



REPORT TO FORMARTINE AREA COMMITTEE – 27 FEBRUARY 2018

LITERACY STRATEGY

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1.1 Provide comments on the Aberdeenshire Literacy Strategy which will be considered by the Education & Children's Services Committee in March 2018.

2 Background / Discussion

- 2.1 This strategy aims to develop good literacy skills across the whole spectrum of learners, from early years to adult literacy.
- 2.2 The strategy has been developed by a group of officers from across the different services in Education & Children's Services.
- 2.3 The aims of the strategy are to recognise and address the need for support and growth within the wider spectrum of literacies. These literacy needs are often evident in transition stages in the life of individuals, families or communities (change of school or job, health and bereavement, closing of local employers etc).
- 2.4 The Scottish Government has highlighted the importance of literacy to "creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth" This is recognised in the National Performance Framework indicator to "reduce the number of working age people with severe literacy and problems".
- 2.5 Members of the Committee are asked to comment on the strategy and give suggestions on the outcomes.
- 2.6 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

3 Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 The Area Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section B.1.2 of the Scheme of Governance Part 2A – List of Committee Powers to consider, comment on, make recommendations to any other appropriate Committee on any matter or policy which impacts their Area.

4 Implications and Risk

- 4.1 An equality impact assessment is not required because the report is for comment.

- 4.2 Any staffing and financial implications will be contained in the revenue budget of Education & Children's Services.
- 4.3 No risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level. At a Directorate Level failure to implement the strategy could mean staff inadequately supported to deliver literacy.

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Report prepared by Maria Walker
26 January 2018



From mountain to sea

Aberdeenshire Literacy Strategy

Introduction & Purpose

The Scottish Government has highlighted the importance of literacy to “creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth” This is recognised in the National Performance Framework indicator to “reduce the number of working age people with severe literacy and problems”.

The National Improvement Framework highlights literacy as the foundation of a successful school system.

Aberdeenshire Strategy

What Do We Mean By Literacy?

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) views literacy as a fundamental human right, also stating that:

‘Literacy is about more than reading and writing - it is about how we communicate in society.

Literacy is defined in Curriculum for Excellence as “ the set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society and learning, through the different forms of language, and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful” (Curriculum for Excellence, Literacy and English, Principles and Practice 2009).

The draft strategy embraces a broad view of literacy. This literacy strategy acknowledges that to achieve desired national outcomes and indicators raising literacy and attainment for all, there is an essential requirement to recognise and address the need for support and growth within the wider spectrum of literacies. These literacy needs are often evident in transition stages in the life of individuals, families or communities (change of school or job, health and bereavement, closing of local employers etc).

For individuals, families and communities to be fully equipped to realise their potential, raise expectations, improve life chances and be successful, the development of emotional, digital, information and cultural literacy skills and critical capacity is as necessary as having strong basic communication skills (reading /writing/listening/speaking).

The Context of Literacy and Changes Needed in Aberdeenshire

Competence in literacy is integral to effective learning in all areas and from birth into adulthood where learning is lifelong, life-wide and learner centred.

“Literacy and numeracy affect people’s lives. Strong literacies skills help people fulfil their potential, achieve their goals, and take advantage of opportunities. When individuals do well, so do their families, communities and employers.” (Aberdeenshire Library and Information Service (ALIS 2020)).

The key findings of The Scottish Survey of Adult Literacies 2009 (SSAL 2009) quantifies the likely levels of literacy learning needs in Aberdeenshire as:

- Around one quarter of the population (26.7%) may face occasional challenges and constrained opportunities due to their literacies difficulties, but will generally cope with their day-to-day lives.
Based on these figures this may impact 69,420 people in Aberdeenshire.
- Within this quarter of the population, 3.6% (one person in 28) may face serious challenges in their literacies practices.
Based on these figures this may impact 9,300 people in Aberdeenshire.
- Scottish Surveys of Adult Literacy (SSAL) 2009 identifies that one of the key factors linked to lower literacies capabilities is poverty, with adults living in the 15% of the most deprived areas in Scotland being more likely to have literacies capabilities at the lower end of the scale.

The ‘Closing the Attainment Gap in Scottish Education’ report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2014) identifies that:

- The gap between children from low-income and high-income households starts early. By age 5, there is gap of 13 months in vocabulary between children from higher-income households and those from low income households.
- Results from the Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy show an attainment gap of 18% for reading and 10% for writing from primary through to secondary school.

Given the recognised scale of need and importance of literacy for key aspects of individual and community life, it is challenging to identify gaps and find solutions for improving access to support key life skills where they limit the achievement and progression of individuals and communities. This is why the strategy should be developed through partnership and joint endeavour, involving the voice of learners, their families, those delivering literacy learning and those engaged with potential learners. Developing partnerships such as the Early Years Forums, provides effective vehicles for engaging with a wide range of stakeholders who can mutually benefit from shared knowledge, experiences and resources to enhance support for our learners.

In addition, it is important that these challenges and barriers to learning are identified and addressed at an early stage, before they develop into more deep-rooted issues. The Northern Alliance Raising Attainment in Literacy, Language and Communication partnership is one which exemplifies a focus on Early Intervention through supporting our youngest learners to develop those key foundation literacy skills which are necessary for successful future learning.

In seeking to establish a stronger partnership approach alongside a focus on early intervention approaches, we can improve the life chances of those affected and enable them to have the literacy capabilities necessary to bridge the poverty gap, to understand and shape the world they live in, and to enjoy the rich knowledge and benefits that being literate can bring.

Aberdeenshire Strategy:

Aims of this Strategy:

1. Develop a partnership approach to improve the literacy skills and learning outcomes of learners in Aberdeenshire.
2. Strengthen the leadership capacity of literacy learning providers.
3. Improve the professional knowledge and skills in delivery of literacy.
4. Enhance the use of data and systems to plan for, monitor and report on the performance of Adult and Children's Services.
5. Encourage and support communities to engage with literacy and the learning journey.

Outcomes of this Strategy:

The strategy will achieve the following outcomes:

- Communities and individuals have easy access to literacy learning opportunities.
- Learners receive high quality learning and teaching to support them to achieve their goals.
- A coherent and effective literacy learning infrastructure, including all stakeholders but particularly learners.
- Utilising the data available to maximise and improve the ongoing literacy provision.

How we will Achieve the Outcomes?

- Improve the levels of literacy in Aberdeenshire by providing a sufficient number of learning hours and activities in a range of learning opportunities in which to engage; from one to one, cluster and learning groups, volunteering self-study support and family learning.
- Priority will be given to learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and learners in the early years.
- Continue to improve providers' professional knowledge and skills in teaching literacy. Improve methods of teaching and use a range of accessible, high quality resources.
- Support learners to develop effective learning skills.
- Empower individuals, families and communities to be active contributors to meeting literacy needs, ensuring learners improve their life chances and have the opportunity to participate in the literacy partnership.

Literacy & Life – How will we do this?

When a child reaches their third birthday our children are entitled to statutory early learning and childcare in line with the Scottish Government's recommendations. Early years settings will deliver an early years curriculum as defined within the Curriculum for Excellence framework.

When a child starts primary school they will receive an education which continues to place a high focus on the development of literacy skills within a literacy rich environment, following the guidance set out within Curriculum for Excellence. Quality learning and teaching will be at the core of everyday practice to ensure that all children are fully involved and supported in their learning, thereby maximising progress and attainment, as well as working towards closing the literacy gap that impedes the life chances of too many of our young people.

The latest Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy 2016 (Literacy), showed 64% of pupils achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence third level (P5 to P7) levels in reading in Aberdeenshire, with 55% achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence Second level (P5 to P7) levels in writing.

Education Scotland collect data on the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels for literacy nationally, and at local authority level at the end of P1, P4, P7 in primary schools and at the end of S3 in secondary schools. This is based on teacher judgement and standardised assessment and provides local and national data on how children and young people are progressing with their learning in schools.

The end of S3 in secondary schools is the stage when the Broad General Education phase ends and young people move to the Senior Phase and National Qualification. Literacy skills continue to be important in the Senior Phase and attainment in literacy is specifically measured through Insight.

Young people in the Senior Phase face key transitions in their lives

- Entering Early Adulthood.
- Further education.
- Work.
- Independent Living.

Typical challenges faced by this age group are:

- Support with life choices. Skills, confidence and ability to navigate the “adult world“.
- Understanding and accessing further & higher education and employment.
- Need for information and guidance on health matters (including sexual and emotional health) and finance.

The latest Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy 2016 (Literacy), showed 46% of pupils achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence third level (S1 to S3) levels in reading in Aberdeenshire, with 45% achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence third level (S1 to S3) levels in writing.

Provision of support for literacy should be based on the concept of equity of outcomes, not inputs. Where appropriate, those with additional needs should be offered appropriate learning support, at any age. Partners working together should support families and learners to overcome any barriers to learning to enable individuals to reach their potential. Provision of support needs to take into account emotional well-being of individuals, their families and communities. Working in partnership we will:

- Ensure provision is flexible and aware of wide range of needs that dyslexia, dyspraxia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), autism etc. can present, seeking the most suitable option, tailored for the best individual outcome.
- Provide family learning which will support parents and carers to develop knowledge and skills to support individual learners.
- Provide suitable training to staff who support individuals, families and communities with additional learning needs in order to provide highest quality provision.

Family Engagement & Family Learning

For Parents and their children it is vital to recognise and support the influence parents have in developing literacy skills.

If we view every day as a learning day, we need to encourage and advise how parents can support their child's development by working with formal and informal establishments to support learning.

To achieve that we need to:

- Ensure parents, practitioners and staff have a more informed understanding of their children and the models, mechanisms, and services that can help narrow the attainment gap amongst Scottish children and young people, particularly disadvantaged.
- Reflect Aberdeenshire Councils Early Years Parenting Strategy, GIRFEC, Read, Write, Count, Bookbug, Summer Reading Challenge and Every Child a Library Member to promote the importance of early learning and developing literacy skills.
- Work with our partners to provide quality information for parents in terms of what we mean by Literacy, the skills associated and develop support materials to give ideas and suggested activities to develop those skills at home from 0- 18.
- Review our current approaches to tracking, monitoring and reporting to ensure parents are receiving the appropriate information to inform and identify progress in literacy, recognise achievements, however small these may be, and to raise aspirations for each individual child.
- Seize the opportunities to regularly engage with parents which may lead to recognising specific challenges within families with their own literacy learning. This could facilitate closer working with partners and other council services. It is also important to note that parental engagement is not confined to the visible presence and actions of parents and family within the physical space of schools; families may find direct engagement with schools difficult, however they still participate extensively in their children's learning at home, in an informal learning setting and in the community. Therefore we need to communicate and work together to ensure needs are met.
- Establish clear procedures for communicating with parents and carers to involve them in setting targets and Individualised Learning Plans (ILPs), and reviewing their child's progress. We should monitor if families understand and are satisfied with the advice and support given.
- Encourage schools and community centres to adapt the strategies and interventions included in this resource to the needs of their own community, school, pupils, and parents and carers. There is no singular model or programme of family engagement guaranteed to narrow the achievement gap and increase the involvement of all children's parents. (<http://engagingwithfamilies.co.uk/evidence>).
- Make arrangements for the support of children not in school to ensure continuity of their literacy learning.

It is essential that all partners involved encourage continued regular positive relationships between the young person and the educational establishment, as well as family engagement, support and clear communication channels to ease the transition of the child and their family to re-engage with learning.

Family learning programmes are those which "... aim to encourage family members to learn together. They are learning as or within a family. They should include opportunities for intergenerational learning and, wherever possible, lead both adults and children to pursue further learning." (Family Learning within the Early Years Framework - HMle).

Research shows that the family unit and its skills and attitude towards learning has a major impact on the engagement of the child in learning, and the development of the child's literacy skills. The impact of parental basic skills on children's cognitive skills is larger for low educated parents. The recent How Good Is Our School 4 Framework has included a specific Family Learning Quality Indicator, reflecting its important role in supporting learning.

Family literacy learning focuses both on the development of parents/carers knowledge and skills to support the literacy learning of the child, and also on the development of the child's literacy skills through intergenerational learning activities.

Activities can take place with families with children at a broad range of ages and stages. They are supported by a range of services within Education and Children's Services and can be delivered as partnership work with other agencies and the third sector with emphasis being placed on prevention and early intervention. Work in partnership with schools, both primary and secondary will be developed to increase the level of engagement with parents/carers, support their involvement in their children's literacy learning, and will strengthen the literacy skills and knowledge of parents/carers to help them make that contribution.

This may involve parents/carers learning about the role they can play in supporting their children's learning in general, the methodologies and timing of literacy learning at school, or learning how to create a supportive learning environment at home.

Impact of Family Learning Programmes:

- Improved parental literacy skills enable them to support children's learning.
- Knowledge gained changes attitudes towards learning and culture towards more self-directed learning and self-realisation.
- Raising confidence and self-esteem through better literacy increases proactive community engagement in families, making most of the local opportunities and contributing to development of new ones.
- School-based and community/work-based learning and development provides a range of flexible opportunities to suit any family learning needs.

Adults

Literacy challenges often emerge at times of transitions for adults. These transitions can be in relation to personal, work, community or family contexts. These transitions can include entering the workplace for the first time, improving prospects in work, responding to changes in or loss of employment, becoming a (young) parent, becoming a carer for a child or children, where children progress through school and seek assistance from parents/carers, or in response to barriers presented to engaging more in community life. These include an agreed strategic direction, targeting of provision where most needed, and ensuring there is a skilled workforce to deliver learning opportunities and measuring impact and success.

The development of this literacy strategy is informed by raised awareness of the social practice and situational models which emphasise the broader understanding of literacies as literacies being 'situated' within a learner's life, i.e. employment and / or family life / family learning to support learning in schools, or community activities. This would reflect best practice, and is an important aspect of the shift in the "culture" of thinking about enhancing individual and community literacy through this literacy strategy.

The ALIS 2020 strategy advocates that local authority and voluntary sector providers of adult literacies offer free support based on a 'social practice model', namely provision that is learner-centred, flexible and often delivered in partnership to secure the most appropriate progression pathways for learners. In Aberdeenshire ("Positive Transitions") partners have agreed that situational, social practice model is embedded in everyday delivery and practice.

Through the joint endeavour of parents, learning deliverers and those engaged with potential learners, partners understanding of the methods and value of engaging with or referring potential learners identified in these transitions should be developed as should their knowledge of the range

of opportunities available to potential learners to develop their literacy skills appropriate to their need and context.

The Adult Literacies In Scotland 2020 Strategic Guidance focuses on the 4 overarching outcomes of:

- Scotland's adults have access to literacies learning opportunities in which they can achieve their goals and progress.
- Adult literacies learners receive high quality learning and teaching so they can achieve their goals.
- Scotland has a coherent and effective adult literacies infrastructure that enables and supports continuous enhancement of provision.
- There is evidence of the impacts and the value of literacies learning for individuals and society.

Workplace Literacy

The Scottish Survey of Adult Literacies 2009 showed that those with lower literacy skills had much less involvement in adult education and training, while at work, than those with higher literacy skills. The findings show that these factors may prevent them from fully engaging in aspects of their work, so workplaces are key sites for engaging adults in literacies learning.

Promoting workplace literacy is part of the Government's aim of engaging employers and employees in literacies learning in the workplace set out in the Government's lifelong learning skills strategy – *Skills for Scotland* (Scottish Government, 2007). Aberdeenshire's literacy strategy will recognise the importance of working in partnership to improve workplace literacy.

The partnership and joint endeavour of a literacy strategy for Aberdeenshire should therefore include as a priority, the active involvement of employers. As key local employers, partners will prioritise the assessment of need for and appropriate development of workplace literacy learning opportunities within their own organisation.

"The workplace is an excellent location in which to impart skills and knowledge [and also that] literacies learning [should be] embedded in all workplace training programmes."

(Scottish Government, 2007:32)

Accreditation, Evaluation and Quality

Accreditation for literacy and core skills learning should be encouraged. For many or perhaps for most, the important aspect of literacy learning is the empowerment of the learner, opening opportunities to progress in life and support families and communities. For many learners however, accreditation of literacy learning may be the first external endorsement of their journey in realising their learning potential and their first qualification. This may add positive value and reinforce learner's confidence and self-esteem and other impacts of literacy achievements. It may also be helpful where the learner wishes to progress to further or higher education, or seek employment.

Aim 1: Develop a partnership approach to improve the literacy skills and learning outcomes of learners in Aberdeenshire

Aberdeenshire Council will facilitate the development, through partnership and joint endeavour, of a literacy strategy for Aberdeenshire. In recognition of the contemporary broad view of literacy, a partnership involving learners, home, schools, tertiary sector, libraries, third sector, workplaces, health and well-being agencies and the community will be developed to improve delivery and engagement of learners in Aberdeenshire, building on the strengths of all. Joint endeavour to develop this literacy strategy will create partnership, engage with wide range of stakeholders in these environments to coordinate contributions to achieving improvements in literacy, and improve learner engagement strategy/referral.

Aim 2: Strengthen the Leadership Capacity of the Broad Range of Literacy Learning Providers

Aberdeenshire Council will work with partners to embrace the developing and inclusive definition of literacy and champion the improvement of literacy capacity from childhood into adulthood.

The strategy will recognise the contribution that council services and partners, including families and the communities, can make to build a positive culture, building high expectations of literacy learning. To help build on this partners will further align highly effective learning practices with resource allocation.

Positive leadership from Aberdeenshire Council, Education, Cultural Services, Community Learning and Development (CLD) and Aberdeenshire Learning Communities Partnership will guide teaching and learning practice and make informed decisions about the allocation of resources to support literacy learning/achievement both within formal and informal learning establishments and explore opportunities to pilot workplace literacy initiatives within their organisations.

Effective responses to literacy challenges have resulted in a number of initiatives being taken locally, nationally and internationally. As the understanding of what constitutes “literacy” has broadened beyond functional reading and writing, the key stakeholders identified as potential contributors to efforts to improve literacy levels has also become more inclusive. The creation of a society in which literacy is strengthened has been recognised as a shared responsibility, which values the importance of partnerships between the home, the school, tertiary, libraries, third sector, workplaces and the community.

This broader understanding of literacy includes emotional literacy as a skill which is important as it supports an individual to tackle personal issues that may be hindering self-belief, commitment and motivation to develop other skills they need and want. Emotional literacies are a prerequisite to laying good foundations to self-determination and successful learning of any other skills that follow, unlocking individual potential.

Developing resilience and a growth mind-set are also elements of a modern understanding of literacy for which support will be developed within for example Activity Agreement activity.

Practical ways will be identified to support the inclusion of those who are not digital natives to develop digital literacy which will enable them to participate in a digital world on a more equal basis.

Aim 3: Improve the Professional Knowledge and Skills in Delivering Literacy

To realise the aims and aspirations of this literacy strategy, a focus on developing the professional knowledge, skills and capacity and to use research-based practices to improve the delivery of

literacy is critical, to strengthen the infrastructure and partnerships needed to deliver high quality, essential learning opportunities.

Through the audit of existing tutors and staff (paid, contracted, sessional and voluntary) delivering literacy partners should will determine the gap between existing skills and knowledge and that which is agreed as the required baseline level. Partners will work to bridge any gap through a programme of Continuous Professional Development (CPD), learning and practice sharing, to build a strong and competent infrastructure to deliver on the aims and aspirations of the literacy strategy.

Appropriate CPD opportunities should be developed to ensure a baseline of knowledge and expertise is built into the Lifelong Learning staff and volunteers practice. All staff will be confident and competent to deliver a range of literacy learning opportunities to meet learners need. Staff will be confident in the ways of identifying learning needs of our learners as well as their own practice development needs. Staff will be competent and confident in using reporting and recording systems to provide reliable data to management. CPD opportunities for all Aberdeenshire staff delivering literacy learning will cover a wide range of literacy areas (Dyslexia and other Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Core Skills, Confidence & Anxiety, group work etc.), and will be delivered using appropriate opportunities such as sharing good practice, research, workshops, seminars and online learning modules, etc.

Staff will be confident and competent to give advice and guidance with regards to addressing barriers to progression. Positive impact of quality delivery needs to be obvious to learners and can be evaluated for identifying any further needs or progression opportunities.

All staff in schools have a responsibility to develop their professional knowledge, skills and practice to support literacy through the requirements of registration as teachers with the General Teaching Council for Scotland. Since the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence in Scotland, all staff, whether involved in formal or informal learning have also been directly responsible for improving the literacy skills of young people irrespective of the establishment.

Robust systems need to be in place for the evaluation of both the learning provided and the impact upon the learner in order for the information to be recorded and communicated to the necessary partners. It is critical all staff are skilled in reflection, evaluation and recording to ensure impact is recognised by all.

Partners will aim to provide learning sessions of the highest quality that will have the greatest impact on the learning outcomes, accreditation and learning experience overall. This includes high quality of teaching, tuition, learning support and well as access to resources and technology that's needed to support that learning (eg. Wi Fi, electronic books etc.).

Decisions will be made to establish the preferred levels of qualification for delivery, guidance and quality assurance for literacy. Therefore the relevance and appropriateness of: TQual, Professional graduate Diploma in Education (Adult Literacy) level 10, Diploma in Higher education (Adult Learning) SCQF Level 8 should be explored for their appropriateness.

Aim 4: Enhance the Use of Data

Challenging targets should be set by partners in action plans for engagement and improvement in literacy which take account of the indicators of need in e.g. ALIS 2020, Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results, SSLN 2014 etc. and to recognise that literacy is key to whole achievement.

Local partners will be supported and encouraged to ensure that literacy outcomes are appropriately embedded in locality plans. All partners will be encouraged and supported to

consider these literacy outcomes and incorporate relevant actions within their own organisations action plans. The data should provide robust information on need and point towards groups we need to prioritise working with, such as looked after children, traveling community members, ESOL and Gaelic/Scots speakers, ex-prisoners.

Data collected and used to improve services and learning outcomes should be specific to the needs of the learners. Where learning is undertaken by parents/carers, which is intended to support the learning of children and young people there should be a recognition of the learning outcomes achieved by the adult and those which are then enabled for the child/young person.

Against the background of the potential numbers of adults who make up the 3.6 percent of those facing major challenges to everyday life due to their levels of literacy, the information management systems of Aberdeenshire Council and its partners should enable the engagement of that community of interest and the learning outcomes achieved to be reported. The use of data within early years and school settings should facilitate the identification of children and young people who would benefit from enhanced intervention to assist achievement of literacy learning outcomes. This data should inform improvement actions and resource allocation.

Robust systems need to be in place for the evaluation of impact, and the communication of that information to the learner, to recording systems and across partners. It is critical all staff are skilled in reflection, evaluation and recording to ensure impact is recognised by all.

To assist in partners evaluating impact, shared/agreed measures for evaluating learning progress and impact should be developed/agreed by partners (mechanism?) and adopted through reporting/management information system.

Aim 5: The Learner Journey – Encourage and Support Communities in Literacy

The potential for culture change, needs to be at the heart of Aberdeenshire's focus on building strong, resilient and active communities. A strong focus should be on the development of a culture where the benefits of high level literacy skills for individuals, families and communities are celebrated, and the development of any of the broad range of literacies is valued in terms of how they enhance individual and community life. A culture where activity to strengthen any type of literacy is not stigmatised but celebrated as a contribution to the strengthening of individuals and communities.

This culture change requires to be led by Aberdeenshire Council, in joint endeavour with its partners, those responsible for the delivery of its learning opportunities and those engaged with those whose life chances may be improved by literacy learning in determining and delivering on the priorities for learning and development in Aberdeenshire. By having an approach which embeds changing cultures towards literacy provision, we can positively engage individuals and communities in a collective activity to strengthen the capacity of individuals, families and communities in Aberdeenshire, to aspire to be the best we can be. In this way we build on the Christie Commission and its key message to change the design, targeting and delivery of services to tackle the deep rooted problems of literacy.

Ages 0-18

Early language development begins in the first 3 years of life. The important role of early literacy experience in helping ensure that a child has all the building blocks for language, reading, and writing development is understood. Children's earliest experiences with literacy materials such as books, paper, and crayons, and with talking with the adults in their lives are vital.

Appendix 1

Looking Outward: Good Practice Examples

Early Years

Blokes on Board: In a National Literacy Trust survey, only a quarter of 8000 children questioned reported seeing their father reading. In a UK study, 40% of fathers said that their partners read more with their children than they did; 37% claimed that they and their partners read to their children about the same amount. The presence and engagement of fathers is positively associated with children's intellectual development, social competence, and emotional well-being (Clark 2009; Geddes 2008). A lack of recognition of their significance and of effort to include them in their children's education, both at school and at home, can have negative implications for children's learning, mental, and emotional well-being (Clark 2009; Tan and Goldberg 2009; Geddes 2008). However, there is little equivalent evidence for the involvement of mothers and it is hard to isolate the impact of fathers' involvement from parental involvement more generally. <https://www.slideshare.net/RodieGarlandRodieAke/getting-the-blokes-on-board>

Literacy Apps: In an increasingly digital world, there are available a number of apps to support and encourage literacy development. These do not require high levels of ICT or literacy skills on the part of the parent/carer to explore with their children. <http://literacyapps.literacytrust.org.uk/>

Bookbug Programme: This is a national programme to encourage early book sharing and parent/child bonding delivered by Scottish Book Trust. Aberdeenshire Libraries coordinate the Bookbug programme locally, working with health visitors, early years professionals, and parents to ensure all children receive their free Bookbug Baby, Toddler, Explorer and P1 bags of books. <http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/bookbug-bags>

Bookbug's Library Challenge: Part of the Bookbug programme, this library joining initiative is open to children from birth to age 4, to encourage reading together at home. In Aberdeenshire, it runs from the beginning of January to the end of April each year. Children receive their own Collectors Card which is stamped every visit to the library. When completed the children choose from a selection of certificates, and can start another Collectors Card. A prize book is awarded to the child with the most certificates in each library. <http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/bookbug-sessions/library-challenge>

Bookbug Sessions/ Rhymetimes: These story, song and rhyme sessions are delivered in libraries and other community venues across Aberdeenshire. The number of parents/carers and children from birth to 4, has risen steadily since these were introduced. These sessions are not only fun and free of charge, but are also an opportunity for parent and child bonding, social interaction for adults and children alike, and aim to encourage parents to continue to sing, say rhymes and read books to their children at home, to increase literacy and numeracy skills. <http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/bookbug-sessions/bookbug-session-songs-rhymes>

Bookbug Session Leader training: Library staff and partner organisations are able to access this training locally to enable them to run their own sessions, and to pass on key messages to parents. <http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/working-with-bookbug/bookbug-training>

Bookbug for the Home training: Health, social work, and third sector staff working with vulnerable families are able to access free training delivered by Scottish Book Trust locally, through the Assertive Outreach Programme.

<http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/working-with-bookbug/bookbug-outreach>

Family Learning/Parental Involvement

Letterbox: Aberdeenshire Libraries subscribes to Book Trust's Letterbox Programme annually. Looked after children aged 7 and 9 years old receive packs of books and maths games, over a 6 month period. These resources are theirs to keep, and sent directly to the address they live at. Social Work staff and a small number of library staff are involved in administering the programme and they are currently working on evaluating the impact locally, both in raising the children's self-esteem and their literacy and numeracy skills. <http://www.letterboxclub.org.uk/>

Big Blue Bus Project: The Big Blue Bus Project operates over the summer months in North Aberdeenshire. Lead by Community Learning and Development, a multi-agency group uses educational tools, sport activities and storytelling for engaging with Gypsy/ Traveller children and adults on unauthorised encampments as well as those on residential permanent sites.

Read Write Count: This Scottish Government initiative, introduced in 2016, aims to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy in early stages primary school children. Bags of books and numeracy resources were gifted to P2 and P3 children across Scotland in November 2016. This initiative follows on from the Bookbug Family bag received by P1 children annually, which now also contains numeracy materials as well as books. Aberdeenshire Libraries were awarded funding to spend on books and display resources for libraries in areas of deprivation, and also paid for author visits to these libraries.

2017 sees the Future Me campaign being promoted to young families supported by library activities, which will also take place at various points in the year. <http://www.readwritecount.scot/>

First Minister's Reading Challenge: Nicola Sturgeon has launched this campaign to encourage children to read for pleasure, explore the world of print while broadening their horizons. This, coupled with other national literacy initiatives, aims to increase children's literacy levels, too. Aberdeenshire Libraries is currently rolling out this initiative locally.

<https://www.readingchallenge.scot/about/first-ministers-reading-challenge>

Summer Reading Challenge: Aberdeenshire Libraries runs a Summer Reading Challenge across the school summer holiday period each year. Supported by sponsorship in past years, the Challenge has had inspirational themes and has attracted many children to read and collect small incentive prizes along the way. The Challenge is usually launched in June and promoted through primary schools in advance of the summer holidays. A prize giving event is always well attended by prize winners and their families, many of whom comment on the positive impact of the SRC on their children's reading habits. <https://onceuponashire.wordpress.com/tag/summer-reading-challenge/>

The Three Read Approach: Is an approach to nurture early reading skills and support interactions between adult and child. Adults assist children to engage in conversation, develop awareness and concept of print, realise the print is meaningful, and understand the mechanics of reading (left to right).

<http://www.cldms.org.uk/case-studies/getting-parents-involved-in-childrens-learning>

Early Words Together: Is a parental engagement and language development programme. Practitioners receive training and resources to help parents support their children's language development and school readiness. The programme is designed to benefit children aged two to five. http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/early_words_together

FAST: Supports families by helping children improve their skills in reading, writing and maths – as well as encouraging good behaviour and a positive attitude to school and learning; helping parents get more involved in their child's education, so they can support learning and development at home; encouraging stronger bonds between parents and their child, their child's school, other parents and the wider community
<http://www.familiesandschoolstogether.com/content/about-fast>

Learn with Fred/Dundee: This programme was to give parents and carers an understanding of how children develop and learn and to highlight the important role of parents as the first and primary educator of their child by showing how everyday interactions and activities can be a learning opportunity, by building parents' and carers' confidence, ability and skills to develop the home to support their child's early literacy skills, and by providing information to support and develop their child's early literacy skills.

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/getting-involved/sharing-ideas/Learn%20with%20Fred%20-%20Dundee%20family%20literacies%20project>

Bellshill Academy developed an improvement activity which involved testing an approach to engage students, teachers and parents in working together to produce a weekly Pupil Progress Plan to support the individual needs of students while encouraging parental engagement and involvement.

<http://engagingwithfamilies.co.uk/ideas/learning-at-home/bellshill-academy-pupil-progress-plan/>

Falkirk Council have developed their 'Learning to Achieve' policy to support learners in the community. Part of this strategy includes interactive literacy and numeracy workshops where parents are given practical suggestions for how they can support their child's learning at home.

<https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/school-life/school-curriculum/docs/school-curriculum/Learning%20to%20Achieve.pdf?v=201508200915>

The PEEP Learning Together programme helps parents to support their babies' and children's language, reading, writing, numeracy and sense of self. It helps to build children's and parents' self-esteem and instill positive attitudes towards learning. The aim is to offer ideas, information and experiences that enable parents to make the most of everyday learning opportunities at home.

<http://www.cldms.org.uk/case-studies/getting-parents-involved-in-childrens-learning>

Education Scotland has developed a toolkit to provide practitioners with a practical resource to help support partnerships with parents and families in all aspects of their children's learning. Practitioners can use the toolkit to help them achieve and sustain high levels of parental involvement and meaningful engagement within their learning settings.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/par2-section1-Feb17.pdf>

Ladybird Nursery in Fife are taking forward successful approaches to support parents to be involved in their child's literacy learning. Head Teacher, Stewart Westwater and staff explain some recent developments to family literacy learning, including how they use digital technologies for home-school partnerships.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/practice-exemplars/How%20staff%20involve%20parents%20in%20their%20children's%20learning%20-%20Ladybird%20Nursery%20School>

Focus Schools in Inverclyde developed a partnership with Barnardo's to design and implement bespoke family learning opportunities, reflective of local context. This work has seen increased numbers of families engaging and confidently supporting their children's learning.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/sac62-aileymill-family-learning.pdf>

Discover Your Child is amazing family literacy learning project in Dundee aimed to provide families with additional support to address barriers and improve life chances. It built the capacity of the parents and carers as the key early educators, strengthening their own literacy skills and helping them to develop critical awareness of their central role in their child's early development and learning. It aimed to test out a new way of working, using data which indicated the likelihood of potential literacies needs down to a street level and offering everyone in those areas, with a child aged 0-3 years, the chance to take part.

<http://www.discoverlearning.org/sites/default/files/hotspoteval.pdf>

Children/Young People

Primary Democracy: In Orkney an election of a P6 pupil to the role of Junior Head Teacher of Stromness Primary School handed some serious responsibility to the pupil. He was selected by fellow pupils following a hotly contested election, which ran as part of the class project on Local and National Government. There was a depth of learning involved in this topic which included literacy and numeracy skills through presentations, listening to the voters and calculating how much to spend on their election campaigns.

<http://www.orkney.gov.uk/OIC-News/Stromness-primary-pupils-put-Daniel-in-powerful-pupil-position.htm>

Grampian Children's Book Award: Aimed at children aged 12-14 years, this Book Award encouraged teenagers to read the shortlisted titles and vote for their favourites. Schools across Moray, Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire take part and school librarians are key to encouraging young folk to participate. The Awards Ceremony is rotated round each local authority to ensure all children have the opportunity to attend. Authors are invited along to read from their work and take part in a question and answer session with their audience.

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/libraries/young/grampian-childrens-book-award/>

Reading the Game: This twelve week project ran as a 2.5 hour session each week. Each session was divided into two parts. The first part of the session involved literacy activities centred on football (1 hour). The second part, run by a football coach from the S.F.A. involved developing skills on the pitch. Young people could not sign up to the project unless they took part in both halves. http://www.glasgowlearning.org.uk/literaciesandsport/reading_game

Premier League Primary Stars: Having a player talk to you about why they love reading will be incredibly inspiring and motivating for a football-loving reluctant reader.

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/programmes/sport-and-literacy/>

CLDMS Case Study: Young people overcoming barriers: <http://www.cldms.org.uk/case-studies/young-people-overcoming-barriers>

Raising Attainment: This practice exemplar describes a targeted intervention in literacy in St Andrew's Primary School in Inverclyde focused on raising attainment and closing the gap in upper primary school. It has been developed through the Scottish Attainment Challenge.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/sac54-st-andrews-ps-literacy-toolbox.pdf>

The Lighthouse Keeper Joint Transition Project in Edinburgh was a partnership project with the aim of raising attainment by engaging families which highlighted creative approaches to engage parents and carers in their child's learning.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/practice-exemplars/The%20Lighthouse%20Keeper%20Joint%20Transition%20Project>

What Works: Where children have not learned to read and write satisfactorily first time through, intervention schemes have been devised to help struggling readers and writers. This report is intended to inform schools' and other providers' choices among such schemes.

<http://www.interventionsforliteracy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/What-Works-5th-edition-Rev-Oct-2016.pdf>