

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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| COMMITTEE | Education & Children's Services Committee |
| DATE | 23 May 2023 |
| EXEMPT | No |
| CONFIDENTIAL | No |
| REPORT TITLE | Health & Wellbeing Report |
| REPORT NUMBER | CFS/23/117 |
| DIRECTOR | Eleanor Sheppard |
| CHIEF OFFICER | Shona Milne |
| REPORT AUTHOR | Gael Simpson & Emma Powell |
| TERMS OF REFERENCE | 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 November and December 2022 and the current support in place for wellbeing, both physical and mental.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the content of this report and the data shared within Appendix A;
- 2.2 instructs the Interim Director Children and Family Services to consider the findings of the report and plan next steps as part of work being taken forward through the Children's Services Plan and associated National Improvement Framework Plan; and
- 2.3 instructs the Chief Education Officer to report the findings of the next Health and Wellbeing surveys to Committee within one calendar year.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 We want all children and young people to be able to learn about health and wellbeing to ensure they acquire skills to live healthy, happy lives.

Health and wellbeing is not a single subject or class, but is organised into six areas which are the responsibility of all staff working in schools:

- 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

All schools deliver a health and wellbeing curriculum aligned to the six areas of responsibility and keep this regularly under review. A focus on positive health and wellbeing helps ensure that pupils are able to make the most of their educational opportunities regardless of their circumstances. Schools have placed significant emphasis on health and wellbeing given the impact of the pandemic and cost of living crisis on children and families and the positive impact of this focus is evident in the improved survey responses from November 2022.

- 3.2 The attached outcome report in **Appendix A**, is a summary of the findings from two Health & Wellbeing Surveys issued to children and young people within Aberdeen City during November and December 2022. One survey is delivered in partnership with Schools Health Improvement and Research Network (SHINE) and focused on mental wellbeing for pupils in P6-S6. The second has a key focus on physical wellbeing, designed by Aberdeen City Council Education staff and undertaken by pupils in P5-S6.
- 3.3 The attached report provides an overview of the city-wide data. Initial review of the data by the education service would suggest a need to:
- Monitor trends carefully on a yearly basis to confidently determine progress
 - Focus on poverty and how this impacts health and educational outcomes through the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and associated Children's Services Plan
 - Look in greater detail at community data around low mood and risk of depression to determine next steps
 - Continue to focus on the promotion of sleep
 - A need to better understand attitudes towards school
 - Consider the implications of the continued concerns regarding appearance and amend health programmes to address this and the influence of social media
 - Undertaken some focused work around girls and those who did not disclose gender
- 3.4 School leaders will now be guided to explore the high level report in Appendix A, alongside the school and Associated School Group (ASG) reports in order to identify appropriate next steps at school and wider community level. Taking this approach will ensure we have a collective understanding of the data, and consider next steps and solutions to address areas of concern.
- 3.5 This high level report will also be shared with the Mental Health Collaborative, established following the Mental Health Summit in October 2022 and the PEPAS (Physical Education, Physical Activity & Sport) Group established in April 2021, to support multi-agency decision making and areas of focus through the Children's Services Plan.

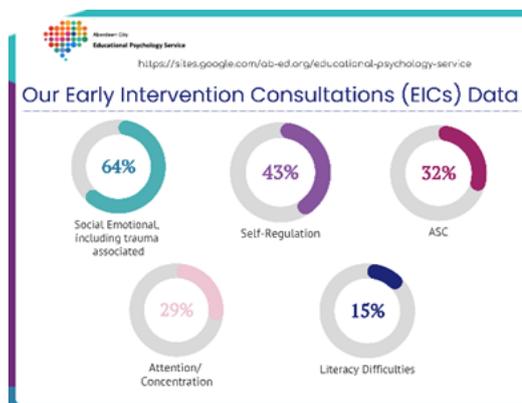
Approaches in place to support Mental Wellbeing

- 3.6 A range of additional interventions above and beyond the school curriculum continue to be in place. We continue to commission Mental Health Aberdeen to support all children from age 10+ with counselling support where required. This can be through referral by school staff or self-referral. Through our last reporting period October 2022 – December 2022, **330** young people were being supported and **100% of the 103** children who had completed an end of session

questionnaire at that time, reported an improved wellbeing outcome following this support. Counselling has a higher percentage of females being supported with this approach and the divide between male and female is 225/96 with 9 young people who identify as transgender or non-binary receiving this support. Reasons for seeking support vary, however a high number of learners are receiving support for anxiety, bereavement, low confidence/self-esteem, low mood and relationship issues.

- 3.7 All schools continue to engage with the Compassionate and Connected Communities (CCC) programme. We have built the capacity of 11 further members of staff to act as trainers for the programme. Taking this approach of on-going training for trainers ensures that we maintain a full 64 trainers across the city with a trainer available in each city school when there is staff movement or retiral.
- 3.8 'Fitlike Aberdeen' continues to offer wellbeing supports to families, with one to one, group work and activities available to help address early indicators of distress in children and families. **401** young people/families are currently engaging with the service and **146** of the 401 are families who are being supported for the first time. We see a higher number of males (229) being supported by Fitlike with current numbers of females lower (163) and 9 young people who identify as non-binary, transgender or gender fluid. Reasons for presenting also vary here, however greater support is required for those presenting with low mood, anxiety, emotional literacy/regulation and wider family support needs.
- 3.9 We are currently working in partnership with Fitlike Aberdeen and CAMHS colleagues to further develop our supports in LIAM (Let's Introduce Anxiety Management). This multi-agency collaboration will continue to build on the current supports we have in place across many schools in order to strengthen the universal offer to children and families. All school nurses are currently trained to deliver LIAM, as are a team of Fitlike staff and currently we have staff in 25 schools trained to deliver this support. A further round of training will take place in June increasing the number of trained staff by a further 23 individuals.
- 3.10 The pilot of DBI (Distress Brief Intervention) has extended to 6 Secondary Schools in partnership with CAMHS and Penumbra focusing on learners aged 14-16. This programme offers more targeted support for young people who have been identified or self-identify the need for support and helps some of our most vulnerable learners to access trained staff and a pathway to support through Penumbra and CAMHS if required. We are beginning to see early signs of improvement through our data report in relation to the Who-5 wellbeing index, which may suggest that earlier responsive intervention is supporting young people previously indicating low mood.

3.11 Our Educational Psychology Service (EPS) support schools through Early Intervention Consultations (EICs), which take place between staff at all levels of the school and the EPS. 424 EICs took place last year, and this academic year to-date, 338 have taken place. EIC data from last year showed that most of the problem-solving discussions that generate strategies and supports for interventions focused on the following areas:

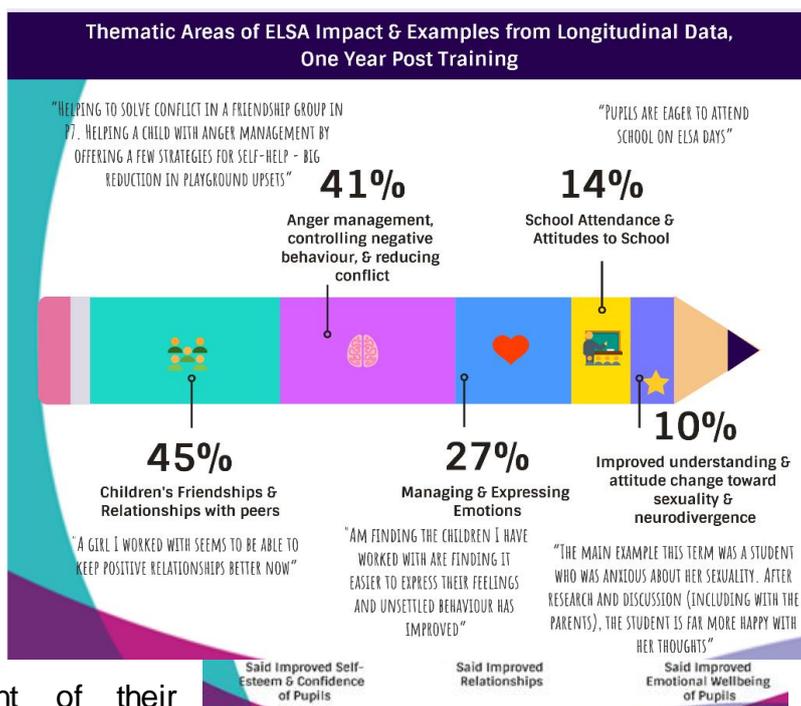


The EPS review and update their digital hub to offer supports to pupils, parents and staff based on information gathered throughout the year about topics and areas of need arising through their work in Education. The EPS continue to review their supports and delivery of several programmes:

- Seasons for Growth – Ongoing training and re-connector groups, offered throughout each session by the EPS. This allows highly skilled groups to be run across education supporting pupils with significant loss and change. This year to date, 89 children have been part of loss and change groups in the Seasons programme. Both the training by the EPS, and the groups continue to be positively evaluated.
- Emotion Coaching – Fully digital training programme, with follow-up EPS coaching and facilitation around implementation and effectiveness. Training programmes run for parents, with content available on the EPS digital hub.
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) training. Aberdeen remains the only local authority to offer this programme that has a strong evidence base and is used across England and Wales.

Local Aberdeen City data shows the positive impact this training programme has had to support staff working with children with a range of emotional regulation needs.

39 staff are currently trained, with a further 13 in training, which will give 52 fully trained ELSAs across Aberdeen City schools to work 1:1 and in groups to support children and young-peoples development of their



emotional literacy and regulation. Each ELSA has ongoing support of 12 hours of psychological group supervision each year.

- 3.12 The Education Service benefit from regular collaboration with health colleagues to ensure that the universal services are aligned and maximising their impact on children, young people and families. This is being evidenced through the recent development of a strong, collaborative Children's Services Plan.
- 3.13 We currently have a small number of Primary schools building a partnership with Place2Be through a pilot project. Place2BE offer in person supports within the primary school setting for children aged 3 and up, families and staff. The impact of this new initiative will be evaluated in due course.

Working in partnership to support Physical Wellbeing through PEPAS (Physical Activity, Physical Education & Sport)

- 3.14 The PEPAS Group continue to work in partnership, taking a lead role as advocates and advisors on Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport on a city-wide basis.
- 3.15 There have been some really positive pieces of work that have developed through the PEPAS group this session and these include:
- The development of a Primary PE progression toolkit, which provides a clear progression of learning in PE for Primary practitioners and signposts staff to relevant resources and lesson plans. This has been linked in to our Grassroots Professional Learning programme led by PE specialists and is improving the confidence of staff in delivering high quality PE.
 - A large scale roll out of Boccia Training in schools. Boccia is a sport designed for all. It is a target sport played indoors with soft leather balls. **Boccia** (pronounced bot-cha) is a Paralympic sport with no Olympic equivalent and is similar to bowls. It is a target ball sport which tests both muscle control and accuracy. This has been delivered directly to pupil leaders who have further disseminated this training across their school communities. It has also been delivered to a large number of teaching, support staff and parents. Schools are working towards a city wide Boccia Festival held in ASGs.
 - As a group we have now agreed a standard format for gathering data and will continue to work collaboratively to gather this, drawing it through MySport, a Sport Scotland tool, which will allow us to have a clearer picture of the activities available to children and young people across the city, identifying strengths and areas for development.

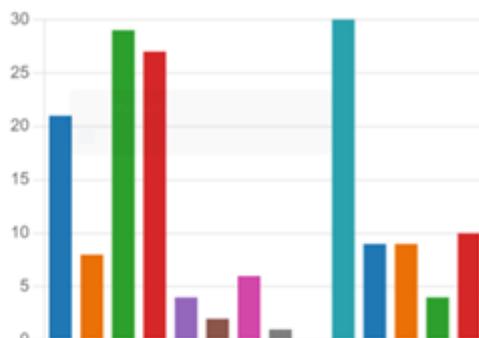
Active Travel

- 3.16 An active travel survey was undertaken in October 2022 and we received a return from 40 of our 61 schools. Responses allowed us to consider the approaches already in place and consider next steps to improve active travel within each school community.
- 3.17 Officers plan to relaunch the travel plan guidance with clear agreed expectations around this as we focus on improving active travel and addressing

the increasing concerns around the environmental impact that transport has on us reaching net zero.

3.18 Schools are currently offering opportunities to increase active travel through park and stride, providing parking for bike and scooters and providing bikeability training in partnership with Active Schools.

- We encourage park and stride 21
- We have a walking/biking incen... 8
- We provide bikeability training -... 29
- We provide bikeability training -... 27
- We provide bikeability training -... 4
- We have a school travel noticeb... 2
- We have Junior Road Safety Offi... 6
- We have a walking bus 1
- We have a bicycle train 0
- We have cycle / scooter parking 30
- We offer regular cycle maintena... 9
- We offer cycling events such as '... 9
- We are registered with Cycle Fri... 4
- We encourage car sharing 10



3.19 We work in close partnership with ACC I Bike officer and Adventure Aberdeen to support Bikeability and Cycle training and offer Level 2 training in all of our Primary school settings in response to feedback from the Aberdeen Parent Council Forum.

3.20 Other supports include the offer of cycle maintenance and cycling events including opportunities led by Adventure Aberdeen and the Aberdeen City I Bike Officer projects, some of which are highlighted below.



Active Schools

Assistants

3.21 The service used COVID recovery funding to increase capacity for physical activity through the recruitment of Active Schools Assistants. The additional resource increased support for physical activity in our playgrounds to encourage healthy choices and offer a range of targeted physical wellbeing interventions at school level. We have seen a 3% increase in young people reporting that their general health is good or excellent since our last report in March 2022. Schools have also seen the positive impact of this work, with some now making use of pupil equity funding to sustain this support.

Free Period Products

- 3.24 On 15th August 2022 Scotland became the first country in the world to make the provision of Free Period Products (FPP) a legal requirement of schools and public venues. Aberdeen City Council have produced a statement of provision to explain how they would meet the legislation which can be found here: [ACC FPP Statement](#) This provides expectations of schools so that equity of provision is available across the city.
- 3.25 Since launch in August there have been a number of activities undertaken by the Education service to increase support for children and young people by increasing the understanding of menstruation, its impact and providing increased awareness of how to access resources. These include:
- Free period products distributed to all probationer teachers
 - Free period products distributed to School Health leads
 - Launch of FPP posters in schools
 - Health & Wellbeing network input from Hannah Miley focusing on Demystifying Menstruation
 - Draft letter to all schools to support increased signposting to resources
 - Parent Newsletter update provided for parents about how and where to access resources

Physical Health Support Visits

- 3.26 Between November 2022 and February 2023 all schools were visited in order to undertake an audit of Physical Health provision. This covered several areas including Free Period Products, Relationships, Sexual Health & Parenthood, Physical Education curriculum, extracurricular activities as well as physical space and resources. Findings from these visits included low staff confidence in the teaching of PE and in particular the area of gymnastics. This is being addressed through our current professional learning offer. Free period product awareness and provision was good in almost all schools with a small number receiving support to improve marketing with learners and parents. 25% of schools were taking significant steps to improve food and nutrition provision, ranging from free breakfast offers to bespoke cooking facilities. All schools were provided with individualised feedback and further analysis of visit findings will be supported directly by the Education Support Officer Team within term 4 of this academic session.

Next steps

- 3.27 This report will be passed to the Mental Health Collaboration 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 2023-24 is being developed.

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? |
|-----------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Strategic Risk | 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 | L | Yes |

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| | | and young people at a local level, thereby reducing some risk. | | |
| Compliance | No significant risks identified | | | |
| Operational | 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 |
| Financial | 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 |
| Reputational | Where single agency support is in place for children and young people to meet their physical and mental wellbeing needs we are unlikely to meet these needs, causing a reputational risk to the organisation. | Data scrutiny, reporting and strong partnerships enable us to enhance the Council's reputation for strong collaborative and solution focused working. | L | Yes |
| Environment / Climate | No significant risks identified | | | |

8. OUTCOMES

| <u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u> | |
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| <u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u> | |
| Prosperous Economy | |
| Prosperous People Stretch Outcome (Children & Young People) | <p>The detail within this report supports the delivery of Children & Young People Stretch Outcomes 4 to 9 in the refreshed LOIP. This includes the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 100% of schools offer sustainable and equitable access to counselling for those children aged 10 and above who require it by 2022. • 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. • Increase by 80% the use of digital wellbeing resources for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing by 2022. • 100% of children and young people have free access to physical activity which improves mental health and wellbeing by 2022 • Increase the number of care experienced young people by 10% receiving multiagency throughcare/aftercare support by 2023 • Increase number of young people who need support in relation to trauma and bereavement having access to such support by 50% by 2023. |
| Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase % of people who walk as one mode of travel by 10% by 2023. • Increase % of people who cycle as one mode of travel by 2% by 2023. • Increase the number of community run green spaces by a minimum of 8 that are organised and self-managed for both people and nature by 2023. |
| <p>Regional and City Strategies</p> <p>Regional Cultural Strategy</p> <p>Prevention Strategy</p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p> | <p>The universal provision of education is fully aligned to the Prevention Strategy and a key partner to the Children's Services Plan.</p> |

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| National Improvement Framework Plan | |
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9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

| Assessment | Outcome |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Integrated Impact Assessment | Not required |
| Data Protection Impact Assessment | Not required |
| Other | None |

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – ACC Health & Wellbeing Survey Analysis (April 2023)

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

| | |
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