



REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 11 AUGUST 2021

SUBJECT: MORAY EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE - PLAY STRATEGY

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

1. REASON FOR REPORT

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

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the Moray Play Strategy.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Play Strategy, collaboratively written by a short life working group of Early Learning and Childcare practitioners, primary school teachers and school management, is part of a wider toolkit to support a consistent pedagogy for play in Moray.
- 3.2 The foundations of the Play Strategy have been developed due to the National drive highlighting the benefits of play based learning across the Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence.
- 3.3 The initial development was through work with local authority nursery managers, the Continuous Improvement Officers and Education Scotland on Pedagogical Leadership. Observation of practice across Moray by a variety of field officers and colleagues in Care Inspectorate identified a need for a shared and improved pedagogy on play and quality experiences which would offer all of Moray's children a consistent quality of experience. This will support Curriculum for Excellence, improved outcomes and increased attainment

- 3.4 Training on Play and Pedagogy was delivered virtually to Early Years and School colleagues from May to July 2020 followed by a Summer “book group” on appropriate texts to upskill our workforce and improve knowledge and theoretical understanding.
- 3.5 It was established that there was a need for a written document to support the training sessions, hence why the Play Strategy was developed.
- 3.5 The Play Strategy highlights the desire for all of Moray’s children to have equality of experiences. This document includes theoretical knowledge and practical suggestions aimed at ELC and Early Level Curriculum for Excellence school colleagues.
- 3.6 The whole document is attached at (**Appendix 1**) with the main strategy contained in sections 2 and 3. Section 5 provides case studies which also offer further opportunity for professional development for all colleagues across the Early Level and beyond.
- 3.7 The Early Years Teaching team and Continuous Improvement Officers will provide practical support in settings to ensure that the principles of this strategy are delivered. The strategy will be reviewed every 2 years.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

The Early Learning Childcare Delivery Plan is aligned to the priorities within the Corporate Plan and LOIP. In particular Our People: Provide opportunities where young people can achieve their potential to be the best they can be.

(b) Policy and Legal

This report should be read in the context of the Scottish Government national framework “A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland” and Realising the Ambition.

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

(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

There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

The plan is aimed at promoting article 31 of the UNCRC, the right to play, and article 12 of the UNCRC, the right to be heard which is linked to the child-centred approach. Individual elements of the strategy will be assessed prior to implementation a monitoring system will be set up to ensure that the benefits are shared fairly.

(h) Consultations

ELC Service Manager, Senior Officers in Education & Social Care, School Estates Manager, Legal Services Manager, Head of Financial Services, Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer, Paul Connor, Principal Accountant and Equal Opportunities Officer, ELC Continuous Improvement Officer, Early Years Principal Teacher.

5. CONCLUSION

That the Committee notes the contents of this report and approves the Strategy.

Authors of Report: Hazel Sly (Early Years' Service Manager)

Background Papers:

Ref: SPMAN1315769894-118 and
SPMAN1315769894-119