Education, Communities and Organisational Development

Wednesday, 26 May 2021

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Meeting of the **Education, Communities and Organisational Development** is to be held at **remote locations via video conference**,   on **Wednesday, 26 May 2021** at **09:30.**

BUSINESS

1. **Sederunt**

2. **Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests**

   *

3. **Resolution**

   Consider, and if so decide, adopt the following resolution:
   "That under Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting for Items 24a, 25 and 26 of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act."

Consider any oral question on matters delegated to the Committee in terms of the Council's Scheme of Administration.

Only items marked * can be considered and determined by all members of the Committee

Item(s) which the Committee may wish to consider with the Press and Public excluded

Moray Council Committee meetings are currently being held virtually due to Covid-19. If you wish to watch the webcast of the meeting please go to:
http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_43661.html
to watch the meeting live.

*   **Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests -** The Chair of the meeting shall seek declarations from any individual or political group at the beginning of a meeting whether any prior decision has been reached on how the individual or members of the group will vote on any item(s) of business on the Agenda, and if so on which item(s). A prior decision shall be one that the individual or the group deems to be mandatory on the individual or the group members such that the individual or the group members will be subject to sanctions should they not vote in accordance with the prior decision. Any such prior decisions will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.

**   **Written Questions** - Any Member can put one written question about any relevant and competent business within the specified remits not already on the agenda, to the Chair provided it is received by the Proper Officer or Committee Services by 12 noon two working days prior to the day of the meeting. A copy of any written answer provided by the Chair will be tabled at the start of the relevant section of the meeting. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than 10 minutes after the Council has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he or she can submit it in writing to the Proper Officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within 7 working days.

***   **Question Time -** At each ordinary meeting of the Committee ten minutes will be allowed for Members questions when any Member of the Committee can put a question to the Chair on any business within the remit of that Section of the Committee. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than ten minutes after the Committee has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he/she can submit it in writing to the proper officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within seven working days.

THE MORAY COUNCIL

Education, Communities and Organisational Development

<u>SEDERUNT</u>

Councillor Aaron McLean (Chair)
Councillor Sonya Warren (Depute Chair)

Councillor George Alexander (Member)
Councillor James Allan (Member)
Councillor Frank Brown (Member)
Councillor Paula Coy (Member)
Councillor Lorna Creswell (Member)
Councillor Tim Eagle (Member)
Councillor Claire Feaver (Member)
Councillor Shona Morrison (Member)
Councillor Laura Powell (Member)
Councillor Derek Ross (Member)
Councillor Amy Taylor (Member)
Councillor Walter Wilson (Member)

Clerk Name:	Tracey Sutherland
Clerk Telephone:	07971 879268
Clerk Email:	tracey.sutherland@moray.gov.uk

MORAY COUNCIL

Item 4.

Minute of Meeting of the Education, Communities and Organisational Development

Wednesday, 31 March 2021

remote locations via video conference,

PRESENT

Councillor James Allan, Councillor Frank Brown, Councillor Lorna Creswell, Councillor Tim Eagle, Councillor Claire Feaver, Councillor Aaron McLean, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Laura Powell, Councillor Derek Ross, Councillor Amy Taylor, Councillor Sonya Warren

SUBSTITUTES

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APOLOGIES

Councillor George Alexander, Councillor Paula Coy, Councillor Walter Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE

Also in attendance at the above meeting were the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Chief Officer, Health and Social Care, Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Chief Financial Officer, Head of Education, Head of Education Resources and Communities, Acting Head of Housing and Property, Corporate Parenting and Commissioning Manager, Robin Paterson, Senior Project Manager, Community Support Manager and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer.

Also present for Items 1 - 8 were Susan Slater, Secondary Teacher Representative, Anne Currie, Religious Representative and Nicola Belcher, Parent Representative.

Councillor Leadbitter was also present in an ex-offcio role.

1.   Chair of Meeting

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Aaron McLean.

2.   Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests *

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, there were no declarations from Group Leaders of Spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how Members will vote on any item on the agenda or any declarations of Member's interests in respect of any item of the agenda.

3.   Resolution

The meeting resolved in terms of Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the items of business appearing at the relevant paragraphs of this minute as specified below, so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the appropriate paragraphs of Part 1 Schedule 7a of the Act.

Para Number of the Minute	Para Number of Schedule 7a
13	1 and 11 Information relating to staffing matters Information relating to any consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations.
14	9 Information on terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the Authority.

4.   Minute of Meeting of 3 February 2021

The minute of the meeting of Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee of 3 February 2021 was submitted and approved.

5.   Written Questions **

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

6.   Analysis of Secondary School Leaver Attainment 2019-20

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) updated the Committee on the Interim Secodary School Attainment 2019/20 report from the meeting of 18 November 2020 (para 17 of the minute refers). The report included information from Scottish Qualifications Authority Senior Phase National Qualifications results generated from submitted estimates during the first national lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

i)   note the leaver attainment information of young people in Moray, with specific regard to the National Measures for leavers published on Insight in February 2021; and

ii)   notes the actions for improvement arising from the 2019/20 attainment performance.

7.   Education Resources and Communities and Education Capital Budget Monitoring

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of projects and proposed expenditure for Capital Budgets with Education Resources and Communities and Education for 2020/21.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

8.   Moray Early Learning and Childcare - Meeting Future Demand

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the demand for early learning and childcare provision in the Speyside, Buckie and Elgin Academy Associated School Group areas.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

i)   to note the pressure for early learning and childcare places in the Speyside, Buckie and Elgin Academy Associated School Group areas;

ii)   to note the actions taken by Officers and our partners to meet this demand; and

iii)   that further reports will be submitted to this Committee in relation to the specific plans to address the demand for early learning childcare places.

9.   Social Recovery through Locality Planning

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) asked Committee to consider how locality planning can contribute to social recovery in Moray, taking account of the strategic aims set out in the Moray Council corporate Plan and the Strategic Framework for Recovery and Renewal in Moray, the learning from the pilot Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Locality Plans, and the strengthening of Community Anchor Organisations as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:

i)   to note the emerging data on the impact of Covid-19 nationally and on the people of Moray and the updated outcome statistics for communities in Moray;

ii)   to identify Forres, Lossiemouth and Keith as the communities for priority action in the next phase of locality planning work led by the local authority, while continuing to support existing partnership locality plan work in Elgin and Buckie;

iii)   that engagement work is developed using the approach set out in Appendix 1, working in partnership with community Anchor Organisations to enhance

and accelerate the work where possible, leading to production of community/locality plans for our communities; and

iv) to note the approach to locality planning set out in this report will support the development of a corporate action plan for social recovery and renewal by facilitating the identification of cross-cutting themes from communities across Moray.

Councillor Ross was absent for a short while during the discussion of this item.

10. SPSO Continuing Care and Transitions

A report by the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care informed the Committee that as an outcome of a parental complaint made to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), which was upheld, the actions required of the authority, have concluded.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note:

i) the revised policies for transitions and for continuing care were approved at Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee on 3 February 2021 (para 19 and 20 of the minute refers);

ii) throughout March 2021 there have been briefing sessions for staff; and

iii) the SPSO have acknowledged completion of all actions.

11. Model Complaints Handling Procedure Report

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) asked the Committee to consider the Model Complaints Handling Procedure for implementation by 1 April 2021.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to approve the revised Model Complaints Handling Procedure (Appendix 1).

12. Question Time ***

Councillor Eagle sought clarification on whether all partner nurseries were being provided with lateral flow tests as he had received concerns that some nurseries had still not received any.

In response the Senior Project Manager (ELC) confirmed that the supply of Lateral Flow Tests had been distributed on a phased basis.

Phase 1 were all local authority nurseries and those private nurseries in Council primary schools. Phase 2 were all private and third sector nurseries. He further added that all nurseries had now received lateral flow tests.

Councillor Ross sought clarification on whether face to face teaching from S1 and S2 pupils will recommence after the Easter holidays.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) confirmed that an announcement by the Scottish Government on social distancing in schools was due on 6 April 2021 so no confirmation could be given until after the announcement.

Councillor Allan requested an update on access to the new Lossiemouth High School for the community groups who currently use the old building.

In response, the Head of Education Resources and Communities confirmed that work is ongoing to identify the spaces available for the groups who currently use the facilities however, access cannot be given until after the restrictions have been lifted which is anticipated to be the end of April.

13. Living Wage Consolidation [Para 1 and 11]

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) asked the Committee to note the content of the report and approve the recommendations to proceed to seek an agreed approach on the consolidation of the living wage as per the Scottish Joint Council (SJC) National Salaries Agreement 2018-21 with the recognised Trade Unions.

During consideration the Chair sought agreement of the Committee to suspend Standing Order 74 to allow the meeting to continue beyond 12.45pm. This was unanimously agreed.

Following consideration the Committee agreed that:

i) discussions proceed with the recognised trade unions wit the aim of establishing an agreed approach to achieve practical and reasonable consolidation of the living wage;

ii) any future preferred option to achieve consolidation maintains a pay structure that is legially compliant, technically robust with regard to good practice pay design and is affordable;

iii) regard is paid to the SJC Consolidation Principles (Appendix 2) as part of the consolidation work;

iv) the scope of the work to achieve consolidation is agreed through future reports to this Committee or Moray Council, whichever is appropriate at each stage of the project, and that this will include consideration of the depth and scale of the project, future proofing and retrospection; and

v) this report is presented to the Council for their consideration of a budgetary request of upt to £30k in the first instance to engage external expertise on pay and grading design and equal pay in terms of paragraph 7c below, to be funded from free general reserves.

14. Early Learning and Childcare - Proposed Lease and Rental Arrangements [Para 9]

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) asked the Committee to agree the sustainable hourly rate for early learning and childcare (ELC) private and third sector providers and the equitable lease arrangements and rental charges for private providers operating from Council premises following the completion of a Moray wide consultation exercise.

Councillor Eagle, seconded by Councillor Brown moved that the new contracts be agreed and put in place from August 2021 but the rent remains at the current levels until August 2022 with the exception of VIP Childcare who would move to the new rent level from August 2021.

The Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) urged caution with the Members as they had to be confident that they had all the information available to them to make the decision.

The Chief Financial Officer confirmed that the additional costs this motion would incur could be covered within the existing budget. The Senior Project Officer, also confirmed that there would be no additional work for Officers based on the motion put forward.

Councillor Eagle sought clarification from the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance on whether his motion was competent.

In response, the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, confirmed that the motion was competent.

Following further consideration and there being no one otherwise minded, the Committee agreed:

i)   to note the outcome of the consultation exercise on the sustainable hourly rate for private and third sector providers who are in contract with Moray Council (Appendix 2);

ii)   that an hourly rate of £6.30 for 3 to 5 year olds, £7.57 for 2 year olds and £2.35 for lunches will be incorporated within the Moray Council ELC contract from this August for the period 2021-2023;

iii)   to note the outcome of the extended consultation exercise in relation to rental charges for private and third party providers to utilise Council premises (Appendix 4);

iv)   that officers contact the ELC providers operating from Council premises to agree main lease terms, as set out in Section 5 of this report for 6 years;

v)   that upon agreement of main lease terms the Legal Services Manager be instructed to put formal leases in place for July 2021 in relation to Strathisla Childcare Centre and along with all other settings (as listed in Appendix 3) to commence at the current rent levels for 1 year from the start date of the ELC Contract in August 2021 with the exception of VIP Childcare who will move to the new proposed rent from August 2021;

vi)   that the "base" commercial rents for each premise as detailed (Appendix 3), will be held fixed for an initial 6 year period and will then be reviewed every 3 years thereafter;

vii)   to the phased uplift of the commercial rents over a 6 year period as set out in paragraph 5.19 of this report;

viii)   that the Ladybird Group is offered a lease agreement at a nominal rent of £1 per annum and no share of property running costs; and

ix)   that Officers will provide a further report to this Committee in 12 months time that outlines a revised methodology for determining the share of common property costs and which does not confer an unfair commercial advantage for any private or third sector provider.

REPORT TO: **EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021**

SUBJECT: **EDUCATION REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO 31 MARCH 2021**

BY: **DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To inform the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee of the budget position for Education as at 31 March 2021.

1.2 This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on the 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance, (para 9 of the minute refers).

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee scrutinises and notes the budget position at 31 March 2021.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The report highlights those areas of the budget where there is a significant percentage variance identified at 31 March 2021.

4. BUDGET POSITION

4.1 The spend at 31 March 2021 is £62,451,000 against a budget of £64,584,000, giving an underspend of £2,133,000 as shown in **Appendix 1**.

4.2 The main variance in Early Learning and Childcare is an underspend on Realising Change Funding.

4.3 The main variance in primary and secondary schools relates to devolved school budgets comprising of £630,000 in primary schools which is 2.3% of the budget and £713,000 in secondary schools which is 2.4% of the budget.

4.4   The main variances in Education Central Services are a £16,000 overspend in central supply, an overspend of £34,000 on clothing grants and an underspend of £53,000 on the facilitating school improvement budget which has had reduced spend due to the closure of schools. The Pupil Equity Fund grant has an underspend of £802,000 as it is used over an academic year and will be carried forward as an ear marked reserve.

4.5   There is an overspend of £368,000 on COVID 19 costs which mainly relates to average pay to supply teachers.

4.6   Staff savings from vacancies and appointment below top of scale exceeded the budget by £189,000.

5.   **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

   (a)   Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)
   The Education Revenue Budget has particular reference to National Outcome 8 – we have improved the life   chances for children, young people and families at risk.

   (b)   Policy and Legal
   The Council has statutory responsibilities to meet educational needs, the needs of children and young people in need and those it looks after.

   (c)   Financial implications
   The resource implications are set out in this report and at **Appendix 1.** The underspend as at 31 March 2021 is £2,133,000 against a budget of £64,584,000.

   (d)   Risk implications
   Budget Managers are aware of their responsibilities for managing budget allocations and approval for any variances will be sought from Committee in line with the Financial Regulations.

   (e)   Staffing implications
   There are no staffing implications associated with this report.

   (f)   Property
   There are no property implications associated with this report.

   (g)   Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
   An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the report is to inform the Committee on budget monitoring.

   (h)   Consultations
   Paul Connor, Principal Accountant and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer, have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report where it relates to their areas of responsibility.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 That Committee scrutinises and notes the budget position as at 31 March 2021.

Author of Report: Vivienne Cross, Head of Education
                     Nicky Gosling, Accountant

Background Papers: with authors
Ref: SPMAN-1315769894-76 / SPMAN-1315769894-75

Educational Services

Budget Monitoring Report to 31st March 2021

Service	Revised Budget	Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Variance to Date	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Early Learning and Childcare	2,085	2,085	1,929	156	7 %
Primary Education	27,183	27,183	26,601	582	2 %
Secondary Education	29,384	29,384	28,614	770	3 %
Education Central Services	4,023	4,023	3,226	797	20 %
Management	117	117	110	7	6 %
Efficiency Savings-Education	189	189	-	189	-
Education COVID 19	1,603	1,603	1,971	(368)	(23)%
				-	
Educational Services Total	64,584	64,584	62,451	2,133	-

REPORT TO: **EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021**

SUBJECT: **PERFORMANCE REPORT (EDUCATION) – PERIOD TO MARCH 2021**

BY: **DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To inform the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 31 March 2021.

1.2 This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young Peoples Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance (para 9 of the minute refers).

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

i) **scrutinises performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of March 2021; and**

ii) **notes the actions being taken to improve performance where required.**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 On 7 August 2019, the Council, approved a revised Performance Management Framework for services (para 5 of the minute refers).

4. SERVICE PLANNING

4.1 Each service plan sets out the planned strategic and service level priorities and outcomes it intends to deliver in the coming year aligning closely with financial planning, corporate and community planning partnership strategic priorities. This report provides an interim update on progress on the service plan, key outcomes and performance indicators. Committee is invited to

review progress to secure assurance that is satisfactory and to provide scrutiny and further direction where performance requires attention.

4.2 The narrative included is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service Plan Actions and Performance Indicators are provided.

SERVICE PLAN PRIORITIES		RAG
STRATEGIC LEVEL	Improved attainment at both the Broad General and Senior Phase	83%
SERVICE LEVEL	Curriculum	100%
	Learning, Teaching and Assessment	100%
	Leadership	100%
	Supporting All Learners	100%
RECOVERY AND RENEWAL		100%
OVERALL PLAN PROGRESS		96%
Comment		
Annual progress is measured by milestone achievements. At the end of year 1 the plan is largely on target.		

SERVICE PLAN PI'S

2 — Achieving Target
4 — Within Target
8 — Below Target
7 — Data Only
15 — Data not available

36

Strategic Outcomes - successes

4.3 Work to improve attainment at both the Broad General and Senior Phase has progressed across all academic stages during Covid-19. Particular focus on digital approaches to the Curriculum and learning has increased the professional learning of practitioners in these areas. The revised Education Plan will be the driver for improvement and better outcomes going forward. (EDU STRAT 1.1)

4.4 Actions relating to the revised Raising Attainment Strategy have been completed as planned. Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) Early Indication data has been collated and disseminated to the Quality Improvement Team for further scrutiny and follow-up with schools. SQA processes were implemented in advance of all Senior Phase pupils return. Preparations for assessment blocks and moderation processes using the 2021 Alternative Certification Model (ACM) during term 4 are well advanced. The Early Learning Centre Attainment Strategy was shared at the Curriculum Forum in March 2021. (EDU STRAT 1.2)

4.5 Advice from the Scottish Government through Insight, the Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool, stated that school leaver attainment results for 2020 should not be directly compared to those in previous years or future years due to the absence of external assessment information. However, an overview of progress in Moray attainment was submitted to this committee on 31 March 2021 (para 6 of the minute refers). The report highlighted that improvements have been achieved across literacy and numeracy levels, accumulated tariff points and positive leaver destinations, however it also acknowledged that a number of targets have not been met and that ongoing work continues with targeted approaches / initiatives to support and improve attainment. A link to report is provided above. (CHN4-5, 11 &12a, EdS413.01 / 02)

Strategic Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

4.6 As part of increasing the scale and pace of change in educational attainment work has taken place in determining investment in resourcing, however

progress has been limited due to dealing with Covid-19. The recruitment to the vacant Quality Improvement Officer posts was progressed this reporting quarter, albeit there was an unsuccessful outcome in external recruitment. Internal recruitment has secured two Acting Quality Improvement Officers who started in April 2021. Investment in resourcing will continue to be a priority in the longer term to support educational attainment. (EDU STAT 1.3)

Service Level Outcomes - successes

4.7   Actions falling out of Best Value review that relate to the curriculum have completed as expected. Numeracy and Literacy Early Level progression was introduced to all nurseries with supplementary training guides to support. Updated curriculum rationale progressed with subject choices in Secondary Schools embracing additional pathway opportunities supported by the Digital Inclusion Strategy for Education. Improving the curriculum offer for all children and young people is tabled as a separate report to this meeting to consider audit findings and recommendations. (EDU SERV 1.1 – 1.3)

4.8   Improving the quality and consistency of learning and teaching continues with additional focus on mitigating the impact of Covid-19. Prior to the Easter break twelve schools had been involved in the Education Scotland review of Remote Learning with one secondary school featured in initial reports. All Primary pupils returned to in-school learning with a focus on re-establishing routines and in-school learning, including identification of learning and attainment gaps, enacting interventions (universal and targeted) in support of learning. Secondary schools prepared for a whole-school return with Broad General Education (BGE) pupils accessing in-school learning while identifying gaps in learning and attainment. Senior Phase pupils consolidating learning and teaching in preparation for assessment. Covid-19 outbreaks continue to affect identified schools, remote learning approaches adopted during lockdown ensure effective continuity in learning for affected learners. Early Learning Centre settings continue to embrace play pedagogy approaches supported by a Career-Long Professional Learning (CLPL) offer. (EDU SERV 2.1)

4.9   There has been an increase in the number of practitioners progressing in their leadership journey across early learning settings and schools. The majority of modern apprentices working at Moray Early Learning Centres (ELC) are on course to complete their SVQ's in early learning and childcare. Interviews of candidates for the Into Headship programme have taken place with successful applicants to commence the programme in the summer of 2021. The Uplifting Leadership programme continues with 21 participants. All vacant Senior Leadership posts have been filled in Moray with many being participants of local and national CLPL programmes. (EDU SERV 2.1)

4.10   The second national lockdown due to Covid-19 impacted on the progress around the priority of supporting all learners, however notable progress has been made to catch-up and complete planned work. There is a greater understanding of inclusive practice within ELC as Early Years Principal Teachers and Early Intervention Teachers continue to work closely with settings and Allied Health Professionals to identify those children who would benefit from additional support. The Supporting All Learners Strategic Group in their understanding of the approaches to support learners has created a

Vision, Values and Mission Statement, prioritising four key focus areas: Additional Support Needs Review, Trauma Informed Practice/Relational Approaches, Workforce Development and Tracking and Monitoring Wellbeing. Revised Child Protection Guidance is currently out for consultation. (EDU SERV 4.1 & 4.2)

Service Level Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

4.11   In 2019, 78% of funded Moray Early Years providers inspected were graded good or better for all quality indicators. While this was an improvement on 2018, Moray continues to rank (28th) against all Scottish Local Authorities. More current data shows that during 2019/20, 85% of the quality indicators assessed by the Care Inspectorate in Moray Early Learning Centres achieved the National Standard rating of good or better. Care Inspectorate inspections have been paused since the Covid-19 outbreak, however seven Moray ELC settings have been requested to complete and submit the 'Key Question 5' self-evaluation to the Care Inspectorate. This new tool is being used to evaluate how well settings are supporting children and families during the Covid-19 pandemic. (CHN18)

Recovery and Renewal Actions - successes

4.12   A key action in the recovery of Early Learning Centres and schools has been the commissioning of a Counselling Service to support Health & Wellbeing across Moray which commenced after the school Easter break to supplement existing approaches using Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). A revised Locality Model is now operational and will strengthen safeguarding and child protection processes. (COVID-19 2.2)

5.   SERVICE PERFORMANCE

5.1   In line with the Performance Management Framework, operational performance is reviewed quarterly by departmental management. Areas performing well and/or areas subject to a decreasing trend or where benchmarking results show performance significantly below comparators will be reported to this committee for member scrutiny.

5.2   Initial publication of 2019/20 Local Government Benchmarking Framework Indicators in February 2021 will be refreshed in early May. The full suite can be viewed using the My Local Council tool.

5.3   Report is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service Performance Indicators are provided.
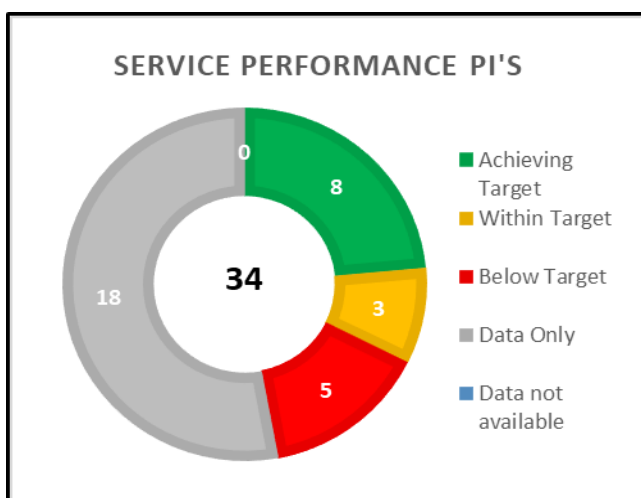
Operational Indicators - successes

5.4   The percentage of Looked After Children (LAC) school leavers (2019/20) who entered a positive destination was 84.2%, up on the 73.1% recorded for 2018/19 leavers.   This compares to a national rate of 81.4%. Of those Moray LAC leavers going into a positive destination 75% went onto a Further Education course, with the remaining leavers entering either Employment, Higher Education, Training or a Personal Skills Development course. (EdS097)

5.5   The percentage of adults satisfied or very satisfied with their local schools increased in Moray to 77%, this compares well to the national average of 71.8%. The latest satisfaction data is drawn from the Scottish Household Survey and is an average of the previous 3 years survey data (2017-20). The rate of satisfaction in Moray is the highest recorded over the last five reporting periods (since 2012-15). (CHN10)

Operational Indicators - challenges and actions to support

5.6   Breadth and depth attainment data is also collected for separate cohorts and is analysed along with leaver attainment and achievement results. The following table summarises the performance across the S4 / S5 /S6 cohorts and includes service performance indicators performing below target. The table highlights the number of indicators that show improvement on previous year, meeting service targets and achieving in line with or above the national average. As stated previously in paragraph 4.5, due to the absence of external assessment information caution has to be applied in analysing this performance data.

COHORT	No. indicators	No. Improving	Target Achieved	In line / above National average
S4	4	4 (100%)	3 (75%)	1 (25%)
S5	3	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	0 (0%)
S6	3	1 (33%)	1 (33%)	0 (0%)
OVERALL	10	7 (70%)	5 (50%)	1 (10%)

5.7   All S4 measures for SCQF Level 5 attainment at 1 or more, 3 or more, 6 or more and 7 or more improved on the previous year, with three indicators achieving target. Of the S5 measures for SCQF Level 6 at 1 or more, 3 or

more and 5 or more, two improved on the previous year with one indicator achieving target. Of the S6 measures for SCQF Level 6 at 3 or more, 5 or more and Level 7 at 1 or more, one indicator improved on the previous year and one achieved target. While the majority of indicators (70%) show an increase in performance on the previous year's result, when compared to the national average we remain behind in nine of the ten indicators measured. Within Moray, there is some considerable work being undertaken to review and improve the curricular offer for senior phase pupils which will positively impact on the breadth and depth measures. (EdS412.12-18 / EdS412.27-30)

6. **OTHER PERFORMANCE RELATED DATA**

Complaints & MP/MSP Enquiries

6.1   In line with the Performance Management Framework, complaints are reviewed quarterly by departmental management in terms of time taken to respond, outcome and learning points. Links to backing tables for Service Complaints are provided.

6.2   The number of complaints received is well below the number received last year. In total 22 complaints were closed during 2020-21, eight at frontline stage (36%). Half of those complaints were upheld, one was partially upheld and three were not upheld. The average time taken to resolve frontline complaints was 5 days, with half of frontline complaints closed within the target 5 working day timescale.

6.3   Due to their complexity, a number of complaints require further investigation in order to achieve a resolution. Of the 22 complaints closed in 2020-21, thirteen complaints were closed at investigative stage (59%). Three of those were upheld, three were partially upheld and the remaining seven were not upheld. On average, investigative complaints took 22 days to be resolved. Five investigative complaints were closed within the target timescale of 20 working days, while five of the eight not resolved within timescale had an authorised extension. One escalated complaint was closed during 2020-21, the complaint was not upheld and was closed within timescale. Due to the individual nature of each complaint, there were no underlying themes in terms of learning points.

6.3   A total of 18 MSP enquiries were received and closed during quarter 4. On average MSP enquiries took four days to be resolved.

Other Performance (not included within Service Plan)

6.4   The impacts of the latest lockdown were detailed in the report, Covid Related Pressures and Service Prioritisation (para 9 of the minute refers), presented to Council on 10 March 2021. The service continues to adapt and respond to the current challenging circumstances.

Case Studies

6.5   No case studies available for this report.

Consultation and Engagement

6.6   Nothing to report.

7.   **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

    (a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))
    Performance measurement is used to ensure the efficient and sustainable delivery of services to meet the Council's priorities in both the Corporate Plan and the LOIP.

    (b) Policy and Legal
    The Council has a statutory requirement to publish a range of information that will demonstrate that it is securing best value and assist in comparing performance both over time and between authorities where appropriate.

    (c) Financial implications
    None.

    (d) Risk Implications
    None.

    (e) Staffing Implications
    None.

    (f) Property
    None.

    (g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
    An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform the Committee on performance.

    (h) Consultations
    The Head of Education (Chief Education Officer), Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Service Managers, Legal Services, the Equal Opportunities Officer, and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

8.   **CONCLUSION**

8.1   **As at 31 March 2021, one strategic level action (EDU STRAT 1.3) was behind schedule and will continue as a priority action into 2021-22. All other strategic and service level actions have progressed well, with overall progress against 2020-21 actions achieving 96%. Recovery actions implemented for 2020-21 to deal with the impact of Covid-19 enabled early learning and school education to continue remotely, while recovery plans continue to be updated to ensure the safe return of young people and staff to education settings.**

8.2 The Education Plan will continue to be a strategic focus and driver for improvement across the service in the aim to deliver better outcomes for Moray's children and young people. With the return to in-school learning the emphasis will be on re-establishing routines, including identification of learning and attainment gaps, and enacting interventions in support of learning.

Author of Report:	Neil Stables, Research & Information Officer
Background Papers:	Held by Author
Ref:	SPMAN-1315769894-50

REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 26 MAY 2021

SUBJECT: MORAY EDUCATION COVID-19 REMOTE LEARNING SCHOOL SURVEY ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   To inform the Committee of the findings of the Moray Education Covid-19 2021 Remote Learning surveys completed by Moray Primary and Secondary schools and outline core recommendations moving forwards from survey findings and analysis, informing Education contingency planning and strategy.

1.2   To update Committee on progress in meeting core recommendations resulting from Moray Education Covid-19 Remote Learning Surveys undertaken and analysed following previous lockdown in March to June 2020.

1.3   This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance, (para 9 of the minute refers).

2.   RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1   It is recommended that Committee:

(i)   scrutinises and notes the report;

(ii)   considers the Digital Innovation Strategy for Education which will be presented to Committee in August 2021; and

(iii)   agrees that a further paper on Parental Engagement/Family Learning be presented to a future meeting of this Committee.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   Covid-19 led to the first lockdown of Moray schools in March 2020 to June 2020 (term 2, session 2019/2020). As a result, schools and officers at

Headquarters worked together in establishing new ways of working across the local authority and schools. Contingency plans were put in place, including planning for remote learning and its delivery and use of online digital platforms through GLOW as our core interface was embraced.

3.2   From the start of Term 3 in January 2021, a further period of lockdown commenced following the announcement by Scotland's First Minister on 19 December 2020 of a lockdown across Scotland due to impact of Covid-19.

3.3   On initial lockdown in March 2020, the majority of Moray schools provided paper-based resources with most embracing new digital platforms in a reactive manner, including adoption of Microsoft Teams and Google Classroom. Staff and wider school communities undertook considerable virtual training in online platforms, their functionality and use for learning and teaching. Once established, all schools continued to refine learning and teaching delivery methods, reviewing what was in place and streamlining arrangements for remote learning and teaching extending beyond online solutions to paper based packs and resources.

3.4   In January 2021, online learning and Remote Learning approaches were re-established alongside childcare provision for critical key workers and identified vulnerable children and Additional Support Needs (ASN) pupils across all of the schools in Moray. Using experiences and intelligence from previous lockdown in 2020, schools were better equipped in terms of established Remote Learning practices based on prior lockdown experiences, mixing Remote Learning approaches in order to maximise learner experiences including live teaching, digital approaches and paper-based activities/resources. This followed feedback from school and wider local authority lockdown surveys from key stakeholder groups in March 2020:

- Learners
- Parent/Carers
- Schools (representing school community)

3.5   The Moray Schools' Survey (**Appendix 1**) was live and completed by all schools during the months of March and April 2021. Designed to elicit responses from schools - having gathered their own intelligence from children and young people, families and staff on Remote Learning experiences – this survey was designed to inform future contingency planning in event of further disruption to our Moray Education system and any further move to Remote Learning with core questions focused on:

- Learning platforms in use and learner engagement
- Learner participation
- Staff confidence in use of online digital platforms for learning and teaching
- Approaches adopted in support of Remote Learning
- Mechanisms and communication methods in use to support learner wellbeing
- Learner progress in learning
- Level of support in Remote Learning from home

- Further support accessed for building confidence in Remote Learning delivery
- Methods of contact and communication with parents
- What worked well with remote learning
- What could have made remote learning better
- Further support required moving forwards (including any other comments)

3.6   Following compilation of survey analysis reports attached in **Appendix 1**, core recommendations are identified as a result of feedback received from all 53 operational Moray schools (45 Primary Schools; 8 Secondary Schools).

3.7   Positive findings emerging from the Moray Schools' Survey on Remote Learning experiences during January to March 2021 are identified as follows:

- Commitment of staff and schools across Moray to plan, deliver, assess and feed back on a wide range of Remote Learning activities including research based activities, online learning, paper based learning activities/resources and live learning extending to wider curriculum areas beyond literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing
- More positive engagement and participation in Remote Learning overall across most Primary and the majority of Secondary school stages
- Positive learner progress overall during lockdown in Primary schools and Senior Phase in Secondary schools
- Refined approaches by schools to appraise online learning platforms available and identify core learning platforms for use in schools, including measured approach to wider learning platform use
- Notable adoption of Microsoft Teams across our schools as a core platform for learning, with further use of Google Classroom
- Equity in approach to learning activities set, mindful of digital connectivity and access for children and families, mixing paper-based resources with online learning
- Extended approaches to differentiation in planned learning activities to meet the learning needs of a wide range of learners
- Effective communication channels and improved approaches to ensuring wellbeing check-ins with children and families throughout lockdown
- Strengthened digital literacy among pupils, staff and parents where appropriate, with notable increase in digital confidence among support staff
- Commitment of staff to undertake professional learning and in particular, professional learning activities in relation to digital skills development
- Level of sufficient support at home provided to children and young people in their Remote Learning activities overall
- Positive use of wider supports available for strengthening Remote Learning delivery including Education Scotland National e-learning offer, Moray Learning Technologists, GTCS, and in-school digital champions
- Positive engagement and communication with harder to reach families using a variety of communication methods across a number of schools
- Provision of virtual playgrounds/chat opportunities supported by digital platforms for social interaction and wider wellbeing

3.8 Extensive progress has been made across core recommendations identified through lockdown 2020 surveys and these are outlined in the Remote Learning Survey Report attached (**Appendix 1**). Ongoing recommendations under continued development include further digital learning support for parents and continued focus on digital connectivity and ICT access, underway through the Education ICT Strategy group.

3.9 Key areas for further review and development in Moray identified through this 2021 Remote Learning Survey are noted below:

- While positive overall, variability in learner participation in Primary stages P1 and P4 is noted in particular across Primary schools with some wider variability within other stages
- While encouraging overall, variability in learner participation in Secondary S2-S4 is further noted across the Secondary schools with identifiable drop in S4 participation in some of our Secondary schools
- Concerns around learner progress in S3 in a number of Secondary schools
- Engagement to Participation transfer rate is of note and requires investigation for reasons behind drop in participation from engagement, noted across a number of schools within P4-P6 and S2-S4 in particular
- Connectivity issues and access to ICT devices remains a concern in a number of schools, including school bandwidth and other device/network related issues (noting that work is advanced and underway with Moray Council ICT department to address these issues including review of legacy devices, roll-out of over 300 additional devices and addressing bandwidth issues with installation of an additional central link, nearing completion)
- Access to devices for children and families, particularly in multi-child households with shared devices with continued approaches to digital inclusion at local authority level aiming to address this
- Restricted parental engagement in a number of families, leading to lower than desired engagement and participation (noting positive engagement also of a number of families, including those harder to reach in a number of schools and less so in others)
- Parental expectations around Remote Learning exceeding what can be delivered in actuality, based on time available, technology and the distant nature of teaching and learning activities delivered during lockdown
- Workload implications associated with Remote Learning linked to planning, differentiation, delivery, assessment and feedback with online learning platforms available at any time heightening expectations of staff availability and access for learners
- Issues of sustaining engagement and motivation of learners in Remote Learning, due to reduced face-to-face interaction and opportunities for natural dialogue with concerns raised by a number of schools around mental health and wellbeing implications for learners and lack of action at times on feedback provided on learning
- Parental digital skills restricting technology support available at home for learners – particularly those in lower stages Primary school – potentially impacting on Remote Learning access and engagement/participation

3.10 As a result of extensive intelligence gathered through this survey, the following recommendations follow as next steps to be taken forward by schools and Moray Education through key working groups and strategies:

- Review reasons behind lower than desired engagement and participation levels – including engagement to participation transfer rates – in individual schools and identified stages to address any emerging attainment gaps and reduce impact of similar non-engagement in the event of future disruption to our school system
- Continue to progress current work at local authority level in line with National guidance on digital connectivity, access and devices to ensuring equity of digital device access for all learners
- Continue to investigate reasons behind technology, bandwidth and ICT infrastructure issues within schools in order to enable seamless approaches to online learning between home and school for learners and staff
- Further develop parental engagement and family learning through the potential of online learning platforms and integrate within review of Moray Parental Engagement/Family Learning Strategy
- Continue to strengthen staff digital skills development through professional learning opportunities, addressing workload issues addressed through a clear framework for staff on expectations around Remote Learning and its delivery in partnership with LNCT
- In the event of any future disruption to the Education system, ensure clear communication messages are distributed through local authority and school communication channels (e.g. social media, websites) to clarify what Remote Learning is/is not to support parental expectations and protect staff from any notable workload pressures
- Provide opportunities for parental digital skills development at local authority and school level through appropriate learning opportunities and resources
- Extend staff confidence in digital delivery and live teaching through extended opportunities to try out these approaches – potential for extending use of online platforms for home learning
- Extend knowledge of learning and teaching approaches available in support of Remote Learning, building understanding of quality Remote Learning experiences through appropriate Quality Assurance self-evaluation frameworks
- Further roll-out resources in support of "Our Moray Standard for Learning and Teaching" in order for practitioners to transfer established good practice in the classroom to the online environment

3.11 Core recommendations arising from the survey will be used to further inform key activities and contingency planning moving forwards, including work underway in respect of the Digital Innovation Strategy for Education and planned future development work around "Our Moray Standard for Remote Learning and Teaching" and Quality Assurance frameworks for Remote Learning. This also forms part of work identified as part of the Moray Education Strategic Plan 2020-2023 moving forwards.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)**
Reflective of priorities within the Corporate Plan with particular regard to providing a sustainable education service aiming for excellence in line with council values of ambitious, improving and responsive. With regards to the LOIP, through raising aspirations, focus relates to building a better future for our children and young people in Moray through equity of learning experience offered across our schools; supporting ambitious and confident children, able to reach their full potential.

(b) **Policy and Legal**
There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

(c) **Financial implications**
Dependent upon the investigative work being undertaken by ICT Technicians across the school estate, there may be further investment required to support the use of digital technology following retiral of identified legacy ICT hardware and software.

(d) **Risk Implications**
Further review of digital infrastructure across the school establishments is required in order to support roll-out of any future Digital Innovation Strategy for Education.

(e) **Staffing Implications**
There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(f) **Property**
There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

(g) **Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**
An Equality/Socio Economic Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform Committee on survey findings and recommendations arising from responses received.

(h) **Consultations**
Senior Officers in Education, Communities and Organisational Development, Head of HR, ICT and Organisational Development, ICT Manager (Infrastructure), Acting Information Systems Manager, Paul Connor, Principal Accountant, Equal Opportunities Officer, Human Resources Manager and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

5. **CONCLUSION**

5.1 **That Committee scrutinises and notes the contents of this report and key findings and;**

5.2   Considers recommendations arising from survey analysis and report findings, including plans for addressing areas for further development

Author of Report: Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager

Background Papers:

Moray Covid-19 Schools' Survey 2021 (**Appendix 1**)
Moray Covid-19 Learner Survey 2020
Moray Covid-19 Parent/Carer Survey 2020
Moray Covid-19 Schools Surveys 2020
Moray Covid-19 Surveys 2020 – Key Recommendations Mapping

Ref: SPMAN-1315769894-82
                             SPMAN-1315769894-83

Milne's
Speyside
ASGs. Moray
Lossiemouth Forres
Elgin-Academy Keith
Elgin-High
Buckie

Education, Communities and Organisational Development

Moray Schools

Covid-19 | Lockdown 2

Remote Learning Survey 2021

...for Moray's children and young people

Introduction

Covid-19 led to lockdown of our Moray schools once more in **January to March 2021** on direction of the Scottish Government. This follows from prior lockdown in late **March 2020 extending to June 2020**. Schools and officers at Headquarters worked together once more in establishing new ways of working across our local authority and schools, using intelligence gathered and lessons learned during the 2020 lockdown to inform 2021 lockdown activities.

Contingency plans were put in place, including planning and quality assurance of remote learning and its delivery. Following an initial recovery period from August to December 2020, the further period of lockdown from start of term in January to March 2021 led to re-establishment of Remote Learning and childcare provision for children of critical key workers, identified vulnerable children and Additional Support Needs (ASN) pupils.

> *"For equity we have focused on both methods - digital and paper - where parents last lockdown preferred the paper packs…teamwork across both the teaching and support staff has been fantastic - really proud of how they have all worked collegiately to support the children and families this lockdown and provide learning activities for our children…"* School/HT A

On first lockdown in **March 2020**, the majority of Moray schools provided paper-based resources with most beginning to embrace new digital platforms including **Microsoft Teams** and **Google Classroom**. Once established, all schools refined learning and teaching delivery methods, reviewing what was in place and streamlining arrangements for remote learning and teaching.

On lockdown in **January 2021**, schools were better equipped in terms of established Remote Learning practices based on prior lockdown experience, **mixing Remote Learning** approaches in order to maximise learners' experiences including live teaching, digital approaches and paper-based books and resources following feedback from previous lockdown surveys from key stakeholder groups.

While considerable requests for live teaching were made initially, based on research available and key guidance issues, a variety of Remote Learning approaches were adopted as a more suitable approach which *included* live learning. Approaches also extended to pre-recorded voiceover PowerPoints, research based activities, flipped learning approaches and activity based learning – including family learning challenges – to name a few approaches embraced. **Quality Assurance of Remote Learning** offer was well considered by our schools, strengthening learning experiences further following feedback during 2021 lockdown.

Through regular Head Teacher virtual meetings, progress reports, intelligence gathered during previous lockdown, engagement and participation rates, it is noted that considerable progress has been made across our Moray Schools in Remote Learning approaches. In Moray, we further developed Remote Learning and Teaching Guidance Toolkits to support our schools (**Appendix A**) with all schools adopting core online learning platforms in support of Remote Learning. In March 2021, a Remote Learning Survey was completed by all of our schools, exploring similar themes to those in the Remote Learning surveys completed in late May/early June 2020.

Feedback has once again, been gathered on:

- Learning platforms in use and learner engagement
- Learner engagement*
- Learner participation*
- Staff confidence in use of online digital platforms for learning and teaching
- Approaches adopted in support of Remote Learning*
- Mechanisms and communication methods in use to support learner wellbeing*
- Learner progress in learning*
- Level of support in Remote Learning from home*
- Further support accessed for building confidence in Remote Learning delivery*
- Methods of contact and communication with parents
- What worked well with remote learning
- What could have made remote learning better
- Further support required moving forwards (including any other comments)

* indicating additions/amendments from surveys undertaken in May/June 2020

> *"Development of ICT skills amongst all members of the school community. This has inspired us to find out more about completion of the Digital Schools Award…recently attended a CPD session on this (thanks to Moray Digital Learning Team…) and found the session really useful and inspiring…."* School/HT B

> *"Engagement across both digital and paper based learning activities: 68% of families who responded to our survey said they have managed alright to access online learning activities, but uploading activities was challenging (18.5%) and 92% of families who responded to our survey said they have collected paper packs each week. There has been a significant increase from last lockdown with the amount of work uploaded and returned which staff are feeding back on each week…"* School/HT C

Procedure

Findings for this Remote Learning Survey report covering lockdown during **January to March 2021** are taken from two core data and information collection activities – our **Moray Primary Schools' Survey** and **Moray Secondary Schools' Survey**.

Previous data and intelligence was gathered last session during Lockdown 1 through 3 key surveys: *Moray Learners' Survey*, *Moray Schools' Survey* and *Moray Parents/Carers' Survey* reported previously as information reports to the Education, Communities and Organisation Development Committee – **click here for online access to these surveys** (*please scroll to bottom of 18 November 2020 Committee Reports – Information Report*). All **53** of our operational Moray Schools contributed to both data and information collection activities through a Primary School Survey and Secondary School Survey.
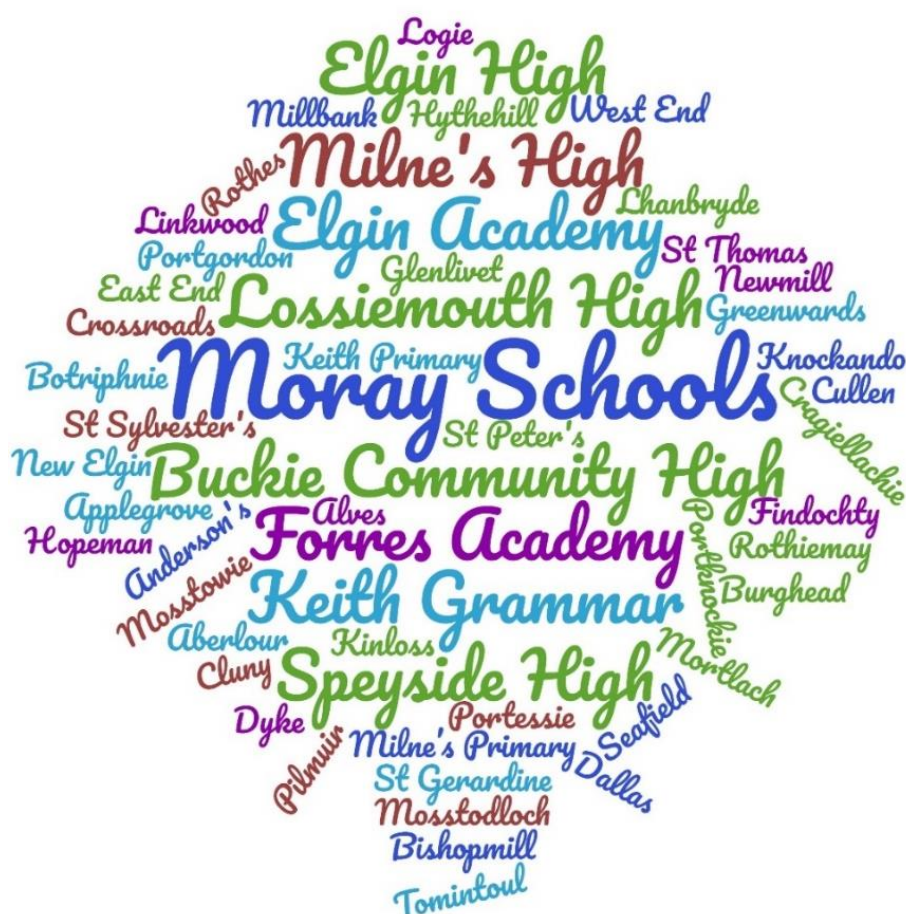
Review activity:	Collected:	Format:
Covid-19 Home Learning School Surveys: Primary Survey and Secondary Survey	March/April 2021	• Quantitative and Qualitative summary report – contained within **Appendix B, C** • Engagement by all **53** of our schools; **45** Primary Schools and **8** secondary schools

> *"Greatest success… Learning and acting on first period of lockdown… Constant reviewing and QA over the past 6 weeks… Staff willingness to expand their knowledge and practice… Move to live lessons/interactions…"* School/HT D

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Findings

Detailed findings from both data and information collection activities are contained within **Appendix B** and **Appendix C**. The following key evaluations are made as summary of remote learning activities with key findings from the April/May 2020 Surveys also included as a comparator. Subsequent pages contain key detail on summary messages below:

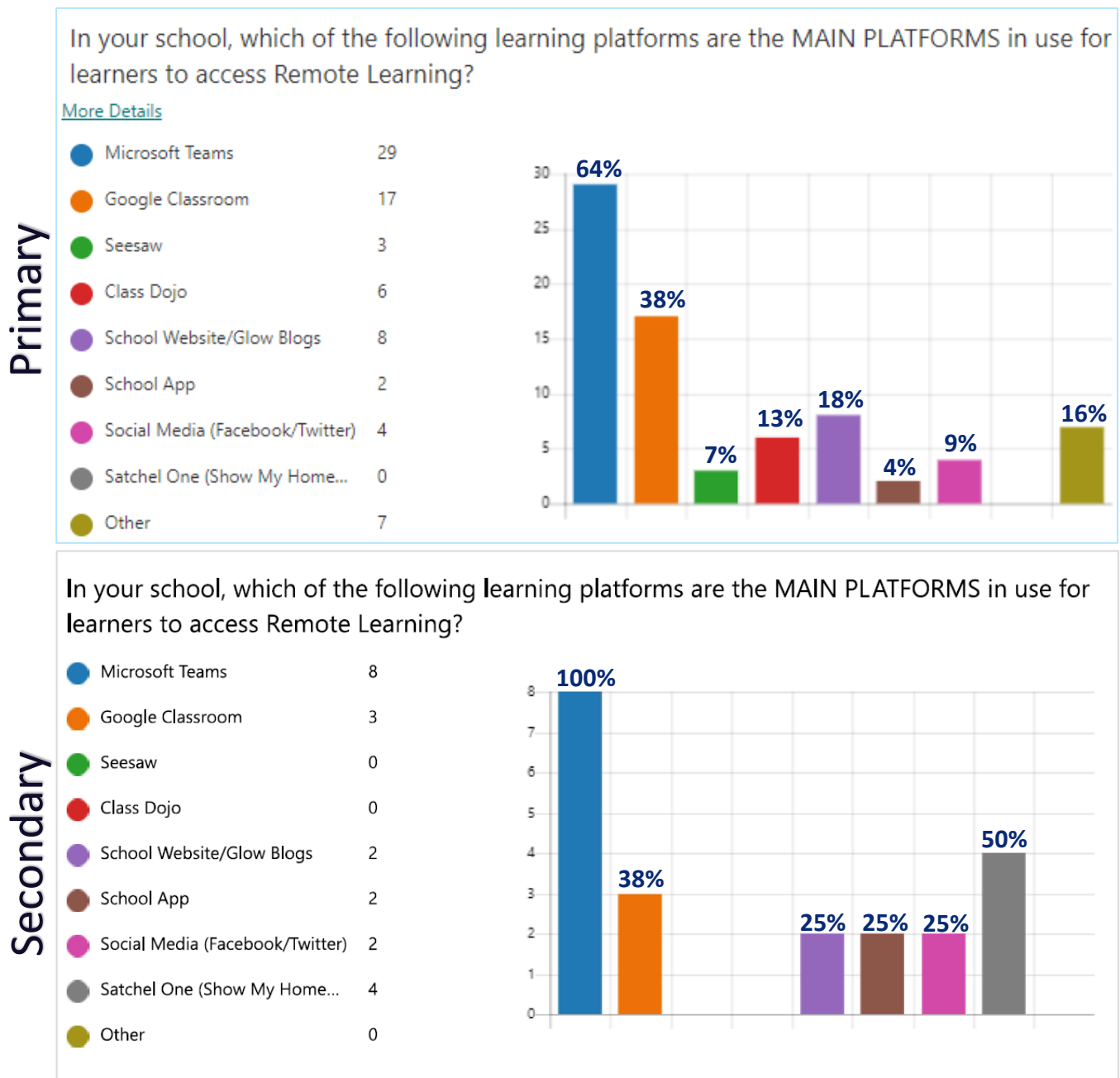| April/May 2020 Surveys	March/April 2021 Schools Survey
• **Almost all** schools issued paper-based resources packs in support of home learning on initial lockdown	• **All schools** provided a mixed delivery approach to Remote Learning including live learning, paper-based activities/resources, research based activities, individual learning activities, family learning challenges, literacy/numeracy/HWB focused activities, Inter-disciplinary learning and wider Curriculum area focused work in order to strengthen and extend learning
• **All** schools continued to review access to learning resources for learners, providing paper-based resource packs where appropriate	
• **All** schools embraced digital platforms in support of online learning including GLOW derived solutions (for example, Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom), Show My Homework (Secondary Schools), Class Dojo and school applications ("Apps")	• **All schools** reviewed learning platforms adopted and embraced only key learning platforms, in particular Microsoft Teams, along with other supporting learning platforms rationalising the quantity of learning platforms required to be accessed from home
• **Most** schools required to adopt a remote learning digital platform (e.g. Microsoft Teams/Google Classroom) on lockdown supported through GLOW with **most** staff undertaking professional learning activities in support of remote learning and teaching	• **Most** Primary Schools reviewed previous lockdown approaches to planning and delivery of learning, extending differentiation to meet individual learning needs and ensuring accessibility of learning through appropriate online platforms (e.g. Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, Class Dojo)
• **All** schools maintained focus on Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing learning with **most** embracing inter-disciplinary learning (IDL) tasks and activities	• **Most** schools extended range of learning resources accessed to include Education Scotland resources developed – live, recorded and supported
• **Most** Primary Schools adopted a learning grid approach to planning and delivery of daily and weekly learning activities	• **All** schools ensured effective communication with children and families through a variety of online, electronic and in-person means, with **all** schools engaging in direct contact/check-ins with children and families on a regular basis
• **All** schools maintained communication with parents through learning activities set, check-ins and use of other tools (e.g. Groupcall, e-mail)	• **All** practitioners continued to extend their digital literacy, with particular commitment of **support staff** in developing their digital skills and confidence
• **All** practitioners worked remotely through uncertainty, undertaking remote teaching and providing virtual and paper-based learning activities in support of our children and young people in Moray schools	• **Engagement and participation** in remote learning was positive overall, with some variability across identified stages of Primary and Secondary schools, as outlined below

> *"The pre-recorded videos and narrated PowerPoints have meant that even with technical problems here or at home, children have not missed out on learning. Along with the live daily check-ins that have proven to be invaluable...."* School/HT E

Learning Platforms in use in our Moray Schools

The graph below outlines learning platforms in use during lockdown 2 (**January 2021**) for Moray Primary Schools and Moray Secondary Schools:

Primary

In your school, which of the following learning platforms are the MAIN PLATFORMS in use for learners to access Remote Learning?

More Details

Platform	Count
Microsoft Teams	29
Google Classroom	17
Seesaw	3
Class Dojo	6
School Website/Glow Blogs	8
School App	2
Social Media (Facebook/Twitter)	4
Satchel One (Show My Home...	0
Other	7

64% 38% 7% 13% 18% 4% 9% 16%

Secondary

In your school, which of the following learning platforms are the MAIN PLATFORMS in use for learners to access Remote Learning?

Platform	Count
Microsoft Teams	8
Google Classroom	3
Seesaw	0
Class Dojo	0
School Website/Glow Blogs	2
School App	2
Social Media (Facebook/Twitter)	2
Satchel One (Show My Home...	4
Other	0

100% 38% 25% 25% 25% 50%

In summary, the following key points are identifiable:

- The **majority** of Primary Schools (64%) and **all** Secondary Schools (100%) made use of **Microsoft Teams** as a main platform for Remote Learning
- **Less than half** of Primary Schools (38%) and Secondary Schools (38%) made use of **Google Classroom** as a main platform for learning
- **Half** of secondary schools (50%) also made use of **Satchel One** (*previously known as Show My Homework*) as a main platform for learning
- **Schools Websites/Glow Blogs** (18%) and **Class Dojo** (13%) were also used as a main platform for learning by Primary Schools
- A **minority** of secondary schools also made use of **School Website/Glow Blogs**, **School Apps**, and **Social Media** for sharing learning

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- **Primary Schools** made use of 'Other' main platforms for learning including use of Glow e-mail for sharing learning, learning journals and paper/hard copies of work were also issued

Other Learning Platforms also in use

Schools also embraced a number of other online learning platforms in support of Remote Learning. The wordle below indicates popularity of wider online learning platforms with size of text indicating use across a greater number of our Moray Schools:
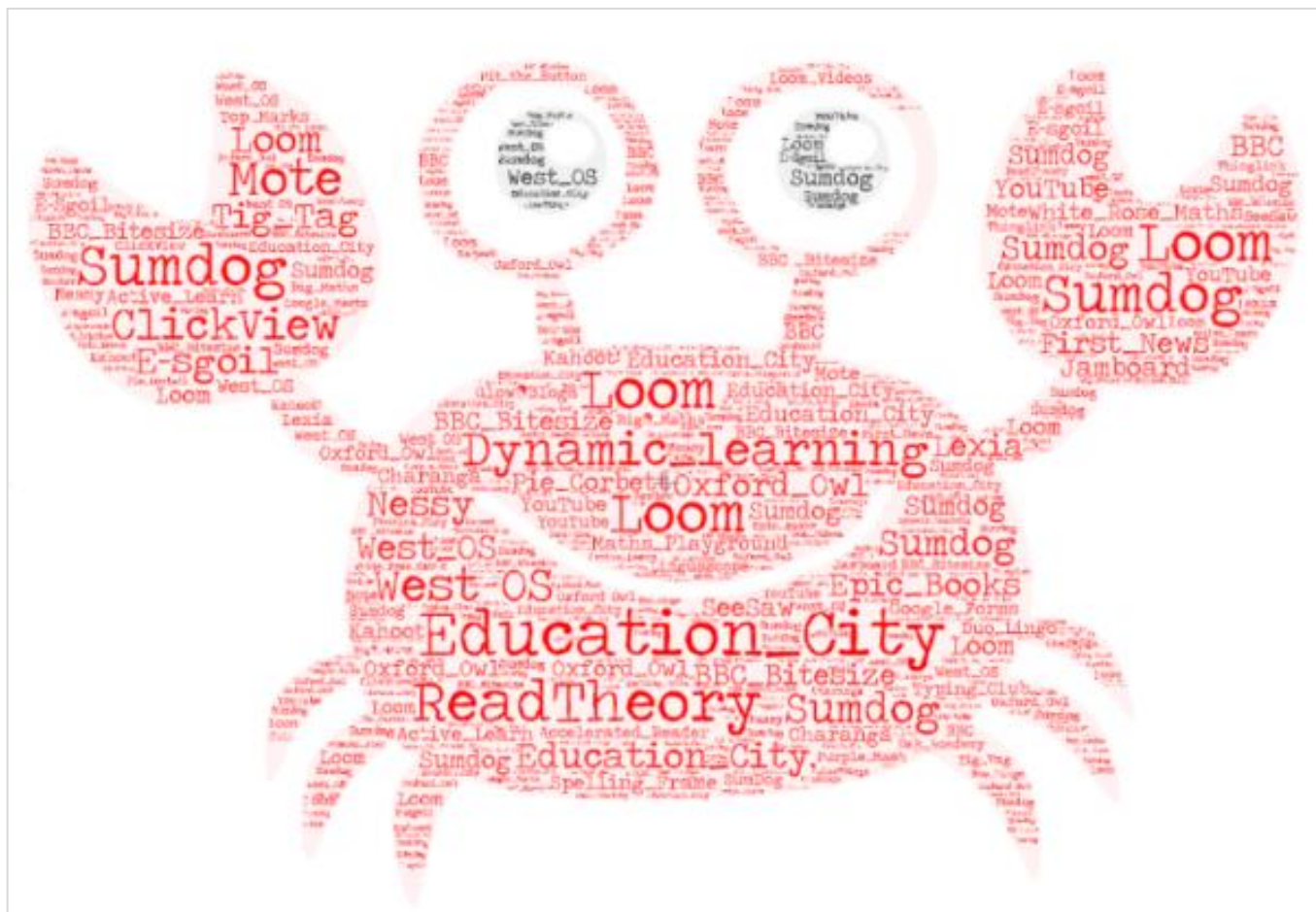
In particular, schools further made use of the following online resources and platforms for learning:

- Loom for pre-recorded lessons (e.g. Voiceover PowerPoints)
- Education City
- Sumdog
- Oxford Owl
- ReadTheory
- E-sgoil
- WestOS/ClickView
- Big Maths

Learner Engagement

Schools were asked to consider the proportion of learners in each stage (P1-P7; S1-S6) known to **engage** in learning activities set during lockdown. By **engagement**, we look to the **proportion of learners accessing learning platforms and/or paper-based resources** where appropriate, and completing **some** of the learning activities that have been set.

Overall, learner engagement was **strong** across Primary and in upper stages of Secondary in particular, with some variability in engagement across stages.

Primary School Stage	Overall % Engagement (*Most or above*)	Learner levels of engagement: % of Primary Schools in Moray [45]						
		All	Almost All	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few	Not Applicable
P1	86.7%	20.0%	40.0%	26.7%	8.9%	2.2%	0%	0%
P2	86.5%	17.8%	44.4%	24.4%	11.1%	0%	0%	0%
P3	88.9%	11.1%	51.1%	26.7%	11.1%	0%	0%	0%
P4	86.7%	15.6%	42.2%	28.9%	13.3%	0%	0%	0%
P5	93.4%	15.6%	48.9%	28.9%	6.7%	0%	0%	0%
P6	95.6%	15.6%	42.2%	37.8%	4.4%	0%	0%	0%
P7	93.3%	28.9%	40.0%	24.4%	4.4%	2.2%	0%	0%

As indicated above, learner engagement across Primary School stages was high during 2021 lockdown, with engagement in upper stages (P5-P7) Primary of particular note. Some schools reported lower engagement in lower stages Primary, indicated by engagement of a majority of learners in their schools, particularly in P2 to P4 stages. Nonetheless, overall engagement across all Primary stages remained high as outlined in column 2 of the table below with most learners overall across our Moray Primary Schools, engaging in Remote Learning during January-March 2021 lockdown.

	Learner levels of engagement: % of Secondary Schools in Moray [8]						
Secondary School Stage	Overall % Engagement (*Most or above*)	All	Almost All	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few	Not Applicable
S1	87.5%	0%	25.0%	62.5%	12.5%	0%	0%	0%
S2	62.5%	0%	25.0%	37.5%	25.0%	12.5%	0%	0%
S3	50.0%	0%	25.0%	25.0%	37.5%	12.5%	0%	0%
S4	75.0%	0%	37.5%	37.5%	12.5%	12.5%	0%	0%
S5	87.5%	0%	50.0%	37.5%	12.5%	0%	0%	0%
S6	100%	0%	62.5%	37.5%	0%	0%	0%	0%

As indicated above, learner engagement in Secondary School stages (*conscious of low number of schools within data set and higher percentage representation of each school*), learner engagement was greater in Senior Phase (S4-S6) overall and S6 in particular. Lower level of engagement is noted in S4 in some of our secondary schools. In the Broad General Education, learner engagement was lower than in Senior Phase, with lower engagement noted in S3 and S2 in particular across some of our secondary schools.

Learner Participation

Schools were asked to consider the proportion of learners in each stage (P1-P7; S1-S6) known to **participate** in learning activities set during lockdown. By **participation**, we look to the **proportion of learners in each stage known to actively participate in learning activities set online or in paper-based formats**.

Learners may also actively engage in dialogue (live/chat posts) and act on feedback provided on learning activities set. Learning participation is where learners are known to meaningfully take part in Remote Learning. During lockdown in 2020 it was noted that a number of primary schools reported **Primary 7** engagement lessening as the term progressed with imminent transition to secondary school, post-Summer. **Primary 1/Primary 2** engagement had been lower in a number of schools due to levels of parental involvement required in support of learning from home. Other pressures including access to ICT, difficulty in parents supporting learning at home due to wider family and work pressures, and issues around learner independence in early stages of Primary requiring greater parental support were noted as some reasons around possible lack of engagement from particular stages at the time.

Overall, learner participation was variable across Primary and Secondary, with information presented below.
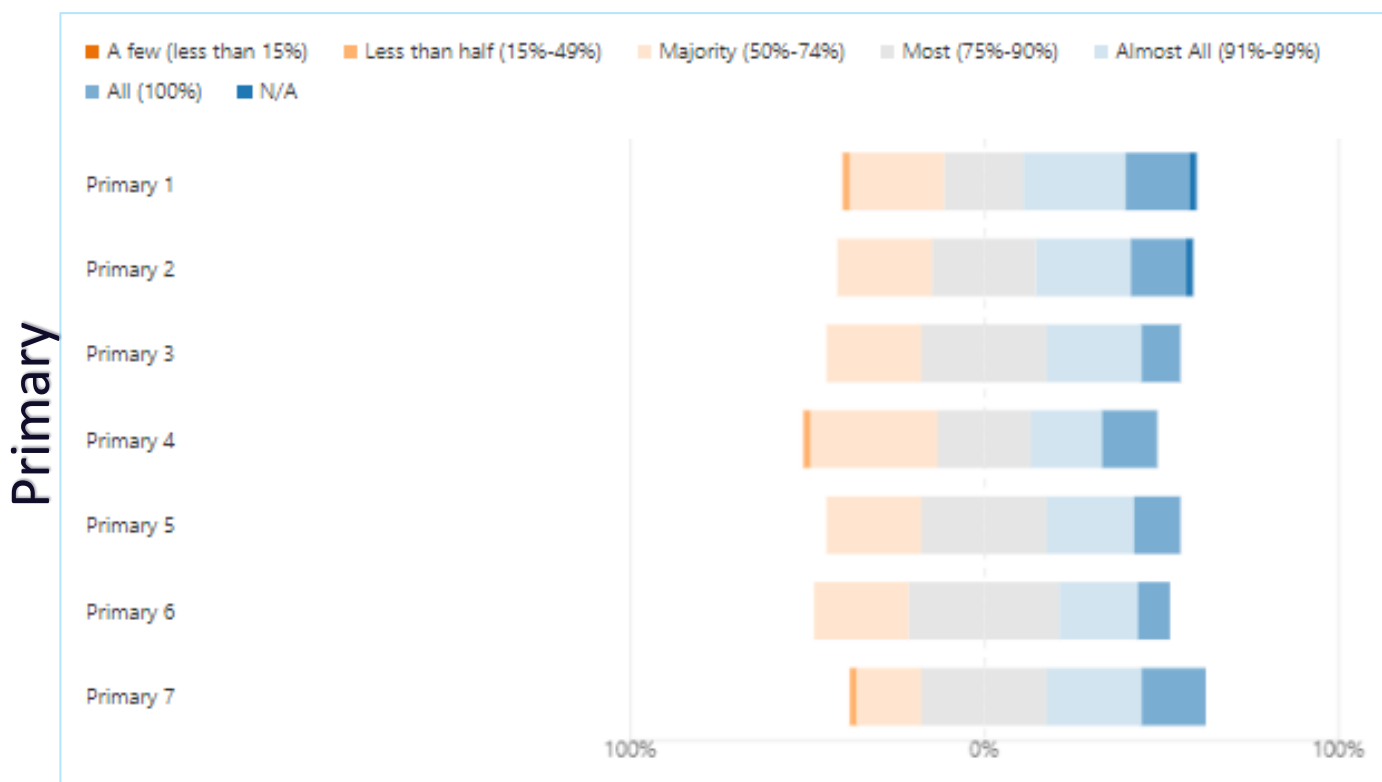
	Learner levels of participation: % of Primary Schools in Moray [45]							
Primary School Stage	**Overall % Participation (*Most or above*)**	**All**	**Almost All**	**Most**	**Majority**	**Less than half**	**Few**	**Not Applicable**
P1	68.9%	17.8%	28.9%	22.2%	26.7%	2.2%	0%	2.2%
P2	71.2%	15.6%	26.7%	28.9%	26.7%	0%	0%	2.2%
P3	73.4%	11.1%	26.7%	35.6%	26.7%	0%	0%	0%
P4	62.3%	15.6%	20.0%	26.7%	35.6%	2.2%	0%	0%
P5	73.3%	13.3%	24.4%	35.6%	26.7%	0%	0%	0%
P6	74.3%	9.9%	22.2%	42.2%	26.7%	0%	0%	0%
P7	80.1%	17.8%	26.7%	35.6%	17.8%	2.2%	0%	0%
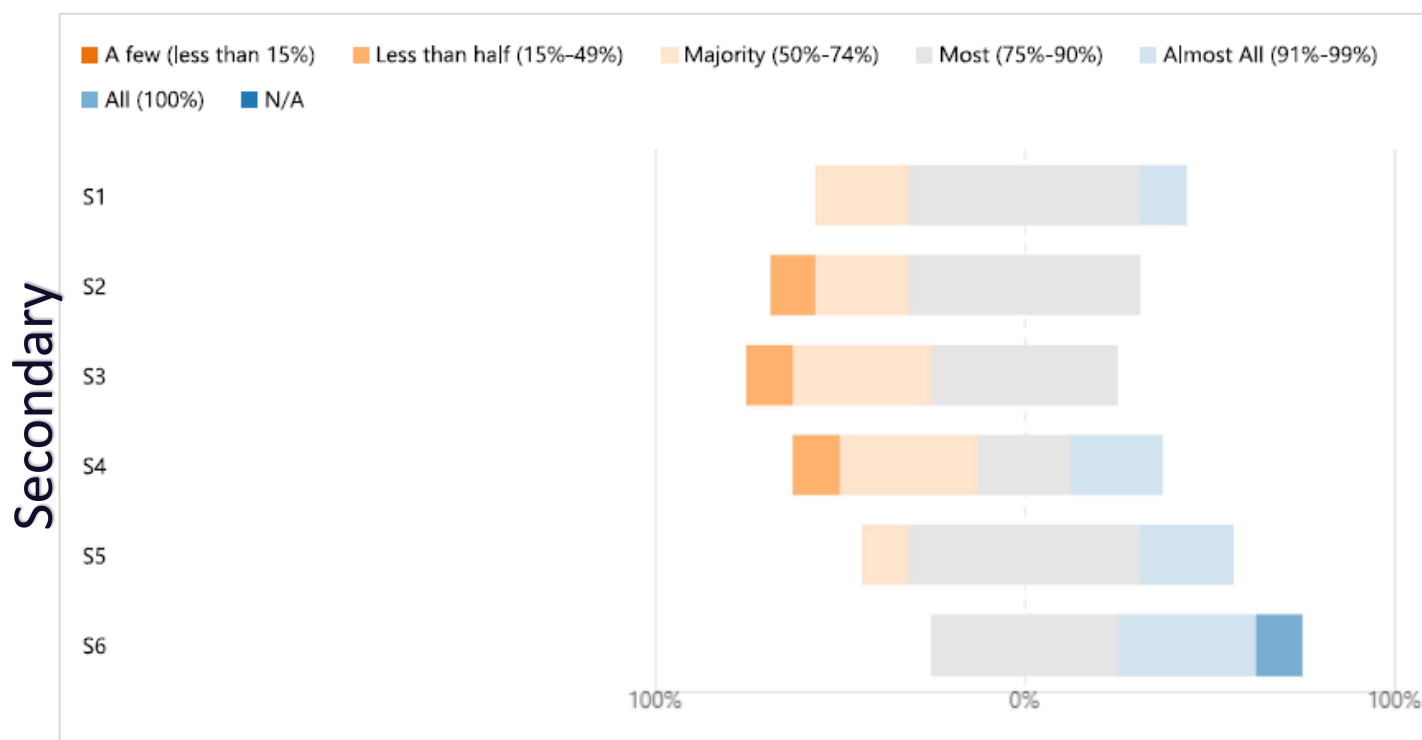
	Learner levels of participation: % of Secondary Schools in Moray [8]							
Secondary School Stage	**Overall % Participation (*Most or above*)**	**All**	**Almost All**	**Most**	**Majority**	**Less than half**	**Few**	**Not Applicable**
S1	75.0%	0%	12.5%	62.5%	25.0%	0%	0%	0%
S2	62.5%	0%	0%	62.5%	25.0%	12.5%	0%	0%
S3	50.0%	0%	0%	50.0%	37.5%	12.5%	0%	0%
S4	50.0%	0%	25.0%	25.0%	37.5%	12.5%	0%	0%
S5	87.5%	0%	25.0%	62.5%	12.5%	0%	0%	0%
S6	100.0%	12.5%	37.5%	50.0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

In Primary, it is noted that middle stage Primary 4 and Primary 1 participation is lower than that of other stages in Primary. Primary 1 may be due to greater levels of parental input and support required at home, limiting participation due to other pressures (e.g. home working while supporting Remote Learning). In Primary, participation is strongest in P3, P5, P6 and P7. In Secondary, it is noted that middle stages (S3, S4) participation is lower than that of other stages, and in particular lower than participation in Senior Phase (S5, S6). In part, this may be attributable to the qualifications based course structure and need to participate for future qualifications/results. Secondary school participation is most positive overall in S1, S5 and S6.

Learner Engagement v Learner Participation

The table below compares overall Learner Engagement with overall Learner Participation from the table above:

Primary School Stage	Overall % Engagement (*Most or above*)	Overall % Participation (*Most or above*)	% Change – Engagement to Participation		Secondary School Stage	Overall % Engagement (*Most or above*)	Overall % Participation (*Most or above*)	% Change – Engagement to Participation
P1	86.7%	68.9%	17.8%		S1	87.5%	75.0%	12.5%
P2	86.5%	71.2%	15.3%		S2	62.5%	62.5%	0%
P3	88.9%	73.4%	15.5%		S3	50.0%	50.0%	0%
P4	86.7%	62.3%	24.4%		S4	75.0%	50.0%	25.0%
P5	93.4%	73.3%	20.1%		S5	87.5%	87.5%	0%
P6	95.6%	74.3%	21.3%		S6	100%	100.0%	0%
P7	93.3%	80.1%	13.2%					

In comparing overall learner engagement with learner participation ultimately resulting, the following key observations are made:

Primary	Secondary
• Participation rates remain positive overall compared with engagement in **P2-P3** and **P7** • Participation rates are less favourable in comparison with engagement in **P4-P6** with lower than may have been anticipated participation, in **P1** • **P7** participation is positive, in contrast to lockdown in 2020	• Participation rates remain positive overall compared with engagement in **S5** and **S6** • Participation rates are lower in comparison with engagement (lower levels of engagement noted) in **S2** to **S4**, with reduced participation (1 secondary school) in **S1** • Variation from last year may also be due to lockdown timing (Term 3 as opposed to Term 4 this lockdown, 2021)

Overall, engagement and participation if variable across stages as noted in the graphs and tables above.

Staff confidence in use of online digital platforms for learning and teaching

> *"Greatly increased teacher confidence and wider range of teaching approaches deployed. This seems to be impacting positively on engagement. These approaches allow for greater connectedness…"*
>
> School/HT H

Staff confidence has increased notably from lockdown 1 in the use of online digital platforms and their use. The table directly below, is taken from our Moray Schools' Remote Learning Survey during lockdown 1 (March-June 2020):

Lockdown 1 (2020)	All	Almost All	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few	N/A
Teaching Staff	22.6%	34%	17%	15.1%	9.4%	1.9%	0%
Non-teaching Staff	0%	15.1%	17%	28.3%	22.6%	11.3%	5.7%

In lockdown 2, the same question was asked of our schools and the following summary of results is shown in the tables below (now split by Primary and Secondary School):

Lockdown 2 (2021) Primary	All	Almost All	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few	N/A
Teaching Staff	44.4%	33.3%	20%	2.2%	0%	0%	0%
Non-teaching Staff	11.1%	17.8%	26.7%	26.7%	11.1%	4.4%	0%

Lockdown 2 (2021) Secondary	All	Almost All	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few	N/A
Teaching Staff	12.5%	62.5%	25.0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Non-teaching Staff	0%	37.5%	12.5%	37.5%	12.5%	0%	0%

Compared with lockdown in 2020, staff confidence has increased considerably in the use of online digital platforms. This is particularly notable in **non-teaching staff** with more support staff embracing online digital platforms in support of learner wellbeing and learning. Across Primary and Secondary schools, staff have embraced digital learning platforms and upskilled through professional learning activities in their use. Support staff were also invaluable through their contribution to childcare/vulnerable hub operation.

> *"The developing confidence of teachers in the use of IT to support learning - having to use glow and familiarise ourselves with the online materials 'out there' to support learning. Better engagement from Pupils during lockdown 2. Pupils are delighted to be able to see each other during Class Meets…"* School/HT I

Approaches adopted in support of Remote Learning

In support of Remote Learning in lockdown during January to March 2021, our Moray schools embraced a range of online and offline learning and teaching approaches in support of continuity in learning. These included use of paper-based packs and resources, live learning, pre-recording videos and voiceover PowerPoints, play-based approaches and family learning activities and challenges. This mixed method approach to Remote Learning was initiated in order to maintain learner interest in learning as lockdown extended and ensure equity of access to learning for all, including those learners with Additional Support Needs (ASN).

Moray Primary Schools – approaches in Support of Remote Learning

To what extent are practitioners in your school making use of the following approaches in support of Remote Learning?

Legend: A few (less than 15%) · Less than half (15%–49%) · Majority (50%–74%) · Most (75%-90%) · Almost all (91%-99%) · All (100%) · N/A

Categories (Primary): Paper-based packs/resources; Live learning (in real-time); Outdoor learning activities; Independent learning activities; Family learning activities/challenges; Practical activities; Pre-recorded videos; Pre-recorded PowerPoint with voiceover; Literacy, Numeracy and HWB focus activities; Activities embracing wider Curriculum areas (beyond L, N, HWB); Inter-disciplinary Learning; Play-based approaches
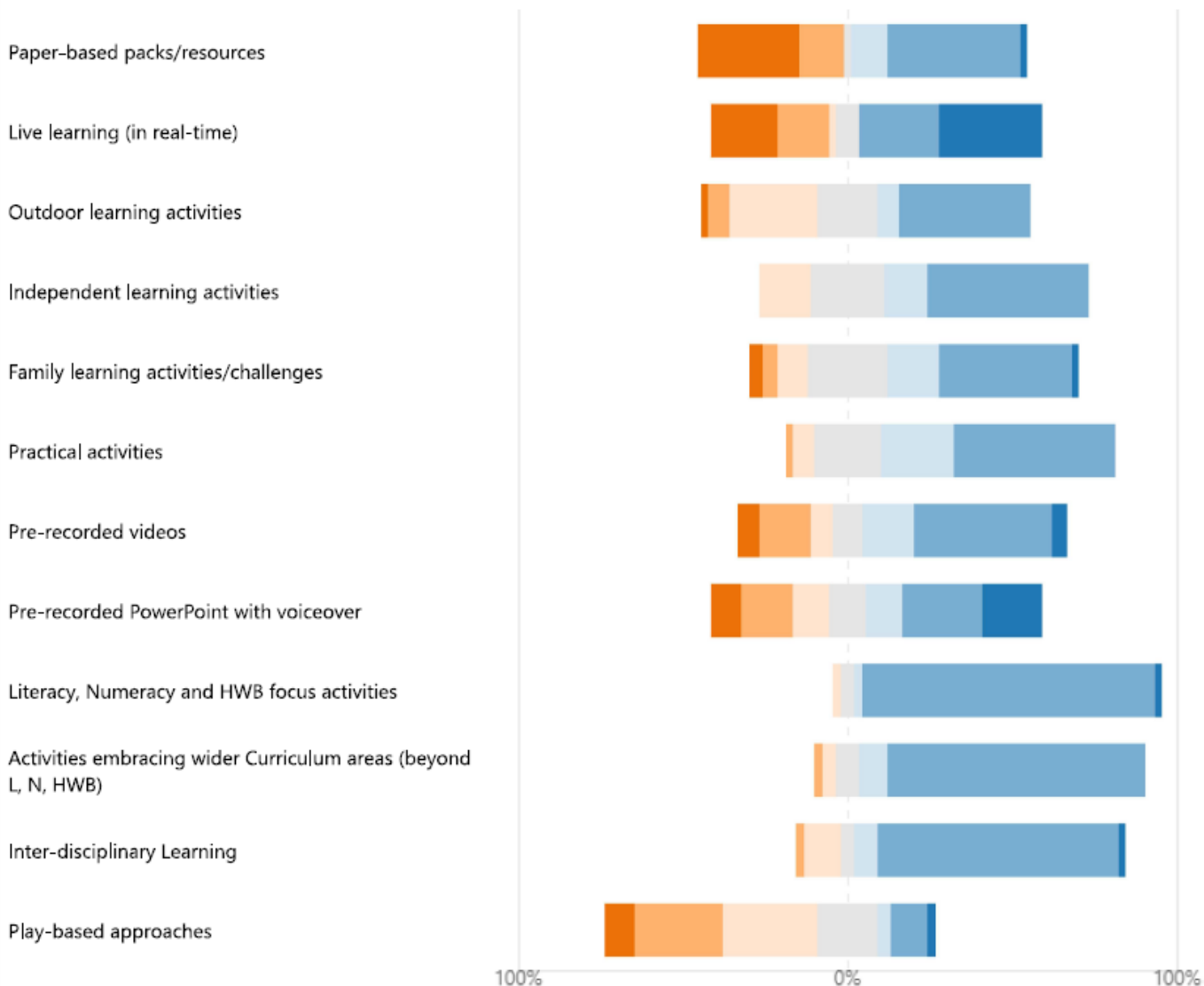
Lockdown 2 (2021) Primary	All	Almost All	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few	N/A
Paper-based packs/resources	40.0%	11.1%	2.2%	0%	13.3%	31.1%	2.2%
Live Learning (in real-time)	24.4%	0%	6.7%	2.2%	15.6%	20.0%	31.1%
Outdoor Learning activities	40.0%	6.7%	17.8%	26.7%	6.7%	2.2%	0%
Independent learning activities	48.9%	13.3%	22.2%	15.6%	0%	0%	0%

Family learning activities/challenges	40.0%	15.6%	24.4%	8.9%	4.4%	4.4%	2.2%
Practical activities	48.9%	22.2%	20.0%	6.7%	2.2%	0%	0%
Pre-recorded videos	42.2%	15.6%	8.9%	6.7%	15.6%	6.7%	4.4%
Pre-recorded PowerPoint	24.4%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%	15.6%	8.9%	17.8%
Literacy/Numeracy/ HWB focus activities	2.2%	2.2%	4.4%	2.2%	0%	0%	2.2%
Activities embracing wider Curriculum	0%	8.9%	6.7%	4.4%	2.2%	0%	0%
Inter-disciplinary Learning	2.2%	6.7%	4.4%	11.1%	2.2%	0%	2.2%
Play-based approaches	2.2%	4.4%	17.8%	28.9%	26.7%	8.9%	2.2%

Compared with Lockdown 1 in March 2020, it is interesting to note that **paper-based resources** continued to be issued by schools, but in a more targeted manner by a greater proportion of schools overall as shown in the comparator table below. This is in addition to other popular approaches to Remote Learning including **outdoor learning** activities, **independent learning** activities, **family learning** activities/challenges, **practical activities**, **pre-recorded videos**, **pre-recorded PowerPoints** and increasingly, **play-based approaches**.

Of particular interest is that Primary Schools **did not embrace live learning (in real-time)** in a notable way, favouring other approaches to reach learners through Remote Learning. However, as noted previously, this required use of an online platform for sharing key learning instructions and materials (Microsoft Teams/Google Classroom/other learning platforms).

Comparator Table – Paper-based Learning packs/resources

Platform	Overall % Participation (*Most or above*)	All	Almost All	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few	Not Applicable
Lockdown 1 (March 2020)	22.7%	5.7%	11.3%	5.7%	3.8%	24.5%	45.3%	3.8%
Lockdown 2 (January 2021)	53.3%	40.0%	11.1%	2.2%	0%	13.3%	31.1%	2.2%

As indicated in the table above, notable increase by schools in issue of paper-based packs/resources for variety in learning approaches and to meet needs of learners.

Moray Secondary Schools – approaches in Support of Remote Learning
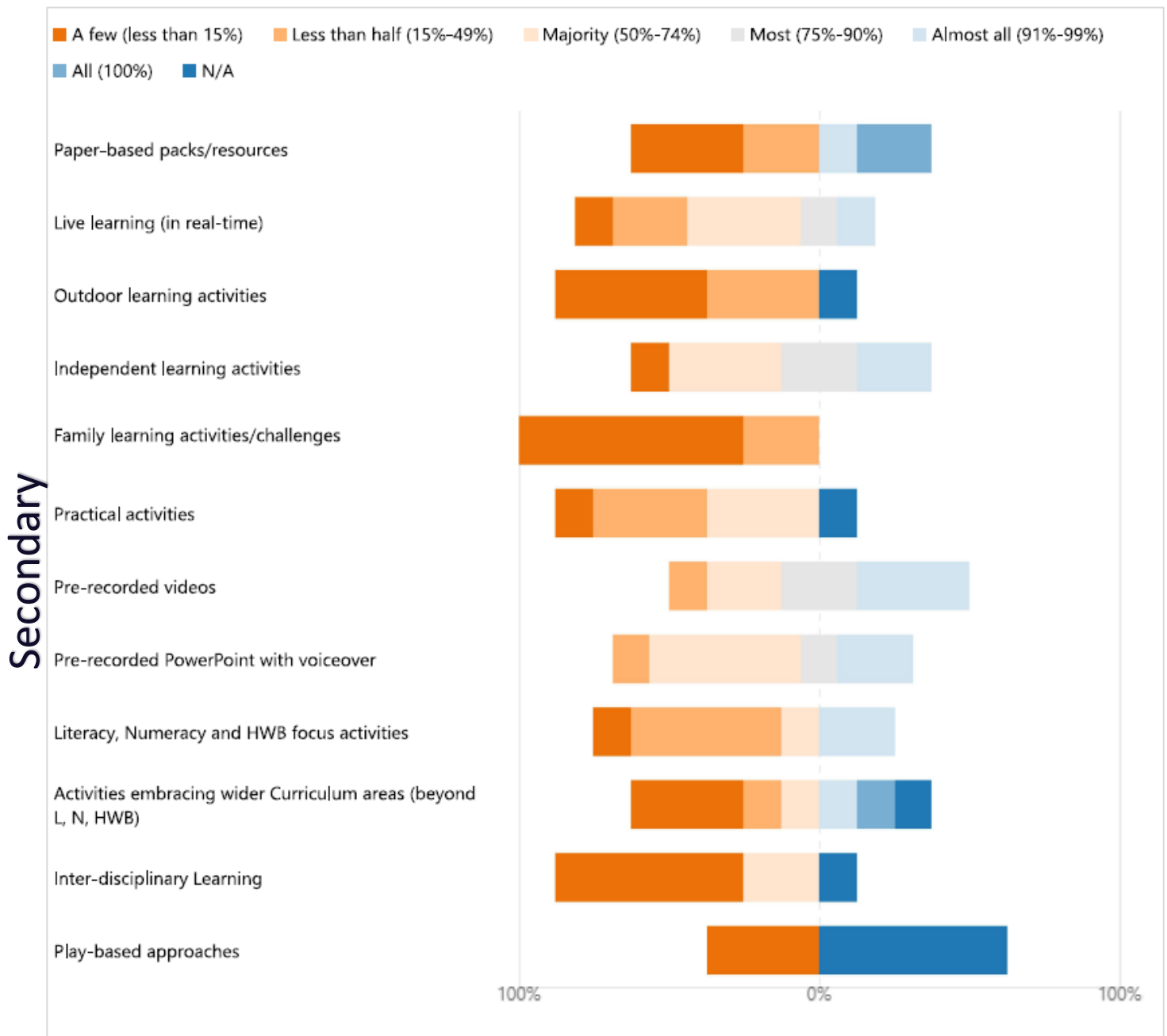
Lockdown 2 (2021) Secondary	All	Almost All	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few	N/A
Paper-based packs/resources	25.0%	12.5%	0%	0%	25.0%	37.5%	0%
Live Learning (in real-time)	0%	12.5%	12.5%	37.5%	25.0%	12.5%	0%
Outdoor Learning activities	0%	0%	0%	0%	37.5%	50.0%	12.5%
Independent learning activities	0%	25.0%	25.0%	37.5%	0%	12.5%	0%
Family learning activities/challenges	0%	0%	0%	0%	25.0%	75.0%	0%
Practical activities	0%	0%	0%	37.5%	37.5%	12.5%	12.5%

Pre-recorded videos	0%	37.5%	25.0%	25.0%	12.5%	0%	0%
Pre-recorded PowerPoint	0%	25.0%	12.5%	50.0%	12.5%	0%	0%
Literacy/Numeracy/H WB focus activities	0%	25.0%	0%	12.5%	50.0%	12.5%	0%
Activities embracing wider Curriculum	12.5%	12.5%	0%	12.5%	12.5%	37.5%	12.5%
Inter-disciplinary Learning	0%	0%	0%	25.0%	0%	62.5%	12.5%
Play-based approaches	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	37.5%	62.5%

In secondary, it is interesting to note the mixed approach embraced across our secondary schools, with **live learning, independent learning tasks, pre-recorded videos** and **pre-recorded PowerPoints** being the favoured approaches to Remote Learning. Schools also mixed approaches to curriculum delivery with core focus on Literacy/Numeracy/HWB and wider curriculum area foci. All secondary schools used **Microsoft Teams** to support delivery as identified previously with some also using **Google Classroom** as a main learning platform.

> *"Staff embracing a whole school IDL approach to support family learning opportunities so parents/adults in the home with multiple children are able to work on common areas. Staff confidence to do Google Meets - children really embraced this. It is early days with about half the staff at this time doing live Google Meets…"* School/HT J

Mechanisms and communication methods in use to support learner wellbeing

Schools adopted a range of approaches in order to maintain contact with children and young people, and their families in order to check in on wellbeing and ensure strong supports were in place to meet learning and wider needs. The graphs below illustrate the core approaches adopted by our Moray Schools:

Secondary

● Daily registration/check in for ...	4
● Opportunities for live learner ...	5
● Targeted engagement/phone ...	8
● Online virtual playtimes/chat c...	2
● Virtual whole-school events al...	1
● Other	2
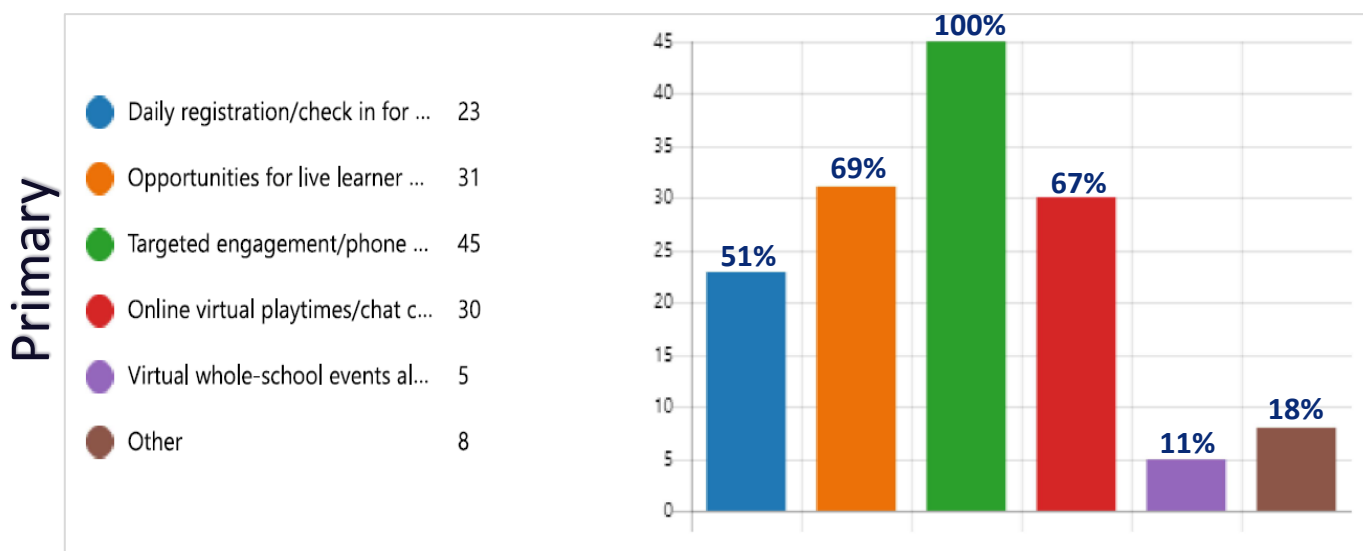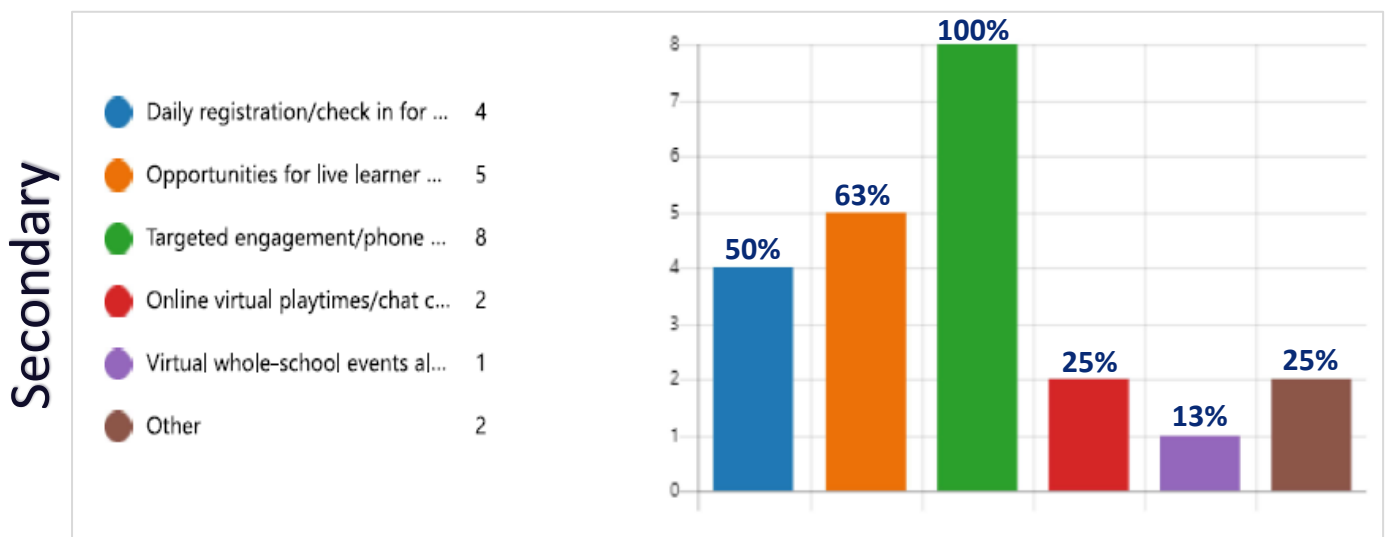
The following key observations are made regarding mechanisms and communication methods used by our Moray schools in support of learner wellbeing:

- **All** Moray schools (100%) undertook direct targeted engagement with children and young people – and their families as appropriate – using direct telephone call communications, e-mail and distanced contact (e.g. doorstep check-ins)
- The **majority** (69%) of our Moray schools provided opportunities for live learner interaction with staff using online platforms (e.g. Microsoft Teams/Google Meet)
- The **majority** (67%) of Moray Primary Schools provided opportunity for virtual playtimes/chat channels for children to support peer interaction and support
- The **majority** of Moray Primary (51%) and Secondary (50%) schools engaged in daily registration activities and check-ins as further interaction with learners
- Other approaches adopted by schools included **socially distanced doorstep check-ins** as required in support of more vulnerable children and young people, **wellbeing walks** and use of online tools (e.g. **Glow Mail**) for interaction and feedback

> *"Participation increased this year... Introduction of video calls and class chats for pupil health and wellbeing…"*
> School/HT K

> *"As we continued using Google Classroom on the return in August for homework, parents and children have felt more confident in using it…"*
> School/HT L

> *"Identifying learners at risk and requiring interventions/encouragement/ support. Parents report being pleased with the amount and quality of work and support being provided…"*
> School/HT M

Learner Progress in Learning during Lockdown

During lockdown, learners made variable progress in learning based on quality of work completed, ongoing assessment approaches adopted by our schools, through teacher review of work submitted and feedback subsequently provided. There has also been some variability in learner motivation to act on feedback provided by their class teachers.

The graphs and table below illustrate school views on learner progress in learning overall:
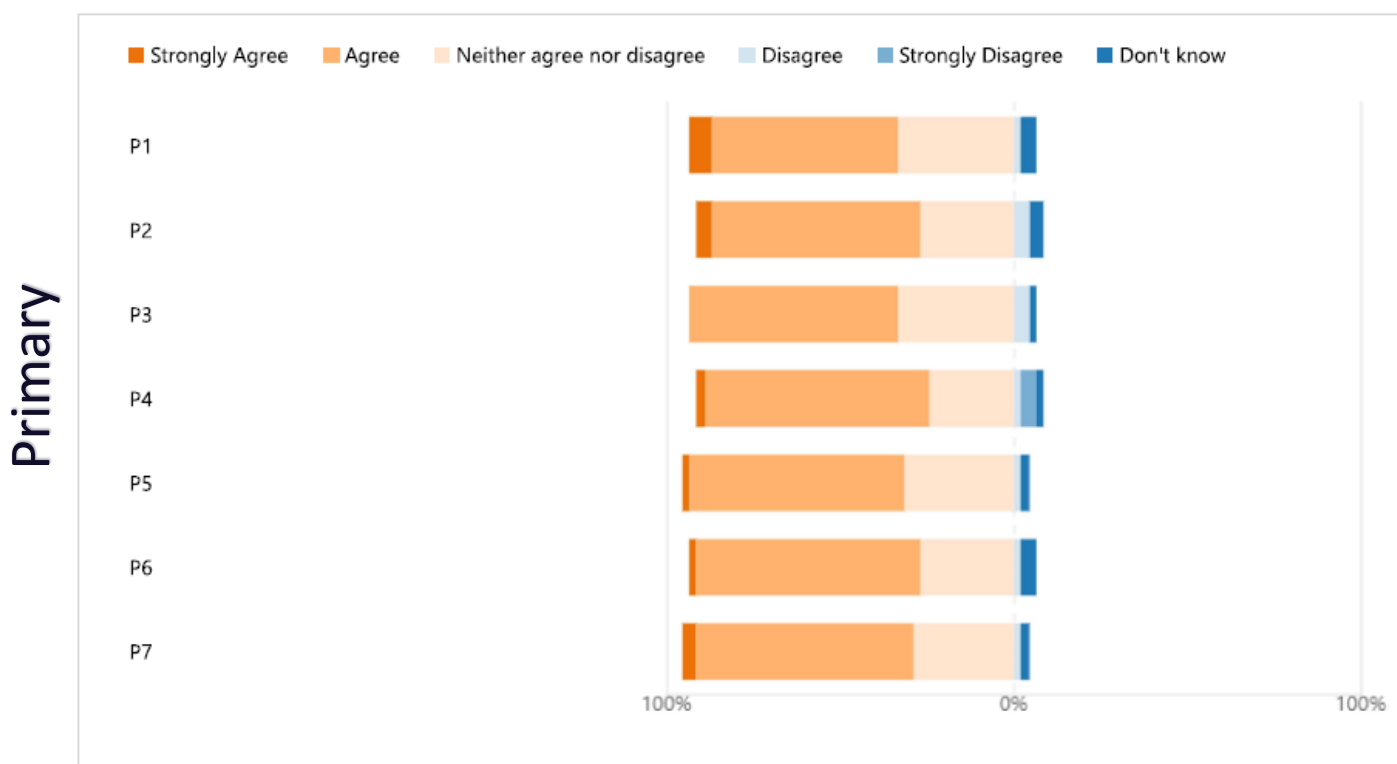
Lockdown 2 (2021) Primary	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
P1	6.7%	53.3%	33.3%	2.2%	0%	4.4%
P2	4.4%	60.0%	26.7%	4.4%	0%	4.4%
P3	0%	60.0%	33.3%	4.4%	0%	2.2%
P4	2.2%	64.4%	24.4%	2.2%	4.4%	2.2%
P5	2.2%	62.2%	31.1%	2.2%	0%	2.2%
P6	2.2%	64.4%	26.7%	2.2%	0%	4.4%
P7	4.4%	62.2%	28.9%	2.2%	0%	2.2%

Overall, engagement in learning during lockdown was positive overall across Moray Primary Schools. Some variation in **P4** is noted depending on school context.
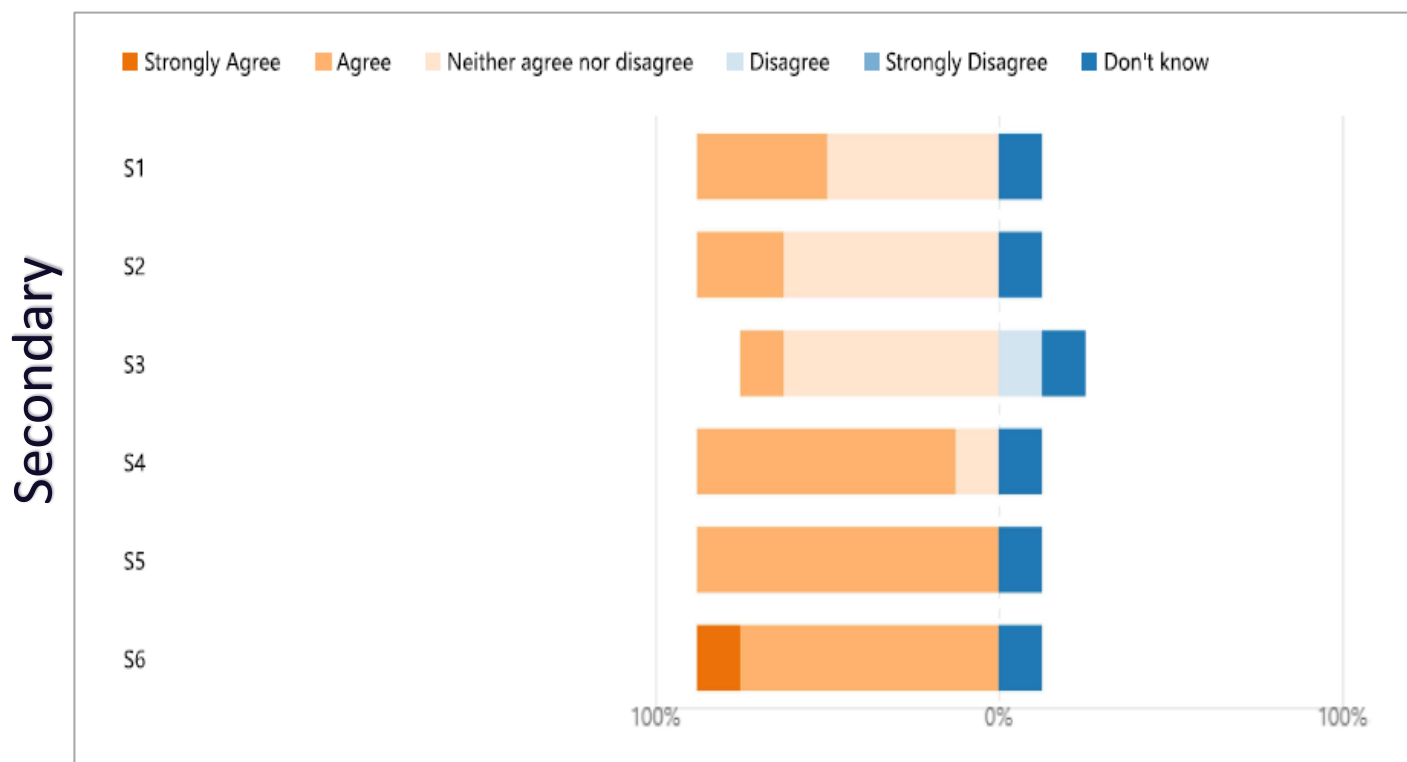
Lockdown 2 (2021) Secondary	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
S1	0%	37.5%	50.0%	0%	0%	12.5%
S2	0%	25.0%	62.5%	0%	0%	12.5%
S3	0%	12.5%	62.5%	12.5%	0%	12.5%
S4	0%	75.0%	12.5%	0%	0%	12.5%
S5	0%	87.5%	0%	0%	0%	12.5%
S6	12.5%	75.0%	0%	0%	0%	12.5%

Overall, engagement in learning during lockdown was positive in **Senior Phase** across our Moray Secondary Schools. In part, this will be attributable to importance placed on **S4 to S6** as the Senior Phase qualifications focus. There is variability in progress in learning across the Broad General Education and in particular, **S3**.

> *"Engagement has tailed off in S1 and S3 over the last week or two. Dongles have yet to arrive so some of our young people cannot access their learning unless they are in the building. Many families are finding it difficult to motivate their young people at home…"*
>
> School/HT N

> *"Much better than last time, would love us to get the issues to sharing of confidential/ASN information sorted… 'Good' progress…it is better than last time so in that sense it is good. It is much slower than in school learning - in that sense not good. Concerns that progress of the less engaged is even slower in comparison with others than in normal circumstances and so the gap is widening…"*
>
> School/HT O

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During Lockdown in March-June 2020, our Moray schools were asked to identify specific stages where lower levels of engagement had been experienced, grouped by key stages: Primary (lower stages – P1-P3), Primary (upper stages – P4-P7), Secondary (lower stages – S1-S3) and Secondary (upper stages – S4-S6).

●	Primary: P1-P3	19
●	Primary: P4-P7	19
●	Secondary: S1-S3	7
●	Secondary: S4-S6	7

Overall, there were **no identifiable stages** where engagement was weaker than other stages. In contrast during lockdown in **January to March 2021**, identifiable stages, particularly in the middle stage of Primary and Broad General Education (with S4 noted for participation) are noted for issues around engagement, participation or progress in learning.

Level of support in remote learning from home

Support in Remote Learning from home was essential for pupil motivation to engage in learning and complete learning activities set, beyond the scope of schools and practitioners during lockdown. The graphs below outline extend of support provide in Remote Learning at home, overall.

Primary

●	Too much support	4
●	Adequate support	39
●	Not enough support	2

Secondary

●	Too much support	0
●	Adequate support	8
●	Not enough support	0

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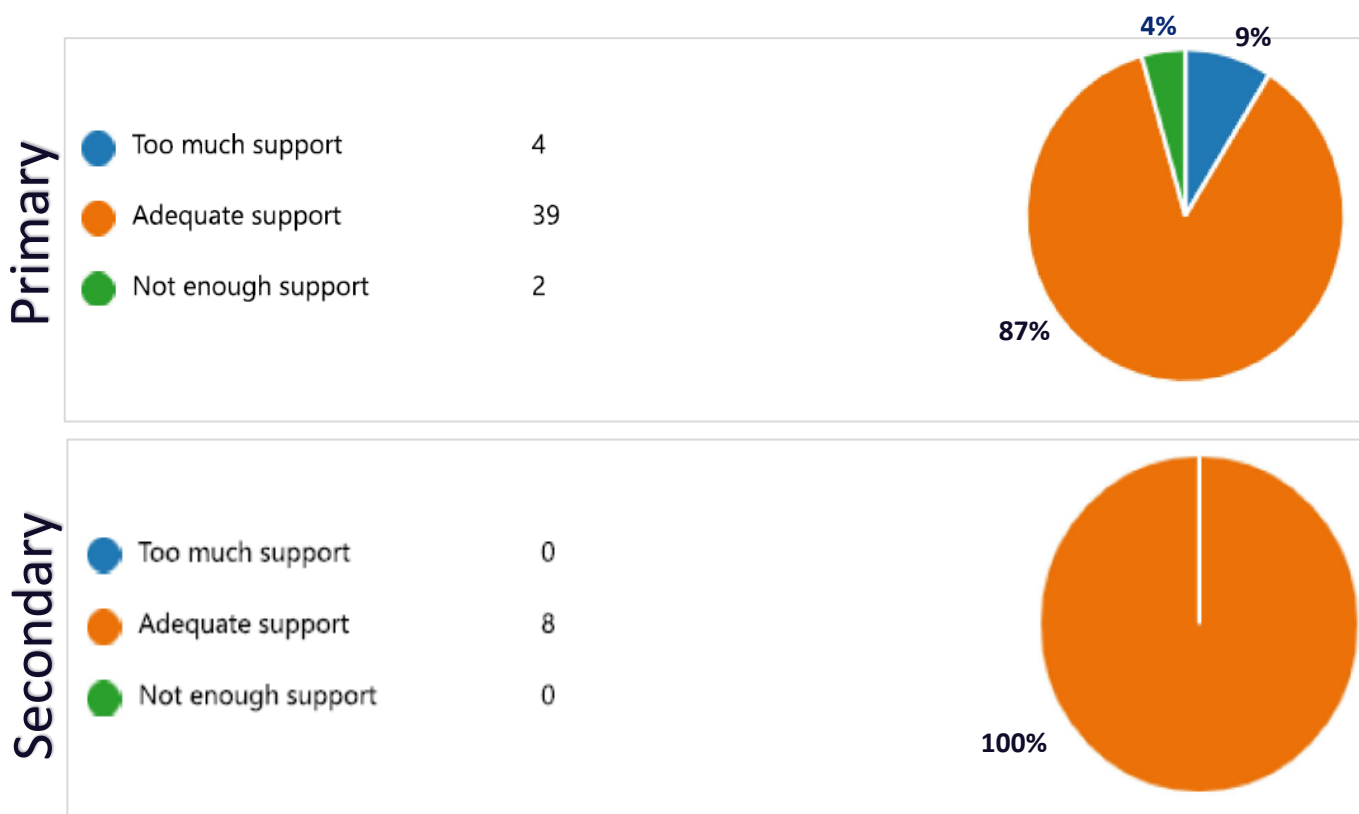
Overall, support in Remote Learning from home was strong, with **adequate support** provided for home learning activities across **almost all** of our schools. A **few** schools report over-support in Remote Learning and a **few** reported not enough support provided, both within the Primary sector.

> *"Everyone has been more confident in accessing the learning online. Paper packs for P1-3 and having the school open so we can hand out reading books has made a difference. Teachers who have volunteered in the hub have had the opportunity to see how the work is seen by pupils and to adjust how they approach the online aspect…"*
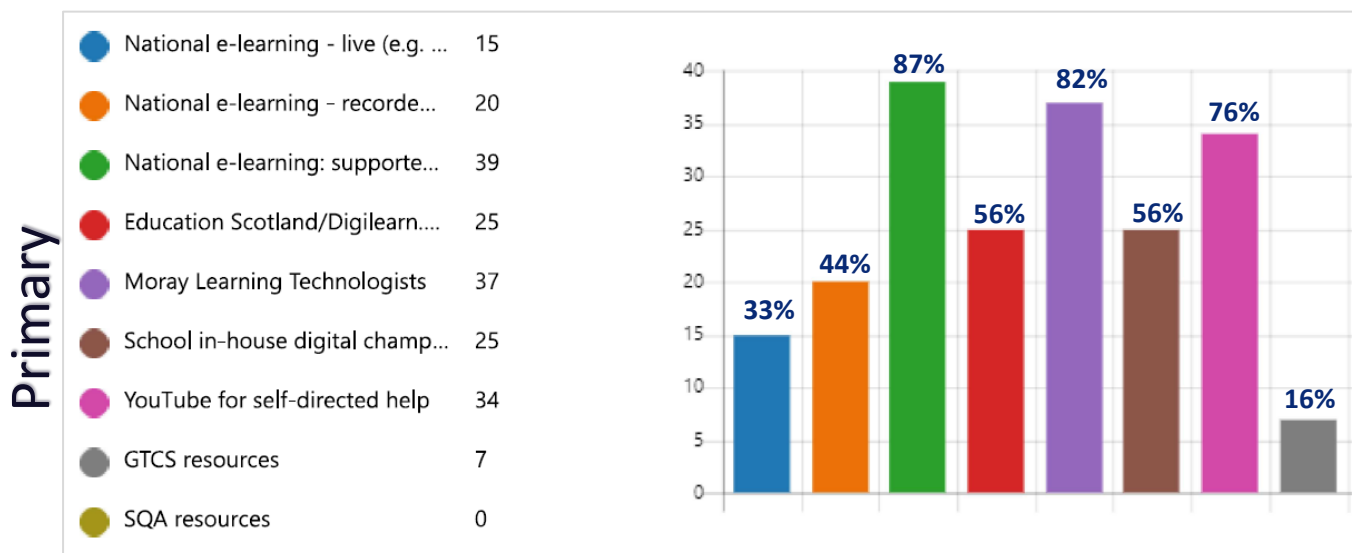>
> School/HT P

Further support accessed for building confidence in Remote Learning delivery

During lockdown 1 from March 2020, national development of resources, online platforms and direction in support of Remote Learning was not advanced in comparison with wider offers available to schools and practitioners during lockdown in January to March 2021. Where all school buildings remained open for childcare provision (local hub model as opposed to centralized '8' school ASG childcare hub model for provision), schools were able to target support more efficiently with easier access to school buildings supporting provision of physical resources and support. In essence, this made response to Remote Learning less reactionary and more planned based on prior experience.

Wider supports during January to March 2021 lockdown included:

- National e-learning live – providing live teaching opportunities supported by e-Sgoil
- National e-learning recorded – providing recorded video content for learning supported by West OS (West Partnership Online School)
- National e-learning supported – providing learning resources, activity packs, wakelets and teacher support materials from Education Scotland working in partnership with e-Sgoil, West OS, ADES, Scottish Government and GTCS
- Education Scotland/DigiLearn.Scot – supporting practitioners and learners in understanding remote learning platforms and how to use them effectively

In Primary, the following supports to Remote Learning were embraced:

Primary	
National e-learning - live (e.g. …	15
National e-learning - recorde…	20
National e-learning: supporte…	39
Education Scotland/Digilearn…	25
Moray Learning Technologists	37
School in-house digital champ…	25
YouTube for self-directed help	34
GTCS resources	7
SQA resources	0

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In secondary, the following supports were also embraced:

Legend	Count
National e-learning - live (e.g. ...	8
National e-learning – recorde...	6
National e-learning: supporte...	8
Education Scotland/Digilearn....	5
Moray Learning Technologists	7
School in-house digital champ...	7
YouTube for self-directed help	6
GTCS resources	3
SQA resources	7
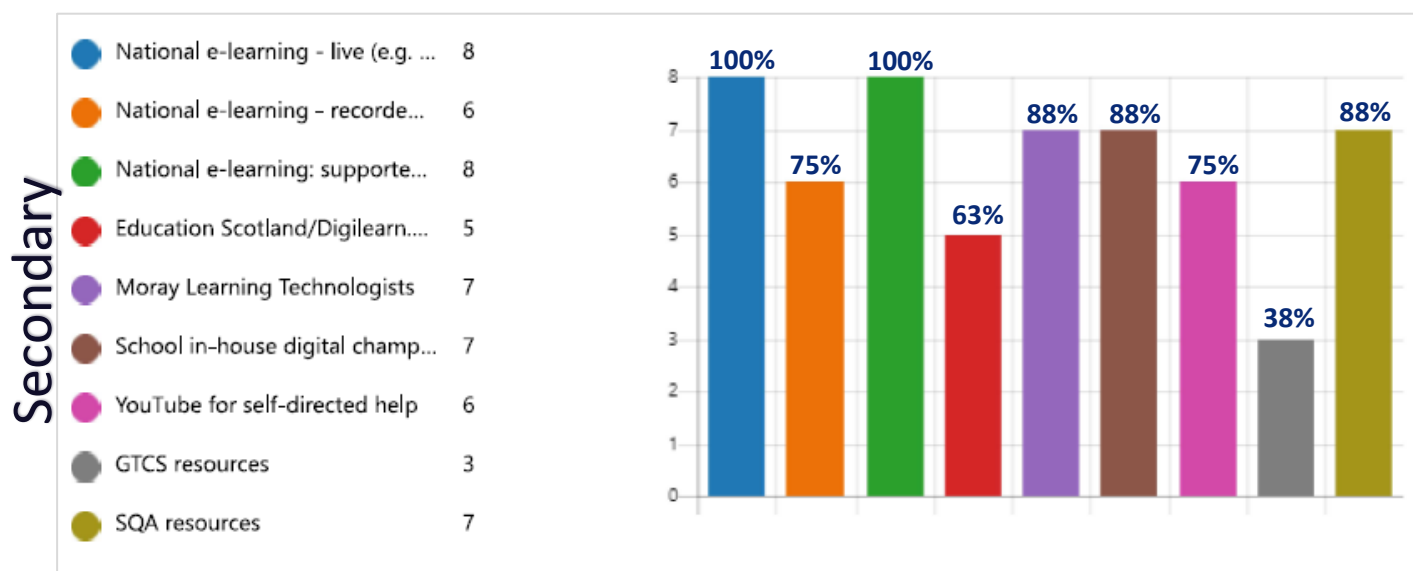
The following key points are noted from survey results above:

- **Most** (87%) of our Primary Schools and **all** Secondary Schools accessed and use **National e-learning 'supported' resources**, with **all** Secondary Schools accessing **National e-learning live** sessions
- **Less than half** of our Primary Schools made use of **National e-learning 'live'** (33%) and **National e-learning recorded** (44%) sessions
- **Most** (75%) of our Secondary Schools also accessed and used **National e-learning 'recorded'** resources
- **Moray Learning Technologists** were approached for support by **most** (82%) of our Primary Schools with **most** (88%) of our Secondary Schools also receiving same support
- The **majority** of our Primary Schools (56%) were supported by their **school in-house digital champions** and **Education Scotland digilearn.scot** support materials/resources
- **Most** Primary Schools also accessed **YouTube tutorials** and **support videos** (76%) for 'how to' support on learning platforms and digital material creation
- **GTCS resources** were used by **some** of our Primary Schools (16%)
- Our Secondary Schools used a mix of all approaches, with **GTCS** resources proving least popular (3 of 8 Secondary Schools embraced). **Most** secondary schools made use of **SQA** resources (88%)

Notable change in the support approaches and resources available are noted, in comparison with graph below from lockdown 1 in 2020 (all schools), particularly in use of **Education Scotland** offers and support from **Moray Learning Technologists** and **YouTube** resources.

Legend	Count
Moray Learning Technologist ...	36
Education Scotland Support ...	24
School's own "In-house" cham...	51
You Tube tutorials for self-tea...	34
Other support materials availa...	30
Other	7

Lockdown 2020
All Schools
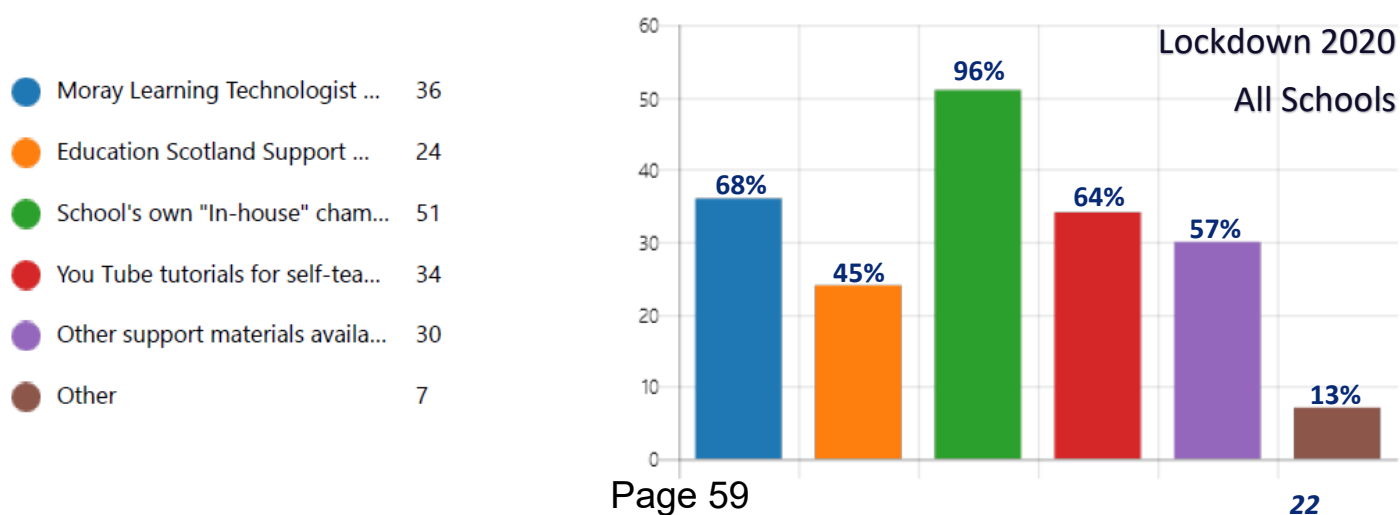
Methods of contact and communication with parents

During 2020 lockdown, schools maintained communication with parents/carers through a variety of methods. During lockdown in March-June 2020, **almost all** schools maintained communication using e-mailed newsletters and school communications (98%) and through direct telephone call contact (96%). Groupcall and text message alerts were used by the **majority** of schools (62%) where social media communication was further popular (Facebook – 49%; Twitter – 51%).

Social Media - Facebook	26
Social Media - Twitter	27
School Apps (Primary, Second...	16
Class Dojo	8
Online learning journals/e-jou...	5
E-mailed newsletters/commun...	52
Telephone Calls	51
Group Call/Text Message alerts	33
Other	19

Lockdown 2020 – All Schools
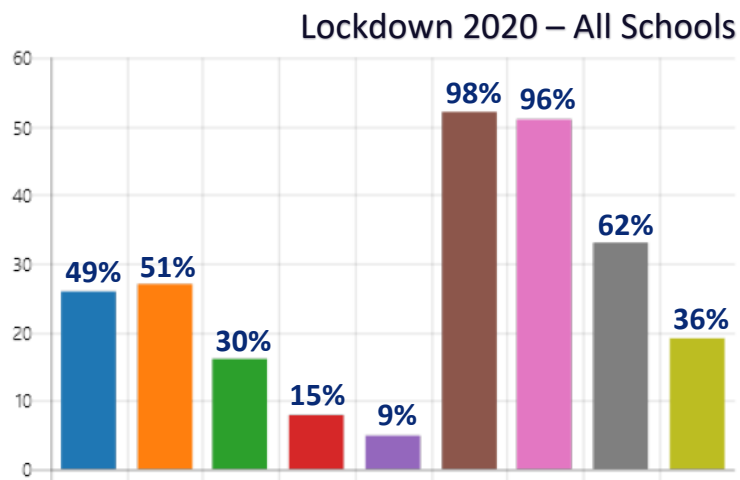
Our Moray Primary Schools during **January-March 2021 lockdown**, made use of the following means of maintaining contact with parents, including updates on learning and general communications:

Primary

Social Media - Facebook	16
Social Media – Twitter	20
School Apps	9
Class Dojo	9
Online learning journals/e-jou...	8
E-mailed newsletters/commun...	43
Telephone calls	45
Groupcall/text messages	26
Other	6
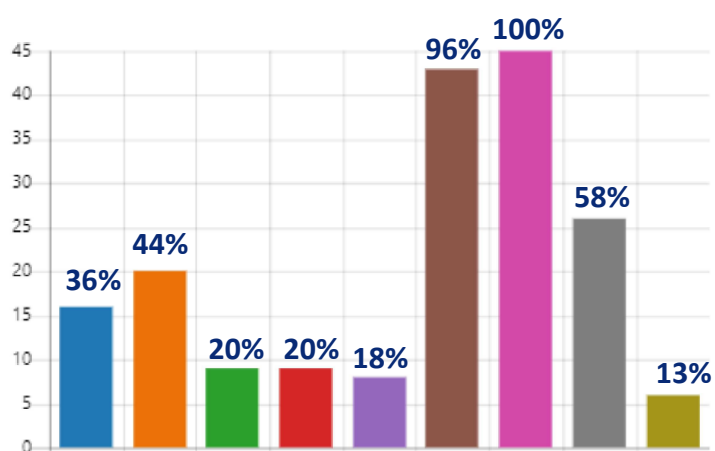
Secondary

Social Media - Facebook	6
Social Media – Twitter	8
School Apps	6
Class Dojo	0
Online learning journals/e-jou...	0
E-mailed newsletters/commun...	8
Telephone calls	8
Groupcall/text messages	8
Other	1
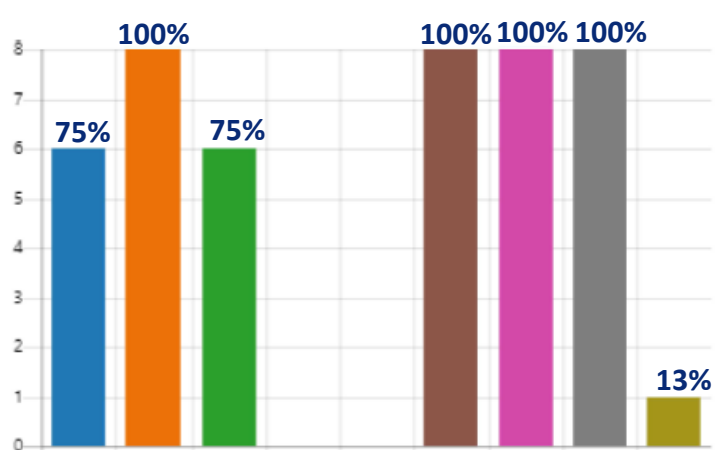
Key findings regarding maintaining contact with parents from lockdown during January-March 2021:

- **All** schools (100%) – Primary and Secondary – maintained contact with identified children and families through **direct telephone calls**
- **Almost all** Primary Schools (96%) and **all** Secondary Schools (100%) **e-mailed newsletters and communicated via e-mail**
- **All** Secondary Schools (100%) made use of **Social Media (Twitter)**, used by **less than half** (44%) of Primary Schools for communication with parents
- **Most** Secondary Schools (6 of 8) and **less than half** of Primary Schools (36%) made use of **Social Media (Facebook)** as a communication method
- **GroupCall** text messages were used by **all** Secondary Schools and the **majority** of Primary Schools (58%)
- **Most** Secondary Schools (75%) also made use of **School Apps**
- A **minority** of Primary Schools also made use of **School Apps** (20%), **Class Dojo** (20%), **Online Learning Journals** (18%) and **other** communication methods including direct contact with families through social distanced doorstep check-ins and other direct contact support

Based on communication methods embraced during lockdown in March-June 2020, schools have reviewed approaches with many extending communication methods embraced. As with March-June 2020 lockdown, schools further support contact with parents/carers through other means. This included use of **digital platforms** (Google Meet/Zoom) for online Parent Council meetings, delivery of **paper-based learning packs** to identified pupil home addresses for wellbeing check-ins, **wellbeing walks** with identified learners, **school websites** and other **Google and Microsoft tools available within GLOW**.

> *"Given our cohort, our engagement / participation figures are good. We have been more assertive in offering supports but there is still a level of frustration when these are not accessed as often it's the most vulnerable who are least visible…"*
>
> School/HT Q

> *"New families who have moved to the area, there has been a lack of engagement, next steps doorstep calls. Engagement has been a challenge with identified families and strategies are put in place to support them…"*
>
> School/HT R

> *"Connectivity continues to be the biggest challenge. Some teachers conducting live sessions have had to abandon the session due to their own or pupils' poor connectivity…"*
>
> School/HT S

What worked well with remote learning

Schools provided a range of positive comments with regards to remote learning. These are summarised in the wordle below:

Pupil engagement and skills development
Communication Differentiated physical packs
Zoom meetings for Parent contact
Feedback provided on learning Whole school IDL
Positive relationships Narrated PowerPoints
Live lessons Provision of ICT devices
Pre-recorded videos GLOW use Virtual classrooms
Differentiated Thinglink
Check-ins
Positive engagement
Weekly telephone calls packs
Staff confidence online platforms
MS Teams Google Classroom
Paper Packs Parental involvement in learning
Participation
Consistent approach to remote learning across the school
Easier to reach hard to reach parents
Live check-ins Families appreciate contact and support

In particular, the following are identified by a number of schools as common positive features:

- **Positive engagement overall** of children and young people in their learning, and families through communication methods used by our schools and **wider digital skills development** of learners throughout lockdown and use of online learning platforms (e.g. Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, GLOW tools)
- **Online learning platforms** and in particular, **Microsoft Teams** accessed through **GLOW** as a principal platform for learning and teaching, sharing learning resources and communication
- **Staff confidence in online platforms** which developed during previous lockdown and the months on return to school that followed, further strengthening during January to March 2021 lockdown
- **Live check-ins** undertaken by schools and practitioners with cohorts, groups and classes
- **Positive communication and positive relationships developed** through Remote Learning, online platforms and direction communication methods used, including a number of schools reporting it was **easier to reach harder to reach families**
- **Provision of mixed approaches to Remote Learning** including **paper packs**, **live lessons**, **pre-recorded videos**, **live check-ins**, **differentiated learning resources** and support of learning through **timely feedback**
- **Staff commitment to CLPL in support of remote learning** and **peer/collaborative support**
- Appreciation from families for **regular and direct contact made by schools with their children and families**

> *"The range of Teams we are running and our virtual Workshop Wednesday activities are leading to a greater level of engagement…"*
>
> School/HT T

> *"The increase in engagement from last lockdown. Staff confidence in digital platforms and approaches to remote learning. The use of Loom Videos for staff to introduce and explain learning and new concepts. The use of Google Meets - the children have responded so well to seeing each other and having the chance to interact with their teachers and friends…"*
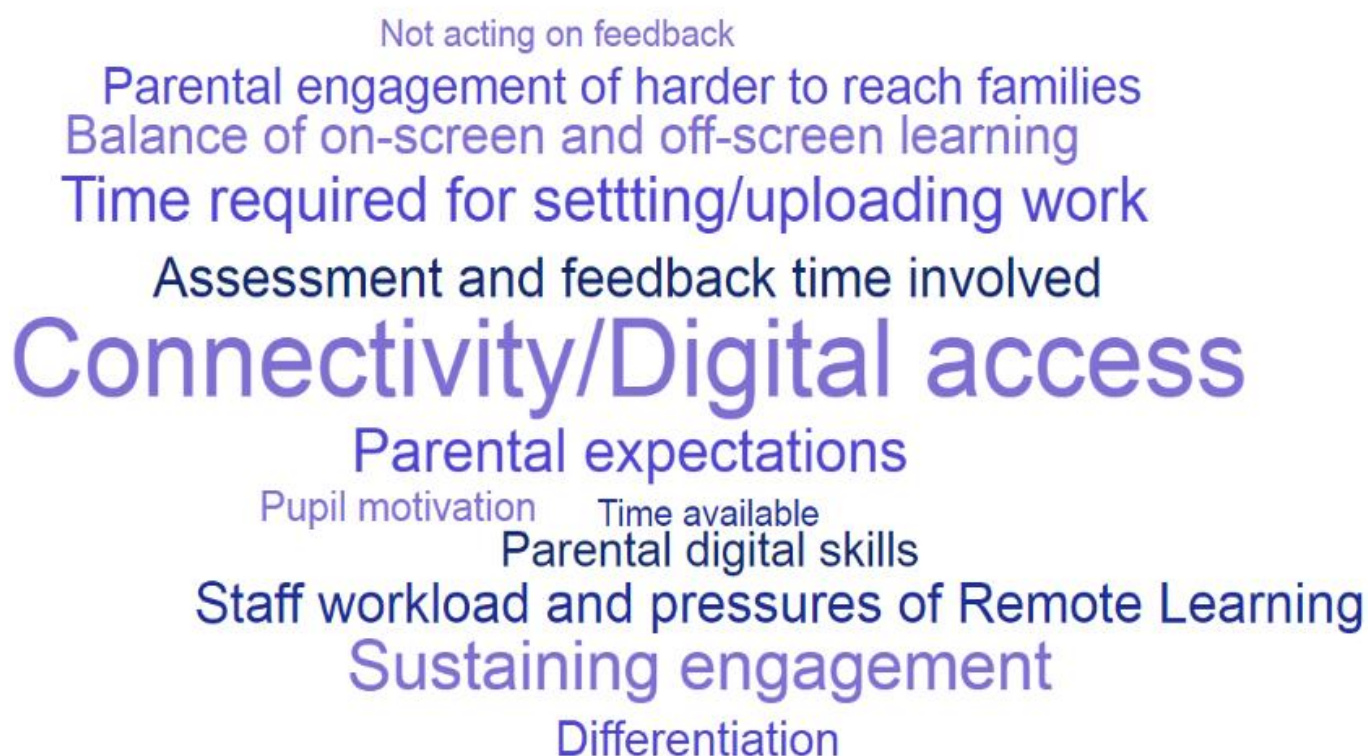>
> School/HT U

> *"Staff embracing new ways of learning using technology and the possibilities of continuing to make use going forward. Parents' feedback praises the way remote learning has been organised and managed and pre-recorded lessons that enable them to access learning around their family commitments…"*
>
> School/HT V

What could have made remote learning better

Schools further identified a range of things that may have made remote learning even better for them as summarised in the wordle below:

Not acting on feedback
Parental engagement of harder to reach families
Balance of on-screen and off-screen learning
Time required for settting/uploading work
Assessment and feedback time involved
Connectivity/Digital access
Parental expectations
Pupil motivation   Time available
Parental digital skills
Staff workload and pressures of Remote Learning
Sustaining engagement
Differentiation

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The following are identified by a number of schools as notable common factors adversely impacting on remote learning:

- While parental engagement was positive for a number of our Moray Schools, a further number also note **parental engagement of harder to reach families problemous**
- **Internet connectivity and digital access** continues to cause problems across a number of contexts, particularly in relation to **rural connectivity and digital access where families require a number of devices to access Remote Learning**
- Following experience of lockdown in March-June 2020, **quality of remote learning has strengthened**. However, **time required for planning /setting and uploading work along with assessment and provision of feedback** proved to be more challenging
- **Parental digital skills** proved to be an inhibitor to pupil progress, particularly where lower stages Primary pupils required support in online learning platforms and resources
- **Planning for learning** required **balance between on-screen and off-screen learning** to maintain **pupil motivation** which at times, proved to be an issue of concern
- A number of schools report that **sustaining engagement of learners** provide difficult as lockdown continued, with a number of learners **failing to act on teacher feedback provided**
- Through strengthened learning activities provided during this lockdown (January-March 2021), a number of schools report that **staff workload and pressures of Remote Learning** heightened, in part due to increased commitment to **differentiation of learning activities to meet the needs of all learners**

> *"Ensuring continued engagement in remote learning and some parental attitudes i.e. not a teacher so not doing remote learning. Deciding which vulnerable children should attend Hub as a large proportion of the school could be considered vulnerable but need to keep numbers manageable. Pressure from other agencies to have children attend hub…"*
>
> School/HT W

> *"As a school - signal strength for supporting online learning in school and in staff homes. Personally - Juggling head teacher role, being class committed with a P1/2 class on Google Classroom, liaising with parents and staff and managing the keyworker rooms, staff and children…"*
>
> School/HT X

> *"Managing parental expectations - especially when national messages are vague and open to interpretation. Managing the sheer volume of information from many providers and the over communication - too lengthy documents. Poor wi-fi coverage and the inability of school devices to work to their potential given the VPN issues.…"*
>
> School/HT Y

Further support required moving forwards (including local authority support)

When asked for any further comments around the remote learning experience during lockdown, various comments were received mirroring analysis above and illustrated in the wordle below. Key elements of note are identifiable in the wordle below:

Further comments relate to schools identifying:

- Overall lockdown experience being **much better than previous lockdown**
- **Connectivity issues** impacting adversely on Remote Learning
- Contribution of all **staff** and **support staff in particular, in supporting Remote Learning and upskilling in digital platforms/support learner wellbeing**
- Contribution of staff in **embracing challenges** presented by Remote Learning and **pride in staff** noted by Head Teachers
- Variability in **engagement/participation** across a number of stages/year groups as noted previously
- Variability in **parental engagement**
- Opportunities presented by Remote Learning including a number of schools **looking to develop online platforms for homework** following lockdown experiences

> *"Progress of children - we have said neither agree nor disagree as it is very difficult to gauge how much help and support has been given by parents at home when reviewing submitted work e.g. perfect spelling from children who we know have difficulty in this area. We have plans to assess children on their progress to identify gaps or challenge required…"*
>
> School/HT Z

Conclusions

Schools across Moray have provided a range of responses to key questions, supportive of informing future home learning activities, local authority and school planning when considering next steps. This survey will inform contingency and scenario planning.

Critical findings include a range of **positive** themes emerging as a result of remote learning and teaching due to Covid-19:

- **Commitment of staff and schools across Moray** to plan, deliver, assess and feed back on a wide range or Remote Learning activities including research based activities, online learning, paper based learning activities/resources and live learning **extending to wider curriculum areas** beyond literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing
- **Positive engagement and participation in Remote Learning overall** across most Primary and the majority of Secondary school stages
- **Positive learner progress overall** during lockdown in Primary schools and **Senior Phase in Secondary schools**
- **Refined approaches** by schools to appraise **online learning platforms** available and identify core learning platforms for use in schools, including measured approach to wider learning platform use
- **Notable adoption of Microsoft Teams across our schools** as a core platform for learning, with further use of **Google Classroom**
- **Equity in approach to learning activities** set, mindful of digital connectivity and access for children and families, mixing paper-based resources with online learning
- **Extended approaches to differentiation** in planned learning activities to meet the learning needs of a wide range of learners
- **Effective communication channels** and approaches to ensuring wellbeing check-ins with children and families throughout lockdown
- **Strengthened digital literacy** among pupils, staff and parents where appropriate, with notable **increase in digital confidence among support staff**
- **Commitment of staff to undertake professional learning** and in particular, **professional learning activities in relation to digital skills development**
- **Level of sufficient support at home provided to children and young people** in their Remote Learning activities overall
- **Positive use of wider supports available for strengthening Remote Learning** including Education Scotland, Moray Learning Technologists, GTCS, and in-school digital champions
- **Positive engagement and communication with harder to reach families** using a variety of communication methods across a number of schools
- **Provision of virtual playgrounds/chat opportunities** supported by digital platforms for social interaction and wider wellbeing

Identified areas where remote learning and teaching was **less favourable**:

- While positive overall, **variability in learner participation** in Primary stages **P1** and **P4** is noted in particular across our Primary schools with wider variability within other stages
- While encouraging overall, **variability in learner participation** in Secondary **S2-S4** is further noted across our Secondary schools with identifiable drop in **S4** participation in some of our Secondary schools
- Concerns around **learner progress** in **S3** in a number of Secondary schools
- **Engagement to Participation transfer rate** is of note and requires investigation for reasons behind drop in participation from engagement, noted across a number of our schools within **P4-P6** and **S2-S4** in particular
- **Connectivity issues** and **access to ICT devices** remains a concern in a number of schools, including school **bandwidth** and other **device/network related issues**
- **Access to devices for children and families**, particularly in multi-child households with shared devices with continued approaches to digital inclusion at local authority level aiming to address this
- **Restricted parental engagement in a number of families**, leading to lower than desired engagement and participation (noting positive engagement also of a number of families, including those harder to reach in a number of schools and less so in others)
- **Parental expectations around Remote Learning exceeding what can be delivered in actuality**, based on time available, technology and the distant nature of teaching and learning activities delivered during lockdown
- **Workload implications** associated with Remote Learning **linked to planning, differentiation, delivery, assessment and feedback** with online learning platforms available at any time heightening expectations of staff availability and access for learners
- Issues of **sustaining engagement and motivation of learners** in Remote Learning, due to reduced face-to-face interaction and opportunities for natural dialogue with concerns raised by a number of schools around mental health and wellbeing implications for our learners and lack of action at times on feedback provided on learning
- **Parental digital skills** restricting technology support available at home for learners – particularly those in lower stages Primary school – potentially impacting on Remote Learning access and engagement/participation

Recommendations

Following review of survey feedback, the following recommendations were made in support of home learning or future blended learning approaches in our Moray schools post-lockdown in August/September 2020. The table below outlines these recommendations with comment and RAG (Red/Amber/Green) rating to indicate their progress:

	Recommendation – 2020	Commentary - 2021
SS 1	Schools should continue to identify gaps in learning and through parental communication, identify reasons for lower levels of engagement and identify interventions to mitigate this in the event of future lockdown	Schools have continued to progress this area, supported by variation in learning approaches, differentiation to meet learning needs and a variety of communication mechanisms in order to reach all learners including those harder to reach. Focus during this lockdown has been very much on quality of learning
SS 2	Support for parents during future lockdown activities should be considered including extension of online platform support materials for learners, in order for parents to support children in their learning	Parental digital literacy continues to be a work-in-progress with materials developed in support of parents (e.g. Digital Learning App, signposting to national e-learning support guidance). Schools continue to promote this with reticence from some parents
SS 3	The local authority should develop guidance for schools in support of future remote and blended learning during Covid-19 lockdown, using surveys undertaken to inform next steps along with key research in this area.	Key guidance and toolkits were developed in support of Remote Learning, including Remote Learning protocols in order to support schools in planning and delivery including "Our Moray Standard for Remote Learning and Teaching". Please refer to Appendix A for Guidance and numbered Appendix items contained within the toolkit
SS 4	The local authority and schools should work to identify learners with insufficient ICT access and digital connectivity in order to support remote learning using identified digital platforms	While issues with connectivity and digital access remain – particularly rural and in-school connectivity – digital inclusion monies along with local authority digital strategy under development has ensured this has progressed at pace and will continue to do so, in line with future Scottish Government directives and approaches
SS 5	Schools should evaluate staff readiness for live learning and teaching using available digital platforms, ensuring appropriate training is undertaken and safeguarding arrangements are in place in adoption of live learning, further building on creative education delivery embraced during Covid-19 lockdown	Appropriate training materials and support guides for live learning were provided, including endorsement through LNCT. As appropriate, a range of approaches to Remote Learning have been adopted and embraced in line with National and local guidance by our schools with measured approach to live learning, ensuring learner engagement. Schools have embraced National e-learning offers including e-Sgoil and WestOS

SS 6	In embracing digital platforms and live learning, the local authority and schools should look to streamline and agree the number of learning platforms in use in order to reduce confusion and need for learners to work on a variety of platforms	Considerable streamlining of learning platforms has been undertaken, with adoption of online learning platforms by schools on a very measured basis in support of learning and learner wellbeing. GLOW continues to be our advocated multi-user platform with accessibility provided through GLOW to Microsoft Teams/Google Classroom, linking with all National safeguards
SS 7	Schools should consider how to strengthen confidence of support staff in use of online digital platforms, in support of virtual communication and learner support in the future including pupils with ASN	Notable progress in this area has been, identified previously in this survey – support staff were valued and identified by a number of schools for their commitment and embracing online platforms in a number of our schools as evidenced in this survey
SS 8	Schools should plan for a range of contingencies – e.g. remote/blended learning for groups and stages – in the event of further disruption to school-based education. Schools should consider a blended approach to learning tasks, mixing paper-based resources with digital learning activities in order to ensure continued interest of learners, providing variety in learning	Schools continued to provide a mixed delivery approach to Remote Learning in line with research, National and Local Guidance including our Remote Learning guidance. This was considered robust following local authority review by Education Scotland HMI. Schools continue to plan for a range of contingencies with Quality Assurance processes built in to Remote Learning and Teaching activities. This is very much a planned approach as opposed to the reactive nature of Lockdown 1 in order to establish online learning platforms at that time

Further recommendations arising from this **Lockdown 2 (January-March 2021)** and this Survey Report are as follows:

SS 1	Review reasons behind lower than desired engagement and participation levels – including engagement-participation transfer rate – in individual schools and identified stages to address any emerging attainment gaps and reduce impact of similar non-engagement in the event of future disruption to our school system
SS 2	Continue to progress current work at local authority level in line with National guidance on digital connectivity, access and devices to ensuring equity of digital device access for all learners

SS 3	Continue to investigate reasons behind technology, bandwidth and ICT infrastructure issues within our schools in order to enable seamless approaches to online learning between home and school for learners and staff
SS 4	Further develop parental engagement and family learning through the potential of online learning platforms and integrate within review of Moray Parental Engagement/Family Learning Strategy
SS 5	Continue to strengthen staff digital skills development through professional learning opportunities, addressing workload issues addressed through a clear framework for staff on expectations around Remote Learning and its delivery in partnership with LNCT
SS 6	In the event of any future disruption to our Education system, ensure clear communication messages are distributed through local authority and school communication channels (e.g. social media, websites) to clarify what Remote Learning is/is not to manage parental expectations and protect staff from any notable workload pressures
SS 7	Provide opportunities for parental digital skills development at local authority and school level through appropriate learning opportunities and resources
SS 8	Extend staff confidence in digital delivery and live teaching through extended opportunities to try out these approaches – potential for extending use of online platforms for home learning
SS 9	Extend knowledge of learning and teaching approaches available in support of Remote Learning, building understanding of quality Remote Learning experiences through appropriate Quality Assurance self-evaluation frameworks
SS 10	Further roll-out resources in support of "Our Moray Standard for Learning and Teaching" in order for practitioners to transfer established good practice in the classroom to the online environment

Moray Education
May 2021
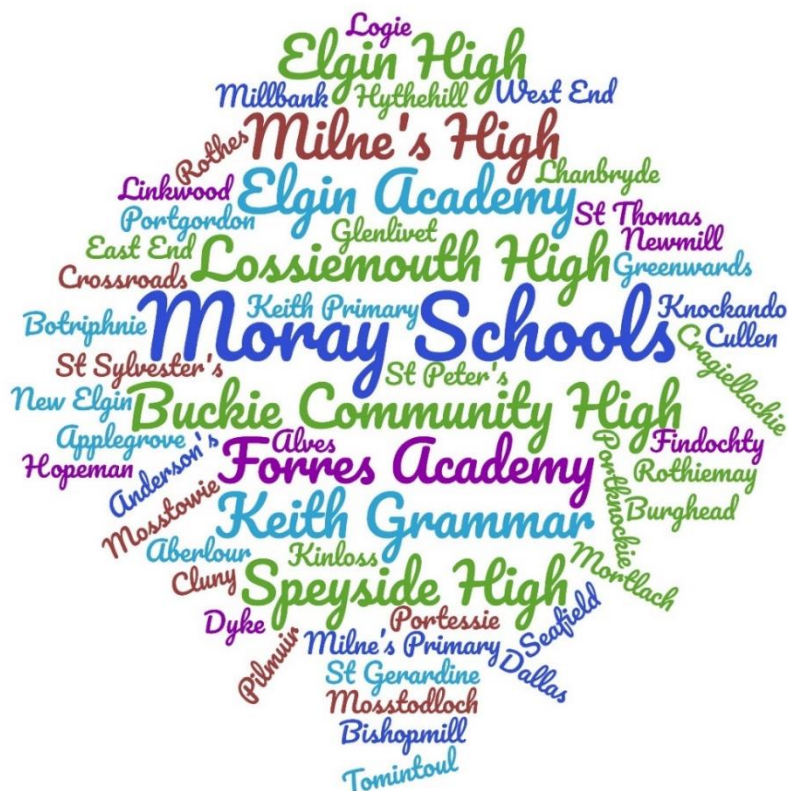
Education, Communities and Organisational Development

Remote Learning
Guidance
Covid-19

...for Moray's children and young people

Background

Covid-19 continues to impact on our daily lives and schools, presenting restrictions on the way that we deliver the curriculum and full entitlements to our Moray learners, through high quality learning and teaching experiences. In order to support development of the four capacities in Moray's children and young people, we must ensure continuity and progress in learning in the event of future lockdown and disruption to our schools while ensuring the wellbeing and safety of all staff in line with National and Local agreements.

This guidance document has been created to support schools in planning remote learning in the event of disruption due to Covid-19 which may include remote learning and teaching delivery to:

- **All pupils** in the event of full school closure
- **Cohorts or groups of pupils** within the **same stages** in Primary/Secondary self/family isolating at home
- **Cohorts or groups of pupils** across **different stages** in Primary/Secondary self/family isolating at home
- **Individual pupils** self/family isolating at home
- **Any or all of the above** in the event of a **teacher self-isolating or working at home due to particular vulnerabilities or their need to shield**, but remaining **able to work from home**

In the above cases, remote learning and teaching materials and delivery (as agreed at school level and fully reflective of national and local agreements) should be provided in order to ensure continuity and access to Education.

Key definitions

As Covid-19 has progressed, a variety of definitions have arisen as part of our new learning and teaching vocabulary. In reference to remote learning and teaching:

> **"Remote Learning…occurs when a learner and teacher are separated by time and/or distance and therefore cannot meet in a traditional classroom setting. Information is typically transmitted via technology such as email, discussion boards, video conferencing...no physical presence is required."**

Other terms now more frequently in use include:

Blended Learning	**Includes learning that happens in real time (synchronous), alongside a teacher such as online discussions and learning which happens at the learners pace (asynchronous) such as project work.**
E-learning/Digital learning	**E-learning or electronic learning is the umbrella term used to describe education using electronic devices and digital media. Much of our learning now involves e-learning both in and outside of the classroom environment.**

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Learning at home/Home Learning	Learning at home is a broad term used to describe the learning which happens outwith early learning and childcare settings and schools. It can take place through everyday activities including play and general family life, such as food preparation and cooking. It can also happen through curriculum related activities, homework, reading and sharing books.
Asynchronous Learning	Children and young people undertake learning activities without direct supervision from the teacher. These activities may be digital or traditional. Learners can communicate with their teacher at their own pace or within a set time period. For example a teacher setting a specific project and asking young people to check in through a discussion board if they have any questions.
Synchronous Learning	Online learning in which children and young people can learn from their teacher in real time. For example a teacher teaching to a group of children or class using digital technologies (also known as 'live teaching').

Source: Education Scotland

Flipped Classroom	A pedagogical approach in which the conventional notion of classroom-based learning is inverted: students are introduced to the learning material before class with classroom time then being used to deepen understanding through discussion with peers and problem-solving activities facilitated by teachers.

Flipped Classroom

1. Learners complete offline learning

2. Learners engage with their teacher(s) to discuss the learning completed at

Traditional Classroom

1. Teacher(s) directly instruct learners

2. Learners complete homework and learning tasks confirming
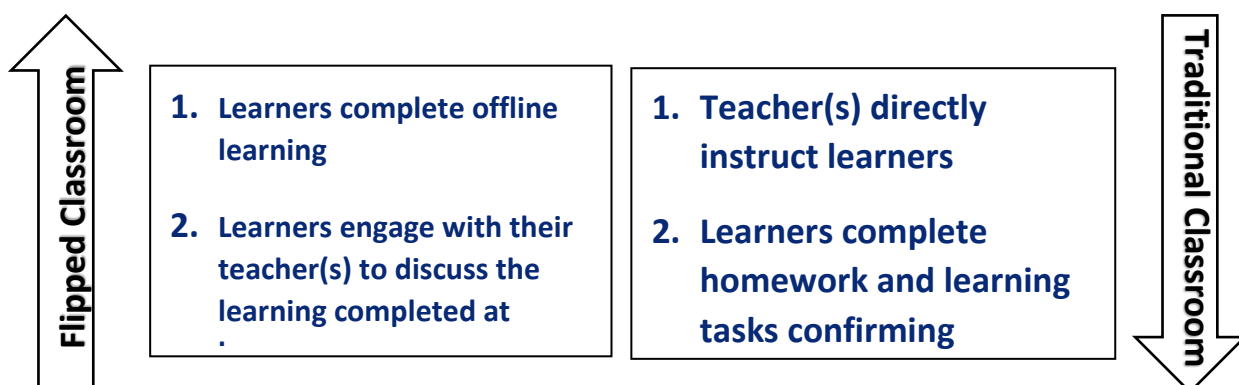
Source: West Partnership

Covid-19 has resulted in a number of parents considering Home Educating their children on return of schools in August 2020. This should not to be confused with **Learning at home/Home Learning**. The definition of **Home Education**:

Home Education/ Home Schooling	When a parent/ family make the decision to withdraw their child from their local authority school and education system and decide to teach their child solely at home. Note: This is a decision made by families to teach their children from home rather than send their children to school. This required contact with the local authority with an approval process following which can take up to 6 weeks.

Source: Education Scotland
See also: Moray Council

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For return of our Moray schools in August 2020, Senior Leaders were asked to plan for a blended learning return, changing at the end of July 2020 following announcement by the Deputy First Minister on behalf of the Scottish Government that schools would reopen fully in August 2020. With increasing cases of Covid-19 in Scotland, it is essential that we plan for remote learning and take time to collaboratively consider key questions in our schools in the event of further disruption to our learners and our schools.

This guidance document has been created in order to provide clarity around expectations for schools and practitioners in Blended and Remote Learning and Teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Digital Platforms

In Moray, **GLOW is the advocated digital platform to be used by our schools for online learning and teaching**. This includes Microsoft Teams and Google Classroom accessible via GLOW. The principal reason for this is to ensure access and safeguarding for all within GLOW's nationally agreed policies. While some nearby local authorities have progressed their own policies (for example with Google Classroom) outwith the National GLOW policy, in Moray we continue to use GLOW as Scotland's Schools National platform with access to digital platforms including Microsoft Teams and Google Classrooms through GLOW.

Schools may make also make further use of a range of learning resources online including Sumdog and Scholar to name some. Class Dojo and School App may be in use to support communication with home on learning set and in order to share key learning activities. Care should be taken by schools to review the range of learning platforms and online digital learning resources in place and balance this with their suitability. Schools should also ensure wider platforms are approved for use in Moray. **Appendix 1** in the *Appendix and Toolkits booklet* contains a generic checklist that schools may wish to use when assessing suitability of learning platforms and online resources.

Digital Inclusion and Equity

In delivering learning and teaching remotely using digital platforms and online learning resources, consideration must be given to **digital inclusion of learners**. Schools should consider whether learners were part of recent digital inclusion device allocations and whether further support is required, following direct contact with children and families affected by Covid-19 self/family isolation. This should form part of initial contact and wellbeing check-in following self-isolation/family-isolation.

Equally, where staff are asked to undertake recording or live streaming of lessons from home due to reasons noted in the **Introduction** section above, appropriate hardware and software should be provided to support this where required. Appropriate training and resources should be made available to support this as provided by Moray Learning Technologists and their bank of materials or the National offer provided by Education Scotland (see **Key Resources** section below).

Moray Schools, Learner and Parent/Carer Covid-19 Surveys

Three key surveys were conducted in Moray during Covid-19 lockdown involving three key stakeholder groups – learners, parent/carers and schools – in order to gain insight into home learning. These surveys were analysed and critical findings extracted and mapped in order to inform future remote or blended learning and teaching.

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Key recommendations arising from survey findings are contained within **Appendix 2** in the *Appendix and Toolkits booklet* with summary recommendations provided as follows:

- The need to continue to identify gaps in learning, further structuring and timetabling learning in the event of future lockdown while cognisant of pressures on families when parents are working while children are learning at home

- Desire for further support and resources for parents in accessing and using online platforms, when supporting learning at home

- The importance of addressing any digital inequity/inclusion issues including access to ICT and digital connectivity for identified children and families

- Support and further resources required for staff in the event of future remote learning and teaching, including support for live teaching using digital platforms available

- Reducing the number of online learning platforms in use in order to streamline access to learning resources and simplify remote learning experiences

- Support for staff in use of online platforms, ensuring work set is of sufficient pace, challenge and with appropriate levels of differentiation to meet the needs of learners (including those learners with Additional Support Needs)

- Importance of contingency planning for any future remote learning, including review of blended learning approaches, providing variety with mix of online and paper-based resources

- The importance of wellbeing and enabling social interaction through available online means for children and young people

Supporting planning for Remote Learning – Top Tips for Schools

Appendix 3 and **Appendix 4** in the *Appendix and Toolkits booklet* contain Reflective Questions and Planning Mats for schools to consider and populate if desired, in the event of absence of individual pupils or staff members, groups/cohorts or partial/full school closure due to Covid-19 following advice from Public Health. Schools may wish to use these as part of their contingency planning in the event of remote learning. Following discussion, the following are areas to consider with regards to Remote Learning and Teaching:

- Where possible within Covid-19 mitigation, working face to face in classrooms with distancing measures and risk assessment should be the favoured approach to learning and teaching. This will not be possible in lockdown

- Online methods of learning may be considered as part of ongoing learning and teaching activities

- Where pupils are absent from school for non-Covid related reasons, normal attendance processes should apply along with provision of work for medical or other authorised reasons for absence in line with policy

- Any practitioner involvement in online teaching during Covid-19 must be capable of being delivered in the 35 hour working week with time allowed within the Working Time Agreement for the school, for preparation of materials for online learning
- Teachers should not be asked to exceed timetabled class contact time or class size maxima when delivering online teaching. This includes when being asked to deliver online teaching to pupils accessing learning remotely, above normal timetable expectations

- Where a teacher is working from home due to reasons provided in the Background section above and is undertaking live teaching from home, supervision of classes engaged in remote learning in physical classrooms should be undertaken by GTCS registered teachers

- Screen-based online learning should not be the only approach adopted with consideration given to a range of activities including asynchronous research tasks, project work, practical activities and paper-based tasks not requiring digital device use

- At local school agreement and where staff are comfortable in doing so, class teachers may teach their own class for the duration of their class contact time while delivering synchronous live-stream or recorded lessons to pupils elsewhere

- Live teaching and other pre-recorded learning videos/voiceovers should only be used where staff are comfortable, keen and willing to do so

- Where staff are working from home due to self-isolation, particular vulnerabilities or a move to blended or remote learning in their own school, they may be asked to deliver online lessons, either pre-recorded or on a live basis. Please see previous bullet points, where staff are comfortable to do so. This includes need for flexibility where provision of live or pre-recorded lessons from home may prove a significant challenge for some staff depending in home circumstances

- Where a teacher is absent and their post is back-filled or absence is covered to ensure in-class lessons are being delivered by another teacher, there may be no need for a self-isolating or vulnerable member of staff who remains fit for work, to deliver any online lessons. Individual circumstances should be reviewed and suitable work plan developed with the member of staff in this event

- Schools may now wish to ascertain which staff are happy to deliver live or pre-recorded lessons in order to mitigate against future concerns that may be raised in the event of staff self-isolating in the future but able to work. Any concerns can then be raised in advance of potential disruption to work and learning

- In the event of a local closure or full lockdown, Remote Learning should be automatically enacted. This may include learners engaging in Remote Learning at home or through in-school key worker childcare provision or due to vulnerability/ASN

Delivery of Remote Learning – Top Tips for Staff

Do's	Don'ts
• Only access Microsoft Teams and Google Classroom for communicating with learners using GLOW and its nationally approved safeguards	• Do not solely provide online learning as a pedagogical approach ensuring a mix of learning activities – asynchronous, synchronous and flipped as appropriate
• Offer a blended learning approach, which may include synchronous and asynchronous learning	• Avoid setting too much work - be mindful of work time required for completion or support/scaffolding that maybe required but not possible from an adult
• Consider the balance between online screen time and offline paper based resources and activities	• Do not share personal phone numbers, e-mail addresses or Social Media IDs with learners or their parents
• Maintain appropriate communication with learners and parents in line with the GTCS Code of Conduct and other guides provided in the Key Resources section as directed by your school	• Do not use any other platform for live-streaming online learning other than GLOW approved digital platforms, accessing through GLOW
• Protect personal privacy and safeguard your professionalism – for example, appropriate dress and neutral virtual backgrounds when delivering online learning	• Do not engage in telephone or video-calls with parents unless agreed and arranged through the school – line managers should be aware and in agreement of such meetings
• Adhere to school procedures for safeguarding and handling incidences of pupil misbehaviour in the online learning environment	• Do not use your own telephone or other devices unless you wish to do so
• Be mindful of your own wellbeing and screen time, avoiding excessive periods of online working	• Do not participate in any remote learning activities that you are not comfortable with
• Consider engaging with online learning support materials and webinars as provided by Moray Learning Technologies and the national Education Scotland Digital team (digilearn.scot)	• Do not forget that while we remain in a pandemic, national agreements on weekly working times and importance of staff wellbeing remain – speak with your line manager if unsure about anything

Education Scotland have produced a useful guide in support of online learning. Please remember that where we access Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams via GLOW, some features referred to may not be accessible:

Our Moray Standard for *Remote* Learning and Teaching

Following extensive work undertaken with senior leaders, practitioners and officers in its development, **Our Moray Standard for Learning and Teaching** remains our overarching strategy for ensuring high quality learning experiences for all. This should be reflected upon and embraced in the event of remote learning as outlined above.

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While remote learning and teaching activities may differ from in-class delivery, principles underpinning high quality learning and teaching remain constant and require reflection upon across our Associated Schools Groups and individual schools. As previously endorsed by LNCT, Our Moray Standard is what we should continue to aspire towards while it is accepted, the Covid-19 pandemic presents practitioners with new challenges. **Appendix 5** in the *Appendix and Toolkits booklet* contains a reflective toolkit that schools may wish to use when considering Our Moray Standard for Learning and Teaching, within the context of Covid-19 and remote learning. This may complement planning mats contained within **Appendix 3** and **Appendix 4** in the *Appendix and Toolkits booklet* where they are in use.

Remote Learning Protocol

Schools should consider development of a Remote Learning protocol, particularly where online live learning has been agreed. This should be developed in order to protect staff and safeguard pupils. A generic template for schools which may be added to is provided in **Appendix 7** in the *Appendix and Toolkits booklet*.

Key Resources

The following resources prove very useful in considering school approaches to support Remote Learning and Teaching. You may wish to review these prior to completing any of the Toolkits and checklists provided within the Appendix. To access, Ctrl + click on the links below

National Resources

Education Scotland – Supporting online learning – links for practitioners
Education Scotland – Blended Learning: enhancing learning through online collaboration
Education Scotland – Delivering Learning and Teaching online
Education Scotland – Digilearn.scot resources
Education Scotland - Digital Skills Webinar Recordings
Education Scotland – Practitioner Support for online remote learning
Glow Connect – for support with GLOW
Education Scotland – Digital Learning Team Events (past and future)

Regional Improvement Collaborative Resources

West Partnership – An Introduction to Blended Learning
West Partnership – Effective Blended Learning
West Partnership – Effective Remote and Digital Learning

Moray Resources

Moray Digital Learning Team (available through Glow Tile) – resources/webinars/guidance
Moray Digital Learning Team – CPD and Training
Moray Learning and Teaching Support Modules and Resources
Moray Learning and Teaching Links for Learning at Home
Supporting Learning and Teaching – Practitioner Observations and Support Materials

**Wider Resources available for Practitioners**

Essentials for blended learning: A standards-based guide

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TES Free Resources for Home Learning
Essentials for blended learning: A standards-based guide
Education Endowment Foundation Support Resources for Schools and Parents
UK Government Safeguarding Advice – remote/live learning
Education Endowment Foundation Supporting Students to Learn Remotely
Futurelearn – How to Teach Online
EIS Advice on Blended and Remote Learning and Teaching during the Covid-19 Pandemic
TES Tips for Remote Teaching
TES Coronavirus – 8 ways to handle parental communications
TES Coronavirus – how to maximise distance learning
TES 5 ways schools can make remote learning sustainable
Education Scotland Global Responses to Learning at Home
Education Scotland – Assessment in the Broad General Education 2020-2021 Blended Learning with Literacy and Numeracy Resource links
Schoology Top Three Models of Blended Learning
Education Endowment Foundation Evidence Reviews – Remote Learning
Impact Wales Sketchnotes: **https://www.impact.wales/** **@ImpactWales** • **The Great Teaching Toolkit** • **The Highly Effective Remote Teacher** • **Coping with Covid-19** • **Long term planning for Blended Learning** • **Live Well Alongside Covid-19** • **Facilitating Learning** • **Teach for Learning** • **4 levels of metacognitive learner** • **Turn up for Home Learning** • **Deep Learning** • **Dunlosky's 5 most effective learning strategies** • **Lessons from China – online learning in a pandemic** • **5 ways to support remote learning** • **Mayer's Principles of Video Learning** • **Modelling for Learning** • **Home Learning** • **Bite-size blogs – Blended Learning that works** • **Webinars** *…all available for practitioners to download/sign-up for free from Impact Wales*

Wider Resources available for Parents

Parent Zone – Supporting Numeracy Learning
Parent Zone – learning at home
NPFS – Resources for Supporting Parents with Learning at Home

> **Please now refer to the separate Remote Learning Appendix and Toolkits document for support materials and resources which may assist schools in planning for remote or blended learning**
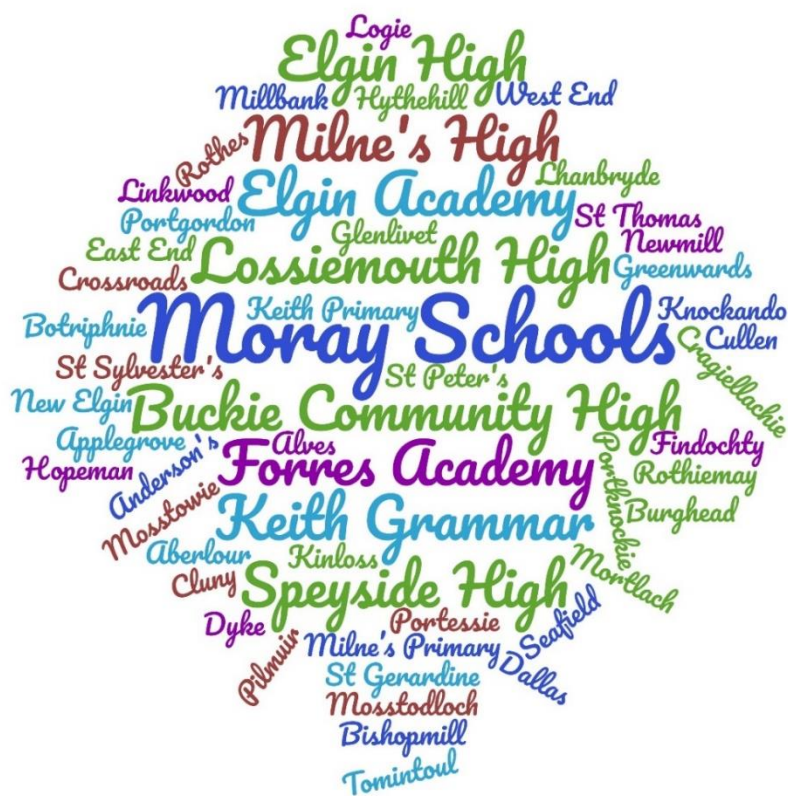
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Education, Communities and Organisational Development

Remote Learning
Appendix and Toolkits
Covid-19

...for Moray's children and young people

The various toolkit resources contained within this Appendix booklet are for schools to use or 'mix and match' as they wish in planning for Remote Learning. This booklet should be read in conjunction with the Moray Remote Learning Guidance Booklet

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Digital Learning Platform/Learning Resource Suitability Checklist

Digital Platform/ Resource Name	

Questions to consider…		Comment…
Necessity	Is this platform essential to learning or an 'add on' to learning – can the same learning be provided in a different way?	
Functionality	Will this platform/learning resource be easy to use and access by learners and if lower Primary stages, their parent(s)?	
Support	Where parents may be working/working from home, how much support and adult interaction will be required to support learning using this platform and is this possible? Are self-help or support guides available?	
Inclusion	Will the material be accessible to all learners and if not, how will support for learning be provided in the form of instructions/differentiated materials when using this platform?	
Access	Are usernames and passwords required to access different platforms and resources? How will management/sharing of multiple usernames/passwords be supported for this platform/learning resource?	
Progress	How easily can feedback be provided to learners on learning, when using this platform/learning resource?	
Accessibility	Will the learner be able to access this platform/learning resource using an appropriate ICT device (or are there digital inclusion issues/sharing of devices within the family restricting use?)	
Overall Comment		
Suitable to use?	☐ YES ☐ NO	

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Key Recommendations Mapping: Schools (SS), Learner (LS) and Parent/Carer (PS) Surveys during Covid-19 Lockdown

Schools Survey Recommendations		Learner Survey Recommendations		Parent/Carer Survey Recommendations	
SS 1	Schools should continue to identify gaps in learning and through parental communication, identify reasons for lower levels of engagement and identify interventions to mitigate this in the event of future lockdown	LS 3	In planning any future remote learning in the event of lockdown or requirement for blended learning, schools should structure/timetable learning where appropriate to support continued learning (including opportunities for live teaching)	PS 3	In planning any future remote learning in the event of lockdown or requirement for blended learning, schools should structure/timetable learning where appropriate to support continued learning (including opportunities for live teaching and learning), cognisant of family pressures including parent(s) working from home
SS 2	Support for parents during future lockdown activities should be considered including extension of online platform support materials for learners, in order for parents to support children in their learning			PS 7	The local authority and schools should provide parents with further access to help guides and supports in order to facilitate access to online digital platforms in support of their child(ren)s remote learning
SS 3	The local authority should develop guidance for schools in support of future remote and blended learning, using surveys undertaken to inform next steps along with key research in this area				
SS 4	The local authority and schools should work to identify learners with insufficient ICT access and digital connectivity in order to support remote learning using identified digital platforms	LS 4	The local authority and schools should work to identify learners with insufficient ICT access and digital connectivity in order to support remote learning using identified digital platforms	PS 4	The local authority and schools should work to identify learners with insufficient ICT access and digital connectivity in order to support remote learning using identified digital platforms
SS 5	Schools should evaluate staff readiness for live learning and teaching using available digital platforms, ensuring appropriate training is undertaken and safeguarding arrangements are in place in adoption of live learning, further building on creative education delivery embraced during Covid-19 lockdown	LS 1	School leaders should evaluate staff readiness for live learning and teaching using available digital platforms, ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place in adoption of live teaching	PS 1	School leaders should evaluate staff readiness for live learning and teaching using available digital platforms, ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place in adoption of live learning
SS 6	In embracing digital platforms and live learning, the local authority and schools should look to streamline and agree the number of learning platforms in use in order to reduce confusion and need for learners to work on a variety of platforms	LS 2	In embracing digital platforms and live learning and teaching, the local authority and schools should look to agree the number of learning platforms in use in order to streamline access to learning and reduce need for learners to work on a variety of platforms	PS 2	In embracing digital platforms and live learning and teaching, the local authority and schools should look to agree the number of learning platforms in use in order to streamline access to learning and reduce need for learners to work on a variety of platforms
SS 7	Schools should consider how to strengthen confidence of support staff in use of online digital platforms, in support of virtual communication and learner support in the future including pupils with ASN	LS 5	Schools should review tasks set to ensure sufficient challenge and differentiation, providing appropriate support channels and feedback as part of the learning cycle, including those pupils with Additional Support Needs	PS 5	Schools and practitioners should review tasks set to ensure sufficient pace, challenge and differentiation, supporting the needs of all learners (including targeted support where appropriate to meet Additional Support Needs)

SS 8	Schools should plan for a range of contingencies – e.g. remote/blended learning for groups and stages – in the event of further disruption to school-based education. Schools should consider a blended approach to learning tasks, mixing paper-based resources with digital learning activities in order to ensure continued interest of learners, providing variety in learning.	LS 6	Schools should consider a blended approach to learning tasks, mixing paper-based resources with digital learning activities in order to ensure continued interest of learners, providing variety in learning	PS 6	Schools should consider a blended approach to learning tasks, mixing paper-based resources with digital learning activities in order to ensure continued interest of learners, providing variety in learning including provision of books and other paper-based resources in support of learning
		LS 7	In the event of any future lockdown activity, schools and practitioners should consider opportunities to replicate social interaction online through online platforms with appropriate safeguarding in place	PS 8	In the event of any future lockdown activity, schools and practitioners should consider opportunities to replicate social interaction online through online platforms with appropriate safeguarding in place

Planning for: ☒ Individual Pupil isolating at home   ☒ Groups/cohorts within and/or across stages isolating at home   ☒ Whole school closure or partial closure

Learning Platforms/Resources	Communication and Engagement	Digital Connectivity/Equity
• Which online learning platforms will be used as part of your school approach for online learning? • Will paper-based resources and books be provided? • Will live teaching or opportunities for online interaction with class teacher(s)/class(es) be part of the remote learning offer? How will this be supported and delivered? • How will learners and their parents be supported in digital platform use (e.g. Moray Digital App, User Guides, Education Scotland and external provider resources)? • How will the e-Sgoil offer be promoted/embraced? • How will resource allocation be managed? By whom?	• How will communication be maintained with self-isolating children and families? • How will feedback be provided on learning and work set? What are arrangements for providing this? • How will you make use of online learning platforms, e-mail, school website/blog, social media and newsletters to celebrate learning and promote engagement with learners and families? • How will children and families feed back on learning and work set (use of "My Remote Learning Diary"?) • How will low or non-engagement be addressed? By whom?	• How are you ensuring all self-isolating learners can access the learning that has been set? • Are learners digitally included that need to be (provided with device/connectivity where needed)? • How will you measure participation and learner engagement (and who will oversee this)? • How will you address digital exclusion issues that may emerge (and who will address these)? • Will paper based resources and printed resources be provided to support remote learning? • Who will manage device issue and oversee any emerging issues with devices?
Wellbeing and Social Interaction	**Upskilling and Support**	**Structure and Timetable**
• What will remote learning wellbeing "check-ins" look like? Who will coordinate these at school level? • Will learning platforms incorporate opportunities for social interaction – e.g. supervised "Playground Channel" – are there any live/real time opportunities for interaction with teacher and class? • How will 1:1 learning conversations be supported? • How will you reach non-engaging children and families in remote learning, ensuring safety and wellbeing? • How will you gain intelligence on wellbeing (e.g. potential use of "My Remote Learning Diary")?	• Do any of the following school community groups require upskilling in the use of digital platforms? *Learners; Staff; Parents/Carers* • How will this support be provided – for example, signposting to Moray Digital App/Resources or wider support materials/Education Scotland digilearn.scot? • Who will provide initial/ongoing support and signposting? • How will parents be supported – particularly those in lower stages of primary - in accessing learning materials and supporting learning?	• How will learning be structured/timetabled for learners including those self-isolating (e.g. learning grids, timetable of activities, blocked learning)? • Will learners have the opportunity to link to their normal timetable or digital learning opportunities (e.g. E-sgoil e-learning offer/webinars)? • Does school technology allow learners to connect with live learning? Who will provide this? • Have the needs of learners, teachers and families been taken into account including time available? • Who will coordinate and oversee this?
Staff Support	**Managing Parental Expectations**	**Pedagogical Approaches**
• How will time be released/allocated from Working Time Agreement for staff to plan and prepare for remote learning activities? • If staff are isolating at home but able to work, how are they supported in remote working/remote learning and who is their main point of contact/arrangements? • How will staff be supported to set work which does not place high expectations on parents to scaffold/deliver lessons? • Will any scaffolding or guidance be provided to staff on preparation of learning grids/structures/timetables? • Who will undertake staff check-ins for wellbeing?	• How will you reassure parents during closure/isolation periods? • Who will the main contact be for maintaining contact with parents of self-isolating pupils/families? • Who will the pastoral/wellbeing contact for any issues be? • What are the agreed communication methods for school-home and home-school? • What help and support will be available to parents to tackle 'tricky' topics? • Who will coordinate compliments and complaints relating to remote learning, addressing any actions?	• Will pedagogical approaches mainly require access to digital technology or paper resources? If so, how will this be managed and by who? • Will learning be synchronous or asynchronous (mix)? • How will the purpose of learning be shared and how will learners know if they have been successful in learning (self/teacher assessment; feedback)? • How will learning be differentiated to meet learning needs? How will pace and challenge be ensured? • Balance of screen/non-screen time? • Will learning include independent project based work and capture wider learning from the home?

Remote Learning Planning Mat (Continuity of Care and Learning Provision): Planning Mat Template

Planning for: ☐ Individual Pupil isolating at home ☐ Groups/cohorts within and/or across stages isolating at home ☐ Whole school closure or partial closure

Learning Platforms/Resources	Communication and Engagement	Digital Connectivity/Equity
•	•	•

Wellbeing and Social Interaction	Upskilling and Support	Structure and Timetable
•	•	•

Staff Support	Managing Parental Expectations	Pedagogical Approaches
•	•	•

Planning for: ☐ Member(s) of staff isolating at home ☐ Member(s) of staff shielding/underlying health condition/pregnancy ☐ Other _____

Wellbeing	Protocols	Support
• How will staff wellbeing be checked on during period(s) of remote learning? • Who will take responsibility for staff check-ins? • What methods of communication will be used for remote staff check-ins? • How frequently will staff check-ins take place? • What supports will be available/signposted in the event of any wellbeing concerns for a member of staff self-isolating?	• What protocol is adopted for ensuring safety for all in online learning and teaching? • What should staff do in the event of disrespectful conduct or behaviour online, or when engaging in live learning and teaching? • What should staff do if they have a safeguarding or pupil welfare concern – do normal school processes apply? • Who are the main points of contact within the school for handling issues with live learning or safeguarding/ child protection?	• What support is available for staff in terms of online learning delivery, remote learning, live teaching or pre-recorded lessons? • Will Education Scotland, Moray Learning Technologist resources and App be signposted? • Will additional training in online learning platforms be made available virtually? • Will other signposting to online learning resources or digital courses be provided?

Planning	Delivery	Managing Pupil Expectations
• Will staff be provided with an advocated school approach to planning and delivery of remote learning – e.g. structured timetable, learning grids? • How will staff be supported to undertake all planning and teaching activities within normal working week? • How will opportunities for interaction be supported in online teaching? • How frequently will flipped learning approaches be embraced and built into planned activities?	• What is the principal learning platform available through GLOW that practitioners will access and use for remote teaching? • What other agreed platforms or communication methods will be available for use? • What is the arrangement for reporting any issues with digital platforms in use? • How will paper-based resources be supported? • How will you reach a variety of learning styles of learners?	• What is the agreed protocol for communicating with pupils? • How will staff remind pupils of expectations when engaging in remote learning and online teaching? • How will feedback be provided when remote teaching and what are the agreed feedback methods? • Who is the main point of contact for handling any issues around pupil expectations at school? • How will learner engagement and satisfaction be measured? Who will monitor this?

Managing Parental Expectations	Collaboration	Wider school support
• What is the agreed protocol for communicating with parents? • What is the agreed communication method for managing parental comments/expectations? • Who is the main point of contact for handling any issues around parental expectations at school?	• How will opportunities for collaboration with colleagues and other classes in school be supported? • How will input to collegiate sessions and school activities continue during remote teaching? • How is this reflective of agreed Working Time Agreement?	• Where a practitioner is working at home and unable to support live teaching/learning due to e.g. backfill in school meaning this is not required, what other duties may staff able to work from home undertake? • Are there any wider school support tasks that staff may undertake in terms of development?

Planning for: ☐ Member(s) of staff isolating at home ☐ Member(s) of staff shielding/underlying health condition/pregnancy ☐ Other _____

Wellbeing	Protocols	Support
•	•	•

Planning	Delivery	Managing Pupil Expectations
•	•	•

Managing Parental Expectations	Collaboration	Wider school support
•	•	•

Reflecting Our Moray Standard for Learning and Teaching
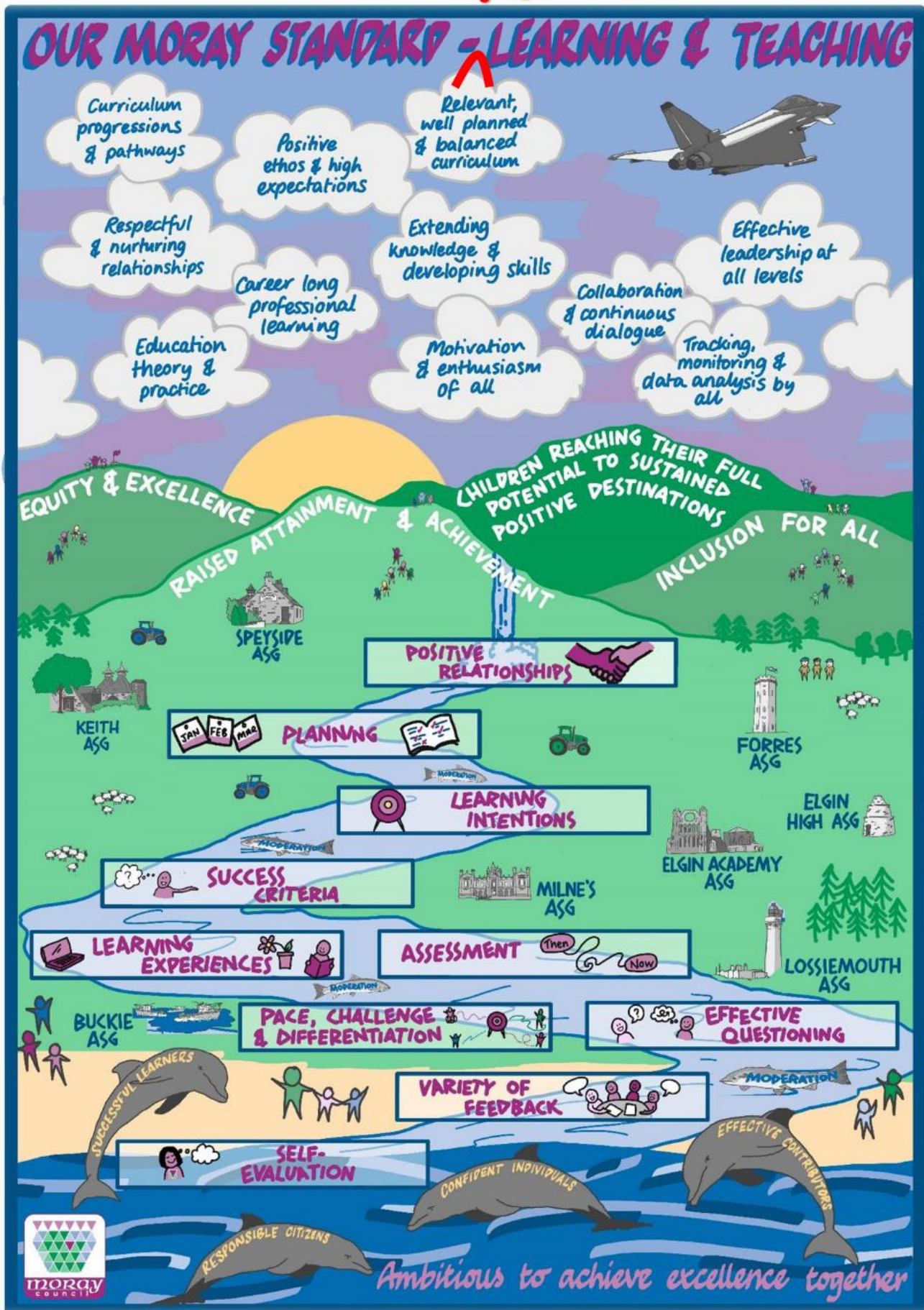
Our Moray Context

Our Moray context is diverse and rich in nature, rural in context from our hills to the sea – coast to country – with many famous landmarks and picturesque landscape. Heritage industries including fishing and farming complement new tourism, whisky and key food manufacturing business providing employment and learning opportunities for our learners. Armed forces presence provides a further dimension to our region where "Our Moray Standard" infographic overall aims to capture this; the unique context of Moray and the unique features of each of our Moray schools, shaping the Curriculum and learning activities undertaken.

As a reminder, a short 15 minute video with learner voiceover is available for **Our Moray Standard for Learning and Teaching** on: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QpWaBw9kmD0**

Our Overarching Essentials

In line with Our Moray Standard, overarching essentials require to be in place in order for effective learning and teaching to take place. Due to Covid-19, it is essential to consider the following questions:
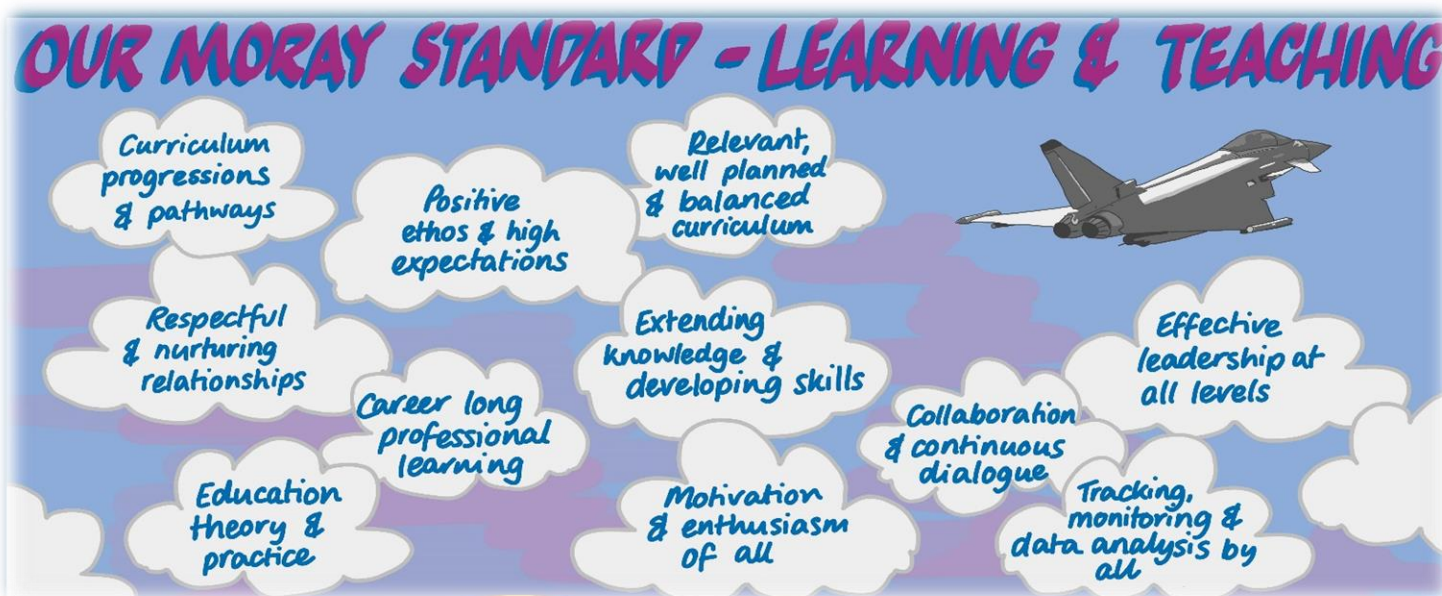
Effective leadership at all levels	**Who will provide the lead for remote learning and teaching and how will leadership at all levels be promoted – practitioners, support staff and learners? Who will maintain overview with groups/cohorts/individuals?**	
Curriculum Progressions and Pathways	**How will literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing be delivered and how will all curriculum areas be embraced?**	
Relevant, well planned and balanced curriculum	**How will planning ensure breadth, challenge and application of learning end develop the four capacities in learners? How will learning be structured and in secondary, ensure**	

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	appropriate coverage for National Qualifications?	
Extending knowledge and developing skills	**Through planned learning experiences, how will knowledge be transferred and skills developed?**	
Respectful and Nurturing Relationships	**How will positive and nurturing approaches be promoted in a remote learning environment?**	
Positive ethos and high expectations	**How will a positive approach to learning be developed and high expectations despite distance between home and school?**	
Motivation and enthusiasm of all	**How will you ensure – through appropriately challenging and enjoyable learning experiences in line with CfE design principles – positive engagement of all learners?**	
Education theory and practice	**How will education theory and practice emerging on best practice including resources developed (e.g. Education Scotland) be shared and used?**	
Career long professional learning	**How will staff be supported in their Career Long Professional Learning, including use of digital platforms and online resources?**	
Collaboration and continuous dialogue	**What opportunities will be embraced for staff collaboration and continuous dialogue including use of virtual staffrooms and chat facilities?**	
Tracking, monitoring and data analysis by all	**How will tracking and monitoring of learner participation and attainment be undertaken by all and how will findings from data analysis lead to improvements in learning?**	

Core Priorities

Reflective of National Priorities as set out in the National Improvement Framework, we must work towards:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

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Through our learning, teaching and assessment we must work to ensure equity and excellence for all learners, ensuring all learners are included, engaged and involved where at all possible. In this way, we may raise attainment and achievement for all children and young people in moray to support them to achieve their full potential and progress on to sustained positive destinations, post-school. In the Covid-19 environment we must consider:

Equity and Excellence	**How are your approaches to learning and teaching ensuring equity for all learners (and staff), including provision of digital technology/connectivity and paper-based packs and resources?**	
Raised Attainment and Achievement	**How are approaches supporting continued focus on raising attainment and achievement for all pupils?**	
Children reaching their full potential to sustained positive destinations	**How do remote learning and teaching approaches ensure curriculum breadth and challenge, ensuring appropriate learning – and in Senior Phase, appropriate level of qualifications – to support positive destinations?**	
Inclusion for all	**How will you work with practitioners, wider support staff and partners where appropriate to ensure inclusion for all pupils, including those pupils with Additional Support Needs?**	

Lesson Essentials

We must ensure that the river of learning flows; it is critical that all learning and teaching activities are meaningful and accessible for all learners. In developing Our Moray Standard for Learning and Teaching, we reviewed key research in relation to the importance of positive relationships along with focus on what will make the biggest difference to learners' experiences.

The following **Moray Videoscribes** provide reminders of key learning and teaching aspects in development of Our Moray Standard for learning and teaching as well as providing general pedagogical principles:

Reasoning and Theory behind Our Moray Standard for Learning and Teaching **(…Paul Dix, John Hattie, Shirley Clarke, Dylan Wiliam, Education Endowment Foundation, Moray Strategy)**
https://youtu.be/Ju1xycFKL48
Barak Rosenshine – Principles of Instruction
https://youtu.be/fjLpcvRQXRA

In order for remote learning and teaching to be effective, the following elements of lessons remain essential:

Learners must know what they are learning, why they are learning, knowledge and skills they are developing and how they will know if they are successful in their learning

Planning should take account of the different needs of learners, dynamic based on learner feedback. Planning should provide opportunities for breadth, challenge and application, taking prior learning into account and extending knowledge and skills

Positive relationships between teachers, pupils and their peers are essential for positive learning and wellbeing, particularly in remote learning

Opportunities for formative and summative assessment should inform learning progress and next steps and support dynamic planning of learning

A range of learning experiences should be embraced through planned learning. Online learning may feature as well as 'offline' pedagogical approaches including research based tasks, books, active and independent learning, project and practical tasks

Appropriate differentiation of learning activities will reach all learners, ensuring appropriate pace and challenge in learning to maximise learning and strengthen learner engagement

Effective questioning will strengthen understanding, check and redirect learning, extending knowledge

Written, verbal and virtual feedback (using online platforms) will support reflection and identification of next steps and support positive encouragement in learning

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Making the river of learning flow during Covid-19 disruption – questions to consider:

Positive Relationships	**How will positive relationships be maintained in remote learning and how will you make use of digital platforms or other tools in support of this?**	
Planning	**How will planning take account of prior learning and reflect in-school learning where at all possible to provide continuity in learning?**	
Learning Intentions	**How will we ensure learners are clear on what they are learning and skills under development?**	
Success Criteria	**How will we ensure that learners are able to self-reflect and understand that they have succeeded in their learning?**	
Learning Experiences	**How will we balance a mix of online and offline learning to maintain learner interest and motivation in learning while ensuring appropriate breadth, challenge and opportunity for application of learning?**	
Assessment	**How will you build in opportunities for formative and summative assessment? Will self and peer assessment feature as key assessment processes? How will this inform teaching planning and next steps?**	
Pace, Challenge and Differentiation	**Using our knowledge of individuals and groups of learners, how will be ensure appropriate pace and challenge of learning through differentiated learning experiences, activities and approaches?**	
Effective Questioning	**How will learning activities set and any formative/summative assessment check for understanding and develop higher order skills through more open-ended questioning?**	

Variety of Feedback	**How will feedback be used as part of the learning process and provided in digital platforms and in more traditional ways – how will this be used to inform learning and teaching?**	
Moderation	**How will we continue to maintain standards and ensure learners are achieving at an appropriate level using evidence gathered?**	

Remote learning may take many forms and as identified by our Moray Covid-19 Survey findings, may not be solely by digital or online means. Schools should take account of their unique context and learner needs in the event that remote teaching is required with focus on high quality learning and teaching.

Building the 4 CfE Capacities in our Moray Learners

In order to develop as successful learners, responsible citizens, confident individuals and effective contributors, self-evaluation is critical at all levels.

At whole school level, approaches to remote learning and teaching should be continually reviewed to ensure they best meet the needs of their learners and their families.   As a reminder of learner entitlements and ensuring effective self-evaluation, the Videoscribe below provides further context:

Self-evaluation in Moray Schools
https://youtu.be/1wxyf6LsEYA

Along with normal face to face teaching, practitioners may wish to seek feedback from learners on their learning. This may be re-created in the online environment through use of chat facility, online discussion stream or through class notebook. Teachers may also see feedback in the form of an exit pass using live interactive document or whiteboard space.

Practitioners – particularly where asynchronous learning and teaching approaches are being adopted may wish learners to reflect on their wellbeing, knowledge and skills under development. As such, we provide the

My Remote Learning Diary in **Appendix 6** for use by schools where more formalised reflection on learning and next steps identification is required. This includes reflection on wellbeing and skills.

Practitioners may also wish to seek feedback from trusted colleagues on their learning and teaching practice, particularly in order to strengthen their live teaching approaches. As a reminder, Learning and Teaching support materials and observation toolkits previously endorsed by LNCT remain available on GLOW and are accessible through the Head Teacher area on Moray tile using the link below:

My Remote Learning Diary

My name is...		Date...	

How I am feeling...

Circle ◯ the number | The bigger the number, the more that...

What I've been doing...

I have taken part in learning activities including...

Things I am doing well in...

I think I am doing well in the following areas of learning...

Skills I've developed further...

I am developing a number of skills (give an example with each skill)...

Things I may need to work on...

I need to get better with the following things in my learning...

My next steps in learning

I need to focus on the following next steps in my learning...

My Remote Learning Diary

Scaffold Sheet | Key Things to think about when completing "My Learning Diary"…

How I am feeling in my remote learning…

Safe
- I feel protected from harm
- I feel people at care about me
- I know when things are risky and try to stay away from danger
- I look out for my own safety and that of others

Healthy
- I have healthy food to eat
- I exercise and have time to spend outside including working on activities outside
- I know where to get help if I need it
- I enjoy remote learning and the variety of activities to keep me healthy

Achieving
- I am developing my skills and knowledge
- I do the best that I can in my remote learning
- I am encouraged to do my best in my remote learning
- If I am struggling I get help with it
- I have opportunities to succeed in remote learning with different activities

Nurtured
- I feel cared for and supported
- If I am worried there are people I can go to and tell to help me
- I am able to speak about my feelings, likes and dislikes
- I am learning to be independent, looking after myself and making decisions

Active
- I do fun and active things
- I have the chance to take part in sporting and/or physical activities
- I do things that interest me
- I have a range of activities that help me develop my knowledge and skills

Respected
- I feel people listen to me before they make decisions about me
- I feel I am involved in decisions about my life
- If I need to, I have people I can tell about my views and decisions

Responsible
- I listen to other people in remote learning and try to understand what they think
- I know the difference between right & wrong
- I am caring and helpful
- I can manage my behaviour and follow rules
- Adults trust me to follow instructions

Included
- I feel I belong when in remote learning and when with family and friends
- I get to take part in activities
- I get to interact with other people
- I feel people want me around (e.g. through virtual check-ins)

What I've been doing…

I have taken part in learning including…

- Online learning
- Learning from paper based home learning packs provided by my school
- Activities planned and delivered by my teacher
- Individual activities during independent learning times
- Research based tasks
- Projects
- Literacy and Numeracy based tasks
- Practical tasks
- Personal reading/interest
- Break and lunch time activities
- Break/lunch choices
- Friendships and wellbeing related information
- Outdoor learning activities
- Any other activities undertaken including those play based activities

Things I am doing well in…

I think I am doing well in the following areas of learning…

Children and Young People may wish to provide more specific examples relating to:

- Specific Literacy/Numeracy tasks set by my Home school and learning activities
- Activities planned and delivered by my teacher and 'in the moment' feedback provided
- Health and Wellbeing related areas doing well in – e.g. friendships, positive relationships, link to Wellbeing Web completion
- Wider achievements
- Projects
- Specific subject related achievements

Skills I've developed further at the Hub…

I am developing a number of skills (give an example with each skill)…For example…

Self management	Social intelligence	Innovation
Focussing	Communicating	Curiosity
Integrity	Feeling	Creativity
Adapting	Collaborating	Sense making
Initiative	Leading	Critical thinking

Skills may require some explanation (see SDS help sheet on next page). An example where the skills was developed should also be given.

Things I may need to work on…

I need to get better with the following things…

This may include:
- Specific areas from home learning packs provided by Home Schools
- Wellbeing/relational aspects
- Literacy/Numeracy focus
- Areas identified through participating in activities planned and delivered by volunteers
- Areas identified through online learning and teaching feedback
- Skills requiring further development

My next steps in learning

I need to focus on the following next steps in my learning…

- Next steps identified through feedback from teacher/self-assessment/peer-assessment
- Areas in need of working on
- Skills in need of further development
- Specific areas of literacy/numeracy
- Specific subject areas

A few key areas for development should be identified – challenging but realistic

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Skills for the future: Meta-skills

Timeless, higher order skills that support the development of additional skills and promote success in whatever context the future brings

Self management

Taking responsibility for your own behaviour and wellbeing

Focussing

The ability to manage cognitive load by filtering and sorting information in order to maintain a sense of focus in an age of information overload and constant change

Integrity

Acting in an honest and consistent manner based on a strong sense of self and personal values

Adapting

The ability and interest to continue to enlarge knowledge, understanding and skills in order to remain adaptive and resilient as circumstances change

Initiative

Readiness to get started and act on opportunities built on a foundation of self belief

Social intelligence

Awareness of others' feelings, needs, and concerns in order to effectively navigate and negotiate complex social relationships and environments

Communicating

The ability to openly and honestly share information in a way that creates mutual understanding about others' thoughts, intentions and ideas

Feeling

Considering impact on other people by being able to take a range of different thoughts, feelings and perspectives into account

Collaborating

The ability to work in coordination with others to convey information and tackle problems

Leading

The ability to lead others by inspiring them with a clear vision and motivating them to realise this

Innovation

The ability to define and create significant positive change

Curiosity

The desire to know or learn something in order to inspire new ideas and concepts

Creativity

The ability to imagine and think of new ways of addressing problems, answering questions or expressing meaning

Sense making

The ability to determine the deeper meaning or significance of what is being expressed and to recognise wider themes and patterns in information

Critical thinking

The ability to evaluate and draw conclusions from information in order to solve complex problems and make decisions

Skills Development Scotland, 2018 | Please also see Moray Skills Framework Posters in schools

Remote Learning Protocol

School Name:	
Senior Manager(s) with Remote Learning oversight:	

Protocol Version:	Date:	Agreed with staff?	Head Teacher:
1		Yes/No	

	…for learners	…for staff
Arrangements for wellbeing check-ins:		
Arrangements for remote learning and teaching:		
What to do if a learner is disruptive/ disrespectful during online learning:		
What to do if not comfortable with remote learning and live teaching/pre-recorded learning:		
Agreed platforms for online learning and live/pre-recorded teaching:		
Agreed platforms/ communication methods (including parents):		
Arrangements for dealing with any safeguarding or child protection concern:		
Other:		

Appendix 8: Screenshots – Primary Survey

3. In your school, which of the following learning platforms are the MAIN PLATFORMS in use for learners to access Remote Learning?

More Details

	Platform	Count
🔵	Microsoft Teams	29
🟠	Google Classroom	17
🟢	Seesaw	3
🔴	Class Dojo	6
🟣	School Website/Glow Blogs	8
🟤	School App	2
🩷	Social Media (Facebook/Twitter)	4
⚫	Satchel One (Show My Home...	0
🟡	Other	7
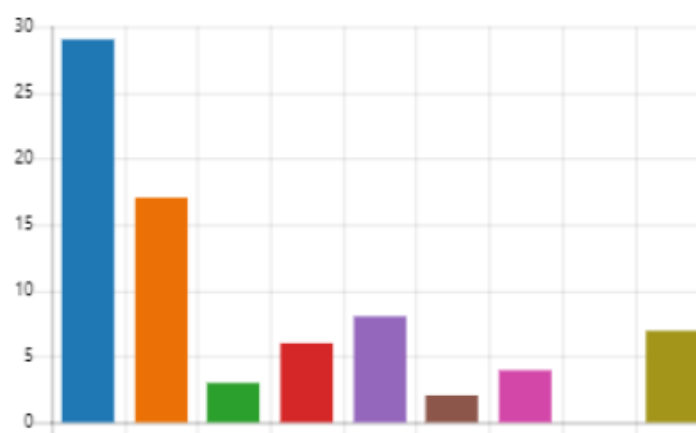
4. If you answered "other" in question 3, please state the name of any other learning platform(s) used as a MAIN PLATFORM in your school:

10 Responses

ID	Responses
1	Some families are still receiving paper packs/emails due to connectivity issues.
2	N/A
3	paper packs
4	Glow e-mail
5	All children have accepted a place in their Google Classroom but due to a variety of issues we have a few families who require paper based packs also.
6	Learning Journals
7	School website
8	N/A
9	.
10	We gave out hard copies of the work that was put on school website pages and also on Teams.

5. Please enter the name(s) of any OTHER learning platform or online learning resource you have found useful during lockdown in support of Remote Learning:

30 Responses

ID	Responses
1	None
2	Microsoft Teams for virtual check in's, Education City, ReadTheory, Dynamic learning, Sumdog
3	Loom
4	Loom, pre-recorded lessons
5	Loom
6	Education City, Sumdog, ClickView, West OS, BBC Bitesize, Oxford Owl, Epic Books
7	Sumdog, White Rose Maths, Education City, E-sgoil, Maths Playground
8	Education City, First News, Tig Tag, Spelling Frame, Northern Alliance Modern Languages Family Learning, BBC Bitesize, Daily Ten on Top Marks, Sumdog
9	Education City; Sumdog; WESTOS; BBC Bitesize; Oxford Owl; The Natural Curriculum; Pie Corbett home learning packs; Jamboard; Mote; Youtube
10	Sumdog; Oxford Owl; Rapid; Active Learn
11	Accelerated Reader, Sumdog, Nessy
12	Oxford Owl, Loom, Google Forms for Questionnaires and Learning Quizzes,
13	Sumdog / Oxford Owl / Charanga
14	Lexia, Sumdog, Charanga, Duo Lingo, Typing Club, Active Learn
15	outlook
16	Glow Blogs - School website
17	SeeSaw for P1,
18	Big Maths, Education City, Sumdog, Linguascope, Teach Your Monster to Read, BBC Bitesize, E-sgoil
19	Education City; Sumdog
20	National e-learning, E-Sgoil, West OS, BBC Bitesize, Moray ICT Technology CPD, YouTube
21	Primary 7 classes are using Microsoft Teams as part of their transition to S1.

ID	Responses
22	Education City and Sumdog
23	YouTube, Loom Videos, BBC, Glow, visualizers, Top Marks, West OS, Oak Academy
24	Thinglink
25	Purple Mash, Education City, Oxford Owl, Kahoot!, Hit the Button, Phonics Play
26	Google Meets, Thinglink, Loom, Kahoot, Google Virtual Classrooms, e-sgoil resources, WOS, Oxford Owls, You tube
27	WestOs, Education Scotland Resources, Buddy Reader Online
28	Sumdog
29	SumDog, Big Maths
30	We have put out other links we have been sent by some organisations and information about BBC provision on our website

6. Overall, how strong is LEARNER ENGAGEMENT in Remote Learning across your school? Please consider the proportion of learners in each stage known to engage in learning activities set. This is the proportion of learners accessing learning platforms and/or paper based resources and completing some of the learning activities set.

More Details

7. Overall, how strong is LEARNER PARTICIPATION in Remote Learning across your school? Please consider the proportion of learners in each stage known to actively participate in learning activities set online or in paper-based formats. Learners may also actively engage in dialogue (live/chat posts) and act on feedback provided on learning activities set. Learner participation is where learners are known to meaningfully take part in Remote Learning.

More Details

Legend: ■ A few (less than 15%) ■ Less than half (15%-49%) ■ Majority (50%-74%) ■ Most (75%-90%) ■ Almost All (91%-99%) ■ All (100%) ■ N/A

Categories: Primary 1, Primary 2, Primary 3, Primary 4, Primary 5, Primary 6, Primary 7

8. In your school, what proportion of your staff are confident in the use of online digital platforms in use (e.g. Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom...)?
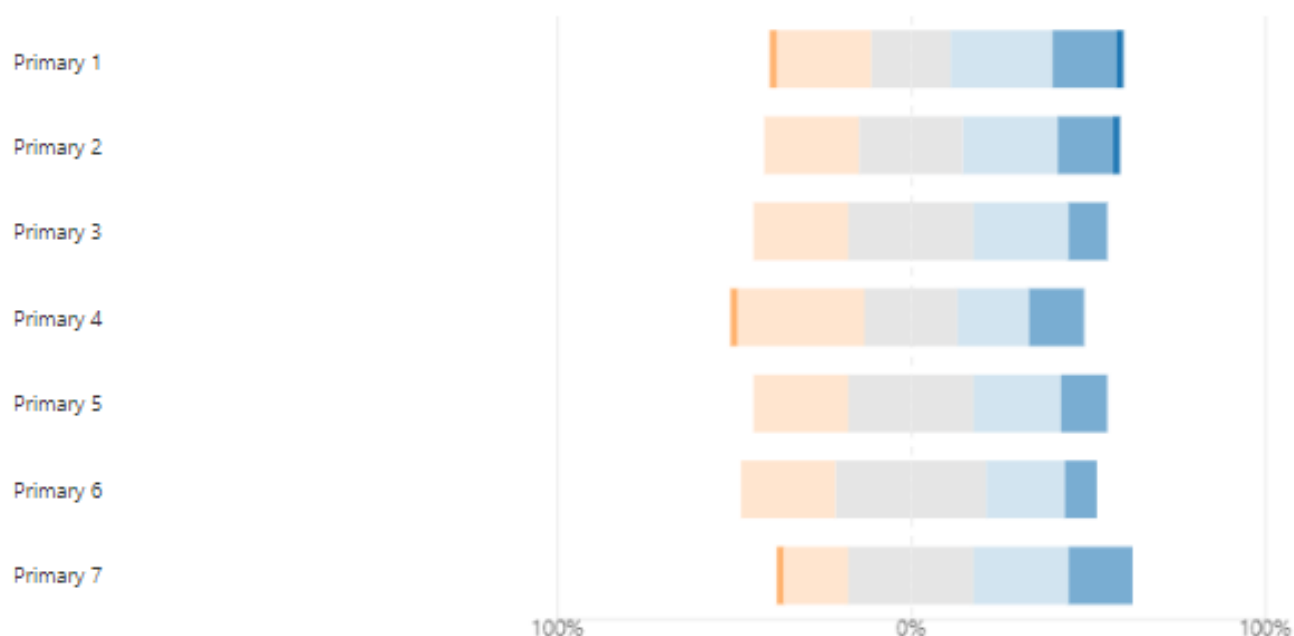
More Details

Legend: ■ A few (less than 15%) ■ Less than half (15%-49%) ■ Majority (50%-74%) ■ Most (75%-90%) ■ Almost all (91%-99%) ■ All (100%) ■ N/A

Categories: Teaching Staff, Non-teaching Staff

9. To what extent are practitioners in your school making use of the following approaches in support of Remote Learning?

Legend:
- A few (less than 15%)
- Less than half (15%–49%)
- Majority (50%-74%)
- Most (75%-90%)
- Almost all (91%-99%)
- All (100%)
- N/A

Categories (top to bottom):
- Paper-based packs/resources
- Live learning (in real-time)
- Outdoor learning activities
- Independent learning activities
- Family learning activities/challenges
- Practical activities
- Pre-recorded videos
- Pre-recorded PowerPoint with voiceover
- Literacy, Numeracy and HWB focus activities
- Activities embracing wider Curriculum areas (beyond L, N, HWB)
- Inter-disciplinary Learning
- Play-based approaches

Axis: 100% — 0% — 100%

10. In support of learner wellbeing and support, which of the following have you adopted as a school:

🔵	Daily registration/check in for ...	23
🟠	Opportunities for live learner ...	31
🟢	Targeted engagement/phone ...	45
🔴	Online virtual playtimes/chat c...	30
🟣	Virtual whole-school events al...	5
🟤	Other	8

11. Overall, are learners showing good progress in their learning, through remote learning underway? Progress in learning may be gauged through quality of work completed, ongoing assessment approaches, review or work submitted and feedback provided (including how learners have acted on feedback provided by their class teachers).

■ Strongly Agree   ■ Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   ■ Strongly Disagree   ■ Don't know
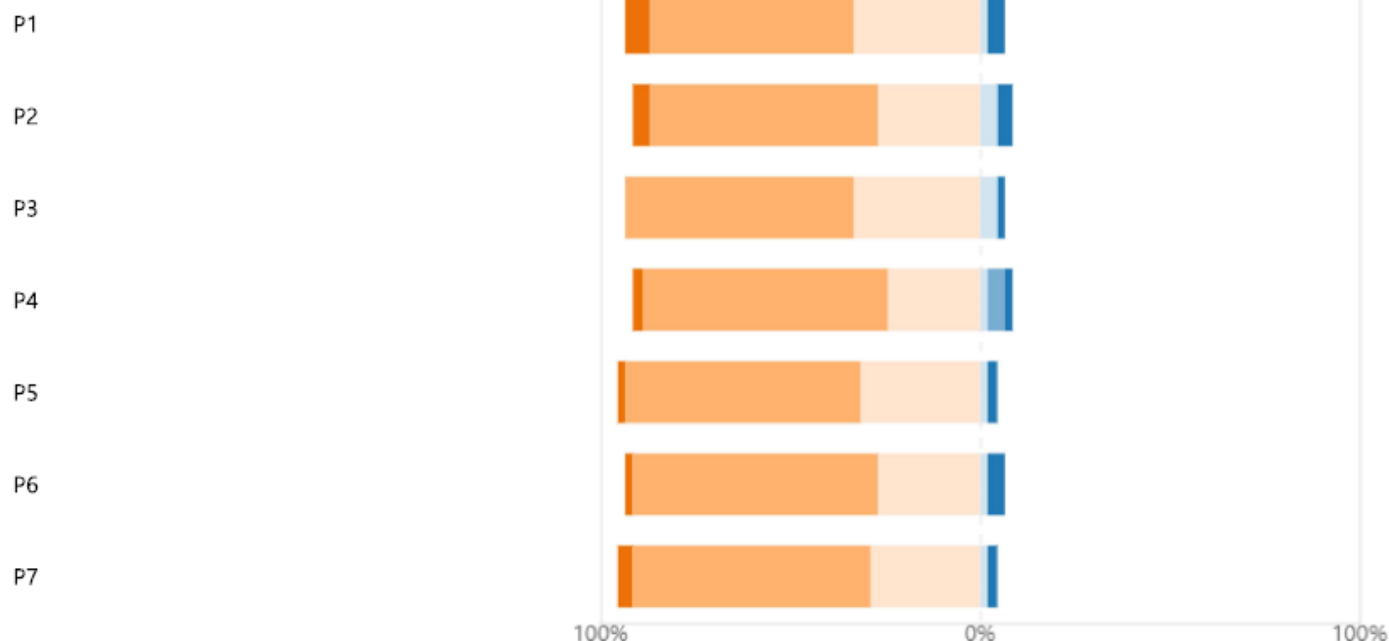
P1
P2
P3
P4
P5
P6
P7

100%   0%   100%

12. In order to support Remote Learning, which of the following have you made use of as a school?

🔵 National e-learning - live (e.g. ...	15
🟠 National e-learning - recorde...	20
🟢 National e-learning: supporte...	39
🔴 Education Scotland/Digilearn....	25
🟣 Moray Learning Technologists	37
🟤 School in-house digital champ...	25
🩷 YouTube for self-directed help	34
⚪ GTCS resources	7
🟡 SQA resources	0

13. To what extent do you believe children and young people enrolled in your school have been supported in their Remote Learning at home, overall?

🔵 Too much support	4
🟠 Adequate support	39
🟢 Not enough support	2

14. How are you maintaining contact with parents, including updates on learning and general communications?

🔵 Social Media – Facebook	16
🟠 Social Media – Twitter	20
🟢 School Apps	9
🔴 Class Dojo	9
🟣 Online learning journals/e-jou...	8
🟤 E-mailed newsletters/commun...	43
🩷 Telephone calls	45
⚪ Groupcall/text messages	26
🟡 Other	6

15. Overall, what has been your greatest success with Remote Learning?

45 Responses

ID	Responses
1	We have been able to provide a consistent approach to remote learning across the school. All families have engaged with paper packs. Families have been appreciative of this approach. This means we have been able to provide resources to ensure progress within packs, for example, reading books. In addition, we have been able to provide pre-recorded videos to support remote learning. These videos support school improvement priorities and will support family learning in the long term. We have also been able to hold some 'live' lessons and are looking to provide more opportunities for this as part of our remote learning provision.
2	Providing differentiated, individual physical packs related the individual children's needs and interests. All families appreciate the resources as 'connectivity' and 'printing problems' created barriers previously. We are also able to provide weekly telephone calls to provide feedback on learning and as a progress 'check in'. Families are able to access more resources if required and have an opportunity to ask questions around tasks and activities.
3	The engagement of the learners and communication with families has been very good. The children have enjoyed the activities and engaged well with the themed week. Increased confidence using MS TEAMs compared to previous lockdown. The check ins/virtual playtimes have been very successful.
4	Use of TEAMs, check ins, Class Notebook. Teamwork from all staff. Engagement and motivation of learners. Learners gaining new skills - time management, IT skills, independent working.
5	Engaging almost all families Prompt responsiveness to questions, learning support and advice by teaching team Positive virtual team meetings each week - solution focused
6	Accessibility for the majority of parents as all parents bar one are using Class Dojo
7	Engagement with Google Classroom Only one family not using at all. Little need for paper packs meaning feedback can be immediate. Pupils are beginning to respond to feedback by 'resubmitting'
8	The pre-recorded videos and narrated PowerPoints have meant that even with tech problems here or at home children have not missed out on learning. Along with the live daily check ins that have proven to be invaluable.
9	Zoom meetings
10	Staff embracing new ways of learning using technology and the possibilities of continuing to make use going forward. Parents' feedback praises the way remote learning has been organised and managed and pre-recorded lessons that enables them to access learning around their family commitments.
11	pupil reaction, pupil engagement, pupil skills, live check-ins, video lessons

ID	Responses
12	Getting so many more children online and engaging since the last period of remote learning. There has been a real growth in confidence for all staff in using online platforms.
13	As we continued to use Teams for homework through Terms 1 and 2 of this session the ongoing familiarity with the technology for staff and pupils has enabled a smooth transition into the current period of Lockdown/Remote Learning and also has meant that engagement is consistently high. As a staff we were keen to build on the successes of the previous period of remote learning and we decided to support each other to go beyond our comfort zones with a shift towards more live interaction/teaching for pupils. As a staff we spent time learning and practising how to present a shared screen for example. So this week alone our pupils have benefitted from live interactive maths and literacy lessons confidently delivered by our teachers. We are also impressed with the way that our pupils are using the technology to interact with us and to complete their learning activities, e.g. uploading tasks to Class Notebook, asking questions, speaking about and sharing their learning with others during our live sessions. The results from our parent and pupil surveys were also very positive and gave us confidence that we are getting it right.
14	The Early years are using daily virtual classrooms which has been really user-friendly for the parents and pupils to use. This has prompted staff to create virtual classrooms for STEM at 1st and 2nd levels and also ones for DYW and Global goals for future use. Relationships with families have been further cemented through such an increase in communication. Staff engagement in CLPL has been very good also as they recognise the requirement to upskill. Consistency of approaches in platforms i.e. Google Classrooms for all allows for ease of use for families whilst allowing for autonomy for staff to create work and provide ongoing feedback appropriate to their classes.
15	As we continued using Google Classroom on the return in August for homework, parents and children have felt more confident in using it.
16	Participation increase this year. Introduction of video calls and class chats for pupil health and wellbeing.
17	Everyone has been more confident in accessing the learning online. Paper packs for P1-3 and having the school open so we can hand out reading books has made a difference. Teachers who have volunteered in the hub have had the opportunity to see how the work is seen by pupils and to adjust how they approach the online aspect.
18	Greatly increased teacher confidence & wider range of teaching approaches deployed. This seems to be impacting positively on engagement. These approaches allow for greater connectedness
19	- good feedback from parents from survey results on communication and quality and quantity of remote learning - live check in confidence growing - format of learning grids and collaborative planning with stage partners - Success at moving from one platform to another - FB groups to Teams - Relationships with parents have been positive
20	Having relationships with parents wouldn't ordinarily be comfortable coming into school.

ID	Responses
21	The increase in engagement from last lockdown. Staff confidence in digital platforms and approaches to remote learning. The use of Loom Videos for staff to introduce and explain learning and new concepts. The use of Google Meets - the children have responded so well to seeing each other and having the chance to interact with their teachers and friends.
22	Engagement across both digital and paper based learning activities: 68% of families who responded to our survey said they have managed ok to access online learning activities, but uploading activities was challenging (18.5%) and 92% of families who responded to our survey said they have collected paper packs each week. There has been a significant increase from last lockdown with the amount of work uploaded and returned which staff are feeding back on each week. As a school staff we have responded to feedback and 75% of families who responded said our instructions were clear and easy to follow, with 87.5% of families who responded saying that the work was at the correct level of challenge. Timetables and daily online messenger chats have been positively received by parents this lockdown. Grids have been used for IDL and non tech activities created collaboratively by staff.
23	Being able to provide a balance between substantial paper based packs and digital learning has provided flexibility for all families. Each week teachers are building on their own technology skills and using this to improve opportunities for all learners. Real time opportunities through phone calls, Teams chats, live check-ins and individual PSA support sessions ensure that there is differentiated access to support for all learners and their parents.
24	High engagement. staff keen to deliver
25	Staff embracing a whole school IDL approach to support family learning opportunities so parents/adults in the home with multiple children are able to work on common areas. Staff confidence to do Google Meets - children really embraced this. It is early days with about half the staff at this time doing live Meets. Thinglink classroom approach - feedback is yet to be collected from P5 class who have trialled this alongside GC Families fed back in a survey that they knew when they contacted school they would be supported. For a number of families this has required Multi-agency signposting/supports as well as educational support.
26	Teacher pre-recorded videos have been well received of the results received 40% said their favourite part of online learning has been watching their teacher's videos. 93% of families engaged in some way this Lockdown. All P2-7 classes using Google Classroom 78% of pupils accessing learning online with 28% picking up paper packs each week. 89% Parents said accessing work was between 3-5 stars. All P1 classes using See Saw with high levels of interaction. 68% of continuous, strong interaction. Variety of engaging tasks and frequency and quality of interactions from teachers 81% of families rated teacher feedback at between 4-5 stars. 75% families feel we are getting the amount of work offered just right, 92& of children said the level of difficulty is just right.
27	Development of ICT skills amongst all members of the school community. This has inspired us to find out more about completion of https://www.digitalschoolsawards.co.uk/ I recently attended a CPD session on this (thanks to Moray Digital Learning Team for promoting this) and found the session really useful/inspiring.
28	Level of engagement,

ID	Responses
29	All families now have access to an IT device which has helped families engage with online learning more purposefully. Teaching staff have embraced live teaching and/or pre-recorded videos of themselves teaching.
30	Level of engagement has been high. Feedback from the majority of parents and pupils suggests they are happy with the provision we are providing.
31	Near 100% engagement! - With almost all pupils completing their full weekly grid of assignments set each week.
32	The use of Glow and Google Classroom. This has made engagement better than the March lockdown. Parents have found this easier to access and engage with staff if help is required through Google meets.
33	The developing confidence of teachers in the use of IT to support learning - having to use glow and familiarise ourselves with the online materials 'out there' to support learning. Better engagement from Pupils during lockdown 2. Pupils are delighted to be able to see each other during Class Meets.
34	Motivating pupils and seeing their success getting regular feedback on Seesaw.
35	Pupil and family engagement.
36	The range of Teams we are running and our virtual Workshop Wednesday activities are leading to a greater level of engagement.
37	Pre-recorded videos containing new learning and 2x weekly check in sessions with pupils live
38	Class chat allowing pupils and staff to communicate quickly and easily.
39	Staff have made real efforts to use new ways to engage pupils including live learner dialogue and live drop in/question and answer sessions
40	Surviving... well so far Staff personal developments and their engagement in digital learning
41	The ability the children have shown in digitally upskilling in such a short space of time.
42	Daily online check-ins with teachers
43	Practitioner support and collegiality
44	The quality, amount of tasks and range of options/tasks being provided to P1-P7 via a range of means (to suit different family needs) and the teachers doing the phone calls this time around
45	Increased digital literacy. Parental involvement in Learning

16. Overall, what has been your greatest challenge with Remote Learning?

45 Responses

ID	Responses
1	Connectivity! Providing opportunities for online meets. It can be difficult to get this to work while in school. Teachers have had to continually problem solve and troubleshoot to provide even a 'check in' experience for learners.
2	Connectivity- across Newmill and Botriphnie we have been working with TEAMs. We use this platform to share plans and work as one staff team. However, TEAMS video calls do not work well at Botriphnie and we have had to arrange 'Google Meet' -the quality is better. It is easier to work within one platform where staff can support each other. Continual trial and error and problem solving required to arrange a simple meet for learners.
3	The connectivity. More families would use MS TEAMs if connectivity in the area was better.
4	Extra hours for teaching staff to deliver remote learning - time spent uploading/downloading, adapting resources for remote learning. Ensuring that all children are progressing - particularly in P1 when it's play based and learning phonics. Assessing work - some children have less support and are working independently while others have a lot of support from parents.
5	Ensuring that vulnerable children who need to attend in-school provision, take up the offer. Pleasing all parents!
6	Sustaining engagement from the most hard to reach parents and facilitating opportunities for live discussion between children.
7	Teacher preparation /time - regularly exceeding the 35 hour working week. Planning/recording of lessons takes a lot of time and in order to engage with available technology / carry out pre recordings etc research / trial and error and appropriate differentiation of remote lessons. Good engagement is great but brings challenges - providing feedback is time consuming and teaching are providing feedback during school day and then planning at night. They can also feel isolated and unsure that what they are doing is in line with others.
8	Parental expectations balanced with staff capacity
9	Ensuring parents understand the category vulnerable
10	Ensuring continued engagement in remote learning and some parental attitudes i.e. not a teacher so not doing remote learning. Deciding which vulnerable children should attend Hub as a large proportion of the school could be considered vulnerable but need to keep numbers manageable. Pressure from other agencies to have children attend hub.
11	parents involvement, pupil's lack of motivation, parents anxiety
12	Digital connectivity and ICT trouble shooting with parents.

ID	Responses
13	We have a small number of pupils (3) who struggle to engage each week. Even with the offer of support, phone calls and paper packs being provided they are not completing all of their learning tasks. There is also a lack of parental support for these pupils.
14	Families who are difficult to engage with and not having devices to give to families who don't have anything. These children are being provided with paper-based work but not getting the same experience as their peers.
15	Difficulty of not being able to give instant feedback to children as easily. Also, ensuring that feedback is acted upon.
16	Parents not digitally aware and unable to motivate children. Paper packs being delivered but difficult to manage the feedback on these.
17	Not being able to have the more natural feedback and interaction with children especially with delivering more new learning this time.
18	Given our cohort, our engagement / participation figures are good. We have been more assertive in offering supports but there is still a level of frustration when these are not accessed as often it's the most vulnerable who are least visible.
19	ICT - in school and laptop issues with parents and accessing teams Running a hub alongside remote learning In P1 as we haven't had the chance to have parents in school we didn't know them as well as in previous years Staff anxiety levels with ICT and live learning and managing workload especially around feedback and marking Differentiation has been a huge challenge to manage remotely
20	Finding the correct balance of remote learning
21	As a school - signal strength for supporting online learning in school and in staff homes. Personally - Juggling head teacher role, being class committed with a P1/2 class on Google Classroom, liaising with parents and staff and managing the keyworker rooms, staff and children.
22	New families who have moved to the area, there has been a lack of engagement, next steps doorstep calls. Engagement has been a challenge with identified families and strategies are put in place to support them.
23	Assessing pupil progress has been the greatest challenge because varying levels of support from parents effects the quality of the learner evidence.
24	staff/parent/pupil IT personal development
25	Families struggling to more during the second lockdown to engage their children in learning. Many families are not returning paper packs at present - as a staff, assessment of planned remote learning upon return to assess retention/application of learning will provide evidence of where progress/impact of remote learning has really taken place. Children

ID	Responses
	attending the Hub have made progress but again it will be good to moderate this against further formative assessments upon return.
26	Digital access. Many of the Digital inclusion devices seemed to cause problems with access from home, lots of admin time taken up trying to resolve issues. A larger percentage of families asking for places in hub as they weren't coping at home. As HT I am disappointed I haven't managed to keep up weekly assembly inputs/ videos due to pressures of managing workload, especially with move to new school and ongoing settling in issues.
27	Getting the balance right for everyone - some seeking more learning activities and a greater degree of "live lessons". This has been tricky to offer due to connectivity and staff confidence. It can be challenging to feel that we are providing enough for some families and not overwhelming others.
28	Connectivity - Teams meetings, ability of families to access internet, devices at home not connecting.
29	Connectivity continues to be the biggest challenge. Some teachers conducting live sessions have had to abandon the session due to their own or pupils' poor connectivity.
30	Having the technology/internet connection and staff confidence to provide live learning sessions.
31	Time - In a small school we are stretched too thinly with hub provision and planning and feedback of remote learning. Also, Teams chats have had to take place from home as we've had connectivity issues from school.
32	To ensure meaningful engagement for all do to family circumstances. This approach to learning has benefitted some but has hindered others.
33	Technology which doesn't work. Ensuring that all families are engaging. Evaluating the progress the children are making when unsure if work is completed independently.
34	Chasing up the minority of pupils who either do not engage or do the work but don't submit what they are doing.
35	Time taken to prepare quality lessons and differentiate learning. Time taken to feedback individually to pupils.
36	The workload at the moment is unsustainable Knowing who is engaging with offline activities (unable to track as easily) Technology and connection Staff anxieties Parental pressure
37	Keeping upper stages pupils engaged and ensuring parents can adequately support their child
38	Finding ways to support families who appear unable/unwilling to engage.

ID	Responses
39	Supporting families who are very reluctant to engage
40	1. Understanding. The lack of understanding of school support in house for remote learning in school setting. . Lack of understanding of what home remote learning looks like. - Think, on reflection, this translates to a general lack of understanding of what children do in school on a day to day basis. I think, based on comments made, that some folk think children sit at desks from 9.00 till 3.15 completing worksheets. We did try to address this by putting info home, but I think parents have been swamped with info and I am not convinced it was read. 2. Parental and other professionals voicing opinions that in school provision is currently "normal" school. This has caused damage to relationships we have worked hard to establish and maintain. 3. Staff morale has been effected by parental rants on social media and trying to support them, remotely, has been challenging. 4. Maintaining a form of equity for learners who can't access digital resources. This is not always due to lack of device but lack of ability to work it. 5. Glow access for P1 - 3's to access Google meets. The wee ones don't have the skill and ability yet to log on independently and Glow User agreement prohibits parents having the information. This is problematic when the press keep reinforcing that everyone in Scotland has access to Glow.
41	Technology and wifi access
42	Getting families to engage - lots of reasons given but usually broken printers (not required anyway), broadband issues etc.
43	Technology
44	ICT/connectivity/reliability and availability of working equipment and internet (pupils and staff!). We put in an order for 10 additional laptops in September and this has still not been received. We have since committed to ordering more - hoping to build on the new skills of staff and pupils. Also: Managing parental expectations (i.e. demands for video and live lessons, comms at all times of day) Being asked for data that we perhaps do not feel fully secure about (there are no real guarantees that parents/older siblings did not do some of the work or support with a great deal, it is hard to know how much was done on our hard copies if we were not emailed photos back) Staff professional isolation and an increased amount of stress (work, family life, lockdown restrictions and anxiety - staff are human too) - miss talking with colleagues about challenges face-to-face (including other agencies) Workload - trying to oversee remote learning and also run/staff the hub and also consider all the changing guidance and RAs for school return then managing a half-back/half-at home return whilst still doing the day job (CPMs, meetings, procurement, budgets, transition, ASN, staff wellbeing, SIP/SEP/ACEL etc) Budget and staffing cuts at the same time as dealing with the pandemic/home learning/running the hub/then having P1-3s in and not mixing staff across bubbles.
45	Connectivity in school and at home.

17. Any other comments?

24 Responses

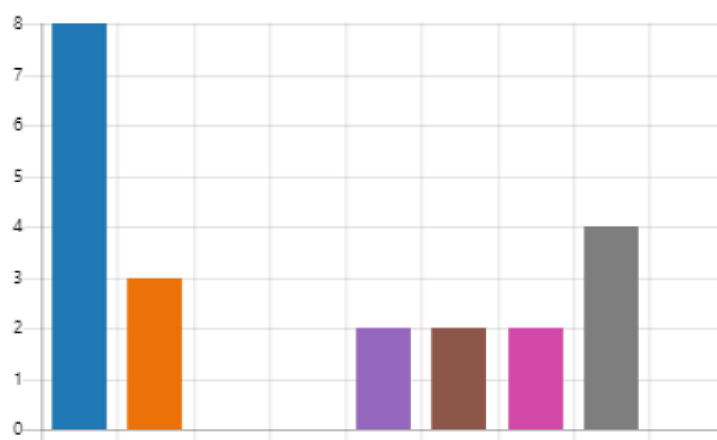| ID	Responses
1	The responses are swayed by the small number of families. There are currently no P1 children - couldn't add that for question 11.
2	Question 13 - depends on the family
3	N/A
4	Our staff and community have really pulled together as a team to support of our pupils and families as well as each other.
5	Our support staff have been brilliant at adapting to yet another new routine supporting our Keyworker/ASN and Vulnerable pupils The pupils coming into school, in particular the ASN pupils have really benefitted from the high level of support on offer in school. Just as the music specialists have made an offer for pupils to engage in remote learning activities, we would have welcomed some guidance for supporting play based learning at home from the ELC Team.
6	The staff have embraced things with relative ease this time and the training we implemented in terms 1 and 2 has paid dividends. Operating the hub in school has enabled us to have time with pupils who never normally get that level of support and attention.
7	Teachers feel they can't replicate in remote learning the same evidence of progress as they would be able in a classroom Frustration at not being able to identify groups of cohorts in P4-7 they would like to see back in school for support, concern about regression for some pupils
8	For equity we have focused on both methods - digital and paper after parents last lockdown preferred the paper packs. Staff are now in a good routine and work collegiately to prepare the learning activities, be online each day for 30 minutes and provide feedback once a week for pupils who complete their learning activities. As a school we are focusing on a Positive Mental Health week next week in response to the number of families who have contacted the school and teachers to inform us they are struggling with the challenges of remote learning or that they have concerns for their child's mental health. Teamwork across both the teaching and support staff has been fantastic - really proud of how they have all worked collegiately to support the children and families this lockdown and provide learning activities for the children at Kinloss Primary School.
9	Although we have 100% engagement and participation, the extent of the engagement and participation is variable.
10	We might get it right third time around
11	Engagement in online learning has increased through anecdotal evidence from class teachers on last year. The SG laptops have been utilised not all children/families are engaging consistently There are many families who are surviving at present, close work with SW and H to meet the Maslow needs - home learning is being encouraged and supported and where dialogue with families takes place, learning through household/life skills are highlighted as valid learning opportunities.

ID	Responses
12	I am extremely proud of the effort teaching staff have given to remote learning and trying to get it right for families. Thank you to the central team for the guidance and support offered during this time. The Guidance papers you have produced have been really helpful.
13	Progress of Primary 1-3: We have decided "neither agree/disagree" as it is difficult with the younger children to assess how much parental support/input they are receiving and how much they are able to complete themselves independently. We'll have a better idea when the children return to the classroom as to how much they have progressed with their learning. No further comments - just looking forward to normality returning!
14	Progress of children - we have said neither agree nor disagree as it is very difficult to gauge how much help and support has been given by parents at home when reviewing submitted work e.g. perfect spelling from children who we know have difficulty in this area. We have plans to assess children on their progress to identify gaps or challenge required.
15	Question 9 - Play based approaches are used mainly in Primary 1 and Primary 2.
16	Apologies this is late. It was on my to do list but hadn't noted the completion date.
17	Lockdown has clearly evidenced that Digital learning is not a substitute for quality face to face learning.
18	We are looking forward to developing the use of online platforms for homework.
19	Looking forward to normal times returning!
20	We would welcome any improvements to the connectivity in our school. Q11 - P2 - I had to answer don't know but I don't actually have any P2s on roll. Thank you.
21	Let's hope this doesn't last too much longer.
22	.
23	Some teachers used resources listed to support remote learning but I have not ticked them because we were not all using them consistently as a school. If there had been an option in question 13 between 'adequate support' and 'too much support' I would have ticked that.
24	Online learning is not ideal for P1

Screenshots – Secondary Survey

3. In your school, which of the following learning platforms are the MAIN PLATFORMS in use for learners to access Remote Learning?

Platform	Count
Microsoft Teams	8
Google Classroom	3
Seesaw	0
Class Dojo	0
School Website/Glow Blogs	2
School App	2
Social Media (Facebook/Twitter)	2
Satchel One (Show My Home...)	4
Other	0

5. Please enter the name(s) of any OTHER learning platform or online learning resource you have found useful during lockdown in support of Remote Learning:

3 Responses

ID	Responses
1	National resources - e-Sgoil, Scholar, West OS, BBC
2	Google Meet
3	Sumdog, Loom, Linguascope, Note flight, National Theatre Live, Mr Grahams Maths, BBC Bitesize, Digi Map, Virtual Library and The Day Newspaper

6. Overall, how strong is LEARNER ENGAGEMENT in Remote Learning across your school? Please consider the proportion of learners in each stage known to engage in learning activities set. This is the proportion of learners accessing learning platforms and/or paper based resources and completing some of the learning activities set.

■ A few (less than 15%) ■ Less than half (15%–49%) ■ Majority (50%-74%) ■ Most (75%-90%) ■ Almost All (91%-99%)
■ All (100%) ■ N/A
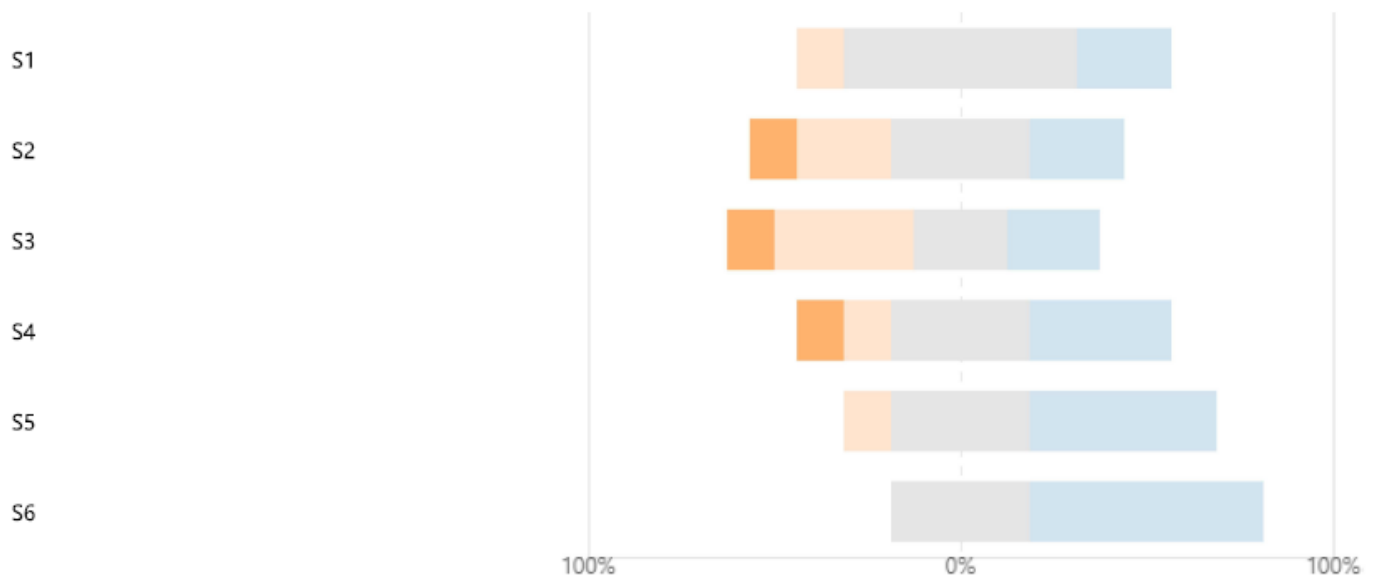
7. Overall, how strong is LEARNER PARTICIPATION in Remote Learning across your school? Please consider the proportion of learners in each stage known to actively participate in learning activities set online or in paper-based formats. Learners may also actively engage in dialogue (live/chat posts) and act on feedback provided on learning activities set. Learner participation is where learners are known to meaningfully take part in Remote Learning.

■ A few (less than 15%) ■ Less than half (15%–49%) ■ Majority (50%-74%) ■ Most (75%-90%) ■ Almost All (91%-99%)
■ All (100%) ■ N/A

8. In your school, what proportion of your staff are confident in the use of online digital platforms in use (e.g. Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom...)?

Legend: ■ A few (less than 15%) ■ Less than half (15%–49%) ■ Majority (50%-74%) ■ Most (75%-90%) ■ Almost all (91%-99%) ■ All (100%) ■ N/A

Teaching Staff
Non-teaching Staff

100% — 0% — 100%

9. To what extent are practitioners in your school making use of the following approaches in support of Remote Learning?

Legend: ■ A few (less than 15%) ■ Less than half (15%–49%) ■ Majority (50%-74%) ■ Most (75%-90%) ■ Almost all (91%-99%) ■ All (100%) ■ N/A

Paper-based packs/resources
Live learning (in real-time)
Outdoor learning activities
Independent learning activities
Family learning activities/challenges
Practical activities
Pre-recorded videos
Pre-recorded PowerPoint with voiceover
Literacy, Numeracy and HWB focus activities
Activities embracing wider Curriculum areas (beyond L, N, HWB)
Inter-disciplinary Learning
Play-based approaches

100% — 0% — 100%

10. In support of learner wellbeing and support, which of the following have you adopted as a school:

🔵 Daily registration/check in for ...	4	
🟠 Opportunities for live learner ...	5	
🟢 Targeted engagement/phone ...	8	
🔴 Online virtual playtimes/chat c...	2	
🟣 Virtual whole-school events al...	1	
🟤 Other	2	

11. Overall, are learners showing good progress in their learning, through remote learning underway? Progress in learning may be gauged through quality of work completed, ongoing assessment approaches, review or work submitted and feedback provided (including how learners have acted on feedback provided by their class teachers).

Legend: ■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ▢ Neither agree nor disagree ▢ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Don't know

12. In order to support Remote Learning, which of the following have you made use of as a school?

- National e-learning - live (e.g. ...   8
- National e-learning – recorde...   6
- National e-learning: supporte...   8
- Education Scotland/Digilearn...   5
- Moray Learning Technologists   7
- School in-house digital champ...   7
- YouTube for self-directed help   6
- GTCS resources   3
- SQA resources   7
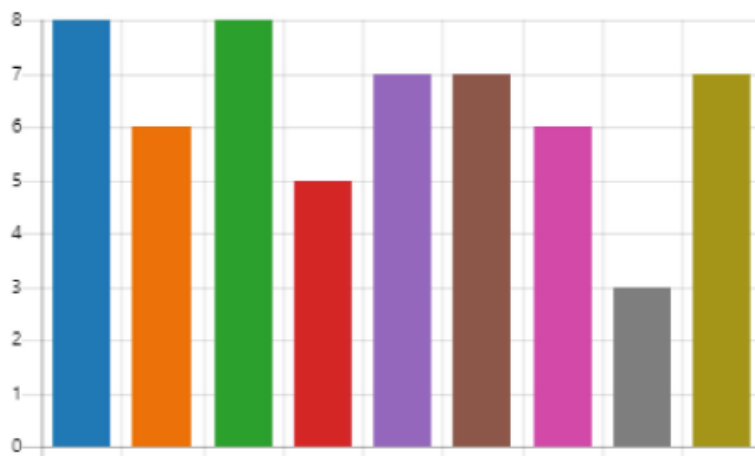
13. To what extent do you believe children and young people enrolled in your school have been supported in their Remote Learning at home, overall?

- Too much support   0
- Adequate support   8
- Not enough support   0

14. How are you maintaining contact with parents, including updates on learning and general communications?

- Social Media - Facebook   6
- Social Media - Twitter   8
- School Apps   6
- Class Dojo   0
- Online learning journals/e-jou...   0
- E-mailed newsletters/commun...   8
- Telephone calls   8
- Groupcall/text messages   8
- Other   1

15. Overall, what has been your greatest success with Remote Learning?

8 Responses

ID	Responses
1	The hugely increased range of types and styles of e-learning opportunities being made available.
2	The introduction of Senior Phase live learning and we have been really impressed by the quality of this. Staff have really embraced this and the quality has improved significantly over the past few weeks.
3	Staff collegiality/communication and supporting each other on Teams Communication from parents re: their children's online learning. Allows for support and challenge to occur. Improved relationships through trusting staff to develop/take ownership of online L&T.
4	Learning and acting on first period of lockdown. Constant reviewing and QA over the past 6 weeks. Staff willingness to expand their knowledge and practice. Move to live lessons/interactions.
5	Identifying learners at risk and requiring interventions/encouragement/support. Parents report being pleased with the amount and quality of work and support being provided.
6	High level of engagement in S4-6. Virtual registration provides good opportunity to check if learners are having any issues accessing resources - if so, phone calls are made to support. Virtual registration also provides wellbeing checks for pupils that are monitored by Guidance daily. Monitoring engagement enables PT Covid to support small number of senior pupils who struggle to engage at home.
7	Many students very engaged and staff willing to continually develop to improve the experience.
8	Drop-in sessions for PSE, Looms, jamboards, voiceover PowerPoints, interactive activities, Parent Group

16. Overall, what has been your greatest challenge with Remote Learning?

8 Responses

ID	Responses
1	Enormous range in access to appropriate ICT seriously affects engagement and massively variable parent/pupil expectations. Parent and pupil surveys range from far too much available to too little. Too much support to not enough. National media suggests that live learning is the gold standard - but it isn't necessarily the most effective.
2	Ensuring access and engagement for all.
3	Digital connectivity/availability of ICT resources; constant change and the increased time required to react to these (unavoidable but necessary).

ID	Responses
4	Technology. Managing staff wellbeing.
5	Digital access and also lack of ICT abilities in young people when using platforms causing a lot of anxiety and stress in families and workload as support has had to be very intensive.
6	Engagement has tailed off in S1 and S3 over the last week or two. Dongles have yet to arrive so some of our young people cannot access their learning unless they are in the building. Many families are finding it difficult to motivate their young people at home.
7	Managing parental expectations - especially when national messages are vague and open to interpretation. Managing the sheer volume of information from many providers and the over communication - too lengthy documents. Poor wi-fi coverage and the inability of school devices to work to their potential given the VPN issues.
8	Maintaining contact with colleagues, engaging difficult to reach young people

17. Any other comments?

4 Responses

ID	Responses
1	Much better than last time, would love us to get the issues to sharing of confidential/ASN information sorted. 'good' progress…it is better than last time so in that sense it is good. It is much slower than in school learning - in that sense not good. Concerns that progress of the less engaged is even slower in comparison with others than in normal circumstances and so the gap is widening.
2	Very grateful for the support of Central team connected to our school.
3	Thank you and stay safe.
4	Staff have worked very hard to ensure the best possible experience for young people. I know a number are frustrated at lack of engagement despite all support in place for a number of young people.

REPORT TO: **EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 26 MAY 2021**

SUBJECT: **MORAY SCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE (SAC) 2015-2020 IMPACT REPORT**

BY: **DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To inform Committee of the impact of Scottish Attainment Challenge (Pupil Equity) funding for the children and young people of Moray, in particular, those most affected by poverty as framed by our Education Scotland Scottish Attainment Challenge Impact Report for Moray 2020.

1.2 To review the impact of SAC funding on closing the poverty related attainment gap and impact of Covid-19 on work by schools to address this.

1.3 This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance, (para 9 of the minute refers).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **It is recommended that Committee:**

    (i) **scrutinises and notes the progress in closing the poverty related attainment gap in Moray over the last 5 years and;**

    (ii) **acknowledges the impact of Covid-19 on work to close the poverty related attainment and progress of schools despite this disruption.**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) was launched in February 2015 to support the Scottish Government in achieving its vision of delivering excellence and equity in education.

3.2 The Council has been part of the SAC since session 2016/2017 and receives funding through the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) and Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund. Moray has received £4,308,920 over the last 3 years across the various funding streams linked to the SAC.

3.3 Over the past two academic sessions, PEF planning and interventions have been impacted by Covid-19 and disruption to our schools. Engagement and participation in learning was variable for some children, with the impact on progress over time not fully known at this stage.

3.4 The SAC programme focuses on closing the poverty-related attainment gap, targeting improvements in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Moray is 1 of 11 'Universal Support' local authorities, with focus on key policies and access to core funding including Pupil Equity Funding. This is different to the 12 local authorities forming 'The Schools Programme' focusing on key interventions and enhanced funding where there is a significant proportion of pupils and families facing some of the greatest challenges across Scotland. There are now 72 schools across wider Scotland in the Schools Programme

3.5 The 'Challenge Authorities' make up the final part of the SAC programme, receiving the greatest proportion of funding with targeted funding allocated to the 9 local authorities with the highest concentration of pupils living in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) decile 1 and decile 2 areas. The table below outlines key local authority areas within each of the SAC programme areas:

Challenge	Schools	Universal
9 Local Authorities	12 Local Authorities	11 Local Authorities
Clackmannanshire	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire
Dundee	Argyll & Bute	Angus
East Ayrshire	Dumfries & Galloway	East Dunbartonshire
Glasgow City	Edinburgh City	East Lothian
Inverclyde	Falkirk	East Renfrewshire
North Ayrshire	Fife	Midlothian
North Lanarkshire	Highland	Moray
Renfrew	Scottish Borders	Orkney
West Dunbartonshire	South Lanarkshire	Perth & Kinross
	South Ayrshire	Shetland
	Stirling	Western Isles
	West Lothian	

3.6 Care Experienced funding has also been available to local authorities since session 2018/2019 with key work underway within Corporate Parenting led by Social Work colleagues and containing an 'Education' pillar within the strategy.

3.7 Completed in late December 2020 and published in March 2021, our Education Scotland Scottish Attainment Challenge Impact Report for Moray 2020 (**Appendix 1**) reviews data sets to session 2019/2020. In 2019 it was noted that Moray had 38% of pupils with an Additional Support Need (ASN), slightly higher than National averages. In total, 9.8% of pupils were registered

for Free Schools Meals (FSM) and almost all Moray Schools received PEF funding ranging from £1,200 to £109,200 per school. £1,200 is representative of PEF funding available for one PEF funding eligible child for spending on targeted and wider universal supports.

3.8   Until session 2020/2021, Moray had no SIMD decile 1 children and families. However, school profiles have notably changed from last year with changes in Scottish Government classifications resulting in 90 Primary School children in Moray now within SIMD decile 1 highlighting increased number of children and young people living in poverty in Moray. Where PEF funding was set for 2 years from session 2020/2021, schools impacted by this change have not benefited from additional funding or being included in the schools programme. Moray has attainment gaps in the upper SIMD deciles, specifically decile 7 where 25% of Moray school cohort reside.

3.9   Key principles of PEF funding are as follows:

- Head Teachers must have access to the full amount of PEF
- PEF must deliver additional activities, interventions or resources
- Head Teachers should work in partnership with each other and partners, taking account of local authority guidance
- PEF should articulate closely to existing planning and reporting procedures. For example, through School Improvement Planning and Standards and Quality reports
- Parents, carers, children, young people and other key stakeholders should be involved in the planning process
- Funding must provide targeted support for children and young people (and their families if appropriate) affected by poverty. PEF is allocated on the basis of Free School Meals – Head Teachers can use their professional judgement to bring additional children in to the targeted interventions and approaches
- Head Teachers must develop a clear, data informed, rationale for use of the funding
- PEF planning should include measuring and evaluating the impact in relation to the attainment gap
- Plans for future sustainability should be considered as part of this

4.   **IMPACT OF SAC FUNDING IN MORAY ON IMPROVING OUTCOMES**

4.1   The SAC Impact Report for Moray contained within **Appendix 1** contains full details of impact of SAC and Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) for Moray. The ethos and vision of SAC is reflected across our Moray Strategic documents including the Children's Services Plan where reducing the impact of poverty is a core aim. This is further reflected in the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) and work is ongoing to ensure school PEF plans take account of the current Moray Child Poverty Action Plan linking with work on Cost of the School Day. Local authority guidance on PEF strategy and planning has recently been reviewed and relaunched working in partnership with our Education Scotland Attainment Advisor.

4.2   Data for Broad General Education (BGE) attainment in literacy indicates a 4-year trend of improvement in attainment for Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. There has been a notable reduction from 28% to 15% (-13%) in the poverty related attainment gap for literacy (P1, P4, P7 and S3 combined). While below the National average, schools continue to use PEF funding to provide a range of targeted interventions to improve reading and writing including effective writing workshops, recovery programmes and reading initiatives.

4.3   Data for BGE attainment in numeracy indicates a 4-year trend for improvement across CfE levels.   There has been a notable reduction in the poverty related attainment gap for numeracy at P1, P4, P7 and S3 combined. The gap has reduced over time from 21% to 13% (-8%). While below national averages at early to second level, Moray are above national average at 3rd level. Supported by local authority Maths Conferences, training, resources, school-based interventions, Associated Schools Group resourcing and partnership working, work continues to address identified poverty related attainment gaps.

4.4   At Senior Phase, there is a 3.09% poverty related attainment gap for Senior Phase Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 4 attainment which is 2.8% lower than the National average (5.89%). There is a 5.09% poverty related attainment gap for Senior Phase SCQF level 5 attainment which is 12.02% lower than the National average (17.11%). There is a 16.67% poverty related attainment gap for SCQF level 6 attainment which is 15.87% lower than the National average (32.54%). Overall, this demonstrates a positive position.

4.5   In 2019/2020, 117 separate PEF interventions were delivered within the majority of schools. The majority of schools report improvements in quantitative and qualitative evidence including health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy. Schools continue to use PEF creatively to consider how they may close the poverty related attainment gaps, using data to inform improvements.

4.6   Schools continue to develop approaches to wellbeing and family engagement, strengthening knowledge and developing interventions in support of closing identified attainment gaps and improving attendance rates of children and young people supported by our PEF strategies.

4.7   Moray has significantly lower numbers of children looked after at home than the Scottish average. While looked after children's school attendance and attainment are below their peers, the Corporate Parenting Strategy Group's Education pillar continue work to address improvements required where Moray is committed to the published 'Promise' and progressing the findings of the National Independent Care Review. This is planned to support improvements in attainment and attendance, maintaining positive destinations in line with National averages.

5. NEXT STEPS

5.1 A number of key areas are identified for further development. It is recognised that lower levels of FSM registration impacts the reach of PEF and as such, the Education Poverty Action Group plan has been developed to tackle this. Where Moray is a rural local authority, basing PEF allocation on FSM may not be a true reflection of poverty prevalence in Moray. Anticipated changes to Scottish Government PEF funding model may positively benefit our rural locality.

5.2 Despite barriers presented, Moray practitioners have demonstrated determination and creativity in planning and delivering PEF interventions with positive attainment impact. As a rural Local Authority, Moray is impacted by wider issues including transportation, connectivity, employment and changing context of industry. Moray has the second lowest wage in Scotland and child poverty rates are increasing within Moray with 1 child in 5 living in relative poverty.

5.3 Schools will continue to explore opportunities for joint PEF collaboration across Associated Schools and local comparator schools, sharing good practice and enacting universal and targeted interventions in support of identified learners.

5.4 Moray PEF planning guidance has been refreshed and relaunched with support sessions delivered by our Education Scotland Attainment Advisor guiding planning and interventions. The Advisor also provides targeted support and bespoke sessions for schools.

5.5 Through strategy development and wider strategy groups including 'Supporting All Learners' and wider Corporate Parenting Strategy in relation to looked after and care experienced children and young people, work will continue to support learner wellbeing and close identified attainment and achievement gaps to ensure equity for all of Moray's children and young people.

5.6 Through lessons learned and future priorities contained within our Education Scotland 'Scottish Attainment Challenge" Impact Report for Moray 2020 (section 6), we will continue to build sustainability in PEF interventions recognising challenges in recruiting staff to temporary PEF posts due to nature of funding, ensuring all elements of our Education Strategic Plan 2020-2023 continue to deliver improvements in data outlined in section 3 above.

6. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)
Reflective of priorities within the Corporate Plan with particular regard to providing a sustainable education service aiming for excellence in line with council values of ambitious, improving and responsive. With regards to the LOIP, through raising aspirations, focus relates to building a better future for our children and young people in Moray through equity

of learning experience offered across our schools; supporting ambitious and confident children, able to reach their full potential and reducing the impact of poverty.

(b) Policy and Legal

The legal implications arising directly from this report are outlined in the National Improvement Framework to close the poverty related attainment gap.

(c) Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Financial implications may arise only as a result of key recommendations from feedback informing wider strategies moving forwards, outlined above and relation to SAC funding models allocated by Scottish Government. There are often underspends in PEF due to funding being across the financial year yet delivered across the academic session.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report. Many interventions are dependent on securing staff to take forward but due to the temporary nature of these, there are often delays in recruitment or sometimes inability to fill vacancies.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

An Equality/Socio Economic Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform Committee on survey findings and recommendations arising from responses received.

(h) Consultations

Senior Officers in Education, Communities and Organisational Development, Paul Connor, Principal Accountant, Equal Opportunities Officer, Human Resources Manager, and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

7. **CONCLUSION**

7.1 **That Committee notes the contents of this report and key findings and;**

7.2 **notes findings, impact and next steps identified in Moray's Scottish Attainment Challenge 2015-2020 Impact Report**

Author of Report: Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager

Background Papers: Education Scotland Scottish Attainment Challenge Impact
Report for Moray 2020 (**Appendix 1**)

Ref: SPMAN-1315769894-84
                              SPMAN-1315769894-85

Scottish Attainment Challenge: 2015-20 Impact report

**Local authority report
Moray**

For Scotland's learners, with Scotland's educators

Contents

Executive Summary

The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) was launched in February 2015 to help the Scottish Government achieve its vision of delivering excellence and equity in education. Moray Council has been part of the SAC since 2016/2017 and receives funding through the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) and the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund. Moray has received £4,308,920 over the last 3 years across these various funding streams.

This report highlights the impact of SAC funding for the children and young people of Moray; in particular, those most affected by poverty. Key strengths include:

- The local authority (LA) has embarked on an extensive programme of events to support staff in using data effectively to inform school improvement. Robust interrogation by the central team has ensured that the majority of schools have improved knowledge and application of data. The education department have developed a highly effective tracker that is used to support schools in tracking of wellbeing, attainment and achievement. This effective tool facilitates reviews of interventions (including PEF) for sufficiency and impact. The LA are supporting staff to consider interventions and analysis of attendance data at school level; this informs universal and targeted interventions to help understand the poverty related attainment gap. This had led to self-reporting of greater practitioner confidence in data use and handling;
- The number of incidents of exclusion has significantly decreased over the past three years in both primary and secondary schools. Effective professional learning in whole school restorative approaches has taken place. In almost all schools, staff and pupils demonstrate respectful behaviour and positive relationships. Staff care about the wellbeing of pupils and pupils feel listened to and valued. This has resulted in self reporting of improved ethos and culture which has resulted in positive behaviour approaches adopted in most schools;
- There is an improving trend in the combined literacy and numeracy attainment for primary children. The LA are using PEF funding to provide targeted interventions to improve reading, writing and numeracy to close the poverty related attainment gap.

The local authority has identified the following areas for continued development:

- Schools will continue to explore opportunities for joint PEF collaboration across Associated Schools Groups or with local comparator schools. Headteachers will continue to look outwards to other local authorities and schools in order to share/identify interesting practice which has led to improvements. Learning will be shared and celebrated across Moray;
- Continue to develop and capture robust attainment information that will provide the local narrative to support PEF planning. Implementing the Moray PEF Planning Cycle as a further revised approach may ensure that additional baseline and impact data is captured, which will inform future practice.
- The LA will continue to develop and embed approaches to underpin wellbeing, including reviewing pastoral care and wellbeing classrooms. Moray Council is working towards a "Supporting all Learners" strategy to address equity.

Section 1 Context of Scottish Attainment Challenge

The Scottish Government's ambition is for Scotland to be the best place in which to grow up. To achieve this, it is essential to raise attainment and reduce educational inequity for all of Scotland's children and young people. Attainment is the measurable progress made by children and young people as they advance through, and beyond, school. However, there continues to be a gap between the progress made between those living in Scotland's least and most deprived areas. The First Minister launched SAC in February 2015 to bring these issues to the fore and provide a greater sense of urgency and priority to address them across the education system.

SAC funding has been available to local authorities and schools to support this vision since 2015. Various funding streams have been available throughout this period. As evidence and understanding evolved, different needs and supports were highlighted:
- Challenge Authority Funding (available to seven authorities from 2015 and an additional two authorities since 2016/17).
- Schools Programme Funding (available to 57 primary schools since 2015 and to another 28 secondary schools since 2016/17). There are now 72 schools in the Schools Programme (as a result of some becoming part of the Challenge Authorities programmes, some mergers and one school closure).
- Pupil Equity Funding (available to almost all schools in Scotland since 2016/17).
- Care Experienced Funding (available to local authorities since 2018/19).

Outcomes

Reducing educational inequity and closing the poverty- related attainment gap is a long term strategy which aims to impact on societal culture and thinking. Consequently a logic model was developed to allow the SAC Programme to recognise and measure short and medium term outcomes towards achieving the long term goals. This report will look at the outcomes achieved with reference to the logic model and how this information can be used to informing next steps.

Moray's context

Moray Council is the eighth largest council by land area in Scotland. In June 2019, the population of Moray was 86,870 (25th out of 32 Scottish local authorities). Moray is a Scottish Attainment Challenge Universal programme local authority. There are 45 primary schools and 8 secondary schools located across Moray. Children with additional support needs receive the support they require within mainstream schools. In 2019 38% of pupils were recognised as having additional support needs, which is slightly higher than the national average. Previously Moray had no Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation decile 1, however, school profiles have notably changed from last year with families now living in decile 1. One datazone now has 90 primary aged pupils in SIMD decile 1 which indicates that an increasing number of children and young people are living in poverty within Moray. This is particularly the case for some relatively remote communities in the area. Moray have attainment gaps in the upper deciles, specifically decile 7 where 25% of their cohort resides. 9.8% of pupils are registered for free school meals (FSM) in the 2019 session. 53 out of the 54 Moray schools received PEF ranging from £1,200 to £109,200 per school.

Section 2 Approach used

During the period of 19th October 2020 to 4th December 2020, Attainment Advisors worked alongside SAC local authority project leads to analyse data and evidence from their individual local authority regarding the Scottish Attainment Challenge. The purpose was to provide qualitative and quantitative answers to three high level questions regarding the impact of SAC within each local authority:

1. How has the implementation of the SAC impacted upon the culture and systems of local authorities to ensure those cultures and systems are equitable for children, young people and families affected by poverty?
2. How has the SAC positively impacted upon, or contributed to, educational outcomes for children and young people affected by poverty?
3. Which lessons have been learned and what are the future priorities for the SAC?

Each Attainment Advisor completed a professional report template providing detail and evidence to thirty-four questions. This provided further detail and evidence around each of these three high level questions. They utilised data from a variety of different sources to triangulate the analysis. Diagram 1 illustrates the range of data used. This report is the result of this analysis.

Diagram 1: Evidence used to collate the Local Authority professional reports on SAC by Attainment Advisors
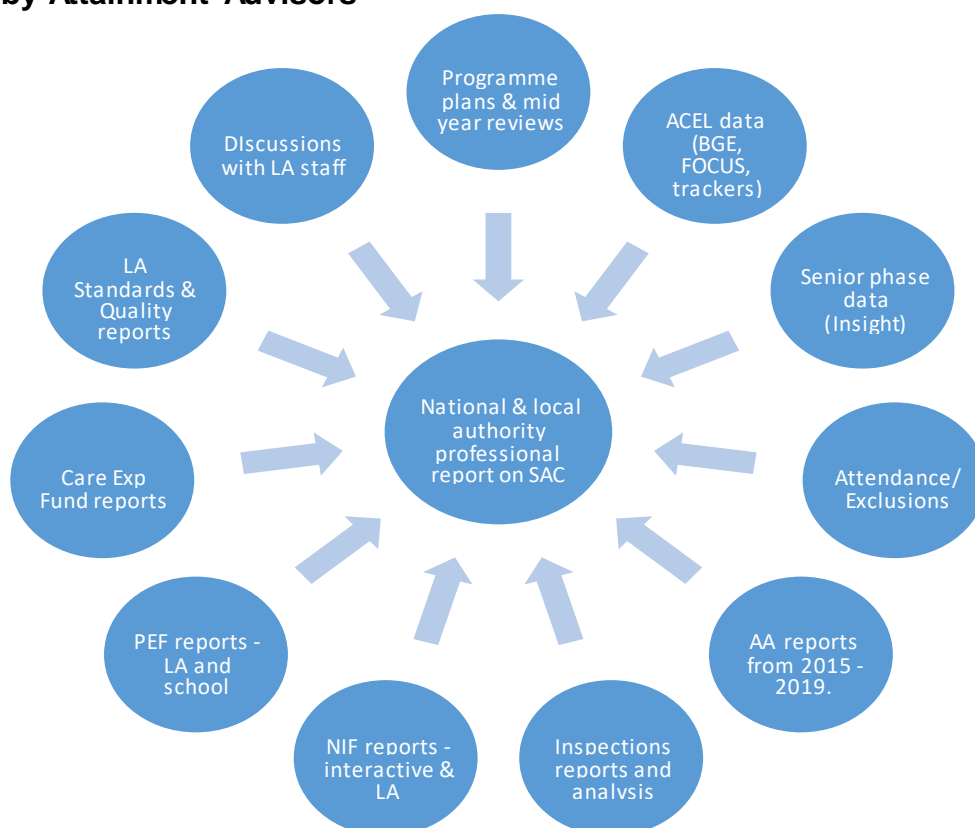
Section 3 Transformational changes: cultural and systemic

3.1   Leadership

3.1.1: Strategic leadership:

The ethos and vision of the SAC Fund is reflected in many of Moray's strategic documents. This includes the Children's Services Plan where "reducing the impact of poverty" is a key aim. The Local Outcomes Improvement Plan states all staff are committed to "building a better future for our children and young people in Moray". Work is ongoing to ensure that School PEF Plans take account of the current Moray (Child) Poverty Action Plan and good practice from other local authorities. PEF interventions have been implemented within the six strategic areas from the Moray Schools and Curriculum Development Department Strategic Action Plan 2018-21. This informs all school improvement planning. This plan is currently under review following restructuring within the council and will take the form of a revised education plan moving forward from session 2020. A lead officer oversees the implementation of PEF as part of their wider lead role. This includes reviewing plans and evaluating impact of PEF and reporting to elected members. The completion of the annual statutory return and organisation of PEF information events also takes place. On inception of PEF in Moray, the Director of Education and Children's Services at that time led on the PEF strategy with responsibility moving to officer level following restructuring. The LA has developed local guidance and paperwork to support PEF planning. This is reviewed regularly.

3.1.2: Leadership skills

Through school support and challenge visits, data and interventions are reviewed for impact and planning. This includes PEF, as linked to the school improvement plans. LA officer intelligence is mapped with school self-evaluations to inform targeted areas for support. Focused CLPL sessions have been delivered which has included Moray Leadership and Management training and Education Scotland CLPL sessions. School leaders are supported to reflect on leadership of change, impact measurement and improvement. Although CLPL sessions delivered are not directly funded by PEF, the increased awareness generated by the SAC has been a contributing factor to the impact that this activity had. The AA continues to offer school visits to discuss data and to consider interventions and priorities. The aims of support sessions are to consider interventions and supports that are informed by data, to improve attainment and closing the poverty-related attainment gap. Support sessions are guided by teachers' needs. Themes have included outcomes and measures, alternative qualifications to recognise wider achievement and considering data over time. Headteachers, deputy headteachers and principal teachers have commented positively about support sessions and have asked for ongoing support in these areas.

3.2   Learning and teaching

3.2.1: Learning and teaching

Following cross-authority collaboration and working, the LA have developed Our Moray Standard for Learning and Teaching as a driver for raising attainment. This is in line with the refreshed Strategy for Raising Attainment in Moray. A suite of resources and toolkits have been created for reflection and school improvement in this area. Headteacher meetings, professional development sessions and school collegiate working have led to improvements in pedagogy and practice. In the recent NIF return for learning, teaching and assessment, 12 headteachers rated schools as very good, 19 were rated as good, and 22 as satisfactory. Assessment and moderation continues to be a LA focus; strengthening practitioner confidence in their professional judgments. This includes Inset activities devoted to moderation. As a result, teacher professional judgement has strengthened and in normal operating years, improvements have been witnessed year on year. Learning modules have been delivered by central officers and have been used to support practice development. Examples of this include play pedagogy collaboration with Early Years staff, considering planning and differentiation. Schools report positively on targeted support sessions that have been delivered. Although sessions delivered were not funded byt PEF, due to the SAC this has been a contributing factor to the impact that this training has had.

3.2.2   Understanding the challenges and impact of poverty

Schools work closely with children and families and collate local intelligence to inform support. Using knowledge of their local contexts, schools have delivered a range of interventions to support pupils living in poverty. This has included: providing breakfast clubs; delivering out of school activities and provision of resources to allow pupils to fully participate in activities. Schools undertake self-evaluation activities, including surveys and questionnaires, to gauge level of need which helps underpin understanding and planning. The AA has delivered career long professional learning to schools, focusing on poverty and equity, to support practitioner understanding. Monthly PEF drop-in clinics have been offered and will be offered as part of the 2021/2022 plan. Support sessions have focussed on the SAC, situational poverty, inwork poverty and profiling schools. Feedback from staff identified that they are now more aware of the issues in their local area which has helped inform planning. In response to digital poverty during COVID-19 Moray have provided 80 iPads, 1700 laptops, 130 Chromebooks and 30 Wi-Fi dongles to families to ensure that digital poverty was not a barrier to learning. This was as a result of Moray colleagues understanding the challenges faced by pupils and families living in poverty. To ensure that this is embedded into practice and a legacy is created, digital poverty will feature in Moray's wider digital strategy that is being developed.

3.3   Families and communities

3.3.1 Family engagement with educational establishments

Moray Parent Forum meets termly with representatives from across Moray parent councils. All parents/carers with children at a school are automatically members of the Parent Forum for their school. All schools within Moray consult with parents and all stakeholders to populate their school improvement plan, of which equity is a key theme. LA parent surveys are undertaken every 2 years. This supports and quantifies intelligence from parents. This has been supplemented most recently by the Moray COVID-19 parent survey. One school which was recently inspected by Education Scotland had their involvement in partnership working, including parents, highlighted as an area of good practice. Following the recent successful launch of Our Moray Standard for Learning and Teaching, the LA next steps are to revisit the draft Parental Engagement strategy. Developed in 2017, it was recognised that revision to the Learning and Teaching strategy was required. Schools continue to build on parental engagement strategies, extending to family learning opportunities. This has included open afternoons, shared learning events, back to the future parental engagement sessions, and other creative ways to engage parents and families in the life and work of the school. Through the wider parent forum, parent council and schools consult and engage with parents on their use of the SAC funding. To ensure that most schools are adopting this practice PEF clinics and revised PEF guidelines will reiterate the importance of this and share practice on how this can be successfully achieved.

3.3.2 Family learning   .

Most primary schools within Moray have developed robust home/school diaries or homework books to effectively communicate with parents. Class blogs are used to allow parents to be involved in homework and as a means to strengthening the relationship between home and school. All schools within Moray have a school newsletter that can be accessed digitally or via the school, recognising digital poverty. Newsletters are issued regularly and keep parents up to date with significant school events. Less than half of schools within Moray offer monthly Family Learning opportunities for all pupils, where parents and carers join their children in learning in class. However progress reports are used in the majority of schools within Moray. They focus on the skills pupils are developing in line with CfE and the Moray Skills Framework. This is underpinned by parental engagement via open afternoons. During lockdown 1206 parents actively took part in a learning survey. Most parents were positive about home-school interactions, wellbeing check-ins and learning at home resources and delivery throughout COVID-19.

3.3.3 Other improvements in outcomes for families and communities

Due to the large number of military families that reside within Moray (second highest in Scotland) almost all schools with military families have developed bespoke Military Families' coffee mornings and wellbeing and participation events. Sessions offer practical and emotional support, advice and guidance to family members of serving military personnel. It is understood that additional social, emotional and mental wellbeing supports for pupils and families from Armed Forces families are required due to experiencing significant emotional life events.

Qualitative feedback from support groups have been very positive as it allows parents to connect with each other and their wider community. Monies received through SAC is being complimented via a grant from the Covenant Fund which will support schools with wellbeing interventions for this unique community. An example of successful SAC spend is the provision of healthy activities and cookery clubs during the summer holidays which encourages parental engagement. Home school link workers have accessed training and provided Seasons for Growth training, offering parent support groups and targeted 1:1 support. As a result of PEF interventions schools have reported a reduction of exclusions, increase in attendance and increase of parental engagement.

3.4   How we work as a system

3.4.1 Effective use of data for improvement

Considerable work has been undertaken through headteacher meetings, collaborative professional development sessions and training on data handling, analysis and intervention. This includes training on SNSA; BGE Benchmarking tool; Insight professional development and wider attainment data sessions. This had led to selfreporting of greater practitioner confidence in data use and handling. The LA continues to provide data sets to schools on key areas including attainment; achievement; attendance; exclusion; FSM; SIMD and other context/school related data. Robust interrogation by the central team has ensured that the majority of schools have improved knowledge and application of data. LA scrutiny and attainment visits make use of data sets provided and supported by the Research and Information team to ensure interventions for improvement are evidence. The education department have develop a highly effective tracker that is used to support schools in tracking of wellbeing, attainment and achievement. This effective tool facilitates reviews of interventions (including PEF) for sufficiency and impact. The Moray Tracker has a clear strategy framework and guidance supporting this cross-authority resource. Almost all schools are using this tool effectively. The AA has complimented this by providing headteachers with further support in data analysis. As a result of this, headteachers have reported greater understanding of data literacy which will support a more accurate identification of the poverty related attainment gap within their school. This has helped facilitate discussions regarding approaches that could be considered to address this gap.

3.4.2 Collaboration including partnership working

Commendably, partnerships with third sector organisations have developed within a few schools in Moray. The SAC principles have been used to engage and co-design interventions with national and grass roots organisations. An example of effective collaboration includes Children 1st working with primary schools to support vulnerable FSM families and pupils. Support is offered within and out with school to nurture and foster appropriate trusting relationships. The Children 1st project worker collaborates with key school staff; Headteachers report effective communication underpins this role and the workers have the skill set and ability to respond to emerging local need.

Due to this role pupils and families are supported to foster positive attitudes and culture towards learning. An intended outcome of this funded role was to improve relationships between pupil, school and parent/carer, which has reportedly taken place. All secondary schools have embedded pathway planning meetings to support the needs of learners allowing for individual pathways to be created. Pathway planning adopts a multi-agency approach to develop flexible and bespoke packages for the most at-risk pupils. Collaboration is also taking place with e-Sgoil to offer pupils broader learning experiences. The AA is a member of the Moray Third Sector Interface and has delivered national and local SAC presentations to further highlight the role that the third sector, CLD and wider partners play in supporting the SAC.

Section 4 Improvement in outcomes for children and young people

4.1   Literacy & Numeracy

4.1.1 Literacy

Data for Broad General Education (BGE) attainment in literacy indicate a 4 year trend of improvement in attainment of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. There has been a significant reduction from 28% to 15% (-13%) in the poverty related attainment gap for literacy (P1, P4, P7 combined). No comparison can take place for fourth level due to data being suppressed, because of small numbers. Despite this positive trend, Moray are 5% below the national attainment averages at early level, 10% at first level; 7% at second level and 5% at third level. The majority of schools have used PEF funding to provide targeted interventions to improve reading and writing. There are a number of strengths within the LA and the use of the SAC Fund has contributed to this. Examples include: Effective writing intervention workshops. The majority of targeted pupils moved up 2/3 of a level. Evaluations from reading groups indicated that YARC reading ages against chronological reading ages improved for the majority of pupils. For a minority this remained the same. For a few pupils this had no impact. To address the attainment gap, the LA has developed robust plans to continue to embed improvements. Rigour of tracking/monitoring via attainment meetings will continue to take place. Work undertaken on moderation includes QAMSO inputs, attending Regional Improvement Collaborative moderation event and embedding the Moderation Strategy. The LA continue to progress moderation CLPL sessions which will upskill and build confidence in benchmarking.

4.1.2 Numeracy

Data for BGE attainment in numeracy indicates a 4-year trend of improvement in attainment of CfE levels. There has been a significant reduction in the poverty related attainment gap for numeracy at P1, P4, P7 combined . This gap has reduced over time from 21% to 13% (-8%). No comparison can take place for fourth level due to the data being suppressed, due to small numbers. Despite this positive trend Moray are 6% below the national attainment averages at early level; 11% at first level and 10% at second level. However, data evidences that the LA are 2% above the national average for numeracy at third level. Moray continue to evidence a commitment to closing the numeracy attainment gap: the majority of schools used PEF funding to provide interventions to improve numeracy attainment. An example of this is collaboration within an Associated School Group where a secondary mathematics teacher worked in partnership with primary schools to improve maths confidence. Qualitative feedback from pupils indicates increased confidence in numeracy and reduced anxiety transitioning to secondary school. Two maths conferences have taken place to increase staff confidence in applying new approaches and to share resources to help identify gaps.

Although the conferences were not directly funded by PEF, the increased awareness generated by the SAC has been a contributing factor to the impact that this activity had. Therefore, this was an unintended outcome for the SAC programme

4.2   Senior Phase

Achievement in literacy and numeracy for SCQF 4 and 5 has improved from previous years. This is broadly in line with national comparisons. The LA report at Higher level there is a 6% increase of achieving at least one Higher. This has been attributed to an effective and relentless focus on learner pathways. Improvement is noted for pupils in S5 and S6 attaining at least 3 Higher level passes, compared to 2019 data. There is a 3.09% poverty related attainment gap for senior phase SCQF 4 attainment which is 2.8% lower than the national average (5.89%). There is a 5.09% poverty related attainment gap for senior phase SCQF 5 attainment which is 12.02% lower than the national average (17.11%). There is a 16.67% poverty related attainment gap for senior phase SCQF 6 attainment which is 15.87% lower than the national average (32.54%). The proportion of young people in Moray who sustain an initial positive destination on leaving school has improved in recent years. The 2018/19 destinations for S4 leavers were particularly positive with 97% moving into a positive destination which is in line with national and virtual comparators.

In 2019 91.3% of 16-19 year olds participated in education, training or employment. This is -0.3% below the average national measure. This has decreased 0.1% when compared to the previous year. 2.9% of 16-19 year olds were identified as not participating which includes those who are both unemployed seeking and unemployed not seeking. 5.8% of 16-19 year olds were identified with an unconfirmed status. It may be that many of these individuals have taken up employment but it has not been possible to confirm this.

4.3   Achievement

Overall, across Moray young people's achievements are improving. There has been an improvement in the range of opportunities for personal achievement. This includes sporting, cultural and outdoor learning opportunities. A few schools use their PEF to support these initiatives within school. Leadership development opportunities via the Cadets, Boys Brigade and Girl Guides are also offered within Moray. Pupils are achieving accreditation for achievement via Dynamic Youth and Saltire Awards. A few schools have been involved in the John Muir Awards with 66 awards being granted to pupils to recognise achievement. A few programmes such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award require further targeting of disadvantaged pupils. Moray is planning to address this to ensure that wider achievement opportunities are accessible to all. Most of the schools within Moray engage with UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools. 33 schools have achieved the Rights Respecting School Award at bronze, silver and gold accreditation. 33% of pupils accessed the Active Schools programme within Moray. Of which 34% accessed FSM.

This is a significant increase from previous years. All 53 primary and secondary schools in Moray established at least one link with a local sports club. Although these activities are not a direct causal link of PEF, the increased awareness generated by the SAC has been a contributing factor to the impact that this activity had. Therefore, this was an unintended outcome for the SAC programme.

4.4   Wellbeing

In a recent wellbeing survey almost all pupils were able to speak about their rights with this being embedded across the curriculum. In most schools, children feel they are listened to and their opinions and ideas are acted upon. However, FSM pupils reported lower life satisfaction than those not eligible. Further, amongst secondary pupils 54% of FSM pupils had higher than average social, emotional and behavioural difficulties compared to non-FSM pupils. Moray colleagues have identified key areas of need and are developing a plan to address the wellbeing of FSM pupils. There are a number of effective PEF interventions that have been developed in Moray to address wellbeing for children and young people. Examples include:

- Extra-curricular clubs and activities to increase self-esteem, promote positive body image and increase pupil confidence;
- PEF support Homework Clubs to mitigate against poverty of experience and aspirational poverty;
- 'Chill and Spill' sessions to assist pupils with self-regulation;
- Nurture lunches that FSM pupils can access;
- Wellbeing interventions and 1:1 support delivered via Home School Link worker and teaching staff to provide nurture supports. This has included wellbeing walks;
- Employment of specialised staff, including Support Workers, Pupil Support Assistants and Family Support Workers to support the wellbeing of pupils and families.

A holistic model of interventions have been adopted which supports the wellbeing of pupils. This has included the majority of schools embedding family learning programmes, introducing breakfast clubs and soft-start transition activities to support pupil wellbeing.

4.5   Attendance & inclusion

4.5.1 Attendance

Attendance rates of pupils in Moray are higher than the national average for both primary and secondary pupils. The average attendance of FSM primary pupils in 18/19 is 92.1%, which is 2.9% less than the LA average. This indicates that, overall, FSM primary pupils had lower attendance rates compared to non-FSM pupils which aligns with the national narrative. Attendance of FSM pupils has marginally decreased by 0.9% from 16/17 to 18/19.

The average attendance of FSM BGE secondary pupils in 18/19 is 85.8%, which is 2.9% less than the LA average, indicating that, overall, FSM secondary pupils have marginally lower attendance rates compared to non-FSM pupils. This trend aligns with the national narrative. Attendance of FSM secondary has marginally decreased by 0.2% from 16/17 to 18/19. To continue to address the attendance gap of FSM v non FSM pupils the LA have established a multi-agency attendance group that are reviewing data that will help to highlight emerging trends and appropriate interventions to schools. The LA are upskilling schools in use of SEEMis to ensure accurate recordings take place. Interventions and analysis of attendance data at school level to inform universal and targeted interventions is also taking place to understand this gap. An example of appropriate use of PEF to address this includes the introduction of breakfast clubs and soft-start transition activities within primary/secondary schools. Qualitative data indicates increased readiness to learn and reduced late arrivals to school which has culminated in improved attendance for pupils accessing these interventions.

4.5.2 Inclusion:

In almost all schools, staff and pupils demonstrate respectful behaviour and positive relationships. Staff care about the wellbeing of pupils and pupils feel listened to and valued. The number of incidents of exclusion has decreased over the past three years (2016/17 to 2018/19) in both primary (-33%) and secondary schools (-37%). Effective professional learning in whole school restorative approaches has taken place. This has resulted in self reporting of improved ethos and culture which has resulted in positive behaviour approaches adopted in most schools. However despite this, the number of Violence and Aggression Reporting (VA) forms populated has increased in both primary (+88%) and secondary (+79%) schools. Therefore, although exclusions have shown a decreasing trend, data shows increasing reports of violence and aggression in primary and secondary sectors. However, consideration should be given to increased rigour in reporting and monitoring processes which could be attributed to the increase of VA forms. Further training in relational practice is being considered. School needs analysis is taking place to actively support staff to maintain the decreasing trend of exclusions and reduce the incidents of violence and aggression in schools. Schools are working with pupils on various alternative to exclusion programmes to ensure minimum disruption to their education. This is being supported by Education Psychologists who have developed a bespoke training programme Building Positive Relationships Training. The majority of schools are embracing this and embedding restorative and solution-orientated approaches. It is hoped that once approaches are embedded violence and aggression incidents will decrease.

4.6   Children and young people's voice

In a recent wellbeing survey, almost all pupils reported that they are included in the life and work of the school and are provided with a range of opportunities to develop their voice. Across Moray, almost all learners are included and feel involved in many aspects of the life of schools. Moray ranks 20 out of 32 local authorities in the 2019 annual participation measure.

In response to COVID-19, surveys were created and issued in order to gauge feedback and opinion from learners, parent/carers and the schools. This was designed to elicit responses from learners on their home learning experience and to inform future contingency planning. Feedback received from 1,873 Moray learners (16%) and 1,206 parents. Capturing pupils and families voice has equipped the LA to respond to emerging need as a result of COVID-19 and realigned their PEF spend to address this need.

4.7   Children and young people who have experienced care

Moray has significantly lower numbers of children looked after at home than the Scottish average. Looked After Children's school attendance and attainment rates are below their peers. Care experienced primary pupils have attendance rates of 92% which is 3% less than LA average. Care experienced secondary pupils have an attendance rate of 82.5% which is 9.4% less than the LA average. This indicates that, overall, care experienced pupils have lower attendance rates compared to non-care experience pupils. Attendance over time for both primary and secondary pupil has remained relatively unchanged. Exclusion rates are relatively low but there has been a recent increase. Male looked after children within Moray have an attendance rate of 87%, females is 88%. In 2018/2019 Moray had 29 school leavers that were looked after. Of these 72% were in a positive destination, which is in line with the national average. The percentage of care experienced school leavers by highest level of attainment achieved is 10% lower than the national average for 1 or more qualification at SCQF level 3 and level 4. Within the Corporate Parenting Strategy the LA has an education pillar which is addressing the improvement required. Moray is committed to delivering on the published promise and progressing the findings of the National Independent Care Review.

Section 5: Specific funding streams

5.1   Pupil Equity Funding

5.1.1 What worked well?

In 2019, 117 separate PEF interventions were delivered within the majority of schools (102 in primary schools and 15 in secondary schools). The majority of schools report improvements in quantitative and qualitative evidence. Most schools have worked on a range of universal and targeted interventions. Health & wellbeing, literacy and numeracy interventions have supported improvement in attainment for literacy and numeracy. The authority continues to make progress in raising attainment across most levels through improved approaches to tracking and monitoring. Most schools report their PEF plans are having a positive impact on pupils, with a minority of schools identifying an increase in attainment and attendance as a result of PEF interventions. Schools have continued to use PEF creatively in order to consider ways in which they can close the poverty related attainment gap. For the majority of head teachers, effective professional learning has improved their understanding of data in relation to identifying gaps for their respective schools. Almost all headteachers have accessed training delivered by the LA. Less than half of headteachers have accessed additional professional training delivered via the Regional Improvement Collaborative, Education Scotland and the AA. Headteachers have reported increased confidence and skills in data analysis.

5.1.2 Further developments

- Increased targeting of PEF is required to close the poverty related attainment gap. Schools should continue to explore opportunities for joint PEF collaboration across Associated Schools Groups or with local comparator schools;
- Continue to develop robust attainment information and develop digital literacy skills to identify gaps and to effectively plan learning which meets the needs of learners. Rigour of tracking and monitoring; CLPL sessions will take place with data coaching opportunities to embed this into practice. Implementing the Moray PEF Planning Cycle as a further revised approach may ensure that additional baseline data is captured, ensuring qualitative baseline data is gathered, prior to embarking on PEF interventions. Thereafter, colleagues will measure impact during interventions and once intervention has concluded to capture impact. Learning will be shared and celebrated across Moray;
- Ensure headteachers continue to look outwards to other local authorities and schools in order to share/identify where good practice is happening and have led to improvements. The LA will continue to collate and share interesting practice across Moray;

- The LA will explore and review how other Universal SAC authorities make use of limited funding, particularly those schools with very small PEF allocations, to ensure maximum impact.
- There will be a continued focus on attainment in P1 to P4. Teacher Professional Judgments continues to improve and strengthen through continued LA approaches to assessment and moderation. The LA are planning appropriate CLPL focussing on assessment within learning and teaching. This should ensure consistency and appropriate progression of a level and increase confidence in teacher professional judgement.

5.2   Care Experienced Fund for children and young people

5.2.1 What worked well?

During 2017 the LA asked Care Experienced Children what issues mattered most to them. From their feedback, the Corporate Parenting Strategic Group developed ten guarantees, intended to improve the care experience for all Children and Young People. This has driven forward three projects that the Care Experienced Fund has financed: Firstly, The Community of School Initiative was established to improve support, opportunity, aspiration and attainment for young people. Four foundations have been identified – Individual Support; Awareness and Understanding; Collective Opportunity and Transitions which have been successfully embedded. Secondly, the development of an advocacy support for a minority of children has been provided, with a focus on support and engagement with education in the context of COVID-19 recovery. Thirdly, The Mentoring Programme has supported a small number of care experienced young people. Referrals have been received from the majority of secondary schools. From this, majority of young people have been successful matched to volunteer mentors. The LA have successfully recruited 29 active mentors, with a further 12 accessing training. Feedback from young people evidences that this has been positive: 'I'm able to relax and I can say what I'm really thinking, it's given me confidence to speak to new people, I used to blank them but now I'm less mardy!' Participatory Budgeting (PB)- This project is piloting PB with a core group of young people who have created a list of items and supports that they say will make a difference to their achievement. No data on impact due to infancy of project.

5.2.2 Further developments:

Following the pilot of the PB project, the group plan to evaluate and roll out a programme that will encourage care experienced young people to positively engage with PB. The LA are clear that young people will be at the heart of the decision making process and will directly benefit from the funding.

5.3   National programmes

Cost of the School Day Moray Action Report (2019) indicates that partners have been supporting two associated school groups. Cost of the School Day have provided two members of staff that have engaged and consulted with children, young people and their families to capture their views and needs. Training and awareness for school communities has taken place. Anecdotal feedback suggests that this has increased pupil understanding and knowledge of barriers for children living on a low-income in school and potential solutions to these barriers. Due to the impact of COVID-19 there has been a significant delay in practitioners producing a draft report detailing their findings. Once completed this information will be presented to the senior leadership/management Teams (assisted by peer researchers in secondary schools) and recommendations will be discussed. It is envisaged that the school will receive a final version of the report that includes feedback. Most schools, pupils and families have reported that that engagement with the Cost of the School day to date has been positive.

Section 6   Lessons learned and future priorities

6.1   Lessons learned

6.1.1 Sustainability

Due to the temporary nature of staffing contracts, it has been challenging for the LA to evidence sustainability. As a Universal SAC authority, some schools receive limited PEF allocations resulting in some projects or initiatives not being able to continue into future sessions. As a small, rural LA, it is felt that there is a limited amount of expertise available locally for recruitment to short-term PEF posts and access to a range of National 3rd sector organisations. With a limited staffing pool and due to temporary nature of PEF posts, this has made recruitment challenging. Schools must be creative and innovative in their approach to providing interventions to support identified children and young people to overcome these barriers. Schools continue to make use of data for intervention and mapping approaches to capture impact. To ensure best value an economy of scale approach is adopted. A few schools have considered joint procurement approaches to increase reach and impact.

6.1.2 Lessons learned

- When planning PEF interventions to support the most deprived pupils, schools should ensure they maintain focus on the overarching aim of closing the poverty-related attainment gap. The importance of setting and capturing baseline data and the use of qualitative information gathered, prior to embarking on PEF interventions has been noted by some schools. Planned PEF clinics led by the AA in the next academic session will help to address this;
- The importance of applying research-based interventions into practice;
- Collaboration of Associated School Groups to ensure best use of funds available. Economies of scale will be considered in future PEF planning to maximise impact and increase reach. The AA will support schools that are commissioning services to ensure that impact returns reflect the school and LA needs. From this, good practice can be shared and replicated, if appropriate. A newly appointed procurement manager will help to facilitate this;
- The importance of having a consistent AA; Over the three years of PEF, the LA has had 4 different AAs and for a period of time no AA was in post;
- Ensuring mechanisms for sharing interesting practice on an ongoing basis needs to be more robust. The AA will work with a number of schools to develop interesting practice case studies that can be shared across Moray and nationally. This will help to share practice and celebrate success.

6.2   Future priorities

SAC has informed part of the revised Moray Education Strategic Plan. This focuses on improving attainment, achievement and outcomes for all; which is underpinned by health and wellbeing with a strong focus on self-evaluation for self-improvement: Embedding the 'Raising Attainment Strategy' and Toolkits and applying 'Our Moray Standard for Learning and Teaching' (and resources) to support PEF implementation;

- Increase use of data, tracking and monitoring approaches. Improved data analysis to understand local narrative to support PEF planning;
- Leadership and professional development for all to support the 'Themes for Intervention for Equity';
- Continued development of the BGE curriculum in line with the refreshed Curriculum for Excellence narrative; with a focus on interdisciplinary learning;
- Development of approaches to underpin wellbeing. Reviewing of pastoral care and wellbeing classrooms. Moray are working towards a "Supporting all Learners" strategy to address equity;
- Review of approaches to self-evaluation for self-improvement, in line with our 'Moray Health Check' for improvement approaches.
- Actions that will be supported by the AA include lead officers and the AA planning professional development sessions on identified PEF themes. This will be supported by PEF drop in clinics that will explore school PEF plans and consider reach and impact. Further targeted planned approaches to identifying schools that will benefit from support from the AA will take place. Moray PEF Guidance will be revisited and Moray PEF planning cycle will be offered as part of the wider planning toolkit.

6.3   Other relevant information

It is recognised that there are low levels of FSM registration which impacts reach. However the LA have turned their attention to this via the Education Poverty Action Group where a multiagency action plan is being developed to tackle this. Despite this local effort, there are a number of wider, complex reasons why basing PEF allocation on FSM is not a true reflection of the prevalence of poverty within Moray. Rural poverty, situational poverty and in work poverty all contribute to this: Moray is a rural LA and as such, is impacted by wider issues including transportation, connectivity, employment and changing context of industry. Moray has the second lowest wage in Scotland. Child poverty rates are increasing within Moray with 1 child in 5 living in relative poverty. Despite these barrier Moray's teachers have demonstrated determination and creativity in planning PEF interventions. The LA continues to work with Northern Alliance partners, Education Scotland and wider LA colleagues to support improvement and performance. This has included tentative work with a central LA to share practice and initiate collaborative working on common themes.

Section 7

Case studies

Case Study 1 Evaluation of The Number Box pilot at New Elgin Primary School

Overview
The Number Box is a fun, multi-sensory teaching programme, designed to support the acquisition of maths skills. It can be used as support for children who need ongoing extra regular teaching. or to support small groups who are not yet able to work with abstract concepts. It can be used from Year 1 and can support pupils with dyslexia, (who find sequential, organisational and spatial skills challenging), pupils with receptive and expressive language difficulties, (who need support in understanding maths vocabulary), and pupils with dyscalculia, (who have difficulties understanding the concept of number). It is designed to be used by PSAs, within an ethos where children are enabled to say if they don't understand, and know it doesn't matter if we make mistakes. It is highly personalised - individual record booklets provide a record of progress over time and has a clear progression of skills. Early skills are practised in each session (to become automatic by over-learning). Children manage all the materials in the box, giving them a sense of ownership of their learning. How The Number Box is currently used Sessions are 1:1, are short (10-15 mins) and are regular (3- 4 days a week, on average). Four P1 pupils are using this resource, and one P4 pupil.

Baseline Assessment
A baseline assessment was carried out with each pupil, based on the resource's Targets/Progression of Skills.

Follow-up Assessment
Assessment has been ongoing, with achieved targets dated on individual Record of Achievements. Data collected indicates improvement across all base line measures for all children that have accessed this intervention. Targets were also reassessed in February to continue to assess and evaluate progress.

Feedback
Feedback from our two P1 teachers has been extremely positive, particularly the speed at which the children have learnt and retained new skills. The children have been able to transfer the skills they have developed to their learning in class. The children really enjoy working with The Number Box. *"I can do this now! I remember when I couldn't do my number 42". "The Number box is fun!"* The Number Box will now be used more widely across the school, to support children who need extra regular teaching of basic maths skills.

Case Study 2 Glenlivet Primary School-Development of Community Playpark

Overview
The school identified that they had a health and wellbeing gap, specifically, lack of opportunities that supported pupil health and wellbeing out with school time. Impact of this was evidenced within classroom via rural deprivation and social inclusion which is a reflection on the schools demographic: Therefore this was poverty of aspiration and poverty of experience gap. Consultation with pupils, families and the community, confirmed that there was a lack of outdoor play opportunities within the area. Consultation further highlighted that this was contributing to social isolation of pupils out with school time.

The Journey
Due to the rurality of the school's location and the pupil catchment area, the head teacher, pupils and families entered into a joint venture with the wider community and committed their PEF allocation to address this gap. Teachers met with pupils via the 'Glenlivet Go Getters' (pupil council), to explore how this would meet their needs. Research was undertaken which highlighted that play based approaches support the development of pupils via resilience, creativity, communication and skills for learning, ensuring that all children are able to successfully engage with learning. The suggestion is that this type of approach can support addressing the poverty related attainment gap and children are ready to learn, ensuring that development gaps are reduced (Education Scotland, 2019). The critical aspect of the schools 'research' was at a grass roots level via consultation and collaborative engagement with the pupils and understanding their needs to address equity.

Collaboration
Due to the small allocation of PEF, the school worked proactively to source and secure additional match funding to support this intervention via Paul's Hill Windfarm and The Glenlivet and Inveravon Community Association. This innovative approach to a limited PEF budget is evidence that schools can work creatively with their local communities to achieve targeted outcomes for their pupils.

Impact
The school's ACEL data from 2018 to 2019 has shown increased attainment across all areas. Although it is acknowledged that the community play park is not solely responsible for this increase; the outdoor play park is a wider reflection of the schools commitment to excellence and equity to all of their pupils through creative and innovative approaches to addressing the poverty related attainment gap. Teachers report: *"We have used the outdoor community play park to ensure that children are supported to be creative, innovative and investigative, which has developed stronger communication skills and opportunities to explore and develop resilience through outdoor play"*. Pupils report: *"We would go home and stay indoors, now we have somewhere to play when we are not in school"*, P6 pupil. *"The play park has made me so much more confident"*, P7 Pupil.

Section 8

Glossary

Term/ acronym	Meaning
AA	Attainment Advisor
ACEL	Achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence level
ASF	Attainment Scotland Fund
BGE	Broad General Education
CECYP	Care experienced children and young people
ES	Education Scotland
Insight	Insight is a benchmarking tool designed to help bring about improvements for learners in the Senior Phase (S4-S6). The system is updated twice annually, around September for attainment results and February for school leavers data.
LA	Local authority
PEF	Pupil Equity Funding
NIF	National Improvement Framework
RIC	Regional Improvement Collaborative
SAC	Scottish Attainment Challenge
SEO	Senior Education Officer
SNSA	Scottish National Standardised Assessments
SRA	Senior Regional Advisor
NIF	National Improvement Framework

Appendix

Scottish Attainment Challenge Logic Model

Inputs	Activities	ST OUTCOMES	MT OUTCOMES	LT OUTCOMES	Vision (to achieve aim)	Strategic Aim
Funding: • PEF • SP • CA • CECYP • National Programmes **Support and Collaboration** • Attainment Advisers, Regional Teams and other ES SAC support • RICs • Improvement Advisers + NIF Advisors • Teacher / school level expertise • SAC policy team support • SG Education Analytical services • Local authorities • Public services – health boards, social work etc • 3rd sector networks / relationships • Cross SG network/ experience • Parents, carers and families) **Data:** • National improvement framework measures and associated tools • School, LA and National Data sets • Evaluation evidence **Resources:** • National Improvement Hub (NIH) • Print / online materials aimed at parents, carers and families • Frameworks / tools to measure / monitor progress • Operational guidance supporting funding • COVID recovery funding (not SAC specific) • COVID documentation inc return to school guidance	**Accelerating Progress activities:** **Additional, focused support** **Specific approaches which are making the biggest impact** identified and systematic sharing of them increased [including capacity to deliver blended learning model / recovery curriculum where required] **Data for improvement** **Embed successful approaches in to the curriculum.** **Increase our collective efforts** to improve the health and wellbeing and progress of children living in poverty. Additional focused support to mitigate against any widening of attainment gap and increased wellbeing needs caused by C-19 Flexibility in funding to allow changes to interventions/ approaches at local leveL though still consistent with SAC principles Focused equity related CLPL to build confidence and capacity (across the system) to deliver the new blended learning model	1. Awareness of need for leadership at all levels focussing on improved learning, teaching and self-evaluation to help close the poverty related attainment gap 2. Readiness to collaborate across the system to achieve equity and excellence 3. Increased engagement (participation) in professional learning with a focus on reducing poverty related attainment gap 4. Increased focus on HWB, literacy and numeracy, balancing efforts to address learning with HWB needs which originated/developed during COVID, to improve outcomes for children and young people living in poverty 5. Awareness of range of approaches to achieve equity within their particular context and settings 6. A focus on increasing the engagement of parents, carers and families living in areas of deprivation with their child's and their own learning 7. Awareness of challenges and barriers to learning faced by children & young people and parents, carers & families living in poverty and how these have been impacted by C-19 8. Shared understanding and engagement with the Scottish Attainment Challenge 9. Knowledge and skills in using data and other evidence 10. Awareness of who the children and young people and their families are that are living in poverty	1. Improved leadership at all levels, fully committed to, and with an unrelenting focus on, closing the poverty related attainment gap 2. Increased evidence of collaboration across the education system (between schools, LAs, 3rd sector, other delivery partners and professionals e.g. social work) to deliver and evaluate approaches aimed at closing the poverty related attainment gap 3. Identification of intersections with other policy areas/OGDs and engagement with them to help deliver long term programme aim 4. CLPL opportunities focussed on equity are embedded throughout the education system , LA and schools 5. Higher quality learning, teaching and assessment, including digital/remote approaches, focussing on achieving equity for learners, across HWB, literacy and numeracy, with a particular focus on HWB during the recovery phase 6. Teachers are able to use data effectively to identify the needs of their learners and improve learning and teaching 7. Active engagement with and support for children and young people, parents, carers and families living in poverty to engage in learning 8. A culture and ethos that promotes high aspirations for all and improves equity is embedded across the whole school community 9. Increased use of research evidence / data to monitor the progress, effectiveness and sustainability of approaches 10. Increased use of data/ evidence to demonstrate an impact against the key NIF measures at a local level for children and young people	1. Embeded and sustained practices related to addressing the impact of poverty related attainment 2. All children and young people are achieving the expected or excellent educational outcome, regardless of their background 3. An Education system which is aspirational, inclusive in ethos, practice and approaches for all including teachers, parents and carers, children and young people 4. Closing of the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people	**Achieving equity:** ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. Demonstrable progress during the lifetime of this Parliament and to substantially eliminate it in the next decade [set out in NIF 2018] **Excellence through raising attainment:** ensuring that every child achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, set out within Curriculum for Excellence levels, and the right range of skills, qualifications and achievements to allow them to succeed	Strategic Aim: closing the poverty-related attainment gap between children and young people from the least and most disadvantaged communities. ES – purpose of SAC Strategic aim : achieving equity in educational outcomes, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

REPORT TO: **EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021**

SUBJECT: **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN THE SENIOR PHASE**

BY: **DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   To update Committee on the current curriculum offer within the Senior Phase across all secondary schools in Moray, with particular reference to the S4 cohort, and consideration given to next steps in extending and broadening the curriculum provision.

1.2   This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance, (para 9 of the minute refers).

2.   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   **It is recommended that Committee:**

      (i)   considers and notes the current curriculum offer within the Senior Phase, with particular reference to S4 cohorts; and

      (ii)   considers and agrees the development of a Curriculum and Learner Pathway Strategy (2-18) to support ongoing review and development of a responsive and agile curriculum provision.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) provides identified learner entitlements helping our children and young people gain the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for life in the 21st century. A refreshed narrative on

Scotland's curriculum, which sets CfE within the current context, was published in September 2019.

3.2   Curriculum for Excellence places learners at the heart of education. At its centre are four fundamental capacities. These capacities reflect and recognise the lifelong nature of education and learning. The four capacities are aimed at helping children and young people to become:

- Successful learners
- Confident individuals
- Responsible citizens
- Effective contributors

3.3   As part of their learner journey, all children and young people in Scotland are entitled to experience a coherent curriculum from 3 to 18, in order that they have opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to adapt, think critically and flourish in today's world. Curriculum is defined as the totality of all that is planned for children and young people from early learning and childcare, through school and beyond. That totality can be planned for and experienced by learners across four contexts:

- Curriculum areas and subjects
- Interdisciplinary learning
- Ethos and life of the school
- Opportunities for personal achievement

3.4   Curriculum entitlements

Children and young people's rights and entitlements are central to Scotland's curriculum and every child and young person is entitled to experience:

- a curriculum which is coherent from 3 to 18
- a broad general education, including well planned experiences and outcomes across all the curriculum areas from early years through to S3
- This includes understanding the world, Scotland's place in it and the environment, referred to as Learning for Sustainability
- a senior phase after S3, which provides opportunities to attain and achieve, including to study for qualifications, awards and other planned activities to develop the four capacities
- opportunities for developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work
- opportunities to maximise their individual potential, benefitting from appropriate personal support and challenge
- support to help them move into positive and sustained destinations beyond school

3.5   Curriculum levels

The Broad General Education (BGE) has five levels (early, first, second, third and fourth) from nursery, primary and up to S3 in secondary school. The

Senior Phase (S4-6) is designed to build on the experiences and outcomes of the BGE, and to allow young people to take qualifications and courses that suit their abilities and interests. The Senior Phase follows a young person's BGE, building firmly on the experiences and outcomes they will have experienced and achieved by the end of S3. It enables them to extend and deepen their learning.

3.6 The curriculum framework and the qualifications system, Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) provides a range of opportunities to meet the needs of all learners, whether aspiring to achievements at SCQF level 1 or up to SCQF level 7. Within S4, the majority of learners will undertake qualifications at SCQF Levels 4 and 5, with some experiencing Levels 1, 2 and 3 and others taking on those at SCQF Level 6 in some subject areas. Schools in Moray support and respond to the individual needs of pupils as appropriate.

In order to deliver this breadth of learning, schools design and deliver a bespoke three-year Senior Phase jointly with a range of key partners, including Moray College, employers who support apprenticeships and work related learning, universities including the Open University who support the Young Applicants in Schools School (YASS) programme, Community Learning and Development, DYW Moray, TSi Moray and are including parents and carers on curriculum options and pathway opportunities from an early stage.

THE SCOTTISH CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

This Framework diagram has been produced to show the mainstream Scottish qualifications already credit rated by SQA and HEIs. However, there are a diverse number of learning programmes on the Framework, which, due to the limitations of this format, cannot be represented here. For more information, please visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk to view the interactive version of the Framework or search the Database.

SCQF Levels	SQA Qualifications				Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	Apprenticeships & SVQs
12					Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship
11					Masters Degree, Integrated Masters Degree, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship SVQ
10					Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship
9				Professional Development Award	Bachelors / Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
8		Higher National Diploma			Diploma Of Higher Education	Higher Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
7	Advanced Higher, Awards, Scottish Baccalaureate	Higher National Certificate			Certificate Of Higher Education	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ
6	Higher, Awards, Skills for Work Higher					Modern Apprenticeship Foundation Apprenticeship SVQ
5	National 5, Awards, Skills for Work National 5					Modern Apprenticeship SVQ
4	National 4, Awards, Skills for Work National 4	National Certificate	National Progression Award			SVQ
3	National 3, Awards, Skills for Work National 3					
2	National 2, Awards					
1	National 1, Awards					

3.7   Following consultation, all secondary schools in Moray moved to a 33 period week for session 2018/19, providing the development of an innovative and progressive curriculum structure within a common school week to support collaborative partnership working. The desire was also to be responsive to the needs of young people and the career and destination opportunities available in line with labour market intelligence.

3.8   A main driver for curriculum review and development is improved attainment to support positive outcomes for our leavers. Insight, the Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool, focuses on performance in the Senior Phase across a range of key national benchmarking measures.

Subject courses and individual units are awarded tariff points. The number of tariff points awarded depends on: the SCQF level of the course or unit; whether the full course has been undertaken and assessed; and the grade achieved for the course. For the purposes of this report, we will consider:

- Improving attainment for all using total tariff points which aggregates the total number of tariff points attained within a specific stage within the senior phase (eg S4, S5 or S6) or the total across the whole the senior phase up to point of leaving
- Improving attainment for all using complementary tariff points which takes the densest 120 SCQF Credit Points worth of 'best' attainment is considered within a specific stage within the senior phase (eg S4, S5 or S6) or the total across the whole the senior phase up to point of leaving
- Breadth and depth is the number of qualifications attained at specific levels. The usual measures are:

    o 1@ SCQF L5, 3@ SCQF L5, 5@ SCQF L5, 6@ SCQF L5
    o 1@ SCQF L6, 3@ SCQF L6, 5@ SCQF L6

4.   **FINDINGS**

4.1   With the ongoing review of Senior Phase attainment, consideration in this report is given to the current curriculum offer within the Senior Phase with particular focus on S4, alongside a range of comparators.

4.2   Current curriculum offer across Moray schools provides the following across the Senior Phase for session 2020/21:

SCQF Levels Nationals 1-3 – 37 separate qualifications
SCQF Level National 4 – 46 separate qualifications
SCQF Level National 5 – 48 separate qualifications
SCQF Level 6 Higher – 38 separate qualifications
SCQF Level 7 Advanced Higher – 24 separate qualifications
SCQF Levels 4/5 National Progression Awards - 20 separate qualifications
SCQF Levels 4/5 Skills for Work Awards - 7 separate qualifications

This is a total of 220 curriculum choices across the Senior Phase in Moray.

4.3   Moray College, UHI, provided the following curriculum choices to senior phase pupils during session 2020/21:

SCQF Level National 5 – 2 separate qualifications
SCQF Level 6 Higher – 4 separate qualifications
SCQF Level 6 Units – 1 qualification
SCQF Level 7 Advanced Higher – 2 separate qualifications
SCQF Levels 4/5 National Progression Awards - 10 separate qualifications
SCQF Levels 4/5 Skills for Work Awards - 5 separate qualifications
Degree modules – 3 separate qualifications
Personal Development Awards – 8 separate qualifications
Foundation Apprenticeships – 8 separate qualifications

4.4   A number of pupils take on the Young Applicants in Schools Schemes (YASS) through the Open University on a demand basis with courses available in such as Science, Engineering, Business Studies, IT and Computing, Arts, Mathematics, Health and Social Care, Sport and Exercise, and Languages. Each course offered through YASS is SCQF Level 7, equivalent to Advanced Higher Level or first year university level.

4.5   All schools engage with partners to enhance and develop their curriculum offer to ensure an agile response for all learners. This continues to include Cullen Sea School, Scotland's Rural College at Craibstone, Inverness College etc.

4.6   A range of consortia approaches continue to be developed within Moray with pupils hosted within other schools either virtually or in-person, and growth is emerging with other consortia through the Northern Alliance and eSgoil, the National e-Learning offer.

4.7   A review of the number of qualifications that are undertaken within each local authority in S4 is presented as follows:

6 qualifications offered in S4 – 18 local authorities - 56%
Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus, Dundee, East Dumbarton, Falkirk, Fife, Highland, Inverclyde, Midlothian, Moray, Orkney, Perth and Kinross, South Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dumbarton, West Lothian, Western Isles

7 qualifications offered in S4 – 13 local authorities - 41%
Argyll and Bute, Edinburgh, Clackmannanshire, Dumfries and Galloway, East Ayrshire, East Lothian, Glasgow, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Scottish Borders, Shetland, Stirling

8 qualifications offered in S4 – 1 local authority - 3%
East Renfrewshire

4.8   In Moray, S4 pupils are currently offered 6 qualifications which follows the principles of CfE where the Broad General Education is undertaken within S1-S3 and the Senior Phase is S4-S6. The 33 period week introduction allowed for the notional 160 hours for National Qualification SCQF Level 5 courses to

be achieved within this time allocation; this was one of the focus areas for the move to a 33 period week across all schools in Moray in order to extend learning and teaching time and improve attainment.

4.9   The following provides an overview of the number of qualifications undertaken by S4 pupils across 3 school sessions in Moray:

Pupils undertaking more than 6 qualifications	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
No of S4 pupils	180	20	30
% of S4 pupils	20%	2%	3%

The table below provides the attainment for S4 pupils sitting both 6 and 7 or more qualifications at National 5, displayed within grade A, B, C and D.

S4 Analysis (2020)	A	B	C	D
Pupils sitting 6 National 5 qualifications	50.2%	27.6%	16.1%	4.2%
Pupils sitting 7 or more National 5 qualifications	70.2%	16.8%	9.5%	1.9%

Many S4 pupils will undertake a range of qualifications as a combination of National 4 and 5 as well as those taking all at National 5 level.

4.10   S4 Qualifications – Attainment Overview for session 2019/20

The information below provides a snapshot of the performance of Moray in comparison with those local authorities also offering 6 qualifications in S4, those offering 7 and those offering 8.

As a reminder, accreditation in session 2019/20 was undertaken within the restrictions of Covid-19 and formal exams did not take place with all candidates awarded their estimates with no national quality assurance undertaken. However, it does provide a snapshot of the most current data which aligns to the current local authority stances on number of qualifications offered for S4 pupils. The previous caveat applies of comparisons for session 2019/20 not being rigorously analysed further than as snapshot data.

- Total tariff points for lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% attaining learners
- Complementary tariff points for lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% attaining learners
- Breadth and depth measure at SCQF level 5 for 3@5, 5@5, 6@5 and where appropriate 7@5 and 8@5

	Lowest 20%	Middle 60%	Highest 20%
Moray Total Tariff* (TT) for S4	103	365	574
Average TT for LAs with 6 Qualifications	134	407	568
Average TT for LAs with 7 Qualifications	120	411	607
Average TT for LAs with 8 Qualifications	307	622	758
	Lowest 20%	Middle 60%	Highest 20%
Moray Complementary Tariff** (CT) for S4	101	314	435
Average CT for LAs with 6 Qualifications	122	331	432
Average CT for LAs with 7 Qualifications	108	327	424
Average CT for LAs with 8 Qualifications	233	401	423
	3@SCQF 5	5@SCQF 5	6@SCQF 5
Moray Breadth and Depth at SCQF Level 5 for S4	67%	47%	33%
Average for LAs with 6 Qualifications	72%	56%	44%
Average for LAs with 7 Qualifications	70%	55%	45%
Average for LAs with 8 Qualifications	91%	85%	79%

* The **total tariff measure** is the sum of tariff points accumulated across the best attainment in all subjects in which a learner has achievement

** The **complementary tariff measure** is the sum of tariff points accumulated across the best attainment in subjects in which a learner has achievement, up to a maximum of 120 SCQF credit points

When ranking the performance in Moray with our Local Government Benchmarking Framework comparators who also offer 6 qualifications in S4; Angus, Highland and Midlothian, the outcome is noted below:

Highest 20% of attainers using total tariff points – Moray is 2 out of 4
Highest 20% of attainers using complementary tariff points – Moray is 2 out of 4
Breadth and depth of 5 SCQF Level 5 – Moray is 4 out of 4
Breadth and depth of 6 SCQF Level 5 – Moray is 4 out of 4

When ranking the performance in Moray with all of our Local Government Benchmarking Framework comparators; Angus, Argyll and Bute, East Lothian, Highland, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and Stirling, the outcome is noted below:

Highest 20% of attainers using total tariff points – Moray is 4 out of 8
Highest 20% of attainers using complementary tariff points – Moray is 3 out of 8
Breadth and depth of 5 SCQF Level 5 – Moray is 7 out of 8

Breadth and depth of 6 SCQF Level 5 – Moray is 8 out of 8

5   NEXT STEPS

5.1   Following this in-depth lens on the Senior Phase offer for S4 pupils in Moray with particular reference to curriculum design and the levels of attainment, a Curriculum and Learner Pathway Strategy group will be set up to support the development of the Senior Phase offer within Moray. This will include collaborative and consortia approaches, broadening the curricular offer allowing for a more responsive approach and wider opportunities for accreditation, supporting where appropriate:

- Opportunity to undertake more than 6 qualifications in S4 where appropriate
- Consideration of pupils undertaking 7 qualifications in S4
- Increase in the number and range of SCQF qualifications from level 1 upwards
- Increase in number of National 5 courses available across Moray
- Increase in offer of SCQF level 5 qualifications available across Moray
- Opportunity for more S4 pupils to undertake qualifications at SCQF level 6/7 in S4
- Engagement in the SCQF Schools Ambassador programme for broadening school and practitioner knowledge of wider accreditation opportunities for building tariff points and also natural opportunities for gathering qualifications
- Wider achievement accreditation outwith the core number of qualifications
- Increase in opportunity for awards to support leadership, wellbeing, personal development
- Increased work related learning opportunities and accreditation; linked to Developing the Young Workforce initiatives
- Improved attainment as evidenced through increased total and complementary tariff points
- Improved attainment demonstrated through increased breadth and depth measures

5.2   This will be reviewed through a further Curriculum report coming to this committee at the end of session 2021/22 and our regular attainment reporting throughout session 2021/22 and beyond in line with our Raising Attainment Strategy. This will also be supported by the Digital Innovation Strategy for Education which is under development and will support virtual and consortia approaches to support an innovative system of curricular provision across the 33 period week.

5.3   Raising attainment continues to be a main priority in Moray and as such a focus on the senior phase curriculum is required to support improvement and ensure equity of our offer for young people.

6   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

a) **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)**
The Policy was informed by the priorities within the Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan and in particular to Our People, Our Place and Our Future and A Growing and Diverse Economy and Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray.

b) **Policy and Legal**
There are no legal implications arising from this report.

c) **Financial implications**
There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

d) **Risk Implications**
There are risk implications if we cannot support national expectations and requirements in relation to this key national policy directive. The risks associated with failure to support expectations and requirements are the potential negative impact on school inspection reports and in the failure to improve learner achievement and attainment. This would have a direct impact on any reporting to the Scottish Government on National Improvement Framework areas. An ongoing risk continues to be Covid-19 with school closures and partial reopening having an impact on progress schools are making with the ongoing late release of information and processes from the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

e) **Staffing Implications**
There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

f) **Property**
None.

g) **Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**
An Equality/Socio Economic Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform Committee on performance.

h) **Consultations**
Senior Officers in Education, Communities and Organisational Development, Paul Connor, Principal Accountant, Equal Opportunities Officer, Human Resources Manager, Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

7.   CONCLUSION

7.1   **The Committee is invited to consider and note performance within the current curriculum offer within the Senior Phase, with particular reference to S4 cohorts; and**

7.2   consider and agree the development of a Curriculum and Learner Pathway Strategy (2-18) to support ongoing review and development of a responsive and agile curriculum provision, with particular reference to the design of revised curriculum approaches to support improved attainment.

Author of Report: Karen Lees, Quality Improvement Manager
Background Papers:
Ref: SPMAN-1315769894-94

REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021

SUBJECT: EDUCATION RESOURCES AND COMMUNITIES AND EDUCATION CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 31 MARCH 2021

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   The purpose of this report is to inform Committee of projects and proposed expenditure for Capital Budgets within Education Resources and Communities and Education for 2020/2021.

1.2   This report is submitted to the Education, Communities & Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of this Committee, the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People's Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance (paragraph 9 of the Minute refers).

2.   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   It is recommended that the Committee:

i)   scrutinises and notes the contents of the report; and

ii)   approves expenditure to design a heating system replacement for Kinloss Primary School for inclusion in a 2022/23 programme of works as per paragraph 5.6.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   It is the practice of this Committee to receive regular reports both providing an update on the current financial position of the capital programme and seeking approval to implement projects when they arrive at a suitable point of development.

3.2   At the meeting of the Moray Council on 3 March 2020 (paragraph 2 of the minute refers) Council approved the capital plan for 2020/21.

3.3   The capital budgets covered in this report and a list of the major projects from this financial year are contained within the Education Resources and Communities and Education Capital Plan under **APPENDIX I**.

4.   **BUDGET FOR 2020/21**

4.1   The total approved Capital Budget for Education Resources and Communities and Education for financial year 2020/21 is as follows:-

	20/21 £000
Land & Buildings	17,710
Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	171
Totals	**17,881**

4.2   Actual expenditure up to 31 March 2021 including carry forwards from 2019/20 is £18.463m.

5.   **MAJOR PROJECTS**

Schools Essential Maintenance Programme 2020/21:

5.1   The original programme of works under this heading was well progressed when the Covid-19 pandemic commenced in March 2020. Work was suspended as the focus was moved toward the safe return of pupils in August. Preparations were made to substitute these projects for external fabric works which could be safely carried out during term time. However, the second national lockdown has seen further delays in this work and the Economic Growth, Housing and Environmental Sustainability Committee on 16 February 2021 (para 5.3 refers) agreed that an underspend of £1,655,000 be carried forward to 2021/22 to allow these projects to complete.

5.2   Expenditure on the schools maintenance programme for 2020/21 at year-end was £0.945m. The project to replace windows at Hythehill Primary School was completed under budget at a cost of £125,000 against a budget of £315,000. The installation of the windows progressed ahead of programme and the carried forward funding was not required in the financial year. There were several small overspends on the summer works and drainage projects on equipment already ordered prior to lockdown and further investigative works. The replacement of the Buckie High School science gas pipework was introduced as an urgent safety project as unplanned work that did not have a budget.

Schools Essential Maintenance Programme 2021/22:

5.3   A programme of planned works for the Learning Estate has been developed for 2021/22 corresponding with the approved total budget of £4.655m, including carry forward underspend from the previous year. The programme will consist of the postponed internal works from last summer and external building fabric projects all as detailed under **APPENDIX II**. These projects have been selected on the basis that the condition of these building elements are D and if they were to fail would impact the school remaining open.

5.4 A programme of reserve works has been developed consisting of external works that could be undertaken should any COVID restrictions prevent the internal summer works from starting in 2021. These works would be phased in such a way that the programme could adapt quickly if further COVID restrictions were put in place that affected the schools or the construction industry whether locally or nationally.

5.5 A serious water leak at Kinloss Primary School has, following a detailed inspection, revealed considerable deterioration to the existing cast iron heating pipework. Urgent designs for the replacement of the most corroded areas of heating pipework are being carried out to allow work to commence during the summer holidays of 2021. These initial works are being funded from the 2021/22 repairs and maintenance budget.

5.6 The remaining replacement of heating pipework, boilers and controls is proposed to be carried out during the summer of 2022 and be funded from the Education Capital Budget. Approval for the progression of a full design of heating replacement for Kinloss Primary School for inclusion in the 2022/23 budget is sought in the recommendations.

6. NEW BUILD (SCHOOLS)

Lossiemouth High Replacement Project:

6.1 The school became operational on Wednesday 14 April 2021 with the community centre and library opening to the public on 26 April as per COVID-19 guidelines. There has been a positive reaction to the building from both staff and pupils with minor issues being dealt with in a timely manner by the contractor.

6.2 The old building is now in the ownership of Balfour Beatty who have commenced the soft strip of the building prior to an intrusive asbestos survey being undertaken. All utilities are being disconnected in line with programme timescales. A letter has been distributed to the neighbouring houses on Coulardbank Road and Boyd Anderson Drive outlining the next phase of works, which are programmed for completion in March 2022.

6.3 The conditions of contract entitle the contractor to recover reasonable costs due to the delays experienced following the COVID-19 government restrictions. These cost negotiations have now reached a conclusion between the Council and hub North Scotland. The Scottish Government have been contacted to request assistance with the additional costs with full evidence of costs claimed being provided to assist with their determination. The outcome of this approach will be reported in due course.

6.4 The overall expenditure for the project was £11.738m during 2020/21 against a budget of £10.515m. The over spend on the budget figure is a result of an earlier restart of construction work than projected during the first lock down and the COVID costs paid to the Contractor.

Linkwood Primary School:

6.5 Since the school became operational on 14 January 2021 feedback on the school from the Head Teacher is "it's been lovely to have the majority of our

pupils back into school and to hear the children enjoying their wonderful new space and amazing building".

6.6   Officers have established costs incurred due to the delayed handover in order that these are recovered from hub North Scotland and these have been presented to hub North Scotland. The costs relate to liquidated and ascertained damages at a pre-determined rate for the delayed handover, additional water sampling and aborted removal costs. The final account is close to being agreed and the costs incurred will be offset against the final account.

6.7   The conditions of contract entitle the contractor to recover reasonable costs due to the delays experienced following the COVID-19 government restrictions. The costs have now been agreed between the Council and hub North Scotland. The Scottish Government have been contacted to request assistance with the additional costs with full evidence of costs claimed being provided to assist with their determination. The outcome of this approach will be reported in due course

6.8   The overall expenditure against the project was £3.979m during 2020/21 against a budget of £3.445m.The overspend on this budget is a result of Housing developer obligations to provide a serviced site not being met and the COVID costs paid to the Contractor. Discussions with the Housing developer are ongoing to agree a figure on the additional costs to provide temporary servicing to the school.

6.9   The Scottish Government are not funding the project, but will be provided with the agreed COVID-19 costs to determine if they will contribute to the costs.

Findrassie Primary School

6.10   At the special meeting of the Moray Council on 9 October 2020 (paragraph 4 of the minute refers) Council approved that a new Primary School at Findrassie would be the priority project submitted to the Scottish Government Learning Directorate for funding through the Learning Investment Programme (LEIP). On 18 December 2020, the Scottish Government announced that Findrassie Primary school was one of 25 projects, which had been awarded LEIP funding. A Project Manager was appointed in April 2021 to the Educational Resources and Communities team and preparations are underway to begin consultation on the project within the Elgin Academy ASG. The time required to arrange the consultation process has resulted in a budget underspend for the project in 2020/21.

7.   **EARLY LEARNING CHILDCARE EXPANSION**

7.1   The Early Learning Childcare (ELC) Capital Programme includes 4 new build nurseries and 7 refurbishments. Projects are now complete at:

- Lady Cathcart, Buckie;
- Lhanbryde Primary;
- Burghead Primary;
- New Elgin Primary;
- Cullen Nursery;
- Mortlach Primary, Dufftown;

- Linkwood Primary School; and
- Pilmuir Nursery.

Keith Nursery

7.2 Work started on site for the new build nursery on 31 August 2020 and is programmed to complete 9 July 2021. The project is on programme and is well advanced on site.

Mosstodloch Primary School Nursery

7.3 The nursery classroom within the existing school is to be refurbished and a small extension added to provide additional accommodation. Works to form a kitchen in an adjacent classroom have completed and the existing nursery has decanted into this space while construction works are undertaken. Work has begun on site and is at an early stage of strip out and site preparation.

Aberlour Primary School Nursery

7.4 Planning and Listed Building Consent has been approved to carry out a full refurbishment and extension to the existing nursery. Temporary decant accommodation is currently being manufactured for both the school and private nursery. The school nursery will be decanted to accommodation on the primary school site and the private nursery to a site adjacent to Speyside High School. The decant accommodation is programed to arrive on site in September 2021 and once set up the construction works to the existing nursery will begin.

8 LEISURE AND LIBRARIES

Gladstone (Leisure Management System) Integration Project

8.1 This project to integrate the online booking system continues to near completion. The database system has been integrated from the customer perspective with background configuration work in its final stages of completion. These final stages have been unable to progress until now as our leisure facilities needed to be open and actual income related reports to be generated and reconciled accurately.

8.2 Milnes Fitness Suite Upgrade Equipment
The new equipment will arrive on 24 May, therefore the fitness room will require to be closed between Mon 24 to Wed 26 May to remove the old equipment and install the new equipment. The facility will re-open to the public from Thurs 27 May.

9 SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)).**
This report supports the Council's corporate working principles of efficiency, effectiveness and economy.

(b) **Policy and Legal**
Future programmes of work funded from the Capital Programme will require policy decisions to help inform how schools' projects will be prioritised and in the case of refurbishments, to what standard.

(c) Financial Implications

The approved capital budget for 2020/21 schools essential maintenance programme is £3.2m. This report provides updates on all key areas of spend.

(d) Risk Implications

The school estate (excluding new build) continues to deteriorate. The level of investment that the Council is able to afford is insufficient to maintain all schools to B/B standard. The risk of building failures, temporary closures and/or health and safety risks continue to be a concern. The programming of work within schools is subject to change as government guidance is issued in relation to COVID-19 restrictions. The latest construction sector guidance is indicating that manufacturing lead in times and costs for building products are increasing rapidly due to the effects of COVID restrictions and Brexit. This will in turn impact tender prices received for construction projects, therefore additional budget maybe required for projects after they return from tender.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications associated with this report.

(f) Property

There are no property implications other than those detailed in the report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There are no equalities or socio economic implications associated with this report.

(h) Consultations

Consultations have been undertaken with Paul Connor, Principal Accountant; the Property Resources Manager; the Design Manager; the Legal Services Manager; the PPR and Communications Officer; Equal Opportunities Officer; Head of Education Resources and Communities, Head of Education and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer. Where comments have been received, these have been included within the report.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 This report presents the Education Capital Works budget to 31 March 2021. It clarifies the status of a number of capital projects and the financial implications associated with each of them where appropriate.

Author of Report: Moray MacLeod, Acting Head of Housing and Property
                                      Services
Background Papers: Education Capital Budgets 2020/2021
Ref: SPMAN-1285234812-823

Moray Council Capital Programme 2020/21
As at 31st March 2021

APPENDIX 1

	Current Capital Plan 2020/21	Actual Expenditure
	£ 000K	£ 000K
Land & Buildings		
Schools - BB - Investment to bring all schools to B for condition		
and B for suitability		
Speyside High School replace hot & cold water supply	6	14
Cluny Primary replace heat source/pipe work kitchen & dining area	159	165
Forres Academy replace hot water supply, heating & gas pipe work	36	58
New Elgin Primary replace heating pipe work	6	14
Andersons Primary electric rewire incl. power and lighting	9	66
Burghead Primary replace heating system and pipe work	6	7
East End Primary window replacement and external render	1	20
East End Primary Replace heating distribution Pipework Phase 2	0	36
East End Primary drainage works)	3	22
Millbank Primary drainage works)	0	7
Applegrove Primary drainage works)	0	11
Seafield Primary drainage works)	0	8
St Gerardines Primary drainage works)	0	3
Forres Academy drainage works)	0	20
Andersons Primary Drainage)	0	5
Hythehill Primary - PS access control	1	0
Hythehill Primary - Flat Roof Replacement Ph2	9	0

Hythehill Primary - Replace Windows	315	116
Hythehill Primary - Insulated Render	2	20
Milnes High - Replace Roofing	3	40
Pilmuir Primary - Replace Roofing	43	170
New Elgin Primary conversion of former nursery to office space	0	1
Buckie High Science Gas & Electrical upgrade	0	99
Andersons Primary Heating Phase 2	0	1
West End Primary School Fencing Works	0	2
Schools - New Build		
Lossiemouth High School	10,515	11,738
Linkwood Primary School Elgin	3,445	3,979
Findrassie Primary School Elgin	150	2
Other Schools		
Legionella works - Schools	0	1
Schools -Fire, Safety and Security - Minor Works	100	56
Schools Accessibility	70	71
3G Synthetic turf pitches	13	12
4 Schools Refurb	0	48
Milnes Primary - 61582 Nursery Extension	0	73
Early Learning & Childcare		
Expansion of Early Learning & Childcare Provision	2,808	3,178
Libraries & Leisure		
All public facilities	10	0
Total Children and Young People's Services Committee	**17,710**	**20,063**

Moray Council Capital Programme 2021/22   Appendix II
Projected Expenditure

	Estimated value	Budget
Land & Buildings	**£ 000K**	**£ 000K**
Schools - BB - Investment to bring all schools to B for condition and B for suitability		
Speyside HS replace hot & cold-water supply	366	
Cluny PS replace heat source/pipe work kitchen & dining area	605	
Forres Ac replace hot water supply, heating & gas pipe work	591	
New Elgin PS replace heating pipe work	451	
Andersons PS electric rewire incl. power and lighting	447	
Burghead PS replace heating system and pipe work (Design)	40	
Summer Works sub total	**2,500**	
Schools Essential Drainage Improvement Works		
• Applegrove PS foul drainage repairs and SUDs works	244	
• St Gerardines PS foul drainage repairs and SUDs works	136	
• Forres Ac foul drainage repairs and SUDs works	243	
• Andersons PS foul drainage repairs and SUDs works	111	
• Anderson PS Extension Underpin & Boundary Wall Rebuild	55	
Drainage sub total	**789**	

Hythehill PS Flat Roof Replacement Ph2	6	
Hythehill PS - Insulated Render	1,129	
Milnes HS – Pitched and Flat Roof Upgrade	133	
Pilmuir Primary – Pitched and Flat Roof Upgrade	14	
East End PS Replace Windows, Doors & External Insulated Render	84	
External sub Total	**1,366**	
Total for BB as compared to Budget	**4,655**	**4,655**
Schools - New Build		
Lossiemouth High School	3,827	
Findrassie Primary School Elgin	150	
NEW Schools sub total	**3,977**	**4,177**
Early Learning & Childcare		
Keith Grammar School Early Learning	720	
Mosstodloch Early Learning	400	
Aberlour Temporary Units and Early learning Extension	670	
Pilmuir Early Learning	280	
Cullen Early Learning Extension	90	
Expansion of Early Learning & Childcare Provision	**2,160**	
Total Children and Young People's Services Committee	**10,792**	

Reserve Projects for COVID 19 Programming Delays

Milnes Roof Milnes Phase 2	960
• East End PS foul drainage repairs and SUDs works	247
• Millbank PS foul drainage repairs and SUDs works	275
• Seafield PS foul drainage repairs and SUDs works	151

Reserve Projects for COVID 19 Programming sub total	**1,633**

REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 26 MAY 2021

SUBJECT: EDUCATION RESOURCES AND COMMUNITIES REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO 31 MARCH 2021

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   To inform the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee of the budget position for Education Resources and Communities as at 31 March 2021.

1.2   This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on the 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance, (para 9 of the minute refers).

2.   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   It is recommended that Committee scrutinises and notes the budget position at 31 March 2021

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   The report highlights those areas of the budget where there is a significant percentage variance identified at 31 March 2021.

4.   BUDGET POSITION

4.1   The spend at 31 March 2021 is £19,392,000 against a budget to date of £19,536,000, giving an underspend of £144,000 as shown in **Appendix 1**.

4.2   The impact of the Covid pandemic and lockdown measures that were put in place had a significant impact on income with loss of income for leisure, sports development, libraries and music instruction of £1,577,000 There are anticipated underspends on the operation of facilities closed during the lockdown periods of £286,000.

4.3   Schools repairs and maintenance are underspent by £390,000 due to no building works having been undertaken in the first few months of the year because of lockdown restrictions in place.

4.4   The School Counselling budget was underspent by £194,000 due to a delay in going out to tender for the service, the School Counselling contract started on 1st April 2021.

4.5   There is an overspend of £73,000 on costs associated with response to the pandemic. The costs are for average pay to relief staff during lockdown and recovery costs associated with the reopening of leisure facilities.

4.6   Underspends on staff travel across the service are £74,000.

4.7   Staff savings from vacancies and appointment below top of scale exceeded the budget by £706,000.

5.   **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

       (a)   Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)
       The Education Resouces and Communities Revenue Budget has particular reference to National Outcome 8 – we have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.

       (b)   Policy and Legal
       The Council has statutory responsibilities to meet educational needs, the needs of children and young people in need and those it looks after.

       (c)   Financial implications
       The resource implications are set out in this report and at **Appendix 1.** The underspend as at 31 March 2021 is £144,000 against a budget of £19,536,000.

       (d)   Risk implications
       Budget Managers are aware of their responsibilities for managing budget allocations and approval for any variances will be sought from Committee in line with the Financial Regulations.

       (e)   Staffing implications
       There are no staffing implications associated with this report.

       (f)   Property
       There are no property implications associated with this report.

       (g)   Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
       An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the report is to inform the Committee on budget monitoring.

(h)   Consultations

Paul Connor, Principal Accountant and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer, have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report where it relates to their areas of responsibility.

6.   CONCLUSION

6.1   That Committee scrutinises and notes the budget position as at 31 March 2021.

Author of Report: Joanna Shirriffs, Head of Education Resources and Communities
Nicky Gosling, Accountant

Background Papers: with authors

Ref: SPMAN-1315769894-73 and
SPMAN-1315769894-74

Education Resources & Communities

Budget Monitoring Report to 31st March 2021

Service	Revised Budget	Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Variance to Date	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Communities	893	893	833	60	7 %
Sport & Leisure	932	932	2,264	(1,332)	(143)%
Culture	1,777	1,777	1,858	(81)	(5)%
Additional Support Needs	12,548	12,548	12,173	375	3 %
Business Support Unit	1,287	1,287	1,277	10	1 %
Education Resources & Communities Management	104	104	104	-	-
Schools Repairs & Maintenance	1,081	1,081	691	390	36 %
Public Private Partnership	(632)	(632)	(721)	89	(14)%
Education Resources	236	236	236	-	-
Education Resources & Communities COVID-19	604	604	677	(73)	(12)%
Education Resources & Communities Efficiency Savings	706	706	-	706	-
				-	
Education Resources & Communities Total	**19,536**	**19,536**	**19,392**	**144**	**-**

REPORT TO: **EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON WEDNESDAY 26 MAY 2021**

SUBJECT: **PERFORMANCE REPORT (EDUCATION RESOURCES AND COMMUNITIES) – PERIOD TO MARCH 2021**

BY: **DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To inform the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 31 March 2021.

1.2 This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young Peoples Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance) (para 9 of the minute refers).

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

i) **scrutinises performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of March 2021; and**

ii) **notes the actions being taken to improve performance where required.**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 On 7 August 2019, the Council, approved a revised Performance Management Framework for services (para 5 of the minute refers).

4. SERVICE PLANNING

4.1 Each service plan sets out the planned strategic and service level priorities and outcomes it intends to deliver in the coming year aligning closely with financial planning, corporate and community planning partnership strategic priorities. This report provides an interim update on progress on the service plan, key outcomes and performance indicators. Committee is invited to

review progress to secure assurance that is satisfactory and to provide scrutiny and further direction where performance requires attention.

4.2 The narrative included is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service Plan Actions and Performance Indicators are provided.

Figure 1

SERVICE PLAN PRIORITIES		RAG
STRATEGIC	Empowering and connectiong communities	45%
	Improve our understanding of the issues in our communities based on the experience of local people	55%
	A Sustainable Council: that provides valued services to our communities	13%
RECOVERY	Empower and support communities to build capacity	85%
SERVICE	Ensuring Digital ways of working are embedded across our teams, maximising connectivity, collaboration and online service delivery	65%
	Restructure of service management to meet demands of the service	80%
	Community Learning and Development	50%
OVERALL PLAN PROGRESS		**62%**

Comment

Progress is measured over the 4-year plan period. At the end of year 1 the plan is ahead of target.

Data not available - Data not yet published or unavailable due to reporting timescales.

SERVICE PLAN PI'S

- Achieving Target
- Within Target
- Below Target
- Data Only
- Data not available

Strategic Outcomes - successes

4.3 Work to develop locality engagement has progressed well and is anticipated to meet the completion date of 31 October 2021 if the easing of COVID-19 restrictions take place as planned. Monitoring reports for the Buckie Central East and New Elgin East communities have been submitted to the Community Learning and Development (CLD) strategy group and ongoing support provided by the Community Support Officers continues in these two areas. Approval was granted to provide locality/community planning support for 'Anchor' organisations in three further communities. Within two of these areas (Lossiemouth and Forres) the local Community Development Trusts, with support from the Community Support Unit, have already commenced work to consult with the communities to develop community plans. (Action STRATEGIC ERC 2.2)

4.4 The development of Participatory Budgeting (PB) has made solid progress. The CONSUL online digital platform to manage the participatory budgeting process is now in place and awaiting COSLA linking the account before the system is made available. The participatory budgeting for Care Experienced young people pilot project has completed and is awaiting evaluation. The COSLA Alan Turing Artificial Intelligence pilot has been approved by CMT/SMT and is awaiting confirmation from COSLA that funding has been secured. The Scottish Government has set participatory budget target at 1% which for Moray Council will be in the region of £1.7 million. Whilst good work has been made in the development stage, it is perhaps questionable at this

point as to whether implementation can be achieved within the current target timescale of March 2022. (Action STRATEGIC ERC 1.2)

Strategic Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

4.5 Enhancing community participation in service delivery has not completed by 31 March 2021 as planned. For two of the four agreed Community Asset Transfers (CAT's) the legal work is complete, the remaining two are still within the process. After the submission of their CAT the Fisherman's Town Hall in Buckie are deferring their application until the pandemic has subsided. The past year has proved challenging and frustrating, the second wave of the pandemic and the resulting restrictions imposed has significantly hindered the speed of progress, with digital methods of engagement the only option open to the service. The speed of progress in the coming year will remain dependent on the restrictions,. (Action STRATEGIC ERC 1.1)

4.6 The work to tackle the affordability and standard of Moray schools has made slow progress and is behind schedule at this stage of the plan, this position continues to be reflected in performance results with 45.3% of schools rated B or better for condition (24 of 53).It is anticipated that, with the recruitment of a Senior Project Manager for the learning estate, progress will increase rapidly in the coming months, with a view to developing an approved plan by the due date of 31 December 2021. The next step is to undertake a community consultation on the new Findrassie primary school, and consultation and engagement on the different options that might be considered for three priority Associated School Groups (ASGs) – Buckie, Forres and Elgin. Preliminary discussions have taken place with Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) regarding the Findrassie project, and contact has be made with other local authorities undertaking similar projects. (Action STRATEGIC ERC 3.1, PI EdS100)

Service Level Outcomes - successes

4.7 The roll out of Digital Youth Work successfully completed by March 2021. Much innovative thinking and proactive work has been adopted during the past year to up-skill youth workers with a new set of digital tools. All youth work staff have been trained in the use of the new digital platforms and training is scheduled for new staff joining in April. Once restrictions ease it is planned to provide youth work in a blended manner with 'face to face' work returning in tandem with new digital methods of engagement. (Action SERVICE ERC 1.2)

4.8 The implementation of online music tuition has also successfully completed, within target timescales. The use of digital platforms to deliver music tuition has been positively received by families. All nine music instructors are fully engaged in the process. The platforms have replaced paper-based progress diaries with all progress recorded digitally. Some challenges remain with the provision of online lessons to pupils within schools requiring more time to fully develop the technology and overcome the availability of staff to supervise younger learners. (Action SERVICE ERC 1.3)

Service Level Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

4.9   The review of school business admin has made slow progress during the past year with many staff diverted to cover other duties as part of the pandemic response. The Transforming Learning Board has extended completion to March 2022. The delivery of digital solutions into Moray schools is complete, however uptake has varied across the school estate. During 2021/22 phases 2 and 3 will progress concurrently to increase uptake, track the efficiency savings generated and consider possible alternatives that focus on maximising the benefits of digital service delivery. (Action SERVICE ERC 1.1)

4.10   Digital offerings in libraries has stalled due to delays in transferring eResouces to a new supplier and has not completed by the due date of 31 March 2021 with a planned handover now due to take place in late April. Once in place it is expected the number of service users accessing virtual learning sessions will increase significantly. The number of Library visits per 1,000 of the population have more than halved in comparison with 2019/20 with all libraries either closed or offering limited services for long periods during the pandemic. (Action SERVICE ERC 1.4, PI SCC5c)

4.11   A review of third tier management arrangements by 31 March 2021 fell just short (80%) of completion. Progress was slower than anticipated due to Covid related work pressures. A Senior Project Manager and a Communications and Engagement Officer to support the Learning Estate programme have been successfully recruited and further recruitment of a Project Officer and Community Support Officer will be undertaken, concluding the Change Management Plan for the new Communities Team by April 2021. The CMP for Sport and Leisure & Culture is with HR for review and will go out to consultation in April/May. Recruitment into the Additional Support Needs (ASN) and Inclusion Manager post was unsuccessful, options are now being considered to support ASN services as the ASN Review progresses (Action SERVICE ERC 2.1)

Recovery and Renewal Actions

4.12   Both Recovery and Renewal actions have progressed, all requests for capacity building support have been met and Community Resilience Plans in Keith and Garmouth are well advanced. (Action COVID ERC 1.1 & 1.2)

5.   SERVICE PERFORMANCE

5.1   In line with the Performance Management Framework, operational performance is reviewed quarterly by departmental management. Areas performing well and/or areas subject to a decreasing trend or where benchmarking results show performance significantly below comparators will be reported to this committee for member scrutiny.

5.2   Initial publication of 2019/20 Local Government Benchmarking Framework Indicators in February 2021 will be refreshed in early May. The full suite can be viewed using the My Local Council tool.

5.3   Report is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service Performance Indicators is provided.

Figure 2

SERVICE PERFORMANCE PI'S

Operational Indicators - successes

5.4   The percentage of schools that are rated B or better for suitability remains at the same level as 2019/20 (98.1%) exceeding the target of 95%. 52 of Moray's 53 schools were rated as suitable with only one secondary school rated as C (Poor). Nationally 87% of schools are rated B or better for suitability. (PI EdS101)

Operational Indicators – challenges and actions to support

5.5   The vast majority of service performance indicators relate to culture and leisure services. With most of these services connected to indoor spaces, COVID-19 restrictions throughout 2020/21 have had a significant impact on service delivery. Without exception all five non-cost performance indicators relating to 'Sports development and Active schools', 'Leisure Services' and 'Libraries and Information Services' all show values significantly lower than 2019/20 results. As the pandemic restrictions ease and facilities begin to open it is expected that attendances at these facilities will increase but unlikely to the levels of 2019/20. (PIs EdS006.2, EdS006.4, EdS407.1, EdS407.2, EdS407.5, EdS511.2)

6.   OTHER PERFORMANCE RELATED DATA

Complaints & MP/MSP Enquiries

6.1   In line with the Performance Management Framework, complaints are reviewed quarterly by departmental management in terms of time taken to respond, outcome and learning points. Links to backing tables for all Service Complaints is provided.

6.2   A total of nine complaints were received during 2020/21, six during quarter 4. Eight complaints were closed during the period, five of which were during quarter 4. Of the complaints closed, six were at frontline stage (75%), four were upheld and two were partially upheld. The average time to resolve frontline complaints during the year varied slightly between five days in quarter 3 to three days in quarter 4.

6.3   Two investigative complaints were received during 2020/21, both during quarter 4 and both were not upheld. The average time to resolve these two complaints was 18 days, within the 20-day timescale.

6.4   Eight MP/MSP enquiries were received during 2020/21, one of which was in quarter 4. All enquiries were resolved.

Other Performance (not included within Service Plan)

6.5   The impacts of the latest lockdown were detailed in the report, COVID Related Pressures and Service Prioritisation (para 9 of the minute), presented to Council on 10 March 2021. The services contribution to the immediate and ongoing pandemic responses is referenced in the report.

Case Studies

6.6   No information to report.

Consultation and Engagement

6.7   In the absence of face-to-face work, the service has made good use of the Corporate Survey Monkey account to carry out community and staff consultations and gather information to inform service development. A good example of which is the Communities Change Management Plan (CMP) Consultation as it sought views of staff involved and gathered information that informed the CMP. The staff who took part felt valued and included in the process and were encouraged by and supportive of the suggested changes to the structure and management of the service.

7.   **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a)   **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**
Performance measurement is used to ensure the efficient and sustainable delivery of services to meet the Council's priorities in both the Corporate Plan and the LOIP.

(b)   **Policy and Legal**
The Council has a statutory requirement to publish a range of information that will demonstrate that it is securing best value and assist in comparing performance both over time and between authorities where appropriate.

(c)   **Financial implications**
None.

(d)   **Risk Implications**
None.

(e)   **Staffing Implications**
None.

(f) Property
None.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform the Committee on performance.

(h) Consultations
The Head of Education Resources & Communities, Deputy Chief Executive (Education, Communities & Organisational Development), Service Managers, Legal Services, the Equal Opportunities Officer, and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 **As at 31 March 2021, six Service Plan outcomes were due to complete, three have completed. One strategic level action and two service level actions are progressing, albeit outwith target timescales. Overall plan progress may appear high at 62%, this is due to many of the plan actions, with completion dates beyond 31 March, being more advanced than would be expected at this stage.**

8.1 **Working within the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly difficult during the past year and has proven prohibitive in progressing some areas of the Service Plan. With the recruitment of senior staff, coming into post in April, the capacity to drive forward the projects which have fallen behind will be increased. It is anticipated that these projects will progress at pace as restrictions ease.**

8.2 **There are some encouraging developments resulting from the pandemic. The use of digital media to engage with young people, moving forward these new methods of engaging will continue to enhance service provision.**

Author of Report: Iain Sneddon, Research & Information Officer
Background Papers: Held by Author
Ref: SPMAN-1315769894-52

REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 26 MAY 2021

SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE REPORT GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE – PERIOD TO MARCH 2021.

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To inform the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 31 March 2021.

1.2 This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young Peoples Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance (para 9 of the minute refers).

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

i) scrutinises performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of March 2021; and

ii) notes the actions being taken to improve performance where required.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 On 7 August 2019, the Council, approved a revised Performance Management Framework for services (para 5 of the minute refers).

4. SERVICE PLANNING

4.1 Each service plan sets out the planned strategic and service level priorities and outcomes it intends to deliver in the coming year aligning closely with financial planning, corporate and community planning partnership strategic priorities. This report provides an interim update on progress on the service plan, key outcomes and performance indicators. Committee is invited to

review progress to secure assurance that is satisfactory and to provide scrutiny and further direction where performance requires attention.

4.2   The narrative included is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service Plan Actions is provided.

SERVICE PLAN PRIORITIES	RAG
STRATEGIC LEVEL OBJECTIVES	54%
SERVICE LEVEL OBJECTIVES	38%
RECOVERY AND RENEWAL	N/A
OVERALL PLAN PROGRESS	48%
Comment	
Progress is measured over the 2-year plan period. At the end of year 1 progress against a number of milestones have slipped with overall progress behind schedule. Service Plan activity are currently measured by milestones, it is hoped to develop Service Plan indicators for 2021-22 reporting.	

SERVICE PLAN PI'S

0

- ■ Achieving Target
- ■ Within Target
- ■ Below Target
- ■ Data Only
- ■ Data not available

4.3   As reported in the previous performance report to this committee on the 3 February (para 8 of the minute refers), there continues to be significant impact on services ability to progress strategic and service plan activity as a result of the Council Covid-19 response. Many services are continuing to deal with changes in their day to day activities to meet the additional demands.

Strategic Outcomes - successes

4.4   At the meeting of Council on 20 January 2021 (para 11 of the minute refers), it was agreed to continue with the temporary committee structure due to the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions. This will be reviewed at the meeting of Council on 30 June 2021. The Governance Review will then consolidate and refresh the Councils Second Tier Governance document and specifically:
-     upgrade guidance on the relationship between Councillors and officers
-     formally adopt a Virtual Meetings Protocol
-     clarify the working arrangements of the Group Leader Forum
-     clarify the process for agreeing councillor senior responsibility allowance (GSP20-22.Strat-4.1)

4.5   As part of the roll-out of the Performance Management Framework the 2019/20 Annual performance report was published this quarter and the 2020/21 Corporate Plan report will go to Full Council committee on 30 June 2021. Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) performance indicators have been incorporated into the half yearly performance reports to support service plan / performance priorities. A series of LGBF online workshops are scheduled from May 2021 targeting at sector policy, strategic and performance leads and will explore the short and long-term impacts of the pandemic, share practice in responding and to consider future challenges / opportunities / new ways of working. Streamlining and refinement of performance reporting to committee will continue into 2021/22. (GSP20-22.Strat-4.3a-c, GSP20-22.Strat-4.2a-d)

Strategic Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

4.6　　Work has continued in drafting the final Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) Delivery Framework documents, however prioritisation of workload relating to the Covid-19 pandemic responses have impacted on delivery timescales. Documents were considered by the Community Planning Board (CPB) in April 2021 which will enable routine reporting against planned priorities and outcomes. (GPS20-22.Strat-4.4a-d)

4.7　　Limited progress has been made around Modernisation and Improvement activities to redesign customer contacts, in particular the focus on Council Access Points. While the Forres access point model was established prior to Covid-19 lockdown, access points have remained closed since March 2020 with staff redeployed to email and call handling duties. It is hoped that recruitment to the Customer Development Manager post will accelerate progress. (GSP20-22.Strat-4.5a-c)

Service Level Outcomes - successes

4.8　　The revised 'Model Complaints Handling Procedure' (MCHP) was approved by this committee on the 31 March 2021 (para 11 of the minute refers). The MCHP provides a standardised approach to dealing with customer complaints across Scottish local authorities. Work progresses in the following areas:
- Staff training will be introduced to cover the changes to the MCHP
- Complaints leaflet and complaints website will be updated. (GSP20-22.Serv-5.2a-b)

Service Level Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

4.9　　The completion of the Council Benefits and Council Tax e-forms has not been achieved as planned. Initial development of the e-forms has begun with a skeleton e-form specification submitted to ICT. Further progress is now dependent on ICT resources which have been diverted during the Covid-19 response. Completion of the e-forms will be carried forward to the 2021-22 Service Plan with a revised due date of April 2022. (GSP20-22.Serv-5.1a-b)

4.10　Increasing services using sharepoint as their primary document management system has not been progressed or met the intended due date of December 2020. The team remain focused on Covid-19 phone contact responses with a "care and maintenance" role in place for existing sharepoint builds. Business cases / project mandates will be required for bringing new services onto sharepoint will progress as resourcing allows. (GSP20-22.Serv-5.7)

5.　　**SERVICE PERFORMANCE**

5.1　　In line with the Performance Management Framework, operational performance is reviewed quarterly by departmental management. Areas performing well and/or areas subject to a decreasing trend or where benchmarking results show performance significantly below comparators will be reported to this committee for member scrutiny.

5.2　　Initial publication of 2019/20 Local Government Benchmarking Framework Indicators in February 2021 will be refreshed in early May. The full suite can be viewed using the My Local Council tool.

5.3   Report is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service Performance Indicators is provided.
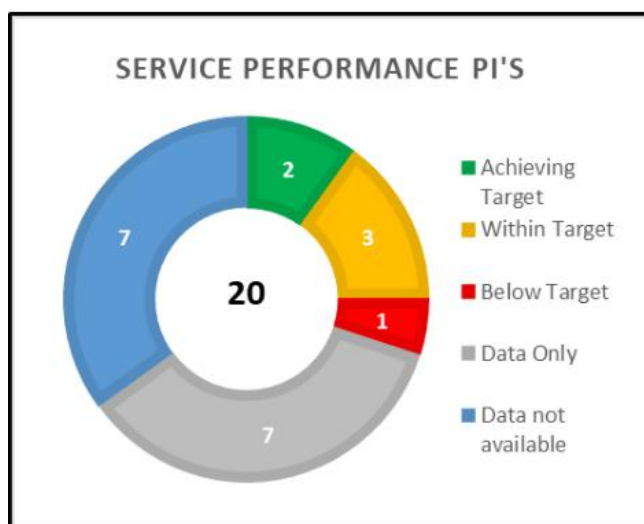
Operational Indicators - successes

5.4   The average number of days taken to process new housing benefits claims and to process notifications of changes of circumstances in housing benefits claims continue to improve. The average processing time for new housing benefits was 19.8 days against a target of 21 days, while change of circumstances in housing claims took an average of 3.4 days against a target of 9 days. The average time taken to process these claims have notably reduced since 2018/19, where average timescales were 24.8 days and 9.4 days respectively. (PIs CPS011, CPS012)

Operational Indicators - challenges and actions to support

5.5   This reporting period is normally the busiest time of year for Customer Services with all services issuing year end documentation along with the renewal of Garden Waste Permits. In addition the service has had to deal with contacts regarding Scottish Government reliefs and grants, responding to Grampian Coronavirus (Covid-19) Assistance Hub calls and making outbound calls to people self-isolating due to positive Covid-19 tests (such calls can take over 30 minutes). The increased workload along with long term absence and staff recruitment continues to affect the ability to achieve service targets. During the reporting period 88.5% of telephone calls received were answered (CPS058) against a target of 93%. Customer Services indicators will be reviewed and changes may be made to reflect the ways customers are choosing to contact the Council (phone/email/self-service) and how effective and efficient the service is in dealing with the various contact methods. (PIs CPS058, CPS059, CPS062)

5.6   The in-year Council Tax collection performance at 31 March 2021 has suffered due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. 95.8% of council tax had been received at the end of the financial year, below the target of 97%. As Council Tax payers became unemployed or furloughed, it reduced the cash available to them to pay bills; the delay in commencement of Council Tax recovery reduced the time to recover unpaid arrears. The number of

Council Tax bills paid by direct debit has also reduced, again impacting on the rate of council tax collection. As Council Tax recovery processes continue, the rate of collection will be closely monitored. Albeit, relating to 2019/20, Local Government Benchmarking Framework data recently published reports performance of in-year council tax slightly above the national average achieving a rank of 7th across all local authorities. (SCM6b)

6.   OTHER PERFORMANCE RELATED DATA

Complaints & MP/MSP Enquiries

6.1   In line with the Performance Management Framework, complaints are reviewed quarterly by departmental management in terms of time taken to respond, outcome and learning points. Links to backing tables for all Service Complaints is provided.

6.2   A total of 24 complaints were received during 2020-21, 15 of which were in quarter 4. The number of complaints is down on those received during 2019-20. In total 19 complaints were closed during 2020-21, 13 of which were in quarter 4. Of the complaints closed, 17 were closed at frontline stage (89%), five were upheld, one was partially upheld and 11 were not upheld. The average time taken to resolve frontline complaints was 6 days, slightly above the target 5 working day timescale. .

6.3   Only two of the complaints closed in 2020-21 were categorised as investigative stage. One was upheld and the other partially upheld. On average investigative complaints took 17 days to be resolved, within the target 20 working day timescale.

6.4   A total of 15 MSP enquiries were received and closed during quarter 4. On average MSP enquiries took eight days to be resolved.

Other Performance (not included within Service Plan)

6.2   The impacts of the latest lockdown were detailed in the report, Covid Related Pressures and Service Prioritisation (para 9 of the minute refers), presented to Council on 10 March 2021. This services contribution to the immediate and ongoing pandemic response is referenced in that report.

Case Studies

6.3   Nothing to report.

Consultation and Engagement

6.4   Nothing to report.

7. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))
Performance measurement is used to ensure the efficient and sustainable delivery of services to meet the Council's priorities in both the Corporate Plan and the LOIP.

(b) Policy and Legal
The Council has a statutory requirement to publish a range of information that will demonstrate that it is securing best value and assist in comparing performance both over time and between authorities where appropriate.

(c) Financial implications
None.

(d) Risk Implications
None.

(e) Staffing Implications
None.

(f) Property
None.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform the Committee on performance.

(h) Consultations
The Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Service Managers, Legal Services, the Equal Opportunities Officer, and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 As at the end of the reporting year progress on implementing the strategic and service level actions is slightly behind schedule at 48% complete. Four of the five actions due to be completed by the end of March have slipped but are near completion, while the remaining indicator has not been progressed and will roll over into 2021-22. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has been felt across the service, with significant changes to workloads in prioritising the council response to the pandemic.

REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021

SUBJECT: COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 The Committee is asked to consider the Complaints Annual Report 2019-20.

1.2 This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People's Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance (para 9 of the minute refers).

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

i) **consider the contents of the Complaints Annual Report;**

ii) **welcome performance as indicated in the report; and**

iii) **approve the report for submission to the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman (SPSO).**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 All councils are required to publish their performance against the national performance indicators set by the SPSO. The attached report presents our performance against these performance indicators for the 2019-20 reporting period. **(Appendix 1)**

3.2   Complaints handling is part of the council's performance management framework. Members receive updates on complaints performance through routine reports to service committees.

3.3   Compared to the 2018-19 figures, there has been an increase of 20.8% in the number of complaints received, 725 versus 611, and a slight increase of around 0.3% in the population size. Consequently, the number of complaints per 1,000 population has increased by 20.4% compared to 2018-19. The increase in complaints recording reflects public confidence in reporting matters. Another factor may be staff reductions impacting on our ability to deliver our services.

3.4   During 2019-20 four-fifths of complaints were dealt with at frontline resolution stage compared to one-fifth dealt with at the investigation stage. This maintains the improvement in performance since 2014-15 when fewer than half of all complaints were resolved at this stage (45.7%).

3.5   Over half (52%) of frontline (stage one) complaints were 'upheld', or 'partially upheld' (Figures 5 & 6) in 2019-20, a 13% increase on 2018-19. In 2016-17 the proportion was 47.8%, and in 2015-16 it was 46%, compared to just one-quarter in 2014-15. This proportion demonstrates that mistakes are being acknowledged, apologies given with learning and improvement outcomes sought and implemented.

For stage two complaints 'upheld' or 'partially upheld' at the investigation stage, the proportion in 2019-20 of 48%, was similar to previous years. Indeed, over the past 5 years the proportion of stage two complaints (including after escalation) has been consistently been between 40% and 50%.

3.6   The late submission of this report was out with the control of the council arising from the commencement of the pandemic in March 2020. Staff did not have access to IT systems required to prepare this report until the end of February 2021. The preparation of the 2020-21 Complaints Annual Report will commence at the end of June 2021 and should be reported to Committee by end of October 2021.

4.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a)   Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan - Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)
This report supports the Scottish Government's national outcomes, in particular the commitment to be accountable to the community as stated: "Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs."

Effective complaints reporting is used to ensure the efficient and sustainable delivery of services to meet the Council's priorities in

‘Moray 2023: A Plan for the Future.’ Within the Moray Council Corporate Plan.

(b) **Policy and Legal**
The SPSO have made it a statutory requirement to have all local authorities publish a Complaints Annual Report.

(c) **Financial implications**
It is not anticipated that there will be any financial implications.

(d) **Risk Implications**
Failure to adhere to the statutory SPSO requirement may result in SPSO making a declaration of non-compliance against the Council. Non-compliance with the statutory duty relating to national standards being adopted would present risk in terms of reputational damage and a loss of public confidence in reporting complaints.

(e) **Staffing Implications**
There are no staffing implications related to this report.

(f) **Property**
There are no property implications related to this report.

(g) **Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**
The Equal Opportunities Officer has been consulted in the preparation of this report and the equalities impact has been identified as uncertain.

The Equal Opportunities Officer has recommended that where services are experiencing high volumes of complaints, the management of respective services should arrange to identify common complaint issues and any learning arising. This will help to ensure that complaints are not arising from situations where customer diversity needs have not been considered or addressed, e.g. disability or cultural issues.

(h) **Consultations**
The Corporate Management Team and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted on the contents of the Complaints Annual Report 2019-20.

5. <u>CONCLUSION</u>

5.1 Publishing the Complaints Annual Report 2019-20 complies with the SPSO statutory requirement.

Author of Report: John Black, Complaints Officer
Background Papers: Held by Author
Ref: SPMAN-2045703626-59

Moray Council

Complaints Handling Annual Report
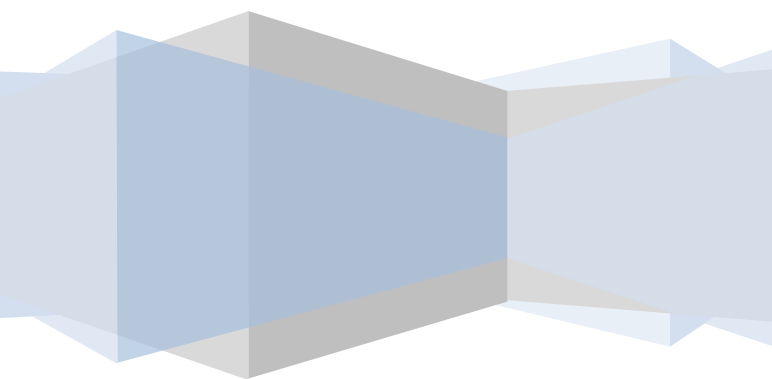
2019/20

Contents

1.   Chief Executive's Foreword

Scotland's public sector has a duty to the people it serves, and part of that duty involves responding positively to complaints. This annual report serves three purposes: to comply with a national requirement to report against a suite of eight Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO) Performance Indicators (PIs); internally to inform management to help us learn from complaints and improve services; and externally to provide information and feedback to the public who engaged with us during the complaints process.

In this report you will find details of how we have performed in dealing with complaints, the outcomes of some investigations and how we have changed our services as a result. I am pleased to see many work practices modified as a result of a complaint, which I feel shows we are listening to the public when they're not happy.

Naturally, not every complaint is upheld, but clearly, they are all addressed at either frontline stage or through a more detailed, thorough investigation within respective timescales including authorised extensions. We take our commitment to the SPSO framework seriously and I am confident that our customer care will continue to improve as a result of complaints we receive.

Roddy Burns
Chief Executive

2.   Introduction

2.1   This Complaints Handling Annual Report summarises the council's performance in terms of handling customer complaints received between 01 April 2019 and 31 March 2020.

2.2   The 2019-2020 reporting period provides the seventh full year of data under the new model Complaints Handling Procedure. This annual report is presented in accordance with the National Performance Framework, which was published in August 2013. The Complaints Standard Authority developed a suite of eight performance indicators in association with the Local Authority Complaint Handlers Network on which we are represented. These indicators are a valuable source of information about council services as this helps to identify recurring or underlying problems, derive learning from complaints and highlight potential areas for improvement.

2.3   The council always aims to provide the highest possible quality of service to our community, but we recognise that there are times when we get things wrong and we fail to meet the expectations of our customers. The council welcomes feedback as it provides information that helps services learn from complaints and to modify and improve the way services are delivered. Complaints are viewed as a positive communication tool and are encouraged.

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction, by one or more members of the public, about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

2.4   Our complaints procedure has two stages:

- **Stage one** – 'frontline resolution': we will always try to resolve complaints quickly, within five working days, and in exceptional circumstances extend for a further five days.

- **Stage two** – 'investigation': if customers remain dissatisfied with our stage one response, they can escalate their complaint to stage two. Complaints that are complex or need detailed investigation from the outset can be looked at immediately at stage two. These complaints will be acknowledged within three working days and a written response provided within twenty working days; this can be extended in exceptional circumstances.

2.5   Following completion of our complaints process, if a customer remains dissatisfied, they can ask the SPSO to consider their complaint further and we advise them of this entitlement.

2.6 In support of the Complaints Handling Procedure, the council has a Complaints Management System enabling us to record, track and report on complaints information across all services. Within this system, we record how we have dealt with and responded to complaints.

2.7 Monitoring complaints information, the preparation and publication of quarterly reports and this annual report helps to provide a clear basis for identifying service failures ('learning from complaints') and information on how effectively the council is handling complaints ('complaints performance').

2.8 The Performance Indicators covered in this report provide a tool that the council and the public can use to judge objectively how well complaints are being handled and how they inform service improvement activity.

2.9 The complaints performance data in this report will also inform our Annual Public Performance Report summarising our performance against the Statutory Performance Indicators.

2.10 Compliance with the Complaints Handling Procedure is monitored by Audit Scotland in conjunction with the SPSO and in line with the principles of the Best Value Shared Risk Assessment arrangements.

2.11 A new two stage statutory social work complaints process was introduced on 1 April 2017 and social work complaints administered under the new process have been included in this annual report.

3   Executive Summary

3.1 Some Improvements have been made in complaints performance in relation to stage one complaints in recent years although closing them off within 5 working days has decreased:
- complaints received being closed off at stage one
  79.9% in 2019-20, being just short of 80.7% in 2018-19 versus 71.5% in 2016-17 and the poorest performance of 45.7% in 2014-15.

- stage one complaints being upheld
  38.2% in 2019-20 versus 30.9% in 2018-19.

- stage one complaints closed off within the five working day target
  71% in 2019-20 versus 77% in 2018-19 and 99% in 2016-17.

This shows that we dealt with complaints at the point closest to service delivery in most cases.

3.2 Feedback received through the complaints survey was mainly critical in nature. Many complainants expressed dissatisfaction about the outcome of their complaint as opposed to the complaint handling process itself which the survey is designed to test.

3.3 Complaints received has shown an increasing trend over the previous three years. This year the rate has risen to 7.7 per 1,000 population compared to 6.4 in 2018-19 and 5.75 in 2017-18. Note that the rate across Scotland in 2019-20 was 10.34 per 1,000 population.

We continue to provide quarterly data to the Local Authority Complaint Handlers Network along with 30 other councils (one council does not submit data) for benchmarking purposes. The network has identified that differences in council recording practices adversely impact on the ability to benchmark on a national basis.

Education and Social Care services have reversed the trend and are no longer resolving most of their complaints through stage two. Only 40% were closed at stage 2 in 2019-20 compared to 57% in 2018-19. It is still likely that there has been under recording of minor complaint issues within

Community Care who recorded 25 complaints in 2019-20, slightly less than the 27 recorded in 2018-19. The appointment of an Education complaints officer has contributed to a 46% increase in Schools and Curriculum Development recorded complaints with 52 complaints recorded in 2019-20 compared to 28 in 2018-19. The complaints officer provided guidance and specific training sessions to social work staff involved in complaint handling, with the aim of increasing their recording of minor complaints.

3.4   Performance in resolving stage two complaints within the 20-working day timescale remains the same. This year, as in 2018-19, 53% were completed on time meaning that almost half of all stage two complaints were responded to out with the timescale. While this is an improvement on the 36% recorded in 2017-18, it falls below levels attained in 2016-17 (61%) and 2015-16 (62%). Of those being closed off beyond 20 working days, there has been a vast improvement in authorised extensions, up to 46% in 2019-20 verses 16% in 2018-19 and 17% in 2017-18.

3.5   Gaining approval to extend our response times beyond the five working day timescale was an area where improvement was made. In 2019-20, 33% of all overdue complaints received an authorised extension compared to 22% in 2018-19. The complaint officer holds quarterly meetings with department complaint administrators and carries out weekly complaint report monitoring with the aim of further improving on authorised extensions of stage 1 and stage 2 complaints.

4   Complaints Performance Indicators

The aim of the model Complaints Handling Procedure is for as many complaints as possible to be resolved at the frontline (i.e. at stage one) with as few as possible requiring progression to investigation (i.e. stage two) in order to improve both the customer's experience and the council's service provision.

The SPSO Performance Indicators provide the minimum requirement for a local authority to self-assess, report on performance and to undertake benchmarking activities. These indicators are:

- Indicator 1 – complaints received per 1,000 of population
- Indicator 2 – closed complaints
- Indicator 3 – complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld
- Indicator 4 – average times
- Indicator 5 – performance against timescales
- Indicator 6 – number of cases where an extension is authorised
- Indicator 7 – customer satisfaction
- Indicator 8 – learning from complaints

A breakdown of 2019-20 figures for relevant indicators will be explained in this section together with 2018-19 figures and some data from previous years to allow for benchmark comparisons. A breakdown of indicator figures for services is included as an appendix.

4.1   Indicator 1

This indicator records the total number of complaints received by the council. This is the sum of the number of complaints received at stage one (frontline resolution) and the number of complaints received directly at stage two (investigation). To allow for a fair comparison across all 32 councils in Scotland, the figure of complaints per 1,000 of population is used.

Table 1: Number of complaints received by Moray Council (per 1,000 population)

Complaints received by Moray Council	*2018-19*	*2019-20*
Total number of received	611	738

Population (mid-year population estimate)	95,520	95,820
Number of complaints per 1,000 population	**6.4**	**7.7**

*Some of the complaints dealt with during the period relate to complaints raised before April 2019, and some raised in March 2020 would be unresolved before the end of March 2020. So, there will not be a direct correlation between numbers received and numbers responded to.

Compared to the 2018-19 figures, there has been an increase of 20.8% in the number of complaints received and a slight increase of around 0.3% in the population size. Consequently, the number of complaints per 1,000 population has increased by 20.4% compared to 2018-19 (Table 1).[1]

The majority of complaints continue to be received by Environmental Services (76%). Complaints to Direct Services, one of the services that has the most direct contact with Moray residents, has shown an 21% increase since 2018-19. Similarly, the other service with direct contact with residents, Housing & Property Service has recorded an increase of 25% compared to 2018-19.

The increase in complaints recording reflects public confidence in reporting matters. Another factor may be staff reductions impacting on our ability to deliver our services.

4.2 Indicator 2

This indicator provides information on the number of complaints closed at stage one and stage two as a percentage of the 725 closed complaints (note that there were 738 complaints received with 13 not closed during the reporting period). The term 'closed' refers to a complaint that has had a response sent to the customer and at the time no further action is required.

This indicator will report:
- the number of complaints closed at stage one as % of all complaints
- the number of complaints closed at stage two as % of all complaints
- the number of complaints closed at stage two after escalation as % of all complaints

Figure 1: Percentage of complaints closed at Stages One and Two (2014-15 through to 2019-20)
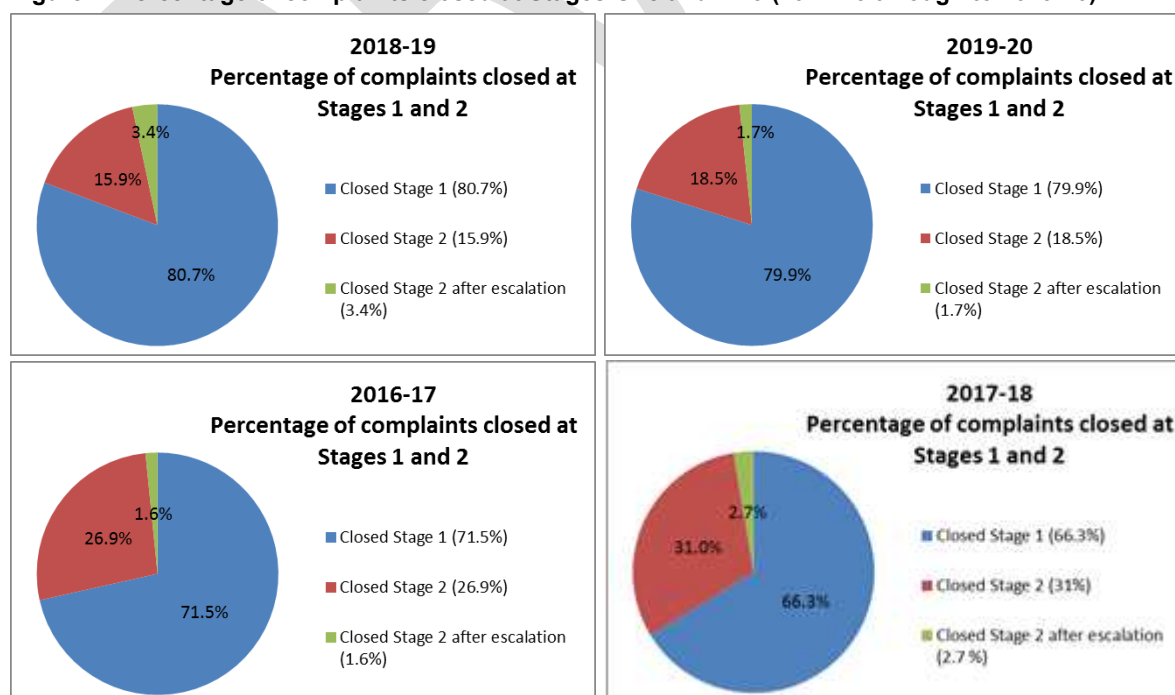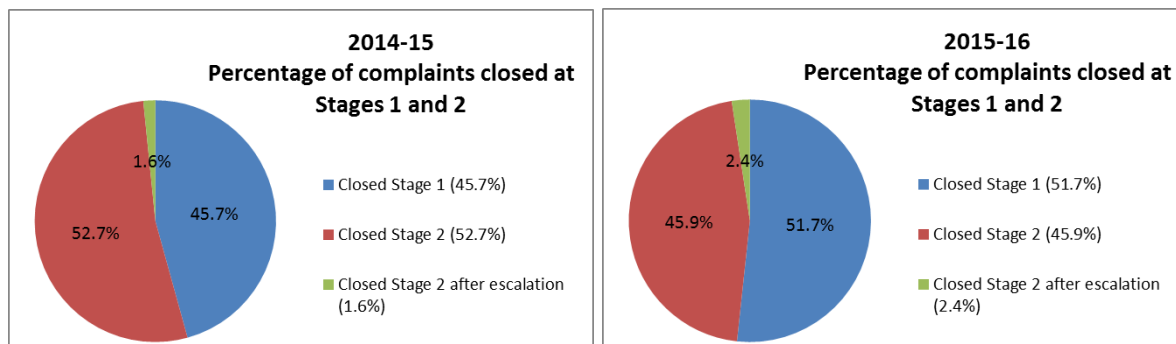
2014-15
Percentage of complaints closed at Stages 1 and 2

- Closed Stage 1 (45.7%)
- Closed Stage 2 (52.7%)
- Closed Stage 2 after escalation (1.6%)

2015-16
Percentage of complaints closed at Stages 1 and 2

- Closed Stage 1 (51.7%)
- Closed Stage 2 (45.9%)
- Closed Stage 2 after escalation (2.4%)

During 2019-20 four-fifths of complaints were dealt with at frontline resolution stage compared to one-fifth dealt with at the investigation stage. This maintains the improvement in performance since 2014-15 when fewer than half of all complaints were resolved at this stage (45.7%).

It is heartening to see that most complaints continue to be dealt with at frontline, as suggested by the SPSO's guidance on the Complaints Handling Procedure to "take every opportunity to resolve service users' complaints at the first point of contact if at all possible." Continued emphasis is placed on highlighting the complaints model to individual services at the quarterly Complaints Administration Group meetings and providing complaints handling inputs to department staff, including the sharing of best practice to improve effective.

As in previous reporting periods Environmental Services continues to receive the most complaints – 553 (76%). This is to be expected as they are responsible for busy service provision such as roads, waste management and planning where complaints often arise. Education and Social Care were the next highest – 123 (17%); Corporate Services – 47 (6%) received the remaining complaints. (See Figure 23 – Appendix).

Direct Services continue to lead the way in resolving complaints at frontline – 298 (96%).
In 2019-20 Housing and Property continued their improvement of recent years and resolved 161 (75%) of complaints at frontline, which compares favourably to the 46% resolved at frontline in 2015-16. Community Care have built upon their performance in recent years. In 2016-17 all 10 of the complaints raised concerning Community Care were dealt with at stage two, whereas in 2019-20 the majority were dealt with at frontline (20 complaints equivalent to 80%).

One service resolves most complaints at the investigation stage; Development Services (67%), although it should be noted the relatively low number of complaints this service receives in comparison to Direct Services & Housing and Property.

Figure 2: Complaints closed at Stage One as a % of all complaints closed (2017-18 through to 2019-20)

Complaints closed at Stage 1 (% of all complaints closed)
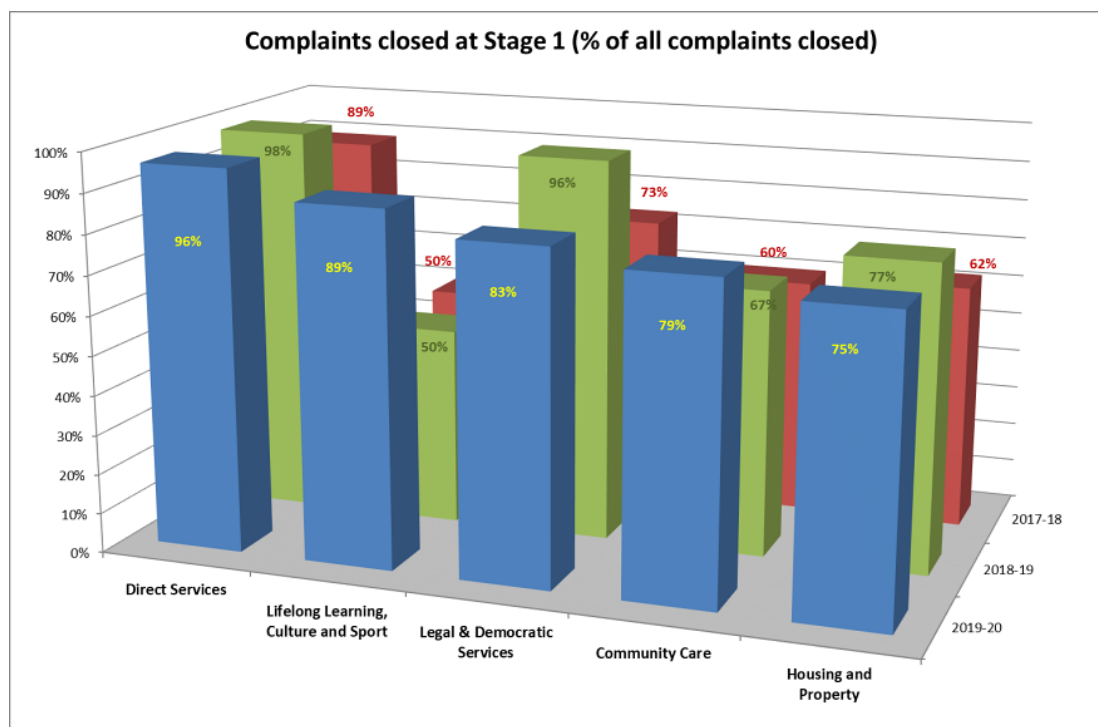
18 out of 37 Integrated Children's Services complaints (49%) were dealt with at stage two; a marked drop since 2018-19 (87%). 27 out of the 52 Schools and Curriculum Development (50%) complaints were resolved at stage two (Figure 3); similar to the proportion in 2018-19 (57%).

Figure 3: Complaints closed at Stage Two as a % of all complaints closed (2019-20 compared to 2018-19)
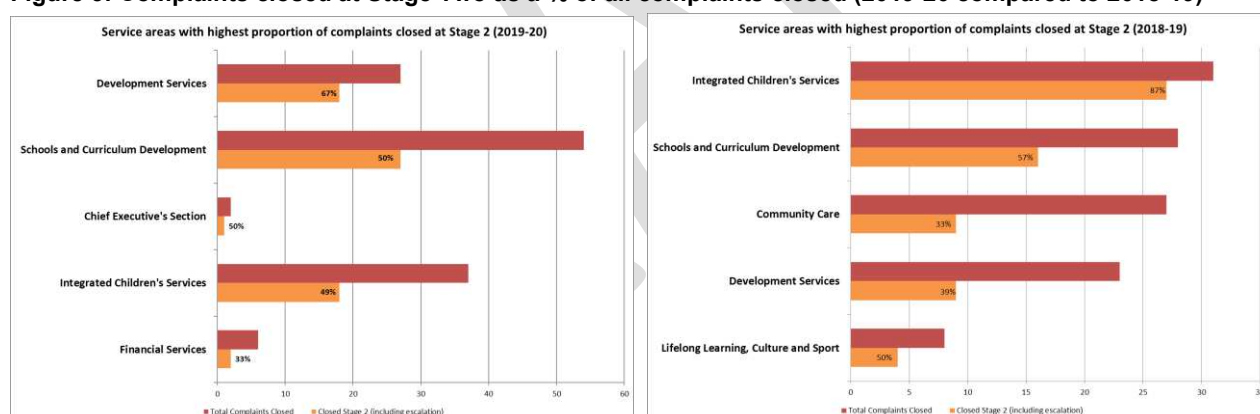
Stage two complaints often involve speaking with several witnesses, meeting with complainants and liaising with partner agencies. In such circumstances, concluding these enquiries and providing a written response to a complainant normally exceeds five working days.

There were two and a half times more complaints against Schools and Curriculum Development compared to 2018-19, suggesting the focus on increasing awareness of the complaints handling procedure has had some success. Furthermore, the work to emphasise the importance of resolving complaints at Stage 1 – frontline has seen a marked increase in the proportion closed at Stage 1 (59% in 2019-20 compared to 49% the previous year, and 16% in 2014/15).

Figure 4: Schools and Curriculum Development complaints resolved (2016-17 through to 2019-20)
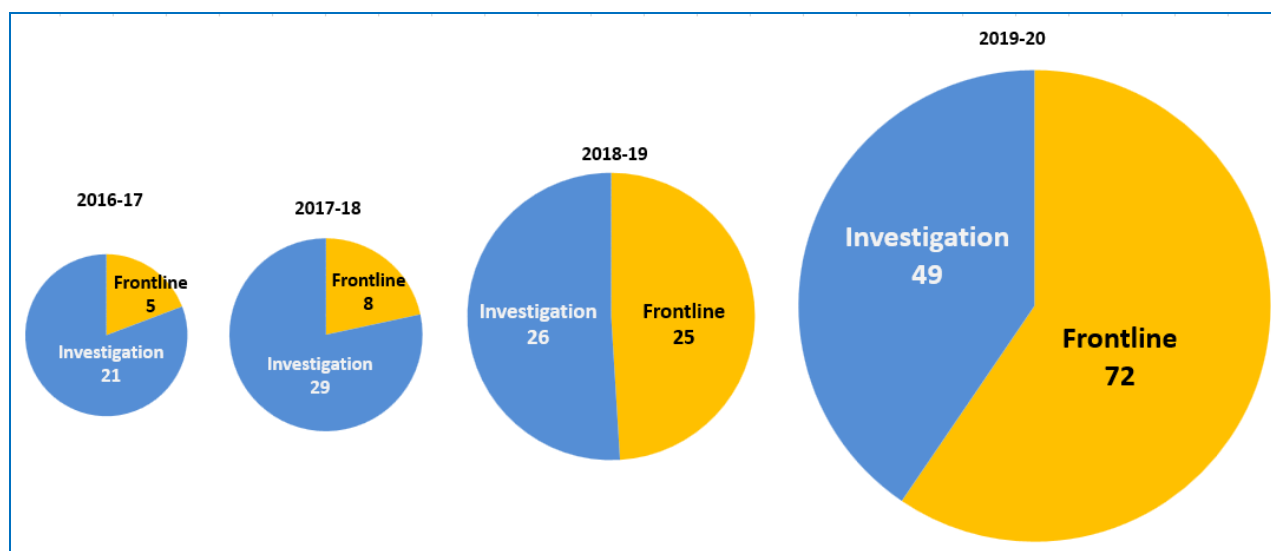
4.3   Indicator 3

There is a requirement for a formal outcome (upheld, partially upheld or not upheld) to be recorded for each complaint.

This indicator will report:
- the number of complaints upheld at stage one as % of all complaints closed at stage one
- the number of complaints not upheld at stage one as % of all complaints closed at stage one
- the number of complaints partially upheld at stage one as % of all complaints closed at stage one
- the number of complaints upheld at stage two as % of all complaints closed at stage two
- the number of complaints not upheld at stage two as % of all complaints closed at stage two
- the number of complaints partially upheld at stage two as % of all complaints closed at stage two
- the number of escalated complaints upheld at stage two as % of all escalated complaints closed at stage two
- the number of escalated complaints not upheld at stage two as % of all escalated
- complaints closed at stage two
- the number of escalated complaints partially upheld at stage two as % of all escalated complaints closed at stage two

A complaint is defined as 'upheld' when it is found to be true or confirmed. A 'partially upheld' complaint results when there are several complaint issues raised and some, but not all, of them are upheld. Complaints are 'not upheld' when they are found to be untrue; that the service provided was of a reasonable standard in line with typical expectations; or if a request for services was misdirected as a complaint. The council reviews all complaints and each customer is contacted to confirm to them whether their complaint has been 'upheld', 'partially upheld' or 'not upheld' together with an explanation of the findings.

Over half (52%) of frontline (stage one) complaints were 'upheld', or 'partially upheld' (Figures 5 & 6) in 2019-20, a 13% increase on 2018-19. In 2016-17 the proportion was 47.8%, and in 2015-16 it was 46%, compared to just one-quarter in 2014-15. This proportion demonstrates that mistakes are being acknowledged, apologies given with learning and improvement outcomes sought and implemented.

For stage two complaints 'upheld' or 'partially upheld' at the investigation stage, the proportion in 2019-20 of 48%, was similar to previous years. Indeed, over the past 5 years the proportion of stage two complaints (including after escalation) has been consistently been between 40% and 50%.

Upheld Complaints
Figure 5: Complaints upheld as a percentage of those closed at each stage (2015-16 through to 2019-20)

Complaints upheld as a percentage of those closed at each stage

Stage	(2015-16)	(2016-17)	(2017-18)	(2018-19)	(2019-20)
Upheld at stage 1	33.9%	40.1%	26.4%	30.9%	38.2%
Upheld at stage 2	18.1%	25.7%	20.2%	15.8%	16.4%
Upheld at stage 2 after escalation	18.2%	16.7%	14.3%	25.0%	25.0%
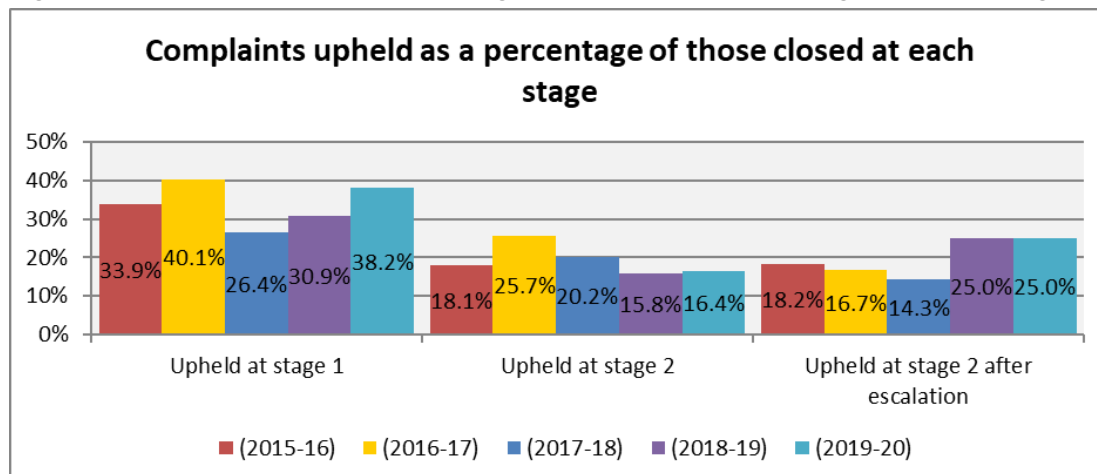
Partially Upheld Complaints
Figure 6: Complaints partially upheld as a percentage of those closed at each stage (from 2015-16 to 2019-20)

Complaints partially upheld as a percentage of those closed at each stage

Stage	(2015-16)	(2016-17)	(2017-18)	(2018-19)	(2019-20)
Partially upheld at stage 1	12.0%	7.7%	11.5%	6.7%	13.5%
Partially upheld at stage 2	22.3%	17.4%	22.7%	17.1%	29.1%
Partially upheld at stage 2 after escalation	18%	0.0%	29%	41.7%	58.3%

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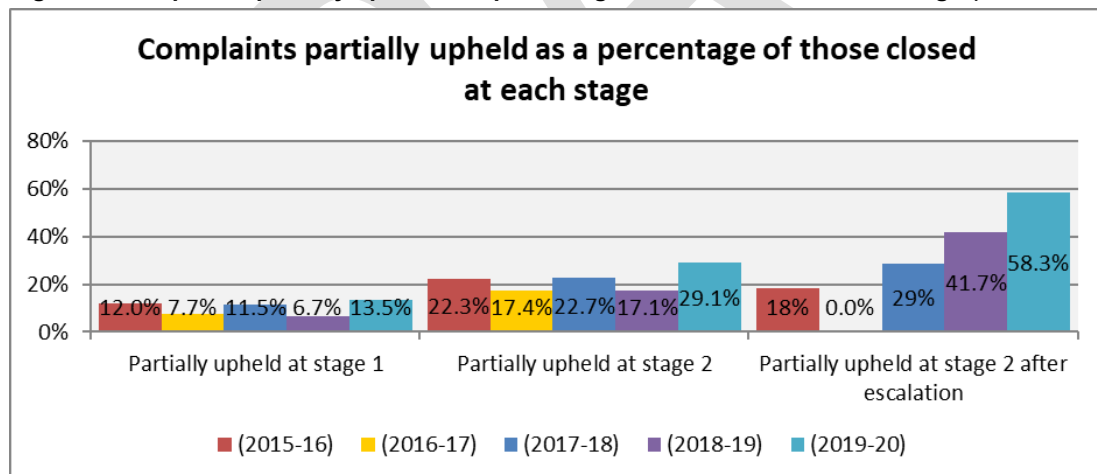
Not Upheld Complaints
Figure 7: Complaints not upheld as a percentage of those closed at each stage (from 2015-16 to 2019-20)
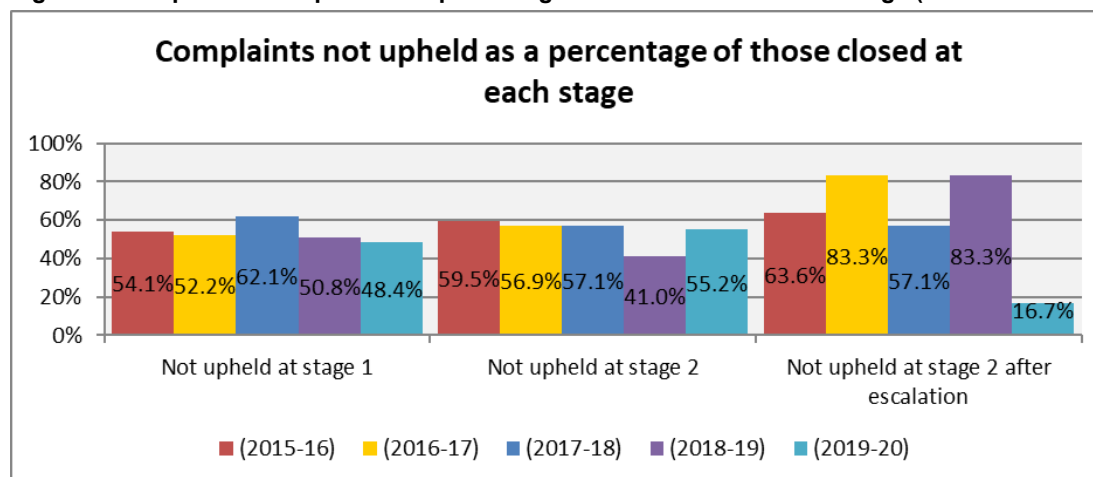
For all the complaints closed during 2019-20, at both stages one and two, 51% were fully 'upheld' or 'partially upheld' overall, similar to 2018-19 (50.5%). This shows that many customers continue to raise concerns with service provision and, although the majority of complaints are not upheld, a significant proportion of all complaints require us to review and improve the way services are being delivered.

4.4   Indicator 4

This represents the average time in working days to close complaints at stages one and two of the model CHP.

This indicator will report:
- the average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage one
- the average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage two
- the average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation

Figure 8: Average time in working days to respond to complaints at each stage (2015-16 through to 2019-20)
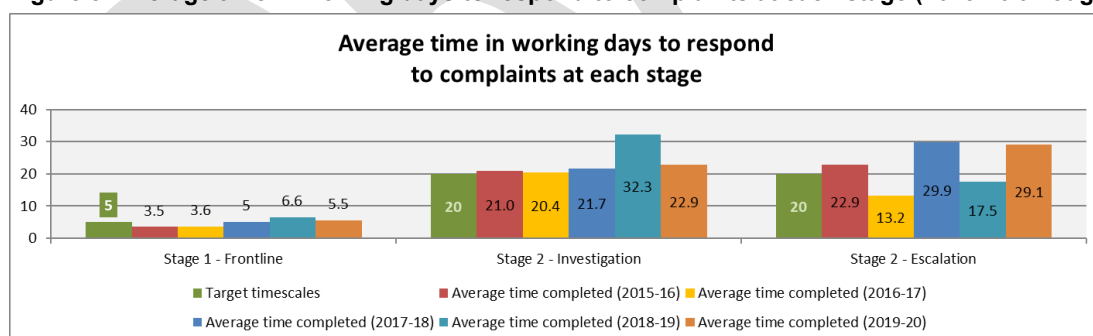
The average time taken to respond to frontline complaints remains just exceeding the SPSO's target 5 working day timescale (5.5 days). The number of frontline complaints closed on time increased to 410 compared to 372 in 2018-19. However, the proportion that was closed within 5 days (71%) was close to the proportion of 77% in 2018-19 (Figure 9).

The average time for resolving stage two investigation complaints was lower in 2019-20 at 22.9 days, compared to 32.3 days in 2018-19; outside the Complaint Handling Procedures' guidelines. The time taken on average to resolve the escalated stage two investigations was up to 29.1 days, an increase from 17.5 days in 2018-19 and closer to the highest figure of 29.9 days in 2017-18.

Although the majority of frontline complaints are dealt with within 5 working days, the proportion exceeding the maximum extension period of 10 working days rose to 7%, more than double the

3% in both 2016-17 and 2015-16. Those complaints extended should have been closed as a frontline resolution complaint (stage one) and escalated to investigation (stage two).

In the past 3 years the number of frontline complaints that take longer than 5 working days to close has been much higher than in previous years, and the trend is increasing. In 2016-17 there were 18 complaints that took longer than 5 days to resolve, 23 in 2015-16 and 30 in 2014-15. However, in 2017-18 there were 77 overdue frontline complaints, in 2018-19 the number rose significantly to 111, and in 2019-20 this figure rose again to 169, which may be indicative of the increasing workload on staff and the continuing pressures on services.

Five services account for the majority taking longer to resolve than the SPSO guidance: 75 complaints relating to Direct Services, 34 for Housing & Property Services, 13 for Community Care, 12 for Legal & Democratic Services and 10 for Integrated Children's Services. The frontline complaint that took the longest time to resolve (63 working days) was raised against Integrated Children's Services.

Weekly monitoring continues to take place with complaint administrators for relevant departments being reminded to ensure they follow the correct database timeline process for stages.

Figure 9: Response Time for frontline resolution complaints (2015-16 through to 2019-20)
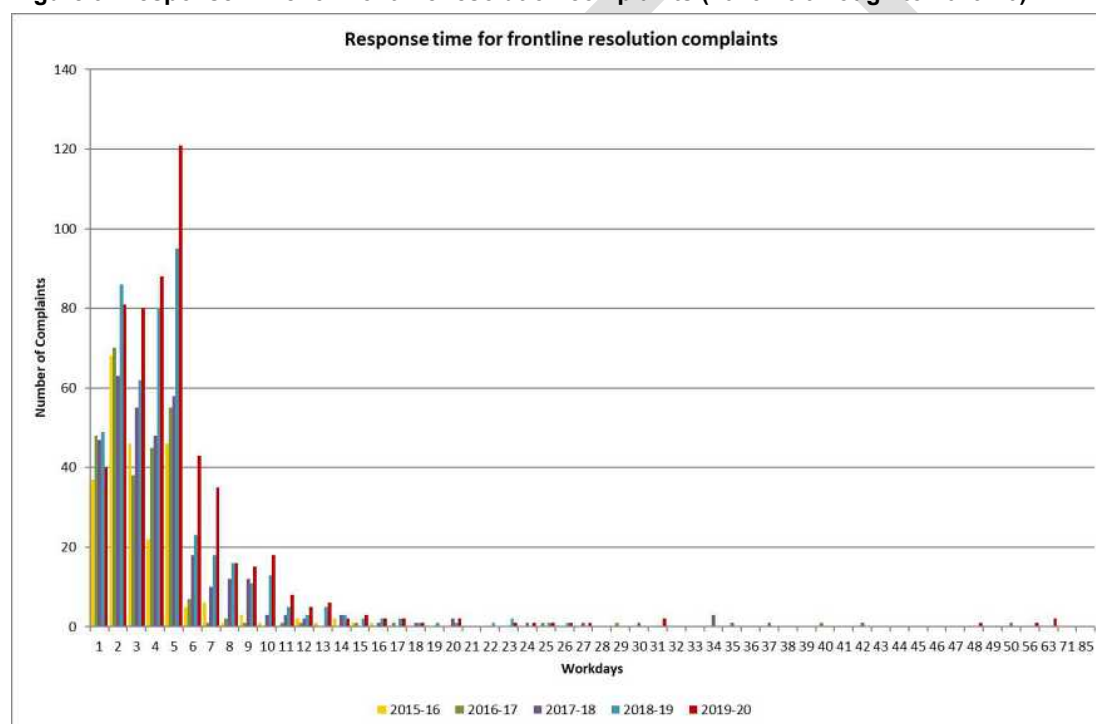
The majority (52%) of the investigations were responded to within the 20-day timescale or within agreed extension periods (Figure 10). Of the 145 complaints closed at stage two (investigation and escalated), 69 (48%) took longer than the target response time. Integrated Children's Services complaints often require investigation of lengthy and complicated issues. This accounted for 10 of their 18 investigations taking more than 20 days to complete. In 2017-18 one of the Schools and Curriculum Development investigations took 179 days to resolve; the longest of all complaints to be closed during the 5 years for which data has been collected. However, the longest resolution time in 2019-20 was much reduced at 84 days. This was an investigation into a complaint made against Community Care.

Figure 10: Response time for Investigation Stage Complaints (including Escalated Investigations) (2015-16 through to 2019-20)
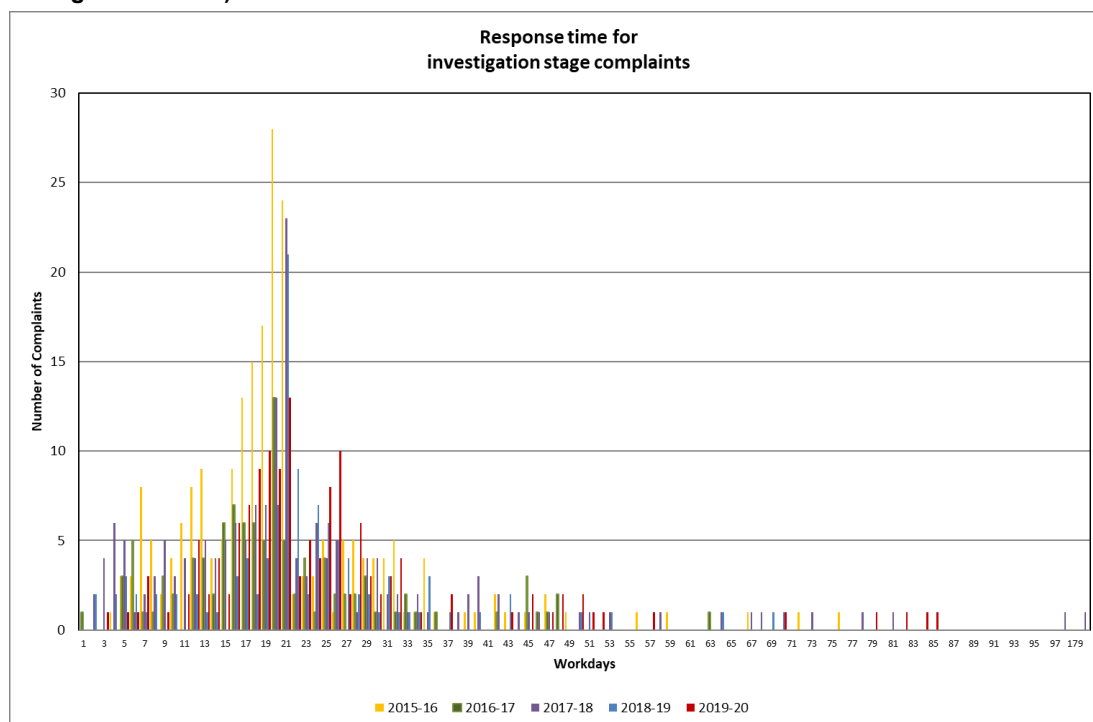
4.5 Indicator 5

The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of five and 20 working days.

The model Complaints Handling Procedure requires complaints to be closed within five working days at stage one and 20 working days at stage two. This indicator will report:
- the number of complaints closed at stage one within five working days as % of total number of stage one complaints
- the number of complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days as % of total number of stage two complaints
- the number of escalated complaints closed within 20 working days as a % of total number of escalated stage two complaints

The analysis provided for Indicator 4 is equally applicable for this indicator.

Table 2: Indicator 5 - Closure timescales (2014-15 through to 2019-20)

Performance Against Timescales		Number of complaints closed at stage one within 5 working days as a %	Number of complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days as a %	Number of escalated complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days as a %
2019-20	**Total no. of complaints**	579	134	12
	No. of complaints within timescales	410	71	6
	Meeting target times	71%	53%	50%
2018-19	**Total no. of complaints**	482	95	20
	No. of complaints within timescales	372	50	9
	Meeting target times	77%	53%	45%
2017-18	**Total no. of complaints**	482	177	20
	No. of complaints within timescales	271	63	4
	Meeting target times	56%	36%	20%
2016-17	**Total no. of complaints**	274	103	6
	No. of complaints within timescales	271	63	5
	Meeting target times	99%	61%	83%
2015-16	**Total no. of complaints**	242	215	11
	No. of complaints within timescales	219	133	7
	Meeting target times	90%	62%	64%
2014-15	**Total no. of complaints**	224	258	8
	No. of complaints within timescales	195	146	8
	Meeting target times	87%	57%	100%

Despite the support given to services by the Complaints Officer in the past 2 years the Council has not improved its performance for closing frontline complaints within the target times; 71% compared to 99% in 2016-17. Note, however, that in 2016-17, there were just 274 complaints, which is less than half of the total for 2019-20. This increasing additional volume and a reducing workforce may be contributory factors to the delay in responding. The services have also struggled to close stage two complaints within 20 working days (53% compared to 67% in 2017-18). Our performance for escalated complaints varies significantly from year to year due to small sample sizes. However, closing just one half of such complaints on time in 2019-20 is disappointing. Performance issues continue to be discussed with complaint administrators and highlighted through quarterly management reports. Closer monitoring and reinforcement was and will continue to be done to try and improve further on this performance.

4.6 **Indicator 6**

The number and percentage of complaints at each stage where an extension to the five or 20 working day timeline has been authorised.

The model Complaints Handling Procedure allows for an extension to the timescales to be authorised in certain circumstances. This indicator will report:

- the number of complaints closed at stage one where extension was authorised, as a % of all complaints at stage one
- number of complaints closed at stage two where extension was authorised, as a % of all complaints at stage two

This is an area where there is still room for improvement, but there has been a significant increase in the number of frontline extensions being approved (33% in 2019-20 compared to 10% or lower in earlier years).

Table 3: Indicator 6 – Extensions (2014-15 through to 2019-20)

Number of cases where an extension is authorised		% of complaints at stage one where the extension was authorised	% of complaints at stage two where the extension was authorised
2019-20	**Total no. of overdue complaints**	158	68
	No. of complaints with authorised extensions	52	31
	Percentage with extensions	33%	46%
2018-19	**Total no. of overdue complaints**	111	56
	No. of complaints with authorised extensions	24	9
	Percentage with extensions	22%	16%
2017-18	**Total no. of overdue complaints**	77	63
	No. of complaints with authorised extensions	4	11
	Percentage with extensions	5%	17%
2016-17	**Total no. of overdue complaints**	42	37
	No. of complaints with authorised extensions	4	11
	Percentage with extensions	10%	30%
2015-16	**Total no. of overdue complaints**	23	86
	No. of complaints with authorised extensions	1	13
	Percentage with extensions	4%	15%
2014-15	**Total no. of overdue complaints**	18	63
	No. of complaints with authorised extensions	1	24
	Percentage with extensions	6%	38%

The council always aims to respond to complaints as quickly as possible. There are, however, times when a complaint is particularly complex, and it is identified that a thorough investigation of the issues will require time out with the prescribed timescales. In these situations, the council

agrees with a complainant to extend the timescale for closing the complaint and will detail the reasons such as having to interview several potential witnesses and for a need to gather reports from a variety of sources. A senior manager must always approve such an extension before it is granted, and this is recorded with revised time limits on our complaints database.

However, as the data in Table 3 testifies, many complaints taking longer than the stipulated times still do not receive such approvals.

Figure 11 gives a breakdown by service where frontline complaints were extended without authorisation. As can be seen 52 overdue frontline complaints (33%) had authorised extensions mainly by the Housing and Property team, and Direct Services. None of the complaints resolved in more than 5 days at frontline by Community Care received an authorised extension.

Similarly, figure 12 gives a breakdown by service where complaints were extended without authorisation for investigations. For the second consecutive year Housing and Property Services had the highest proportion of authorised extensions for investigations that took longer than 20 working days to resolve with 15 out of 20 (75%). Schools and Curriculum Development had the next highest number with 8 out of 13 (62%).

Despite the revised complaints database, which was introduced in April 2017, the expectation that this would allow for closer monitoring to identify complaints that have extended beyond 20 days without authorisation continues to prove challenging. Senior management are still being notified of such cases and administrators reminded weekly to update the database, but there is still scope for improvement.

Figure 11: Frontline complaints not responded to in stipulated timescales, without authorised extensions (2019-20)
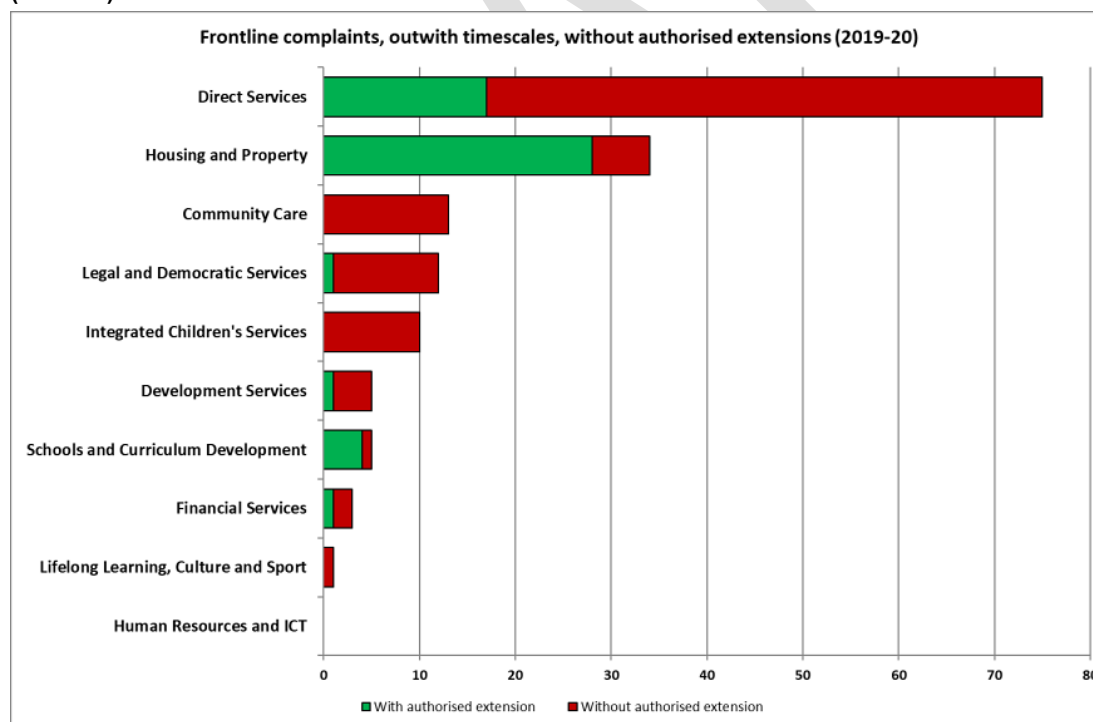
Figure 12: Stage two (including escalated) complaints not responded to in stipulated timescales, without authorised extensions (2018-19)

Stage 2 (including escalated) complaints, outwith timescales, without authorised extensions (2019-20)
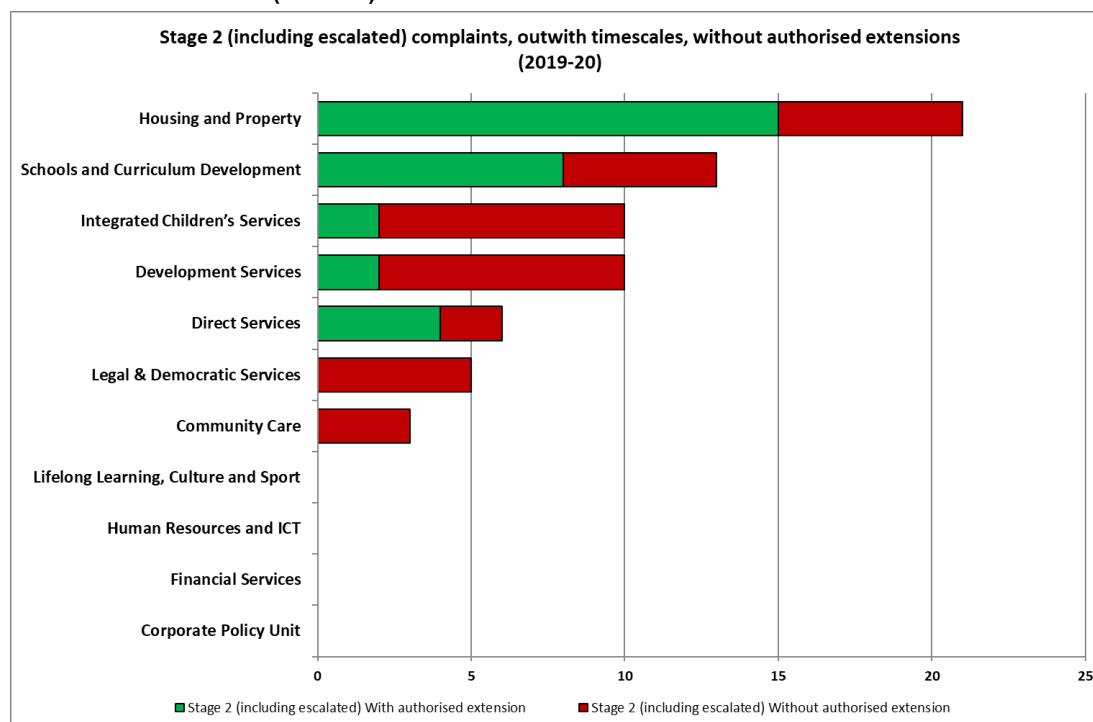
4.7   Indicator 7

The SPSO requires a statement to report on customer satisfaction with the complaints service provided.

A customer satisfaction survey was sent out to customers with the aim of helping the council focus on areas where improvements or change could be made to our complaints handling procedure and service provision.

In assessing customer satisfaction within the complaints service, complainants are asked to consider:
- how satisfied they were with the way their complaint was handled
- how easy the complaints process was to follow
- how well we complied with the CHP
- how well we provided service delivery, timeliness and information
- how professional the attitude of staff was

The SPSO currently requires a statement to report on customer satisfaction with the complaints service provided although this is currently being reviewed as part of the SPSO revision of the Model Complaint Handling Procedure. A brief report is included on customer satisfaction.

Customer Satisfaction Feedback Survey

Complaints Handling Customer Feedback Surveys were sent to every complainant when they were informed of the outcome of their complaint. In 2019-20, 505 surveys were sent out, 345 by email and 160 by post. We received 23 postal responses and 43 online responses, giving an overall poor survey response of 66. This was a 54% decrease from 2018-19.

Arising from the survey, the main dissatisfactions are:
- not contacting customers to confirm complaints and outcomes sought;
- not updating customers;
- not adhering to policy timescales;

- not taking the issues seriously;
- not apologising for poor service provision;
- having to chase up a response;
- only receiving a single sentence response;
- staff rudeness;
- poor work by contracted service providers

In 2019 -20, some positive feedback comments were received. These included:

- several customers expressed their satisfaction on how customer service staff dealt with them;
- one customer praised the very thoughtful reply to their reported concern;
- one customer expressed their satisfaction that following making their complaint, a good service was quickly provided;

4.8 Indicator 8 – Lessons learned: a statement outlining changes or improvements to services or procedures as a result of the consideration of complaints.

The council has a clear commitment to listen to our customers and act on their feedback. Learning from complaints is a continuous process that helps the council to resolve common issues and further improve the services that are provided. The council is continually working on learning from complaints and implementing changes to working practices as a direct result of investigating complaints.

4.8.1. Learning Outcomes

Managers review complaints that are upheld or partially upheld to determine if change or improvement would prevent re-occurrence. When a complaint is upheld or partially upheld, the remedies offered will generally fall into one or more of the following four categories:

- **Redress** – Putting things right where they have gone wrong, admitting where mistakes have been made.
- **Reimbursement** – Covering vouched actual costs incurred as a direct result of mistakes made by the council.
- **Reinforcement** – Recognising that a correct council policy/procedure has not been followed or we have fallen short of what could be expected. Training and instructing staff to prevent re-occurrence.
- **Revision** – Reviewing current practice to amend and improve working practices.

The Complaints Management System has a specific learning outcome section for managers to complete when complaints are closed. Where they have been upheld or partially upheld, any learning outcomes and service improvements are recorded.

Complaints Officer monitoring and database processing by Complaint administrators have ensured that more detailed closures are being recorded. The below information provides a quarterly breakdown of completion of the learning outcomes section in the complaints database.

Quarter 1	*Upheld*	*Partially Upheld*	*Not Upheld*
Number of Complaints Closed	72	29	103
Learning Outcomes Completed	71 (98.6%)	26 (89.7%)	Nil

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Quarter 2	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld
Number of Complaints Closed	58	33	86
Learning Outcomes Completed	57 (98.3%)	29 (87.9%)	Nil

Quarter 3	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld
Number of Complaints Closed	58	28	83
Learning Outcomes Completed	56 (96.6%)	28 (100%)	Nil

Quarter 4	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld
Number of Complaints Closed	54	32	88
Learning Outcomes Completed	53 (98.1%)	30 (93.8%)	Nil

2019/20	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld
Number of Complaints Closed	242	122	360
Learning Outcomes Completed	237 (97.9%)	113 (92.6%)	Nil

For the majority of complaints that were upheld or partially upheld a learning outcome was recorded on the complaints database (350 out of 364 complaints, equivalent to 96.2%).

The following is a summary of some learning outcome actions taken to change a procedure or policy in resolving complaints that were upheld or partially upheld in 2019-20:

Table 4: Actions taken in response to complaints upheld (2019-20)

Department	You said…	We listened and took action on the following upheld complaints…
Legal and Democratic Services	We failed to carry out the necessary checks resulting in us wrongly suspending a claim you submitted.	In upholding your complaint, we apologised and revised our process to ensure that, in future, appropriate checks would be made prior to considering suspensions. We resolved the issue to your satisfaction and you thanked us for this.
Financial Services	Your personal information was accidentally released in published documents.	In partially upholding your complaint, we apologised and put arrangements in place to ensure all relevant staff are provided with advice on suitable redaction methods. We included a procedure where all similar correspondence would be checked over by a manager prior to publishing.
Housing and Property	Through an appointed contractor, we made some housing repairs but failed to complete others within agreed timescales.	In partially upholding your complaint, we apologised and arranged for the completion of the outstanding repairs. We met with the contractor who agreed to a put a more co-ordinated process in place so that all repairs followed an agreed customer schedule within set timescales.
Community Care	We misunderstood your request for alternative accommodation.	In partially upholding your complaint, we apologised and met with you to address the misunderstanding and we agreed a solution with you.
Integrated Children's Services	We provided a lack of foster carer support when you asked for help to go through review reports to help your understanding of them.	In partially upholding your complaint, we apologised and revised our process for providing support to foster carers. Staff were briefed on this new process.
Schools and Curriculum Development	We failed to deal timeously and effectively with reported parental concerns relating to your child.	In upholding your complaint, we apologised and reviewed our systems for communication and protocols relating to reported parental concerns, particular for longer running concerns where a number of parental communications have been received. We also reviewed our recording processes and provided staff training.

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5. Scottish Public Services Ombudsman/Benchmarking

In 2019-20, the Local Authority Complaint Handlers Network continued to benchmark across all 32 councils. 1 council didn't provide their annual data so results were drawn from the remaining 31 councils.

The below tables provide some information on how Moray Council compares with overall recorded complaint national statistics:

Complaints Received	2018-19	2019-20
Moray Council	611 (1%)	738 (1.3%)
Nationally	56,178	56,119

Complaints Received Per 1000 Population	2018-19	2019-20
Moray Council	6.40	7.7
Nationally	10.36	10.34

Complaints Closed	2018-19	2019-20
Moray Council	597	725
Nationally	54,782	54,562

Nationally there was a 1% reduction in the number of complaints recorded in 2019-20. In contrast, Moray Council had a 21.4% increase in complaint recording demonstrating continued public confidence in reporting complaints.

Average Time in Working Days – Stage one	2018-19	2019-20
Moray Council	4.8	5.5
Nationally	7.1	10.2
Average Time in Working Days – Stage two	**2018-19**	**2019/20**
Moray Council	22.2	22.9
Nationally	29.9	23.9

Nationally, many Councils do not meet their target of resolving stage one complaints within 5 working days with a 43.7% increase in the time taken from 2018-19. Moray Council marginally failed to achieve the 5 working day target and increased the average time taken to resolve frontline complaints by a 14.6% in 2019/20.

Both nationally and locally the stage two complaints target times of 20 working days were not met although nationally significant improvement was made. Moray Council had a 3% increase compared to nationally where a 20% reduction was made. This could be indicative of reducing staff numbers and, for Moray Council, the increase in the number of complaints dealt with.

6. Summary

The council is committed to customer service and values feedback from our service users. Customer views and experiences are important to us as they help us to understand what we do well and identify where we need to improve. We want our customers to feel that their feedback is valued, that we will listen and act on lessons learned in order to improve service provision. Use of digital technology complements written survey requests providing additional opportunity to receive public feedback. A higher percentage 65% were received online.

Only by utilising the Complaint Handling Procedure and adhering to the robust performance management framework, will we learn from complaints, improve services and increase customer confidence in our service provision. Staff are making good use of the new database to demonstrate learning from complaints. Our Complaints Officer continues to highlight the importance of this to services through complaint administrator meetings and staff training.

It is importance that we aim to deal with complaints quickly, keep complainants informed and advise them what to do if they remain dissatisfied. Staff training, intranet guidance and Complaints Officer monitoring is used to help achieve this aim. The complaints section in the Moray Council website provides the public with policies, reports and general information on how a complaint can be reported and dealt with.

The results of the complaints survey were the lowest yet with a 9% return rate some however some useful feedback was given. It remains the case that satisfaction with the complaints handling process appears to be influenced by how satisfied the customer was with the outcome of their complaint. We used the easy-to-use online option and sent paper copies; however, this produced a similarly low number of survey responses meaning we were restricted in assessing the effectiveness of it as a learning tool. We will continue to use both online and hard copy methods for our survey.

Welcoming, recording, managing and resolving complaints in an effective manner will increase public confidence in our application of the Complaint Handling Procedure and afford us opportunity to learn and improve our service provision.

APPENDIX

Please note that due to rounding, some totals may add up to slightly more or less than 100%.

Table A: Indicator 2 – Complaints closed at stage one and stage two as a percentage of all complaints closed

Indicator 2 by service	2018-19				2019-20			
	Stage 1 – Front line resolution	Stage 2 – Investigation	Stage 2 – Escalated Investigation	Total	Stage 1 – Front line resolution	Stage 2 – Investigation	Stage 2 – Escalated Investigation	Total
All Council	**482** 81%	**95** 16%	**20** 3%	**597**	**579** 80%	**134** 18%	**12** 2%	**725**
Chief Executive's Office	**0** n/a	**0** n/a	**0** n/a	**0**	**1** 50%	**1** 50%	**0** 0%	**2**
Chief Executive's Section	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0	1 50%	1 50%	0 0%	2
Corporate Policy Unit	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0
Community Planning & Development	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0
Corporate Services	**46** 88%	**6** 12%	**0** 0%	**52**	**38** 81%	**8** 17%	**1** 2%	**47**
Financial Services	2 50%	2 50%	0 0%	4	4 67%	2 33%	0 0%	6
Human Resources and ICT	1 33%	2 67%	0 0%	3	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0
Legal and Democratic Services	43 96%	2 4%	0 0%	45	34 83%	6 15%	1 2%	41
Environmental Services	**398** 88%	**35** 8%	**18** 4%	**451**	**468** 85%	**76** 14%	**9** 2%	**553**
Development Services	14 61%	8 35%	1 4%	23	9 33%	18 67%	0 0%	27
Direct Services	251 98%	3 1%	2 1%	256	298 96%	11 4%	2 1%	311
Housing and Property	133 77%	24 14%	15 9%	172	161 75%	47 22%	7 3%	215
Education and Social Care	**38** 40%	**54** 57%	**2** 2%	**94**	**72** 59%	**49** 40%	**2** 2%	**123**
Community Care	18 67%	8 30%	1 4%	27	20 80%	5 20%	0 0%	25
Integrated Children's Services	4 13%	26 84%	1 3%	31	19 51%	17 46%	1 3%	37
Lifelong Learning, Culture and Sport	4 50%	4 50%	0 0%	8	8 89%	1 11%	0 0%	9
Schools and Curriculum Development	12 43%	16 57%	0 0%	28	25 48%	26 50%	1 2%	52

Table B: Indicator 3 by service – The number of complaints upheld/partially upheld/not upheld at each stage as a percentage of complaints closed in full at stage one

Indicator 3 by service – Stage 1	2018-19				2019-20			
	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Total	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Total
All Council	**149** 31%	**39** 8%	**294** 61%	482	**221** 38%	**78** 13%	**280** 48%	579
Chief Executive's Office	**0** 0%	**0** 0%	**0** 0%	**0**	**0** 0%	**0** 0%	**1** 100%	**1**
Chief Executive's Section	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	0 0%	0 0%	1 100%	1
Corporate Policy Unit	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Community Planning & Development	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Corporate Services	**14** 30%	**10** 22%	**22** 48%	46	**14** 37%	**5** 13%	**19** 50%	38
Financial Services	1 50%	0 0%	1 50%	2	1 25%	0 0%	3 75%	4
Human Resources and ICT	0 0%	0 0%	1 0%	0	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Legal and Democratic Services	13 30%	10 23%	20 47%	43	13 38%	5 15%	16 47%	34
Environmental Services	**123** 31%	**23** 6%	**252** 63%	398	**190** 41%	**59** 13%	**219** 47%	468
Development Services	0 0%	5 36%	9 64%	14	0 0%	2 22%	7 78%	9
Direct Services	61 24%	4 2%	186 74%	251	98 33%	42 14%	158 53%	298
Housing and Property	62 47%	14 11%	57 43%	133	92 57%	15 9%	54 34%	161
Education and Social Care	**12** 32%	**6** 16%	**20** 53%	38	**17** 24%	**14** 19%	**41** 57%	72
Community Care	3 17%	5 28%	10 56%	18	3 15%	10 50%	7 35%	20
Integrated Children's Services	0 0%	0 0%	4 100%	4	7 37%	1 5%	11 58%	19
Lifelong Learning, Culture and Sport	2 50%	0 0%	2 50%	4	1 13%	1 13%	6 75%	8
Schools and Curriculum Development	7 58%	1 8%	4 33%	12	6 24%	2 8%	17 68%	25

Figure 20: Stage one – % of Complaints Upheld, Partially Upheld, and Not Upheld (2014-15 through to 2019-20)
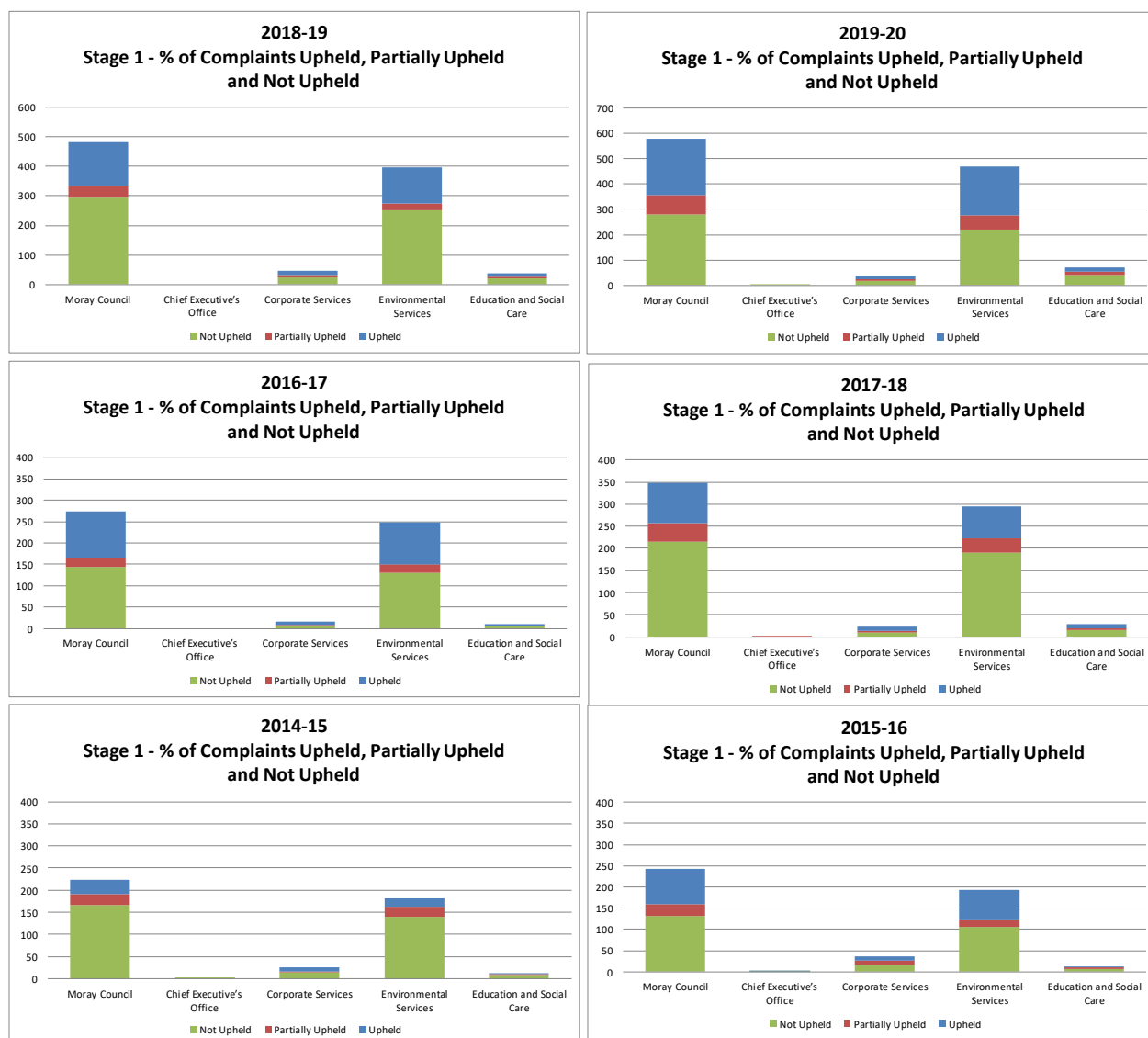
Table C: Indicator 3 by service – The number of complaints upheld/partially upheld/not upheld at each stage as a percentage of complaints closed in full at stage two (including escalated complaints)

Indicator 3 by service – Stage 2 (including escalated)	2018-19				2019-20			
	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Total	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Total
All Council	**20** 17%	**30** 26%	**65** 57%	115	**46** 17%	**76** 28%	**146** 54%	268
Chief Executive's Office	**0** 0%	**0** 0%	**0** 0%	0	**0** 0%	**1** 50%	**1** 50%	2
Chief Executive's Section	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	0 0%	1 50%	1 50%	2
Corporate Policy Unit	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Community Planning & Development	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Corporate Services	**1** 17%	**0** 0%	**5** 83%	6	**4** 25%	**3** 19%	**9** 56%	16
Financial Services	0 0%	0 0%	2 100%	2	1 33%	0 0%	2 67%	3
Human Resources and ICT	0 0%	0 0%	2 100%	2	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Legal and Democratic Services	1 50%	0 0%	1 50%	2	3 23%	3 23%	7 54%	13
Environmental Services	**6** 11%	**14** 26%	**33** 62%	53	**29** 18%	**43** 27%	**85** 54%	157
Development Services	0 0%	3 33%	6 67%	9	3 9%	13 38%	18 53%	34
Direct Services	0 0%	0 0%	5 100%	5	2 10%	5 25%	13 65%	20
Housing and Property	6 15%	11 28%	22 56%	39	24 23%	25 24%	54 52%	103
Education and Social Care	**13** 23%	**16** 29%	**27** 48%	56	**13** 14%	**29** 31%	**51** 55%	93
Community Care	0 0%	6 67%	3 33%	9	3 38%	0 0%	5 63%	8
Integrated Children's Services	10 37%	7 26%	10 37%	27	6 17%	12 33%	18 50%	36
Lifelong Learning, Culture and Sport	2 50%	0 0%	2 50%	4	1 50%	0 0%	1 50%	2
Schools and Curriculum Development	1 6%	3 19%	12 75%	16	3 6%	17 36%	27 57%	47

Figure 21: Stage two – % of Complaints Upheld, Partially Upheld, and Not Upheld (2014-15 through to 2019-20)

2018-19
Stage 2 - % of Complaints Upheld, Partially Upheld and Not Upheld

2019-20
Stage 2 - % of Complaints Upheld, Partially Upheld and Not Upheld

2016-17
Stage 2 - % of Complaints Upheld, Partially Upheld and Not Upheld

2017-18
Stage 2 - % of Complaints Upheld, Partially Upheld and Not Upheld

2014-15
Stage 2 - % of Complaints Upheld, Partially Upheld and Not Upheld

2015-16
Stage 2 - % of Complaints Upheld, Partially Upheld and Not Upheld
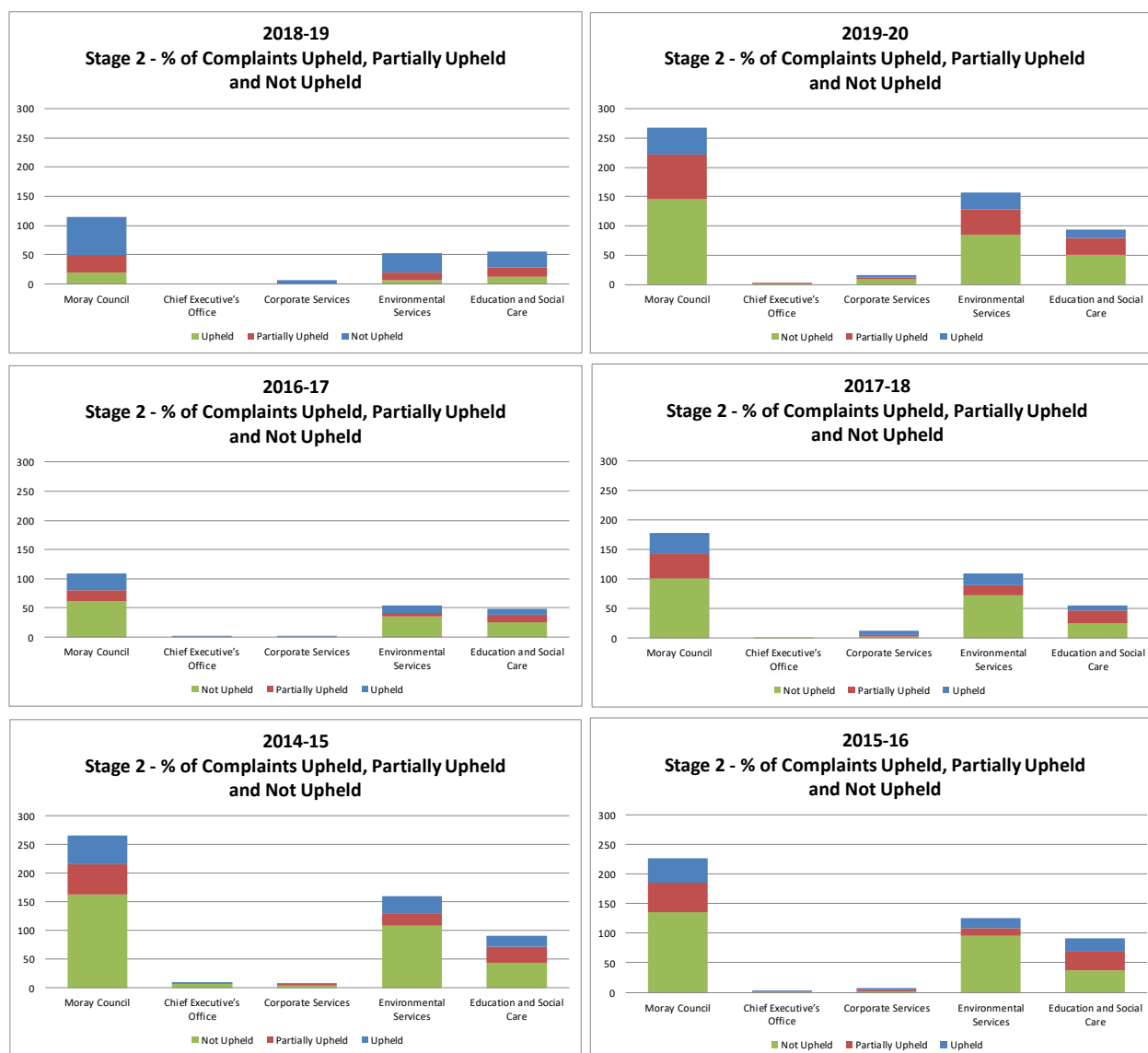
Table D: Indicator 4 by service – The average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage

Indicator 4 by service	2018-19			2019-20		
	Stage 1 – Front line Resolution	Stage 2 – Investigation	Stage 2 – Escalated Investigation	Stage 1 – Front line Resolution	Stage 2 – Investigation	Stage 2 – Escalated Investigation
Target timescales (number of working days)	**5**	**20**	**20**	**5**	**20**	**20**
All Council	**4.8**	**22.2**	**21.5**	**5.5**	**22.9**	**29.1**
Chief Executive's Office	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**2.0**	**5.0**	**n/a**
Chief Executive's Section	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.0	5.0	n/a
Corporate Policy Unit	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Community Planning & Development	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Corporate Services	**4.5**	**18.2**	**n/a**	**5.2**	**18.3**	**81.0**
Financial Services	1.5	20.0	n/a	5.0	13.0	n/a
Human Resources and ICT	1.0	13.5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Legal and Democratic Services	4.7	21.0	n/a	5.3	20.0	81.0
Environmental Services	**4.6**	**19.0**	**19.1**	**5.0**	**22.1**	**26.0**
Development Services	5.9	22.8	20.0	11.4	23.4	n/a
Direct Services	4.5	14.3	22.0	4.9	20.6	25.5
Housing and Property	4.7	18.3	18.6	4.7	21.9	26.1
Education and Social Care	**6.7**	**24.7**	**43.0**	**9.1**	**25.2**	**17.0**
Community Care	9.8	26.0	34.0	12.0	38.0	n/a
Integrated Children's Services	4.8	26.6	52.0	14.3	22.1	13.0
Lifelong Learning, Culture and Sport	3.3	20.8	n/a	3.9	17.0	n/a
Schools and Curriculum Development	3.9	22.0	n/a	4.6	25.2	21.0

Figure 22: Average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage (2014-15 through to 2019-20)

2018-19
Average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage

Stage 1 - Frontline ■ Stage 2 - Investigation ■ Stage 2 - Escalation ■

2019-20
Average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage

Stage 1 - Frontline ■ Stage 2 - Investigation ■ Stage 2 - Escalation ■

2016-17
Average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage

Stage 1 - Frontline ■ Stage 2 - Investigation ■ Stage 2 - Escalation ■

2017-18
Average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage

Stage 1 - Frontline ■ Stage 2 - Investigation ■ Stage 2 - Escalation ■

2014-15
Average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage

Stage 1 - Frontline ■ Stage 2 - Investigation ■ Stage 2 - Escalation ■

2015-16
Average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage

Stage 1 - Frontline ■ Stage 2 - Investigation ■ Stage 2 - Escalation ■

Table E: Average Time in working days to respond to complaints at each stage

Average Time in working days to respond to complaints at each stage	2018-19			2019-20		
	No. of complaints	Total time (workdays)	Average time (workdays)	No. of complaints	Total time (workdays)	Average time (workdays)
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage one	482	3185	6.6	579	3185	5.5
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage two	95	3067	32.3	134	3067	22.9
Average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation	20	349	17.5	12	349	29.1

Table F: Indicator 5 by service – The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of five and 20 working days

Indicator 5 by service (Refer to Table A for Totals)	2018-19			2019-20		
	Stage 1 – Front line Resolution	Stage 2 – Investigation	Stage 2 – Escalated Investigation	Stage 1 – Front line Resolution	Stage 2 – Investigation	Stage 2 – Escalated Investigation
Target timescales (number of working days)	**5**	**20**	**20**	**5**	**20**	**20**
All Council	**372** 64%	**50** 38%	**9** 75%	**410** 71%	**71** 53%	**6** 50%
Chief Executive's Office	**0** 0%	**0** n/a	**0** n/a	**1** 100%	**1** 100%	**0** n/a
Chief Executive's Section	0 0%	0 n/a	0 n/a	1 100%	1 100%	0 n/a
Corporate Policy Unit	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a
Community Planning & Development	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a
Corporate Services	**34** 89%	**3** 38%	**0** 0%	**23** 61%	**4** 50%	**0** 0%
Financial Services	2 50%	1 50%	0 n/a	1 25%	2 100%	0 n/a
Human Resources and ICT	1 n/a	1 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a
Legal and Democratic Services	31 91%	1 17%	0 0%	22 65%	2 33%	0 0%
Environmental Services	**317** 68%	**23** 30%	**9** 100%	**344** 74%	**43** 57%	**5** 56%
Development Services	11 122%	5 28%	1 n/a	4 44%	8 44%	0 n/a
Direct Services	202 68%	2 18%	0 0%	214 72%	6 55%	1 50%
Housing and Property	104 65%	16 34%	8 114%	126 78%	29 62%	4 57%
Education and Social Care	**21** 29%	**24** 49%	**0** 0%	**42** 58%	**23** 47%	**1** 50%
Community Care	4 20%	3 60%	0 n/a	6 30%	2 40%	0 n/a
Integrated Children's Services	3 16%	10 59%	0 0%	9 47%	7 41%	1 100%
Lifelong Learning, Culture and Sport	4 50%	2 200%	0 n/a	7 88%	1 100%	0 n/a
Schools and Curriculum Development	10 40%	9 35%	0 0%	20 80%	13 50%	0 0%

Table G: Overdue complaints with formal extensions or holding letters issued

Overdue complaints that have holding letters issued, or been granted a formal extension – by service (Refer to Table A for totals)	2018-19			2019-20		
	Stage 1 – Frontline Resolution	Stage 2 - Investigation	Stage 2 - Escalated Investigation	Stage 1 – Frontline Resolution	Stage 2 - Investigation	Stage 2 - Escalated Investigation
Total number of complaints investigated	482	95	20	579	134	12
Total number of late responses	111	45	11	158	62	6
All Council	**24** 22%	**4** 9%	**5** 45%	**52** 33%	**27** 44%	**4** 67%
Chief Executive's Office	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a
Chief Executive's Section	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a
Corporate Policy Unit	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a
Community, Planning & Development	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a
Corporate Services	- n/a	**0** 0%	- n/a	**2** n/a	**0** 0%	**0** n/a
Financial Services	- n/a	0 0%	- n/a	1 33%	0 n/a	- n/a
Human Resources and ICT	- n/a	0% 0%	- n/a	- n/a	0 0%	- n/a
Legal and Democratic Services	- n/a	0 0%	- n/a	1 8%	0 0%	- n/a
Environmental Services	**1** 2%	**2** 16.7%	**4** 44%	**46** 40%	**17** 52%	**4** 100%
Development Services	1 25%	1 33%	- n/a	1 20%	2 20%	- n/a
Direct Services	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	17 23%	3 60%	1 100%
Housing and Property	0 0%	1 12.5%	4 57%	28 82%	12 67%	3 100%
Education and Social Care	**23** 58%	**2** 7%	**1** 50%	**4** 14%	**10** 40%	**0** 0%
Community Care	23 62%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	- n/a
Integrated Children's Services	0 0	2 13%	1 100%	0 0%	2 20%	- n/a
Lifelong Learning, Culture and Sport	- n/a	0 0	- n/a	0 0%	0 100%	- n/a
Schools and Curriculum Development	0 0%	0 0%	- n/a	4 80%	8 67%	- n/a

Note: N/A indicates that a service had no overdue complaints at that particular stage

Table H: Percentage of complaints by department (2014-15 to 2019-20)

Given the types of service provided by each department, it is not surprising that the proportion of complaints dealt with by each department in 2019-20 is broadly similar to previous years. Environmental Services has the most direct contact with users of council services and receives the lion's share of complaints.

Figure 23: Percentage of complaints by department (2014-15 to 2019-20)
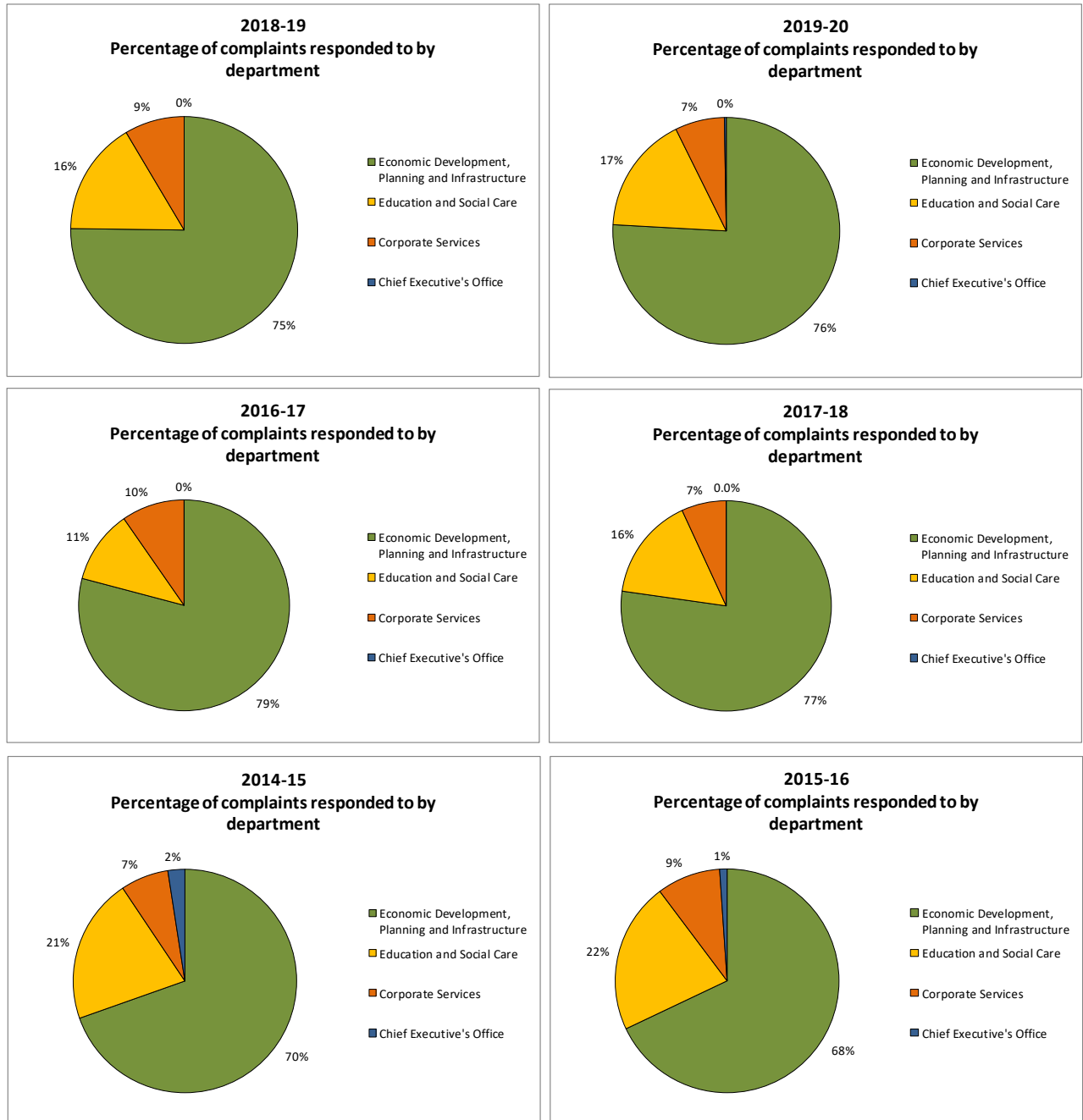
REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL
                     DEVELOPMENT MEETING 26 MAY 2021

SUBJECT: CORPORATE RISK REGISTER UPDATE

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION COMMUNITIES AND
                     ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   To provide the Council with the latest copy of the Corporate Risk Register for review and comment.

1.2   This report is submitted to Council in terms of Paragraph III (B) (38) of the council's Scheme of Administration relating to risk management.

2.   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   The Committee is asked to consider and approve the updated Corporate Risk Register dated May 2021.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   A key element of good governance practice is the effective management of risk and, at six monthly intervals, the Corporate Management Team and Senior Management Team formally reviews and updates the Corporate Risk Register.

3.2   The register was last reviewed by the Policy and Resources Committee on 12 February 2019. It was not reviewed in 2020 due to limited staff resource and re-prioritisation due to the pandemic response.

3.3   The Register describes the principal risks facing the council under nine generic categories. An additional category "Economic Recovery" has been added to the register for this year. For each category there is
- a description of the risk
- a risk rating based on an assessment of the likelihood of its occurrence and its potential impact
- supporting information on risk appetite
- details of controls in place detailing how each risk is currently being managed
- details of mitigating actions

3.4   The updating exercise provides senior management with the opportunity to reflect on the risks facing the organisation and how they are being managed. It also allows consideration to be given to whether existing measures to mitigate risks have either fulfilled their purpose and can be deleted; remain current and are being applied as intended, or alternatively constitute new mitigation measures to be applied going forward.

3.5   The completed risk register evidences progress made in managing risks and is attached for consideration by elected members as **Appendix 1**.

3.6   The Council's response to the pandemic is a theme which runs through the nine risk categories. A number of the risks are rated at the highest level and are considered likely to remain so going forward, although all risks highlighted will require the ongoing attention of both elected members and management. It should be noted that the purpose of the review process is to manage risk to a tolerable level, and be recognised that risk mitigation measures will not eliminate risks completely in many cases.

Political Risks: The risk level has been reduced given successful cross party working in a number of areas including budget, but remains in the highest level given the delicate balance of minority administration.

Financial risks: The risk level has been reduced given the Council has managed to achieve savings and to balance its budget for financial year 2021/22. It still remains at the highest level given there remains a substantial risk around the budget gap for future years.

HR/Staffing risks: The risk level has been reduced as recruitment issues, especially relating to teaching posts and workforce changes relating to the financial a position have eased. Staffing risks still remain high with the challenges of new ways of working as we emerge from the pandemic, the impact of planned staffing reductions and continuing recruitment challenges in certain areas.

Regulatory risks: The risk level has remained constant. The council must comply with a myriad of regulations and endeavour to continue to do so across all services. The statutory duties of setting a balanced budget and continuing to provide best value services means that corporately the risk of non-compliance remains high.

Environmental risks: The risk level has been increased largely due to the challenge of meeting tougher climate change targets. The risk remains high due to planned reductions in council resourcing of areas such as street sweeping, maintenance of parks and open spaces, and roads and winter maintenance, all of which will impact on environmental amenity.

Reputational risks: These remain very high given the external focus on Best Value and the Council's challenge to deliver on a number of performance targets as well as the continuing need to reduce, stop or increase charges for services.

Operational Continuity and Performance risks: This risk is particularly relevant to the Council's pandemic response. It is positive that critical services were maintained for vulnerable citizens however there has been slippage in service plan activity and service performance. There are challenges for the future in re-gaining ground and re-designing services.

Technological risks: The risk has been increased to the highest level due to the unprecedented challenges of moving the workforce into remote working and the increasing threats posed by cyber-attacks.

Economic Recovery risks: This new risk has been included to cover the likely challenges for the Council in case of a wider economic downturn as a result of the pandemic and the impact of Brexit. The risk has been assessed as high.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

    (a) **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**
        Effective risk management practices are necessary to evidence how the Council identifies and seeks to address any issues that may impact on its ability to deliver its stated priorities and plans.

    (b) **Policy and Legal**
        Effective risk management practice is an essential component of good governance.

    (c) **Financial implications**
        The risk register recognises the financial challenges facing the council and the importance of addressing these. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

    (d) **Risk Implications**
        Risk and its management is the subject of this report.

    (e) **Staffing Implications**
        No direct implications.

    (f) **Property**
        No direct implications.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
No direct implications

(h) Consultations
The Corporate Management Team and Senior Management Team have participated in the development of the Corporate Risk Register.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Following its review and updating by the Corporate and Senior Management Teams, the Committee is asked to consider and approve the latest Corporate Risk Register dated May 2021.

Author of Report: Atholl Scott, Audit Manager
Background Papers:
Ref: SPMAN-2045703626-63

MORAY COUNCIL CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

AS AT MAY 2021

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL RISKS		
Nature of Risk	**Main issues**	**Risk Score**
1. **Political**	Political differences detract from focus on priority matters; decision making processes are strained and ineffective; partnership working is not optimised relying too heavily on council inputs.	**20**
2. **Financial**	Demand for services outstrips available budget. Council is unable to make savings or generate income that meets expectations of government, citizens or regulators.	**16**
3. **HR (Staffing)**	Inability to recruit and retain well qualified or experienced staff, staff workloads are unsustainable. Additional pressures associated with pandemic results in increased absenteeism and reduced staff morale.	**16**
4. **Regulatory**	Expected governance standards are unmet. Statutory or regulatory breaches occur. Council is subject to censure.	**16**
5. **Environmental**	Impact of climate change including severe weather events.	**16**
6. **Reputational**	Council decisions result in litigation/judicial review; expectations from external inspections and of service users are not met; performance targets set at levels not commensurate with capacity to deliver.	**15**
7. **Operational Continuity and Performance**	Council performance falls below acceptable level for sustained period; impacts of the pandemic and the need to focus on priorities; transformational change impacts on service delivery.	**12**
8. **IT (Technological)**	Major disruption in continuity of ICT operations; new ways of working create added pressures for ICT staff; data security is compromised.	**20**
9. **Economic Recovery**	Risk of prolonged economic downturn following the pandemic and withdrawal from European Union. Macro-economic conditions may affect local area investment and growth potential.	**16**

RISK CLASSIFICATION

RISK RATING	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	VERY HIGH
RISK MOVEMENT	DECREASE	NO CHANGE	INCREASE	

The process for managing risk is documented separately in the council's risk policy, strategy and guidance notes. The risk rating is calculated by reference to assessed likelihood and impact (on a scale of 1 to 5) for each identified risk. The minimum score (lowest risk) being 1x1=1, the maximum (highest risk) 5x5 =25. Scores of 3 and below are ranked low, green; between 4 and 6 medium, yellow; between 8 and 12 high, amber; and 15 and above very high, red, as per the table below.

LIKELIHOOD

		1 Minimal	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Catastrophic
Almost certain	5	5	10	15	20	25
Likely	4	4	8	12	16	20
Possible	3	3	6	9	12	15
Unlikely	2	2	4	6	8	10
Remote	1	1	2	3	4	5

IMPACT

1.

Description of Risk: *Political:* Political priorities are not achieved; decision making processes are ineffective; partnership working is not optimised. Addressing this risk is central to the future provision of public services in Moray. While wider external political influences will continue to shape the future direction of the council in terms of its ability deliver services either on its own or in partnership with others, the Aug 2020 Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) highlighted the challenges arising from the political balance. In Sept 2020 a decision by Council resulted in the present Administration continuing but there is a high risk of political differences that may impact on the effectiveness of decision-making in the lead up to the local government elections and beyond. This has the potential to impact on the council's ability to secure effective continuity of leadership and respond positively to the recommendations in the BVAR. However, even in this environment, the Council has taken forward challenging areas such as the Learning Estate Strategy and has now set a number of budgets through successful cross party working. Covid-19 has also created a need for agile decision making, ensuring that the council can respond both quickly and efficiently. Accordingly the likelihood score has dropped from 5 to 4.

Lead: Council Administration / Chief Executive / Corporate Management Team

Risk Rating: low/medium/high/very high	**Rationale for Risk Rating:**
VERY HIGH **Likelihood 4 x Impact 5 = Score 20**	The likelihood is assessed at a high level given that it is likely the council will continue to operate in a political environment with a minority administration. This will have consequential impacts when considering service reduction and redesign arising from changing political emphasis on issues such as poverty, climate and education. It also increases decision making time through increased political preparatory work, which impacts on pace of change. The impact of the pandemic has rightly focused attention on immediate priorities; as a consequence plans to transform services in a manner which is sustainable and acceptable to the various political interests both internal and external to the council are expected to take longer and may be more difficult to achieve
Risk Movement: increase/decrease/no change	**Risk Appetite:**
DECREASE from 25 to 20	There remains an appetite for the council to be successful in delivering best value services for its citizens against a challenging background of increasing demand and diminishing resources and a need to identify service priorities. Political stability will be key to ensuring progress is made towards addressing the recommendations made in the recent BVAR with the follow up audit likely to take place around the time of the local government elections.
Controls:	**Current and Proposed Mitigating Actions:**

Ten year strategic plan Moray 2027 (the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan) approved to be delivered jointly by the council and its community planning partners. Council Corporate Plan approved in March 2020 Plans emphasise prevention and resilience to reduce partner interventions and aid securing of sustainable outcomes. Suite of Governance Documents in place and regularly updated. Elected members fully briefed and aware of political uncertainties Engagement at councillor and officer level with government, COSLA and audit bodies re political challenges facing the council Moray Economic Strategy 2019-2029 published setting out ambitions for the wider Moray community and business Establishment of political group leaders' regular meetings to discuss areas of risk and determine areas of consensus and disagreement, principally on budget issues. BVAR response plan approved	Corporate Management Team/Senior Management Team will continue to provide support and advice to elected members on sustainability of any proposals for change. Monitoring officer to continue statutory role of ensuring legality of decision making processes. Specific resourcing of projects and priorities to provide and advance clear plans to deliver objectives over time
Current performance: The framework for political governance has been affirmed and supports the Council's administration in the development and implementation of its stated priorities. However circumstances make it more challenging to deliver at pace on a sustained basis.	**Comments:** Political risks can be mitigated to some extent by structures and processes that regulate the workings of the council and these continue to be developed. However, risks are likely to remain high in the current economic climate and while uncertainty and fine political balance remains.

2.

Description of Risk: *Financial:* There is a risk of financial failure with demand outstripping available budget. Savings require to be made although the position has significantly improved with a more positive position on general reserves and a lower savings target to be achieved than in previous years. This risk has been actively managed to provide significant savings to improve the situation and work is ongoing through a transformation programme to deliver different models of service delivery and manage demand in future. This has the potential to impact on all sectors of the community. The council is constrained in its ability to generate funding through local taxation and has limited options to ensure it continues to meet statutory obligations and that service delivery is aligned with available funding. Uncertainty makes planning more difficult and the impact of external factors including the pandemic and withdrawal from the European Union is unclear. There is also an impact on services the council delivers jointly with partners as described in the LOIP ten year plan, particularly the need potentially to part funding of IJB overspends, and although Growth Deal funding has been secured, maintaining adequate funding for core services remains a significant risk.

Lead: Corporate Management Team/ Senior Management Team/ Chief Financial Officer (Section 95 Officer)

Risk Rating: low/medium/high/very high	**Rationale for Risk Rating:**
VERY HIGH **Likelihood 4 x Impact 4 = score 16**	Continuing budget pressures affecting the council and the wider public sector. Financial plan recognises the need for budget savings and further development of the medium to long term financial plan is underway. The Council has consistently delivered significant savings which in recent years have been agreed by the council in advance of the date when the budget must be set. Council financial reserves are in an improved position and no longer close to minimum 'safe' levels hence reduction is risk likelihood from 5 to 4.
Risk Movement: increase/decrease/no change	**Risk Appetite:**
DECREASE from 20 to 16	The council has no risk appetite for financial failure given its statutory requirement to manage its resources in a responsible and prudent manner and to continue to deliver statutory services. However it also recognises, as a consequence of financial constraints, that services have been curtailed in certain areas resulting in a diminution of performance. Expectations of service users will require to be managed. There is also a recognition that public finances generally are constrained, although there has been a more positive recent settlement and the council's reserve position has improved to provide a degree of contingency; and that in this regard, Moray Council is facing the same risks as others across the UK.

Controls:	Current and Proposed Mitigating Actions:
Financial plan in place with budget projections in place for current and next two financial years. Financial pressures identified. Medium and longer term financial strategy developed. Regular budget monitoring reports (on capital and revenue)presented to council Financial regulations in place and regularly reviewed. Property Asset Management Plan established, including Capital Strategy Treasury Management strategy. Procurement Policies and Practice Energy Monitoring. Internal and External Auditing Plans in place for participatory budgeting	Work to develop medium and long term financial plans continuing. Lobbying Scottish Government and COSLA regarding funding allocations Work of the 'Transforming the Council' and Programme Boards including the BVAR and the Improvement and Modernisation Programme to inform further change. Monitoring of Covid-19 associated costs, offset by central grants. Asset base requires sustainable rationalisation and learning estate strategy now agreed by council Moray Growth Deal type inward investment secured albeit progress slowed as a consequence of the pandemic More Community Engagement/Public Consultations. . Potential for redesign of services. Annual pricing review on charges for services.
Current performance: Despite the additional demands on staff during the Covid-19 response a balanced budget for 2021/22 has been achieved and, given lower than planned expenditure on service costs, the council has seen its free reserves increase slightly at year end.	**Comments:** Financial risk is likely to remain high for the foreseeable notwithstanding controls in place and planned mitigating actions.

3.

Description of Risk: *Human Resources (People):* Effect of planned staffing reductions on services, both on staff directly affected and on workloads of staff in teams where staff numbers are reduced. Capacity of smaller teams to deal with business as usual and additional Covid-19 demands. Although the Council has responded well during the pandemic both in continuing normal service delivery and establishing new response based services, the pandemic has created an entirely new working environment with many employees now working from home and teachers moving to provide online learning, a situation that may impact on employees' ability to carry out their roles effectively, as well as having the potential to impact on staff mental health and morale in both the short to medium term.

Inability to recruit and retain well qualified or experienced staff, staff unprepared for change, lack of staff engagement, inadequate health and safety arrangements. With staff the council's most important resource, there is a need to ensure employees are equipped to embrace change and deliver services in different and innovative ways that as far as possible are sustainable at a time when resources are reducing.   There is a particular impact on schools arising from the teacher shortage in certain subject areas and challenges recruiting head teachers, although this has improved. Shortages in key areas can affect attainment and inspection outcomes are impacted when there is no consistent leadership over time in a school. Recruitment can also be challenging for specialist and experienced staff which can have a consequential impact on service delivery. This is currently an issue with some specific professional areas such as Engineering and for senior management posts, but is not as prevalent across professional posts as it was, accordingly risk likelihood has been reduced from 4o to 3). Consequential pressures will apply in HR.

Lead: Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and OD); Head of HR, ICT and OD.

Risk Rating: low/medium/high/very high	**Rationale for Risk Rating:**
VERY HIGH **Likelihood 4 x Impact 4 = Score 16**	Reduced ability of smaller teams to deal with competing and complex demands exacerbated by additional Covid-19 demands; Reduced ability of smaller teams to forward plan across a wider Council agenda and be ready with a strategic response. Difficult to recruit in certain specialist areas including certain subject teachers; vehicle technicians, specialist professional posts and senior management. Staff turnover leads to loss of expertise and 'corporate memory' but workforce planning is used to offset this, especially for key roles. Inability to meet service demands and secure continuous improvement. Staff morale and productivity is adversely affected as a consequence of the pandemic.

Risk Movement: increase/decrease/no change	Risk Appetite:
DECREASE from 20 to 16	Employees are the council's most important resource and a skilled and motivated workforce is essential for the delivery of council services. During the pandemic a degree of negative impact on staff has had to be tolerated as a result of the change to homeworking which contributed to stress or isolation for some as they adapted. It is recognised that the challenge to recruit staff to certain specialist jobs remains with particular impacts around senior management posts and on leadership capacity. Council pay and grading policies limit incentives that may aid in the filling of vacancies. Inability to attract suitable staff in sufficient numbers creates risks including but not limited to staff morale, poor service quality, inability to secure best value, and censure by regulators.
Controls: Corporate Workforce Plan, (reviewed and updated annually) in place Leadership Development Programme established Moray Management Methods promote consistency Employee Review and Development Programmes in place for teaching and non - teaching staff Reduced scope of HR activity reported to Policy and Resources Committee Employee Communications & Engagement Framework (including Interchange) Workforce Culture Group Health and Work Policy Health and Safety Policies and Annual Report. Absence Management Policy Working from Home Policy	Current and Proposed Mitigating Actions: Ensure senior management capacity revised following external review is sustainable and is sufficient to deliver the transformational change programme required to secure financial stability, in addition to 'business as usual'. Annual Review of Workforce Strategy and Plan and activity to address the main themes of health and wellbeing, leadership capacity, employee engagement and workforce development to ensure organisational capacity for the future. Activity to address specific recruitment and retention issues. Managing vacancies with regard to available skills Continue to review and develop the leadership development strategy and associated activity. Continue to develop modular training opportunities for staff Ongoing promotion of health and safety risk assessments, including for COVID, and of zero tolerance approach to safety breaches. Development of Safety Management Systems. Review and rationalisation of property assets estate – fewer schools would enable improved deployment of teaching resources

Current performance: The promotion of key staffing policies as described above has strengthened staff engagement and support in recent years; however, workload pressures as identified in the staff survey and highlighted in the BVAR may impact on staff morale going forward. In addition, the switch to home working for many of the staff will be creating its own challenges. Most recently a number of key posts have been approved for recruitment, including project managers within Children's Services.	Comments: This risk is being actively managed but may be impacted upon further should staffing arrangements or levels be subject to change in the incoming period.

4.

Description of Risk: *Regulatory:* Expected governance standards are unmet. Council is subject to censure.
The council is heavily regulated by statute, by national guidance and through local policy and procedures and, within its systems, has established checks and balances to support delivery of intended outcomes. Nevertheless in the current climate there is a risk that senior staff are diverted from their day to day responsibilities increasing the possibility that regulatory requirements are unmet, with attendant legal and financial implications and increasing the possibility that the council is unable to sustain delivery of best value services.

Lead: Corporate Management Team/ Chief Financial Officer/ Monitoring Officer/ Heads of Service

Risk Rating: low/medium/high/very high	**Rationale for Risk Rating:**
VERY HIGH **Likelihood 4 x Impact 4 = Score 16**	Governance arrangements have been developed over many years. Systems and processes are subject to on-going review and development within services Corporate support and review in relation to performance, audit, and inspection. Change increases the risk of system breakdown and non- compliance with regulatory requirements.
Risk Movement: increase/decrease/no change	**Risk Appetite:**
NO CHANGE	The council has zero appetite for regulatory failure and takes seriously its responsibility for effective management of resources and delivery of services. A robust approach is taken to securing governance arrangements which includes suitable systems of internal control.
Controls: Governance statement prepared annually in line with best practice guidance. Monitoring officer oversees governance processes. Constitutional documents available to direct good governance. Performance management framework developed. External scrutiny and inspection programme Internal and external audit arrangements	**Current and Proposed Mitigating Actions:** Governance oversight by Corporate Management Team, Monitoring Officer and audit bodies, in accordance with agreed plans where applicable. Introduction of a simplified committee structure as well as delegated decision making powers to the Chief Executive during the pandemic. Develop remit of scrutiny function to be fulfilled by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee Pro-active management response to issues raised in inspection reports. Consider governance implications of proposed changes to service delivery arrangements e.g. use of Arm's Length External Organisations.

	Continued active participation in delivery of joint services with statutory and other partners as appropriate.
Current performance: The council considers its current governance arrangements to be fit for purpose however ownership of these arrangements specifically around the development of the annual governance statement needs to be strengthened. The current simplified committee structure and delegation of decision making powers to the Chief Executive has allowed the council to be more agile and reactive during the pandemic.	**Comments:** The public sector is highly regulated with legislation and best practice guidance adopted both corporately and within services to ensure openness and accountability for the use of public funds. Established practices are likely to be challenged by change and by expectations of service users

5.

Description of Risk: *Environmental:* Ability of the Council to respond to climate change emergency, to keep up with the pace of changing carbon reduction, waste and environmental targets. Impact of climate change and severe weather events; ability to deal with unforeseen emergencies is compromised by inadequate resilience. The council continues to invest in projects to address climate change issues, to manage energy use and ensure the council is well placed to respond to crisis situations in conjunction with the emergency services and other partners. A reducing workforce in Direct Services has an impact on the council's ability to respond to emergency environmental situations in future.

Risk Rating: low/medium/high/very high	**Rationale for Risk Rating:**
HIGH **Likelihood 4 x Impact 4 = Score 16**	This risk has been increased (likelihood and impact from 3 to 4) due to targets being set by Government and by the Council in relation to the Climate Emergency. Local flood risk management plans approved for Findhorn, Nairn, and Speyside and North East Areas. Moray Development Plan considers climate change issues.
Risk Movement: increase/decrease/no change	**Risk Appetite:**
INCREASE from 9 to 16	Proportionality is reflected in risk appetite such that the development and application of preventative measures mitigates risks to pre-determined and agreed levels recognising it is neither feasible nor affordable to wholly eliminate every environmental risk that may be faced.
Controls: Local flood risk management plans prepared and approved. Non statutory flood schemes being progressed Council part of North of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership Energy from waste plant being developed with neighbouring North East councils to replace landfill site. Recycling awareness promoted and high rates achieved. Street light replacement programme completed to reduce carbon emissions and energy costs Emergency response co-ordinators and support staff identified and trained Council coordination centre established and operational; crisis communications secured	**Current and Proposed Mitigating Actions:** Update flood risk register as works progress Provide update reports to Council committees on progress Continued liaison with other agencies Continue programme of exercises to test resilience / adequacy of responses to incidents Sustainable transport options under consideration. Introduction of Climate Change Strategy 2020 – 2030. External contractors engaged to support e.g. winter maintenance during extreme weather events.
Current performance: Existing controls and mitigating actions seek to maintain and enhance Moray's reputation as a thriving area and a great place to live.	**Comments:** The council recognises its role in promoting policies and applying regulations which contribute to a

	sustainable environment and the recently approved Climate Change Strategy will further strengthen this commitment.

6.

Description of Risk: *Reputational:* Not meeting performance targets (e.g. attainment - complexity of solutions and number of influencing factors as well as small resource); Not delivering on key projects within IMP, growth deal, over spending or failing on a school build; failure on Best Value delivery plan,: Major adult or child protection failure: Missing a major policy direction or funding opportunity because resources are so tight.

The council provides services to all sectors of the community and while committed to high service standards, the diversity of service provision and the expectations of the public may increase the risk that the council's reputation could be called into question. This risk generally is considered to be managed through performance management, organisational development, the application of codes of conduct, complaints procedures and similar, however any reduction in services to any individual or group of individuals may justly or otherwise impact on the Council's reputation.

Lead: Corporate Management Team/ Heads of Service/Chief Financial Officer

Risk Rating: low/medium/high/very high	**Rationale for Risk Rating:**
VERY HIGH **Likelihood 5 x Impact 3 = Score 15**	The risk rating has regard to established systems, procedures and controls designed to prevent adverse reputational damage, recognising that at a time of service reduction and curtailment with limited consultation there is a higher possibility of increased criticism of council services, and the council will be subject to increased scrutiny and inspection during the year across a number of service areas.
Risk Movement: increase/decrease/no change	**Risk Appetite:**
NO CHANGE	The council is committed to continuous improvement in the delivery of services either on its own or with partners. It seeks to deliver these services having regard to its equality duty and has set targets for doing so through a customer charter. However it is accepted that increased reputational damage is a potential consequence of service reduction or cessation.
Controls: A suite of policy, strategy governance organisational development, project management and performance management measures in place to enable delivery of the services to a standard which mitigates the risk of significant damage to the council's reputation. Consultation protocols established and range of consultation and engagement with public and workforce carried out over period of time	**Current and Proposed Mitigating Actions:** Ongoing review, redesign and implementation of policy, strategy governance, organisational development, project management and performance management. Develop support for improvement across the three key themes of • Resources; • Finances; and • Attainment.

Customer charter in place and customer focus strategy developed to improve citizen engagements and provide a consistent experience across services Formal complaints procedures in place Performance management reporting framework updated Corporate Management Team monitors external inspection processes and outcomes. Freedom of Information processes	Regular meetings with officers and inspection agencies to support and challenge progress towards improvement. Risks to be fully considered in committee reports requiring a decision. Effectiveness of customer focus strategy to be monitored Means of communicating changes impacting service users to be closely monitored Improved outcome reporting of service delivery and linked performance indicator measures
Current performance: The council has received a critical BVAR inspection report although in large measure reputational damage has been avoided given the current commitment shown by members and officers to ensuring continuity of key services during the pandemic It is unlikely the risk of reputational damage can ever be fully eliminated given the breadth of services the council provides, nonetheless, the council takes its obligation to mitigate risk through establishment and application of controls detailed above.	**Comments:** A range of measures are in place to regulate how the council interacts with citizens and to address any issues where recipients of services are dissatisfied with outcomes.

7.	

Description of Risk: *Operational Continuity and Performance:* The council is unable to deliver services or performance falls below acceptable levels for a sustained period; insufficient business continuity planning; changes in working practices impact on service delivery. This risk has particular significance during the pandemic and it is encouraging that the council has been able to respond in a manner such that delivery of critical services have been maintained, particularly for vulnerable service users who are dependent on the timely delivery of many council services.. Equally, going forward post COVID it is recognised that operational continuity and performance may be affected as a consequence of service re-design and changes in service delivery in areas such as Customer Contract, and there is a need to carefully align resources available to service delivery standards in areas where services are being reduced.

Lead: Corporate Management Team/ Heads of Service

Risk Rating: low/medium/high/very high	**Rationale for Risk Rating:**
HIGH **Likelihood 3 x Impact 4 =12**	There are three strands to this risk; firstly, the need to ensure that business continuity arrangements remain fit for purpose, in particular for service areas deemed critical; secondly, to ensure that operational continuity and performance standards are reviewed and refined during COVID recovery to reflect short term and longer term changes in service delivery; and thirdly, that we capitalise on improvements learned during the COVID response such as community resilience and digital working.
Risk Movement: increase/decrease/no change	**Risk Appetite:**
NO CHANGE	The risk appetite reflects a requirement to sustain delivery of statutory services and ensure the needs of the vulnerable service users are met, recognising that reducing or restricting discretionary services is likely to affect some sectors of the community and have a 'knock-on' effect on operational continuity and performance.
Controls: List of critical functions agreed by Corporate Management Team Business continuity plans in place for key services although the scope of these will need to be reviewed post pandemic in terms of what can be reasonably foreseen and is achievable. Organisational Development Team promoting workforce and leadership development Communication strategy for informing service users of impending changes to services developed.	**Current and Proposed Mitigating Actions:** Incident management log to be established covering known issues arising from UK withdrawal from the European Union Update service risk registers and link to business continuity plans. Business continuity plans to be reviewed taking into account staff changes and service reconfigurations Ensure clear links between identified risks and service plans are maintained. Review Performance Management Framework to ensure it aligns appropriately to revisions to service provision.

	Service Prioritisation to ensure delivery of vital and key services during the pandemic.
Current performance: A range of measures is in place to secure operational continuity and performance for current service provision, with it being recognised that these measures may need to be revisited as a consequence of change. Service delivery has also been reduced with a focus on ensuring that key and vital services are provided as a priority.	**Comments:** Developments under this risk category are predicated on change with risks around operational continuity and performance dependent on the nature and scale of services delivered in future periods.

8.

Description of Risk: *IT (Technological)* Major disruption in continuity of ICT operations; data security is compromised. Changes in working practices post pandemic reliant on ICT infrastructure, capacity and support. The threat of cyber-attacks on ICT systems is on the rise, and the council has a range of measures in place to limit the risks of data being corrupted or accessed for unauthorised purposes. The risk cannot be eliminated with attacks being nuanced over time and requiring the council to constantly be alert to new threats. The prevalence of working from home results in greater isolation, and increases the risk that staff may become susceptible to malicious emails.

Lead: Corporate Management Team/ Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and OD)/ Head of HR ICT and OD

Risk Rating: low/medium/high/very high	Rationale for Risk Rating:
VERY HIGH **Likelihood 4 x Impact 5 = 20**	A recurring theme from senior management relative to their experiences during the course of the pandemic is that the success of their services in many respects is predicated on the availability of robust and adaptable ICT systems. This creates an elevated risk that has been recognised centrally, albeit it brings with it a number of challenges in terms of resourcing changed ways of working both to infrastructure and in terms of staffing to support that change in a timely manner. Meanwhile cyber security continues to have a high profile and the ICT service has a suite of controls in place to mitigate known risks in this area. Intelligence in relation to recent successful cyber-attacks has highlighted that the disruption to the affected organisations can be widespread, and the recovery process is likely to take a significant amount of time to restore business operations fully. Accordingly he risk impact has been raised from 4 to 5.
Risk Movement: increase/decrease/no change	**Risk Appetite:**
RISK INCREASED from 16 to 20	There is zero appetite for service interruption or data loss, as this has the potential for catastrophic impact on service delivery and the cost of system disruption or data protection breaches can run to hundreds of thousands of pounds. The security and continuity of ICT services is therefore of vital importance and this is reflected in the range of controls in place
Controls: Corporate Information Security Policy. Disaster Recovery Plans. Senior Information Risk Officer. External accreditation processes for Network Security (Public Services Network, Cyber Essentials Plus)	**Current and Proposed Mitigating Actions:** Assess control as part of plans for developing digital services ICT Action Plan Participation in the Scottish Government Cyber Resilience Programme Information Assurance Group re-established Extend accreditation process to include the Education ICT network

Environmental Controls for Data Centre (cooling, fire, flood and backup power) Boundary Firewalls and Internet Gateways (email and web filtering) Data control enhanced through network controls Malware Protection Patch management (Applications and Infrastructure) Third Party Maintenance Agreements (Applications and Infrastructure) Main financial system supported in-house Information Assurance Group Records Management Policy Data breach reporting arrangements Working from home policy/guidance	Update ICT Business Continuity Plan Review Corporate Information Security Policy Investigate and implement Cloud Services as appropriate (Microsoft Office 365) Introduction of guidance, policies, and staff awareness programme to ensure employees working from home are doing so safely in terms of ICT security. Implement recommendations from Records Management audit
Current performance: The risks associated with the delivery of ICT are constantly evolving, and the controls outlined above together with on-going vigilance are necessary to prevent disruption to critical services.	**Comments:** The suite of controls in place reflects the council's commitment to securing data held and used in the effective delivery of modern council services.

9.

Description of Risk: Economic Recovery. Risk of prolonged economic downturn following the pandemic and exit from European Union with the possibility of a recession. Potential for further national lockdowns will put additional strain on the already struggling local economy. Higher inflation and any increase in interest rates longer term may have an impact on capital projects including the Moray Growth Deal. Continued and/or increased unemployment may have impact on council tax revenues and business failures may create similar pressures on business rates. There may be increased demand for welfare benefits and money advice services. All of which are factors outside the control of Moray Council but will have an influence on how the council reacts and plans for the future.

Lead: Corporate Management Team/ Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance)

Risk Rating: low/medium/high/very high	**Rationale for Risk Rating:**
HIGH **Likelihood 4x Impact 3 = 16**	Both the current pandemic and exit from the European Union are likely to have both short and long term effects on the local economy. Great uncertainty will make planning challenging and the future economic landscape of Moray is yet to be defined. Moray Council's inputs, both as a driver and supporting force, will be crucial to aiding economic recovery.
Risk Movement: increase/decrease/no change	**Risk Appetite:**
NEW RISK	There is a strong appetite for Moray to flourish as a community and economic recovery is a priority for the Council. Works are continuing with the Moray Growth Deal and current efforts are focused on providing support to businesses and other external organisations. Partnership working is also being encouraged to generate a synergy effect and ensure support is delivered efficiently and with optimal impacts.
Controls: Moray Economic Strategy 2019 – 2029 including Moray Skills Investment Plan. Moray Growth Deal Partnership working with Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Moray College UHI, Skills Development Scotland and more. Money Advice Service providing support to citizens as required.	**Current and Proposed Mitigating Actions:** Funding for Growth Deal agreed in Aug 2020 bringing total investment to the area of over £100m. Recruitment drive for key project leads in the Early Years STEM and Bus Revolution projects.

Current performance:	Comments:
Current performance: Service delivery has been concentrated to providing vital and statutory services reacting in response to the pandemic. Pace has begun to pick up on the Moray Growth Deal with key projects now coming on stream in the near future with committee approval being granted for the first two.	**Comments:** The current situation coupled with future uncertainty will make economic recovery challenging. Key steps have been taken to establish a long term strategy, providing the backbone for the road to economic revival.

REPORT TO: **EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021**

SUBJECT: **PERFORMANCE REPORT (HUMAN RESOURCES, INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT) – PERIOD TO MARCH 2021**

BY: **DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   To inform the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to March 2021.

1.2   This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young Peoples Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance (para 9 of the minute refers).

2.   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   **It is recommended that Committee:**

   i)   scrutinises performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of March 2021; and

   ii)   notes the actions being taken to improve performance where required.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   On 7 August 2019, the Council, approved a revised Performance Management Framework for services (para 5 of the minute refers).

4.   SERVICE PLANNING

4.1   Each service plan sets out the planned strategic and service level priorities and outcomes it intends to deliver in the coming year aligning closely with financial planning, corporate and community planning partnership strategic priorities. This report provides an interim update on progress on the service plan, key

outcomes and performance indicators. Committee is invited to review progress to secure assurance that is satisfactory and to provide scrutiny and further direction where performance requires attention.

4.2   The narrative included is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service Plan Actions and Service Plan Performance Indicators are provided.

Figure 1:

SERVICE PLAN PRIORITIES		HR & OD	ICT
STRATEGIC LEVEL	Sustainable Council that provides valued services to our community (HR & OD 4 Actions, ICT 3 Actions)	46%	63%
SERVICE LEVEL	Sustainable Council that provides valued services to our community (HR & OD 5 Actions, ICT 4 Actions)	33%	74%
	Reward & Recognition	25%	N/A
	Compliance	N/A	7%
RECOVERY & RENEWAL	COVID Service Delivery Recovery	N/A	N/A
OVERALL PROGRESS		38%	61%
COMMENT			
Both HR & OD and ICT Service Plan cover the 2 year period 2020-2022. At the end of year 1,progress has been made though this has been affected by changing prioritites and increased workloads in other areas due to COVID.			

SERVICE PLAN PI'S
- Achieving Target (4)
- Within Target (0)
- Below Target (1)
- Data Only (0)
- Data not available (0)
Centre: 5

Strategic Outcomes - successes

4.3   Working with the North East Learning Collaborative (NELC), delivery of two virtual training workshops on outcome based planning was trialled with council and community planning officers to refine Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) delivery framework documents for each of the priority areas. Further enhancements to the training are planned in the period to June 2021. Leadership development training is under redesign and the current blended learning model is being translated into digitally accessible courses in the interim. Additional functionality on the e-learning platform is required for the re-design to work effectively, this is being pursued with Procurement within the context of the current learning management system provision. (Action HR&OD20-22.Strat 4.3, 4.3a, 4.3b)

4.4   In addressing the findings of the Best Value audit, implementation of the elected member development strategy to support strategic and corporate roles has progressed. One to one elected member sessions are complete and a calendar of activity has been developed and awaiting sign-off. Implementation of elected member training on effective scrutiny of performance is in the design stage and incorporates a blend of external development activity and in-house workshops. (Action HR&OD20-22.Strat 4.4, 4.4a)

Strategic Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

4.5   Work to extend the availability of online services for Children's Social Work Services and provide improved access to services via the council website and customer portal, expected to complete in March 2021, is 80% complete. ICT have submitted a business case and testing of the NHS 'Near Me (Attend Anywhere)' application was undertaken. Progress has faltered as a result of restructuring within Children's Services and completion of this project is dependent on resources being in place to collaborate with ICT. (Action ICT 20-22.Strat 4.5)

Service Level Outcomes - successes

4.6   In establishing a digital culture, all trial ICT work in relation to the review of LEAN management software is complete and a number of benefits have been identified. An investment proposal has been prepared and opportunities confirmed for when software is made available and resourcing issues resolved. The Digital Champions remit has now been passed to the OD team to finalise in the coming year. (Action ICT20-22.Serv 5.2)

4.7   Expansion and enhancement to the provision of flexible and mobile working now recognises the 'Flexible by Default' approach as the norm with the rollout of dedicated laptops to corporate staff complete. 75% of all users are now classed as flexible (compared to just 30% at the end of the previous transformation programme Designing Better Services). The focus on flexibility will continue, ensuring that the vision and requirements of the Council post COVID will be met and that benefits achieved from the work undertaken during 2020 are not lost or reduced. (Action ICT20-22.Serv 5.3)

Service Level Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

4.8   As part of the Service Level Compliance priority, it was anticipated that cyber essentials plus accreditation would be achieved for the corporate network by January 2021, progress is currently at 10%. The Cabinet Office has given latitude on timescales for Public Service Network (PSN) submissions due to the pandemic as they themselves have struggled with resources to complete the required assessments. The scope of the IT Health Check is being progressed with the supplier and remediation work will be actioned in the period to June 2021. (Action ICT20-22.Serv 5.1a)

4.9   Implementation and promotion of Video Conferencing is progressing (60%) albeit out with original target timescales (December 2020) as a result of underestimating the work required to implement MS Teams and the level of competing priorities. In the quarter to March 2021, significant progress has been made; integration of MS Teams with existing user accounts and outlook calendars is complete along with the process to create new users and assign appropriate licences. Work on the security aspects and roll-out plan continues. (Action ICT20-22.Serv 5.4)

4.10   The gender pay gap indicator provides a picture of the gap in pay between men and women. Latest Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) reported the gender pay gap in Moray for 2019/20 period as 6.4%, above the national average of 3.4%. The Council employs a high number of the workforce in service areas such as catering, cleaning, homecare and schools support staff. These areas are populated predominantly by a high number of part time female workers; often who may hold more than one part time position which contributes to the higher gender pay gap. The Councils' employment policies continue to reflect its commitment to equal opportunities and initial data for this year's gender pay gap indicates a further reduction to 6.14%.
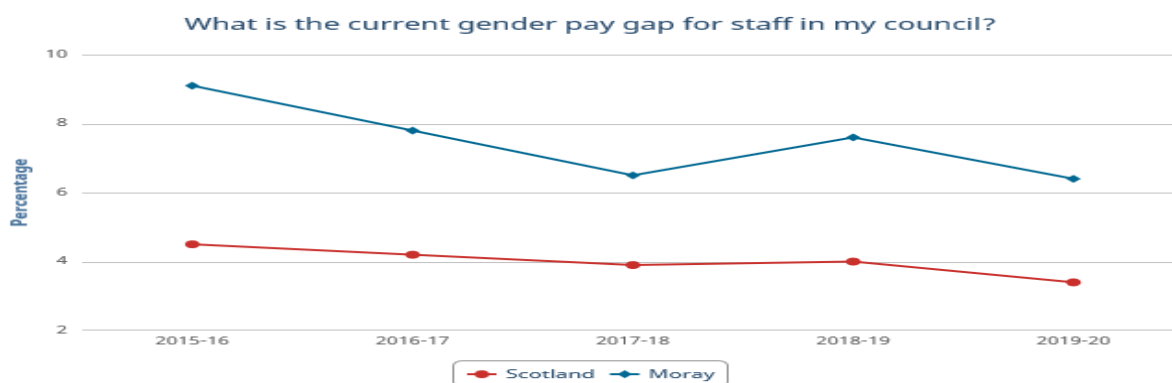
What is the current gender pay gap for staff in my council?

5. SERVICE PERFORMANCE

5.1 In line with the Performance Management Framework, operational performance is reviewed quarterly by departmental management. Areas performing well and/or areas subject to a decreasing trend or where benchmarking results show performance below comparators will be reported to this committee for member scrutiny.

5.2 Initial publication of 2019/20 Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) Indicators in February 2021 will be refreshed in early May. The full suite can be viewed using the My Local Council tool.

5.3 Report is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service Performance Indicators is provided.

Figure 2:
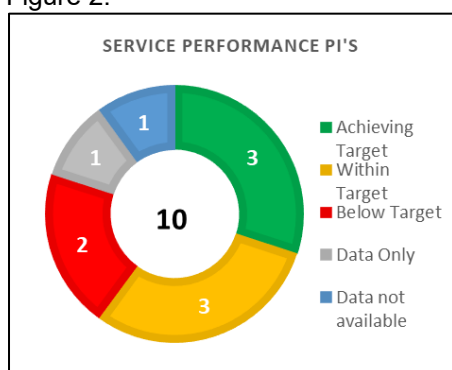
Operational Indicators - successes

5.4 Indicators consistently exceeding target over the last three years include payroll accuracy and availability of website. (PIs FS111, FS112, FICT174)

Operational Indicators - challenges and actions to support

5.5 Sickness Absence Rates (Teachers) and (All Other Employees) are Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) indicators. An increasing absence trend is evident over the last four years for both indicators with performance above the national average in three and four of those years respectively. Depression/stress/anxiety continues to be the main reason for absence. Feedback from trade unions, managers and employees indicate the long term impact of successive savings resulting in staff reductions and increasing workloads as contributory factors. A planned review on how the workforce can be better supported has been delayed due to recent pandemic

pressures. Meantime, with the increasing number of people working remotely and the anticipated potential impact on mental health and wellbeing, guidance on how to better support and promote staff well-being is currently being refreshed. Reducing absence rates is a long term aim and any actions are likely to take 18-24 months to have a noticeable impact. Links with engagement are clear and the work to develop and improve both engagement and culture is a priority as the council moves into recovery following prolonged periods of lockdown. (PIs CS016B.1 and CS016B.2)

What is the level of sickness absence for teachers in my council (average number of days per teacher)?

What is the level of sickness absence in my council (average number of days per employee, non-teachers)?
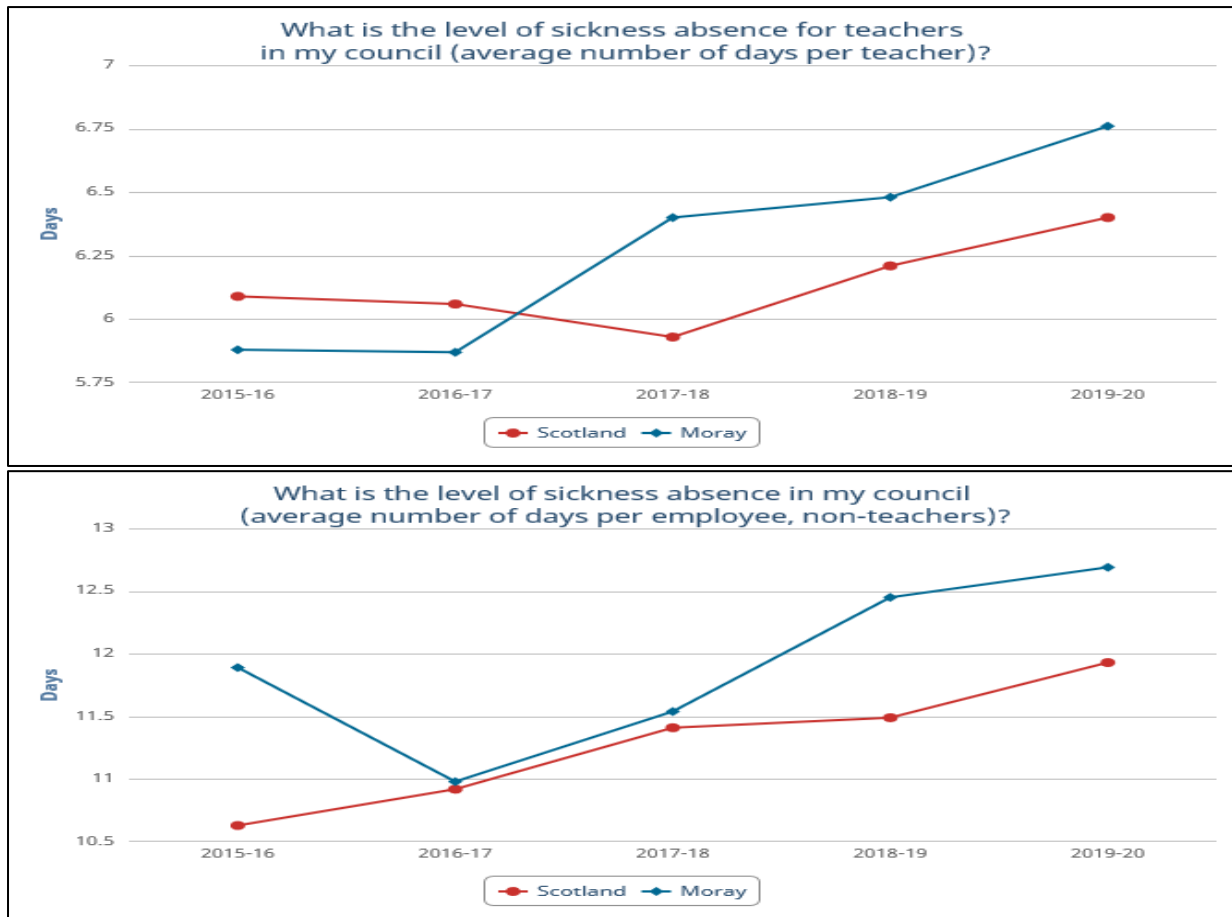
5.6   In 2020/21, 84% of ICT Help Desk calls were resolved within target timescale, below target (90%). Ongoing resourcing issues and competing priorities, such as the issuing devices to schools, account for the slight drop in performance from previous years. There has been significant improvement from the previous quarter (73%). Given the challenges in the reporting year, the service has done well to maintain performance at the level achieved. (PI CPS041)

5.7   As at March 2021, the ICT Action Plan achieved 50% completion, against a target of 90%. Pandemic response and recovery work took priority over the reporting period. Essential upgrade work has continued and efforts to complete the Plan will progress as priorities allow. (PI FICT173 ICT)

6.   **OTHER PERFORMANCE RELATED DATA**

Complaints & MP/MSP Enquiries

6.1   In line with the Performance Management Framework, complaints are reviewed quarterly by departmental management in terms of time taken to respond,

outcome and learning points. Links to backing tables for all [Service Complaints](#) are provided.

6.2   Between January and March 2021, the service received two complaints. Three complaints were closed during the same period; two at frontline and one at investigative. One complaint was partially upheld and two were not upheld.

6.3   During the same period, two MP/MSP enquiries were received and responded to.

Other Performance (not included within Service Plan)

6.4   The HR service has dealt with significant increases in workload this year. Temporary changes were necessary for a number of Policies and Procedures while guidance has been provided on many evolving employment related matters. Weekly meetings have also been held with trade unions to ensure continuous workforce engagement.

6.5   Likewise the focus of ICT work changed rapidly in response to the pandemic with supporting Education and increased home working taking priority. To facilitate this, a roll out of equipment was undertaken across the organisation and the ICT infrastructure upgraded. As a result, all members of staff who have been designated as flexible workers can now be supported. In the last 12 months, the number of staff accessing the system remotely has increased from 30 - 40 per day to in excess of 700 per day.

Case Studies

6.6   During the COVID recovery phase, ICT have been involved in several projects that contributed positively to the local community. To allow the Household Waste Recycling Centres to reopen safely and ensure compliance with requirements, development and roll out of a Waste Booking System was undertaken. E-forms allowing public access to various government grants were also created and made available on the council's website.

Consultation and Engagement

6.7   Engagement with staff and acknowledging the effort made every day by colleagues throughout the pandemic was assisted by the Employee Appreciation Scheme as a temporary measure instead of STAR Awards during lockdown. This scheme recognises the contribution made by individuals and teams to both keeping services going and bringing services back during these challenging times. It has been well received by staff with messages of appreciation shared on the dedicated interchange page from services across the council.

6.8   Regular staff updates have provided consistent and 'in the moment' communication to the workforce since early in the pandemic. With frequency adjusted as required from twice weekly to once weekly and now fortnightly, the staff update has aimed to pass on critical corporate information and messages in a timely manner. Feedback has been positive and there are plans to trial continuing with this channel of communication as a more permanent arrangement.

7. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

    (a) **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**
Performance measurement is used to ensure the efficient and sustainable delivery of services to meet the Council's priorities in both the Corporate Plan and the LOIP.

    (b) **Policy and Legal**
The Council has a statutory requirement to publish a range of information that will demonstrate that it is securing best value and assist in comparing performance both over time and between authorities where appropriate.

    (c) **Financial implications**
None.

    (d) **Risk Implications**
None.

    (e) **Staffing Implications**
None.

    (f) **Property**
None.

    (g) **Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**
An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform the Committee on performance.

    (h) **Consultations**
The Head of HR, ICT & Organisational Development, Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities & OD), Service Managers, Legal Services, the Equal Opportunities Officer, and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

8. **CONCLUSION**

8.1 **As at March 2021, four Service Plan actions have been completed, with progress made on in all other areas. Overall, the HR & OD plan is 38% complete and the ICT Service Plan 61% complete.**

8.2 **COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the planned work of the service this year. Dealing with the pandemic has been and remains an unprecedented evolving situation resulting in changing priorities and increasing workloads. The service has responded well and work on many key areas has progressed albeit perhaps out with original target timescales. The focus for the year ahead will be on delivering the remaining service plan outcomes.**

Author of Report: Suzanne Wilson, Research & Information Officer
Background Papers: Held by Author SPMAN-1656699058-24

REPORT TO: **EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021**

SUBJECT: **HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2020**

BY: **DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   To ask the Committee to consider the annual Health and Safety report and approve the progress noted, proposed future actions and carry forward of outstanding actions for the next year.

1.2   This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic In the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance, (para 9 of the minute refers)

2.   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   It is recommended that the Committee:

i)   Considers the content of the annual health and safety report, as set out in Appendix 1, and the progress towards the outcomes established in the last report; and

ii)   Approve the carry forward of outstanding actions and proposed future actions for 2021.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   The Health and Safety at Work Act requires that organisations ensure the safety of employees and others who may be affected by their actions.

The main elements needed to provide protection are:

- Making plain the organisation's commitment to have good standards of health and safety management;
- Defining the roles that people at all levels play in ensuring the good standards are maintained;

- Having systems in place to ensure awareness of hazards and assessment of risks to employees, customers, partners and others who may be affected by our activities;
- Having in place effective arrangements to eliminate or control those risks;
- Monitoring the system in place and reviewing it on an ongoing basis;
- Providing access to health and safety advice and support;
- Engagement with employees at all stages of the process to ensure adequacy.

3.2 As part of this process, a report is provided every year on the Health and Safety provision within the Council.

3.3 The Annual Health and Safety Report for 2020 is set out in **Appendices 1 and 2**. It summarises the Council's health and safety performance corporately and is based on statistics for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020. The report highlights the Council's safety performance and provides information on the types of accidents reported.

3.4 This report relates the calendar year January to December 2020 and for most of this period, the organisation as a whole and the services within it were affected by the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This impacted on health and safety at both a corporate level and within services to a significant degree. Some services continued to operate in the usual workplaces, with appropriate advice and guidance provided on risk assessments, mitigation and control measures, resulting in different operating procedures to ensure everyone's health and safety. All in accordance with national guidance issued by the Scottish Government, Public Health Scotland and the HSE. Some services ceased for periods of time, with workplaces closed as a result. Other services continued to operate but from home rather than within the usual workplace environment. The information provided in this report needs to be regarded within this overall context.

3.5 The report highlights that the number of accidents and dangerous occurrences reported in 2020 has decreased compared to the numbers reported in the previous three reports. Overall, incidents were down by 33% and it is most likely that the reason for this is that there were fewer employees working in their usual workplaces as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the varying restrictions that have been in place during most of 2020. However, within this, there continues to be variation at departmental level. Education continues to record the highest number of health and safety incidents with total incidents during 2020 falling by just 21%, compared to incidents recorded within Environmental Services decreasing by 46% and those in Social Care down by 29%.

3.6 Against the particular context within which services and the health and safety team were operating during 2020, the main areas of progress on planned work in 2020 have again been balanced with responding to the work required from specific issues arising throughout the year, in particular work related to the impact of COVID 19. This, coupled with the volume of ad hoc work, has impacted on progress on planned work. Despite this, targeted work has been undertaken with Environmental Services regarding vehicle incidents, a rolling plan of fire risk assessments has been put in place using a risk based, priority

approach, and there has been delivery of planned audits of risk assessments in high risk areas. Much of the work around risk assessment has necessarily been related to Covid-19. Building and activity risk assessments are in place and are being continually reviewed in light of the changing national guidance as appropriate.

3.7   Main themes arising from the report are the requirement to continue to ensure that workplaces are Covid secure, particularly moving further through the recovery phase and towards a more business as usual approach, to focus on improving the health and safety culture across the council, to target support in high risk areas, involving an OD approach as appropriate, to support the work on challenging behaviour in schools and reducing the number of incidents based on human error.

3.8   The Annual Health and Safety Report for 2020 identifies the main areas for development and planned work over the next year as continuing to audit high risk area risk assessments and progress with the work relating to vehicle incidents, improving manager understanding and activity, progressing with actions to improve the behaviour challenges in schools and provide the business as usual such as accident / incident investigation, inspections and fire risk assessments.   The increased health and safety risks of working within a COVID-19 environment will continue to be incorporated into normal working, with a focus on supporting the recovery and return to a more business as usual approach. To this end, policies on DSE and Lone Working in particular will be reviewed and measures implemented as appropriate. In addition, the profile and awareness of normal health and safety risks both within and across the council activities will continue to be maintained.

4.   **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a)   **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**
        This report provides information relating to Health and Safety activities within the Council to enable this learning and to ensure that the council continues to provide a safe and healthy workplace for employees to deliver services.

(b)   **Policy and Legal**
        Ensuring the health and safety of staff and service users is a statutory duty on the Council. An annual report is an effective method of recognising achievement and highlighting opportunities for further improvement.

(c)   **Financial implications**
        There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Accidents can have implications for Council resources and may result in losses that are difficult to quantify.

(d)   **Risk Implications**
        Health and safety is included within all levels of the Council's risk register.

(e) Staffing Implications
Staff time will be required to implement the actions set out in the report. This will be accommodated within existing resources by adjusting the priorities to be worked on.

(f) Property
None.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
None.

(h) Consultations

CMT and the Central Health and Safety Committee have been consulted about the report at Appendix 1.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The 2020 annual health and safety report shows that the Council continues to provide a healthy and safe environment for its employees and service users. Given the context within which the Council has had to operate over the past year, the decrease in incidents may be attributed to the impact of the Covid-19 restrictions, rather than an indication that the incident rate across the Council has decreased as a result of other measures. Thus, there is a need to continue to work on the main areas outlined in previous reports and build on the progress that has been made over the course of 2020, despite the context within which services and the health and safety team have had to operate within. In particular, it is planned to continue work to allow the Council's safety culture to continue to develop with a focus on supporting managers and employees to take responsibility for and give priority to the health and safety of themselves and others.

Author of Report:	Frances Garrow, Head of HR, ICT and Organisational Development
Background Papers:	
Ref:	SPMAN-1656699058-25
	SPMAN-1656699058-26
	SPMAN-1656699058-27

DRAFT   **APPENDIX 1**
THE MORAY COUNCIL
HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT
(January 2020 to December 2020)

1 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the performance of the council in ensuring the health and safety of the workforce and service users. This is done through the utilisation of monitoring data and includes recommendations for improvements required to procedures and/or systems.

1.2 The national context for similar organisations on incidents and enforcement action is also considered for the purposes of shared learning.

2 Summary of Key Themes

2.1 Covid 19 has had a significant impact on how the Council has had to operate during 2020 and this is reflected both in the statistics that have been collected and the way that the Health and Safety Team have had to function. Reduced activity and service provision in many areas due to restrictions imposed by the pandemic has resulted in a lower incident rate than might have been expected but there has also been an impact on the planned work of the Health and Safety Team as outlined in the report for 2019. It should also be noted that many services continued to operate during the pandemic with advice, guidance and support provided to ensure the health and safety of the workforce, service users and others. Work related to the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery will continue to be a key feature over the course of the next year. One particular aspect that has been brought to the fore over this period, given altered ways of working, is lone working which will feature in the policy review plans for the coming year.

2.2 Health and Safety Culture is a continuing key theme where detailed actions and interventions are being planned. It is important that there continues to be a focus on this area of work which will be an ongoing project given the long term nature of implementing and sustaining culture change.

2.2 Incidents based on human error continue to occur. Organisational development support is being targeted within service areas with the highest rates of incidents, seeking to understand the underlying causes and create improvements in embedding health and safety awareness into the workforce.

2.3 Violence and Aggression in schools continues to be a major theme. While the national lockdown created a pause in work to address this, a refreshed action plan has been developed to ensure that this issue, which is of significant concern, remains a key priority going forwards.

3 Review and Monitoring of Council Performance

3.1 Statistical Review

3.1.1 **Appendix A** sets out the analysis of health and safety incidents that were reported during the year January – December 2020, with comparison to previous years' performance.

3.1.2 The main points to note are:

a) Incidents were down by 33% in 2020 as compared with 2019. This was most likely due to the impact of Covid-19 on services and the prolonged lockdowns of some services and changes to working patterns in others that resulted from it. Education continues to be the service that accounts for most incidents, followed by Environmental Services, and slips, trips and falls continue to be the top cause of accidents, as tends to be the case across different sectors and services. Appendix A contains further information. It should be noted that Education accounts for approximately 40% of the Council's workforce, providing service to approximately 11 900 pupils across Moray.

b) Violence and Aggression incidents in Education also declined by a quarter, again most likely due to the effects of Covid restrictions on schools which saw closures for 13 weeks out of a possible 40 during calendar year 2020 (33%).However it is worth noting that Education hubs became operational on 30 March 2020 and ran until 2 July 2020. Analysis of the data indicates that the incidents are largely due to a comparatively small number of pupils in a relatively small number of schools. There are a range of focused and tailored interventions already in place and as referred to above, an action plan is being implemented that includes work streams for the various inter-dependent elements that are considered to be key in helping address this issue, as part of the wider ASN review. The figures given for violence and aggression incidents elsewhere in the Council were negligible, again, probably reflecting the wholesale effects of the restrictions on many services, though a degree of under-reporting is likely (for example, in Social Care services) which requires further consideration.

c) The incident reporting process and data gathered will be reviewed and consideration given as to whether further, more detailed information and analysis is possible to inform future reports and actions as a result.

3.2 Review of Incidents/Accidents/Interventions

3.2.1 The following incident summaries are presented as a sample to illustrate the nature and range of risks the council has faced and to inform decisions on improvements for the future with appropriate remedial actions.

   a) A child suffered a serious injury to her leg during a play equipment accident when another child dismounted too quickly and the injured party's foot was thought to have been at an unfortunate angle. Defects were found and the item was removed from service but design features seem to be a likely cause of what happened. Public playground equipment is inspected and maintained and the importance of ensuring this was highlighted by the recent prosecution of a London council for a playground fatality.
   b) A relatively high number of slip and trip incidents were observed in the second half of the year. One involved a slip on stairs caused by hand sanitiser spillage; another was caused by defective stair fittings, resulting in a reminder to service and building management of the importance of risk assessments and appropriate interventions, for example, ensuring building maintenance. There was also a relatively high number of slips during the various cold snaps and this has prompted a review of the arrangements that are in place for keeping staff safe when there is ice and snow on the ground, including appropriate messaging and communication to raise staff awareness.
   c) Covid-19 had a significant effect on the way that many staff have had to work. Homeworking increased dramatically and this has had health and safety implications mainly in the form of postural problems. This is still a temporary arrangement but the Health and Safety Team have had a regular stream of calls for assistance with this. Guidance is in place for homeworking during the pandemic but in many cases short term arrangements will have been made and longer term advice and support will

have to be taken in to account when looking at ongoing and future working arrangements. The promotion of the self-assessment tool available on interchange will support employees to consider their individual working environment and highlight any issues that require further intervention.

d) The HSE visited the new Moycroft Waste Transfer facility in December 2020 and issued 2 Prohibition Notices and one Improvement Notice. The Prohibition Notices were issued to Moray Reach Out who operate the recycling facility for the Council and refer to machinery breaches that were quickly rectified. The Improvement Notice was issued to the Council for deficiencies in pedestrian traffic separation, which is currently being addressed.

3.3 Review of Progress

3.3.1 Health and Safety activity is set out in the annual action plan and then monitored through the council's performance management framework via the service plan and a more detailed workforce plan. Covid 19 has had a significant impact on the work planned for 2020, however, an interim service plan has been outlined for 2020-22 and planned work will be carried out in accordance with this plan.

3.3.2 The following outlines the progress that has been made in addressing action areas established in the 2019 report

3.3.3 Accident/Incident – monitor high risk areas: Vehicle and Transport: incident data will continue to be monitored and responded to as appropriate. A survey of vehicle damage incident statistics compiled by Fleet Services over the last two years (2019 and 2020) recorded 202 incidents, 55 of which involved reversing
(N.B. Not all of these incidents would be reported to the H&S Team as dangerous occurrences so the figures given are not reflected in the H&S Incident figures) A trial has been implemented in two services to involve service managers in the review of reversing incidents in an attempt to modify behaviour by increasing accountability. This will be reviewed in October 2021 and will be extended if successful.

3.3.4 Violence and Aggression: the action plan has been refreshed and updated with a group of officers, led by the Head of Education Resources, working on implementation, across different strands, supported as appropriate by the health and safety team and social work training team (SWTT), particularly around improved staff training. Whilst affected by the Covid-19 restrictions, work is now progressing in this area.

3.3.5 Fire Risk Assessments: a rolling plan has been put in place to carry out fire risk assessments using a risk based priority approach. Measures have also been introduced to ensure service managers are aware of and involved in any significant findings highlighted during fire risk assessments. The aim of this is to improve accountability and ensure that all appropriate actions arising are addressed.

3.3.6 Safe Working Methods: audits of high risk areas have almost been completed but audits of specific topic issues were impacted by Covid 19 restrictions. Plans are in place to carry out audit activity in 2021-22.

3.3.7 Improved Reporting and Monitoring: training of staff to carry out inspections in care facilities was progressing successfully but unfortunately was impacted by Covid-19 restrictions. It is planned to resume this during 2021-22 and if effective, roll out to other services.

3.3.8 Risk Assessment, Covid-19: Much of the focus of work during 2020 was in relation to Risk Assessment, particularly around the requirements resulting from national guidance on Covid-19. Risk Assessments are in place for all buildings and activities and are subject to ongoing and continual review. A compliance tool is being developed for application to Council services and will be used to build the foundation for ensuring that continual review is embedded into business as normal.

3.3.9 Risk Management: arrangements are being made with OD colleagues to take forward the work required to improve manager understanding and activity in targeted areas with high risk or increasing incident reports. In addition, appropriate links are being highlighted with the work around developing health and safety culture across the Council.

4 Benchmarking and National Developments

4.1 The incident rate for 2020 is down in comparison with previous years, most likely due to reductions in activity and service provision, i.e. less people were in some workplaces so less accidents occurred. Figures available from the HSE are from 2019-20 and were not significantly influenced by Covid-19, so they are not particularly useful for comparison purposes.

4.2 Annual Incident Rate (AIR) figures based on RIDDOR incidents are available for comparison between all the councils in the north of Scotland, though Moray is the only one currently that measures the AIR on a calendar year basis. The figure for 2020 was 1.42, reflecting the reduction in activity during the year. The figure for 2019 was 3.7, which was at the higher end of the spectrum measured among north councils during 2019/20 i.e. these range from 1.82 to 4.4

4.3 The top 10 prosecutions for health and safety breaches in 2020 showed a decline in the number of high tariff sentences (i.e. over £1M fines) compared with 2019, though that may have been due to restrictions in court room access. Nevertheless, there were a number of high profile cases that involve activities carried out within the council. One firm was fined £1.1M for a ladder fall; a supermarket giant was fined £750k for a fall on a slippery floor; and two companies were fined £500k and £400k respectively for vehicle accidents, one of which involved reversing. None of these involved fatalities and go to illustrate the seriousness with which the courts are likely to treat poor health and safety standards.

5 Conclusions and Proposed Developments

5.1 For most of the period covered by this report, Covid-19 had a significant impact on Council services and activities and this is reflected in the incident statistics for 2020. Numbers are significantly down for most measures and this makes comparison with previous years difficult.

5.2 Nevertheless, the underlying issues that have been highlighted in previous reports continue to be valid and important and are likely to feature again as services move in to the recovery phase, e.g. violence and aggression, lone working, vehicle incidents, health and safety culture. Plans are in place to address these issues and will be the subject of ongoing review throughout the year, taking account of any competing priorities and demands.

5.3 Work will continue with the OD team in terms of using different tools and techniques and communications to support managers in targeted areas to monitor and raise awareness amongst their teams.

5.4 As services and activities work through the recovery phase and towards a more "business as usual" approach, the impact of Covid-19 will continue to be important. It is likely that new and different ways of working e.g. homeworking, video conferencing, in work rota arrangements are likely to become permanent features of the Council's working practices and as such a number of factors need to be taken into account, including, for example, workstation arrangements and social isolation issues. Work is already planned around refreshing policies on DSE and Lone Working and other potential health and safety issues arising from changed ways of working going forward will require to be identified and addressed.

5.5 In the interim period, Covid-19 will continue to be a significant factor for all areas of the council, probably for the rest of 2021. A corporate approach to risk assessment has been developed and this will be further revised to ensure continual review in line with any national, public health or professional standard recommendations that emerge.

6 Action Plan.

6.1 It is anticipated that the corporate health and safety team will continue to be involved with ongoing pandemic demands across services as the Council works through the recovery phase into more of a business as usual approach. Combined with the requirement to complete a proportion of monitoring work, including fire risk assessments, plus managing the ad-hoc operational work, this is likely to continue to have a considerable impact on the team's ability to carry out other development or improvement work.

Actions	Target for Completion
Accident/Incident: Audit high risk services or issues	Adhere to identified timescales for completion according to prioritisation in order of importance. March 22 with review quarterly.
Review incident reporting process and implement changes as necessary.	October 2021.
Accident/Incident: Review the trial of the reversing incidents initiative and implement measures as appropriate	Review to be undertaken by October 2021 with implementation by January 2022.
Fire Risk Assessments: Implement the fire risk assessment rolling programme.	Adhere to identified timescales for completion according to prioritisation in order of importance. March 22 with review quarterly
Violence and Aggression – implementation of the Challenging Behaviour Action Plan and roll out of identified training as appropriate.	In accordance with timescales outlined in Challenging Behaviour Action Plan. March 22
Covid 19 risk assessment – embed continual review over the course of the pandemic, including implementation of compliance tool	On-going Compliance tool to be operational in line with plans for a wider return to workplaces later in 2021.

	Promote self-assessment tool for homeworking station
Audit/Inspection: Improve accountability by carrying out more inspections within services.	Adhere to identified timescales for completion according to prioritisation in order of importance
Risk Management: work with OD colleagues to implement measures in targeted areas with high or increasing incident reports.	Plan to be agreed by summer 2021, with implementation of appropriate interventions identified by March 2022 with review quarterly.
Revised Working Arrangements post Covid-19.	Refresh DSE and Lone Working Policies and support ongoing work related to recovery and moving to new ways of working as a permanent feature. March 2022.

HEALTH AND SAFETY INCIDENTS 2020

The following information is based on the data for incidents reported during the period January to December 2020.

Figure 1: Number of Health and Safety Incidents Reported by Moray Council (2016 - 2020)
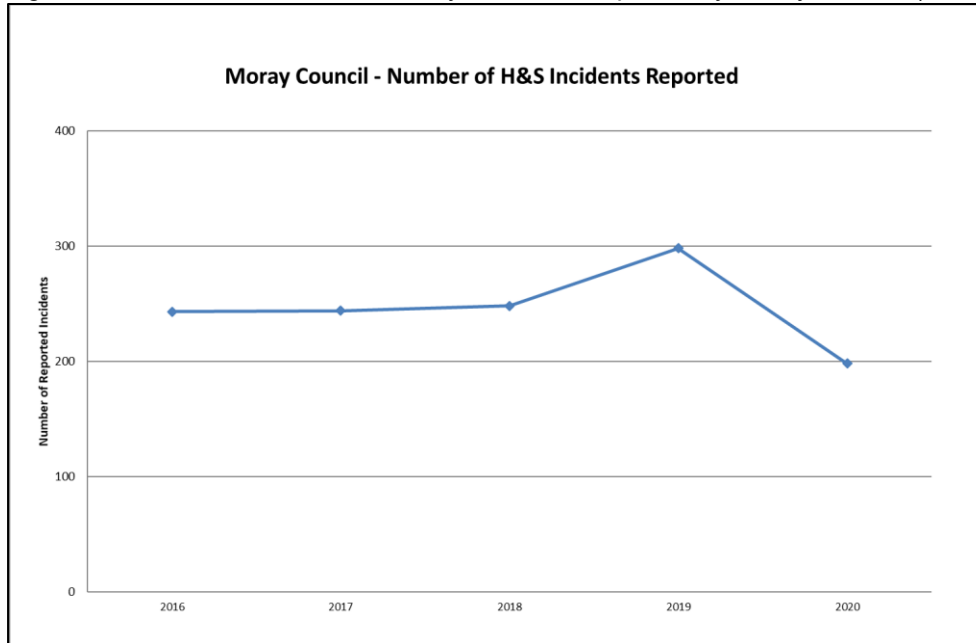
In 2020, the number of Health & Safety Incidents reported by Moray Council fell to 198, 33% less than in 2019 and the lowest recorded since current reporting methods were introduced. This significant decrease can likely be wholly attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown restrictions that affected all Moray Council services between March and December 2020.

Figure 1a: Number of Health & Safety Incidents 2020 by month
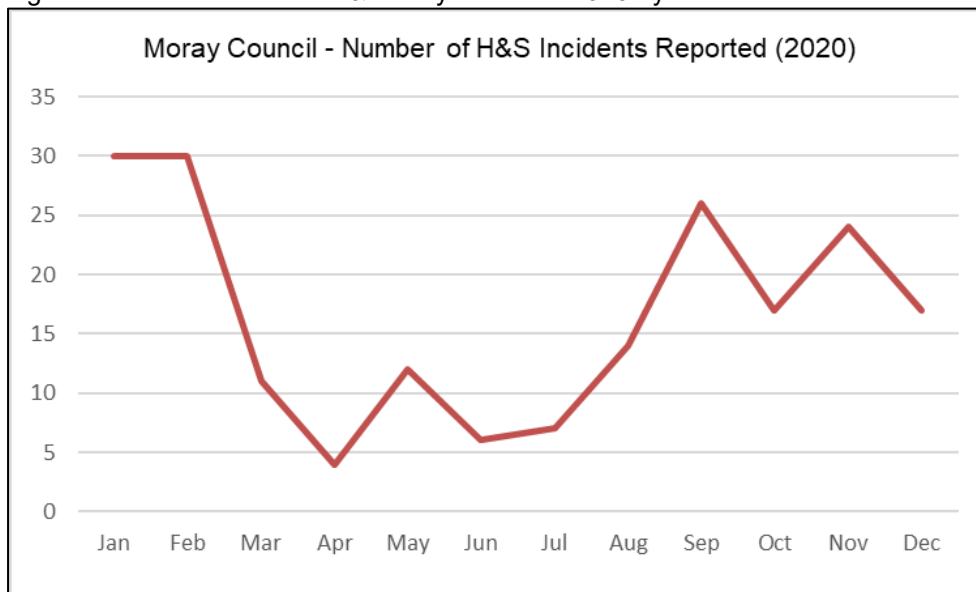
Figure 1a above shows the fall in incidents from March, when the pandemic began, into July when restrictions began to lift. Although incidents increased from August onwards, numbers were still below that recorded during the pre-COVID period in January and February.

Figure 2: Number of Health & Safety Incidents Reported by Department (2016-2020)
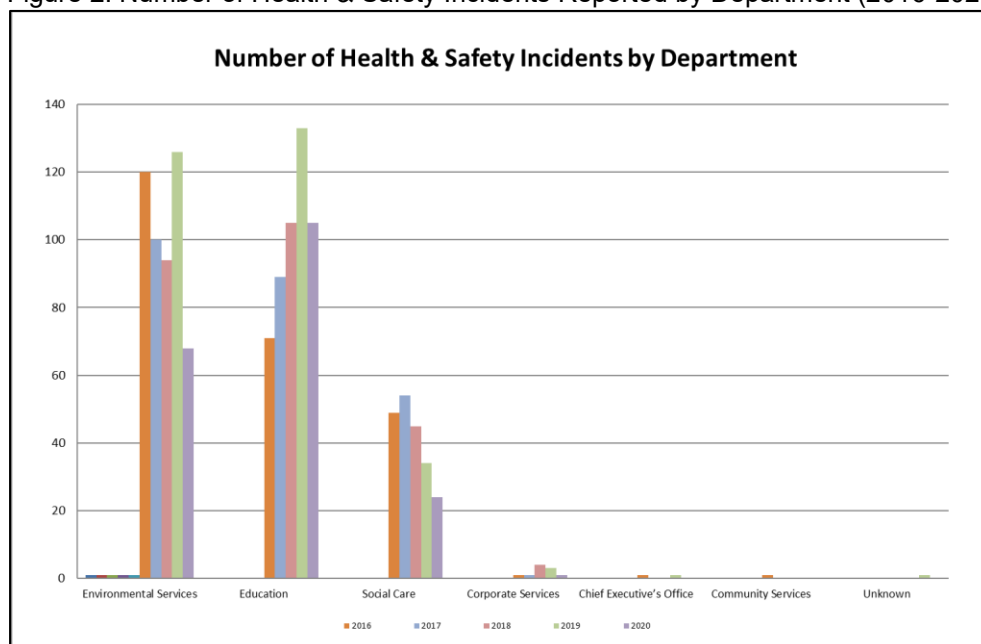
NB: The incident reporting form and recording spreadsheet are yet to be amended therefore the departments noted in the graph above do not reflect the current structure of Moray Council introduced in 2019. This does however allow for comparisons to be made with previous years.

Against all other departments, Education continues to record the highest number of Health and Safety incidents. Even with lockdown restrictions closing schools for the whole of term 4 and only limited pupils attending Hubs, total incidents during 2020 fell by just 21%. In comparison, incidents recorded within Environmental Services and Social Care fell by 46% and 29% respectively.

Figure 3: Number of Incidents by Type (2016-2020)
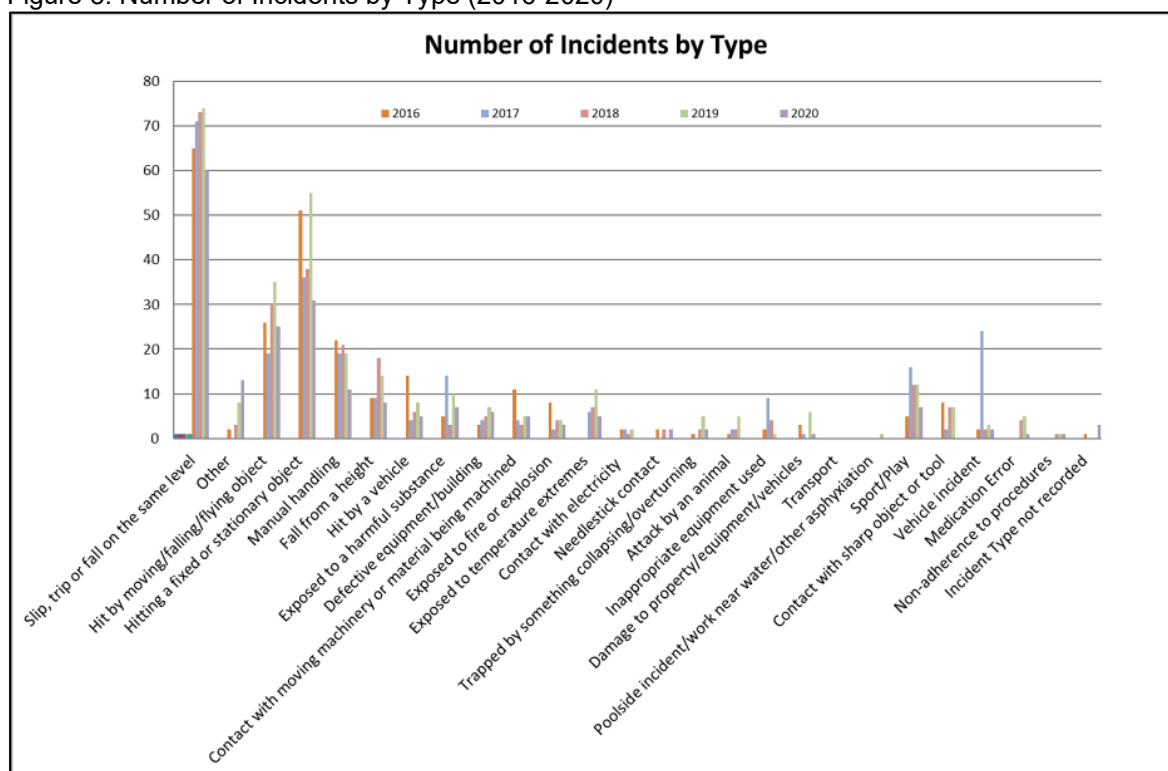
Number of Incidents by Type within figure 3 shows during 2020, "Slip, trips or falls" continued to account for the largest proportion of incidents reported (60) followed by "Hitting a fixed or stationary object" (31) and "Hit by moving/falling/flying" (25).

13 incidents this year remain recorded as "Other". Looking at the description recorded via the accident form, the majority of these (62%) were medical matters. There were also 3 incidents where no "Incident Type" was recorded, the highest number in recent years.

VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION INCIDENTS 2020

Figure 4: Violence and Aggression Incidents by Service based on quarterly performance report data (2016 to 2020)
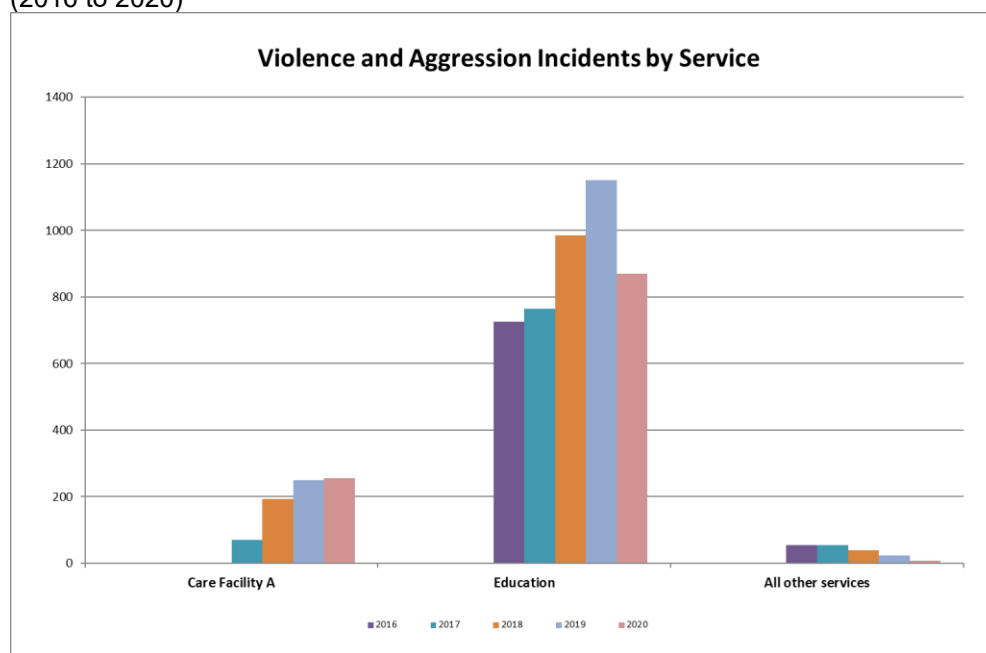
Adult Services

Figure 4 above shows Violence and Aggression Incidents at Care Facility A have increased during 2020 by 2% from 250 in 2019 to 255.

Education

Between 1 January to 31 December 2020, Violence and Aggression in schools has declined 24% with incidents falling from 1151 in 2019 to 871 in 2020. As with the decline in Health and Safety Incidents noted earlier, the reduction in Violence and Aggression is also likely due to the school closures between March and June 2020.

Violence and Aggression is reported to Education by academic year. Looking at data this way in figure 5 shows 2019/20, the year that included school closures for the whole of term 4, had the second highest number of incidents in recent years; 1,009, just 12% less than the year before. Of the 1,009, 88.6% were reported at Primary schools with 11.4% at Secondary schools.

Figure 5: Number of Violence and Aggression Incidents in Moray Schools (2014/15 to 2019/20)
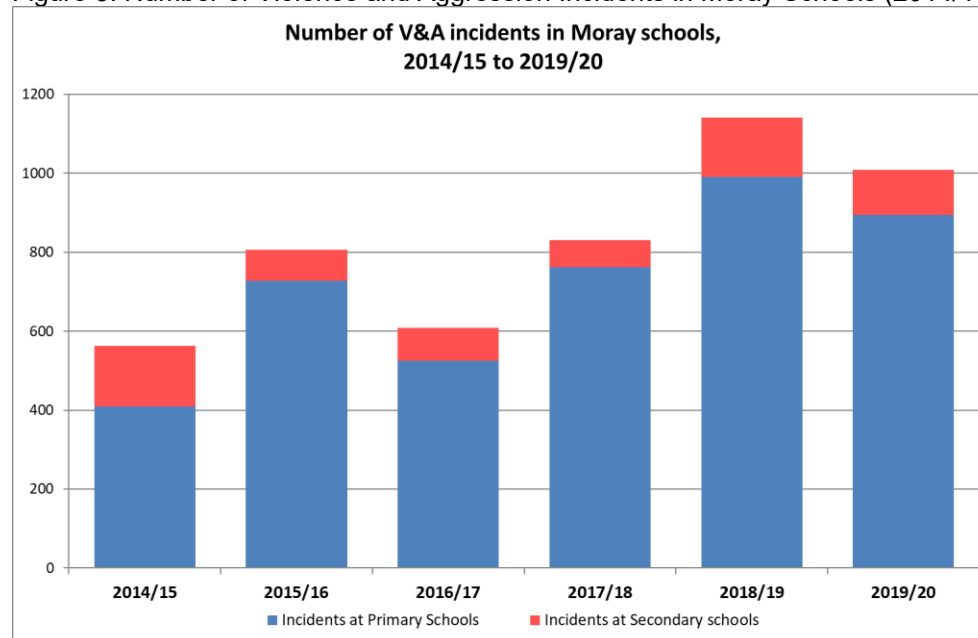
NB: Figure 5 includes revised data from that reported in last year's Health and Safety Report.

The most common type of V&A within Schools is "Physical assault with no weapon", which accounts for 58.7% of all incidents.

Other Services

Figure 4: Violence and Aggression Incidents Reported by Other Services (2016-2020)
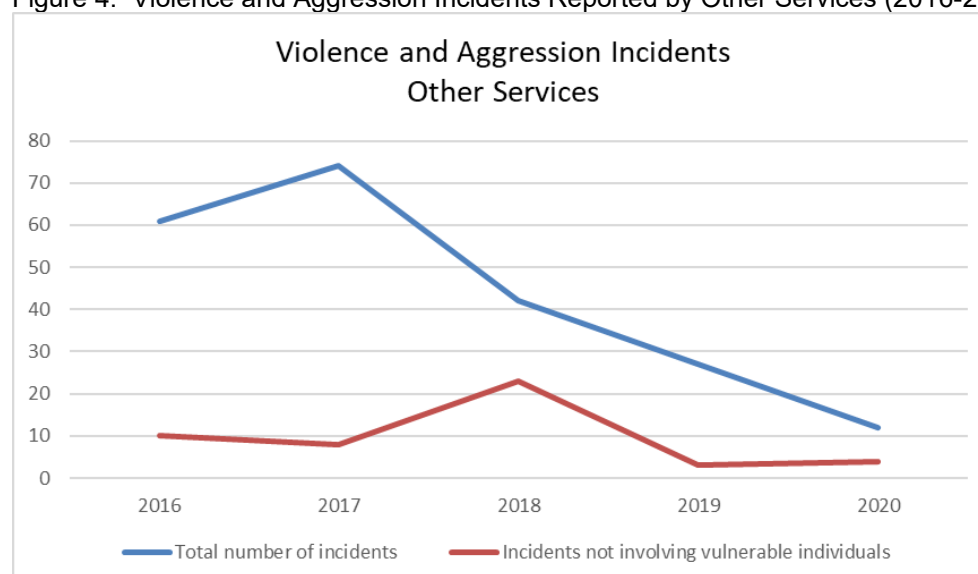
Since 2017, the number of Violence & Aggression incidents reported by other services within Moray Council has steadily declined. In 2020 just 12 incidents were reported compared to 74 in 2017, a fall of 84%. Incidents not involving vulnerable

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individuals peaked in 2018 at 23 but in the past two years have remained steady at around 4 incidents per year.

WORKING DAYS LOST DUE TO INDUSTRIAL INJURY/ACCIDENT 2010-2020

Figure 7: Moray Council Working Days Lost due to Industrial Incidents and Accidents (2010-2020)

The number of working days lost due to industrial injury or accident can fluctuate considerably from quarter-to-quarter however, since quarter 1 2018/19, days lost had remained well below target. During 2020, the impact of COVID-19 is clear with only 3 days lost during quarter 4 2019/20 and quarter 1 2020/21. However, as restrictions began to lift in quarter 2 2020/21, a significant spike of 118 days was recorded. Analysis of this increase is ongoing with more information into the cause of the spike requested.

Conclusion

It is already well document the impact COVID-19 has had across all areas of Moray Council. The effect of school closures, unprecedented levels of home working and the pausing of many social care services can clearly be seen from the decline recorded with both Health and Safety and Violence and Aggression incidents.

Education continues to account for the highest proportion of Health & Safety and Violence and Aggression incidents despite school closures and only limited pupils attending hubs between March and June 2020.

Ensuring the Health and Safety of staff and service users continues to be a priority for Moray Council.   The Interim Corporate Workforce Plan 2020-2022 and the HR & OD Service Plan 2020-22 both detail planned actions that will deliver effective health and safety systems and promote this culture across the organisation.   Data relating to these issues will continue to be monitored as services enter a phase of COVID recovery and renewal.

Item 19.

REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL
             DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021

SUBJECT: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SOCIAL WORK SERVICES
             REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO 31 MARCH 2021

BY: CHIEF OFFICER, HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   To inform the Education, Communities and Organisational Development
       Committee of the budget position for Children and Families Social Work
       Services as at 31 March 2021.

1.2   This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational
       Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on the 17 June
       2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19
       pandemic. In the case of this committee the combining of the delegated
       responsibilities of Children and Young People Services, Governance, Strategy
       and Performance, (para 9 of the minute refers).

2.   RECOMMENDATION

**2.1   It is recommended that Committee scrutinises and notes the budget
       position at 31 March 2021.**

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   The report highlights those areas of the budget where there is a significant
       percentage variance identified at 31 March 2021.

4.   BUDGET POSITION

4.1   The spend at 31 March 2021 is £16,672,000 against a budget to date of
       £19,673,000, giving an underspend of £3,001,000 as shown in **Appendix 1**.

4.2   The area teams have an underspend of £290,000. This is mainly due to
       underspends of £140,000 on self-directed support, £76,000 on home to
       school transport for foster children and £74,000 on the area teams operational
       budget.

4.3   Corporate Parenting and Commissioning has an underspend of £2,626,000. This is mainly due to an underspend in out of area and additional resource packages of £1,933,0000 which is partly due to children transitioning into adult services. There are also underspends on adoption placements through external providers, adoption allowances and adoption legal fees of £159,000, fostering fees and allowances £290,000, children with disabilities fun club contract coming to an end £52,000, end of NHS CAHM Project £52,000 and one-off income from another authority for the placement of adopted children £78,000. Special Moray Council 3 March 2021 approved net savings of £744,000 in 2021/22 from the Corporate Parenting and Commissioning budget (para 5 of the Minute refers).

4.4   Staff savings from vacancies and appointments below top of scale exceeded the budget by £66,000.

5.   **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

        (a)   Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)
                The Children's Services Revenue Budget has particular reference to National Outcome 8 – we have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.

        (b)   Policy and Legal
                The Council has statutory responsibilities to meet educational needs, the needs of children and young people in need and those it looks after.

        (c)   Financial implications
                The resource implications are set out in this report and at **Appendix 1.** The underspend as at 31 March is £3,001,000 against a budget of £19,673,000.

        (d)   Risk implications
                Budget Managers are aware of their responsibilities for managing budget allocations and approval for any variances will be sought from Committee in line with the Financial Regulations.

        (e)   Staffing implications
                There are no staffing implications associated with this report.

        (f)   Property
                There are no property implications associated with this report.

        (g)   Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
                An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the report is to inform the Committee on budget monitoring.

(h)   Consultations

Paul Connor, Principal Accountant and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer, have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report where it relates to their areas of responsibility.

6.   CONCLUSION

6.1   That Committee scrutinises and notes the budget position as at 31 March 2021.

Author of Report: Tracy Stephen, Acting Head of Children's Services
                     Nicky Gosling, Accountant

Background Papers: with authors

Children and Families Social Work Services

Budget Monitoring Report to 31st March 2021

Service	Revised Budget	Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Variance to Date	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Quality Assurance Team	133	133	126	7	5 %
Locality Management Groups	77	77	63	14	18 %
Children's Services Area Teams	4,021	4,021	3,781	240	6 %
Corporate Parenting & Commissioning	14,619	14,619	11,943	2,676	18 %
Justice Services	471	471	446	25	5 %
Reviewing Team	286	286	284	2	1 %
Children Services Additional Funding	-	-	-	-	-
Efficiency Savings-Children's Services	66	66	-	66	-
Children's Services COVID 19 costs	-	-	29	(29)	-
				-	
Children's Services Total	19,673	19,673	16,672	3,001	-

REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021

SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE REPORT -CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK – PERIOD TO MARCH 2021

BY: CHIEF OFFICER, HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   To inform the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 31 March 2021.

1.2   This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young Peoples Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance) (para 9 of the minute refers).

2.   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   It is recommended that Committee:

i)   scrutinises performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of March 2021; and

ii)   notes the actions being taken to improve performance where required.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   On 7 August 2019, the Council, approved a revised Performance Management Framework for services (para 5 of the minute refers).

4.   SERVICE PLANNING

4.1   Each service plan sets out the planned strategic and service level priorities and outcomes it intends to deliver in the coming year aligning closely with financial planning, corporate and community planning partnership strategic priorities. This report provides an interim update on progress on the service plan, key outcomes and performance indicators.   Committee is invited to

review progress to secure assurance that is satisfactory and to provide scrutiny and further direction where performance requires attention.

4.2 The narrative included is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service Plan Actions and Performance Indicators are provided.

Figure 1

SERVICE PLAN PRIORITIES		RAG
STRATEGIC LEVEL	Improved outcomes for looked after and care experienced children and young people	34%
	Children and Young people are safe from harm, abuse and neglect	33%
SERVICE LEVEL	Instigate transformational change programme	41%
OVERALL PLAN PROGRESS		35%

Comment

Progress is measured over the 3-year plan period. Annual progress is measured by milestone achievements. At the end of year 1 the plan is on target.

Data not available - Data not yet published or unavailable due to reporting timescales.

SERVICE PLAN PI'S

31

- Achieving Target — 12
- Within Target — 2
- Below Target — 2
- Data Only — 10
- Data not available — 5

Strategic Outcomes - successes

4.3 Work to improve the identification and monitoring of care leavers and care experienced young people in the youth and criminal justice systems' has completed within the target timescale. A monthly process, introduced in February 2021, uses new Business Intelligence reporting to extract Carefirst data that is circulated to social work teams who ensure the young person has a case management plan (Criminal Justice) or a Start AV assessment and plan (Youth Justice) in place to target support and referrals whilst they are open to the service. (Action STRAT 1.4)

4.4 All three underlying actions focused on early intervention to minimise impact of neglect, parental substance misuse and domestic abuse have met planned milestones for the reporting period. The upcoming launch of a Neglect Toolkit and staff training will assist staff to work more confidently with families. The new locality planning model commencing in April utilises the Multi-Agency Support Hub to deliver appropriate services at an early stage. 'Safe and Together training for trainers' has commenced to build on practitioner skills in supporting families experiencing domestic violence. Representation on the Violence Against Women strategic group is in place. (Action STRAT 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3)

Strategic Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

4.5 As at 31 March 2021 there were 177 Looked after Children (LAC) in Moray. Work to increase the proportion of children and young people looked after in kinship and foster care and care at home is measured by 10 milestones, three of which have not been met. The milestone to achieve a 3% increase in Looked After Children (LAC) under home supervision showed an overall increase of 1% to 20.3% in the year to March 2021. This may be as a result of a marked increase in the number of LAC accommodated in kinship

placements returning to the family home and there not being a requirement for them to remain looked after. At the end 2020/21 1.1% of LAC were placed for adoption below the target of 2.2%, due to the small numbers involved, any change can have a significant effect on the percentage result. The remaining milestone that was not met by the end of 2020/21 was the number of new fostering households exceeding the number leaving, with three new households recruited and seven households leaving; the implementation of the fostering service plan seeks to redress that imbalance. Mindful that these aims are set in overall context of reducing requirement for residential care, improvements in other LAC care categories has contributed to the reduction from 21.3% of LAC being cared for in residential accommodation in March 2020 to 17.5% in 2021. (Action STRAT 1.1, PI's EdS606.01 & EdS606.09)

Service Level Outcomes - successes

4.6   Good progress in instigating the transformational change programme has been made; training in an evidence informed NSPCC Reunification Assessment is being delivered to support, where appropriate, our children's return to Moray from current Out of Area Placements. Consideration of a resource panel to look at decision making around placing children in care is in hand. Indicators support this activity with just one child placed out of area and three children returning to Moray, an improvement from the 8 to 3 ratio last year. (Action SERV 1.4 / PIs LAC004, LAC005)

Service Level Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

4.7   The process of integrating Children and Families and Criminal Justice Social Work services into the Integrated Joint Board has not been completed by 31 March as planned, with current progress recorded at 50%. Staffing changes in quarter 4 resulted in delays. With a new project leader appointed and regular meeting opportunities with IJB in place to allow the transition, the project can now push forward at pace. (Action SERV1.1.)

5.   **SERVICE PERFORMANCE**

5.1   In line with the Performance Management Framework, operational performance is reviewed quarterly by departmental management. Areas performing well and/or areas subject to a decreasing trend or where benchmarking results show performance significantly below comparators will be reported to this committee for member scrutiny.

5.2   In February 2021 the initial publication of 2019/20 Local Government Benchmarking Framework Indicators were made available, Children's social work indicators are not currently available until the information is refreshed in early May. The full suite (excluding children's indicators) can be viewed using the My Local Council tool.

5.3   Report is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service Performance Indicators is provided.

Figure 2

SERVICE PERFORMANCE PI'S

- Achieving Target
- Within Target
- Below Target
- Data Only
- Data not available
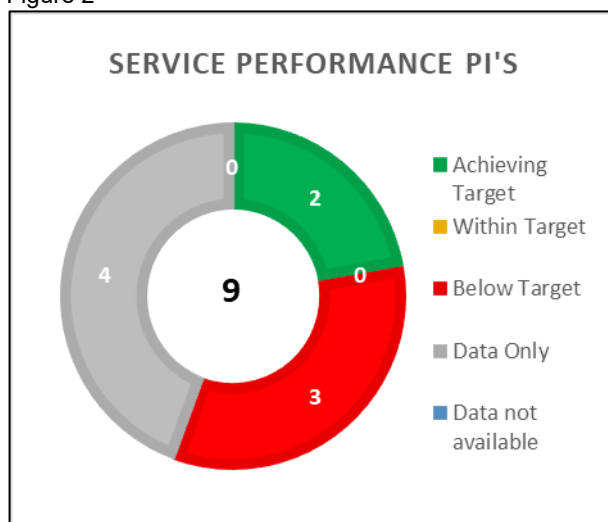
Operational Indicators - successes

5.4   As Figure 3 below shows both the number of Looked After Children (LAC) and the number of children on the Child Protection register (CPR) have declined significantly over the past four years. Rates per 1,000 for LAC and children on the CPR are both significantly below the median of comparator authorities. (PI's CSCF100, CMS013)

Figure 3

Number of LAC and children on Child Protection register
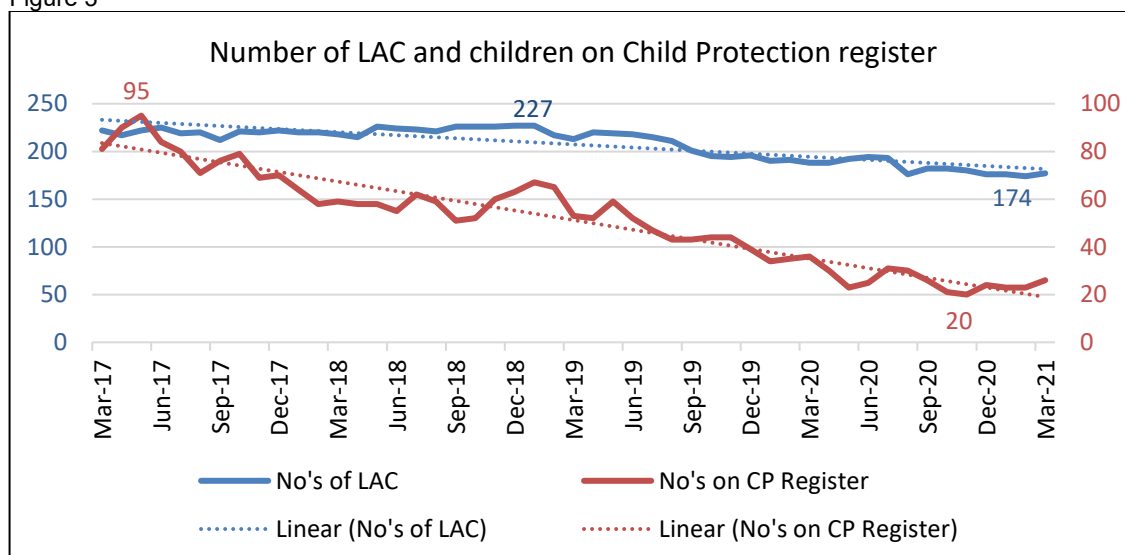
Operational Indicators - challenges and actions to support

5.5   Whilst the overall proportion of LAC in foster care placements has risen throughout 2020/21, as at March 2021 6.2% are within placements purchased by the council, above the current target of 4%. Many of these placements are needed for children presenting with specific needs which are not able to be met by the available council foster carers. Work is underway to recruit carers that have shown an interest and ability to provide placements to children presenting with specific needs. (PI LAC007)

5.6   In 2020/21, the percentage of LAC in paid placements, at 75.7% remains stubbornly high and almost 12% higher than the comparator authority median. The major influencing factor is the low percentage of LAC under home supervision (para 4.5 refers). Whilst this may show this indicator as underperforming, with less Looked After children in 2020/21 than in 2019/20, the overall placement costs will be lower. (PI LAC006)

5.7   The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) publishes social work workforce resource levels annually. Census data from 2 December 2019 shows that Moray has the equivalent of 379.4 whole time equivalent (WTE) children's services fieldwork social workers per 100,000 children aged 0-17, significantly above our comparator authorities median of 196 and the second highest rate in Scotland. For the majority of other local authorities' resource levels have dropped since March 2018, whereas levels in Moray have increased. (PI WRL001)

6.   **OTHER PERFORMANCE RELATED DATA**

        Complaints & MP/MSP Enquiries

6.1   In line with the Performance Management Framework, complaints are reviewed quarterly by departmental management in terms of time taken to respond, outcome and learning points. Links to backing tables for all Service Complaints is provided.

6.2   A total of 33 complaints were received during 2020/21, 10 in quarter 4. Thirty eight complaints were closed in the period, eight in quarter 4. Of those complaints closed, 17 were at frontline stage (45%), two were upheld, six were partially upheld and nine were not upheld. Due to the impact of the pandemic, the average time to resolve frontline complaints varied significantly, from 36 days in quarter 1 to 4 days in quarter 4.

6.3   Due to the complexity of complaints received by the service, many need further investigation. Twenty one complaints were closed at investigative stage (55%) in the period, two were upheld. 12 were partially upheld and seven were not upheld. Resolution times also varied from 31 days in quarter 1 to 18 days in quarter 4. There were no escalated complaints.

6.4   A total of 5 MSP enquiries were received in the period, 3 in quarter 4. Three enquiries were out with jurisdiction, one was resolved and the remaining enquiry remains ongoing.

        Other Performance (not included within Service Plan)

6.5   There has been a significant reduction in the number of community payback orders with an unpaid work requirement made during 2020/21. With courts unable to operate for long periods during the pandemic, 79 orders were made, compared to 229 in 2019/20 Due to the social distancing restrictions in place, it has been particularly difficult to carry out the unpaid work element of these orders where supervision is required. However, innovation has been used as appropriate with a homeworking model adopted and tasks not requiring direct

supervision used to contribute to outstanding hours. Requests for court reports have more than halved during 2020/21 in comparison to 2019/20. All reports requested have been submitted to courts by the due date in 2020/21. (PIs CJ05, CJ01b, CJ01)

Case Studies

6.6   Nothing to report.

Consultation and Engagement

6.7   Nothing to report.

7.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a)   Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))
Performance measurement is used to ensure the efficient and sustainable delivery of services to meet the Council's priorities in both the Corporate Plan and the LOIP.

(b)   Policy and Legal
The Council has a statutory requirement to publish a range of information that will demonstrate that it is securing best value and assist in comparing performance both over time and between authorities where appropriate.

(c)   Financial implications
None.

(d)   Risk Implications
None.

(e)   Staffing Implications
None.

(f)   Property
None.

(g)   Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform the Committee on performance.

(h)   Consultations
The Head of Children and Families and Criminal Justice Social Work, Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Service Managers, Legal Services, the Equal Opportunities Officer, and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

8   CONCLUSION

8.1   As at 31 March 2021, of the 12 service plan actions; one service level action due for completion failed to meet target timescale, the strategic action due to complete has completed. Anticipated progress for two strategic actions is behind schedule for this stage of the plan but there is sufficient time to catch up in years 2 and 3. One action is not due to commence until April 2021. The remaining actions are either performing to or above target levels at this stage of the plan.

8.2   Working within the limits imposed by COVID-19 restrictions has proven challenging in the past year. Under these circumstances the service has continued to meet the needs of the children and young people in its charge. In the coming year work needs to accelerate to progress the integration of the service into the Integrated Joint Board (IJB). It is anticipated that with the appointment of a new project lead to support the transformational change programme this process will be able to move forward at pace in 2021/22.

Author of Report:	Iain Sneddon, Research & Information Officer
Background Papers:	Held by Author
Ref:	SPMAN-1315769894-51

REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL
              DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021

SUBJECT: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND JUSTICE SERVICES SOCIAL
              WORK SERVICE PLAN 2020-23

BY: CHIEF OFFICER, HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

1.   **REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1   To invite the Committee to consider the Children and Families and Justice
      Services Social Work Service Plan for 2020-23.

1.2   This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational
      Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June
      2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19
      pandemic in the case of this committee the combining of the delegated
      responsibilities of Children and Young Peoples Services, Governance,
      Strategy and Performance) (para 9 of the minute refers).

2.   **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1   **It is recommended that Committee consider and approve the Service
      Plan for children and families and justice social work.**

3.   **BACKGROUND**

3.1   At the meeting of this Committee in 3 February 2021, the Committee agreed
      to defer the decision on this item to allow targets to be populated (para 18 of
      the minute refers). The Chief Officer met with Elected Members on 8 March
      to demonstrate that Service Plan progress is monitored by a combination of
      milestone improvements and local and national performance indicators.
      Members were satisfied with the monitoring arrangements in place using
      Pentana, the Council's performance monitoring software.

3.2   Service planning is a key aspect of the Council's Performance Management
      Framework and is undertaken annually to set out the strategic direction for
      services over the coming months. Typically, actions are more certain in the
      short term, but work will continue beyond a 12-month period and will feature in
      plans for more than a single year. There has been a delay in presenting
      service plans due to the Covid-19 pandemic and so these plans cover the
      period to April 2023 in order to recover the April planning cycle.

4. THE PLAN

4.1 The Children and Families and Justice Social Work Service Plan identifies the areas to be progressed over the next three years, with the ambition of improving outcomes for children and their families in their communities. The main focus will be on the model and approach of social work; the model and approach to commissioning at a strategic and individual level, and the subsequent contract monitoring; and to support Moray children who are living out of area, to return to be closer to their families and communities where appropriate (**Appendix 1**).

4.2 This plan will also contribute to support the ambitions of the Moray Children's Services Plan 2020/23.

4.3 Looking forward, it is anticipated that a significant amount of planned work will be on improvement and modernisation of the approach of social work, informed by the Independent Care Review and The Promise. Operationally, the Covid-19 pandemic will continue to have a significant ongoing impact on service delivery and management of time and resources. It is, highly likely to affect services' ability to focus on planned work as well as responding to the operational context the pandemic creates. Nevertheless, there remains within the services a clear commitment to progressing change.

5. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))
The service plans were informed by the LOIP and the Council's Corporate Plan.

(b) Policy and Legal
Statutory requirements and council policies are considered by Manager's when preparing service plans for the year ahead.

(c) Financial implications
No additional financial resources are required to support the service.

(d) Risk Implications
Up to date risk registers are maintained and considered as part of the service planning process. The covid-19 pandemic will have an ongoing impact on services as resources are directed to the priority of responding to and adapting to COVID requirements. This will mean that resources may be diverted from the actions set out in the plan depending upon how the pandemic evolves.

(e) Staffing Implications
Service plans are integral to good management practice including workforce planning and assisting with communication about work plans for staff, identifying priorities and matching staff time to the Council's priorities.

(f) Property
There are no property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
Managers consider equalities issues for staff and service users when assessing current service delivery arrangements and future requirements.

(h) Consultations
The Chief Officer, Health and Social Care, Legal Services, the Equal Opportunities Officer, Service Managers and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Service plans have been prepared identifying the improvements targeted for the period up to April 2023. In preparing the plans managers have taken account of risk, performance data (including inspections and Best Value), the LOIP, the Corporate Plan and other relevant factors such as audit outcomes. Consideration has also been given to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and recovery that is required to respond to that. The service plans identify the resources allocated to each service and how these will be utilised to deliver core service requirements and improvements.

Author of Report:	Tracy Stephen, Interim Head of Children and Families and Criminal Justice Social Work
Background Papers:	Held by Author
	ECOD Committee 03 February 2021
	Report / Appendix
Ref:	SPMAN-1315769894-57 / SPMAN-1315769894-58

1. **Service Definition:**	**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK** A. Children and Families social work teams (East, West, Access). B. Placement Services. C. Youth Justice. D. Criminal Justice. E. Community Justice. F. Out of Hours team. G. Reviewing team. H. Associated business support. I. Cala (managed on behalf of children's service by adult services). J. commissioned services
2. **Service Resources**:	**REVENUE BUDGET: £19,276,000** **FTE: 148.37**

3. **What have we identified for improvement in 2020/21**	**Recovery & Renewal** **(tick if app)**	**What evidence did we use to identify this improvement?** **Please add benchmark information wherever available and relevant to the improvement.**
Our social work approach to how we work with people	☐	LGBF on our numbers of children who are not living with their own families or in a family setting; learning from complaints; Effective and regular monitoring of available data to influence service delivery.
Our approach to commissioning	☐	Contracts requiring to be reviewed; financial imperative to release savings identified through budget setting; refresh contracts that have been in place to ensure they are meeting the outcomes for children and their families; costs of placements; having to source places for children to stay in away from Moray; our Out of Area budget remaining at £6.5M, funding a very small number of people often in places far from home.
Keeping children who can't stay with their families in Moray	☐	Independent Care Review findings and associated actions. Above two boxes of evidence are equally relevant here too.

4. Strategic Outcome or Priority	Action	Planned Outcome	Recovery & Renewal	Outcome measures	Completion target	Lead	Priority Rating (1 high 3 low and 4 for ongoing, 5 for on hold?)
(L) Building a better future for our children & young people. (CP) Our People: Opportunity for people to be the best they can be CSP Priority 4; Improved outcomes for looked after and care experienced children and young people.	1. Children and young people looked after in kinship and foster care and care at home increases. 2. Time taken and number of placements a young person experiences before achieving permanence reduces.	(L) Children and care leavers have safe, secure, stable and nurturing homes	Services continued to be provided during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic as per statutory requirement.	1. Increase the number and range of fostering households. 2. Increased % of children in foster, kinship and care at home. 3. % of brother and sisters remaining together within the same Foster Care placement. 4. Reduction in drift and delay as measured by PACE data. 5. Reduction in the number of children moving placement within the reporting year.	March 2023 ***Targets adjusted annually and measured by a suite of performance indicators.*** ***End of plan (March 2023) target set at comparator authorities' median value.*** ***Annual Milestone improvements to measure progress to target.***	Tracy Stephen (Interim head of service)	1 & 4
(L) Building a better future for our children & young people. (CP) Our People: Opportunity for people to be the best they can be	1. Improve the identification and monitoring of care leavers and care experienced young people in the youth and criminal justice systems. 2. Reduce any over representation of care leavers and care experienced young people in the youth and criminal justice systems.	(L) The number of looked after children and care leavers who enter the youth and criminal justice systems is reduced	Services continued to be provided during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic as per statutory requirement.	1. Process in place which is consistently adhered to. 2. Reduce the % of care experienced young people in the youth and criminal justice systems.	March 2021 March 2023	Tracy Stephen (Interim head of service)	1 & 4

(L) Building a better future for our children & young people. (CP) Our People: Opportunity for people to be the best they can be	1. Children and young people feel secure and supported in their relationships	(L) Looked after children and care leavers are enabled to maintain positive relationships with their family, friends, and other trusted adults.	Services continued to be provided during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic as per statutory requirement.	1. Baseline data to be collected to measure improvement. 2. % of Looked After Children report they feel more able to maintain positive relationships with family, friends and other trusted adults.	March 2021 March 2023	Tracy Stephen (Interim head of service)	1 & 4
(L) Building a better future for our children & young people. (CP) Our People: Opportunity for people to be the best they can be	1. Intervene at the earliest opportunity to minimise the impact of neglect on children and young people. 2. Intervene at the earliest opportunity to minimise the impact of parental substance use on family wellbeing. 3. Intervene at the earliest opportunity to minimise the impact of domestic abuse on children, young people and parents	(L) Children live in safe and supportive families (CP) Improved outcomes for our most vulnerable young people and families.	Services continued to be provided during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic as per statutory requirement.	1. % of young people who report feeling safe as a result of an intervention in the reporting year. 2. Number of children on child protection register. 3. Number of children on the Child Protection Register (per 1,000 of 0-15 population). 4. Reduction in the % of children on the Child Protection Register as a result of Neglect concerns. 5. Reduction in the % of children on the Child Protection Register as a result of Parental Substance Misuse concerns. 6. Reduction in the % of children on the Child Protection Register as a result of Domestic Abuse concerns. 7. Number of children with child protection orders (per 1,000 of 0-15 population)	March 2023 *Targets adjusted annually and measured by a suite of performance indicators.* *End of plan (March 2023) target set at comparator authorities' median value.* *Annual Milestone improvements to measure progress to target.*	Tracy Stephen (Interim head of service)	1 & 4

				8. Number of children Looked After (per 1,000 population) 9. Number of children referred to Children's Reporter - non offence (per 1,000 0-17 population)			

5. Service Level Outcomes or Priorities	**Action**	**Planned Outcome**	**Recovery & Renewal**	**Outcome Measures**	**Completion Target**	**Lead**	**Priority rating**
Instigate transformational change programme	1. Complete Intermediate business case and get authorisation to progress with programme	The whole system has a clear road map to understand the change required to support children and families the way they want to be supported	Services continued to be provided during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic as per statutory requirement.	Change programme is underway.	April 2021	Andy Doneghan	1
	2. Initiate the three work streams within the transformational change programme	1. Our practice model changes.	Services continued to be provided during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic as per statutory requirement.	1. Families report feeling supported in how they look after their children.	March 2022	Tracy Stephen (Interim head of service)	2
		2. Our commissioning model changes.		2. Contracts with commissioned services are explicit in what is expected of them to meet individual outcomes for the child or family they are commissioned to support.	March 2023	Commissioning and corporate parenting service manager	2
		3. Our children return to Moray		3. Children return to live in Moray from where they currently live.	March 2022	Tracy Stephen (Interim head of service) in conjunction with commissioning and corporate parenting manager.	2

REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021

SUBJECT: CORPORATE PARENTING

BY: CHIEF OFFICER, HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   To inform the Committee of data and service activities relating to corporate parenting in Moray.

1.2   This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance, (para 9 of the minute refers).

2.   RECOMMENDATION

i)   It is recommended that Committee considers and notes the content of the report.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   The Corporate Parenting Strategy for Moray 2017 – 2020 was approved by the Community Planning Partnership in October 2017 and was launched at the Champions Board which was held that month. The next strategy will be coproduced with our children, young people and their families. Consistent with the Promise, family will be defined by our children and young people.

3.2   This report will explore the following: -

i)   A brief overview of what is meant by looked after child
ii) Numbers, rate (per 1,000 of the 0-18 population) and placement type
iii) Focus on assessments, planning and reviews
iv) Systems in place with education for tracking attainment and attendance
v)   Pathway planning for independence, from a basis of continuing care and being better equipped to leave care
vi) Future activities to implement the Promise.

Taking each of these in turn.

3.3   Children are looked after when they: -

(a) Are provided with accommodation out with the care of their parent/s. The
child may be looked after, and therefore cared for, in kinship care, foster
care or residential care, including residential school or secure care.

(b) Remain living in the care of their parent/s but are subject to a Supervision
Order under Section 83 of the Children's Hearing (Scotland) Act 2011
without condition of residence.

3.4   More usually the basis for becoming looked after is to safeguard and promote
the welfare of the child.

3.5   There is always a legal basis for a child being looked after, either the child's
parent/s have given legal consent for the child to be looked after or there is an
order in place, through a Children's Hearing or court.

3.6   The language around looked after children, care leavers and care
experienced children/young people can be confusing. Children and young
people have said that they dislike the wording of 'looked after' and that they
prefer the phrase care experienced. Care experienced applies for children
who are or who have been looked after. A care leaver is used to describe a
young person who ceased being looked on or after their 16th birthday and who
is eligible for after care advice and assistance.

Numbers, Percentage and Placement Type

3.7   The Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland, published at the end of March
every year, report on the period ending 31 July of the previous year. The
statistics for 2019- 2020 are attached (**Appendix 1).** They reflect an increase
in the number of looked after children in Scotland for the first time in 7 years.
The reason for the increase in number in Scotland is because fewer children
were leaving care, rather than there being an increase in the number of
children becoming looked after. The numbers for looked after children in
Moray have reduced for the following reasons: -

(a) Fewer children are becoming looked after.

(b) When they are becoming looked after, given change in practice following
our engagement with the Permanence and Care Excellence (PACE)
programme in 2018, they return to paternal care more quickly, when safe
to do so.

The Permanence and Care Excellence (PACE) programme was run jointly
by the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland
(CELCIS) and the Scottish Government: it began in Scotland in 2014. The
aim of the programme was to enable more looked after children to
experience permanence without drift and delay in their care planning. The
programme applied an improvement methodology from the basis that
delay in care planning for children and young people was not the
responsibility of any one agency. All local authorities had the opportunity

to engage with the programme between 2014 and December 2018. The project closed during 2020, however working practices in Moray will continue to work with the Quality Improvement methodology principles applied within PACE, reflected in the Children's Services Plan.

(c) Increasingly when cared for in kinship care often their carer seeks an alternative order through court, to secure the child permanently in the kinship household, thus removing the child from the legal definition of being 'in care'.

3.8   The following graphs and table are considered to be helpful for an overview of Moray's care experienced young people. The onset of Covid is marked, given its impact. Weekly data, monitoring the impact of covid on vulnerable children and families and how services have been responding, is published by the Scottish Government. The focus of this report is the general context for looked after children and service developments in Moray. Figure 1 shows the numbers of young people looked after November 2016 – Feb 2021

Figure 1
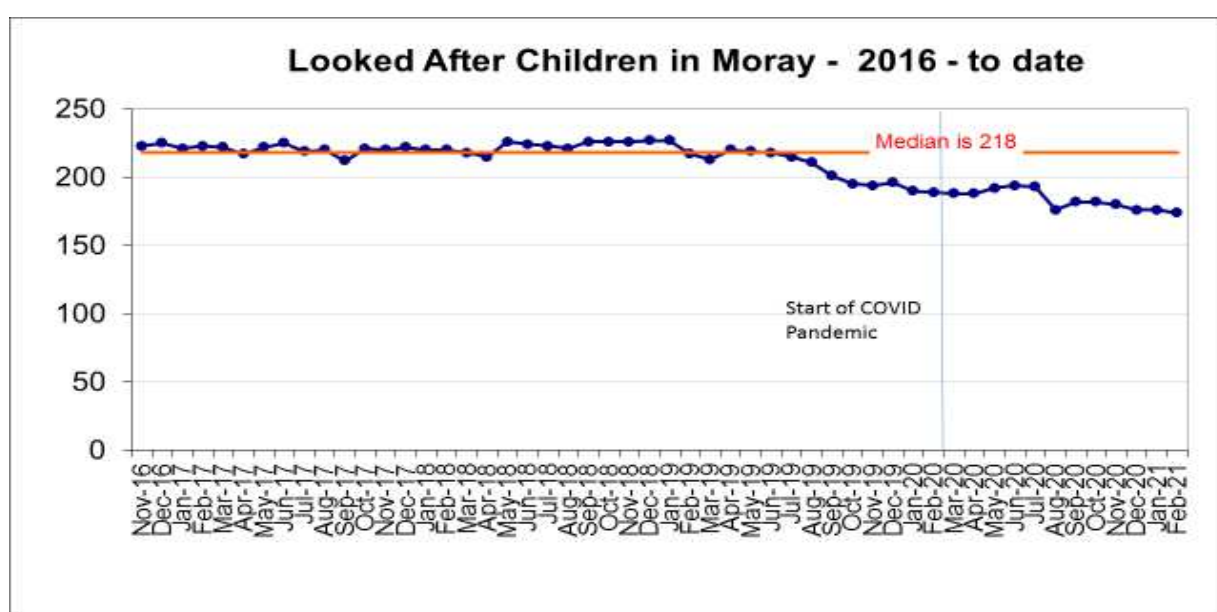
The graph reflects that fewer children are looked after in Moray, especially since the onset on covid and that the reducing trend had started before covid for the reasons noted above.

3.9   Reporting numbers needs to be in context therefore rate per 1,000 of the 0-18 population is used. Table 1 details the numbers, rate and placement types for Moray's looked after children in the periods 31st July 2018; 2019 and 2020.

Table 1 -

	2018	2019	2020
Number of looked after children Moray	222	210	188
Shown as a % of the 0-18 years population in	12.1%	11.5%	10.3%

Moray			

Consistent with the graph above, the number and rate, per 1,000 of the 0-18 population, of looked after children has reduced.

Care Placement	2018	2019	2020
Looked after at home Number %	46 21%	44 21%	40 21%

While the number of Moray's looked after children who are on home supervision orders through the children's hearing system are reducing, the % rate has remained constant. At 21% of our population of looked after children, this reflects far fewer looked after children living at home in Moray, compared with our benchmarking comparator authorities whose % is reported between 30-33%. The PACE steering group is going to audit the needs and nature of intervention that is in place for children in need, prior to the child becoming looked after. There is some evidence that children are supported as children in need, prior to becoming looked after and that when they become looked after they are looked after and accommodated in a care placement, rather than being cared for as looked after children at home.

Consistent with the Promise (the Scottish Government's Independent Care Review 2020) "where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay - Scotland must provide families with support that lasts as long as required, with the collective acceptance that for some families this will be a long-term commitment", we continue to develop our focussed family work to support our children to safely remain living in the care of their families.

Placement type Foster care	2018	2019	2020
Number Rate	82 37%	67 32%	60 32%

The number and rate reported above is for children who are looked after in foster care, either by Moray foster carers or by independent foster agencies.

The number of children who are looked after in foster care is reducing but the % rate for the last 2 years has remained at 32%. Our benchmarking comparator authorities have a similar rate for their foster care placements.

To offer a choice of placement and alternatives to residential care, we have worked hard to improve our ability to offer family based placements to children. The strategy that has been developed is for targeted recruitment of placements for children who we have previously found it challenging to find the correct foster families for.

Placement type Residential Care	2018	2019	2020
Total residential care Number Rate	48 22%	44 21%	35 19%

The rate for residential placements in Moray	8%	10%	9%
The rate for out of area residential placements	14%	11%	10%

The total number reported above is for children who are looked after in residential care, this includes care in Moray and residential homes, schools and secure care, out of the Moray area.

The rate of children who are looked after in residential care out of the Moray area is reducing, due to a focus of our workforce in returning children and young people back to Moray where that was appropriate, however compared with our benchmarking comparator authorities our use of residential care in total remains exceptionally high and this is one of our priorities for the coming year. Our comparators rate for **total** residential care for each of those years is 13%: 12% and 13%: the total for Moray for each of those years is 22%; 21% and 19%. We will continue to develop our workforce in relational and family based interventions that support children to remain with their parents wherever possible.

The Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee in February 2021 approved the reduction of 2 bed spaces in Moray which have been used by children whose need for care was on the basis of social or emotional needs, instead focussing our resources on our work within families.

Placement type Kinship care	2018	2019	2020
Number Rate	39 17%	47 22%	48 26%

The number and rate for children who are looked after in kinship care in Moray is increasing. Our comparator authorities' rates for each of these three years are 21%, 23% and 22%.

In Moray following the initial formal kinship care scheme in 2009 the number and rate of kinship placements was fairly constant. Since our engagement with the PACE programme, from 2018, there has been change in practice which is evidenced through these figures. We recognise that children do best when they are living with their parents, however, where that is not possible young people are best placed (where that can happen safely) with other family members.

Figure 2 reflects the increase in kinship care for looked after children
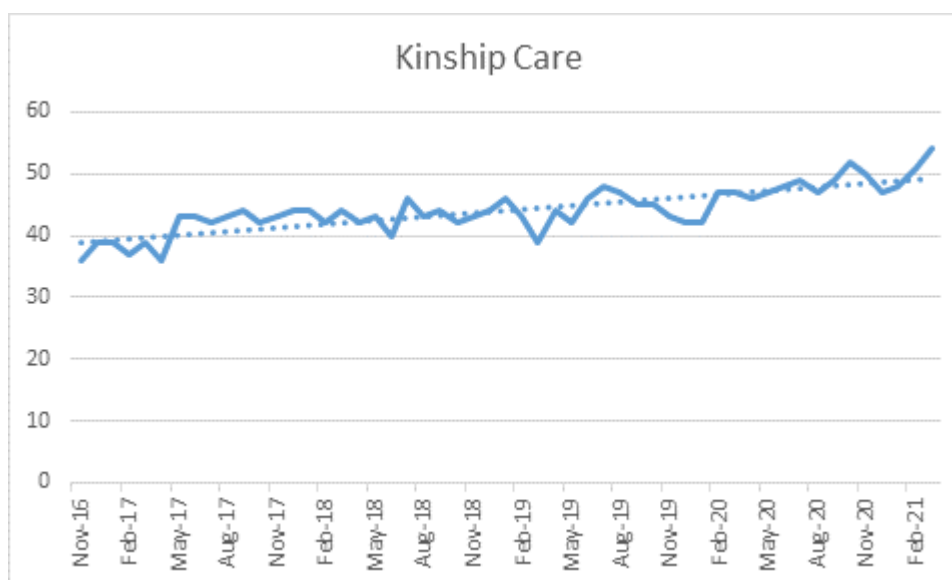
Kinship Care

Figure 3 shows the increase in the number of children for whom their kinship carers are seeking alternative orders through court, removing the child from public care and making the child's care permanent in the kinship family.

Figure 3

S11 Carers
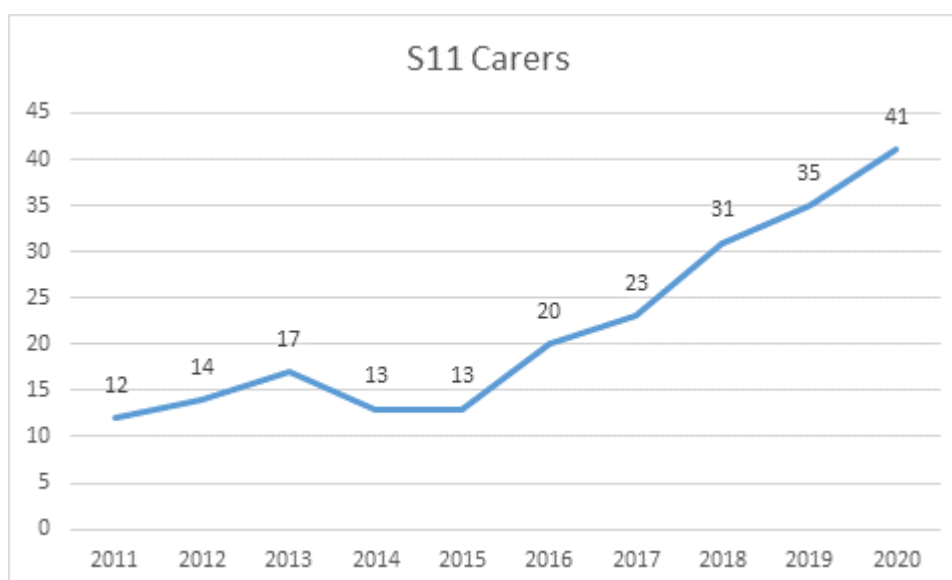
Assessments, planning and reviews

3.10   The processes for assessing and reviewing, the needs and placements of our looked after children are based in legislation and are informed by emerging guidance and practice.

3.11   An audit of our placements of children in foster care indicated that our social workers have identified a need to ensure that children are cared for together with their brothers/ sisters. A number of the placements made with independent foster agencies have been made on the basis of need for children to be together, so placements made with independent foster agencies have been resource based, when we have not had placement options for children to be living with their brothers and sisters with Moray

foster carers. The renewed recruitment strategy for fostering has a focus on placing children together.

3.12 The timing and content of formal reviews for our children is consistent with legislation. However there is no set format in legislation about how and where reviews should be held. We welcome the findings of The Promise that will support us to look at how review meetings are conducted based on what children and their families tell us. We are currently in the process of a consultation to establish families' views around this.

3.13 Work on the issues of how and where reviews and meetings might be held has been progressed through the Better Meetings project, which started in 2019. The work of the group has created a trilogy of films, the third being made in February this year, the first was shown at the Champions' Board meeting in February 2020. This project has involved 21 children and young people across Moray and been led by Who Cares? Scotland working together with members of Children's Hearing Scotland and social workers. The work of the Better Meetings project offers practice guidance that will be rolled out across Moray given the focus is all meetings and not just Children's Hearing and Looked after Child reviews.

3.14 Auditing and monitoring of reviews has been developed because of need to ensure our meetings are robust and meet children's needs and takes cognisance of a recommendation made to us by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). Systems for the administration and business support for reviews have also been developed.

3.15 Engagement with the PACE programme resulted in the introduction of what is called the 2 week planning meeting. This meeting was a systems change to which improvement methodology was applied, it is not based in legislation, but we do recognise it better meets children's needs. Consistent with other local authorities that introduced this meeting, our tests of change found that the meeting helped parents and workers to focus on what are key issues; what needs to change; what supports are needed to help make that change. Audit has found that when safe to do so children are returning to parental care quicker and families are keen to maintain changes made so that their children remaining living at home.

Education systems

3.16 To raise awareness about corporate parenting and of the issues that matter to our children who are looked after, there have been briefing sessions at head teachers meetings and designated teacher training has been developed and delivered. The most recent session for designated teachers was February 2020 at a session called "the Voice of the Child". This session was designed by and delivered not only to designated teachers but to social workers and children hearing members. Key to the session were the voices of our children who had been involved in a specific consultation project.

3.17 In the summer of 2019 a senior social worker and the teacher for children who are looked after spoke to 26 of our children who were either placed out of Moray at that time, or who had returned from having been cared for out of

Moray. The children and young people were asked to talk through their views and wishes. What we were told by our young people was that relational and person-centred planning is needed. They want us to support them to hold on to the things that are working well in their lives to avoid unnecessary disruptions and moves. Our young people were craving a commitment from all our Care and Education staff to get to know them beyond the reports and paperwork. We have kept this on our agenda and continue to work in a way that reduces moves of placement for young people where we can.

3.18 On 5 May 2021 the Education and Employability pillar group of Corporate Parenting and the Champions Board, held a development session which was previously planned for January but due to COVID had to be rescheduled. The session included all key partners within the Education and Employability pillar area. The session looked at data in relation to attainment, exclusions and attendance both in Moray and nationally, as well as the "asks" of the Promise in education. Projects including Mentoring Young Talent, Advocacy, Youth Engagement and the Young Persons Guarantee were highlighted as areas of good practice. There was a sharp focus on what education need to do to ensure they deliver the "asks" of The Promise and next steps suggested. The Pillar group will meet to develop an action plan to support all partners to fully embed the "asks" of the Promise in practice in education.

3.19 Within the Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland 2019- 2020, there is a link to the Education Outcomes for Looked After Children for the period 2018-19: often the reporting of statists is out of sync.

  i)   Attainment for care experienced school leavers at levels 4 and 5 numeracy and literacy, has remained inconsistent in Moray. This will be planned for within the action plan that will be developed and referred to at 3.19. Nationally it is noted that improvement in narrowing the gap between the attainment levels for looked after young people compared with all school leavers has stalled over the last four years.

  ii)   In terms of positive leaver destinations there is an increase for children who are looked after away from home. This reflects that increased support is needed for children who are looked after at home.

  iii)   The attendance rate for pupils looked after nationally has fallen over the last six years, decreasing from 89% in 2012-13 to 87% in 2018-19. For Moray the % rate for Moray has been constant at 89%, however in 2012/13 the % rate was higher at 91%.

  iv)   The rate of exclusion for looked after pupils nationally has fallen from 280 per 1,000 pupils in 2012-13 to 152 per 1,000 pupils in 2018-19. For Moray this change has been from 254 per 1000 pupils in 2012-13 to 180 per 1000 pupils in 2018 - 19. Exclusions will feature on the action plan moving forward.

Preparation for Independence

3.20   Pathway planning remains central to planning for young people planning to leave care and preparing for independence. The policies to pathway

planning, transitions and continuing care have been revised and improved over the last year. Implementation groups are being set up for both transitions and continuing care practice within the social work department.

3.21 There are a number of accommodation options for young people developing independent living skills or leaving care.

(i) Supported lodgings – are provided either by foster carers who convert to become supported lodgings providers or by people who have not previously been foster carers but who have the skills and interest to support our young people to grow towards independent living.

(ii) Continuing care – is available up to the age of 21years for young people who want this form of support and for whom it is assessed continuing care will meet their support needs. Continuing care is based on maintaining caring relationships.

(iii) Scatter flat initiative - The Scatter flat initiative, supports our young people to become more confident in managing their tenancy. The support is flexible and able to respond to changing needs for support, over time.

(iv) The accommodation pillar group of Corporate Parenting and the Champions Board, held a development session on 9 March 2021. Consistent with the education and employment pillar referred to above, this pillar group will develop their action plan to address issues raised by the young people in Moray and consider the "asks" in the Promise.

Future activities

3.22 The Promise is the outcome of the Scottish Government's Independent Care Review, February 2020. Following the launch of The Promise, the Plan 21-24, was published in April this year. Between them these publications advise of a 10 year journey of culture and systems change. Moray made successful application for funding to support the implementation of The Promise. Two part time posts will be appointed; one focussed on the engagement of children and their families and the other focussed on strategies, polices and systems. This funding and those posts are for 12 months.

3.23 We are planning a significant change within our children's services social work department including:

(i) Increased advocacy - provided by someone of the child's choosing

(ii) Family Group Decision Making – staff are being trained in this method of working with families to put families at the centre of decision making and planning for a child or young person.

(iii) Safe and together – an evidence based model of working with families where domestic violence is a feature, as we recognise the damaging environment this creates for children. It focusses on offender behaviours as a target for change and takes the blame and weight of

responsibility away from the non-offending parent. We have committed to training staff across the partnership and within social work, we are currently training staff within social work as trained trainers, to ensure sustainability of the rollout of this model, as part of a wider culture change within Moray.

(iv)   A dedicated, temporary, senior commissioning officer and, permanent commissioning coordinator have been appointed to support the element in The Promise that relates to commissioning: "Follow the Money". This will enable commissioning and service design with families, to develop community based resources, so when children are loved and it is safe for the child to remain in their family, they are supported and able to.

(v)   Consistent with the action plans being developed in the pillar groups above indicated at paragraphs 3.19 and 3.21(iv) above, the youth and criminal justice pillar group are undertaking an engagement survey with young people to help understand the experiences of care experienced young or people who are/ who have been involved in youth or justice processes and to hear what worked well and what did not work within the system. By working with the information offered by the young people and identifying areas for improvement, the pillar group intends to develop an action plan based on co-production with the young people.

4   **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a)   **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**
The Children's Services plan 2020/23 identifies improving outcomes for looked after children as a key priority the Children and Families and Justice Social Work service improvement plan identifies actions to be taken to support these improvements the Corporate plan (2020 update) identifies the following priorities**:**

Work with families as partners to give their children the kind of lives they want them to lead so that children grow up to be strong and resilient; Improve the life chances and outcomes for care experienced children and young people Improvement in children and young people's health and well-being

(b)   **Policy and Legal**
The relevant legislation and policies are detailed within the report.

(c)   **Financial implications**
There are no specific financial implications associated with this report.

(d)   **Risk Implications**
The risks associated with this report is the extent to which we engage with and deliver on our duties as corporate parents.

(e) Staffing Implications
There are no direct staffing implications associated with this report.

(f) Property
There are no direct property implications associated with this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
There are no equality implications as the purpose of the report is to inform committee of progress.

(h) Consultations
Chief Executive, Moray Council; Chief Social Work Officer; Head of Service, Children and Families and Criminal Justice Services; Head of HR, ICT, and Organisational Development: Senior Human Resources Adviser; Principal Accountant; Legal Services Manager; Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer and the Equal Opportunities Officer have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are in agreement with the content relating to their areas of responsibility.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 It is recommended that Committee considers and notes the content of this report.

Author of Report: JG – Corporate Parent & Commissioning Manager
Background Papers:
Ref:

A National Statistics publication for Scotland

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland, 2019-20

As at 31 July 2020, 16,530 children in Scotland were looked after or on the child protection register

2,654 total on child protection register

14,458 total looked after

582 both

| **2%** | **Looked after or on the child protection register** |

82 young people were in secure care accommodation
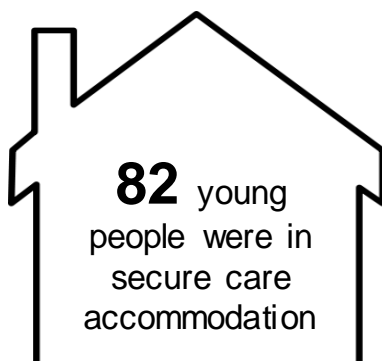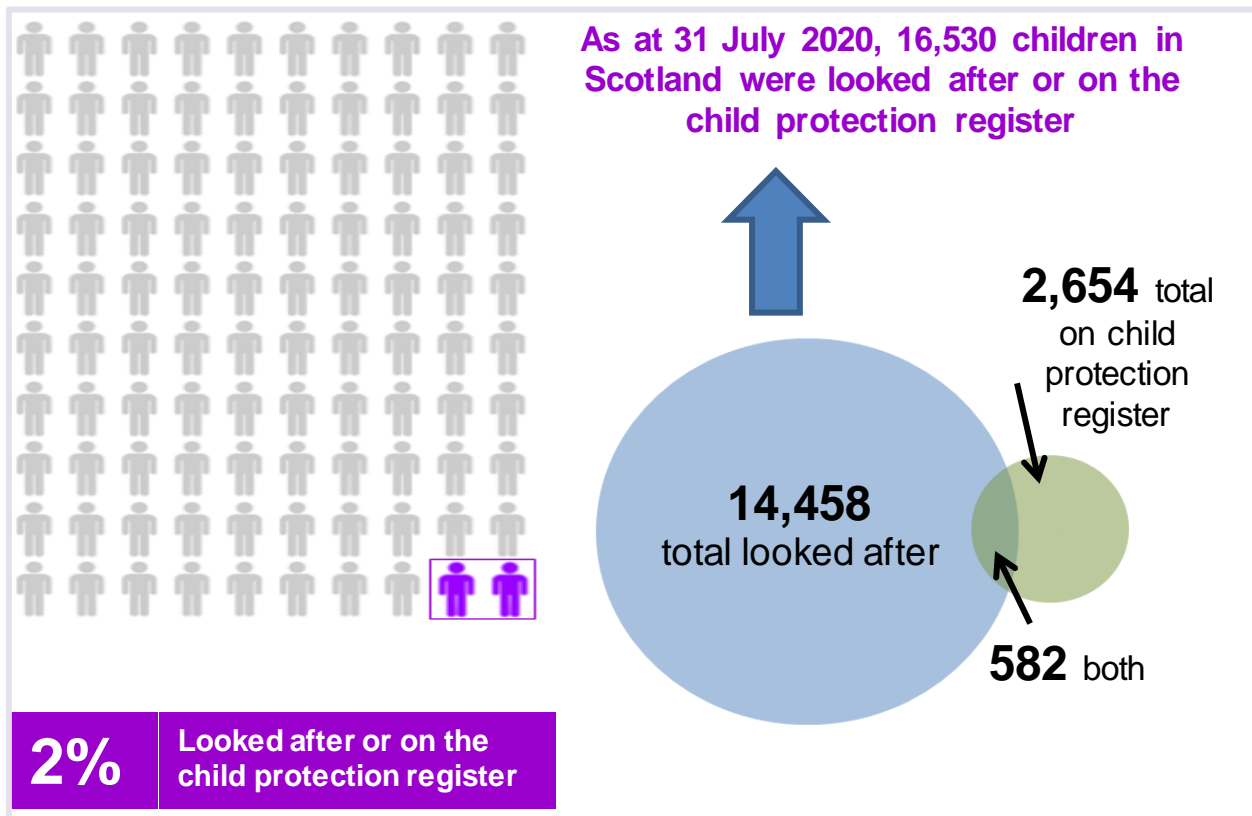
Comparisons with 2018-19:

1% increase in number of children looked after

3% increase in number of children on child protection register

3 more young people, on average, during the year in secure care accommodation

Contents

Introduction

What do these statistics include?

We present information collected from local authorities and secure units on children and young people, who were formally looked after; under child protection measures; or in secure care at some point between 1 August 2019 and 31 July 2020.

How do children come to be counted in these figures?

There are a number of ways that a child may become looked after, on the child protection register or in secure care. Children may be referred to the Children's Reporter[1], become voluntarily looked after or come via the criminal justice system. The diagram below gives a high-level illustration of the main routes by which children would be included.

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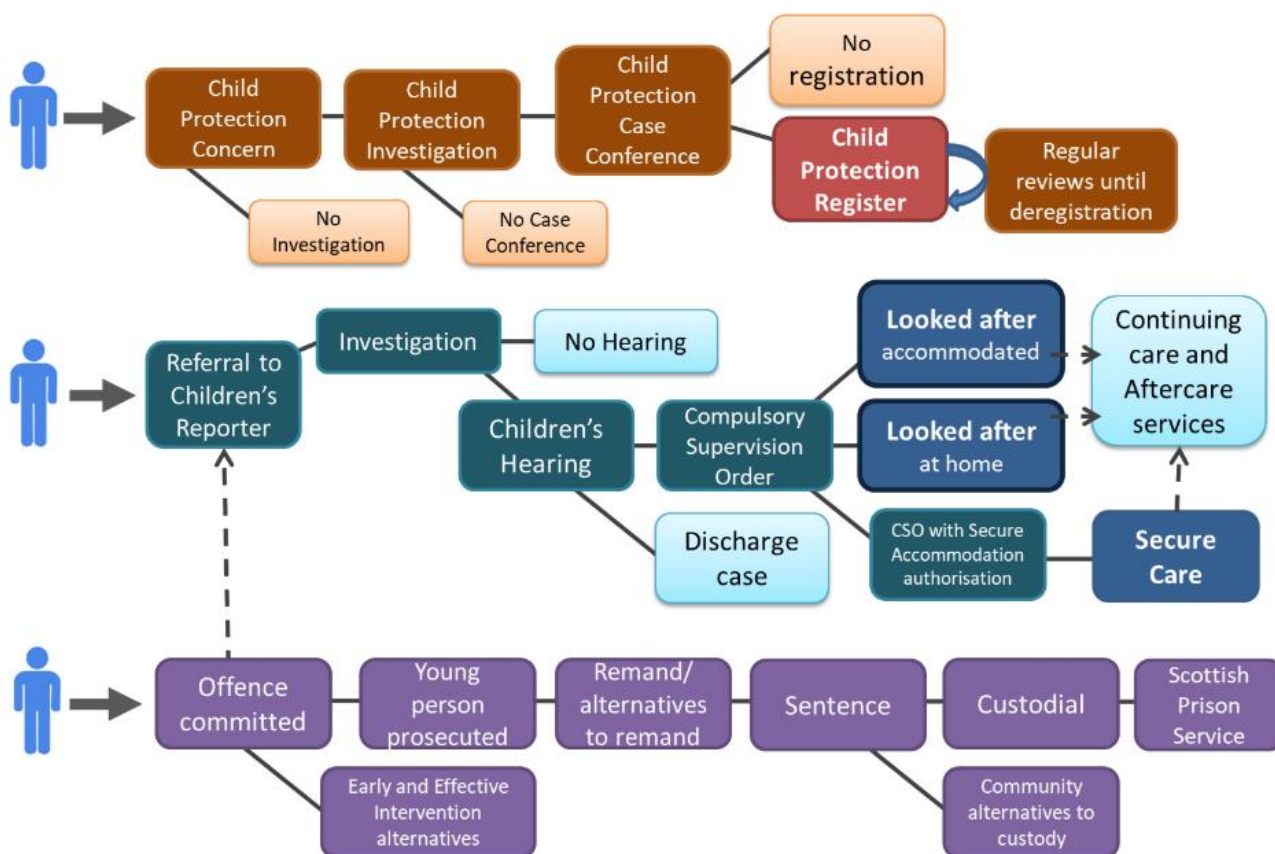
[1] Most referrals to the Children's Reporter come from partner agencies, such as the police, social work and education. However, anyone can make a referral, including parents, family members, carers or members of the public.

Revisions of 2018-19 data

Each year, data for Children Looked After, Child Protection and Eligibility for Aftercare are collected for the period 1 August to 31 July from all local authorities in Scotland.

It is normal practice that, during the child protection data collection process, local authorities revise their data for the previous year. This report reflects those updates provided by all local authorities for 2018-19.

Also, in this year's report, figures on the number of young people eligible for aftercare services does not include those in continuing care. This revised method has also been applied to 2018-19 figures included in the supporting tables.

Child protection
The total number of children on the child protection register was previously reported to be 2,599 at the 31st July 2019. The revised figure in this report is 2,580.

Eligible for aftercare
The total number of young people eligible for aftercare services on 31st July 2019 was previously reported as 6,650. This figure has been revised to 6,492.

Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on these statistics

Statistics for the year 2019-20 in this report refer to the period from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020. Therefore, annual figures for 2019-20 are affected by any impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on social work practices, from March 2020.

Weekly data monitoring the impacts of the pandemic on vulnerable children and families, and how services were responding, have been collected and published[2] by Scottish Government since April 2020.

To illustrate the impact of the pandemic on these figures, this report includes time series charts showing patterns by month within each of the last two years, in:
- children becoming looked after
- children ceasing to be looked after
- children registered on the child protection register
- children deregistered from the child protection register

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[2] Vulnerable Children and Adult Protection - SG Education Analytical Services: Learning Analysis | Tableau Public

Children Looked After

> ⬆ **The total number of children looked after** has increased for the first year after seven years of consecutive decline.
>
> ⬇ The number of children starting to become looked after **decreased by 9%**, compared with 2019.
>
> ⬇ The number of children ceasing to be looked after **decreased by 18%**, compared with 2019.

This section presents data on looked after children from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020. This is referred to as 2020 for ease of reporting, with 2018-19 referred to as 2019, and so on.

Local authorities have a responsibility to provide support to certain children and young people, known as 'looked after children'. A child may become looked after for a number of reasons, including neglect, abuse, complex disabilities requiring specialist care, or involvement in the youth justice system.

At 31 July 2020, there were 14,458 looked after children – an increase of 196 (1%) from 2019. This is the first year of increase after seven consecutive years of decline, falling from a peak of 16,248 in 2012 to 14,262 in 2019. The number of children ceasing to be looked after each year was consistently greater than the number becoming looked after between 2012 and 2019. However, the number of children ceasing to be looked after fell by 18% from 4,068 in 2019 to 3,325 in 2020. The number of children becoming looked after also fell – by 9% from 3,824 in 2019 to 3,490 in 2020. This figure was higher than the number of children ceasing to be looked after, as shown in the supporting publication tables 1.3,1.4 and Charts 2a-2b.

Placement type

There are several types of care setting in which looked after children or young people could be looked after, including:

- at home (where a child is subject to a Compulsory Supervision Order and continues to live in their usual place of residence)
- in kinship care (where they are placed with friends or relatives)
- with prospective adopters
- foster care
- residential unit or school
- a secure unit

Table 1.1 and Chart 1 show the proportion of children being looked after at home has decreased over the last decade, with 25% of the total in this group in 2020 compared to 39% in 2010. Increasing proportions of children are being looked after away from home in community settings. In particular, 4,456 children were placed formally with kinship carers in 2020 (31% of the total in 2020 compared with 20% in 2010). There has also been an increase in the proportion of children placed with foster carers – up from 30% in 2010 to 33% in 2020 – and this remains the most common accommodation type for looked after children. The proportion of children looked after in residential care settings remained static at around 10% of the overall total.

Table 1.1: Number of children looked after at 31 July, in each type of accommodation[1]

	2010	2019	2020
In the community	**14,412**	**12,814**	**13,022**
At home with parents	6,193	3,569	3,563
With Kinship Carers: friends/relatives	3,172	4,175	4,456
With Foster Carers provided by LA	3,651	3,335	3,315
With Foster Carers purchased by LA	1,046	1,463	1,429
With prospective adopters	299	212	185
In other community	51	60	74
Residential Accommodation	**1,480**	**1,448**	**1,436**
In local authority home	620	581	556
In voluntary home	82	127	130
In residential school	471	344	329
In secure accommodation	82	63	59
Crisis care	17	0	0
In other residential [1]	208	333	362
Total looked after children	**15,892**	**14,262**	**14,458**

(1) Information on the number of children looked after by accommodation type is available back to 1988 in chart 1 data of the spreadsheet version of the associated downloadable publication tables

(2) 'In other community' is a category that captures those people in community placements outside those listed, such as supported accommodation

(3) The bulk of the 'other residential' placements are private/independent residential placements for young people with complex needs

Chart 1: Children Looked after per 1,000 children under 18, by Accomodation 1987-2020
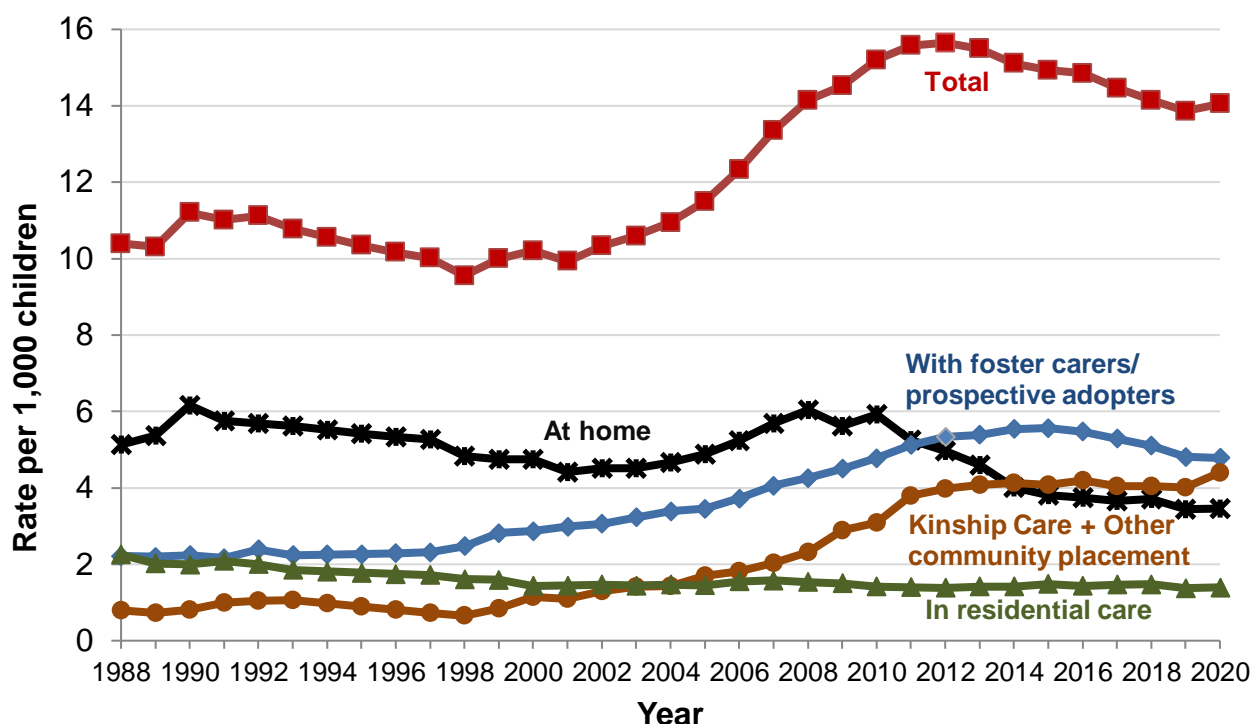
Care Plan

When children become looked after, a care plan should be produced by the local authority. The care plan should include detailed information about the child's care, education and health needs, as well as the responsibilities of the local authority, the parents, and the child. A care plan is considered 'current' if it has been produced or reviewed in the past 12 months.

Table 1.2 shows that 96% of the 14,458 children who were looked after at the end of July 2020 had a current care plan, up from 94% in 2019. The proportion with a current care plan was 96% among those looked after at home and those looked after away from home. Of those looked after away from home, the proportion with a current care plan was slightly higher among those placed with foster carers (97%) or in residential care (97%), compared to those with kinship carers (95%) or with prospective adopters/ other community placement (93%).

Table 1.2: Children looked after with and without a current care plan, at 31 July 2020[1]

| | At home | Away from home | Away from home - breakdown by category | | | | Total |
			With Kinship Carers: friends/relatives	With Foster Carers	With prospective adopters/ other community	In Residential Care	
With current care plan	3,406	10,479	4,230	4,619	242	1,388	13,885
Without current care plan	157	416	226	125	17	48	573
Total	**3,563**	**10,895**	**4,456**	**4,744**	**259**	**1,436**	**14,458**
With current care plan	96%	96%	95%	97%	93%	97%	96%
Without current care plan	4%	4%	5%	3%	7%	3%	4%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

(1) Some children without a current care plan may have one in progress on this date; local recording may differ with regard to when a care plan is recorded as being in place.

Children starting and ceasing to be looked after

The increase in total numbers being looked after is because fewer children or young people left care than started it.

As shown in table 1.3, 3,490 episodes of care began between 1 August 2019 and 31 July 2020. This represents a 9% decrease from the 3,824 episodes of care beginning in 2019.

Table 1.3: Number of children starting to be looked after, by age[1,2]

| Age | Number | | | Percentage | | |
	2010	2019	2020	2010	2019	2020
Under 1	650	565	531	13%	15%	15%
1-4	1,146	891	815	24%	23%	23%
5-11	1,463	1,137	1,060	30%	30%	30%
12-15	1,555	1,128	922	32%	29%	26%
16-17	45	102	158	1%	3%	5%
18-21	0	*	*	0%	*	*
Not known	0	*	*	0%	*	*
Total	**4,859**	**3,824**	**3,490**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

(1) A child may start to be looked after more than once in a year and so may be counted more than once.
(2) Table cells containing * have been suppressed to maintain confidentiality

Table 1.3 also shows a reduction in the proportion of children becoming looked after aged 12-15, from 32% in 2010 to 26% in 2020. The longer term pattern of children starting to be looked after at younger ages than this is offset by a slightly increased

8

proportion of children becoming looked after aged 16-17 - up to 5% in 2020 from 1% in 2010. Fifteen percent of children starting episodes of care were less than one year old, increasing from thirteen percent in 2010.

There were more boys than girls starting episodes of care in 2020 – 55% of those starting episodes of care were boys compared with 45% girls (the Scotland-wide population of under eighteens was 51% male in 2019[3]). This is the most pronounced gender split of those starting episodes of care since 2007, during which period the proportion of those starting episodes of care who were boys has ranged from 51% to 55%.

Table 1.4 shows the number of episodes of care which ceased, by length of time looked after. There were 3,325 episodes of care which ceased between 1 August 2019 and 31 July 2020, a decrease of 18% from the previous year.

The length of time for which children ceasing to be looked after had been looked after remained similar between 2019 and 2020. However, when compared with 2010, there are a higher proportion of children who had been looked after for more than five years, and a lower proportion who had been looked after for under one year.

Table 1.4: Number of children ceasing to be looked after, by length of time looked after [1]

Length of time looked after	Number			Percentage		
	2010	2019	2020	2010	2019	2020
Under 6 weeks	342	259	264	8%	6%	8%
6 weeks to under 6 months	349	321	301	8%	8%	9%
6 months to under 1 year	764	543	400	17%	13%	12%
1 year to under 3 years	1,811	1,474	1,184	40%	36%	36%
3 years to under 5 years	672	643	496	15%	16%	15%
5 years and over	566	828	680	13%	20%	20%
Not known	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%
Total	**4,504**	**4,068**	**3,325**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

(1) A child may cease to be looked after more than once during the year and will be counted once for each episode of care ending.

Charts 2a and 2b show the pattern of children becoming and ceasing to be looked after by month within each of the last two years. In 2018-19, the number of children ceasing to be looked after was lower than the number of children becoming looked after in only two out of twelve months, with no clear pattern emerging over the year

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[3] Mid-2019 Population Estimates Scotland | National Records of Scotland (nrscotland.gov.uk)

except lower numbers of cases in December. In 2019-20, the pattern of more children ceasing to be looked after reversed at the beginning of the year, but again with no clear pattern until a step change from April 2020 – the first full month of the COVID-19 pandemic. From April to July 2020, the numbers of children becoming and ceasing to be looked after were considerably lower than earlier in the year, although the figures rose steadily throughout those months. While from 1 August 2019 to 31 March 2020, the number of children starting (2,727) and ceasing (2,726) to be looked after was almost identical, there was a clear difference from April 2020 onwards (763 becoming looked after; 599 ceasing to be looked after).

Chart 2a: Number of Children Starting and Ceasing to be Looked After by month, 2019-20
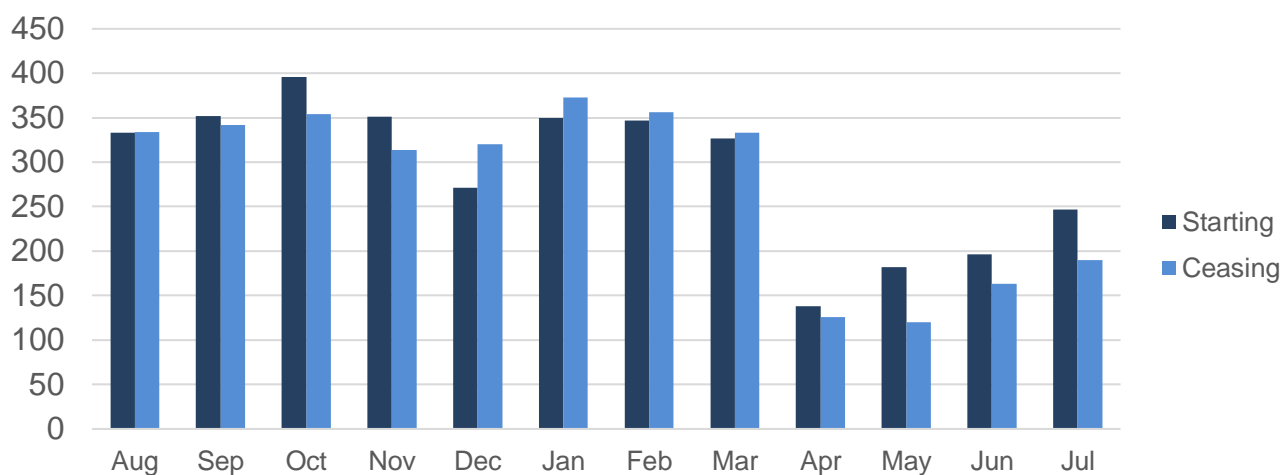
Chart 2b: Number of Children Starting and Ceasing to be Looked After by month, 2018-19
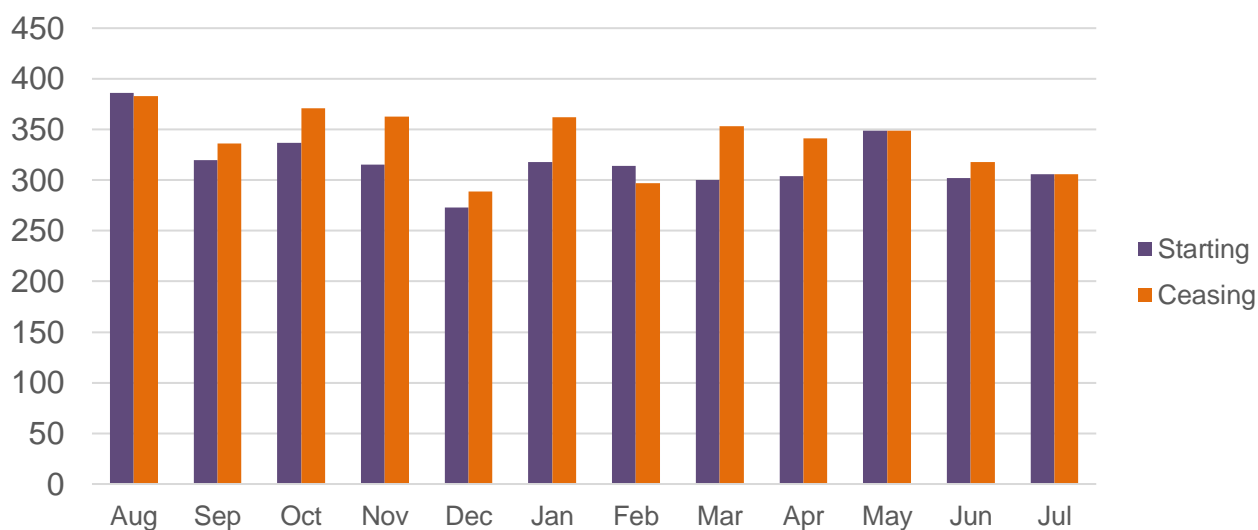
When a child ceases being looked after, a destination is recorded ([Table 1.5](#)). This is the third year that Kinship Care Order and Continuing Care were included as destination categories in the Looked After Children data collection. A Kinship Care Order is a court order that confers all or part of parental responsibilities and rights to a friend or relative of the child and can be a trigger for receipt of kinship care assistance. More information on Continuing Care is available in the [Continuing Care](#) section.

Although most children go home to their biological parents when they cease to be looked after, the proportion has declined from 62% in 2010 to 54% in 2020. A further 16% went to live in kinship care with friends or relatives or left care through a Kinship Care Order in 2020. The proportion of children leaving care due to being adopted was 6% in 2020, down 1 percentage point from 2019. The majority of adoptions (73%) are of children aged under five years old, as shown in Additional Table 1.9. There is a much more even spread of ages of young people leaving care to go home or to live with friends and relatives.

Table 1.5: Number of children ceasing to be looked after by destination[1]

Destination after leaving care	Number			Percentage		
	2010	2019	2020	2010	2019	2020
Home with (biological) parents	2,794	2,365	1,807	62%	58%	54%
Kinship carers: Friends/relatives[1]	532	563	481	12%	14%	14%
Kinship Care Order[2]	-	70	53	-	2%	2%
Former foster carers[1]	84	110	85	2%	3%	3%
Continuing Care[2]	-	167	229	-	4%	7%
Adoption	218	265	192	5%	7%	6%
Supported accommodation / own tenancy	257	223	245	6%	5%	7%
Other[3]	303	281	202	7%	7%	6%
Not known	316	24	31	7%	1%	1%
Total	**4,504**	**4,068**	**3,325**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

(1) A child may cease to be looked after more than once during the year and will be counted once for each episode of care ending.
(2) New destination categories of 'continuing care' and 'kinship care order' were added in 2018. Children who left care for these destinations in previous years were mostly recorded in the friends/relatives category for 'kinship care order' and the former foster carers category for 'continuing care', which partly explains the decrease in these 2 categories in 2018.
(3) "Other" includes residential care, homeless, in custody and other destination.

Pathway Plans

Local authorities have a duty to provide advice, guidance and assistance for young people who at the point of leaving care have reached 16 years of age. This is referred to as 'aftercare services'. Local authorities are required to carry out a

pathway assessment for aftercare services for all currently looked after young people who are over the age of sixteen and every 'compulsorily supported person' (a care leaver who has not yet reached their nineteenth birthday). These young people should be provided with a pathway co-ordinator who assesses their needs and a pathway plan which outlines how the local authority plans to meet the needs of the young person. The pathway assessment should be done within three months of a young person becoming a compulsorily supported person but it is expected that all young people over age 16 will have had their pathway assessment, and will have a completed pathway plan in place as to their future, before they cease to be looked after.

Of those young people who had reached 16 years of age at the time they ceased to be looked after during 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020, 79% (up from 71% in 2019) had a pathway plan and 70% had a pathway co-ordinator (Table 1.6), an increase from 60% in 2019. Where a young person's final placement type was 'at home' they were less likely to have a pathway plan or a pathway co-ordinator than if the final placement type was 'away from home'. Of young people whose last placement was at home, 68% had a pathway plan and 57% a pathway coordinator, compared with 83% and 74% respectively of those whose final placement type was 'away from home'.

Table 1.6: Pathway plans and nominated pathway co-ordinators of young people who were at least 16 years of age on the date they ceased to be looked after during 2019-20[1,2]

	Number looked after			Percentage looked after			Away from home - breakdown by category			
	at home	away from home	Total	at home	away from home	Total	With Kinship Carers: friends/relatives	With Foster Carers	With prospective adopters/ other community	In Residential Care
With a pathway plan	200	759	959	68%	83%	79%	182	271	40	266
Without a pathway plan	92	156	248	32%	17%	21%	65	26	5	60
With a pathway co-ordinator	165	675	840	57%	74%	70%	161	228	28	258
Without a pathway co-ordinator	127	240	367	43%	26%	30%	86	69	17	68
Total	292	915	1,207	100%	100%	100%	247	297	45	326

(1) Figures include all episodes of ceasing to be looked after beyond 16 years of age (i.e. a child may be counted more than once).
(2) It may be the case that some young people who don't have a relevant pathway plan/coordinator may be receiving similar support from adult services instead.

Aftercare services

Table 1.7 shows the number of young people eligible for aftercare services by age and the percentage of these young people in receipt of aftercare on 31 July 2020.

From April 2015, aftercare eligibility has been extended to cover all care leavers up to and including people aged 25 where it previously only covered up to their 21st birthday. This extension of the original policy has now reached maturity so age groups entering eligibility for aftercare should broadly equal those sufficiently mature to leave aftercare. Figures for those eligible for aftercare have risen from 4,602 in 2016 to 6,492 in 2019 and increasing further to 7,198 in 2020.

For young people eligible for aftercare, Table 1.7 shows that 57% have taken up these services, in line with the proportion in receipt of aftercare services in 2019. As in 2019, the proportion of eligible young people in receipt of aftercare was highest among those aged 19-21, with 65% of those eligible and aged 19-21 being in receipt of aftercare services (67% in 2019).

Table 1.7a: Young people eligible for and in receipt of aftercare services by age[1], 2020

Status	16	17	18	19-21	22+	Total
In receipt of aftercare	177	348	639	1,688	1,278	4,129
Not in receipt of aftercare	199	281	479	926	1,184	3,069
Total eligible for aftercare	**377**	**629**	**1,118**	**2,614**	**2,461**	**7,198**
In receipt of aftercare	47%	55%	57%	65%	52%	57%
Not in receipt of aftercare	53%	45%	43%	35%	48%	43%
Total eligible for aftercare	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

(1) Age on 31 July 2020

Table 1.7b: Young people eligible for and in receipt of aftercare services by age[1], 2019

Status	16	17	18	19-21	22+	Total
In receipt of aftercare	200	396	576	1,616	922	3,710
Not in receipt of aftercare	159	222	404	791	1,206	2,782
Total eligible for aftercare	**359**	**618**	**980**	**2,407**	**2,128**	**6,492**
In receipt of aftercare	56%	64%	59%	67%	43%	57%
Not in receipt of aftercare	44%	36%	41%	33%	57%	43%
Total eligible for aftercare	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

(1) Age on 31 July 2019

Continuing Care

Continuing Care is the continued provision of the accommodation and other assistance that was being provided by the local authority immediately before the young person ceased to be looked after. Only children who cease to be looked after

aged 16 years or over and were looked after away from home are eligible for Continuing Care. Continuing Care has been available to eligible care leavers from April 2015, enabling eligible young people aged 16 or older to stay in the same kinship, foster or residential care placements when they ceased to be looked after. The 'higher age' for continuing care eligibility rose annually as part of a roll out strategy. Continuing Care became fully operational in April 2020, allowing all eligible care-leavers to remain in their care setting from age 16 until their 21st birthday.

The data in Table 1.5 shows that 229 children who ceased to be looked after between 1 August 2019 and 31 July 2020 received Continuing Care. Additional data on the population in Continuing Care is collected as part of the above statistics on eligibility for aftercare. Table 1.8 uses that data to show that, in addition to the 229 young people recorded as ceasing to be looked after and staying in Continuing Care, there were an additional 77 young people in a Continuing Care placement, identified in the eligible for aftercare data. Therefore, in total there were 306 young people recorded as being in Continuing Care in 2019-20, up from 286 in 2018-19.

Table 1.8: Number of children in Continuing Care[1], 2019-20

	Recorded as ceasing to be looked after with a destination of Continuing Care	Recorded as being in Continuing Care	Total
Number of children	229	77	**306**

(1) There were 11 additional children recorded as being in Continuing Care in the eligible for aftercare data, but they were also included in the ceasing to be looked after with a destination of Continuing Care figures. They have been omitted from the 'Recorded as being in continuing care' figures to avoid double counting.

Cross-UK looked after comparisons

The definition of "looked after children" varies across the countries within the UK, which makes cross-UK comparisons difficult. To improve comparability, the Scotland figure at 31 March has been used, rather than the published 31 July figure, as the other nations publish figures as at this date.

Chart 3 gives Scottish figures including a breakdown for children looked after at home and away from home for comparability with the other nations. Scotland has a much higher proportion of children looked after at home than the rest of the UK, a placement which in Scotland requires a supervision order from the Children's Panel. Overall, Scotland had the highest rate of looked after children in 2020 at 139 children per 10,000 under 18 population. The rate of looked after children in Wales is

lower, at 109 per 10,000, while the rates in Northern Ireland (77 per 10,000) and England (67 per 10,000) are much lower still.

Chart 3: Cross-UK comparison of rate of looked after children per 10,000 children, 2004-2020
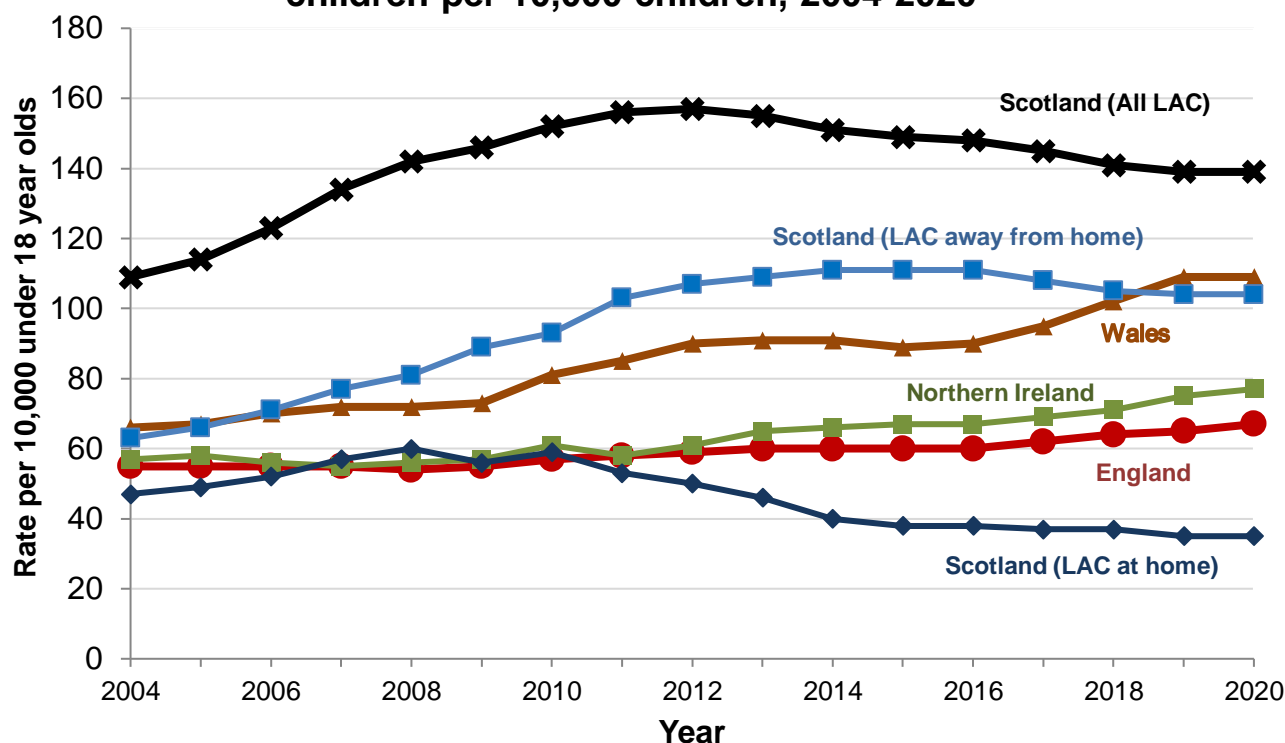
Links to the cross-UK data underlying the chart can be found in Background Note 1.7. There is more information on the comparability of looked after children data across the UK on the Scottish Government website.

The data used to produce the charts and tables on looked after children in the publication are available in the supporting files accompanying the publication. There are also **additional tables** available in the supporting files.
Children's social work statistics - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

Child Protection

Number of children on the child protection register increased by 3%, but is lower than the peak in 2014

There was a decrease in the number of child protection registrations and deregistrations in the last year, by 8% and 9% respectively

Most common causes for concern were **emotional and domestic abuse, parental substance misuse, and neglect**

This section presents data on children on the child protection register from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020. This will be referred to as 2020 for ease of reporting (with 2018-19 referred to as 2019 and so on). Child protection means protecting a child from abuse or neglect. This can either be in cases where abuse or neglect has taken place, or in cases where a likelihood of significant harm or neglect has been identified. The risk of harm or neglect is considered at a Child Protection Case Conference. Where a child is believed to be at risk of significant harm, their name will be added to the child protection register (a child protection registration).

This was the eighth year that child protection data has been collected entirely at individual level.

Children on the child protection register

The number of children on the child protection register increased from 2,580 in 2019 to 2,654 in 2020 (a 3% increase). There was a general upward trend in the number of children on the child protection register, until 2014 when the number peaked at 2,877. However, the number on the register then reduced in each of the next four years, before rising again slightly in 2019 and 2020.

As is usual, the number of children on the register in 2020 will be revised in next year's publication, as updated information is received from local authorities. This report includes revised figures in 2019 for all local authorities.

Chart 4 : Number of children on the child protection register by age, 2000-2020[1]
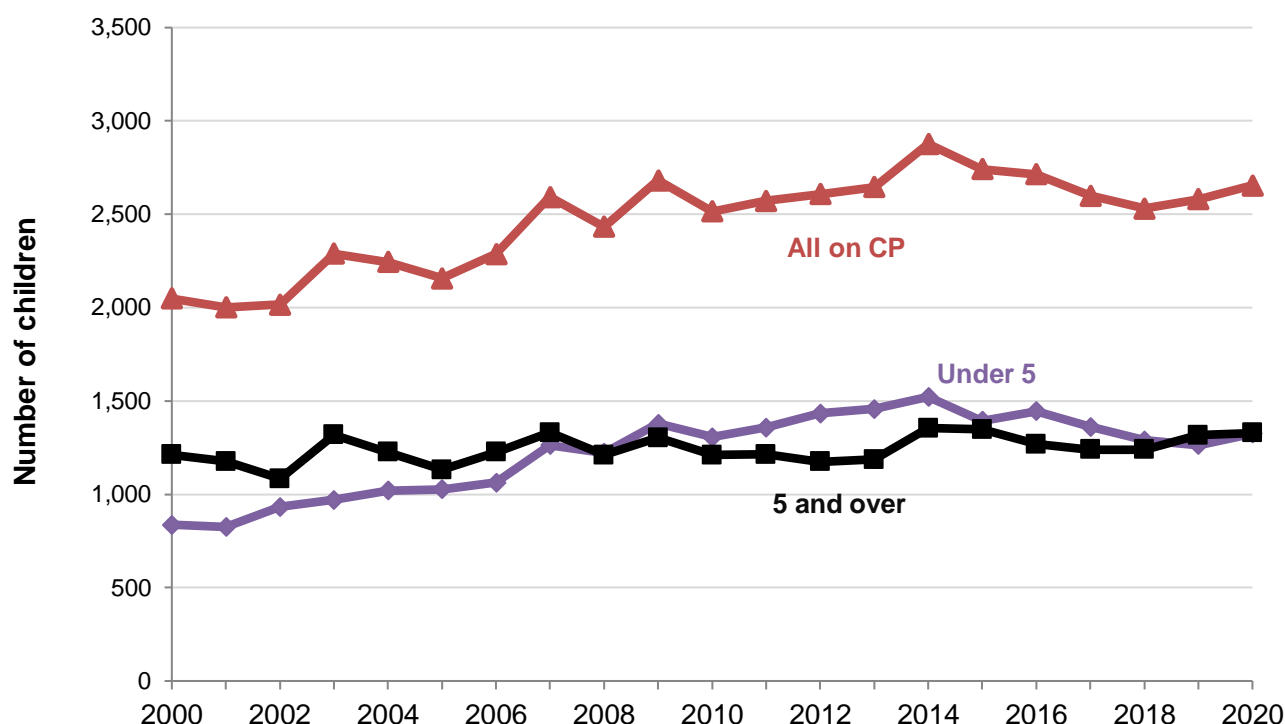
Between 2008 and 2018, there were more children aged under five than five or over on the child protection register. This changed in 2019, with just over half of children being aged five or over. In 2020, again around half of children on the child protection register were aged under five (1,325) and half were 5 or over (1,329).

There is no strong gender pattern among children on the child protection register – 47% were boys, 48% were girls, and 5% were unborn (Table 2.1). Because of a change in how unborn children were recorded by local authorities in 2010, figures for unborn children are only comparable from 2011 onwards.

Table 2.1: Number of children on the child protection register, by gender[1]

	Number			Percentage		
	2011	2019	2020	2011	2019	2020
Male	1,282	1,358	1,260	50%	53%	47%
Female	1,209	1,224	1,271	47%	47%	48%
Unborns	80	97	123	3%	4%	5%
All Children	**2,571**	**2,580**	**2,654**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

(1) Unborn children include both unborn children with a known gender and those with an unknown gender. Those with a known gender are not included in the boys or girls categories in this table.

At child protection case conferences, multiple concerns can be recorded (rather than just the main category of concern). This means that the total number of concerns is larger than the total number of registrations. For the 2,654 children on the child protection register at 31 July 2020, there were 7,315 concerns at the case conferences at which they were registered – an average of 2.8 concerns per conference. Chart 6 below shows the most common concerns identified were domestic (1,132) and emotional (1,028) abuse, neglect (1,112), and parental substance misuse (1,135). The parental substance misuse category is further broken down by the type of substance misused. Alcohol misuse only was identified as a concern in 333 conferences, drug misuse only in 536 conferences and both in 266 conferences. Figures are shown in full in Additional Table 4.3.

Chart 5: Concerns identified at the case conferences of children who were on the child protection register, 2020
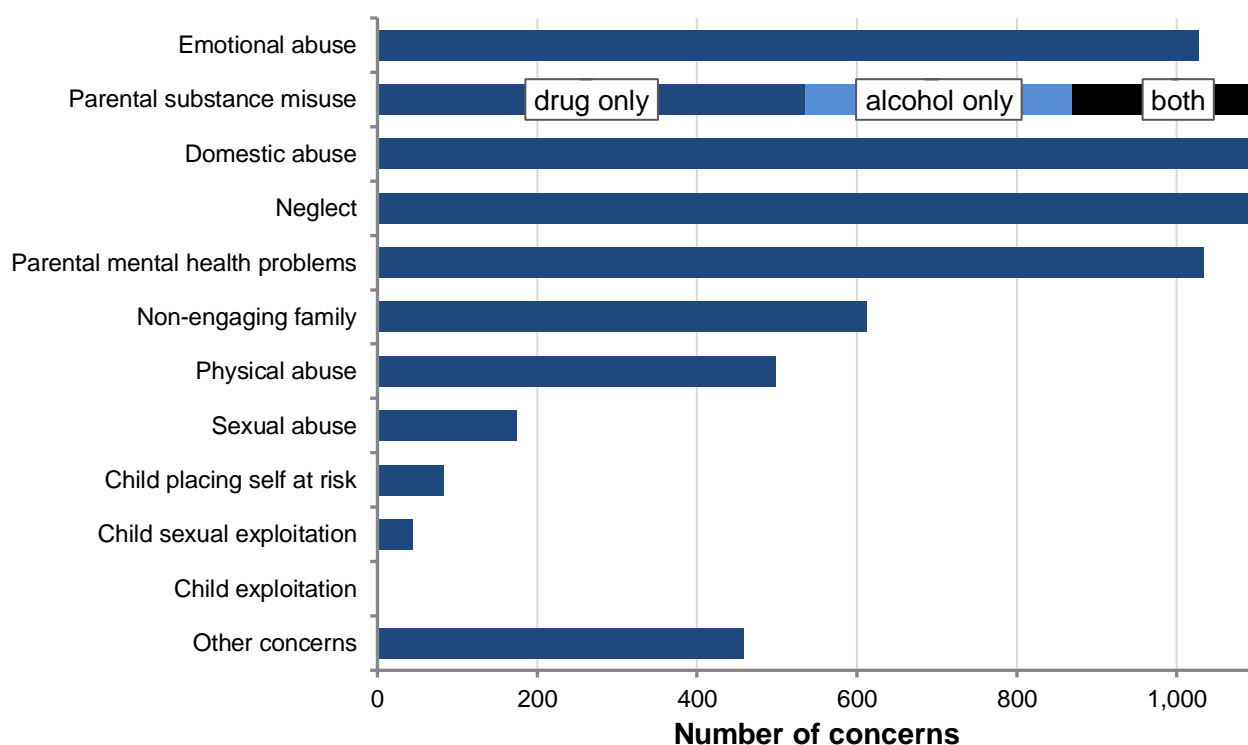
Child protection registrations and deregistrations

The number of registrations to the child protection register decreased by 8% between 2019 and 2020. The proportion of children registered who had never been registered before stayed at 80% in 2020 (Table 2.2). The remaining 20% of registrations on the child protection register were for children who had been registered previously. The largest group of these children was those who had been previously registered 2 years ago or more, with this group making up 11% of all registrations in 2020.

Table 2.2: Number of registrations following an initial, pre-birth or transfer-in case conference by length of time since previous deregistration

Time since last deregistration	Number			Percentage		
	2010	2019	2020	2010	2019	2020
Never been registered before	2,971	3,427	3,163	84%	80%	80%
Registered before but time unknown	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%
Less than 6 months	81	99	104	2%	2%	3%
6 months - < 1 year	98	104	81	3%	2%	2%
1 year - < 18 months	67	107	89	2%	2%	2%
18 months - < 2 years	60	96	59	2%	2%	1%
2 years or more	269	456	446	8%	11%	11%
Not known if been registered before	5	6	15	0%	0%	0%
Total	**3,551**	**4,295**	**3,957**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

(1) This is calculated as a proportion of registrations excluding cases where it is not known if a child had been registered before.

Table 2.3 shows the numbers of deregistrations from the child protection register, by length of time registered and reason for deregistration. There were 3,879 deregistrations from the child protection register in the year to 31 July 2020, a 9% decrease from the 4,245 recorded in 2019. The most common reason for deregistration in 2020 was an improved home situation, recorded in 53% of cases. In almost half (48%) of deregistrations, the child had been on the child protection register for less than 6 months, and in 86% of cases for less than one year.

Table 2.3: Length of time registered and reason for deregistration from the child protection register[1]

Time since last deregistration	Number			Percentage		
	2010	2019	2020	2010	2019	2020
Length of time registered						
Less than 6 months	1,592	2,149	1,856	42%	51%	48%
6 months to under 1 year	1,483	1,551	1,464	39%	37%	38%
1 year to under 18 months	460	356	362	12%	8%	9%
18 months to under 2 years	168	103	101	4%	2%	3%
2 years or more	123	43	55	3%	1%	1%
No date of registration information	0	43	41	0%	1%	1%
Reason for deregistration		0	0			
Child taken into care & risk reduced	538	500	465	14%	12%	12%
Child with other carers	275	307	312	7%	7%	8%
Child died	*	11	9	*	0%	0%
Removal of perpetrator	81	144	123	2%	3%	3%
Improved home situation	1,220	2,227	2,074	32%	52%	53%
Child automatically deregistered because of age	8	12	6	0%	0%	0%
Child moved away - no continued risk	26	37	30	1%	1%	1%
Other reason	1,674	1,007	860	44%	24%	22%
Reason not known	0	0	0	0%	100%	0%
Total	**3,822**	**4,245**	**3,879**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

(1) Includes where a child transferred to another local authority and where reason has not been recorded.

Charts 6a and 6b show the number of children being registered on and deregistered from the child protection register in each of the last two years by month. While the number of deregistrations relative to the number of registrations has fluctuated across each of the last two years, and the patterns are broadly similar in each year, the number of deregistrations reached its lowest level over the two years in April 2020 at 225. The second lowest level of deregistrations over the two year period was recorded in July 2020.

In 2019-20, the numbers of registrations and deregistrations were lower than in 2018-19 in the period August to March (prior to the COVID-19 pandemic) by 9% and 7% respectively. For the remainder of the year, the numbers were lower than in the equivalent period the previous year by 5% and 13%.

Chart 6a: Child Protection registrations and deregistrations by month, 2019-20

Registrations ■ Deregistrations
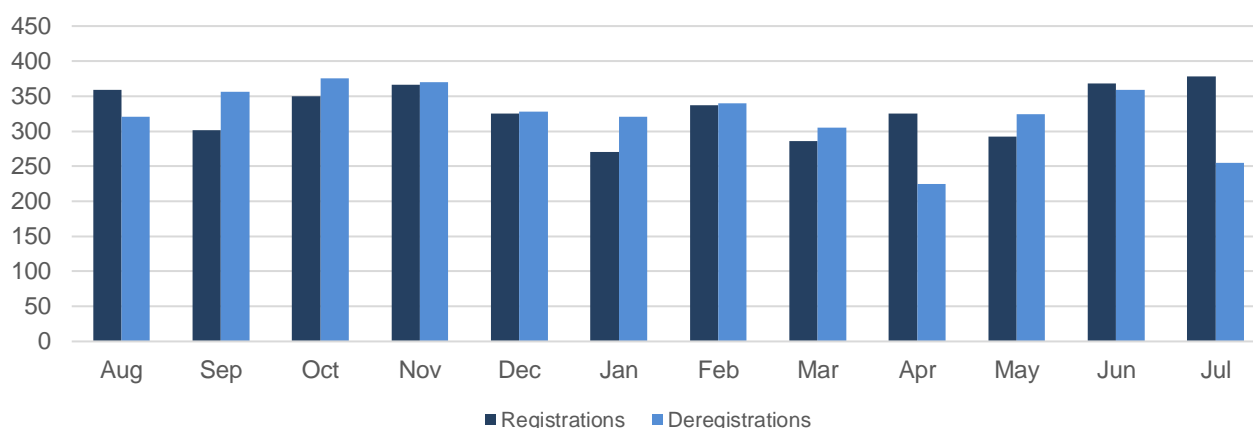
Chart 6b: Child Protection registrations and deregistrations by month, 2018-19

Registrations ■ Deregistrations
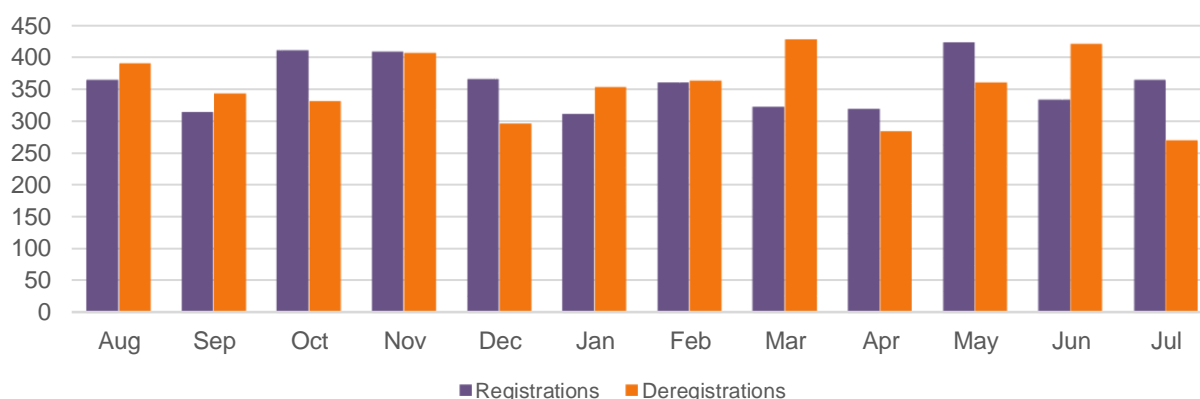
Chart 7 shows that, since 2015, the percentage of deregistrations of children who spent less than six months on the child protection register increased each year till 2019, peaking at 51%. The current figure has fallen back to 48% of deregistrations in 2019-20. There has been a corresponding increase in the last year in the proportion of deregistrations for children who spent 6 months or more on the child protection register, with 38% of deregistrations in 2019-20 being of children who spent between 6 months and a year on the child protection register.

Chart 7: Percentage of deregistrations by length of time on Child Protection Register, 2007-2020
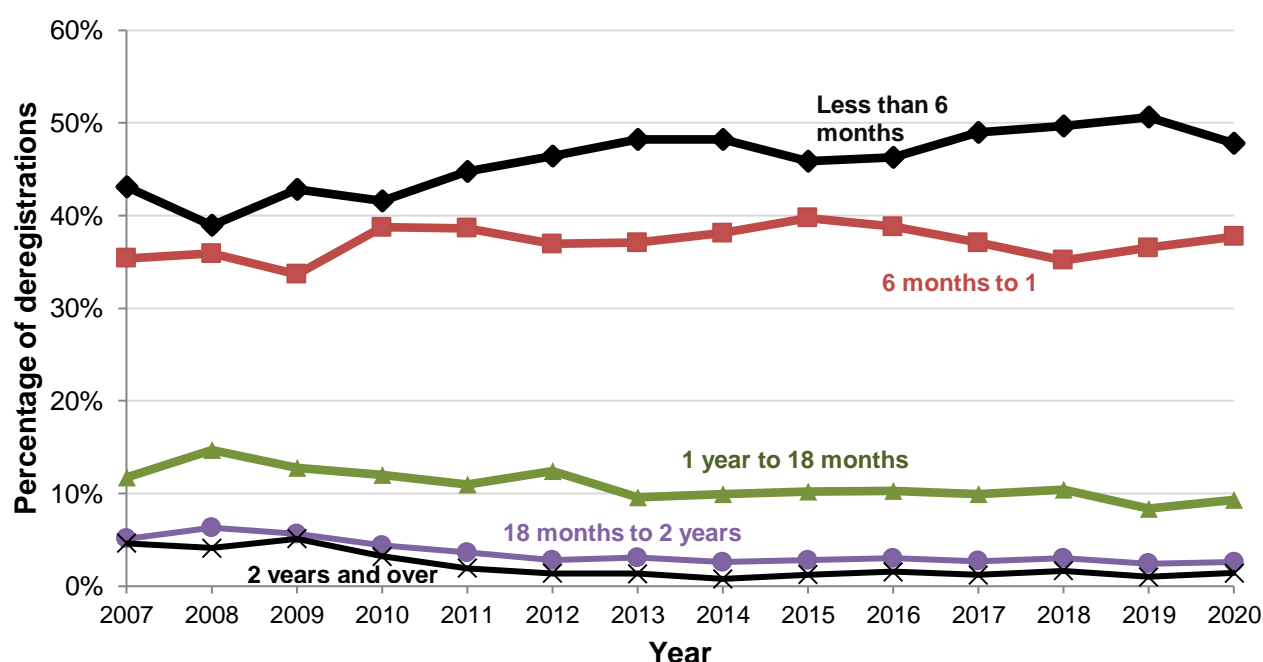
Child Protection Register Geographical Comparisons

Number on the register within Scotland

Table 2.4 shows the number and rate of children under 16 who were on the child protection register in Scotland in July 2020 by local authority. The rate varied from 0.5 per 1,000 children in the East Renfrewshire to 6.1 per 1,000 children in North Ayrshire.

There is a lot of variability from year to year in the numbers of children on the child protection register at a local authority level due to the small numbers of children involved in each local authority.

Table 2.4: Number of children on the child protection register and rate per 1,000 population aged 0-15 by local authority

Local authority	2010 Number on Register	Rate[1,2]	2019 Number on Register	Rate[1,2]	2020 Number on Register	Rate[1,2]
Aberdeen City	119	3.7	119	3.4	142	4.0
Aberdeenshire	51	1.1	103	2.1	111	2.3
Angus	92	4.5	45	2.4	36	1.9
Argyll and Bute	43	2.9	28	2.2	49	3.8
City of Edinburgh	256	3.6	122	1.5	95	1.2
Clackmannanshire	56	5.9	24	2.7	41	4.6
Dumfries and Galloway	100	3.9	18	0.8	26	1.1
Dundee City	70	2.9	90	3.7	102	4.2
East Ayrshire	42	1.9	100	4.7	78	3.7
East Dunbartonshire	28	1.5	55	2.8	37	1.9
East Lothian	70	3.8	48	2.4	52	2.6
East Renfrewshire	31	1.7	15	0.8	9	0.5
Falkirk	73	2.6	124	4.4	142	5.1
Fife	220	3.4	205	3.2	147	2.3
Glasgow City	286	3.0	415	4.1	420	4.2
Highland	99	2.4	91	2.3	129	3.3
Inverclyde	35	2.5	47	3.7	61	4.8
Midlothian	96	6.2	49	2.7	49	2.7
Moray	44	2.6	47	2.9	31	1.9
Na h-Eileanan Siar	*	*	*	*	*	*
North Ayrshire	60	2.4	104	4.6	137	6.1
North Lanarkshire	63	1.0	162	2.6	118	1.9
Orkney Islands	*	*	*	*	10	2.8
Perth and Kinross	49	1.9	78	3.2	95	3.9
Renfrewshire	119	3.9	83	2.7	98	3.2
Scottish Borders	32	1.6	46	2.4	34	1.8
Shetland Islands	10	2.2	12	2.9	*	*
South Ayrshire	43	2.3	37	2.1	29	1.6
South Lanarkshire	135	2.4	116	2.1	160	2.9
Stirling	43	2.7	42	2.7	46	3.0
West Dunbartonshire	27	1.6	44	2.8	66	4.2
West Lothian	119	3.4	104	2.9	92	2.6
Scotland	**2,518**	**2.7**	**2,580**	**2.8**	**2,654**	**2.9**

(1) Per 1,000 population aged 0-15. Source: National Records of Scotland, 2007-2019 mid-year population estimates

(2) The rate shown in this table includes unborn children who are on the register

Number of child protection investigations within Scotland

A child protection investigation is a joint[4] investigation launched following an Inter-agency Referral Discussion in order to determine if any child protection action is needed and whether a child protection case conference should be held.

Data on child protection investigations has been published for the first time in Table 2.5. The rate of child protection investigations varied from 1.2 in East Renfrewshire to 39.7 per 1,000 children in Clackmannanshire.

The number of initial and pre-birth child protection case conferences and registrations from these is also shown; for those with an investigation recorded within 90 days prior to case conference, the child's progression through the child protection process from investigation to case conference and potentially registration can be followed.

However, there were 733 out of 4,978 total initial and pre-birth case conferences where no investigation was recorded within 90 days prior to case conference; this suggests that the investigations for these conferences may be missing from the figures shown. There may be other legitimate reasons for the investigation not being within 90 days prior to case conference.

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[4] Between Social work, police and health services, and any other agencies as required

Table 2.5: Number of child protection investigations, initial and pre-birth case conferences, registrations from these conferences and rates per 1,000 population aged 0-15 by local authority, 2019-20[1],[2]

Local authority	Child protection investigations		Child protection initial and pre-birth case conferences				Child protection registrations from initial and pre-birth case conferences			
	Number[3]	Rate[2]	Number with an investigation recorded within 90 days of case conference	Number with no investigation recorded within 90 days of case conference[4]	Total	Rate[2]	Number with an investigation recorded within 90 days of case conference	Number with no investigation recorded within 90 days of case conference[3]	Total	Rate[2]
Aberdeen City	269	7.6	183	3	186	5.3	156	3	159	4.5
Aberdeenshire	408	8.3	144	14	158	3.2	134	13	147	3.0
Angus	266	13.9	50	70	120	6.3	38	62	100	5.2
Argyll and Bute	114	8.8	39	36	75	5.8	38	29	67	5.2
City of Edinburgh	1,026	13.0	159	30	189	2.4	143	26	169	2.1
Clackmannanshire	355	39.7	70	37	107	12.0	47	22	69	7.7
Dumfries and Galloway	383	16.5	57	11	68	2.9	32	9	41	1.8
Dundee City	698	29.0	128	29	157	6.5	127	29	156	6.5
East Ayrshire	384	18.2	211	15	226	10.7	139	8	147	7.0
East Dunbartonshire	170	8.8	79	8	87	4.5	40	7	47	2.4
East Lothian	360	18.3	55	14	69	3.5	50	9	59	3.0
East Renfrewshire	23	1.2	20	0	20	1.0	19	0	19	1.0
Falkirk	459	16.3	181	8	189	6.7	150	5	155	5.5
Fife	892	13.8	317	1	318	4.9	282	1	283	4.4
Glasgow City	1,740	17.3	654	3	657	6.5	449	2	451	4.5
Highland	412	10.6	22	145	167	4.3	20	136	156	4.0
Inverclyde	125	9.9	94	28	122	9.7	76	19	95	7.5
Midlothian	567	31.6	92	20	112	6.2	76	18	94	5.2
Moray	240	14.9	27	23	50	3.1	23	17	40	2.5
Na h-Eileanan Siar	15	3.5	3	23	26	6.1	1	8	9	2.1
North Ayrshire	430	19.1	295	1	296	13.2	243	1	244	10.9
North Lanarkshire	720	11.5	271	15	286	4.6	208	10	218	3.5
Orkney Islands	67	18.7	13	1	14	3.9	10	1	11	3.1
Perth and Kinross	303	12.4	112	16	128	5.2	102	15	117	4.8
Renfrewshire	405	13.4	224	1	225	7.4	136	0	136	4.5
Scottish Borders	118	6.2	39	5	44	2.3	32	5	37	1.9
Shetland Islands	96	22.9	10	5	15	3.6	8	3	11	2.6
South Ayrshire	157	8.9	63	0	63	3.6	46	0	46	2.6
South Lanarkshire	699	12.6	366	35	401	7.2	252	23	275	4.9
Stirling	100	6.5	0	52	52	3.4	0	50	50	3.2
West Dunbartonshire	241	15.4	114	29	143	9.1	72	6	78	5.0
West Lothian	692	19.5	153	55	208	5.9	114	49	163	4.6
Scotland	**12,934**	**14.0**	**4,245**	**733**	**4,978**	**5.4**	**3,263**	**586**	**3,849**	**4.2**

(1) Per 1,000 population aged 0-15. Source: National Records of Scotland, mid-year 2019 population estimates.

(2) The rate shown in this table includes unborn children who are on the register

(3) Includes 135 child protection investigations that took place prior to 1 August 2019 (in 2018-19) where the resulting case conference took place on or after 1 August 2019 (in 2019-20).

(4) Case conferences with no investigation recorded within 90 days are cases where no investigation was recorded in the data provided to Scottish Government in the 90 days preceding the case conference.

Cross-UK child protection comparisons

Child protection systems across the United Kingdom vary but are generally comparable. Scotland's data collection year runs from 1 August to 31 July, so end-year figures are typically reported at 31 July in this publication, while the collection year in England, Wales and Northern Ireland runs from 1 April to 31 March

(so end-year figures are at 31 March). In Chart 8, we report the Scotland figures at the 31st March to allow better comparison with the other countries.

Chart 8: Cross-UK comparison of rate of children on the child protection register per 10,000 under 18s, 2004-2020
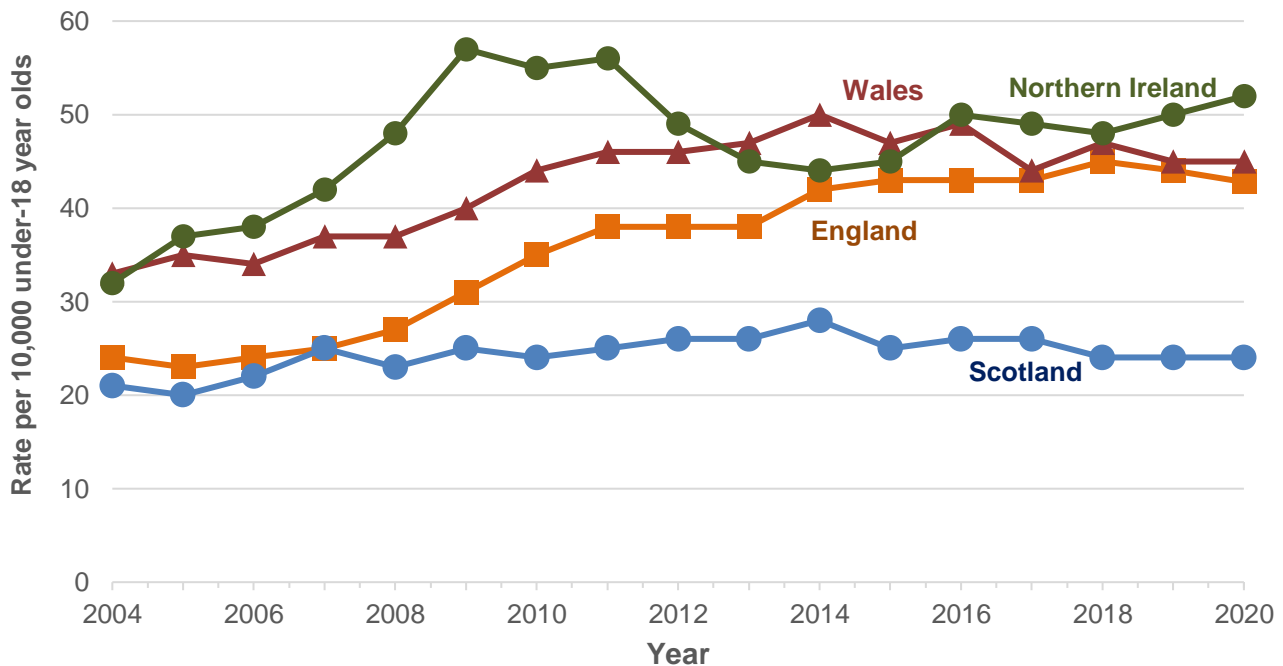
The proportion of children on the child protection register has been broadly stable in Scotland over the last decade and this proportion is notably lower compared with the rest of the UK. Scotland did not experience the large increases in children on the register in 2007-2011 as seen in the rest of the UK. There is more information on the comparability of child protection data across the UK on the Scottish Government website.

The data used to produce the charts and tables on child protection in the publication are available in the supporting files accompanying the publication. There are also **additional tables** available in the supporting files.
Children's social work statistics - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

Secure Care Accommodation

> ⬆ **Average number of residents** increased by 3 to 82 since 2019.
>
> ⬇ **The number of young people admitted** to secure care decreased by 11% from 217 to 194 since 2019.

This section presents 2019-20 data on secure care accommodation. Following the conventions in the rest of this publication, 2019-20 is referred to as 2020. Secure care is used for a small number of young people who present high risk to themselves or others. A placement to secure care can only be authorised following a decision through the Children's Hearing System or a Court, or as an emergency placement for up to 72 hours before attending a hearing or court.

Bed complement

There were 84 secure places available in five secure units in Scotland excluding emergency beds on 31 July 2020 (Table 3.1). Furthermore, there were an additional 7 beds available across these units for emergency and short-term use – these would normally only be used if required and on a short-term basis.

Table 3.1: Secure care unit bed complement at 31 July 2020[1]

Unit	Number of secure care beds
Edinburgh Secure Services	6
Good Shepherd	18
Kibble	18
Rossie School	18
St. Mary's Kenmure[1]	24
ALL UNITS	**84**

(1) Excluding emergency or short-term respite beds

Capacity and usage

Table 3.2 shows there were an average of 82 residents in secure care accommodation between 1 August 2019 and 31 July 2020, an increase from an average of 79 in the previous year. The average number of residents from within Scotland remained at 53, while the average from outside Scotland increased slightly from 26 to 28, all of whom were from England.

The number of nights emergency beds were used was 209 in 2020. This is a considerable decrease of 47% from 398 in the previous year. The number of residents using emergency beds decreased by 49%, from 55 in 2019 to 28 in 2020.

Table 3.2: Secure care accommodation capacity[1] and usage, 2014-2020

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	% change 2019-20
Places at year end	90	90	90	84	84	84	84	*0%*
Admissions during the year	232	249	256	248	210	217	194	*-11%*
Discharges during the year	226	245	253	257	213	210	194	*-8%*
Average number of residents during the year	74	82	85	76	80	79	82	*4%*
Residents from within Scotland	67	76	72	56	45	53	53	*0%*
Residents from outside Scotland	7	6	13	19	35	26	28	*8%*
Minimum number of residents during the year	60	71	77	67	73	71	75	*6%*
Maximum number of residents during the year[1]	84	89	90	87	86	88	88	*0%*
Number of nights emergency bed used during the year[2,3]	5	146	50	90	284	398	209	*-47%*
Number of residents emergency bed used for during the year[2,3]	*	13	11	25	41	55	28	*-49%*

(1) Capacity: Young people can be admitted and discharged more than once during the year.

(2) Four units reported having an emergency bed: Rossie Secure Accommodation Services; Good Shepherd Centre; Kibble Education and Care Centre; and St. Mary's Kenmure. St Mary's Kenmure also have 3 short-term beds (see background notes for definition of an emergency or short-term bed).

(3) Figures for emergency/short term bed usage have been estimated for St. Mary's Kenmure. More information is available in the background notes section.

On 31 July 2020, 54% of young people in secure care accommodation were male and 46% were female (Table 3.3); 46% were aged 16 or over; and 78% were aged 15 or older.

On 31 July 2020, 9% of young people in secure care accommodation had at least one disability, defined as "a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

Table 3.3: Young people in secure care at 31st July 2020 by gender, age at admission, disability and length of stay[1,2]

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018[3]	2019	2020	*% of 2020 total*
Gender of residents[3]								
Males	52	59	65	46	39	60	44	*54%*
Females	29	26	23	34	43	24	37	*46%*
Age of Residents								
13 years old or under	5	7	9	14	12	*	5	*6%*
14 years	12	18	18	18	18	*	13	*16%*
15 years	31	28	27	26	25	21	26	*32%*
16 years or over	33	32	34	22	27	55	37	*46%*
Residents with disability								
Yes	-	-	34	27	39	27	7	*9%*
No/unknown	-	-	54	53	43	57	74	*91%*
Length of stay of residents at year end								
Less than 1 month	13	17	20	26	10	21	17	*21%*
1 month to under 2 months	14	16	14	13	14	16	14	*17%*
2 months to under 3 months	14	13	14	12	13	9	6	*7%*
3 months to under 6 months	23	26	24	25	27	22	18	*22%*
6 months to under 1 year	9	*	10	*	14	11	16	*20%*
1 year or more	8	*	6	*	0	5	2	*2%*
Total	**81**	**85**	**88**	**80**	**82**	**84**	**81**	*100%*

(1) As at 31 July of each year.

(2) Cells containing * represent numbers that are suppressed to maintain confidentiality.

(3) Trans, intersex and non-binary individuals are grouped with males for the purposes of maintaining confidentiality.

Cross-UK secure care accommodation comparisons

Table 3.4 shows secure children's homes/secure care accommodation units, places approved, and children and young people accommodated across the United Kingdom. This shows that there is no clear trend in the number of children accommodated in England and Wales, as the numbers have fluctuated.

As noted earlier, the Scotland total includes a number of young people who are from elsewhere in the UK. The England and Wales totals may also include some children from other parts of the UK, but these numbers aren't published separately.

Table 3.4: Number of secure children's homes/secure care accommodation units, places approved and children accommodated at year end across the United Kingdom[1,2,3], 2014-2020

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
England	Number of secure children's homes	16	14	14	14	14	14	13
	Places approved	276	232	232	232	233	237	230
	Children accommodated	211	194	192	184	189	162	171
Wales	Number of secure children's homes	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Places approved	22	22	22	22	22	22	22
	Children accommodated	18	11	18	19	15	10	13
Scotland[4]	Number of secure care units	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
	Places approved	90	90	90	84	84	84	84
	Children accommodated	80	85	84	81	82	84	82

(1) Sources: England and Wales - Statistics on secure children's homes: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-secure-children-s-homes; Scotland - Secure care accommodation census; Northern Ireland, official/national statistics are not produced on secure care accommodation. The legal routes into secure care can vary between the four UK countries.
(2) The Scotland total includes a number of children from the rest of the UK, so trends in each country based on the children's origin may be different.
(3) The figures from outside Scotland include children placed on welfare grounds only.
(4) To allow for comparison with England and Wales, Scotland's data for all years is 'at 31 March' within this table only.

The data used to produce the charts and tables on secure care in the publication are available in the supporting files accompanying the publication. There are also **additional tables** available in the supporting files.

Children's social work statistics - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

What are the trends in other children's social work data?

Between 2009 and 2020 the number of children referred to the Children's Reporter decreased by 73%[5] (Chart 9), while the number of children looked after or on the child protection register has remained broadly stable over this period. The decrease is the result of falls in both the number of offence and non-offence referrals. Offence referrals now account for 21% of all referrals.

Chart 9: Number of children referred to the Children's Reporter and numbers looked after/on child protection register, 2004-2020
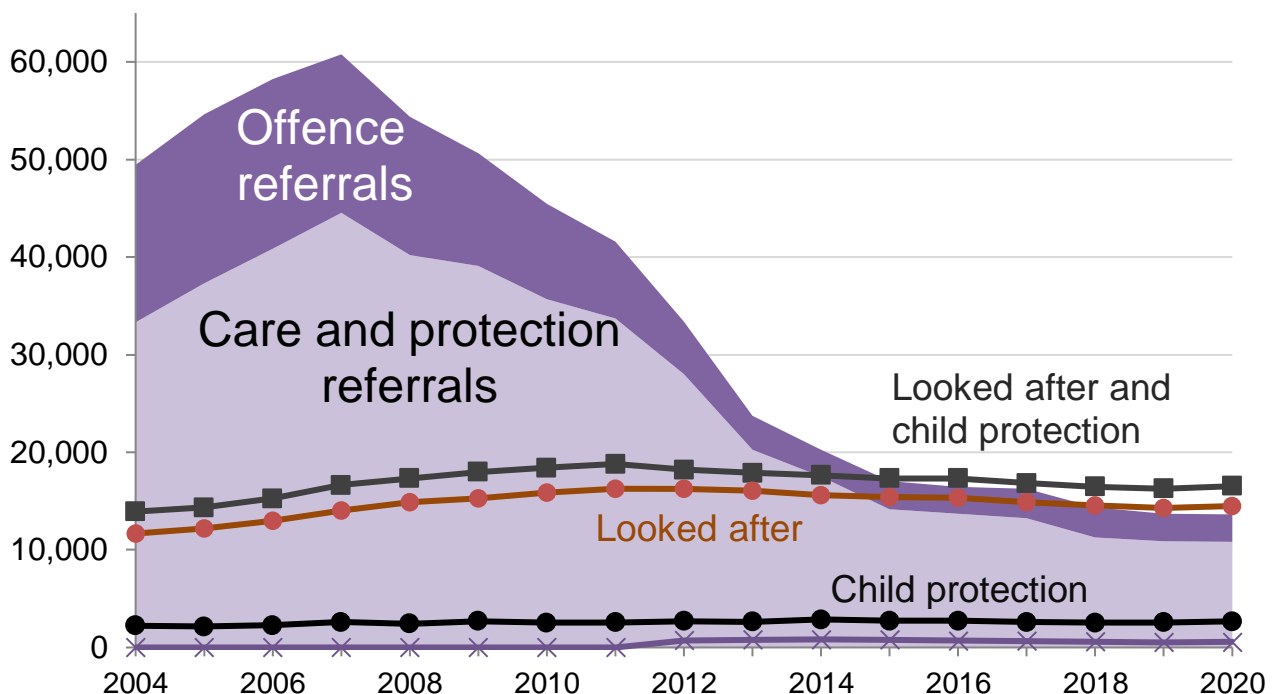
The fall in referrals to the Reporter is likely to be due to pre-referral screening across many areas of the country. This has led to a reduction in referrals received by the Reporter where compulsory measures are not deemed necessary; and a proportionate increase in referrals, where deemed necessary.

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[5] Official Statistics - SCRA

Background notes

1. Context and related publications

1.1.   This publication includes data on children and young people who were looked after, on the child protection register or in secure care accommodation between 1 August 2019 and 31 July 2020. Children most commonly become looked after or placed on the child protection register following a referral to the Children's Reporter. The majority of referrals to the Children's Reporter are on care and protection grounds, although a small proportion are on offence grounds. Young people are placed in secure care either as an outcome of the criminal justice system or through a referral to the Children's Reporter. Figures on referrals to the Children's Reporter are published by the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA): Official Statistics - SCRA

Figures on referrals of young people from the criminal justice system to the social work system are published the bottom of the following link:

Criminal justice social work statistics: 2019 to 2020 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

1.2.   This publication collates data on children who were looked after during 2019-20. Education Outcomes for Looked After Children statistics are produced on a subset of these children – those whose Scottish Candidate Numbers have been supplied to Scottish Government. The latest education outcomes publication is available here:

Education Outcomes for Looked After Children, 2018-19 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

1.3.   The annual Civil Law Statistics published by the Scottish Government includes a table which gives the number of petitions for adoption made through the courts. These figures include looked after children who are adopted from care as well as children who are out with the care system. The Civil Law Statistics in Scotland are available on page 48 of following link:

Civil Justice Statistics in Scotland 2018-19 (www.gov.scot)

Cross-UK comparability

1.4.   It is possible to draw comparisons between the looked after children, child protection and secure care accommodation statistics of the four UK countries. However, it should be borne in mind that there are differences in legislation, the children's social work systems and the definitions of categories that will affect these figures.

1.5.   Work has been undertaken between the Scottish Government and administrations from England, Wales and Northern Ireland to document clearly the differences between each administration's **looked after children** statistics and to scope out the feasibility and need for a comparable dataset. Further developments from this work have been published on the Scottish Government children's statistics web site: UK Comparability of Children's Social Services Statistics.

1.6.   Work was commissioned by the Department for Education to document clearly the differences between each administration's **child protection** statistics. Further developments from this work have been published on the Scottish Government Children's Statistics web site: UK Comparability of Children's Social Services Statistics.

Equivalent data across the UK

1.7.   Looked after children statistics:

England	Children looked after in England including adoption: 2019 to 2020 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Wales	Children looked after (gov.wales)
Northern Ireland	Childrens Social Care Statistics for Northern Ireland 2019/20 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

1.8.   Child protection statistics:

England	Statistics: children in need and child protection - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Wales	Statistics: children in need and child protection - GOV.UK
Northern Ireland	Childrens Social Care Statistics for Northern Ireland 2019/20 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

1.9.   Official/ National Statistics are not produced on secure accommodation in Northern Ireland. However, there is one secure unit which when at full capacity can house sixteen 11 to 18 year olds. The latest national statistics on children accommodated in secure children's homes in England and Wales were released on 17 September 2020 and can be found at:-
Statistics: secure children's homes - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

2. Data sources and coverage

2.1.   The **looked after children** data in this publication were collected at an individual level from local authorities. Data were collected on all children/young people who were looked after between 1 August 2019 and 31 July 2020, on every episode of being looked after which occurred at some point in the reporting period, every placement that took place during these episodes, and every legal reason for which a child was looked after. Statistics were also collected at an individual-level for those eligible for aftercare.

2.2.   All **child protection** information in this publication were collected at an individual level from local authorities. Information is submitted for each investigation and case conference held as well as demographic information for each child. Detailed individual data has been collected since 2012-13. Prior to this, data was collected as aggregate summarised data.

2.3.   The child protection statistics survey covered the period 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020. If a member of the public or professional report concern about a child, a referral will be made to an agency such as the local authority social work team. If they decide that the child is at risk of significant harm, an investigation will be undertaken. In 2010-11 and previous years, aggregate information was collected on the referrals that were initiated during the period (so numbers starting). From 2011-12 information has been collected on child protection investigations which ended during the collection period. Information on child protection referrals has not been collected since 2010-11.

2.4.   The **secure care** statistics in this publication were collected from five secure care units which were open from 1 August 2019 till 31 July 2020.

2.5.   The secure care accommodation census covered 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020. The data collected at the unit level covers the number of places. Individual-level information was collected on the characteristics of the young person, medical care, admissions and discharges in secure care accommodation.

2.6.   The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) can provide information on staffing and vacancies of secure accommodation services, where a secure unit has provided that information to the Care Inspectorate, although this is not necessarily published. The data is an annual snapshot of the workforce on 31 December each year. If you require further information on staffing and vacancies on the other data held for secure accommodation services, you can visit the SSSC's workforce data

site at: Scottish Social Services Council Data | SSSC or contact dataenquiries@sssc.uk.com.

3. Definitions and notation

3.1.   The survey forms, data specifications and guidance notes for the statistics presented in this publication are available on the Scottish Government website. The data specifications include the standard validation checks undertaken to quality assure these data.

	Online documentation can be found at the bottom of the following links.
Looked after	Scottish Exchange of Data: looked after children - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
Child protection	Scottish Exchange of Data: child protection - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
Secure care accommodation	Scottish Exchange of Data: secure accommodation - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

Children Looked After

3.2.   Under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 , 'looked after children' are defined as those in the care of their local authority – sometimes referred to as a 'corporate parent'. Looked after children - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

3.3.   *Supervision Requirement/Compulsory Supervision Order* – A children's hearing is a lay tribunal which considers and makes decisions on the welfare of the child or young person before them, taking into account the circumstances including any offending behaviour. The hearing decides on the measures of supervision which are in the best interests of the child or young person. If the hearing concludes compulsory measures of supervision are needed, it will make a Supervision Requirement or a Compulsory Supervision Order which will determine the type of placement for the child. In most cases the child will continue to live at home but will be under the supervision of a social worker. In some cases the hearing will decide that the child should live away from home with relatives or other carers.

3.4. *Permanence order* – This is an order that the sheriff court can make for the protection of children. By default, parents have a right for their child to live with them and control where the child lives. A Permanence order, which can only be applied for by the local authority, transfers this right of residence to the local authority. In making a permanence order the court can , as it considers appropriate, to promote and safeguard the child's health, development and welfare , also make ancillary orders which:

- give other parental rights and responsibilities to the local authority or other person(s),
- and /or remove those parental rights and responsibilities from the child(s) parents.

A permanence order may also specify arrangements for contact between the child and any other person the court considers appropriate and in the best interests of the child.

3.5. *Types of placement*
- At home with parent(s): at home with parent(s) or 'relevant person(s)' as defined in Section 200 of the Children's Hearings Act 2011
- With friends/relatives: placed with friends or relatives who are not approved foster carers. Also referred to as 'kinship care'.
- With foster carers provided by the local authority
- With foster carers purchased by the local authority
- With prospective adopters
- Other community: such as supported accommodation, hospital (e.g. at birth)
- Local authority home: in local authority children's home/hostel, local authority home/hostel for children with learning disabilities, local authority home/hostel for physically disabled children
- Voluntary home: in voluntary children's home/hostel which may be specifically for children with learning disabilities or for physically disabled children
- Residential school: in local authority or voluntary residential school (home/hostel), private school or independent school
- Secure accommodation
- Crisis care: in women's refuge, local authority/voluntary hostel for offenders or for drug/alcohol abusers
- Other residential: a known residential setting but does not fit with one of the above

3.6. There is information on the process by which children come to be looked after and legislation governing this on the Scottish Government website: Looked after children - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

Child Protection

3.7. *Child Protection Case Conference* (CPCC) – a meeting where the risk of harm or neglect of a child is addressed. There are four types of CPCC:

Type	Who is it for	Potential outcome
Initial	a child not currently on the child protection register	– Child is **registered** or – Child is not registered
Pre-birth	an unborn child	– Child is **registered** or – Child is not registered
Review	a child already on the child protection register either receiving a regular case review, or where there are significant recent changes in the child or family situation	– Child remains on register or – Child is **deregistered**
Transfer	a child already on the child protection register moving between local authorities	– Child is **deregistered** or – Child remains on register

3.8. *Registrations* - The children who were the subject of a child protection case conference and were subsequently added to the child protection register between 1 August 2019 and 31 July 2020.

3.9. *Deregistrations* - Children who were subject to a transfer or review conference and subsequently removed from the child protection register between 1 August 2019 and 31 July 2020.

3.10. The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland, published in 2010 and refreshed in 2014, is available here: National guidance for child protection in Scotland - gov.scot (www.gov.scot). This guidance is currently under review.

Secure care accommodation

3.11. *Secure accommodation legal framework* – The children's hearings system has responsibility for dealing with most children and young people under 16 who commit offences or who are in need of care and protection. In some cases, children's hearings have responsibility for young people under 18 where the young person is under the supervision of the hearing when he or she reaches 16 and the supervision requirement is extended.

3.12. For children who commit very grave crimes (the circumstances are set out in the relevant Lord Advocate's guidelines), the option remains for them to be jointly reported to the children's reporter and the procurator fiscal and together, they will decide whether prosecution through the court is appropriate. The court may then sentence, or return the young person to the hearing to be dealt with.

3.13. A young person who appears in court accused of an offence, where bail is not considered appropriate, can be remanded to the care of the local authority responsible for them under section 51 of the Criminal Procedures (Scotland) Act 1995. Local authorities are then responsible for placing that young person in secure care.

3.14. A young person convicted of an offence in court can be sentenced to detention in secure accommodation under section 205 or 208 of the Criminal Procedures (Scotland) Act 1995. In these cases, it is the responsibility of Scottish Ministers to place the sentenced young person in suitable accommodation.

3.15. Before a child or young person can be placed in secure accommodation through the children's hearings system, the children's panel must consider that the young person meets the legal criteria set out in The Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011. The conditions are -
  (a) that the child has previously absconded and is likely to abscond again and, if the child were to abscond, it is likely that the child's physical, mental, or moral welfare would be at risk;
  (b) the child is likely to engage in self harming conduct;
  (c) the child is likely to cause injury to another person.

3.16. Average number – The average number of young people in secure care accommodation over the year is calculated using the dates of admission and discharge for every child. Ages on admission, discharge during 2019-20 and age at 31 July 2020 are the actual ages for all young people.

3.17. *Ethnicity* and *Religion* – Data was collected on ethnicity and religion of young people in secure care and close support accommodation, but we are unable to publish this due to small numbers and data confidentiality issues.

3.18. *Emergency/short-term beds* – these can be used at short notice, for example, when a young person is admitted during the night as it is less disruptive for the other young people. The young person is usually admitted to the main facility the following day. Four units reported having an emergency bed: Rossie Secure Accommodation Services; Good Shepherd Centre; Kibble Education and Care Centre; and St. Mary's Kenmure. St Mary's Kenmure also has 3 short-term beds which, for ease, these beds are referred to as emergency in the report.

Disability and additional support needs

3.19. Prior to 2011, data was presented as 'Disability', and, because the categories in use did not match with definitions in the Equalities Act, from 2011-12 until 2014-15, data was presented as 'additional support needs'. The statistics themselves did not change in any way – the content of the data and categories remained the same, so were still comparable over time. From 2016-17 onwards, a new disability question has been introduced for the child protection, children looked after and secure care accommodation data collections, and this reduced the question to a simple yes/no, but with a more stringent qualification: "does the young person have a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities?". This is not comparable to data prior to 2016. Work is underway to find a unified set of disability criteria to provide more detail and to meet user needs.

Further information is available in the online documentation listed in section 3.1.

Notation and rounding

3.20. The following notation is used in this publication
- -   Data not available
- *   In cases where information is presented on a small number of children, indicates that data have been suppressed to prevent disclosure of personal information.

3.21. The sum of the breakdowns in the tables may not sum to the total displayed due to rounding.

4. Data Quality and revisions

4.1.   The data for all three parts of this publication – looked after children, child protection and secure care – come from administrative data held by local authorities and secure units. As this information is used to monitor and manage these sectors it should be robust and accurate.

4.2.   Automated validation checks are undertaken at the point the data are submitted. These validations are outlined in the relevant data specifications (see Background note 3.1 for links).

4.3.   The Children and Families statistics team undertake a range of validation checks on administrative data as part of the quality assurance process of preparing this national statistics publication. These procedures include: trend analysis, comparing against other available sources, and checking outliers with data providers. The data providers are then asked to confirm their data – for looked after children and child protection data this confirmation comes from local authorities; for secure care accommodation this confirmation comes from secure units. In cases where concerns about data quality outweigh the value of having an estimated figure publically available, we would not publish that particular information.

4.4.   Where data need to be revised due to the resubmission of data for a particular year, or to correct errors, the timing will be announced on our website and by email to those who have registered an interest in our statistics. The impact of revisions will be clearly explained in our published reports.

Looked after – comparability over time

4.5.   Looked after children statistics for years prior to 2008-09 used data supplied by local authorities aggregated at a local authority level. Since 2008-09, there have been significant improvements in the quality of data reporting as a result the collection of data about individuals. This should be borne in mind when comparing years.

4.6.   Data collected on children in a planned series of short-term placements ceased after 2012/13. This was done in consultation with local authorities and data users. Historical figures are still available from previous years' publications.

4.7.   For this publication, local authorities were asked to review and revise their data for 2018-19 during the collection process, following quality assurance checks

comparing data on individual episodes of care open in 2018-19 and 2019-20. This report reflects those updates to Looked After Children data provided by local authorities for 2018-19.

Looked after – data quality of specific variables

4.8.   The data on looked after children is collected from local authority social work management information systems. There can be a delay between an event affecting the child and the data being updated on local authority management information systems. Therefore, the figures published may be the subject of future revision. However, Scottish Government and partner Local Authorities have been improving data flows and the need for revision is less likely.

4.9.   From 2011-12, local authorities were requested to supply information on all legal reasons for a child being looked after (i.e. a child may have more than one legal reason at any time). The quality of this information has consequently improved.

4.10.   The only looked after field for which data is collected but not published is religion. This is due to data quality concerns as each year around two-thirds of children are recorded with religion as 'unknown'.

Child protection

4.11.   Since 2012-13, the child protection data has been collected at an individual level. It has been normal practice that, during the collection process, local authorities revise their data for the previous year. This report reflects those updates provided by local authorities for 2018-19.

4.12.   Prior to 2011-12, some local authorities did not place 'unborn' children on the child protection register until the child was actually born. The revised National Guidance now states that 'unborn' children should be placed on the child protection register if this is required and not wait until the child is born.

Secure care accommodation

4.13.   As the number of young people using secure care is very small, relative changes over time will show greater percentage changes than for data relating to children looked after or child protection.

Annex A

Children's Social Work Statistics 2019-20 Publication Tables

Full Excel versions of these tables with additional detail are available in the supporting files accompanying the publication.

Illustration 1   All children in Scotland and relative number being looked after and on the child protection register at 31 July 2020

Looked after children

Child protection

Secure care

Other

Annex B

Children's Social Work Statistics 2019-20 Additional tables

Full Excel versions of these tables are available in the supporting files accompanying the publication.

1. Looked after children 2019-20

Characteristics of looked after children at 31 July

Children starting to be looked after

Children ceasing to be looked after

Young people ceasing to be looked after who were 16 or over

Placements ceasing

Children looked after by number of placements

Young people eligible for aftercare services on 31 July

2. Looked after children, trend data

3. Looked after children, local authority data

4. Child protection additional tables

Children on the child protection register at 31 July 2020 by local authority

5. Secure care accommodation additional tables

A National Statistics publication for Scotland

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be interpreted to mean that the statistics: meet identified user needs; are produced, managed and disseminated to high standards; and are explained well.

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**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021**

SUBJECT: FOSTERING SCHEME AND SHORT BREAKS

BY: CHIEF OFFICER, HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   To seek approval for proposed changes to short break entitlement for the fostering scheme and update Committee on the outcome of the consultation carried out with carers.

1.2   This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance, (para 9 of the minute refers)

2.   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   It is recommended that Committee approves the proposed changes to the short break scheme for foster carers set out in 3.7 a) to d) on the basis that the required consultation with carers has been undertaken as set out in 3.8.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   The new scheme approved by Committee 13 February 2019 (paragraph 19 of the minute refers) changed the number of short breaks days accessible to ensure simplicity. All carers now have the option of up to 35 days per year. This meant that "mainstream" carers – levels 1-3 in the old scheme would have the option of additional breaks from 28 to 35 days. Whereas Choices carers in the old scheme, now Level 4 carers were reduced from 42 nights to 35.

3.2   The system that had been in place in the old scheme was complicated. Carers who took a short break (a holiday without the foster child in their care) lost their full fees for that period and only retained 50% of their fostering allowances. Carers who had not taken any short breaks received the 28 days entitlement as a payment because they had taken the child with them on holiday and kept them included within the family.

3.3 Within the new scheme, carers who do not take a short break essentially lost out on that additional sum. Not many carers were affected: but a few were and some had only appreciated that they would not receive this additional fee at the end of the financial year – March 2020.

3.4 The impact for one family was that rather than have that sum of money which they, by habit, would use to book a family holiday, they did not have that sum and could not book the holiday. The impact on the child in foster care would have been that the family might have accessed a short break for the child, while they had a holiday without the child with them. This would not have met the needs of the child in question so was assessed as necessary to agree a sum of 2 weeks fostering fee to enable planning to progress as they would have usually done. This was agreed at this Committee on 25 November 2020 (para 40 of the minute refers).

3.5 The service was inspected by the Care Inspectorate in October 2019: the report was considered by Children and Young Peoples Committee on 4 March 2020 (paragraph 20 refers). The verbal feedback expressed surprise that carers could access up to 35 days short breaks: most other schemes offer 21 or 28 days. The offer in Moray had been in an endeavour to simplify an already complicated system where two schemes were in operation.

3.6 Given the outcome of The Care Review – The Promise, it would be expected that foster carers would include the child/ren they care for in their holiday plans.

3.7 It was agreed at Committee on 25 November 2020 (para 40 of the minute refers) that consultation is undertaken with carers in the following areas;

(a) Decrease the number of accessible short break days from 35 to 28.

(b) Have an expectation that at times foster carers will include the cared for child in their holiday plans

(c) For carers who do not access short breaks they will receive a pro-rata payment for between 0 and 28 days for the days they have not taken.

(d) The fee is calculated on the daily rate of the carers approved level (1-4) based on them having cared for a child for 294 days

(e) Based on last year's figures of carers who would have been entitled to this payment for the full 28 days payment then this sum of money paid to the carers would be £23,514.

(f) This sum can be accessed within budget in part because the service no longer has two retained short breaks carers and this made available budget of £48,000 but currently we have fewer carers: there is an active recruitment campaign ongoing to recruit carers and we will continue to develop and promote this.

Foster carer feedback:

3.8 The results of the consultation of 4 focus groups meeting with all carers invited to attend and a survey monkey questionnaire are noted within:

i)   Out of 41 carers 19 responded = 47.5%
ii)   16 attended the meetings and three emailed with their preferences
iii)   15 opted for 28 days as their preference
iv)   1 thought a compromise of 21 days was another option
v)   2 were happy to go with the majority decision
vi)   1 thought that as they were newly approved that they didn't know enough to comment.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Moray 2026: A Plan for the Future and Moray Corporate Plan 2015 - 2017**
The Children's Services plan 2020/23 identifies improving outcomes for looked after children as a key priority the Children and families and Justice Social Work service improvement plan identifies actions to be taken to support these improvements the Corporate plan (2020 update) identifies the following priorities**:**

Work with families as partners to give their children the kind of lives they want them to lead so that children grow up to be strong and resilient. Improve the life chances and outcomes for care experienced children and young people, improvement in children and young people's health and well-being.

(b) **Policy and Legal**
The policy considerations are those that tie with The Promise – and with duties within corporate parenting. The Council's paramount legal duty in terms of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 when making decisions in respect of looked after children is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child.

(c) **Financial implications**
Corporate Management Team

Additional Expenditure Warning

When the Council approved the budget for 2021/22 on 3 March 2021 (paragraph 3 of the Minute refers) it balanced only by using one-off financial flexibilities. The indicative 3 year budget showed a likely requirement to continue to make significant savings in future years.   All financial decisions must be made in this context and only essential additional expenditure should be agreed in the course of the year. In making this determination the committee should consider whether the financial risk to the Council of incurring additional expenditure outweighs the risk to the Council of not incurring that expenditure, as set out in the risk section below and whether a decision on funding

could reasonably be deferred until the budget for future years is approved.

Financial implications are detailed within the body of the report.

(d) **Risk Implications**
As noted one carer specifically challenged the current functioning of the scheme, as they do not request short breaks for the child/ren in their care and as such lost out on the additional sum of money. There would be an impact on children if carers found they could not include the child in the family holiday plans.

(e) **Staffing Implications**
There are no staffing implications associated with this report.

(f) **Property**
There are no property implications associated with this report.

(g) **Equalities**
The proposal outlined is consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Articles:
20, 25, 27 and 31.

(h) **Consultations**
Chief Executive, Moray Council; Chief Social Work Officer; Head of Service, Children and Families and Criminal Justice Services; Head of HR, ICT and Organisational Development; Principal Accountant; Legal Services Manager, Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer and the Equal Opportunities Officer have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are in agreement with the content relating to their areas of responsibility.

5.   CONCLUSION

5.1   It is proposed that Committee approves the proposed changes to reduce the short break entitlement from 35 to 28 days and reinstate the end of year payment to foster carers who do not take the full 28 day entitlement to short breaks.

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Background Papers:
Ref: SPMAN – 1315769894-96