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## Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee

Tuesday, 14 May 2024

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that a Meeting of the **Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee** is to be held at **Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX** on **Tuesday, 14 May 2024** at **09:30**.

### BUSINESS

1. **Sederunt**

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

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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 Item 16 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."

4. **Minutes**

4a **Minute of meeting of 20 February 2024** 7 - 14

4b **Minute of Special Meeting of 27 March 2024** 15 - 18

5. **Written Questions \*\***

6.\* **Briefing Report Receipt of Petition to Request a Review** 19 - 26

**of the Policy and Procedures for the Allocation of ELC**

**Places in Moray**

Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)

7.*	<b>Education Scotland Inspection of Jack and Jill Nursery</b>	<b>27 - 32</b>
	<b>Elgin</b>	
	Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)	
8.*	<b>Education Scotland Inspection of Seafield Nursery</b>	<b>33 - 38</b>
	<b>Elgin</b>	
	Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)	
9.*	<b>Performance Report - Education Resources and Communities - Period to 31 March 2024</b>	<b>39 - 46</b>
	Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)	
10.*	<b>Partnership Community Learning and Development Plan (2024-2027)</b>	<b>47 - 54</b>
	Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)	
11.*	<b>Performance Report - Education - Period to 31 March 2024</b>	<b>55 - 62</b>
	Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)	
12.*	<b>Analysis of Secondary School Leaver Attainment 2022-2023</b>	<b>63 - 76</b>
	Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)	
13.*	<b>Education Scotland Inspection of Seafield Primary School</b>	<b>77 - 82</b>
	Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)	
14.*	<b>Education Scotland Inspection (Continuing Engagement) of St Peters RC Primary School</b>	<b>83 - 92</b>
	Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)	
15.*	<b>Education Scotland Inspection (Continuing Engagement) of Forres Academy</b>	<b>93 - 104</b>
	Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)	
	<b>Information Reports - if called in</b>	

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

**16.\* Additional Support Needs Review - Change Management Plan [Para 8 and 9]**

- 8 & 9. Information on proposed terms and/or expenditure to be incurred by the Authority;

**Information Reports - Not for Discussion at this Meeting**

Any member wishing to call in a noting or information report from one meeting shall give notice to Committee Services at least 48 hours before the meeting for which the report is published. The Notice shall be countersigned by one other elected member and shall explain the reason for call in including any action sought.

**Information Report - Early Learning and Childcare -** 105 -  
114

**Sustainable Rate Update**

Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)

**Information Report - Early Learning and Childcare Core** 115 -  
120

**Funding**

Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)

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

**Summary of Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee**

To exercise all the functions of the Council as Education Authority within the terms of relevant legislation with regard to school education, nurseries and child care, Gaelic, children's services, leisure, libraries and museums, sport and the arts, CLD, life long learning, youth justice and child protection.

## GUIDANCE NOTES

- \* **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.

# MORAY COUNCIL

## Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee

### SEDERUNT

Councillor Kathleen Robertson (Chair)  
Councillor Bridget Mustard (Depute Chair)

Councillor James Allan (Member)  
Councillor Tracy Colyer (Member)  
Councillor John Cowe (Member)  
Councillor John Divers (Member)  
Councillor Juli Harris (Member)  
Councillor Sandy Keith (Member)  
Councillor Scott Lawrence (Member)  
Councillor Graham Leadbitter (Member)  
Councillor Marc Macrae (Member)  
Councillor Paul McBain (Member)  
Councillor Shona Morrison (Member)  
Councillor Derek Ross (Member)  
Councillor Sonya Warren (Member)

Mrs Sheila Brumby (Non-Voting Member)  
Mrs Anne Currie (Non-Voting Member)  
Ms Jillian MacKellar (Non-Voting Member)  
Reverend Tembu Rongong (Non-Voting Member)  
Mrs Susan Slater (Non-Voting Member)  
Mrs Emma Tunnard (Non-Voting Member)

Clerk Name:	Caroline O'Connor
Clerk Telephone:	07779 999296
Clerk Email:	committee.services@moray.gov.uk



**Minute of Meeting of the Education, Children's and Leisure Services  
Committee**

**Tuesday, 20 February 2024**

**Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX**

**PRESENT**

Councillor James Allan, Mrs Sheila Brumby, Councillor Tracy Colyer, Mrs Anne Currie, Councillor John Divers, Mr Alfie Harper, Councillor Juli Harris, Councillor Sandy Keith, Councillor Scott Lawrence, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Ms Jillian MacKellar, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Paul McBain, Councillor Bridget Mustard, Councillor Kathleen Robertson, Councillor Derek Ross, Mrs Susan Slater, Mrs Emma Tunnard, Councillor Sonya Warren

**APOLOGIES**

Councillor John Cowe, Councillor Shona Morrison, Reverend Tembu Rongong

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development); Head of Education; Acting Head of Education Resources and Communities; Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance; Head of Service/Chief Social Work Officer; Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager and Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer.

**1. Chair**

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Kathleen Robertson.

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

In terms of Standing Orders 21 and 23 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, there were no declarations from Group Leaders or 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 on the agenda.

**3. Welcome**

The Committee joined the Chair in welcoming Jillian MacKellar as the new Primary School Representative to her first meeting.

**4. Resolution**

The meeting resolved that 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 for Items 16 and 17 of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Para Number of Minute	Para Number of Schedule 7A
17	Paras 8 and 9 Information on proposed terms and/or expenditure to be incurred by the Authority.
18	Paras 8 and 9 Information on proposed terms and/or expenditure to be incurred by the Authority.

## 5. Minutes of meeting of 28 November 2023

The minute of the meeting of the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee dated 28 November 2023 was submitted and approved.

## 6. Written Questions \*\*

The Committee noted the following written question submitted by Councillor Fernandes and the Council's response thereto:

### **School Library Improvement Fund**

The list of schools that have been awarded a share of the £200,000 from the School Library Improvement Fund, administered by The Scottish Library and Information Council, was recently published.

No Moray schools received any funding this year, which was also the case in 2023. Did any Moray schools apply for the latest round of SLIF funding?

Across Moray, how many SLIF applications have been made since the funding's launch in 2017?

How many of these applications have been successful?

What support do school librarians receive to help them succeed in applying for the fund?

### **RESPONSE**

#### **Did any Moray schools apply for the latest round of SLIF?**

No Moray schools applied for funding in the latest round of SLIF. Therefore, none received.

#### **Across Moray, how many SLIF applications have been made since the funding's launch in 2017?**

- 2021/22: Forres Academy: Equality, Inclusion, Diversity and A Mentally Healthy School.
- 2019/20: Elgin Academy: Raising Awareness of Everyday Sexism Project. The group of S6 pupils who led this project subsequently received Moray Young Citizen of the Year Awards.
- 2019/20: Dyke Primary School: Develop a culture of reading for enjoyment across the whole school community and to raise attainment in reading.
- 2018/19: West End Primary School: Library Transformation project.
- 2018/19: Moray School Librarians from Buckie High School, Elgin Academy, Elgin High School, Forres Academy, Keith Grammar School, Lossiemouth



**How many of these applications have been successful?**

- Forres Academy
- Elgin Academy
- Moray Schools Librarians Group.

**What support do school librarians receive to help them succeed in applying for the fund?**

Shelagh Toonen, librarian at Elgin Academy (ST) is the Lead Contact for SLIF in Moray and when the funding is announced, she emails all primary headteachers; school librarians and QIO for Literacy at Moray Council to make them aware of funding and any requirements from SLIC. Applicants are asked to submit applications to ST a week before the SLIC deadline. ST and the applicant discuss the application and when the applicant is happy and confident about submitting their application, ST shares the application with SLIC. ST can talk to SLIC staff at any time about the application process and feedback is shared with applicants throughout the application process.

Within school, school librarians receive support from their line managers and SLT. Indeed, permission and approval for any projects should be granted by SLT before submission of any application for funding.

The project within schools is managed by a team, which includes the school librarian (usually project manager) and teachers, support staff and a member of SLT. The project team meets regularly during both the planning and the implementation of the projects. The project team is required to submit an evaluation of the project after its completion.

**7. Children and Families Social Work Services Revenue Budget Monitoring to 31 December 2023**

The meeting had before it a report by the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Moray informing the Committee of the budget position for Children and Families Social Work Services as at 31 December 2023.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to note the budget position as at 31 December 2023.

**8. Education Revenue Budget Monitoring to 31 December 2023**

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informing the Committee of the budget position for Education as at 31 December 2023.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to note the budget position as at 31 December 2023.

**9. Devolved School Budgets Carry Forward**

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) seeking Committee approval to allow a school to carry forward budget spend which was planned for this financial year and which has not progressed due to reasons outwith the school's control.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to allow the following school to retain the following amounts for planned spend which has not progressed:-

- (i) Milne's High School for flooring circa £20k and altering a room to create an additional PE changing room circa £50k.

## **10. Education Scotland Inspection of Knockando Primary School**

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informing the Committee of the outcomes of the recently published report on a Moray school following inspection by Education Scotland.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to note the contents of the report and findings of Education Scotland following their inspection visit.

## **11. Initial Analysis of Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels 2023**

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) providing the Committee with a summary of the Moray data collected in June 2023 and provided to the Scottish Government at the end of October 2023 regarding Teacher Professional Judgements (TPJ) on children achieving Curriculum for Excellence levels (ACEL) at P1, P4, P7 and S3. This data appears in the Scottish Government Report published in December 2023.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to:-

- (i) note the content of the report;
- (ii) acknowledge work underway by Education and across Moray schools using resources available in order to address identified areas of underperformance and improve outcomes for all children and young people;
- (iii) note ACEL results for P1, P4 P7 and S3, improvement over time and progress in relation to Stretch Aims set using available data intelligences, as part of the Scottish Government and Education Scotland Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress requirements; and
- (iv) note actions underway and planned in support of improving outcomes for all learners and their ACEL achievement.

## **12. Behaviour in Moray Schools**

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) in response to the request of Committee in November 2023, advising Committee of escalating behaviours in schools and actions to support staff, pupils and the wider school community as well as ongoing work with partners.

Councillor Mustard welcomed the report however considered a stronger recommendation to the Community Planning Board was appropriate and proposed amending recommendation (iii) to read:-

- (iii) that this work will be led in a multi-agency approach with a short, medium to long term action plan and refers the matter to the Community Planning Partnership Board as a matter of urgency seeking assurance of commitment to bring back a report with actions identified to the Community Planning Board in May, to include barriers and what can be done to support and alleviate the issues.

This was seconded by Councillor Warren.

Councillor Ross in responding to the paper advised that he was in favour of smaller class sizes and he believed reducing class sizes in secondary schools would alleviate a number of the behavioural issues.

Thereafter Councillor Ross, seconded by Councillor Macrae, moved to add an additional recommendation asking the Council Leader to write to the Cabinet Secretary endorsing the approaches in the Behaviour in Schools 2023 report and calling for the Scottish Government to reduce class sizes to 20.

### **Adjournment of the Meeting**

The Chair proposed a short adjournment to allow Members the opportunity to consider the wording of the motion.

### **Resumption of the Meeting**

Following a short adjournment and prior to moving to the vote, clarification was sought as to whether this was a competent motion. The Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance advised that there did not appear to be sufficient information within the report to support this position on class sizes as there be factors to consider, such as the impact on the school estate and financial implications. The question, in terms of Standing Order 49(c), was whether Members had sufficient information for them to come to a reasoned and balanced decision. The Chair sought the views of Members on this issue and the majority felt there was not enough information to make a decision to write a letter in those terms based on the information contained in the report.

Further discussion took place during which it became clear members of the Committee were not against the principle of writing a letter to the Cabinet Secretary in more general terms asking that class sizes be considered.

As an amendment, Councillor Lawrence, seconded by Councillor McBain, moved to add an additional recommendation asking the Council Leader to write to the Cabinet Secretary endorsing the approaches in the Behaviour in Schools 2023 report and asking that the Scottish Government consider the effect of class sizes on anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Divers left the meeting during discussion of this item.

Prior to the vote, the Chair clarified that both the motion and amendment included the strengthened recommendation (iii) moved by Councillor Mustard and seconded by Councillor Warren.

On the division there voted:

For the Motion (3)	Councillors Ross, Macrae and Keith

For the Amendment (9)	Councillors Lawrence, McBain, Allan, Colyer, Harris, Leadbitter, Mustard, Robertson and Warren
Abstention (1)	Councillor Divers

Accordingly the amendment became the finding of the meeting and the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to acknowledge National work ongoing around increased disruptive behaviour across schools and society;
- (ii) to acknowledge and endorse the local approach as set out in Appendix 1;
- (iii) that this work will be led in a multi-agency approach with a short, medium to long term action plan and refers the matter to the Community Planning Partnership Board as a matter of urgency seeking assurance of commitment to bring back a report with actions identified to the Community Planning Board in May, to include barriers and what can be done to support and alleviate the issues; and
- (iv) the Council Leader be asked to write to the Cabinet Secretary to endorse the approaches recommended in the Behaviour in Schools 2023 report and asking that the Scottish Government consider the effect of class sizes on anti-social behaviour.

In terms of Standing Order 67, Councillors Ross, Keith and Macrae requested that their dissent at the decision be recorded.

### **13. Review of Additional Support Needs Services**

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) advising Committee of the progress to date with the Additional Support Needs (ASN) review and action plan moving forwards.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to:-

- (i) acknowledge work to date in progressing the review;
- (ii) acknowledge and endorse new priority areas and identified actions;
- (iii) the Supporting All learning strategy being reviewed to include ASN and to be brought back to a future meeting of this Committee; and
- (iv) a comprehensive Change Management Plan (CMP) being reported back to a future Committee with a clear timeline for move from current Enhanced Provision Units to Enhanced and Flexible Provision.

### **14. Education Resources and Communities Revenue Budget Monitoring to 31 December 2023**

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informing the Committee of the

budget position for Education Resources and Communities as at 31 December 2023.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to note the budget position at 31 December 2023.

#### **15. Information Reports - if called in**

The Committee noted that no Information Reports had been called in.

#### **16. Question Time \*\*\***

##### **Buckie Associated School Group Engagement**

Councillor Warren suggested reminders of the engagement survey be issued to ensure the public are participating including the drop in sessions on 26 and 27 February and asked what procedures, checks and balances are in place to ensure the surveys used in the consultations provide neutrality and given open and balanced answers and opinions and also if the questions in the survey have been checked against an independent verifier for objectivity and neutrality standards.

In response the Acting Head of Education Resources and Communities advised there is no independent verifier and while the survey contains direct questions, they have tried to allow open questions to provide narrative so the appropriate messages can be picked out. The survey follows a similar style and approach adopted by other local authorities and has been reviewed and approved by the Council's Equal Opportunities Officer and Research and Information Officer.

##### **Moray College**

Councillor Ross asked if officers can monitor the situation at Moray College regarding the impact of proposed job and course cuts and come back with an update if found to be having a significant impact on school leavers.

In response the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) advised the only information officers have is what is in the public domain however advised further information could be sought from the College.

##### **Primary and Secondary School Capacity Occupancy and General Purpose Spaces 2023-24**

Councillor Harris asked for information on out of zone placement percentages for primary and secondary schools in Moray which could be placed alongside the information report containing the table on school working and functional spaces and provided data on past and current actual numbers in school.

In response the Acting Head of Education Resources and Communities advised such information was in the public domain and confirmed he would arrange for it to be added.

#### **17. Learning Estate and Delivery Programme - Findrassie Primary School [Paras 8 and 9]**

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) providing Committee with an update on the Findrassie Primary School new build project and seeking a decision

from Committee to continue with a deferment of the project based on updated school roll forecast.

Concern was raised by a number of Councillors about whether recommendation (iii) should be removed given that the current forecast was until 2030, other pressures on officer time and also the need to take account of other undetermined factors.

In terms of Standing Order 85, the Chair sought agreement from the Committee to suspend Standing Order 77 and continue beyond 12.45pm in order to conclude consideration of this item.

This was unanimously agreed.

Councillor Macrae left the meeting during discussion of this item.

Following discussion with officers, the Chair moved to remove recommendation (iii) which meant recommendation (iv) would become recommendation (iii).

Following consideration and there being no one otherwise minded the Committee unanimously agreed to:-

- (i) note the update to projected pupils numbers in Elgin Academy Associated School Group (ASG) impacting the future requirement for Findrassie Primary School new build;
- (ii) approve the continued deferment to the Findrassie Primary School new build project for a further 5 years; and
- (iii) note that a further update report on the Findrassie project will be brought to this Committee in early 2025.

#### **18. Learning Estate Programme - Elgin High School Capacity Expansion Project Update [Paras 8 and 9]**

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informing the Committee of the current status of the Elgin High School capacity extension and seeking approval to progress to Full Business Case.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to approve the procurement strategy set out in paragraphs 5.4 to 5.6 of the report and associated costs to take the project to Full Business Case (FBC).

**Minute of Special Meeting of the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee**

**Wednesday, 27 March 2024**

**Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX**

**PRESENT**

Councillor James Allan, Councillor Tracy Colyer, Councillor John Cowe, Mrs Anne Currie, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Juli Harris, Councillor Sandy Keith, Councillor Scott Lawrence, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Ms Jillian MacKellar, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Paul McBain, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Bridget Mustard, Councillor Kathleen Robertson, Reverend Tembu Rongong, Councillor Derek Ross, Mrs Susan Slater, Councillor Sonya Warren

**APOLOGIES**

Mrs Sheila Brumby, Mr Alfie Harper, Mrs Emma Tunnard

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Chief Executive; Head of Education; Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance; Programme Manager (Learning Estate); Quality Improvement Officer (ASN) and Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer.

**1. Chair**

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Kathleen Robertson.

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

In terms of Standing Orders 21 and 23 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, there were no declarations from Group Leaders or 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 on the agenda.

**3. Resolution**

The meeting resolved that 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 for Item 7 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.

Para Number of Minute	Para Number of Schedule 7A
8	Para 1 Information relating to staffing matters

**4. Congratulations**

The Committee joined the Chair in congratulating the Active Schools Team for organising a successful Moray primary school cross country championship at Gordon Castle on Saturday 23 March along with the schools who supported their pupils to attend.

The Committee further joined the Chair in noting this was Alfie Harper's last meeting having been the pupil representative for the last 2 years and wished him all the best on his journey.

## **5. Learning Estate Programme - Future Forres Academy Project Update**

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informing the Committee of the current status of the Future Forres Academy project and seeking approval to progress to Full Business Case.

The Programme Manager (Learning Estate) apologised for late identification of a key error in the report relating to recommendation (iv) and associated paras which had resulted in the late upload of an updated version in the Additional Meeting Documents section of the Committee papers.

In response to a question from Councillor Lawrence relating to whether the financial spend element would require to be a recommendation to Moray Council from this Committee following consideration at the meeting on 14 May 2024, the Programme Manager (Learning Estate) confirmed it would require to be reported to Moray Council in relation to additional capital funds following approval by this Committee.

The Chair moved an amendment to recommendation (iii) to include "and thereafter referred to Moray Council for approval".

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

- i) to note the evidence to support a New Build project option (para 3.3);
- ii) that public engagement is undertaken regarding the location of a new school (para 4.1);
- iii) determination of the preferred site following public engagement will be at the Education, Children's and Leisure Services (ECLS) Committee on 14 May 2024 (para 4.1) and thereafter referred to Moray Council for approval; and
- iv) to approve the procurement strategy and associated costs for next stage to progress the project towards Full Business Case (FBC) (para 4.7-4.10).

## **6. Federation Policy for Schools**

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) seeking Committee approval to scrutinise the reviewed policy and adopt this for future vacancies across schools.

In terms of Standing Order 85, the Chair sought agreement from the Committee to suspend Standing Order 77 and continue beyond 12.45pm in order to conclude consideration of this item.



This was unanimously agreed.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to:-

- i) acknowledge work to date and agree the reviewed Federation Headteacher Policy to be adopted for schools;
- ii) delegate authority to the Chief Education Officer, working with the Business Support Team Manager and the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers, to create a linear formula for management structure and staffing for any federation models and to review this regularly;
- iii) adopt this policy for any future vacancies across schools from 1 April 2024;
- iv) adopt option 6 management structure for the new pairing for St Sylvester's and East End;
- v) adopt option 2 management structure for the new executive model for Newmill, Botriphnie and Rothiemay; and
- vi) instruct officers to review the current pilot across Milne's High School and Milne's Primary to bring back a report by the end of the academic session 2024/25 regarding 5-18 campus model.

#### **7. Briefing Report: Receipt of Petition to request a review of the Policy and Procedures for the allocation of ELC Places in Moray**

The meeting had before it a briefing report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) advising the Committee of a petition entitled 'To request a review of the policy and procedures for the allocation Early Learning and Petition Childcare places in Moray' received on 12 January 2024 from Clare Stables, the terms of which stated:-

"We, the undersigned, call on The Moray Council to review the policy and procedures for allocation of Early Learning and Childcare places in Moray to ensure: [a] there is adequate provision within each secondary school area to enable families living in that area to access appropriate ELC within their 20 minute neighbourhood. [b] that, where reasonably practicable, children can receive their funded entitlement at times and locations that best support their learning and development, and fit with the needs of their parents/carers. [c] that the criteria used to allocate places takes particular account of the needs of vulnerable families and children with additional support needs, including minimizing travel time and cost, enabling siblings to attend the same provision, and ensuring smooth transition to Primary School."

The Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance apologised to the Committee and Petitioners for omission of an important procedural step in the process meaning the Petitioners had not been invited to attend to speak to the petition. He advised it would be prudent to defer consideration of the report until the next Committee meeting to allow the Petitioners to be invited to attend.

There being no one otherwise minded, the Committee unanimously agreed to defer the report until the next Committee meeting to allow the Petitioners to be invited to attend.

## **8. Additional Support Needs Allocations [Para 1]**

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) advising Committee of the proposed allocations based on moderation for Additional Support Needs (ASN) (teachers and support staff) for session 2024/25.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed:-

- i) to acknowledge the work to date to bring allocations in line with available budget and ensure demand is contained within budget year on year in future;
- ii) the options that have been assessed based on moderation as well as allocations so far;
- iii) Option 3 based on proportional allocation of funding available and determined by need through moderation;
- iv) to the change management process beginning with immediate effect for Teacher allocations; and
- v) to the change management process for support staff allocations as soon as practical based on information from the system.



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**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT: BRIEFING REPORT: RECEIPT OF PETITION TO REQUEST A  
REVIEW OF THE POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR THE  
ALLOCATION OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE PLACES  
IN MORAY**

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

**1. PETITION DETAILS**

1.1 Title of Petition: To request a review of the policy and procedures for the allocation of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) places in Moray.

1.2 Petitioner: Clare Stables, who has submitted the petition on behalf of the Buckie Community and over 150 residents.

1.3 Petition Statement:

We, the undersigned, call on The Moray Council to review the policy and procedures for allocation of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) places in Moray to ensure:

- a) there is adequate provision within each secondary school area to enable families living in that area to access appropriate ELC within their 20 minute neighbourhood.
- b) that, where reasonably practicable, children can receive their funded entitlement at times and locations that best support their learning and development, and fit with the needs of their parents/carers.
- c) that the criteria used to allocate places takes particular account of the needs of vulnerable families and children with additional support needs, including minimising travel time and cost, enable siblings to attend the same provision, and ensuring smooth transition to Primary School.

- 1.4 Reasons for the petition/concerns raised by the petitioner: These are contained in the petition, a copy of which is attached as **APPENDIX A** and are summarised as follows:
- Travel distance for families that do not have access to their own transport.
  - Cost of public transport
  - Co-ordination of drop off/pick up if siblings are not at the same ELC provision
  - Concerns around continuity of provision, particularly when children transition into Primary 1

## 2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Buckie Associated Schools Group (ASG) currently has ten ELC settings, including Teddy Bear Developmental Group, that offer a mixture of term time and year round models to support families accessing up to 1140 hours of funded ELC. ELC settings differ from school in as much as there are no “catchment” areas and instead parental choice is the reasoning for place allocation, where there is capacity.
- 2.2 Alongside the ten ELC settings we also have nine childminders that support the Buckie ASG.
- 2.3 Six of the ELC settings are run by the local authority and the other four are private providers in contract with Moray Council to offer the funded hours. The childminders all run as private business with three of them being in contract to offer funded hours to eligible 3-5 year olds.

## 3. **CURRENT POSITION**

- 3.1 Currently funded childcare places are allocated with priority given as follows:
- Child with existing attendance in the nursery
  - Child resident in secondary catchment area and sibling in the nursery
  - Child resident in secondary catchment
  - Child with [Co-ordinated Support Plan \(CSP\)](#), and/or assessment by the Education Authority
  - Child outwith secondary catchment area and sibling in the nursery
  - Child outwith the secondary catchment area

Priority within any of the six categories above, where it is necessary to be determined, will be given to older children first and then to those resident closest to the setting (distance being calculated by the straight line method)

- 3.2 This [allocation process](#) was originally published in 2000 and was last reviewed in 2010. At the time the policy noted Moray Council will attempt, where possible, to match admissions to parents' wishes.
- 3.3 The current policy complies with the Scottish Government requirements as per the [Funding follows the child guidance](#).

3.4 Currently, both in Buckie High ASG and across Moray, there is sufficient capacity to accommodate all of the children that are eligible for funded 3-5's places. Capacities are reviewed on annually based on Community Health Index (CHI) data.

#### **4. PETITION PROCESS**

4.1 In terms of the [process](#) for considering petitions this is the preliminary hearing. In terms of paragraph 8.4.2 of the process the petitioner should be given up to 5 minutes time to introduce their petition (extendable at the discretion of the Chair) with a similar amount of time being given to an appropriate officer to respond.

4.2 The Committee may decide as follows:-

- Direct that the petition (in whole or part) proceed to a full hearing, at the next available date of that service committee, another appropriate service committee or full council, at which a further report will be presented detailing the full background to the issues in the petition and addressing any points of particular interest to the committee.
- Reject the petition (in whole/part) stating reason
- For simple issues instruct immediate action by the council without any further hearing or report
- Pass the petition to the relevant director and chairperson to look into, with or without any specific direction as to action.

#### **5. Summary Response to Petition**

5.1 It is clear that there are different and potentially conflicting views around the availability and allocation of ELC places across Moray and more specifically in Buckie High ASG. However it should be noted currently there are sufficient ELC spaces across the ASG.

5.2 The ELC service has a clear policy for allocation of spaces and this reflects similar approaches to allocations of funded places across Scotland.

5.3 Consideration would need to be given to whether a review of policy is warranted, however, this is not recommended due to there being sufficient capacity already within the ASG. While it is recognised that it is not always possible to meet parental preference, the practical reality is that although ELC provision is made in a number of locations within the ASG it is not always possible to ensure this matches with local demand for particular settings and adequacy of provision must be considered across the whole ASG. The current policy already makes provision to accommodate parental preference as far as possible. If the Committee directs that petition should proceed to a full hearing, further information will be provided on the background to the petition, relevant considerations and to address the points from the petitioner.

**6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 It is clear that there is a concern from local people as reflected in the petition regarding allocation of ELC services in Moray. However**
- 6.2 the Committee is also asked to consider the key points noted in 3.2, 3.4 and section 5 outlining the service advice that there are sufficient ELC spaces in Buckie ASG, that the policy already reflects parental choice as far as possible, and therefore the recommendation is to reject this petition on that basis.**

Author of Report: Hazel Sly, Early Years' Service Manager

Background Papers:

Ref: SPMAN-1315769894-509 / SPMAN-1315769894-507



Office use: Petition number

**PE2014-001**

Updated 09/01/2023

## PETITION SUBMISSION FORM

If you wish to submit a petition for consideration by The Moray Council, please complete this form. For guidance, further information or advice on the submission of a petition please contact the Democratic Services Manager on 01343 563016 or email [committee.services@moray.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@moray.gov.uk), or alternatively refer to information on [www.moray.gov.uk/petitions](http://www.moray.gov.uk/petitions)

### Details of principal petitioner submitting the petition

Please enter the name of person and organisation you represent (if applicable) and who is raising the petition.

Include a contact address to which correspondence may be sent, a contact telephone number and e-mail address if available so that we can contact you with any queries.

**Name:** Clare Stables

**Address:** 111, Park Lane, Inverurie

**Postcode:** AB54 6JZ

**Tel No:** 01463 70000

**E mail:** clare.stables@moray.gov.uk

**Title of the Petition**

To request a review of the policy and procedures for the allocation Early Learning and Childcare places in Moray

**Petition Statement** - Please state (in no more than 250 words) what action the Petitioner wishes the Council to take. If you require you can attach a typed sheet to this form with the detail.

We, the undersigned, call on The Moray Council to review the policy and procedures for allocation of Early Learning and Childcare places in Moray to ensure:

[a] there is adequate provision within each secondary school area to enable families living in that area to access appropriate ELC within their 20 minute neighbourhood.

[b] that, where reasonably practicable, children can receive their funded entitlement at times and locations that best support their learning and development, and fit with the needs of their parents/carers.

[c] that the criteria used to allocate places takes particular account of the needs of vulnerable families and children with additional support needs, including minimizing travel time and cost, enabling siblings to attend the same provision, and ensuring smooth transition to Primary School.

**Cont.**

**Action taken (if any) to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition**

Before a petition is submitted, petitioners are expected to have taken reasonable steps in attempting to resolve the issues.

Please enter below details of any individuals or organisations approached.  
Copies of correspondence, including any responses, should be attached.

This information will be made available when this Petition is considered.

I have spoken to local Councillors and to my MSP.

**Background Information**

Please note any other background information that you think we should be made aware of.

Families without access to a car struggle to take children to ELC provision outwith walking distance.

Public transport isn't always available, and having to use it adds to the overall cost which is an issue when families are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.

Use of any petrol or diesel transport is undesirable in the fight to reach Net Zero.

Siblings aren't guaranteed provision in the same establishment making it challenging to coordinate pick-up and drop-off, particularly in case of emergency. This adds stress, costs time and money, and limits the parents' availability for work.

Having an ELC placement within their Primary School catchment area enables children to have continuity from nursery to pre-school to primary, allowing them opportunity to develop social relationships with their future classmates and increasing the likelihood of a smooth transition to Primary Education.

Unless overall provision is increased, replacing half day sessions with full day sessions reduces the number of children who can benefit from a placement.

**Other Proceedings**

Please indicate the following to the best of your knowledge.

Are the issue(s) raised in the petition currently being handled or been submitted in the past as a formal complaint to Moray Council?

No

Are the issue(s) raised in the petition currently subject to any other formal processes in the council e.g. appeal or planning process

No

Are the issue(s) raised in the petition, currently subject to any other legal proceedings, e.g. information within is not subject to interdict or court order?

No



**Appearance before a meeting considering the petition**

The Chairperson of the appropriate Committee who hears the petition will invite the petitioner to appear before the meeting to speak in support of their petition. This is useful in assisting elected members to reach a decision.

Please indicate below whether you wish to submit a request to make a brief statement to the Committee when it is considering your petition. Please note that you will be asked to submit a written summary of your comment 3 days prior to the meeting.

**\*I DO wish the opportunity to make a brief statement before the Meeting**

**Signature of Principal Petitioner**

When satisfied that the petition meets all the criteria outlined in the *Guidance to Submission of Petitions*, the Principal Petitioner should sign and date the form in the box below.

Any additional sheets of signatures should be attached to the form.

Signature .. ..... Date *12 Jan 2024*

Name of signatory in block capitals *CLARE STABLES*

**Number of people who have signed the petition**

*187*






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**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT: EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION OF JACK AND JILL  
NURSERY, ELGIN**

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

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Committee of the outcomes of the recently published report on a Moray Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) setting following inspection by Education Scotland.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee scrutinise and notes the contents of this report and findings of Education Scotland following their inspection.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 When an ELC setting is inspected by Education Scotland, a report is published (by Education Scotland) which gives commentary on the setting's performance. These reports are presented regularly to this Committee, where possible at the first available opportunity after publication.
- 3.2 In January 2024, Education Scotland inspected Jack and Jill Nursery, Elgin using the [Short Inspection Model](#).
- 3.3 The key features of the short inspection visit model were;
- The team comprised of 2 inspectors.
  - The inspectors spent 2 days at the setting, including time for initial scoping and feedback.

3.4 The Education Scotland Inspection team use selected Quality Indicators (QI's) from the [How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare \(HGIOELC\)](#) quality framework which were evaluated using the [six point scale](#) , namely;

QI 2.3 – Learning, Teaching and Assessment  
QI 3.2 - Securing Children's Progress

3.5 The inspectors also had a focus on safeguarding as is the case in every inspection.

3.6 The inspection findings indicated that Jack and Jill Nursery has the capacity to continue to improve and Education Scotland will make no more visits in connection with this inspection.

3.7 The summary of the inspection report is contained in **Appendix 1**. The original inspection report and summary of inspection findings can be viewed at; <https://education.gov.scot/inspection-and-review/find-an-inspection-report/find-an-inspection-report/details?id=3083>.

#### 4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The report links to the 'Tackle Poverty and Inequality' priority as referred to in the Moray Council Corporate Plan and to 'Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray' from the LOIP.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

This report relates to Section 66 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, which concerns the inspection of educational establishments.

**(c) Financial implications**

None arising directly from the report.

**(d) Risk Implications**

None arising directly from the report.

**(e) Staffing Implications**

None arising directly from the report.

**(f) Property**

None arising directly from the report.

**(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform Committee on performance following external scrutiny/validation activity

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

None arising directly from the report.

**(i) Consultations**

Head of Education (Chief Education Officer), Continuous Improvement Officer (West), Continuous Improvement Officer (East), Principal Teacher Early Years Education Service and Caroline O'Connor, 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 Committee is invited to scrutinise and note the contents of this report at Jack and Jill Nursery, Elgin.**

Author of Report: Hazel Sly, Early Years' Service Manager

Background Papers:

Ref:



5 March 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

In January 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Jack and Jill Nursery School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and worked closely with the group manager, peripatetic manager and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the setting's work.

- The highly effective leaders and practitioners work very well together as a team. They are highly committed to children and families, and to helping all children make the best possible progress.
- Children are making very good progress in their learning supported by skilled interactions from practitioners. Children benefit from rich sensory experiences which encourage them to explore, investigate and use their imaginations.
- Approaches to learning are child-centred and based around their ideas and interests. Staff seek and act upon children's views, so that children are motivated and engaged in their learning.
- There are strong and productive partnerships with families and external agencies. These ensure that children receive very good support in their learning and development.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the owner/manager of the setting and a representative from Moray Council.

- Develop next steps in learning which are individualised for each child, to ensure they are appropriately challenged.
- Continue as planned to take forward the priorities identified in the improvement plan.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the setting's work using quality indicators from [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#). Quality indicators help learning and childcare settings, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Jack and Jill Nursery School

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Securing children's progress</b>	<b>very good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: [Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

We are confident that the setting has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Moray Council will inform parents/carers about the setting's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its settings.

May Geddes  
HM Inspector






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**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT: EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION OF SEAFIELD  
NURSERY, ELGIN**

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

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the outcomes of the recently published report on a Moray Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) setting following inspection by Education Scotland.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee scrutinise and notes the contents of this report and findings of Education Scotland following their inspection.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 When an ELC setting is inspected by Education Scotland a report is published (by Education Scotland) which gives commentary on the setting's performance. These reports are presented regularly to this Committee, where possible at the first available opportunity after publication.
- 3.2 In November 2023, Education Scotland inspected Seafield Nursery, Elgin using the [Short Inspection Model](#).
- 3.3 The key features of the short inspection visit model were;
- The team comprised of 2 inspectors.
  - The inspectors spent 2 days at the setting, including time for initial scoping and feedback.
  - The team inspecting Nursery liaised with the team inspecting School.

3.4 The Education Scotland Inspection team use selected Quality Indicators (QI's) from the [How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare \(HGIOELC\)](#) quality framework which were evaluated using the [six point scale](#), namely;

QI 2.3 – Learning, Teaching and Assessment  
QI 3.2 - Securing Children's Progress

3.5 The inspectors also had a focus on safeguarding as is the case in every inspection.

3.6 The inspection findings indicated that Seafield Nursery has the capacity to continue to improve and Education Scotland will make no more visits in connection with this inspection.

3.7 The summary of the inspection report is contained in **Appendix 1**. The original inspection report and summary of inspection findings can be viewed at; <https://education.gov.scot/inspection-and-review/find-an-inspection-report/find-an-inspection-report/details?id=4313>

#### **4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The report links to the 'Tackle Poverty and Inequality' priority as referred to in the Moray Council Corporate Plan and to 'Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray' from the LOIP.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

This report relates to Section 66 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, which concerns the inspection of educational establishments.

**(c) Financial implications**

None arising directly from the report.

**(d) Risk Implications**

None arising directly from the report.

**(e) Staffing Implications**

None arising directly from the report.

**(f) Property**

None arising directly from the report.

**(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform Committee on performance following external scrutiny/validation activity.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

None arising directly from the report.

**(i) Consultations**

Head of Education (Chief Education Officer), Continuous Improvement Officer (West), Continuous Improvement Officer (East), Principal Teacher Early Years Education Service and Caroline O'Connor, 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 is invited to scrutinise and note the contents of this report at Seafield Nursery, Elgin.**

Author of Report: Hazel Sly, Early Years' Service Manager  
Background Papers:  
Ref:



6 February 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

In November 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Seafeld Nursery. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and worked closely with the manager/head of setting and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the setting's work.

- The nurturing ethos and positive relationships across Seafeld Nursery. These relationships ensure that children and their families feel welcomed and valued.
- The dedicated manager and enthusiastic nursery team who are working well together to improve outcomes for children. They develop children's wellbeing well in the welcoming nursery where everyone is valued.
- The effective support children and families receive from practitioners who ensure all children are able to access learning through play. Their interventions result in children who require additional support for learning making very good progress.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the manager of the setting and a representative from Moray Council.

- The nursery team should review approaches to planning. Practitioners should continue to build on children's interests and what they already know as children play.
- In addition, practitioners should provide increased planned experiences to develop further children's learning across the curriculum.
- Practitioners should develop further their approaches to assessing and tracking children's learning. They should develop how they record and track children's learning and development over time. This will help practitioners to ensure all children make the best possible progress in their learning.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the setting's work using quality indicators from [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#). Quality indicators help learning and childcare settings, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Seafield Nursery

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Securing children's progress</b>	<b>good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

[Details](#) | [Find an inspection report](#) | [Find an inspection report](#) | [Inspection and Review](#) | [Education Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

We are confident that the setting has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Moray Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its settings.

Rhoda MacDonald  
Managing Inspector




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**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE REPORT (EDUCATION RESOURCES AND  
COMMUNITIES) – PERIOD TO 31 MARCH 2024**

**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 2024.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Committee in terms of section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration in relation to the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

**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 2024; and**
- ii) notes the actions being taken to improve performance where required.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

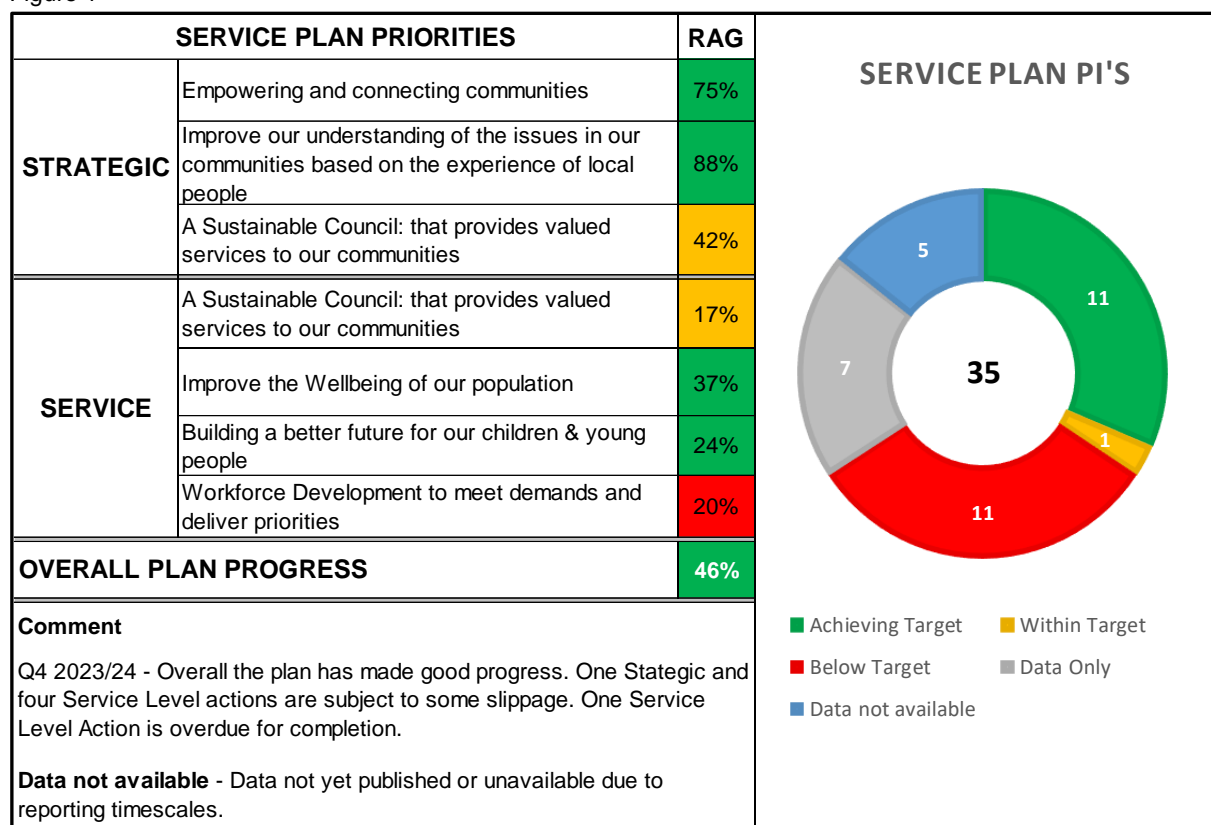
- 3.1 On 7 August 2019, the Council, approved a revised Performance Management Framework for services (para 5 of the minute refers).

**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 can be accessed within the Background Papers section of this report.

Figure 1



### Strategic Outcomes - successes

- 4.3 Work with Council services to deliver Participatory Budgeting (PB) exercises continued during the second half of 2023/24 and the action was able to complete by the deadline date. Significant activity in supporting a range of projects took place during quarters 3 and 4 including £91K being allocated to eight arts projects through the prosperity fund. Due to the restructuring of PB delivery, influenced by difficult budget decisions, the continuation of PB activity will rest within individual Council services. Community Support Unit (CSU) staff affected have now been successfully redeployed via the Transform process. All existing PB activity within the CSU has now been closed off. (Action STRAT ERC1.2 23-27)
- 4.4 Support for locality planning in the Buckie and New Elgin areas progressed well during quarters 3 and 4. With both groups operating effectively, outcomes have been achieved and this action has completed. Both groups, with CSU support, have put in place regular events which are well attended and sustainable. Community lunch provision in Buckie served 564 lunches by an average of 15 volunteers during the second half of 2023/24. The Strategic Equity Funded project in New Elgin primary school continues to deliver a well-attended weekly youth club. An ambitious target to increase resident participation in the locality planning process was set for 2023/24. Although a significant increase of 38.5% was witnessed it fell short of the 50% target. (Action STRAT ERC 2.1 23-27, PIs ERC008, ERC008a)



- 4.5 Engagement with the public on the future of Council services has developed well during quarters 2 and 3, this action is now complete. A public survey was undertaken and supported by CSU lead focus groups regarding the modernisation of Sport, culture and Leisure services. Further surveys were undertaken in the Forres and Buckie ASG areas to gauge public opinion in relation to 'A sustainable learning estate'. The Forres consultation process is now complete and the process for the Buckie ASG is ongoing. Further details of surveys undertaken can be found at para 6.8 of this report. Community Action Plans have been produced and are in place for Lossiemouth, Forres and Keith meeting the target for 2023/24. (Action STRAT ERC 2.3 23-27, PI ERC003)
- 4.6 The cost per attendance of sport facilities (including swimming pools) has reduced from £2.66 to £2.44 between 2021/22 to 2022/23 ranking Moray in the top quartile of Scottish Local Authorities (5/32). Moray is placed 2/8 within our family group where the average is £4.87. (Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) PI CLS01)
- 4.7 Although the percentage of adults satisfied with libraries has reduced from 82.3% to 79.3% between 2021/22 to 2022/23 it remains in the top quartile (7/32). Within our family group Moray is ranked 4/8 where the group average is 71%. (LGBF PI CLS05a)

#### **Strategic Outcomes – challenges and actions to support**

- 4.8 The action to address the affordability and standard of Moray schools is subject to slippage with key milestones not being met by agreed deadlines. Resourcing issues and the effect of budget savings have impacted on their achievement. Revised submission dates during quarters 1 and 2 2024/25 are in place for the reports and plans linked to these milestones. Although the Crossroads Primary school community engagement finished in November 2023, resourcing issues within both Education, Resources and Communities and Education services prevented the completion of the options appraisal on the future of the school. Two site options have been identified for the proposed new build of Forres Academy. Public engagement is underway to seek views on preferred site selection. The survey element of the consultation is due to close on Thursday 25 April, an update report will be submitted to full council on 22 May with recommendations. Currently 22 of 53 schools in Moray as condition B or better, showing no improvement. With the school estate reduced, due to the closure of Inveravon, the condition has proportionately deteriorated. (Action STRAT ERC 3.1, PI EdS100)
- 4.9 The cost per library visit has increased significantly from £2.75 in 2020/21 to £6.55 in 2022/23 placing Moray in the bottom quartile with a ranking of 29/32 nationally and 6/8 with our family group. Previous misinterpretation of LGBF guidance regarding the recording of virtual library visits led to inflated figures for years prior to 2022/23. The loss of two major income streams for the library service since the COVID pandemic (passport verification and ILA grant for teaching ICT courses) led to a significant reduction in income and increasing overall service costs. (LGBF PI CLS02)
- 4.10 The percentage of adults satisfied with museum and galleries has decreased from 62.3% in 2021/22 to 58.3% in 2022/23 placing Moray 24/32 nationally and 7/8 in our family group. (LGBF PI CLS05c)

### **Service Level Outcomes - successes**

- 4.11 The Changing Lives approach within Sport & Culture services is embedding well. The changing lives mindset is about using sport and physical activity to intentionally bring about positive change for people and communities. Adopted as a new approach in 2022/23, the figures recorded have provided a baseline from which improvement can be measured. Cumulatively, quarters 3 & 4 have shown a significant increase of participants, in comparison to the first half of the year and exceeded expectations. Whilst there was a slight increase in annual participants from 2022/23 to 2023/24 (489 to 494), the ambitious target of a 10% increase was not met. Four specific areas: poverty, mental health, disability and older people were focussed upon during quarter 4. Both the libraries and sport and leisure services have developed programmes that follow the approach. Moving forward measures will need to be designed to measure positive outcomes for participants. (Action SERV ERC 2.1 23-27, PIs ERC021, ERC021a)

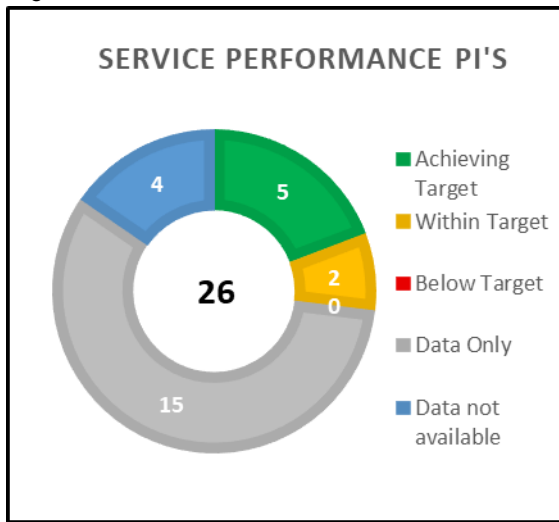
### **Service Level Outcomes – challenges and actions to support**

- 4.12 Little progress was made during the second half of 2023/24 in the development and implementation of the school business admin review and one milestone for Phase 1 implementation was not met. Staffing vacancies and an inability to free resources from the current team has prevented progress. Plans are in place to release officer time from quarter 1 2024/25, however further resource will be needed to move forward at pace. Action SERV ERC 1.1 23-27)
- 4.13 Progress has been slow in further developing and implementing the Sport and Leisure Capital Investment plan during the second half of 2023/24, with the key milestone to have asset management plans in place for 25% of facilities not being met. The development of the plan is dependent on decisions in other service areas, such as the learning estate, which have taken precedence. The proposal to extend Moray Leisure Centre was presented to elected members in quarter 3 and discussions are ongoing. The Speyside 'Astro Carpet' replacement is nearing completion and handover of the refurbished facility is expected in quarter 1 2024/25. (Action SERV 1.2 23-27, PI ERC030)
- 4.14 The update and implementation of the Sport & Leisure business plan has not progressed as expected. The process to develop a new approach commenced in quarter 1 after a presentation from Public Health Scotland of a 'Systems based approach' to physical activity. In quarter 4 the new approach received endorsement from the Community Planning Partnership. Work has commenced on the new plan with partners and other organisations, but progression is proving challenging in bringing agencies together. (Action SERV ERC 2.2 23-27)
- 4.15 SERV ERC 4.1 23-27 No significant progress was made in improving the ERDP experience during quarters 3 & 4. Staffing changes and management vacancies have led to the delay in progress of this action. The process has already begun to schedule ERDPs for 2024/25 with some progress to be noticed from quarter 1. (Action SERV ERC 4.1 23-27, PI ERDP.ERC3)

## 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 The narrative included is by exception, links to Service Performance Indicators can be accessed within the Background Papers section of this report.

Figure 2



### **Operational Indicators - successes**

- 5.3 Attendances at Indoor leisure services, swimming pools and Health & Fitness suites have all increased in comparison to 2022/23. Total admissions to leisure services have shown an increase of 9%, swimming pools by 15% and Health & Fitness suites by 17%. (PIs ERC018c, EdS407.1 & EdS407.2)
- 5.4 Use of library facilities (Static & mobile) continues to increase. In comparison 2022/23 library facilities have seen a 12% increase in usage. (PI ERC046)
- 5.5 The percentage of Data Protection requests responded to within 30 calendar days has consistently improved during 2023/24. The annual average for 2023/24 at 96.9% is significantly higher than recorded in 2022/23 (81.3%). (PI CE037)

### **Operational Indicators – challenges and actions to support**

- 5.6 In comparison with 2022/23, the number of attendances at staffed community centres has fallen with 8% less attendances in 2023/24. With the impending closure Elgin Community Centre, it is likely that numbers attending these facilities will continue to decrease. (PI EdS407.5)

## 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. Detailed tables can be accessed within the Background Papers section of this report.

- 6.2 Four complaints were received during the second half of 2023/24 and six complaints closed. Of those, five were at frontline stage (83%), two were upheld and three were not upheld. One (20%) frontline complaint was closed within the 5-day target timescale. No frontline complaints were escalated.
- 6.3 One investigative complaint was closed in the same period, this complaint was not upheld. Time to resolve the complaint, at 25 days, was out with the 20-day target timescale. No investigative complaints were escalated.
- 6.4 There is no commonality with the two upheld complaints.
- 6.5 Eight MP/MSP enquiries were received during the second half of 2023/24, all resolved within the period. Five enquiries related to sport & culture services and two regarding the school estate.

#### **Other Performance (not included within Service Plan)**

- 6.6 Nothing to report.

#### **Case Studies**

- 6.7 Nothing to report.

#### **Consultation and Engagement**

- 6.8 A number of surveys were undertaken in the second half of 2023/24, supported by the Community Support unit. These surveys included budget consultations, sustainability of the school estate for two ASG areas and most recently the Forres academy location survey. To date collectively these surveys have received more than 6,000 responses. During 2024/25 it is planned to continue the roll out of the sustainability of the school estate surveys for the six remaining ASG areas.

## **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 Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

**8. CONCLUSION**

**8.1 By 31 March 2024, Service Plan actions are 46% complete with most actions progressing well. Four Strategic actions completed during the period. One Strategic action and three Service actions are subject to slippage, all have completion dates in 2025, 2026 and 2027 so have sufficient time to be brought back on schedule. One Service action is overdue for completion.**

Author of Report: Iain Sneddon, Research & Information Officer

Background Papers: [Service Plan Actions](#)  
[Performance Indicators](#)  
[Service Performance Indicators](#)  
[Service Complaints](#)

Ref:





**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT: PARTNERSHIP COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN (2024-2027)**

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

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the process that the Community Learning and Development (CLD) Strategic Partnership (CLDSP) are going through to meet the Statutory Requirement to produce a new Partnership CLD Plan for Moray and to give members the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Plan themes.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee comment on the suitability of the current themes of the CLD Plan (1 - Lifelong Learning, 2 - Participation & Community Voice, 3 - Active Citizens & Community and 4 - Workforce Development) and identify any other priorities or cross-cutting themes for consideration in the 2024-27 update.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 An [information paper](#) was shared with this Committee on 20 February 2024 on the results of a Progress Visit report published by His Majesties Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in December 2023.
- 3.2 The HMIE Progress Visit Report confirmed that there is effective leadership of CLD through the partnership approach of the CLDSP and that there is good evidence of impact. The main improvement action was to further enhance links with independent youth organisations, community activists/organisations and adult learners to help shape the next CLD Plan and to fully capture the impact of wider CLD provision in Moray.

- 3.3 The information paper noted the announcement of a national independent review of CLD by The Minister for Higher and Further Education and Veterans. This review would be engaging with learners and strategic partners until the end of March with the intention of reporting back to Ministers in June 2024. The Communities (CLD) service formally responded to the consultation via an online survey and our Adult and Family Learning Team co-ordinated an Adult Learner focus group session with the review team.
- 3.4 The timing of the national review is challenging as the statutory requirement on local authorities to produce a CLD Plan by 1 September 2024 remains. The Partnership CLD plan will therefore need to be go to the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) for final approval in August 2024 to meet the deadline. The current Lifelong Learning theme (or its successor) is where partners will have scope to consider how to strategically respond to any recommendations that come out of the Independent Review of CLD
- 3.5 New Guidance was issued by the Scottish Government on 26 April 2024 which recognised the challenge in 3.4. The Guidance stated that all previous Guidance issued for producing earlier plans remain in place and accepting therefore that new plans would be *'carrying forward much of the content of their existing plans and only reflecting significant changes which have impacted communities and learners'*. The Guidance then states *'Where such an approach is taken, once the independent Review of CLD is published, education authorities are encouraged to consider whether it is appropriate for their area to undertake a more substantial learner and partner consultation and update their plan accordingly.... for the remaining two years of the plan cycle'*.
- 3.6 The CLD Strategic Partnership have already been consulting with stakeholders around the current themes as they believe that these are still relevant and consistent with the purpose of CLD – which is in line with the new Guidance issued and referred to in 3.5. The current plan has four themes – Lifelong Learning, Active Citizens, Participation & Community Voice and Workforce Development. The CLDSP are considering whether to merge the Active Citizens and Participation & Community Voice themes in the updated version.
- 3.7 The Workforce Development priority will remain as this is one of the main themes of the current national CLD Review. Moray is part of the Learn North partnership group of Local Authority and Third Sector learning providers and draws down a small grant from the CLD Standards Council annually. Currently there is a survey across all authorities to ascertain workforce development priorities.
- 3.8 The Plan also has cross-cutting themes of addressing rurality and poverty; improving mental health and well-being and addressing social isolation. (**Appendix 1** - Plan on a Page).
- 3.9 The process of engaging on the new CLD Plan creates a space to identify new or emerging priorities and thus delivers on the HMIE Progress Visit recommendations to widen partnership involvement in producing the new plan. Staff have engaged with third sector partners in settings such as the tsi



Moray Join the Dots Conference; the Voluntary Sector Managers Forum; Children and Young People's Forum, Third Sector Development Trust Managers Group and the Fairer Moray Forum Action Group etc. This process will continue alongside an online survey for organisations and a separate one for individuals.

- 3.10 The Adult and Family Learning team facilitated a very well attended Learner Link-Up event for adult learners which has fed into both the national CLD review and the CLD plan refresh. The Youth Work Network has been meeting again and the partners are working together collectively to identify how best we can work together to support pro-social activities for young people. Third sector and community partners have also shared case studies with the Fairer Moray Forum Action group which will form the third Inequalities in Moray report.
- 3.11 From the discussions at the CLDSP and with the range of partners in 3.9 and 3.10 there are emerging issues coming through

Themes	Considerations
Youth Work provision & Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More Life Skills and Employability opportunities for young people</li> <li>- More community-based youth work</li> <li>- Need for more social integration and youth work opportunities.</li> <li>- Responding to CLD review</li> </ul>
Adult & Family Learning & Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ability to access more informal Community Based Adult Learning and accredited learning opportunities.</li> <li>- More opportunities to connect with people who are isolated.</li> <li>- CLDSP to look at developing a clear pathway for adult learning opportunities in Moray.</li> <li>- Responding to CLD review</li> </ul>
Community Development & Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Funding landscape is very unclear for third sector partners.</li> <li>- Third sector partners would like to see continuation of participatory grant making processes.</li> <li>- Increased expectations on volunteers – particularly if public services are reducing.</li> </ul>
Workforce partnership provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learn North survey will give indication of priority areas.</li> </ul>
Emerging issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of affordable activity/meeting spaces in general – including both localities in the LOIP.</li> <li>- Need to recognise climate change as a cross-cutting theme in the new plan alongside the poverty, social isolation and mental health and</li> </ul>

	<p>well-being themes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Following up on HMI Improvement Actions.</li> </ul>
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**4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The work of the council Communities (CLD) team explicitly addresses the Corporate Plan priorities of ‘Building thriving, resilient, empowered communities’ and ‘Tackling Poverty and Inequality’. Both themes also translate into the LOIP priorities and the support of Localities Work.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

There is a statutory requirement to produce a three year Community Learning and Development (CLD) Plan in line with [the requirements for Community Learning and Development \(Scotland\) Regulations 2013 \(CLD Regulations\)](#). Responsibility for ensuring this is done sits with the local authority with sign off required through the Community Planning Partnership (CPP).

**(c) Financial implications**

The CLD requirements are that Local Authorities must ensure ‘adequate provision’ of CLD.

**(d) Risk Implications**

The current National Review of CLD will only be reporting to the Minister in June 2024 so there is likely to be a lag from that time until any recommendations become policy or strategy. The CLD Plan should be flexible enough to respond to any change of emphasis which comes out of the Review process as outlined in 3.5

**(e) Staffing Implications**

Communities (CLD) commitments in the Plan will be based on current staffing resources – with the option to broaden/accelerate the scope of delivery if external funding allows. In the three years of the current plan this approach allowed partners in the CLDSP (CLD service, UHI Moray and LEAD Scotland) to use The Multiply Scheme to widen delivery of numeracy based adult learning. Similarly, the CLD Adult and Family Learning Team were able to reinstate community-based English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes through Refugee and Asylum Resettlement funding.

**(f) Property**

Partners and stakeholders have consistently identified the need for affordable access to meeting spaces.

**(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

An EIA will be included with the final report to the CPP.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

Responding to climate change has featured in feedback from stakeholders and will feature in the final Partnership Plan.

**(i) Consultations**

Work is ongoing with community planning partners on the development of the partnership plan.

**5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The CLD SP are consulting on the new Partnership CLD Plan and will use the feedback from this process to produce the new Plan in time for the 1 September publication deadline.**
- 5.2 The current priorities are likely to remain as they capture the core purpose of CLD, but there is scope for other issues to be more prominent within a particular strand or to become a future cross-cutting theme.**
- 5.3 The committee is asked to comment on the suitability of the current themes of the CLD Plan (Lifelong Learning, Participation and Community Voice, Active Citizens and Community and Workforce Development) and identify any other priorities or cross-cutting themes for consideration.**

Author of Report: Kevin McDermott  
Background Papers: [Information paper to Committee](#) (Feb2024)  
Appendix 1 – Plan on a Page  
Ref: SPMAN-9425411-367



# LEARNING FOR LIFE

**INCREASE RANGE of learning opportunities**

ESOL Skills for life & work

Support into work

Community **MANY ways to learn**

Family

Digital skills

Create **MORE opportunities**

**OPEN TO ALL**

Range of adult learning opportunities

REMOVE barriers to access



in inclusive participation

# PARTICIPATION & COMMUNITY VOICE

**SHARE** best practice

It's **NORMAL** to discuss services & issues

Embed localities approach

Build on existing networks & forums



We can make **CHANGE**

Inclusive processes face to face & online

Community events

Get involved with youth work

Young people meet & discuss issues

Further roll out of participatory budgeting



**IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING**

**ADDRESSING SOCIAL ISOLATION THROUGH COMMUNITY CONNECTION**

**ADDRESSING RURALITY & POVERTY**

Development of Community Resilience Plans

**IMPROVE engagement** with communities



Asset transfer

Better outcomes: confidence, constitution, funding

Peer support & training to help grow

Many active groups & organisations to improve community

Community Councils

**SUPPORT**

CLD is a **SAFETY NET**

We value volunteering



# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**PARTNERSHIP** approach

Training offered to groups & organisations

Digital skills for online learning

services improve when professionals learn

Networking with confidence

Understand **RIGHTS BASED** approach

Career pathways & progression routes

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Supported by regional & national networks

**SHARE** peer learning & research

# ACTIVE CITIZENS & COMMUNITY

**STRONGER, RESILIENT, SUPPORTIVE & INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES**






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**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE REPORT (EDUCATION) – PERIOD TO 31  
MARCH 2024**

**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 2024
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Committee in terms of section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration in relation to the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

**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 2024; and**
- (ii) **notes the actions being taken to improve performance where required.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 On 7 August 2019, the Moray 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 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 Service Plan Actions and Performance Indicators can be accessed within the Background Papers section of this report.
- 4.3 Unlike other services' Service Plans the Education plan is reported by School Term as an alternative to quarters. Strategic and Service Level progress within this report reflects progress made during Terms 2 and 3 (October – March) of the current school year.

SERVICE PLAN PRIORITIES		RAG
<b>STRATEGIC LEVEL</b>	Improved attainment at both the Broad General and Senior Phase	75%
<b>SERVICE LEVEL</b>	Curriculum	73%
	Leadership	73%
	Learning, Teaching and Assessment	74%
	ASN Review	95%
<b>OVERALL PLAN PROGRESS</b>		<b>76%</b>
<b>Comment</b>		
<p><b>Service Plan:</b> Annual progress is measured by milestone achievements, as at the end of term 3 (quarter 4) progress was at 76%. The majority of actions are on target, although three actions around the ASN Review are overdue, albeit are well progressed and are expected to be completed by academic year end.</p> <p><b>Performance Indicators:</b> ACEL data for 2022/23 shows improvement on previous year in Literacy and Numeracy, across primary and secondary. Initial 2022/23 LGBF results also shows increase in the participation rate of 16-19 year olds, while overall average total tariff points achieved has Moray remaining in the bottom quartile of local authorities.</p>		

**SERVICE PLAN PI'S**

15

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

### Strategic Outcomes - successes

- 4.4 Development of both the Moray Literacy Strategy and Moray Numeracy Strategy remain on timescale. A draft Literacy Strategy has been prepared and is ready for consultation. Future action plan being drawn up in order to ensure sustained action to support schools and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings engage with the Strategy. First draft of Moray Numeracy Strategy complete with edits and updates for wider feedback from Improvement Group. Quality Improvement Officer regularly attending national network meetings and sharing messages and updated guidance to inform group. (Action EDU 2023-24 CUR 1.7 & 1.8)
- 4.5 Review of Moray approaches to strengthening tracking and monitoring of learner attainment and achievement has continued over the last two terms, including further development of AnalyseM at secondary stage. Further work on moderation practices also continuing, with development drop-ins and network meetings planned at local authority level. National Standardised Assessment (NSA) training undertaken with further sessions to be confirmed with NSA trainer regarding term 4 activities. (Action EDU 2023-24 LTA 1.7 & 1.8)
- 4.6 The initial review of Additional Support Needs (ASN) training across staged intervention levels, working with teaching and support staff to ensure they are fully equipped, has progressed well over the academic year to date. Education core training programme has been agreed in line with the Moray Staged Intervention model. Training and development programmes created to support



universal level inclusive practice, mandatory for all Moray Education staff. Training and development options matched to 'Universal with Support' and 'Targeted' levels identified and resourced to allow ELC and schools to select training in line with their school improvement journey. (Action EDU 2023-24 ASN 1.9)

#### **Strategic Outcomes – challenges and actions to support**

- 4.7 A new ASN allocation model has been created and actioned for session 2024-25. High level information shared at Education Strategic Meetings and Headteacher Briefings and detailed information shared with each ELC and school setting. The effectiveness of the new allocation model will now be reviewed during session 2024-25. (Action EDU 2023-24 ASN 1.1)
- 4.8 Undertaking ASN 'Visioning' exercises to road map a new provision and delivery model has slipped against an anticipated due date of December. However, the review of ASN service delivery structure has been completed with Central ASN team Principal teachers and priorities for future service delivery identified. Restructure of Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs (SEBN) and Autism services to be launched for session 2024-25. A review of remaining Central ASN structures (Sensory Education Services and English as an Additional Language teams) now scheduled to take place during session 2024-25. (Action EDU 2023-24 ASN 1.2 & 1.10)
- 4.9 Moray ranked in the bottom quartile of Scottish local authorities for the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) indicator Overall Average Total Tariff. The indicator measures the average total tariff score for pupils in the senior phase, where tariff points are accumulated by individual pupils for all eligible qualifications that are the latest and best in a subject. The average total tariff achieved for Moray 2022-23 leavers was 830, below the national average (915) and the benchmarking family average (877). The number of qualifications and units available for a young person to complete varies significantly due to the number of different curriculum structures there are across Scotland, and as such care has to be taken in comparing performances. Work on curriculum choice and innovations, working with Education Scotland in collaboration with Moray Secondary Schools and an ADES-Education Scotland Collaborative Improvement event focused on Senior Phase Curriculum will progress further work on curriculum design for strengthened consortia working and senior phase offers to improve scoring. Further analysis on 2022-23 school leavers attainment is also provided to this committee by the Quality Improvement Manager, with the Analysis of Secondary School Leaver Attainment 2022-23 report. (PI CHN12a and Action EDU 2023-24 CUR 1.9)

#### **Service Level Outcomes - successes**

- 4.10 The ten Moray Improvement Groups (MIGs), including the Moray Curriculum Strategy Group, are now established with a regular calendar of meetings and reporting structure agreed. Recognition that certain MIG's have made more progress due to capacity issues in the system, this is being followed up by the Quality Improvement Manager. Transition Strategy for Nursery to Primary 1 pupils has been finalised and will be ratified through the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT), with a parent version of the strategy also developed will be reviewed by the MIG. (Action EDU 2023-24 CUR 1.3 and 1.5)

4.11 Work continues on strengthening moderation in the Broad General Education in further improving practitioner confidence in teacher judgements for learner level achievement. The Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officers (QAMSO) network has been re-established for term 4, with drop-in and support sessions offered to colleagues. Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) early indications for 2023-24 have been gathered, with follow up sessions at school level by Quality Improvement team planned. Looking forward to session 2024-25 a network programme is currently being agreed.(Action EDU 2023-24 LTA 1.6).

**Service Level Outcomes – challenges and actions to support**

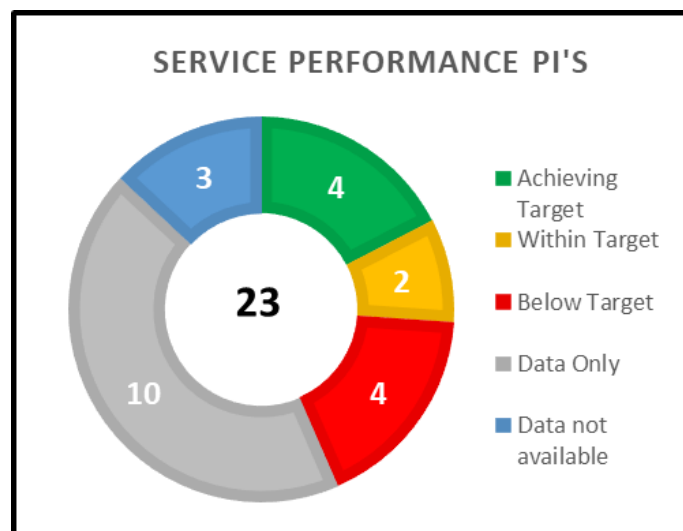
4.12 The review of existing Primary – Secondary curriculum transition arrangements have progressed at a slower pace than planned due to capacity issues. The Moray Improvement Group has met to discuss key approaches and resources to support and improve transition, including linking in with the ELC – Primary transition for common approaches. However, progress has been affected by staffing issues within participating schools. The review will continue to progress as the capacity of school colleagues allows. (Action EDU CUR 1.6)

**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. Regular attainment reports are presented at Committee as and when local and national data is available.

5.2 Initial publication of 2022-23 Local Government Benchmarking Framework Indicators in February 2024 will be refreshed in early June. The full suite can be viewed using the [Dashboard](#).

5.3 The narrative included is by exception, links to Service Performance Indicators can be accessed within the Background Papers section of this report.



### **Operational Indicators - successes**

- 5.4 Across Scotland the school attendance rates have declined over the last few years, this is also reflected in Moray. While the overall school attendance rate has fallen, Moray (91%) continues to exceed the national average (90.2%) and the benchmarking family average (90.8%) and remains in the top performing quartile. In Moray, work is underway in schools and centrally in order to strengthen engagement and attendance for identified young people, with use of additional funding where available in a targeted way to support children and young people to attend and achieve. Further detail on attendance rates, as well as exclusion rates and staying on rates for 2022-23, can be found in the Education Public Performance Report link at the end of this report. (PI CHN19a)

### **Operational Indicators - challenges**

- 5.5 The percentage of funded early years provision which is graded good / better increased marginally to 87.5% for 2022-23, however this ranked Moray in the bottom quartile (25<sup>th</sup>), behind the national average of 90.1% and below our benchmarking family average (90.7%). Where funded early years settings do not reach grade 4 (good / better), support from the respective Continuous Improvement Officer and Early Years Teaching and Learning Officer to address the recommendations is provided. Significant challenges remain around building and expanding provision, and increasing the workforce, where the sector is faced with shortages in the availability of qualified staff and seeing the average experience level of workforce lowered. (PI CHN18)
- 5.6 Moray rank in the bottom quartile of Scottish local authorities in four of the five LGBF indicators for total tariff points which are measured across the five SIMD quintile groupings. As noted in para 4.9 above, indicators are based on total tariff and not complementary tariff points, where the curriculum structures of authorities will impact on points available to students through number of qualifications they are able to take.
- Ave. Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 1 - Moray 561 / National 658 (Rank 21<sup>st</sup>)  
Ave. Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 2 - Moray 580 / National 781 (Rank 31<sup>st</sup>)  
Ave. Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 3 - Moray 814 / National 905 (Rank 28<sup>th</sup>)  
Ave. Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 4 - Moray 917 / National 1,051 (Rank 30<sup>th</sup>)  
Ave. Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 5 - Moray 974 / National 1,264 (Rank 29<sup>th</sup>)  
(PI's CHN12b-f)

## **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. Detailed tables can be accessed with the Background Papers section of this report.
- 6.2 A total of 49 complaints were received during the second half of 2023/24 with 32 complaints closed. Of those closed, 13 were at frontline stage (37%), with four upheld, one partially upheld and the remaining eight not upheld. The average time to resolve frontline complaints was 6 working days, with 6 of the 13 frontline complaints responded within the 5 working day target.

- 6.3 Due to their complexity, a number of complaints require further investigation in order to achieve a resolution. A total of 19 investigative / escalated complaints were closed in the second half of 2023/24, with two upheld, six partially upheld and eleven not upheld. The average time taken to resolve investigative / escalated complaints was 29 days. Three of the complaints were resolved within the 20 day working timescale, with a further four completed within extension timescales. A total of eleven complaints required extensions due to the time needed to investigate.
- 6.4 Of the 32 complaints resolved just over two thirds (22) were at primary school, eight at secondary and two for the Central Education Team. The majority of complaint types were recorded as Other (26), while four were process / procedure, one against staff and one for bullying concerns.
- 6.5 Over the reporting period common complaint issues within Education included concerns with the action taken against bullying across various schools. There have also been incidents where staff have made inappropriate comments, and also concerns raised about data protection with regards to photographing children in schools and anti-social behaviour outside of a school building. There have also been concerns from parents of ASN children who do not feel they are receiving adequate support, and a perceived lack of understanding of needs.
- 6.6 A total of 15 MP/MSP enquiries were received during the second half of 2023/24, with all enquiries resolved. During the full year a total of 40 MP/MSP enquiries were received.

**Other Performance (not included within Service Plan)**

- 6.7 No information to report.

**Case Studies**

- 6.8 No case studies available for this report.

**Consultation and Engagement**

- 6.9 No information 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 & Organisational Development), Service Managers, Legal Services, the Equal Opportunities Officer, and Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

**8. CONCLUSION**

**8.1 As at 31 March 2024, overall progress against the service plan for 2023/24 was 76% complete, with the majority of actions scheduled to be completed by the end of the 2023/24 academic year. Actions which have been subject to slippage are mainly around the ASN review, however these actions are still anticipated to be complete by the end of Term 4 2023/24.**

Author of Report: Neil Stables, Research & Information Officer

Background Papers: [Service Plan Actions](#)  
[Service Plan Performance Indicators](#)  
[Service Performance Indicators](#)  
[Service Complaints](#)  
[Public Performance Report \(Education\)](#)

Ref:





**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT: ANALYSIS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL LEAVER ATTAINMENT  
2022-2023**

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

## **1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) leaver attainment across secondary schools in Moray and for this data to be scrutinised and noted as part of the Council's focus on improving outcomes and raising attainment. This is an update to the Initial Attainment Report for Secondary Schools 2023 previously presented to Committee on 28 November 2023, with leavers' update now presented to Committee at first opportunity following data release in February 2024 including initial positive destinations.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

## **2. RECOMMENDATION**

### **2.1 It is recommended that Committee:**

- (i) scrutinise and note the Senior Phase Leaver Attainment across Secondary Schools in Moray for session 2022/2023 with specific regard to the National Measures for leavers published on Insight in February 2024;**
- (ii) acknowledge identified improvements in performance evidenced through key measures outlined within this paper; and**
- (iii) further note identified actions for improvement arising from 2022/2023 attainment and performance as outlined in initial analysis of secondary school attainment paper previously presented to committee on 28 November 2023 (para 14 of minute refers).**

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Contextual information relating to the examinations in place for session 2022/2023 have been provided in the [Initial Analysis of Secondary School Attainment: Session 2022-2023 Committee Paper](#) presented for scrutiny and noting to Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 28 November 2023 (please see Background, Section 3)
- 3.2 This report provides update in relation to Insight data we receive each year for cohort attainment across S4, S5 and S6 for our school leavers across four key national benchmarking measures:
- Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy
  - Improving attainment for all
  - Increasing post-school destinations
  - Tacking disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to high attainers
- 3.3 Insight encourages us to take a holistic approach to evaluating attainment and achievement that takes into account the performance within Moray across all four measures in 3.2 above. We also use our breadth and depth of SCQF level qualifications for leavers as a measure against our virtual comparator.
- 3.4 As part of our revised Secondary Improvement Model approach this session and secondary school visit programme, we continue to discuss performance with Moray Secondary Head Teachers and collectively through Secondary Head Teacher meetings, at school level with in-person visits to schools and through our refreshed school visit programme and triaged extended school visit schedule in line with anticipated inspection timelines. This is commensurate with our revised Secondary Attainment and Performance Framework for school support and challenge, data scrutiny activities and discussion on key actions required and next steps focussed on improvement where we now look undertake year two planned activities.
- 3.5 Caution remains with data trends over time whereby this year represents year two of a return to a formal examination diet following on from two very different years of Alternative Certification Models (ACMs) with Covid-19 impacting on young people and our school communities. Schools continue to support young people as a result of the legacy of Covid-19, with secondary schools reporting higher levels of absence, concerns in relation to behaviours exhibited by some young people, mental health and wellbeing concerns and further increase in Additional Assessment Arrangements (AAA) for examinations. Some AAA resulted in acute accommodation pressures in some of our secondary schools in running SQA Examinations for April/May 2023.
- 3.6 Secondary schools continue to support young people as much as possible through wellbeing, learning and supported study opportunities. While schools are offering the latter, it is noted that Secondary Head Teachers report variability in uptake by young people, where attendance at school also continues to be addressed, highlighted nationally across Scotland and being



addressed locally at local authority and school level. Further signposting to national e-learning opportunities offered through e-Sgoil and Scholar are also made by our schools in support of young people as well as wider interventions including mentoring and targeted learning conversations/target setting.

- 3.7 Within this Committee report, data from 2018/19 is noted along with data from 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 in order to demonstrate progress made to date as well as actions that are planned for improvement, albeit within very different assessment processes and operating environments compared to previous sessions when arriving at final grades, making year on year comparisons unequal across the five-year trend period presented.
- 3.8 This report will now complete the attainment picture for session 2022/23 where leaver destination data is not available until December of each year, information appearing on Insight in February 2024. This report is presented to Committee at first available opportunity following data release. For session 2022/23 there were 971 leavers in total (S4: 183; S5: 321 ;S6: 467)

#### 4 **SENIOR PHASE ATTAINMENT ANALYSIS OVERVIEW – LEAVERS’ DATA**

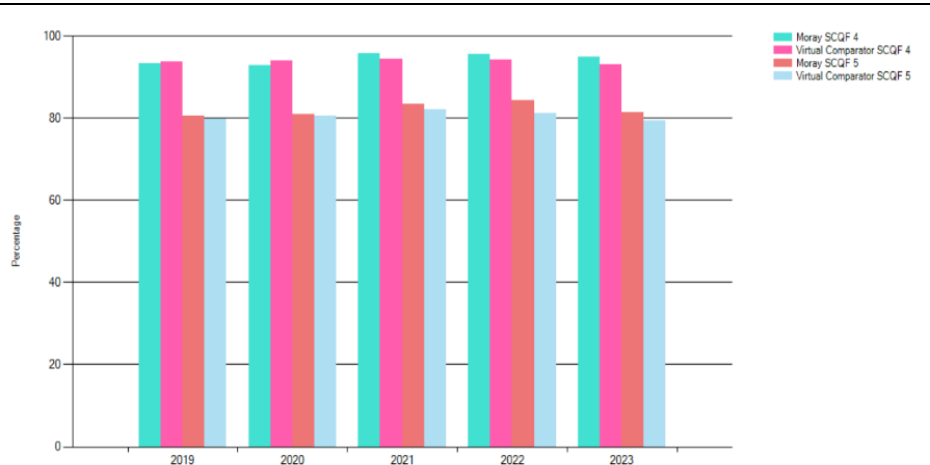
##### **Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy**

- 4.1 This measure presents the percentage of leavers achieving an award in Literacy and Numeracy at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Levels 4 and 5 by the end of their school experience in Moray, compared with pupils with identified similar characteristics across Scotland (VC - Virtual Comparator) for each of the last five years. This is shown in graph form below for Moray (all leavers, percentage attaining Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF level 4 and 5).

##### **Percentage of Leavers Attaining Literacy:**

SCQF level 4: Literacy remains **above** the VC, common with 2021 and 2022.

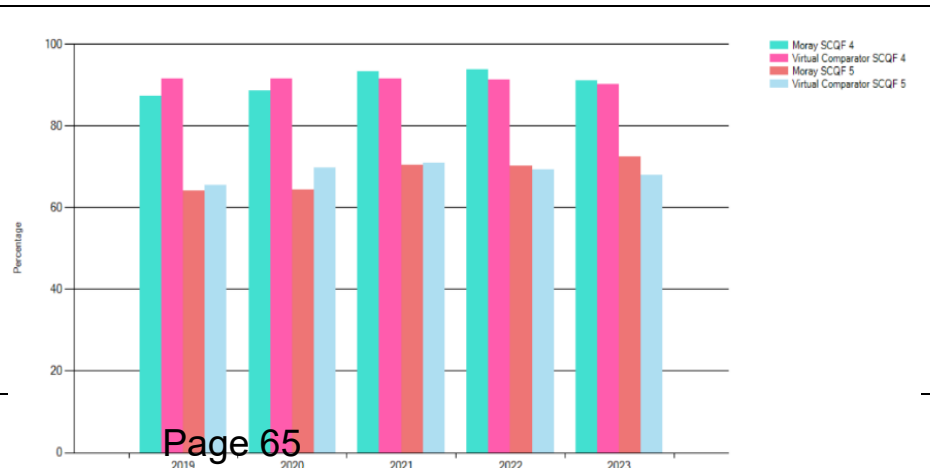
SCQF level 5: Literacy is **above** the VC, positive trend across 5-year period.



##### **Percentage of Leavers Attaining Numeracy:**

SCQF level 4: Numeracy remains **above** the VC, common with 2021 and 2022.

SCQF level 5: Numeracy is positively



**above** the VC, highest performance across 5-year trend.

*Five-year analysis: Moray performance at SCQF level 4 and 5 against Virtual Comparator*

Literacy & Numeracy	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 5 Numeracy
<b>Moray</b>	<b>2023</b>	94.85	91.04	81.36	72.50
VC	2023	93.10	90.18	79.35	68.03
<b>Moray</b>	<b>2022</b>	95.53	93.87	84.32	70.09
VC	2022	94.27	91.25	81.10	69.41
<b>Moray</b>	<b>2021</b>	95.90	93.29	83.39	70.53
VC	2021	94.52	91.57	82.01	70.93
<b>Moray</b>	<b>2020</b>	92.95	88.53	80.88	64.16
VC	2020	93.95	91.62	80.44	69.63
<b>Moray</b>	<b>2019</b>	93.30	87.16	80.46	64.00
VC	2019	93.73	91.60	79.81	65.49

4.2 Overall, Moray has performed positively and above the Virtual Comparator for leaver attainment for Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF level 4 and level 5. This year is the second year in a five year trend that performance has exceeded the Virtual Comparator across all four measures reported above.

**Improving attainment for all**

4.3 This measure allows us to examine how different ability cohorts are attaining in relation to the appropriate virtual and national cohorts. Attainment is measured using the tariff scale, which was developed for Insight. This allocated a specific number of points to each qualification (including non-examination, unit-based courses). More demanding qualifications gain more points than less demanding ones and in graded courses, a grade ‘A’ is equivalent to more points than a grade ‘C’ for example, within the same course

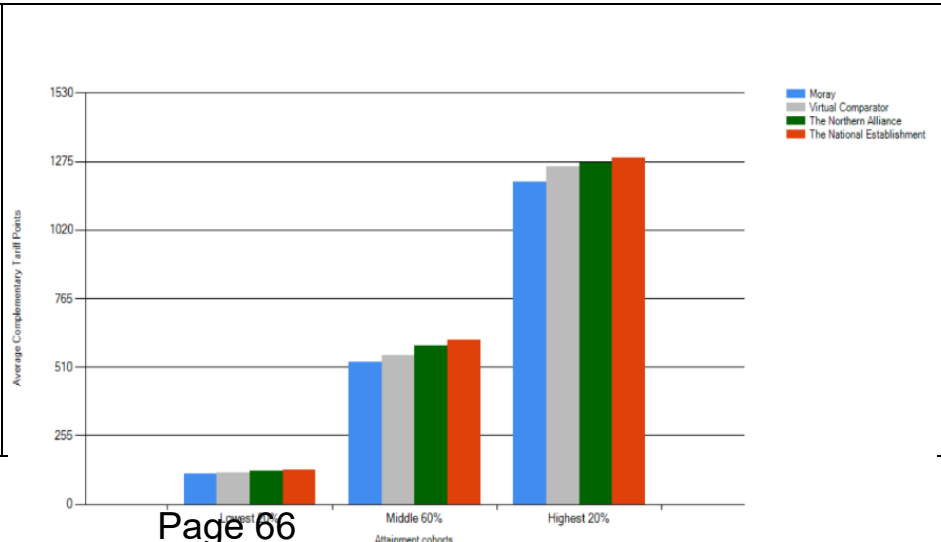
4.4 Three ability cohorts are identified for each school, the VC, the Northern Alliance (Regional Improvement Collaborative) and Scotland as a whole (The National Establishment): those in the lowest 20% of tariff points achieved, those in the highest 20% and those that fall within the middle 60% of tariff points achieved based on the courses they have undertaken and completed.

**Average Complementary Tariff Points:**

The lowest 20% are **in line** with comparators overall.

The middle 60% are **marginally below** VC, Northern Alliance and Scotland.

The highest 20% are



**below** comparators with gap noted.  
Performance overall is similar to 2022.

- 4.5 Complementary tariff is a score that looks at parity of achievement of young people in their top five qualifications studied. It is not affected by the number of qualifications and units a young person completed; this removes the inequality and anomalies with different curriculum structures across Scotland of which there are many. Reasons including quality of pass and level of study can impact on the overall tariff measure, requiring schools to continue to work with young people and families in raising aspirations in order to aim high for positive achievement.
- 4.6 Continued work in schools on curriculum choice and innovation, working with Education Scotland in collaboration with our Moray Secondary Schools and through Moray Improvement Groups continue to reflect on structures and work on curriculum design for strengthened consortia working and senior phase offers.

*3-year analysis: Lowest 20%, Middle 60%, Highest 20% across SCQF levels*

<b>Complementary Tariff</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Lowest 20%</b>	<b>Middle 60%</b>	<b>Highest 20%</b>
<b>Moray</b>	<b>2023</b>	113	529	1198
VC	2023	117	552	1255
Northern Alliance	2023	123	590	1269
National	2023	127	612	1286
<b>Moray</b>	<b>2022</b>	135	568	1231
VC	2022	133	605	1290
Northern Alliance	2022	143	628	1289
National	2022	138	644	1303
<b>Moray</b>	<b>2021</b>	129	631	1,277
VC	2021	137	638	1,315
Northern Alliance	2021	143	669	1,328
National	2021	144	692	1,339
<b>Moray</b>	<b>2020</b>	117	595	1,284
VC	2020	130	610	1,286
Northern Alliance	2020	142	654	1,321
National	2020	133	657	1,313

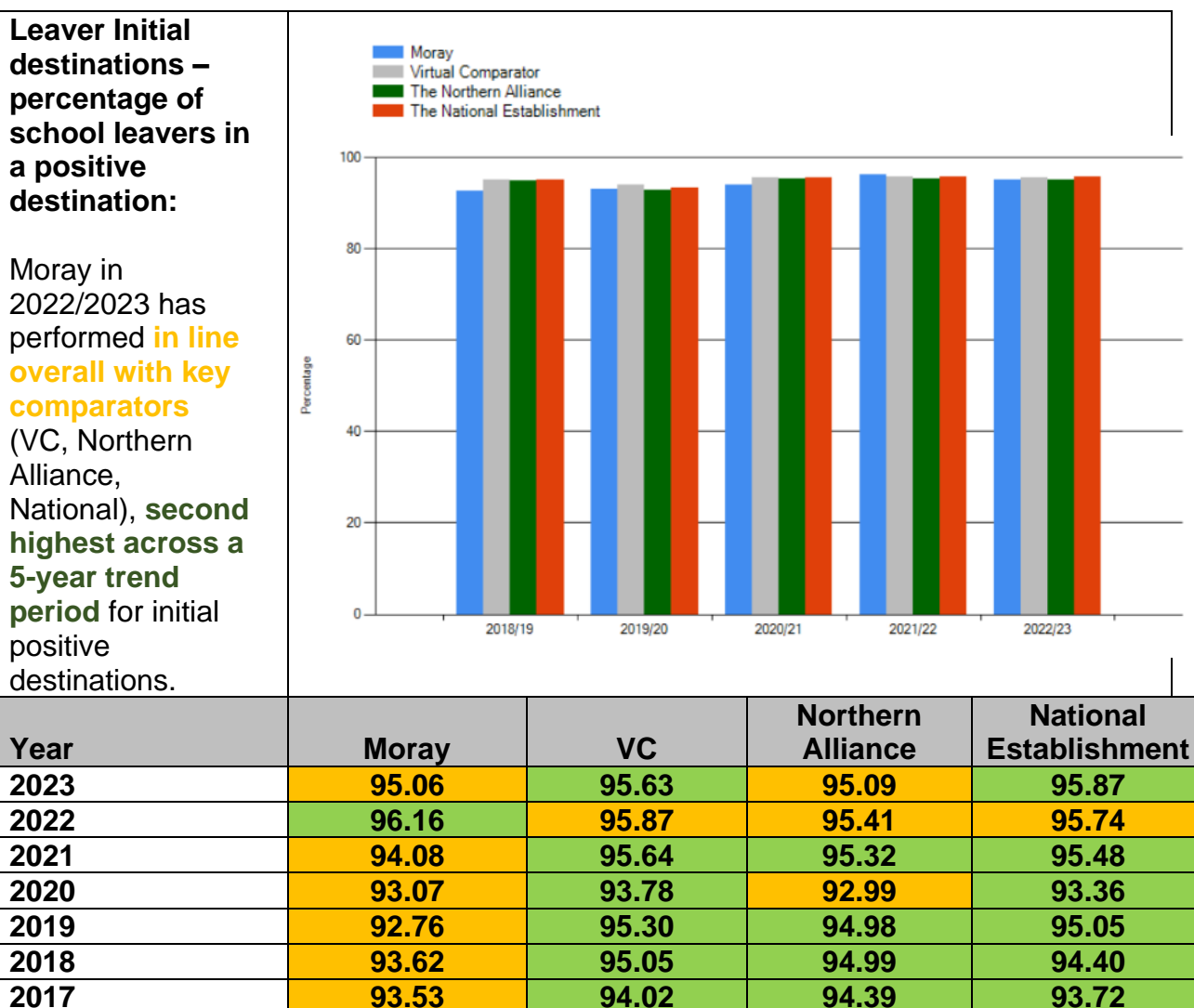
- 4.7 It is noted that the lowest 20% of leavers are marginally below the VC, the middle 60% and highest 20% below the VC. Schools continue to support young people in maximising their attendance, health and wellbeing concerns and aspirations. Challenging behaviours exhibited by a minority of young people require schools to creatively support young people and their families, impacting on resources and staffing capacity. We continue to work with multi-agency partners in support of children and families, with increased societal pressures and demand on partner services impacting on school resources. Discrete staffing pressures in specific subject areas continue to be supported by our schools in order to minimise impact on learner experiences.

4.8 Schools continue to review their course offers, with a number extending their SCQF (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) level 3 to level 6 course offers in particular with a range of grade neutral (ungraded) courses including National Progression Awards, Foundation Apprenticeships and wider awards such as Leadership, Modern Languages for Life and Work and Personal Development Awards. This has led to improvements in performance of the lowest 20% of learners in a number of our schools. However, quality of passes, breadth and depth of qualifications studied remain as issues within measures and identified areas. Schools continue to work with young people in raising their aspirations in order to maximise their attainment/achievement.

**Leaver initial destinations – increased post-school participation**

4.8 This measure shows the percentage of young people securing an initial positive post-school destination when they leave school at their point of exit in S4, S5 or S6.

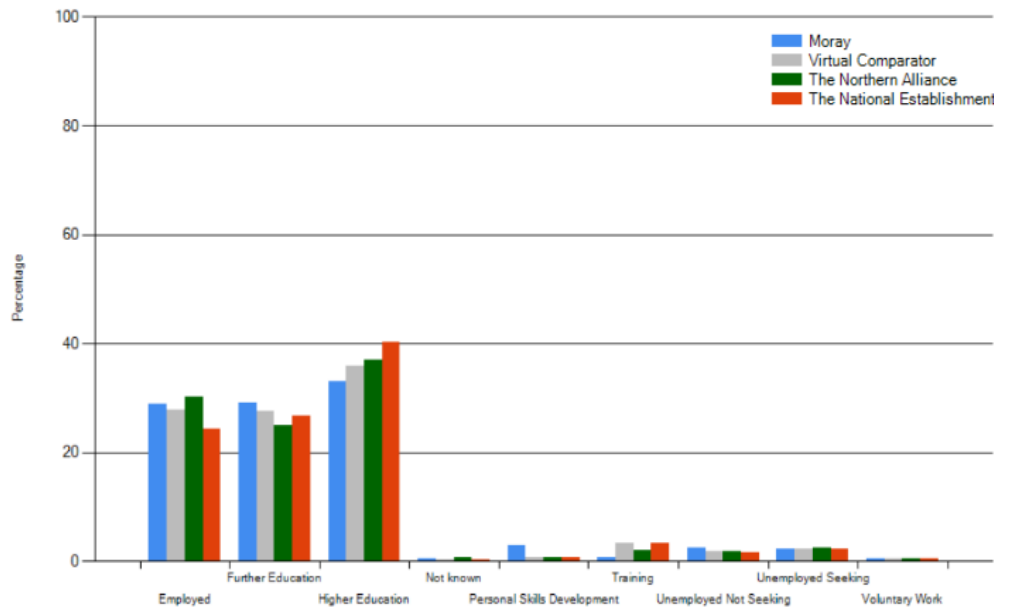
4.9 Destination figures reflect choices made by pupils along with opportunities available to them upon leaving school. The availability of particular opportunities (e.g. apprenticeships and employment opportunities) extend options available to school leavers. As a result, this may have impact on the number of young people progressing on to Further and Higher Education as destination pathways.



4.10 In Moray, for 2022/2023 we perform slightly below national average at 95.06% compared with 96.16% in 2021/2022, remaining above 94.08% noted in 2020/2021. Nationally, 95.87% of leavers were in an initial positive destination in 2022/2023 compared to 95.74% in 2021/2022. Gap noted in 2022/2023 between Moray (95.06%) and the VC (95.63%) is 0.57% or represents 6 young people in total. Moray (95.06%) is in line with Northern Alliance (95.09%) from a leaver population of 971 young people.

**Leaver destinations for 2021/2022:**

Data presented highlights **more young people entering employment** compared with most key comparators. **Further Education is above comparators overall, Higher Education below comparators.**



4.11 As further outlined in graph form above and in the table below, the number of young people entering Employment, Further and Higher Education contribute most to initial positive school leaver destination figures highlighted in yellow below. Depending on future destination pathway of young people, numbers entering Employment, Further Education and Higher Education can vary year on year and across our schools.

	Year	Employed %	Further Education %	Higher Education %	Not known %	Personal Skills Development %	Training %	Unemployed Not Seeking %	Unemployed Seeking %	Voluntary Work %
Moray	2022/23	28.94	29.15	32.96	0.41	2.88	0.72	2.37	2.16	0.41
VC	2022/23	27.74	27.63	35.86	0.28	0.59	3.29	1.88	2.20	0.53
Northern Alliance	2022/23	30.18	24.84	37.03	0.64	0.61	1.98	1.85	2.43	0.45
National	2022/23	24.34	26.62	40.30	0.32	0.75	3.35	1.57	2.24	0.52
Moray	2021/22	36.86	24.40	31.36	0.31	1.66	1.45	1.77	1.77	0.42
VC	2021/22	27.18	26.75	38.21	0.33	0.45	2.75	1.67	2.13	0.53
Northern Alliance	2021/22	30.84	23.35	38.28	0.66	0.48	1.93	1.63	2.30	0.53
National	2021/22	25.11	25.45	41.27	0.40	0.51	2.92	1.54	2.32	0.47
Moray	2020/21	27.42	26.62	37.09	0.23	0.46	2.28	2.16	3.53	0.23
VC	2020/21	25.53	24.81	40.91	0.25	0.50	3.58	1.73	2.38	0.31
Northern Alliance	2020/21	27.47	22.80	41.67	0.46	0.34	2.75	1.89	2.33	0.31
National	2020/21	22.58	23.29	45.11	0.30	0.47	3.67	1.69	2.53	0.37

- 4.12 In comparison with the 2021/2022 leaver cohort, it is noted that numbers entering Further Education in 2022/23 was higher (29.15%) compared with 2021/22 (24.40%), with noted drop in numbers entering Employment in 2022/23 (28.94%) compared with 2021/22 (36.86%).
- 4.13 Those young people who are *unemployed not seeking* and *unemployed seeking* are marginally above or in line with key comparators respectively. Our schools continue to work with key partners through pathway planning meetings to ensure pupils at more risk of negative destinations are supported, during and post-school. We continue to reduce percentages in these categories to as near to zero as possible, noting impact of wider factors (for example, mental health and wellbeing) on initial positive post-school destination of identified young people. This can vary from school to school and as noted in slight change above to *unemployed not seeking* now at 2.37% of the 2022/23 leaver cohort (23 leavers across our schools from a total leaver population of 971 young people).
- 4.14 Work continues with key partners including Skills Development Scotland and DYW Moray to ensure Moray learners are informed and afforded opportunities to progress on to chosen post-school pathways based in individual desires and talents. We continue to analyse our key data on leaver dates, destinations and routes to success to support for young people, in order that they may succeed in their chosen journeys.

4.15 Working with Moray College UHI, our young people have opportunities to progress to Further Education courses in areas of interest, many building on successes achieved through Wednesday College courses studies while in Senior Phase at school. As a multi-agency partnership, we continue to review with SDS, DYW Moray, Moray Pathways, Moray College UHI and employability colleagues our Annual Participation Measure (APM), taking key actions forward to address issues in relation to sustaining positive post school destinations.

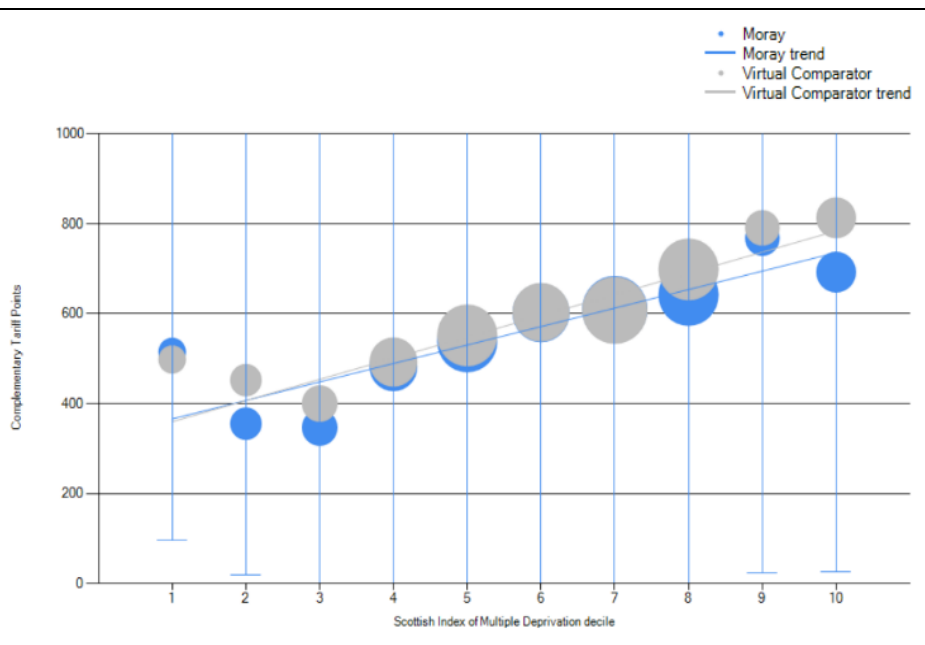
**Tacking disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers**

4.16 The graph below shows 2022/23 leaver attainment data (using complementary tariff scores) for Moray against the VC, broken down into the ten deciles according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

4.17 Decile 1 refers to attainment of young people living in areas with postcodes considered the 10% most deprived in Scotland according to SIMD. Decile 10 refers to those young people living in postcodes identified as the 10% least deprived datazones according in SIMD. We continue to monitor the use of SIMD as a measure in authorities where rural poverty and other wider poverty related factors are of concern; however, these are not fully considered nationally within SIMD classification.

**Attainment versus Deprivation - VC**

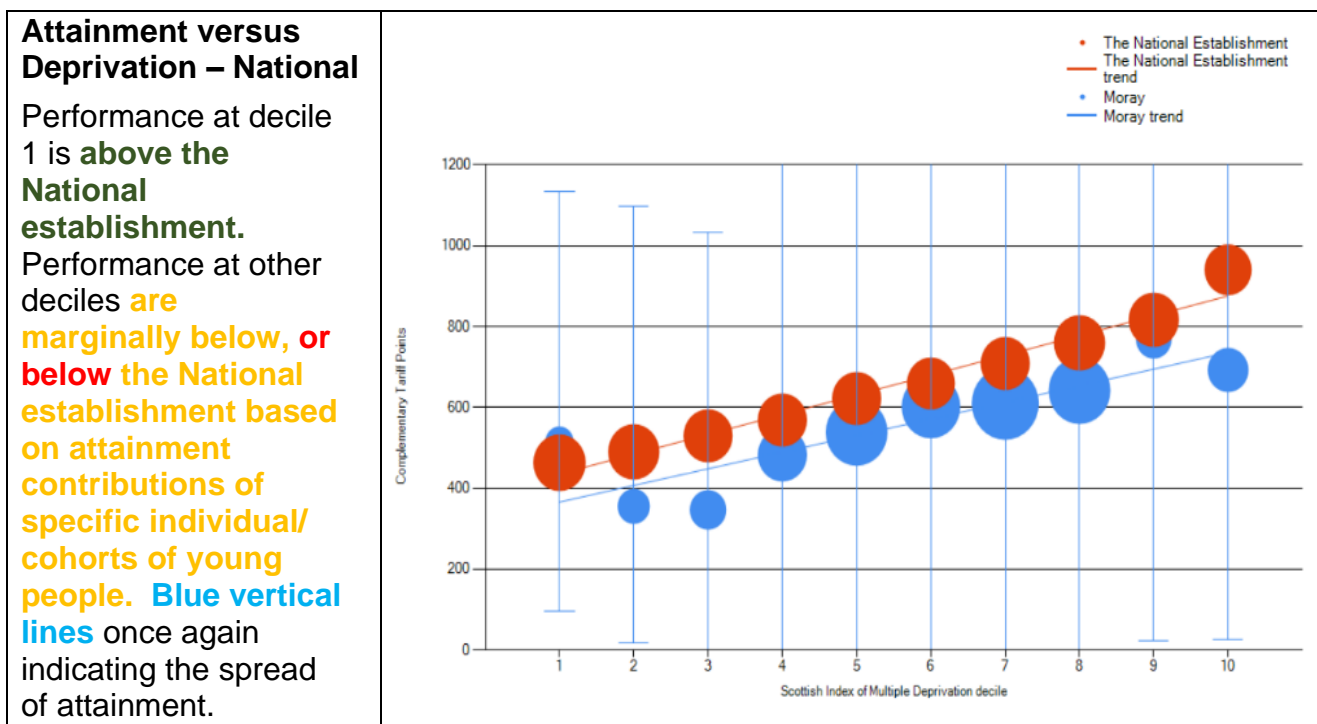
Performance at deciles 1, 6 and 7 are in line with or marginally above the VC. Performance at deciles 4, 5 and 9 are marginally below the VC. Performance at SIMD 2, 3, 8 and 10 are below the VC. Larger circle size represents a greater amount of young people within the SIMD decile.



4.18 Similar to session 2021/2022, the highest number of young people leaving school in Moray in 2022/2023 were within SIMD deciles 4-8. It is noted that while performance at SIMD decile 6 and 7 is in line with the VC, some young people in deciles 4, 5 and 8 performed less well in comparison with VC. Vertical lines within each SIMD show the range of attainment for young people within each decile, noting both positive and less favourable attainment for a variety of reasons as noted previously. As shown by trend lines, as SIMD decile increases to SIMD 10, a small attainment gap emerges as the SIMD increase between Moray and the VC. SIMD 1 learners (16) perform well overall. Performance of some young people far exceeds VC as shown by

vertical lines within each SIMD, with opposite also noted in SIMD 3-8 for a range of reasons including health, wellbeing, attendance and engagement.

4.19 A similar comparison may also be made against the National Establishment (Scotland) as shown in graph form below.



4.20 As noted in the [Initial Analysis of Secondary School Attainment: Session 2022-2023 Committee Paper](#) presented for scrutiny and noting to Education, Children’s and Leisure Services Committee on 28 November 2023, we continue to progress key actions across our schools in order to raise attainment and achievement for learners. This includes work underway by Head Teachers to improve course presentation levels and quality of passes among the lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% of learners. Gaps in performance within SIMD deciles are noted and working with wider staff funded through Attainment Scotland Funding and through use of Devolved School Management (DSM) budgets, creation of equity, achievement and inclusion teams is supporting raising attainment and achievement of identified learners. All schools continue to consider their curriculum offers and are extending working together as required in order to ensure young people benefit from appropriate courses and pathways to raise attainment and achievement for all. Work ongoing through Moray Improvement Groups (MIGs) will also support improvement with key actions identified.

**Breadth and depth of qualifications achieved by leavers**

4.21 This measure considers the breadth (number) and depth (SCQF levels studied) of qualifications achieved by our young people in Moray. This demonstrates the suite of qualifications that our 971 leavers in session 2022/23 (slight increase from 963 in 2021/22, 837 leavers in session 2020/21) gained throughout their Senior Phase by point of exit, whether in S4, S5 or S6 as they reach school leaving age or natural point of exit from their secondary schooling based on their chosen pathway and qualifications required.



4.22 The table below highlights overall performance across key breadth and depth measures against the VC. This measures how many qualifications learners achieved at all SCQF level qualifications (SCQF level 5, 6, 7); this includes National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher awards as well as other qualifications, including Skills for Work and National Progression Awards at level 5. Key measures are:

- 1+, 3+, 5+ and 6+ qualifications at SCQF level 5
- 1+, 3+ and 5+ qualifications at SCQF level 6
- 1+ qualifications at SCQF level 7

	SCQF level 5				SCQF Level 6			SCQF level 7
	1+	3+	5+	6+	1+	3+	5+	1+
Moray 2023	86.9%	74.6%	62.0%	56.0%	56.6%	42.3%	28.4%	19.4%
VC 2023	86.6%	74.3%	62.4%	55.7%	59.9%	45.9%	33.1%	21.7%
Moray 2022	90.1%	76.2%	63.1%	56.0%	60.4%	45.6%	29.8%	21.2%
VC 2022	88.5%	77.2%	65.3%	58.3%	63.1%	49.5%	35.8%	23.3%
Moray 2021	88.7%	79.3%	65.8%	57.3%	63.9%	49.7%	34.2%	23.7%
VC 2021	89.0%	78.7%	67.4%	60.5%	65.5%	52.0%	37.6%	24.1%
Moray 2020	87.6%	74.6%	61.9%	55.1%	61.2%	48.5%	34.2%	22.0%
VC 2020	87.6%	76.5%	65.0%	57.4%	63.1%	50.3%	36.8%	22.6%
Moray 2019	88.6%	74.9%	61.6%	50.3%	58.7%	44.5%	29.5%	18.7%
VC 2019	87.8%	74.0%	60.7%	52.7%	60.6%	46.5%	32.3%	19.1%

4.23 At SCQF level 5, leavers achieving 1, 3, 5 and 6 or more qualifications at this level are above the VC, 5+ in line with the VC. Across breadth and depth measures at SCQF level 6, performance is marginally below the VC where 1% of leavers accounts for approximately 10 young people leaving school. Compared with performance in 2022, (as the last year prior to 2019 when formal SQA examinations were the principal form of assessment in place), it is also noted that the VC has fallen across all measures from 2022 to 2023, also noted in change in Moray leavers' performance from 2022 to 2023. Performance of leavers at SCQF level 5 is positive overall, with identified areas for improvement in terms of attainment and potential aspiration to achieve at SCQF level 6, which impacts overall on breadth and depth and other key measures as highlighted through Attainment versus Deprivation graphs in para 4.17 through 4.19.

4.24 Through our Secondary School Improvement Model (SIM) partnership working, secondary schools continue to pilot alternative timetabling and curriculum approaches for session 2023/2024. This includes piloting of seven SCQF level 5 qualifications in S4 in one of our SIM partnerships (two secondary schools) as well as extending accreditation and ungraded (grade neutral) SCQF course offers for young people. All schools have embraced the SCQF Ambassador programme working with the SCQF partnership to extend opportunities through wider awards and accreditation, maximising achievement of Moray's young people.

4.25 We continue to monitor use of additional monies in our school supported through Scottish Attainment Challenge Pupil Equity Funding and Strategic

Equity Funding arrangements. Five key projects are now in place for the latter, with additional focus around attendance and engagement as bids open for session 2024/2025. Looking ahead to SQA 2024, we continue to reflect on our stretch aims set for all of our secondary schools as a measure to focus improvement activities, following review of the Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress by Scottish Government and Education Scotland.

- 4.26 Further actions for improvement have previously been provided in the [Initial Analysis of Secondary School Attainment: Session 2022-2023 Committee Paper](#) presented for scrutiny and noting to Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 28 November 2023 (para 5.1 through 6.4). We continue to support our schools through support and challenge activities and our central quality improvement framework aligned to our key Quality Indicator Framework, [How Good is Our School? version 4](#). Further detail is also provided through the [Education Public Performance Report for Primary and Secondary Schools 2022/23](#).

## 5. **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 (People) in providing a sustainable education service aiming for excellence, progress in achieving better performance and improved inspection outcomes, empowering and raising aspirations. With regards to the 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan LOIP), (2) building a better future for children and young people in Moray through equity of learning experience offered across Moray's schools.

### **(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. Any future reduction in funding to schools may directly may adversely impact on data presented and impact on supports available to maximise achievement of Moray's children and young people in our schools.

### **(d) Risk Implications**

There are risk implications as to how this attainment dataset will continue to be used as comparator data for the next 3-5 years and may skew future performance reporting. The data presented herein reflects year 2 of a return to SQA examinations following two years of an ACM, much different to the previous two years of ACM in 2020 and 2021. The conditions for assessment in this year's SQA Examination diet (pandemic related) are also notably different to 2019 with similarity to 2022. For session 2023/2024, further change will also be witnessed with removal of course assessment modifications which had been implemented by SQA in support of post-pandemic course delivery and assessment.

There is further consideration that more young people continue to stay on at school beyond S4 and S5 due to increased anxiety and wider wellbeing factors. This has been noted in some of Moray's secondary schools, requiring creativity regarding potential course options and levels of study.

Likewise, concerns regarding wellbeing and Mental Health and impact on learner outcomes and attainment. Schools continue to support young people through a range of wellbeing and wider learning supports. Schools also report increase in anti-social behaviours and attendance issues, impacting overall on learner achievement and continuity in learning. Schools continue to work with young people and parents in order to address these concerns, with increases in Additional Assessment Arrangements (AAA) noted by schools as well as impact on levels of aspiration among some young people impacting on key breadth and depth measures and attainment.

Schools observe increase in ASN among pupils, impacting on number of courses studied and levels of study. This has noted impact on attainment measures outlined above. A number of young people, due to their ASN, access a personalised curriculum with individual targets and outcomes. This requires schools to allocate resource in a measured, targeted and supportive manner in order to meet the needs for all learners.

**(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 performance.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

No climate change or biodiversity implications have been determined due to the scrutiny based nature of activities reported and no findings related to such implications contained herein.

**(i) Consultations**

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

**6. CONCLUSION**

**6.1 Committee is invited to consider and note performance of leavers in Moray for session 2022/23 as second year of full return to formal SQA examination diets in May 2022, after two years of Alternative Certification Models (ACM) in 2019/20 and 2020/21. Positive**

performance continues to be noted in Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF level 4 and level 5, initial positive leaver destinations and individual measures within attainment versus deprivation (SIMD), improving attainment for all (complementary tariff) and breadth and depth compared with 2022 as the first year available of similar comparison due to SQA examination diet presence, post ACM.

- 6.2 Schools continue to work together and with key partners to ensure young people progress on to positive post-school destinations and those who require additional support are increasingly supported by our schools, creative in their approaches using resources they have available to meet learning, wellbeing, additional support and behavioural needs. Work continues through inter-school working and local authority improvement groups to strengthen learner achievement and routes to accreditation.
- 6.3 We continue to analyse our data and performance centrally and with our schools through our quality improvement processes, sharing good practice and successes while focussing on improving outcomes further based on data intelligence. This includes through more targeted approach this session as year two of our Secondary School Improvement Model.
- 6.4 This report completes the cycle of performance reporting for session 2022/23.

Author of Report: Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager

Background Papers: [Initial Analysis of Secondary School Attainment: Session 2022-2023 Committee Paper](#)  
[Education Public Performance Report for Primary and Secondary Schools 2022/23](#)  
[How Good is Our School? version 4](#)

Ref:




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**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT: EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION OF SEAFIELD PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

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

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the outcomes of the recently published report on a Moray school following inspection by Education Scotland.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **It is recommended that Committee scrutinise and note the contents of this report and findings of Education Scotland following their inspection visit.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 When a school is inspected by Education Scotland and/or the Care Inspectorate a report is published which gives commentary on the school's performance. These reports are presented regularly to Committee, where possible at the first available opportunity after publication.
- 3.2 In November 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Seafield Primary School. During their visit, Education Scotland inspectors talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the Headteacher and staff.
- 3.3 Seafield Primary School was subject to a short model inspection visit spanning over three days in total.

3.4 The Education Scotland Inspection team use selected Quality Indicators (QIs) from “[How good is our school? 4th edition](#)” (HGIOS4), rated using the [six-point scale](#).

3.5 Education Scotland focus QIs for the Primary school (short model inspection) are:

QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

QI 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement

Education Scotland Inspections also include focus on Safeguarding.

3.6 Following further dialogue between Education Scotland and the local authority, Education Scotland published Seafield Primary School’s Inspection Report on 6 February 2024 with the following gradings:

QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Satisfactory
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Satisfactory

3.7 The inspection team found the following strengths in the school’s work:

- Children who are friendly, respectful and motivated to do their best. They are supported well through trusting relationships and positive learning environments. Within the school and in the learning lounge, staff understand the needs of children well and have developed strong nurturing relationships.
- All staff are aware of children who face challenges and barriers to learning. They are well supported through one-to-one interventions and in class supports. This enables them to make appropriate progress in their learning.
- The variety of ways in which children share and celebrate their achievements. Older children have valuable opportunities to develop leadership skills across the school.

3.8 The inspection team agreed the following areas for improvement with the Head Teacher and Moray Education:

- Improve the consistency of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment across the school. Teachers should improve the pace of learning and ensure that children experience learning at the right level of difficulty.
- Within the learning lounge, continue to monitor the learning opportunities for all learners in order to ensure that the time for learning is maximised for all children.
- Improve children’s progress and attainment across all areas of the curriculum.

3.9 The Education Scotland inspection report and summary of inspection findings for the school can be viewed at:

- [Inspection Report](#)

- [Summarised Inspection Findings](#)
- [Additional Inspection Evidence](#)

- 3.10 Following inspection, Education Scotland have advised that they are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and will make no more visits in connection with the inspection. As a local authority we will continue to inform key stakeholders including parents/carers on the school's progress through normal arrangements on reporting on quality of schools.
- 3.11 For reference, Education Scotland's His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) visit report published in February 2024 following visit in November 2023 is contained within **Appendix 1**.

#### **4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The report links to the 'Tackle Poverty and Inequality' priority as referred to in the Moray Council Corporate Plan. With regards to the 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan LOIP), (2) 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**

It is the duty of the local authority to secure improvement and the quality of school education which is provided in schools managed by Head Teachers and to raise standards of education (Section 3, 8 of Standards in Scotland Schools Act etc 2000).

This report relates to Section 66 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, which concerns the inspection of educational establishments.

**(c) Financial implications**

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

**(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.

**(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 school performance following external scrutiny/validation activity.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

No climate change or biodiversity implications have been determined due to the scrutiny based nature of activities reported and no findings related to such implications contained herein.

**(i) Consultations**

Senior Officers in Education, Communities and Organisational Development, Equal Opportunities Officer, Human Resources Manager, Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer and the Headteacher of Seafield Primary School have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

**5. CONCLUSION**

**5.1 Committee is invited to scrutinise and note the contents of this report, following positive short model inspection visit as outlined above, to Seafield Primary School.**

Author of Report: Lynne Riddoch, Quality Improvement Officer  
Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager

Background Papers: [Inspection Report](#)  
[Summarised Inspection Findings](#)  
[Additional Inspection Evidence](#)  
[How good is our school? 4th edition](#)  
[Education Scotland six-point scale](#)

Ref:



6 February 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

In November 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Seafield Primary School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- Children who are friendly, respectful and motivated to do their best. They are supported well through trusting relationships and positive learning environments. Within the school and in the learning lounge, staff understand the needs of children well and have developed strong nurturing relationships.
- All staff are aware of children who face challenges and barriers to learning. They are well supported through one-to-one interventions and in class supports. This enables them to make appropriate progress in their learning.
- The variety of ways in which children share and celebrate their achievements. Older children have valuable opportunities to develop leadership skills across the school.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Moray Council

- Improve the consistency of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment across the school. Teachers should improve the pace of learning and ensure that children experience learning at the right level of difficulty.
- Within the learning lounge, continue to monitor the learning opportunities for all learners in order to ensure that the time for learning is maximised for all children.
- Improve children's progress and attainment across all areas of the curriculum.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4<sup>th</sup> edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Seafield Primary School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

[Details](#) | [Find an inspection report](#) | [Find an inspection report](#) | [Inspection and Review](#) | [Education Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Moray Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Teri McIntosh  
HM Inspector




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**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT: EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION (CONTINUING  
ENGAGEMENT) OF ST PETER'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the outcomes of the recently published report on a Moray school following inspection revisit by Education Scotland.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 It is recommended that Committee:**

- (i) scrutinise and note the contents of this report and findings of Education Scotland following their inspection visit;**
- (ii) note that a clear and revised action plan is in place to acknowledge areas where progress has been made and in order to focus on areas for improvement requiring further attention;**
- (iii) note that support will continue from the Quality Improvement team in order to realise further improvements required; and**
- (iv) note that following future revisit from Education Scotland (anticipated April 2025), a further paper will be brought to Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee in order to provide update on school progress with improvements.**

### 3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 When a school is inspected by Education Scotland and/or the Care Inspectorate a report is published which gives commentary on the school's performance. These reports are presented regularly to Committee, where possible at the first available opportunity after publication.
- 3.2 In November 2022 and as previously reported to Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 19 April 2023 (para 13 of minute refers), a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited St Peter's RC Primary School. During the visit, Education Scotland inspectors talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the Acting Headteacher and staff. Education Scotland gathered evidence to enable them to evaluate aspects of the quality of leadership and children's achievements. St Peter's RC Primary School was subject to a full inspection model visit spanning across five days in total.
- 3.3 The Education Scotland Inspection team use selected Quality Indicators (QIs) from "[How good is our school? 4th edition](#)" (HGIOS4), rated using the [six-point scale](#).
- 3.4 Education Scotland focus QIs for the Primary school (full inspection model inspection) are:

QI 1.3 Leadership of Change  
QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment  
QI 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement  
QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion

Inspectors make evaluations of these QIs using the six-point scale. The first three of these QIs feed directly into the evidence base for the National Improvement Framework.

- 3.5 Full establishment inspections also include focus on Safeguarding and themes from other QIs to ensure Inspectors continue to capture the evidence needed to promote improvement and provide evidence to inform national policy development. These are not assigned a rating and are:

QI 2.2 Curriculum (Learning Pathways theme)  
QI 2.7 Partnerships (Partnerships in evaluating the impact of parental engagement)

- 3.6 Through inspection in November 2022, St Peter's RC Primary School were graded as 'weak' across QI 1.3, 2.3, 3.2 and 3.1 as noted above. Areas for development were also agreed in relation to safeguarding. Education Scotland liaised with Moray Council thereafter regarding the school's capacity to improve and intimated their intention to carry out a further inspection of the school in discussion with Moray Council.
- 3.7 Following inspection, the Acting Head Teacher was supported in developing a comprehensive school improvement action plan with staff, in order to address

areas identified for improvement. The Quality Improvement Officer and Primary Advisor provided support to the school with positive changes implemented working together as a school community. Regular reporting to the Quality Improvement Manager and through quality improvement visits to the school, it was noted that key improvements had been made, led by the Acting Head Teacher and supported by all staff and where pertinent, children and their parents/carers.

- 3.8 In January 2024, Education Scotland's His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) returned to carry out a further inspection of St Peter's RC Primary School over three days. Inspection activities were focused on the areas of improvement agreed with the school and the local authority. Following review of these areas, Education Scotland HMIE were then able to find out about the progress the school has made since original inspection in November 2022 and how well this is supporting children's learning and achievements.
- 3.9 The five areas for improvement forming focus of the January 2024 further inspection as agreed in November 2022 were as follows:
- Senior leaders and staff should work together to improve leadership across the school. In doing so, staff should support children, parents and partners to participate in evaluation activities that improves how the school works.
  - Staff should work together to improve the quality of learning and teaching. This includes ensuring children are actively involved in learning.
  - Staff should improve approaches to planning of learning, teaching and assessment. There is a need to ensure children's knowledge and skills build on what they know as they move through the school.
  - All staff should be involved in planning learning that supports better children with additional support needs. They should ensure that they set targets that help children make progress in their learning.
  - All staff should work together to have a clear focus on raising attainment of all children.
- 3.10 The Education Scotland Further Inspection Letter (published April 2024) can be viewed at:
- [Further Inspection Letter](#)
- 3.11 Education Scotland noted that overall, some progress had been made in all areas for improvement as noted in 3.9 above from original inspection in November 2022. However, across all five areas it was noted that further development should continue as planned where planned approaches and interventions in order to address key areas for improvement should also continue to be embedded across the school.
- 3.12 As a result of the further inspection in January 2024, Education Scotland HMIE note that the school has made some progress since the original inspection. Education Scotland HMIE will return to carry out a further

inspection of the school within one year of further inspection letter publication, anticipated around April 2025.

- 3.13 Following inspection, further review of the School Improvement Action Plan has followed to ensure key actions for improvement continue to be addressed by the school. This has been further supported by the Primary Advisor and Quality Improvement team.
- 3.14 As reported to Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 27 March 2024 (Federation Policy for Schools: [para](#) 6 of minute refers), St Peter's Primary School now has an interim pairing in place following the Acting Head Teacher taking up a permanent Depute Head Teacher post elsewhere in the local authority. The Head Teacher of St Thomas RC Primary School now has interim oversight as Head Teacher of both St Peter's RC Primary School and St Thomas RC Primary School following Head of Service enactment of exigencies of the service in February 2024. Under the leadership of the interim pairing Head Teacher, and supported closely by the Primary Advisor, the school improvement Action Plan continued to be progressed in line with required improvements identified by Education Scotland HMIE.
- 3.15 For reference, the Education Scotland HMIE Further Inspection Letter published in April 2024 following further inspection in January 2024 is contained within **Appendix 1**.

#### **4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

##### **(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The report links to the 'Tackle Poverty and Inequality' priority as referred to in the Moray Council Corporate Plan. With regards to the 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan LOIP), (2) 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**

It is the duty of the local authority to secure improvement and the quality of school education which is provided in schools managed by Head Teachers and to raise standards of education (Section 3, 8 of Standards in Scotland Schools Act etc 2000).

This report relates to Section 66 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, which concerns the inspection of educational establishments.

##### **(c) Financial implications**

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

##### **(d) Risk Implications**

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

##### **(e) Staffing Implications**

An interim pairing is in place with the Head Teacher of St Thomas RC Primary School in Keith, now also leading St Peter's RC Primary School on an interim pairing basis. This follows recruitment difficulties experienced in terms of Primary Head Teacher posts and with specific regard to appointment of denominational Head Teachers as noted in para 3.14 above, and reported to Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 27 March 2024 (Federation Policy for Schools: [para 6](#) of minute refers). The Acting Head Teacher continues to establish herself in post while leading forward school improvement actions identified, supported by all staff and identified central officers.

**(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 school performance following external scrutiny/validation activity.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

No climate change or biodiversity implications have been determined due to the scrutiny based nature of activities reported and no findings related to such implications contained herein.

**(i) Consultations**

Senior Officers in Education, Communities and Organisational Development, Equal Opportunities Officer, Human Resources Manager, Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer and the interim paired Headteacher of St Peter's RC Primary School/St Thomas RC Primary School have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

**5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 Committee is invited to scrutinise and note the contents of this report, noting that the action plan in place following inspection in November 2022 has been further revised in order to guide improvements in further areas noted by Education Scotland HMIE through their further inspection activities in January 2024.**
- 5.2 Following departure of the Acting Head Teacher in January 2024, an interim pairing with Head Teacher oversight with St Thomas RC Primary School has been formed under exigencies of the Education service by the Head of Education (Chief Education Officer).**
- 5.3 School improvement actions continue to be progressed with support from the local authority Quality Improvement team and Primary Advisor.**
- 5.4 Further inspection is anticipated around April 2025 in order to gauge progress with areas of school improvement being progressed.**

Author of Report: Susanne Campbell, Quality Improvement Officer  
Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager

Background Papers: [Further Inspection Letter \(April 2024\)](#)  
[Inspection Report \(February 2023\)](#)  
[Summarised Inspection Findings \(February 2023\)](#)  
[Additional Inspection Evidence \(February 2023\)](#)  
[How good is our school? 4th edition](#)  
[Education Scotland six-point scale](#)

Ref:



23 April 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2023, HM Inspectors published a letter on St Peter's RC Primary School. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Moray Council. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to children and worked closely with the acting headteacher and staff. We heard from the acting headteacher and staff about the steps the school has taken to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection. As a result, we were able to find out about the progress the school has made and how well this is supporting children's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

**Senior leaders and staff should work together to improve leadership across the school. In doing so, staff should support children, parents and partners to participate in evaluation activities that improves how the school works.**

The acting headteacher, supported by staff, has made the school values of 'Faith, Hope, Respect, Honesty and Love' more visible around the school. Children are developing their awareness of the school values well. They refer to the school values in classrooms, assemblies and when speaking with staff. Staff should continue to help children understand the school values in their everyday activities.

Senior leaders have made a positive start to checking how well the school helps children learn. However, they need time to consider what aspects of the school's work makes a difference to children and what helps children learn better. Senior leaders have made a positive start to working with teachers to reflect on how they can make sure all learning activities high-quality. Senior leaders should now ensure that teachers make sure that all children are making progress.

Senior leaders and staff still need to develop ways to check that school improvement priorities are helping improve children's outcomes. They need to be clearer on where the work of the school makes a difference to children's attainment. The acting headteacher should explore ways to support parents be involved in the work of the school and how the school plans to use Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) meaningfully. This includes ways to check that PEF is making a difference to targeted learners and their attainment.

Staff have reintroduced pupil leadership opportunities successfully. All children participate actively in a leadership group. Children value their contribution to leadership groups very highly. Children share that their leadership group is making a difference to other children and the wider community.

Overall, there has been some progress made in addressing this area for improvement. As planned, senior leaders should continue to develop and embed approaches to improving leadership across the school.

**Staff should work together to improve the quality of learning and teaching. This includes ensuring children are actively involved in learning.**

Across the school, staff and children have caring and respectful relationships. These relationships support children to be ready to learn and help most children to engage well in learning.

Teacher's professional learning is beginning to help them to think about how they can improve learning across the school. Senior leaders should continue to support teachers to engage in learning opportunities to develop their teaching skills further.

All teachers share with children what they are going to learn. Children now have more opportunities to work in groups and individually. Across the curriculum there needs to be more learning activities which encourage children to think for themselves and lead learning.

Children are encouraged more to talk about their learning. A few children share that they know what they need to do next to make progress in learning. Staff now need to develop ways to help all children to understand what they need to do to continue to progress in learning.

Children are beginning to have opportunities to learn skills in digital technology and use online search tools to support their research. Teachers and senior leaders should continue to ensure all children have regular opportunities to use technology creatively across the school.

Children are beginning to participate more fully in classroom activities. For example, in a few classes, children become 'mini teachers' and explain to the class how they arrived at their answers. All teachers should continue to extend these opportunities for children to talk through their thinking and what they would like to learn about. Children are developing a range of writing skills well across the school. Children in the upper primary use helpful checklists to check their work to see how well they are writing. They receive useful teacher feedback which helps them improve their writing further.

Teachers using play to extend learning for younger children is at the very early stages of development. It will be important for teachers to use national guidance to support their knowledge, understanding and development of play.

Staff have made a positive start to developing activities for groups of children to learn outdoors. Staff should continue with plans to provide more opportunities for all children to learn outdoors. In doing so they will increase opportunities for children to develop a wider range of skills.

Overall, there has been some progress made in addressing this area for improvement. The acting headteacher and teachers have made a positive start to improving learning and teaching. However, it will take time to embed the new learning and teaching approaches to ensure all children experience consistent high-quality learning and teaching.

**Staff should improve approaches to planning of learning, teaching and assessment. There is a need to ensure children’s knowledge and skills build on what they know as they move through the school.**

Teachers have prioritised improving how they plan children’s learning in reading, writing and numeracy and mathematics. Their approaches to planning are beginning to impact positively on children’s learning experiences in literacy and numeracy across the school. Senior leaders and teachers now need to ensure children build on their knowledge and skills across the breadth of the curriculum.

Staff now have a clearer understanding of how to plan for children’s learning which builds on their knowledge and skills as they progress through Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. Assessment is not yet integral to teacher’s planning. Staff should now review assessment approaches to ensure their monitoring and tracking reflects fully children’s skills and knowledge. The acting headteacher and teachers should now develop an effective calendar to help ensure assessment informs planning more closely.

Overall, there has been some progress made in addressing this area for improvement. As planned, staff should continue to develop approaches to how they evidence the progress children make in learning.

**All staff should be involved in planning learning that supports better children with additional support needs. They should ensure that they set targets that help children make progress in their learning.**

Teachers have begun to provide children with more frequent opportunities to explore their wellbeing needs. Teachers identify accurately any children who demonstrate obstacles to their learning. More time is now required for senior leaders to check that interventions are helping improve children’s wellbeing.

The school’s approaches to child protection, and safeguarding continues to require improvement in line with national guidance.

Teachers have improved their approaches to identifying children who would benefit from support with their learning in school. Teachers should now develop individual programmes further to support learners to accelerate their progress.

Senior leaders are beginning to take positive steps to encourage good patterns of attendance, in line with national guidance. However, a few children continue to have significantly low levels of attendance. Senior leaders should monitor the attendance of these children more frequently. They should work with them and their families to learn what supports and strategies will help them improve their attendance.

Overall, there has been some progress made by staff to plan learning and set targets that support children with additional support needs to improve. There is a need for staff to ensure that they continue to improve this area.

**All staff should work together to have a clear focus on raising attainment of all children.**

The acting headteacher is tracking the progress of children increasingly well. The acting headteacher is working with teachers to help them understand the information better and how this information helps them improve attainment. They should now use the information to plan what else children need to learn to improve their attainment.

Staff need to develop further their approaches to identifying children adversely affected by poverty. There is not yet enough evidence for staff to understand if the support they provide is helping these children accelerate their progress in learning. The acting headteacher needs to develop approaches to check that children who receive support for their learning are improving their attainment.

The acting headteacher and teachers have begun to track children's participation in clubs and activities, both in and out of school. They are now using this information to check whether all children have opportunities to access a range of clubs and activities that builds their skills and successes further.

Overall, there has been some progress made in addressing this area for improvement. However, it is too early to see the impact of this work on raising attainment at this stage. The acting headteacher and staff need to develop an overall strategy for raising attainment. This should include how they monitor and measure the progress children are making across the school.

### **What happens next?**

The school has made some progress since the original inspection. We will liaise with Moray Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within one year of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with Moray Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school we will write to you as parents informing you of the progress the school has made.

David McKellar  
HM Inspector



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT: EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION (CONTINUING  
ENGAGEMENT) OF FORRES ACADEMY**

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

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the outcomes of the recently published report on a Moray school following inspection revisit by Education Scotland.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 It is recommended that Committee:**

- (i) scrutinise and note the contents of this report and findings of Education Scotland following their inspection visit;**
- (ii) note that a revised school improvement action plan is in development with review of key actions identified by Education Scotland His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) to be addressed;**
- (iii) note that support will continue from the Quality Improvement Manager in order to support and challenge school improvement required with further oversight, scrutiny and support by the Head of Education; and**
- (iv) note that following future revisit from Education Scotland (anticipated April 2025), a further paper will be brought to Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee in order to provide update on school progress with improvements.**

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 When a school is inspected by Education Scotland and/or the Care Inspectorate a report is published which gives commentary on the school's performance. These reports are presented regularly to Committee, where possible at the first available opportunity after publication.
- 3.2 In January 2023 and as previously reported to Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 7 June 2023 ([para 11](#) of minute refers), a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Forres Academy. During the visit, Education Scotland inspectors talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the Acting Headteacher and staff. Education Scotland gathered evidence to enable them to evaluate aspects of the quality of leadership and children's achievements. Forres Academy was subject to a full inspection model visit at that time spanning across five days in total.
- 3.3 The Education Scotland Inspection team use selected Quality Indicators (QIs) from "[How good is our school? 4th edition](#)" (HGIOS4), rated using the [six-point scale](#).
- 3.4 Education Scotland focus QIs for the Secondary school (full inspection model inspection) are:

QI 1.3 Leadership of Change  
QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment  
QI 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement  
QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion

Inspectors make evaluations of these QIs using the six-point scale. The first three of these QIs feed directly into the evidence base for the National Improvement Framework.

- 3.5 Full establishment inspections also include focus on Safeguarding and themes from other QIs to ensure Inspectors continue to capture the evidence needed to promote improvement and provide evidence to inform national policy development. These are not assigned a rating and are:

QI 2.2 Curriculum (Learning Pathways theme)  
QI 2.7 Partnerships (Partnerships in evaluating the impact of parental engagement)

- 3.6 Through inspection in January 2023, Forres Academy were graded as 'satisfactory' for QI 2.3 (Learning, Teaching and Assessment). In the further three QIs, Forres Academy were graded as 'weak' for QI 1.3 (Leadership of Change), QI 3.2 (Raising Attainment and Achievement) and QI 3.1 (Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion). Areas for development were also agreed in relation to safeguarding. Education Scotland liaised with Moray Council thereafter regarding the school's capacity to improve and intimated their intention to carry out a further inspection of the school in discussion with Moray Council within one year of the publication of their letter in April 2023.

- 3.7 Education Scotland HMIE identified the following strengths of the school in January 2023 as reported in April 2023:
- The members of staff, who are working in a way that helps young people to feel included and valued.
  - The clubs and activities on offer to young people, which help them to develop a range of skills. The provision at the local college, which helps young people to achieve positive outcomes and skills for life and work.
- 3.8 Through inspection, Education Scotland HMIE also identified the following areas for improvement following inspection in January 2023 as reports in April 2023:
- Improve the strategic leadership of change and improvement across all areas of the school. Leadership at all levels needs to be focussed on improving outcomes for learners.
  - Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment. Teachers should focus on meeting the needs of individual learners. Class lessons need to be more engaging and young people should be involved in leading their learning.
  - Improve approaches to supporting young people's learning and wellbeing. This includes the planning and review of supports for learning. Young people and their parents should be fully involved in decisions that affect them.
  - Improve attainment for young people from S1 to S6. Teachers should track progress at all stages and make sure learner's progress is understood by young people and their parents.
- 3.9 Following inspection, the Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team were supported in the development of a comprehensive school improvement action plan which would require support from all staff, in order to address areas identified for improvement noted above. Previous inspection findings and report to Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 7 June 2023 ([para](#) 11 of minute refers) note key actions underway at that time. From the action plan developed, the Senior Leadership Team and all staff were asked to input their thoughts based on the findings of His Majesty's Inspectors of Education during their visit.
- 3.10 As a result of inspection findings, additional support was put in place by the local authority for the school including direct involvement of the Quality Improvement Manager as Quality Improvement Officer for the school. Operational support from a central Quality Improvement Officer was also provided, support in relation to QI 3.1 from a Senior Leader in another local authority secondary school and critical friend offer from Education Scotland HMIE Associated Assessor, also an experienced Head Teacher in another local authority secondary school. Support from a peer Head Teacher as Education Scotland Associate Assessor was also offered and school improvement partner.

- 3.11 Due to absence experienced within the Additional Support Needs (ASN) department, additional budget was released in order to appoint a further Principal Teacher of ASN in order to support improvement required. The Education Support Officer (ASN) was also on site and support implementation of key changes as well as professional learning for teaching and non-teaching staff. Increased budget allocation from the Head of Education was also redirected from school improvement monies in order to fund supported study in the lead up to SQA 2024.
- 3.12 The Quality Improvement Manager with oversight from the Head of Education continue to provide support to the school. Through regular reporting by the Quality Improvement Manager and through quality improvement visits to the school, it was noted that key improvements had been made in the lead up to June 2023, led by the Head Teacher and with additional support from the local authority as outlined in para 3.8 above. The Senior Leadership Team also looked outwards to other schools for best practice and undertook visits, bringing forward key changes to systems and processes in place. Education Scotland Head of Scrutiny continued to engage for progress updates with the Head of Education and Quality Improvement Manager.
- 3.13 As notified to elected members in August 2023 and as reported to this Committee in an update by the Head of Education on 28 November 2023 ([para 19](#) of minute refers), reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) was identified in the Forres Academy structure. This resulted in closure of a notable number of classrooms spaces, repurposing of general spaces and transporting identified Senior Phase classes (practical including Home Economics, Science, Technical) to other locations including Moray College UHI, Elgin High School, Elgin Academy and Lossiemouth High School. A period of disruption followed with changes to school operations, access/egress arrangements, teaching areas and reduction in social spaces available due to repurposing as classroom areas (including main hall, gym hall and social area).
- 3.14 From January 2024 with the exception of Home Economics, most subjects had access returned to departments or repurposed classrooms following building works overseen at pace by colleagues in Moray Council Housing and Property, and Learning Estates sections. Regular updates to parents/carers and elected members have taken place since August 2023 including meetings and written communications, in order to update on progress and address concerns raised. Working in partnership, Moray Council Housing and Property, Learning Estates, Education and Public Relations teams worked together in order to support timely updates to pupils, parents/carers, staff, and wider stakeholders, with frequently asked questions (FAQs) developed in response to stakeholder questions across a range of themes. Forres House Community Centre was also use for SQA preliminary examinations in February 2024 for most young people.
- 3.15 In March 2024, Education Scotland returned to inspect Forres Academy, leading to publication of a parent/carers letter in April 2024 as intimated in their previous inspection report as noted in para 3.6 above. This is provided in **Appendix 1**.



- 3.16 Education Scotland HMIE noted in their April 2024 visit letter following their visit in March 2024, RAAC was identified in Forres Academy in August 2023 which resulted in Senior Leaders devoting much time to ensure effective mitigation measures were in place. As a result, they acknowledge that they have not made the progress they would have liked to have made with identified areas for improvement noted in para 3.8 above. This was due to the significant disruption and impact that RAAC had on the school building and access to practical spaces, requiring school timetable rewrite into a blocked timetable arrangement with partnership arrangements initiated for Senior Phase classes.
- 3.17 In specific regard to the four key areas identified for improvement (para 3.8 above), Education Scotland report that the school has made insufficient progress since the original inspection as outlined in their visit letter for each priority area within **Appendix 1**.
- 3.18 It is reported that improvement area 1 (*improving strategic leadership of change and improvement across all areas for the school*) has not yet been overtaken successfully. In regard to improvement area 2 (*improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment*), this remains an area for continuing improvement. Through improvement area 3 (*improve approaches to supporting young people's learning and wellbeing*), while at an early stage it is noted that changes are beginning to have positive impact with further areas for development noted. In regard to improvement area 4 (*improve attainment for young people from S1 to S6*), while it is noted that improvements have been initiated through revised monitoring and tracking, department attainment review processes and early signs of improvement in identified areas of attainment, this would remain an ongoing area for improvement.
- 3.19 As a result of inspection findings, Education Scotland HMIE will continue to liaise with Moray Council Education regarding the school's capacity to improve. Education Scotland HMIE will also return to carry out a further inspection of Forres Academy within one year of the publication of the inspection letter (further visit anticipated, April 2025). Following further inspection, Education Scotland HMIE will write once again to parents based on findings of their further inspection visit.
- 3.20 Since February 2024 and following inspection in March 2024, the school have experienced further change in the Senior Leadership Team. The Acting Depute Head Teacher with overview of SQA has commenced maternity leave. A substantive Depute Head Teacher has returned from secondment from the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Collaborative, assuming overview of SQA systems, processes and overview. A further substantive Depute Head Teacher is currently absent from work. Departure of a substantive Depute Head Teacher in term 1 following appointment to a Head Teacher post in another local authority highlights further change, where the Head Teacher continues to review Senior Leadership Team remits in support of school improvement and oversight of key priorities.

- 3.21 Following inspection, further review of School Improvement Action Plans is underway, in order to streamline actions for improvement now required and ensure focus on key areas which will realise greatest impact at pace. These are based solely on areas identified from further inspection with engagement from staff at all levels as well as key partners where appropriate based on improvement areas identified.
- 3.22 Link meeting continue with the Head Teacher and Quality Improvement Manager in planning for further improvement looking ahead, including planning for engagement with key stakeholder groups in vision for the school and engagement activities now required to ensure full school ownership of improvements now required. Due to further engagement anticipated, the Head of Education will increase overview with the Quality Improvement Manager of the school in relation to scrutiny and support required.
- 3.23 For reference, the Education Scotland HMIE Further Inspection Letter published in April 2024 following further inspection in March 2024 is contained within **Appendix 1**.

#### **4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

##### **(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The report links to the 'Tackle Poverty and Inequality' priority as referred to in the Moray Council Corporate Plan. With regards to the 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan LOIP), (2) 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**

It is the duty of the local authority to secure improvement and the quality of school education which is provided in schools managed by Head Teachers and to raise standards of education (Section 3, 8 of Standards in Scotland Schools Act etc 2000).

This report relates to Section 66 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, which concerns the inspection of educational establishments.

##### **(c) Financial implications**

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

##### **(d) Risk Implications**

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

##### **(e) Staffing Implications**

Further changes in the Senior Leadership Team have resulted in remit change and review of key priority oversight. As a school, changes in staff are noted within key departments with particular change noted in English and Maths departments, with two vacancies arising in the latter department that the school continue to proactively look to recruit to, in

order to minimise potential disruption and impact on attainment. As a result of RAAC and wider scrutiny activities, continued focus around wellbeing of all staff is maintained as a local authority and continues to be reviewed when guiding implementation and pace of school improvement activities.

**(f) Property**

Issues in relation to RAAC noted as above.

**(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

An Equality/Socio Economic Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform Committee on school performance following external scrutiny/validation activity.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

No climate change or biodiversity implications have been determined due to the scrutiny based nature of activities reported and no findings related to such implications contained herein.

**(i) Consultations**

Senior Officers in Education, Communities and Organisational Development, Equal Opportunities Officer, Human Resources Manager, Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer and the Headteacher of Forres Academy have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

**5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 Committee is invited to scrutinise and note the contents of this report, noting that further revision to school improvement action plan is underway, led by the Headteacher and to involve all staff. This follows in initial inspection in January 2023 and further inspection in March 2024.**
- 5.2 Further revision will consider improvements in further areas noted by Education Scotland HMIE now required through their further inspection activities in March 2024. Time has been allocated during SQA study leave for staff to meet, discuss and agree next steps looking ahead based on local authority and Education Scotland visit reports.**
- 5.3 Considerable disruption has been encountered by the school due to RAAC. The Senior Leadership Team recognise the need to move at pace on improvement areas identified with importance of involving all key stakeholders as the vision for Forres Academy is refreshed.**
- 5.4 School improvement actions continue to be progressed with increased support and scrutiny from central Education colleagues including the Quality Improvement Manager and Head of Education. Further supports will be called upon as school improvement plans are refined and refocussed, as required.**

**5.5 Further inspection is anticipated around April 2025 in order to gauge progress with areas of school improvement being progressed.**

Author of Report: Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager

Background Papers: Appendix 1 – Further Inspection Letter (April 2024)  
[Further Inspection Letter \(April 2024\)](#)  
[Inspection Report \(April 2023\)](#)  
[Summarised Inspection Findings \(April 2023\)](#)  
[Additional Inspection Evidence \(April 2023\)](#)  
[How good is our school? 4th edition](#)  
[Education Scotland six-point scale](#)

Ref:

23 April 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

In April 2023, HM Inspectors published a letter on Forres Academy. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and The Moray Council. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We heard from the headteacher and other staff about the steps the school has taken to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection and at other aspects of the school's work as proposed by the headteacher. As a result, we were able to find out about the progress the school has made and how well this is supporting young people's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

In August 2023, reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) was identified in the Forres Academy structure. Senior leaders have had to devote much time to ensure that effective mitigation measures have been in place. As a result, they acknowledge that they have not made the progress they would like to have made with the identified areas for improvement.

**Improve the strategic leadership of change and improvement across all areas of the school. Leadership at all levels needs to be focussed on improving outcomes for learners.**

This area for improvement has not yet been overtaken successfully. Senior leaders have created a detailed school improvement plan that sets out a large number of actions to address areas for improvements identified in the original inspection. Senior leaders should now streamline these actions to those that will have the greatest impact on improving young people's outcomes. This then needs to be shared with stakeholders to ensure that all members of the school community understand the future direction of the school.

Senior leaders have engaged successfully with parents, staff and young people to refresh the school values. Young people are not yet clear that the new values are making any significant difference. Senior leaders, as planned, should work with stakeholders to develop a clearer vision statement for the school that sets out the school's purpose.

Senior leaders need to strengthen their strategic leadership to lead areas of the school's work more effectively. In doing so, they need to develop clear strategies that are well communicated to stakeholders. Middle leaders also need to strengthen their approaches to monitoring and evaluating the performance of their departments so that they can demonstrate improvements more effectively. This includes strengthened analysis of attainment data.

**Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment. Teachers should focus on meeting the needs of individual learners. Class lessons need to be more engaging and young people should be involved in leading their learning.**

The quality of learning, teaching and assessment remains an area for continuing improvement. In most lessons, young people's learning needs are not well planned for.

Teachers need to plan tasks and activities set at the right level of difficulty for young people. Teachers are not checking for understanding on a regular basis and therefore do not know how well learners are progressing.

Young people's engagement is highly variable. Teachers need to plan and deliver more engaging activities to support young people's motivation. The majority of young people need to be better engaged and more motivated by their learning activities. When young people are off task, this needs to be managed more effectively by teachers. A few learners have disengaged and do not attend classes, which has a negative impact on the learning environment for all. There is need to increase expectations of behaviour, standards and conduct across the school by all staff. This remains an important next step. Almost all lessons are teacher led, with few opportunities for young people to lead learning. A greater variety of teaching approaches are required to motivate and engage young people more.

**Improve approaches to supporting young people's learning and wellbeing. This includes the planning and review of supports for learning. Young people and their parents should be fully involved in decisions that affect them.**

The school is at an early stage of introducing changes to how it supports young people's learning and wellbeing. The increased middle leadership team responsible for supporting young people's learning and wellbeing is beginning to have a positive impact. Young people speak positively about the new House Structure and the House Assemblies which celebrate success.

Senior leaders have plans in place to track the wellbeing of young people across the school. This tracker is being developed in consultation with staff and pupils. There is a continued need for teachers to plan and review supports for learning. Young people and parents should be involved fully in decisions that affect them.

**Improve attainment for young people from S1 to S6. Teachers should track progress at all stages and make sure learner's progress is understood by young people and their parents.**

Senior leaders have very recently introduced revised approaches to monitor and track how well young people are progressing and attaining. It is important that information about progress is reliable and robust based on assessment evidence. Most young people are not aware of their current levels of attainment, progress or next steps in their learning.

There are a few areas where attainment has shown early signs of improvement. This includes improvements in literacy and numeracy attainment. At S4, there are improvements in young people attaining national qualifications although young people's performance remains lower than their peers from similar schools. Standards of attainment remain low in several areas assessed. There are also some declines evident. Senior leaders acknowledge that attainment still requires significant improvement and they should continue to work with staff to improve attainment as an immediate priority across the school, especially in S4, by S5 and by S6.

Senior leaders have introduced greater levels of accountability for middle leaders by introducing new approaches to departmental attainment review meetings. This practice

should be built upon by strengthening rigour across all levels of the school. It is important that the strategies deployed by classroom teachers are monitored and evaluated for effectiveness.

### What happens next?

The school has made insufficient progress since the original inspection. We will liaise with The Moray Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within one year of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with Moray Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school, we will write to you as parents informing you of the progress the school has made.

Guch Dhillon  
HM Inspector







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**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT: INFORMATION REPORT: EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE –  
SUSTAINABLE RATE**

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

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the updated guidance issued by Scottish Government on 8 March 2024 for setting sustainable rates in the 2024/25 financial year.
- 1.2 To inform Committee of the additional funding provided by Scottish Government to meet the £12 Real Living Wage (RLW) commitment in 2024/25.
- 1.3 To inform Committee that the uplift will be backdated to April 2024 as per the agreement with COSLA.
- 1.4 To inform Committee that the standard methodology for setting the sustainable rate for Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) funded hours in future financial years will continue to be based on the Survey (Costs) method as agreed at Full Council on 12 December 2023 (para 11 of the minute refers) while taking account of any further guidance issued by Scottish Government.
- 1.5 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the consideration of financial and budgetary policy of the Council.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 A report was submitted to Full Council on 12 December 2023 where it was agreed (para 11 of the minute refers) to use the Survey (Costs) approach in current and subsequent financial years as the standard methodology for setting the sustainable rate for partner providers in partnership with Moray Council to provide funded ELC hours. This approach included allowance for the £12 real living wage (RLW) commitment within the agreed sustainable rate calculations. It was further agreed that setting the sustainable rate would be reviewed annually as part of Moray Council's yearly budget planning with any uplifts to be applied in April at the start of each new financial year.

- 2.2 Subsequent to this report, further [guidance](#) was issued by Scottish Government on 8 March 2024 which outlined requirements for setting the sustainable rate in the 2024/25 financial year.
- 2.3 This guidance was agreed by COSLA leaders, on the advice of the Settlement and Distribution Group, and requires all local authorities to apply a minimum 7.6% uplift to the 2023/24 sustainable rates with the uplift to take effect from April 2024. This relates to the Scottish Government commitment for childcare workers delivering funded ELC in private and third sector services to be paid at least £12 per hour from April 2024.
- 2.4 Additional funding of £16 million for the 2024/25 financial year will be provided by Scottish Government to local authorities throughout Scotland. **Appendix 1** indicates the additional uplifts required to the rates agreed in December by Full Council to meet the 7.6% uplift stipulation. For Moray there is a significant shortfall in funding, with the bulk of the funding towards the 7.6% coming from Council provision for the 4.2% uplift agreed by the Council in December 2023.
- 2.5 As noted in **Appendix 1**, a further 22p/hour uplift is required to the 3-5s rate of £6.90 taking the revised rate to a total of £7.12. There is an additional 27p/hour uplift to the 2s rate taking it from £8.28 to a revised total of £8.55. It is estimated that this further uplift to meet the 7.6% requirement from SG would cost approximately £277,000 which is within the total confirmed SG funding allocation of £284,400 to Moray Council. However, this equates to an estimated 3.4% increase in the hourly rate. Therefore, it is only possible to deliver on the whole 7.6% because the Council had already agreed to fund an increase of 4.2%. Had this not been in place there would have been a significant funding shortfall. Additionally, a comparison chart has been included in **Appendix 2** to outline how the updated guidance would affect other local authorities if a minimum 7.6% uplift is applied assuming current reinvestment percentages are maintained.
- 2.6 **Appendix 2** highlights the wide ranging rates throughout Scotland. The lowest rate based on the updated guidance would be in East Ayrshire with £5.92 for both 3-5s and 2s if only a straight uplift of 7.6% is applied with the highest rates being in Argyll & Bute for 3-5s at £7.41 and £9.15 in Renfrewshire for 2s. Moray Council's rate would be third highest for both 3-5s and 2s if only a straight 7.6% uplift is applied.
- 2.7 Clarification has been sought from the Scottish Government and COSLA concerning the approach recommended in the updated guidance in terms of how the varying rates can ensure the RLW £12 commitment is achieved within all authorities. There has been no account taken of the position of each authority before applying the 7.6% uplift and whether or not councils, like Moray, had already made provision for the £12 RLW within their sustainable rate. The result is that rates continue to vary significantly across Scotland with no consistent methodology.
- 2.8 While the updated guidance does alter from the Survey (Costs) approach agreed at Full Council in December for 2024/25, it is recommended that the

Council reverts to the Survey (Costs) as the standard approach in subsequent financial years while taking into account any further guidance that may be issued by Scottish Government.

### 3. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

#### **(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The report links to the 'Tackle Poverty and Inequality' priority as referred to in the Moray Council Corporate Plan.

The report links to 'Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray' from the LOIP.

#### **(b) Policy and Legal**

There are no policy or legal implications arising directly from this report; however, it is important to note that the current contract agreement between Moray Council and partner providers highlights the following points regarding the sustainable rate:

- inflationary and RLW increases will be reviewed on an annual basis;
- the extent to which any inflationary and RLW changes are reflected in the price for future years of the contract is subject to the overall level of funding agreed between Scottish Government and local government for the expanded ELC hours;
- in relation to the sustainable rate setting process, the Council will take into consideration statutory and non-statutory Guidance including as published by Scottish Government and COSLA;
- the Council may, as a result of the sustainable rate setting process, elect to amend the price during the period of contract and shall be the sole judge of whether the price is amended and is under no obligation to implement any price amendment at any stage;
- the process for setting the price will be conducted in line with [Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard for Early Learning and Childcare Providers: Guidance for Setting Sustainable Rates from August 2020](#); and
- the sustainable rate and daily lunch rate will be determined annually by the Council.

The full contract agreement can be viewed on the [Public Contracts Scotland](#) site.

#### **(c) Financial implications**

The sustainable rate takes account of the full costs of providing funded ELC. Providers entering into contract with Moray Council must accept the offered rate.

The updated guidance from Scottish Government issued on 8 March 2024 continues to stipulate that the rates should be sustainable for local

authorities in terms of the budgets available while also incorporating the following elements:

- The rate will support delivery of a high quality ELC experience for all children;
- It will be a rate that reflects the cost of delivery, including the delivery of national policy objectives;
- The rate will allow for investment in the setting – staff, resources and physical environment; and,
- It will enable payment of the RLW for those childcare workers delivering the funded entitlement.

The updated guidance stipulates that a minimum 7.6% uplift to the 2023/24 rates should be applied from April 2024. The 4.2% rate uplift agreed at Full Council on 12 December 2023 (para 11 of the minute refers) of £6.90 for 3-5s and £8.28 for 2s required an additional budget commitment of £342,130. The further 3.4% uplift required by Scottish Government to the 2023/24 rates will cost an estimated £276,963 with additional funding from Scottish Government confirmed at £284,400.

**(d) Risk Implications**

There are two inherent risks when considering the sustainable hourly rate:

- If the rate is set too low, there is a risk that providers would not be able to remain financially viable if paying the RLW. Should this be the case then some providers may seek to alter their service offer to manage business costs.
- If the rate is set too high, there is a risk that this would not be sustainable for the Council to maintain in the 2024/25 financial year and subsequent years.

The process for setting the hourly rate aims to allow both factors to be balanced; however, there is a risk to the reputation of the Council as an accredited RLW employer if the sustainable rate is set too low for providers to continue paying the RLW.

**(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 Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) was completed previously as part of the report submitted to Full Council on 12 December 2023.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

There are no climate change or biodiversity implications arising directly from this report.

**(i) Consultations**

Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Head of Education (Chief Education Officer), Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Chief Financial Officer, Nicky Gosling, Accountant, Equal Opportunities Officer and Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer have been consulted.

**4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 Committee is asked to note the updated guidance for setting sustainable rates issued by Scottish Government on 8 March 2024.**
- 4.2 Committee is asked to note the additional funding provided by Scottish Government to meet the £12 Real Living Wage commitment in 2024/25;**
- 4.3 Committee is asked to note the additional uplift required to meet the updated guidance as per the agreement with COSLA and note the uplift will be backdated to April 2024; and**
- 4.4 Committee is asked to note that the standard methodology for setting the sustainable rate for ELC funded hours in future financial years will continue to be based on the Survey (Costs) method as agreed at Full Council on 12 December 2023 (para 11 of the minute refers) while taking account of any further guidance issued by Scottish Government.**

Author of Report: Hazel Sly, Early Years Service Manager  
Background Papers: SPMAN-1315769894-39 / SPMAN-1315769894-346 /  
SPMAN-1315769894-353 / SPMAN-1315769894-360 /  
SPMAN-1315769894-391 / SPMAN-1315769894-422  
SPMAN-1315769894-457  
Ref: SPMAN-1315769894-519 / SPMAN-1315769894-520 /  
SPMAN-1315769894-521



**Survey (Costs) Approach-- using hourly costs data obtained from most recent IPSOS Mori exercise:**

Using the average hourly costs to provide ELC in Moray as detailed in the IPSOS Mori data collection exercise from Feb/Mar 2022 (£4.77), add percentage increases in the Real Living Wage (RLW) on staffing costs (£3.76) plus a percentage increase for inflation on non-staffing associated costs (£1.01) and 8% increase for re-investment. This option is based on suggested method 5.1 Survey (Costs) found in the Funding Follows the Child Guidance for Setting Sustainable Rates.

Year	RLW	RLW percentage increase from previous year	Consumer Price Inflation (CPIH) rate based on figure from October or November of each year*	Re-investment percentage	Average Moray hourly rate from Feb/Mar 2022 IPSOS Mori data for staffing only costs**	RLW percentage increase for staffing costs	Average Moray hourly rate from Feb/Mar 2022 IPSOS Mori Data for non-staffing costs**	Inflation percentage increase for non-staffing costs	Sustainable Rate before re-investment percentage	Total 3-5s Sustainable Rate including re-investment-Survey (Costs) method
2021/22	£9.90	4.2%	4.6%	8%	£3.76	£3.92	£1.01	£1.06	£4.98	£5.38
2022/23	£10.90	10.1%	9.3%	8%	£3.76	£4.32	£1.01	£1.16	£5.48	£5.92
2023/24	£12.00	10.1%	4.7%	8%	£3.76	£4.76	£1.01	£1.21	£5.97	£6.45
2024/25	£12.90	7.5%	4.7%	8%	£3.76	£5.12	£1.01	£1.27	£6.39	£6.90

\* RLW percentages are based on previous year's increase to the RLW and estimated for 2024/25. Inflationary increases are based on CPIH rates from October or November of each financial year and estimated for 2024/25. (CPIH rates obtained from Office for National Statistics)

\*\* Although data was submitted by partner providers in Feb/Mar 2022, information provided would have been based on previous year's costs, so percentage increases have been included from 2021/22 to account for this.

\*\*\* 2 year old rate for 2024/25 is estimated at £8.28 - with option 1 the estimated 2024/25 rate for 3-5s is 4.2% higher than current rate of £6.62 -- a 4.2% increase on current 2's rate of £7.95 would equate to £8.28 with option 1.

**Update to sustainable rate with additional funding from Scottish Government - following 8th March Sustainable Rate Guidance requirements**

**3-5s rate**

Moray's 2024/25 rate for 3-5s determined by survey of costs approach	Additional uplift to meet 7.6% overall uplift to 23/24 rate of £6.62 for 3-5s	Total 2024/25 Sustainable Rate for 3-5s including additional funding from Scottish Government
£6.90	£0.22	£7.12

**2s rate**

Moray's 2024/25 rate for 2s determined by survey of costs approach	Additional uplift to meet 7.6% overall uplift to 23/24 rate of £7.95 for 2s	Total 2024/25 Sustainable Rate for 2s including additional funding from Scottish Government
£8.28	£0.27	£8.55

2024/25 Full Council budget commitment for £6.90/£8.28 uplift based on survey of costs method:	<b>£342,130</b>
Additional estimated costs for further uplift on top of committed budget of £342,130 for 2024/25:	<b>£276,963</b>
Additional funding provided by Scottish Government to meet 7.6% uplift to 23/24 rates:	<b>£284,400</b>





**Sustainable Rate Comparison**

**This comparison accounts for a straight 7.6% uplift to 2023/24 rates assuming current reinvestment percentages would be maintained**

Orange highlighted authorities would exceed the uplift to the average 23/24 rate for 3-5s detailed within the COSLA report January 2024 (point 16) which notes an uplift of 7.6% or 46p for 3-5s rates and 7.6% or 51p for 2s rates to the average rates from 2023/24 of £6.04 and £6.70 - (Orkney has not been included in below averages as they only have partner childminders and no partner nursery settings)

Green highlighted authorities would meet the exact 7.6% or 46p uplift to the average 23/24 3-5s rate

Blue highlighted authorities would **not** meet the 7.6% or 46p uplift to the average 23/24 3-5s rate

Authority	3-5s sustainable rate for 2023/24 financial year	3-5s rate with straight 7.6% uplift for 2024/25 financial year	2s sustainable rate for 2023/24 financial year	2s rate with straight 7.6% uplift for 2024/25 financial year
Argyll & Bute	£6.89	£7.41	£7.79	£8.38
Scottish Borders	£6.83	£7.35	£7.17	£7.71
Moray	£6.62	£7.12	£7.95	£8.55
Fife	£6.52	£7.02	£6.52	£7.02
West Lothian	£6.50	£6.99	£6.50	£6.99
Shetland Islands	£6.49	£6.98	£8.44	£9.08
Aberdeenshire	£6.37	£6.85	£7.72	£8.31
Dumfries and Galloway	£6.30	£6.78	£7.42	£7.98
South Ayrshire	£6.05	£6.51	£6.33	£6.81
East Lothian	£6.04	£6.50	£7.55	£8.12
Edinburgh	£6.03	£6.49	£6.48	£6.97
Midlothian	£6.02	£6.48	£6.50	£6.99
Falkirk	£6.00	£6.46	£6.00	£6.46
Glasgow City	£6.00	£6.46	£7.11	£7.65
Stirling	£6.00	£6.46	£6.51	£7.00
Angus	£5.98	£6.43	£7.68	£8.26
Renfrewshire	£5.97	£6.42	£8.50	£9.15
Clackmannanshire	£5.90	£6.35	£6.41	£6.90
East Dunbartonshire	£5.89	£6.34	£7.09	£7.63
South Lanarkshire	£5.88	£6.33	£6.53	£7.03
East Renfrewshire	£5.87	£6.32	£5.87	£6.32
Inverclyde	£5.87	£6.32	£5.87	£6.32
North Lanarkshire	£5.87	£6.32	£6.14	£6.61
West Dunbartonshire	£5.84	£6.28	£5.84	£6.28
Aberdeen City	£5.83	£6.27	£6.43	£6.92
North Ayrshire	£5.76	£6.20	£5.76	£6.20
Highland	£5.75	£6.19	£6.66	£7.17
Dundee City	£5.59	£6.01	£5.90	£6.35
Perth and Kinross	£5.59	£6.01	£5.79	£6.23
Eilean Siar	£5.55	£5.97	£5.75	£6.19
East Ayrshire	£5.50	£5.92	£5.50	£5.92

Orkney	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	Orkney does not have PVI nurseries (childminders paid £5.50 for 2s and 3-5s in 23/24)
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	2023/24 3-5s average rate	2024/25 3-5s average rate with straight 7.6% uplift	2023/24 2s average rate	2024/25 2s average rate with straight 7.6% uplift
<b>Average rates</b>	£6.04	£6.50	£6.70	£7.21

- \* 21 LAs would not meet a 7.6% or 46p uplift to the average 3-5s 23/24 rate of £6.04
- \* 20 LAs would not meet a 7.6% or 51p uplift to the average 2s 23/24 rate of £6.70
- \* 23 LAs 7.6% straight uplift to **24/25** rates for 2s and 3-5s would be less than Moray's **23/24** rates of £7.95 and £6.62



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**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT: INFORMATION REPORT: EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE  
CORE FUNDING**

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

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) current core funding payment processes for developmental nurseries and the application to developmental nurseries of the council's agreed methodology to determine sustainable rates for ELC including the procedure for applying Real Living Wage (RLW) and inflationary increases to the core funding rate.
- 1.2 To inform the Committee of the in budget uplift to the ELC core funding rate for developmental nurseries.
- 1.3 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the consideration of financial and budgetary policy of the Council.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) has gone through a period of substantial change due to the commitment from the Scottish Government to offer 3-5 year olds 1140 hours of funded childcare.
- 2.2 This increase has seen a shift in the nature of the service which has resulted in some charity partner nurseries (PVI) being unable to apply for as much charitable funding as this would be classed as double funding.
- 2.3 In Moray, a fully inclusive approach to Education is taken and although there are no special schools, there are three developmental nurseries. These services, Ladybird Developmental Nursery in Lossiemouth, Noah's Ark in Forres and Teddy Bear in Cullen, provide developmental services to an average of 20-30 children at a time depending on the intake period.
- 2.4 These three developmental nurseries get paid the same way as other partner nurseries and receive a sustainable rate of £6.90 per child for 3-5s and £8.28

for 2s; however, they also receive a core payment three times a year in line with each intake period for those children receiving developmental services.

- 2.5 The core payment rate since 2017/2018, per child, was £3.50 for 3-5s, £4.00 for 2s and £4.50 for 0-2s. For those children that are funded 2s or 3-5s, this core payment is in addition to the sustainable rate but only for those children receiving developmental services.
- 2.6 As part of the review of the sustainable rate, a survey of costs approach was established as the basis for setting a yearly rate by applying Real Living Wage (RLW) increases to staffing costs and inflationary increases to non-staffing costs.
- 2.7 Following the sustainable rate review, a similar review process has taken place at the service level to assess the core funding rate for developmental services. As part of this core funding review, the following points were identified:
- Although the ELC core funding budget for developmental nurseries was uplifted yearly to account for inflationary increases, the rate being paid for core funding payments has remained the same since 2017/18.
  - Along with a reduction in access to charitable funding, the lack of uplift to the core funding rate has put pressure on the financial sustainability of the nurseries.
  - Payment of the core funding is currently made three times a year, which affects the cash flow of the groups.
  - In order for the core funding rate to be in line with current RLW and inflationary levels, the core funding rate for developmental nurseries should be increased in line with the methods used to increase the ELC sustainable rate.
- 2.8 On reviewing the budget for the core funding, it was identified that sufficient budget is in place to accommodate the required uplifts to meet the RLW and inflationary increases from 2017/18 to the current financial year. This has allowed the operational decision to be made at the service level to uplift the core funding rate to meet these increases.
- 2.9 A breakdown of how the uplifted rates were estimated can be found in **Appendix 1**. This is based on the same principles outlined in the survey of costs approach which is the standard methodology for setting the ELC funded hours sustainable rate from April 2024.
- 2.10 The figures indicated that a 43% overall increase to each rate (3-5s, 2s and 0-2s) should be applied. This uplifted the core funding rates for developmental nurseries as follows:
- 3-5s rate increased from £3.50 to £5.00
  - 2s rate increased from £4.00 to £5.72
  - 0-2s rate increased from £4.50 to £6.44

- 2.11 The core funding rate will be reviewed annually moving forward to ensure it remains in line with the RLW and inflationary increases applied to the ELC sustainable rate.
- 2.12 Furthermore, in order to ease financial pressures for the three developmental services, the payment process will shift from three times yearly to monthly in arrears to follow the same procedure as the ELC sustainable rate payments. Final payments under current arrangements will be made for April – July 2024 with new monthly payment arrangements to be in place from August 2024.

### **3. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The report links to the 'Tackle Poverty and Inequality' priority as referred to in the Moray Council Corporate Plan.

The report links to 'Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray' from the LOIP.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

There are no policy or legal implications arising directly from this report

**(c) Financial implications**

The current budget for core funding payments for developmental nurseries is £61,732. This is sufficient budget to allow for the 43% uplift required to meet RLW and inflationary increases accordingly.

**(d) Risk Implications**

There is a risk that developmental nurseries will struggle to remain financially sustainable. By increasing the core funding rate and making monthly payments instead of three payments yearly, this should help to mitigate the risk.

**(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**

There are no implications arising directly from this report.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

There are no climate change or biodiversity implications arising directly from this report.

**(i) Consultations**

Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Head of Education (Chief Education Officer), Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Chief Financial Officer, Nicky

Gosling, Accountant, and Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer have been consulted.

**4. CONCLUSION**

**4.1 Committee is asked to note the core funding payment processes for developmental nurseries, which is now consistent with the costs approach applied to all ELC providers, including and the procedure for applying Real Living Wage (RLW) and inflationary increases to the core funding rate.**

**4.2 Committee is asked to note the uplift to the ELC core funding rate for developmental nurseries.**

Author of Report: Hazel Sly, Early Years Service Manager  
Background Papers: SPMAN-1315769894-457  
Ref: SPMAN-1315769894-536 / SPMAN-1315769894-537

**Core Funding - Real Living Wage (RLW) and inflationary increases from 2018-2025 for 0-2s, 2s and 3-5s**

<b>Year</b>	<b>RLW (estimated for 2024/25)</b>	<b>RLW percentage increase from previous year (estimated for 2024/25)</b>	<b>Consumer Price Inflation (CPIH) rate based on figure from November of each year (estimated for 2024/25)</b>	<b>0-2s Hourly staffing only based on 7% from current £4.50</b>
2018/19	£9.00	2.9%	2.2%	£3.
2019/20	£9.30	3.3%	1.5%	£3.
2020/21	£9.50	2.2%	0.6%	£3.
2021/22	£9.90	4.2%	4.6%	£3.
2022/23	£10.90	10.1%	9.3%	£4.
2023/24	£12.00	10.1%	4.2%	£4.
2024/25	£12.84	7.0%	3.5%	£4.

<b>Year</b>	<b>RLW (estimated for 2024/25)</b>	<b>RLW percentage increase from previous year (estimated for 2024/25)</b>	<b>Consumer Price Inflation (CPIH) rate based on figure from November of each year (estimated for 2024/25)</b>	<b>2s Hourly staffing only based on 7% from current £4.00</b>
2018/19	£9.00	2.9%	2.2%	£3.
2019/20	£9.30	3.3%	1.5%	£3.
2020/21	£9.50	2.2%	0.6%	£3.
2021/22	£9.90	4.2%	4.6%	£3.
2022/23	£10.90	10.1%	9.3%	£3.
2023/24	£12.00	10.1%	4.2%	£3.
2024/25	£12.84	7.0%	3.5%	£4.

<b>Year</b>	<b>RLW (estimated for 2024/25)</b>	<b>RLW percentage increase from previous year (estimated for 2024/25)</b>	<b>Consumer Price Inflation (CPIH) rate based on figure from November of each year (estimated for 2024/25)</b>	<b>3-5s Hourly staffing only based on 7% from current £3.50</b>
2018/19	£9.00	2.9%	2.2%	£2.
2019/20	£9.30	3.3%	1.5%	£2.
2020/21	£9.50	2.2%	0.6%	£2.
2021/22	£9.90	4.2%	4.6%	£3.
2022/23	£10.90	10.1%	9.3%	£3.
2023/24	£12.00	10.1%	4.2%	£3.
2024/25	£12.84	7.0%	3.5%	£3.

Hourly rate for non-staffing only costs based on 21% split from current rate £4.50	RLW percentage increase for staffing costs 0-2s rate	Inflation percentage increase for non-staffing costs 0-2s rate	0-2s Final rate including RLW and inflationary increases
£3.66	£0.94	£0.96	£4.62
£3.78	£0.96	£0.97	£4.75
£3.86	£0.97	£0.98	£4.84
£4.02	£0.98	£1.03	£5.05
£4.43	£1.03	£1.13	£5.56
£4.88	£1.13	£1.18	£6.06
£5.22	£1.18	£1.22	£6.44

Hourly rate for non-staffing only costs based on 21% split from current rate £4.00	RLW percentage increase for staffing costs 2s rate	Inflation percentage increase for non-staffing costs 2s rate	2s Final rate including RLW and inflationary increases
£3.25	£0.84	£0.86	£4.11
£3.36	£0.86	£0.87	£4.23
£3.43	£0.87	£0.88	£4.31
£3.57	£0.88	£0.92	£4.49
£3.93	£0.92	£1.01	£4.94
£4.33	£1.01	£1.05	£5.38
£4.63	£1.05	£1.09	£5.72

Hourly rate for non-staffing only costs based on 21% split from current rate £3.50	RLW percentage increase for staffing costs 3-5s rate	Inflation percentage increase for non-staffing costs 3-5s rate	3-5s Final rate including RLW and inflationary increases
£2.85	£0.73	£0.75	£3.60
£2.94	£0.75	£0.76	£3.70
£3.00	£0.76	£0.76	£3.76
£3.13	£0.76	£0.79	£3.92
£3.45	£0.79	£0.86	£4.31
£3.80	£0.86	£0.90	£4.70
£4.07	£0.90	£0.93	£5.00