

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	21 November 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	MCR Pathways update
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/260
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Larissa Gordon
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on the continuation of the MCR Pathways Programme in Aberdeen City Schools

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Committee:

- 2.1 Note that 3 schools (Northfield Academy, Lochside Academy and St Machar Academy) will continue with the MCR Pathways programme for the duration of academic year 2023/24. Lochside Academy and St Machar Academy will fund the programme through their Pupil Equity fund and Northfield Academy will be supported to fund the programme through the Scottish Attainment challenge Care Experienced Fund.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 On the 12th September 2023 the Education and Children's Services Committee instructed the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services to report back to Committee outlining which of the participating MCR Pathways schools were agreeable to supporting the programme via their respective Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) allocation.
- 3.2 The Virtual School Head Teacher held discussions with each of the 6 Head Teachers to consider whether or not they were in a position to fund the continuation of the programme in their school. MCR Pathways were notified that these discussions would be taking place and that updates would be provided. The Virtual School Head Teacher liaised with the MCR Pathways Senior programme manager to support robust transition arrangements, including arrangements for MCR Pathways Coordinators who may require to transition to a new school building.
- 3.3 Northfield Academy, Lochside Academy and St Machar Academy will continue with the programme and are currently in discussions with the MCR Pathways

team to consider a more flexible approach to ensure that those learners who would benefit most can be part of the programme. This will be inclusive of those young people with experience of care and also recognises the differences in needs of other cohorts of young people across the city and within different communities.

- 3.4 Where there is not currently a MCR Pathways Co-Ordinator in place, arrangements are being made to support the continuation of the programme in the school until new MCR Pathways Co-ordinators appointments are made. This is being supported by MCR Pathways and school staff.
- 3.5 Individual contracts and Memorandum of understanding will be drawn up with each school and MCR Pathways to reflect the individual needs of each school and their young people. The aim of this is to ensure there is maximum impact in supporting young people to achieve a positive destination.
- 3.6 The Virtual School Head Teacher will continue to have an overview of the data to ensure this is robust and accurate by working in collaboration with the Analytics and Insight Team and MCR pathways to address data issues highlighted in the last committee report (September 2023).
- 3.7 Schools no longer accessing MCR Pathways are currently supporting young people to transition from the programme. Where possible, mentors will continue to support the young people they have been working with. This is dependent on capacity within the school to support for example, the co-ordination of mentor meetings.
- 3.8 Schools are looking at other ways of supporting young people who have been involved in the MCR Pathways programme if they are unable to continue to have external mentors. This includes support accessed through the new Aberdeen City Pathways Advocates who have been appointed in each of the 11 academies in the city.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Recommendations in the plan will make use of existing budgets within schools through Pupil Equity Funds.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Local Authority has many legal duties including those of:
 - The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000
 - The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004
 - The Children (Scotland) Act 1995
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

The Council is mindful of these duties when planning support and looking to improve the long term outcomes for Care Experienced children and young people.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

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	Not delivering on The Promise with particular note of p71 “Mentoring has a significant positive impact on children and young people who receive it, with evidence that it can”	The role of the Aberdeen City Pathways Advocate is being piloted in schools and other approaches to mentoring in schools are being explored	L	No This is below the appetite set as we wish to deliver on the Promise
Compliance	Non-compliance with legislation, and legal challenge (reference to Appeals Committee, Disability Discrimination, reference to ASN Tribunal)	Mitigated by school staff developing a better understanding of how to meet the needs of our Care Experienced Children and Young people in Aberdeen City working in partnership with learners, families and partners.	L	Yes
Operational	Possible non delivery of programme due to failure to appoint suitable	MCR Pathways team work alongside the schools to provide support to ensure that the programme continues	L	No. This is below the risk appetite. The mitigation ensures the

	pathways co-ordinators			programme can continue
Financial	Risk of not continuing the programme beyond summer 2024 due to allocation of PEF being used to support alternative interventions. Risk of PEF funding not continuing	MCR Pathways programme funded through PEF that is currently available and will be evaluated in 3 schools to determine impact and consider all forms of support that seek to deliver on The Promise. Decisions will be made based on impact and on future funding that is available	L	Yes
Reputational	Risk of not achieving positive outcomes for Care Experienced children and young people and their parents and carers Risk of not delivering on The Promise and our duties as Corporate Parents	National Improvement Framework plan outlines other interventions including the Pathways advocate role which is being piloted across all 11 academies so reducing the risk as this role prioritises support for Care Experienced young people	L	No. This is below the risk appetite. The mitigation ensures that the needs of our care experienced young people could be supported through another avenue if required.
Environment / Climate	N/A			N/A

7. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	NA
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The information provided in this report outlines the current picture and planned next steps with MCR Pathways to seek to ensure the best use of resource in the system, promoting an understanding of the

	<p>circumstances of individual Care Experienced Children and Young People to ensure they move into a positive destination.</p> <p>This supports stretch outcomes:</p> <p>6. By meeting the health and emotional wellbeing needs of our care experienced children and young people they will have the same levels of attainment in education and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.</p> <p>7. 95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 & 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p>
<p>UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes</p>	<p>This report takes into account the local authority's legal obligations in respect of the legislation below:</p> <p>The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duties with regard to meeting the needs of children and young people with additional support needs. <p>The Equality Act 2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty to ensure we are not discriminating disabled learners directly or indirectly. <p>The Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty of education authority in improving school education • Raising standards • Requirement that education be provided in mainstream schools <p>The National Improvement Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Authorities are under a duty to endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of education of school education which is provided in the schools managed by them and to carry out the duty with a view to achieving the strategic priorities set out in the National Improvement Framework. <p>The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 58: Corporate Parenting Responsibilities

	The Promise Scotland
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8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Stage 1 Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required – One in place

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

10. APPENDICES

None

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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