

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education & Children's Services
DATE	28 January 2016
DIRECTOR	Gayle Gorman
TITLE OF REPORT	Education and Children's Services - 2014-15 Annual Performance (Statutory Performance Indicator) Report
REPORT NUMBER	ECS/15/053
CHECKLIST RECEIVED:	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to:

Provide Elected Members with a summary of the 2014-15 Annual Performance (Statutory Performance Indicator) outcomes covering the work of the Education and Children's Services Directorate.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Committee is asked to:

- i) Note the content of the report
- ii) Note E&CS, 2014-15 Annual Performance (Statutory Performance Indicator) outcomes contained within Appendix A.
- ii) Acknowledge the improved educational outcomes for children and young people in Aberdeen.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from the report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct implications arising from this report.

5. BACKGROUND

During 2014/15, a series of projects and audits were carried out across the Directorate which were designed to enhance the Directorate's understanding of the impact of service delivery on stakeholders.

Prior to this work, the Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People in Aberdeen City, conducted in 2014, offered a detailed and substantially positive assessment of the contribution of its Services to the wellbeing of the City's young people.

The Joint Inspection also noted that partners in the City, with the Education and Children's Services Directorate at the core, were committed to improving outcomes.

The Inspection, while identifying strengths in the use of data to identify need and impact, acknowledged that this could be further built upon. This is now being addressed through the Joint Inspection Action Plan.

This report, relating to the integrated functions of the new Directorate, offers an enhanced and revised range of Statutory Performance Indicator measures that follow on from these themes.

5.1 The Education Of Children

5.1.1 Attainment of National Qualifications

From the 2013-14 academic year, new National Qualifications were introduced at SCQF levels 4 and 5, replacing Standard Grades.

The cumulative trend for SQA attainment, across the comparable seven measures, **(ECS SPI 6)** demonstrates an improvement in 2014 outcomes in comparison with the previous year. There is an overall improvement across the seven measures of 6 percentage points from 2013 to 2014.

A significant positive movement is reflected in the outcomes at the end of S5, where there was an increase in each of the three measures, with performance at the end of S6 being maintained at 2013 levels.

In most instances, the results achieved substantially exceeded the predicted expectations derived from the MidYIS Baseline assessments conducted in S1. This is the predictor of future attainment assessment carried out across our schools. In respect of five of the seven measures, the highest outcomes were recorded across the past seven years of the current Qualifications Framework.

5.1.2 School Leaver Destinations

It is also significant to note the continued and strengthening trend in delivery against the Positive Destinations Indicator **(ECS SPI 10)** that is recording its highest City outcome since reporting against this indicator was first published in 2008.

The impact of the implementation of Aberdeen Guarantees is clearly seen here, with this marked improvement for our young people.

5.1.3 School and Pre-school Inspections

The Directorate can also evidence outcomes through a range of qualitative indicators as evidenced through inspections. These inspections display a picture of improving outcomes. The inspections are carried out by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate and the outcomes are reflected within **ECS SPI's 7, 8 and 9**.

Appendix A reflects the outcomes from inspections of 40 educational settings carried out during 2014-15 which encompasses 7 Education Scotland reports against 5 individual establishments (which are less than 4% of all City provision) and 33 Care Inspectorate visits.

The combined positive inspection outcome for education settings are 90% for 2014-15.

5.1.4 Pre-School Provision

ECS SPI 11 for 2014-15, notes a 3.9 percentage point reduction in the proportion of the City's eligible pre-school and ante pre-school population being offered nursery places

There is a similar picture across Scotland during the first year of significant change in early learning and childcare entitlement. These changes are to contribute towards the national priority of improving outcomes for children, especially those who are more vulnerable or disadvantaged.

In 2014, 3 and 4 year olds became eligible for an increase in the level of early learning and childcare to 600 hours per year (the equivalent of around 16 hours per week during term time). Since August 2014, this provision also became available to eligible 2 year olds. The increase in provision coupled with significant demographic changes has had an impact on meeting demand in the first year of implementing these changes.

The Directorate recognises that real and long term progress on tackling inequality can be made through a focus on early years and so actions have and are being taken to increase the provision available to meet demand.

This is seen through the additional nursery classes provided across the City this academic year and the implementation plan to both increase partner provider places and extend our own provision.

5.2 **Cultural and Community Services**

5.2.1 Sports Facility Attendances (ECS SPI 1)

There were a total of 2,487,138 indoor dry and pool sports facility attendances over the course of 2014-15, an increase of 264,550 in admissions in comparison with 2013-14.

This reflects a combined position with dry facility attendances improving by a margin of 5.7% to 1,834,213 with both Community and Schools use and Aberdeen

Sports Village noting rising attendances of 19.1% and 5.7% respectively, although Sport Aberdeen noted a marginal reduction in footfall (-1.1%) across its core managed facilities.

Admissions to pool facilities, with the introduction of attendances generated by the new 50m pool at the Aberdeen Sports Village, showed a significant overall rise of 166,305 (+34.2%). However this must be counter-balanced by falls in visits to both Sport Aberdeen managed premises and School and Community pools of around 46,000.

5.2.2 Museums and Galleries

Visits in person, rose materially to 283,566 visits, (+3.2%) despite the redevelopment and related closure of the Art Gallery and Museum site in February, with both the Art Gallery and Maritime Museum increasing visitor numbers.

At the same time, there was a reduction in the number of visits to the Service's on-line platforms. Therefore, the combined total for visits to/usages of the Service has seen a 3.5% reduction. **(ECS SPI 2)**

5.2.3 Libraries and Information Services

There has been a 3.2% rise in the three year trend pattern in total visitor figure **(ECS SPI 3)** with 47,258 more visits than were recorded in 2012-13 although the year-on-year number has decreased from 1,647,002 in 2013-14 to 1,525,986 in 2014-15, (-7.35%)

This has to be viewed in the context of a national background of declining visits to library facilities (around -8.1% over the past three years in Scotland) and a number of extended site closures for refurbishment and repairs in 2014-15, with physical visitors increasing slightly from 987,435 to just less than 1 million.

ECS SPI 5 notes that there has been an increase in both the number in PC users and the proportion of population which is registered to 17.7% from 16.6% in 2013-14

Lastly, **ECS SPI 4**, introduced this year, records an increasing level of engagement with the Service's lifelong learning and outreach programmes, covering a variety of opportunities across the spectrum of ages, for participating in educational and life-skills based events with over 28,300 participations (+ 19%)

5.3 **Child Protection and Children's Social Work**

5.3.1 Background

Implementation of the Reclaiming Social Work model, which is a whole system redesign of services for families in need, is underway within Children's Social Work Services.

Ahead of the model's introduction, bi-annual caseload audits have been undertaken resulting in improved identification of both the number of children and the number of families requiring support by social work services.

In addition, completion of the Inclusion Review has created new opportunities for promoting and addressing the needs of looked after children which are, in part, captured through the Indicators below:

5.3.2 Number of Care Placements of Children

This is a newly developed metric (**ECS SPI 12**) specifically linked to implementation of the Reclaiming Social Work model.

Research evidences that the more placement moves children experience the poorer their outcomes generally are. It is the aim of Aberdeen City Council to minimise the number of care placements children have.

The Reclaiming Social Work model is intended to support children to remain within their families and to enable families to find solutions to their own problems. There will continue to be instances when children will need to be accommodated but, as staff become more familiar with this model, there will be a reduction in numbers of looked after children.

The sufficient supply of foster carers is a local and national priority. The fostering service is further developing its recruitment strategy to attract new carers. Of particular challenge is the recruitment of foster carers able to care for larger sibling groups; teenagers and children on a permanent basis.

A review of its residential services is nearing completion and will set out the role and remit of each of our children's homes to ensure they best placed to meet the future needs of our young people over the coming years.

The review will also outline a workforce development plan to support the staff within the residential service to ensure that they are best placed to meet the needs of the young people in their care, to contribute to minimising the number of moves young people experience.

5.3.3 Support for Young People and Families at Risk

Two thirds of children and young people whose families meet the threshold for a social work service intervention are supported to live at home within in their own communities without becoming looked after.

Within the sub-set of those children and young people who become looked after, the proportion that are looked after at home, or with friends or relatives, (ECS SPI 13) has fallen for the second year running, which is reflected in similar trends both within comparator authorities and across Scotland, as demonstrated by the 2014 CLAS return.

Whilst this may suggest a decrease in performance in this area, it should be noted that there has been both a counter-balancing improvement against the overall number of children looked after within the City in comparison with 2013-14 (i.e.

down to 771 during 2014-15, compared to 856 in the previous year) and in each consecutive year since 2010, alongside a positive reduction in the numbers recorded within this sub-set from 449 in 2013-14 to 375 in 2014-15.

5.3.4 Child Protection Registrations

Over the course of 2014-15, there were a total of 260 registrations involving 257 children recorded under **ECS SPI 14**.

The nature of registration means that there will always be fluctuations in the number of children registered due to individual circumstances. (The figure for 2013-14 was 266 registrations involving 260 children)

Domestic violence, which has been the focus of continued profile raising during 2014-15, along with alcohol misuse and neglect are also prevalent identified risk factors.

The highest noted registration category is emotional abuse, (43%) in the light of the fact that it can be the observed result for children of the impact of the other categories.

The rate of children on the register within Aberdeen of 2.9 children per 1000 population of 1-16 year olds, sits exactly in line with the national average conversion rate in Scotland over the same period.

5.3.5 Child Protection Re-registration

ECS SPI 15 figures for 2014-2015 records that 30 children who were registered at any point during the year, had a previous registration history, which is an increase on the previous year's figure

For the purpose of benchmarking, 23% of the 99 children registered on the snapshot date of 31st March 2015 were identified as having prior registration periods. This is similar to our neighbouring authorities with Aberdeenshire (22%) and Moray (19%). These rates are higher than the national average which saw those with previous registration sitting at 16% of all registrations.

An audit will explore in detail why a higher proportion of children in Aberdeen who require more than one period of time on the child protection register.

Actions are in place to ensure that positive changes are maintained after they cease to be on the child protection register, including ensuring that support is provided and monitored up to three months after children cease to be on the register.

6. **IMPACT**

Improving Customer Experience

Analysis and publication of Performance data and, in particular, the use of benchmark information, offers the Directorate the opportunity to critically evaluate the extent to which it is currently meeting customer needs and, as required, re-align

delivery methodologies to ensure that the customer experience is continuously improving.

Improving Staff Experience

Transparency of performance reporting, in terms of outputs and outcomes, offers staff with the opportunity to gain insight into areas of good practice within the Directorate, those where improvement might be required and importantly, recognise where their contributions are materially influencing and driving the work of their Service.

Improving our use of Resources

This report aligns with the principles of Best Value whereby local authorities are required to evidence and evaluate the extent to which resource is used effectively and efficiently in the delivery of services to stakeholders.

Corporate

Reporting to the Committee is an essential governance requirement of the Directorate's performance management arrangements, by which Members may seek assurance that performance improvement activity is evidenced and robust.

Public

Transparency of performance reporting is a key component of the Council's Public Performance Reporting requirement, which is subject to annual review by the Audit Commission.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

There are no additional direct risks to be considered as a result of the publication of this report.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix A: 2014-15 Education and Children's Services Statutory Performance Indicator Scorecard

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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