

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	24 June 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Ukrainian School Partnerships project – International Travel
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/25/128
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Caroline Johnstone
TERMS OF REFERENCE	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?
Strategic Risk	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
Compliance	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
Operational	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
Financial	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.		
Reputational	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	Yes
Environment / Climate	Carbon footprint of air travel.	The number of officers to attend this trip is restricted to one.	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>Council Delivery Plan 2024</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</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"> 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 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
<u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026</u>	
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.
Regional and City Strategies	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
Integrated Impact Assessment	New Integrated Impact Assessment Completed
Data protection impact assessment	Not required
Other	Not required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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