

SERVICE UPDATE

<u>Name of Function:</u>	Customer
<u>Date:</u>	24/07/2023
<u>Title of Update:</u>	St Machar Parent Support Update
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UPDATE:

Background:

At the meeting on 26 April, the Council resolved, in respect of the notice of motion relating to the St Machar Parent Support Project to:

- Instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to explore the potential impact and to provide an update to all members as appropriate.

St. Machar Parent Support Project, a community-based project offering whole-family support to families living within the St Machar Associated School Group (ASG), went into administration in April 2023. The project offered direct 1:1 support around parenting, additional support needs, financial assistance, employability, health and wellbeing, and kinship. There were three established groups operating at the time of closure, Kinship, Additional Support Needs and a Wellbeing Walking group. The project was based within the local community and operated an open-door policy, where staff could be responsive to the needs of the community in a real-time manner. They offered a listening-ear service, which resulted in signposting and communicating with many different services on behalf of the individuals they were supporting.

Support currently being provided:

In response to the project going into administration Aberdeen City Council's Community Learning and Development (CLD) leads held a meeting with the remaining staff from the Project at that time. A discussion was held around what services CLD could provide to mitigate the immediate impact of the loss of service for families at short notice.

Following a handover by St. Machar Parent Support Project staff, two of the three groups have continued. The Additional Support Needs group and the

Kinship group have continued with the support and facilitation of the CLD, Family Learning service, operating from the Tillydrone Community Campus.

The Additional Support Needs group, running fortnightly, currently has 12 regular attendees. There has also been interest for new participants to join this group. We will therefore continue to explore how best to provide support, as staff capacity allows and given that demand for support for families in this area continues to increase out with this provision and across the city.

The Kinship group has close ties with another Kinship group based in Aberdeenshire. There has been regular cross-meetings between the two groups which results in the Kinship group meeting more regularly than fortnightly. Since Family Learning have become involved with the Kinship group, they have continued with an existing format of guest speakers, with representatives from Quarriers and Children 1st invited to come along to engage with the participants. Family Learning continue to encourage participants to identify the services that they would like to hear from.

Multi-agency and 1:1 support: The Family Learning Service are also providing support with any multi-agency meetings, to mirror the support previously offered by St Machar Parent Support Project. Since mid-April, there have been four multi-agency meetings supported by Family Learning staff, and a recognition that these parents would benefit from 1:1 direct support as well as the group offering.

The Family Learning service has a waiting list of families seeking 1:1 direct support and existing St. Machar Parent Support Project participants who wished to receive this support have been added to the waiting list. In one instance 1:1 support was prioritised for a family due to their circumstances.

The Family Learning Service also continues to work with partners to signpost to support, where an alternative option is available, depending on a family's needs. The Summer in the City offer has also been shared with families and there has been good uptake in activities.

Next steps

The Community Learning and Development Team have provided invaluable support to families to mitigate the impact of the loss of the St Machar Parent Support Project. They will continue to evaluate the need and explore alternative services and measures to provide support for those who require it.