%	✓	100%	↑
% initial Child Protection Planning Meetings held within timescale	77%	59%	65%	⚠	80%	↑
% of Care Experienced Children and Young People with three or more placements in 12 months	3%	2%	4%	✓	<7.5%	↓
% Care Experienced Children and Young People (CECYP) with a pathway plan by the age of 15 years		70%	74%	⚠	95%	↑

**Service Commentary - Table 13.**

The data table above reflects the 2024/25 Service Standards as averages across the full financial year, and where available or aligned with these in prior years, the outcomes from 2022/23 and 2023/24.

**Child Protection Meeting Timelines**

Although improving, the 2024/25 outcome was materially influenced by relatively low performance at Quarter 3, the circumstances behind which were described in the report to the February 2025 meeting of this Committee. This outlined the extent to which this metric can be influenced by the availability of the various stakeholders, including parents/guardians, in setting these multi-agency meetings within the optimum timescale. As a reminder of the direction of travel, the most recent quarterly outcome fully met the target with a % figure that was the highest quarterly performance for this measure to date.

### **Placements**

The number of children and young people experiencing 3+ placements has risen slightly in 2024/25, although as reflected in a previous report this can be a consequence of the application of progressive and positive movement between placements which are more suitable to and/or stable for the circumstances of the children/young people as their support needs become clearer, as well as those where there is the breakdown of previous placements. The dynamic nature of the Service Standard is also at play between years, in that, as the numbers of Care Experienced Children and Young People change, the percentage of those with 3 or more placements is also affected by this denominator.

### **Pathway Plans**

Taking account of the increasing data refinement/analysis that has been offered through the implementation of the D365 and the need for continuous development in case recording that this has highlighted, the 2024/25 figure presents an improved status against the prior year. At the same time, given that significant work on case recording and accuracy has only more recently been impacting on this metric, the extent of improvement year-on-year may be marginally muted.

^ Original Standard based on 5 days

## **Service Level Standards 2024/25 – Narrative Led Annual Measures**

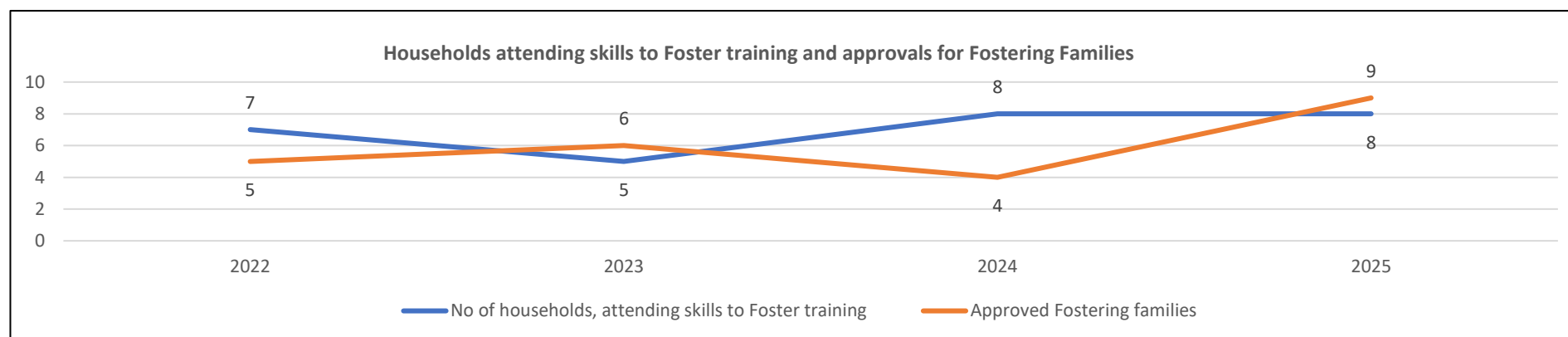
### **We will ensure all joint interviews are undertaken utilising the Scottish Child Interview Model**

Aberdeen City (along with the two other NE local authorities) and Police Scotland) adopted the Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) in November 2023. This is a trauma informed model to improve the interviewing of children/young people, by Police and Social Work staff, to ensure the best possible evidence is gathered, mitigating the need for them to repeat their story on multiple occasions. This model will be central to the operationalising of our Bairns Hoose.

Since going live Aberdeen City has been able to consistently ensure that in excess of 90% of all interviews of children utilise the SCIM. Work continues to explore changes and build resilience within the system to enable the partnership to deliver 100%.

### We will work to maintain or increase the current number of foster carers

Scotland continues to experience a significant shortage in the number of foster carers it requires to meet the needs of children who require this resource. It is estimated that Scotland requires an additional 400 fostering households - [Call for more foster carers - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/topics/children-and-family/child-protection/care-and-protection/care-experiences/care-experiences-2022). The Scottish Government has very recently launched a campaign to encourage more people to consider fostering. The impact of this will only be known in the months to come. Locally, increasing the number of fostering households is a service priority. Efforts to do so are ongoing and while there has been a slight increase in the numbers interested and being approved we continue to prioritise this activity.



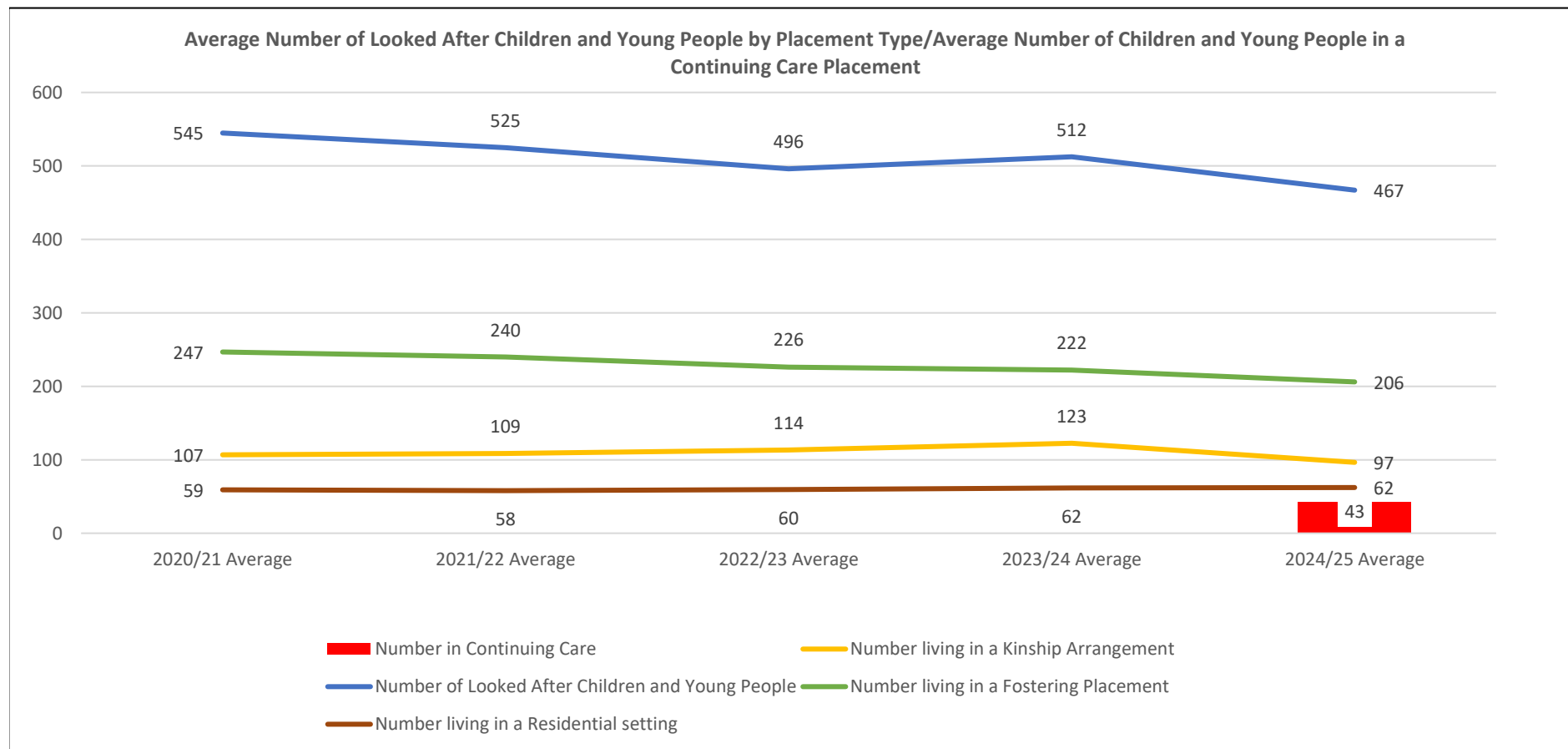
### We will undertake an initial age assessment within 2 weeks of unaccompanied asylum-seeking individuals who identify as being under 18 years where there is a dispute to their age

Aberdeen City is currently supporting 68 young people / young adults who are seeking asylum in the UK. While the number transferred to Aberdeen via the National Transfer Scheme (moving children from Kent to other parts of the UK) continues, the majority of the 68 have arrived in Aberdeen via the Adult Asylum Dispersal planning. In effect these are individuals, originally identified as being adults, having arrived in Aberdeen claim to be under 18. In these circumstances an initial Age Assessment requires to be undertaken.

An initial age assessment would seek to establish whether there are grounds to suspect the individual might be under 18. If this concludes there is such a possibility then arrangements must be put in place to move them to more appropriate accommodation with the requisite support. If the initial assessment does not support their claim and this is contested then a full assessment is required to be undertaken.

Aberdeen has established a small team to support the unique needs of this group of children/young people. Their role includes undertaking initial age assessments. These assessments are complex made harder by language barriers but are generally concluded within a 2 week period.

**Chart 2. Service Level Measures – Number of Looked After Children and Young People by Placement Type/ In Continuing Care - 12-month average**



**Table 14. Balance of Care -% of Looked After Children by Placement Type - 12-month average**

Period	% Looked After living in a Kinship Arrangement	% Looked After Children living in a Fostering Placement	% Looked After Children living in a Residential setting
2022/23	21.8%	45.4%	11.8%
2023/24	23.9%	44.7%	11.9%
2024/25	22.4%	43.4%	12.7%

**Service Commentary.****Chart 2 – Looked After Children and Young People and those in Continuing Care**

The long term trends for a reduced number of Looked After Children overall, and the proportions living in both Kinship and Fostering placements respectively are in line with the strategic direction of travel set out for the balance of care for Looked After Children, whilst the number of those in Residential placements remain largely static. The number of children and young people in Continuing Care, being reported for the first time as an independent annual dataset, offers a baseline for future comparisons.

**Table 14 – Looked After Children**

Data within this table provides averaged % outcomes 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.

The number of placements in a residential setting tend to be more extended in nature and are less subject to variation in year-on-year cycles, On this basis, the % of Looked After Children in this setting is equally influenced by changes in the denominator, (the overall number of Looked After Children) which being on a reducing trend, therefore inflates the % of Looked After Children in this setting.

## 7. Staff

### Corporate Measures – 2024/25 Service Level Indicators ( Annual)

Table 15. Establishment (Children's Social Work)



Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Status	Long Trend - Annual
	Value	Value	Value		
Establishment actual FTE – Education and Lifelong Learning)	338	341	351		

Table 16. Accidents and Incidents







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

Table 17. Absence Due to Illness (Children's Social Work) 12 month rolling average at fiscal year end

Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25 Corporate Figure	Status	Long Trend - Annual
	Value	Value	Value			
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Children's Social Work	5.8	6.4	3.6	4.8		





#### Service Commentary - Table 17

Levels of employee absence due to illness are showing a further continuous trend period of improvement, which is in line with the direction of travel for the Council as a whole, and at a level which is comparatively positive when contrasted with the corporate value.

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 21<sup>st</sup> April 2025 offered detailed analysis of the most recent accident and near miss data across Clusters

## 8. Finance & Controls

**Table 18. 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%		108.5%*	

### Service Commentary - Table 18

The Management Commentary provided within the Q4 2024/25 budget report to the Finance and Resources Committee on the 7<sup>th</sup> of May 2025 , outlined the financial position of the children's services overall, and for Children's Social Work, it noted the unaudited accounts position against the full year budget and demand pressures from specific areas of need ( e.g. on-going support for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, refugee families and young people.)




Separate to this, there is also a general increase in case work arising from the extent of support needed by our children and young people overall, which reflects the legacies around social and other deficits that, from needs based data, have expanded over the course of the recent past. As with the Education and Learning Cluster, cost pressures were mitigated as far as possible by underspends and cost reductions in other areas of the service.





\* 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.
- 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 - INSIGHT National Benchmark Measures Summary

### Introduction

Formally benchmarked educational attainment and achievement data are released at various points throughout the course of each subsequent academic year with an emphasis on the provision, and use of two main sets of comparable INSIGHT data releases, for the purpose of detailed analysis by education authorities and schools.

The second of these releases, the **National Benchmark Measures**, which are reflected in the summary below, offer a post-review (i.e. after completion of the appeals process) evaluation of outcomes from examination diet and end of year achievement assessments of all school leavers undertaking evaluated work aligning with the Scottish Qualifications Framework

This latter release encompasses the attainment and achievement of all school leavers from the prior academic year, referred to as National Benchmarking Measures, subsequent to the December leaving date for those pupils who had not passed the age which enabled them to leave statutory education in the Summer of that year.

### Benchmark Comparability

In the context of data comparisons between year cohorts and education authorities, including the Virtual and National Comparators, there are multiple influences at each level of achievement.

Of these, the profiles and characteristics of each pupil cohort e.g. SIMD status, language skills etc. are amongst the most important determinants of comparative achievement but course availability, presentation policies and course grading changes are also influential.

### Summary

What follows are highlights of key measures and analysis from the March 2025 INSIGHT release, based on three core aspects of the National Improvement Framework themes for Senior Phase: Literacy and Numeracy, Improvement for All and post school Destinations

### **Literacy and Numeracy**

Key Measure: Percentage of leavers who achieve both literacy and numeracy at Levels 4, 5 and 6.

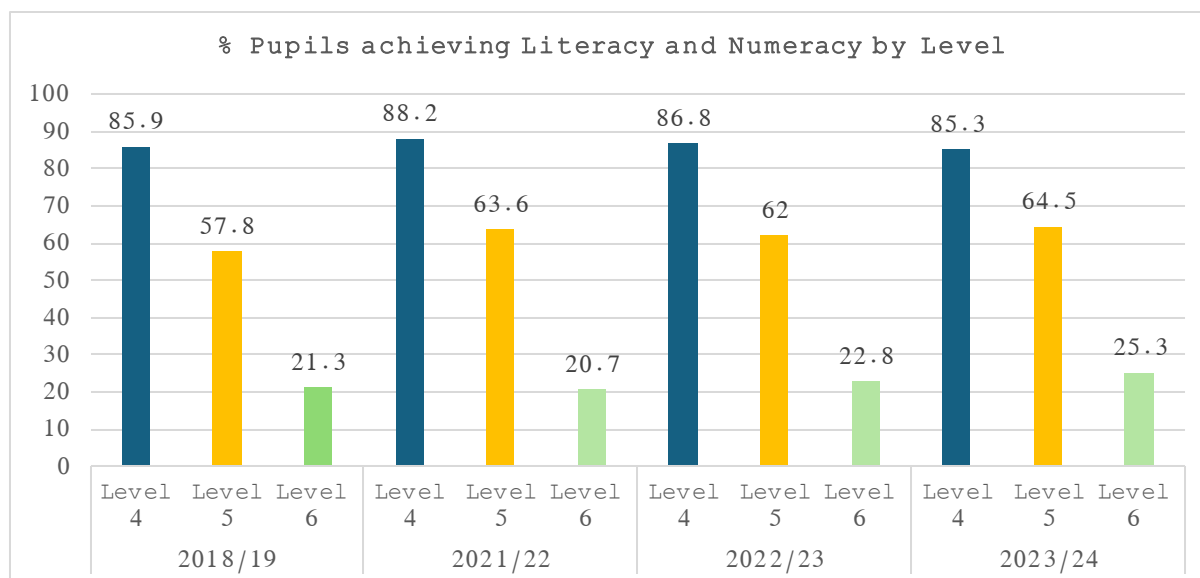
#### Trend Analysis

- 2023/2024 results show an increasing trend in the % of pupils achieving SCQF Levels 5 and 6 with a small reduction in attainment at Level 4.
- The outcomes for Level 6 are the highest recorded over the course of the current qualifications framework, with Level 5 outcomes only being exceeded in

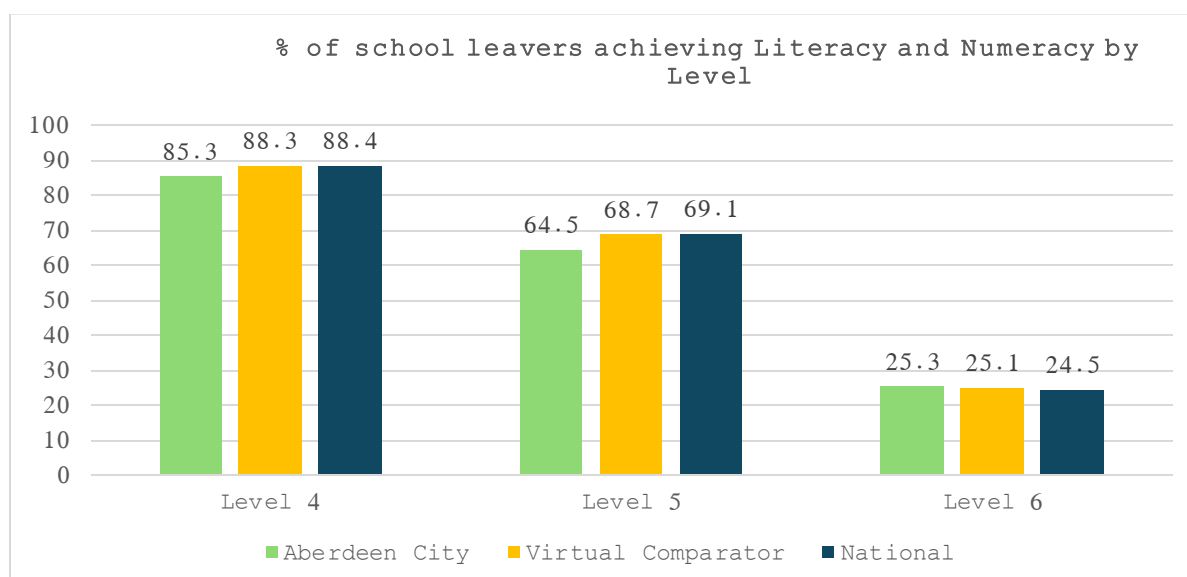
2020/21 where substantive revisions to the assessment framework were in place.

- There is a narrowing of the gap to both the Virtual Comparator (-4.2 p.p) and the National figure (-4.6 p.p) at Level 5 and the City is performing above both comparators at Level 6.
- At Level 4, the distances to both comparators have extended marginally in 2023/24 to -3.1 p.p from -2.4 p.p. (VC) and -2.2 p.p (National) in 2022/23.

**Table 1. Literacy and Numeracy – Aberdeen City**



**Table 2. Literacy and Numeracy – Benchmark Comparators**



## Attainment For All

Key Measure: Average Complementary Tariff Points

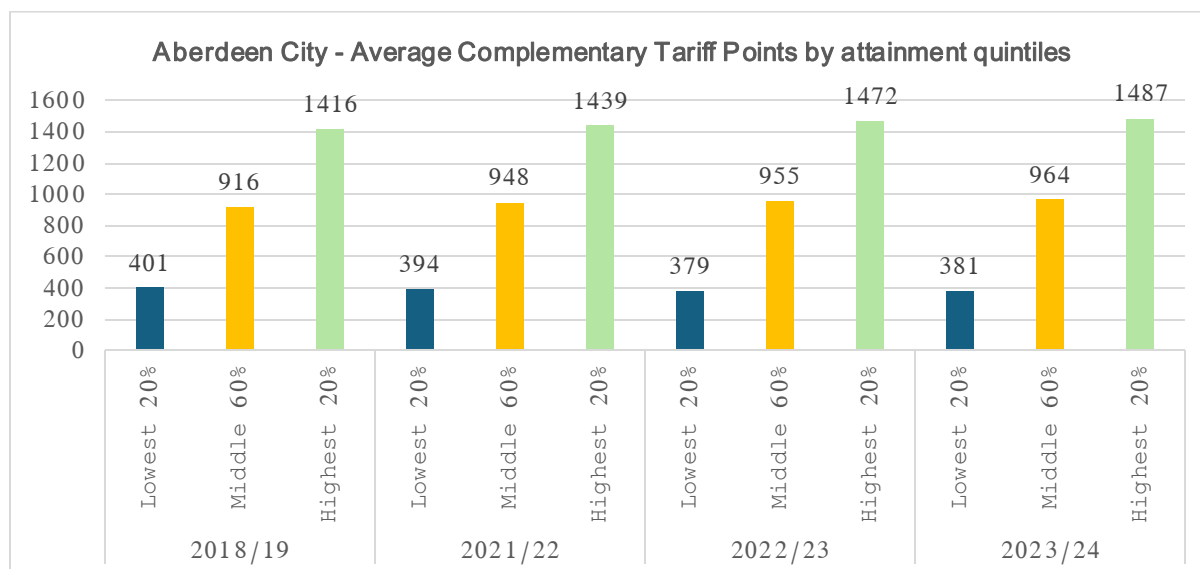
### Trend Analysis:

- The tariff point scoring of both the Middle 60% of candidate attainment and the Highest 20% of attainment among school leavers is higher than in previous comparable years and on a sustained upwards trend.
- Outcomes for candidates in the Lowest 20% of attainment is lower than in most comparable years which is consistent with the National and Virtual Comparator trend.
- Across the percentile quintiles in 2023/24, Aberdeen was generally performing as well as, or better than, its benchmark comparators, with each of the upper quintiles ( M60 and H20) exceeding both comparators for the first time since 2019/20, when the model of assessment was heavily influenced by COVID-19.

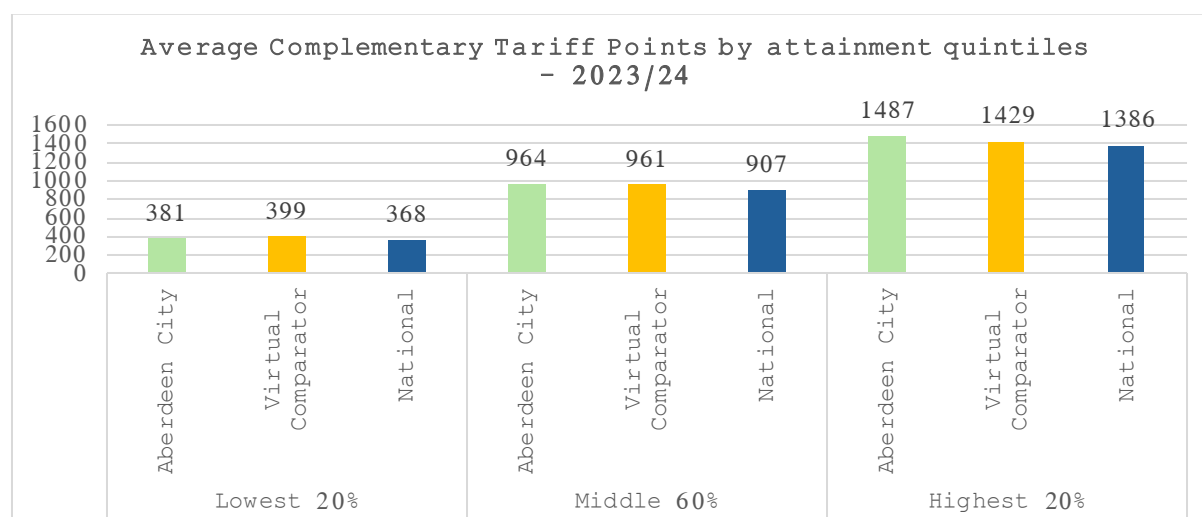
Attainment for All converts learner success in qualifications into *tariff points*, which numerically represents the cumulative attainment of our pupils across the Senior Phase stages. This is presented within INSIGHT by percentile quintiles of candidate attainment that enables comparative analysis of trends across the spectrum of abilities.

The graphs below shows the performance of learners split into the Lower 20 percentile (L20), Middle 60 percentile (M60) and Highest 20 percentile (H20) quintiles of candidate attainment. The charts below outline outcomes for leavers from across all Senior Phase stages.

**Table 3. Average Complementary Tariff Points - Aberdeen City**



**Table 4. Average Complementary Tariff Points – Benchmark Comparators 2023/24**



## Destinations

Key Measure: Percentage of school leavers in a positive destination

Trend Analysis:

- The percentage of Aberdeen City school leavers in a positive destination has remained stable over the course of the timeseries but is lower than that of its benchmark comparators in 2023/24.
- The distance between Aberdeen City and the National comparator has narrowed slightly (-0.5 p.p) in 2023/24 although the gap to the Virtual Comparator has remained unchanged at around -2 p.p since 2021/22.

Table 5. Percentage of school leavers in an Initial Positive Destination - Aberdeen City

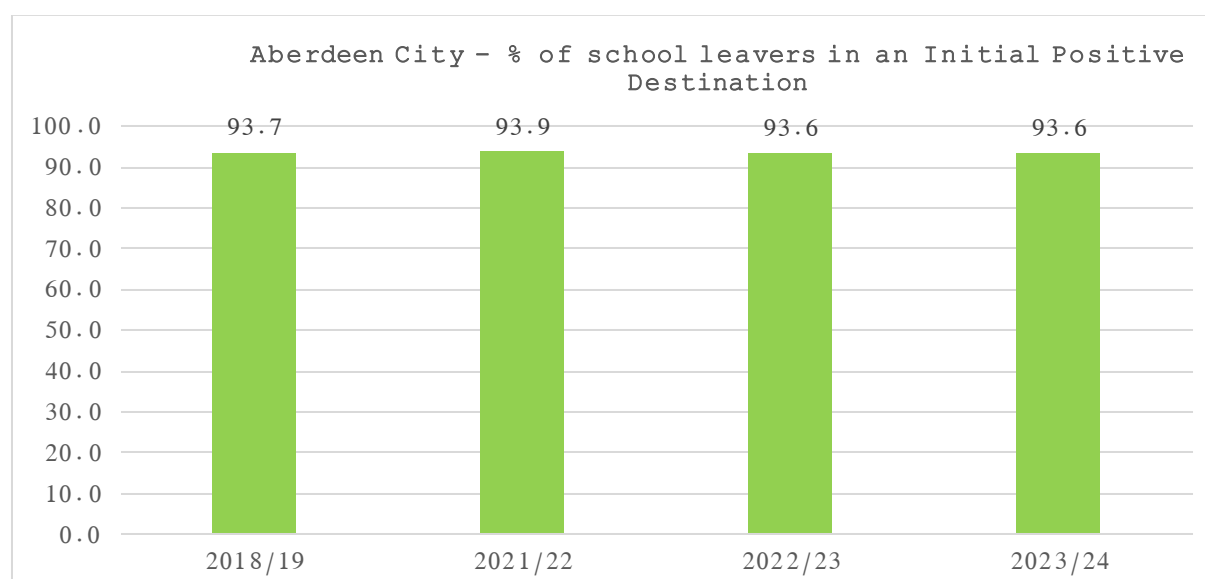
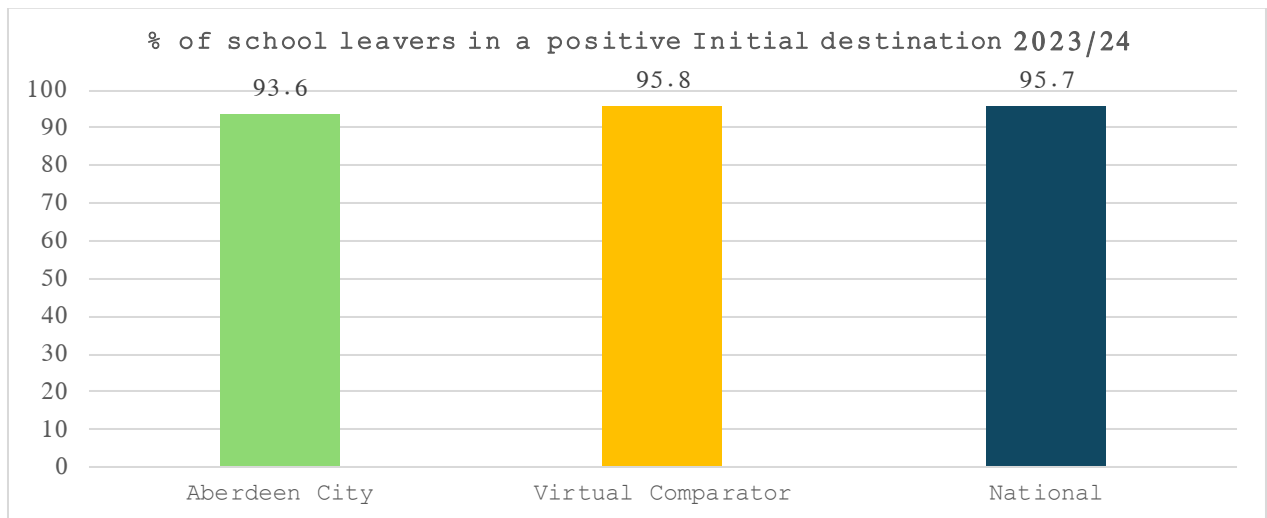


Table 6. Percentage of school leavers in an Initial Positive Destination – Benchmark Comparators 2023/34



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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Approaches to Quality Improvement
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/25/151
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Shona Milne
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

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

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the content of this report;
- 2.2 Instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to immediately implement the approach detailed in the Aberdeen City Council Early Learning and Childcare Quality Improvement Framework;
- 2.3 Instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to implement the approach detailed in the Aberdeen City Council Quality Improvement Framework across all schools from August 2025;
- 2.4 Instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to review the impact of arrangements on evaluations of core Quality Indicators over school session 2024/25, amending approaches as required, and report back to Committee with any proposed changes to arrangements in advance of the 2025/6 school session; and
- 2.5 Instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong learning to narrow the focus of the National Improvement Framework Plan for session 25/26 in order to focus more extensively on leading, learning, teaching and assessment in order to realise further improvement.

### **3. CURRENT SITUATION**

- 3.1 The Quality Improvement Frameworks (QIF) established for the 2024/25 school session were put in place to help drive improvement across all sectors (ELC, primary and secondary). The frameworks continue to provide a helpful scaffold to support central officers and head teachers to deliver proportionate quality improvement support.

#### **LEARNING FROM THE THEMATIC INSPECTION**

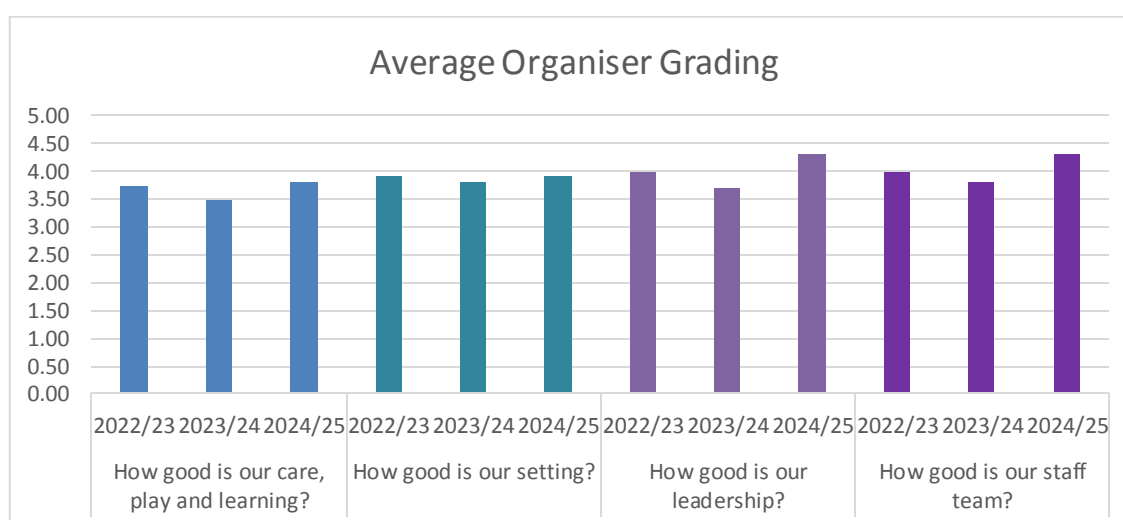
- 3.2 The [Aberdeen City Council feedback](#) from the HMIE Thematic Inspection of Local Authority Approaches to Support School Improvement offered comment on the impact of current arrangements. Inspectors noted that the school Quality Improvement Framework (QIF) provides clear exemplification of expected and appropriate processes, standards of self-evaluation, improvement planning and standards and quality reporting at school and local authority level. Inspectors noted the need to consistently evaluate the impact of our systems and processes, particularly in relation to schools in Category 3. This feedback validates the continued use and refinement of the Framework and has triggered more detailed consideration of Category 3 schools in determining any necessary changes to the Framework for use during school session 2025/26.
- 3.3 Inspectors suggested that a consistent approach to Improvement Planning format would be advantageous, and this feedback has been considered with a new format being used for session 25/26. Inspectors noted that quality improvement visits, including the use of Trios, Quads and Associate Assessors, are helping to build leadership capacity and capability across the local authority. Discussion with Inspectors and written feedback indicated potential value in extending opportunities to participate in quality improvement visits to middle managers, and to continue to monitor the impact of these arrangements. This feedback has been considered as the QIF has been refreshed.
- 3.4 In addition, discussions with Inspectors and written feedback indicated a need to track the impact of sharing practice on improvement and also monitor the impact of middle leadership work on the secondary middle leadership pipeline. This feedback has also been reflected in the updated QIF for 2025/26.

#### **LEARNING FROM EACH SECTOR**

- 3.5 The impact of the QIF on inspection outcomes for each sector (ELC, primary and secondary) and on positive movement through the categories of support has been reviewed to inform the design of the frameworks for the 2025/26 academic session.
- 3.6 **Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)**  
Early Learning and Childcare has, until now, been assessed against two inspection frameworks. HMIE inspect using How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare framework, while the Care Inspectorate inspect using the Health and Social Care Standards. From August 2025 both agencies will be using the new shared inspection framework when visiting settings. A copy can be found [here](#).

- 3.7 Following the successful leadership training run in session 23/24 to improve the quality of play and learning, the service delivered the Pedagogical leadership programme in partnership with Education Scotland for all ELC managers. Building on the success of the programme, 25 Leaders each received 3 further individual coaching sessions. These sessions provided leaders with the opportunity to engage in reflective discussions to support their leadership of ELC. There is clear evidence of the impact of professional learning on inspection outcomes.
- 3.8 Care Inspectorate reports continue to be a mix of risk based and routine inspections, this can make it harder to elicit a balanced view of performance against the National Standard. Common areas for improvement identified both locally and nationally include personal planning, play and learning, self-evaluation and safe environments. Bespoke support is provided to settings based on the quality improvement visit findings and inspection recommendations and any common themes used to design the training programme for practitioners.
- 3.9 The 6 ELC Locality Leads support approximately 200 ELC settings (including childminders). The team regularly visit settings to offer support and guidance to help drive improvement. Locality leads are part of School Quality improvement events for schools and offer support to practitioners in ELC and Primary 1.

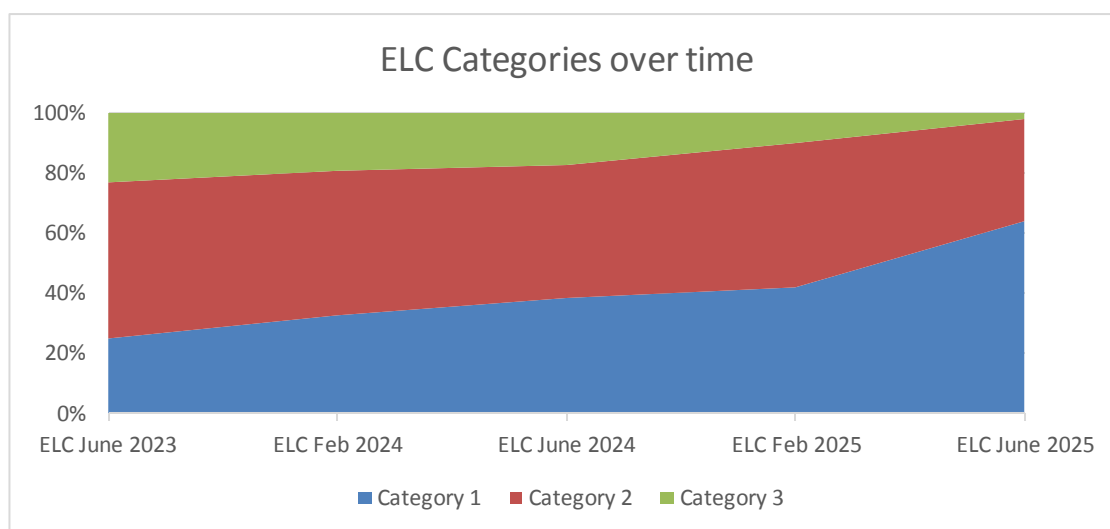
	How good is our care, play and learning?			How good is our setting?			How good is our leadership?			How good is our staff team?		
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
Very Good	4	5	2	6	6	2	4	6	5	7	5	5
Good	3	5	5	3	8	7	2	4	4	0	7	3
Adequate	3	10	3	1	6	2	4	10	2	3	7	2
Weak	2	3	0	3	2	0	1	2	0	2	2	0
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average Organiser Grading	3.75	3.5	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.7	4.3	4.0	3.8	4.3



- 3.10 Average gradings have increased for all Quality Indicators (QIs). The increase in average grading for Quality of Leadership and Management suggests that the additional professional learning put in place has impacted positively. The number of weak gradings has decreased to zero across all QIs and there has been a significant drop in the number of Adequate gradings suggesting that the

support being provided to Category 3 settings is realising improvement and should be maintained. Quality of care combines gradings from care and play and learning. Individual grades, shared at feedback but not published, evidence that the quality of play and learning, although improving, remains a key area for improvement.

- 3.11 The service continues to support highly effective settings to share their practice by encouraging visits to the setting and supporting staff to lead professional learning sessions on in-service days and sector training events. Staff welcome the opportunity to share their practice with others and gain confidence through planning and delivering sessions for others. There is a clear correlation between this peer support offer and the increased proportion of settings being placed in Category 1 as shown below. Critically, very few settings now require Category 3 support.



- 3.12 Support offered to Category 3 ELC settings has enabled 66% of Category 3 settings to move to at least Category 2 in the last 12 months. The increased focus on professional learning to build capacity around play and learning will be maintained. Professional learning will be offered to ensure all practitioners are familiar with the national changes. The current ELC quality improvement framework is supporting improvement and so remains unchanged. It will be updated once the final national documents are available. A copy of the current framework is available at Appendix C.

### 3.10 Primary Schools

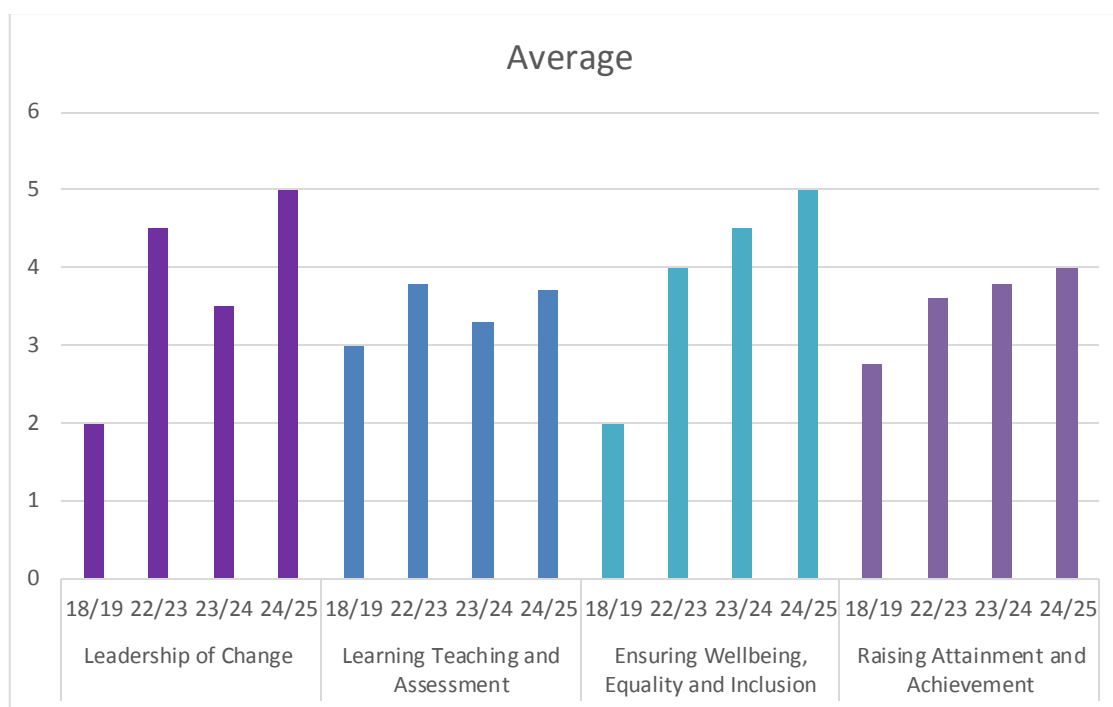
Primary schools are assessed by HMle against How Good is Our School (4). There are two types of inspection model. The short inspection model, which involves a team visiting the school for 2 days and focusing on Quality Indicators QI 2.3 (Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment) and QI 3.2 (Raising Attainment and Achievement) and the full inspection model where the inspection team are in school for 5 days and cover all 4 quality indicators. School inspections continue to be inconsistent with outcomes ranging from very good to weak suggesting that further improvements are necessary.

- 3.11 As a result of the variation evident across the sector, Trios now comprise schools sitting across all categories to ensure that those leading schools in

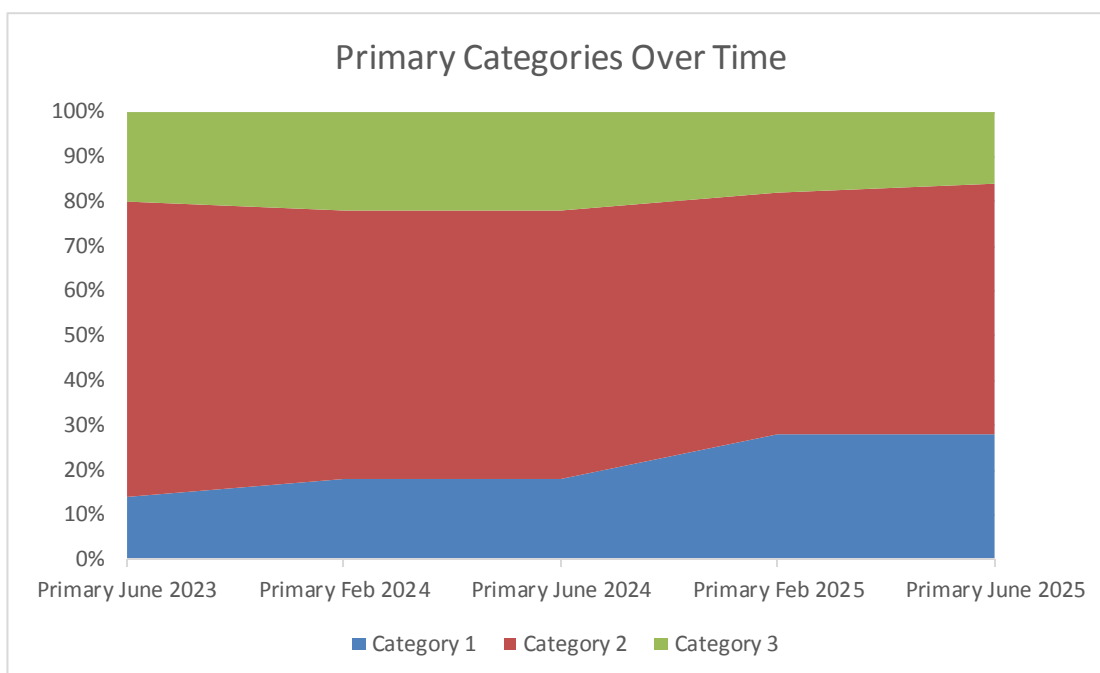
lower categories are being supported by those with higher evaluations. This approach is providing improved peer mentoring of Head Teachers.

- 3.12 Two Primary Quality Improvement teams, each comprising a Quality Improvement Manager and 2 Quality Improvement Officers, each support half of the city's primary schools. Although Teams officially oversee their half of the city's schools, they are involved in quality improvement visits across other city schools as required to allow central officers to focus on the schools requiring the highest levels of support and ensure consistency.
- 3.13 The primary Quality Improvement Team of 2 Quality Improvement Managers and 4 Quality Improvement Officers carried out 52 full Quality Improvement Visits in primary schools over session 2024/25. All 48 primary headteachers have been part of the evaluation team in at least one other school. In order to continue to increase the capacity of our middle leaders, almost all DHTs have been involved in at least one quality improvement visit to another primary school. Middle leaders report that these opportunities are invaluable professional learning.
- 3.14 In addition to this, each primary school has received 3 formal data discussions providing support and challenge around attainment. Some schools will have received very regular contact to check progress against actions for improvement depending upon their classification of need, with mechanisms in place to check that agreed actions are completed timeously. Taking this approach has realised positive movement in inspection outcomes.

Primary HMLe	Leadership of Change				Learning Teaching and Assessment				Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion				Raising Attainment and Achievement			
	18/19	22/23	23/24	24/25	18/19	22/23	23/24	24/25	18/19	22/23	23/24	24/25	18/19	22/23	23/24	24/25
Gratings																
Excellent																
Very Good		1		1		1		2		1	1	1		1		3
Good		1	1			2	3	2			1			2	3	1
Satisfactory			1		4	2	2			1			3	1	2	
Weak	3					0	1	2	3				1	1	1	2
Unsatisfactory																
Average	2	4.5	3.5	5.0	3	3.8	3.3	3.7	2	4	4.5	5.0	2.75	3.6	3.8	4.0



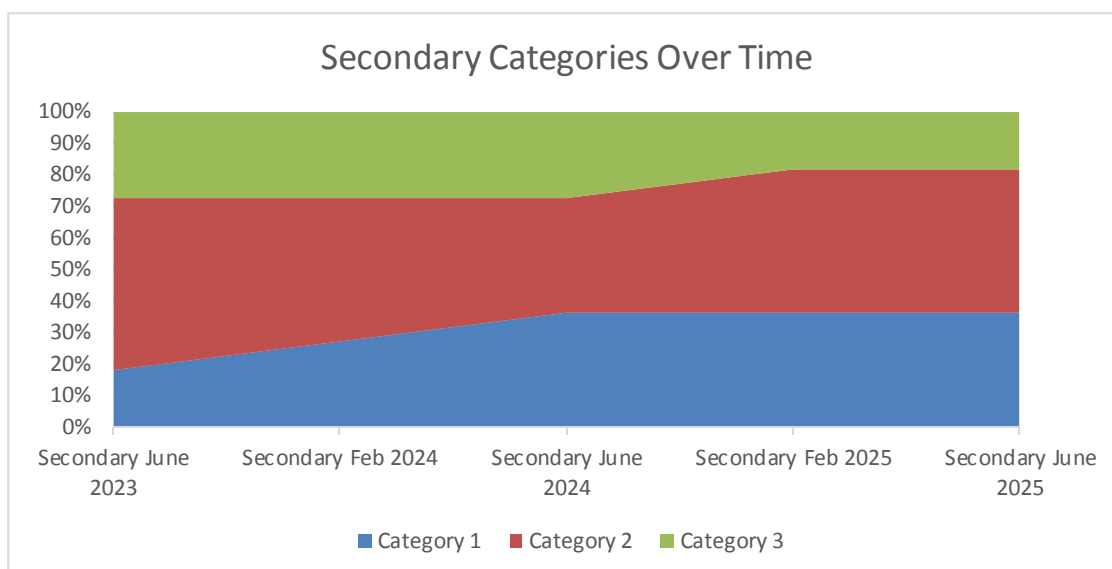
- 3.15 It is worth noting that the sample size is small (6/48 schools) and looking at this data in isolation doesn't give a complete overview. Data is also impacted by the type of inspection as the short inspection model only looks at QI 2.3 (Learning, Teaching and Assessment) and QI 3.2 Raising attainment and Achievement). However, in the last 12 months there is evidence of improvement in all QIs. The increase in raising attainment and achievement could indicate that training in data literacy and accountability is beginning to have impact.
- 3.16 There are still some schools who require support to achieve gradings of good or better and this has to be prioritised. If we look at the pre-pandemic baseline, there is a significant positive shift across all core QIs, however QI 2.3 is still not consistent and there is a need to continue to focus on this as a priority next session. Given that high quality learning, teaching and assessment is at the heart of positive educational outcomes, it is proposed that the service reduce the number of priorities in the National Improvement Framework Plan for 2025/26 so that more intensive and necessary support on Learning, Teaching and Assessment can be prioritised as failing to afford this area sufficient time is directly contributing to variation in inspection outcomes.
- 3.17 7 schools have moved down a category of support over the year, from Category 3 to Category 2 or Category 2 to Category 1. 14 Primary schools are now in Category 1 (5 more than in June 2023) and able to contribute to the self-improving system. Working city wide has allowed the team to focus on schools where there is the greatest need for improvement. School and central staff evaluations continue to align, leading to agreement on the support category the school requires to make required improvements. Appendix B provides an overview of the categories in place for schools for the start of the 2025/6 academic session.



- 3.18 The professional learning offer is reviewed annually in light of inspection findings. The Quality Improvement Framework for 2025/26 will be complemented by a professional learning programme focussed on:
- Leadership of change
  - Learning Teaching and Assessment including the implementation of the Northern Alliance Learning, Teaching and Assessment Toolkit
  - A continued focus on Relationships and actions from the behaviour plan
- 3.19 During session 24/25 a head teacher and Deputy Head Teacher have been seconded one day a week to support the development of the Northern Alliance Learning and Teaching Toolkit. This work has focused on ensuring senior leaders are aware of the content of the Toolkit and how to navigate through each of the sections. Development sessions have been well attended, and we can see that schools are making good use of the resources to support school self-evaluation as well as accessing the materials to support professional learning for whole school and individuals. Inspection outcomes show that there is a need to further strengthen our approach to learning, teaching and assessment and as a result, the use of the Toolkit has been added to the Quality Improvement Framework for session 25/26. Engagement and impact will continue to be measured as there is a need to focus more heavily on this area.
- 3.19 As part of the 24/25 Quality Improvement Framework regular sessions to share progress were added to the Quality Improvement Calendar. These have supported schools to share regular updates against improvement priorities, as well as successful interventions to raise attainment with their trio schools. These regular updates will continue to form part of the Quality Improvement Calendar for session 25/26. All Quality Improvement visits will continue to involve DHTs and other middle leaders increasing their involvement in providing specific written feedback. This will improve their ability to write evaluatively and help to grow Head Teachers of the future. There is emerging evidence that the new Trio groups are providing increased challenge.

- 3.20 The Quality Improvement Framework (Appendix A) has been amended to reflect changes to working practices as outlined in paragraphs 3.11, 3.12, 3.13 and 3.14, more intensive support for schools not yet achieving evaluations of good or better and the ongoing agreed Behaviour Plan.
- 3.21 **Secondary Schools**  
 Variability continues across our secondary schools. Schools in Category 1 are performing at the highest levels (some nationally) and those in Category 3, although making progress, still require considerable support from the central team and peer Head Teachers. Tactical teams have been useful in providing support and these continue to be in place on a consultative basis for those schools in Category 3. The team has managed 3 return HMIE visits this session along with a short model inspection.
- 3.22 The Quality Improvement Manager for secondary and two Quality Improvement Officers have worked in collaboration with other senior Officers and Secondary Head Teachers to utilise the expertise of our Associate Assessors (high performing Head Teachers who support HMIE to undertake school inspections) to support a self-improving system.
- 3.23 Secondary schools are now part of a Quad or a Trio with each group being led by an Associate Assessor. This arrangement ensures all Secondary Head Teachers have access to a mentor to provide support and challenge. The number of HMIE School Inspections being carried out, however, does impact on the team's capacity. In order to create capacity for session 25/26, Associate Assessors will have a greater role in Quality improvement and these responsibilities, including leading Quality Improvement Visits and providing professional learning around national standard for each of the Core QIs, have been added to the framework.
- 3.24 During session 2024-25, four of our eleven secondary schools hosted an HMIE inspection. This reduced to a degree the number of QI visits that were possible during the session. However, the secondary team will have undertaken 8 Quality Improvement visits. 6 visits have focussed primarily on QI 2.3 (Learning, Teaching and Assessment), one focussed on QI 3.2 (Raising Attainment and Achievement) and one on QI 3.1 (Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion) and QI 1.3 (Leadership of Change). Over the course of the visits, teams will have observed approaching 250 classes with the school being left with a clear set of next steps to support progress.
- 3.25 Each of the visits had a team comprising central team and senior leaders from schools. 7 of our secondary HTs and 19 DHTs have been part of a quality improvement team visiting another school in the city over session 24/25. The model provides valuable professional development for team members and has been received positively by schools and staff involved in the visits.
- 3.25 4 schools remain in Category 1 of the framework and require minimal oversight. 5 schools are now in Category 2 and are continuing to make progress with the support available. 1 school has moved from Category 3 into Category 2 and the remaining schools (2 both in an inspection cycle) remain in Category 3 and continue to receive bespoke support aligned to their particular circumstances. There is very clear evidence that Category 3 schools make most progress when school leaders fully drive improvement at school level.





- 3.26 There is emerging evidence of the impact of involving members of school senior leadership teams in quality improvement activities beyond their own schools. Widening the visit team to include a wide cross section of senior leaders not only benefits the school being visited but also the individual team members and their home school. This approach also ensures a shared understanding of what high quality looks like and is building capacity across our schools.
- 3.27 Secondary schools and the central team introduced a programme of professional learning during session 2024-25. Central Officers and Associate Assessors have delivered professional learning in:
- Learning & Teaching (Head Teacher Meeting Nov 2024)
  - Timetabling (Dec 2024)
  - ABZ Campus (Jan 2025)
  - An Introduction to INSIGHT to wider Central Officers and School Leaders (Mar 2025)
  - Attainment (Statistical Summary Report) - Various Across Year
  - Timetabling Software (Mar 2025)
  - Secondary Conference QI 1.3, 2.3, 3.2, (May 2025)
  - Secondary Conference QI 2.1, 3.1 (May 2025)
- 3.28 The timetabling course has now run for the second year and in December 2024 delegates from Aberdeenshire and Moray attended. Evaluation and feedback has been universally positive.
- 3.29 Officers acknowledge that the volume of inspections continues to impact on the capacity of the central team and cannot be controlled locally. In order to continue to respond positively to the inspection regime, and accelerated progress, there is a need to reduce the volume of activity outlined in the National Improvement Framework Plan for session 2025/26.
- 3.29 **Quality Improvement Framework for 2025/26**  
Changes made to the Quality Improvement Framework are highlighted in blue in Appendix A. These include:
- Increased involvement of Secondary Associate Assessors

- Establishing a network of Learning Teaching and Assessment leads
- Changes to the split of primary teams
- Changes to the trio sets of schools
- Planned sessions for trios to work together on school improvement planning
- New improvement planning format for all sectors
- Integration of the Northern Alliance Learning and Teaching Toolkit

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. All activity outlined within the report is funded from within existing budgets.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

#### 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified.

#### 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Risk of not improving outcomes for learners	Positive engagement with Inspection agencies and sharing learning across the system where appropriate.	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Positive engagement with Inspection agencies and sharing learning across the system where appropriate.	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Risk that schools/ELC settings do not accurately identify the	Quality assurance arrangements in place to validate self-evaluation gradings	L	Yes

	areas for improvement that will make the greatest difference to learners			
<b>Financial</b>	No risks identified			
<b>Reputational</b>	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
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No risks identified			

## 8. OUTCOMES

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

Children's Services Plan National Improvement Framework Plan	plan, the Child Poverty Action Plan and the National Improvement Framework Plan is also supported through external scrutiny.
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## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	I confirm as Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning that an Integrated Impact Assessment is not required
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	None

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## 11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Quality Improvement Framework for Schools  
Appendix B – School Support Categories  
Appendix C – Quality Improvement Framework for ELC

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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# Quality Improvement Framework

## 2025/26

## Rationale

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

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

## Roles and Responsibilities

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

Core QIs & Statutory duties	Elected Members	Central Quality Improvement team	Associate Assessors	School leaders across the Local Authority	School leaders	Middle leaders	Class teacher
1.3	Scrutinise school inspection outcomes against HGIOS	<p>Establish a self-improving culture across the Local Authority (LA)</p> <p>Validate school self-evaluation and associated <a href="#">Standards &amp; Quality (S&amp;Q)</a> and Improvement Plans</p> <p>Scrutinise progress against agreed Plans</p> <p>Align central resource and structures to realise improvement</p> <p>Support school leaders to prepare for school inspections</p> <p>Maintain oversight of core measures to identify emerging risks and issues</p>	<p><a href="#">Establish a self-improving culture across the Local Authority</a></p> <p><a href="#">Work with central officers to validate school self-evaluation and associated S&amp;Q and Improvement Plans.</a></p> <p><a href="#">Support networks of school leaders with core Quality Indicators (QI) responsibility, to improve, by facilitating opportunities to share local good practice and national standards.</a></p> <p><a href="#">Support school leaders to prepare for inspection.</a></p> <p><a href="#">Support the provision of professional learning to realise improvement.</a></p>	<p>Establish a self-improving culture across the Local Authority</p> <p>Contribute to Local Authority self-evaluation and use self-evaluation to identify and share good practice</p> <p>Share skills and expertise to support the self-evaluation of and improvement of other schools</p> <p>Share experiences of inspection to support school leader colleagues</p> <p>Work across the Cluster/Associated Schools Group (ASG) to identify and respond to emerging risks and issues</p>	<p>Establish a culture of self-evaluation at school level by providing regular opportunities for staff, partners, young people and parents &amp; carers to contribute</p> <p>Establish robust self-evaluation systems through the development and implementation of the school Quality Improvement Calendar (QIC)</p> <p>Evaluate the range of QI data gathered to plan and implement change</p> <p>Analyse and act on outcome data through robust accountability structures</p> <p>Build data literacy skills in staff</p>	<p>Establish a culture of self-evaluation at department level by providing regular opportunities for staff, partners, young people and parents &amp; carers to contribute</p> <p>Establish robust systems to help monitor performance across the team against the core QIs</p> <p>Critically analyse evidence to inform the work of the department and school improvement plan</p> <p>Establish effective systems to gather and analyse outcome data at team levels through robust accountability structures</p>	<p>Evaluate own work using robust evidence to help set professional development targets</p> <p>Use data to determine the impact of changes being made at classroom levels</p> <p>Share the impact of changes being made with colleagues at department or whole school level</p> <p>Engage in moderation against agreed standards to drive consistently good practice</p> <p>Participate in school self-evaluation <a href="#">activities</a></p>



				Explore any benefits from pooling resource	Share plans and improvements with elected members annually.	Build capacity in staff to measure and report the impact of changes being made to promote best practice	
2.3		<p>Support the provision of professional learning to realise improvement</p> <p>Support Category 3 schools to engage effectively with the Northern Alliance (NA) Toolkit to improve learning and teaching</p> <p>Working with Aberdeen City Council (ACC) Associate Assessors, facilitate the sharing of strong practice across settings (local and national sources)</p> <p>Manage and lead QI visits with a focus on learning and teaching</p>	<p>Support Category 3 schools to engage effectively with the NA Toolkit to improve learning and teaching</p> <p>Manage and lead a network of school leads for learning, teaching and assessment to develop consistency and shared standards across the local authority</p>	<p>Contribute towards the provision of professional learning to realise improvement</p> <p>Where appropriate, engage with and contribute to the NA Toolkit</p> <p>Contribute to the sharing of strong practice across settings (local and national sources)</p> <p>Participate in QI visits to other settings</p>	<p>Plan the provision of professional learning to realise improvement in their setting</p> <p>Where appropriate, engage with and contribute to the NA Toolkit</p> <p>Make judicious use of learning from examples of strong practice</p> <p>Plan and organise QI visits for their own and trio/quad settings</p>	<p>Facilitate and participate in professional learning to support improvement in their setting</p> <p>Where appropriate, engage with and contribute to the NA Toolkit</p> <p>Make judicious use of learning from examples of strong practice</p> <p>Participate in QI visits for their own and trio/quad settings</p>	<p>Participate in professional learning to support improvement in their setting</p> <p>Where appropriate, engage with and contribute to the NA Toolkit</p> <p>Make judicious use of learning from examples of strong practice</p> <p>Participate in QI visits for their own setting</p>
3.1	Set policy based on local need	<p>Analyse performance by reviewing data linked to QI 3.1</p> <p>Coordinate the drafting of policies to be presented for approval to Elected Members</p>	<p>Contribute to the development of Local Authority policy</p> <p>Use learning from inspections to inform professional learning and inspection preparation for others</p>	<p>Contribute to the development of Local Authority policy</p> <p>Work across agencies to identify and respond to emerging risks and issues</p>	<p>Maintain oversight of wellbeing data to quickly identify and address emerging risks</p>	<p>Maintain oversight of wellbeing data at team level to quickly identify and address emerging risks</p>	<p>Deliver the health and wellbeing curriculum effectively recognising it as the responsibility of all</p>
3.2	Scrutinise performance against agreed key measures	<p>Establish data systems to monitor performance at individual, school and service level</p> <p>Monitor and report performance trends to Elected Members</p> <p>Establish accountability structures and enhance them where required</p>	<p>Support schools to use data systems effectively to monitor performance</p> <p>Support central officers to test and evaluate accountability structures</p>	<p>Collaborate with cluster/ASG colleagues to address the root cause of issues and risks</p>	<p>Monitor and take action to address performance risks across the school</p> <p>Establish accountability structures and enhance them where required</p>	<p>Monitor and take action to address performance risks across the department</p> <p>Establish accountability structures and enhance them where required</p>	<p>Monitor and take action to raise attainment and achievement at class level</p>
Standards and Quality Report	Scrutiny of Local Authority	Lead coordination of Local Authority self-evaluation activity	Contribute to the development of self-evaluation to inform plans for learners	Contribute to the development of self-evaluation to inform plans for learners	Lead coordination of the school S&Q Report	Lead coordination of team evaluation to inform the school S&Q Report	Inform the content of the S&Q Report

	self-evaluation Scrutiny of performance at school level						
Improvement Plan	Approval of Local Authority Improvement Plan  Approval of some school Improvement Plans	Lead coordination of Local Authority Improvement Plans  Coordinate the setting of stretch aims for inclusion in the Local Authority Strategic Plan	Contribute to the development of Plans for learning including Locality Plans, the Children's Services Plan and Education Authority Plans	Contribute to the development of Plans for learning including Locality Plans, the Children's Services Plan and Education Authority Plans	Use the data gathered through self-evaluation activities to inform the School Improvement Plan. Publish the approved plan on the school website  Create a family-friendly version which when approved should be shared on the school website	Use the data gathered through self-evaluation activities to inform the team Improvement Plan	Inform and support development of the school improvement plan through active participation in self-evaluation activities  Support delivery of the plan through curriculum delivery
Local Authority statutory duty for quality of provision	Instruct Officers to address vulnerabilities in inspection outcomes	Amend working practices to realise improvement at Local Authority and school level  Design and deliver an approach to quality improvement that offers sufficient and proportionate levels of support and challenge to schools	Collaborate with central officers to deliver an approach to quality improvement across the Local Authority that offers sufficient and proportionate levels of support and challenge to schools	Collaborate with central officers to deliver an approach to quality improvement across the Local Authority that offers sufficient and proportionate levels of support and challenge to schools	Lead the school to engage positively in Local Authority quality improvement visits and other activities	Lead the school to engage positively in Local Authority quality improvement visits and activities	Engage positively in Local Authority quality improvement visits and activities



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

### HGIOS 4 overview statement (p24)

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

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

### Plan for and record ongoing self-evaluation activity

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

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

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

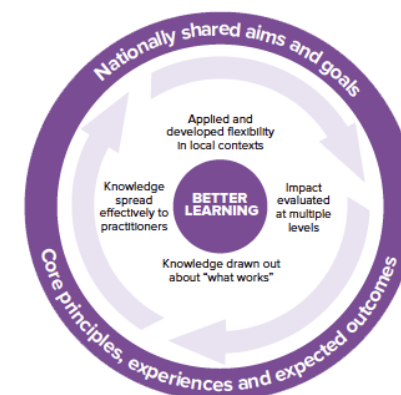
- How are we doing against the proposed outcomes in the Improvement Plan?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now to maximise the identified outcomes?

School self-evaluation activity should be aligned with the school improvement plan and should be outlined in an agreed School Quality Improvement Calendar. The self-evaluation activity outlined in the Calendar should support the on-going gathering of evidence. An exemplar School Quality Improvement Framework is available at **Appendix A** and an exemplar Quality Improvement Calendar is available in **Appendix B**.

### Ensure ownership and accountability

Leadership teams should work in partnership with staff to monitor the impact of improvement plans by following their quality improvement calendar. The findings of self-evaluation activities should be reflected upon with changes made to plans as required. This approach ensures timely changes are made.

All staff should know the strengths and areas for development for their school and be able to access self-evaluation documents. Opportunities to capture the voice of learners is critical, in line with the UNCRC and The Promise. Schools must ensure learner voice is included throughout the improvement planning process and **HGIOUS** may assist with this process. Locality EPS are available to support if required.



Clear lines of accountability for delivery of the school improvement plan and associated self-evaluation should be in place. There is an agreed LNCT protocol for Quality Improvement Visits in Schools.

## Developing the Standards and Quality Report

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Developing Improvement Plans

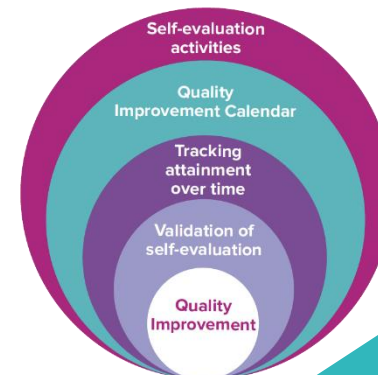
The School Improvement Plan will reflect the unique context of the school and take into account the wider Local Authority context and national direction of travel. National policy determines that the UNCRC and The Promise should continue to be planned for within School Improvement Plans. Consideration should also be given to the Morgan Review to support planning for those with additional support needs. All schools should be using the CIRCLE framework to support "Getting it Right for Every Child."

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

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

When developing Plans, the outcome to be realised must be explicitly clear along with mechanisms for measuring or indicating progress. [A copy of the Improvement planning format for all schools can be found at Appendix D.](#)

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



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

## How the Local Authority will gain assurance on QI 1.3

The Local Authority will:

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

The Local Authority may:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## How the Local Authority will gain assurance

The Local Authority will:

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

The Local Authority may:

- Undertake thematic reviews on areas of perceived vulnerability if required

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

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

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

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

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

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

At the beginning of a lesson:

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

As the lesson progresses:

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

Mid lesson:

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

- Learners understanding what they are learning and why

At the end of the lesson:

- A plenary that links back to success criteria, checks understanding and refers to future or home learning

## How the Local Authority will gain assurance

The Local Authority will:

- Check that schools have a locally agreed standard based on Local Authority [L&T Standard/Northern Alliance Toolkit](#)
- Check that classroom visit documentation being used by schools supports giving feedback on the areas being developed by the school
- Review attainment data
- Review attainment data following transition to primary or to secondary
- Undertake learning walks
- Check alignment of the in school professional learning offer with areas identified for improvement

The Local Authority may:

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## How the Local Authority will gain assurance

The Local Authority will:

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

The Local Authority may:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## How the Local Authority will gain assurance

The Local Authority will:

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

## Local Authority Assurance system

### School Visits

Visits include a range of Officers, for example, Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning, Quality Improvement Manager, Quality Improvement Officer, Locality Lead Officers, EPS, senior leaders and middle leaders from other schools and a selection of school staff. The frequency of school visits will depend on the level of support required to secure improvement.

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

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

The learning from the visit is pulled together into a report outlining strengths and next steps by the visiting team. In some cases, schools are asked to develop a plan to address the areas identified for action and report progress on a regular basis.

### Local Authority attainment/data reviews

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

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

- Power BI tools including school profiles
- PEF tracker
- SQA Power BI dashboard
- (Secondary only) Pupil Tracking
- (ELC / Primary) Progress + Achievement (P+A)

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

<b>Category 1</b> Validated self or external evaluation has identified each core QI at good or better or have overtaken all priorities	<b>Category 2</b> Validated self or external evaluation has identified one or more of the core Quality Indicators as satisfactory or below  School is currently or expecting to engage with HMle imminently	<b>Category 3</b> Validated self or external evaluation has identified one or more of the core Quality Indicators as weak or unsatisfactory  School is currently or expecting to engage with HMle imminently  There are self-evaluated concerns around QI 1.3 or staff cohesion.
<b>Possible features of support</b>	<b>Possible features of support</b>	<b>Possible features of support</b>
Attainment/data review/discussion  SQuIP review and feedback  Support to quality assure internal processes  Monitoring of presentations, attendance and exclusions  Review of interventions and supports for ASN learners  Participation in professional learning visits  Encouragement for staff to participate in professional learning visits to other schools to contribute to a self-improving system  Support from QAMSOs and Locality Leads	Attainment/data review/discussion  SQuIP review and feedback  Support to quality assure internal processes  Monitoring of presentations, attendance and exclusions  Review of interventions and supports for ASN learners  Participation in professional learning visits  Encouragement for staff to participate in professional learning visits to contribute to a self-improving system  Support from QAMSOs and Locality Leads  Mandatory attendance at professional learning	Attainment review/discussion  SQuIP review and feedback  Support to quality assure internal processes  Monitoring of presentations, attendance and exclusions  Review of interventions and supports for ASN learners  Participation in professional learning visits  Encouragement for staff to participate in professional learning visits to contribute to a self-improving system  Support from QAMSOs and Locality Leads  Mandatory attendance at professional learning

	Quality assurance visit to participate in school assurance mechanisms that look at each core QI in detail Routine checks on progress	At least twice yearly QI visit encompassing all core QIs Dedicated team from across the city to help support improvement with regular checks on progress
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## APPENDIX A - Example of a School Quality Improvement Framework

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



## APPENDIX B - Example of a Whole School Quality Improvement Calendar

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

Month	Outcomes	Activity
Through the session and built in for each year group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent/carers are in receipt of quality information regarding their child's progress</li> <li>Parent/carers are informed in a timely manner of any areas of concern</li> <li>Staff have access to CLPL to enable progress against the School and Personal Improvement Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BGE 1 summary report / BGE 1 full report with comments</li> <li>Senior phase 1 summary report / Senior phase 1 full report with comments</li> <li>Senior phase Final WG/EG report</li> <li>All year groups – 1 virtual parents' meeting</li> <li>Cause for Concern procedures built into tracking and reporting procedures</li> <li>Provision of CLPL with impact followed up through activities such as PR&amp;D and class visits</li> </ul>
Each month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The progress of Looked After Children (LAC), Young Carers and young people where economic hardship is a barrier is monitored and interventions put in place to secure positive outcomes</li> <li>Senior Leadership Teams have a sound understanding of the progress being made against priorities identified in the SQulP</li> <li>Senior Leadership Teams have a working knowledge of the standard of learning and teaching across the school</li> <li>Faculty Heads have a clear picture of the standard of learning and teaching in classrooms across their faculty</li> <li>Class teachers can share good practice and test out pedagogy</li> <li>Young people are achieving L5 and L6 literacy and numeracy qualifications (in line/above VC)</li> <li>Children and young people across the ASG benefit from early intervention facilitated through the Partnership Forum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff update Key Case Tracker. House Teams review the information and agree interventions - Key Case tracker checks attendance, exclusion, part-time timetables</li> <li>Agree evaluative activity linked to the SQulP - Pupil and staff focus groups on an aspect of learning and teaching, curriculum, wellbeing</li> <li>Extended SLT Meetings and Staff meetings scheduled as per the WTA</li> <li>Parent Council has the SQulP as a standing item – a different theme is explored during each meeting</li> <li>Staff present progress/seek feedback and ideas to Parent Council</li> <li>TLCs meet, the aspect of learning and teaching they focus on is derived from the SQulP, inform staff meetings, CLPL website and in-service staff training</li> <li>Senior Phase literacy and numeracy tracker update/check. (Check L5 and L6 literacy and numeracy Check young people achieving at the highest SCQF level)</li> <li>Partnership Forum meetings</li> </ul>
Each term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff understand attainment of their pupils in BGE and Senior Phase - Interventions agreed at class, faculty, and school levels</li> <li>Robust moderation arrangements are in place which support staff judgements on level achieved and the standard within NQs. This means tracking data is accurate</li> <li>All young people on track to achieve a positive destination</li> <li>Partnerships with union reps to support collegiate working</li> <li>Young people have their success recognised and rewarded</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of faculty and whole school tracking data</li> <li>Faculty Quality Improvement Calendar schedules attainment tracking meetings BGE and Senior Phase. Moderation meetings scheduled</li> <li>Positive destination planning meeting – House Teams</li> <li>Feedback on WTA, Calendar and any matters arising from union reps</li> <li>Colours awards processed. Merit/commendation awards processed</li> </ul>

Month	Outcomes	Activity
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff have a clear understanding of Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures.</li> <li>Staff have a clear understanding of the UNCRC and the implications of The Promise</li> <li>Staff understand how to report near misses/incidents and confirm their understanding</li> <li>A well-planned programme of transition arrangements is in place - Primary/ Secondary transition arrangements are effective for all learners, including those requiring additional support and in line with legislative requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Protection and Safeguarding training delivered during the Inservice day - Following training and on a termly basis throughout the year, staff complete a confidence rating on their knowledge of CP and Safeguarding</li> <li>Staff reminded/agree school policies for supporting young people who exhibit distressed behaviour and confirm their understanding of processes including near miss and incident reporting</li> <li>New member of staff in receipt of CP training on arrival across the year</li> <li>P6/7 enhanced transition planning agreed across the ASG - Transition Calendar in place driving outcomes detailed in the ASG Transition aspect of the SQulP</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people in the Senior Phase attain well in their SQA examinations. The school is in line with/above its virtual comparator in key measures</li> <li>Our curriculum is refreshed and provides an increasing range of flexible learning pathways - This is raising attainment by meeting the needs and aspirations of our young people</li> <li>Parent/carers access materials to help them support their child's learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Termly attainment meetings with Faculty PTs with a BGE and Senior Phase focus</li> <li>Termly attainment meetings work through collated whole school tracking data. Example: Working Grade collation by NQ</li> <li>SQA Co-ordinator issues bespoke SQA Calendar detailing operational deadlines</li> <li>Curriculum planning meetings with Faculty PTs, NESCol and other providers</li> <li>Planning for Success parental materials uploaded to website</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent/carers have a sound understanding of the range of learner pathways available and can support their child to make an informed choice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learner pathways website refreshed prior to the beginning of the course choice process. DYW virtual parental events scheduled to support learner pathways work</li> <li>Initial P7 transition visit – wellbeing activities</li> <li>Initial SQA presentations letter issued to parent/carers</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collated whole school report indicating strengths and areas for development - All staff in receipt of feedback which is noted in My GTCS and helps inform PR&amp;D</li> <li>S3 NSA data used to support teacher judgements on level achieved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Class Visits senior phase</li> <li>S3 NSA completed</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people as they progress into S3 can personalise their curriculum within the 8 curricular areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>S2 Personalisation &amp; Choice/Learner Pathways actions</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people in the Senior Phase can prepare for an exam diet in more formal examination conditions. Young people are clear on their progress and next steps in learning.</li> <li>Young people as they progress into S2 can personalise their curriculum within the 8 curricular areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior Phase Assessment Weeks</li> <li>S1 Personalisation &amp; Choice/Learner Pathways actions.</li> <li>P7 enhanced visits</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people as they progress into the senior phase choose a relevant curriculum which allows them to achieve the highest level of SCQF qualifications and achieve a positive destination.</li> <li>Parent/carers have a sound understanding of the range of learner pathways available and can support their child to make an informed choice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupil Feedback to support final push to SQA examinations for senior phase</li> <li>House Team meetings with young person and parent/carers as appropriate – additional interventions agreed for senior phase pupils.</li> <li>Learner Pathways event for parent/carers</li> </ul>

Month	Outcomes	Activity
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people make well informed course choices based on their prior learning/ attainment. These choices fulfil the standard set by the school's presentation policy. These choices maximise attainment gains for the individual pupil, choices made are at the highest SCQF level based on the young person's prior attainment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>S4/5/6 Pathways Planning days with PTs of PS and SLT. Final checks that coursing is appropriate for everyone.</li> <li>Pupil leadership opportunities – applications deadline</li> </ul>
April		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>P7 into S1 Class lists – first draft to ASG primaries</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people in S1-S3 make progress over time as detailed in CfE levels. Assessment evidence is valid and reliable based on robust moderation arrangements</li> <li>Collated whole school report indicating strengths and areas for development. All staff in receipt of feedback which is noted in GTCS and helps inform PR&amp;D</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>S3 CfE literacy and numeracy levels are submitted to the LA</li> <li>S3 CfE literacy and numeracy levels are moderated and checked against NSA data</li> <li>BGE Class Visits</li> <li>PR&amp;D meetings – link back to 2 x class visits. Celebrate success and guide professional learning</li> <li>Change of timetable</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A draft SQulP is submitted to LA detailing clear and achievable priorities arising from effective evaluative activities</li> <li>All members of the school community have a shared understanding of the priorities for the year ahead</li> <li>Systems to track attainment and achievement for the year ahead refreshed</li> <li>Celebration of the achievements of our young people – affirmation of school vision, values and ethos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole school SQulP, Calendar and WTA in place. Agreement on key working groups. Remit devised for each working group which addresses outcomes in the SQulP</li> <li>Faculty Improvement Plans (FIPs) completed. Faculty Quality Improvement Calendar completed</li> <li>P7 Transition Visits</li> <li>New S1 tracking set up – use of P7 CfE levels and NSA data. Used to inform BGE literacy and numeracy tracker</li> <li>Tracking systems set up</li> <li>Agree Partnership Forum meeting schedule</li> <li>Prize Giving</li> </ul>
July		

## Appendix C Examples of Evaluative Statements to support evaluative writing.

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

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

## QI 1.3 Leadership of Change - Strategic planning for continuous improvement

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

## QI 1.3 Leadership of Change - Implementing improvement and change

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

## QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment - Learning and engagement

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



## QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment - Quality of teaching

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



<b>Feedback for learners</b>	<p>Most young people are not yet aware of their strengths and next steps in their learning.</p> <p>Feedback provided by teachers needs to focus more on what young people can do well and what they need to do to improve.</p>	<p>A few teachers provide a range of verbal and written feedback and where this is most effective it helps children understand their progress.</p>	<p>In the best examples of feedback, staff frame this well to support children to have a clear understanding of their next steps in learning. There are positive examples of children making use of targets and peer and self-assessment to take forward their learning.</p>	<p>Teachers provide support and challenge through a range of feedback strategies, both verbal and written. Across the school these include ongoing feedback and discussion with young people in class, as well as after homework exercises and assessments.</p>	
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## QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment - Effective use of assessment

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

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

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

## QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion - Wellbeing

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### QI 3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement - Attainment over time

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

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

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

## QI 3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement - Equity for all learners

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



# Appendix D – SQulP Format

Insert School Badge	<b>SQIP 2025-26</b> School: <b>Aberdeen City School</b>	Section 1: School Context Section 2: Self Evaluation Summary Section 3: Improvement Plan	Key Quality Indicator	Self-Evaluation	Self-Evaluation (ELC)
			1.3 Leadership of Change	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			2.3 Learning Teaching & Assessment	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement / Securing Children's Progress	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

## Section 1: School Context (Guide 500 words)

**Guidance on Header**

Double clicking on the header area will allow you to customise the header including adding your school badge on the left hand side. The Self Evaluation table has had a drop-down menu added to give you the opportunity to choose from the six-point scale for each of the four core QIs (an additional column has been added for ELC where appropriate). This header will then replicate on each page in your document automatically.

**Guidance on School Context**

This section should ideally take up no more than one page of your SQIP. Consider a focus on a), vision and values, b), those aspects of school life that makes your school unique (including context), c), acknowledging the breadth of your school community, and d), introducing the self-evaluation and improvement plan sections of the remainder of your document (example introduction below).

*In the first part of this document, the Self-Evaluation Summary, we will provide an evaluation of our work during (session) In the second part of this document, we will share our School Improvement Plan for (session). It is an ambitious plan as we seek the very best for our young people as we look ahead to a new and exciting academic session.*

**Community-Friendly SQIP**

It is good practice to create a family or community friendly version of your SQIP – it is worth considering the format and content of this – e.g. follow the sections from this document or a more simple version with context and improvement plan aspects only.

Insert School Badge	<b>SQIP 2025-26</b> School: <b>Aberdeen City School</b>	Section 1: School Context Section 2: Self Evaluation Summary Section 3: Improvement Plan	Key Quality Indicator	Self-Evaluation	Self-Evaluation (ELC)
			1.3 Leadership of Change	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			2.3 Learning Teaching & Assessment	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement / Securing Children's Progress	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

## Section 2: Self-Evaluation Summary

<b>HGIOS QI 1.3 Leadership of change</b> (Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community; Strategic planning for continuous improvement; Implementing improvement and change)		<b>How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS?4/HGIOELC? six-point scale?</b>	School Choose an item.
<b>HGIOELC QI 1.3 Leadership of change</b> (Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the ELC setting and its community; Strategic planning for continuous improvement; Implementing improvement and change)			ELC Choose an item.
<b>How well are you doing?</b> What's working well for your learners?	<b>How do you know?</b> What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?	<b>What are you going to do now?</b> What are your improvement priorities in this area?	
<p><b>Guidance on completion</b></p> <p>A useful approach could be to work in a sequenced way through each of the themes within the QI (this might not always be possible). In the left hand column, focus as closely as you can on the learner experience. For the middle column, consider how well-triangulated your evidence is (quantitative, people's views and direct observation), again with the focus on impact on learners. In this section, it would be worth actively considering effectively using language such as 'as a result', 'the evidence for this is', and evaluative language (almost all, most, majority etc.) Finally, your right hand column, once completed, should give the reader a fair indication of the content of the Improvement Plan Section of this document.</p>			
<b>QI 2.3 Learning Teaching &amp; Assessment</b> interactions; Effective use of assessment; Planning, tracking and monitoring)		<b>six-point scale?</b>	Choose an item.
<b>How well are you doing?</b> What's working well for your learners?	<b>How do you know?</b> What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?	<b>What are you going to do now?</b> What are your improvement priorities in this area?	

Insert School Badge	<b>SQIP 2025-26</b> School: <b>Aberdeen City School</b>	Section 1: School Context Section 2: Self Evaluation Summary Section 3: Improvement Plan	Key Quality Indicator	Self-Evaluation	Self-Evaluation (ELC)
			1.3 Leadership of Change	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			2.3 Learning Teaching & Assessment	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
			3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement / Securing Children's Progress	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

<b>HGIOS QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b> (Wellbeing; Fulfilment of statutory duties; Inclusion and equality)		<b>How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS?4/HGIOELC? six-point scale?</b>	School Choose an item.
<b>HGIOELC QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b> (Wellbeing; Fulfilment of statutory duties; Inclusion and equality)			ELC Choose an item.
<b>How well are you doing?</b> What's working well for your learners?	<b>How do you know?</b> What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?	<b>What are you going to do now?</b> What are your improvement priorities in this area?	

<b>HGIOS QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement</b> (Attainment in literacy and numeracy; Attainment over time; Overall quality of learners' achievement; Equity for all learners)		<b>How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS?4/HGIOELC? six-point scale?</b>	Choose an item.
<b>HGIOELC QI 3.2 Securing Children's Progress</b> (Progress in communication, early language, mathematics, health and wellbeing; Children's progress over time; Overall quality of children's achievement; Ensuring equity for all children)			ELC Choose an item.
<b>How well are you doing?</b> What's working well for your learners?	<b>How do you know?</b> What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?	<b>What are you going to do now?</b> What are your improvement priorities in this area?	

## Section 3: Improvement Plan

<b>Priority</b> Context				
<b>Links to Quality Indicators</b>				
<b>Output(s)</b> What improvement will the learner experience?	<b>Actions Required</b> What will we do to improve the learner experience?	<b>Outcomes</b> What products or outcomes will be created?	<b>Resources</b> Who/What/When	<b>Progress</b> N - Not Started B- Barriers to Starting I - In Progress C - Completed or RAG T1/2 T3 T4

**Guidance on completion**

Advice on effective improvement planning from HMIE colleagues suggests that a good starting point (left hand column) is to describe what improvement the learner will experience – starting with the learner-eye view can help to set the activities and outcomes in context of the end-goal. The next-to-left column will contain a description of the activity required, and this will result in the third column with a summary of outcomes or products that will result from the activity and prompt the changed learner experiences. The fourth column contains an overview of the people or groups that will work to undertake activity and outcome, with the final set of columns providing an opportunity for chronological high-level assessments of progress.

*NB – it is very likely that underneath this improvement plan will be a series of more granular plans created by a member of the senior leadership team or project/working group. Given this is the case, it will not be necessary to articulate the full plan for each improvement area in this document.*



## 2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Standard

### ► Arrangements for safeguarding, including child protection

- We have clear, appropriate, and up to date policies and procedures in place
- All staff take part in regular professional learning to ensure they can confidently respond to any child protection or safeguarding issue
- All staff partners, learners and parents know how to raise a child protection or safeguarding concern
- Approaches to safeguarding and child protection are an important part of our self-evaluation and improvement activities

### ► Arrangements to ensure wellbeing

- The ethos and vision of the school strongly promotes equality
- All learners feel well supported to help themselves and are fully involved in decision making
- We have well embedded systems in place to promote wellbeing across all aspects of school life
- Through the curriculum we use approaches to promote resilience and responsible citizenship which are sensitive and responsive to the individual

### ► National guidance and legislation

- All learners are safe and feel safe in school
- We ensure there are strong, robust, and proactive responses that reduce the risk of harm to learners
- All staff are confident in identifying indicators which may suggest that a child or young person is suffering or is at risk
- Staff can confidently implement ACC Policies and Guidance
- Senior Leaders comply with their child protection duties under legislation
- Our record keeping for all safeguarding matters is maintained to the highest standards



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



Arrangements for safeguarding, including child protection

Arrangements to ensure wellbeing

National guidance and legislation

## Appendix E – Aberdeen City Safeguarding and Child Protection Standard

## 2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Standard

### ► Arrangements for safeguarding, including child protection

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

- Our child protection and safeguarding arrangements are aligned to [National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland \(2024\)](#) and [ACC Child Protection & Safeguarding Guidance. Our page overview](#) and reviewed at least once a year
- School Business Continuity Plans are in place and address matters relating to emergencies and security incidents to ensure that pupils will be properly cared for and protected should they occur
- ACC Anti Bullying Policy and the Anti-Weapon Policy provide procedural and operational guidance for schools to follow to ensure a consistent approach
- Where necessary, a [Person-Centred Risk Assessment](#) is completed so that adequate measures are in place for staff to maintain the security of pupils who pose a higher risk to themselves and those around them
- Attendance monitoring procedures are in place and supported by various policies e.g. [Children Missing From Education Policy](#), [Bullying Child Protection](#)

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

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

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

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

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

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



Arrangements for safeguarding, including child protection

Arrangements to ensure wellbeing

National guidance and legislation

## 2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Standard

► Arrangements to ensure wellbeing

The ethos and vision of the school strongly promotes equality

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

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

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

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

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


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

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

Arrangements for safeguarding, including child protection

Arrangements to ensure wellbeing

National guidance and legislation



## 2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Standard

► National guidance and legislation

All learners are safe and feel safe in school

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

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

- We have a clear Anti-bullying policy that aligns with [national guidance](#) and [ACC Anti-Bullying policy](#)
- School Risk Assessments are clear, developed based on [ACC guidance](#), in partnership with all relevant staff, shared with all stakeholders and reviewed termly

Staff are confident implementing ACC Policies and Guidance

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

Senior Leaders comply with their child protection duties under legislation

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

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

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

Arrangements for safeguarding, including child protection

Arrangements to ensure wellbeing

National guidance and legislation



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Appendix F – Exemplar safeguarding form

## QI Visit

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

### 1. Name of School \*

Lochside Academy

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

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

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

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

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

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

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

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

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

- ☐ Yes, RAG rated termly.  
☐ Yes, RAG rated annually.  
☒ No, not updated yet for this session.

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

Catch up sessions for new staff as needed.

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

0

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

9

16/01/2023, 15:23

QI Visit

### 10. How many learners have CSPs? \*

0

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

25

### 12. How many learners have an IEP? \*

118

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

IEPs reviewed termly. Child's plan as needed.

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

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

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

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

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

0

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

0

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

0

### 19. Number of exclusions this session to date? \*

46

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 23. Fire Evacuation Record up to date. \*

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

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

9

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

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

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

9

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

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

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

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

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

- ☐ 1  
☐ 2  
☐ 3  
☐ 4  
☐ 5  
☐ 6  
☒ 100

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

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No

### 31. ELC - How many notifications have you submitted to Care Inspectorate via the Eforms system? \*

0

### 32. ELC - Have any of these notifications triggered the duty of candour? \*

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No

### 33. What is your Care Inspectorate SAT score? \*

- ☒ Low  
☐ Medium  
☐ High

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

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No

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

- ☒ Yes



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

- Our lessons are planned with explicit success criteria and as a result, learners understand the purpose of their learning and how to achieve success

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning intentions and <b>success</b> criteria evident in every lesson and understood by learners</li> <li>Learning intentions and success criteria should be explicit to provide clear focus for learners who will be working independently.</li> <li>Evidence of co-constructed success criteria</li> <li>Planned and effective differentiation</li> <li>Appropriate pace and challenge</li> <li>Timely interventions to support</li> <li>Learning environment well organised and resources accessible to all</li> </ul> | <p>When setting digital tasks, success criteria should be explicit to provide clear focus for learners who will be working independently.</p> <p>This also allows learners flexibility in when they complete tasks.</p> |
|--|---|

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

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

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

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



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

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

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



- Assessments integral to our planning. Milestones, [benchmarks](#) and national standards are embedded in success criteria and in our classroom dialogue
- Assessment is for Learning
- Quality success criteria
- [Learner friendly benchmarks](#)
- Learning conversations
- Assessment is ongoing and timeless

- We assess learners' progress by engaging with learners and making interventions as required
  - Working the classroom: class, group, individual
  - Effective interventions e.g. Support for Learning, specialist resources, PSA deployment
- We use a variety of assessment approaches to allow learners to demonstrate breadth, depth and application of learning
  - High quality questioning
  - Approaches to assessment

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

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

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

## Appendix B

### School Categories over Time

#### Don Schools

School Name	Locality	School Category June 23	School Category February 2024	School Category June 24	School Category Feb	School Category June 25
Braehead School	North	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Bramble Brae School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Brimmond School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Cornhill School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1
Danestone Primary School	North	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Dyce Primary School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Forehill School	North	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Glashieburn School	North	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Greenbrae School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Heathryburn School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Holy Family RC School	North	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2
Kittybrewster School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 3	Category 2
Manor Park School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 3	Category 3
Middleton Park School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Muirfield School	North	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Quarryhill School	North	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Riverbank School	North	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Scotstown School	North	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Seaton School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Stoneywood School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Sunnybank School	North	Category 2	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Westpark School	North	Category 2	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2
Woodside School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Kingswells Primary School	North	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
St Peter's RC School	North	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1

#### Don ELCs

School Name	Locality	ELC Category June 2023	ELC Category February 2024	ELC Category June 2024	ELC Category February 2025	ELC Category June 2025
Braehead School	North	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Bramble Brae School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	NA	NA
Brimmond School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
Cornhill School	North	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Danestone Primary School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 3	Category 2	Category 1
Dyce Primary School	North	Category 1	Category 2	Category 1	Category 2	Category 1
Forehill School	North	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Glashieburn School	North	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2
Greenbrae School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
Heathryburn School	North	Category 2	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
Holy Family RC School	North	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2
Kittybrewster School	North	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
Manor Park School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1
Middleton Park School	North	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Muirfield School	North	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2
Quarryhill School	North	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2
Riverbank School	North	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2	Category 3	Category 2
Scotstown School	North	Category 1	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2
Seaton School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Stoneywood School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
Sunnybank School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Westpark School	North	Category 2	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2
Woodside School	North	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Kingswells Primary School	North	Category 2	Category 1	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1



## Dee Primary Schools

Kingsford School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Abbotswell School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Airrhall School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1
Ashley Road School	South	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Broomhill School	South	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Charleston School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Countesswells School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2
Culter School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1
Cults Primary School	South	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Fernielea School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Ferryhill School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Gilcomstoun School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Greyhope School	South	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2
Hanover Street School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Hazlehead Primary School	South	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Kaimhill Primary School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Kirkhill School	South	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Loirston School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Mill End School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1
Milltimber School	South	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Skene Square School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
St Joseph's RC School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1
Tulloch School	South	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3

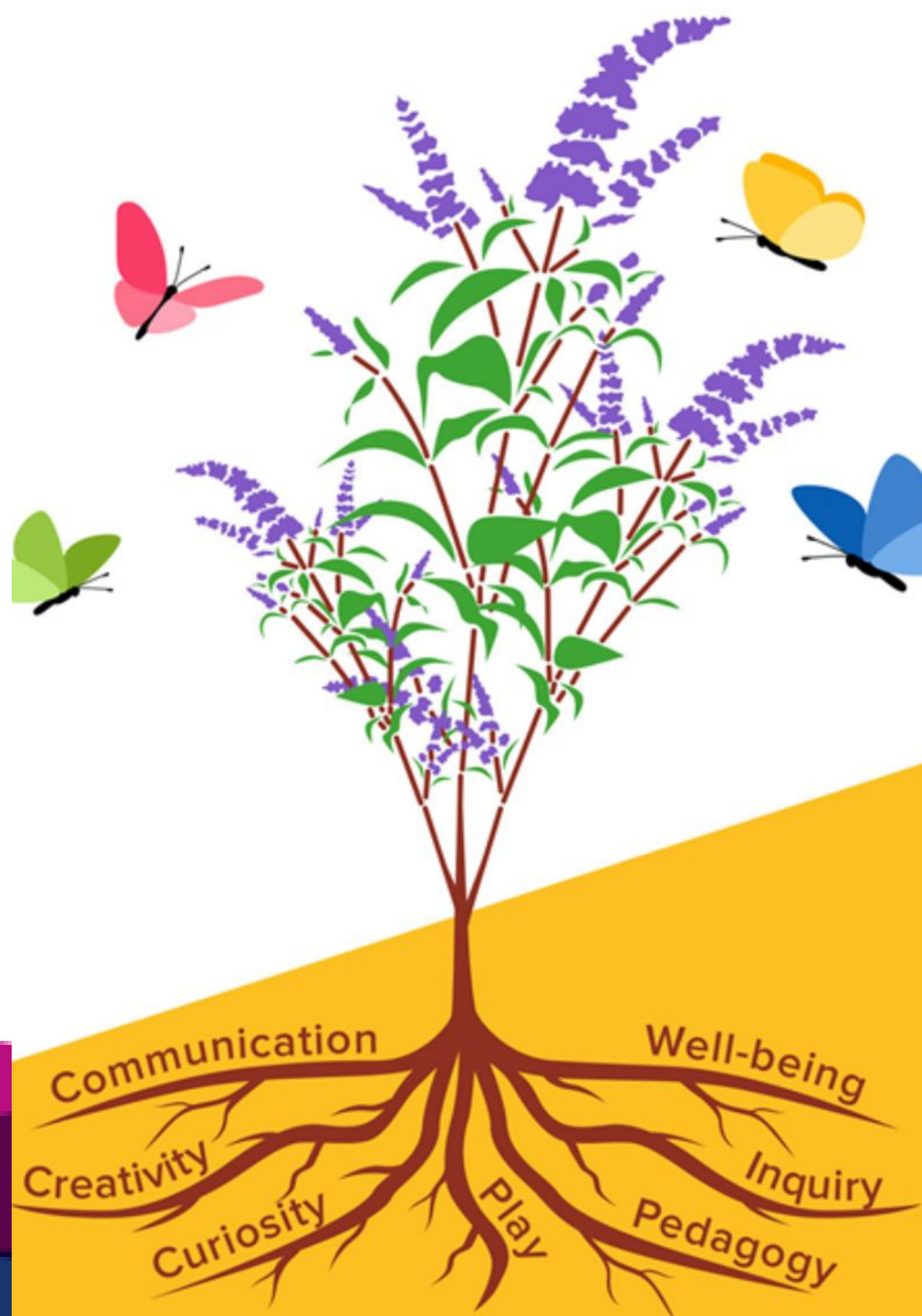
## Dee ELCs

School Name	Locality	ELC Category June 2023	ELC Category February 2024	ELC Category June 2024	ELC Category February 2025	ELC Category June 2025
Kingsford School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
Abbotswell School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Airrhall School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1
Ashley Road School	South	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2
Broomhill School	South	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
Charleston School	South	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Countesswells School	South	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2	Category 1
Culter School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Cults Primary School	South	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2	Category 1
Fernielea School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
Ferryhill School	South	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2	Category 2
Gilcomstoun School	South	Category 3	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2	Category 2
Greyhope School	South	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2
Hanover Street School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
Hazlehead Primary School	South	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1
Kaimhill Primary School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1
Kirkhill School	South	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Loirston School	South	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Mill End School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2
Milltimber School	South	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Skene Square School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
St Joseph's RC School	South	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Tulloch School	South	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2

## Secondary Schools

School Name	Locality	School Category June 23	School Category February 2024	School Category June 24	School Category Feb 25	School Category June 25
Aberdeen Grammar School	Secondary	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Bridge Of North Academy	Secondary	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Bucksburn Academy	Secondary	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Cults Academy	Secondary	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Dyce Academy	Secondary	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Harlaw Academy	Secondary	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Hazlehead Academy	Secondary	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Lochside Academy	Secondary	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2
Northfield Academy	Secondary	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Oldmachar Academy	Secondary	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
St Machar Academy	Secondary	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2

# QUALITY FRAMEWORK PACKAGE - ACC Early Years



# Introduction

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

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

Realising the Ambition - Education Scotland

How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare - Education Scotland

Quality Framework - Care Inspectorate

Health and Social Care Standards - Scottish Government

The National Standard - Scottish Government

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

This framework will:

- Outline the protocols which inform our quality improvement visits for each Early Years setting in Aberdeen
- Describe the criteria which will determine the agreed level of support provided by the Early Learning and Childcare Team, to ensure settings receive the support required for continuous improvement
- Detail the format of the Quality Improvement visits
- Support settings with self-evaluation for self-improvement through using audit materials, which will help identify priorities for improvement
- Support settings with the process of creating and implementing action plans for improvement



# Quality Assurance Support Visits

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

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

Visits and discussions will explore:

- Planning process
- The Manager providing evidence of the planning process e.g. floor books, learning walls etc.
- Planning for progression in Health and Wellbeing, Literacy and Numeracy
- Evidence of planning for improvement
- Evaluation of effectiveness of team meetings
- Effectiveness of tracking and monitoring strategies
- Evidence of engagement with the key documents and frameworks used nationally
- The learning spaces
- The quality of adult/child interactions
- The quality of children's experiences
- The impact of CLPL on outcomes for children

## Levels of Support

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

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

### UNIVERSAL

High quality provision

Stable staff team

Good inspections

Clear vision

Reflective practitioners

Positive ethos

Enabling environment

High quality staff interactions

Learning identified

Engaged children - Leuven Scale

Improvement plan having an impact

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

### TARGETED

Staff changes

Adequate inspections

Quality inconsistent/not maintained

Environment - additional support required to challenge/support learning

Inconsistent quality of staff interactions

Variable levels of child engagement

Variable levels of child-initiated learning

In addition to the universal offer:

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

### INTENSIVE

Service does not meet the national standard

New/inexperienced management team

Poor/weak inspections

Large turnover of staff

Intensive support required with staff/child interaction

Consistently low levels of child engagement

No improvement plan/no engagement with plan

High level of adult direction

Intensive support required with planning cycle

Intensive support required with written observations of children

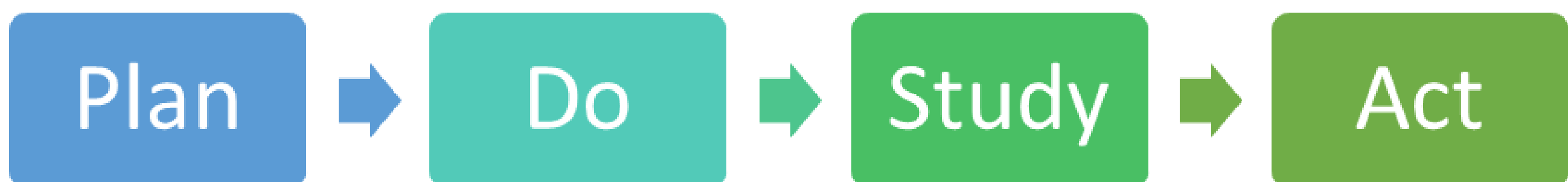
As well as the previous support, the Early Learning and Childcare Team member may at any point identify the need for and broker the support of another member of the Early Learning and Childcare Team and/or other agencies. To achieve the National Standard, a 12-month Service Improvement Period programme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

# Self-Evaluation and Improvement Planning

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

- National Improvement Framework
- How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare?
- Realising the Ambition
- Health and Social Care Standards
- Quality Framework Early Learning and Childcare

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



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

- How are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now?

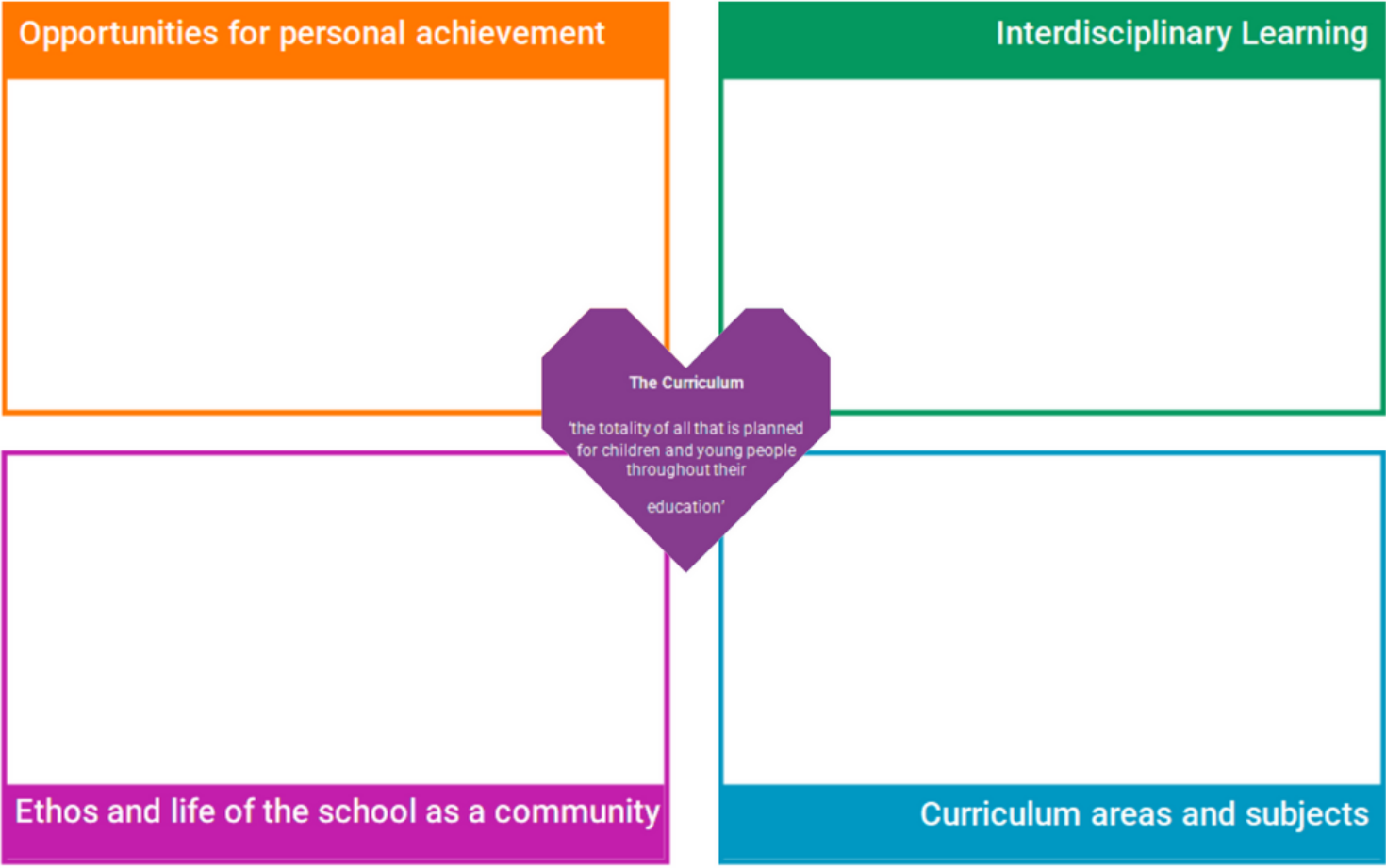
In order to answer these questions, all practitioners should be actively engaged in continuously evaluating and improving your setting. Settings should be able to demonstrate your answers, linked to your Vision, Values & Aims.



Evaluation Report

- Interactive report - including written comments, video, audio and photographs
- Created in Partnership with the service (in the moment)
- Will reflect on prior visit priorities
- Will celebrate practice and identify further opportunities for improvement
- Link with key documents and frameworks
- Inform your curriculum design

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



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

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

Interdisciplinary Learning:

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

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

Ethos and life of the service as a community:

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

HGIOELC	HSC STANDARDS	NATIONAL STANDARD
1.4 Leadership and management of practitioners 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection 2.5 Family learning 2.7 Partnerships	I experience warm, compassionate and nurturing care and support. I am included in wider decisions about the way the service is provided, and my suggestions, feedback and concerns are considered. I am supported to participate fully and actively in my community.	1.3 - Sustainable staffing structures are in place which meet the recommended adult: child ratios. 3.2 - Children have daily access to outdoor play and they regularly experience outdoor play in a natural environment as part of their funded ELC offer. 5.1 - There is open and regular communication with parents and carers about the work of the setting and families are meaningfully involved in influencing change 5.2 - Parents and carers are supported to engage in their child's learning and development
CI FRAMEWORK	RTA	
1.2 Children are safe and protected 1.4 Family engagement 1.5 Effective transitions 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	Establishing positive, loving, nurturing and understanding relationships Work with children, young people and their families on ways to improve wellbeing Believe professionals must work together in the best interests of the child	

Curriculum areas and subjects:

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

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

Operational/business Factors

1.2 - All support workers, practitioners and lead practitioners/managers working in the setting and included in the adult: child ratios must have either obtained the benchmark qualification for their role or, if they are still within their first 5 years of registering with the SSSC, have started to work towards this.

1.5 - Staff new to delivering funded ELC within the last year are familiar with the content of the most up-to-date version of the national induction resource.

4.2 – The setting has a clear plan, developed in line with self-evaluation evidence, evidence from Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate scrutiny activities, research and national practice guidance, to continuously improve the quality of provision and outcomes for children and families.

6.1 - The setting must comply with the duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Settings wishing to deliver the funded entitlement must be able to demonstrate that they are financially viable providers.

Settings, including childminders where workers are regularly employed to provide direct care to children, who agree to deliver the funded entitlement will, in accordance with the supporting guidance on Transition Options, pay the real Living Wage to all childcare workers delivering the funded entitlement and commit to adopting and demonstrating Fair Work practices in their setting. In committing to Fair Work practices, settings must take into account:

- o a fair and equal pay policy across their setting, (including a commitment to supporting the real Living Wage);
- o ELC managers/lead practitioners/employers (in the case of childminders who employ staff) have clear managerial responsibilities to nurture talent and help individuals fulfil their potential;
- o promoting equality of opportunity and developing a workforce which reflects the population of Scotland in terms of characteristics such as age, gender, religion or belief, race, sexual orientation and disability;
- o security of employment and hours of work, avoiding exploitative employment practices such as unfair zero hours contracts, or pregnancy and maternity discrimination;
- o consideration of patterns of working (including for example part-time working and/or term-time working) and support for family friendly working and wider work life balance; and
- o support progressive workforce engagement, including trade union membership or alternative arrangements to give staff an effective voice, for example, through regular staff meetings, where possible.

Settings delivering the funded entitlement must ensure that access to the funded hours are free at the point of access to the child and that parents and carers are not subject to any fees in relation to the funded hours. The setting must ensure that:

- o parents and carers are not asked to make any upfront payment, including a deposit or any other payment, in respect of the funded hours, therefore ensuring that the child's funded entitlement is free at the point of access;
- o no top-up fees are charged to parents and carers relating to the funded hours;
- o parents and carers are not required to purchase additional hours beyond the funded hours in order to access their child's funded entitlement at the setting;
- o additional charges to parents and carers relating to the funded hours should be optional, and limited to, for example, snacks, costs of outings or extracurricular activities such as music classes; and where parents and carers choose to purchase further hours in addition to the funded hours, the associated fees and hours must be transparent and clearly set out in any parental communication and invoices

Settings must have a clear and comprehensive policy for the provision of healthy meals and snacks for children. This should be consistent with Setting the Table and the Eatwell Guide and should ensure that individual cultural and dietary needs are met. There should be consultation with parents and carers about how other dietary preferences might be accommodated.



## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Inspection Reporting
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/25/154
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne/Graeme Simpson
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Shona Milne/Graeme Simpson
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.6

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report details the outcome of inspection reports published by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) and The Care Inspectorate since the last meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 Notes the content of this report; and
- 2.2 Instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to continue to support Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings and schools to implement continuous improvement in keeping with the Quality Improvement Frameworks being considered by Committee today.

### 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*.



### 3.4 EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTIONS

#### **Education Scotland Return Inspection to Quarryhill School and Nursery**

In January 2024, HM Inspectors visited Quarryhill School and Nursery Class. Following the visit a letter was issued outlining a number of areas for improvement. Inspectors returned to the school in March 2025 and reviewed progress against each of the areas.

**Area for improvement 1 ELC:** *Practitioners should build on their very recent, positive start to improving approaches to learning and teaching in the nursery. This will ensure experiences engage, motivate and challenge all learners appropriately.*

Inspectors found that the staff team in the ELC had made strong progress towards addressing this area with practitioners working well together to create a caring and inclusive ethos where children were offered engaging play opportunities and spaces for rest and relaxation.

Senior leaders have developed robust systems for planning and assessment and have ensured practitioners have access to quality professional learning which is improving interactions in the ELC.

**Area for improvement 2 School:** *Develop high-quality learning and teaching, using topics which children find interesting. Teachers need to adopt a greater range of approaches to teaching, which motivate children more in their learning.*

Inspectors found that staff are beginning to apply teaching and learning approaches shared through the comprehensive professional learning offered at school and local authority level. However, teachers require to continue to improve the quality of feedback provided to children.

Positive relationships between staff and pupils exist however learning activities need to be better matched to children's individual needs. Inspectors reported that a few children were struggling to regulate their emotions however recognised that the professional learning undertaken in nurturing approaches should, once applied consistently, support children to better understand their emotions.

**Area for improvement 3 School:** *Develop how teachers evaluate children's progress. Teachers need to use the information they gather to plan learning which provides all children with greater challenge.*

Inspectors recognised that an assessment calendar was in place and staff were beginning to make use of it. Although teachers had participated in moderation activities there was a need to increase opportunities to work with teachers from other schools.

Inspectors noted that attainment discussions are supporting teachers to identify children who may require additional support and senior staff are able to support class teachers to consider how they need to adapt their lessons.

**Area for Improvement 4:** *Raise attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school. This should include ensuring that targeted approaches to support children are successfully closing gaps in children's learning.*

Inspectors found that senior leaders are collecting information more and beginning to use this to help improve children's progress and attainment. Resources being used to support literacy and numeracy are at the early stages of development and these need to be embedded to increase attainment.

As a result, Inspectors do not feel sufficient progress has been made to disengage at this stage, and inspectors will return within 12 months to carry out a further inspection. A new headteacher was appointed in August and inspectors were confident in her capacity to lead change commenting that they could recognise that the work she has done with Senior leaders and staff since arriving in August is beginning to have impact.

The school was sitting in Category 3 prior to the return inspection and will remain in Category 3 with central officers having regular contact and visits to the school to check on progress against the Action Plan at Appendix A. A copy of the letter sent to parents can be found [here](#).

### **3.5 Education Scotland Inspection of Forehill Primary School**

During the week beginning 10 February, a team of HM Inspectors visited Forehill school to undertake a full model inspection. They did not visit the ELC as this had been inspected within the last 18 months by the Care Inspectorate. During the visit they talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the HT and staff in the school.

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

- The acting headteacher leads the school with passion and a clear vision. She has created a culture of mutual respect, collective leadership and high expectations.
- The happy, well-behaved children are proud of their school and are eager to participate. They demonstrate the school values well and are keen to learn.
- All staff have created a safe, nurturing and welcoming environment. This has resulted in positive relationships within the community, where everyone works well together. They work effectively with their partners to enrich children's learning across a range of contexts.

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

- With support from the local authority, senior leaders need to improve approaches to evaluating the work of the school. They should use more robust evaluations to help them identify key priorities. It is important that

staff are able to demonstrate fully that their actions are improving outcomes for all children.

- Senior leaders and staff should improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment, including learning through play. This will ensure all children benefit from high quality experiences that meet their learning needs.
- Staff should raise attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school. At all stages, children are capable of achieving more.

### **Evaluation Gradings for Forehill Primary School**

<b>School Quality Indicators</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
Leadership of Change	Weak
Learning Teaching and Assessment	Weak
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Satisfactory
Raising attainment and achievement	Weak

Inspectors found very positive relationships within the school between staff and pupils. Children in older classes supported younger children well in the playground and within school acting as good role models. Overall behaviour in the school is very good.

When visiting classes inspectors felt there was an over reliance on whole class teaching and a need to better match learning to the needs of individuals. There is a need for staff professional learning on feedback to help children understand what they need to improve particularly in the area of writing.

Inspectors could see there had been work done to increase staff confidence in the use of assessments and interpretation of data however this was not yet supporting staff to make informed decisions about next steps in teaching and learning. There requires to be further work on moderation and the understanding of national standards.

Although children are given opportunities to develop skills these need to be built into a progression framework to allow staff and children to assess progress.

Staff were pleased the work they had done around wellbeing was recognised during the inspection and are keen to progress the action plan across all areas.

The substantive headteacher was on maternity leave during the inspection and will return to post August. She has participated in developing the Action Plan during her keeping in touch days.

HM inspectors will return within 12 months to check progress against the areas for improvement.

The school was in Category 3 prior to the inspection and will remain in Category 3. The school team will receive regular visits from the central team to track



progress against the areas for improvement outlined in the action plan at Appendix B. A link to the full report can be found [here](#).

### **3.6 Education Scotland Return Inspection to Queens Cross ELC**

In March 2024, HM Inspectors visited Queens cross Nursery Limited. Following the visit a letter was issued outlining a number of areas for improvement. Inspectors returned to the school in February 2025 and reviewed progress against each of the areas.

**Area for improvement 1:** *The manager and practitioners should improve the quality of the learning environments and children's experiences. Children need a wider range of natural materials and everyday objects to explore and investigate. This should support children to develop their curiosity, imagination and problem-solving skills.*

Inspectors could see there had been some improvements made however staff require more time to develop their skills and embed practices further. Improvements had been made to both the indoors and outdoors environments and the quality of experiences had also improved. Despite these improvements inspectors felt continued development was required. Inspectors recognised the high level of support offered by the Aberdeen City Council Locality Lead and highlighted the need for this to continue to ensure practitioners continue to deepen their knowledge. Inspectors also noted the investment made in the outdoors to provide additional space. The report notes practitioners now need to better plan how to use this space most effectively.

**Area for Improvement 2:** *The manager and practitioners should improve approaches to planning to ensure that children are supported to build on what they already know. They should ensure they provide a balance of responsive and planned learning experiences for children.*

Overall, Inspectors felt that there has been limited progress towards addressing this area for improvement. Managers and practitioners will require support and more time to develop approaches further that support planning for children's learning.

Although revised approaches are in place practitioners still require to improve the quality of experiences planned and ensure these come from the children's interests to ensure maximum impact.

**Area for improvement 3:** *Practitioners need to improve their approaches to understand how well children are learning. This will help practitioners to know where children need the right level of help with their learning to ensure they all make the best possible progress.*

Overall, there has not yet been sufficient progress made towards addressing this area for improvement. Working together, and supported by the local authority, managers and practitioners now need to accelerate progress in this area

**Area for improvement 4:** *The manager and practitioners should access relevant training to ensure they understand fully their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children.*

There has been positive progress in addressing this area for improvement. This now needs to be built upon to ensure everyone has the necessary understanding to carry out effectively their responsibilities to keep children safe. Managers and practitioners have all received relevant professional learning. There is still a need for the senior practitioner and managers to receive enhanced training to support them to understand and deliver their child protection lead role.

Following the return inspection there was a change in management at the setting. Staff recognise that although some improvements had been actioned there are still improvements to be made in both practice and the environment.

The ELC was in category 3 prior to the return and Inspectors noted the high level of support offered by the locality lead since the last inspection. The setting will remain in Category 3 and the Locality lead team will continue to support them to overcome the areas for improvement. A copy of the report can be found [here](#) and the action plan can be found at Appendix C

### **3.7 Inspection of Bucksburn Academy**

In March 2025, a team of HMIE inspectors visited Bucksburn Academy to undertake a short-model inspection. During the visit they visited classes, talked with parents/carers, staff, partners and young people, and worked closely with the headteacher and senior leaders. The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- Young people demonstrate a sense of pride in Bucksburn Academy. Learners benefit from a range of experiences across the school which support and develop their confidence. Staff and young people enjoy trusting relationships and this leads to a calm and purposeful environment for learning.
- Senior leaders and staff have worked together to develop a common framework for learning, teaching and assessment across the school. Teachers use this framework well. This is leading to more consistent learning experiences for young people.
- Young people enjoy a range of experiences and activities which allow them to collaborate, demonstrate their skills and consider their learning well through a wider context of life and work. Young people are very aware of the transferable skills they are developing and understand well how to apply them to their learning and wider lives.
- Learners who attend the ASN wing benefit from high-quality relationships, which help them settle confidently and well into their learning. Learning experiences in the ASN wing are appropriately challenging and matched very well to young people's needs.

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

- Staff should continue to improve consistency in the quality of learning experiences. This should include further use of effective practice to adjust planned learning to better meet the needs of all young people.
- Teachers should work to improve the quality of passes in National Qualifications in order to raise attainment for all young people.

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

The school are happy that HMIE colleagues recognised that at the centre of Bucksburn Academy there can be found strong relationships, a commitment to improving outcomes through strong learning and teaching and working with partners to develop the skills of young people.

A copy of the letter to parents/carers can be found [here](#).

### **3.8 Pilot Inspection Using the New Quality Improvement Framework for ELC**

Bright Horizons Tree House Early Learning and Childcare provision, based at Robert Gordon's University, agreed to be part of the pilot inspection using the new Quality Improvement Framework for Early Learning and Childcare. HMIE and the Care Inspectorate have worked together to develop this shared self-evaluation framework to support quality improvement in all early learning and childcare (ELC) settings. The new framework was designed to provide a more integrated approach to assessing care, play and education rather than both inspection agencies utilising separate documentation. The new combined framework contains quality indicators(QIs) to support reflection and help settings to identify practices that are going well and those areas which require improvement.

During the pilot inspection, a member of the local authority quality improvement team joined the Tree House inspection to gain an understanding of how the new framework will be implemented.

Although Education Scotland did not produce a report following the pilot, Care Inspectorate were required to report on findings. There were no evaluations given, however, the feedback from both HMIE and Care Inspectorate was very positive. The team at Treehouse and the Local Authority were given the opportunity to feedback on the quality indicators and to challenge questions and the inspection process itself. This information will support the evaluation of the framework and inform the inspection methodology prior to the full national implementation planned for September 2025.

The key messages given at feedback included;

Children were cared for by staff who were motivated and enthusiastic in their professional learning and who worked well as a team. Children experienced nurturing and loving care. They experienced positive snacks and mealtimes. Children's wellbeing was supported through effective personal planning. Strong connections with families impacted positively on children's experiences.

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

### 3.9 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.

- 3.10 **ALC** (formerly known as Aberdeen Lads Club), a funded provider located in the Tillydrone area of Aberdeen, received an unannounced Care Inspectorate inspection on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025. Inspectors noted that children benefitted from warm and nurturing care which supported their confidence and wellbeing. They had fun and participated in a balance of planned and spontaneous play experiences. Children were made to feel welcome and valued in a bright, stimulating and well- maintained environment. Staff were reflective of their practice and adopted an ethos of continuous improvement to promote positive experiences for children. Children and families had a strong connection to the established and experienced staff team.

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 full report can be read [here](#)

- 3.11 **Broomhill @ Cults**, a funded provider setting in the Cults area of Aberdeen, received an unannounced Care Inspectorate inspection on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025. Inspectors noted that children were happy, confident and having fun. They experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches from staff who knew them well. Children experienced an environment which was comfortable and promoted independence. Children's natural curiosity and creativity were promoted through high quality play experiences. Children and families benefitted from a service committed to continuous improvement. Staff were well deployed and worked well together to meet children's needs

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 full report can be read [here](#)

- 3.12 **Kingsford ELC**, a Local Authority setting, received an unannounced inspection on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025. Inspectors noted that staff were kind, caring and nurturing in their approach with children. Staff knew the children well and supported their individual needs. They had developed good relationships with parents who felt well informed and involved in their child's experiences and learning. Staff were passionate about their role and were keen to extend their professional development to further improve outcomes for children.

The setting should now use their success criteria to evaluate improvements and consider the impact of these on outcomes for children and families. Parents and children would benefit from improvements being shared to support their understanding of developments.

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation April 24	Recent Evaluation April 25
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)
How good is our setting?	Good (4)	Good (4)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)
How good is our staff team?	Good (4)	Good (4)

Staff are pleased that their improvement journey has continued to impact positively on children and families. The setting will move from **Category 2** to **Category 1** of the Quality Improvement Framework.

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

- 3.13 **Culter ELC**, a Local Authority setting, received an unannounced inspection on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025. Inspectors noted that children's overall wellbeing was supported by staff who knew them well. Mealtimes were unhurried, and children benefited from the relaxed and homely atmosphere created. Effective personal planning, created in partnership with families, reflected the needs of each child which supported their wellbeing. Children were having fun with lots to do and explore. They moved confidently between the indoor and outdoor spaces and were regularly out playing in the nursery garden. Families had a variety of ways to become involved in influencing change within the setting. There were some opportunities for children to influence change however this was in the early stages of development and should continue to improve. There was a good mix of skills and experience across the staff team which contributed to positive outcomes for children

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation January 24	Recent Evaluation March 25
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)
How good is our setting?	Good (4)	Good (4)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)
How good is our staff team?	Good (4)	Good (4)

The team were pleased that improvements had been recognised. The staff will continue to focus on the quality of observations and assessments as these are not yet consistent to ensure progress for all children.

The setting will move from **Category 2** to **Category 1** of the Quality Improvement Framework.

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

- 3.14 Heathryburn ELC, a local authority setting, received an unannounced inspection on 8 and 9 May 2025. During the inspection inspectors spoke to staff, parents and children accessing the service as well as reviewing documentation and observing practice. Inspectors noted that children benefitted from positive, nurturing interactions with staff, the needs of children were met effectively through well planned activities which were balanced with spontaneous learning which captured children's interest and enthusiasm. Families reported that they felt well supported.

Aspect being inspected	Previous Evaluation September 23	Previous Evaluation May 24	Recent Evaluation May 25
How good is our care, play and learning?	Weak (2)	Adequate (3)	Very Good (5)
How good is our setting?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
How good is our leadership?	Weak (2)	Good(4)	Very Good (5)
How good is our staff team?	Weak (2)	Adequate (3)	Good (4)

Staff were delighted the work they had done on improving the environment, planning and use of personal plans was identified as good practice. The team has worked hard to build relationships with families to ensure personal plans captured all the needs of children and this was evident in the plans reviewed by the team. New arrangements for mealtimes are supporting children to build relationships with each other and staff. The setting was in **Category 3** of the Quality Improvement Framework prior to this inspection and it will now move to **Category 1**.

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

- 3.15 **Copper Pots Nursery**, a funded provider setting in the Wooside area of Aberdeen, received an unannounced Care Inspectorate inspection on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025. Inspectors noted that Children were very well supported by staff who were consistently responsive to their needs. The staff approach was very caring and nurturing which helped the children to feel loved, safe and secure.



Children benefitted from a variety of positive play and learning opportunities supported by skilled staff and a rich, stimulating and challenging learning environment. Staff had worked hard to ensure children received consistently high quality learning opportunities which followed children's interests and deepened their knowledge. Strong leadership and a whole team commitment to improvement had led to the continued development of the service which impacted very positively on children's wellbeing, play and learning. Children benefitted from a motivated and committed staff team who demonstrated high quality engagement with children at all times

Aspect being inspected	Previous Evaluation July 23	Previous Evaluation April 24	Recent Evaluation May 25
How good is our care, play and learning?	Weak (2)	Adequate (3)	Very Good (5)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
How good is our leadership?	Weak (2)	Adequate (3)	Very Good (5)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)

Management and staff are delighted that their hard work to make improvements has been recognised. Copper Pots previously sat in the **Category 3** level of support in the Quality Improvement Framework and will now move to **Category 1**.

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

### 3.2 Children's Social Work

- 3.2.1 Registered services in children's social work are inspected by the Care Inspectorate on a regular basis. The frequency of inspections are risk based, taking account of data from a range of sources. This includes service type, complaints, data provided by the service to the Care Inspectorate but fundamentally the outcome of past inspections – positively evaluated services are inspected less frequently, with the opposite for weaker services.
- 3.2.2 All inspections are unannounced and registered services need to be "inspection registered and ready" at all times. As part of the inspection the Care Inspectorate undertake a range of activities to evaluate "How well does the service support children and young people's rights and wellbeing."
- 3.2.3 In April 2025 the Care Inspectorate undertook an inspection of Gilbert Road Children's Home service. The service was positively evaluated and graded as "very good" (5) based on a 6 point scale. The inspection spoke very encouragingly about the quality of the relationships between staff and the young people they care for and support provided. "Young people experienced relational nurturing care, which promoted their emotional and physical safety." Inspectors recognised that staff appeared to know the children and their needs well. In addition Inspectors positively recognised the extent to which both services ensured a rights based approach to the care provided to the young

people. The inspection identified no 'requirements', with two 'recommendations' made:

- i) Policies and procedures should be developed which ensure that robust safeguards are in place for young people spending time in the family homes of adults outwith their family, including staff members,
- ii) Documents which identify young people's support and risk management needs should be in a format which is accessible to young people and available at all times.

3.2.4 These recommendations have been actively progressed and will build on the existing activity. The "Write Right About Me" initiative seeks to support all professionals around a child/young person write about them in a manner that is accessible and easily understood. The Promised recognised there should be no barrier to young people maintaining relationships that are important to them. This practice was evident to the Inspector. It was the opinion of the inspector a minor adjustment was needed to existing guidance. This is being actioned across all of our residential care homes. The report can be accessed [here](#). (insert link)

3.2.5 Recruitment of staff to our residential services is challenging and we are currently operating with a number of vacancies across our service. All roles in our residential care structure are recognised as being 'hard to fill'. This context reinforces very positively on the leadership and commitment of all our residential staff reflected in this report.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

#### 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified.

#### 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve. Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *Taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Risk of not improving	Positive engagement with Inspection	L	Yes



	outcomes for learners	agencies and sharing learning across the system where appropriate.		
<b>Compliance</b>	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Positive engagement with Inspection agencies and sharing learning across the system where appropriate.	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Risk that schools/ELC settings do not accurately identify the areas for improvement that will make the greatest difference to learners	Quality assurance arrangements in place to validate self-evaluation gradings	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	No risks identified			
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a reputational risk to the Council	High levels of assurance are taken Quality Improvement and Inspection visits	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No risks identified			

## 8. OUTCOMES

<u><b>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</b></u>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<p><b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b></p> <p>Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices.</p> <p>Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.</p>	<p>External scrutiny provides helpful assurance that there is sufficient focus on helping young people recover from the pandemic and that the school self-evaluation and improvement plan is well positioned to support a closing of the poverty related attainment gap.</p>
<u><b>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</b></u>	
Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including	Engagement with inspectors provides an opportunity to learn from national best practice and

those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.	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.
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b> 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
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	No assessment required. I confirm this Shona Milne , Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	No DPIA is required.
<b>Other</b>	

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## 11. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Quarryhill Action Plan

Appendix B – Forehill Action Plan

Appendix C - Queens Cross Action Plan

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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# Quarryhill School



## Action Plan 2024-2027

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## Quality indicators gradings by Education Scotland – April 2024

Quality indicators for the primary school		Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment		weak
Raising attainment and achievement		weak

Quality indicators for the nursery class		Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment		weak
Securing children's progress		satisfactory

# Early Years

## 2.3 C 3.2



# Early Level (ELC and P1)

Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes For Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<b>Environment/spaces</b>  Staff need to improve a few spaces to sustain children's play for longer periods of time.  All children would benefit from increased opportunities to apply their skills, test out their ideas and explore their interests in more depth.  All children would benefit from increased	Establishing routines and continuous provision to ensure breadth and depth of curriculum.	Children will have access to an enabling environment that promotes independence, curiosity, choice and creativity.	Ongoing	P1- Spaces developing in P1 classrooms with resources to accommodate more opportunities to learn through play.	
	Develop sensory room		Completed Feb 2025		
	Regular audit of how children are using the space. Using this information to develop the space.	Opportunities for meaningful literacy and numeracy will be available throughout the space to promote children's progress/development.	Ongoing		
	Ensure the space is numeracy and literacy rich		Ongoing	ELC - Quality improvement visit in February showed that meaningful changes had been implemented in the outdoor spaces with involvement from learners. Indoor spaces had been well developed with spaces for rest and relaxation available. During a visit in March 2025, learning contexts supported many different types of play.	Consider how to further develop outdoor play to incorporate numeracy and literacy.
	Children's voice should be evidenced through Working walls to showcase and celebrate learning and achievements	Practitioners and children will take ownership of the ELC environment.	Ongoing		
	High-quality, open-ended resources available both indoors and out	Continuous provision will ensure that children have increased opportunities to apply their skills, test out their ideas and explore their interests in more depth	Completed Feb 2025 – to be regularly reviewed		Ensure sensory play is part of continuous provision.
	Practitioners to take responsibility for individual contexts.		Ongoing	ELC practitioners are completing environment audits for their context areas twice termly – action taken to improve areas	

<p>opportunities to mark make for a purpose.</p> <p>Most children would benefit from a wider range of more challenging numeracy and mathematics experiences through play and real-life contexts.</p> <p>All children would benefit from continued use of the language of wellbeing to help them express and understand how they feel. Most children are ready for increased leadership opportunities across their nursery experiences</p>	Professional development opportunities for practitioners to reflect on quality interactions and spaces to extend learning.			and ensure experiences link with intentional planning.	This now needs to happen in P1
			Will be regularly revisited	QA visits have indicated that experiences and spaces are well developed as a result of practitioner CLPL.	
	Outdoor learning should always be available for the children		Complete Feb 2025	Outdoor learning available daily and planned into daily routine. This is evidenced by QA visits in Feb and March 2025 and general observations. P1 attend ELC one afternoon a week to access outdoor area.	Sharing practice across Early Level - interactions now need to extend learning consistently.
	Termly practitioner observation completed by SEYP/HT with specific focus linked to Realising the Ambition (experience, spaces, interactions).		Ongoing	P1 staff still to complete with HT. Some evidence in ELC.	Needs to be regular feature of QA procedures.



Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<p><b>Observation, assessment and planning for learning:</b></p> <p>HT and practitioners should build and strengthen their shared understanding of these new planning approaches.</p> <p>There is not yet an appropriate balance between responsive and planned learning that supports children to build on and develop further their skills.</p> <p>The quality, and use of staff's observations and identification of next steps needs to improve. Children's next steps in learning should better influence the planning</p>	Establish systems for tracking individual learners progress. Link to both developmental overviews and E&O benchmarks	Children will benefit from a wider range of more challenging literacy, numeracy and health & wellbeing experiences through play and real life contexts.	ongoing	Tracking spreadsheets started in nursery continued to P1. This supports building on prior learning and the tracking of learners over time. It has also meant that ELC staff feel more valued through recognition of their judgements regarding progress of learners.	Review and evaluate
	Introduce 3 progress meetings a year(HT, SEYP & EYP). Ensure termly data discussions are undertaken with SLT (Nov, Feb, May). HT to analyse data to identify trends/areas for improvement.	Children will be making appropriate progress in their learning, supported by practitioners who effectively plan for this.	Meetings part of QA calendar	Across early level, data discussion have taken place with new systems established. As a result, practitioners have a good understanding of learners progress and plan accordingly.	
	Establish key worker system and empower practitioners to take lead in planning for their key children's learning.	Children will benefit from a balance of responsive and intentional planning experiences, that reflects enjoyment, personalisation and choice.	In place in ELC	Evidence of Key worker system in place in ELC.	
	Professional dialogue to be recorded where appropriate		System to be fully established by Aug 2025	Process underway- evidence of planning discussions, SEYP/HT meetings, professional box meetings.	
	Ensure planning considers short term, medium term and long terms planning (bundles, continuous review/audit)	Practitioners will embed and confidently use planning systems to ensure breadth, depth and	To be completed by Aug 2025	Early Level planning meetings took place terms 1, 2 and 3 with HT. The focus has been to	This now needs to be used to ensure play experience reflect prior learning which was not evident in the quality improvement visit in March 2025. Play pedagogy will become a focus of practitioner enquiry next session. Time for

<p>of spaces, experiences and interactions</p> <p>The HT and senior early years practitioners should now ensure that they develop processes to track and monitor the progress of children with additional needs more effectively.</p> <p>Practitioners should ensure what they know about children's achievements is used to influence their planning for individual children.</p>	HT/SEYP - create a shared vision/guidance material illustrating ELC/Quarryhill planning systems (intentional, responsive and personal planning).	relevance of curriculum coverage.	To be completed by Aug 2025	develop planning for play that meets the needs of learners and staff. Staff are reflecting on practice and supporting each other to develop quality planning. Some staff have been released from class to focus on this in more depth. Confidence is slowly building; however, some staff require more support to develop their understanding of the theoretical principles behind play pedagogy.	this will be built into the Working Time Agreement and this will be a focus of professional development review discussions
	SEYP to carry out termly audits of personal plans and observations.	Children's learning is planned for by practitioners who make meaningful and relevant observations/assessments, confidently identifying developmentally appropriate next steps.	Ongoing		
	Establishing weekly/fortnightly planning meeting with all practitioners that will:	Shared understanding of tracking system, and increased staff confidence levels linked to achievement of a level, will improve forward planning for individuals and cohorts.	Ongoing	ELC – Processes in place with practitioner interaction – Seesaw provides evidence. Planning and observation policy established and regularly reviewed. Practitioners engaging with planning process and meeting fortnightly. Bundling has been reviewed and adapted in August 2024; this now needs to be done across the school.	All staff need to develop their confidence in supporting Interactions which connect with intentional planning focus.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Empower and upskill practitioners to use newly embedded planning process.</li> <li>- Using practitioners observations to plan for next steps in learning</li> <li>- Plan for literacy and numeracy rich experiences eg rhymes, stories</li> <li>- Using Progression Pathways to support and plan appropriate next steps.</li> </ul>	Personal plans are used effectively to meet learners needs.	Ongoing		Planning/learning points need to be consistently identifiable within the play contexts
	All Personal Plans to be updated to include a clear support strategies	Learners strengths and areas for development are clearly tracked and monitored.	Ongoing		
		Tracking systems inform planning.	Ongoing	Warm and positive interactions have been observed in the ELC	

	section. Record keeping linked to Personal Planning to be accurate and kept up to date.				and P1. However, quality assurance observations in March 2025, showed more reference to prior learning. The Seesaw observations in ELC link to prior learning. Seesaw planning and observation policy in place.	This now needs to be extended into P1.
	Practitioners - use national practice guidance to increase further their knowledge and understanding of the role of the adult to support children's learning.				All practitioners aware in P1. Input for ELC staff in May 2024, focusing on RtA. Early Years staff to familiarise themselves with new quality framework.	More CLPL required and opportunities for good practice identified and shared.
	SEYP/HT to track and monitor progress of learners with additional needs.				Discussions around ASN and data captured. This informs decisions around allocation of resources.	

Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<p><b>Practitioner development and looking outwards:</b></p> <p>The HT and senior early years practitioners should now ensure that they develop processes to track and monitor the progress of children with additional needs more effectively.</p> <p>Senior leaders should develop the skills and confidence of the team in how to develop further and measure and the impact of such strategies on children's progress</p>	Visits to other settings which will focus on: Literacy and Numeracy, Cosy Spaces, Outdoors, Leadership for Learners	Children will benefit from staff taking back new ideas from other settings.	To be in place by Dec 2025	P1 – February 2025 a training opportunity was attended by early level teachers with trio counterparts and Aberdeen university lecturer on depth planning for early years. Staff are using the knowledge gained to reflect on the depth of the experiences they are offering in P1 and P2.	This now needs to be used to ensure play experience reflect prior learning which was not evident in the quality improvement visit in March 2025.
	Collaborations between ELC and Primary 1 with clear rationale	HT/SEYP will provide more opportunities for moderation within the school and across the local learning community.	On going	ELC- Training delivered on the following areas: Outdoor Training- Mud Play – Feb 2025 Enabling Environments and Indoor Contexts – Feb 2025 ASN Learning Festival – Feb 2025	Opportunities to share good practice across the school.
	Opportunities for practitioners to look outwards and develop their own practice, including the review of local and national frameworks/guidance.	Children across Early level will be support by practitioners who have a commitment to continued professional learning.	On going	Realising the Ambition – May 2024	Identify further quality CLPL opportunities.
	All practitioners in ELC and P1 to read RtA and engage with online professional materials related to the document.	Collaborative working across Early Level will promote planning for children's progress and equity.	On going	Effective Interactions and Sustained Shared Thinking- May 2024 ELC Aberdeen Learning Festival - Feb 2024. Circle Framework – Feb 2024 ELC Managers programme Aug 2024 – Nov 2024	P1 staff to visit other settings.
	CLPL on quality observation for all Early Level staff (Practitioners, Teacher, Support Staff).		Teachers to be offered CLPL session Term 4 2024/2025		

				SSSC – development records reflect staff’s professional development	Continue this practice.
	Practitioners to attend ACC Planning example CLPL.		Attended by SEYP – Sept 2024		
			Ongoing	Staff have had some opportunities to visit other settings- Countesswells, Grayhope, West Park, Seaton, Fraserburgh, Muirfield, Hazelhead and Haddo outdoor nursery. Each visit had a particular focus. Impact can be seen through the continued development of service.	
	HT/SEYP moderation meetings weekly		Ongoing		
	All practitioners to become familiar with the Progression Pathway.				
	What does equity look like at Quarryhill?’ positional statement		To be completed by August 2025	Attainment and tracking meetings for P1 and ELC have taken place with the HT.	
	Ongoing support visits from LLO and QIO team.		On going		
	Whole school approach to the review and implementation of Relationship policy.		Policy in place March 2025		

# 2.3

## Whole School



## Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes For Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<p><b>High quality learning and teaching that motivates learners.</b></p> <p>Engagement and motivation of learners.</p> <p>Teachers to engage in a range of creative approaches.</p> <p>Policy and Guidance Revisited and agree expectations around high quality learning and teaching.</p>	<p>Create joint L,T, P, A policy with the following areas being explicitly agreed and understood:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Daily review</li> <li>- Learning intentions</li> <li>- Success criteria</li> <li>- Spotlight assessment</li> <li>- Presenting content</li> <li>- Practice</li> <li>- Differentiation</li> <li>- Questioning</li> <li>- Discussion</li> <li>- Feedback</li> <li>- Plenary</li> <li>- Expectations, behaviour and relationships</li> </ul>	<p>Lessons will be more engaging and learners will be more focused.</p> <p>Increased attainment will be evidenced over time for almost all learners.</p> <p>Consistency in teaching approaches to improve learners’ experiences.</p>	<p>Ongoing process</p> <p>Feedback CLPL to be completed term 4 2024/2025</p> <p>Each element to form CLPL offer 2025-2026</p> <p>All regularly reviewed and form focus for class observations</p> <p>First draft of Positive Relationship policy completed Feb 2025.</p>	<p>7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – IDL planning session with QIO. Staff have agreed that how we effectively plan for this, and the quality of experiences needs further discussion.</p> <p>In school training in September 2024 with follow up in Feb 2025 with a session on</p> <p>At the end of Feb 2025, the majority of teachers felt more confident in their ability to differentiated lessons. During a quality improvement visit at the beginning of March 2025, the team felt that some improvements had been made with regards to differentiation.</p> <p>15<sup>th</sup> Nov 2024 – in school equity offer in terms of differentiation delivered by Suzie Wood, Attainment Advisor. This resulted in a “class on a page” document that each teacher created to give a snapshot of the needs of the class. Teachers are now more aware of the wide range of need and lived experiences of their class. This is evident in discussion with SLT. Staff are also using this as an aid to identify where support may be needed and as</p>	<p>This will form the basis of several collegiate sessions in term 4 2025.</p> <p>This will now be a regular feature in weekly meetings during term 4.</p>



				<p>a tool for sharing information about the class with supply staff.</p> <p>13<sup>th</sup> Feb 2024 – introduction to White Rose Maths- Teachers have stated that the resource helps them to plan next steps and gives them confidence with regard to identifying the necessary operations and thought processes.</p> <p>13<sup>th</sup> Feb 2024 - input on Ann Glennie phonics. The adoption of this way of working has had various degrees of success with some staff finding it very useful.</p> <p>7<sup>th</sup> May 24 – introduction to Learning Intentions and Success Criteria, revisited in Feb 2025. Most teachers are confident in their ability to write appropriate Learning Intentions and Success Criteria. During a recent Quality Improvement visit, the team felt that where they saw shared LI and SC, the majority were appropriate and matched the learning taking place.</p>	<p>SLT are considering investing in new resources/ training to support the delivery of phonics and early reading skills.</p>
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Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes For Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<p><b>Develop teachers' ability to evaluate learning, teaching and progress.</b></p> <p>Self- Evaluation Processes to encourage reflective teaching.</p>	<p>A focus on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LI and SC</li> <li>• Differentiation and meeting the needs of all learners.</li> <li>• Learners leading learning</li> <li>• Collaborative work between learners across the school.</li> <li>• Weekly learning walks by SLT focusing on agreed areas identified by QA calendar.</li> </ul>	<p>Lessons will be more engaging and learners will be more focused.</p> <p>Increased attainment will be evidenced over time for almost all learners.</p> <p>Consistency in teaching approaches to improve learners' experiences.</p>	<p>LI and SC &amp; differentiation CLPL delivered 2024-2025</p> <p>Other areas to form CLPL offer over next 2 years</p>	<p>Using training from in-service days in November 2024 and February 2025, staff have reflected on their teaching in terms of the differentiated offer available for each lesson.</p> <p>Staff are also reflecting on quality of LI and SC.</p> <p>Staff are reflecting on practice and working together to develop different areas of school improvement within the areas of literacy, health and wellbeing and play pedagogy.</p> <p>All teaching staff have stated that they appreciate the opportunity to work towards school development.</p> <p>Jotter monitoring – Dec 2024 – leading to creation of marking policy. A recent sampling of senior pupils indicate that they find the focus of highlighting the success criteria in jotters useful and use it as a check list.</p> <p>LI and SC are now visible on written work. These are linked to marking/feedback policy. Learners are beginning to use them to</p>	<p>Build time into WTA for peer assessment to support the continued reflection.</p> <p>Time will be dedicated to ensuring this practice continues into the next session.</p> <p>Next steps will be to introduce self and peer assessment.</p> <p>Further training will be undertaken to develop consistency in</p>

				understand what success looks like.	quality of LI and SC through attending CYPIC Spread and Scale training. This should help teachers to confidently use data to create specific LI and SC.
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Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes For Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<b>Develop Teacher's teaching and learning offer and ability to Plan motivating lessons.</b>	<b>Planning</b> for 7 CFE design principles Stage planning between teachers- agreed timetable of meetings.	Teachers are clear on what is expected of them for each year group/age/stage.	To be introduced June 2025	Planning formats and expectations agreed in February 2025 – teachers stated that they are growing in confidence with regards to expectations around how they evidence what they have planned to teach and what they have covered, (survey March 2025).  Early stages teachers have been experimenting with planning for learning through play. Recent feedback from the Quality Improvement visit in March has helped develop the next step which is to ensure the play opportunities build on prior learning.	Continue to quality assure planning – formats and content - to ensure formats fit for purpose and planned learning meets needs
	Learners being involved in planning – agreement on how this is evidenced.	Teachers are clear on the skills required to be mastered before moving onto the next stage of learning.	By Aug 2025		
	Review of planning folders and progressions.	Constituency in experiences across the school.	Completed March 2025 – to be reviewed again June 2025		
	Long term and medium term planning discussions and agreements on expectations/formats.	Learners are motivated to learn as experiences are of interest.	Agreed by Aug 2025		
	Termly reflection of planning templates/ formats at collegiate sessions and agreed changes made.	Learners are beginning to understand how they are progressing in their learning.	To begin May 2025		

Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<p><b>Develop high quality learning and teaching which motivates learners.</b></p> <p>Opportunities for collaborative working between learners to encourage engagement</p> <p>Sharing learning and teaching with parents/carers.</p>	<p><b>Whole school collaboration-</b> Collaboratively created timetable of whole school focus weeks.</p> <p>House challenges to be introduced and take place 4 times a year.</p> <p>Class rota for sharing learning at assembly and front office display.</p> <p>Parents/carers invited into school for celebration of learning. – Timetable of events published each August.</p> <p>What does collaborative learning look like? Agreement on collaborative working practices and joint working guidance</p> <p>Staff working together to moderate practices.</p>	<p>Cross collaborative working will promote positive relationships and a sense of responsibility across the school.</p>	<p>Reviewed and in place by August 2025 – to be shared with community each August</p>	<p>6<sup>th</sup> Nov 2024 P4 and P4/5 open morning 18<sup>th</sup> Nov 2024- P2, P2/3 and P3 open morning 5<sup>th</sup> Dec 2024– P7 open morning 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec 2024 - Christmas craft fayre 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Dec 2024 – Christmas shows. 7<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025- All 3 P5/6 classes host community café- All feedback collected at each opportunity has been positive.</p> <p>First House Challenge took place on 6<sup>th</sup> of March 2025 and focused on World Book Day.</p> <p>A range of examples of children in leadership roles has also been used successfully to motivate learners. These include Pupil Council, Young Leaders of Learning and Young Librarians.</p>	<p><b>Continue to engage parents/carers</b></p> <p>Continue House Challenge days</p> <p>Continue to develop leadership opportunities.</p>

Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<p><b>Develop high quality learning and teaching.</b></p> <p>Develop differentiation in all classes</p> <p>Effective use of progression frameworks to meet learner's needs.</p> <p>Appropriate pace and Challenge for all.</p> <p>Learners involved in leading their own learning.</p>	<p>Inset day in November – What is effective differentiation?- delivery by SLT</p> <p>Snapshot of class data/ attainment discussions – teachers to demonstrate clear knowledge of range of learning needs in class.</p> <p>Input from Attainment Advisor on equity and what this looks like in the classroom.</p> <p><b>Class observations to focus on differentiation</b> in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groupings</li> <li>• Learning styles</li> <li>• Progressive tasks</li> <li>• Collaborative learning</li> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Ongoing assessment/feedback</li> <li>• Digital resources</li> <li>• Pace</li> </ul>	<p>Staff are fully aware of the needs of learners and understand their lived experiences.</p> <p>Needs are met appropriately.</p> <p>Staff develop a sense of accountability for addressing the needs in their class effectively.</p>	<p>Ongoing review required – to form part of QA calendar</p> <p>Completed October 2024</p> <p>Completed Nov 2024-</p> <p>Each area to be observed as part of QA processes- information used to inform CLPL offer</p>	<p>Training delivered 15<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2025 on differentiation and how to meet the needs of all within class.</p> <p>Developmental curriculum introduced to meet the needs of learners with complex needs. This is being used by Haven and Recharge staff to identify support strategies for children.</p> <p>Teaching staff are using it to reflect on the progress of some pupils and to identify next steps, particularly when writing targets for IEPs .</p>	<p>This will be a continued focus area for staff training.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning strategies</li> <li>• Varied outcomes/expectations /tiered learning task</li> </ul>				
	These differentiation strategies to be regularly discussed at collegiate sessions to ensure clarity of understanding.				
	Termly planning discussions with SLT to ensure differentiation is planned for. Reflection task will focus on effective planning for differentiation as stated above.				
	During attainment and tracking meetings, discussion will focus on CFE levels for each learner.				
			Ongoing		
			Ongoing		
			Ongoing process		

Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<p><b>Developing high quality learning and teaching – what motivates our learners?</b></p> <p>Developing child led topics and following learners interests.</p>	<p>Inset day input on Taxonomy/thinking skills and how this can be used to plan challenge.</p> <p>All staff to have an awareness of the meaning of the following terms and how these relate to depth of learning and differentiation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Knowledge</li> <li>· Comprehension</li> <li>· Application</li> <li>· Analysis</li> <li>· Evaluation</li> <li>· Synthesis</li> </ul> <p>Develop Meta skills across the school through effective planning, assessment and learning and teaching.</p>	<p>Necessity for depth of learning understood by staff. This will ensure that the skills taught are fully understood and can be transferred and applied in a variety of situations by learners.</p>	<p>Briefly discussed Feb 2025-</p> <p>Will be revisited – 2025-2026</p> <p>Completed by 2027</p>	<p>Introduced by HT February 2025. This is very early stages. Staff have reflected on how thinking about the level of a task/activity/questioning can be used as a means of differentiating the learning on offer.</p>	<p>This will become a focus on collegiate sessions in Term 1 of 2025-2026.</p>

Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomesfor Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<b>High quality learning and teaching</b>  Clear and concise explanation of learning	Agreed understanding of effective LI/SC. Discussion and agreement around expectations at each stage, eg, verbal, pictorial, written etc.	Agreed practice, expectations and standards will inform L&T policy. This will ensure a rigorous and consistent approach to learning for all learners.	Ongoing process	Training on LI and SC has supported approaches to clear and concise learning and teaching. Staff have stated that they are confident writing these and are using the SC as a means of assessment for the planned lessons.	Continue to review and evaluate.
	LI/SC will be the focus of class observations and learning walks.	Learners will clearly understand what they are learning and what they need to do to be successful.	Focus of observations Feb and March 2025	LI and SC focus of class observation February 2025. In the majority of classes, the LI and SC aligned and were appropriately matched to the learning taking place. In the March 2025 quality improvement visit, only two classes had SC that were seen as being too wide and not related specifically to the lesson.	
	YLOL to help monitor practice through sampling learners’ views on the effectiveness of LI/SC.		Ongoing		
	Quality of LI/SC regularly discussed in collegiate sessions.		Ongoing		



Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<p><b>Developing high quality learning and teaching</b></p> <p>Use of effective questioning</p>	<p>‘Effective Questioning’ CLPL sessions to be undertaken by all CTs/PSAs.</p> <p>This will include quality interactions as detailed in Early level action plan.</p> <p>Revisit social constructivist theories on learning to develop deep understanding as to how children learn through interactions.</p> <p>Discussion around giving learners thinking time and developing active listening. What does this look like in practice?</p> <p>Link questioning with memory and development of associated cognitive skills.</p> <p>SLT to quality assure through learning walks/classroom observations.</p>	<p>High quality learning experiences will be delivered as teachers become more confident in developing cognitive and meta skills, which will motivate pupils and increase engagement.</p>	<p>CLPL input planned for Nov 2025</p>	<p>Staff have read book study chapter on memory, (Power of Pedagogy). The majority of staff have indicated that this has supported their understanding of learning. 27% of those sampled said they would like more in-depth learning on this.</p> <p>Effective questioning was not evident in most classes during recent class observations in February and March 2025.</p>	<p>This will be addressed next session.</p> <p>Effective questioning will be a focus for term 4. Lydia Tait, ESO, will be asked to provide an input on this.</p>

Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<p><b>High quality learning and teaching.</b></p> <p>Use of high quality feedback</p>	<p>Whole staff agreement and understanding of what effective feedback looks like and how it bridges the gap between assessment and learning.</p> <p>Agreement that feedback will be: Targeted, timely, actionable, meaningful, clear, specific and personalised. This will become part of the L,T,A and P policy.</p> <p>Agreement of what feedback may look like at each stage. What does this look like in action and in written form?</p> <p>Feedback CLPL sessions to be undertaken by all CTs/PSAs/EYPS.</p> <p>SLT to quality assure through learning walks/classroom observations.</p> <p>YLOL to be used to evaluate progress.</p>	<p>Learners will be able to edit and improve their output on the basis of effective feedback.</p> <p>Staff will be confident in using feedback to promote learning which will lead to a better quality discussions around next steps for learners.</p> <p>Learners will be able to use feedback to identify next steps in learning.</p>	<p>CLPL offer planned for June 2025</p>	<p>Jotter monitoring completed in December 2025.</p> <p>The creation of the new marking guidance and expectations is now available to support consistency in approach.</p> <p>Staff trialing new feedback approaches in upper stages took place in February 2025. Although staff verbal feedback on the guidance has been positive, a recent monitoring of jotters, (March 2025) indicated some staff are still not marking work appropriately</p>	<p>Marking policy will continue to be monitored</p> <p>Reinforce guidance by sharing of jotters and standards at planned meeting.</p>

Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<b>Effective use of assessment data</b>  Effective use of assessment, planning and teaching cycle AIFL strategies	SLT to audit current assessment approaches.	Learners will be accurately supported in their learning as teachers' confidence grows in assessing children.	Ongoing – calendar to be reviewed and update yearly.	Assessment calendar reviewed and agreed.	This will be reviewed for effectiveness again early in Term 1 of 2025/2026.
	Assessment calendar to be reviewed and updated.		Feb 2025	AIFL strategies discussed and shared February 2025.	
	AIFL strategies to be revisited and discussion held around expectations at each stage.	Accurate assessment information will focus resources more effectively ensuring learners receive appropriate and timely interventions.	Ongoing	In a recent survey, all teachers stated a range of strategies they use in class, however, class observations in February and March showed little evidence of these being used. A further input took place on 5/3/25 to agree on the strategies being used and the expectations around these.	Moderation meetings now need to be organised to support the use of data to inform everyday judgements on achievement and attainment.
	Clarity on how assessment information informs practice- collating data to make decisions around planning and next steps for each learner and meeting needs.				
	Agreement on gathering of evidence – expectations at each stage.		To become a regular feature of collegiate sessions 2025/2026	Attainment meetings are being held 3 times a year with SLT. Staff are becoming more confident in discussing levels, comparing data sets and suggesting interventions.	
	CT/SLT sharing session to be undertaken. Share good practice/new examples for assessment/evidence gathering, across the curriculum. (Promote collaboration/learning from each other.)		In place – ongoing review of practice		
	SLT to continue to develop monitoring and tracking systems to support data analysis.				

Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<b>Evaluate learners' progress</b>  Data used effectively by SLT to ensure learner's individual needs are met.	New robust data collection tracking system being created.	Learners will receive the effective interventions in a timely manner to ensure they are making appropriate progress and achieving their full capability.	In place Feb 2025	ACEL uplift in SEEMiS now accurately recorded.  IEPs now being used effectively to support learning. Targets are now appropriate and SMART. 73% of teachers indicated that they are more confident in writing these after a recent input by HT	The HT will revisit writing SMART targets with those staff members who require additional support
	Agreed data collection points three times a year.		Agreed Oct 2025		
	Measuring impact a weekly focus of SLT meetings.		Ongoing process		
	Data used effectively to inform decision regarding interventions. Interventions tracked and evaluated for effectiveness/impact.		Systems in place – impact still to be evidenced		
	HT to link in with Suzie Wood, Education Scotland Attainment Advisor.		New AA in place- HT has made contact – Jan 2025		
	HT to continue to engage in data discussions with QIO		Ongoing process		

Area for improvement – resources and context	Actions required- what will we do?	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<b>Evaluating children's progress</b>  Effective moderation of learner's work  Develop a comprehensive understanding of national standards.	SLT to provide a quality input on what constitutes effective moderation.  Each strand of the moderation cycle to be used to reflect on current practice and make improvements where required.  Moderation policy to be updated with regular time set aside for moderation activities.  SLT to provide opportunities for moderation across the school. SLT to provide opportunities for moderation with CTs from other settings.	Teachers will be confident in their judgments ensuring that the progress and achievement of learners is accurate and reflective of an equitable offer.	Planned for 2025/2026	7 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 – Numeracy moderation activity held. 50% of teachers said that they found this useful.	These focus areas will be used to form the CLPL offer for 2025-2026.

# 3.2

## Whole School

### Raising Attainment and Achievement





Area for improvement	Actions required	Desired outcome for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<b>Improve Attainment in literacy and English</b>  SLT/CTs to agree expectations for teaching Literacy, closely considering the following points	<b>Listening &amp; Talking focus:</b>  - Increase opportunities to share their learning with an audience, give presentations and lead group discussions.  - CTs to ensure these skills are taught regularly and provide opportunities for children to apply their skills.  - Accurate assessment of key skills – how are we capturing this data? What do the key skills look like at each stage?  - Focus on vocabulary development through story telling approach	Learners develop a wide range of vocabulary.  Conversational skills increase in complexity with learners considering other people's point of view and using this to develop their thinking.  Learners can confidently share their thoughts, feeling and ideas through discussion.	Planned for session 2025/2026   Ongoing   Ongoing process	Listening & Talking progression in the process of being developed.  Class novel/book a week is being used to support Listening & Talking.  Observations around the school suggest that the majority are passive and not regarding themselves as active agents in their learning. It is hoped encouragement to use their voices will support the development of active participation.	This now needs to be shared with staff and feedback acted upon.  Next session, expectations around storytelling, rhyme and rhythm will be agreed and expectations shared. This will be a focus for class observations, particularly in the Early Years. Middle to upper stages will focus on debating skills. Introduce Leven's Scale to track engagement  The CIRCLCE resource will be used to help gauge participation for some. We anticipate vocab enrichment will increase by 10% year on year when new expectations around listening and talking are in place.  SLT to investigate the Talk for Writing and decide on implementation plan.

[illegible]



Area for improvement	Actions required	Desired outcome for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<b>Improve Attainment in literacy and English</b>  SLT/CTs to agree expectations for teaching Literacy, closely considering the following points:	<b>Writing focus:</b> Early level – focus on the letter formation. Increased opportunities for fine motor development. -Increase opportunities to develop and enjoy writing skills through play contexts.  First & Second level to develop agreed standards and progression in the following writing skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handwriting/presentation</li> <li>• Spelling</li> <li>• Grammar</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Editing</li> <li>• Clarity</li> <li>• Structure</li> <li>• Persuasiveness</li> <li>• Research and accuracy.</li> <li>• Sentence construction.</li> </ul> Increased opportunities to write at length/variety of relevant purposes.  Working group established focusing on developing the above points.  Introduction of Talk for Writing Training for all staff.	Increased attainment in writing across the school.  Early intervention will support individuals in a timely manner.	Ongoing process	Early years developing play contexts to support fine motor development and exploration of writing.  Writing now being taught 3-5 times per week in P3-7 with cross curriculum links. 82% of teachers felt that writing was improving.  PT visiting other schools re: CYPIC development to observe planning around genres.	Marking policy now in place and supporting editing skills.  This needs to be a focus for further collegiate sessions. Staff will take part in the Authority's' training offer regarding spread and scale within the CYPIC model.  Implementation plan agreed Coaching model introduced

Area for improvement	Actions required	Desired outcome for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
Improve attainment in Numeracy and Mathematics	<p>SLT/CTs to agree expectations for teaching Numeracy, closely considering the following points.</p> <p><b>Number, money and measurement.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support to develop skills in recognition of coins to £2</li> <li>- correct number formation.</li> <li>- subtraction using exchange.</li> <li>- calculating percentages of a given quantity.</li> </ul> <p><b>-Shape, position and movement. -</b></p> <p>Support to identify acute, obtuse and straight angles.</p> <p><b>-Information handling.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children need more opportunities to present and interpret information using a variety of formats</li> <li>- Digital technology used to display data in a variety of ways.</li> </ul> <p><b>All levels</b> – opportunities to apply their learning in numeracy and mathematics in real-life and problem solving contexts.</p>	<p>Increased attainment in numeracy across the school.</p> <p>Learners confident in applying taught numeracy skills.</p>	Ongoing process	<p>Increased use of manipulatives across all stages was evident in recent class observations. A recent sample group of learners stated that some learners had access to concrete materials to support numeracy.</p> <p>New laptops have been provided for learners use. Digital technology is being used effectively in some classes. Teachers are using technology to differing degrees with 45% indicating that they are not confident in their ability to use this effectively (March 2025).</p> <p>Sumdog being used across the school with data being collected and analysed to support teacher judgements.</p>	Opportunities to share good practice will be part of next sessions collegiate sessions.

	<p><b>White Rose Maths</b> introduced in May 2024 Audit undertaken of effectiveness from pupils and staff in December 2024.</p>		Regular review to form part of QA procedures	White Rose assessments being used to track attainment from P2-7. Teachers are using this data to support learning and teaching.	
	<p><b>Introduction of Highland Numeracy</b> for Early Level – October 2024 Review- February 2025</p> <p>Regular review of achievement in all areas of numeracy. Identified patterns of progress and address any areas with low achievement as soon as possible.</p>		As above		

Area for improvement	Actions required	Desired outcome for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
<p><b>Raise attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school.</b></p> <p>Track by specific group of learners to identify barriers to learning.</p>	<p>Systems to be established to enable staff to monitor and report on the progress of learners (i.e. EAL/Care Experienced learners).</p> <p>-Focus on specific cohorts regularly throughout the academic year.</p> <p>Track cohorts over time- analyse trends and address accordingly.</p> <p>Drill down into class profiles and use data to inform decisions around allocation of resources.</p> <p>SLT to establish a clear plan for ASL.</p> <p>-Clear guidance/expectations linked to internal system for requesting targeting support.</p> <p>-Tracking system to be established to monitor progress for learners receiving interventions/targeted support.</p>	<p>Accurate identification of trends allowing the concentration of resources to remedy any shortfall in the learning offer.</p> <p>Resources used effectively to increase attainment and meet needs. This will allow all learners to meet their capability.</p> <p>Trends identified quickly.</p> <p>Supports in place in a timely manner ensuring that needs are met quickly to prevent any gaps in learning improving outcomes for learners.</p> <p>Learners successfully reaching their capability.</p>	<p>Regular review planned via QA procedures</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Plan in place and regularly reviewed via ongoing QA processes</p>	<p>NSA data collected and analysed at P1,4 and 7. Termly attainment meetings are helping to support this process.</p> <p>Class profiles created and regularly revisited. SLT are using this data to inform decisions around allocation of resources, particularly those funded through PEF.</p> <p>Some interventions have produced data that shows an increase to health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Milestone trackers are being used to track small steps in progress to ensure achievements are recognised.</p>	<p>New tracker requires regular evaluation for effectiveness.</p>

Area for improvement	Actions required	Desired outcome for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	Next steps
Children to be enabled to talk about the skills they have learned from wider achievements	<p>Tracking processes to be further developed linked to wider achievements.</p> <p>Staff to highlight skill development linked to participation in wider achievement activities.</p> <p>SLT/CT to consider use of ACC Skills Framework.</p> <p>LI and SC to have skills focus where appropriate.</p>	<p>Staff know learners well and are able to connect outside experiences with in school ones ensuring learners understand that learning happens daily in a variety of settings. It will also support the sense of achievement.</p> <p>Learners are aware of and able to discuss the skills they are developing.</p>	In place by Dec 2025	<p>Wider achievements celebrated at assemblies and in class.</p> <p>School football team celebrated at assemblies and in school newsletters.</p>	Find effective ways of encouraging families to share wider achievements. Reach out to other schools for examples of good practice.

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## Forehill Primary School

### Action Plan following HMle Inspection

**Inspection Date** 24/02/25  
**Report Publication Date** 03/06/25  
**QI Grading**  
     1.3 – Weak  
     2.3 - Weak  
     3.1 -Satisfactory  
     3.2 - Weak

#### Areas for Improvement identified by HMle (all)

- With support from the local authority, senior leaders, need to improve approaches to evaluating the work of the school. They should use more robust evaluations to help them identify key priorities. It is important that staff are able to demonstrate fully that their actions are improving outcomes for all children.
- Senior leaders and staff should improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment, including learning through play. This will ensure all children benefit from high quality experiences that meet their learning needs.
- Staff should raise attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school. At all stages, children are capable of achieving more.

#### Priority 1 (QI 1.3, 1.1)

- With support from the local authority, senior leaders, need to improve approaches to evaluating the work of the school. They should use more robust evaluations to help them identify key priorities. It is important that staff are able to demonstrate fully that their actions are improving outcomes for all children.

Areas for Improvement (taken from SIF)	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Actions Required	Measures of Success (how will we know?)	Resources (who, what, by when)	RAG	Next Steps
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Action Plan following HMle Inspection

<p><b>Embed the vision for the school which reflects its current context.</b></p>	<p>Embed school vision to compliment the school values which will lead to high aspirations for all learners.</p>	<p><b>1. <u>Embed school vision</u></b> Stakeholder survey to find out how we ensure the vision underpins our continuous improvement</p>	<p>All stakeholders will be able to articulate the school vision and understand how it informs school improvement</p>	<p>Google form – HT to action May 25</p>		<p>Vision to be visible throughout the school and in communications to stakeholders</p> <p>Vision to be embedded in learning activities and referenced in dialogue between staff and learners</p>
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Action Plan following HMle Inspection

<b>Robust school improvement planning and self-evaluation procedures</b>	<p>School improvement targets are clearly defined and SMART, resulting in embedded improvements in experiences for learners within the setting</p>	<p><b>1. <u>School Improvement Plan (SIP)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a robust SIP with clear, tightly planned targets</li> <li>• Create a maintenance plan for items which are implemented and continue to require input to keep improvements on track</li> </ul> <p><b>2. <u>Supporting all stakeholders to engage meaningfully in self-evaluation</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with challenge questions from HGios 4 in identified areas to ensure a continuous focus on self-evaluation.</li> </ul>	<p>School Improvement Plan session 25/26 -27/28 including an ongoing maintenance plan created to ensure the impact of school improvements continue to be monitored and evaluated</p>	<p>Staff team to reflect on SIF and work with stakeholders to create SIP for 25/26 – June 25</p>	<div></div>	<p>Share school improvement plan with all stakeholders</p> <p>Learner focus group to create and publish a learner friendly version of the Standards and Quality Report and School Improvement Plan</p>
	<p>Learners will be included, engaged and involved in contributing to school improvement.</p>		<p>Discussion related to challenge questions recorded in staff meeting minutes</p>	<p>SLT to start all staff development sessions with a HGios challenge question. - Session 25/26 ongoing</p>		<p>Staff survey to be issued to measure the impact of protected self-evaluation time</p>

Action Plan following HMle Inspection

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planned self-evaluation activity throughout the school session to allow all staff to work together to plan for continuous improvement</li> <li>Continue to involve the Pupil Council and committees fully in self-evaluation using HGIOURS to engage pupils meaningfully in school improvement</li> <li>Include parents and partners in self-evaluation procedures</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback will be gathered from all staff and next steps identified</p> <p>Pupils will be able to articulate their role in self-evaluation and can discuss the impact of their contribution to school improvement</p> <p>Parental feedback will evidence a stronger collaborative approach to school improvement</p>	<p>Pupil council/committee meetings with a focus on HGIOURS</p> <p>DHT to lead the above in session 25/26 and ongoing</p> <p>Exit questionnaires from parent events to have a leadership of change focus throughout session 2025/26</p>		<p>Evidence from pupil evaluations will be considered when planning for continuous improvement</p> <p>Parent Council discussions to include feedback captured from the wider parent forum and next steps identified and actioned</p>
<b>Build leadership capacity and strengthen impact measurement.</b>	Senior leaders to create conditions where staff feel confident to initiate impactful change and to develop a collective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect time within the WTA to support working groups (Leadership of Change, Raising Attainment, Learning &amp; Teaching) in leading and delivering key</li> </ul>	QA Calendar/MTA detail hours allocated to working groups to ensure pace of change	June 25 through QA calendar and MTA		Measure the impact of capacity building in working time agreement and in quality assurance calendar.

Action Plan following HMle Inspection

	responsibility to improve outcomes for learners	<p>priorities from the School Improvement Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empower staff to initiate and lead change by facilitating opportunities for this through working groups</li> <li>• Ensure PRD discussions and CLPL opportunities are strategically focused on improvement priorities</li> <li>• Promote a culture of shared professional learning through staff-led discussion and the use of the CLPL noticeboard to share opportunities and insights.</li> <li>• Strengthen collaborative decision-making processes to ensure all staff contribute meaningfully to the school's strategic direction.</li> </ul>	<p>Examples of play pedagogy action research projects leading to improved engagement of learners.</p> <p>PRD records evidence links to school improvement priorities</p> <p>Evidence that stakeholder contributions have informed the action plan</p>	<p>CR &amp; LG undertaking play pedagogy action research project.</p> <p>HT/ Class teachers PRD meetings in June 25</p> <p>Session 25/26 discussion groups run by HT and DHT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Realising the Ambition</li> <li>- Teaching Backwards</li> </ul> <p>SLT to engage staff in collaborative decision making throughout session 25/26</p> <p>Action plan development facilitated by SLT May 25</p>		<p>Continue to encourage staff to undertake learning through enquiry opportunities</p> <p>All stakeholders to be included in decision making regarding plans for school improvement</p>

**Forehill Primary School**

**Action Plan following HMle Inspection**

**Priority 2 (QI 2.3)**

- Senior leaders and staff should improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment, including learning through play. This will ensure all children benefit from high quality experiences that meet their learning needs.

Areas for Improvement (taken from SIF)	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Actions Required	Measures of Success (how will we know?)	Resources (who, what, by when)	RAG	Next Steps
Improve the use of assessment and feedback to inform high quality planning for learning and teaching.	Improved planning formats will ensure learners' needs are being met	<b>1. Planning for Learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Termly collaborative planning meetings as part of the Working Time Agreement (WTA) to ensure consistent, high-quality planning.</li> <li>Embed a revised planning format aligned to outcomes and benchmarks, providing clear progression pathways.</li> <li>Introduce stage-level planning to ensure depth of learning and to utilise staff expertise.</li> </ul>	Planning Guidance adopted, followed and evident in all classes  'What does a good lesson at Forehill look like?' created, providing a standard for all staff  Staff reflections on planning format are used to inform next steps  QA by SLT evidences improvement in planning, assessment and moderation	Planning Guidance Document – rolled out by HT to all staff May 25  Collaborative time to create agreed lesson standards June 25  Class teachers using new formats from August 25		Planning guidance to be implemented – August 2025  'What does a good lesson look like at Forehill?' document will be referenced by all staff when planning learning and will form an important part of planning guidance.  QA calendar shared with staff so there is a clear shared understanding of what quality assurance looks like at Forehill.

Action Plan following HMle Inspection

	Clear expectations for learners will lead to effective individual target setting and long term success for learners.	<b>2. Develop Robust Assessment Practices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All assessments will be identified in teacher's plans. Consistent use of pre- and post-topic assessments in numeracy to establish starting points and measure learning progress.</li> <li>• Schedule standardised assessments in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing within the annual QA calendar to track progress and inform interventions.</li> </ul>	<p>Planning and assessment guidance will have clear links to assessment materials</p> <p>QA calendar with agreed standardised assessment timings will ensure rigour in assessment frequency</p> <p>Clearer guidance will impact positively on teacher confidence, leading to more robust judgement of CfE attainment</p>	<p>Planning Guidance shared May 25</p> <p>Timings for standardised assessments shared in QA calendar</p>		<p>Implement and review the revised planning formats and act on feedback to ensure that all aspects of planning are leading to improvements in the pace and challenge of learning.</p> <p>Continuing to implement a calendar of assessments will allow teachers to plan effectively for support and challenge and will enable SLT to monitor effectively the impact of interventions.</p>
		<b>3. Develop High-Quality Feedback Approaches</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning and teaching working group to</li> </ul>				

Action Plan following HMle Inspection

	Improved attainment in all curricular areas as a result of clearer understanding and guiding next steps for improvement.	<p>provide staff training on effective feedback strategies to support learners in identifying their strengths and next steps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree a consistent approach to feedback across the school, including clear expectations for peer and self-assessment and how feedback is recorded (e.g. in jotters).</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Foster Collaborative Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for collaborative planning and resource development within</li> </ul>	<p>Peer and SLT jotter monitoring evidences improvement in meaningful feedback .</p> <p>Examples of pupil led target setting based on feedback from teachers.</p> <p>Staff book group feedback will evidence increased teacher confidence in providing effective feedback to inform next steps and set targets</p> <p>Feedback agreement document will be linked to planning guidance for consistency and all staff will be referring to it</p>	<p>Peer and SLT jotter monitoring planned within the QA calendar with an agreed focus area of the curriculum.</p> <p>Build capacity within learning and teaching working group to lead a feedback book group in term 2 25/26</p> <p>Feedback agreement created in staff development meeting April 25 to be included in updated planning guidance.</p> <p>QA calendar demonstrates planning as stage groups to</p>		SLT and Learning and teaching
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Action Plan following HMle Inspection

	<p>Collaborative approaches will lead to improved teacher efficacy which will ensure consistency in experience for learners.</p> <p>Increased motivation and engagement for learners</p>	<p>stages to share effective practice and reduce reliance on commercial material.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to plan and provide moderation opportunities for all teachers</li> </ul> <p><b>5. Promote Learner Engagement in Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning and teaching working group to create a child-friendly, visual reference for formative assessment strategies to encourage pupil ownership and engagement in their learning.</li> </ul>	<p>Quality assurance evidences planning is based on outcomes and benchmarks rather than being resource driven</p> <p>Digital spaces are used to share good practice, resources and pedagogical approaches.</p> <p>Environments and displays evidence children's engagement in both learning and assessment.</p>	<p>take place from Aug 25.</p> <p>All planning and digital resources available in a digital space – ongoing</p> <p>DHT to work with pupil learning and teaching group to quality assure wall displays for consistency - ongoing</p>		
<b>Improve the quality and pace of learning and teaching.</b>	<p>Raised attainment in core curricular areas of literacy and numeracy.</p>	<p><b>1. Strengthen Learning and Teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide CPD on clear learning intentions, success criteria, and real-life contexts.</li> </ul>	<p>Notes/minutes from development sessions shared with staff</p> <p>Examples of WALT, WILF and TIB in classroom</p>	<p>Mar/Apr 25 delivered by HT at staff development meeting</p>		<p>Language used to discuss learning intentions, success criteria and real life applications will become embedded and consistent across classes.</p>

### Action Plan following HMle Inspection

	Improved motivation and engagement for all learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver training on differentiation, rubrics, and effective pace and challenge, using examples from the NA Toolkit.</li> <li>• Work collaboratively to agree on standards for a good lesson and use these standards for classroom observations both peer and SLT led.</li> <li>• Train staff in higher-order and open-ended questioning, and effective formative assessment.</li> </ul>	<p>practice and environments will be gathered</p> <p>Shared standard created for what makes a good lesson and is consistently evident in lesson observations</p> <p>Staff confidence survey undertaken – pre and post training to measure impact</p>	<p>Create at staff development meeting June 25</p> <p>L Tait to deliver higher order questioning training June 25</p>		Staff will reflect their own areas for development in relation to agreed standards for a good lesson and these will become a focus for lesson observations going forward.
		<p><b>2. Empower Learners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build pupils' understanding of success criteria, learning intentions and feedback to support self and peer-assessment and co-creation of success criteria.</li> <li>• Ensure engaging, well-resourced environments which promote independent and active learning.</li> <li>• Promote use of outdoor and digital learning to enhance engagement.</li> </ul>	<p>WALT/WILF/TIB characters designed and will be displayed in all classes for teachers and learners to refer to during learning.</p> <p>Pupil Council Environment Audits will evidence improvement in working walls.</p> <p>Circle Environment Audits will be undertaken across all classes</p> <p>Expectations for outdoor learning and digital literacy included in planning guidance and evident in practice.</p>	<p>Winning characters selected May 25 digital designs created and rolled out to whole school</p> <p>Ongoing</p>		Consistent branding will support learners to reflect on what they are learning, why they are learning it and how to be successful.
						Children will become more confident when talking about their learning.



Action Plan following HMle Inspection

		<b>3. Collaboration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish peer mentoring to share effective practice.</li> <li>• Encourage collaboration through resource sharing, team teaching and professional dialogue.</li> </ul>	<p>All teachers are working collaboratively with a moderation partner.</p> <p>Lesson plan examples evidence team teaching</p> <p>Digital collection of shared resources will support collaboration</p>			
<b>Develop play pedagogy with reference to national guidance.</b>	<p>Improved play pedagogy leading to improved attainment for learners.</p>	<b>1. Develop Shared Understanding of Play and Child Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver CLPL play pedagogy using the book group format to ensure shared understanding of play, child development, and the role of the adult.</li> <li>• Promote professional dialogue and reflective practice through practitioner enquiry.</li> </ul>	<p>Notes from Group book discussion will be used to inform next steps</p> <p>Practitioners will keep a reflection log which will form the basis of discussion</p> <p>Practitioner enquiry findings will be shared with</p>	<p>AJ to lead play pedagogy book group Term 1 25/26</p> <p>All staff in P1, P2/1 and P2 have visited other classes to see good examples of play pedagogy</p> <p>CR &amp; LG completing action research project on play engagement</p>		<p>Continue to plan for and deliver high quality CLPL that will build the capacity of all staff to utilise play based pedagogy to improve learner attainment.</p>

Action Plan following HMle Inspection

	By being responsive to learners we will create a more engaging learning environment.	<p><b>2. Embed Responsive, Child-Led Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use responsive planning based on observations, interests, and developmental stages.</li> <li>• Support adults to scaffold learning through in-the-moment interactions. Schema Input.</li> <li>• Ensure environments are flexible, well-resourced and encourage creativity and independence.</li> </ul>	<p>other colleagues with a view to impacting practice. Responsive planning examples will evidence impact on learners</p> <p>Feedback from staff Observations regarding interactions will be shared</p> <p>Environment audits will reflect improvement for learners</p>	<p>Input for support staff on schemas run by SEYPs – May 25</p> <p>CR to share schema chart to support planning with teaching staff P1/P2</p> <p>SEYP/EYP timetabled to support with area development</p>		Continue to plan for and reflect on the learning environments to ensure they are responsive to needs and interests, suitably engaging and offering support and challenge to learning.
	Supports children to reflect on and lead their own learning.	<p><b>3. Empower Children as Active, Valued Learners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use floorbooks and learner-led planning to promote voice, agency and ownership.</li> <li>• Embed nurturing approaches that support emotional</li> </ul>	<p>Examples of floor book pages will evidence this approach to planning and tracking learning journeys. Completed Leuven scales and Boxall profiles will be</p>	<p>Teaching staff in P1-2 to introduce floor books from Aug 25 (currently being trialled in one class Mar 25)</p>		Extend this work to use seesaw as a way to document and share individual children's learning

Action Plan following HMle Inspection

	Improved play pedagogy leading to improved attainment for learners.	<p>wellbeing and secure relationships.</p> <p><b>4. Strengthen Leadership and Collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop play pedagogy champions to lead and model practice.</li> <li>• Use working groups and professional learning communities to drive improvement.</li> <li>• Continue to encourage team teaching to encourage sharing of good practice.</li> </ul>	<p>used to measure impact for learners</p> <p>Learning and teaching working group will have a focus on improving play pedagogy</p> <p>Working group actions will be completed and next steps identified</p> <p>Position statement for play will be written and followed</p>	<p>Planning document to track engagement from Aug 25</p> <p>Empower staff member to be lead for play development from Aug 25</p>		<p>journeys with parents and carers.</p> <p>Continue to build capacity in all staff in early and first level to ensure high quality play experiences for learners.</p>
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**Priority 3 (QI 3.2)**

- Staff should raise attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school. At all stages, children are capable of achieving more.

Areas for Improvement (taken from SIF)	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Actions Required	Measures of Success (how will we know?)	Resources (who, what, by when)	RAG	Next Steps
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Action Plan following HMle Inspection

<p><b>Raise Attainment in all areas of Literacy</b></p>	<p><b>Improved attainment in reading</b></p> <p><b>Attainment in reading will improve by at least 10% at primary 4 and 7 and will be maintained in P1.</b></p>	<p><b>1. Improve Reading Attainment Through Assessment and Targeted Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement PIRA reading assessments at key stages (P3, P5, P6) to gather robust data on comprehension and vocabulary.</li> <li>• Use assessment data to inform targeted reading interventions.</li> <li>• Identify and use stage-appropriate texts to monitor reading fluency and pace (e.g. PM Benchmarks).</li> <li>• Increased library use to support reading for enjoyment.</li> </ul>	<p>SNSA, PIRA and SWIST will be used as standardised assessment to support moderation and planning for learning.</p> <p>Minutes from discussion at tracking meetings will identify pupils for targeted interventions.</p> <p>SLT monitoring of impact of interventions through whole school tracker and SFL tracking meetings will ensure appropriate learner progress</p>	<p>Assessment data to be collected, reflected upon and then interventions planned to improve attainment in reading.</p> <p>Create and implement a structured library timetable to embed good reading habits. Literacy working group May 25 – ongoing</p>		<p>Reading interventions implemented based on discussions with teachers as part of tracking meetings</p>
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Action Plan following HMle Inspection

	<p><b>Improved attainment in writing</b></p> <p><b>Attainment in writing will be maintained at P1 and will increase to above 93% in P4 and P7.</b></p>	<p><b>2. Improve Writing Attainment Through CYPIC Engagement and Effective Feedback</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with the CYPIC programme to improve writing outcomes, starting with P4.</li> <li>• Align writing planning with ACC Writing Progression Pathways to ensure consistency and progression.</li> <li>• Enhance the quality of feedback in writing jotters by linking it to co-created WILF/success criteria.</li> <li>• Review and revise core writing targets to better support planning,</li> </ul>	<p>Using CYPIC data to inform practice and track progress will lead to improved attainment in writing.</p> <p>ACC writing planner examples will demonstrate consistent approaches across the school and clear progression through the benchmarks for all learners.</p> <p>Feedback monitored as part of jotter monitoring and assessed against standards agreed by all</p>	<p>Staff participation in training starting Aug 25</p> <p>New planners in use in Term 1 25/26</p> <p>Peer and SLT jotter monitoring feedback – ongoing</p>		<p>Continue to monitor feedback as part of QA process CLPL for staff as required</p>
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Action Plan following HMle Inspection

	<p><b>Improved attainment in listening and talking</b></p> <p><b>Improved learner engagement</b></p>	<p>tracking, and learner progress.</p> <p><b>3. Promote Oracy and Learner Engagement Across the Curriculum</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote high-quality classroom dialogue through strategies such as talk partners, think-pair-share, sentence stems, and hot seating.</li> <li>• Reduce hands-up strategies to encourage equity in classroom talk.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for pupil-led learning and communication through class-led assemblies delivered to the whole school.</li> </ul>	<p>staff to ensure feedback is effective in helping learners to progress towards their targets.</p> <p>High quality dialogue between learners/learners and staff/learners in classroom observations</p> <p>Higher order questioning evident in classes with no hands up strategies will evidence children's listening, talking and thinking skills.</p> <p>Examples of assemblies and open events led by classes will demonstrate learners ability to present their learning to a range of audiences.</p>	<p>Classroom observation feedback – ongoing</p>		<p>Incorporate pupil dialogue opportunities as part of the QA calendar to monitor and evaluate learner engagement</p>
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Action Plan following HMle Inspection

<p><b>Raise Attainment in all areas of Numeracy</b></p>	<p><b>Improved attainment in all areas of numeracy and mathematics</b></p>	<p><b>1. Improve Attainment Through Robust Assessment and Data-Driven Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll out MALT assessments (P1–P7) to provide standardised data on maths age and identify learning gaps; initial focus on P3 and P6 in Summer 2025, then full implementation from August.</li> <li>• Use a range of assessment data to inform responsive planning, groupings, and targeted interventions.</li> <li>• Continue tracking meetings to monitor progress and adjust supports based on identified needs.</li> </ul>	<p>Examples of teachers planning and tracking will evidence reflection on assessments to plan for support and challenge and will demonstrate differentiated planned learning to meet individual needs.</p> <p>Minutes of tracking meetings will demonstrate teacher reflections on supports put in place to support learners and will evidence strategies to offer additional challenge.</p>	<p>Malt assessments purchased for use in P1 to P7.</p> <p>Impact of interventions to be tracked in whole school tracker.</p>		<p>SLT and staff will continue to track, monitor and analyse data to ensure progress in attainment and achievement</p>
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Action Plan following HMle Inspection

		<p><b>2. Strengthen Pedagogical Approaches to Ensure Progression and Challenge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a mental maths progression from P1–P7 and embed expectations within stage agreements to ensure consistency across the school.</li> <li>• Provide staff training on Leckie and Leckie problem-solving resources, and include this approach in stage agreements to build confidence in tackling multi-step and word problems.</li> <li>• Offer CLPL on effective strategies for teaching conceptual understanding, mental</li> </ul>	<p>Stage agreements will demonstrate increased teacher engagement with and commitment to using school wide problem solving resources.</p> <p>Examples of the slides from CLPL sessions and feedback from staff will demonstrate increased teacher confidence in planning for the teaching of mental agility, conceptual understanding and differentiation.</p>	<p>Term 1 25/26</p> <p>Stage agreements to be revised prior to Aug 25</p>		
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Action Plan following HMle Inspection

		<p>agility, and differentiation.</p> <p><b>3. Increase Learner Engagement and Confidence in Numeracy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase active learning approaches in numeracy.</li> <li>• Promote pupil dialogue, correct mathematical language, self-assessment, and target setting in numeracy to increase ownership and confidence.</li> <li>• Celebrate numeracy success across the school and build a positive mindset around challenge and problem solving.</li> </ul>	<p>Examples of purposeful play opportunities to develop math concepts.</p> <p>Working walls will be available and used by learners to support the understanding of mathematical concepts and vocabulary.</p> <p>Whole school numeracy awards will support children to develop their resilience and confidence in numeracy.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>		
Develop a culture of Engagement, Achievement and Participation with a focus on the impact of all aspects of PEF spending.	<p>Equity of opportunity for all learners.</p> <p>Improved evaluation of impact of interventions to ensure the best</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the whole-school tracking system to include meta-skills development, wider achievement, and targeted interventions, ensuring support is data-informed and clearly monitored.</li> <li>• Use robust standardised assessments in literacy and numeracy to</li> </ul>	<p>Whole school tracking document will collate evidence of children's engagement with Forehill families, committees and other wider achievement opportunities.</p> <p>Wall displays will be used to celebrate wider achievements</p>	<p>PT to update tracker from Aug 25 to track a variety of wider achievements.</p> <p>Continue to track impact of targeted interventions to show improvement over time.</p> <p>HT and PT have purchased</p>		

Action Plan following HMle Inspection

	outcomes for learners.	support the evaluation of PEF-funded interventions, with impact tracked and reviewed through regular tracking meetings.	Positive impact assessed and tracked over time in whole school tracker.	standardised assessments for numeracy and reading.		
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**Appendix C - Queens Cross Nursery Ltd. - Improvement plan following inspection – February 2025**

Area for improvement 1 (ES)	Action required & stakeholders involved	Timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG Rating
The manager and practitioners should access relevant training to ensure they understand fully their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children.	<p>-Managers with lead responsibilities for child protection should have enhanced professional learning in order to equip them with carry out their role effectively. This includes a full understanding of 'PREVENT' and designated responsibility to ensure this is fully implemented.</p> <p>-Managers should ensure that training provided by the local authority following the initial inspection is repeated as a 'refresher' in context on an annual basis, in line with local authority guidance.</p>	April 2025	Children will be fully protected from harm, by knowledgeable staff who are able to carry out Child Protection processes confidently. Any children or families requiring additional input from other agencies will be supported to do so.	<p>02/25 Manager has completed PREVENT online training and is on the waiting list for Advanced Child Protection Training.</p> <p>27/03/25 All staff have completed Child Protection refresher through Azilo</p>	
	<p>The child protection policy should be reviewed and refreshed to ensure the requirement to notify the Care Inspectorate where there are reported safeguarding concerns is explicit.</p> <p>Ensure details of named persons with responsibility for child protection are displayed for parents and visitors. This could include photographs.</p>			<p>27/03/25 Child Protection Policy has been updated. Flow chart showing named persons is displayed for parents/visitors and includes photographs.</p>	
	<p>Ensure those with responsibility for child protection and safeguarding have a comprehensive understanding of the requirement to have effective plans for children. This includes consideration of additional plans for learning</p>			<p>13/3/25 LLO shared enhanced care plan for care experienced child.</p> <p>30/3/25 Awaiting parent/carer signature</p> <p>1/5/25 Signed by parents</p>	

	where a child is care experienced.				
	Managers and practitioners should make full, consistent and effective use of chronology formats introduced to document significant events.			13/3/25 LLO and Manager discussed the use of chronologies. These will be used to record significant event in a child's life/learning.	
	Managers should ensure that policies and risk assessments are reviewed and updated timeously, and this is clearly documented. Review should be clearly documented with the next review date established and detailed.			27/02/25 All policies are currently being reviewed by the manager. Any changes are to be documented and next review date detailed. 1/5/25 All staff reviewing 2 policies a month	
	Ensure that all visitors are made aware of child protection arrangements and fire evacuation arrangements on signing in on arrival.  Update fire evacuation and risk assessment to ensure they reflect current arrangements, including no involvement with the Parent and Toddler group.			27/03/25 Visitor badges with fire procedures and child protection details are now in use. Provider is updating fire evacuation and risk assessment to reflect current practice. 1/5/25 Completed and in use	

Queens Cross Nursery Ltd. - Improvement plan following inspection – February 2024					
Area for improvement 2 (ES)	Action required & stakeholders involved	Timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG Rating
The manager and practitioners should improve the quality of the learning environments and children's experiences. Children need a wider range of natural materials and everyday objects to explore and investigate. This should support children to develop their curiosity, imagination and problem-solving skills.	<p>Manager and practitioners to create and audit nursery environment with a view to set up engaging learning environments. Send out questions to the families regarding resources and experiences within the setting. (Discussed GoogleForms as well as paper based). This will also be mind mapped with the children to gather pupil voices.</p> <p>Use results of the audit to make adjustments to the environment.</p> <p>Practitioners will provide an ELC environment that promotes curiosity, imaginative and creative play where children experience appropriate levels of challenge.</p>	June 2025	Children will have more opportunities to open-ended and natural resources, resulting in greater levels of challenge. Children will also have more 'real-life' experiences and resources to support their play.		

Queens Cross Nursery Ltd. - Improvement plan following inspection – February 2024					
Area for improvement 3 (ES)	Action required & stakeholders involved	Timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG Rating
The manager and practitioners should improve approaches to planning to ensure that children are supported to build on what they already know. They should ensure they provide a balance of responsive and planned learning experiences for children.	<p>-Manager/practitioners should now use progression pathways to support intended learning experiences.</p> <p>-Manager/practitioners should engage with CLPL looking at effective questioning to extend children's learning responsively.</p>	June 2025	Children will have increased opportunities to build on life long skills and access to a high quality learning provision. Staff will work together to develop a shared understanding of early years pedagogy.		

## Queens Cross Nursery Ltd. - Improvement plan following inspection – February 2025

Area for improvement 4 (ES/CI)	Action required & stakeholders involved	Timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG Rating
Practitioners need to improve their approaches to understand how well children are learning. This will help practitioners to know where children need the right level of help with their learning to ensure they all make the best possible progress.  Ensure a children experience a high-quality play, learning and development opportunities	Staff understand their role in supporting children through meaningful engagement.  Staff demonstrate understanding of child development and how to use play to support children's learning and development  Ensure planning processes are effective to promote children's individual learning  Ensure that observation and assessment of children's individual learning supports and identifies progress,	June 2025	Children will experience a high-quality environment where practitioners know how to support them with their next steps.		

## Queens Cross Nursery Ltd. - Improvement plan following inspection – February 2025

	How good is our care play and learning? 1.1 Nurturing care and support & 1.3 Play and learning				
Area for improvement 5 (CI)	Action required & stakeholders involved	Timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG Rating
Ensure children's personal plans are up-to-date, and parents have been fully involved in this process.	-Manager/practitioners to adapt personal plans to contain all the relevant information. -Manager/practitioners to review every 3 months in partnership with parents/carers.	April 2025	Children will have supported by practitioners who are fully aware of their needs and the needs of their family.	13/3/25 All children have personal plans which are up-to-date. These have been shared with families and signed. Manager has been advised to review these each term. 1/5/25 These have been updated and signed	
Ensure all children have the appropriate	-Manager to ensure all children have a supports	April 2025		13/3/25 LLO provided support on how to	

level of information in their personal plan to meet their needs.  Ensure staff are well informed about the children and use their personal planning information to provide individualised and responsive care relevant to their needs.	strategy sheet within their personal plan folder. -Manager/practitioner to ensure those who require an enhanced care plan should also have this.		Children will receive appropriate levels of care to meet their needs.	complete enhanced care plans. Each child has a support strategies sheet in their folder, these need to be completed where appropriate 1/5/25 Completed	
Provider, manager and staff should ensure mealtimes are a safe, calm and meaningful experience that meets the individual needs of children.	-Manager/practitioners should ensure food is of a safe temperature before serving. -Manager/practitioners should continuously reflect on mealtimes and change as appropriate. -LLO to spend time over mealtimes to suggest how to make this a calm experience for the children.	June 2025	Children are provided food of safe temperatures and are supported in a positive mealtime experience.	27/3/25 LLO observed and provided feedback. Manager/Practitioner to trial for a few weeks. 1/5/25 Improvements made but clearer communication between staff is essential	
To ensure dignity and privacy of children, staff should ensure that children are well supervised and supported in a way that meets their needs with the children being in distress.	-Provider/manager to source ways to ensure children can close bathroom doors when they are in use.	March 2025	Intimate personal care is carried out in a dignified way with my privacy and personal preferences respected.	27/3/25 Closers have been added to the doors to ensure they stay closed when bathrooms are in use. Children were also observed knocking to check if the cubicle was free.	

**Queens Cross Nursery Ltd. - Improvement plan following inspection – February 2025**

Queens Cross Nursery Ltd. - Improvement plan following inspection – February 2025					
How good is our setting? 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities					
Area for improvement 6 (CI)	Action required & stakeholders involved	Timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG Rating
Ensure the comfort and wellbeing of children of the children is met through	-Manager/practitioners to work with the children to open/close the door safely on cooler days.	March 2025	Children's playroom will be of comfortable temperature and will provide warmth after outdoor play.	1/5/25 Children are actively closing the outside door behind them and reminding their peers of this	



having the playroom at a suitable temperature					
Ensure children learn and develop using outdoor spaces through high quality continuous provision and experienced being provided	-Manager/Practitioner to develop learning areas in the outdoor area -These should offer continuous learning experiences and be linked to intended learning outcomes. -These should follow the children's interest	June 2025	Children will have access to high quality learning provision outdoors.		
To ensure children's safety the provider, manager and staff should ensure that all staff are knowledgeable and competent in assessing potential hazards and risks and take appropriate action to keep children safe.	-Manager/practitioner should use a daily risk assessment to ensure children's safety outside. -Children can also be part of this to develop their awareness of hazards.	April 2025	Children will be more aware of potential hazards and gain an understanding of why we risk assess. Children will also develop confidence in this area.	303/3/25 Garden risk assessment is in place. Setting to look into using a child friendly one too.	

**Queens Cross Nursery Ltd. - Improvement plan following inspection – February 2025**

	<b>How good is our leadership? 3.1 Quality Assurance and improvement are led well</b>				
<b>Area for improvement 7 (CI)</b>	<b>Action required &amp; stakeholders involved</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Desired outcomes for children</b>	<b>Evidence and confirmed completion</b>	<b>RAG Rating</b>
Ensure children and families are meaningfully involved and influence changes within the setting	-Seek views of parents/carers/children involved with the setting -Use the results of these to continually improve areas within the setting -Inform parents/carers/children of these on a regular basis.	June 2025	Children will have opportunities to lead developments within their setting, creating an environment relevant to them and their families		
Ensure quality assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement plans lead to high quality care and support.	-Develop QA Calendar -Carry out regular self-evaluation within the setting and document	June 2025	Children will have access to care which is of high quality and relevance to them.		

	these and the changes/progress made				
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Queens Cross Nursery Ltd. - Improvement plan following inspection – February 2025					
	How good is our staff team? 4.3 Staff deployment				
Area for improvement 8 (CI)	Action required & stakeholders involved	Timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG Rating
Ensure staff receive essential breaks to support their wellbeing.	-Practitioners should be taking their break entitlement	End April 2025	Children will be supported by staff who have had wellbeing breaks	1/5/25 All staff are taking their break entitlement	
To ensure children receive high quality care that meets their needs the provider, manager and staff should ensure that staff are deployed effectively.	-Ensure staff have the knowledge to carry out their role -Ensure staff are deployed effectively to meet the individual needs of children throughout the day	End April 2025	Practitioners will be able to provide a safe environment for the children and meet individual needs	1/5/25 Manager is continuously reminding staff where they should be to support children effectively	
To ensure the safety and wellbeing of children the provider, manager and staff should ensure that all staff have appropriate training and skills in core areas of practice.	Staff to complete the following training a)Child Protection b)Paediatric First Aid c)Food Hygiene d)Infection Control	End March 2025		All staff completed these training modules through Azilo.	

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	2024/25 Education Climate Change Report
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/25/144
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Matt Reid
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report aims to update the Education and Children's Services Committee on some of the key events that have taken place within our schools to educate children and young people about Climate Change, Biodiversity and the drive towards Net Zero during school session 2024-25. The report also outlines the work from the Youth Climate Change Group over the school session.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Note the summary of events that took place in schools to educate children and young people about Climate Change, Biodiversity and the drive towards Net Zero in session 2024-25
- 2.2 Note the work of the Youth Climate Change Group; and
- 2.3 Instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to report back on progress through Service Update within one calendar year.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Schools continue to engage positively to further student knowledge across the breadth of the Learning for Sustainability (LfS) agenda. This brings together sustainable development, biodiversity, climate change, outdoor learning and global citizenship with a view to educating our children, young people and communities and empowering them to take action for a better future.
- 3.2 Schools deliver Learning for Sustainability experiences and activities through considered integration of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and Experiences and Outcomes framework. Biodiversity and climate change activities are predominantly provided within the CfE through: Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL), Project Based Learning (PBL), Science, Social Studies, Outdoor Learning, cross-curricular themes, and citizenship and sustainable development.

- 3.3 With the sciences curriculum, students explore topics related to biodiversity and climate change, such as ecosystems, environmental science, and Earth's systems. They learn about the causes and effects of climate change, the importance of biodiversity for ecosystem health, and human impacts on the environment.
- 3.4 Within social studies, students investigate the social, economic, and political dimensions of climate change and biodiversity conservation. They explore issues such as environmental justice, sustainable development, and global citizenship, considering how individuals and societies can address these challenges.
- 3.5 Schools in Aberdeen often utilise outdoor learning experiences to connect students with nature and promote environmental stewardship. Outdoor activities such as field trips, nature walks, and habitat surveys provide opportunities for students to observe biodiversity, learn about local ecosystems, and understand the impacts of climate change firsthand. Schools routinely engage the support of Aberdeen City Council's Countryside Ranger Service to support these education experiences.
- 3.6 Through citizenship education and sustainable development goals, students explore their roles as active citizens in addressing environmental challenges. They learn about sustainable practices, environmental conservation, and the importance of collective action to mitigate climate change and protect biodiversity.
- 3.7 There are currently 48 Aberdeen City Schools actively engaged in the Unicef Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) programme. Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child specifically relates to children and young people having the right to the best health care possible, clean water to drink, healthy food and a clean and safe environment to live in. The RRSA award places a strong emphasis on empowering children and young people to advocate for change and have their voices heard (Article 12). Annually, in August, Unicef promote an 'OutRight' campaign linked to a theme or issue. The focus of this year's OutRight campaign was 'Climate Adaption'.
- 3.8 Increasingly, schools are partnering with Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB), Aberdeen for a Fairer World (AFW), North East Scotland Climate Action Network (NESCAN), and the Energy Transition Zone (ETZ), as well as several other partners, to support their work on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Net Zero.
- 3.9 All schools utilise pupil groups to involve students in environmental awareness, sustainability practices, and community engagement. These groups have a key role in developing environmental responsibility among students and encouraging active involvement in tackling climate change and biodiversity protection at the school level. Participation provides students with the opportunity to learn more about environmental issues, grow leadership skills, empower them with the skills and opportunities to have their voices heard to affect change, carry out practical solutions and become responsible global citizens.

## KEY 2024 - 25 CLIMATE CHANGE HIGHLIGHTS FROM SCHOOLS

- 3.10 Eleven schools in Aberdeen have now been recognised as Eco Schools and awarded Green Flag status by Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB). Central officers are engaged in discussions with KSB around bespoke and tailored supports for Aberdeen City Schools and will actively promote their Climate Ready Classrooms across the primary sector to support a baseline of climate literacy amongst primary-aged pupils.

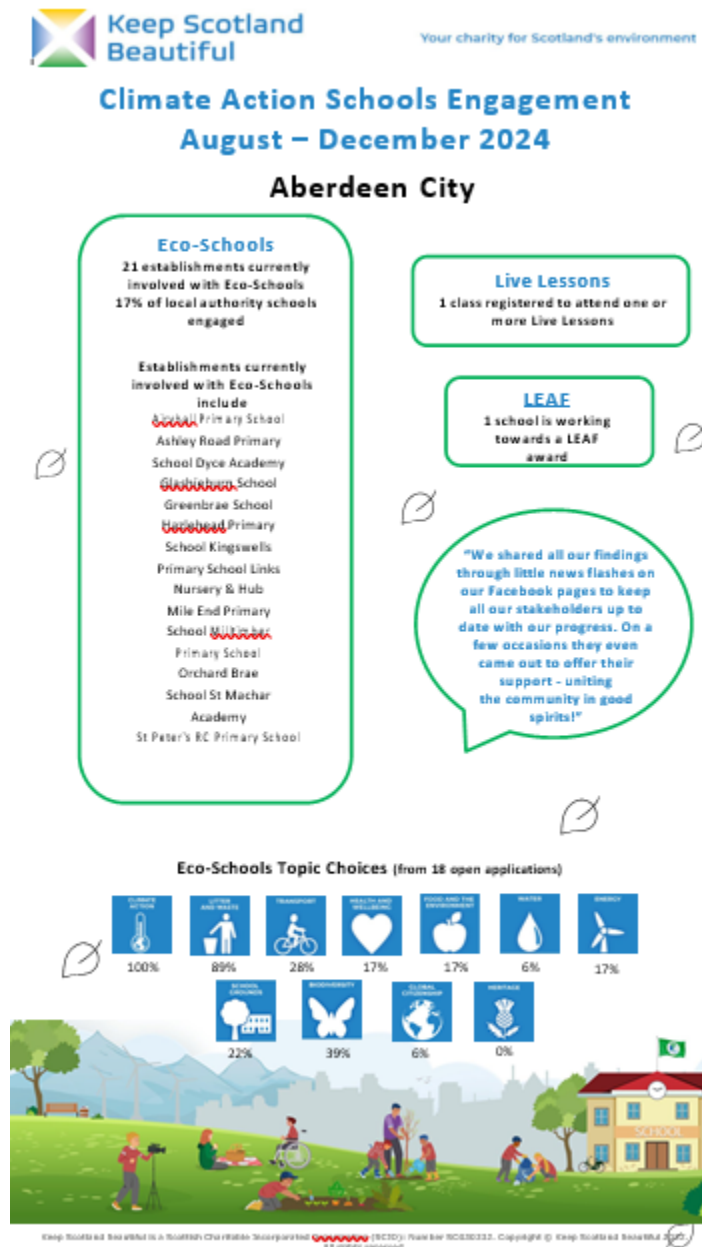


Figure.1: Keep Scotland Beautiful Engagement Infographic

- 3.11 Aberdeen City Council continues to support and promote close partnership working with Aberdeen for a Fairer World (AFW) to support both professional learning for school staff, including continued career long professional learning (CLPL) sessions and also direct engagement with schools, both in an advisory capacity and the delivery of school based activities.

- 3.12 This session, AFW has been working closely with Woodside Primary School, Seaton School, Greyhope School, St Machar Academy and Lochside Academy on a pilot project to support the development of [active and safe travel plans](#).

The pilot has 5 main goals;

- engage children, young people and families in the active travel data for their areas
- connect the young people's ideas with other local contacts and plans; active schools, NESTRANS Regional Travel Strategy
- develop test of change approaches (plan, do, study and act) with communities
- embed sustainable change by scaling up successful approaches
- share knowledge/learning of what has worked and what has not worked.

An [interim report on](#) this project has been published, with a fuller report expected in summer 2025.

- 3.13 AFW continue to support schools with the provision of learning resources, practical sessions and support with curriculum planning. Examples include, within Fashion and Textile classes at St Machar, support around fashion and upcycling, inputs and support at Charleston School and Loirston School around inequality and fair/ethical trade and, at Oldmachar Academy and Broomhill School, introductory activities around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- 3.14 A number of further professional learning opportunities have been delivered by Aberdeen for a Fairer World. These sessions have covered a range of topics ranging from Climate Action, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Children's Rights, Fair Trade, and Fashion. In each session there have been discussions about the intersectionality of ideas and connections between the topic and the Sustainable Development Goals, Children's Rights and social/environmental justice.
- 3.15 In addition, AFW also led a session on Learning for Sustainability (LfS) during Aberdeen City Council organised professional learning inputs. This session highlighted to teachers newly entering the profession their responsibility to embed LfS within their practice and to inspire and motivate learners to address the challenges of learning to live within the environmental limits of our planet and to build a just, equitable and peaceful society.
- 3.16 Building on the past success of the innovative and award winning 'Meadow in a Box' project, planning and preparatory work has been undertaken by central officers and staff teams across City Regeneration and Environment, School Catering, Education and Facilities to develop the 'Salad in a Box' project. This aims to provide opportunities for learning around biodiversity, sustainable food growth, growing seasons and more.

Ten Aberdeen City schools have been identified to participate in this pilot which will provide them with wooden planters (1.4m x 1.4m) built by inmates at Peterhead Prison, soil, salad seeds and bird/pest protection cages to enable

the safe growth of salad vegetables. Catering teams within the respective schools will support the safe preparation of the grown vegetables whereupon children will be able to sample their hard work.

Schools participating in this pilot project include:

- Airyhall Primary
- Middleton Park Primary
- Braehead Primary
- Scotstown Primary
- Hazlehead Primary
- Orchard Brae
- Skene Square Primary
- Sunnybank Primary
- Cults Primary
- Bramble Brae School

- 3.17 Schools continue to drive forward with a range of climate/net zero and broader Learning for Sustainability (LfS) activity. Some further examples of approaches, successes and notable activities taken forward at a school level include:

**Aberdeen Grammar School:** Utilising £5000 of funds made available to schools/associated schools groups (ASGs) across the city as part of the Youth Climate Change Group school fund and a match funded bid to former pupils of the school, Aberdeen Grammar School has recently undertaken works to create an outdoor learning classroom within our school grounds. Work is currently being carried out to erect fencing around a section of underutilised playground. Upon completion of securing this site, our outdoor learning space will include the following:

- Teaching area including seating and overhead pergola (we are working in partnership with ACC Arboriculture who are providing us with timber and bark).
- Large raised beds for cultivating fruit and vegetables.
- A native hedgerow to encourage wildlife to the site.
- A row of fruit trees and bushes.
- Storage for equipment.
- Greenhouse.
- A section for outdoor-sensory play.

The school's young people have been at the heart of the planning and have been involved during each step of the project. Pupils identified a site, drew plans for the fencing and are now planning each section of the new space.

The outdoor learning space will become a hub for curricular delivery including – social and therapeutic horticulture; SQA Personal Development award and SQA Horticulture award.

They have engaged with their local community including ACC Arboriculture, Duthie Park Winter Gardens and local builders and landscapers. As the site

progresses, they will make contact with local businesses to further our partnership working.

The school cite also being fortunate to have the support of parents from our Community Consultation Group who meet across the year to discuss topics relating to our Neurodiverse Community.

The school's work, to date, paves the way for continued improved positive outcomes for the young people within the school and wider community.

- 3.18 **Northfield Academy:** Young people at Northfield Academy have been raising awareness of the impact of litter on their local community and embarked on a series of 'Crew Community Clean Ups', highlighting the importance of responsible waste disposal.



*Figure.2: Northfield Academy: Crew Community Clean Up.*

In addition, within Crew, using a project based learning approach, classes have been exploring the 'driving question' of, 'Can Aberdeen be a Sustainable City?' This 8 week project covered a range of CfE experiences and outcomes from within literacy, technologies, science and social subjects. Activities included:

- Exploration of the Sustainable Development/Global Goals
- Learner led renewable energy research for presentations at an, in-school, "Energy Conference 2024" attended by staff from across the school.
- The creation of a 'Northfield News Production'
- Learners exploring the features of sustainable cities around the world and designing and building their own sustainable cities.
- Outdoor learning opportunities through visits to Bonnymuir Community Garden



- 3.19 **Springhill Community Garden:** Several Aberdeen City Schools have developed close ties with the Springhill Community Garden and visit regularly to support the maintenance of this important community space. In doing so, opportunities are provided for outdoor learning experiences relating to biodiversity, growing seasons and sustainable soil to plate food production.

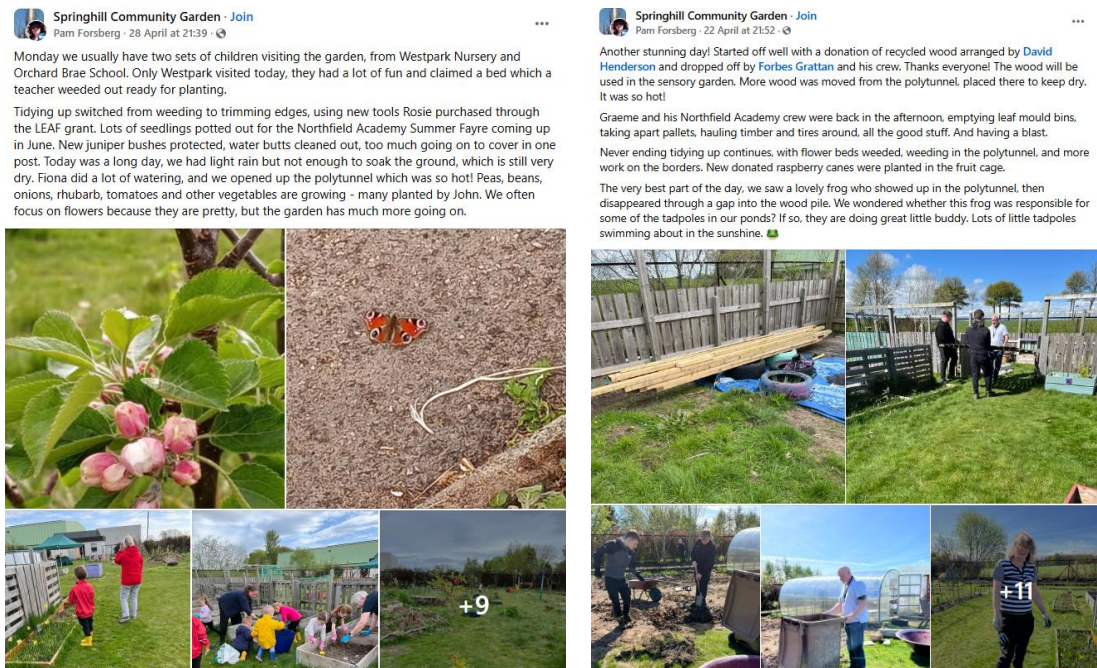


Figure 3: Children, young people and staff from Westpark, Orchard Brae and Northfield Academy attending Springhill Community Garden

- 3.20 **Barista Championships:** These championships were held for a second year with representation provided by Bridge of Don Academy, Northfield Academy and St Machar Academy. This event promotes themes of sustainability, wellbeing and recycling and seeks to empower participants to plan and lead further climate related work across their schools and local communities while also incorporating the promotion of employability skills and future career pathways.
- 3.21 **St Joseph's School RC Primary School:** In recognition of their 10 year commitment to fair and ethical trade, including being the first Scottish school to commit to supporting and linking with communities in India, St Joseph's School RC Primary School were [nominated](#) for, and won, the Scottish Fair Trade 'In the Bag' award.

## In the Bag



cotton farming communities in India.

*Figure 4: Fair Trade 'In the Bag' Award Winner - St Joseph's RC Primary School*

The winners are dedicated to choosing Fair Trade where they can. They've found ways of adapting to challenges in order to continue their Fair Trade stall, and they've been working with Fairtrade school uniform supplier, Koolskools, since 2015!

**St. Joseph's Primary School** in Aberdeen was the first school in the whole area to offer a Fairtrade school uniform choice, and now, 10 years later, they're still choosing Fairtrade and organic school uniforms plus they are working with Koolskools to support schools in

- 3.22 **Glashieburn Primary School:** Glashieburn Primary School's passion for the Learning for Sustainability is demonstrated through their whole school approach that embeds a range of learning opportunities across every age and stage, from nursey to upper primary.

The case study provided (Appendix 1), highlights the creative approaches taken by the school, working closely with a range of partner organisations to foster natural curiosity, develop knowledge and skills and explore the local natural environment through outdoor learning opportunities.

Their commitment to sustainability is recognised through their Green Flag Award (re-awarded 23/05/2024), [LEAF Award](#) and Tree Council '[Beacon Award](#)'.

- 3.23 **Stemovators 'Hydrogen Challenge:** [STEMOVATORS](#) is an organisation across Scotland who focus on sparking to engage with young people to develop their creativity, communication and teamworking skills, plus increasing their awareness and understanding of Hydrogen energy and its role in the transition to Net Zero.

Prior to the final 'challenge' event, free workshops were delivered in schools facilitated and delivered by STEMOVATORS and Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) professionals.

These workshops were specially adapted to include Aberdeen-specific content, informing students of the projects taking place around them and inspiring the next generation of renewable energy engineers, informing them of future opportunities in engineering, environmental sciences and the development of cleaner, greener transport.

Participating Aberdeen City Council schools included:

- Aberdeen Grammar School
- Bridge of Don Academy
- Bucksburn Academy
- Cults Academy

- Hazlehead Academy
- Lochside Academy
- Northfield Academy
- St Machar Academy

The teams that designed the most efficient car were invited to the regional final event to compete against other schools and, in March 2025, 120 young people and teachers gathered at Hydrasun's Hydrogen Skills Academy to put their skills and knowledge to the test to compete for one of the three available prizes. Lochside Academy took home the first place prize, Cults Academy and Bridge of Don Academy taking home the second and third place prizes respectively.



Figure 5: 2025 Hydrogen Challenge Winners

3.24 **Seaton Primary School:** Seaton Primary School currently have a Pupil Participation Group focusing on working towards successful achievement of the ECO Schools Green Flag Award as part of their efforts to raise awareness and understanding around each of their four main target areas:

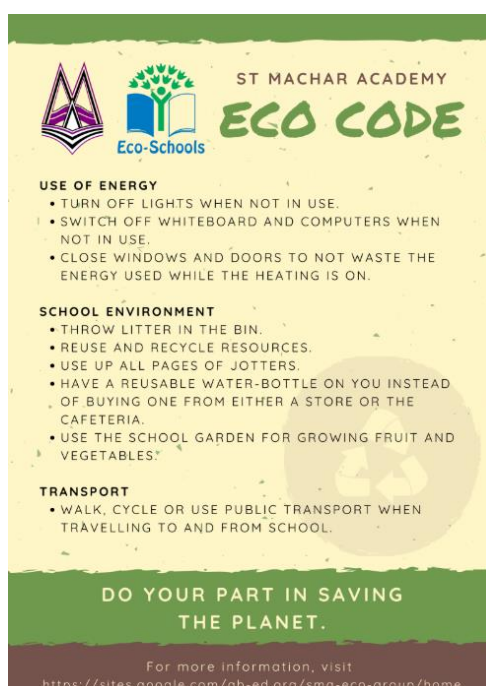
- Climate Change,
- Litter & Waste,
- Biodiversity and,
- Active Travel.

3.25 **Oldmachar Academy:** Partnership involvement and support in Excelerate workshops and resources development showcase the school's dedication to fair trade and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) integration into their curriculum.

3.26 **St Machar Academy:** The Eco Committee at St Machar continues to drive a range of work, projects and activities around climate change, sustainability, biodiversity and social responsibility. The student led creation of their school's



Eco Code is one example of the awareness raising and social responsibility efforts that they have undertaken.



Recently, the Eco Committee designed a pocket garden and entered it into the Keep Scotland Beautiful Pocket Garden Design Competition. Their entry has been chosen as a winning design for 2025.

A space has been allocated for their Pocket Garden in the online digital showcase that will be the national platform for people to see and be inspired by their work and creativity.

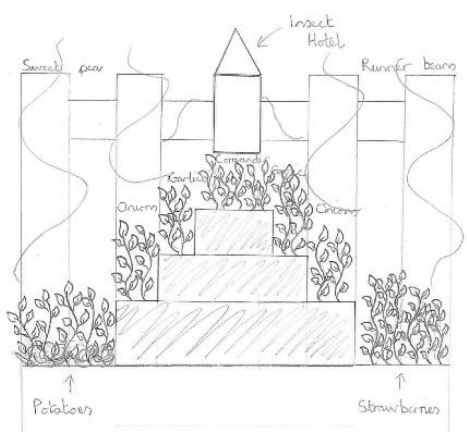


Figure 6: St Machar Academy's award winning 'Pocket Garden'

- 3.27 **Ashley Road Primary:** Focused work on global issues supported the school's successful re-accreditation of Unicef's Gold Rights Respecting Schools Award. In their report, visiting Unicef assessors noted that,

"Community partnerships are well established and make clear connections to children's rights and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Children described themselves as, *"Being a global citizen means we do things for charity, we help the environment and our community."*

- 3.28 **Harlaw Academy:** Learners at Harlaw Academy participated in the Sustrans 2025 '[Big Walk and Wheel](#)' initiative which inspires pupils to make active journeys to school, raising awareness around the impact of transport methods using fossil fuels on pollution and climate change, improving air quality in their neighbourhood and the physical and mental health benefits of active travel.

Cycle Friendly School status and [#andshescycles](#); the school are actively encouraging active and non-polluting methods of travel to and from the school for both staff and pupils. Working in partnership with Sustrans, Harlaw Academy have set up a girls' cycling group as part of Sustrans's [#andshescycles](#) campaign which aims to address the barriers faced by teenage girls and young women in Scotland when cycling. Harlaw Academy have sought to empower and encourage teenage girls to get on bikes by creating safe spaces for them to cycle.

Furthermore, using money awarded through grants, the school have invested in improved cycle parking facilities in school for staff and pupils and purchased helmets, gloves and jackets for cycling. As a direct result of their efforts, in 2025 the school was awarded [Cycle Friendly School](#) status by Cycling Scotland.

- 3.29 **St. Peters RC Primary School:** The Eco group's drive to achieve Eco School Status and Green Flag success was realised with successful accreditation on 20/06/2024.

This year's pupil Eco group has been working on discussing different environmental issues such as air pollution, water pollution and environmental issues within their school. They have also led work to organise an '[Earth Day](#)' in their school, including a range of activities for the whole school to participate in.



Through the Youth Climate Change Group funds made available to schools/associated schools groups, the school were able to purchase equipment and resources to support their activities, specifically with respect to increasing experiential skills development and learning opportunities for learners both outdoors, in their garden, and their classes, linked to biodiversity and plant growth. Additionally, this will support the school in their pursuit for Green Flag status and enable them to sustainably maintain this status in subsequent years.

Purchased items included:

- watering cans,
- a wheelbarrow,
- gloves,
- a potato planning barrel, planting pots,
- a mobile greenhouse,
- a gardener's kit for classes,
- metal planters,
- seed packs,
- gardening wheels (to plant and display flowers),
- hanging caddies and,
- gardening tools.

**3.30 Kittybrewster School:** As part of Kittybrewster School's commitment to biodiversity and meaningful outdoor learning opportunities and experiences, they have centred their attention on the rejuvenation of the school's 'Wild Garden' area and planting containers positioned around the school playgrounds.

Funds made available through the Youth Climate Change Group have provided children with an empowering opportunity to direct and lead improvement. This has enabled them to purchase a small garden shed for the safe and secure storage of gardening supplies and tools, planters and bird houses to encourage wildlife.

The school have provided some further information about this piece of work:

*One of our Primary 7 classes and one Primary 1 class worked together to develop ideas for spending the money. They decided creating a garden would be the best way forward to provide the children with the opportunity to work outside, learn new skills and take responsibility for looking after a shared area. It has been a way to promote pupil voice, giving children the chance to contribute their ideas and see them reflected in the wild garden.*

*Together they focused their ideas for the project and the P7s sourced and ordered all of the equipment and resources needed, (detailed above). The P7s built the tool shed, the 2 planter beds and positioned them. We also sought the help of a local Men's Shed group to help fill the beds with soil. The P7s planted potatoes in one of the planters and we have a parent helper keen to come in*

*and run a planting workshop with the P7s, so they can teach the P1s to plant sunflowers.*

*We also sourced 5 small apple trees and after completing a small grounds survey, decided upon the best locations for them to grow. Again, we were supported in the planting of these trees by the Men's Shed group. Next year we intend to provide each of the Buddy pairings with a section of planter/garden for them to cultivate and care for. We will also be looking at improving the smaller planters around the school grounds.*

*The improved garden has provided a more welcoming and well-resourced space for outdoor learning. Other classes have shown interest and begun using the space creating a sense of pride and ownership across the school. This has provided the children with the opportunity to work outside, learn new skills and take responsibility for looking after a shared area. It has been a way to promote pupil voice, giving children the chance to contribute their ideas and see them reflected in the wild garden.*

*For the wider school, the improved garden has provided a more welcoming and well-resourced space for outdoor learning. Other classes have shown interest and begun using the space creating a sense of pride and ownership across the school.*

*We bought:*

- *Small garden tool shed*
- *2 large wooden planters*
- *Water butt*
- *Small Composter*
- *Child-sized spades/forks*
- *Hand trowels/forks*
- *Watering cans*
- *850ltr Topsoil*

- 3.31 **Cults ASG:** The Cults associated schools group (ASG) have adopted an ASG approach to the spend of the funds allocated through the Youth Climate Change Group and commissioned the services of [Alba Explorers](#), a respected organisation who provide inputs, training and support linked to outdoor education and environmental education.

Examples of the projects that will be undertaken in Cults ASG schools include:

- Building planters for the cultivation of a range of food and plants,
- Outdoor learning opportunities centring around the exploration of the local area,
- Making bird boxes
- Staff provided with fire safety training to enable the sustainable delivery of future activities for children in the school and,

- The creation of a wildlife garden and area that can be used to promote and learn about biodiversity.

These projects enable children and young people to develop their understanding of biodiversity, how to grow and plant food, sustainability and supports skills development. Using the Skills Development Scotland framework, they have been able to identify core skills relevant to this work. These include team work, understanding emotions and learner leadership.

In addition, it is expected that this work will:

- **Increase** the amount of quality time spent learning outdoors for all pupils
- **Develop** learner understanding and provide skills enhancement in outdoor and environmental education
- **Support** appreciation and ownership of school grounds
- **Increase** pupil health and wellbeing
- **Enhance** the ability of staff members to deliver meaningful outdoor learning experiences

- 3.32 **Lochside ASG:** Lochside ASG have taken determined a join project focussing on two key themes: reducing litter and improving recycling practices. Pupils will be supported to explore the link between waste, recycling, and the global climate crisis, deepening their understanding of how local actions contribute to wider environmental outcomes.

The case study provided (Appendix 2), details the collaborative project that will increase knowledge, give children and young people a sense of agency and encourage a culture of care and active citizenship, fostering pride in their local area and school communities.

## UPDATE FROM THE YOUTH CLIMATE CHANGE GROUP

- 3.33 In order to ensure the continuity of the Youth Climate Change Group, membership of the group remained unchanged for academic session 2024/25. Saanvi Kumar (S6) of Cults Academy has remained as the group's president, supported by three vice-presidents: Finlay Robinson (S5, Dyce Academy), Yujin An (S5, Cults Academy), and Vinuth Wijemanne (S5, Cults Academy). The group have a 4-6 week meeting schedule with meetings chaired by Saanvi Kumar.

However, despite previous efforts to give the group greater structure, the group has agreed that they would benefit from greater clarity of purpose, structure and increased leadership responsibilities within the group for future years. Accordingly, a Terms of Reference (ToR) is being drafted and agreed with the group for academic session 25-26. In addition, clear agenda and minute templates have been created and membership roles such as 'Secretary', 'Communications Officer' and 'Treasurer' have been identified and agreed for next year.



- 3.34 This session, working alongside central officers, schools were provided with information on how to access funds to promote biodiversity, sustainability, and outdoor learning within their respective localities.

Details regarding examples of the spend to date are illustrated earlier within this report and further information relating to specific school projects will be made available to ward members on request.

- 3.35 In addition, the Youth Climate Change group, working closely alongside ETZ Ltd Community Lead, Carole Monnier, worked closely to co-design an exciting and creative project focused on telling the story of the energy transition in Aberdeen – past, present and future - through the eyes of young people.

Invitations were circulated to schools by the group, with participants invited to attend a series of two workshop events hosted at the W-ZERO Wind Campus in Altens. These events, attended by 13 secondary aged young people, featured Net Zero business sector speakers who talked to the group about the current and evolving nature of the renewable energy industry and discussed with them industry opportunities, both current and emerging. In addition, participants worked together, alongside a commissioned artist, to explore and create a series of artworks, intended to tell the story of energy transition. The final artwork created as a result of the workshops will be displayed in the first instance on Union Street through Our Union Street's "Fill the Space" programme and will then move on to a second more permanent destination, yet to be determined.

To date, early storyboard concepts and animation designs, co-created by young people and the commissioned artist, have been developed and shared with the young people who participated. Preparatory work is currently ongoing in preparation for future exhibition with Our Union Street (OUS).



Figure 7: Event invitation

- 3.36 The group has represented the voice of the young people of Aberdeen at national forums and events. These have included the national Education Scotland Learning for Sustainability group who were keen to hear about the Youth Climate Change Group.
- 3.37 The group continues to foster established relationships with BP, NESCAN (Northeast Climate Action Network), ETZ (Energy Transition Zone), and AFW (Aberdeen for a Fairer World).
- 3.38 The Youth Climate Change group contacted all Primary and Secondary school Headteachers to introduce themselves and gain an insight into the climate change initiatives taking place in schools. They also wanted to extend and offer support and continue to offer to collaborate with any scheduled activities.
- 3.39 The group has now also made direct links with every school's Eco/Climate Change group to expand the network and offer to support their future plans and initiatives. There was also the opportunity for schools to inform the group about any energy saving initiatives or environmentally conscious practices that they have already implemented. A Google Classroom has now been created for this purpose but further promotion is required to ensure that it is more widely utilised/accessed.

- 3.40 The group are continuing to work alongside Central Officers on the ABZ Pipeline project, which supports the city of Aberdeen building its future energy workforce.

## **FUTURE PLANS**

- 3.41 Education, and other council clusters, will continue to support and promote the Youth Climate Change group. This will include supporting the continued collaboration on projects with external organisations. Opportunities have been identified to support the creation and dissemination of school-based climate messages in alignment with Council messaging as part of the Net Zero ambition and opportunities to engage with central officers about the creation of the new Hazlehead Academy school building.
- 3.42 With the membership of the Youth Climate Change Group certain to change next year as the President moves on to further education, considerations are underway as to how to increase the membership for next year how best to recruit Saanvi Kumar's successor. There is a clear need to increase the representation within the group to include a broader range of schools, views, communities and experiences. Central officers will work closely with the group to develop information to be disseminated by schools to promote the group and increase representation. A robust application and interview process will be used to identify and appoint Saanvi's successor.
- 3.43 Many employer-led school experiences are one-off activities with limited follow-up or measurable impact on learners. In partnership with the City Development and Regeneration Cluster, Education is launching ABZ Pipeline, which aims to map and create broad pathways into the renewables sector. The ABZ Pipeline project will create a programme of curriculum linked opportunities with employers to establish a targeted pipeline of activities across the BGE and senior phase.
- 3.44 Aberdeen for a Fairer World have developed a clear plan to continue to support schools in Aberdeen with activities related to climate change, biodiversity, and net zero.
- 3.45 Pupils in our schools will get the chance to work with local authority officers, ETZ, and other employers to review potential projects. This initiative aims to promote cooperation and find ways for meaningful action in our communities.
- 3.46 Along with project development, the organisation plans to use existing plans to identify skills and employment opportunities that match the initiatives, helping young people to include them in their career planning strategies. This holistic approach ensures that educational activities are connected to real-world opportunities. After the in-school activities, there will be a thorough assessment of the skills gained and the impact created, allowing changes and enhancements for future engagements.
- 3.47 To record progress and share good practices, AFW aim to create a complete list of school activities carried out during [Climate Week Northeast 25 \(CWNE\)](#), to be available in the summer term.

- 3.48 Engagement opportunities go beyond the classroom, with a focus on improving wider achievement and volunteering opportunities, as well as supporting National Qualifications (NQs) that are related to the outlined plans. There are aims to display the excellent work of participating schools during Climate Week NE and beyond, acknowledging and showcasing the impressive efforts and achievements of young people.
- 3.49 Participation in events such as film screenings, workshops, and school-based activities like Barista events and Fair-Trade initiatives, ensures ongoing involvement and motivation for further action within the school community. Through these focused efforts, AFW is dedicated to enabling schools in Aberdeen to actively participate in climate change reduction, biodiversity conservation, and the achievement of net zero goals.

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

- 4.1 Currently there are no financial implications for this report.

Centrally managed education funds are tracked and monitored through existing school cost centres and cost codes. This enables accurate tracking of any spends/underspends and, currently, no other council funds are directly accessed/spent by education establishments. This, combined with reports on spend, as in the case of monies made available to schools this session, enables accurate information to be obtained against strategic outcomes at both a Council and school level. Information pertaining to this can be made available to the Climate Change/Net Zero Oversight group. A central Education officer is a member of the Council's Oversight Group and information relating to spend will be shared with this group as a matter of business to further monitor activity and spend against the strategic outcomes at an organisational level.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications from this report. However, the work and activities contained in this report contribute favourably to the progress that the local authority is making towards its climate change, Net Zero, and biodiversity commitments.

#### **7. RISK**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level</b>	<b>*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)</b>  <b>*taking into account controls/control actions</b>	<b>*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?</b>
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Risk of not planning	Working in collaboration with young people and	L	Yes

	effectively for Net Zero	enabling them to be heard in decisions which will impact them helps reduce the risk in this area.		
<b>Compliance</b>	Risk in not engaging young people in strategic decision making	Continuation of the monthly Pupil Group will enable us to hear directly from young people and give them a direct opportunity to shape our plans	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Risk of attendance at the group impacting negatively on pupil attendance at lessons	Timings will be agreed with the young people and their school to ensure that pupils face no detriment to their education.	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	No
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk of not achieving Net Zero	The establishment of this Pupil Group will help us better realise our plans	M	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Risk of not achieving Net Zero	The establishment of this Pupil Group will help us better realise our plans	M	Yes

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</u></b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>  <u><a href="#">Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</a></u>	<p><b><u>Example:</u></b> The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners to deliver a just transition to net zero and plan to make Aberdeen a net-zero city by no later than 2037, and earlier if that is possible.</li> <li>• As we strive to achieve Net-Zero, we need to work with partners to ensure a Just Transition which is fair, both economically and socially, for the citizens of Aberdeen. The climate emergency that we face is not in dispute, and our partnership seek to work with Government, partners, the people of Aberdeen and the private sector to deliver a city that is fit for future generations.</li> </ul>
<u><a href="#">Local Outcome Improvement Plan</a></u>	

Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 13 – Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate. To meet the target of Net Zero Emissions by 2045 there is a need for rapid and far-reaching change to reach this target. Continuing to support the climate change and biodiversity activities in our schools will support our young people being educated in this key area and ready to meet the challenges of the ongoing climate emergency.
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	<b>The National Improvement Framework</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education Authorities have a responsibility to ensure that the quality of school education, which they provide in the schools they manage, improves and do so with the aim of meeting the strategic priorities outlined in the National Improvement Framework.</li> </ul>

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Shona Milne, Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning on <date>.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	Not required

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## 11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Case Study: Glashieburn Primary School

Appendix 2 – Case Study: Lochside ASG

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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## Appendix 1

### Climate Change/Net Zero/Sustainability

#### Case Study



**School name:** Glashieburn Primary School

**Year(s)/Stage(s):** Whole School

**Brief description of project(s)/piece(s) of work:**

At Glashieburn we are passionate about the environment and our place within it. Nature and being outdoors is interlaced through our learning in all ages and stages, from nursery to P7. We have designated outdoor learning teachers who make sure that all children get the opportunity to get outside, not just in our school grounds but also to our local forest, moors and ponds. We have been awarded Green Flags for Eco Schools as well as taking part in the LEAF (Learning through and about Forest) Awards through Keep Scotland Beautiful. Last year we also received the Tree Council, Beacon School award for planting trees in our school grounds and developing a specific outdoor classroom area.

Here are just a few of the amazing projects going on here at Glashieburn:

As Little Leaders in Global Goals, the P1 children made a lesson to teach the whole school about Global Goals and link them to their learning in their classrooms.

P1 and P2 classes also received a range of books from the Bon Accord Lions Club about climate change and sustainability. This led the P1 classes to learn about Greta Thunberg, thinking about how they would like to make the world a better place. They created their own wind turbines, which they think are Aberdeen's most lovely landmark and they became fascinated by the life of Eugenie Clark, in the book 'The Shark Lady'.

With the outdoor learning teacher, all classes celebrated Earth Day through a range of activities, pledging their support for Planet Earth, talking about how if we all make little changes, big changes can happen. We have all taken part in litter picks around the school grounds as well as planting wildflower seeds and creating a garden around our outdoor classroom to bring in pollinators. This term the early years will be learning about bees and butterflies, observing them in their own environment and the importance of our tiny friends.

Seasonal learning happens through all ages and stages but particularly in the early years where the nursery children learn about the world around them and recognising the seasons changing and harnessing their natural curiosity for the world



around them. From planting flowers and vegetables through the Royal Northern Countryside Initiative in Spring, to stopping and looking at how trees blossom and shade us in Summer to seeing them change colour in Autumn, learning about our hibernating friends and making hedgehog homes, to making bird feeders and fat balls in Winter. Their love of the natural world is enhanced and developed, the hope for the future.

Back within the school, our 'May the Force Be With You' topic saw the whole school become a hub of sustainable learning from the first level focusing on forces from the (through learning about our bird friends and how to take care of them over winter and taking part in the Big Schools Birdwatch), to pushing and pulling and creating their own source of electricity using circuits.



Into the Upper Stages, each class had the opportunity to learn and take part in a range of exciting activities based on four specific areas; batteries, floating wind turbines, solar energy and wind energy. The children created their own batteries and experimented with how these could be charged in different ways. Car batteries were also investigated, and sustainable/unsustainable resources discussed. Looking to the North Sea for inspiration the classes found out the importance of offshore wind platforms, how and why they worked so well and the differences between on land turbines and floating platforms. They also took their learning outdoors to enhance this further with making their own turbines. With solar energy, links were made with 'Mackies', who are at the forefront of sustainable energy in Scotland. The classes made their own solar energy using multimetres to generate small amounts power to light a bulb. They also experimented with the difference of doing this indoors and outdoors. Learning about wind turbines also encouraged children to think about the mechanics of how they work and exactly why they are better for the environment.



## Climate Change/Net Zero/Sustainability

**School Name:** Lochside ASG

**Year(s)/Stage(s):** Whole-school pupil leadership opportunity involving all 7 schools.

**Brief description of project(s)/piece(s) of work:**

### **Lochside ASG Youth Climate Project: Building Responsibility and Respect Through Recycling and Litter Reduction**

The project will focus on two key themes: reducing litter and improving recycling practices. Pupils will be supported to explore the link between waste, recycling, and the global climate crisis, deepening their understanding of how local actions contribute to wider environmental outcomes. By engaging in real-world, hands-on activities such as litter picks and recycling audits, children and young people will develop not only knowledge, but also a sense of agency and responsibility for the spaces they live and learn in.

The full £13,636 funding for the project will be used to purchase new recycling infrastructure, including indoor paper and plastic bins tailored for school use, as well as litter picking equipment suitable for both school grounds and public spaces in the surrounding communities. Each of the seven schools in the ASG will receive resources, enabling them to implement meaningful and lasting improvements to their waste management practices. These investments will also support ongoing pupil-led campaigns aimed at reducing single-use plastics and promoting a 'reduce,

**Please outline outcomes for learners from aforementioned activity/activities/project(s):**

This initiative will support children and young people in Torry, Kincorth and Cove to become more respectful of their environment and each other. It encourages a culture of care and active citizenship, fostering pride in their local area and school communities. As they see the tangible impact of their actions — cleaner playgrounds, reduced waste, and more visible recycling options — pupils will gain confidence in their ability to influence change.

Through this climate project, Lochside ASG is not only addressing immediate environmental concerns but also equipping the next generation with the values, knowledge and leadership skills needed for a more sustainable future. It reflects a commitment to education that is both inclusive and forward-looking, giving young people the tools and motivation to make a difference now and in the years ahead.

**Please provide any links to related social media/website posts below.**

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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Free School Meals Annual Update
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/25/092
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Stephen Booth and Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Andy Campbell
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents the annual update on Free School Meals (FSM).

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the progress in Free School Meal provision and actions to continue increasing uptakes;
- 2.2 Notes the Scottish Government's decision to stop data collection via the annual Healthy Living Survey, and the move to collecting data on school meal uptakes and free school meals registrations via the Local Financial Return; and
- 2.3 Notes the successful implementation of the Pre-order app in Secondary Schools and the positive impact it has had on both customer numbers and revenue.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The trend data for primary and secondary schools FSM registrations is available in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 On 03 February 2025, the Scottish Government's Learning Directorate wrote to all Scottish Local Authority Directors of Education to consult on their proposal to replace the annual Healthy Living Survey as the main source for school meal uptake statistics, with data from the [Local Financial Return](#) (LFR).
- 3.3 On 12 February 2025, the Scottish Government's Learning Directorate again wrote to all Scottish Local Authority Directors of Education, to advise them of the outcome of that consultation, this being that after considering the responses to the consultation and their assessment of their own use of school meal uptake statistics, they had decided to move to producing statistics based on data from the LFR.

- 3.4 The result of this is that the Healthy Living Survey was not undertaken in February 2025, meaning that no updates on a number of the metrics which historically form part of this report are able to be provided in this annual update report.
- 3.5 Data from the Pupil Census and Supplementary Statistics was, however, published on 25 March 2025. This data, as well as internal service data has been used to provide some statistical updates for Committee's information.
- 3.6 The trend data shows that universal entitlement to free school meals for those in Primary 1 – 5 had triggered a sharp rise in the number of primary children registered. There has been a slight dip in the percentage of eligible primary children (from 77.1% in 2023/24 to 76.7% in 2024/25), which is due to changes in the primary demographic across primary 6 and 7.
- 3.7 Registrations for primary pupils continues to be above the national average, which is now a four year trend. This suggests that our arrangements to encourage registrations continue to be successful.
- 3.8 Registrations are likely to increase further over the next year as children in P6 and P7 in receipt of the Scottish Child Payment (SCP) now qualify for free school meals. Eligibility for this cohort commenced from February 2025, however, because no data sharing agreement was in place between Local Authorities and Social Security Scotland, auto enrolment was not possible. A change to our application process for free school meals was implemented in April 2025, with parents and carers asked to indicate SCP eligibility, whereafter a verification process is undertaken. Once eligibility has been confirmed, free school meals eligibility is applied to the pupil's record in Seemis. The data from registrations for this cohort will be included in future years reports.
- 3.9 Because no Healthy Living Survey was undertaken in February 2025, it is not possible to provide data on either Primary or Secondary pupils taking lunches, either free or paid for on survey day, as has historically been reported in this annual update report. However, for Committee's assurance, internal data displayed in Table 1 below shows that the number of Primary School Meals served per financial year continues to increase, with an additional 65162 meals served in 2024/25 as compared to 2023/24.

Year	Primary School Meals Served
2022-23	1,526,088
2023-24	2,015,903
2024-25	2,081,065

*Table 1*

Table 2 below provides a further breakdown of the meals served per quarter, as reported as part of the Performance Report to Communities, Housing & Public Protection Committee on 27 May 2025.

Period	2023-24	2024-25	Difference
Q1	576576	588741	12165
Q2	314384	338994	24610
Q3	523174	536217	13043
Q4	601769	617113	15344
Total	2015903	2081065	65162

Table 2

- 3.10 After a 5 year rising trend in the number of young people of secondary school age registered for free school meals, we have seen a slight dip in the percentage of eligible secondary children (from 18.2% in 2023/24 to 15.5% in 2024/25). 1735 secondary pupils are now registered for free school meals, which is the second highest number of pupils registered in the last 5 years. The dip in registrations is consistent with the general picture of improvements in various poverty indicators. Table 3 below shows the reduction in the percentage of Children Under 16 living in relative poverty In Aberdeen City, as well as the reduction in the percentage nationally.

	Percentage of children 2020	Percentage of children 2021	Percentage of children 2022	Percentage of children 2023	Percentage of children 2024	Year-on-year percentage change
Aberdeen City	15.9%	13.9%	13.5%	14.5%	12.3%	-2.2%
Scotland	19.5%	16.8%	16.9%	17.8%	16.3%	-1.5%

Table 3

(Source: [Children in low income families: local area statistics 2014 to 2024 - GOV.UK](#))

### Changes made over the last year to encourage increasing meal uptakes

- 3.11 The Scottish Government announced the [School Meal Debt Fund 2024/25](#) on 16 May 2024. Aberdeen City Council made a successful application to the fund, being awarded £411,977.90 in additional grant funding to address debt for financial year 2023/24 up to and including 31 March 2024, and also debt which had been previously written off by the Council in financial years 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23.
- 3.12 In March 2025, the Catering team undertook an exercise on our ParentPay cashless catering system, to credit the accounts which had been in debt on 31 March 2024. A total of 700 accounts were cleared of debt, with the total value of debt cleared being £21,882.17.
- 3.13 Free School Meals and School Clothing Grant applications have been merged into one application. This allows parents to quickly determine if they will be eligible based on initial questions. Those identified to be eligible and not claiming their entitlements are contacted to encourage registration.

- 3.14 We continue to allow parents to be auto-awarded Free School Meals/School Clothing Grants through Housing Benefit/Council Tax Reduction claims unless they opt out. Each school is provided with a list of pupils who the local authority believes are automatically entitled to free school meals. Initially, these families are not auto-awarded the benefit as we require them to apply and provide information about their bank, so that School Clothing Grant payments can be made. Many families in poverty regularly change between banks and we need to be sure that their account details are valid so that any payment can be accessed by the family.
- 3.15 From 1st June 2024, any family who is on the auto-award list, but has not applied, has been auto-awarded Free School meals only. A communication is sent to the family notifying them of the auto-award. This includes details of any entitlement to School Clothing Grant with an invitation to apply where necessary. The data will also be used to identify those families who qualify for school meal vouchers during holiday periods.
- 3.16 It has long been acknowledged that there are particular challenges around uptakes of school meals in our Secondary Schools. At its meeting on 02 July 2024, this Committee instructed the Chief Officer, Corporate Landlord to progress the implementation of the school meals pre-order app for all Secondary Schools in the city, with the service seeing this as an initiative which might help to combat these challenges. The app was implemented on a phased approach with schools going live as follows:
- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| 11 September 2024 | Cults Academy<br>Northfield Academy<br>Oldmachar Academy     |
| 16 September 2024 | Dyce Academy<br>Lochside Academy<br>St Machar Academy        |
| 24 September 2024 | Bridge of Don Academy<br>Harlaw Academy<br>Hazlehead Academy |
| 30 September 2024 | Aberdeen Grammar School<br>Bucksburn Academy                 |
- 3.17 Committee also instructed the Chief Officer, Corporate Landlord to report on the impact of the pre-order app. The app has been an immediate success. Between September 2024 and April 2025, there has been an average monthly increase of 10,037 pupil customer transactions across the Secondary School estate which has resulted in an average monthly increase of £22,759 in revenue (which includes the value of free school meals customer transactions). Data can be seen in **Appendix 2**.
- 3.18 Scottish Government have extended FSM eligibility for P6/7 young people who are eligible for the Scottish Child Payment (SCP) from February 2025. Because

no data sharing agreement between Social Security Scotland and Local Authorities was in place at the time of the extension, an additional interim application and verification process was required to be developed and implemented which delayed the go live date for eligible Aberdeen City pupils to 14 April 2025.

- 3.19 The 'Social Security Information-sharing (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2025' were unanimously approved by Scottish Parliament on Wednesday 30 April 2025. The legal framework came into effect on 19 May 2025. The regulations allow the sharing of data between Social Security Scotland and all 32 local authorities on families eligible for the Scottish Child Payment. This will enable the incorporation of data into exercises to identify pupils who may be eligible for free school meals, allowing auto-enrolment and negating the need for the aforementioned interim application and verification process, beyond the date that the legal framework came into effect.
- 3.20 With an already high pupil roll at Cults Academy, and in anticipation that the roll will increase further in the years ahead, an expansion and renovation of a satellite snack bar in the school has been undertaken, utilising developer obligations funding. This has given the pupils at Cults additional physical space for dining, with an optimised layout which improves customer flow and accessibility in a separate space from the main school dining hall, which has resulted in reduced queuing times, faster service and a more pleasant customer experience overall.

#### **Further changes planned to continue encouraging increasing meal uptakes**

- 3.21 On 11 March 2025, Scottish Government wrote to all Scottish Local Authority Chief Executives and Directors of Education, inviting applications to participate in the test of change phase for the school meal expansion programme for families in receipt of the Scottish Child Payment in Secondary 1 to Secondary 3. The test of change will run for one school year, starting in August 2025 and running until July 2026 in eight local authorities representing a variety of geographical areas. Aberdeen City Council have responded to Scottish Government to advise that we wish to be considered for participation in the test of change. We currently await a response from Scottish Government.
- 3.22 A business case with a recommended option for grounds Improvements at St Machar Academy was approved by Finance and Resources Committee on 08 May 2024. Included in the grounds improvements is the installation of a new external food pod and covered dining area. Works are anticipated to complete by August 2025, giving the pupils of St Machar Academy an additional outlet for purchasing their school meals from.
- 3.23 A business case with a recommended option for suitability improvements at Harlaw Academy was also approved by Finance and Resources Committee on 08 May 2024, which will see Harlaw Academy having an extension built. The extension will include space for the kitchen and dining facilities to be relocated from their current location as well as classroom alterations, a rooftop multi-use games area and an outdoor covered space which will include an additional

external point of sale for pupils to purchase their school meals from. The new facilities will offer significant improvements to the dining experience for the pupils at Harlaw and help to address school meal uptake challenges which are apparent at the city-centre located secondary school. The project will commence immediately after the end of the current school session and completion is anticipated in time for the new school session in August 2026.

- 3.24 A full refurbishment of the Bridge of Don Academy kitchen through the (Capital) Condition & Suitability programme was scheduled for summer 2025. Initial quotations received indicated higher than anticipated mechanical and electrical costs. These costs have required to be reviewed, meaning the tendering process could not be completed in time to award the works for the 2025 summer holiday period. An updated business case is being prepared, and the works rescheduled to span the summer holiday period in 2026.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. School catering continues to operate within existing budgets. Improvements are being funded from a combination of sources, including the General Fund Capital Programme, Scottish Government grants, Developer Obligations, and external funding secured by the schools.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

#### 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

#### 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	n/a	n/a	L	Yes
Compliance	n/a	n/a	L	Yes
Operational	There is a risk that families will experience food poverty	We will continue to monitor effectiveness of systems and processes to maximise registrations and uptake of free school meals; improved debt management and debt eradication.	L	Yes



<b>Financial</b>	There is a risk of reduced income due to fewer school meals being paid for	Improved debt management. Scottish Government Grant funding and monitoring of impact on budgets	L	Yes
<b>Reputational</b>	n/a	n/a	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	n/a	n/a	L	Yes

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>Council Delivery Plan 2024</u></b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>  <u><a href="#">Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</a></u>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement:-</p> <p>As a Council, it is a key priority that we invest in our children's futures, to ensure that they achieve positive destinations and are given the best opportunities in life</p> <p>Caring for young people - Review the cost of the school day, to make sure no child is missing out on opportunities because of their financial situation</p>
<b><u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026</u></b>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 1 – 20% reduction in the percentage of people who report they have been worried they would not have enough food to eat and/or not be able to heat their home by 2026.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of all Children & Young People Stretch Outcomes 5. By meeting the health and emotional wellbeing needs of our care experienced children and young people they will have the same levels of attainment in education and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with the Chief Officer on 19 May 2025.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	n/a

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

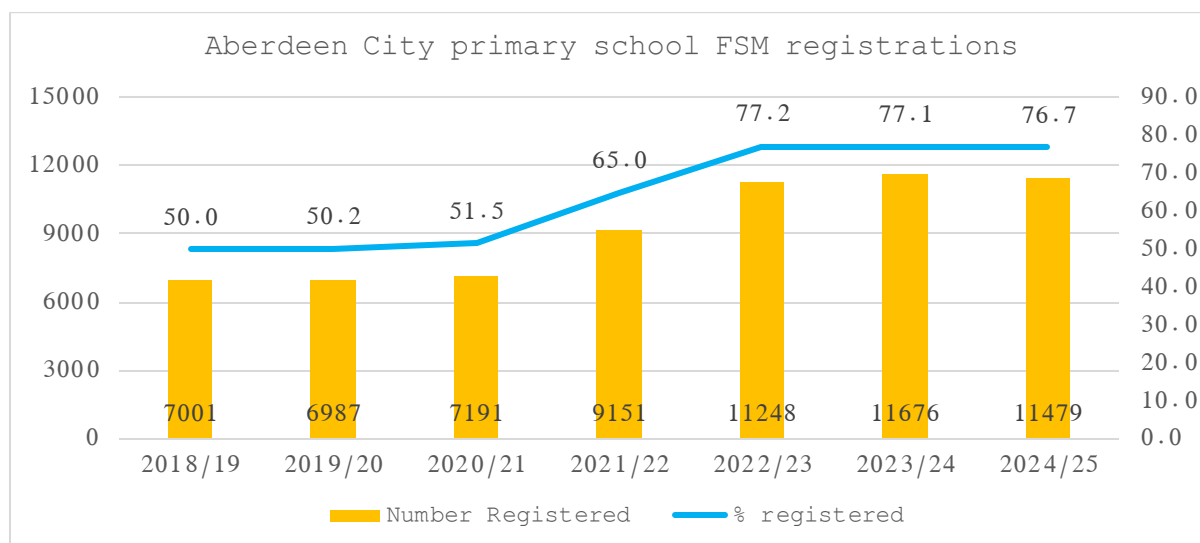
- 10.1 [Free School Meals Annual Update CUS/23/172](#)
- 10.2 [Free School Meals Annual Update F&C/24/180](#)

## 11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Free School Meal Registration data
- 11.2 Appendix 2 – Secondary School Pre-order App data

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

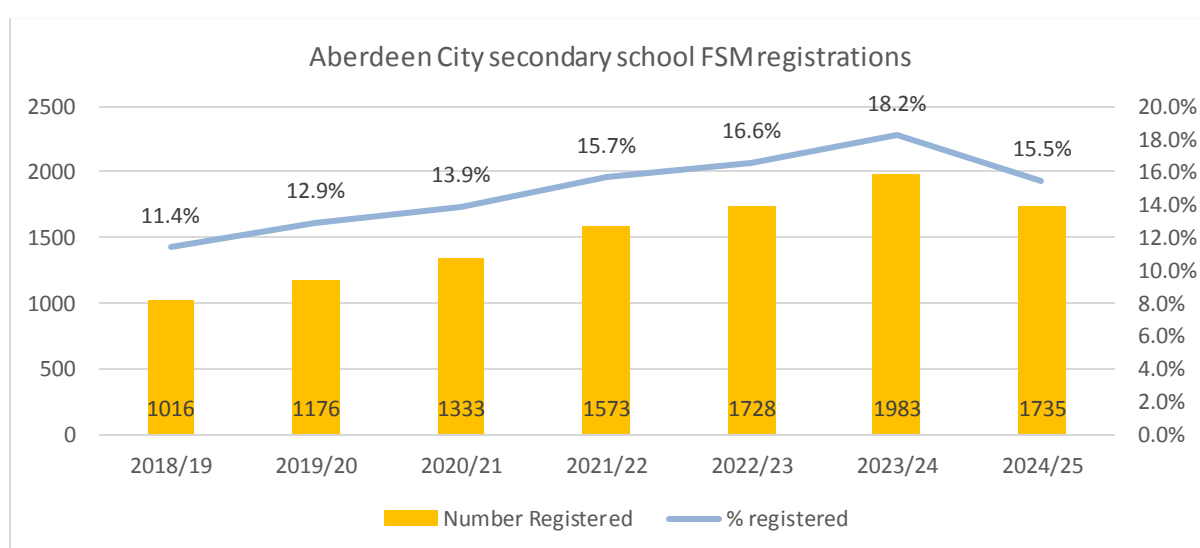
<b>Name</b>	Andy Campbell
<b>Title</b>	Facilities & Transportation Manager
<b>Email Address</b>	<a href="mailto:AnCampbell@aberdeencity.gov.uk">AnCampbell@aberdeencity.gov.uk</a>



The change in numbers of pupils registered at Primary phase in 2024 is consistent with a small reduction in the school roll in Primary ( -1.1%), a marginal shift in the proportion of the school roll which in P6 and 7 stages ( and therefore not automatically covered by Universal Entitlement), alongside a reduction in the proportion of pupils in these two stages who meet the criteria for Low Income Related Entitlement.

The trend and pattern in the number and proportion of Primary School pupils registered for FSM has been stable since 2022/23 (when Universal Entitlement was extended to Primary 5) but with a year-on-year fall in the % of eligible, and FSM registered P6/7 pupils from 20.6% in 2023/24 ( 899 pupils) to 18.2% ( 774) in 2024/25.

For all local authorities, the % of Primary School pupils eligible and registered for FSM was 76.3% in 2024/25 and 76.3% in 2023/24 with the % of P6/7 pupils eligible through Low Income Entitlement being stable at 21.2% ( 21.1% in 2023/24).



In Secondary, the change is largely, but not exclusively, driven by a fall in the numbers of pupils who met the criteria for FSM eligibility through Low Income Related

Entitlement. Increases in the proportion of pupils at S4,5 and 6, where active FSM registration is generally lower than for earlier phases, is also an influencing factor in this percentage reduction.

In combination with the increase in secondary school rolls, this has had the effect of lowering the percentage of FSM registrations. Registration levels are now reverting to those that were last recorded prior to the full impacts of the Cost of Living crisis being experienced in the City.

National FSM % registration for secondary pupils in 2024/25 was stable at a figure of 18.2%, having been 18.3% in 2023/24.

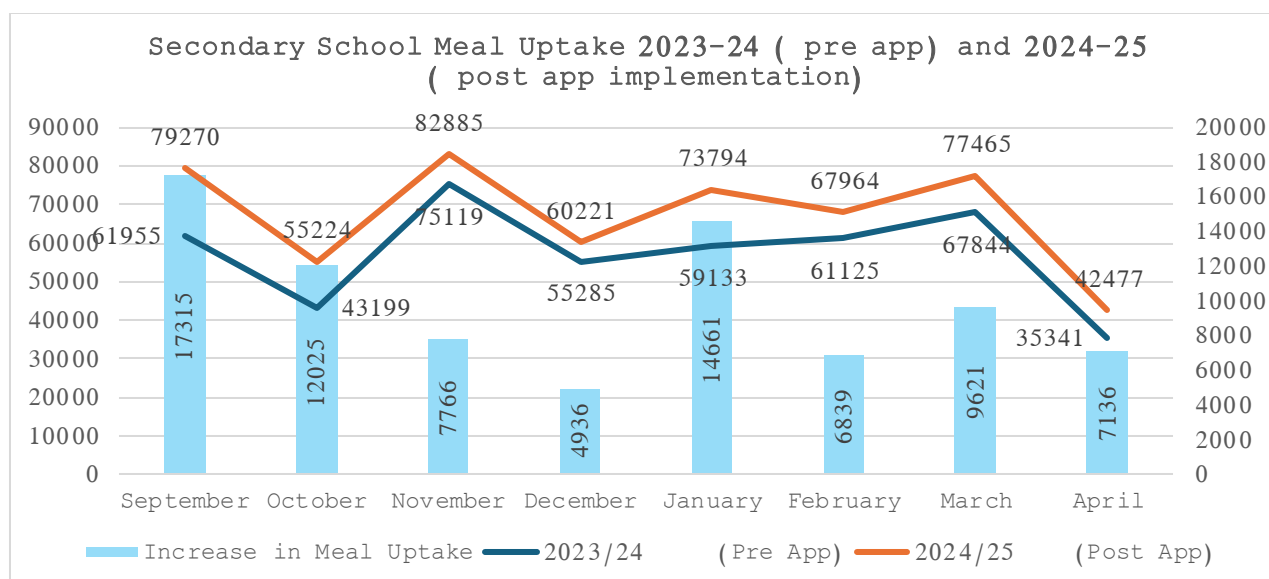
Year	Primary Pupils Universal Provision	Primary Pupils Income Related Registered	Total Primary Pupils Registered	Secondary Pupils Registered	Special School Pupils Registered	Totals	% of school roll registered for FSM
2018	6225	895	7120	1016	33	8169	35.0%
2019	6151	1056	7207	1176	66	8449	35.5%
2020	6075	1046	7121	1333	67	8521	36.2%
2021	8034	1117	9151	1573	76	10800	44.5%
2022	10388	860	11248	1728	140	13116	51.9%
2023	10777	899	11676	1983	130	13739	52.5%
2024	10705	774	11453	1735	125	13313	50.6%

In line with the observations above, there has been a reduction in the number and proportion of pupils, across combined primary, secondary and special school establishments, who are eligible, and registered, for FSM in 2024/25.

## Appendix 2

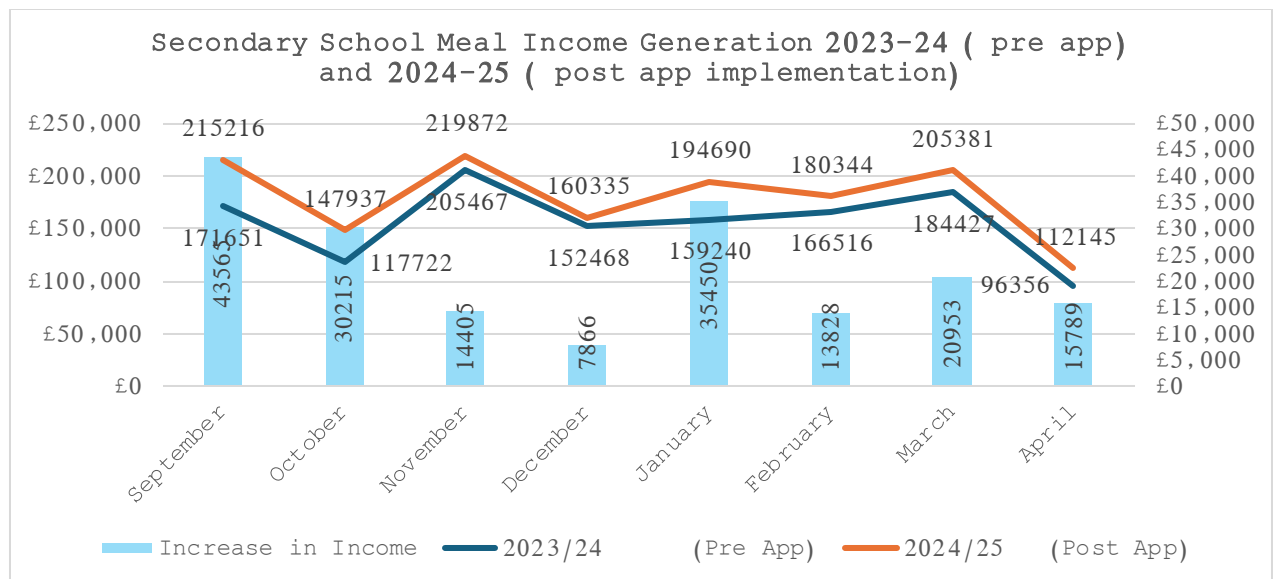
### Meals Uptake - Pre and Post Application Values - Secondary Schools

Month	2023/24 (Pre App)	2024/25 (Post App)	Increase in Meal Uptake
September	61955	79270	17315
October	43199	55224	12025
November	75119	82885	7766
December	55285	60221	4936
January	59133	73794	14661
February	61125	67964	6839
March	67844	77465	9621
April	35341	42477	7136
Monthly Average Meal Uptake	57375	67413	10037
Total	459001	539300	80299



## Pre-order App Income generation - Secondary Schools

Month	2023/24 (Pre App)	2024/25 (Post App)	Increase in Income
September	£171,651	£215,216	£43,565
October	£117,722	£147,937	£30,215
November	£205,467	£219,872	£14,405
December	£152,468	£160,335	£7,866
January	£159,240	£194,690	£35,450
February	£166,516	£180,344	£13,828
March	£184,427	£205,381	£20,953
April	£96,356	£112,145	£15,789
Monthly Average Meal Income	£156,731	£179,490	£22,759
Total	£1,253,848	£1,435,919	£182,071



## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Whole System Approach to Healthy Weight
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/25/152
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Niki Paterson and Phil Mackie
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1 and 1.1.2

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report on progress to increase the number of children and young people who are of a healthy weight by taking a Whole System Approach, as requested by the Education and Children's Services Committee on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended the Committee -

- 2.1 Note the work undertaken to date:
- 2.2 Continue to endorse the Whole Systems Approach to Healthy Weight known as Healthy Weight Aberdeen; and
- 2.3 Instruct the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to report progress on the service's delivery of the Whole Systems approach, Healthy Weight Aberdeen, through a Service Update within 12 calendar months.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Healthy Weight Aberdeen is a Whole Systems evidence-based approach developed primarily by Leeds Beckett University. The approach advocates using the whole system to work with local communities to identify changes that can be made to the obesogenic environment to help people make healthier choices and be more effective in maintaining a healthy weight. Apart from the clear health and wellbeing benefits to individuals, taking this approach has the potential to positively impact upon the employability and productivity of the local population and reduce future demand for health and social care services.

### 3.2 Governance

A Strategic Networking Group (SNG) has been established with members from Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP), Aberdeen City Council, NHS Grampian, and Community Planning Partners. This will be extended over time to include wider educational establishments and representatives from the business world. The Education Service is represented by a central officer, a secondary headteacher, a primary headteacher and an Early Learning and Childcare Locality Lead. Family Learning and the School Catering team are also represented.

- 3.3 The role of the SNG is to provide strategic leadership to operationalise the Healthy Weight Aberdeen approach and be responsible for oversight of the development, delivery and monitoring of the Healthy Weight Aberdeen Programme. The Healthy Weight Aberdeen SNG is chaired by the Prevention Lead of the ACHSCP and reports to the Community Planning Aberdeen Management Board (CPAMG).
- 3.4 Overall, the governance for Healthy Weight Aberdeen will be incorporated under the Community Planning Aberdeen Board and delivered within the context of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) for 2023-2026 and wider planning mechanisms (e.g. the Local Development Plan).
- 3.3 Progress against the six phases of the Whole System Approach public health model is outlined below.



### 3.4 Phase 1 : Setup

Actions conducted in phase 1 included:

- Collaboration between Children and Families Services and Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP)
- Establishing collaboration with Public Health intelligence on data and unhealthy weight prevalence
- Delivering the Stakeholder engagement launch event

- 3.5 On 30th August 2024 the Healthy Weight Aberdeen process was launched at an event in the Aberdeen Town House. The launch event, introduced by the Executive Director of Families and Communities, was attended by 111 stakeholders, including



Council members and helped to raise awareness on the Whole Systems Approach (WSA) to Healthy Weight. It emphasised the importance of a range of stakeholders and systems coming together, discussing the issue collectively and avoiding the tendency towards silo working.

- 3.6 The event was a means to plant seeds for potential early intervention and prevention for Aberdeen City and recommendations for future stakeholder engagement. Discussions identified causes around 18 themes within the city. Research data highlighted the prevalence of those of an unhealthy weight in Aberdeen, with 1 in 5 children in the first year of primary school being at risk, with higher rates in more deprived areas. The event report can be found [here](#) and the senior leaders' videos regarding support and commitment are available [here](#).

**3.7 Phase 2: Building the Local Picture**

Actions conducted in phase 2 included:

- Ensuring engagement with Multi-agency Senior Leaders;
- Establishing the Multi-agency Strategic Network Group (SNG);
- Establishing Healthy Weight Aberdeen as part of Community Planning Aberdeen Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP)

- 3.8 A multi-agency Strategic Network Group was established on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024 with 24 partners in attendance. The group established Terms of Reference and agreed roles and responsibilities. Good practice and evidence-based examples (nationally and internationally) have been reviewed.

**3.9 Phase 3: Mapping the Local System**

Key deliverables included:

- Delivering System Mapping workshop
- One to one meeting with partners and workshop working on Action Mapping; and
- Establishing Research links / collaboration with Rowett Institute and Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC).

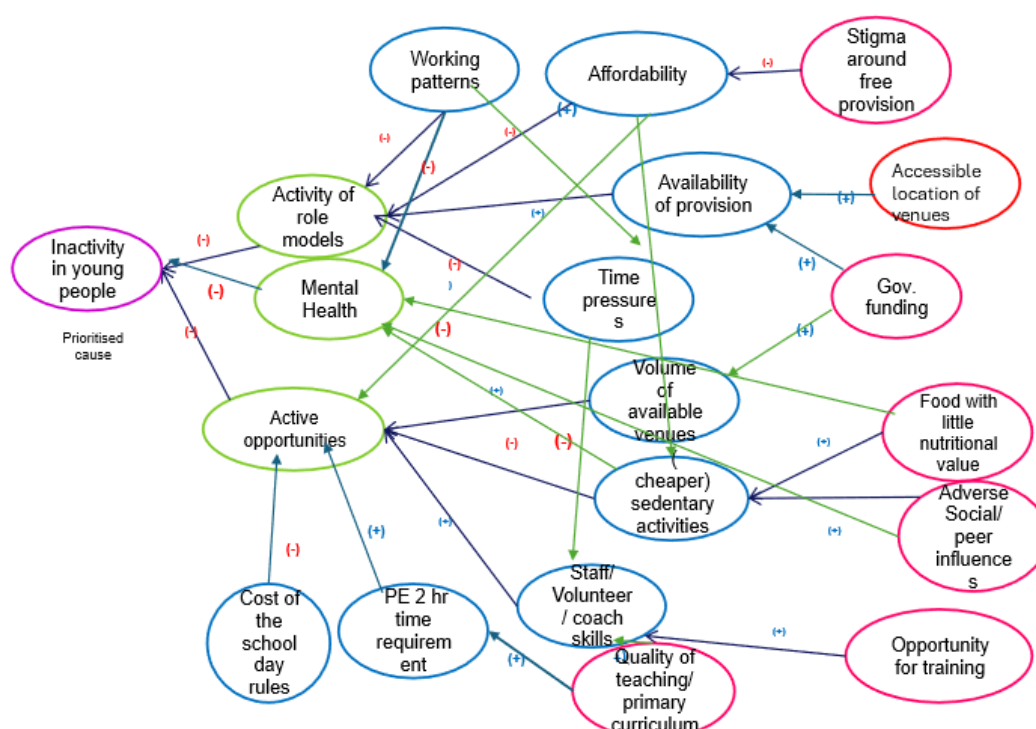
- 3.10 The System Mapping workshop was delivered on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025 with 19 partners in attendance. The workshop presented previous Whole System Work examples of collaborative working and wider systemic changes. The aims were to increase partner understanding on the Wider determinants of health (WDOH) and their influence in shaping individuals' biology, health behaviours and health outcomes.

- 3.11 Discussions included linking identified causes, actions to address these and the role of Scotland's seven levers for diet and healthy weight. The workshop illustrated the way stakeholders and their

work would fit into the overarching whole systems approach, visualising their place in the system. System Mapping was undertaken by education to identify points of leverage where future actions could be focussed. To exemplify the approach, Diagram 1 demonstrates the positive and negative influences between causes when exploring inactivity in young people.

- 3.12 This phase is ongoing, but it is anticipated it will be completed in August- September 2025 by sense-checking the work on existing systems mapping with the Strategic Network Group and wider stakeholders

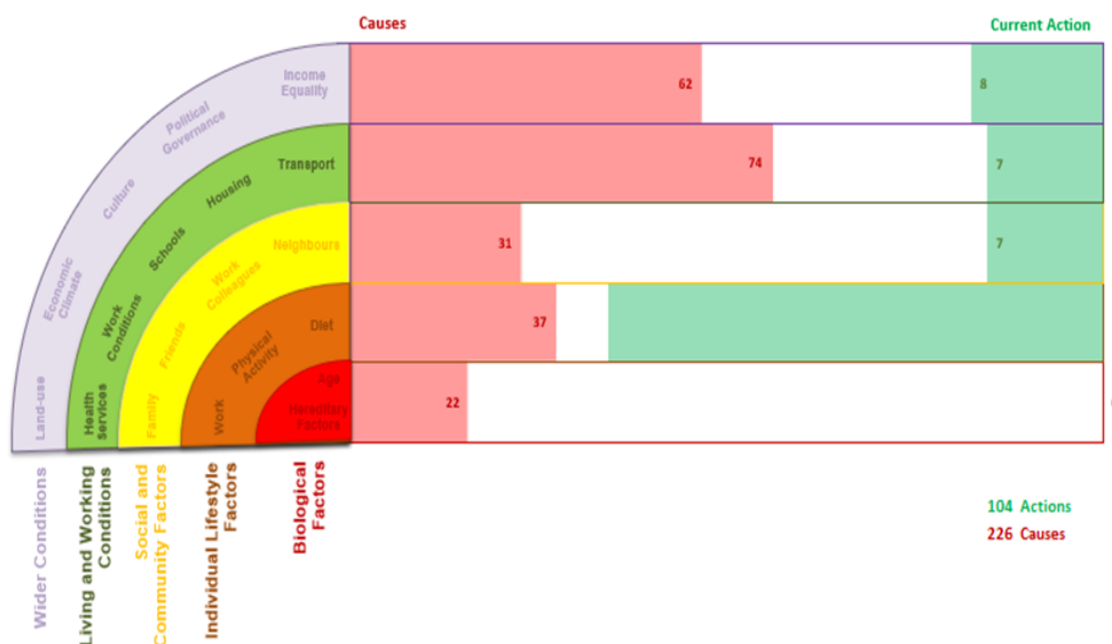
**Diagram 1: System Mapping-Workshop – Education Example: Inactivity in Young People**



- 3.13 Action Mapping was carried forward through a mixture of one-to-one working and a dedicated workshop delivered on 20th March 2025 with 28 partners in attendance. The purpose of the workshop was to initiate discussion on partners' existing actions, using the Public Health England Action Mapping Tool, and increasing understanding on the distribution of stakeholder resources in the context of the Wider Determinants Model of Health. The workshop also focused on consideration of the built environment; food environment; early years; and physical activity environment.
- 3.14 71% of partners completed action mapping for their sectors. Currently 82 partner actions are targeted around individual behaviours and 15 actions around wider living and working conditions. Our whole systems work will aim to shift the focus towards wider conditions and living and working conditions.

- 3.15 Education identified 15 actions being undertaken in schools, with the majority focused on increasing physical activity. These included Daily Mile engagement, development of physical education provision through the School Sports Award, increasing extra-curricular activity in partnership with Physical Education Physical Activity School Sport partners, P4 swimming provision, upskilling primary school staff to teach high quality PE, Active Travel Plans, the provision of Calm Space for Me ( Qi Gong) through virtual teaching, and cycling initiatives such as Bikeability and iBike. A notable exception is the award-winning Give Peas a Chance Project, through which the school catering team have incorporated sustainable peas into several dishes on the school lunch menu and the profile of sustainable food has been raised through classroom workshops. The impact of these actions is being reviewed to determine which could be a key focus for collaborating partners as part of the Whole Systems Approach (WSA) programme. For example, if we are to increase uptake of school meals, there could be development of a creative approach through collaboration between the school catering team, family learning, early years and school staff.
- 3.16 To support the review, education officers undertook an analysis of the National Physical Activity for Health Framework, mapping the expectations of the framework and how this relates or could relate to Education.
- 3.17 Wider partners have collectively identified key actions such as developing an integrated healthy weight pathway across life course (from pre-conception to older adults), supporting people in maintaining healthy weight and offering greater support to people who are at risk. However, as both Diagram 2 and Table 2 (below) demonstrate, there is a mismatch between organisational insight into the perceived causes and the current actions that they are taking.

**Diagram 2: Current Actions Mapped against Perceived Causes of unhealthy weight**



**Table 1: Healthy Weight Aberdeen partner actions against the Wider Determinants Model of Health**

	Current Actions	Perceived causes
Biological Factors	0	22
Individual Lifestyle factors	82	37
Social and Community factors	7	31
Living and working conditions	7	74
Wider conditions	8	62
Total actions	104	226

- 3.18 As part of Phase 3, a research collaboration workshop was organised between the Rowett Institute, NHS Grampian, Aberdeen City Council, and the Health Determinants Research Collaborative. This workshop explored how best to collaborate with the Rowett in specifying new research and in how best to translate research into local action. Topics explored included:
- Healthy weight and food insecurity;
  - Mapping social prescribing initiatives and food initiatives across Scotland;
  - Benefitting communities in rural areas involved in fishing (as part of a just transition);
  - promoting increased fibre intake;
  - school meals uptake.

### 3.19 Phase 4: Action

Work on all these areas is now underway:

- Facilitating two Public Engagement sessions in May 2025
- Initiating work on seven lever planning;
- Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) Public Health establishing structured and sustainable Tier 1 Weight Management prevention
- Establishing Healthy Weight Aberdeen as part of partners planning (Community Learning and Development, Health and Transport Action Plan etc);
- Collaboration with Public Health Directorate (NHS Grampian team) and Health Determinants Research Collaborative

3.20 As part of ACHSCP's Grampian Wellbeing Festival two public engagement sessions were organised on 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025. The outcome of these sessions will help ensure that the Healthy Weight Aberdeen work takes account of the views, knowledge and priorities of the communities who are, ultimately, going to benefit from the whole system efforts to address obesity.

3.21 The intention is to involve communities in the planning, implementing and monitoring phases. This will be carried forward as part of the community engagement and locality planning mechanisms within the Aberdeen City LOIP.

3.22 Work is now starting to enhance the action mapping work by exploring the Local Levers for Diet and Healthy Weight to support local healthy weight working. The focus on developing actions will use existing (or new) strategic approaches to ensure the delivery of healthy weight actions which focus on the wider determinants of healthy weight. This will need to link to the existing strategy/policy review for public health delivery currently underway but will ensure that co-benefits across the whole system are meaningfully delivered. As a first "cut" Table 2 again shows the area identified as a healthy weight lever and the strategies/policies to which it relates. At present this is only an initial specification as further work is needed to explore appropriate local authority powers and duties and the local policies and strategies where action to deliver them is articulated.

**Table 2: Healthy Weight Levers and Associated Strategies/Policies /Legislation**

<b>Lever Area</b>	<b>Associated Strategy / Policy / Legislation</b>
Restrict food advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good Food Nation Action Plan</li> <li>• The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (Scotland) Regulations 1984</li> <li>• Business Advertising Codes of Practice</li> </ul>
Utilise planning to improve food environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good Food Nation Action Plan</li> <li>• National Planning Framework 4</li> </ul>

Strengthen public food procurement and provision standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good Food Nation Action Plan</li> <li>• Local business codes for nutrition</li> </ul>
Work with the out of home sector to reduce calories on the menu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good Food Nation Action Plan</li> <li>• Local business codes for nutrition</li> </ul>
Improve uptake of school meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy eating in schools: guidance 2020</li> <li>• Free School Meals (Local government finance circular 1/2025: settlement for 2025 to 2026)</li> </ul>
Promote and support physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical activity for health: framework</li> <li>• The National Transport Strategy</li> </ul>
Protect, promote, and support breastfeeding and healthy diets for children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Scotland Breastfeeding Policy</li> <li>• Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland Scheme</li> </ul>

### 3.23 Next steps

The most urgent next steps are associated with completing Phase 3 and delivering Phase 4. This will allow actions identified in Phase 5 to be fed into the LOIP and wider agency planning for implementation during 2025/26 and beyond.

### 3.24 Work to complete Phase 3 is underway and will be completed by August 2025. This will involve:

- On-boarding wider (further) educational institutions, small to medium local businesses, and wider elements of Aberdeen City Council
- Establishing community engagement processes for Healthy Weight Aberdeen;
- Completion of current action mapping (one to one working)
- Sense checking system mapping models

### 3.25 Activities to engage the views of children and young people are being planned for Term 1 in Session 25/26.

### 3.26 Phase 4 work has now been initiated but needs to accelerate beyond current action mapping and will be completed by October 2025 (subject to staffing capacity). This will include:

- Delivery of lever specific strategy /policy reviews and proposed actions to move away from individual behaviour change and towards wider causes of poor healthy weight;
- Delivery of the proposed research collaboration;

- Delivery of new strategic action areas, in particular the National Physical Activity Framework actions and delivering the Good Food Nation Action Plan.

3.27 Completion of Phase 5 Managing the SNG, Action Plan & Phase 6 Reflect and Refresh require the delivery of specific actions which can be fed into the LOIP and wider planning /delivery mechanisms. In this role, the SNG will work under the CPA Management Group to oversee this task. It is anticipated this would take place during Q3 to Q4 of 2025-26. During the same period specific monitoring and impact assessment approach can expect to be put in place.

3.28 With Committee approval, Committee will be apprised of progress toward this long-term programme of work through a Service Update within one calendar year.

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

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report. Our Local Public Health Team have identified 3 members of staff to work alongside a Local Authority Officer to help drive the work forwards. Two members of staff from NHS Grampian are also supporting the programme.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified, although the work may lead to recommendations on changes to policy governing the obesogenic environment.

#### **7. RISK**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level</b>	<b>*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control action</b>	<b>*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?</b>
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Not addressing obesity will lead to serious long term health needs for	Early Plan in place to address the rise in levels of obesity as a CPP	L	Yes

	our citizens which will add considerable demand on Community Planning Partners (CPP)			
<b>Compliance</b>	Risk of not aligning with national policy	The Plan reflects national policy.	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Risk that we take a simplistic view, implement the easy options but make no impact on those we serve	We plan to take account of the complexity of the issue by working closely with communities	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	Risk that we don't have sufficient resource to meet the needs of those with health needs arising from obesity	The CPP is taking preventative steps to address obesity now that the issue is known	L	Yes
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk that we don't take action now that we know there is an issue	Mitigated by reporting back via service update within a year.	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Risk if we don't take action to now support active travel	Officers from Planning and Transport are engaged with the plan	L	Yes



## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u></b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<p><b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b></p> <p>The cross-cutting nature of work on obesity could impact on a range of Partnership Priorities including those within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Active City</li> <li>• Supporting people with the cost-of-living crisis</li> <li>• Building a greener and more sustainable city</li> <li>• Keeping our city moving</li> <li>• Empowering communities</li> </ul>	<p>Taking the approach advocated in the report will enable the joining up of all priorities to support a reduction in levels of obesity.</p>
<b><u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u></b>	
<p><b>LOIP stretch outcome 3:</b> <i>95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27–30-month review by 2026</i></p> <p><b>LOIP stretch outcome 10:</b> <i>Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026</i></p>	<p>Taking the whole systems approach will help us scale up the interventions into CPP policies and strategies.</p>
<p><b>Regional and City Strategies</b></p> <p>Prevention Strategy</p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p> <p>Local Outcome Improvement Plan</p>	<p>The approach being advocated prioritises prevention and is aligned with our key CPP plans.</p>

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	No
<b>Other</b>	None

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 [\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Education and Children's Services Committee, 02/07/2024 10:00](#) Item 10.5 :Healthy Weight initial report

## 11. APPENDICES

None

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Incidents and Behaviour Action Plan Progress
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/25/153
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Elaine Thomson
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1,1.1.2

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the preventative work undertaken to tackle behaviour in school, progress made against the national behaviour plan and a comparison of incidents reported across other local authorities.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee

- 2.1 Notes the content of this report; and
- 2.2 Instructs the Chief Officer Education & Lifelong Learning to continue to plan preventative professional learning and report progress against the local Behaviour Plan through regular National Improvement Framework updates.

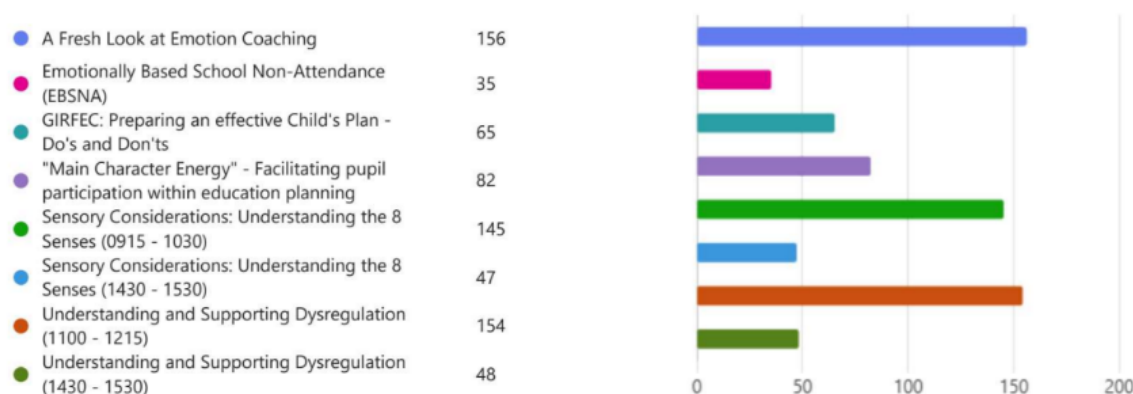
### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Officers have reviewed local and national incident data, progress made against the local and national behaviour plans and professional learning on offer to school staff in order to understand the impact of the interventions currently in place to determine how best to continue to support staff and young people in our schools.
- 3.2 Relationships and behaviour in schools: national action plan 2024 to 2027 was published in August 2024. Phase one of the national plan has just completed and we are about to enter into Phase 2. Members should note that the Aberdeen City Council Behaviour plan was developed and agreed with Trade Unions colleagues prior to the publication of the National Plan and progress has been reported regularly through our performance updates. An overview of national and local progress towards the National Action Plan can be found at Appendix A.
- 3.3 In August 2024 a mandatory staff training module on how to report incidents was rolled out with all staff being allocated time to complete it during in-service

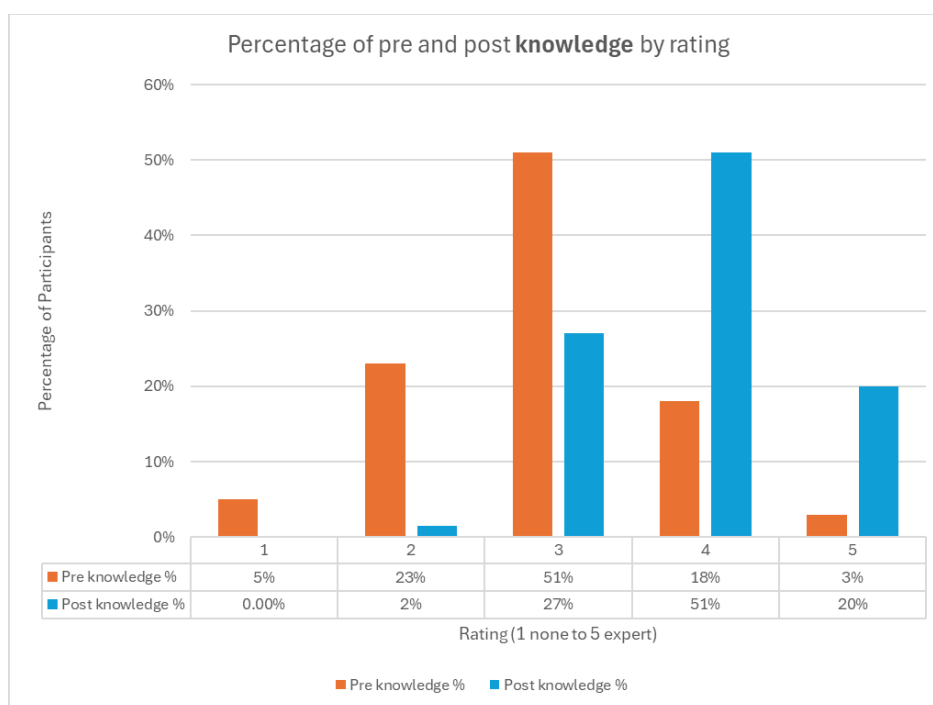
or staff development sessions. This has ensured all staff who completed the module know how to report an incident. An increase in awareness of how to report incidents would be expected to lead to an increase in the number of incidents being reported and this is evident in the upward trend in the number of incidents that have been reported in schools.

### Ongoing Preventative Work

- 3.4 Aberdeen City Council has promoted the Crisis, Aggression, and Limitation Management (CALM) System across complex Additional Support Needs provisions to support the management of distress in learners. There are nine staff in the CALM Team who can deliver theory, physical intervention and bespoke support to schools in relation to strategies, risk assessment, and planning.
- 3.5 Over 400 Aberdeen City Council staff are trained in CALM Theory, since 2022, 166 staff from specialist settings, 24 staff from secondary and 78 staff from primary have attend the two day course. Following the training schools have ongoing support from the Aberdeen City CALM Team. CALM Theory. This training includes inputs on de-escalation as well as recognising and supporting trauma and distress
- 3.6 Maybo Training was introduced in August 2025 to support staff with positive behaviour and de-escalation. Over the past year over 3235 staff have been trained in level 1. Level 2, level 3, and train the trainer programmes are also being piloted in the hope of rolling these further programmes out pending successful evaluation. To support our preparedness, the service now has 9 Level 2 and 3 Level 3 Trainers to offer further training as part of the professional learning offer for session 25/26.
- 3.7 The Supporting Learners Festival, held in February 2025, saw over 250 staff from across the education service attend to further develop their knowledge and skills. The first day had input from education staff, focusing on understanding and supporting dysregulated behaviour.



Data shows that following the inputs all staff noted an increase in both knowledge and confidence in supporting dysregulated or distressed young people. Further data will be collected 6 months from now to determine how the training is continuing to impact on practice in school.



- 3.8 Throughout session 2024/25 further resources have been developed for both universal and targeted aspects of Child Inclusion Research Curriculum Learning Education (CIRCLE). Over 200 participants attended a workshop on day two of the Supporting Learners Festival in February, indicating a progressive shift to meeting learners' needs. CIRCLE approaches will continue to be developed and shared through the CIRCLE leads' network and our professional learning offer for session 25/26.
- 3.9 Restorative Practice training was attended by 170 staff. The training emphasised the importance of building relationships with a trauma-informed approach and provided practical tools and techniques through scenario discussions.
- 3.10 As part of our review of professional learning we will be tracking the impact of any training delivered locally on outcomes for young people 6 months post the input. This ongoing engagement enables the service to shape future training and gain a greater understanding of the style and content of professional learning which delivers greatest impact on practice in the classroom.
- 3.11 Following the success of the Supporting Learners Festival in February, officers and practitioners offered professional learning on supporting those with ASN to 150 ELC staff on the in-service day in May 2025, focusing on understanding and supporting distress, sensory considerations, and the CIRCLE Framework for Supporting Learners. This will ensure consistency across all sectors and supports our early intervention model.
- 3.12 Following the publication of the Scottish Government's Guidance Included, Engaged, and Involved part 3. *Supporting learners: A relationship and rights-focused approach to physical intervention*, updated local guidance for schools was issued in April 2025.

- 3.13 A group, consisting of secondary Headteachers and central officers, is exploring interventions for young people who are exhibiting risk taking behaviours in secondary. The work of the group includes the review and refresh of Person Centred Risk Assessment procedure and guidance. In addition to this the group are scoping the establishment of a city wide secondary intervention to mirror the interventions offered through 'The Bridge' at Riverbank.
- 3.14 A Complex Additional Support Needs Teacher has been leading on 3 key pieces of work related to Aberdeen City Council's Behaviour Plan. These include bespoke professional learning offers, Senior Leadership Book Group, Sensory Ambassadors test of change and supporting the ACC Pupil Voice group.
- 3.15 The Emotion Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) programme continues to be implemented with 45 trained ELSAs working in 30 Educational Establishments. Learners engage in individual or group sessions, typically within one term, targeting their social and emotional skills, emotional awareness and regulation, self-esteem, sense of belonging, and resilience.
- 3.16 Universal training on Emotion Coaching and on Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) continues to be offered and there is planned refresh and update of the materials in both courses to respond to feedback and evolving need.
- 3.17 The next phase of the supporting learners professional learning offer will focus on the Social Communication Emotional Regulation Transactional Support (SCERTS) approach, which will support school staff working with young people with more complex needs.

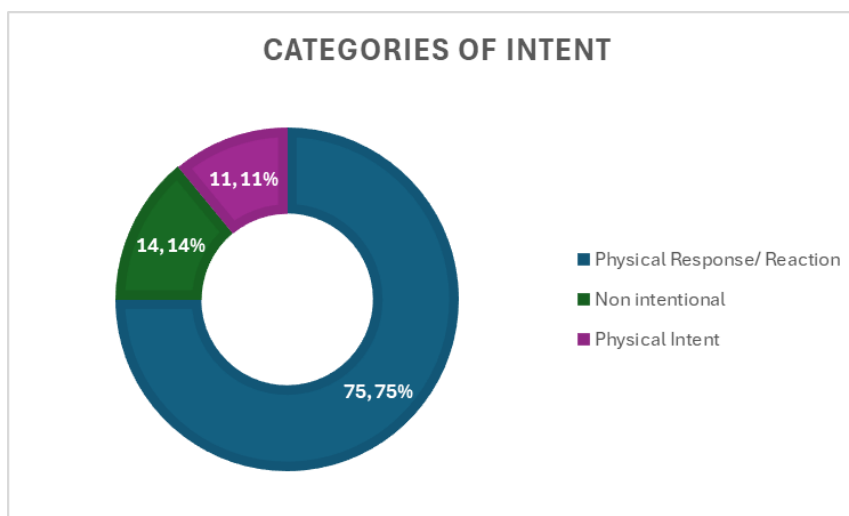
### **Analysis of Recent Incidents in Schools**

- 3.18 Officers have reviewed the last 100 incidents reported and analysed these in some detail to better understand causes and responses to incidents in schools. Data was analysed by timing and location of incidents, roles and individuals involved, incident descriptions, injuries and outcomes, risk assessments and resolutions. In addition to this, each incident was categorised, using the description provided, into a category of intent.

#### **Categories of Intent**

- Physical Intent - Deliberate, unprovoked actions.
  - Physical Response/Reaction - Reactive behaviour following perceived provocation.
  - Non Intentional - Accidental or circumstantial actions.
- 3.19 The analysis revealed patterns and variations across schools in the language used to describe incidents, the detail provided as part of the report and how the incident was investigated. 81% of incidents reported were one-off, suggesting that post incident interventions or adaptations are effective. 19% were repeat incidents and a result targeted support has been offered to the school. 82% of incidents involved children with an additional support need and these ranged from a single need to those with multiple and complex needs.

28% of incidents occurred in special school settings. Most injuries resulted from physical responses/ reactions and a few injuries occurred as a result of deliberate intent.



- 3.20 Analysis of the incident data has highlighted inconsistencies in the level of detail reported. Not all reporting made it clear what was happening prior to the incident making it difficult to determine a potential antecedent. In order to address this the safeguarding group will look to update the training to include a section on essential information to be recorded.

### **Comparison with other Local Authorities**

- 3.21 The tables below represent the number and frequency of Violent Incidents (Primary and Secondary combined) in consecutive academic years benchmarked by the City's Local Government Benchmark Framework and Urban Authority Family Group comparators. This data is extracted from a third party FOISA request submitted to all Scottish Local Authorities with responses provided by each according to data availability for the respective academic years. In some instances, individual Local Authorities were not enabled to offer data in response to this FOISA request against specific years.
- 3.22 When interpreting the data it is worth noting that across the 32 Scottish Local Authorities, a variety of differing recording methodologies are, and have been, used. These have been developed independently by individual Local Authorities to meet the educational and health and safety strategy/policy frameworks and priorities of each Authority.
- 3.23 The robustness of this metadata, and the extent to which it offers the capacity for direct comparisons between Local Authorities, is stronger in 2023/24 and 2024/25 but should not be taken to represent universal consistency of recording methodologies across all 32 Local Authorities even in these later years.

### 3.24 Comparisons with Local Government benchmark authorities

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 (to date)	Incidents per 10,000 pupils 2024/25
Aberdeen	401	807	491	441	401	1.5
Aberdeenshire	223	196	852	1099	1186	3.3
East Dunbartonshire	99	258	321	381	251	1.5
Edinburgh	408	799	2454	2908	1843	3.5
East Renfrewshire			467	390	185	1.0
Orkney	64	42	113	7	113	4.1
Perth and Kinross	442	595	1003	1080	467	2.6
Shetland	68	144		537	501	15.7
Family Group Average						2.8
All local authorities						3.6

The number of violent incidents recorded (Primary and Secondary Combined) in Aberdeen is 1.5 per 10,000 pupils. This is below the family group average of 2.8 and less than 50% of 3.6 per 10 000 which is the average of all local authorities.

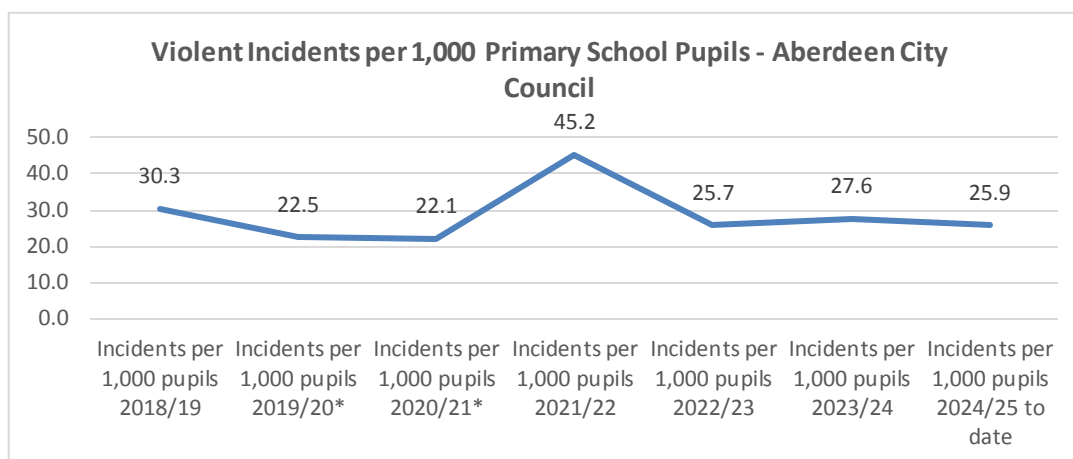
### 3.25 Comparisons with other urban local authorities

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 (to date)	Incidents per 10,000 pupils 2024/25
Aberdeen	401	807	491	441	401	1.5
Dundee City	794	914	1237	1645	225	1.2
East Dunbartonshire	99	258	321	381	251	1.5
Edinburgh	408	799	2454	2908	1843	3.5
Glasgow			2300	4049	2790	4.0
North Lanarkshire	261	423	969	697	296	0.6
Renfrewshire	191	342	576	1208	712	3.0
West Dunbartonshire				1518	1286	11.1
Family Group Average						2.9
All local authorities						3.6

When we compare with other Urban Local authorities, we continue to be significantly below both the family group average and the average of all local authorities. Over the last 3 years the number of violent incidents reported has reduced from 807 in 2021/22 to 441 in 2023/24. To date this session, we have had 401 incidents reported which is likely to return a slight increase by the end of session. This would be expected as all staff have undertaken training in how to report incidents.

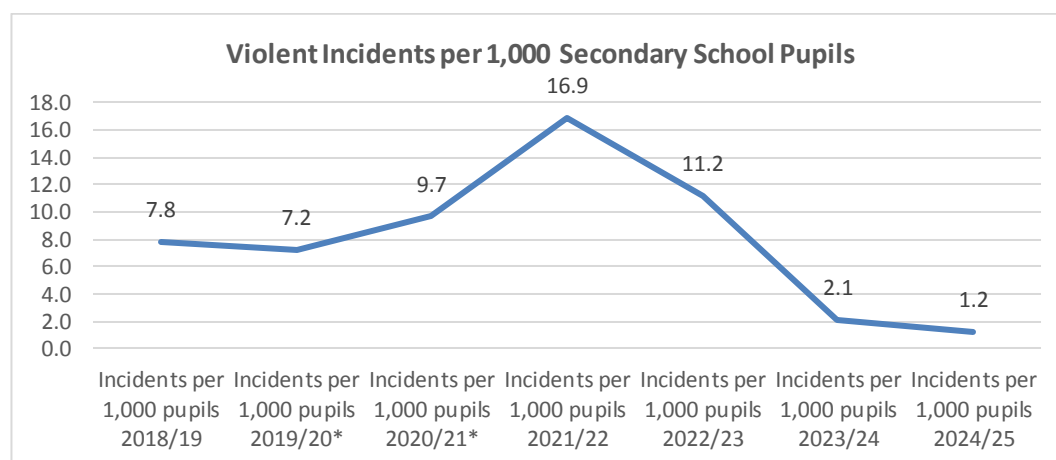


### 3.26 Violent incidents in Primary Schools



The number of violent incidents in primary schools per 1000 pupils fluctuates year on year. The highest number of incidents was in 2021/22 with 45.2 incidents per 1000 pupils, this could have been predicted given that children returned to schools following the periods of lockdowns and had to come to terms with the very restricted school environment. 2021/22 was the year all staff and pupils returned to face to face teaching and some young people struggled with the restrictions in place. The number of incidents being recorded remains lower than those recorded in 2018/19.

### 3.27 Violent Incidents in Secondary Schools



The number of violent incidents in secondary school has reduced year on year for the last 3 years and is now sitting well below the level in 2018/19.

The data shows that the number of incidents in both primary and secondary is sitting below the levels in 2018/19. The total number of incidents recorded is below both family group and national average.

### Conclusion

- 3.28 Officers were instructed to provide an overview of the preventative work undertaken to tackle behaviour in school; progress made against the national

behaviour plan and a comparison of incidents reported across other local authorities

- 3.29 In reviewing the evidence gathered it is clear there has been a significant amount of professional learning offered to all staff during session 24/25 which has been welcomed by school leaders and staff. The impact of this will be subject to on-going review. There is a need to improve the guidance to include an antecedent (what was happening prior to the incident ) within an incident report in order to make best use of this valuable data in determining next steps.
- 3.30 The Safeguarding Group, comprising Trade Unions and officers, has overseen the progress made against the local behaviour plan and we have overtaken all of the actions in Phase 1 of the National plan. The safeguarding group will now look to update the local plan to take account of Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the National Plan.
- 3.31 The work we are doing to reduce the number of incidents in our schools is having impact and when we look at the number of incidents across our family group and other urban local authorities we are below the average of both groupings. Officers will continue to monitor trends to help determine any required changes in collaboration with Trade Union colleagues. Through the safeguarding group officers will propose a joint survey developed in conjunction with the HDRC (Health Determinants Research Collaborative) to gather feedback from all staff in order to support future strategic planning for professional learning and support for schools.

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

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

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 every education authority must make adequate and efficient provision for the additional support required by each child or young person having additional needs and monitor and review that support. This Report addresses how these duties can be fulfilled more effectively.

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Risk of young people and staff not being appropriately supported after an incident	Training for all staff and appropriate supports put in place	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	Risk of not complying with legislation and legal challenge (tribunals)	Mitigated by appropriate supports being in place for young people and staff receiving appropriate training	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Staff not feeling listened to and unsure how to support young people	Mitigated by high quality professional learning to ensure staff can meet their statutory duties under The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 and the Equality Act 2010.	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	N/A			
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk of recording of incidents not being consistent or accurate reflection	Training in how to record an incident increase consistency.	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	N/A			

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b>Council Delivery Plan 2024</b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>  <u><a href="#">Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</a></u>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following ACC Priorities:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise attainment and achievement</li> <li>• Support improvement in the health and wellbeing of children and young people</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise the impact Of Early Learning and Childcare</li> </ul>
<u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	<p>The proposals support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 3 - 95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27-30 month review by 2026. Through offering support to all parents and sharing parenting opportunities we will create networks of support for families of children with additional support needs.</p> <p>The proposals within this report also support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 6 – 95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 &amp; 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026. Through developing partnerships and working with families to ensure all young people have access to a positive destination</p> <p>The proposals within this report also support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 8– 100% of children with Additional Support Needs /Disabilities will experience a positive destination by 2026. Through developing partnerships and working with families to ensure all young people have access to a positive destination. Through improving support for parents and supporting young people with an early intervention model.</p>
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>The proposals in this report seek to ensure the best use of resource in the system, promoting an understanding of the circumstances of individual children and young people to ensure that appropriate and timely personalised support is available to them.</p> <p>Effective use of resources will help to ensure all initiatives and interventions impact positively on all children and young people and are particularly targeted at those who are adversely affected by poverty.</p> <p>Specific links to:</p> <p>Stretch Outcome 4 90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026</p> <p>Stretch Outcome 6 95% of children living in our priority localities will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026</p> <p>Stretch Outcome 7 83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.</p>

Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	Underpinning the work of all schools in Aberdeen City is reducing the poverty related attainment gap and achieving excellence and equity for all.
Community Empowerment Stretch Outcomes	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 16 – 50% of people report they feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026.</p> <p>There will be consultation with parents as part of the process for allocating additional support through the early intervention setting</p>

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Shona Milne, Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning on 30 May 2025.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	N/A
<b>Other</b>	

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Behaviour Action Plan, -[F&C/24/322](#)

## 11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix A - ACC Progress against the Relationships And Behaviour In Schools: National Action Plan 2024 To 2027

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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## Appendix : Progress towards National Behaviour Action Plan Phase 1

Theme 1: Setting clear national expectations for promoting positive relationships and behaviour in schools		
Actions from National Behaviour plan	Key highlights of Aberdeen City Council Progress	Summary of National Progress (this column is as it appears nationally)
<b>Action 1: Create a clear and consistent definition and understanding of relationships and behaviour</b>	<p>A safeguarding group was established with representatives from all trade unions, health and safety representative, school leaders and central officers to implement the local behaviour plan.</p> <p>The definition of violent incident being used <b>is any act or attempted act of physical force that may cause, or has caused, physical injury to a person</b></p> <p>The group meets fortnightly and reviews referrals from the data group to identify schools where there has been a significant increase or decrease in incidents to allow best practice to be identified and shared.</p>	<p><b>Phase 1 Work by Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools (SAGRABIS):</b></p> <p>Work is ongoing in developing a clear national definition of relationships and behaviour, including what constitutes a violent incident in schools and this will be progressed during phase 2 and integrated into the national guidance Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2: A Positive Approach to Preventing and Managing School Exclusions.</p>
<b>Action 2: Identify good practice in evidence-based relationships and behaviour approaches, including consequences.</b>	All schools have reviewed their relationships and behaviour policies in light of ACC guidance developed in partnership with the safeguarding group and based on the national guidance.	Good progress has been made in developing guidance following input from Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research (BISSR), summits involving practitioners and this will be published by June 2025.

	All schools have updated their anti-bullying guidance in light of the Scottish Government <a href="#">Respect for All</a> update	Anti-bullying guidance published in November 2024  Guidance for developing a local relationships and behaviour policy published on the Education Scotland Website
<b>Action 3: Publish new national guidance on emerging areas of concern.</b>	<p>All schools have implemented the framework on preventing and responding to gender based violence.</p> <p>All secondary schools have participated in the Mentors in Violence Prevention(MVP) programme and have active mentors in school</p> <p>All school mobile phone policies have been reviewed in light of the Scottish Government guidance on mobile phones. All policies are clear and have been developed in consultation with the school community</p> <p>Schools continue to use the resources issued in November 2023 to support Personal and Social Education programmes highlighting the health impacts of vaping.</p> <p>Maybo training was procured for all staff and modules on de-escalation added to mandatory training . All staff were given time on in-service day or as part of</p>	<p>Areas raised by BISSR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Misogynistic behaviour in schools - framework on preventing and responding to gender-based violence published and Mentors in Violence training updated</li> <li>• Use of mobile phones – guidance on mobile phones in Scotland's schools</li> <li>• Increase in the number of young people vaping on school premises – Highlight the materials shared with schools in November 2023</li> <li>• Support staff more likely to experience verbal abuse, physical aggression and physical violence – Scottish Government provided local authorities with funds to procure training for staff</li> </ul>



	development time to complete the modules to ensure consistency of approach. The safeguarding group has also developed induction sessions for support staff which will run twice termly and will provide staff with strategies for de-escalation.	
<b>Action 4: Review all current processes for recording incidents including violent incidents, to identify potential means of streamlining processes and improving consistency</b>	<p>The safeguarding group have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-designed a mandatory eLearning module for all staff on reporting incidents to ensure consistency of reporting</li> <li>• Produced guidance on the use of pupil centred risk assessments</li> <li>• Updated the health and safety exemplar for schools</li> </ul> <p>All schools use the SEEMis Bullying and equalities module to record bullying incidents. 2 schools were part of a thematic review undertaken by Education Scotland and both were found to have very good processes in place. This has been shared as good practice with other schools across the city.</p> <p>Equalities officer reviews the data monthly and supports schools where there may be emerging trends to ensure they have all mitigations in place.</p>	<p>In January 2024, Education Scotland published a toolkit to support current and developing practice in recording and monitoring bullying incidents, informed by phase 2 of the thematic inspection on recording and monitoring bullying incidents. The toolkit comprised a number of case studies under the themes of effective partnership working, high-quality professional learning, whole-school universal measures, anti-bullying curriculum, and involving children and young people.</p> <p>In addition, updated guidance on recording and monitoring bullying incidents was published within the refresh of the national anti-bullying guidance, Respect for All. This included clear messaging from the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills that all reports of bullying should be recorded, in order to ensure the necessary support is in place for children and young people, to monitor recurring patterns or trends, and to assess the effectiveness of policy and practice.</p>

Theme 2		
Action 5: Implement framework of support to assist the local application of national policy.	<p>A Supporting Learners Festival in February provided sessions for 250 staff from all sectors with a focus on supporting dysregulated behaviour. Data collected showed that the inputs increased staff confidence in identifying and supporting young people displaying dysregulated behaviours.</p> <p>On day 2 of the Supporting Learners Festival, 170 staff engaged in sessions on Being Restorative delivered by Education Scotland which were part of the national offer to local authorities.</p> <p>Schools are making use of the Education Scotland suite of professional learning resources at local level to support with their review of relationship policies.</p> <p>Bespoke training on supporting learners continues to be delivered as part of the probation training offered during their induction year.</p>	<p>Education Scotland has launched updated guidance on supporting additional support for learning including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an information session for relevant staff and stakeholders to highlight the main updates and changes to the guidance run by Education Scotland and respectme;</li> <li>• a series of webinars for school staff on the SEEMiS bullying and equalities module; and</li> <li>• the development of a template anti-bullying policy, aligned with new guidance, produced by respectme, Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service.</li> </ul> <p>Education Scotland has published an online suite of professional learning resources for education settings to use themselves to support relationship building, nurturing approaches and to support self-regulation and positive behaviour, which it has been supporting at both local and national level.</p>

<p><b>Action 6: Identify examples of current/ developing practice that can be shared with schools.</b></p>	<p>Local best practice is identified through Quality Improvement visits, data discussions and the work of the Safeguarding group.</p> <p>Best practice is shared through Headteacher meetings, training sessions and regular network meetings with CIRCLE leads.</p> <p>Aligning with the CIRCLE framework, the “Spotlight” resource has been developed to enable the sharing of good practice across ACC settings in supporting the needs of learners with complex ASN in mainstream settings.</p>	<p>This action is at an early stage of development with most activity scheduled for phases 2 and 3 and will be taken forward in conjunction with professional associations.</p> <p>Work completed during phase 1 related to attendance, with a short-life working group established to create resources to support tracking and monitoring attendance. These resources have been developed and published on the Education Scotland website.</p>
<p><b>Action 7: Develop mechanisms to provide schools with individualised feedback on relationships and behaviour approaches and areas for development.</b></p>	<p>QIMs review attendance and incident data on a fortnightly basis as part of Service manager meetings.</p> <p>Attendance, exclusions and attainment are discussed with individual schools during data discussions highlighting impact of any interventions in place.</p> <p>Behaviour and relationships are observed as part of Quality Improvement visits and feedback is provided to SLTs identifying strengths and areas for improvement.</p>	<p>From February 2024, HM inspectors set out they would enhance the evidence gathered and commentary made about relationships and behaviour. As part of school inspections, they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening to staff, learners, parents, and partners to understand current priorities and challenges related to relationships and behaviour in their school.</li> <li>• Asking the school to reflect on the effectiveness of their approaches to promoting positive relationships and behaviour, as well as how they record and respond to incidents. This is captured in an updated Child Protection and Safeguarding Self-Evaluation Form</li> </ul>

	<p>Sampling is done of the quality of PCRAs, IEPs and pastoral notes as part of the Quality Improvement Visit.</p> <p>Behaviour is discussed as part of HMle feedback and actions are overtaken by school staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gathering and evaluating evidence as part of usual inspection processes, ensuring approaches align with the school's context.</li> <li>• Exploring in more depth how the school promotes positive relationships and behaviour through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-evaluation discussions with the school and local authority representative on the effectiveness of current approaches and the support provided by the local authority.</li> <li>• Focus group discussions to gather views from staff, pupils, parents, and partners.</li> <li>• Reviewing how behavioural incidents are recorded and the strategies used to support those involved.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Evidence gathered will be synthesised to provide feedback to schools, local authorities and partners to support strengthening approaches.</p>
<p><b>Action 8: Implement the recommendations of Education Scotland's report 'Improving Attendance: Understanding the issues'.</b></p>	<p>Attendance in Aberdeen continues to be above the national average.</p> <p>Headteachers regularly share approaches to improving attendance as part of...</p> <p>Emotionally Based School Non Attendance (EBSNA) Universal training offer and follow up Coaching sessions facilitated by the Educational Psychology Service. In 2024-25, 4 secondary schools, 3 primary schools and one ELC have engaged in this training, with evaluations indicating an increase in</p>	<p>Education Scotland has developed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An improving Attendance package of support for areas where improving attendance remains a challenge</li> <li>• A national network of attendance leads to support collaboration and networking</li> <li>• Updated webpages with materials on using data , partnership and effective practice.</li> </ul>

	<p>confidence in identifying and supporting EBSNA following the training.</p> <p>The Supporting Learners Festival in February included an introductory session on Emotionally Based School Non Attendance (EBSNA). 63 education staff attended, and evaluation feedback showed marked improved in understanding of EBSNA and of confidence in supporting learners with EBSNA.</p>	
Theme 3: Support for Children and Young people		
<p><b>Action 9: Age and stage appropriate resources are available to support children's social and emotional development</b></p>	<p>Schools have access to the resources on the Education Scotland Website, and these are promoted through head teacher events and local and national professional learning.</p> <p>All schools have staff trained in Compassionate and Connected Classrooms.</p> <p>The supporting learner's festival provided staff with training in de-escalation and supporting dysregulated learners.</p> <p>The Emotion Coaching Universal Training Offer (e-learning resource &amp; in person staff coaching sessions) has been delivered by</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In September 2024, refreshed school resources to support children's emotional development were published, supported by the Scottish Government Mental Health Directorate. This updated resource was created by Fife Council Education staff alongside the Digital Bricks Learning team, Education Scotland and Scottish Mediation.</li> <li>• The 'Keeping Your Cool in School' programme was first launched in 2007, has been updated and was relaunched in 2024 The Keeping Your Cool in School resources aim to equip primary-aged children with the skills to manage emotions and also raise awareness of wider issues affecting them and their peers. Each level of the programme explores a range of responses to different situations and has the</li> </ul>

	<p>the Educational Psychology Service in full to 5 settings, with a further 9 settings currently in progress.</p> <p>Delivery of session “A fresh look at Emotion Coaching” by the Educational Psychology Service as part of the Supporting Learners Festival. This session was attended by 156 participants from 22 schools &amp; nursery settings. The focus on expanding the approach with explicit links to Trauma Informed and Restorative Practice was positively evaluated with feedback indicating increases in both attendee knowledge and confidence.</p> <p>170 staff attended sessions on restorative conversations</p> <p>The planned PSA induction programme which will run twice a term will equip staff with a basic understanding of trauma and how to support children and young people to regulate.</p> <p>The Emotion Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) programme continues to be implemented. A new cohort of 13 ELSAs completed their training this session. There are 45 trained ELSAs working in 24 primary schools, 5 secondary schools and</p>	<p>potential to support positive relationships and behaviour, particularly amongst younger children, which was highlighted within BISSR 2023. Education Scotland is currently refreshing the Compassionate and Connected Classroom resources targeted at upper primary learners.</p>
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	<p>1 ELC. ELSAs develop individualised programmes for learners to engage in individual or group sessions, typically within one term, targeting their social and emotional skills, emotional awareness and regulation, self-esteem, sense of belonging, and resilience.</p> <p>9 PSAs from Specialist Provisions have been offered 3 supervision and support sessions from EPS, focusing on using the Emotionally Connected Framework to support the emotional well-being of learners with severe and complex needs.</p> <p>The universal training offer and the session at the Supporting Learners Festival on Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) (noted in action 8) include sharing and exploration of assessment frameworks, planning templates and tools to gather learner's views and experiences.</p>	
<b>Action 10 :Children and Young people are supported to develop healthy relationships and behaviours grounded in tolerance and respect</b>	<p>Schools have accessed the resources available from Education Scotland and updated policies in light of this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have 4 Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) trainers now in ACC to support the training of staff in schools and ensuring that we are self-sufficient as an authority.</li> </ul>	<p>Education Scotland have developed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">New health and wellbeing resources on antiracism at nursery and primary</a></li> <li><a href="#">Challenging online misogyny as part of MVP</a></li> <li><a href="#">Analysis of the Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood statutory guidance consultation</a></li> <li><a href="#">Updated keep your cool in school</a></li> <li><a href="#">Mental health and wellbeing Whole School Approach</a></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total of 93 staff across 11 secondary schools are currently trained to deliver the MVP programme and to support pupil mentors within their contexts, usually through PSE or wider achievement programmes. Additionally, we will be arranging further ACC training in term 1 of next session, to support new staff to this programme and refresh existing staff.</li> <li>• The primary adapted version of MVP test of change pilot led by the Scottish Government is drawing to a close and is scheduled for roll out in the next year. We will be well placed to support primary colleagues with training and roll out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Professional learning resource on supporting children and young people's mental health</a></li> </ul>
<b>Action 11: Children and young people's views are embedded in the development of school policies and procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children and young people have a voice in decisions that affect them, including in how they learn, and we continue to work to amplify participation and voice. Pupil voice is both sought to inform and is included within school improvement plans with a number of our schools creating and sharing accessible 'child-friendly' versions of their school improvement plan with their school communities</li> </ul>	<p>All new guidance issued by Education Scotland highlights the importance of schools engaging with their whole learning community, including children and young people, in the development of their local policies.</p> <p>Education Scotland and the General Teaching Council for Scotland worked together to produce a resource to support teaching professionals  <a href="#">A children's rights-based approach</a></p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of session “Main character energy: facilitating pupil participation within education planning” by the Educational Psychology Service, as part of the Supporting Learners Festival. This session was attended by 82 participants from 13 schools. The focus on use of Lundy model to support implementation of the UNCRC was positively evaluated with feedback indicating increases in both knowledge and confidence of attendees.</li> </ul>	
Theme 4:Supporting the Workforce		
<b>Action 12: Support all education settings to have a planned and ongoing programme to promote staff wellbeing.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All managers have access to the Supporting health and wellbeing toolkit on the intranet. This provides an easy to navigate suite of tools and resources to support staff through any incidents that may impact on staff .</li> <li>• These resources are highlighted through regular communications to schools and through virtual and face to face Head Teacher events.</li> <li>• Staff participate in People and Organisation annual health and wellbeing surveys</li> </ul>	The first meeting of the Scottish Government HWB Group is due to take place in Spring 2025.

<p><b>Action 13: Empower staff through provision of relevant professional learning to support relationships and behaviour approaches and practice and to respond to emerging trends in behaviour.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scottish Government monies used to provide training for all staff in de-escalation. Provider selected following small test of change in Bucksburn Academy</li> <li>• All Education Scotland professional learning opportunities are shared with staff through our weekly education and lifelong learning bulletins, during any locally delivered professional learning.</li> <li>• Our local behaviour plan continues to support staff with targeted professional learning on de-escalation, risk assessments and supporting young people impacted by trauma.</li> <li>• Incidents recorded are analysed regularly to determine where interventions may be required with a school or member of staff.</li> <li>• Our newly developed PSA induction programme will support staff to have greater understanding of how to support young people who have been impacted with trauma.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p>Education Scotland has delivered a number of relevant strands of work to support professional learning including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identifying and promoting resources and <a href="#">professional learning</a> available to staff and schools on relationships and behaviour in schools. These resources are freely available online for schools to use as part of collegiate learning or practitioners can use as self-directed learning. To promote the resources and support implementation Education Scotland delivered a series of seven online webinars between January and March 2025 under the theme of 'It's all about relationships.'</li> <li>• continuing to develop <a href="#">professional learning opportunities</a> to support educators' understanding and practice of inclusive pedagogy and approaches required to support all learners including those who require additional support. This is linked to the ASL Action Plan.</li> <li>• Further promoting Keeping Trauma in Mind (KTiM) professional learning as a sustainable train the trainer model, by delivering national on-line delivery during September / October 2024. There are plans for further national online delivery during May 2025.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Action 14: Identify and promote the approaches to curriculum design, pedagogy, and assessment to facilitate learner engagement of all children and young people.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education Scotland presented the timeline for the new curriculum framework at a recent headteacher meeting ensuring all senior leaders understand the national direction.</li> <li>• Maths specialists worked together to create a maths portal to support consistent delivery of content and provide professional learning for both specialist and non-specialists delivering maths qualifications. The portal also has links to aid parents in supporting their young people.</li> <li>• ACC Writing progression framework has been updated to take account of the learning through involvement in the CYPIC writing project. The framework has been piloted with an ASG and will be ready to be shared across the city in August 2025.</li> <li>• The Northern Alliance Learning and teaching toolkit has been launched and is supporting schools to improve the accuracy of their self-evaluation and the quality of professional learning to improve pedagogy being offered to staff.</li> </ul>	<p>Education Scotland is working with school leaders and practitioners to develop exemplification of curriculum design having a positive impact on both attendance and engagement. Six school leaders are undertaking short-life enquiries on the correlation between the curriculum and improved attendance and/or engagement.</p> <p>As a next step, in phase 2 the Education Scotland Pupil Support Staff professional learning framework will be refreshed to reflect the Education Scotland Inclusion Wellbeing and Equalities professional learning themes.</p>
<p><b>Theme 5: Reducing violence and harm in schools</b></p>		

<b>Action 15: Identify supports for schools where children are not</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The service commissioned the EP service to undertake an <a href="#">Exploration of learners needs</a> interviewing senior leaders, parents, trade unions, young people, teaching staff and support staff. The findings were used to help the service develop a small test of change which is due to open August 2025.</li> <li>• Attendance, incidents and exclusions are monitored monthly to identify and explore trends. This data is used to inform universal and targeted professional learning for different staff groups.</li> <li>• ACC attendance rates are higher than national average and central officers and schools interrogate data to ensure interventions are having the maximum impact.</li> </ul>	<p>The Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists (ASPEP) are currently developing a paper outlining the range of approaches and services that educational psychologists can offer to support relationships and behaviour, at a school and local authority level, based on their five core functions of consultation, assessment, intervention, training, and research and policy development.</p> <p>Preliminary work has been undertaken on guidance around staged intervention approaches, and this work will be further scoped and developed during phase 2.</p> <p>Education Scotland held a stakeholder event, attended by around 450 practitioners, to initiate discussions around how to use a rights-based approach to decision making when responding to a variety of scenarios ranging from school exclusions to considering alternatives educational options for some children and young people who disrupt the learning of others.</p>
<b>Action 16: Support schools' development of clear protocols for both preventing and responding to violent incidents and incidents involving a weapon, including risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local guidance Supporting learners: A relationship and rights focused approach to physical intervention and seclusion was updated in line with Scottish Government <a href="#">Guidance Included, Engaged and involved Part 3 Physical Intervention in schools- a relationship and rights based</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In November 2024, the Scottish Government published Included, Engaged, and Involved Part 3: A relationships and rights-based approach to physical intervention in Scottish schools. This guidance provides schools with the latest human rights-based advice on reducing distressed behaviour and minimising the use of restraint. A review to consider the</li> </ul>

assessments, relevant to age and stage of child or young person.	<p><a href="#">approach: guidance</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A group of headteachers has worked with officers to update the Pupil Centred Risk Assessment guidance and professional learning has been developed to improve consistency.</li> <li>Generic Risk assessments have been developed in partnership with Health and safety and trade union colleagues.</li> </ul>	<p>effectiveness of the guidance will begin in autumn 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A sub-group comprising members of SAGRABIS and Education Scotland's Social, Emotional and Behaviour Needs Network has been established to develop guidance on risk assessments. This guidance will be published during 2025.</li> </ul>
<b>Action 17: Develop evidence base on factors underlying violence, develop teaching resources to support children and young people</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data on incidents is analysed monthly, and trends are used to support the development of professional learning for staff and learning materials for young people. The MVP programme supports learning in secondary schools and once available this will be rolled out to primary staff and young people too.</li> </ul>	<p>The Violence Prevention Framework sets out the Scottish Government's vision to prevent violence across Scotland, and when it does occur, to reduce its harm. While the Framework has a broader scope than schools, a number of activities carried out by funded partners to support its implementation directly relate to schools and therefore contribute to this action.</p>
Theme 6:Engaging with the whole school community		
<b>Action 18: All members of a school community - children and young people, parents and carers, and staff – have their views embedded in</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All schools engaged with the whole school community when developing their mobile phones in schools' guidance and anti-bullying guidance.</li> </ul>	<p>This action is at an early stage of development.</p> <p>The Scottish Government's updated anti-bullying guidance and guidance on mobile phones in Scotland's schools outlined clear expectations of how schools should engage with children and young</p>

the development of school policies and procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All schools engage the whole school's community in any policies being developed</li> </ul>	people, parents and carers, and school staff during development and implementation of local policies.
Theme 7: Tracking Impact and Progress		
<b>Action 19: Continue to update and maintain evidence base on relationships and behaviour in schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two schools were identified to be part of the study into positive practice in dealing with instances of bullying</li> <li>Positive trends in incident reporting are identified and shared with peers through Head Teacher events and professional learning networks.</li> </ul>	<p>As set out under action 4, case studies to highlight features of positive practice when dealing with instances of bullying behaviour have been published.</p> <p>As part of the Anti-Racism in Education Programme, Intercultural Youth Scotland gathered young people's experiences of racism and made recommendations to each of the four workstreams, including the workstream on racism and racist incidents. These recommendations have been considered by the workstreams, and a response was issued in August 2024.</p> <p>SAGRABIS has had initial discussions on the scope of the sixth wave of the Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research, which will be commissioned during phase 2.</p>
<b>Action 20: Ensure alignment with existing cross-government policy commitments that seek to support children and</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All service policies are checked across the cluster and wider council. The Health Determinants Research Collaborative support us with accurate data ensuring we continue to target those families, children and young people most in need of support</li> </ul>	As has been highlighted across this report, there are various other government policies and strategies that are contributing to the outcomes of the action plan, and activity taken forward under these other strategies have been cited in this report.

<p><b>young people to reach their full potential.</b></p>		<p>To ensure the work of SAGRABIS in implementing the action plan is sufficiently aligned with the broader policy landscape, the following actions have been undertaken during phase 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The membership of SAGRABIS has been widened to include representation from the justice, health, early years, and care-experienced sectors, including organisations that can bring perspectives from children and young people.</li> <li>- Policy officials have attended the Additional Support Needs Project Board to raise the profile and promote the work being delivered through the action plan, and to ensure alignment with additional support for learning policy.</li> <li>- Views have been sought from the Gender Equality Taskforce on Education and Learning during the development of the action plan, and work on consequences, to consider these publications through a gendered lens.</li> <li>- Links were made between the update of Respect for All and the Racism and Racist Incidents Workstream of the Anti-Racism in Education Programme, to ensure these pieces of work are consistent.</li> </ul> <p>During phase 2, work will continue to ensure cohesion with other national policies, including the</p>
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		mental health and wellbeing strategy and The Promise.
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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education & Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	24/06/2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Health & Wellbeing Report
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/25/155
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Emma Powell
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out the findings of the Health & Wellbeing surveys undertaken within Aberdeen City Schools in December 2024.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the content of this report;
- 2.2 acknowledges the hard work of secondary schools, and the wider support staff in Education and Lifelong Learning in supporting S5 Girls to improve their mental health outcomes;
- 2.3 instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to consider the findings of the report and plan next steps as part of work being taken forward to develop the next Local Outcome Improvement Plan and associated National Improvement Framework Plan; and
- 2.4 instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to report the findings of the next Health and Wellbeing surveys to Committee following the next survey point.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Within the curriculum, health and wellbeing is currently organised into six areas:
- mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing
  - planning for choices and changes
  - physical education
  - physical activity and sport
  - food and health
  - substance misuse
  - relationships, sexual health and parenthood

- 3.2 Schools across the city deliver a health and wellbeing curriculum aligned to the six areas of responsibility and keep this under regular review. A range of resources are available to support curriculum planning and provide staff with access to relevant and up to date resources. Schools have invested in and developed, with wider Education and Lifelong Learning Service support, universal supports which targeted interventions are then built upon. A progression overview and resource bank for Physical Education for Primary Schools is also available to all Aberdeen City Education Staff and was developed by Aberdeen Physical Education, Physical Activity and School Sport (PEPASS) team.
- 3.3 To determine the effectiveness of arrangements currently in place to support positive wellbeing, the Education & Lifelong Learning Cluster regularly surveys pupils to help identify trends and determine the adequacy of current approaches. The report in Appendix A, is a summary of city-wide findings from the two most recent Health & Wellbeing Surveys issued to children and young people within Aberdeen City during November and December 2024. One survey is delivered in partnership with Schools Health Improvement and Research Network (Shine) and focusses on mental wellbeing for pupils in P6-S6, the second focussed on physical wellbeing, and was designed locally and undertaken by pupils in P5-S6. These surveys are taken at the same time to try and provide consistency within the data and subsequent data analysis.
- 3.4 The city-wide analysis, contained in Appendix A, shows that there are encouraging widescale improvements in almost every aspect of wellbeing compared to previous data sets which include:
- a reduction in levels of pupils with low mood and at risk of depression;
  - an improved picture on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) which measures mental health difficulties;
  - improved levels of reported self-confidence levels and optimism;
  - improvements in physical health;
  - an improved picture in relation to feelings of safety, inclusion, good health, aspects of sleep, and being listened to; and
  - reduction in reporting of loneliness
- 3.5 In general, city outcomes continue to sit above national comparator data. We remain alert to reports of self-harming and happiness with appearance and both continued to improve in this year's data. Improvements were also observed for this with our 'Did Not Disclose' gender group, and with girls. There remain areas for us to consider more fully. These include a need for us to work with Community Planning Partners to:
- continue to address the gap between the Family Affluence Scale Groups (low, medium and high) even though each group is showing an improved position the gap between them especially the low and high affluence groups has not improved;
  - whilst acknowledging the improvements in improved levels of liking school, we are seeing more learners feel pressurised by schoolwork, this is likely connected to the hard work across Aberdeen to improve educational attainment and outcomes for all learners;
  - stay alert and monitor data in relation to boys' levels of confidence
  - consider how best to support secondary pupils to eat breakfast; and

- continue to work with the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership to address the slight increase in the number of pupils trying of e-cigarettes/vapes and other substances, including lifestyle drugs that have not been prescribed to them.

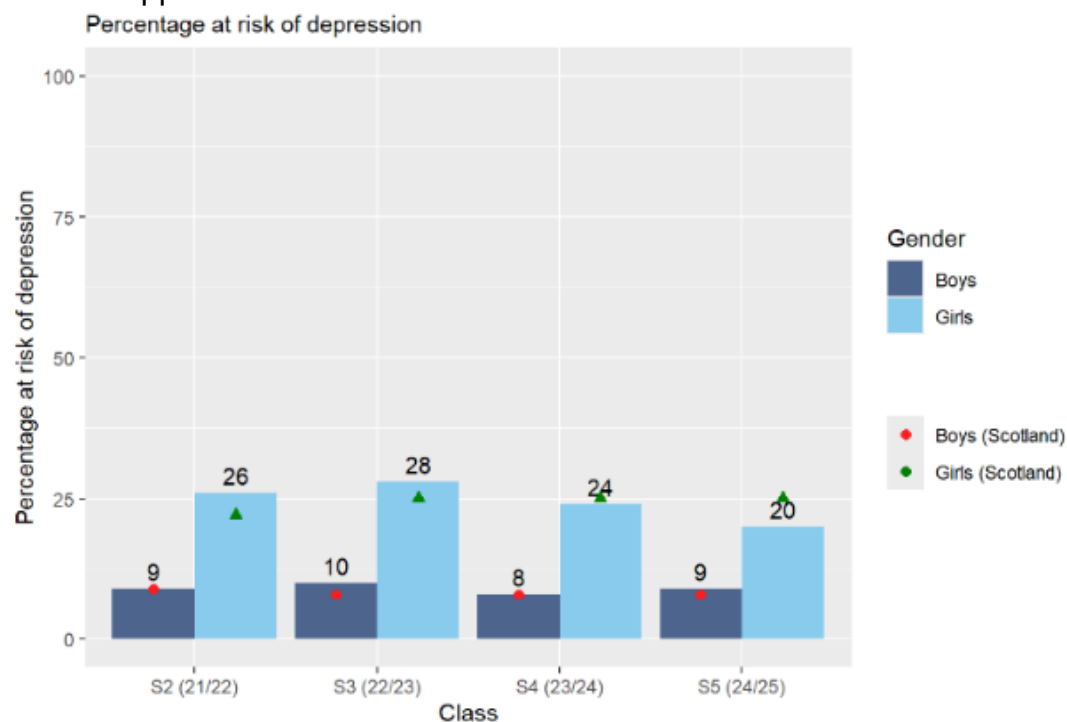
### 3.6 Cohort of Focus: S5 Girls (Previous S4 Girls)

In keeping with the Committee instruction, we applied a focused lens to our data to consider our current S5 girls who were identified as a cohort of focus due to their then continued poorer outcomes compared to their male peers, and the years above and below them. These girls transitioned to Secondary School during and between Covid lockdowns, this meant they did not have the opportunities normally in place for successful Primary to Secondary transitions. They did not have visits to school, the opportunities for small group working and chances to get to know their teaching staff, nor their support links in guidance. Once they transitioned to Secondary school, they were not able to access school groups whether sports, arts, drama or humanities clubs, as these were not allowed to be in place. Moreover, social distancing and bubbles were in place. This meant less contact and interaction with their peers. Research into Teenage Brain Development tells us that social connectivity is typically more important for teenage girls than boys, and that at this stage of development social interactions matter more for girls. To explore the positive outcomes in more detail, an explorative case study was carried out with a secondary school to discover the approaches that lay behind their positive data.

3.7 Within Appendix A you can see that the outcomes for our current S5 girls, our cohort of focus, have improved. We are really pleased to see this. The areas of improvement include:

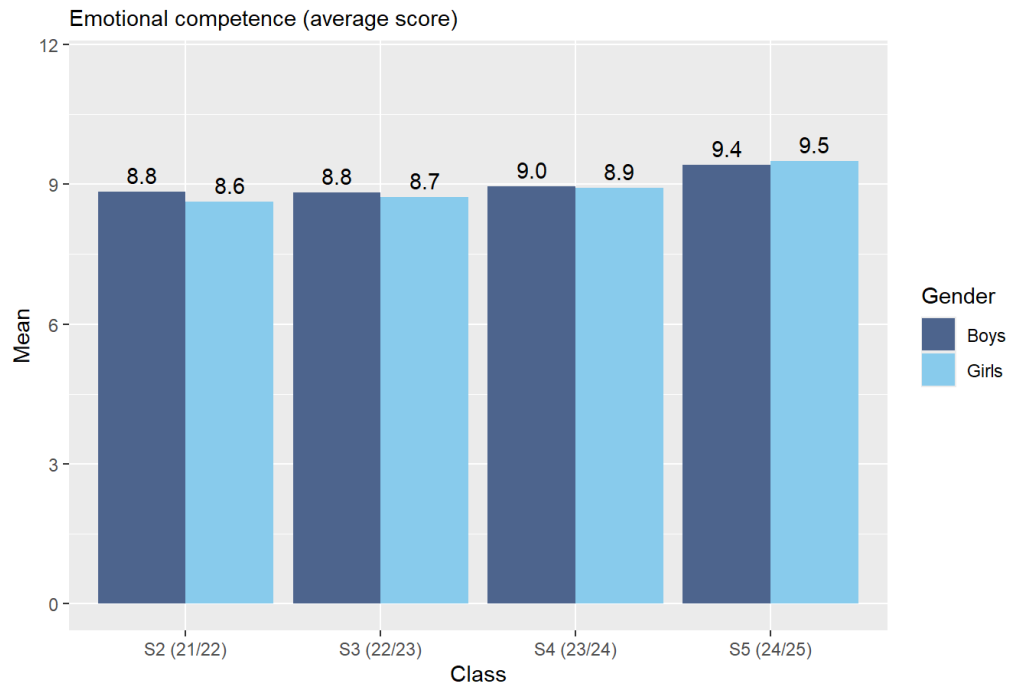
- General health
- Emotional Competencies
- Loneliness
- Risk of Depression
- Belief in Self
- Liking School
- Belief in school support

3.8 The following graphs show the progression made for this cohort compared to previous years with the graph to the right showing the progress in lowering the reported risk of depression for this cohort. You can see how our cohort of focus

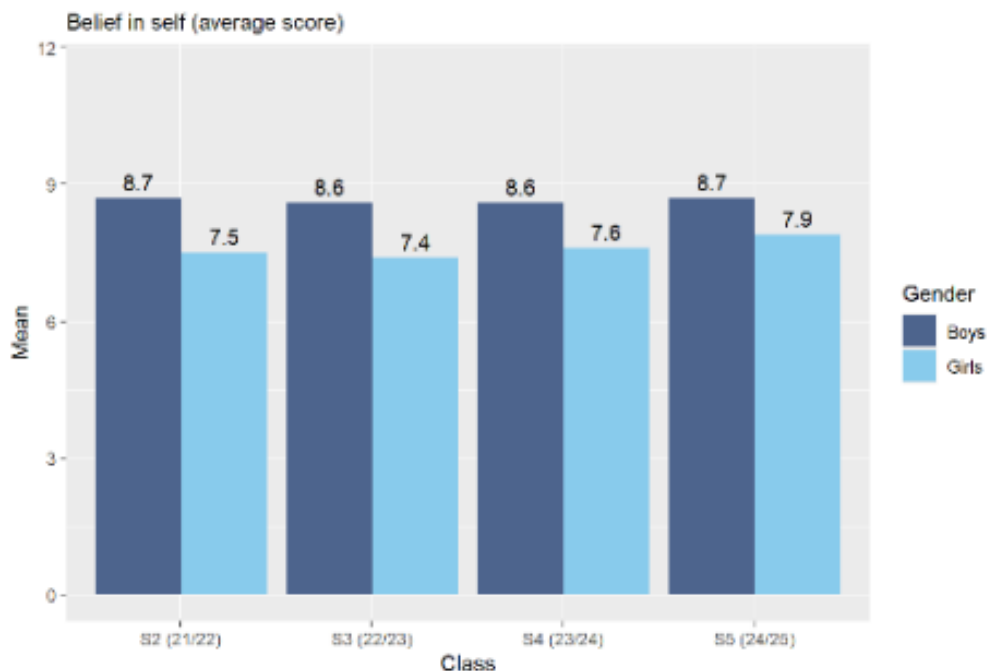


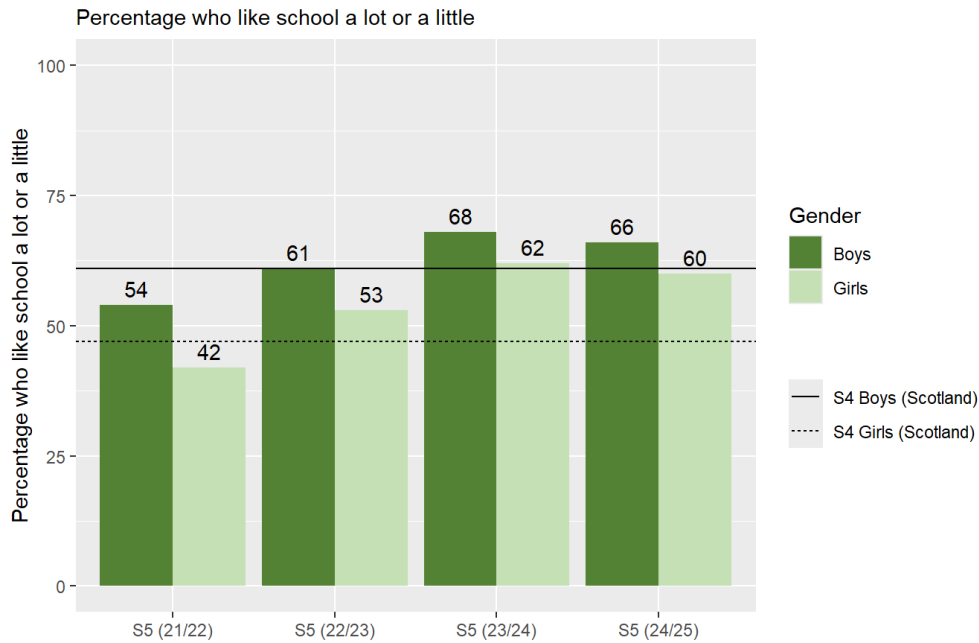
were originally higher than the Scottish Comparators but are now below that level (the green triangles).

3.9 Emotional competency is higher now in S5 than in S2 to S4 and compared to the reporting of previous S5s. Emotional competency is a positive mental health determinant. Higher scores signify better outcomes for learners.



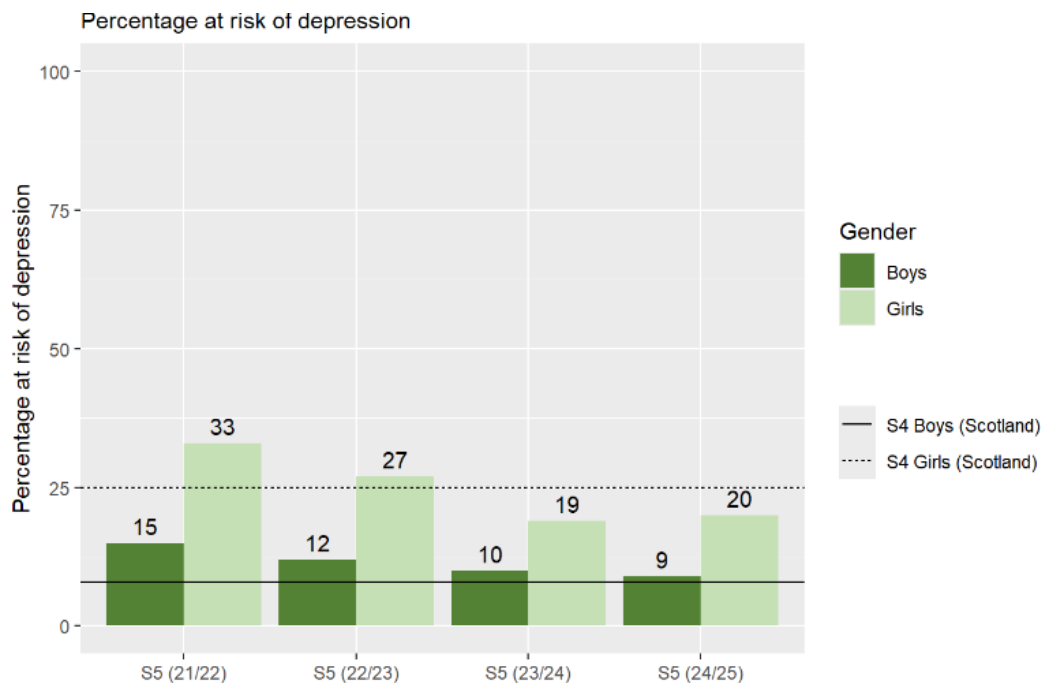
3.10 The graph in blue below shows Belief in Self. This is a protective mental health measure made up of the average scores in the subdomains of self-efficacy, self-awareness and persistence, which when added together, create an overall score of belief in self. You can see how our cohort of focus have improved in this domain, especially over the last year.

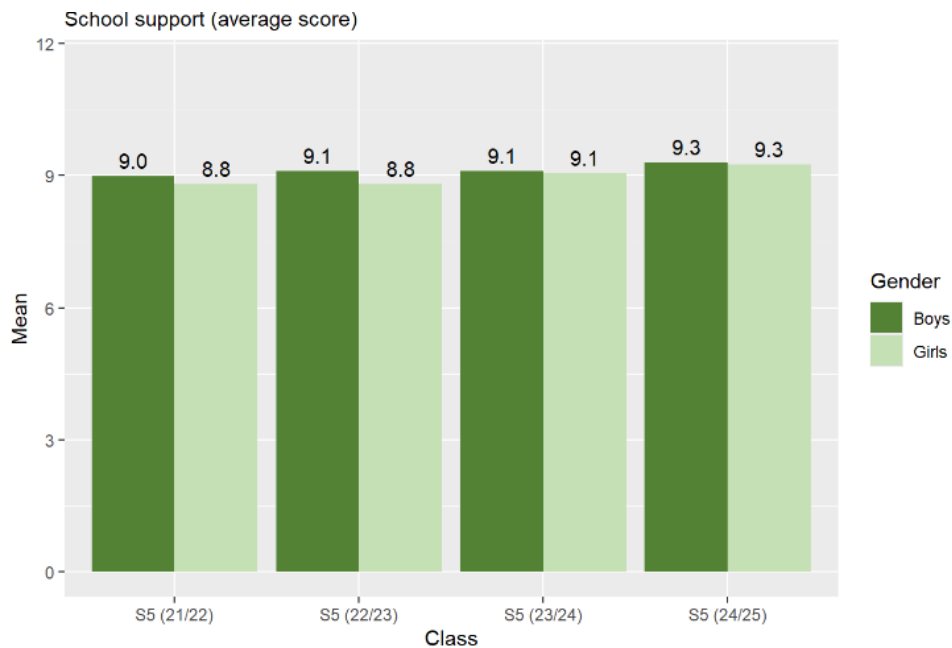




3.11 The graph above in green shows that more girls report liking school now in S5 than when they were in S2 to S4. This is more than previous S5s and we can see from the line, more than the national average.

3.12 The following graphs show the progression made for this cohort in comparison to previous S5 cohorts. You can see from the chart on the left below that our current S5 cohort are reporting lower risk of depression than our first 2 cohorts of S5 pupils surveyed under Shine. We can also see that the gender gap has reduced for this cohort in this important area too.





3.13 The graph above on the right shows us that the average score for school support has increased for our current S5 cohort compared to previous cohorts. Again the gender gap has decreased for these cohorts.

3.14 Although we are seeing overwhelming progress for this cohort, there are a couple of areas we need to give focus to. Areas still requiring consideration for our cohort of focus:

- 'Feeling pressured by schoolwork'
- 'Emotional Symptoms' & 'Hyperactivity' within the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire
- Risk of Low Mood, although this has come down for our S5 girls compared to their previous years' reporting, it is still higher than the reporting for other stages this year

3.15 Insight from the Secondary Schools in relation to the factors that allowed them to have a positive impact on the current S5 girls include:

- Strong leadership, and strong wider leadership structures and clear roles and remits
- Knowing their own unique context, learners and their families and addressing key areas for them – use school based and the Shine and Physical Health and Wellbeing Surveys data
- Targeting Attainment, and making mental health and wellbeing connected and part of this, rather than a separate focus. Integrating wellbeing into learning, teaching and assessment
- Invest in the capacity of staff, to build their skills and understanding in learning, teaching and assessment and the role they play on factors of mental health and wellbeing
- Making it a whole school approach, not just a 'Support for Learning' or Guidance responsibility
- Starting with universal supports, especially universal teaching and supports – to reduce stress, low sense of self as learners, and lack of confidence
- Engage learners in meaningful consultation and collaboration

- Support the learners to become leaders of learning and empowerment approaches, so programmes designed in collaboration with themselves, they then deliver to, or support others to deliver to other learners
- Developing understanding of families, through collaboration and connection

3.16 This local insight clearly correlates with the best practice laid out in Scottish Government's 2021's "Whole School Approach Framework for Schools to Support Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing". This framework draws together factors for successfully supporting mental health and wellbeing across a whole setting, and with full engagement and connection to the wider school community. It proposes that positive mental health and wellbeing is integral to a school support model and that a piecemeal approach to address mental health and wellbeing will not work. The Eight Principles will continue to be considered by the service and are detailed in the diagram below:

<b>E. Eight principles of a whole school approach to support mental health and wellbeing</b>	
1. Leadership and management that supports mental health and wellbeing across the school	
2. An ethos and environment that promotes positive and respectful relationships and values diversity	
3. Effective curriculum and learning and teaching to promote resilience and support mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing and learning	
4. Enabling children and young people's voices and participation to influence decisions	
5. Supporting staff professional learning and development in order to ensure their own and others' wellbeing	
6. Identifying need and monitoring impact of interventions	
8. Targeted support and appropriate pathways to the right support	

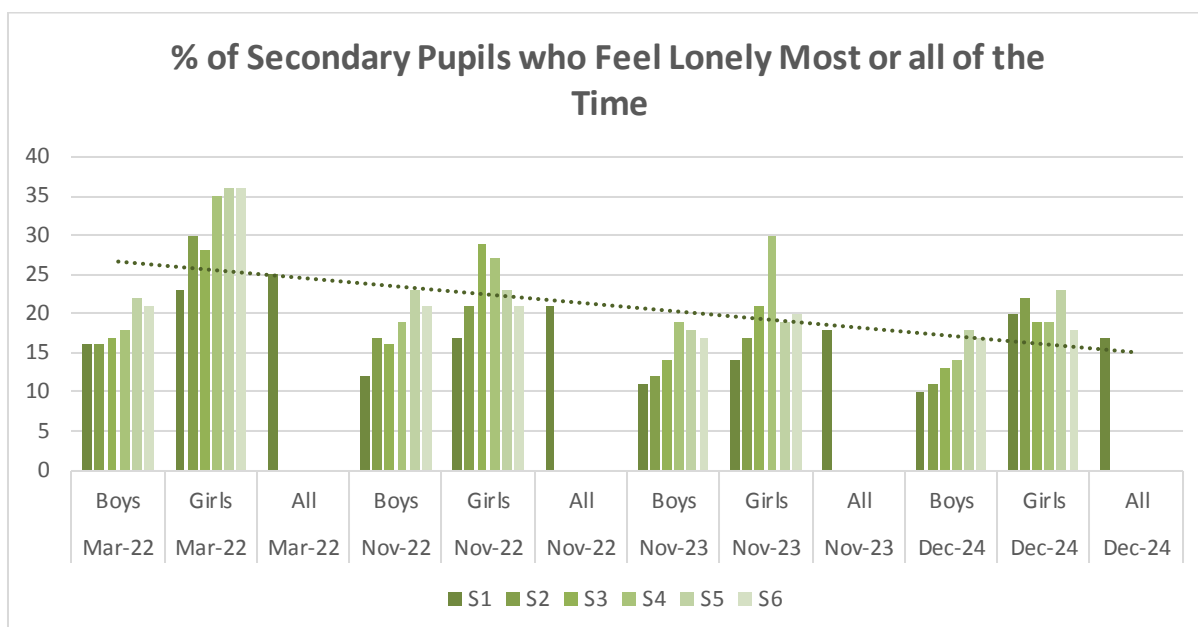
### 3.17 **Factors that can lower Risk of Suicide**

The Children's Services Plan Annual Report highlights an area of concern, younger adults at increased risk of suicide. At April's Education and Children's Services Committee it was agreed that the service should consider this further in relation to the data within the Shine Mental Health and Wellbeing measures.

3.18 Certain mental health and wellbeing measures can be considered risk or protective factors as part of the highly complex picture and pattern of death by suicide. Some indicators that are viewed as being involved would be ratings of:

- Loneliness
- Optimism
- Risk of depression
- Increased emotional competence

3.19 All these measures have shown continued improvements for us in our data again this year. Especially loneliness, risk of depression and low mood, which all have lower reported scores. This is encouraging, but our on-going consideration of this area, within the content of Children's Services Planning, will continue.



- 3.20 Scottish Government's document, ["Time Space Compassion: Supporting People Experiencing Suicidal Crisis"](#) highlights some key interventions being trialled by NHS Trusts and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector organisations. Distress Brief Intervention (DBI) Scotland is highlighted and this intervention continues to be offered in our schools.
- 3.21 Other integral aspects includes the importance of genuine listening and connections, and again many Aberdeen City Council support offers focus on a sense of belonging as being fundamental to successful support for learners. Additionally, the need for practitioners to be trauma-aware and informed in their approaches when working with learners and their families is thought to be key.
- 3.22 Our continued work on trauma and nurture will support the service to be as suicide preventative in our approaches as possible and we will continue to monitor new publications of emerging learning to strengthen our arrangements. We will continue to be responsive to events across our school communities, as well as utilising materials coming from the Local Government's Working Group on Mental Health. SAMH currently are working with five Aberdeen City schools to assist their work in this area. School staff across the city have been trained as Mental Health First Aiders, and settings continue to work with a variety of third sector partners who offer support and advice around suicide prevention. Schools can request a Systemic Early Intervention Consultation at any point with their locality EPS in relation to suicide prevention, personal and social education curriculum, or to consider their Shine data more carefully.
- 3.23 School leaders have access to Associated School Group (ASG) Shine reports and their physical health and wellbeing survey data through a PowerBI dashboard to help illustrate local trends over the last 3 years. This trend data is enabling individual schools and ASG partnerships to identify positive changes and areas for inclusion in School Improvement Plans for 2025/26. Officers in the Quality Improvement Team, and the Educational Psychology Service are there to support schools in their data exploration, support planning, or building capacity. Some school communities are working together within their Associated Secondary Group's (ASGs) to address challenges and trends they



see across their contexts, or to promote and develop positive factors of mental health and wellbeing.

- 3.24 The report and data available in Appendix A will be tabled with the Children's Services Board and used to inform delivery of year 3 of the established Children's Services Plan. It will also be considered as the National Improvement Framework Plan for 2025-26 is being developed and as priorities for inclusion in the Next Local Outcome Improvement Plan are being considered.

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

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

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 provides that children's services should be provided in a way which best safeguards, supports or promotes the wellbeing of children; ensures that any action to meet needs is taken at the earliest appropriate time and that, where appropriate, action is taken to prevent needs arising; is most integrated from the point of view of the recipients; and constitutes the best use of available resources.
- 5.2 The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 places a duty on Education Authorities to secure that education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential and in carrying out this duty to have due regard to the views of children and young people.
- 5.3 The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 places a duty on the Authority to make adequate and efficient provision for supporting children and young people with additional support needs.
- 5.4 The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the Authority to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not and to take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
- 5.5 The ingathering of data from the surveys undertaken and the proposed steps to address the findings of these surveys will assist the Authority to implement these duties more effectively.

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Only positive environmental impacts have been identified. On-going promotion of pupil voice and their participation in decision making will help develop citizens who consider environmental implications in later life.

## 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Risk of not improving outcomes for children and young people	Data gathered from the wellbeing surveys and the work in schools in response to this is tailored to meet the needs of children and young people at a local level, thereby reducing some risk.	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	No significant risks identified			
<b>Operational</b>	Staff are overwhelmed, which leads to low morale as staff feel unable to meet the educational and well-being needs of young people.	Staff wellbeing surveys are undertaken which help us to understand their needs and respond with an ongoing commitment to delivering support and high-quality professional learning for all.	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	Risk of not having sufficient resource.	Ongoing consideration of a multi-agency approach to service delivery and resource, ensures the right support from the right place is timely and we have a more joined up process for children and families.	L	Yes
<b>Reputational</b>	Where single agency support is in place for children and	Data scrutiny, reporting and strong partnerships enable	L	Yes

	young people to meet their physical and mental wellbeing needs we are unlikely to meet these needs, causing a reputational risk to the organisation.	us to enhance the Council's reputation for strong collaborative and solution focused working.		
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No significant risks identified			

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u></b>	
<b><u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u></b>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcome (Children & Young People)	<p>The detail within this report supports the delivery of Children &amp; Young People Stretch Outcomes 4 to 9 in the refreshed LOIP. This includes the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase to 80%, the number of staff who feel confident about how to directly support, or refer a child for support, and signpost to appropriate services by 2022.</li> <li>• 100% of schools offer sustainable and equitable access to counselling for those children aged 10 and above who require it by 2022.</li> <li>• The number of children and young people with an eating disorder who are identified within 3 months of onset is increased by 50% by 2023.</li> <li>• Increase by 80% the use of digital wellbeing resources for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing by 2022.</li> <li>• 100% of children and young people have free access to physical activity which improves mental health and wellbeing by 2022</li> <li>• Increase the number of care experienced young people by 10% receiving multiagency throughcare/aftercare support by 2023</li> <li>• Increase number of young people who need support in relation to trauma and bereavement having access to such support by 50% by 2023.</li> </ul>
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase % of people who walk as one mode of travel by 10% by 2023.</li> <li>• Increase % of people who cycle as one mode of travel by 2% by 2023.</li> <li>• Increase the number of community run green spaces by a minimum of 8 that are organised</li> </ul>

	and self-managed for both people and nature by 2023.
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b> Regional Cultural Strategy Prevention Strategy Children's Services Plan National Improvement Framework Plan	The universal provision of education is fully aligned to the Prevention Strategy and a key partner to the Children's Services Plan.

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Shona Milne, Chief Education Officer on 16/05/25
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	None

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## 11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – ACC Health & Wellbeing Survey Analysis (April 2024)  
Appendix B

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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# Appendix A: Health & Wellbeing Survey Analysis

April 2025



## Approach

This report provides an overview of the insight from our analysis of health and wellbeing data gathered at the end of 2024 compared to that gathered in November 2023, November 2022, and March 2022. This report provides the beginnings of trend data over 4 points between March 2022 and December 2024. Officers have compared year group survey responses to those from previous years in order to continue to determine if the actions taken to date have positively impacted pupil wellbeing. Comparisons with national data sets have been made where possible. Please note, current data is included in **bold**, last year's in plain, November 22 in plain, and March 22 in *italics*.

The surveys undertaken are anonymous (which prohibits matching to SIMD profile), therefore, the Family Affluence Scale (FAS) has been used. The FAS asks questions about material assets with the answers given, summed to create an overall score to enable analysis. Young people who didn't want to respond to particular questions were able to disregard them and **606 (17.5%)** of primary school pupils and **895 (16.8%)** of secondary school pupils are not included in the analysis by family affluence due to incomplete responses. This is thought to be a sufficiently high response rate to have confidence in the insights gleaned.

Gender can be a strong influence on mental health and wellbeing outcomes. Girls (from the onset of puberty) self-report higher emotional difficulties than boys whilst boys are more likely to exhibit behavioural traits. National data also shows that those who are transgender or non-binary are more likely to report adverse health outcomes as a result of 'minority stress' and exposure to stigma and discrimination. **75 (2.8%)** primary and **217 (2.2%)** secondary pupils chose not to record or disclose their gender when asked (this is a reduction in percentages on last year). We cannot make assumptions about the reasons for pupils selecting 'In another way/Prefer not to say'. Not disclosing gender could indicate that some young people did not see the relevance of the question and chose to disregard it, or that a young person may identify as being transgender (identify as a gender different to their sex at birth). This may also indicate young people who identify as being non-binary (those that do not or do not fully identify as either male or female), thought the question was irrelevant or a range of other potential scenarios.

## Background

During December 2024, **9,924** children and young people from P6-S6 (3471 Primary, 6453 Secondary) completed the Mental Health & Wellbeing Survey developed by the Scottish Schools Health and Wellbeing Improvement Research Network (SHINE), this was a slightly lower return rate than the previous year (10,382, 9803, 9431). In real terms this means that we have returns from **65%** of all pupils from P6 to S6 with a higher proportion of returns as

expected from younger year groups. The Primary 6 and Secondary 4 returns increased this year compared to previous years. SHINE had to delay the start of the survey this year, due to their data platforms being upgraded, this could have impacted on Schools' ability to carry out the data collection due to it being closer to end of term and the end of the calendar year with an increase in associated activities.

Year group	% of returns March 2022	% of returns November 2022	% of returns November 2023	% of returns December 2024
P6	81%	81%	80%	85%
P7	80%	85%	86%	74%
S1	67%	77%	68%	63%
S2	64%	68%	68%	59%
S3	72%	64%	63%	63%
S4	46%	49%	58%	61%
S5	44%	43%	56%	55%
S6	41%	42%	50%	43%

Note: this Table column from 2024, does not include those pupils who did not provide their year group (n=4 in primary and n=53 in secondary)

The response rates means that the confidence level exceeds 95% for respondents. As a result, we can have confidence in the data.

Children and young people from P5-S6 also had the opportunity to undertake a Physical Health & Wellbeing survey developed by the Local Authority. Questions within this were drawn from previous local surveys, national lines of enquiry and the clarification sought to support effective local planning based on the working knowledge of school leaders. **8916** pupils completed this survey in November/December 2023, an increase of 1923 from the previous year. There is a full section looking at this data within this appendix following the SHINE analysis.

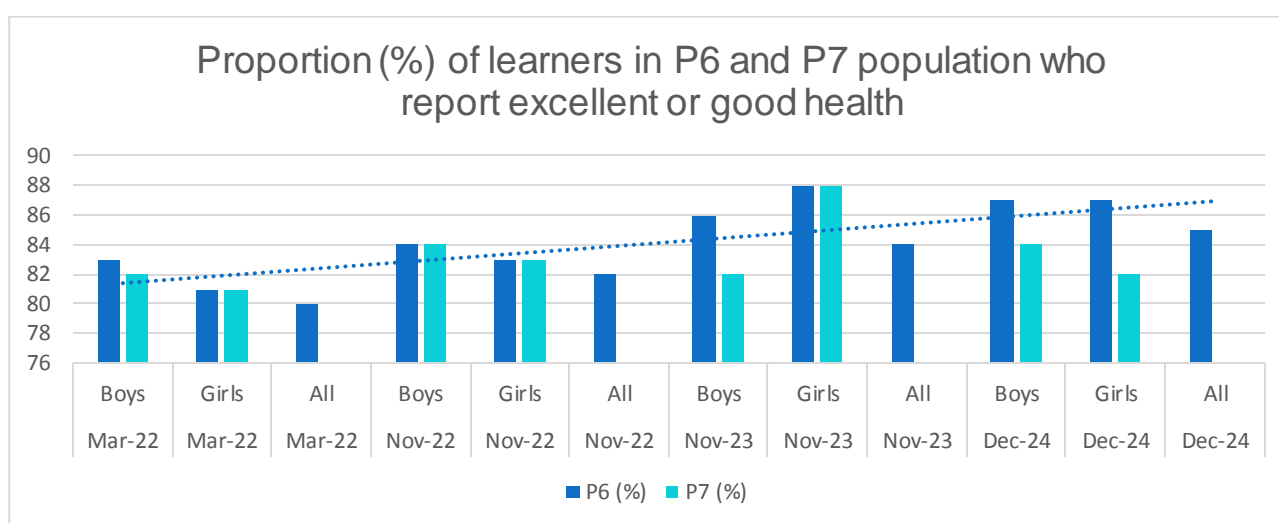
The analysis of both surveys provides an opportunity to reflect on our current approaches and identify appropriate next steps to address emerging health needs. This report will be shared with key partners so that it can be used to inform work in delivering against the Children's Services Plan 2023-26 and will be considered as the National Improvement Framework Plan for 2025-26 is being developed.

## SHINE Mental Health Survey results - Primary 6 & 7

**4220** (3561) pupils from P6 and P7 completed this survey with **87 pupils** not providing details of their gender and **51** (48) pupils not identifying their year group.

Young people were asked about their happiness with eleven aspects of life including family, friendships, school, appearance, future, and life overall.

**85%, 3587** (84%, 2991; 82%, 2897; 80%, 2616) of learners in primary 6 and 7 who responded, reported that their health was excellent or good. The proportion of pupils self-reporting Excellent Health in particular has increased consistently over time and more noticeably for girls.



Based on Scottish Government data reports from February 2023, which is still the most recent health census data, the Scottish average for excellent and good health in P6/7 is 78.4% compared to the Local P6 & 7 average of **85%**. As a result, local data exceeds the Scottish average and suggests that we are taking appropriate steps to mitigate risk and improve pupil health and wellbeing.

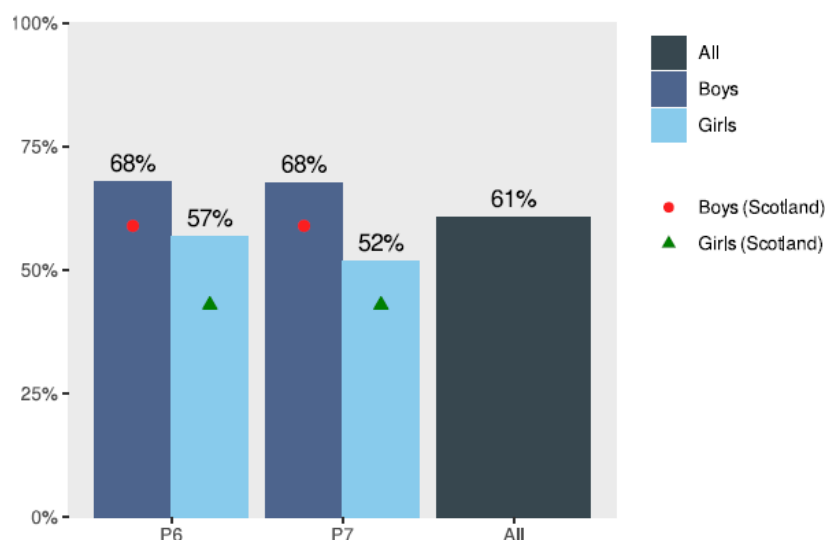
Across general health, we continue to see a consistent positive improvement in outcomes. Those in the low family affluence group, however, continue to be more likely to report a range of negative outcomes across nearly all the measures within the survey. This is also seen nationally in the Scottish Government Data and in the health outcomes of adults living in areas of deprivation. This needs to continue to be considered carefully as we work across all departments within the council to address the poverty related attainment and health gap.

Family affluence – General Health			
Primary pupils	Low	Medium	High
% Excellent or good health	<b>80</b> (77, 73, 72)	<b>85</b> (85, 83, 81)	<b>93</b> (92, 89, 84)

% Feeling always or often confident	<b>51</b> (53, 49, 45)	<b>63</b> (62, 58, 55)	<b>69</b> (72, 66, 57)
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**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

We have seen dips in confidence levels in both low and high affluence groups for Primary aged pupils this year. We can see from the table regarding gender breakdowns that this reduction in confidence reporting has been seen in girls and our 'did not disclose' gender group. But our confidence levels remain much higher than the Shine National Comparators.



Amongst both primary and secondary school pupils, those young people who did not disclose their gender remain more likely to report a range of negative outcomes and feelings across nearly all measures, although improvement is evident from last year. We continue to work with schools and partner organisations to address any emerging patterns from this data and other data sets regarding gender.

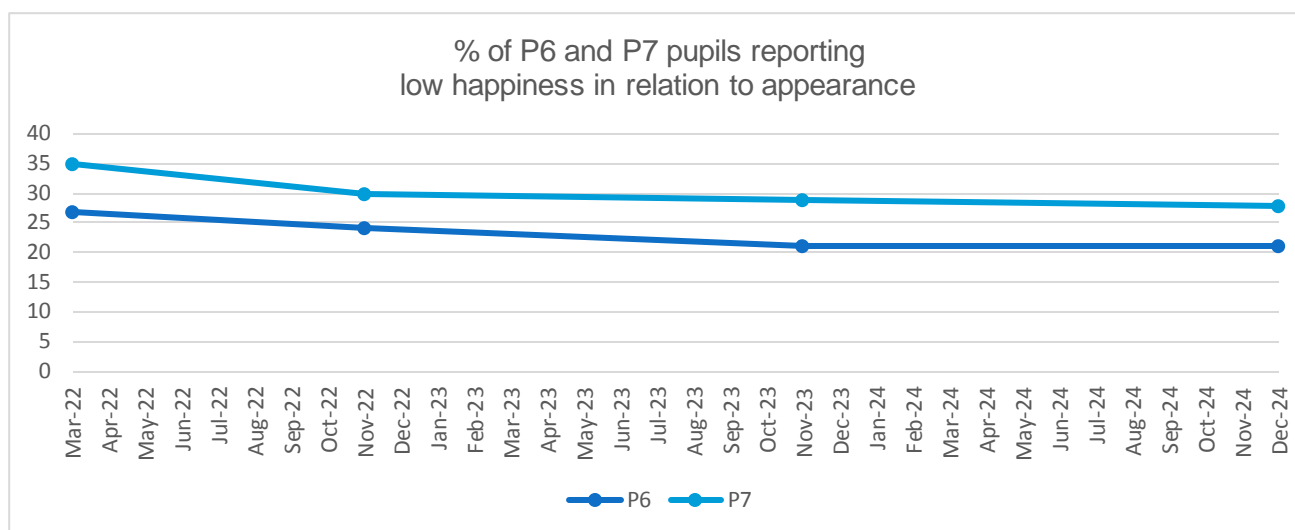
Gender – General Health			
Primary pupils	Boy	Girl	Did not disclose
% Excellent or good health	<b>86</b> (85, 82, 82)	<b>85</b> (85, 84, 81)	<b>71</b> (66, 61, 50)
% Feel always and often confident	<b>68</b> (68, 65, 61)	<b>54</b> (56, 50, 45)	<b>38</b> (32, 27, 26)

**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

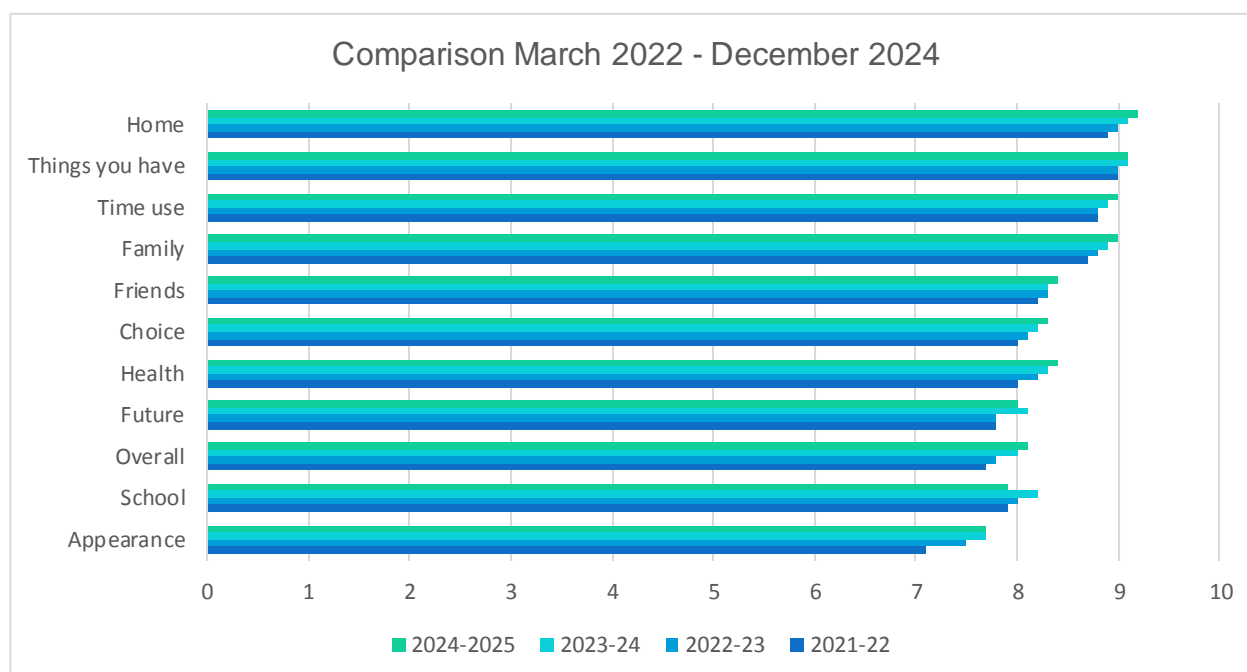
## Happiness

Learners were asked to rate how happy they are with various aspects of their life. Response options ranged from 0 to 10, where 0 means 'very unhappy', 5 means 'neither happy nor unhappy' and 10 means 'very happy'. Similar to the previous year, on the whole boys were slightly more positive than girls, however, this was the opposite when asked specifically about school. This is broadly to be expected given what we know about how young people grow and develop and are impacted by puberty.





Across P6 and P7, learners were positive about many aspects of their lives. We have seen a decrease in the number of learners reporting low happiness in relation to their appearance from our baseline which is positive. However, across both age groups and gender categories, 'Appearance' was still lower than other aspects, with **21%** (21%, 24%, 27%) of P6 learners and **28%** (29, 30%, 35%) of P7 learners noting appearance as a concern.



December 2024 survey data continues the overall reduction of 5 percentage points in those concerned about appearance compared to our baseline of March 2022. This suggests that work in this area continues to have a positive impact.

Young people in the lowest family affluence group were more likely to report low levels of happiness across a range of life domains than their more affluent peers at both primary and

secondary school level. Those in the lowest group were more than twice as likely to report lower levels of happiness with life as a whole, the home they live in, choices available to them, friendships, appearance, their future than their peers in the least deprived cohort. We see an increase in low happiness reporting this year for low affluence group in regards to appearance, which has increased by 1%. There continues to be an overall reduction in the self-reporting of low happiness for those in the lowest affluence group, but this goes alongside a reduction for all, meaning the poverty gap itself isn't actually being reduced. This continues to have implications for how we work to address the poverty related attainment gap and more effectively target our interventions at those most in need. Data from Scottish Government shows this is a strong theme across Scotland and remains a focus nationally as well as being a local priority.

Family affluence – Report of low happiness			
Primary pupils	Low	Medium	High
% Life as a whole	<b>9</b> (9, 12, 13)	<b>5</b> (6, 7, 8)	4 (2, 5, 6)
% Family relationships	<b>5</b> (6, 5, 7)	<b>2</b> (3, 3, 4)	<b>2</b> (3, 1, 4)
% Home you live in	<b>5</b> (5, 5, 6)	<b>2</b> (1, 2, 3)	<b>0</b> (1, 2, 3)
% Choice in life	<b>7</b> (7, 9, 7)	<b>4</b> (5, 6, 6)	<b>3</b> (3, 4, 5)
% Friendships	<b>7</b> (9, 9, 7)	<b>4</b> (5, 5, 7)	<b>5</b> (4, 3, 5)
% Things you have	<b>3</b> (5, 3, 4)	<b>1</b> (1, 2, 2)	<b>0</b> (1, 1, <1)
% Health	<b>8</b> (8, 9, 10)	<b>4</b> (4, 6, 7)	<b>2</b> (2, 2, 5)
% Appearance	<b>20</b> (19, 19, 25)	<b>13</b> (14, 12, 16)	<b>8</b> (9, 7, 12)
% Future	<b>7</b> (10, 12, 8)	<b>4</b> (5, 7, 9)	<b>3</b> (4, 5, 5)
% School	<b>10</b> (9, 12, 11)	<b>9</b> (7, 8, 10)	<b>8</b> (6, 5, 8)
% Free time	<b>3</b> (5, 3, 4)	<b>2</b> (2, 2, 3)	<b>1</b> (1, 2, 2)

**Bold**=Dec '24, **plain**=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

Reviewing the data by gender shows that the small group of 86 who did not disclose their gender were nearly 4 times more likely to be negative about life as a whole than their peers and 6 times more likely to report poor health. There is a continued reduction in the number of those who did not disclose their gender reporting low happiness in their appearance to **39%** this year, from a baseline of 55% in March 22. This is in line with overall reduction in reporting of low happiness around appearance for all groups. This small group still has a noticeable disparity compared to other school populations, and we need to continue to carefully consider how we address this.

Apart from the category of health, there has been a reduction in the incidence of low happiness in all other life categories for the Did Not Disclose Gender group this year compared to last. This group were more than 4 times as likely to report low happiness than boys and girls in primary.

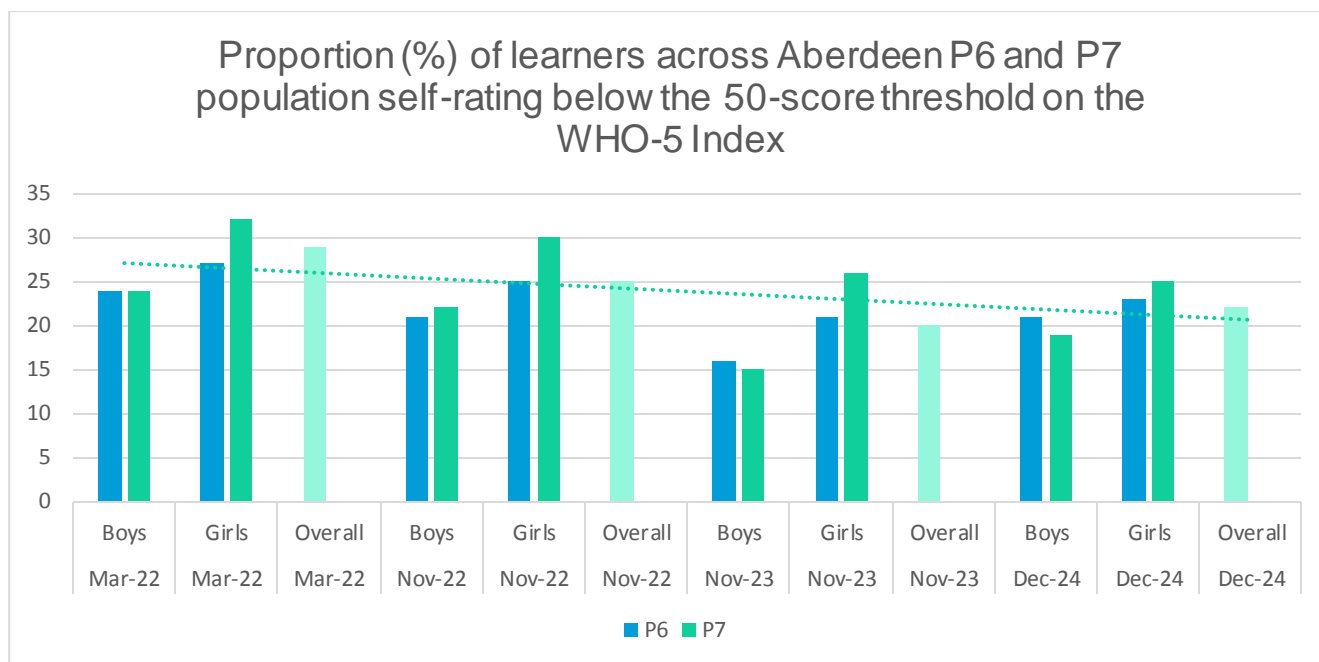
The focused consideration around self-esteem including the impact of social media has had a positive impact in reducing the high levels of low happiness in relation to appearance in

this year's return. This work will continue, and we hope to see continued further reductions in next year's survey.

**The WHO-5 Wellbeing Index is a five-item scale which provides a measure of emotional functioning. Items are summed to create a score ranging from 0 to 100. A score of 50 or less on the WHO-5 indicates low mood**

**78%** of those in Primary 6 and 7 didn't show evidence of having low mood. This is a positive increase of 7% since our baseline in March 2022 but a slight decrease of 2% from last year. This means that **22%** of learners across Aberdeen P6 and P7 population self-rated below the WHO-5 50-score threshold, indicating they have low mood. This is a positive figure and is around or *below* the Scottish average provided by Shine.

We are confident that a continuing focus on supporting the mental wellbeing of learners through counselling, LIAM (Let's Introduce Anxiety Management), DBI (Distress Brief Intervention), ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants), Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance, Trauma Informed, and Emotion Coaching approaches, is impacting positively on pupils.



Low mood was more prevalent amongst young people from the least affluent group, for example, amongst primary school children, **28%** of pupils from the low affluence group reported low mood compared with **16%** of those in the most affluent group. The difference between outcomes for those deemed to be at risk of depression was also stark with the lowest affluence group more than twice as at risk compared to those deemed the most affluent.

Family affluence – Low Mood			
Primary pupils	Low	Medium	High
% Low mood	<b>28</b> (31, 34, 34)	<b>20</b> (18, 23, 28)	<b>16</b> (11, 15, 23)

% Risk of depression	<b>10</b> (10, 11, 13)	<b>5</b> (4, 7, 8)	<b>4</b> (2, 3, 5)
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**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

Low mood also varied by gender amongst both primary and secondary school pupils with girls more likely to report low mood than boys. However, we have seen a slight increase in the number of boys reporting low mood and risk of depression. This will need to be considered next year to ensure this is just a one-off variance in the data. Those who did not disclose their gender were more than twice as likely to have low mood than their peers. Those who did not disclose were around three times as likely to report being at risk of depression. There is a reduction in this area this year, with an 11% reduction in the percentage at risk of depression.

Gender – Low Mood			
Primary pupils	Boys	Girls	Did not disclose
% Low mood	<b>20</b> (16, 22, 25)	<b>24</b> (24, 26, 30)	<b>45</b> (51, 51, 59)
% Risk of depression	<b>6</b> (4, 7, 8)	<b>7</b> (8, 7, 9)	<b>17</b> (28, 15, 21)

**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

## Emotional and Behavioural scale

There continues to be a higher percentage of girls than boys showing elevated responses within the Emotional Scale, in P6, **37%** (35, 41%, *44%*) and in P7, **35%**, (38, 42%, *44%*) (compared to boys **19%** and **22%**). This is an improvement of **7%** and **9%** since March 2022. Whilst the responses for Behavioural aspects were similar for both boys and girls with an average **15%** (14%, 16%, 17%) of responses being elevated, similar to last year but an overall decrease from March '22. Data from Scottish Government also shows a gender bias; national data shows mental wellbeing for girls to be poorer than for boys overall in Scotland. Broad alignment between local and national data continues to be observed.

Family affluence - Emotional and Behavioural scale			
Primary pupils scoring as expected	Low	Medium	High
% Emotional	<b>64</b> (62, 57, 57)	<b>72</b> (72, 67, 65)	<b>80</b> (80, 71, 69)
% Behavioural	<b>81</b> (81, 80, 78)	<b>86</b> (87, 84, 83)	<b>89</b> (89, 90, 86)

**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

Amongst primary school pupils, those who did not disclose gender were **30-40%** less likely to score “as expected” on the emotional and behavioural scales. The percentages of pupils scoring as expected in the Behavioural scale have also remained consistent with last year’s data.

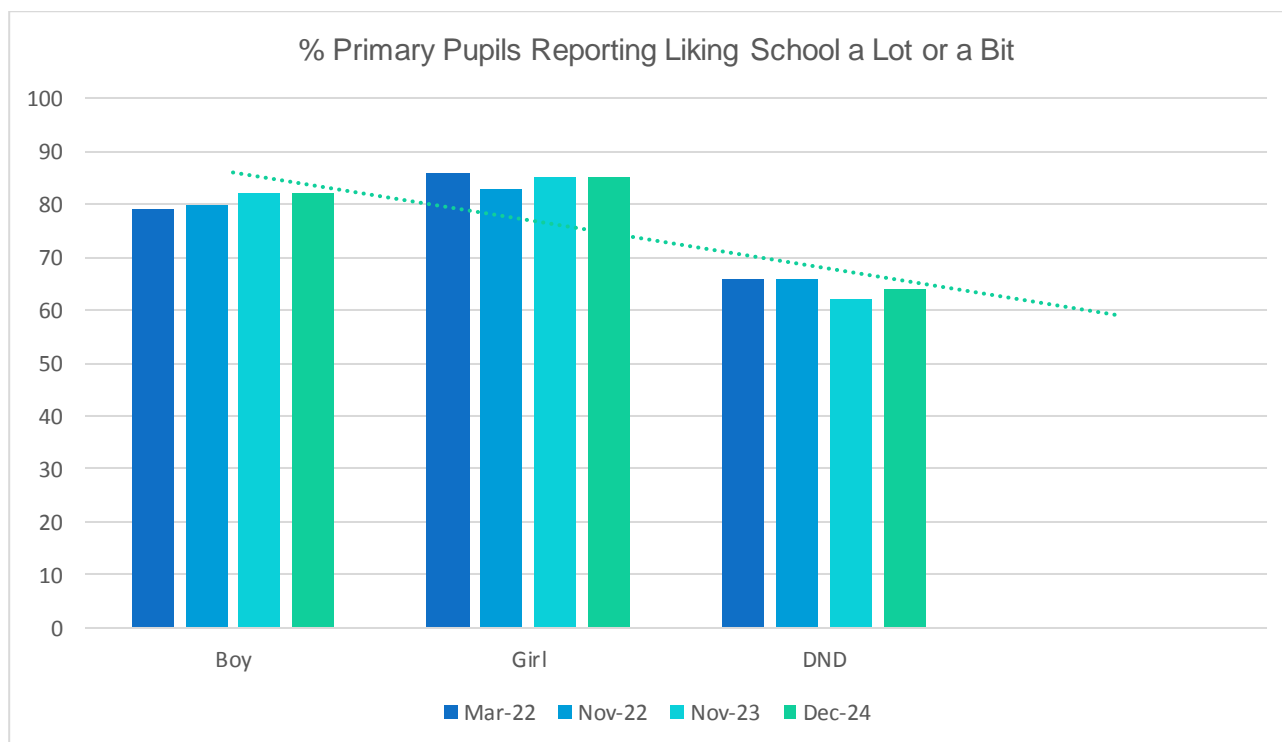
Gender - Emotional and Behavioural scale			
Primary pupils scoring as expected	Boys	Girls	Did not disclose
% Emotional	<b>80</b> (79, 73, 72)	<b>64</b> (63, 59, 56)	<b>41</b> (42, 33, 28)
% Behavioural	<b>85</b> (85, 83, 81)	<b>86</b> (87, 87, 87)	<b>65</b> (66, 66, 66)

**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

## Liking School

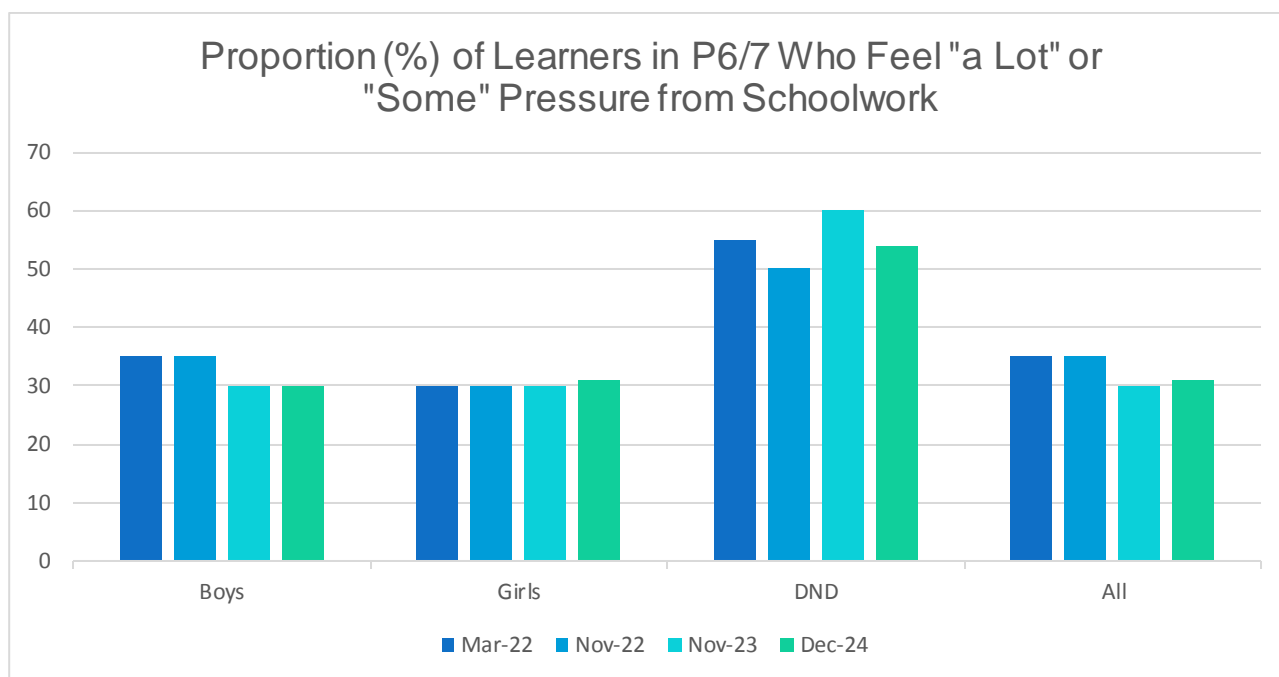
The number of P6 & 7 learners reporting that they like school shows a continued slight overall increase, **83%** (84%, 82%, 80%) who like school a bit or a lot. A trend had been observed over the data sets of girls reporting liking school more than boys in both P6 & P7.

The P6 and P7 learners who did not disclose their gender, reported the lowest levels of 'liking school a lot or a bit' compared to boys and girls with **64%** (girls **85%**, boys **82%**). Additionally, unlike boys who saw a small increase each year, and girls who kept within a range of 85, for the DND group there was an increase of **2%** this year, which has made up some of last year's 4% decrease for this group.



## Pressured by Schoolwork

Shine report the HBSC Scotland national average being the same as Aberdeen's percentages for boys, but the national average of girls feeling pressure by schoolwork is more than 5% higher than Aberdeen's **30%**.



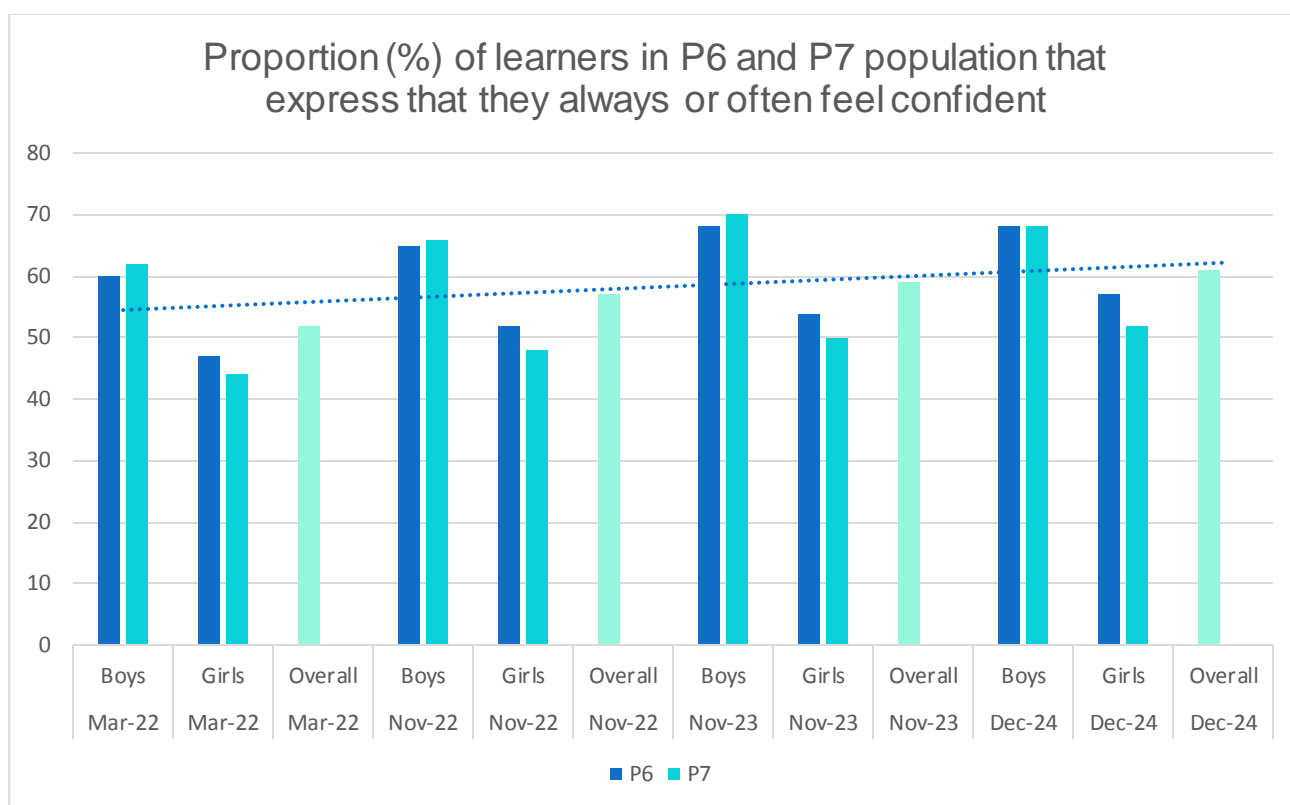
When considering gender, the proportion of learners who feel a lot or some pressure from schoolwork shows us that the figures have remained quite static. With those children who DND gender feeling the most pressure from schoolwork, compared to their peers even in Primary school. Individual schools have access to this information at a more localised level to understand if there are any particular groups most impacted.

Unlike previous years where some of the school experience data did not vary by family affluence, this year all data relating to liking school and pressurised by schoolwork showed poorer performance for low compared to high affluence.

## Self Confidence

Learners were asked about how confident they felt in themselves.

**61%** (61%, 57%, 52%) of P6 and P7 pupils stated that they always or often felt confident. This has increased year on year, with a plateau this year with the same score as last year. We are now over the Scottish Averages provided by Shine. Shine compares our data to HBSC National data for Scotland. This shows around **10%** more of our P6&7 learners continue to rate their confidence positively compared to national reporting.



Overall, reported confidence levels between March '22 to December '24 data sets reflect statistically meaningful improvement by gender and phase, resulting in a seen increase in self-reported confidence levels among all pupils and higher than the Scottish comparison.

Scottish data for all school stages for 'feeling always or often confident' shows a strong gender difference with girls reporting lower confidence levels than boys. Overall, the percentage for our primary pupils who DND their gender reported **23** points less confidence levels than the median percentage (**38** compared to **61**). Although this discrepancy remains higher than we would like there are signs that this has decreased, from a difference of 35% in March '22, 30% in November '22 & 28% in November '23.

In terms of Family Affluence, the lowest to the highest groups had a difference of **18** in percentage of Primary 6/7 children reporting 'feeling always or often confident' (**51** to **69**). This difference had been gradually increasing, 12 in March 22, 17 in Nov 22, 19 in November 23 but reduced by 1 to 18 this year.

**The Social Emotional Health Survey (SEHS) measures different aspects of a child's social and emotional wellbeing: Gratitude, Zest, Persistence and Optimism. All these aspects are positive character traits and are linked to having more positive mental health and greater school engagement.**

**Gratitude** is associated with increased life satisfaction and social interaction including perception of support and providing support to others as well as academic achievement.

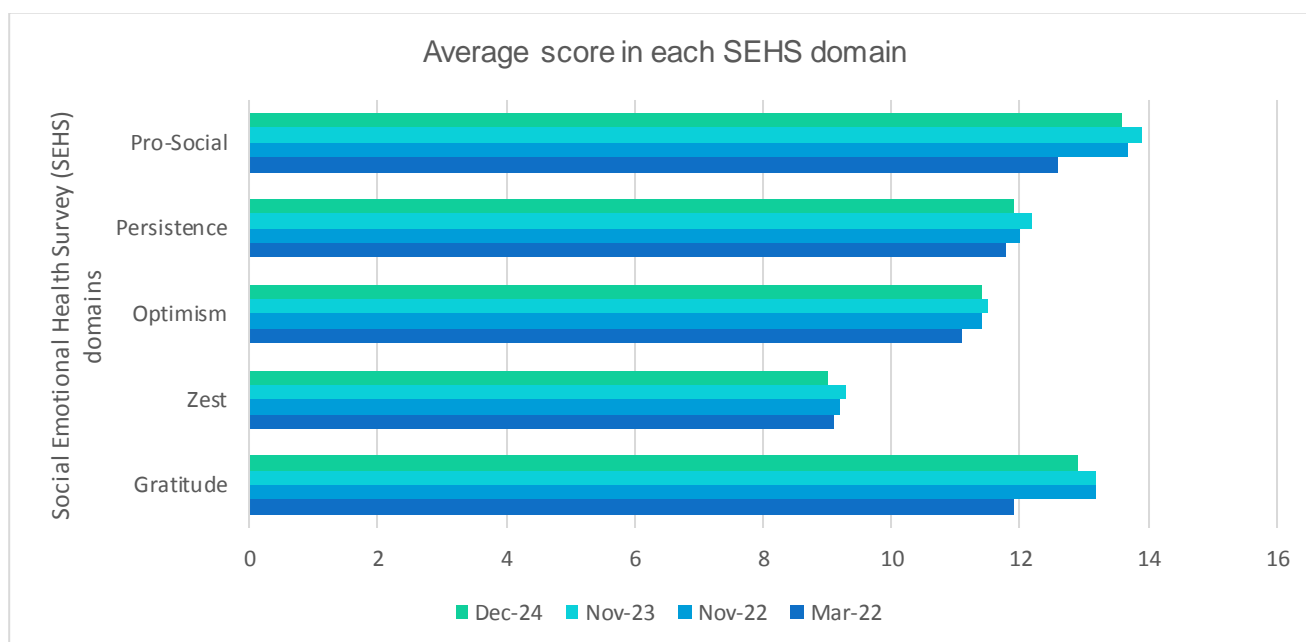
**Optimism** is associated with greater interest in school, persistence and coping as well as more positive social relationships.

**Zest** has a positive association with relationships with others, improved emotional wellbeing and autonomy.

**Persistence** has been shown to increase learning, mediating the relationship between motivation and performance.

The co-occurrence of multiple positive psychological traits from these 4 areas is called (covitality) they are associated with increased resilience, pro-social behaviour, school engagement (which is a key determinant in school attendance) and satisfaction.

The responses to this section of the survey provide scores out of 16 within these four domains and then are collated to create an overall *covitality* score, out of 64.

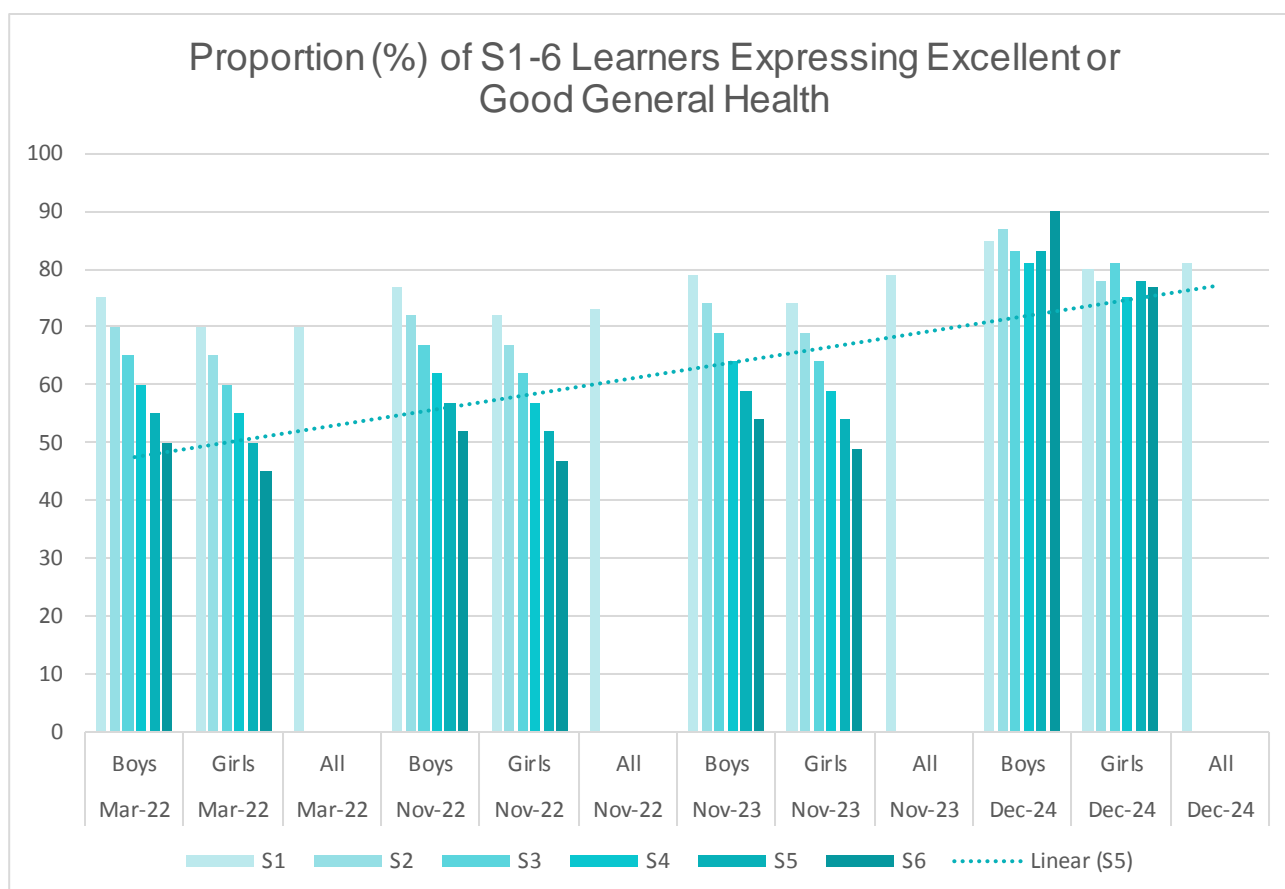


Across gender groups and year groups, responses since March 22 have continued to gradually increase across all aspects, showing a positive picture for all. Increasing the overall pro-social scores of both boys and girls. This year we have seen a slight dip in our primary scores in this area. For the overall positive mental health score for primary pupils (“covitality”) those who did not disclose gender had the lowest score (**45.3** boys/**45.6** girls versus **40.2** DND) and there continues to be no significant difference between boys and girls.



## SHINE Mental Health Survey(Secondary 1-6)

**6453 (72%)** (62% 6686; 59% 6270; 60% 5914) of learners from S1-S6 completed the secondary survey with **173** (207, 292, 237) learners choosing not to provide details of their gender and **53** (29, 98, 93) learners not identifying their year group.



The data suggests that boys continue to be more confident about their general health.

The percentage of both male and female learners across secondary stages that state that their general health is Excellent or Good has increased by **2%** from 79% to **81%**. However, this continues to be slightly lower than the levels reported by children at the primary stage.

For both boys and girls, there is an appreciable increase in self-reported general health between survey points with the whole cohort outcome rising again to **81%** from 79% (73% baseline).

Gains can be observed across Secondary, with a reduction in the gap of positive reporting between boys and girls. The Scottish comparison data provided by SHINE shows that ACC data tracks to around the same percentages. This year there is no exception for our current S5 girls, who were previously well below the Scottish comparator by about 9 data points and are now just above the Scottish comparator. Previously there was over a 12% negative differential seen by this cohort compared to our average, this year this has reduced by 9 data points to a 3% difference. This cohort is a focus cohort given their low reporting in previous data sets. They will be highlighted throughout this appendix. This cohort of girls

started Secondary school in the 2020-21 School year and were not able to have the usual transition processes or experiences as peers in the years above or below them.

The differential between boys and girls, although closing with each data set, continues to show a gap of **six** percentage (seven in 2023, points. The difference between the average percentage for all compared to those who DND gender is **25** although a large difference is greatly reduced from the 34 percentage points last year.

The graphs above show that self-reporting of good health is improving with each data set.

Reporting good or excellent health continues to be associated with family affluence at both primary and secondary school level, for example, **88%** of secondary pupils in the high family affluence group rated their health as good or excellent compared with **71%** of those in the low family affluence group, a difference of 17 percentage points. This has remained at the same level from last year. Although not a directly comparable measure, review of national data from 2022 (no updated figures for this year) shows a **10%** difference between the lowest and highest affluence groups. The local difference is greater suggesting a need for continued focus on this area. However, the national lowest affluence group is **2%** lower than in Aberdeen at 69.2%.

Family affluence			
Secondary pupils	Low	Medium	High
% Excellent or good health	<b>71</b> , (71, 61, 59)	<b>82</b> (79, 74, 70)	<b>88</b> (88, 81, 80)
% Feel always or often confident	<b>37</b> , (36, 34, 27)	<b>45</b> (45, 41, 35)	<b>53</b> (50, 48, 44)
% Feel lonely all or most of the time	<b>22</b> , (23, 29, 32)	<b>16</b> (16, 19, 24)	<b>11</b> , (13, 17, 19)
% Has self-harmed at least once in lifetime	<b>19</b> , (22, 25, 25)	<b>15</b> (18, 19, 23)	<b>17</b> (17, 17, 21)

**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

Young people in the low family affluence group were more likely to report lower levels of confidence at both primary and secondary school. We can see that the 2024 survey continues to show increased confidence levels across all 3 levels of Family Affluence, but the Family Affluence Scale (FAS) gap continues to not reduce.

Young people in the low family affluence group were more likely to report feeling lonely all or most of the time, compared with those in the high family affluence (**22%** versus **11%**).

The gap has reduced between affluence group in relation to reporting of self-harming at least once, reducing from a high of 8% points difference to the current 2% differential. A reduction of 6%.

Girls continue to be consistently more likely to report more negative outcomes than boys, with greater differences between boys and girls continuing amongst secondary pupils. Improvements are observed or sustained, for girls across the four areas.

Prevalence of self-harming varied by gender, with four in ten (**40% n=69**) of those who did not disclose their gender reporting that they had self-harmed at least once in their lifetime, compared with **17%** of girls and **13%** of boys. We did see a reduction for both boys and girls of **3%** in terms of self-harming. This area will continue to require careful consideration by the Mental Health Improvement Collaborative. A Scottish Government Strategy for Self-Harm has been published and has been shared with all schools. Training from Penumbra the official Scottish Government training partner on Self-Harm, is now offered nationally and shared with all settings.

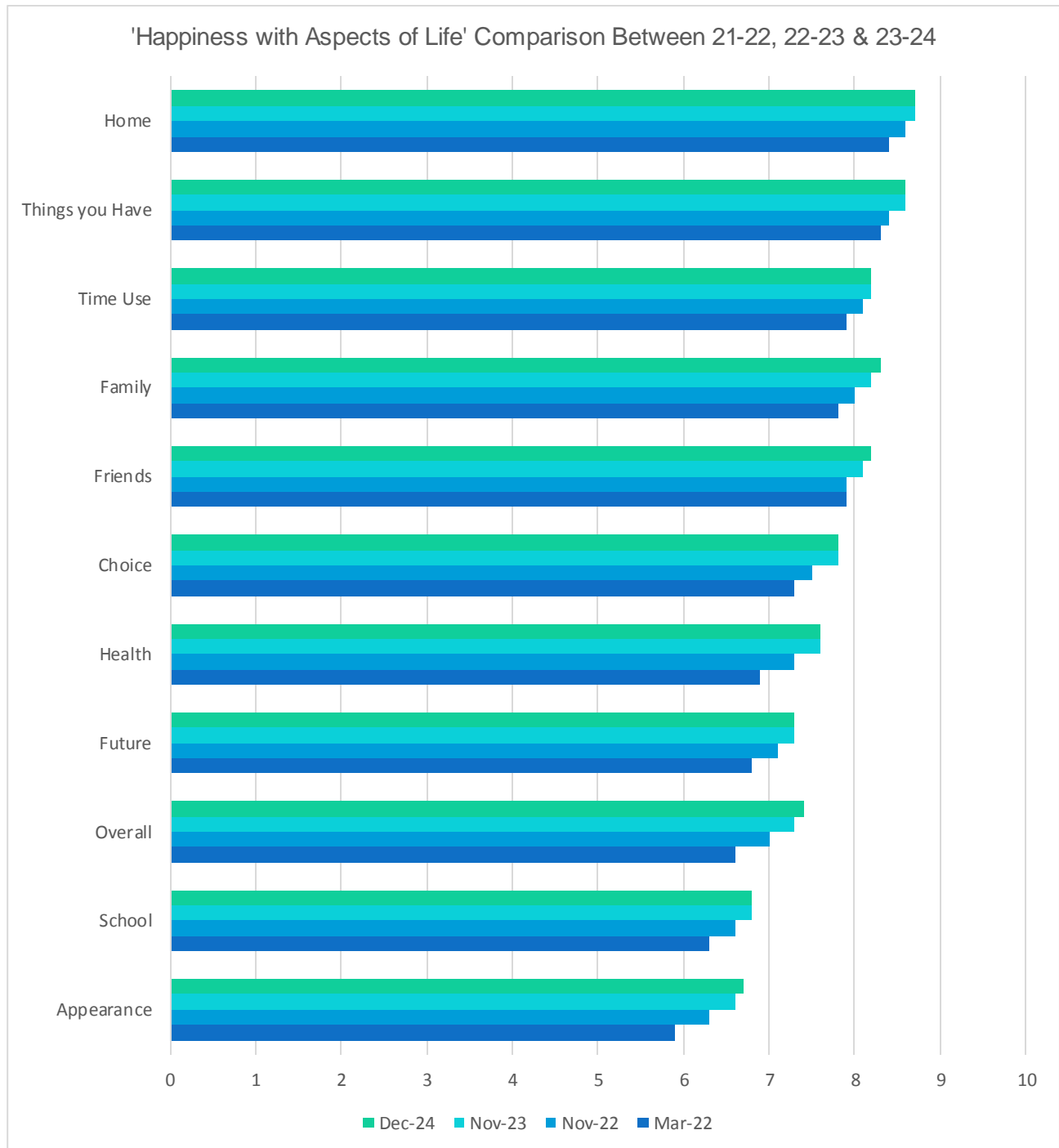
Outcomes in these measures were poorer for those who did not disclose their gender, compared to both boys and girls. However, improvements were seen this year for this group in all categories, and improvements were particularly noted in a reduction of reporting of feeling lonely all or most of the time – down **12%** from 2022, and an increase in self-reporting of feeling always or often confident – increased by **9%** from last year.

Gender			
Secondary pupils	Boy	Girl	Did not disclose
% Excellent or good health	<b>84</b> (83, 79, 77)	<b>78</b> (76, 69, 65)	<b>56</b> (45, 39, 39)
% Feel always and often confident	<b>58</b> (57, 55, 49)	<b>33</b> (33, 28, 23)	<b>26</b> (17, 24, 20)
% Feel lonely all or most of the time	<b>13</b> (15, 17, 17)	<b>20</b> (20, 23, 30)	<b>40</b> (46, 46, 52)
% Has self-harmed at least once in lifetime	<b>13</b> (16, 15, 18)	<b>17</b> (20, 21, 24)	<b>40</b> (38, 38, 48)

**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

**Learners were asked to rate how happy they are with various aspects of their life. Response options ranged from 0 to 10, where 0 means 'very unhappy', 5 means 'neither happy nor unhappy' and 10 means 'very happy'.**

Within Secondary Schools, it was again clear that the aspects of their lives learners were most happy with are: home, things they had, time use, friends and family; with school and appearance consistently receiving lower scores. The chart below shows us that there is increased happiness with all aspects of life for each year's data point.

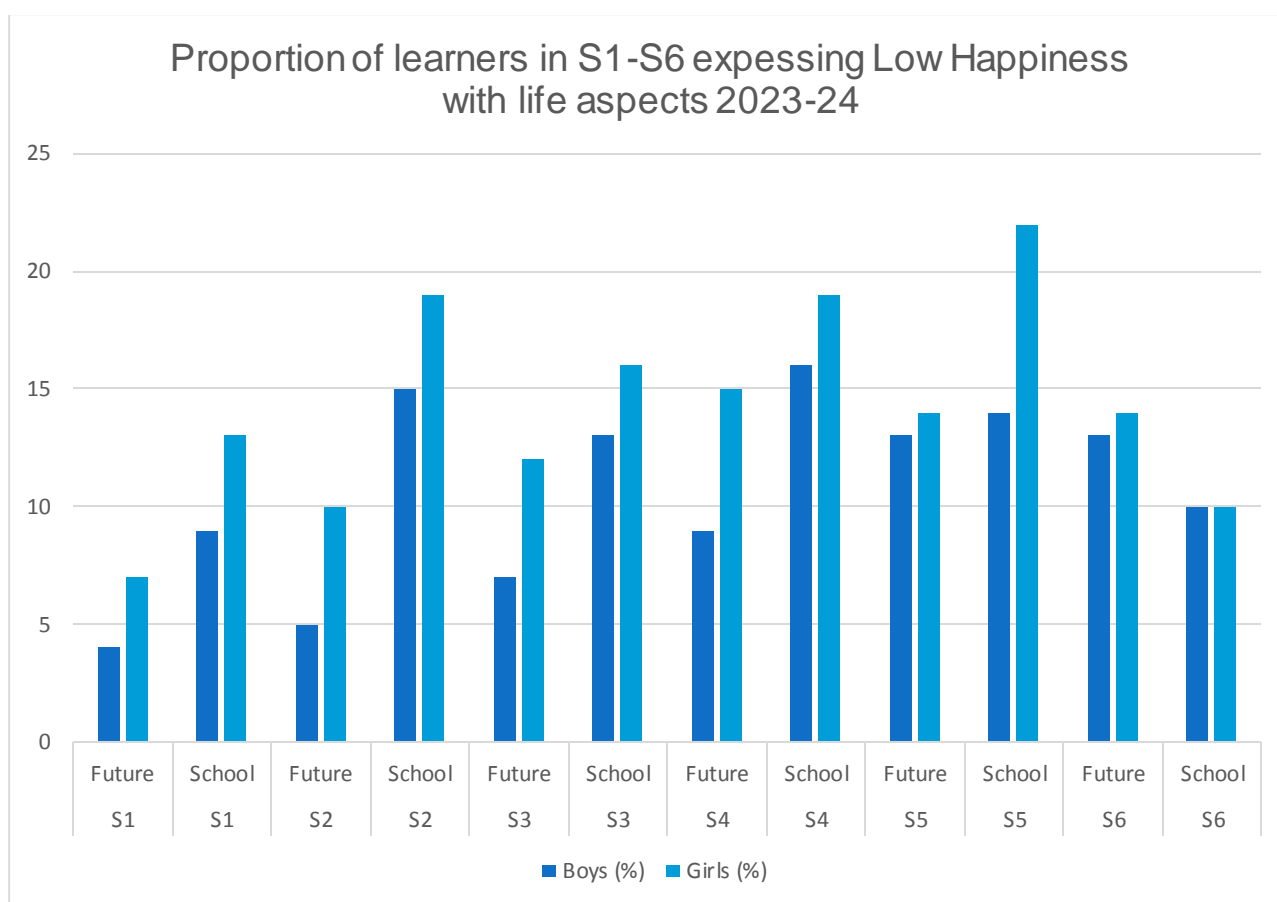


Overall, 19% (a continued reduction of **12%** since March 2022) of learners report low happiness linked to 'Appearance' and 15% (a continued reduction of **8%**), linked to 'School'. There is a continued trend of reduction in both areas. There continues to be, however, an

increase in the number of learners transitioning from primary to secondary who report low happiness regarding school (10% to 15%; 5% difference compared to last year's 9%).

There is a gender difference in girls reporting more low happiness aspects of life views compared to boys across the spectrum (except for things they have), this continues to be seen in their perceptions of School compared to boys. But all low happiness has decreased for each aspect, and the gender gap has decreased noticeably in relation to School. Girls consistently express lower happiness than boys regarding the Future, that continues on a mainly deteriorating trend up to S6.

Our cohort of focus, our current S5 girls have reduced their **low** reporting, **22%** school and **14%** future compared to 27 & 17% respectively last year.



Family affluence heavily continues to influence happiness at the secondary phase. Those in the low affluence group were more than thrice as likely to be unhappy with life in general than those in the highest affluence group. Those in the lowest affluence group's low ratings have mostly decreased or stayed consistent, but so have the other affluence groups, therefore the gap hasn't decreased between groups to the extent we would hope.

Family affluence (% of Low Happiness with... by Affluence)			
Secondary pupils	Low	Medium	High
% Life as a whole	<b>14</b> (16, 20, 25)	<b>8</b> (10, 15, 17)	<b>4</b> (7, 10, 13)
% Family relationships	<b>10</b> (11, 12, 18)	<b>5</b> (5, 8, 10)	<b>3</b> (4, 5, 7)
% Home you live in	<b>6</b> (8, 10, 12)	<b>3</b> (3, 4, 5)	<b>2</b> (1, 2, 3)
% Choice in life	<b>10</b> (10, 14, 15)	<b>6</b> (6, 9, 10)	<b>3</b> (4, 6, 8)
% Friendships	<b>7</b> (7, 10, 10)	<b>4</b> (5, 6, 7)	<b>4</b> (3, 5, 6)
% Things you have	<b>5</b> (7, 8, 10)	<b>2</b> (2, 4, 4)	<b>2</b> (1, 2, 2)
% Health	<b>14</b> (15, 19, 22)	<b>8</b> (9, 13, 16)	<b>5</b> (6, 9, 11)
% Appearance	<b>28</b> (30, 33, 38)	<b>18</b> (20, 25, 30)	<b>11</b> (15, 18, 23)
% Future	<b>17</b> (16, 17, 22)	<b>9</b> (10, 13, 15)	<b>5</b> (7, 9, 10)
% School	<b>21</b> (23, 27, 29)	<b>14</b> (16, 18, 21)	<b>10</b> (14, 15, 18)
% Free time	<b>8</b> (7, 9, 12)	<b>5</b> (5, 6, 7)	<b>3</b> (2, 4, 5)

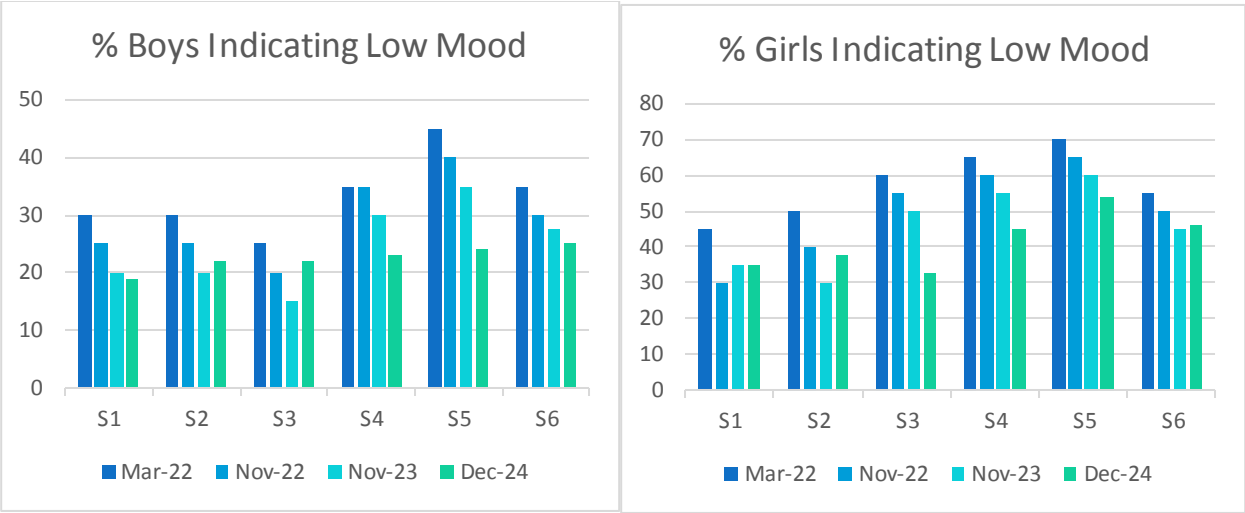
**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

In terms of low happiness with life, across nearly all of the measures, pupils who didn't disclose their gender expressed the most unhappiness at both secondary and primary level, in all aspects. Some noticeable improvements were observed in these areas. Reporting of low happiness in relation to 'Life as a Whole', 'School', all reduced by 5 percentage points or more for the DND gender group. Continued improvements were seen in regards to 'Health', 'Appearance', and 'Future'. Increases were seen in the reporting of low positivity in relation to the areas of 'Friendships', 'Family Relationships', 'Choice in Life'. As the table below shows they are continuing to report much lower positivity than their peers in most areas, in all 'aspects' they were at least three times as likely than their peers to report low positivity in each. The gap between this group and their peers has widened, even for the areas that have seen continued improvement. The difference between girls and boys continues, but improvements were seen for both these groups but not reducing the gap between them.

Percentage reporting Low Positivity by Gender			
Secondary pupils	Boy	Girl	Did not disclose
% Life as a whole	<b>6</b> (8, 10, 11)	<b>12</b> (13, 18, 20)	<b>31</b> (36, 44, 50)
% Family relationships	<b>4</b> (3, 4, 6)	<b>7</b> (8, 11, 13)	<b>25</b> (20, 27, 30)
% Home you live in	<b>3</b> (3, 3, 3)	<b>4</b> (4, 6, 7)	<b>13</b> (14, 13, 22)
% Choice in life	<b>5</b> (6, 7, 7)	<b>7</b> (8, 10, 13)	<b>23</b> (21, 26, 33)
% Friendships	<b>4</b> (4, 5, 5)	<b>6</b> (6, 9, 8)	<b>17</b> (14, 18, 17)
% Things you have	<b>3</b> (3, 3, 3)	<b>3</b> (3, 5, 6)	<b>9</b> (9, 12, 13)
% Health	<b>7</b> (7, 9, 10)	<b>11</b> (11, 15, 20)	<b>29</b> (33, 36, 44)
% Appearance	<b>13</b> (13, 15, 17)	<b>25</b> (28, 33, 41)	<b>47</b> (50, 56, 61)
% Future	<b>8</b> (8, 8, 10)	<b>12</b> (12, 15, 19)	<b>33</b> (35, 36, 39)
% School	<b>13</b> (15, 16, 16)	<b>17</b> (18, 23, 27)	<b>32</b> (39, 37, 44)
% Free time	<b>4</b> (3, 2, 4)	<b>7</b> (6, 8, 11)	<b>15</b> (14, 12, 14)

**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

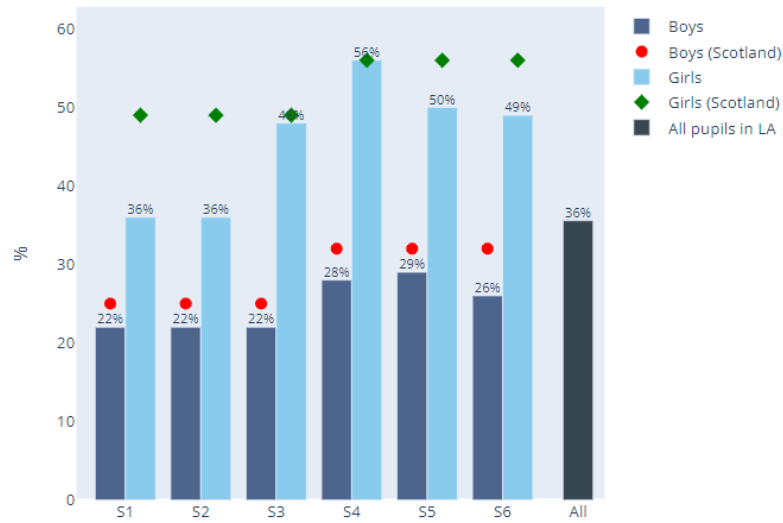
**The WHO-5 Wellbeing Index is a five-item scale which provides a measure of emotional functioning.** Answers are collated to create a score ranging from 0 to 100. A score of 50 or less on the WHO-5 indicates low mood.

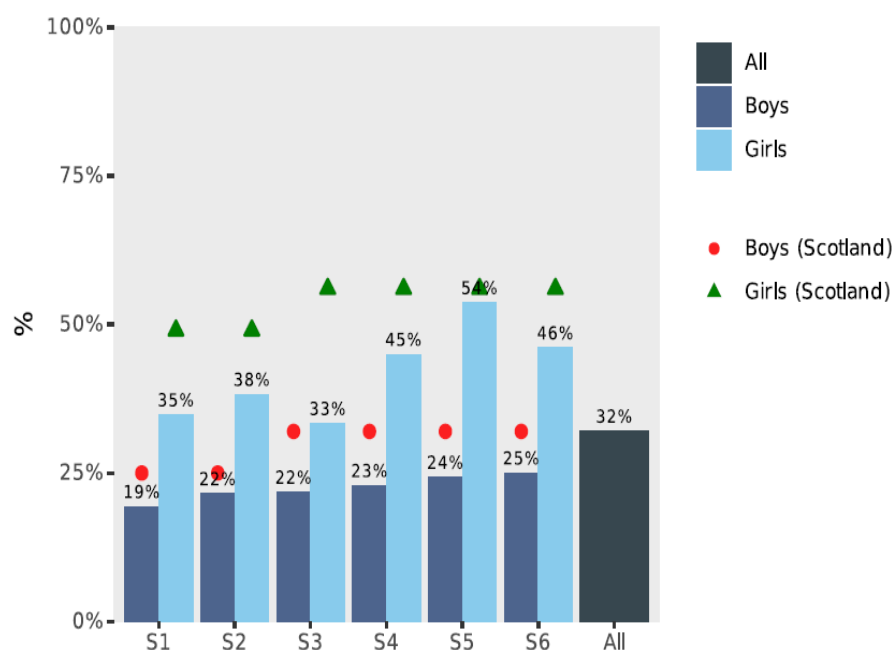


We have seen a small reduction for our cohort of focus, S5 girls, who report low mood; 54% compared to 56% last year, and 60% the year before.

The proportion of learners across S1-S6 self-rating below the 50-score threshold on the WHO Wellbeing Index is continuing to show year-on-year signs of improvement across each phase, and for all learners in this cohort.

**Table Showing ACC Low Mood compared to SHINE Scottish Average 23 Vs 24**

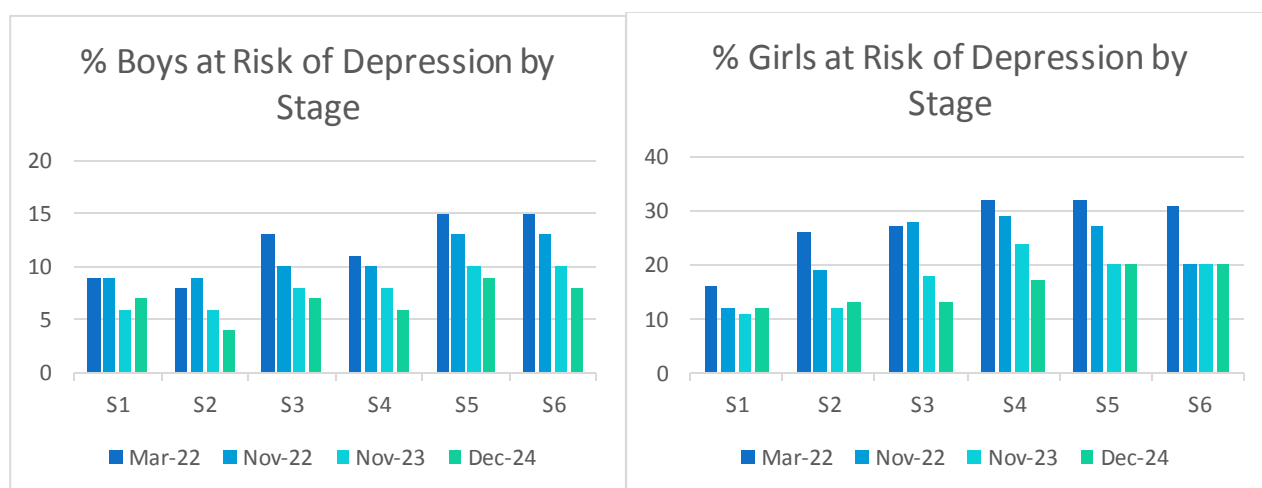




Encouragingly for all stages and gender, this year now including girls in S3 & S4 and including our cohort of focus in S5, we report lower percentages than the indicated Scottish Average provided by SHINE (chart above provides visual).

The graphs above indicate an overall positive picture towards the reduction of low mood in both boys and girls from March 2022. Overall, there has been a further **4%** reduction of learners indicating low mood (a 15% reduction since our baseline).

The graphs below highlight the proportion of those scoring 28 or less and are classified as at risk of depression. We see a reduction in the number of learners at risk of depression in both gender groups and every year group. Previously our cohort of focus, S5 Girls risk of depression score was 24%, this has dropped down to **20%** this year. This is below the updated Scottish Comparator of 25%.

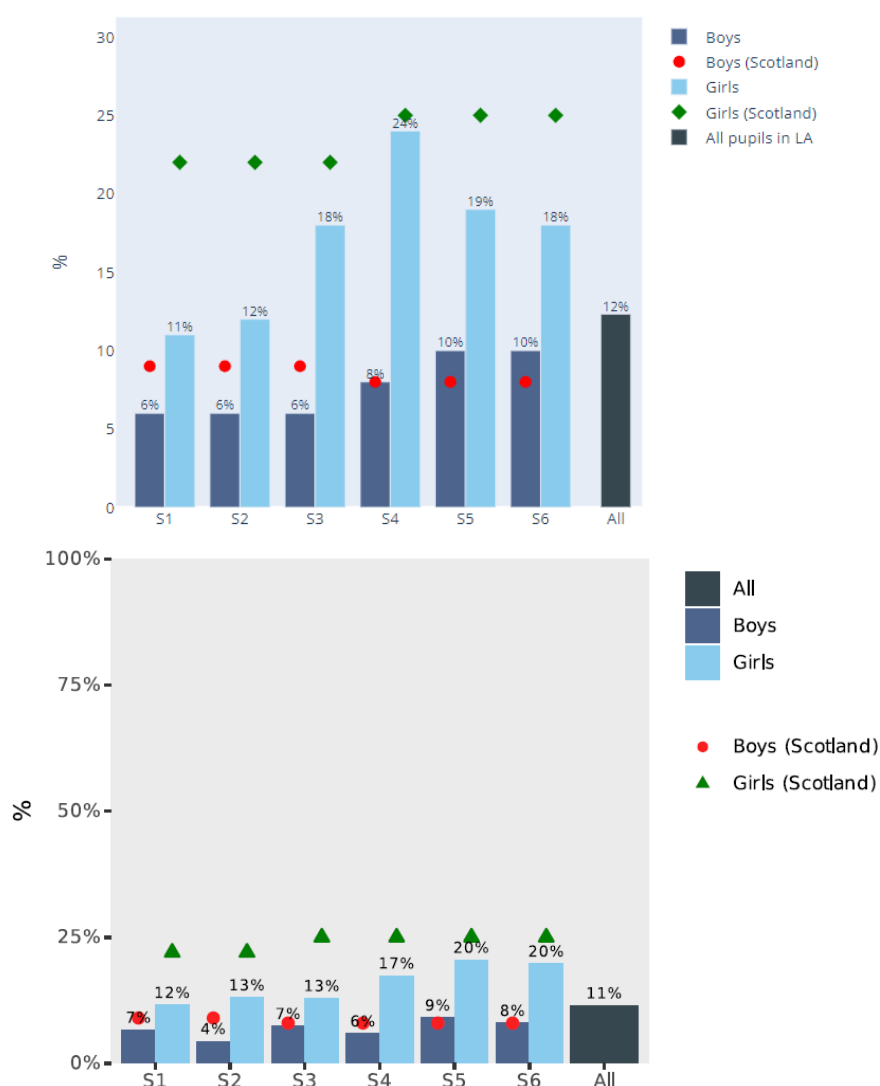




The gap between girls and boys in relation to risk of depression continues. But you can see from the charts above (green column is most recent data) reductions overall in risk of depression have continued for both genders.

Concerns for the wellbeing of girls compared to that of boys remains. However, ACC Secondary Girls are self-reporting levels well below the SHINE Scottish Average. So, although we see a difference in more girls than boys being at Risk of Depression, we have lower figures in this area than the Scottish Average.

**Table Showing ACC At Risk of Depression compared to SHINE Scottish Average 23 Vs 24**



Boys risk of depression has reduced this year, and is now on or below the Scottish National Comparator provided by Shine. As you can see from the charts above, this is a marked improvement from previous years. Our cohort of focus, S5 girls, had a further reduction of 4% in this area this year.

Family affluence continues to strongly influence low mood and a risk of depression. We have again seen reductions across each Family Affluence group, but the smallest reduction for the lowest affluence group. The gap between affluence groups has not reduced. As with for primary schools, this information will have to be considered carefully as interventions are being planned and continued to continue to address equity and poverty proofing across the City.

Family affluence			
Secondary pupils	Low	Medium	High
Low mood	<b>42</b> (45, 50, 56)	<b>31</b> (34, 42, 47)	<b>21</b> (28, 33, 38)
Risk of depression	<b>16</b> (18, 24, 25)	<b>10</b> (11, 15, 20)	<b>5</b> (7, 10, 13)

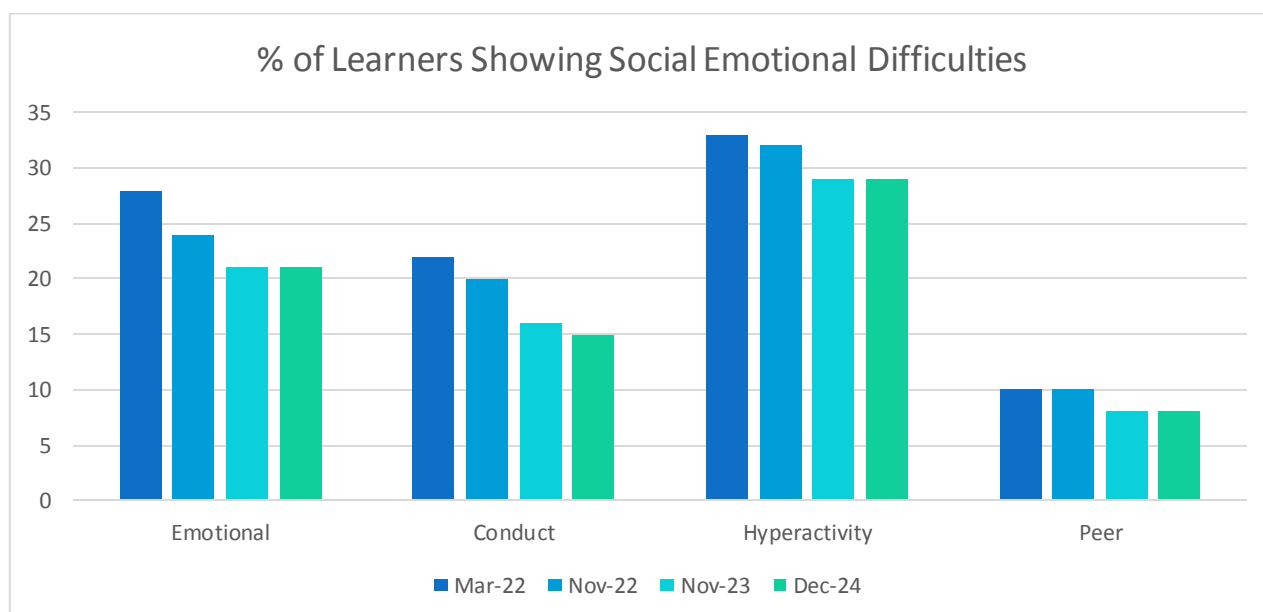
**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

Those who did not disclose their gender continue to be far more likely to self-report low mood and be considered at risk of depression than their peers. We have seen an increase in this group's risk of depression. This is still a relatively small number overall (59 compared to 61 last year).

Gender			
Secondary pupils	Boys	Girls	Did Not Disclose
Low mood	<b>22</b> (24, 30, 34)	<b>41</b> (45, 53, 58)	<b>61</b> (70, 73, 78)
Risk of depression	<b>7</b> (7, 10, 11)	<b>15</b> (17, 21, 26)	<b>33</b> (29, 37, 44)

**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

**The Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) measures mental health difficulties in different areas: emotional symptoms, conduct, hyperactivity and peer relationships.**



Reviewing all year groups there is still a higher percentage of girls showing difficulties with hyperactivity and emotions. There is an overall slight decrease across all measures since March '22.

Although at first glance the high percentage of learners showing difficulties is of concern, data for Aberdeen City continues to mirror Scottish Government data on differences between genders:

Encouragingly, Aberdeen City wellbeing data for both genders continues to be ahead of last recorded national data. There is still a need to continue to consider a local focus on effectively meeting the emotional wellbeing needs of girls across all year groups, but we have seen improvements in our S5 Girls Hyperactivity. This has reduced by **6%** from 36% to 30%, and Emotional has reduced by **3%** from 40% to 37%. Conduct has also reduced by **5%** from 15% to 10%. This extends to considerations around community and education supports. Further consideration should be given to what further opportunities there are to provide support as our local data highlights this area.

Secondary school pupils in the high family affluence group were less likely to report mental health difficulties, as scored by the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDS). Overall, **71%** of those in the most affluent group scored within the expected normal range on this scale, compared with **51%** of those in the low family affluence group. This is a change in profile from last year. Overall, the highest affluence group increased their SDQ score by 5%, whereas the lowest affluence group's SDQ score decreased by 2%. Meaning the gap between them increased from 13% to **20%**.

Family affluence			
Secondary pupils scoring as expected	Low	Medium	High
% Emotional	<b>61</b> (62, 58, 53)	<b>70</b> (70, 66, 62)	<b>77</b> (73, 70, 66)
% Conduct disorder	<b>73</b> (70, 66 63)	<b>77</b> (75, 71, 67)	<b>79</b> (74, 73, 68)
% Hyperactivity	<b>53</b> (54, 51, 49)	<b>59</b> (60, 55, 56)	<b>64</b> (62, 59, 59)
% Peer relations difficulties	<b>63</b> (65, 59, 59)	<b>75</b> (76, 71, 70)	<b>83</b> (82, 78, 77)
% Pro-social	<b>77</b> (72, 70, 70)	<b>82</b> (77, 74, 72)	<b>86</b> (80, 80, 78)
Overall SDQ score	<b>51</b> (53, 45, 42)	<b>62</b> (63, 56, 53)	<b>71</b> (66, 62, 59)

**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

A quarter (**25%**) of those who did not disclose gender scored within the "as expected" normal range in the overall Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) score compared with **54%** of girls and **69%** of boys. The DND group improved overall by **4%** this year but decreased in terms of expecting scoring for peer relationships difficulties. Both girls and boys reported higher scores, but DND group reported lower scores this year overall.

Gender			
Secondary pupils scoring as expected	Boys	Girls	Did not disclose
% Emotional	<b>85</b> (85, 83, 81)	<b>55</b> (56, 53, 45)	<b>41</b> (35, 36, 29)
% Conduct disorder	<b>73</b> (73, 71, 69)	<b>76</b> (74, 70, 65)	<b>60</b> (60, 52, 48)
% Hyperactivity	<b>63</b> (65, 61, 62)	<b>56</b> (56, 53, 51)	<b>30</b> (31, 29, 31)
% Peer relations difficulties	<b>74</b> (74, 71, 73)	<b>73</b> (74, 70, 68)	<b>35</b> (42, 41, 40)
% Pro-social	<b>74</b> (69, 68, 68)	<b>88</b> (82, 79, 78)	<b>64</b> (62, 62, 55)
% Overall SDQ score	<b>69</b> (70, 65, 64)	<b>54</b> (54, 46, 43)	<b>25</b> (21, 24, 19)

**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

At secondary school, those who did not disclose gender were more likely to have lower scores in the domains of belief in self, belief in others and emotional competence. Girls and boys performed similarly in belief in others, and emotional competence, but girls performed worse in the belief in self-domain. This maps onto what we know about teenage girls and teenage brain development in terms of self-esteem and confidence.

## Sleep

Secondary learners were asked to complete the adolescent sleep wake scale that measures sleep quality. Higher scores indicate better sleep quality.

Boys in all year groups continue to indicate that they have a better sleep quality than girls. The average sleep score from March 2022 has remained consistently around 38. It is currently **38.3**, an increase of 1.3 from last year.

All pupils, however, would benefit from increased sleep quality to positively impact on their mental and physical health. The links between social media and the use of digital technology and the potential impact this has had on the measures noted continue to be monitored. There is a range of data around the increased need for sleep in the teenage years, with teenagers having a different biological circadian rhythm and sleep requirements to adults, or younger children. For example, they need more sleep and need more sleep in mornings than others.

Family affluence			
	Low	Medium	High
Mean sleep quality score	<b>36</b> (36, 35, 35)	<b>39</b> (38, 37, 37)	<b>41</b> (40, 39, 38)

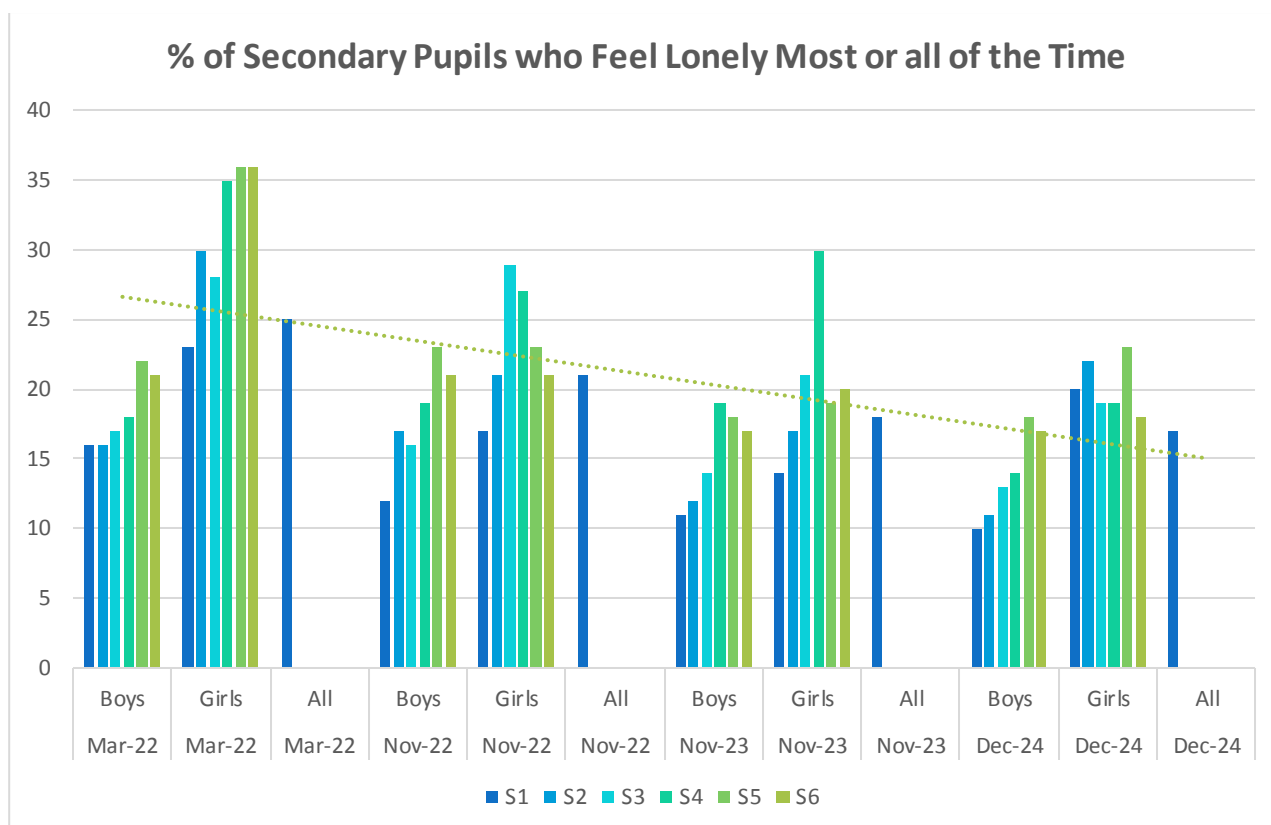
**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

Young people in the high family affluence group continued to report higher sleep quality than those in the other affluence groups. Those who did not disclose their gender continued to report poorer sleep than all other groups but increased by a point this year.

Gender			
	Boy	Girl	Did not disclose
Mean sleep quality score	<b>40</b> (40, 39, 39)	<b>38</b> (37, 36, 35)	<b>30</b> (29, 30, 29)

**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

## Loneliness



There are links between high loneliness, other areas of wellbeing and decreasing positive life outcomes. Learners across Aberdeen City, reported lower levels of feeling lonely all the time. **17%** compared to 28% last year, a decrease of **11%** on last year. You can see from the chart above that our cohort of focus have also decreased their reported levels of loneliness to **23%** a reduction of **7%** from last year, their reporting of loneliness had stayed static at 30% previously.

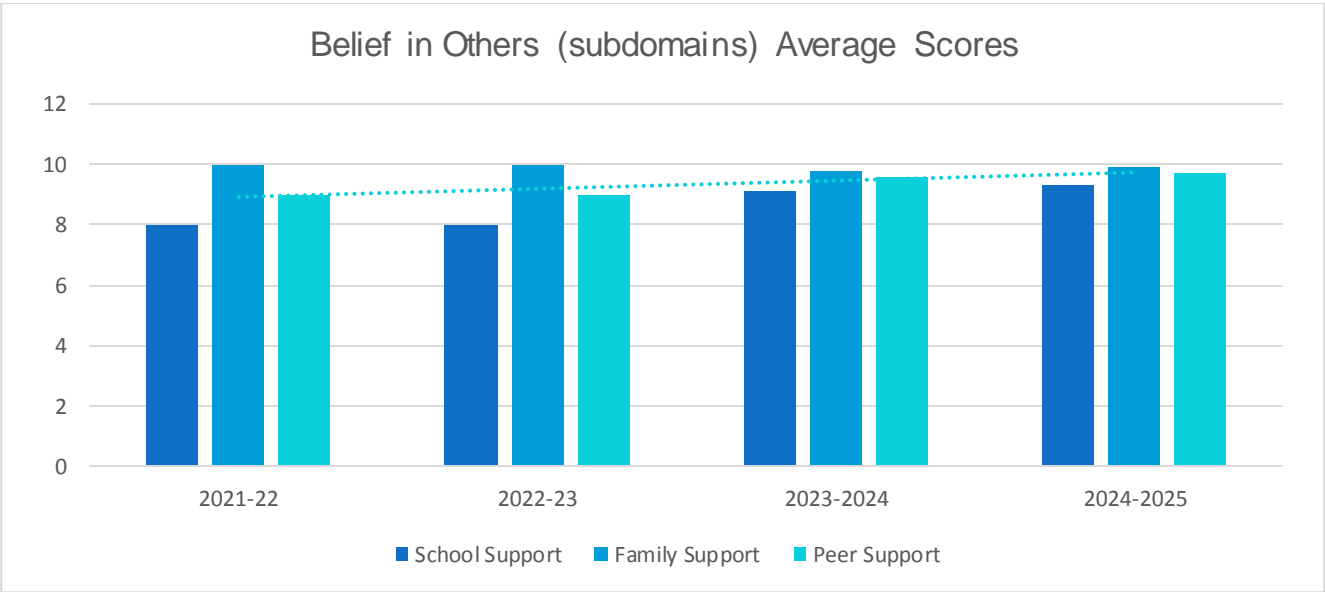
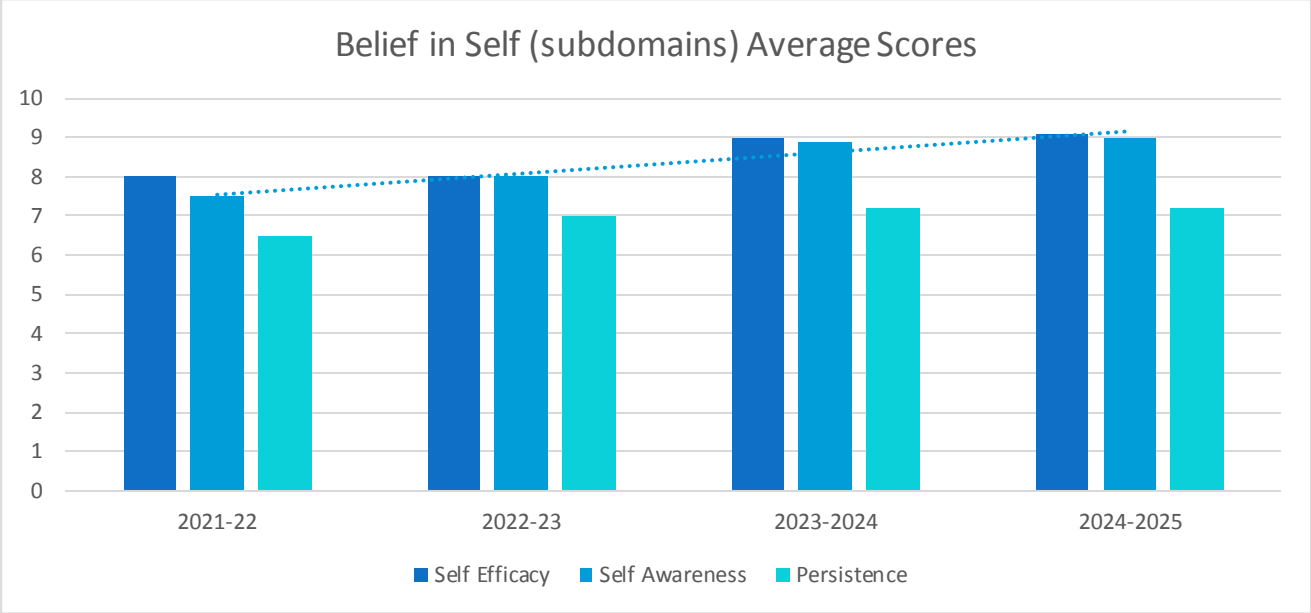
Research on loneliness in teenagers tells us that teenagers report higher levels of loneliness, and they feel social connectedness and conversely loneliness more acutely than any age group in society. Additionally, their self-reports of feelings of loneliness are related to their need to feel socially connected, particularly to groups. Even a short time away from a strong positive group can make them feel lonely. Many secondary school's activities and clubs, outdoors sporting clubs to a lesser extent, were suspended in line with the range of restrictions from the Covid-19 pandemic. Since these have been re-established, we have seen these figures around loneliness continue to decrease. There are ways we can incorporate more social learning across the secondary curriculum which can also support this area, supporting wellbeing more generally. These outcomes should continue to be explored by leaders and pastoral care and supports in our Secondary settings.

### Social Emotional Health

This measures different competencies of positive socio-emotional health, which are fundamental for young people to develop to live engaging and meaningful lives.

In all year groups, boys show higher levels of self-efficacy, self-awareness, and persistence, with self-efficacy rating higher in most year groups. Since March 2022, there has been a positive increase in all 3 areas of a range of 3-5 in relation to the summed average scores of belief in self.

Learners overall are showing a positive response to belief in others with an increase in the areas of school support and family support. Data for boys suggests that school support and family support are better than peer support and for girls, peer support is significantly higher at all year groups. This gender difference is again in-line with national data from Scottish Government, that boys and younger children self-report higher positive perceptions of those they live with. Teenagers, especially females seek more peer support and acceptance from peers than their family members, as a function of the teenage brain.



Our cohort of focus, our current S5 girls reported higher levels across each area and every domain in comparison to previous years. This is really encouraging and contributes to the positive picture for this cohort.

Emotional regulation, empathy and self-control are reviewed to understand Emotional competence. The results are pretty static from November 2022. Self-control continues to be lower than the other 2 subdomains. Within this section all subdomains have increased by .2 points. At this time in a teenager's development, we see a reduction in their ability to correctly recognise emotions in others (if not related to themselves) and increased self-consciousness.

Overall, learners' levels of optimism are continuing to rise. Importantly this includes last year's S3 and S4, who are showing an increase on the previous year, and an increase on their peer groups at their stage last year. Our cohort of focus, S5 girls, have increased from 7.1 to 7.6 which is important to see. Local data continues to be at odds, in a positive way, with the national data which shows a declining picture up to S5 and S6.

Gender			
Secondary pupils level of optimism	Boys	Girls	Did not disclose
Optimism	<b>8.7</b> (8.6, 8.3, 8.0)	<b>7.9</b> (7.6, 7.3, 6.9)	<b>6.5</b> (6.1, 6.1, 5.6)

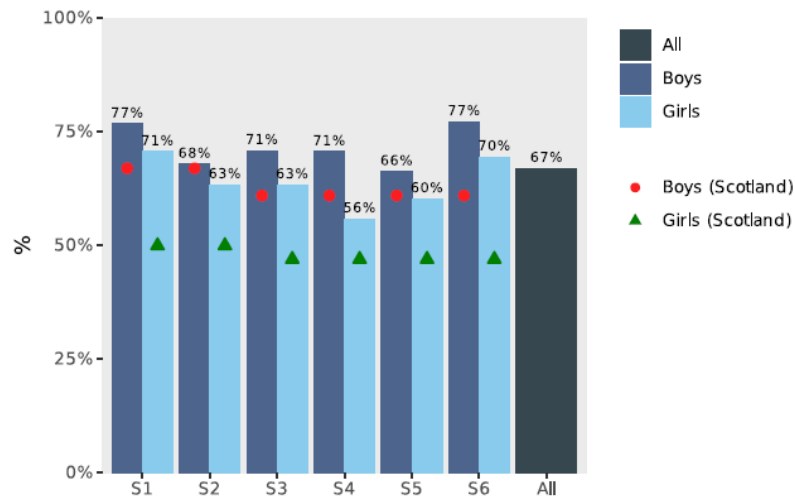
**Bold**=Dec '24, **plain**=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

We can again see poorer outcomes for those who did not disclose gender, but they have had another increase in their self-reporting this year in this area.

## Liking School

Learners were asked to select whether they liked school from a scale of, a lot to not at all. **24%** (compared to **36%** last year and baseline of **42%**) of learners indicating that they don't like school very much or at all. There is real continued improvement in this important area. Work done by schools in relation to transition arrangements and the impact of ABZCampus on subject choices and experiences could be positive factors on these improving figures from young people. Scottish Government data reports the low trend in attitudes across S1 – S4, improving in S5 and 6. This pattern is now continuing to be seen within our data set, with stronger ratings now seen for S5&S6. The percentage of pupils who like school (a lot or a bit) remains what appears low across secondary stages but are very much in line and ahead of - the HBSC Scotland national average provided by Shine. Our cohort of focus, S5 Girls, increased to **60%** reporting liking school this year, compared to 52% last year, and ahead of the Scottish average provided by Shine.

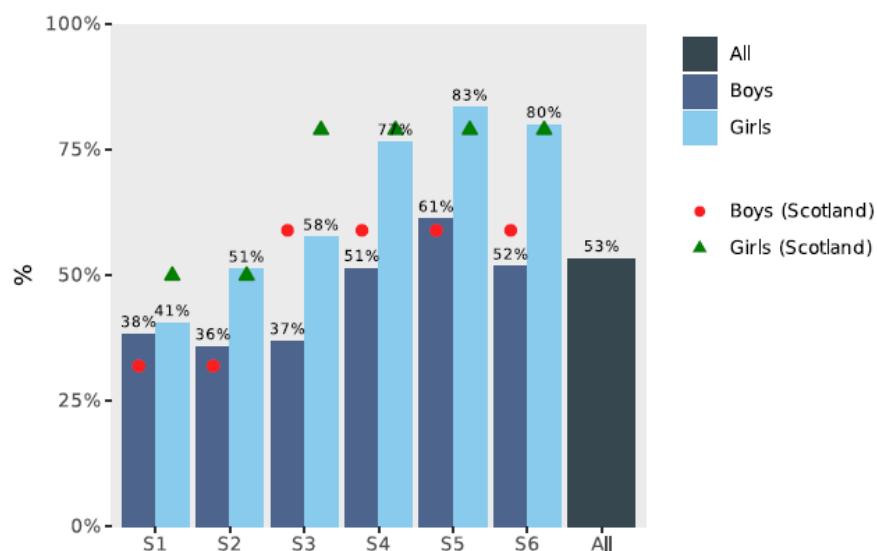
**Table Showing % of Pupils Who Reported They Like School a Little or a Bit compared to SHINE Scottish Average 24**



### Pressured by Schoolwork

The number of pupils who feel pressured by school work has gone down overall by two points to **53%**, (55%, 54%, 58%). This remains a high figure. The Secondary Quality Improvement Officers Team will continue to consider this, and explore with Secondary Head Teachers and their teams.

**Table Showing % Table % of Pupils Reporting They Feel a Lot of or Some Pressure From Schoolwork compared to SHINE Scottish Average 24**



We can see that we have the same distribution or pattern as the Scottish Comparators, but in all but one we are at or below the Scottish average Shine provide. This is really encouraging. Our cohort of focus, S5 girls express feeling more pressured by schoolwork than any other year group, and ahead of S5 girls last year, they also report higher than they did in S4. They are just above the national average Shine provide.



There is a continuing gender gap between boys and girls that, as in last year, statistically develops as learners progress through the phases. Improvements have been seen across all groups, but differences between groups remain.

Gender			
Secondary pupils reported levels towards School	Boys	Girls	Did not disclose
Like school a lot or a bit	<b>71</b> (68, 68, 65)	<b>64</b> (61, 58, 53)	<b>52</b> (43, 48, 43)
Feel a lot of or some pressure from schoolwork	<b>44</b> (45, 44, 47)	<b>62</b> (62, 63, 68)	<b>74</b> (78, 76, 75)

**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

Family affluence			
Secondary pupils reported levels towards School	Low	Medium	High
Like school a lot or a bit	<b>61</b> (59, 59, 52)	<b>68</b> (65, 63, 59)	<b>74</b> (66, 66, 65)
Feel a lot of or some pressure from schoolwork	<b>57</b> (53, 57, 64)	<b>54</b> (56, 54, 58)	<b>49</b> (52, 56, 54)

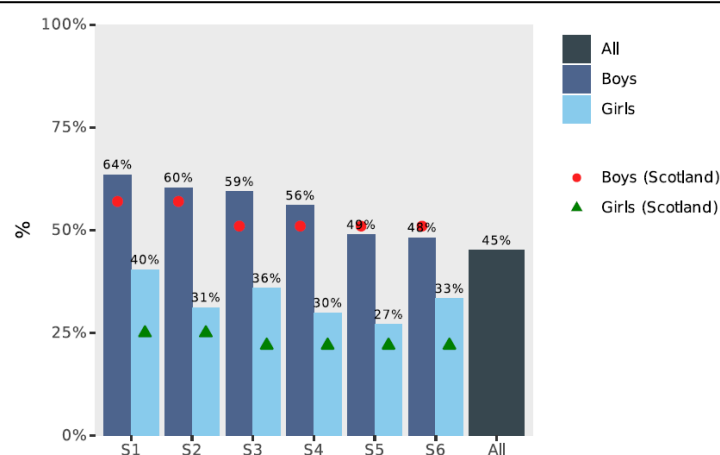
**Bold**=Dec '24, plain=Nov '23 & '22, *italics*=Mar '22

There is a marked difference of perspectives of school based on Family Affluence with a gap between the highest and lowest of 13% for Liking School, and 12% for Feeling Pressured by Schoolwork. Looking forward, the outcome of the on-going education reforms, most notably the Hayward Review, may impact positively here as less reliance is put on single high-stake exams which are known to disproportionately affect those living in areas of deprivation. Given that improvements have been seen in liking school measure, we hope that this will translate into feeling less pressurised by schoolwork in the future.

## Self Confidence

The proportion of all S1-S6 pupils who express that they always or often feel confident has risen by ten percentage points from our baseline in March 2022 to **45%**. Our cohort of focus show an increase in self-reporting of always or often feel confident from 22% last year to **27%** this year.

**Table Showing % of Secondary Pupils Who Feel Always or Often Confident**



We can see from the graph, S1-S6 girls and boys expressing 'Always or Often Confident' above that we are ahead of the Shine reported Scottish Average for most stages, especially for girls. This is an improvement on our first 2 years especially and last year, particularly for our S3 & S5 cohorts. Our cohort of focus S5 girls have lower levels than their peers but show an increase of 5% over their reporting last year. There are clear differences between girls and boys reporting in this area, with boys averaging reporting twice as much confidence than girls overall, with some variations by year. However, this year we can see that boys in S5 and S6's reporting of self-confidence has dropped by 8-10%. This needs to be considered further as a new development and is perhaps reflective of some of the reporting around later male teens, their online experiences and the impact on them. Secondary leaders and their teams will look at their local data and continue to adapt and address through Personal Social Education curriculum and support.

## Self-Harm

**3622** (5949 last year) learners were asked if they had ever hurt themselves on purpose, **15%** (19%) said yes, which is 4% lower figure than last year. There is a difference between the responses from girls and boys with **12%** (16%) of boys stating they had hurt themselves on purpose and **17%** (20%) of girls. This gender difference is seen nationally, and for all ages of the Scottish Population.

**14%** (16%) a further reduction of 2% from last year of all learners from S1-S6 choose 'prefer not to say' with **7%** (10%) of boys selecting this option and **20%** (20%) of girls. There is a higher incidence of learners in the low affluence group who report having self-harmed at least once in their lifetime (19% compared to 11% for the high affluence group).

This data, although a further reduction in learners self-harming, these figures are higher than we would like. This area needs continued significant focus through partnership approaches to support young people. National and UK wide data pre-pandemic showed that self-harm was on the increase, with teenage girls and those identifying in the LGBTQA+ most at risk at using this coping strategy as a way of managing mental health. Of the 3622 learners who were asked, boys reported 13%, compared to girls 17%, and those who did not declare their

gender were over twice as likely to report having self-harmed at least once in their lifetime at 40%. The Scottish Government Self-Harming strategy aims to support understanding around Self-Harm behaviours and promotes early intervention around mental health indicators. National training in this area continues to be offered, and schools can request support from the Educational Psychology Service for support to explore this area.

## **Summary**

We are delighted to see continued year-on-year improvements across the majority of the wellbeing picture in Aberdeen City compared to the previous three data sets. For example, we can observe a reduction in levels of pupils with low mood and at risk of depression, and a marked reduction in reported loneliness. We also see increases in terms of performance on items such as the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) which measure mental health difficulties, increased optimism, and continued higher reporting of self-confidence levels.

Where we have been provided with the SHINE National Scottish Average we can see we are either tracking alongside this or performing better than the reported Scottish average. We are seeing increased improvements against national comparators each year.

We are pleased to see improvements for our cohort of focus, our S5 girls (previously our S4 girls), our Covid generation. In almost all measures we can see improvements for this group, compared to their previous reporting, but also in some measures against previous S5 cohorts too. Focused work by secondary schools in this area has contributed to these improved outcomes.

We are still observing reporting of lower positivity towards school between primary and secondary, but we have seen higher reporting of learners liking school. Feelings of pressure regarding schoolwork remains higher than we would like and has increased for some groups. Work continues in these areas.

The small group (173 Secondary & 75 Primary) who 'Did Not Disclose' their gender are continuing to report poorer mental health outcomes in almost every area. This is seen particularly for the small Secondary group in relation to measures of happiness; loneliness; feelings about their future, and school; low mood and risk of depression, and lowest scores on all the Strengths and Difficulties areas (SDQ) which measure mental health difficulties.

The reporting of our learners in relation to positive aspects of mental health and wellbeing – Belief in Others, Belief in Self, and Emotional Competence all remain static. It is positive they have not reduced, but we know that investing in areas that promote good mental health can increase resilience and improve outcomes.

Girls continue to report poorer mental health and wellbeing than boys, given what we know about the teenage brain and the broader picture in society this is to be expected, but we have some areas of focus within this.

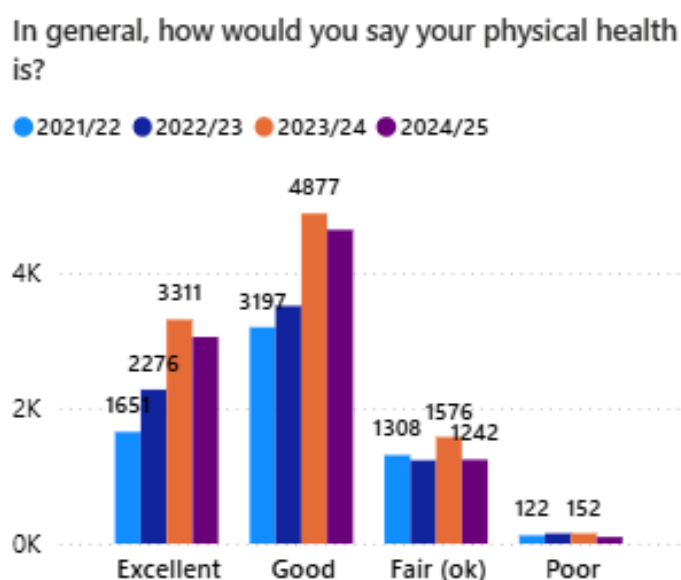
The gap between the Family Affluence Scale Groups (especially between the lowest and highest affluence) has not reduced. Individually we are seeing reductions in key areas of reporting, we like the national picture across Scotland, are struggling to 'close the poverty

related gap'. Wider community work and partnership will be key on addressing this longer-term area.

## Physical Wellbeing Survey Results (P5-S6)

**9031**, compared to 9916, (7,172, 6278) last year, learners from P5-S6 completed the Physical wellbeing survey in December 2024. This is a slight decrease of 885 responses. This decrease follows previous years of continued increasing numbers of return and could be due to the later administration of the survey, which was to keep it aligned with the Shine Mental Health Survey (due to their platform changes). Similar to the Mental Wellbeing survey, learners were asked to identify how well they thought their general physical health was.

The majority of learners, **85%** (84%) continued to identify their general health as good or excellent, with a further 1% increase in this area on top of the 9% seen since November 2022. **14%** (a reduction of 2%) felt their general health was fair with a further **1%** of learners stating that their general health was poor. This shows an improvement across general physical wellbeing. This still presents as being more positive for primary pupils than secondary.



## Physical Health and Body Image

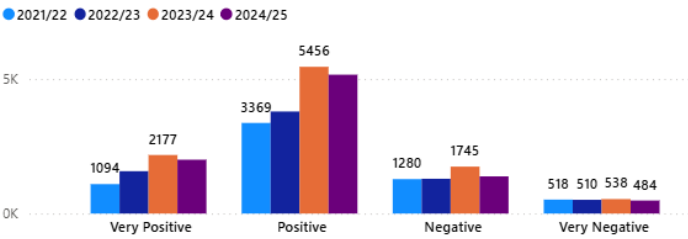
NHS physical activity guidelines suggest that on average children and young people between 5 – 18 should aim for at least 60 minutes of moderate or vigorous intensity, physical activity a day across the week. **60%** (61%) of learners who completed this survey meet the national health standards set above.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

**79%** (77%, 75%, 71%) of learners feel positive or very positive about their body image, showing a gradual increase of **8%** from November 2022. As with the mental wellbeing survey, however **21%** (23%, 25%, 29%) of learners reported that most of the time they felt negative or very negative about their body image. Out of the **484** pupils who stated they

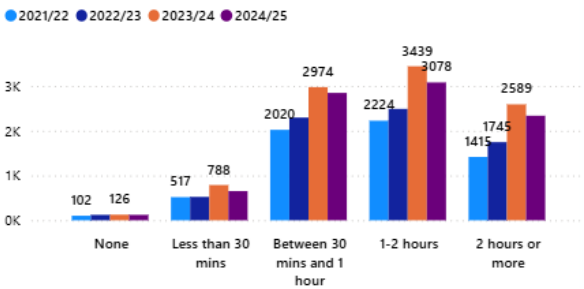
felt very negative about their body image, **175** of those pupils were in Primary School, this is an increase on last year and means we need to stay alert to building positive components of mental health, as featured above in the Shine mental health and wellbeing survey, to counteract negative self-image and esteem.

The Mental Health Foundation have reported that 35% of 13–19-year olds said their body image causes them to ‘often’ or ‘always’ worry. They also stated that 37% of young people said they felt upset, and 31% said they felt ashamed about their body image. This shows that nationally poor body image and worries about appearance are commonplace amongst young people and must remain a national as well as local focus for improvement and support.

How do you feel about your body image most of the time?



How much time do you spend doing physical activity on your most active school day? (this may include break time, PE, walking to school etc.)



**Relationships with others**

Throughout our lives, both the number and quality of relationships can impact our mental and physical wellbeing. The benefits of social interactions and good mental health are significant. Proven links include lower rates of anxiety and depression, higher self-esteem, more positive physical health outcomes, greater empathy, and more trusting and cooperative relationships.

Being available to listen to children and young people, is essential for supporting individual needs and understanding fully what is required. Learners were asked if they had an adult in their lives that listens to them about how they are feeling. **72%** (70%, 68%, 64%) positively shared that they always did, showing a further increase of 2%, an overall growth of **8%** from March 2022. **3%** also stated no, they did not have an adult in their life that listens to them about how they are feeling. This is a positive reduction of 2% from our baseline of 5% from March 2022.

**94%** (94%, 93%, 95%) of learners identified that overall, their relationships with other people were positive some, most, or all of the time. Continued focus on a sense of belonging and connection to schools, wellbeing, equality, equity and real inclusion will support us to continue to build a positive culture for our learners to thrive at home, school and in their local community.

The numbers of pupils who felt included across their life has also kept consistent since last year from our baseline in March ‘22, as seen in the table below:

	Always or often felt included				
	March '22	November '22	November '23	December '24	Difference (since March '22)
At home	81%	83%	85%	<b>85%</b>	<b>+4%</b>
In the classroom	75%	76%	78%	<b>78%</b>	<b>+3%</b>
At break / lunch times in school	82%	82%	84%	<b>84%</b>	<b>+2%</b>
Online	72%	73%	76%	<b>75%</b>	<b>+2%</b>

## Relational Questions New for December 2024

Three new questions were added for the 2024 survey, as a way of exploring some areas of interest to the Education and Children's Services Committee. There is only one year's data at this point, and these areas will take on more significance as future data sets get added. The three new questions are:

- Are you aware of your school's relationship policy?
- I have a say about decisions in school which affect me through pupil voice opportunities
- How well do you feel any bullying situations are resolved in school?

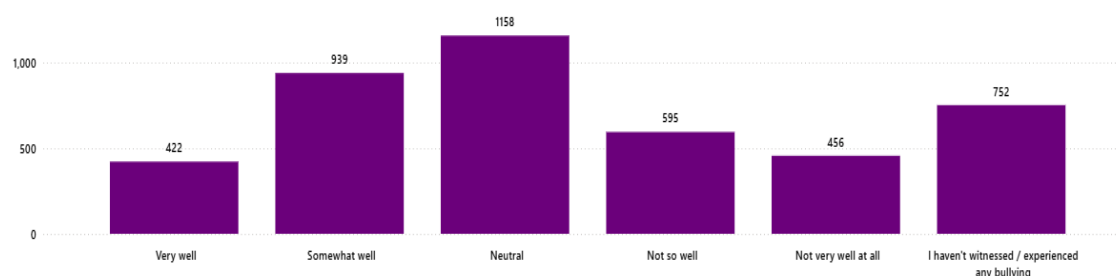
**59%** of responses answered they were 'aware of their school's relationship policy'. That means 41% did not know about it, or did not remember it. This is helpful information for schools to take forward for their community to consider.

Only **16%** of respondents answered that they *frequently* 'have a say about decisions in school which affect me through pupil voice'. **43%** of respondents answered they *occasionally* do, **24%** they *rarely* do, and **13%** responded *never*. With United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child now enshrined and enacted in Scots Law, it's important our learners feel they have a say in the decisions that matter to them. Autonomy and choices play an important role in our resilience and wellbeing. This data will be used by schools as part of their Standards and Quality Improvement Planning and reporting.

There were more positive responses in regards to 'how do you feel any bullying situations are resolved', the most frequent answer was Neutral, followed by somewhat well, then I haven't witnessed bullying, before the more negative responses of not so well, not very well at all; the lowest chosen response was very well. Again, this is useful data for schools to use in planning for their learners – responding to and communicating with them.

How well do you feel any bullying situations are resolved in school?

2024/25



Individual schools will take their local data forward and can seek support from the Educational Psychology Service in engaging learners meaningfully.

## Feeling Safe

Learners were asked to consider how safe they felt within various environments. Across stages and year groups, the majority of learners reported that they felt safe always or most of the time in their communities, at home and in school, however, there remains a small percentage of learners who feel that they rarely or never feel safe in these environments. We will continue to work with the Health & Wellbeing Youth Group; we will explore this further at a school community level to understand this better and address this both at local level and city wide. Where appropriate we will involve the Community Planning Partnership and other partners.

It is positive that learners are reporting increased levels of *feeling safe in school*, with an increase to **82%**, from a baseline of 79% in 2022.

	Feeling safe always or most of the time				
	March 22	November 22	November 23	December 24	Difference (since March 22)
In the community	86%	87%	88%	<b>88%</b>	<b>+1%</b>
At home	96%	96%	97%	<b>97%</b>	<b>+1%</b>
At School	79%	81%	80%	<b>82%</b>	<b>+3%</b>
Online	76%	76%	79%	<b>80%</b>	<b>+4%</b>

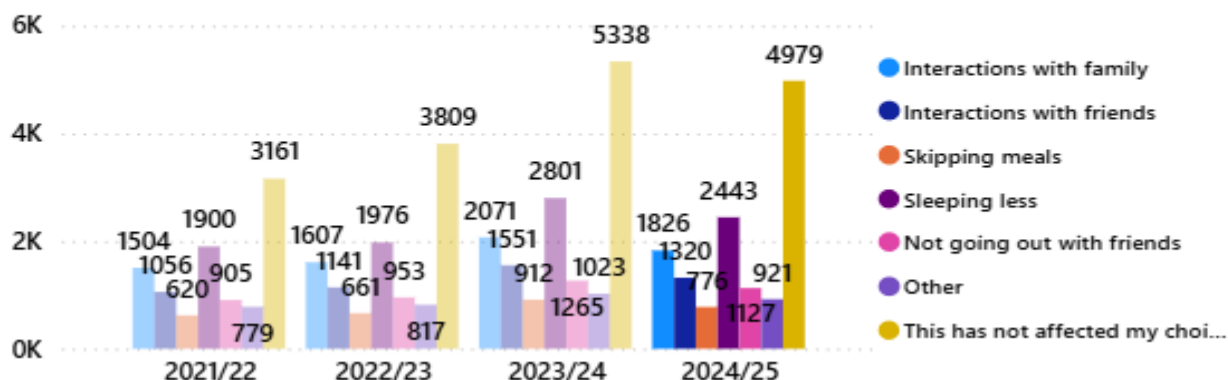
## Sleep

The NHS advises that teenagers between the age of 13-18 should have a recommended 8 hours sleep. Research into Teenage brain development recommends instead 10+ hours sleep for 12+ year olds due to the complex brain processes they are undertaking at this stage in their development. Learners were asked about their usual sleep patterns and the number of hours they slept the night before completion of the survey. **8%** (8%) of learners again reported that they had 5 hours sleep or less with **2%** (2%) learners again saying that they had less than 3 hours sleep. **236** (109, 187, 257) Primary aged pupils reported that they usually went to bed after midnight, this shows a sudden increase of 127 pupils. This increase is in contrast as the previous years have held a pattern of continuing reduction from the baseline number of 257. This is an area that our partners who work with parents in Education and Lifelong Learning can explore, alongside schools, and the Stronger Families Series of parental events.

The most popular time of going to sleep for P5-P7 pupils is shared equally between before 9pm and between 9pm and 10pm. Secondary pupils selecting between 10pm and 11pm. This is a change from last year's 11pm-midnight, which is encouraging. We will continue to work with parents through our Stronger Families Series to support positive choices around sleep routines and sleep diet.

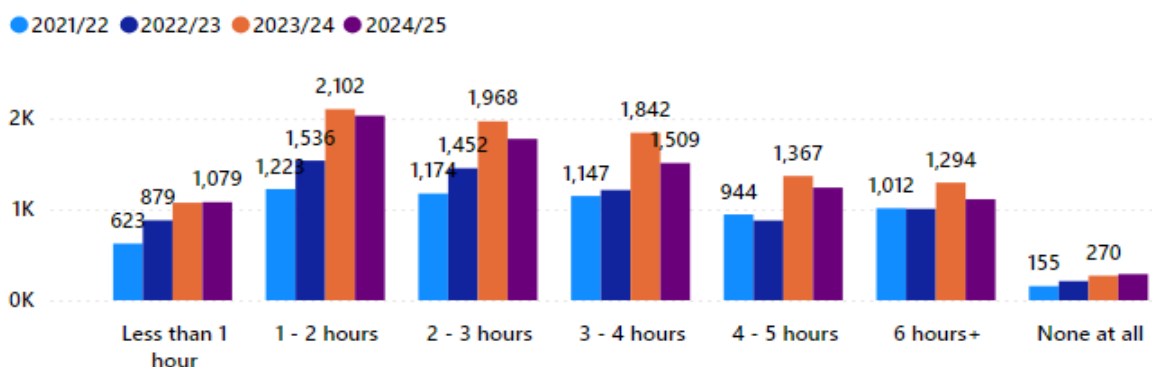


## Has technology affected any of the choices you make on a daily basis?



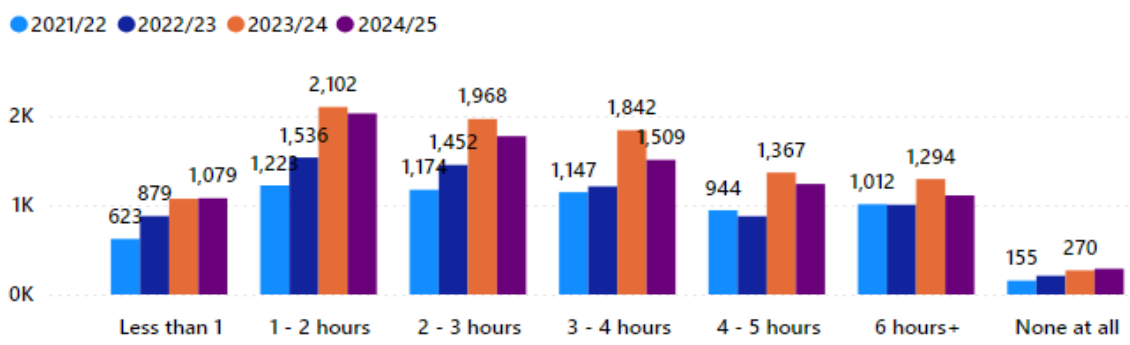
**27%** (28%, 27%, 30%) of learners feel that technology has affected the choices that they make regarding sleep, showing a further reduction of 1% leading to a 3% since March 2022.

Weekdays (Mon-Fri)



The figure for learners reporting that on school days they can spend more than 3 hours on technology during free time has remained static. **45%** (45%) learners reported that on school days they can spend more than 3 hours on technology during free time. **13%** reported they spend more than 6 hours per day.

Weekdays (Mon-Fri)



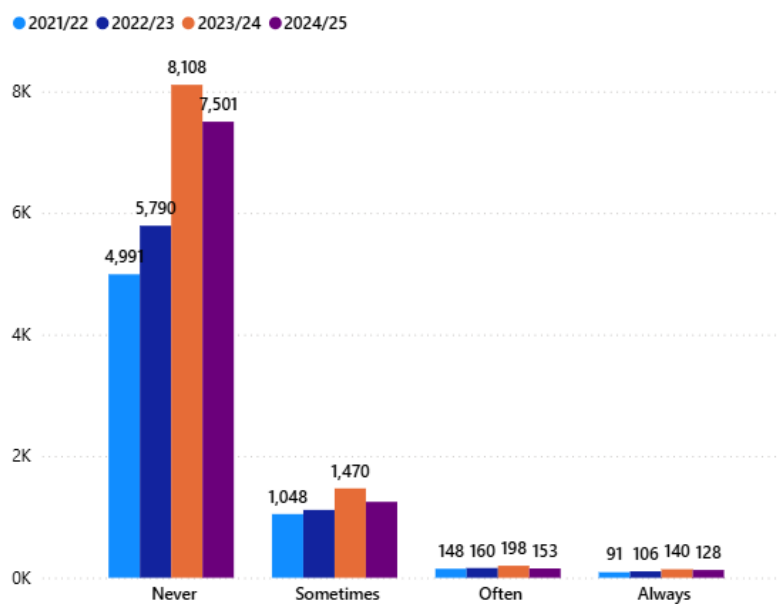
These figures increase further at the weekend. **65%** (65%) report 3+ hours at the weekend with **28%** (28%) continuing to state that they spend more than 6 hours on technology at this time. The increase is seen solely through increased number of learners reporting they spend 6+ hours at the weekend. 946 of these are Primary stage learners. HBSC (Health Behaviour in School Aged Children) data for Scotland shows the average of *continuous social media use throughout the day*, this is at 34% for 11-year-olds, and 48% for over 13's. We can see this is not a like-for-like measure but gives some insight into the national picture. This continues to be a high figure in terms of time spent on technology, consideration should be given for encouraging healthy choices for learners, and their families. Research is ongoing nationally around healthy technology diet, and benefits and risks to learners of school ages in spending their time online, whether on social media or gaming. We will share and adapt our approaches when this research is available. Continued work around the use of technology will be delivered through school curriculum and wellbeing sessions; the Stronger Families series; communications with families; and school and/or Associated School Group level events to support and develop practice in this area.

## **Food and Drink**

Establishing good eating habits is vitally important to support positive weight management and general good physical health. We have seen a continued increase of learners eating breakfast daily during the school week, that has plateaued this year to remain at **62%** (62%, 61%, 59%). Only **49%** (51%) of secondary pupils eat breakfast daily on a school day with 74% (75%) of primary pupils having breakfast before going to school. There was a variance in the number of learners who reported starting the day with breakfast on school days versus weekends with 75% (74%) eating breakfast daily at the weekend. 16% (16%) of all respondents continue to regularly attend school with no breakfast.

There are times when children and young people do not have access to sufficient food to meet their nutritional needs. The continued impacts of the cost of living for all could further impact this. **3%, 238** (3%, 281) learners who completed the survey, reported that they often or always went to bed hungry because there was not enough food at home. This has remained a static percentage. Continued review of this data at a local level will help us identify where food parcels, foodbanks, breakfast clubs and other such resources could help us address this and target our support to ensure all learners have enough food.

Some children and young people go to school or to bed hungry because there is not enough food in the house. Does this happen to you?



## Substance Use / Misuse

### Smoking

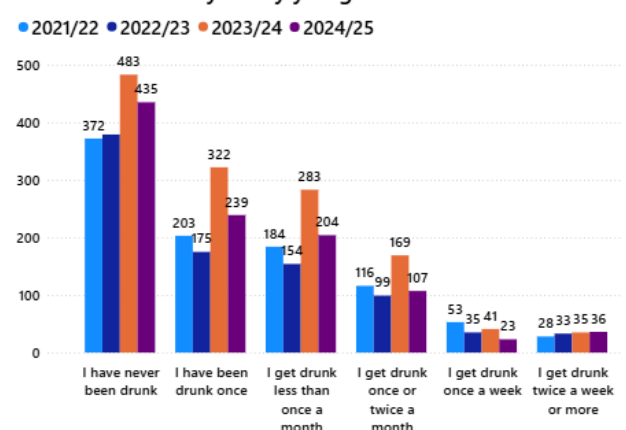
**6%, 556**, (8%, 771 6.7%, 473, 8% 477) of learners reported that they have tried smoking cigarettes or e-cigarettes. This is a reduction overall from our baseline percentage from March 2022. **7%** (30) learners reported smoking between 1-20 cigarettes a week and **28%** (25) learners reported smoking more than 20 a week.

The number of young people reporting that they use e-cigarettes or vapes was **1.4%, 128** (2.4%, 235) reporting that they use e-cigarettes or vapes once a week or more. This is a slight decrease in reported vaping. It is encouraging to see this reduction, and we hope that the work being carried out in this area is helping educate learners to make informed health choices in relation to smoking and vaping. We will continue to raise awareness across school communities and continue to work with partners to ensure vaping and smoking are being addressed and schools are supported to manage this.

### Alcohol

Learners were asked about alcohol consumption, regularity and type of alcoholic drinks consumed. **88%, 7987** (87%, 8582 88%, 6137; 84.64%, 5242) learners stated that they had never had a drink of alcohol. Of those that answered that they had tried alcohol (which was 1044 learners or 12%) **59%** (76, 62, 80) of learners shared they get drunk more than once a week. This figure is an encouraging reduction of **17%** on previous years reporting. The small group that said they

How often would you say you get drunk?



drank, highlighted Spirits, Alcopops, and Cider as those most often selected for regular consumption.

## Drugs

**98%, 8843** (97%, 9641) learners reported that they had never taken drugs. **2%, 188** (3%, 275) of our learners reported that they have taken illegal drugs, drugs formerly known as legal highs, solvents, or prescription drugs that were not prescribed for them. Of the learners who reported taking drugs (**2%, 188** learners), further questions revealed that **26** (43) also reported that they use drugs daily. This is an almost 50% reduction on the previous year. The largest number of responses reported, linked to cannabis, followed by Ecstasy, solvents, Ketamine, prescription medicines and Cocaine. Ecstasy use this year seems to have reduced further in usage, compared to the uptick reported last year. “Lifestyle drugs” seem to be on the rise, with very small increases; these include steroids, and diet and tanning pills.

Which (if any) of these drugs have you used in the last year?



## Summary:

- Although we saw a higher number of returns this year than in our first 2 data sets, we saw a decrease in responses compared to last year. Consideration should be given to moving the survey data collection point to facilitate schools' administration of the surveys.
- New questions have been added this year, which help explore some of the factors that contribute to good health and wellbeing and explore some of the functions and duties on schools with the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Areas of improvement have been observed in more learners reporting they are continuing to:
  - Sleep* more than they were previously and for more than 5 hours a night
  - Feel *safer* across all aspects of their life, including at School
  - Feel more *included* across all aspects of their life
  - Have increased overall *good health*
  - Have overall increased positive feelings about *body image*
  - smoking or using *vapes* in lower numbers

- Feel *listened to* by those in their life
- Are having *earlier bedtimes*
- Areas requiring further consideration and continued support, including engaging with community partners, with more learners reporting:
  - dissatisfaction with their body image within primary stage learners (although there was a reduction overall)
  - *not eating breakfast* daily at a continuing increased level of 51% within secondary stage
  - Their usage of *alcohol* has only slightly reduced
  - An increase in lifestyle drugs, such as tanning and diet pills, and steroids that have not been prescribed to them. But there is a *slightly* lower number that have *tried illegal substances* overall.
  - No reduction in the number of learners who spend more than 3 hours per day using *online technology*
  - Being impacted by *online technology* affecting the *choices* that they make, relating to and *impacting their sleep* still at high figures, with a 1% reduction this year

### Summary of Overall Next Steps

Through the LOIP and associated Children's Services Plan we will link with the Mental Health Collaborative to review any identified trends and consider how to address these.

We need to give some consideration to changing the month of data collection, moving to December this year could have negatively impacted the numbers of returns. Shine offers a September survey, which given it's point in the new academic year is worth trialling to see if this improves data collection and grants time for schools to use the data within the school year.

Aberdeen City Council continues its focus on poverty reduction. This is important as the poverty related gap in relation to almost all mental and physical health and wellbeing outcomes exists. We are of course pleased to see improvements in lowering the numbers associated with the different affluence groups or SIMD but are mindful that the poverty gap is not reducing, even if overall numbers are.

Work continues in regard to the area of physical appearance. This is to build upon the gains observed in this year's data. We will need to consider carefully our support for girls in particular, and those who did not disclose their gender identity, who have shown greater challenges with regards to mental health. We know that community and parenting approaches are needed alongside school level work.

It will be important to monitor primary into early secondary stage boys to see if some data this year was the beginning of a trend relating to male confidence, or just some outliers within the data sets.

We will continue to promote healthy choices and build confidence in our young people and parents and carers, to support good decisions in areas such as sleep, exams, understanding of teenage development, use of technology and misuse of substances. Continued community approaches, making best use of the combined opportunities of the recently expanded Education and Lifelong Service to allow for better collaboration and joined-up approaches.

We will continue to monitor trends carefully and report on a yearly basis to ensure that we are targeting the right supports in the right areas. Individual schools and Associated Secondary Groups will continue to use their specialist knowledge of their contexts alongside this data to ensure autonomous and appropriate responses. Existing supports will continue and be adapted based on feedback on outcomes and areas arising in this report.

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Review of Spaces for Additional Support Needs
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/25/158
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Stephen Booth
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Andrew Jones
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1, 1.1.2

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of a recent review of the use of space in Aberdeen's schools for supporting pupils with additional support needs.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee :-

- 2.1 Notes the findings of the review as outlined in this report;
- 2.2 Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to continue providing support to head teachers and staff in schools to make best use of the space available to them for supporting pupils with additional support needs, to reflect existing and emerging policies and guidance in this area; and
- 2.3 Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to ensure that the Council's specification of spaces for additional support needs in future new school buildings and school refurbishment projects continues to be regularly reviewed and updated, to reflect ongoing feedback received locally, and any relevant national and local guidance on the design of spaces for additional support needs.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 At its meeting on 17 September 2024, the Education and Children's Services Committee instructed 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.* This report fulfils that instruction.
- 3.2 In conducting this review, officers in the Corporate Landlord cluster worked closely with colleagues in Education and Lifelong Learning to assess the ways

in which spaces in schools are currently being used to support pupils with additional support needs (ASN), and to identify examples of good practice.

- 3.3 The recent Exploration of Learners' Needs, carried out by the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) and reported to the Education and Children's Services Committee in November 2024 ([F&C/24/322](#)) was reviewed, with a focus on understanding how spaces should be designed and used for supporting pupils with ASN in future.
- 3.4 The findings and recommendations of a report on [Additional Support For Learning](#) published by Audit Scotland in February 2025, was also taken into consideration, in preparing this report.

#### The benefits of spaces for ASN

- 3.5 The Exploration of Learners' Needs report includes the findings of a questionnaire issued to schools, along with structured interviews held with staff in schools, and highlights that head teachers in both primary and secondary schools see real benefits in establishing separate spaces outwith classrooms, for use in supporting young people who can find mainstream classes challenging. These 'enhanced areas' were found to be used in a variety of ways across settings, with some learners accessing these areas occasionally for parts of the school day, and others spending the majority or all of their school time within these spaces.
- 3.6 In addition to creating enhanced spaces outwith classrooms for ASN support, consideration also needs to be given to mainstream classrooms, and the extent to which the classroom environment supports the needs of individual young people. The Exploration of Learners' Needs report highlights schools' effective use of the CIRLE Framework, for example. This advocates the benefits of setting up 'inclusive classrooms', where there is a focus on pupils' seating position in the room, the use of individual workstations and 'safe spaces', along with consideration of the need for window blinds and other measures where they are required to regulate lighting and/or noise levels for those young people who find elements of the physical environment overwhelming.

#### Current use of space for ASN

- 3.7 Aberdeen City's school estate consists of a wide range of buildings, which vary considerably in their age, design, condition and suitability. This means that there can be no one standard approach to providing enhanced spaces in schools to support pupils with ASN, as each building presents its own opportunities and challenges in terms of the spaces available for this.
- 3.8 It is clear that head teachers and staff in our existing schools make very good use of the space that is available to them, to ensure that pupils receive the additional support that they require. This often requires a flexible approach, and innovative use of a wide range of spaces to suit individual pupils' needs. Support is provided to schools by the School Estate Team to convert or re-purpose spaces outwith classrooms for use for ASN support as required, and



to make improvements to the learning environment within classrooms, where it is practical to do so and where funding allows.

- 3.9 Good examples of innovative use of space for ASN include Bramble Brae School, Heathryburn School and Aberdeen Grammar School, all of which have made very effective use of available space not required for classrooms to support the needs of individual young people. Brimmond School also makes use of a number of rooms of varying sizes to support pupils on a full time or part time basis, and Lochside Academy has an established 'ASN Hub' which is in a quieter area of the school and provides a secure learning environment for pupils with a range of support needs.
- 3.10 When planning our newest school buildings, spaces for ASN are designed to be used as flexibly as possible and to meet a range of needs. For example, in the new Riverbank School, two teaching spaces specifically for ASN have been provided, along with a quiet room, a sensory room, and a hygiene room, and the facilities have been located to ensure there is direct access from them to secure outdoor space. Designs for the planned new Hazlehead Academy incorporate an ASN Hub, comprising a suite of five classrooms, two sensory rooms, two quiet rooms, hygiene rooms, and access to outdoor space.
- 3.11 When planning major refurbishments of school buildings, specifications for ASN spaces can be more constrained by the availability of space and existing layout of the building, but designs are again intended to allow spaces to be used as flexibly as possible, to meet the varying needs of pupils within the school. For example, in the proposed Victorian Schools programme which would involve the refurbishment of ten of the oldest buildings in the school estate, which present some of the most significant challenges in terms of available space and building layout, the project brief includes a requirement to make creative and innovative use of spaces outwith classrooms, for the support of pupils with ASN.

#### Challenges for schools

- 3.12 Despite these examples of good practice and the innovative and flexible approaches taken across our schools to provide the highest possible levels of support to young people, the Exploration of Learners' Needs report does highlight that there is room for further improvement. The report notes that 39% of primary pupils and 44% of secondary pupils said they sometimes find the school environment overwhelming, and suggests that learning environments in some schools may not always be appropriate for learners with sensory or dysregulation difficulties.
- 3.13 The report highlights that there is a need to ensure learning environments are designed from a child positioned perspective, using natural colour schemes, appropriate lighting and acoustic controls, and direct outdoor access. Whilst this approach is already taken with the specification and design of our new school buildings and in major school refurbishments, it can be much more difficult to achieve similar standards in our existing schools.
- 3.14 Where pupil numbers are close to or exceed the school's capacity, classroom space can be at a premium, and this can create further challenges for ensuring

there is sufficient space available outwith the classrooms to provide appropriate additional support for individual or small groups of pupils.

- 3.15 Where a school does have some spare classroom capacity, in many cases this is used to create enhanced spaces for ASN, but if pupil numbers at the school begin to rise, it is often necessary to re-purpose some or all of the enhanced spaces to be used as mainstream classrooms, to ensure the school continues to operate within national class size limits. This can negatively impact the school's ability to support its pupils with ASN.
- 3.16 When designing new mainstream schools, the extent to which dedicated space for meeting pupils' support needs can be provided, alongside mainstream classrooms, can be limited, especially where the new school project is externally funded. Scottish Government funding for new school projects is allocated based on metrics devised by the Scottish Futures Trust, where there is an expectation that two-stream primary schools will be designed to provide an overall 7.5 square metres of floorspace per pupil, and secondary schools will provide 10 square metres per pupil. All classroom space, circulation space and ancillary rooms (including space for meeting pupils' support needs) must be included within this allocation, and any floorspace over and above this metric would not be covered by the external funding and would be required to be funded directly by the Council. This limits the extent to which additional space for pupil support can be provided within a new school design.
- 3.17 At a national level, the Audit Scotland report on Additional Support for Learning highlights the increasing proportion of pupils in mainstream schools (40%) who require additional support, and raises concerns that this is not currently reflected in national funding formulas, in maximum class sizes, and in the design of new school buildings.
- 3.18 Locally, there is evidence that the numbers of children requiring access to hygiene rooms and nappy changing facilities whilst in school are growing, and that the age of children requiring these facilities is also increasing. This has implications for the specification of equipment within the facilities, as nappy changing units are increasingly required to be larger and stronger than the units previously specified for younger children. Similarly, the requirement for hoist and sling equipment in mainstream schools to assist in the manual handling of older children requiring this type of support is expected to continue to increase.
- 3.19 The increasing requirements of pupils with other types of physical support needs are an important consideration when planning and designing the use of space in schools. As the technology available to support young people with physical disability improves and becomes more widespread, there are implications for the space requirements in schools to accommodate this equipment and to allow the young people to move around with ease. Powered wheelchairs, for example, are generally becoming larger, and the space required for these can be considerably greater than the square metre per pupil allocation which is used for external funding for new schools, or when calculating existing schools' capacity. The impact of this increases considerably when there is more than one wheelchair user in the same class or year group within a school.

#### Implications for future planning: new school buildings

- 3.20 The Audit Scotland report on Additional Support for Learning recommends that Scottish Government and councils should assess the appropriate numbers of pupils in a class, and consider the design of schools to reflect the current and changing needs of the pupil population. Whilst the numbers of pupils in a class are determined at a national level by regulations and SNCT agreement, and are therefore largely outwith the control of the Council, there are opportunities for us to maximise the benefits to pupils with ASN, through the design of our new and refurbished buildings.
- 3.21 When specifying and designing new school buildings and when planning major refurbishments of our existing schools in Aberdeen City, the requirements for spaces to support ASN are given very careful consideration, and are discussed in detail with head teachers, school staff and other stakeholders to ensure that the needs of existing and future pupils, are met as far as practically possible. Post occupancy surveys of new school buildings are also carried out to assess the effectiveness of the spaces provided, and the results of these are used to inform and adapt specifications for future building and refurbishment projects.
- 3.22 The findings of this review of ASN spaces highlights the importance of continually reviewing our approach to the design and specification of new and refurbished school buildings, to reflect on the changing needs of young people and the requirements for support within mainstream classrooms and in enhanced spaces.
- 3.23 New or refurbished school buildings will require to remain compliant with current national standards and guidelines, including legal obligations in respect of class sizes, and for projects which are externally funded, criteria for maximum space allocations will be a key consideration when determining the extent to which space can be allocated for ASN use.

#### Implications for future planning: existing school buildings

- 3.24 As highlighted earlier in this report, the wide range of age and design of our existing school buildings mean that there can be no single approach to providing spaces for supporting pupils with additional needs. Flexibility and innovative use of the spaces available will continue to be key to ensuring that all of our schools are supported in delivering the best possible support for learners. The School Estate Team will continue to work closely with head teachers and staff in schools to maximise the use of available space and to repurpose spaces where appropriate, to ensure the individual needs of young people can be met.

#### Summary and recommendations

- 3.25 In summary, the review of ASN spaces has demonstrated that there is a range of good practice across our school estate, with schools taking a creative and flexible approach to make best use of the space available to provide appropriate support to pupils with ASN. A number of key challenges have also been

highlighted, for both our existing school buildings and also for the design and planning of our new and refurbished buildings. Whilst some of these challenges may require decision making and policy change at a national level, there are some important considerations for the way in which we need to plan and manage our school estate at a local level going forward.

- 3.26 It is therefore recommended that the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord is instructed to continue to provide support to schools in making best use of the space available for supporting pupils with ASN, reflecting any new local or national policies and guidance in this area which may emerge in the future.
- 3.27 It is also recommended that the Council's specification of spaces for ASN in future new school build and refurbishment projects continues to be reviewed regularly, to take account of any new guidance on school design and to reflect on feedback received from our existing school users.

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

- 4.1 Existing budgets will continue to be used to help meet the cost of making adjustments within school buildings, to ensure that spaces are used effectively for ASN support.
- 4.2 Any changes to Council specification of spaces for ASN in new school buildings would be incorporated into future budget planning for new schools within the General Fund Capital Programme.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Under Section 4 of the Education (Additional Support for Learning ) (Scotland) Act 2004 every education authority must make adequate and efficient provision for the additional support required by each child or young person having additional needs and monitor and review that support.
- 5.2 Section 17 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that it shall be the duty of an education authority in the performance of their functions under sections 1 to 6 of the Act, to provide for their area, sufficient accommodation in public schools and other educational establishments under their management to enable them to perform their said functions. In addition, an education authority shall maintain and keep efficient every public school, and other educational establishment under their management, and shall from time to time provide such additional accommodation as may be necessary to enable them to perform their functions under the Act and may, provide, alter, improve, enlarge, equip and maintain schools and other educational establishments within their area.

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	No significant risks identified			
<b>Compliance</b>	Failure to plan effectively for the use of space for ASN leading to the Council being unable to fulfil its duty to make adequate and efficient education provision	The recommendations within the report will help to ensure effective planning for the use of space for ASN in schools.	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	No significant risks identified			
<b>Financial</b>	No significant risks identified			
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk of not effectively meeting the needs of all learners	The recommendations within the report will help to ensure spaces are available to help support learners with ASN	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No significant risks identified			

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>Council Delivery Plan 2024</u></b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>  <u><b>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</b></u>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following ACC Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise attainment and achievement</li> <li>• Support improvement in the health and wellbeing of children and young people</li> <li>• Maximise the impact Of Early Learning and Childcare</li> </ul>
<b><u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026</u></b>	
<b>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes</b>	<p>The recommendations support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 3 - 95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27-30 month review by 2026. Providing appropriate spaces in schools for ASN will support children with additional support needs in achieving their potential.</p> <p>The proposals also support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 6 – 95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 &amp; 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026, and the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 8– 100% of children with Additional Support Needs /Disabilities will experience a positive destination by 2026. Providing appropriate spaces in schools for ASN will help to ensure all young people can achieve their potential and have access to a positive destination.</p>

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

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

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Education and Children's Services Committee, 26 November 2024: [Agenda Item 11: Behaviour Action Plan \(F&C/24/322\)](#)
- 10.2 Audit Scotland, February 2025: [Additional Support for Learning](#)

## 11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Finance and Resources
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2025 06 August 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	The report is public, but Appendix A is exempt under Paragraph 8: <i>Estimated expenditure on Contracts</i> . The appendix refers to the potential acquisition or supply of goods/services where disclosure to the public of the amount to be spent would be likely to give an advantage to a person or organisation seeking to enter a contract with the Council.
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Bucksburn and Dyce Long Term Secondary School Provision: Outline Business Case
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/25/159
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Stephen Booth
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Andrew Jones
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	ECS: 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.2, 1.3 F&R: 4.1

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents a completed Outline Business Case detailing options for ensuring appropriate long term secondary education provision to serve the communities of Dyce and Bucksburn and seeks approval for discussions to be undertaken with Aberdeenshire Council on catchment area adjustments for Dyce Academy.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Education and Children's Services Committee :-

- 2.1 Notes the preferred option for ensuring appropriate future provision of secondary education at Dyce and Bucksburn, as detailed within the Outline Business Case at Appendix A of this report; and:
- 2.2 Instructs the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord in consultation with the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to consult with officers at Aberdeenshire Council on proposals for adjusting the Dyce Academy catchment area to align with the City boundary, therefore removing all areas of Aberdeenshire including Newmachar and Kingseat from the catchment area, and to report back to this Committee on the outcomes of these discussions and recommendations for next steps, within the next two committee cycles.

That the Finance and Resources Committee :-

- 2.3 Notes the preferred option for ensuring appropriate future provision of secondary education at Dyce and Bucksburn, and:
- 2.4 Notes the decision of the Education and Children's Services Committee at its meeting on 24 June 2025 in relation to the proposed changes to school catchment areas.

### **3. CURRENT SITUATION**

- 3.1 At its meeting on 8 September 2022, the former Education Operational Delivery Committee approved the Council's School Estate Plan, and instructed the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to take forwards a detailed action plan to develop and improve the school estate. This included an instruction to carry out a feasibility study, to identify options for ensuring appropriate long term secondary school provision for Bucksburn and Dyce.
- 3.2 The Outline Business Case, included at Appendix A of this report, sets out the full findings of the feasibility study, and provides an analysis of the options available for the future.
- 3.3 As the city's smallest secondary school, Dyce Academy faces challenges in its efficient operation, and can be limited in the curriculum choice it can offer to pupils. The catchment area for Dyce Academy extends beyond the city boundary to the north, and covers areas of Aberdeenshire including the communities of Newmachar and Kingseat (see catchment area map at Appendix B). This means that all secondary aged children living in these areas of Aberdeenshire have an entitlement to a place at Dyce Academy.
- 3.4 Meanwhile, Bucksburn Academy is under pressure with rising pupil numbers, due to planned housing within the Newhills Expansion area. The planned permanent extension of the school, which will provide 300 additional pupil places, may not be sufficient to meet the continued rise in demand for places which is expected beyond 2030.
- 3.5 The School Estate Plan therefore highlighted that there may be a need to consider additional measures for managing pupil numbers in the long term between Bucksburn and Dyce. This document presents the findings of a feasibility study to assess the options for the long term planning of secondary school provision to serve the two communities.

#### Feasibility Study and Stakeholder Engagement

- 3.6 To assess the options available, a feasibility study was carried out between May and July 2024. The extent to which the school buildings will continue to meet the needs of Dyce and Bucksburn for secondary education provision in the future was assessed, and any required improvements or changes were considered.

- 3.7 To help evaluate the options for balancing numbers across the two schools (by making changes to catchment areas so that fewer pupils would be expected to attend Bucksburn Academy in future, and would instead be included within the catchment area for Dyce Academy) architects were instructed to assess the opportunities and estimated costs for extending the Dyce Academy building, which would enable the school to accommodate an increased pupil roll.
- 3.8 A stakeholder engagement exercise was also carried out, to gather comments and feedback from school communities on the options available, and the potential impact of making changes to school catchment areas to help balance numbers across the two schools. A summary of the feedback received from stakeholders is included within the Outline Business Case at Appendix A.

#### Preferred Option and Recommendations

- 3.9 Whilst work was undertaken as part of the feasibility study to produce outline plans for extending Dyce Academy, which would allow catchment areas to be amended and future pupil numbers to be redistributed between the two schools, it is acknowledged that no funding has been approved or allocated for the extension of the school, and that any extension to the school would likely result in increased running costs, which are also not budgeted for. Given the need to avoid adding further pressure to the Council's capital programme or revenue budgets, alternative options to minimise further capital expenditure needed to be considered.
- 3.10 The feasibility study also considered the possibility of reducing the overall numbers of pupils who would be eligible to attend the two schools in the future, by making changes to catchment areas, and identifying some areas of land which could instead be included within a catchment area for an alternative secondary school.
- 3.11 Current school roll forecasts indicate that none of the Aberdeen City secondary schools within reasonable travelling distance from Dyce or Bucksburn are expected to have capacity available in the foreseeable future to accommodate additional pupils from these areas. However, there may be an opportunity for the areas of Aberdeenshire which currently fall within the catchment area for Dyce Academy, including Newmachar and Kingseat, to be moved to the catchment area of an alternative secondary school in Aberdeenshire in the future. This would make space available at Dyce Academy to allow for a rebalance of pupil numbers between Dyce Academy and Bucksburn Academy, thus relieving the expected pressure on space at Bucksburn Academy in the future.
- 3.12 The preferred option identified within the outline business case would involve the removal of all areas of Aberdeenshire from the Dyce Academy catchment area, so that pupils living in these areas are no longer entitled to attend Dyce Academy in future, and are included within the catchment area of an Aberdeenshire secondary school instead. A map showing the areas of Aberdeenshire which currently fall within the Dyce Academy catchment area is included at Appendix B.

- 3.13 The preferred option would also include the realignment of the catchment areas for Bucksburn Academy and Dyce Academy, so that fewer pupils are entitled to attend Bucksburn Academy in future, and are instead entitled to attend Dyce Academy. This would most likely involve all or part of the community of Stoneywood being moved from the Bucksburn Academy catchment area to the Dyce Academy catchment area.
- 3.14 Any proposed changes to school catchment areas which could affect Aberdeenshire Council's school estate would require detailed consultation and discussion with colleagues in Aberdeenshire from an early stage, so that plans and communications can be aligned and coordinated between both councils. Moreover, proposals to make any changes to school catchment areas are subject to statutory public consultation, before a decision can be made on whether the proposals should be implemented, so both Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council would need to consult on changes to their respective catchment areas, prior to any decisions being taken.
- 3.15 It is therefore recommended that officers are instructed to enter into discussion with colleagues at Aberdeenshire Council, with a view to land in Aberdeenshire no longer being included in the Dyce Academy catchment area. Subject to the outcome of those discussions, officers would then make further recommendations to the Education and Children Services Committee on progressing with formal consultation on the proposed catchment areas changes in Aberdeen City, to help balance pupil numbers between Dyce Academy and Bucksburn Academy in the future.

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

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.
- 4.2 If a decision is taken in future to proceed with the removal of Aberdeenshire land from the Dyce Academy catchment area, and pupils from these areas in future attend a school in Aberdeenshire and not Aberdeen City, then the per capita funding which the Council currently receives from Scottish Government to assist with the cost of the education of these pupils, will instead be paid to Aberdeenshire Council, and the overall per capita funding paid to Aberdeen City would be reduced. The total reduction in per capita funding, following full implementation of catchment area changes after six years, is estimated at £20k per year.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that it shall be the duty of every education authority to secure that there is made for their area adequate and efficient provision of school education.
- 5.2 Section 17 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that it shall be the duty of an education authority in the performance of their functions under sections 1 to 6 of the Act, to provide for their area, sufficient accommodation in public schools and other educational establishments under their management

to enable them to perform their said functions. In addition, an education authority shall maintain and keep efficient every public school, and other educational establishment under their management, and shall from time to time provide such additional accommodation as may be necessary to enable them to perform their functions under the Act and may, provide, alter, improve, enlarge, equip and maintain schools and other educational establishments within their area.

- 5.3 A proposal to make changes to a school, including changes to catchment areas or closing, relocating or opening a school, is subject to consultation in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Formal consultations will require to be carried out for any proposals to make changes to the catchment areas for Dyce Academy and Bucksburn Academy, and consideration of this has been given in the recommendations arising from this report.

## 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

## 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	No significant risks identified			
<b>Compliance</b>	Failure to plan effectively for secondary education provision leading to the Council being unable to fulfil its duty to make adequate and efficient education provision	The recommended option as set out within the business case would help to ensure that adequate and efficient secondary education provision for Dyce and Bucksburn will be in place for the foreseeable future	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Proposed changes to catchment areas don't	Any changes to catchment areas	M	Yes

	provide sufficient re-balancing of pupil numbers	would be designed to rebalance pupil numbers according to the latest available forecasts, however there would remain a risk that the desired changes are not realised immediately. Other short term mitigating actions may therefore be required to address any further lack of capacity at either school.		
<b>Financial</b>	No significant risks identified			
<b>Reputational</b>	Failure to engage with stakeholders (including Aberdeenshire Council) on the planned changes to the school catchment areas could lead to reputational damage for the Council.	Ongoing dialogue and engagement with Aberdeenshire colleagues, staff, parents and pupils at the appropriate stage of the project	L	Yes
<b>Environmental/Climate</b>	No significant risks identified			

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>Council Delivery Plan 2024</u></b>	
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></b>	<p>The recommendations within this report support the delivery of the following policy statements:</p> <p>A City of Opportunity</p> <p>Policy Statement 2 - Review and invest in our school estate, ensuring all of Aberdeen's schools are fit for the educational needs and the challenges of the 21st century. The report presents options for balancing pupil numbers and ensuring Bucksburn Academy can operate within its available capacity.</p>

<a href="#">Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026</a>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Prosperous People: The project will support Stretch <b>Outcome 8 in the LOIP</b> - 100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination." Ensuring sufficient capacity and resources across our school estate will support pupil needs and positive destinations.
Community Empowerment Stretch Outcomes	The report and proposed future consultation support the delivery of Stretch Outcome 16 in the LOIP – 50% of people report they feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026.
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	This project forms part of the School Estate Plan which will support the delivery of the Council's Property and Estates Strategy and the Net Zero Routemap for Aberdeen City.

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	No other assessments required

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Education Operational Delivery Committee, 8 September 2022: [Agenda Item 14: School Estate Plan 2022](#).

## 11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Exempt Appendix A: Outline Business Case – Bucksburn & Dyce Long Term Secondary Education Provision
- 11.2 Appendix B: Map of existing catchment areas for Dyce Academy and Bucksburn Academy

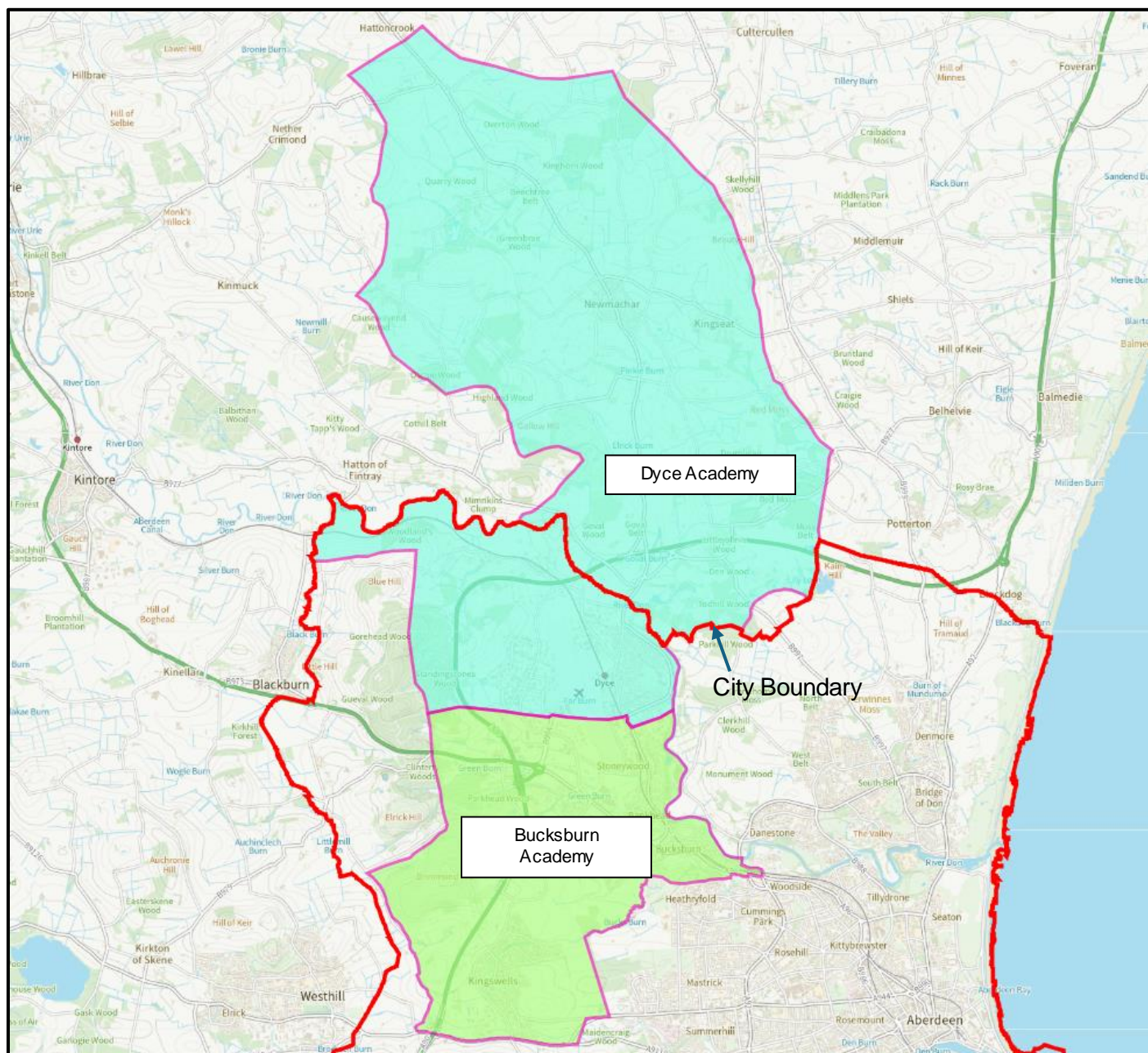
## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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## Appendix B: Current Catchment Areas



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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No, with the exception of Appendix I which is exempt under paragraph 5 of Part 1 of Section 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as it includes information relating to the adoption, care, fostering or education of any particular child or where any particular child is subject to a compulsory supervision order or interim compulsory supervision order (as defined respectively in sections 83 and 86 of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011) information relating to the order
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	ABZ Campus
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/25/150
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Mark Jones
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.2

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report updates Committee on progress with ABZ Campus, with particular reference to levels and achievements of participants and of plans in place for 2025-26. The report also includes a full review of the impact of the role of the Pathways Advocate.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee :-

- 2.1 Note the progress made in delivering *ABZ Campus* which aims to further broaden the curriculum offer for young people in the Senior Phase in Aberdeen City Council schools;
- 2.2 Instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to support the roll out of Phase 3 *ABZ Campus*; and
- 2.3 Instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to continue to report the progress of ABZ Campus to Members through a yearly Service Update.

### 3.1 CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1.1 *ABZ Campus* is a collective effort from the eleven secondary schools, partner organisations and central officers to contribute to the continued need to broaden the curriculum offer available in the senior phase, to seek out new

opportunities including growth-sector relevant courses, and ultimately to raise attainment for young people in Aberdeen City schools.

- 3.1.2 The work of ABZ Campus supports, but does not replace, the ongoing work of individual secondary schools to offer a broader curriculum that meets the needs of all young people in Aberdeen City.
- 3.1.3 The work of ABZ Campus commenced through the collective will expressed by secondary Head Teachers in the form of a proposal paper in November 2021. This led to resourcing, planning, creation of new courses, opening up choice to young people and the first launch of new courses in June 2023. Following further planning, an extended tranche of courses commenced in June 2024. Course choice concluded in early April 2025 to allow for the third phase of ABZ Campus to commence from June.
- 3.1.4 Delivery of the phases of ABZ Campus to date has incorporated some common features to allow for effective implementation and impact. These common features are identified below and will form the structure of this committee report:-
  - a. agree column alignment across all eleven secondary schools and thereby a vehicle for offering courses that would be accessible to all young people irrespective of the school they attend
  - b. increase the breadth of courses, with alignment to growth-sector industries, through *ABZ Campus* and provide impetus and support to the individual work of broadening the curriculum by the eleven secondary schools in Aberdeen City
  - c. support increasing breadth for ABZ Campus through developing partnership connections with other local authorities and organisations
  - d. respond to the voice of young people to create a streamlined application portal, more accessible course information, and regular surveys and focus groups for an understanding of the experiences of young people on ABZ Campus courses
  - e. effectively track and monitor the progress of young people within courses and then analyse the impact of ABZ Campus on young people at the point of certification, comparing young people on ABZ Campus courses with those participating in more regular school-based experiences
  - f. respond to the need to provide bespoke support to our care experienced and most vulnerable young people.

### **Column Alignment**

- 3.2.1 One of the most common aspects of ABZ Campus provision asked about by other local authorities has been the work to align aspects of the senior phase across our secondary schools in Aberdeen. The structure agreed by leadership teams in March 2022 has remained in place for the three phases since launch. However, this current session, 2025-26 will be the first where all eleven schools have fully aligned with the structure described below, with Harlaw Academy making further changes to their curriculum structure during this most recent session to allow their young people to fully benefit from the courses on offer across all columns.

DAY	MORNING (BEFORE BREAK)	MIDDLE OF DAY	AFTERNOON (AFTER LUNCH)
Monday	Column C		Column A
Tuesday	Column D	Column E (Virtual)	Column B
Wednesday	Column C		Column A
Thursday	Column D	Column E (Virtual)	Column B
Friday			

Figure 1

## Breadth of Courses

- 3.3.1 As with the initial commitment to broaden curricular offers with a particular focus on growth-sector industries, the practice of making transparent connections with growth-sectors has continued. Figure 2 shows examples of how courses delivered by a variety of partners are linked to growth-sector areas.



<b>ACCOUNTING (Higher)</b>		<b>SCIENTIFIC TECHNOLOGIES (NPA Level 6)</b>	
LEVEL	HIGHER	LEVEL	NATIONAL PROGRESSION AWARD – SCQF LEVEL 6
DELIVERER	ABERDEEN GRAMMAR SCHOOL	DELIVERER	OLDMACHAR ACADEMY
GROWTH SECTOR	FINANCIAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	GROWTH SECTOR	LIFE SCIENCES
 <b>FOUNDATION APPRENTICESHIP (1 Year): SOCIAL SERVICES &amp; HEALTHCARE (Level 6)</b>		 <b>FOUNDATION APPRENTICESHIP (1 Year): CONSTRUCTION (Level 5)</b>	
LEVEL	SCQF LEVEL 6	LEVEL	SCQF LEVEL 5
DELIVERER	BON ACCORD CARE or NESCol – ABERDEEN CITY CAMPUS	DELIVERER	ST MACHAR ACADEMY (DELIVERED BY NESCol)
GROWTH SECTOR	CARE	GROWTH SECTOR	CONSTRUCTION

Figure 2

- 3.3.2 Having completed Phase 1 (2023-24), in the process of concluding Phase 2 (2024-25) and preparing for the launch of Phase 3 (2025-26), a picture of increasing breadth can now be seen, as demonstrated in Figure 3. The three phases have seen; a widening of growth-sectors covered, an increasing range of courses from Level 4 to Level 7, and a diversification in the method of delivery from Phase 2 onwards, with ‘anytime’ and ‘twilight courses’ increasingly available to young people across Aberdeen City.

Session	Courses	L4	L5	L6	L7	Agriculture	Childcare	Construction	Digital	Energy	Financial & Business	General	Healthcare	Life Science	Tourism & Hospitality	Providers	In Person	Virtual	Anytime	Twilight
2023-24	36	1	2	15	18	0	4	0	2	5	5	7	4	4	5	10	35	1	0	0
% 2023-24		2.8	5.6	41.7	50.0	0.0	11.1	0.0	5.6	13.9	13.9	19.4	11.1	11.1	13.9	27.8	97.2	2.8	0.0	0.0
2024-25	70	1	14	30	25	6	5	4	5	9	6	12	6	6	11	16	55	1	12	2
% 2024-25		1.4	20.0	42.9	35.7	8.6	7.1	5.7	7.1	12.9	8.6	17.1	8.6	8.6	15.7	22.9	78.6	1.4	17.1	2.9
2025-26	78	4	14	30	30	5	5	3	5	10	8	20	5	4	11	18	57	1	16	4
% 2025-26		5.1	17.9	38.5	38.5	6.4	6.4	3.8	6.4	12.8	10.3	25.6	6.4	5.1	14.1	23.1	73.1	1.3	20.5	5.1

Figure 3

- 3.3.3 As we approach the launch of the third phase of ABZ Campus, we are now able to compare the picture of applications for courses. This does not equate to participation as the application process is followed by system to ensure that young people are applying for the best possible course, that they have a realistic prospect for success and, of course, we recognise that young people will inevitably change their minds as they go through the process, not least when results from a prior year are considered. Figure 4 shows the comparison across three phases of applications (with Phase 3 applications still being accepted at the time of writing).

Applications from Aberdeen City	
Year	Total
23/24	1279
24/25	1461
25/26*	1496
Applications from Aberdeenshire	
Year	Total
23/24	6
24/25	46
25/26*	11
* Applications still being accepted. Data taken from ABZ Campus applications	

Figure 4

### Partnerships

- 3.4.1 There is recognition that partnerships must be maximised in order to give young people the best possible range of certificated experiences in the Senior Phase. These partnerships arrive in a variety of forms; schools, fellow local authorities, and wider organisations.
- 3.4.2 As referenced in section 3.2.1, Phase 3 now has all of our secondary schools fully aligned within the column structure. Since Phase 1, a greater number of our schools have become providers of courses, developing a better geographical spread to 'host' ABZ Campus courses, as can be seen in the 'provider' column of Figure 3. The intention is to continue to develop this geographical spread in future phases of ABZ Campus.
- 3.4.3 The development of ABZ Campus has given rise to twin potential benefits for Aberdeen City in relation to our partnership with fellow local authorities. Firstly, the ABZ Campus Curriculum Manager and central officers have now met with six other local authorities who are either interested in developing a similar curriculum model or in replicating aspects of delivery such as anytime or twilight courses. Secondly, we have looked to develop opportunities for shared courses with Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils. Currently, we have contracted access for small cohorts of our young people to Foundation Apprenticeships in Construction and Automotive with Aberdeenshire Council and, in turn, offer access to some of our in-person and 'anytime' courses for young people from Aberdeenshire Council. The intention is that some course delivery could be offered across local authorities to further develop the range of certificated experiences our young people can access and officers will explore the funding of this approach in the coming year.
- 3.4.4 A central part of our ABZ Campus offer has been our continued partnership with North-East Scotland College (NESCol). At around the same time that ABZ Campus commenced course offers, an *Enhancing the Senior Phase* project was launched encouraging regional collaboration to support certificated offers



for targeted groups of young people. NESCol continue to offer a significant proportion of ABZ Campus Courses, with a number of Foundation Apprenticeships, HNC and Skills for Work courses. To support the pipeline of interest in energy-related growth sector courses, NESCol is leading on the *Energy on the Move* vehicle which is aimed to provide rich curriculum experiences on energy transition, low-carbon energy industries and promote pathways into energy careers for young people in S1-S3 across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. In addition to this, we are grateful for close working relationships with other partners to help us to deliver ABZ Campus courses, Figure 5 provides an overview of just some of our delivery partners.



Figure 5

3.4.5 ABZ Campus offers an opportunity to work with partners in wider organisations to develop the scope of certificated experiences for young people. Our partnership with NUCO Training has seen the introduction of First Aid Training for young people in the Senior Phase, typically as part of senior phase induction activities in our secondary schools. Information on this can be found in Figure 6 below. Initial discussions with prospective ABZ Campus partners Sport Aberdeen have taken place to support them to offer certificated courses and we continue to engage with all potential partners to support pathways for all young people through enhancing the offer. During 2024-25, the Employability Pathway has supported 12 young people who are looking to transition into employment which has been under represented in post-school destinations. Work experience and induction experience has been provided through various parts of Aberdeen City Council. This session also saw the implementation of a bespoke ASN Pathway for 6 young people which benefited from an investment of time from teams within Aberdeen City Council. Work placements for both of these Pathways were partners including CFINE, a local nursery, bakery and Instant Neighbour Aberdeen.

Course	Total
Emergency First Aid at Work - FAA Level 6 Scotland Award - 1 day	1026
Paediatric Emergency First Aid - FAA Level 6 Scotland - 1 Day	8

Figure 6

## Pupil Voice, Communication & QA

- 3.5.1 There has been a consistent desire to ensure that the voices of young people play a significant role in ABZ Campus. This started with initial focus groups leading to the development of consistent course information and a bespoke application portal, as shown in Figure 7.

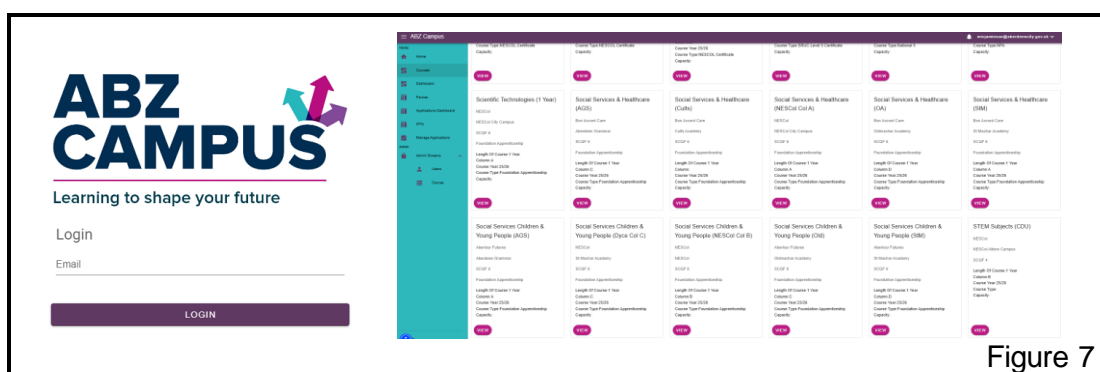


Figure 7

- 3.5.2 During the course of the last two sessions, surveys and focus groups have been carried out with young people who were participating in ABZ Campus courses. During February and March 2025, young people responded positively to the accessibility of the course information and application process, and also confirmed that they felt valued as part of the ABZ Campus class (see Figure 8). In Figure 9, we see young people respond favourably to the quality of learning and teaching, with just under half rating this as excellent. Given this is the second year of gathering the voice of young people in this way, a comparison is possible, and shown in Figure 10. The responses show young people remain confident in the accessibility of course information and satisfaction with ABZ Campus courses.

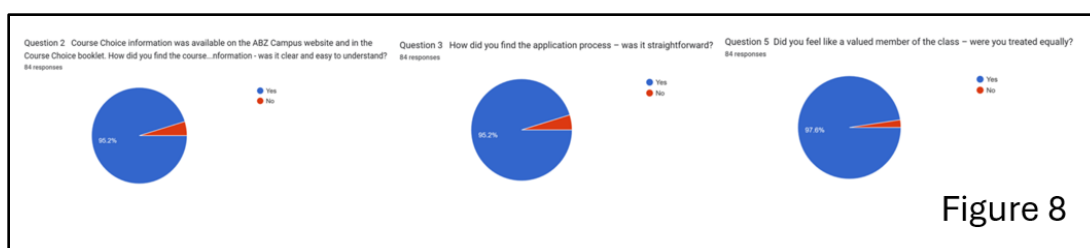
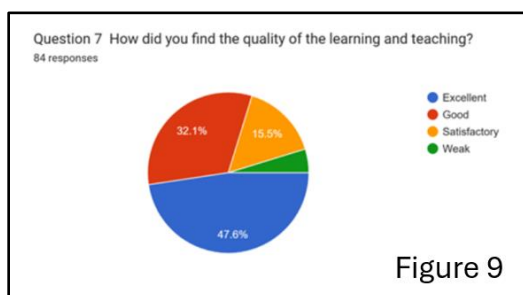


Figure 8





Selected Questions for Comparison	2023-24	2024-25
Number of Responses	97	84
Response	Yes	Yes
Course Choice information was available on the ABZ Campus website and in the Course Choice booklet. How did you find the course information - was it clear and easy to understand?	95.70%	95.20%
How did you find the application process - was it straightforward?	92.40%	95.20%
(If you choose a daytime course that involved attending another school or provider) were you welcomed into the building and given an induction?	82.60%	85.70%
Did you feel like a valued member of the class?	94.60%	97.60%

Figure 10

3.5.3 During Phase 2 (2024-25), the ABZ Campus Curriculum Manager, central officers and partner organisations collaborated to commence a programme of classroom visits to validate the positive responses from young people and support the analysis of successful participation through certification. At the time of report-writing, nine collaborative visits had taken place shared between central officers and partner organisations, with further visits planned during May and June 2025.

3.5.4 Communication with young people, families and staff teams continues to be a high priority to ensure that all are aware of the additional course range that is available to young people across Aberdeen City schools. The ABZ Campus curriculum manager visited a number of Career Events during the course choice window (January to March). In addition, a twilight event was held for our school choice teams in schools on 29<sup>th</sup> January to support their knowledge of courses on offer. Finally a family information recording was made (<https://abzworks.co.uk/abzcampus/parents/>) to support applications from all young people in Aberdeen City.

### Track, Monitor & Impact

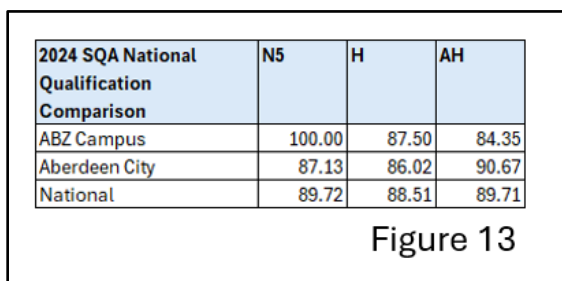
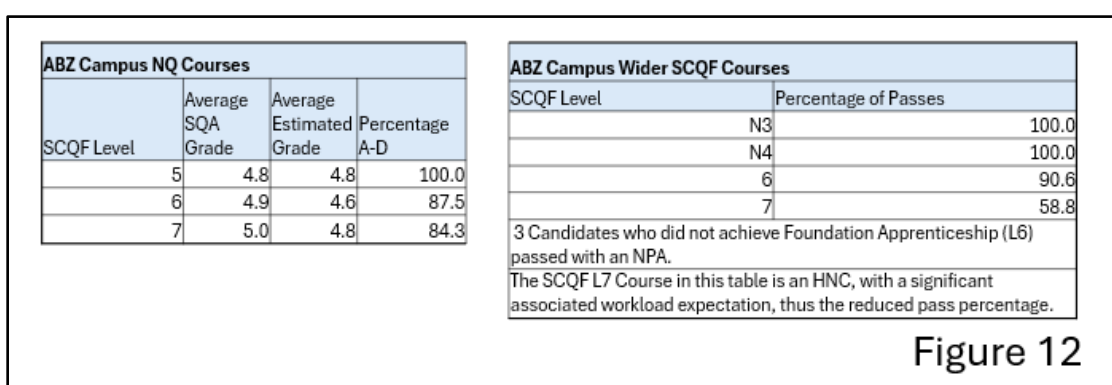
3.6.1 In June 2024, all secondary schools made the decision to move to a common tracking system which has begun to have a positive impact both for schools in relation to having a more robust tracking mechanism, and for central officers as consistent data is available much more readily than if eleven separate systems were being used. For ABZ Campus Phase 2 courses currently approaching examination and assessment in May and June 2025, the picture for estimated grade has been provided in Figure 11. In addition, most young people are on track to successfully pass those wider SCQF courses (such as Foundation Apprenticeships) that carry a pass/fail result rather than a grade.

ABZ Campus NQ Courses - Estimated Grades 2024-25		
SCQF Level	Average Estimated Grade	Percentage A-D
5	5.1	100%
6	4.6	90%
7	4.4	94%

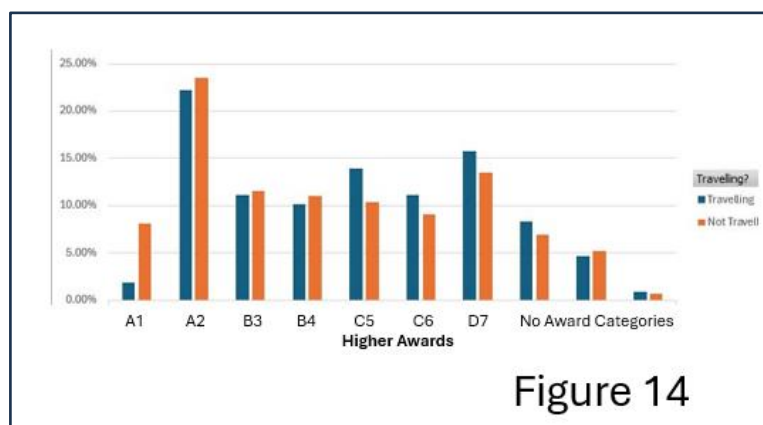
Figure 11

3.6.2 With young people in Phase 1 of ABZ Campus having completed assessments and received results in August 2024, a first year of SQA results is available for

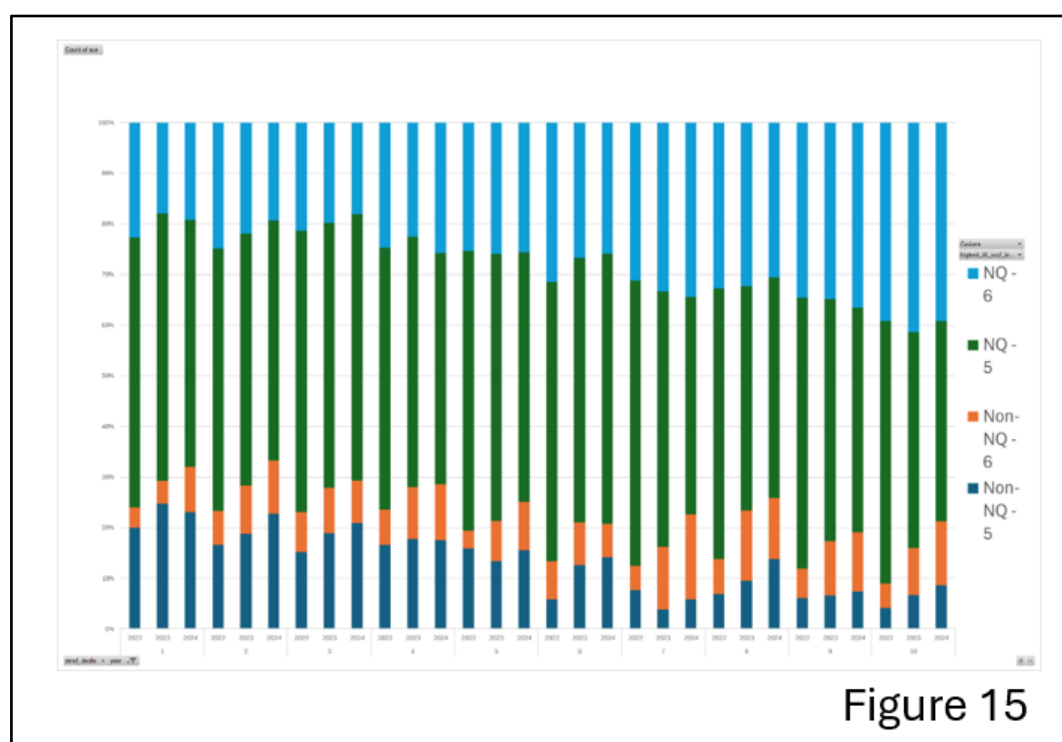
analysis, and a brief overview shown in Figure 12. For National Qualification (e.g. National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher) courses, the results were encouraging with the final average grade sitting at a B for National 5 and Higher, and on the cusp of a B and a C for Advanced Higher. The A-D pass rate was also positive. For wider SCQF (e.g. Foundation Apprenticeships and HNC) courses, pass rates again were positive. The HNC course carries the 'weight' of over two Advanced Higher courses and can open up access to year two of a University course, thus the pass rate is slightly reduced. Figure 13 provides a comparison on the A-D pass rate for both Aberdeen City and National benchmarks. On balance, the results for young people in ABZ Campus courses justifies the investment of time and energy into the initiative. It is worth emphasising that; these are courses that would otherwise be unlikely to run in individual schools, the ABZ Campus numbers are low and therefore more susceptible to statistical fluctuation, and that this is the first year of running and so no trends can be observed.



- 3.6.3 A question that has and will continue to be asked (and the outcome monitored) is whether there is an impact on attainment for those who travel. With only one year of data, it is not possible to draw a conclusion, and again, the choice for young people taking ABZ Campus courses is not whether to travel or not to travel, but whether to access a course they could not otherwise choose or not. Figure 14 shows a broad comparison between results for those who travel against results for those who do not. The outcome, again with the caveat that this is only one year of data, suggests that there is broad correlation between the two (with A Band 1 grades the only outlier). When this is expressed as an average, both show that a young person will on average achieve a 'lower' B grade (this graph shows Higher Level only).



3.6.4 The purpose behind the creation of ABZ Campus centred around opening up access for all young people, irrespective of school, and also a desire to provide the broadest possible range of pathways for young people in Aberdeen City. Our first set of results in 2024 also suggests that the introduction (both through ABZ Campus and through the general curriculum work in our secondary schools) of wider SCQF courses is disproportionately helping young people from areas of higher deprivation. Figure 15 below shows the change over three years for each of the 10 deciles (SIMD) from left to right, with orange and blue bars showing wider SCQF courses. As can be seen, the proportion is higher towards the left hand side of the chart where the lower deciles sit. This will continue to be subject to analysis as young people in further phases of ABZ Campus move towards certification.



3.6.5 The introduction of wider courses by our secondary schools, of which ABZ Campus forms just a part, is resulting in a greater number of attainment gains for young people in Aberdeen City. These gains are shown in Figure 16 below.

Wider Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) - Level	Attainment by number of courses from Aberdeen City Council young people in 2024	Attainment by number of courses from Aberdeen City Council young people in 2023	Attainment by number of courses from Aberdeen City Council young people in 2022
SCQF 4	595	400	360
SCQF 5	940	685	480
SCQF 6	730	435	160

Figure 16

### Pathways Advocate

- 3.7.1 Committee *instructed the Chief Officer to report back on the impact of Pathways Advocates within one calendar year.* The full review is contained in Appendix I of this report and a summary of the conclusion and recommendations found below.
- 3.7.2 The role of the Pathway Advocate was introduced to provide young people who are care experienced with the opportunity to have an informed advocate in school to advise and support in the area of choices, vocational pathways and future options. Qualitative information including feedback from young people and staff has been positive, with some examples of success found within case studies shown in Appendix I. There are also signs of positive progress when looking at the quantitative data.
- 3.7.3 The recommendations from the Pathways Advocate – June 2025 Evaluation are as follows:-
- the Pathways Advocate role continues in schools to enable a more extended period of time to fully embed the role and evidence impact
  - Improve the tracking system to better support evidencing impact, including linkage with the newly established master tracking system
  - Continue to refine the cohort of young people to be supported to ensure the right young people are benefitting

### Future Plans

- 3.8.1 Given the continued positive experiences of young people, and the evidence that *ABZ Campus* is playing an important part in broadening curriculum offer and supporting improvements in attainment, early thought has already been given to how Phase 4 in 2026-27 can build on what we already have. It is important to note that discussions around Phase 4 are in the early stages and an important next step will be to build in time with the Secondary Head Teachers agreeing the details of what follows.
- 3.8.2 As with previous phases of ABZ Campus, we are committed to continuing to grow the offer for our young people. Discussions have started with both partner local authorities and organisations to work together to offer an even wider range of courses in a way that is sustainable and cost-effective.
- 3.8.2 Introducing a suite of ABZ Campus work placements has been planned for some time, however challenges have been experienced with progressing this

aspect to allow introduction for Phase 3. The intention now is that this offer will be included as part of Phase 4.

- 3.8.3 During Session 2024-25, all of our secondary schools have started to use a new tracking system for monitoring, tracking and reporting on the progress of young people. The intention is that school-based ABZ Campus courses will be tracked and reported using this new system in future sessions. This will allow a fully aligned and consistent approach to this important area.
- 3.8.4 Following the Chief Officer instruction to review the impact of the Pathway Advocate role, and the resulting report contained in Appendix I, the recommendations in Section 3.7.3 will be adopted as part of the plans for ABZ Campus going forward.

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

- 4.1 *ABZ Campus* relies upon funding contributions from each of the Aberdeen City schools, for investment in the senior phase by partners and a significant allocation of central resources to oversee and manage the Phases. In order to continue to increase broader opportunities for young people through *ABZ Campus*, there may be a need for an increase in contributions from our secondary schools. There is also a risk that financial constraints limit the contribution being made by partners. This continues to be monitored carefully.
- 4.2 Earlier in 2025, the Scottish Government confirmed that responsibility for providing national training programmes, including apprenticeships, will move from Skills Development Scotland to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). It is anticipated that these changes will take effect in autumn 2026, and it is possible that these changes will change the way we are able to access funding for Foundation Apprenticeships, currently principally through our partners North-East Scotland College but also through other local partners such as Bon Accord Care, Aberlour and Aberdeenshire Council.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications from this report.

## 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Risk of not focussing our offer on growth and volume sectors to support growth in the local economy.	Planning courses which are designed to support young people to access growth and volume sectors.	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	As work to incorporate the UNCRC progresses, there is a risk of not being guided by young people to ensure they can claim all of their rights.	Continuing to regularly canvass young people through survey and focus group will provide confidence that their voice is heard clearly in future iterations of <i>ABZ Campus</i> .	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Risk of low uptake resulting in no improvement in attainment	Mechanisms in place to monitor update and progress to ensure that we remain agile and responsive.	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	Risk that ABZ Campus is not prioritised by partners and secondary schools.	Ensuring that phases are aligned to the needs of secondary schools helps mitigate this risk. Regular discussions with partners will help provide early warning of any changes in their investment.	M	Yes
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk of young people not completing courses	Mechanisms in place to monitor update and progress to ensure that we intervene and respond in a timely manner.	L	Yes

<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Risk that the curriculum does not prepare young people to face the challenges ahead.	Continued focus on volume and growth sectors with plans for future phases to focus on Green Technology and Employability Projects	L	<b>Yes</b>
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## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u></b>	
<b>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</b>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The delivery of ABZ Campus is aligned with Stetch outcome 6 of the Children's Services Plan and Local Outcome Improvement Plan.
<b>UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes</b>	<p><b>The Education (Scotland) Act 1980</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duty to provide adequate and efficient education for our area.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duties regarding meeting the needs of children and young people with additional support needs.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raising standards</li> <li>Requirement that education be provided in mainstream schools</li> </ul> <p><b>The National Improvement Framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education Authorities are under a duty to endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of education of school education which is provided in the schools managed by them and to carry out the duty with a view to achieving the strategic priorities set out in the National Improvement Framework.</li> </ul>

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

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

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

[Education & Children's Services Committee – 30.04.24, Item 10.3 ABZ Campus](#)

## **11. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Pathways Advocate – June 2025 Evaluation – Exempt Appendix

## **12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS**

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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Ukrainian School Partnerships project – International Travel
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/25/128
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Caroline Johnstone
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	2.1.1 and General Delegation 5

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for a teacher from Ferryhill School to travel to Krakow in Poland as part of the British Council UK-Ukraine School Partnerships project on Reading for Pleasure.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Approves travel for a teacher to attend Krakow in September 2025, with the purpose of the visit being to help teachers from partnered schools to get to know each other and guide them along the journey of developing their partnership and project. The travel is funded by the British Council, there is no cost to the local authority.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Schools Connect is the British Council's programme for schools in the UK and around the world. They help teachers to bring an international perspective to the curriculum, supporting all young people to build the skills, knowledge, and attitudes they need to respond to global challenges and develop international understanding.  
<https://www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources>
- 3.2 A teacher from Ferryhill School has the opportunity to participate in a six-month project, during which will be provided with a range of suggested curriculum-related activities which they and their pupils can develop along with pupils in their partner school, focusing on reading for pleasure. The programme will be linking schools in the UK and Ukraine.
- 3.3 The project provides an opportunity to connect and collaborate with teachers and pupils internationally to foster a love of reading, celebrate diverse literature, and engage reluctant readers.

This project is aimed at learners aged 7-14 with the following expected outcomes:

- To broaden pupils' horizons and provide exciting new learning opportunities
- To give learners the opportunity to share work with students in your partner school
- To plan and carry out a partnership project related to Reading for Pleasure
- To get targeted support from expert practitioners who have successfully developed a Reading for Pleasure culture in their schools.
- To exchange ideas with teachers from Ukraine and the UK while gaining transferable skills and discovering new teaching approaches.

3.4 The teacher from Ferryhill School will be paired with a school in Ukraine and will work on joint activities within a wider group of Ukrainian and UK schools.

3.5 The project will begin with the face-to-face event in Krakow, Poland where the teacher will have the opportunity to meet a teacher from their partner school and plan the partnership. On their return to school the British Council will host a series of support webinars, plus a final online celebratory event. The webinars will be complemented with guidance, professional development and help with any questions participants may have.

3.6 Following the face-to-face event, participants will work on their projects with their partner school in the Autumn term before coming back together to celebrate with the wider group in February. After the programme has finished, the British Council will continue to support participating schools in utilising their partnership resources. The participating school will be asked to identify any learning from the project which can be shared more widely across city schools.

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

4.1 There are no costs to the school or Council for this proposed trip, the costs of the travel are being met by funding from the British Council.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty to secure best value in terms of section 1 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. The Council has travel policies for both members and officers. All travel will be booked in accordance with these policies to ensure cost-effective travel arrangements.

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The report recommendations have a negative environmental impact, namely an increase in carbon emissions due to air travel. To minimise this the itinerary will be full and valuable. Consideration could also be given to minimising the carbon footprint when booking travel e.g. booking a train rather than flight for any in-

country connections where possible and the itinerary allows or booking 'green' airfares only.

## 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Failure to maintain and foster international relationships may negatively impact reputation and relationships.	Aligning international activity with local partners to maximise impact of Aberdeen's attendance, reputation and messaging.	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	Travel and accommodation bookings, and subsistence arrangements, not being in line with Council policies.	All travel and accommodation arrangements made via the Travel Team to ensure accordance with the Council's travel policies for members and officers.	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Safety and security risks of travel to certain locations.	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) travel advice and country entry requirements adhered to. A thorough risk assessment exercise is completed prior to any travel outside of the UK. This forms part of the pre-travel briefing. The Council has sufficient travel insurance in place.	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	Actual costs exceed those estimated in this report.	All costs of travel to be met by the British Council.	L	Yes

		No travel will be booked without this funding being assured.		
<b>Reputational</b>	Reputational risks if the city does not actively maintain and participate in international events and networks, which could diminish the city's global profile.	Close working relationships with officers of the British Council and professionals in other schools to ensure benefits maximised from all outgoing international activity.	L	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Carbon footprint of air travel.	The number of officers to attend this trip is restricted to one.	L	<b>Yes</b>

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>Council Delivery Plan 2024</u></b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>  <u><a href="#">Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</a></u>	<p>The proposed travel/event attendance, and rationale of establishing and maintaining international connections and networks supports the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As a Council, it is a key priority that we invest in our children's futures, to ensure that they achieve positive destinations and are given the best opportunities in life</li> <li>With partners, we will work to improve attainment, expand curriculum choice and develop services that will secure the wellbeing that young people and their families need. We will promote creativity and excellence and make opportunities for learning and culture more accessible</li> </ul>
<b><u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026</u></b>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	This report supports the LOIP Key Driver within Stretch Outcome 8 - Improving pathways to education, employment and training for identified groups (including disability, ASN, term time leavers and those from priority neighbourhoods) because it supports the Education Service providing additional

	opportunities for children and young people to work with schools in other countries to develop reading.
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	This travel/event attendance will support the Improvement Plan to ensure that Aberdeen is a “City of Learning” and will provide an opportunity to connect and collaborate with teachers and pupils internationally to foster a love of reading, celebrate diverse literature, and engage reluctant readers.

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	New Integrated Impact Assessment Completed
<b>Data protection impact assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	Not required

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

## 11. APPENDICES

11.1 None

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Bairns Hoose Update
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/25/157
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Graeme Simpson
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Alison McAlpine
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	2.2

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update members on progress in relation to Aberdeen City's Pathfinder activity to develop our Bairns Hoose.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note the update of progress made by the Aberdeen City Pathfinder to deliver a Bairns Hoose and the Scottish Government grant award for 2025/26 to support delivery of Aberdeen's Bairns Hoose;
- 2.2 note that an incremental approach to opening the Bairns Hoose will commence from the Summer of 2025;
- 2.3 instruct the Chief Officer, Children & Family Support Services/CSWO to arrange a visit for Committee Members to the Bairns Hoose upon completion of the build; and
- 2.4 instruct the Chief Officer, Children & Family Services/CSWO to provide a service update, in June 2026.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

#### 3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 The Scottish Government's vision for a Bairns Hoose in Scotland is that *"All children in Scotland who have been victims or witnesses to abuse or violence, as well as children under the age of criminal responsibility whose behaviour has caused significant harm or abuse will have access to trauma informed recovery, support and justice."*
- 3.1.2 A Bairns Hoose is based on the concept of 'four rooms'. It brings together the four elements of justice, health, social work and recovery support into a single

setting to deliver integrated and compassionate support to best meet the needs of children who are victims of abuse or have witnessed violence as well as children under the age of criminal responsibility whose behaviour has caused significant harm to others.

- 3.1.3 Aberdeen City's Executive Group for Public Protection noted their commitment in 2023 to fully deliver a Bairns Hoose in Aberdeen. In doing so the unused part of the Links Hub was identified as a possible location for the Bairns Hoose.
- 3.1.4 In summer 2023 the Scottish Government invited applications for Partnerships to become a Pathfinder. Aberdeen City partnership was awarded "Pathfinder Status" in November 2023. Being a Pathfinder, Aberdeen City has been awarded some funding in 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 to support the system and practice change required to deliver on the [Bairns-Hoose-Standards](#) and capital funding to support the development of a Bairns Hoose building that can deliver the integrated transformational service envisaged. The national Pathfinder phase of the Bairns Hoose policy will run until 31 March 2027.
- 3.1.5 To oversee the multi-agency transformational change required to deliver a Bairns Hoose, a Delivery Group was established with a number of workstreams.

**VOICE** – to ensure our service design is informed by and takes full account of the voice and views of children, young people and families.

**Systems and Processes** – Adapting and transforming existing systems and processes to enable alignment to the Bairns Hoose Standards.

**Capital & Resources** – Overseeing the building development and the resource required to deliver a Bairns Hoose on a sustainable basis

**Governance** – oversight of reporting duties to Scottish Government, Independent Funding Partners as well as internal governance

**Evaluation** – to lead learning and begin to understand the impact of a Bairns Hoose service model.

- 3.1.6 The Delivery Group reports directly to the Child Protection Committee and the Public Protection Chief Officer Group.

## **3.2 Voice, Participation and Recovery Support**

- 3.2.1 Children First is Scotland's national children's charity, protecting children from harm and supporting recovery from trauma and abuse. It leads the development of a child-focused recovery offer in Aberdeen City's Bairns Hoose, providing recovery, rights, and advocacy support. They are available to deliver tailored support for families through the court and legal processes ensuring appropriate levels of recovery service are in place.
- 3.2.2 Recognising that *recovery* supports may already be in place and/or may not always require to take place through the confines of Bairns Hoose, we are working to strengthen links to other existing support services, such as our Fit Like Wellbeing Hubs. Children First are working in collaboration with Victim Support Scotland, Cybersafe Scotland, and Grampian Women's Aid to ensure appropriate access to support and knowledge that will guide children and their families appropriately.

- 3.2.3 Within the City, our most common reason for child protection referral continues to be in relation to physical harm at the hands of a parent/carer and here, most children will remain within their families with no criminal charges being professed. This has required us to carefully consider how best to support these families to think differently about how to manage the needs of children and their parent carers and to establish appropriate linkages with services who can mitigate against further harm.
- 3.2.4 The voices of children, young people, and their families are central to Bairns Hoose planning therefore the VOICE workstream is dedicated to embedding systemic listening and learning practices, aligned with UNCRC and The Promise, ensuring that these voices are heard and acted upon in strategic planning and evaluation. This approach is also by necessity, integrated across all workstreams to consistently inform service development and delivery.
- Children and their families have contributed directly to the design of our Bairns Hoose, influencing features such as outdoor space, access to food, shower facilities and the overall aesthetic.
  - A consistent feedback tool has been co-developed with children and young people to ensure their experiences inform service improvement.
  - A local advisory group aligned with the Lundy model, has been established to promote sustained participation and influence.
  - Children and young people are leading on the design of a dedicated Bairns Hoose logo for Aberdeen City which we hope to be ready in summer 2025, reinforcing ownership and identity.
  - Advocacy, Rights and Recovery staff have provided coordinated, holistic support to families throughout their journey.
  - A target has been set for 95% of children and families to report a positive impact from the support received via the Bairns Hoose.

### **3.3 Improvement Activity**

- 3.3.1 Integration has been a key feature of Aberdeen's pathway planning for Bairns Hoose. Openness to change and candid challenge between agencies and services has been an approach that has matured since the outset of this project. Meeting the Bairns Hoose Standards will require much more than a 'lift and shift' of individual areas of expertise into one building. Instead, partners believe that we need to be greater than the sum of our individual parts in order to truly deliver preventative support to more effectively respond to the needs of this group of vulnerable children. This will ensure that children do not fall through current gaps and that the systems and processes they find themselves in do not inadvertently cause them further harm.
- 3.3.2 Collaborative discussions across the partnership including with the NHSG has led to detailed planning to enhance the health element within our Bairns Hoose as well as the health pathways connected to this. This will see activity to improve the responsiveness of support to children/young people who have been abused, harmed or those younger children who may have caused harm to others. This improvement work will also enable an increasing preventative lens to the health needs of children who connect with the Bairns Hoose.

- 3.3.3 A health coordinator will be embedded within the Bairns Hoose. This role will undertake initial health and wellbeing medicals and screen all children for unmet health needs. They will also connect with existing health professionals connected to the child/young person to progress identified actions. Their role will also consider the needs of parents/carers recognising that responding to their needs is often the most effective means to support the recovery of the young from their harmful experiences.
- 3.3.4 In 2025, a specific test of change will embed specialist Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) within Bairns Hoose to enhance communication support for children and young people. The focus will be on identifying communication needs before interviews or court attendance, fostering an inclusive communication environment, and training staff with tools like Talking Mats. The project's success will be measured through training, feedback, case studies, and an impact report to guide future service development.
- 3.3.5 Collaboration via a joint Justice workstream continues to take place with our colleagues in Aberdeenshire in order to plan improvement within our legal processes and systems.
- 3.3.6 A workshop is planned to enable a deeper dive around the “Justice” element of the Bairns Hoose to more fully explore the required change needed. The Partnership are committed to thinking innovatively, challenging where necessary systems and processes that may in fact be counter-productive to the recovery that we are committed to offering. Our partnership with the University of Edinburgh is providing an additional opportunity to explore international models of delivering justice support to children and young people who have been harmed or whose behaviour has harmed others.
- 3.3.7 The policy landscape and expectations are changing at pace and we continue to enhance our planning to ensure our Bairns Hoose is ‘future proofed’ - i.e. potential increase of age of criminal responsibility; changes to the rules of evidence for children; Trauma Informed Domestic Abuse Management (TIDAM) and the implementation of the Children’s (Care & Justice) Act.
- 3.3.8 Insights from the Justice workshop will ensure that all considerations related to the provision of remote evidence are addressed, and that relevant connections to broader policy agendas are appropriately integrated.
- 3.3.9 Planning for the opening of our Bairns Hoose is expected to conclude in the coming months, with the aim of becoming operational in late summer 2025. It is acknowledged that full implementation may be phased, and not all components will be fully active from the outset.
- 3.3.10 As the above work further develops we will continue to explore opportunities to maximise the space within the Bairns Hoose on an incremental basis, for example, whether the space could be used for a wider cohort of need, for example in vulnerable adult interviews or for children who come into conflict with the law.

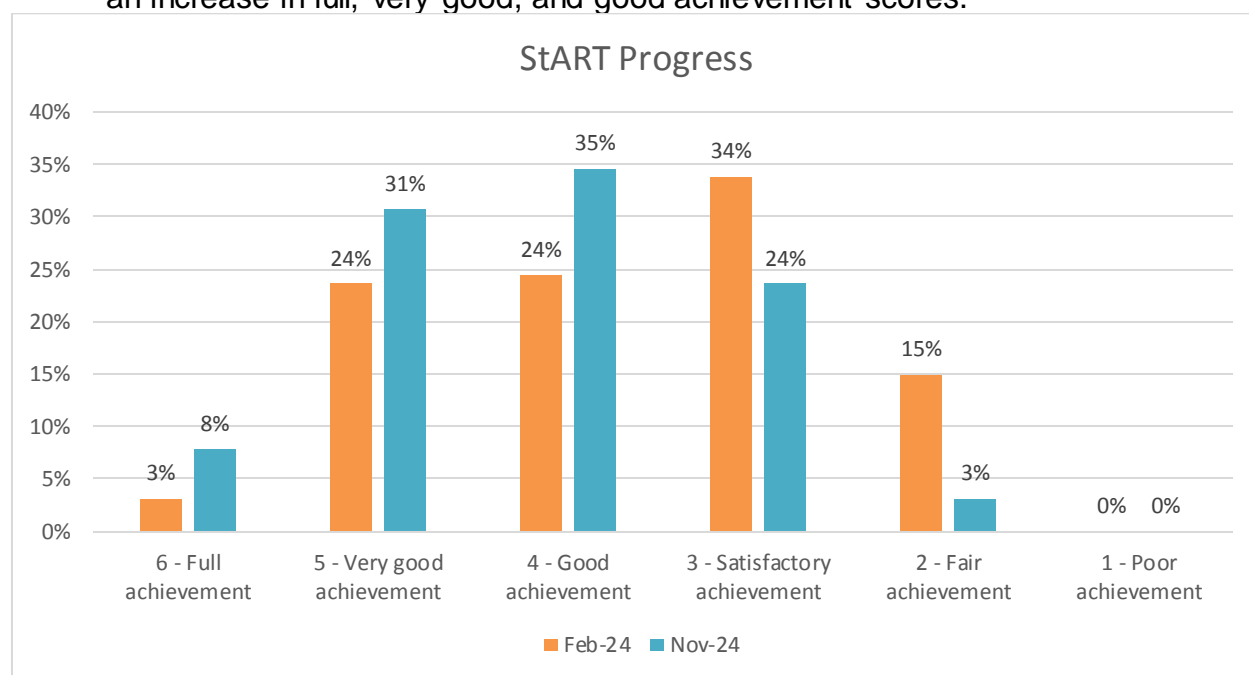
3.3.11 While partners continue to note their commitment to deliver the Bairns Hoose to the fullest possible extent, they have also flagged the fiscal pressures all public agencies are experiencing and the potential impact on their capacity to contribute financially to the operational delivery of the Bairns Hoose.

3.3.12 As a Pathfinder site, we were required to complete a self-assessment and readiness tool (StART) at the beginning and throughout our Bairns Hoose journey. The purpose of the StART tool is to support pathfinder partnerships in understanding their own current state of implementation in order to inform improvement priorities, and to provide a national picture of progress against the Standards. The StART tool is designed to help review progress and developments as well as learning for improvements.

3.3.13 In February 2024, Aberdeen City undertook a self-assessment of the 127 criteria to fulfil the eleven Standards, providing a structured opportunity to plan and measure improvement. Aberdeen City committed to regularly reviewing our self-assessment and did so again in November 2024.

3.3.14 The chart below illustrates the progress Aberdeen City have made from our position against the standards in February 2024 (orange column), and again in November 2024 (blue column).

Throughout the implementation and delivery process, we expect to continue to see a reduction in percentages for fair and satisfactory achievement, and to see an increase in full, very good, and good achievement scores.



## 3.4 Bairns Hoose Design and Development

3.4.1 Construction work began renovating our building in January 2025 after approvals and the tendering process. Despite an ambitious schedule, work is expected to finish by early July 2025, following the design plans agreed upon in 2024.

- 3.4.2 Under the coordination of the Delivery Group, multi-agency partners have worked jointly over 2024/25 to ensure the building's design and layout met the practical and therapeutic needs of those it is intended to support and protect. During this time, children, young people, and their families have actively contributed their views, all of which have been incorporated, directly shaping planning and decision-making.
- 3.4.3 We are particularly appreciative of those who visited the site during its development and those who have assisted in evaluating furnishings. Their candid feedback on elements such as texture, style, colour, and overall atmosphere has been instrumental in creating a space that genuinely reflects the needs and preferences of its future users.
- 3.4.4 Care is being taken to ensure the building can be compliant of technical requirements from the point of interview with a child through to linking the child's evidence to Court, where this is necessary. Space has been created to maximise every opportunity for recovery, as well as to include a dedicated health and wellbeing suite that has been future proofed in order that it can potentially undertake forensic medicals if this is in a child's best interests. This latter point is building on feedback from a young person who fed back that the facilities proposed for her medical did not feel as safe and supportive as those which she had attended for an interview.

### 3.5 Evaluation

- 3.5.1 Aberdeen City's Bairns Hoose progress is being evaluated, by the University of Edinburgh (UoE). It is underpinned by a [Programme Theory](#) designed to measure progress against national standards, ensure continuous improvement, and inform future service delivery. The findings have been shared through key reporting mechanisms in addition to within Bairns Hoose Delivery Group meetings, in recognition that our learning is fluid throughout our pathfinder journey.
- 3.5.2 The evaluation aims to test whether the model improves outcomes for children across five areas: **recovery, safety, justice, rights, and reduction of systems harm**. Five core assumptions guide the approach:
- I. A dedicated, child-friendly Bairns Hoose building will enhance children's comfort, safety, and evidence quality.
  - II. Multi-agency coordination, led by a Bairns Hoose Coordinator, will ensure timely, joined-up responses to children's needs.
  - III. Access to tailored recovery support, including Advocacy, Rights and Recovery (ARR) workers, will improve outcomes for children and families.
  - IV. Justice processes will be less harmful through trauma-informed interviews, remote court access, and better communication.
  - V. Updated forensic medical protocols and broader health assessments will support children's physical and mental recovery



- 3.5.3 The UoE recently shared findings from a survey of professionals across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, conducted in November 2024. (Aberdeenshire are also a Bairns Hoose Pathfinder and we are sharing learning but also developing aspects collaboratively.) The survey offers key insights, notably that current practice is felt to evidence a strong initial response, but weaker long-term support, especially for recovery. The main barriers to improvement were felt to be high workloads, limited resources, and inconsistent multi-agency collaboration. Justice processes were noted to be distressing and needed to be more child friendly. Professionals felt that there were knowledge gaps in relation to the Bairns Hoose model.
- 3.5.4 Since the time of this evaluation, improvement activity has been progressed, resulting in enhanced information sharing among all agencies regarding developments. Our children have been involved in helping us produce documentation on Bairns Hoose services, and those who might benefit from a recovery service have been offered this following a joint investigative interview where appropriate.
- 3.5.5 Over 2025/2026, our strong linkage with a Scottish Government Improvement Advisor will aid to maximise the benefits of improvement methodology allowing live data to inform continuous learning and positively impact outcomes for children.

### **3.6 Funding**

- 3.6.1 As a Pathfinder, Aberdeen was awarded **£281,875** to spend between January and March 2024 (£120,500 capital funding and £161,375 revenue funding). In 2024/25, the maximum funding of **£500,000** was sought and (£116,654 capital - £81,00 of this for video recording equipment and £358,936 revenue funding). All funding has to be utilised within the agreed time frame. There is no opportunity to carry forward funding. A quarterly return requires to be submitted setting out progress and spend. During 2024/25 due to staff vacancies etc there was a small underspend in the revenue budget and where possible we have successfully negotiated converting this funding to capital spend.
- 3.6.2 Our funding application for the 2025/26 Pathfinder year has requested the maximum level for both revenue and capital elements. Feedback on the application was again positive, with confirmation of full awards of **£700,000** (£500,00 revenue and £200,000 for capital spend.)
- 3.6.3 On top of core funding, **£36,027** has also been secured for 2025/26 to allow a test of change project to enhance core service provision as detailed above.
- 3.6.4 When it became known there was scope for additional capital funding requests in 2025/26, a further application was submitted in respect of funding that could focus on the fixtures, fittings and equipment within the Bairns Hoose as well as the garden and entrance area to our Bairns Hoose. Our additional submission aligned with the wishes and needs of our children, young people and their families. This has recently resulted in a further **£293,000** of funding to further support our meeting of Bairns Hoose standards.

- 3.6.5 Learning from the six Pathfinders is being aggregated by the Scottish Government Bairns Hoose Team to support the national roll out of the Bairns Hoose Policy. This will focus on practice learning and how Pathfinders have overcome current barriers/challenges. The learning will also inform what ongoing funding will be required to support delivery of the Bairns Hoose. This will be a focus across all Pathfinders and the national team during the first six months of 2026.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising out of this report
- 4.2 Pathfinder learning will support an understanding of costs of delivering a Bairns Hoose that meets the standards set. Long term funding to embed delivery of the Bairns Hoose model has yet to be confirmed although similar funding as at 2025/26 has been indicated for 2026/27.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising out of this report.

#### 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

#### 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	Target Risk Level (L, M or H)	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	No significant related risks	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Compliance</b>	The Scottish Government policy is that every child in Scotland will have access to a Bairns Hoose service by 2025. It is anticipated that national reporting will in future include reporting against the Bairns Hoose Standards.	The Child Protection Committee has primary oversight on progress to develop and deliver a Bairns Hoose. Regular reporting will be shared with Aberdeen's Public protection Chief Officers Group.	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people who	Aberdeen City has a well-established Child Protection data reporting	L	Yes

	<p>have experienced harm or Aberdeen City has a well-established Child Protection data reporting. Those whose behaviour poses a risk to others is central to the planning for all children and young people open to Children's Social Work. Children's Social Work and Police Scotland have lead responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse or where children's behaviour poses a concern to others. While this duty is currently being fulfilled the environment in which these investigations occur does not fulfil the requirements of the Bairns Hoose standards nor best meet the needs of the children and young people.</p>	<p>framework. Going forward the framework will be amended to include reporting against the Bairns Hoose Standards.</p>		
<b>Financial</b>	<p>There are no significant related financial risks from this report. The Business case for the redevelopment of the building to become a Bairns Hoose is concluded. This will enable a tendering exercise to be undertaken.</p>	<p>One of the core principles of delivering a Bairns Hoose service is that by providing early trauma informed support to children and their family it will reduce the demand on services in the longer term and</p>	L	Yes

	All agencies will be responsible for funding the individual service components that will deliver a Bairns Hoose.	reduce the likelihood of children requiring intensive support.		
<b>Reputational</b>	Failure to deliver on the Brains Hoose standards will have a reputational impact on the Council. It will also adversely impact on the assessment of Children's Services within future strategic joint inspections.	By being a pathfinder the Council will benefit from support from the National Bairns Hoose team to deliver a high quality service.	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No significant risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b>Council Delivery Plan 2024</b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>  <u><b>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</b></u>	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people has a direct relevance to the delivery of the following statements contained within the Council Delivery Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure local services identify young people with mental health problems and help them get early support and help.</li> <li>• Ensure the Council follows best practice as a corporate parent to get the best outcomes for looked after young people, those in kinship care and those with additional support needs such as autism, developmental disorders or mental health problems</li> <li>• Continue to seek to support young people to receive care in Aberdeen, through fostering, adoption and other services and seek to reduce "out of authority" placements.</li> </ul>
<u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people for whom secure care might be considered has a direct relevance to the following stretch outcomes in the LOIP:

	<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 will report that they feel listened to all the time, by 2026.</p> <p>5. By meeting the health and wellbeing emotional 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&amp;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>
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people is central to the planning for all children and young people open to Children's Social Work. This activity is relevant to the Aberdeen City Council Delivery Plan, the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, and the Children's Services Plan
<b>UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes</b>	Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people is central to the planning for all children and young people open to Children's Social Work supports the Scottish Government's drive to #KeepthePromise. This wide ranging and ambitious programme impacts on a range of statutory duties on the Council in relation to vulnerable and care experienced children including those contained in the Children(Scotland) Act 1995, Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011, Children & Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 and Children (Scotland) Act 2020.

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	Previous Integrated Impact Assessment relating to the Bairns Hoose report presented to Committee in February 2024 has been reviewed and no changes required.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required.
<b>Other</b>	Not required.

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

## 11. APPENDICES (if applicable)

None

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2023-24.
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	F&C/25/160
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Graeme Simpson
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Graeme Simpson
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.3 and 1.2

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To share the Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2023-24 report and provide a commentary on the performance of Aberdeen City Council compared with the national position.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 Note that care experienced children and those children who need protection in Aberdeen City, are, predominantly, receiving care and protection in line with national averages;
- 2.2 Note that where performance differs from national averages, and it requires it, there are improvement plans in place; and
- 2.3 Instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to update the Education and Children's Services Committee on the 2024/25 Statistical Report following its publication in Spring 2026.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Aberdeen City compares favourably to the national position reported in the three reports Child Protection, Looked After and Secure care. 2023-24. [Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland: 2023 to 2024 \("the report"\)](#). This is an annual retrospective report reporting on data relating to Child Protection activity and activity relating to Looked After Children.
- 3.2 The report contains extensive statistical information using snapshot data as at 31 July 2024, from which we have identified the following areas of interest:

Where Aberdeen City is broadly in-line with the national average:

- Rate of registrations of children on the child protection register

- Children registered on the Child Protection Register with a previous registration period which occurred more than two years ago
- Reducing rate per 1,000 of looked after children and young people
- Proportion of looked after children in secure care
- Majority of looked after children are living in the local community

Where Aberdeen City differs from the national average:

- Larger % decrease in the number of Looked After Children
- Proportion of children looked after with a disability is higher
- Rate of children receiving Continuing Care is lower
- Rate of looked after children with three or more placements is lower
- Proportion of children receiving Aftercare is higher
- Proportion of children looked after at home or with kin is lower
- Proportion of children placed in foster care is higher

3.3 The Scottish Government data set is ever evolving and there is a proposal to extend the breadth of data reported to include data in relation to 'Brothers and Sisters'. There will also be alignment to the [Promise Progress Report](#). This year sees data on children considered via Care & Risk Management processes for the first time, see Section 3.5.

### 3.4 Child Protection

3.4.1 On 31 July 2024, 2,129 children were on the Child Protection Register in Scotland. This is a 3% increase on the number reported as of 31 July 2023 (2,077). On 31 July 2023, there were 112 children's names appearing on Aberdeen City's Child Protection Register, and 100 children's names appearing on 31 July 2024, representing an 11% decrease.

3.4.2 The published Local Authority Child Protection Statistics illustrates that across our comparator authorities on 31 July 2024 (317), there has been an increase of 10.45% in the number of children appearing on the Child Protection Register compared with 31 July 2023 (287). Aberdeen City's comparator authorities are City of Edinburgh, Dundee City, South Ayrshire, Argyll & Bute, and Renfrewshire.

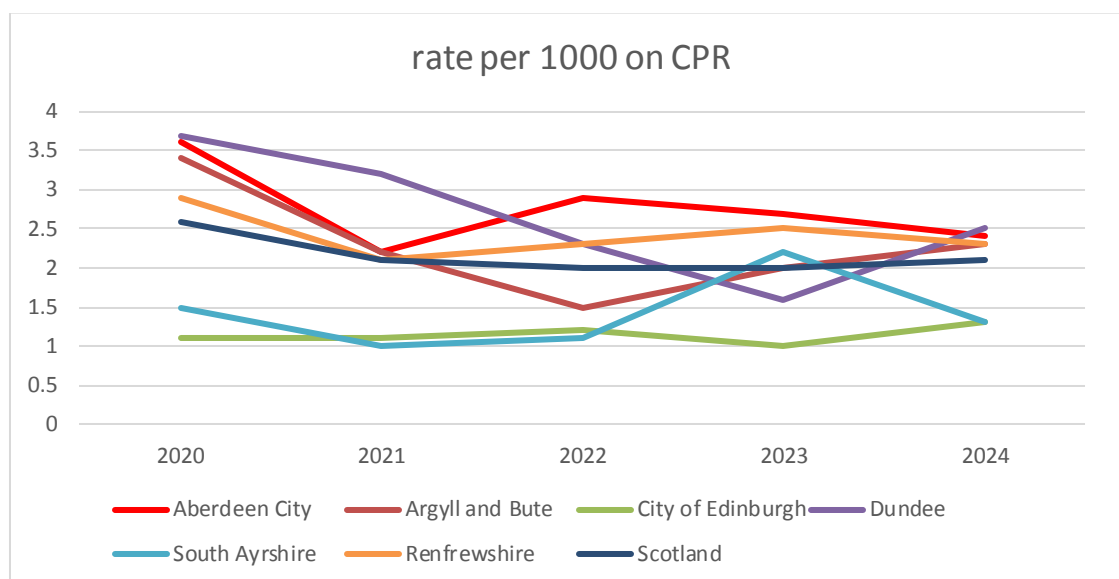
3.4.3 On 31 July 2024, Scotland's rate per 1,000 children on the Child Protection Register was 2.1 per 1,000 children. This is a slight increase from 2023 (2.0 per 1,000). On 31 July 2024, Aberdeen City's rate per 1,000 children on the Child Protection Register was 2.4 per 1000, a decrease from 2.7 per 1,000 in 2023. Comparator Authorities rate of registration on 31 July 2024 ranged from 1.3 to 2.5 per 1000, see Figure 1 below.

3.4.4 Committee members will be aware that Aberdeen City is actively progressing its plan to open a Bairns Hoose in 2025. While acknowledging decisions about Child Protection Registration will always be based upon a professional assessment of risk and vulnerability, through access to early and preventative intervention and recovery support, delivered from the Bairns Hoose, it is



anticipated this will mitigate the need for Child Protection processes to be initiated and reduce the length of time other children are on the CPR.

Figure 1, illustrates the rate per 1000 children on the child protection register on 31 July 2020 - 2024



3.4.5 On 31 July 2024, 45% of the children on Aberdeen City's child protection register were aged under 5 years old, compared with 47% across Scotland. This is a decrease from 49% as at 31 July 2023. The weighting of younger children on the CPR is unsurprising given the natural vulnerability of age and the limited structural supports that exist during a child's first 1000 days (conception through to their 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday). Reducing the barriers (real or perceived) to accessing support will be a clear focus of the developing family support model being progress by the Fairer Futures Partnership.

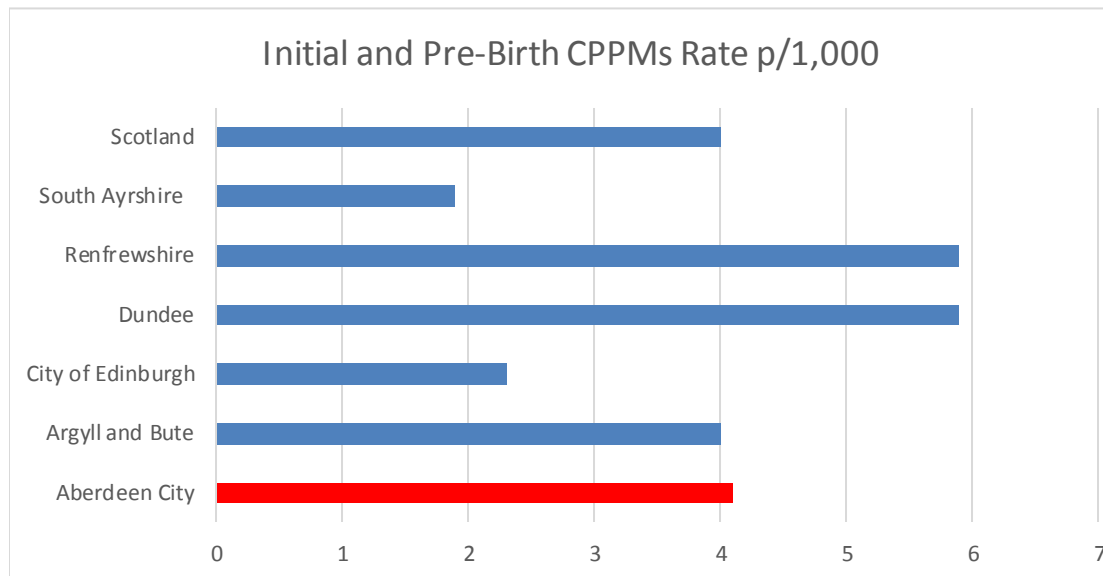
3.4.6 This is the first year that Inter-agency Referral Discussion (IRD) statistics have been included in the national report. During the year 2023-2024, a rate of 17.7 per 1000 children were the subject of an IRD in Scotland, in Aberdeen City, the figure was 15.3 per 1000. Again, aligned to work associated with developing our Bairns Hoose we are reviewing our IRD processes to ensure that only those children who are at risk of significant harm are considered within an IRD.

Figure 1

2023-2024	IRD Rate p/1,000
Aberdeen City	15.3
Argyll and Bute	11.7
City of Edinburgh	11.9
Dundee	30.8
Renfrewshire	18.5
South Ayrshire	10.3
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>17.7</b>

3.4.7 During 2023-2024, at a Scottish level an initial or pre-birth initial child protection planning meeting was held at a rate of 4 per 1000 children. For the same period in Aberdeen City, an initial or pre-birth initial child protection planning meeting was held at a rate of 4.1 per 1000 children.

Figure 2



3.4.8 Of the child protection planning meetings held in Scotland in 2023-2024, a rate of 3 per 1000 children were registered on the child protection register as a result of the initial or pre birth initial child protection planning meeting. In Aberdeen City, this rate was 3.2 per 1000 children. This is a reduction from the previous year and reflects our continuing efforts to support families and manage risk without utilising formal child protection processes which are often experienced as stigmatising.

Figure 3

2023-2024	Registrations from initial and pre-birth CPPM Rate p/1,000
Aberdeen City	3.2
Argyll and Bute	3.1
City of Edinburgh	1.9
Dundee	4.8
Renfrewshire	3.5
South Ayrshire	1.4
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>3</b>

3.4.9 In Aberdeen City Neglect; Parental Mental Health; Emotional Abuse; Parental Alcohol & Drug use and Domestic Abuse were the most common concerns resulting in children's names being placed on the Child Protection Register (CPR). These reasons have been consistently prominent locally and nationally

for the past number of years. In many instances there is an interrelationship between these concerns and recognition that children are often placed on the CPR with more than one concern identified. It is reassuring that the primary reasons for registration are reflected in Aberdeen City's [CPC Improvement Programme](#) and work is ongoing to increase the capacity of the workforce to recognise and respond to these concerns. The one area not recognised is Parental Mental Health.

- 3.4.10 In 2023-2024, 143 children were de-registered from the CPR. 49% of children were on the register for 6 months or less, 39% were on the register for 6 months to 1 year, and 19% for 1 year to 2 years. The most common reason for removing a child's name from the CPR was an improved home situation enabling the child to remain within the care of parents reflecting our continuing commitment to #Keepthepromise, supporting children to remain within their family network where it is safe to do so.

Figure 4

Reason	Scotland		Aberdeen City	
	2023	2024	2023	2024
<b>Child Died</b>	0%	0%	1%	1%
<b>Child moved away - no continued risk</b>	1%	1%	2%	2%
<b>Child taken into care &amp; risk reduced</b>	11%	15%	27%	11%
<b>Child with other carers</b>	6%	8%	6%	17%
<b>Improved home situation</b>	50%	52%	44%	41%
<b>Other</b>	28%	20%	17%	13%
<b>Removal of perpetrator</b>	4%	4%	2%	15%

- 3.4.11 Of the children registered on Aberdeen City's CPR in 2023-2024 (245), 79% had no previous registration history. The same figure was reported for Scotland. 8% of children registered in Aberdeen City had a registration history within the preceding 2 years. This aligns favourably with the 7% national position.
- 3.4.12 The CSW statistics continue to highlight the correlation between poverty and vulnerability. On 31 July 2024, across Scotland 73% of the children lived in an area classified as either SIMD 1 or SIMD 2. (48% SIMD1; 25% SIMD2.) In Aberdeen City a similar correlation was highlighted, although with some variation. On 31 July 2024 75% of the children on Aberdeen City's CPR lived in an area classified as either SIMD 1 or SIMD 2. (30% SIMD1; 45% SIMD2.)
- 3.4.13 This data reinforces the need for all agencies to further consider preventative support that mitigates the impact of poverty and in turn vulnerability or risk children experience. The evolving development of Aberdeen City's Fairer Futures Partnership with its emphasis on prevention, will be critical to ensuring a lens on early and easily accessible support to children, young people and families.

### 3.5 Care & Risk Management (CARM)

- 3.5.1 This is the first year the CARM statistics have been included in the national statistics report. CARM meetings are held to assess, manage and intervene in situations where a child or young person's behaviour poses a serious risk of harm to others. These are therefore generally convened for older young people. The inclusion of CARM data helpfully reminds us that the young people who may be causing harm to others are likely to have experienced harm themselves and will have similar needs to children who have been harmed.
- 3.5.2 As would be anticipated the number of children/young people whose needs are considered within a CARM meeting are low. This also reflects other planning processes aligned to Getting it Right for Every Child are positively utilised to support children without this escalation.

*Figure 5*

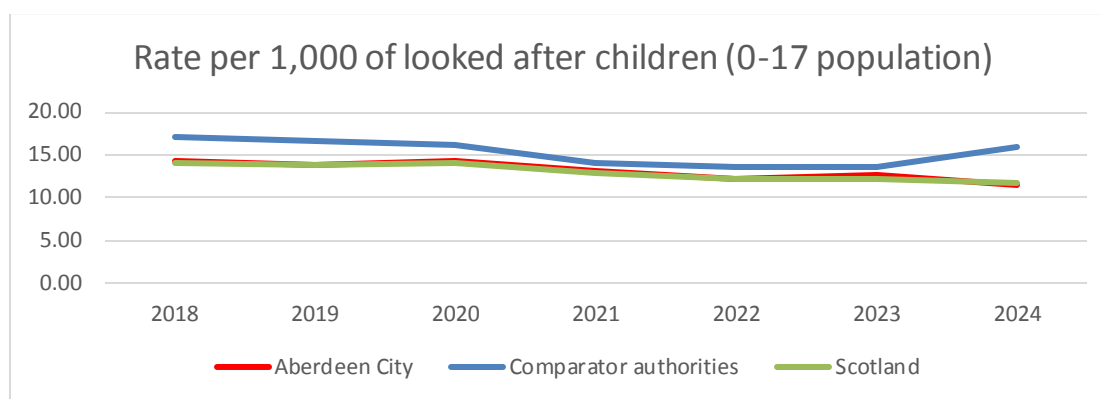
Number of children referred to have CARM meetings, and the number of each meeting type held by local authority, 2023-24			
	Total Referred	Initial Meetings	Review Meetings
Aberdeen City	4	4	3
Argyll and Bute	*	*	*
City of Edinburgh	9	5	8
Dundee	4	3	1
Renfrewshire	3	3	1
South Ayrshire	16	4	12

*\*Argyll & Bute figures not provided*

### 3.6 Looked after Children

- 3.6.1 The national [Children's social work statistics](#), reports that there has been an 2% decrease in the number of Looked After Children in Scotland from 2023, to 2024. In Aberdeen City there was a 6.57% decrease during that same period (487 in July 2023 snapshot to 454 in July 2024). This data reflects our continuing commitment to [The Promise](#) ensuring that children, young people and families have access to support that mitigates the need for compulsory measures and to support children to remain within their family network.
- 3.6.3 Figure 7 illustrates that the rate of looked after children per 1,000 population (0-17 years) is steadily reducing nationally to 11.8. Across our comparator authorities there has been an increase over the past year to 16.02. Locally we have seen a reduction from 12 per 1000 to 11.5 per 1000. Aberdeen City continues to be in line with the national trend and lower than our comparator authorities.

Figure 6



- 3.6.4 The number of children who started to be looked after in Aberdeen City during 2023-24 was 143, marginally higher than the 138 in the previous year. This variation is in line with the national trend which highlighted an increase to 3,105 from 3,004 in the previous year.
- 3.6.5 The total number of children in Scotland who ceased to be looked after, during 2023-24, was 3,397. This was more than in 2022-23 which was 3,286. In Aberdeen City there was a slightly bigger variation 176 in 2023/24 from 120 in 2022/23. This reflects the change reported to Committee in recent months whereby children living in Continuing Care were erroneously being counted as being looked after. Continuing care is a different status, and we have separated this group of young people from the larger cohort of looked after children.
- 3.6.6 In Aberdeen City during 2023-24, the rate of children who ceased to be looked after, with a destination of continuing care was 1.4, per 1,000 up from the 0.7 in the previous year. This is a higher rate of cessation than national comparisons, where the rate was 0.8. In part this reflects our continuing commitment to deliver on the [Staying Put](#) policy but also the reclassification noted in 3.6.5.
- 3.6.7 The [Independent Care Review report](#) - The Promise reaffirmed that legal measures should only be used when absolutely necessary. This aim was restated in the 2023 Children's Hearing System Review report. A 'Promise Bill' is expected to be laid before the Scottish Parliament in June 2025. It is anticipated this Bill will frame the legislative change required to deliver the recommendations of the System Review report. It is anticipated that the number of Looked After Children will continue to decrease but as the data of our comparative authorities highlights decisions will always be taken as to what is in the child/young person's best interests. It is important to recognise that our local reduction isn't due to lower demand but rather reflects our practice to try and build supportive relationships with children, young people, and families without requiring compulsory measures to do so.
- 3.6.8 The national report identifies the percentage of looked after children living in the various settings. Across Scotland, in 2024, the majority of Looked After Children (89%) were placed in community settings, kinship care 35%; foster care 32% and 20% looked after at home. A smaller proportion of Looked After

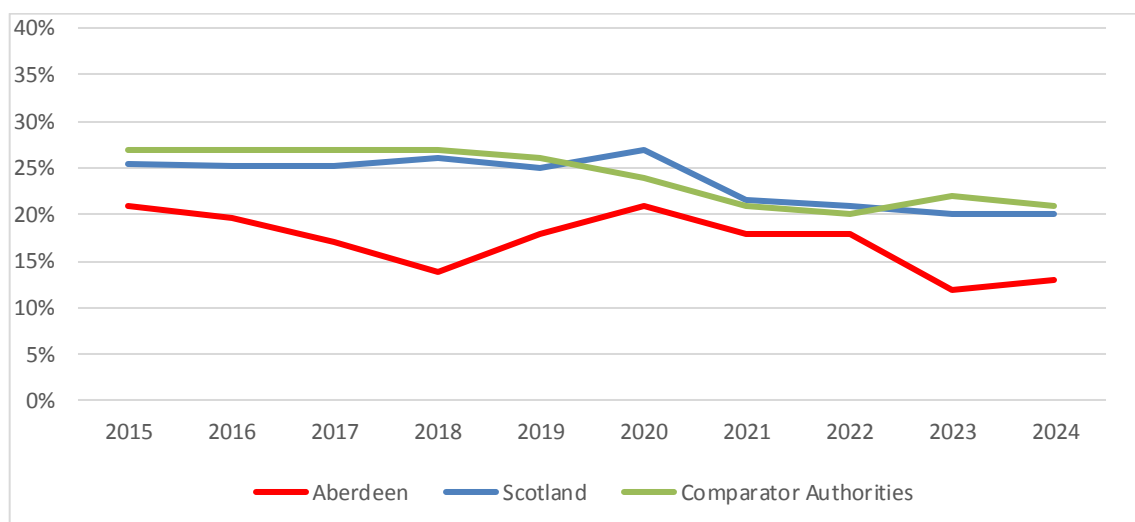
Children (11%) were placed in residential accommodation. In Aberdeen City, the proportion of Looked After Children placed in community settings as at 31 July 2024 was 85%. Our balance of care was 13% were looked after at home; 21% in a kinship placement; 46% living in a foster placement and 15 % in residential care.

- 3.6.9 Looked after children with three or more placements has reduced in Aberdeen City, from 5% in 2023, to 2% in 2024. Across Scotland 4% of Looked After Children have had three or more placements each year since 2020, hence Aberdeen City is supporting increased levels of stability in the care arrangements for our looked after children. This remains an area that is kept under close scrutiny and aligns to our work on keeping brothers and sisters together.

### 3.7 Looked After Children Living at Home

- 3.7.1 Aligned to the national trend, locally there has been a stable position in the proportion of Looked After Children living at home - 12% in 2022/23; 13% in 2023/24. As noted in 3.6.7 this reflects the local and national intention to try and support children, and young people without the need for compulsory measures, recognising that such measures, while often necessary, don't set the ideal conditions to effect positive and lasting change.

Figure 8

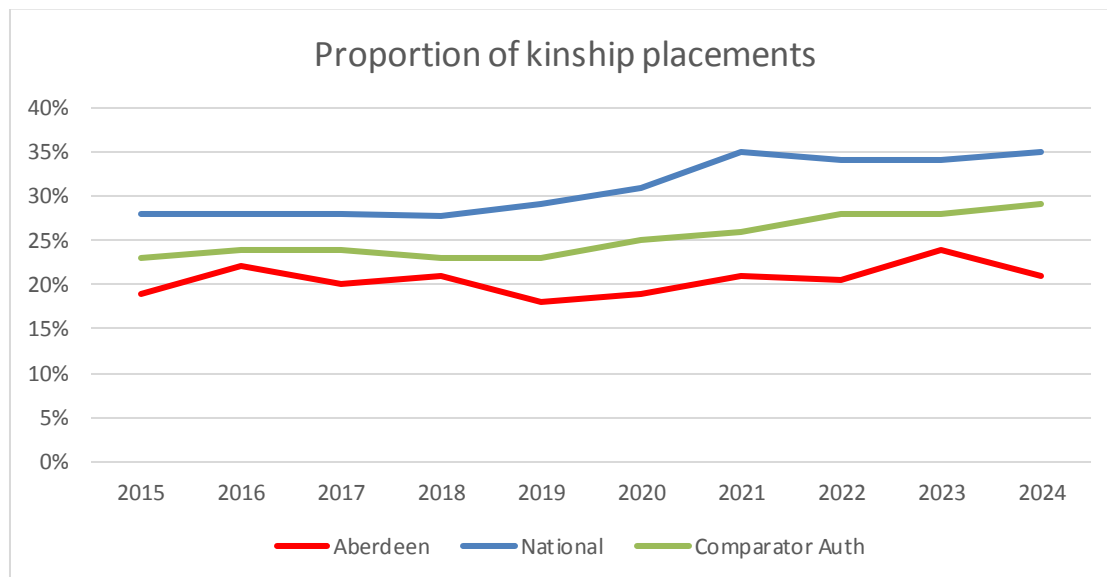


- 3.7.2 Building on existing activity, including 'The Edge of Care Pilots', our commissioned intensive family support services, as a partnership we continue to evaluate the impact of our efforts to improve the outcomes for looked after children living at home. This acknowledges that nationally this group of young people have amongst the poorest outcomes of all groups. In recognition of this national picture, the Care Inspectorate, in January 2025, intimated that the focus for strategic multi-agency inspections will, focus on the outcomes for looked after children living at home.

### 3.8 Kinship Care

- 3.8.1 Nationally the proportion of Kinship placements has increased over the past few years to 35% in 2024 (Figure 9). Locally the report highlights a small decrease in the proportion of children looked after by friends or relatives in 2023/24. It has decreased to 21% from 24% in the previous year.
- 3.8.2 Working with partner agencies and local 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations we have developed support options for kinship carers. Feedback from kinship carers tells us that they have welcomed this, which in turn is seeing increased stability for kinship placements. In addition, our improvement activity in relation to 5.1 of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan is seeking to support early consideration of kinship options where there are indicators that the child may not be able to remain with the care of their parents.
- 3.8.3 While noting the above, the Local Authority has Corporate Parenting duties for a far larger number (circa 220) of children/young people living within a kinship arrangement who are not included in this data. These children were previously looked after but their care has been legally secured within their extended family. In an effort to promote security and stability for the young person, our practice is to support kinship carers to seek legal measures that safeguards the child. On a day-to-day basis our involvement in their care and support is, in most instances, minimal however we retain a responsibility to provide financial support for these arrangements.

Figure 9



### 3.9 Foster Care

- 3.9.1 As seen in Figure 10, Aberdeen City continues to have a higher proportion of looked after children placed in foster care than Scotland and comparator Authorities. While the actual number of children in foster care in Aberdeen City is reducing (226 end of Q1 2023/24; 209 end of Q1 2024/24) this is not reflected

in a percentage drop given the overall number of looked after children in Aberdeen City has reduced by a larger percentage.

- 3.9.2 The Promise Scotland has identified that the lack of foster carers is impacting on Scotland's endeavours to #keepthepromise. Locally we are experiencing similar challenges and this requires us to utilise external fostering providers resulting in children being placed further from Aberdeen than we would want. We welcome the forthcoming publicity the Scottish Government will be launching to encourage more people to consider fostering. Locally we have seen an increase in the number of people interested in fostering than in previous years and we hope their interests sustain to becoming foster carers. See Figure 11.

Figure 10

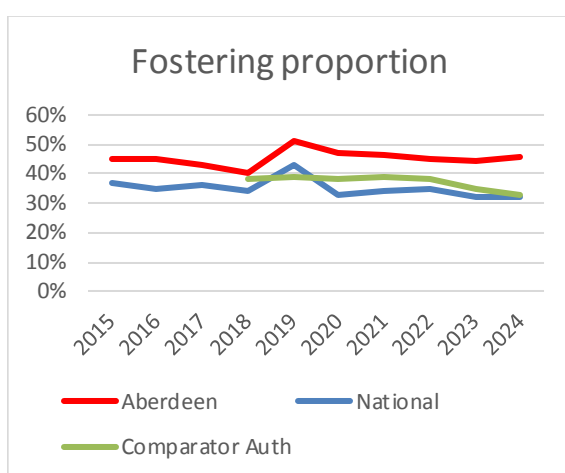
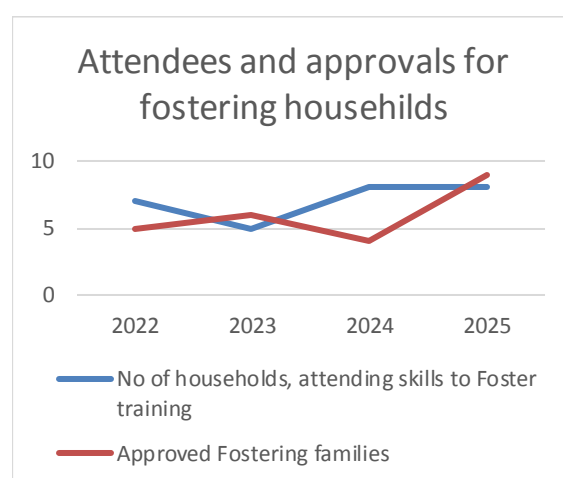


Figure 11

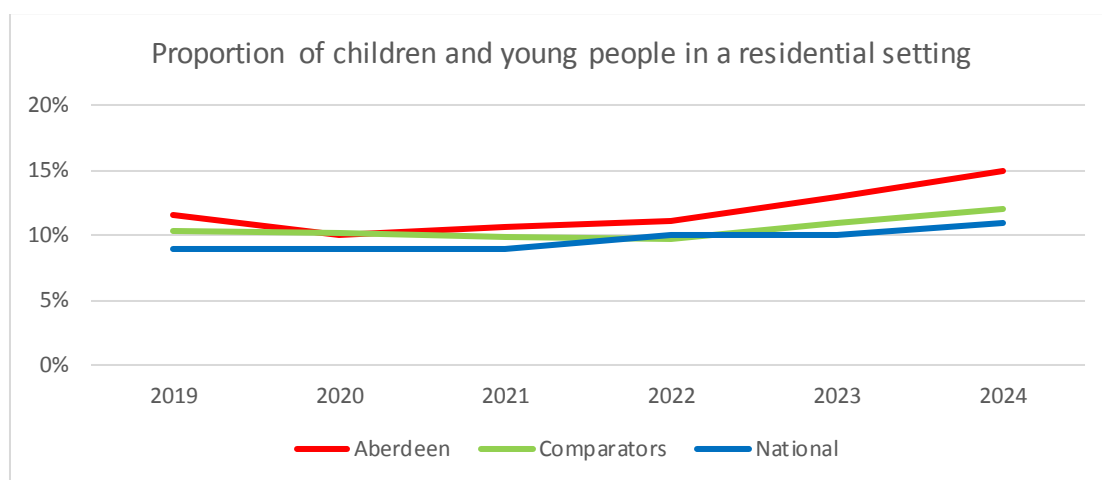


### 3.10 Residential & Secure Care

- 3.10.1 Currently 15% of Aberdeen City's looked after children are cared for in a residential setting. This includes local authority residential care settings. This has increased over the past couple of years from 13% last year to 15%. This is the same trend across Scotland and comparator Authorities. See Figure 12.



Figure 12



3.10.2 For a range of reasons Scotland is seeing an increase in the percentage of looked after children and young people living in residential settings. Some of the reasons for this include:

- a) A growing complexity of need of the young people in our care. We are seeing more children, including more younger children (aged 9 – 12 years) with complex and enduring additional support needs, including neurodiverse needs and the impact of early life trauma. The needs of these children are often beyond that a foster carer can provide for and require team care approach.
- b) advances in medical sciences are resulting in children and young people living for longer and living well.
- c) the national shortage of foster carers
- d) the ethos of the Promise and learning from practice is rightly promoting an elongated and managed transition from care with increasing numbers of 16 & 17 plus olds choosing to remain looked after and access continuing care support.

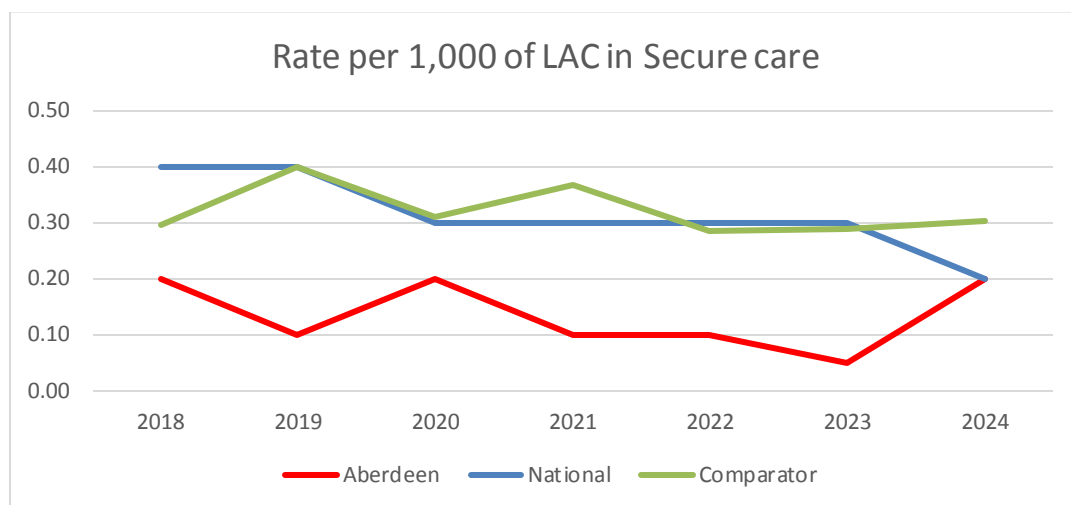
3.10.3 The number of children in secure care is very low and is less than 1/1000 of the looked after population and has been so for 10 years. Looking at rates across calendar years (see Figure 13), Aberdeen City is the same as the national rate per 1,000 reported this year at 0.2/1,000 but was previously lower than national rate. This recognises that small changes can have a disproportionate percentage change.

3.10.4 We welcome the change introduced in September 2024 which stopped the placement of 16- and 17-year-olds in adult prisons. It will be important that we monitor the impact of this change in terms of whether it has an unintended consequence of increasing the numbers of young people in secure care. Although still early there is some anecdotal evidence to support this hypothesis.

3.10.5 Children placed in residential/secure care are in almost all circumstances placed via the Children's Hearing System or the Court. In effect we have no option but to comply with these legal orders. We are fully cognisant that the costs of these placements are hugely significant – circa £300k to £400k per child per year. As such the Executive Director, Chief Education Officer and Chief Social Work Officer meet regularly to identify the drivers for children being

placed in residential care settings and what change we can make locally to mitigate the need for these outcomes.

Figure 13



### 3.11 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and Young People.

3.11.1 Aberdeen City continue to receive and welcome a number of young people claiming asylum via the National Transfer Scheme. All young people transferred to Aberdeen via this route are deemed looked after children. Hotel accommodation in Aberdeen City continues to be utilised as dispersal accommodation for asylum seeking adults a number of whom have claimed to be under 18 years of age following their arrival in Aberdeen. If, following an age assessment, there is reason to believe the individual could be under 18, in line with National Guidance they are treated as a child under the age of 18 and consequently entitled to enhanced support, coordinated via children's social work, similar to that provided to other looked after children. As of July 2025, 27 unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people held a looked after status in Aberdeen City marginally up from 23 at the same time in 2023.

Figure 14

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
How many asylum claims were for children the local authority were responsible for?	1	0	2	14	21	28
How many age assessments were undertaken	1	0	0	5	10	52
How many of these age assessments were successful in determining the individual being assessed as a child?	1	0	0	5	7	25

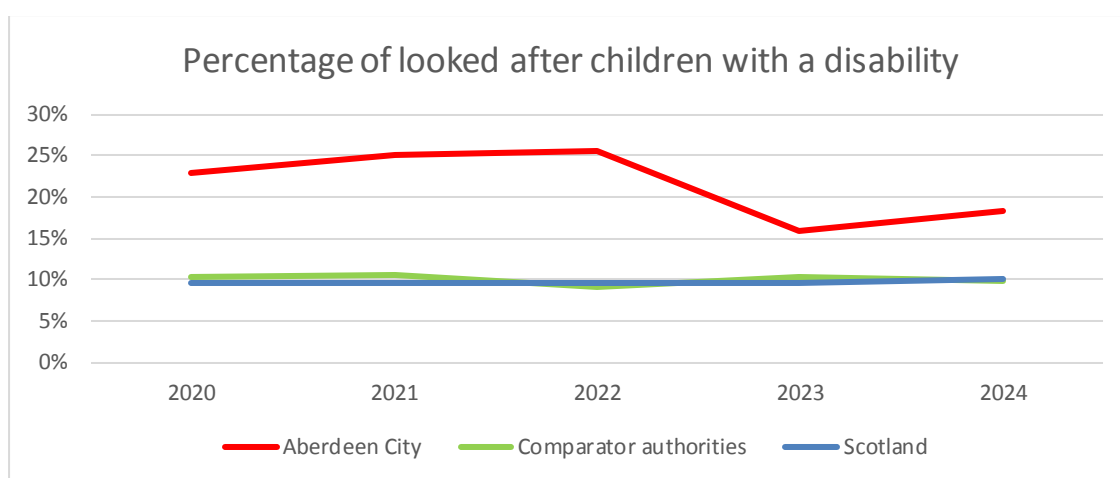
\*Data up till July 2024

### 3.12 Children with a Disability

3.12.1 Aberdeen City has a larger proportion of looked after children with a recorded disability compared with Scotland and comparator authorities. The number and proportion increased from 79 (16%) in 2022/23 to 83 (18%) in July 2024. Scotland and comparator authorities both had 10% of looked after children with a disability in both these years. See Figure 15.

3.12.2 Social work practice locally continues to record when a child or young person (or their parents) self-identify as having a disability this is recorded on our D365 system. This is a relatively new category of data reporting. We however recognise that the data still indicates Aberdeen City is an outlier. As such we will liaise with comparative authorities to better understand our divergence and to identify any learning.

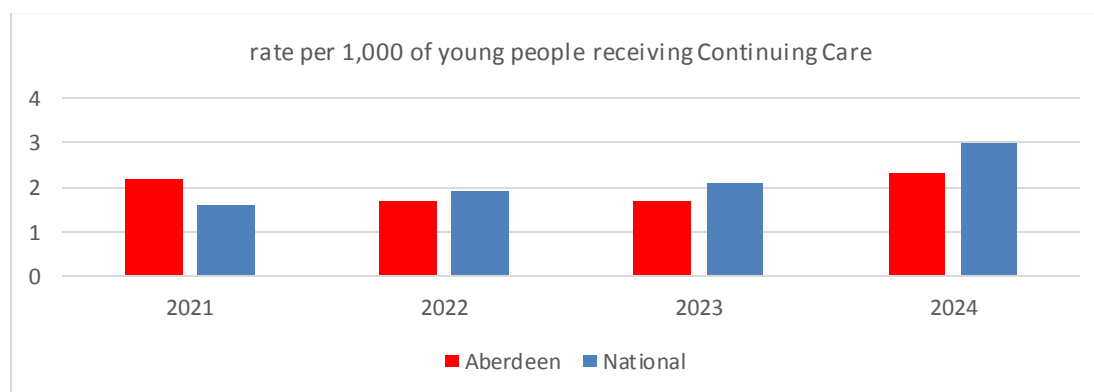
Figure 15



### 3.13 Continuing Care and After Care

3.13.1 During 2023/24, 1115 children across Scotland were receiving continuing care, which is 3.0 per 1,000 young people, this is an increase from 2.1/1000 in 2022/23. In Aberdeen City during 2023/24, 39 young people (2.3/1000) were receiving continuing care, which is an increase from the 31 (1.7/1000 in 2022/23). See Figure 16 below.

Figure 76



3.13.2 The proportion of children receiving aftercare in Aberdeen City in July 2024 was 262 out of 390 eligible, this is 67%, significantly higher than the National position which is recorded as 48%. Although recognising we would want our reach to be fuller our young people have told us via the Bright Spots survey they value the support by the throughcare/aftercare service and the multi-agency connections that the team have developed.

### **3.14 Aims and next steps**

3.14.1 Resetting our 'balance of care' remains a longer-term aim, set out in Aberdeen City's refreshed Children's Services Plan 2023 – 26 and Aberdeen City's Corporate Parenting Plan 2023 – 26 both of which were presented to committee in April 2025.

3.14.2 Addressing the balance of care is a challenge we share with many local and comparative local authority partnerships. Strategic plans seek to address this. We have also established constructive relationships with some of our comparator local authorities to explore whether there is learning we want to share and capture.

3.14.3 We are committed to supporting children and young people to remain within their families and communities where it is safe to do so and returning Looked After Children and young people to placements in the city where such is in their best interests. In line with The Promise, we are endeavouring to keep brothers and sisters together. Where we cannot, we ensure that they have active and live connections with each other and that we review this decision and that children are connected to the people who are important to them.

## **4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, the costs associated with care for children out with their family are significant. Reducing the proportion of children being looked after in out of authority foster and residential placements will be positively significant.

## **5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The statistics reported relate to the children and young people for whom the Council holds statutory responsibilities under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011.

## **6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications from this report.

## 7 RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Many of the improvements required to support more children to be looked after at home or kinship as part of the requirements of Children's Services Plan 2023 – 26. These are already built into a variety of strategic plans. It is expected that gaps will emerge as the Council and partners scrutinise the requirements of Children's Services Plan 2023 – 26 in detail.	The Child Protection Committee, Children's Services Board and Community Planning Management Group have oversight of the delivery of the relevant aspects of strategic plans in this respect. They are ensuring that the terms of Children's Services Plan 2023 – 26 are incorporated into current and future strategic planning.	M	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	No significant related risks.	Services across all multi-agency partners are aware of legislative requirements and ensure compliance	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Care experienced children and young people are a vulnerable cohort whose needs require to be recognised and met. Competing resource	These are duties which have been incorporated across existing structures and will be consolidated in practice	L	Yes

	demands may have an impact			
<b>Financial</b>	That the number of children having to be looked after away from home continues to remain high leading to poorer outcomes and higher resource costs.	Children's Services Plan 2023 – 26 and various strategic plans are in place to address these issues	L	Yes
<b>Reputational</b>	Organisational failings in relation to child protection can bring significant media interest and scrutiny of services delivered to children and young people.	The public can be assured that: the Council ensures compliance with legal requirements, national standards and guidance; partners respond to self and external scrutiny; and identified areas for improvement are addressed.	M	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Not applicable for this report			

## 8 OUTCOMES

<b><u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 24-25</u></b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
	The information in this report has no impact on the Council Delivery Plan.
<a href="#">Working in Partnership Policy Statement.pdf (aberdeencity.gov.uk)</a>	
<b><u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan (refresh April 2024)</u></b>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>The report seeks to provide an update on how ACC compares with National 'performance' in Child# Protection and Care Experienced children. This links with Corporate Parenting activities, including the following improvement project within the LOIP:</p> <p>5. By meeting the health and emotional wellbeing needs of our care experienced children and young people they will have the same levels of attainment in education and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.</p> <p>For the Child Protection programme, in particular stretch outcomes 4, 5, and 6 with the following key drivers:</p>

	4.1 Ensuring that families receive the parenting and family support they need 4.2 Keeping Children Safe 5.2 Increasing children's knowledge and understanding of their own physical and mental wellbeing and take an early intervention and prevention approach 6.2 Supporting attainment of balance of care where children are able to remain more often at home and or with kin.
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## 9 IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	It is confirmed by Chief Officer Graeme Simpson that no Integrated Impact Assessment is required
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	Not required

## 10 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 [Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2023-24](#)
- 10.2 [Children's Services Strategic Plan 2023-26](#)
- 10.3 [Aberdeen City Corporate Parenting Plan 2023-26](#)
- 10.4 [Aberdeen City Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2023/2024](#)

## 11 APPENDICES - NONE

## 12 REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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