

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	12 September 2023
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CFS/23/268
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Shona Milne
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to implement the refreshed Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan for 2023/24 following submission of the Self-Evaluation and Plan to the Scottish Government.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the content of the service Self-Evaluation and Plan contained in Appendices A and B;
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Education Officer to implement the proposed Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan 23/24;
- 2.3 instructs the Chief Education Officer to maintain a review of the 23/24 Plan in light of any impacting national legislative or policy provisions through the education reform agendas and advise Committee of any required changes in due course;
- 2.4 notes the evaluative reports on MCR pathways included in Appendices C and D of this report; and
- 2.5 instructs the Chief Education Officer to work with MCR Pathways to address the data issues to inform a further review in March 2024 to help shape a longer term and sustainable approach to the delivery of mentoring for young people.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan is a statutory submission to the Scottish Government that requires to be provided by the end of September each year. The document brings together an analysis of a range of data sets and resultant areas for improvement in keeping with the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc.2000 legislation.

- 3.2 The service self-evaluation process begins in February and concludes when draft School Improvement Plans and updated Scottish Qualifications Authority data are available for review. In real terms, Officers keep the Plan under constant review as new data sets are released and available for analysis.
- 3.3 Staff from across the Education Service collectively consider data trends in order to conclude a high level analysis in order to determine next steps. This analysis is informed by and informs school improvement priorities and the Children's Services Plan. The Council Performance Board and Strategy Board both play a role in reviewing the draft documentation prior to it being presented to Committee for approval. This approach ensures that the interconnection of Council business is reflected in the final Plan presented for Committee approval.
- 3.4 Updated national guidance on the management of Scottish Attainment Challenge funding has led to the inclusion of amended Stretch Aims in the Plan. Stretch aims are no longer to be set against a baseline year, but rather look at trends over time and provide clearly articulated trajectories for progress towards 2025/26 stretch aims. These stretch aims and the proposed priorities for improvement have been scrutinised by Education Scotland who noted the comprehensive analysis undertaken and endorsed the direction of travel. Officers propose to keep members of the Education and Children's Services Committee sighted on progress through the now well established tracking appendix linked to routine Performance Reports.
- 3.5 This year has seen a significant rise in pupil population and a strong humanitarian response to those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine. The school roll is now around 12% higher than in 2019 and this has led to changes in the use of spaces in some schools to increase the number of classrooms. Our roll is far more fluid than before. 6.74% of our current school population arrived in the city after the school census in September 2022.
- 3.6 The impact of the cost of living is impacting families as they recover from the public health restrictions in place during the pandemic. This is impacting on the needs of children, young people and their families.
- 3.7 Despite the challenges the service has experienced over the last 12 months, a number of national and local programmes and policies have been successfully delivered with support from across the organisation and wider partnership. These include:
- An increase in the uptake of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in the city with 94.74% of our eligible population placed in 2022/23 compared to 91.22% in 2021/22
  - Successful delivery of holiday programmes targeted at the 6 groups most at risk of poverty, with average enjoyment ratings sitting at 9.7 out of 10
  - Development of our Children's Services Plan and associated GIRFEC Operational Guidance
  - Further development of school profiles by making use of Power BI to improve the accessibility of data to support school improvement and development of an authority wide PEF tracker to support evaluation of interventions at an authority level to help ensure best value

- Early response to the issues Logan found in the national review of the technology ecosystem. Successful launch event for Aberdeen Computing Collaborative working closely with local higher education institutes, local independent schools and Opportunity North East.
- Completion of phase 1 of ABZ Campus. Producing a parent information video for parents and carers and offering young people a total of 37 courses with a projected occupancy of 87%.
- A coalesced programme of 'clearing' to provide better opportunities for young people to be able to access their chosen courses.
- Close collaboration between secondary schools and partners seeing an increase in the number of pathways available for young people in the senior phase. An example of this can be found in the projected increase in successful National Progression Awards (NPA) from 390 in 2021-22 to approximately 800 in 2022-23.
- Providing Settle in the City programmes for Ukrainian families arriving in Aberdeen and supporting families to access school placements
- Establishment of a refreshed Quality Assurance calendar and proportionate model of support with a clear focus on professional development against Core QIs.
- On-going work to support mental health and wellbeing and commissioning of Mental Health Aberdeen to provide city wide counselling for those aged 10+
- Increased opportunities for young musicians to play and sing together.
- Successful partnership working with the Attainment Advisor and Children and Young People's Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) National Improving Writing Programme resulting in improved attainment in 11 city primary schools

3.8 Our high level Strategic Plan, agreed by the former Education Operational Delivery Committee in September 2022 remains valid. However the resumption of inspection regimes and associated inspection outcomes has evidenced continued variability across our Early Learning and Childcare settings and schools. This has triggered changes in approaches to quality improvement. Addressing variability will be a key focus over school session 2023/24.

3.9 There are positive signs of improvement in the mental and physical health of our learners which needs to be maintained. We now need to ensure that we consider our approach for those identified with poorer wellbeing outcomes such as those in the LGBT+ community.

3.10 The rapid rise in school roll has impacted on high level attainment data over this school session. We would expect that impact to reduce over coming years and now have high quality data dashboards to support the monitoring of progress. We now need to work with schools to ensure high levels of data literacy so that the valuable resources are fully utilised

3.11 Long terms areas for development such as our Edge of Care Pilots and work associated with those who are care experienced, work to meet the needs of those with additional support needs, further development of ABZ Campus and work with Aberdeen Computing Collaborative remain a focus.

- 3.12 It is proposed that Scottish Attainment Challenge resource continues to be utilised to support the provision of Youth Work, Family Learning and Money Advisors in school and that the place of these supports within a wider model of Family Support be explored and aligned with our work to develop our Bairns Hoose.
- 3.13 The need to carefully consider approaches to raising attainment in our care experienced young people triggered an evaluation of the impact of the MCR Pathways programme on our young people to help determine the best use of Scottish Attainment Challenge funding.
- 3.14 The evaluation undertaken by officers is available in Appendix C. An MCR led evaluation is available in Appendix D. It is recommended that Officers continue to work with MCR Pathways to address the data issues identified to enable more effective monitoring with schools opting to use Pupil Equity Funding to cover the cost of the Pathways Coordinator over school session 2023/24. Taking this step will enable Care Experienced Scottish Attainment Challenge funding to be utilised to support a larger group of care experienced young people (and those on the edge of care) by accelerating work on Phase 2 of ABZ Campus, ensuring adequate provision of Pathways Advocates and extending the Edge of Care pilots to St Machar Academy.
- 3.15 It is proposed that a further evaluation of our approach to mentoring begin in March 2024 to determine a sustainable Mentoring model for vulnerable pupils across Aberdeen City.

#### **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 and grants

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000 requires that, as the Education Authority, Aberdeen City Council has a duty to:
- Enhance equity and promote a reduction in inequalities of educational outcome experienced by pupils because of socio-economic disadvantage.
  - Endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education with a view to achieving the strategic priorities of the National Improvement Framework.
  - Undertake annual planning and reporting and annual school improvement planning to address the four priorities of the National Improvement Framework
  - Ensure strategic decisions are taken with due regard as to how they will address, or help to address, the disparity of educational outcomes which exist between the most and least disadvantaged and at the same time raise attainment for all.

## 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) <small>*taking into account controls/control actions</small>	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Risk of not improving outcomes for learners	Changes to our provision and service delivery will enable primary prevention and early intervention thereby reducing potential risk.	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	Non-compliance with legislation, financial claims, and legal challenge (tribunals).	Mitigated by services being realigned to better meet the needs of our young people in Aberdeen City and prevent escalation of need.	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Staff are overwhelmed, which leads to low morale as staff feel unable to meet the educational and well-being needs of young people.	Mitigated by staff engagement on the draft National Improvement Framework and the ongoing commitment to delivering high quality professional learning for staff to ensure	L	Yes

		that they meet their statutory duties under the relevant Acts.		
<b>Financial</b>	Risk of not having sufficient resource.	Mitigated by realigning service delivery and resource through the National Improvement Framework to better meet the needs of our young people in Aberdeen City and make best use of Officer time.	L	yes
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a reputational risk to the Council	Data scrutiny and reporting enhance the Council's reputation for transparency and accountability	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Risk of lack of awareness of environmental/climate issues.	Mitigated by breadth and scope of Curriculum for Excellence.	L	Yes

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u></b>	
<b>Impact of Report</b>	
<p><b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b></p> <p>Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.</p>	<p>The school self-evaluation and improvement plan is well positioned to support a closing of the poverty related attainment gap.</p>
<b><u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u></b>	
<p>Prosperous People</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The detail within this report supports the delivery of Children &amp; Young People Stretch</li> </ul>

	<p>Outcomes 4 to 9 in the refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan. This includes the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27-30 month review by 2026 (Baseline 77.5% 2015-16)</li> <li>• Increase the number of ELC settings achieving good or better from 83.7% in 2022 to 90% by 2025.</li> <li>• Establish a single source of information for parents, carers and children and young people to improve the accessibility of mental health services and support.</li> <li>• Implement 'One Good Adult' programme in education</li> <li>• Increase the range of accessible options for children and young people with sensory and physical impairments. Ensure a more equal distribution of gender participation in physical activity.</li> <li>• Increase the understanding of creating child friendly environments within local communities to help reduce the gap between the number of children living in areas of deprivation who report feeling safe in their community with their peers living in less deprived communities. Better understand the inequalities associated with the mental health needs of the 6 priority groups from a programme of engagement and co-design</li> <li>• Continued prioritisation for children aged 5-18 from the 6 priority groups for extra-curricular activities and holiday programmes with particular reference to young carers and those for whom we have Corporate Parenting responsibility. Maintain spread of uptake for holiday programmes against the 6 priority groups</li> <li>• Evaluate the impact of the intensive Edge of Care Pilots at Lochside and Northfield Academies to inform next steps for school session 23/24 and beyond</li> <li>• Evaluate the impact of Pathways Associates on CEYP attainment, achievement and positive destinations by 2024 to inform next steps.</li> <li>• 100% of schools with care experienced young people will continue to plan for Care</li> </ul>
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	<p>Experienced young people within School Improvement Plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of a live and effective tracking system for all CEYP or those on the edge of care by 2023.</li> <li>• All secondary schools to establish effective systems to support their LGBTQIA community transitions from Primary 7 to Secondary 1. Ensure our senior primary pupils have opportunities to share examples of their learning as part of the transition programme from Primary 7 to S1. Ensure tracking information for all curricular areas transfers from P7 to S1</li> <li>• Delivery of Phase 2 of ABZ Campus to further increase the number of available courses from June 2024.</li> <li>• Increase the number attaining 1@L6 to be ahead of the Virtual Comparator by 2025.</li> <li>• Increase the Attainment For All Total Tariff point measure for leavers at L20, M60 and H20 so these are ahead of the Virtual Comparator by 2025.</li> <li>• Maintain through Scottish Attainment Challenge funding the provision of youth work and Family Learning to improve core educational measures through the delivery of bespoke learning pathways where appropriate.</li> <li>• Ensure tracking at individual pupil level.</li> <li>• Ensure cohesion across school, college and university.</li> <li>• Develop and deliver effective and current professional learning for computing science and other teachers.</li> <li>• Develop and deliver collaborative extra-curricular Computing Science and Digital activities.</li> <li>• Develop communication for parents/carers/young people to promote the opportunities in the sector.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Regional and City Strategies</b></p> <p>Children’s Services Plan</p> <p>National Improvement Framework 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>

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Stage 1 Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	NA

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## 11. APPENDICES

Appendix A– Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Evaluation

Appendix B – Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan

Appendix C – ACC led evaluation

Appendix D – MCR led evaluation

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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