

ITEM No ...4...

REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE – 28 JANUARY 2019

REPORT ON: ASPIRE DUNDEE – PROGRESS UPDATE JANUARY 2019

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 42-2019

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Children and Families Services Committee with an update of the ASPIRE Dundee Programme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Committee members are asked to:
- i. note the content of this report; and
 - ii. instruct the Executive Director of Children and Families Service to include updates on the ASPIRE programme through Scottish Attainment Challenge Updates.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The ASPIRE Dundee Project is funded by a contribution from the Scottish Attainment Challenge of £271,000 and £20,000 from Creative Scotland in financial year 2018-19.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

- 4.1 The ASPIRE Dundee Project was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 24 June 2013, (Article X of the Minute of Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee of 24 June 2013, Report No 297-2013 refers). The ASPIRE project is part of the Attainment Challenge in Dundee. The project uses music, drama and dance to raise the ambitions and aspirations of primary and early years children in some of our most deprived areas within the city. The ASPIRE project is being delivered by professional musicians, dancers and drama artists to around 2,950 pupils across 13 primary schools and 4 early years establishments. The project commenced in October 2014 with almost all of the initial funding being provided by external agencies such as Creative Scotland, Legacy 2014, Early Years Change Fund and the Scottish Government. A four year evaluation by the University of Dundee was completed in 2018

This year's official launch of the Dundee Year of Young People featured 450 performers from ASPIRE Dundee schools in an eclectic performance of music, dance and drama in the City Square in March

- 4.2 Schools involved in the ASPIRE Dundee Project are:

School Community	Art Form
St Francis RC Primary	Drama
Longhaugh Primary	Drama
Quarry View Nursery	Drama
Camperdown Primary	Music
St Clement's RC Primary	Music
Sidlaw View Primary	Music
Rosebank Primary	Music
Ardler Primary	Music
Dens Road Primary	Music

Claypotts Castle Primary	Dance
Claypotts Castle Early Years Centre	Dance
St Pius RC Primary	Dance
St Pius RC Nursery	Dance
Rowantree Primary	Dance
Rowantree Early Years Centre	Dance
Quarry View Nursery	Dance

- 4.3 The original criteria used for selecting the schools and early years establishments included, statistical data and analysis derived from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and data held by Dundee City Council. In addition, consideration was given to ongoing community interventions, community assets, free schools meals, clothing grants, attendance and exclusion rates.
- 4.4 ASPIRE Dundee is underpinned by a belief that issues of attainment, achievement and lack of aspiration facing local communities, children and families should be addressed at local level through a multi-partnership approach. It is a collaborative local partnership programme to help address large scale inequalities in Dundee. The programme increases participation in different art forms in schools and in the surrounding communities. ASPIRE Dundee is a direct intervention and a catalyst for bringing together existing resources and services
- 4.5 The programme uses the transformative power of performing arts to increase and develop pupils' health and wellbeing, self-confidence and self-esteem, and learning and skills development while challenging inequalities and the effects of poverty. Through greater engagement with the arts locally ASPIRE develops motivation, enthusiasm and resilience in children and ultimately in the community they are part of. The overall aim is to achieve long term social transformation for children in areas of Dundee experiencing economic and social deprivation. This is an essential component of Dundee City Council's Fairness Strategy and impacts on the communities the children are part of, and on Dundee overall.
- 4.6 Dundee City Council is committed to achieving long term social transformation for children in areas of Dundee experiencing economic and social deprivation and expects ASPIRE Dundee to remain a core part of its work in these communities for many years to come.
- 4.7 ASPIRE Dundee builds on the wealth of arts and cultural excellence within the City of Dundee, a UNESCO City of Design.
- 4.8 Working with organisations such as Scottish Dance Theatre, Scottish School of Contemporary Dance, Dundee and Angus College, Dundee Rep Theatre and the Instrumental Music Service allows us to build upon prior knowledge and practice whilst developing new and exciting approaches to arts based, immersive learning experiences in schools and communities.
- 4.9 ASPIRE Dundee is recognised nationally by many bodies as a model of excellent and innovative practice. The programme was nominated as a finalist in the European Innovation In Politics Awards in 2017. The final 10 projects shortlisted at the event were those that demonstrated:
- Innovation
 - Trust Building
 - Bridge Building
 - Sustainability
 - Financial Viability
- 4.10 A number of local authority areas have now visited the programme and have developed programmes based on the design of ASPIRE. These include: Glasgow City Council, North Ayrshire Council, Falkirk Council and Renfrewshire Council
- 4.11 ASPIRE Dundee is part of a series of planned interventions within Dundee City Council's Scottish Attainment Challenge programme
- 4.12 The programme is planned to align with Education Scotland's *Interventions for Equity* increasing and promoting:

- Partnership Working
- Targeted approaches to literacy and numeracy
- Social and emotional wellbeing
- Promoting a high quality learning experience
- Professional learning and leadership
- Promoting healthy lifestyles
- Engaging beyond the school

5.0 DEVELOPMENTS IN 2018

5.1 ASPIRE Drama

Further to evaluation consultation a new two year drama programme was launched in 2018 with project partners Dundee Rep Theatre. This was to build on the excellent practice developed in recent years and to align with the Rep's revamped ENGAGE Learning Team.

Working with Rep ENGAGE a new programme of in-school and community delivery has been developed basing three part time ASPIRE Drama Artists directly within the new North East Campus, home of Quarry View Nursery, Longhaugh PS and St Francis RC PS.

The new programme balances work delivered to all children across the school campus by the Drama Artists along with visits by professional theatre companies through the Theatre in Schools Scotland programme partnering with the National Theatre of Scotland and IMAGINATE.

Work undertaken in drama is co-designed with class teachers linked to curriculum study with a majority of activities directly extending work in literacy.

ASPIRE Dundee has provided the opportunity for children and teachers involved in the programme to work with a wide range of professional artists in school and within the various departments of the Rep. These include: actors, designers, musicians, directors, song writers, puppeteers.

Programmes such as INSPIRE have provided mentoring and professional development opportunities for teachers to extend their skills in the delivery of drama and performing arts

5.2 ASPIRE Music

The ASPIRE Music programme takes a whole school approach to developing music making skills and participation across six primary school communities.

Approximately 700 children in the schools involved are now actively playing a musical instrument (P5-7) with children in some cases electing to learn a second.

Structure of engagement in music programme:

P1 & P2	Early Musicianship – developing listening, pulse, rhythm, pitch
P3	Using instruments, percussion, singing, reading notation
P4	PBuzz, percussion and singing
P5	Whole Class Instrumental Tuition (wind band)
P6	Whole class instrumental tuition (wind and) African Drumming & Samba programme
P7	Performance projects, bands and ensembles, music technology
<i>*from P4 children are able to access tuition on a second instrument via the Instrumental Music Service</i>	

Statistics show that ASPIRE Dundee music schools now have by far the highest percentage of children participating in music tuition in schools in the city.

The immersive approaches developed in musical tuition in ASPIRE Dundee schools has positively influenced the methods now used by the wider Instrumental Music Service in other primary school settings thus extending access to participation for a greater number of children and young people

High percentages of children who started playing within the ASPIRE Dundee programme have continued to play beyond their transition to secondary school with many regularly accessing the Dundee Central Bands and Orchestras playing with young people from all across the city

Along with the development of musical skills the music programme seeks to develop:

- Listening, readiness for learning,
- Co-operation, resilience
- Development of fine motor skills
- Confidence and self-esteem through performance and personal achievement

5.3 **ASPIRE Dance**

Dance Officers supported by the Health and Wellbeing strand of the Scottish Attainment Challenge fund work directly within targeted schools and nursery settings.

This dedicated team liaise with Head Teachers and teachers to deliver bespoke programmes of work directly in school, in extra curricular contexts and during holiday time.

Programmes include:

Dance work in class linked to curriculum study

Regular dance activity promoting physical activity in PE particularly targeting girls participation

Popular “Wake up and shake up” morning sessions post breakfast club

One to One Nurture Sessions – working with a dance specialist developing approaches to self-regulation and time out strategies for young people with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Transitions – working with students of Dundee and Angus College to explore themes related to the transition from primary to secondary school

SHANARRI Superheroes – working with nursery children, P7 buddies and parents/carers to promote health and wellbeing

T-His T-Hat – P1 and P2 immersive performances using 1+2 Modern Languages and dance

Innocence – in school live performance years for early by Scottish Dance Theatre dancers using live music and the poetry of William Blake

Strictly Tea Dances – pupils learn about social dances, links to WWII and develop and host their own tea dance for elderly members of their communities

Looping Scotland – summer school run in partnership with Dundee and Angus College The Space, Scottish Dance Theatre, professional dance company from Brazil and supported by Dundee Bairns leading to a premier performance at Dundee Rep Theatre

5.4 **Impact**

A four year evaluation of the ASPIRE Dundee Project undertaken by the University of Dundee was concluded in 2018 ([External Link](#)).

The University of Dundee Evaluation Project Team. Professor Teresa Moran (Project Leader), Dr Fiona McGarry and Nikki Doig (Teaching Fellow).

The evaluation aimed to measure the success of the programme in meeting it's original stated aims:

- ◆ To increase skills for teachers and support staff;
- ◆ To improve physical and mental wellbeing of teachers and support staff;
- ◆ To improve physical and mental wellbeing of pupils;
- ◆ To develop strategic partnership working responsive to local needs;

- ◆ To increase cultural knowledge and understanding;
- ◆ To support the raising of attainment across the curriculum

Evaluation Design:

- ◆ The evaluation involved a mainly primary approach to data collection, although secondary sources were used to provide statistical data.
- ◆ Analysis was for the most part qualitative, for reasons that are explored in the literature review.
- ◆ There is some reference to quantitative data retrieved from the Scottish Schools datasets, and in order to provide a degree of triangulation in the analysis of the data collected, as well as to present key data cohesively, some of the qualitative data has been quantified.

5.5 Summary of findings

Teachers interviewed reported:

- ◆ Increased motivation among pupils
- ◆ Increased opportunities for and access to arts provision
- ◆ Evidence of increased levels of peer collaboration and teamwork
- ◆ Evidence of enhanced pupil self-confidence deriving from experiencing success
- ◆ Increased levels of resilience linked to Health & Wellbeing among pupils

Pupils interviewed reported:

- ◆ Learning new skills in the arts (e.g. dance/drama skills; learning to play a musical instrument)
- ◆ Improved listening skills
- ◆ Peer collaboration/group work
- ◆ Improved self-confidence derived from performing in front of others
- ◆ Increased enjoyment

"Pupils' confidence has developed, their willingness to overcome anxiety has developed resilience, their clear enjoyment in learning new skills, the opportunity to perform in front of others beyond family and friends, the opportunity to perform in different venues beyond the classroom and evidence to suggest pupils' behaviour has improved and interest in school increased."

"Parents of pupils in the ASPIRE schools are overwhelmingly positive about their children's schooling."

"There is evidence to indicate that teachers' confidence and competence to teach aspects of the arts is growing with several teachers actively learning new skills alongside their pupils."

5.6 Stakeholder Feedback:

- ◆ *Pupils and teachers indicated that there have been positive outcomes cross-referenced to ALL of the aims of the project, and overall. The evidence shows that the two areas most positively impacted by ASPIRE are the Physical and Mental Wellbeing of Pupils, and Raised Attainment.*
- ◆ *Pupils' attitudes and aptitudes towards school and learning in general along with pupil confidence and perceptions of competence have shown significant measurable improvement.*
- ◆ *Parents are increasingly aware of the benefits of the project, are increasingly engaged with the project aims, and overall it is their perception that the two areas most positively impacted by ASPIRE are the Physical and Mental Wellbeing of Pupils, and Strategic Partnerships.*

- 5.7 An impact survey was conducted in November 2017 involving 88 participants drawn from a range of parents, teachers, arts tutors and head teachers in ASPIRE schools. The results were overwhelmingly positive.

Those areas in which the project was perceived as having the greatest impact were:

- ◆ The building of new skills
- ◆ Providing deep enjoyment
- ◆ Stimulating interest and confidence in the arts
- ◆ Increasing pupil confidence and self-worth
- ◆ Contributing to educational development

- ◆ Helping people develop their creativity
- ◆ Raising expectations about what is possible and desirable
- ◆ Having a positive effect on how people feel

6.0 NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 To continue to build upon the practice developed to date in the ASPIRE Dundee programme and extend the success of this work across other learning communities in Dundee through the consideration of the effective use of existing resources.
- 6.2 Continue to build meaningful partnerships with local and national organisations to enrich the quality, reach and long term sustainability of the ASPIRE Dundee programme.

7.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainable Development, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Integrated Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

8.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The Council Management Team have been consulted in preparation of this report.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Final Report of the Evaluation of the City of Dundee's ASPIRE Project – University of Dundee. Impact survey with participants from ASPIRE schools.

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December 2018