

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	20 February 2024
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Report on the National Delivery Framework for School Age Childcare and Local Delivery Plans
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CFS/24/014
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<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
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<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the National Delivery Framework for School Age Childcare and on local delivery plans in Aberdeen.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the Scottish Government Delivery Framework for School Age Childcare 2023;
- 2.2 notes the update on local delivery plans for School Age Childcare in Aberdeen;
- 2.3 Welcomes the additional funding from a successful bid to Scottish Government Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces Programme; and
- 2.4 instructs the Interim Chief Officer - Education to work with key stakeholders to review and refresh the Aberdeen City Council Out of School Care Policy, in line with national policy, and report back to Committee in September 2024.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

#### Background

- 3.1 School Age Childcare services play a vital role within our communities, offering a variety of options which families can rely on to support their childcare needs before and after school, and during the school holidays. It is not currently a statutory service, like Early Learning and Childcare, however it is a crucial service for many families who rely on it to enable them to work or study and it contributes positively to the economic development of the city as well as helping improve outcomes for children and young people.
- 3.2 Following the implementation of Early Learning and Childcare expansion, we have seen a natural increase in demand for School Age Childcare, as parents and carers look to secure continuity of wraparound childcare when their children start Primary School. In our recent Early Learning and Childcare consultation

with Parents and Carers (June 2023), 45.2% of respondents indicated that they will require School Age Childcare when their child(ren) start Primary School.

- 3.3 Registered School Age Childcare provisions are regulated by the Care Inspectorate and are subject to ongoing inspection. Inspections in Aberdeen continue to be positive with almost all provisions receiving an average grading of 4 (Good) or better.

### **School Age Childcare Delivery Framework 2023**

- 3.4 The National Framework for Delivery of School Age Childcare was published by the Scottish Government in October 2023, along with a Children's Charter for School Age Childcare, including a specific Charter for School Age Childcare in Aberdeen.

- 3.5 The National Delivery Framework outlines the Scottish Government's School Age Childcare commitments and the action areas for the next 3 years. Its key policy drivers are: Tackling child poverty; and improving outcomes for children and families, with the Framework highlighting that an expanded childcare offering for school age childcare is crucial to the national mission to tackle child poverty, to promote family wellbeing, drive greater gender equality and to #Keep The Promise to our care experienced children.

- 3.6 The Vision is for a rights based, dynamic School Age Childcare (SAC) offer for children and young people, which supports choice and growth, enabling families and communities to reach their full potential.

- 3.7 The aim is for Scotland to have a system of accessible and affordable SAC, providing care before and after school and during the holidays for primary school children from low income households, and that children will be able to access healthy and nutritious food as part of this offer.

- 3.8 The SAC offer will be directed towards the six priority family types, identified in *Best Start, Bright Futures: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022-26*:

- Families with a baby under one
- Families with three or more children
- Lone parent families
- Families with a young mother (under 25)
- Minority ethnic families
- Families with a disabled adult or child

- 3.9 Current key action areas include:

- Designing and building a system of SAC which will be people-centred and place-based;
- Testing the change – Access to Childcare Fund Projects; Early Adopter Communities; Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces (ISACS) Fund; support to Local Authorities for costs related to the delivery of summer programmes; and support to local football clubs to provide after school

and holiday football clubs, in a joint project with Scottish Football Association; and

- Embedding monitoring and evaluation in the programme development; and Programme logic model to develop a theory of change.

3.10 In 2025/26, a more detailed delivery plan will be developed by the Scottish Government. This will set out what a targeted SAC offer will look like for families within communities and provide a clear timescale for delivery. We are keen to see how these developments will progress.

3.11 As part of the approach to build a system of SAC, a Children's Charter has been developed. This involved visiting children in primary schools in five Local Authority areas, including Aberdeen. The children came from a mix of communities including rural, urban and island communities, had experience both of attending after school activities or not, and included children whose families belong to one of the six priority family types.

3.12 The Children's Charter will be used to ensure that decisions take account of what's important to children and will be used in future engagement with childcare providers.

### **School Age Childcare (SAC) in Aberdeen**

3.13 We have a mixed model of SAC provision in Aberdeen. There are currently 42 settings, delivering nearly 1700 registered places on a daily basis across the city (up 200 from June 2022). In addition, there are 931 registered breakfast club places across the city, as well as a number of unregistered services offering free or low cost breakfast. Aberdeen City Council (ACC) run approximately 1/5th of all registered services. The others are run by Community Link Childcare (CLICC), a social enterprise company, and a mix of other private and independent childcare providers.

3.14 A map has been created to provide a visual overview of where School Age Childcare is located across the city:

[https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=15uXp\\_FoaRzx4vUVxVLILLH0yV-JcKLnP&usp=sharing](https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=15uXp_FoaRzx4vUVxVLILLH0yV-JcKLnP&usp=sharing)

### **Aberdeen City Council Provision**

3.15 We have built a very successful business model with competitive but standardised fees across the city, including 50% discount for families on low incomes and those in receipt of certain benefits. This means that our services are accessible and affordable for all. We are especially proud we can offer a SAC service for children with Additional Support Needs (ASN). It should be no different for these families, but they often find it much more challenging to secure the childcare they need. We are delighted we can help to meet their needs so that they are able to gain and sustain employment and training opportunities.

3.16 Our School Age Childcare service generates substantial income for Aberdeen City Council. We have increased income from around £250K per annum pre-2020 to over £600K in 2023, meeting the changing needs of families and

responding to local demand. The opening of two additional After School Clubs in the Northfield Associated School Group (ASG), one of our priority areas, in February 2024, will contribute significantly to addressing unmet need in this area and will enable more families to access employment and training opportunities.

### **Supply and Demand**

- 3.17 We regularly monitor supply and demand across the city and work with our external SAC partners to support the establishment of new services, where viable, following feasibility studies. Sometimes the uptake of spaces does not match the initial interest noted by local families. However, we continue to monitor this situation closely.

### **Engagement with Parents and Carers**

- 3.18 As part of our statutory duties under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, we are required to consult with parents and carers every two years on the provision of daycare of children's services. The Early Years team consulted with parents and carers in December 2023 and January 2024 on the provision of School Age Childcare in Aberdeen. The consultation received a total of 549 responses after 5 weeks (+1% from 2021).

- 3.19 Key headline data from our recent School Age Childcare consultation with parents and carers is below:

- 43.7% of all respondents currently use School Age Childcare to support the working day.
- 77% of those families who currently access a SAC service do so to support the working day.
- 3% of all respondents currently use School Age Childcare to college/university.
- 5% of those families who currently access a SAC service do so to attend university/college.
- 10% of all respondents currently use SAC to enable their child/children to play and/or socialise with other children.
- 18% of those families who currently access a SAC service do so to enable their child/children to play and/or socialise with other children.
- 22.77% of all respondents currently access the service of a Breakfast Club.
- 36.43% of all respondents currently access the service of an After School Club.
- 16.21% of respondents indicated that they require both Breakfast and After School provision.
- 29.69% of respondents' children attended a registered Holiday provision.
- 41% of respondents' children attended unregistered sports/activity camps.
- With 20.03% respondents attending both registered and unregistered holiday provisions.
- 11% of respondents accessed the 'In The City' programmes.

- Most respondents (66.48%) indicated that they require holiday care during the Summer Holidays.
- With 43.53% during the Spring holidays and 41.53% during the Autumn holidays.
- Nearly a quarter (24.04%) of respondents said they currently have children attending an ELC setting that would require SAC once they attend primary school.
- With 27% of those families requiring SAC from 2024 and a further 30% in 2025.

3.20 The full report and analysis of the responses (Appendix 1) will be used to determine current and future demand for School Age Childcare services in the city and will also inform the refresh of the Aberdeen City Council School Age Childcare Policy.

### **Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces Programme**

3.21 The purpose of the Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces (ISACS) Fund is to improve indoor and outdoor spaces in school estates for the purposes of supporting provision of SAC. Aberdeen City Council submitted four project funding proposals to Scottish Government / Scottish Futures Fund in May 2023, in relation to this Programme. We are delighted to confirm the projects listed below were considered to have met all the qualifying criteria at the time the assessment workshop took place and have been identified by Ministers to be included as part of ISACS Programme.

<b>Project Name:</b>	<b>Maximum award approved:</b>
Cornhill School Community Wing	£100,000
Orchard Brae School	£56,420
Kirkhill Primary School	£59,431
Muirfield Primary School	£93,610
Total Funding Awarded	£309,461

### **Cornhill School Community Wing**

3.22 We have secured funding to provide a secure outdoor area with direct access from the club room to outside, which will offer children the ability to have free flow play and make their own choice of being inside or outside. Suitable outdoor lighting will also be installed to allow access outdoors all year round. Outdoor storage will enable Loose Parts to be stored within the area with easy access for the children.

3.23 The improvements will also be of benefit to the wider Cornhill Community who access the Community Wing of Cornhill School. This project will provide:

- Access from room to outdoors;
- Suitable permanent fencing;
- Suitable outdoor surface; and
- Outdoor storage.

### **Orchard Brae School**

- 3.24 We have secured funding to create and develop the space within the GP room in the school that is welcoming, cosy and offers the ability to be adapted to meet the differing needs of the children attending. This will include the purchase of suitable furnishings such as a sofa, beanbags, tables, chairs & sensory resources.
- 3.25 Funding will also be used to develop a permanent outdoor area which will be fully secure with suitable fencing and offer the opportunity for children to have free flow play opportunities from the room to outside and back as they choose. Suitable lighting will ensure that the outdoor area can be accessed year round. A suitable storage cupboard will also be added.
- 3.26 The school will also benefit by having access to the area during the school day as a breakout area for children who may need a quiet time away from class and the provision of a cosy adaptable space will also meet their needs.

### **Kirkhill Primary School**

- 3.27 Funding has been secured to further develop both inside and outside areas, which will allow the development of a holiday club provision in the area. There is currently no holiday club provision in the local area and we are seeking to meet this gap in provision, by making the necessary improvements in order to offer longer hours of registered care. The project will provide:

- Access to outdoor area from room;
- Fence at both ends with gate at carpark end;
- Removal of current black fence;
- Resurface of tarmac area;
- New kitchen area including cooker;
- New flooring, decoration; and
- Lockable doors on cupboards for secure storage.

### **Muirfield Primary School**

- 3.28 Finally, we have secured funding to facilitate year-round outdoor play and activities at Muirfield After School Club by improving the outdoor area. The project will provide:

- Outdoor flood lighting
- Outdoor storage.

- 3.29 This project is being delivered in partnership with Community Link Childcare (CLICC) who operate the After School Club at Muirfield.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Unlike Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), School Age Childcare is not currently a statutory service. However, under the Children and Young People

(Scotland) Act 2014, Aberdeen City Council is responsible for engaging and consulting with parents and carers on a regular basis (minimum of every 2 years) on the provision of daycare of children's services delivered locally and this includes School Age Childcare. We continue to meet our statutory obligations in relation to this duty.

## 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified.
- 6.2 The funding secured from Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces fund will be invested in outdoor spaces at four settings, enhancing our outdoor spaces and outdoor learning opportunities. Across all School Age Childcare settings, good use is also made of outdoor and green spaces where practicable and where feasible to do so.

## 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?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	No risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Compliance</b>	No risks identified	N/A	L	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Operational</b>	Risk of not attracting enough new practitioners into the workforce.	Mitigated through the ongoing activities being undertaken to support workforce development.	L	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Risk of building a financially unsustainable model.	School Age Childcare is currently an accessible but paid for service, with discounts available for families on lower incomes using Aberdeen City Council operated provision. Officers regularly monitor supply and demand in order to maximise resources and achieve best value.	M	<b>Yes</b>

		We have been careful to build our School Age Childcare services gradually to ensure it meets demand but is also sustainable. For example, delivering services for children from more than one school.		
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk of not delivering on legal obligations	There are currently no statutory obligations to deliver School Age Childcare.	L	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A

## 8. OUTCOMES

<u><b>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</b></u>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the policy statement “Work with the Scottish Government to expand free early learning and childcare to one and two year-olds from low-income households.”</p> <p>The provision of funded Early Learning and Childcare has the potential to be transformational for many families, but especially for those with the lowest incomes in the city.</p> <p>The provision of School Age Childcare is required in order to meet the continued need for wraparound care once children start to attend Primary School. This is backed up by 45.2% of respondents, in our recent Early Learning and Childcare consultation with Parents and Carers (June 2023), who indicated that they will require School Age Childcare when their child(ren) start Primary School.</p>
<u><b>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</b></u>	
Prosperous Economy - 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/ reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic	The School Age Childcare Delivery Framework 2023 and delivery of School Age Childcare in Aberdeen will continue to have a positive impact on this priority theme and will help to deliver the LOIP.

<p>opportunities as they arise by 2026 (Stretch Outcome 3)</p>	<p>The Aberdeen City Council School Age Childcare workforce has increased in order to deliver the increase in School Age Childcare provision. In particular, in our two newest settings at Manor Park and Heathryburn in the Northfield ASG, opening in February 2024, the majority of applicants were from the local area, which is extremely positive in terms of creating economic opportunities.</p> <p>In addition, we have introduced a Modern Apprenticeship position into our School Age Childcare structure. This involves training young people to become Playworkers as part of our 'Grow Our Own' workforce strategy. This is a new role in our Local Authority School Age Childcare settings and provides a positive destination and career pathway for our young people as well as strengthening our workforce. We currently have 4 Modern Apprenticeships working across the city.</p> <p>There will be ongoing opportunities to join the School Age Childcare workforce in Aberdeen and to retrain, to upskill and for career progression.</p>
<p>Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026 (Stretch Outcome 7)</p>	<p>We have introduced a Modern Apprenticeship (MA) position into our ELC staffing structure. This involves training young people to become Early Years Practitioners as part of our 'Grow Our Own' workforce strategy. This is a new role in our Local Authority ELC settings and provides a positive destination and career pathway for our young people as well as strengthening our workforce. We have also recently introduced this role into our School Age Childcare and currently have 4 Modern Apprenticeships working across the city in our School Age Childcare settings.</p> <p>School Age Childcare can improve long term outcomes for children and families.</p>
<p>Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The provision of high quality School Age Childcare will help to deliver the LOIP.</p> <p>The increase in funded ELC is designed to enable more families to take up employment and training opportunities, thus reducing poverty. More hours are now available in Local Authority ELC settings and Funded Provider ELC settings are now an option for many families who could not afford this previously.</p> <p>This means that there is also a need to ensure sufficient School Age Childcare is available to</p>

	support families when their children go to Primary School.
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	<p>The proposals within this report support the Strategic Development Plan by supporting the workforce. The provision of high quality School Age Childcare will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support families to take up employment and training opportunities;</li> <li>2. Develop the Young Workforce; and</li> <li>3. Support business to recruit and retain staff.</li> </ol> <p>The Delivery Framework for School Age Childcare is aligned to the Children's Services Plan and the National Improvement Framework Plan and work to address poverty in the Child Poverty Action Plan.</p>
Strategic Development Plan	
Children's Services Plan	
National Improvement Framework Plan	

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required. As no personal information will be shared.
<b>Other</b>	None

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 [Scottish Government: National Framework for School Age Childcare](#)
- 10.2 [Scottish Government: Children's Charter](#)
- 10.3 [Scottish Government: A Children's Charter for School Age Childcare in Aberdeen](#)

## 11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – School Age Childcare: Parent and Carer Consultation 2023 (Draft)

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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