ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education Operational Delivery
DATE	3 June 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Inspection Reporting
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/21/122
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TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.6

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report aims to provide Elected Members with oversight of the outcomes of the reviews that have been undertaken by Education Scotland over the course of the pandemic.

2.   RECOMMENDATIONS

That Committee:-

2.1   note the contents of this report; and

2.2   instruct the Chief Education Officer to continue to engage positively with National Overviews of Practice and ensure key learning is taken account of in education service delivery.

3.0   The Education Scotland Inspection Process during the pandemic

3.1.   Education Scotland has been unable to undertake school inspections due to restrictions currently in place across schools. The Inspection Agency has undertaken a number of Overviews of Practice to provide assurance to the Scottish Government and to parents and carers. This report aims to provide Elected Members with oversight of the publications and highlight how Aberdeen City Council has contributed to and taken account of findings in their work.

3.1.2   In the first and second phase of the national overview, six reports were published. These focused on planning, guidance and delivery of remote learning and how schools and local authorities are taking forward the expectations and entitlements outlined in the remote learning guidance published on 8 January 2021.

3.1.3   The purpose of the reviews were to:
*   Learn what was working well and share this widely to celebrate success and support consistency in the quality and effectiveness of delivery of remote learning.
*   Surface the challenges and/or issues so that these could be addressed, either locally or nationally, as appropriate.

- Identify what further assistance was required to continue to improve the delivery of remote learning so that relevant support could be provided at local and/or national level.

3.1.4 Phase three of the national overview focused on taking a closer look at particular themes emerging from evidence published in previous reports.

3.2 [National Overview of Practice in Remote Learning - Local Authorities](#)

3.2.1 The first review focused on the quality of the remote learning offer across the country and was published in January 2021. The review focused on Local Authority planning and guidance. In early January Central Officers engaged with Inspectors to share how the leadership and guidance provided by the Local Authority had supported their delivery of a remote learning offer.

3.2.2 Inspectors heard that guidance had been put in place at an early opportunity and that considerable focus had been placed on providing access through both the provision of chromebooks and Myfi devices. Inspectors were content with the level of engagement with parents and carers and heard how our approach to professional learning had improved the quality of the remote learning offer from the first period of school closure. The Local Authority use of data to track engagement to help assure quality was highlighted in the national report.

> "We have improved our expertise in using the analytics that their chosen digital platform provides, in order to inform decision making at strategic level. Interpretation of the data allows central staff to pinpoint where support for remote learning is needed, and also where innovation is evident. Through our effective use of analytics and available data, education officers monitor on a daily basis the usage and engagement of remote learning across the authority. We are pleased that daily figures routinely demonstrate around a 95% pupil engagement across all schools. In one day this week, over 6000 individual posts to our learning platform were recorded. The analytical data can also be used at cluster, individual school, class and pupil level."

3.2.3 The Review highlighted a number of recommendations for consideration by all Local Authorities. These included:
- Ensuring local authority planning, guidance and delivery for remote learning was updated to reflect the entitlements and expectations published on 8 January 2021.
- Providing further professional learning for staff in local authorities and schools with a particular focus on the pedagogy of remote learning.
- Continuing work to ensure equitable access to digital devices and online access for learners and staff.
- Providing ongoing communication and engagement with parents about what remote learning is and the approach being taken by local authorities and schools to ensure a shared understanding.
- Continuing to provide health and wellbeing support to learners, parents and staff.
- Developing and implementing, at pace, approaches at local authority level to assure the provision of high-quality remote learning was delivered by individual schools.

3.2.4 Officers are content that all recommendations have been met. Planning guidance has been in place since April 2020 and been well received by staff and parents. Professional learning in remote delivery has been available over the course of the

pandemic and is enhanced by our Google Educators offering 1-1 support to colleagues. Schools and the education service have worked hard to keep parents sighted on progress and continue to focus heavily on the health and wellbeing of staff, pupils and parents having offered bespoke supports to all stakeholders. Our use of Google Analytics to help assure quality was highlighted in the national report.

3.3   National Overview of Practice in Remote Learning - Schools

3.3.1   The second review was focused on practice across schools and a number of Head Teachers across Aberdeen City engaged with the Inspection Agency.

3.3.2   Head Teachers who engaged with Inspectors spoke positively about how all Local Authority staff (central officers and school staff) had worked together well and had been proactive in their response. Regular and timely digital engagement with Head Teachers and staff engagement and participation in professional learning were identified as positive approaches offered.

3.3.3   Overall there was clear evidence that schools had learned from the previous lockdown and were continuing to improve their remote learning offer. A majority of schools had continued to engage with parents to gather feedback on the approaches to home learning and making use of this this to inform further developments and improvements to remote delivery.

3.3.4   The review highlighted a number of recommendations for all Local Authorities to consider:
- Ensure school planning and guidance for the delivery of remote learning was updated to reflect the entitlements and expectations published on 8 January 2021.
- Ensure children and young people experience high quality remote learning across the breadth of the curriculum.
- Continue to review approaches to learning and teaching to ensure learners receive an appropriate balance of live, recorded and independent learning.
- Ensure learners are aware of the progress they are making in their learning and what they need to do to improve.
- Build on existing good practice to continue to support the health and wellbeing of learners and their families, staff and the school community.
- Develop and implement approaches to continually review the quality and impact of remote learning to ensure all learners receive consistently high quality experiences.

3.3.5   Officers are content that all recommendations were met as the service continued to focus on providing accessible and clear guidance to staff and had the support systems in place to support staff to improve practice. Our Learning, Teaching and Assessment Standard was adapted at pace to reflect the digital environment and ensure that formative assessment strategies were maintained in the digital environment.

3.4   National Overview of Practice in Remote Learning - Parents and carers

3.4.1   The third review heard from parents and carers. Between 19 and 25 January 2021, HMIE met remotely with parents, carers, and learners through a series of focus groups to hear their views on the approaches taken to delivering remote learning. Three focus groups were held in partnership with the National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS) and Connect Scotland. A further three focus groups were held in partnership with Children in Scotland and Young Scot. In addition and with the support of schools, 22

focus groups took place with children and young people, across a selection of local authorities including Aberdeen City Council.

3.4.2   Between 20 and 25 January 2021, Education Scotland ran two national surveys, one for parents and carers and another for learners. The national surveys were developed with support from a range of partners and focus on the following three aspects of remote learning:
- Communication and wellbeing
- Resources and equipment
- Learning and teaching

3.4.3   The review recommended that all Local Authorities consider a number of recommendations including:
- Provide regular check-ins and opportunities for learners to meet up online with peers in order to support wellbeing, and collaboration.
- Ensure plans and guidance for remote learning are shared with learners and parents, including the balance of live learning and independent activity.
- Engage with learners and parents to gather feedback on remote learning to identify what is working well and what needs to improve.
- Continue to place an emphasis on supporting the health and wellbeing of learners, parents and practitioners.
- Provide learning that is responsive to learners' needs, including for those children and young people who require additional support for learning or may be disadvantaged.
- Provide parents and learners in the senior phase with information and support to help alleviate any concerns and worries over arrangements for assessment and National Qualifications.

3.4.4   The vast majority of these recommendations had already been met at the time of the review. Daily check ins were a clear expectation for all learners over the second period of school closure and staff became more skilled at sharing plans of learning with learners and parents. Schools and the service continued to gather data from families to help to identify areas for improvement and support. This led in part to the development of our Stronger Families sessions and the content of our monthly Parent E-Newsletters. We continue to keep parents updated on assessment arrangements across the senior phase such as the latest Guide for Parents and Carers on the Alternative Certification Model.

3.5   National Overview of Practice in Remote Learning - ASN

3.5.1   The fourth review focused on how schools were supporting children with additional support needs and again, a small number of schools were involved in the process to share how they have adapted approaches.

3.5.2   The review identified the particular challenges evident for some children with additional support needs and made a number of recommendations:
- Provide tasks and activities that provide the right level of challenge for all learners, including those with additional support needs.
- Further develop approaches to monitoring and tracking children's and young people's progress so that teachers can build on what children and young people already know.

- Ensure support planning is reviewed regularly in partnership with learners and parents to help meet the needs of children and young people.
- Share approaches taken by schools to provide personalised support for those children and young people with complex additional support needs.

3.5.3 There is no doubt that some children with additional support needs found a remote learning environment challenging and this added considerable pressures on some families. Our supporting learners workstream will continue to improve the accessibility of information for parents and carers over the coming year in keeping with our Accessibility Plan and National Improvement Framework Plan.

3.5.4 To ensure we responded to the needs of individual learners, paying particular attention to learners who find change difficult to manage, the Educational Psychology Service developed a Digital Educational Psychology Hub to provide, guidance, support and advice.

3.5.5 The last recommendation led (in part) to our development of Digital Postcards to share best practice across the city and beyond. These are being linked to our Learning and Teaching Standard so that staff themselves can exemplify best practice for others. 2 postcards are being released per week through the service twitter account.

Example Digital Postcard 1

Example Digital Postcard 2

Example Digital Postcard 3

3.6 National Overview of Practice in Remote Learning - Learning Entitlements

3.6.1 The fifth review focused on the extent to which schools were able to continue to meet the entitlements of Curriculum for Excellence. As with earlier reviews, 5% of all schools were invited to contribute and 3 City schools participated.

3.6.2 The review found that levels of confidence had grown considerably from the first period of lockdown and Dyce Primary were featured in the report.

Children and their families are offered a monthly curriculum overview, outlining the main theme for the month and suggested activities children can undertake independently and with their families. Each Wednesday, children can choose from a series of linked activities that offer opportunities for personal achievement, and that promote the ethos and life of the school as a community. The overview also highlights the focus for the four set days of learning across the curriculum on Google Classroom. The interdisciplinary learning theme for February has a strong focus on social studies, learning about the past in their local area. Children across the school are working together to create a virtual museum 'A Walk in the Past at Dyce'.

3.6.3 It was identified that vulnerable learners were being supported by their home schools and staff were reaching out to those who were not engaging. Within Aberdeen there were many creative and innovative approaches being used through strong partnerships to ensure all learners who required support both digitally or face to face received it.

3.6.4 The Review highlighted key recommendations which included:

- Ensuring the curriculum provides all children and young people with breadth and depth in their learning.
- Supporting all children and young people to receive their entitlements to, and engage in, remote learning.
- Providing all children and young people with opportunities to revisit learning when required.
- Ensuring that all children and young people receive regular feedback on their learning and the progress they are making.
- Providing support for parents to help children and young people engage in remote learning.

3.6.5 Through the development of our guidance on [Creating Trauma Informed Learning Environments](#), all staff felt supported to make effective decisions around the planning of asynchronous and synchronous learning. This continued to be supported through our updated Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework and professional learning opportunities related to high quality feedback and Learner and Teacher Autonomy.

3.7   [National Overview of Practice in Remote Learning – What we have learned so far](#)

3.7.1 Following the initial 5 reports, the 6th provides a summary to share key findings and areas for development and improvement.

3.7.2 It was identified that local authorities, schools and parents across Scotland had responded quickly to ensure children and young people continued learning during the period of lockdown. Local authorities, schools and parents were commended for the commitment and effort to deliver learning and teaching remotely in the most challenging of circumstances.

3.8   [National Overview of Practice in Remote Learning – Quality Assurance Approaches](#)

3.8.1 This report focused on local authority approaches to assuring the quality of remote learning and highlights examples of practice which illustrated what was working well in six local authorities. The report includes comments made by local authorities during professional dialogue with HMIE and detailed case studies to help illustrate examples of strong practice.

3.8.2 Through professional dialogue, the conversations aimed to:
- identify approaches local authorities were taking to assure the quality of remote learning, and how new approaches had been adapted for this purpose
- explore how well these approaches were enabling local authorities to assure the quality of remote learning
- explore how local authorities were using the information gathered to support individual school and local authority wide improvement and what had improved/changed in the delivery of remote learning as a result of these quality assurance processes
- identify the main challenges and how had these been overcome.

3.8.3 This report contained case studies from the local authorities involved, this did not include Aberdeen City as we were not approached to participate.

3.8.4 Emerging strengths which were identified in quality assuring remote learning were:

- Local authority and school staffs' skills in digital learning and teaching, as an essential basis for ensuring high-quality remote learning; and professional learning approaches well matched to staff needs.
- The clear progress in the local authorities' strategic approach to quality assurance which builds on the experiences of earlier periods of remote learning. This is enabling them to adapt their established quality assurance approaches to meet the demands of remote learning at rapid pace.
- The positive impact of quality assurance approaches in recognising families' needs with respect to remote learning, including resource issues alongside the sharing of key information to help parents and carers support young people's engagement

3.8.5   Through self evaluation activity such as our Learning at a Distance Survey, Quality Improvement discussions within Head Teacher Networks including trio discussions and the collaborative nature and ability of Microsoft Teams, Officers feel confident that within Aberdeen we also had strong quality assurance approaches with regards to the above.

3.8.6   Areas highlighted for continuing improvement in quality assuring remote learning included:
- The clarity with which local authorities consistently share their expectations of remote learning with stakeholders, for example ensuring key features of the entitlements expressed in national advice including a clear commitment to 'live' interactions between staff and learners.
- Quality assurance processes for remote learning materials and approaches, including collegiate moderation of teaching materials and innovative systems for monitoring the quality of learners' remote learning experiences.
- Further progress in securing resourcing to enable every learner to have access to digital learning, including appropriate supply of devices and access to online learning

3.8.7   Officers conclude that clear guidance and expectations of learning has been shared with stakeholders through a variety of means including our Parent E-Newsletters, Letters directly from the Chief Education Officer and agreed expectations with Trade Union Representatives.

3.8.8   There is also confidence that all learners who required digital support during this time of remote learning were able to access this within Aberdeen. The use of Google Classroom and the wider Google Suite?s of tools and Microsoft Teams allowed staff to collaborate and share practice within and across schools. This will continue to be developed in relation to our moderation practices.

3.9   [National Overview of Practice in Remote Learning – Supporting Pupil Engagement](#)

3.9.1   This report was supported by engagement in professional dialogue with 18 schools in five local authorities about their approaches to supporting children's and young people's engagement, participation and motivation.

3.9.2   Dialogue aimed to:
- explore how schools are monitoring the engagement, participation and motivation of children and young people during remote learning
- exemplify how educators are ensuring that remote learning provision is engaging and motivating for individual learners, and the steps being taken to increase engagement

and participation, where necessary, for individuals, groups and across school communities; and to

- identify the main challenges and how these are being overcome. This report contains case studies from the local authorities involved. Supporting documentation will be published on the national overview 'Sharing what's working well' section of the Education Scotland website.

3.9.3 Emerging strengths identified that the establishment of clear and realistic expectations for engagement and participation in learning, taking account the individual context of the school was beneficial. Schools within Aberdeen considered carefully the local context of the school community while planning learning opportunities, including family learning activities and partnership engagement to encourage and enhance learning.

3.9.4 Systematic approaches being used to monitor and evaluate children's and young people's engagement in their learning was also highlighted as a strength. The use of Google classroom within Aberdeen, captured data in relation to engagement with remote learning through digital registration by pupils on a daily basis.

3.9.5 The review identified the need to maintain a focus on meeting the needs of all children and young people to support motivation, participation and engagement. Within Aberdeen the use of creative approaches and partnership working with Active Schools, AFCCT, ACE Voices and wider partners helped us to address this in part. We continue to look at innovative ways to meet the learning needs of all.

4.0   National Overview of Practice in Remote Learning – Support for Health & Wellbeing

4.0.1 HMIE engaged in professional dialogue with 26 schools across six local authorities to share how schools are supporting the health and wellbeing of children, young people, families, staff and the school community. A number of schools were nominated within Aberdeen City to participate in this review from a variety of school localities.

4.0.2 All local authorities highlight how they are prioritising support for health and wellbeing. They have strengthened their focus on supporting the emotional, social and physical needs of children, young people and their families.

4.0.3 The report highlighted that through more regular contact with children and young people, staff could respond quickly to wellbeing concerns and support learners and families overcome any worries or challenges. Staff were able to use various mechanisms to reach out to children and young people and provide helpful advice on keeping healthy, including the importance of regular exercise and spending time away from a screen. Examples of this within Aberdeen were linked to Wellbeing Wednesdays, Family and Staff Sport Challenges and daily phone calls from identified staff members.

4.0.4 In most secondary schools, staff had increased their focus on supporting young people's mental wellbeing. They were developing ways to promote positive attitudes amongst young people during lockdown and help reduce and address their concerns. As part of the supports offered across Aberdeen City resources like the Resilience Alphabet and The Journey were developed, endorsed by Education Scotland and shared nationally.

4.0.5   As part of this process the Inspectors also met with Central Officers to review the supports in place for staff. Numerous resources are now available within the 'Sharing what's working well' section of the National Improvement Hub.

> Case Study – Aberdeen City Council
>
> Empowering staff to support children and young people The Aberdeen City Council Building Capacity Team has played a central role in supporting staff and school communities during the pandemic. Members of this team have been working with both internal and external partners to help support staff, including probationers during remote learning. Support for health and wellbeing and professional learning has been a core part of this work.
>
> Practitioners have the opportunity to engage in professional learning. Self-directed opportunities are shared through the Informed, Skilled, Enhanced or Expert (ISEE) Framework, allowing practitioners to select professional learning relevant to their needs. Staff appreciate the ready access to this professional learning. This model has helped to build capacity, professional agency and offers progression pathways for all. Staff report that they are engaging well in professional learning around remote learning at their own pace and level and in collaboration with various agencies. The local authority is now confident that staff have a shared understanding of wellbeing and how to support better children, young people and families.
>
> The local authority has targeted support materials and engagement events around staff's wellbeing, and the impact of the pandemic on learner and family wellbeing. A guide for staff, 'what to look out for in your pupils', includes helpful advice on key things to consider around young people's wellbeing now and when they return to school. Practical solutions, professional support and the opportunity to develop beneficial partnership with others have been offered. These include one-to-one coaching with educational psychologists, podcasts focusing on the wellbeing of staff and wellbeing sessions from the Scottish Association for Mental Health. Staff found these professional learning sessions reassuring and report that these have reduced the isolation felt by individual members of staff.

4.0.6   Emerging strengths which were identified through this report were:
- Schools know their children and families well and have continued to increase communication with families during lockdown. They use a range of approaches to monitor children's and young people's wellbeing and respond promptly using a range of supports to address wellbeing concerns.
- Staff recognise the impact of remote learning on family life and provide parents with strategies and interventions for them to use at home with their children to help support wellbeing.
- Strengthening collaborative working amongst staff and with senior leaders is supporting staff wellbeing. Staff provide peer support for one another through catch-ups, sharing of resources and offering helpful advice when needed.

4.0.7   Areas for improvement highlighted were:
- Continue to have a strong focus on supporting the health and wellbeing needs of children, young people and staff in order to help address any impacts for them in the long term.

- Through well-established communication and support channels, schools should continue to work with learners, parents and the school community to help maintain positive approaches to health and wellbeing, including learning outdoors.
- Build on supportive arrangements being put in place for learners at key points of transition. Staff should continue to offer support to all children and young people, with a particular and immediate focus on those moving into P1, S1 and post-secondary stages.
- As more children and young people physically returned to school, staff should continue to support the health and wellbeing of children and young people and recognise that transition back to school will be challenging for some.

4.0.8 Officers are content that all recommendations are continuing to be a key focus and have a high priority at this time and thread through our National Improvement Framework Plan for the coming year.

4.1 [National Overview of Practice in Remote Learning – Complex Learning Needs](#)

4.1.0 This report focused on the outcomes of professional dialogue with local authorities, school leaders and teachers in relation to their approaches to providing learning for children and young people with complex learning needs. This aimed to: exemplify the steps local authorities and schools were taking to provide learning for children and young people with complex learning needs and to help overcome challenges.

4.1.1 Case studies are provided within this report from various local authorities. Aberdeen City is not reflected within this report.

4.1.2 As with other reports it was highlighted that local authority support, good quality professional learning and ongoing reflection was resulting in improved approaches to meeting the needs of learners with complex needs.

4.1.3 Schools have been able to exercise autonomy in allocating resources to provide personalised approaches to meet individual learning needs and Schools have taken positive steps to increase engagement with and support for parents of children and young people with complex learning needs. This would also be reflected in the further developments of our [Educational Psychology Hub](#) and [Parent Learning Hub](#) within Aberdeen.

4.1.4 Recommendations from this report included:
- Continue to improve approaches to assessing learning and evaluating the progress of learners with complex needs.
- Ensure a focus on planning for transitions to reduce any anxiety and support change.
- Learn from their experiences of remote learning to identify what has worked successfully that could be continued post-pandemic to support learners with complex needs.

4.1.5 Through focused school improvement plans and the work of our Supporting Learners working group, officers are confident that these recommendations will be a key focus in future planning and developments.

4.2 [National Overview of Practice in Remote Learning – Learning through Feedback](#)

4.2.0 The focus of this review was to consider approaches to using feedback from learners and parents to adapt and make improvements to the delivery and quality of remote learning. In particular, these conversations aimed to identify and explore approaches that schools were using to gather feedback from learners and parents; and how schools were using feedback from learners and parents to adapt and make improvements to the quality of remote learning.

4.2.1 A number of case studies were used to exemplify findings and these demonstrated the increased range and frequency of approaches in relation to gathering feedback from learners and families and the less formal approach to these has increased engagement in many circumstances with Senior Leaders recognising the benefits of engaging more regularly in this way.

4.2.2 Digital technology was highlighted as a key tool for gathering feedback and this would be replicated across Aberdeen City with the use of resources such as Microsoft Forms and Google and Team Meetings being used more frequently and with a clear focus for engagement and improvement. An example of this would be our 'Learning at a Distance' Survey which provided clear data on the impact of both the first and second lockdown period on Learners, Families and Staff.

4.2.3 Feedback from children and young people had however shared their feelings of heightened anxiety when they are on camera for a lot of the time. They reported that they sometimes find it difficult to raise issues with teachers in a public setting. Schools have responded to this by creating more opportunities for smaller breakout groups during online learning. This is helping teachers to tailor support better and schools report that children and young people say they now feel more comfortable.

4.2.4 Areas for improvement include continuing to build on the range of approaches used during remote learning to gather feedback and consider carefully the voice of children, young people and families to ensure their needs and interests are being met. As an Authority, we continue to do this, making best use of digital tools and considering carefully the qualitative and quantitative data required to continue to review our work and identify strengths and areas for improvement.

4.3 [National Overview of Practice in Remote Learning – Learner Assessment and Progress](#)

4.3.0 The final national overview of practice in remote learning focused on how schools were assessing learning and providing feedback to learners on progress. The report contains case studies from some of the schools and local authorities involved and a selection of supporting documentation shared by local authorities and schools has been published on the ['Sharing what's working well'](#) section of the national overviews website.

4.3.1 Within the second period of remote learning, the report highlighted that teachers were planning learning experiences with ongoing and periodic assessment built in. Young people demonstrated their learning by undertaking written and oral work which was evaluated by teachers and where possible peer assessment was also offered through digital breakout spaces. All headteachers report that staff have become more skilled at using digital platforms to assess progress and deliver feedback and this practice is being shared through our Digital Postcards mentioned at 3.5.5.

4.3.2 A majority of headteachers reported that there were challenges associated with assessing the development of young people's practical skills during remote learning. For example, teachers face challenges in directly observing young people demonstrating their skills in practical science and drama. Staff adopted creative approaches to reduce these barriers to assessment for young people. For example, in the senior phase, music is being recorded for assessment instead of being played live for a visiting assessor and in our own Secondary Schools musical instruments were distributed during the remote learning period to support ongoing practical application.

4.3.3 The review highlighted the need to continue building on new ways of assessing learning and providing feedback during the return to in-school learning by building on existing approaches. Further consideration should also be taken in relation to monitoring and tracking to better inform next steps in learning and teaching.

4.3.4 Officers are confident that through the Raising Attainment and Achievement Working Group, key planning will continue to focus on ensuring that across Aberdeen City we have a consistent understanding of moderation and develop our practices holistically in relation to learner assessment. We are also working to ensure that our tracking and monitoring is robust and consistently applied across all schools.

4.4 **Thematic Review of Alternative Certification Model (ACM)**

4.4.1 A Thematic Review of Local Authority approaches to the ACM is currently underway. The review has not yet been published. Aberdeen City Council engaged with Inspectors in April 2021 as part of this national review. We still await the official findings although verbal feedback highlighted a number of strengths including:
- Strong communication
- Good strategic Leadership and positive culture of collaboration
- Staff having a good understanding the standards
- Rigorous layers of quality assurance

4.4.2 The feedback identified that very strong communication with clear and consistent messaging was in place. As a result, parent/carers, young people and staff feel well supported and have confidence in the processes in place to deliver the ACM.

4.4.3 Collective and coherent approaches to supporting schools through weekly Head Teacher meetings are highly valued and seen to be a stabilising influence. It was reported that there is a shared understanding of expectations and a consistent approach being adopted across all schools. This clarity of communication, particularly in an uncertain context is creating confidence. This confidence is passed onto learners and learners are feeling less anxious.

4.4.4 It as recognised that there is an extremely positive culture across the city and collaboration and collegiate working is helping the service develop a highly effective ACM and associated high quality guidance for staff. Collaboration and collegiality are evident at senior and middle leadership level as well as across practitioners. It was noted that this is very special and stands Aberdeen in very good stead generally as we move forward.

4.4.5 Through this review all staff spoke positively about the work to explore the standards and highly appreciated having protected in-service time to undertake this work. Staff spoke positively about the on-going opportunity to link with each other. This again

should be maintained and stands us in good stead as a working model for improvement across the Local Authority, beyond procedures for the ACM. As part of this work ACC Moderation and Assessment Guidance has been developed (see appendix A).

4.4.6 It was reported that all staff have a sound understanding of their role in quality assuring the predicted results. Staff spoke in detail about their role and could evidence impact. The ability to layer at class teacher, faculty, school and Local Authority level is a strength and all staff spoke about their role in the process. The use of the Power BI tool has the potential to transform work at school and Local Authority level.

4.4.7 Colleagues reviewing this work were genuinely inspired by their time with us and shared a number of considerations as they realise our capacity for improvement.
- In the short-term, use the strength apparent in collegiate working; work together on a PSE insert to ensure that young people are well supported during a term where they will be facing a significant amount of assessment (such as time management and study planning).
- Consider how we support learner agency in the longer term – how do we reshape our Personal and Social Education programme to ensure continued self-efficacy and learner agency?
- The roll out of Power BI data analysis tool provides an ideal and transformational opportunity to deepen understanding of data at class teacher level.
- Build on existing collaborations and continue to consider the balance of learning, teaching and assessment.
- Gather quantitative data at Local Authority level to validate our processes (pupil, staff and parents and carers). Check learner understanding of arrangements.

4.4.8 In summary, the positive and solution-oriented attitudes witnessed repeatedly over the throughout the review period were identified as inspirational. There was excitement about what we could achieve and belief that our capacity and capability for improvement is significant.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Standards In Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000 places an obligation on Local Authorities to secure improvement in all schools whilst the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 places a duty on Local Authorities to provide 1140 hours of Early Learning and Childcare from 2020. Settings not able to provide a service rated as 'Good' or better will not be eligible to offer the expanded entitlement.

7.   MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	Lack of alignment within improvement planning, strategic objectives and Education Scotland recommendations	L	Service Improvement plan will respond to recommendations in alignment with Council's strategic objectives
Compliance	Failure to deliver on legal duties	L	Actions and proposed actions satisfy these legal duties
Operational	Risk of employees feeling overwhelmed by the many improvements required.	L	Support in place from the Local Authority Education Service
Financial	N/A		
Reputational	Risk of reputational damage for school and service	M	This report will provide some assurance that plans being implemented are effective
Environment / Climate	N/A		

8.   OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN		
	Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan		
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	Children who have their learning and wellbeing needs well met are more able to contribute to a prosperous economy	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Children and young people who have their learning and wellbeing needs met are more likely to have fulfilling and more independent lives, as such this report closely aligns to all the children's stretch outcomes in the LOIP.	

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A   - ACC Moderation and Assessment Guidance.

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