

REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE –
31 OCTOBER 2016

REPORT ON: EVALUATION OF THE CITY OF DUNDEE ASPIRE PROJECT

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 346-2016

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide the Children and Families Services Committee with an update on the progress being made with the ASPIRE Dundee Project.

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 prepare an annual report on the ASPIRE Dundee Project.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The ASPIRE Dundee Project is fully funded by the Scottish Attainment Challenge and Creative Scotland.

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 aim of the project is to strengthen family engagement and transform communities. 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. The project is being evaluated by the University of Dundee.

4.2 ASPIRE Dundee is underpinned by a belief that attainment, achievement and lack of aspirational issues facing local communities, children and families should be addressed at a local level through a multi-partnership approach. To help address the issue of equality for some of our most deprived communities we are working in collaboration with targeted schools and key local arts partners to deliver both the right intervention and the factors which will facilitate their implementation.

4.3 The key 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 Schools involved in the ASPIRE Dundee Project are:

School Community	Art Form	Start of Project (planning – implementation)
St Vincent's RC Primary	Dance	November 2013
Rowantree Primary	Dance	November 2013
Rowantree Early Years Centre	Dance	November 2013
St Luke's & St Matthew's RC Primary	Drama	January 2014
Ballumbie Primary	Drama	January 2014
Ballumbie Early Years Centre	Drama	January 2014
Longhaugh Primary	Drama	January 2014
Longhaugh Nursery	Drama	January 2014
Camperdown Primary	Music	April 2014
St Clement's RC Primary	Music	April 2014
Sidlaw View Primary	Music	April 2014
Rosebank Primary	Music	April 2014
Claypotts Castle Primary	Dance	March 2015
Claypotts Castle Early Years Centre	Dance	March 2015
St Pius RC Primary	Dance	March 2015
Dens Road Primary	Music	March 2016
Ardler Primary	Music	March 2016

4.5 There has been a planned strategic approach to linking the ASPIRE Project with Curriculum for Excellence. At the outset of ASPIRE a working group was established to map ASPIRE activities on the Curriculum for Excellence. As a result of this work, ASPIRE has successfully developed activities that work towards achieving the Curriculum for Excellence aims and capacities by incorporating them in to ASPIRE activities.

4.6 ASPIRE Dundee contributes to the four capacities through its wide range of learning experiences giving children the opportunity to develop self-worth and confidence by representing themselves and their community; celebrating learning through performances; team working and team building; active participation; personal engagement and commitment and engaging with others.

4.7 Two management groups provide governance for the project a Strategic Partnership Board and an Operational Group. The Strategic Partnership Board is chaired by the Head of Service and includes representatives from the Scottish Government, Creative Scotland, Community Planning, University of Dundee, Dundee and Angus College, Project Manager, Education Officer, Attainment Adviser, Education Scotland and Health.

- 4.8 The ASPIRE Dundee Project is being evaluated by the University of Dundee Project Team. Professor Teresa Moran (Project Leader), Dr Fiona McGarry, Neil Taylor (Teaching Fellow) and Nikki Doig (Teaching Fellow).
- 4.9 The University of Dundee Evaluation Findings conclude from the data collated during the period from January 2015 to December 2015 - it is evident that the ASPIRE Project has made positive contributions to pupils' school experiences, parents' perceptions of their children's school experiences, teacher development and wider impact in the community in the following ways:
- i. The attendance and exclusion data would indicate that there appears to be a general overall trend towards increased attendance rates and decreased exclusion rates for pupils in the ASPIRE schools. It is recognised that Dundee City Council have a number of initiatives taking place simultaneously in schools across the authority so whilst it is not possible to ascribe these positive trends solely to the ASPIRE project it would be fair to assert that the ASPIRE project is making a positive contribution to increased pupil attendance rates and decreased exclusion rates.
 - ii. 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 some evidence to suggest pupils' behaviour and interest in school has increased.
 - iii. Parents of pupils in the ASPIRE schools are overwhelmingly positive about their children's schooling.
 - iv. 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. This can be a very positive experience for pupils to witness their teachers overcoming the same difficulties and challenges they do as they acquire new skills.
 - v. Wider community impact. Through the range of activities that pupils have engaged in, the pupils are getting the opportunity to perform to a wider audience, to use different venues and to experience working alongside different community groups thus raising pupils' awareness of the activities of these groups.

A summary table of the fuller interim findings is included below:

Dundee City Council Children and Families Service	Children and Young People	Schools	Communities
Increased quality partnership	Increase in confidence and self esteem	Increased attendance reduced exclusions	Focus of positive ethos from primary school
Effective management of existing resources	Improved co-ordination and fine motor skills	Evidence of better behaviour – less disruption	Strengthened relationships

Sharing good practice across local authorities and beyond	Better motivation for learning	Better concentration skills	Increased local participation in arts/ healthy activities
Co-ordinated approach of local services	Higher levels of skills development	High quality Career Long Professional Learning for staff	Sense of pride
Greater capacity for project delivery	Pride and sense of achievement	Positive ethos	Greater connectivity between services
Highly skilled and ambitious workforce	Improved schools and home relationships	Strong partnerships addressing local priorities	Greater use of local assets
	Developing a Growth Mindset approach	Greater parental involvement	Raised awareness of opportunities
	Greater resilience	Strong evidence of high quality interdisciplinary learning approaches	
	Enjoyment in learning and taking part		
	Increased aspirations		

4.10 The ASPIRE Dundee Project is ambitious in its aims but has already evidenced key successes in its 24 month lifespan. Key to the strengthening and improvement of the project is the value placed on high quality and robust evaluation and monitoring across all of its processes. The project leads by evidence which will help local authorities distinguish between proven, promising and unproven approaches in the future.

4.11 The work of the ASPIRE Dundee Project has also gained wider interest from educationalists as the work of the project has been shared at the Scottish Educational Research Association, Heads of Instrumental Teaching Scotland, Scottish Attainment Challenge Learning Day. The Dundee model is now being replicated in several local authorities.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached to this report.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Executive Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

MICHAEL WOOD
Executive Director of Children and Families Service
September 2016

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL Part 1: Description/Consultation

Is this a Rapid Equality Impact Assessment (RIAT)? Yes	
Is this a Full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)? No	
Date of Assessment: October 2016	Committee Report Number: 346-2016
Title of document being assessed: Evaluation of the city of Dundee ASPIRE Project	
1. This is a new policy, procedure, strategy or practice being assessed (If yes please check box)	This is an existing policy, procedure, strategy or practice being assessed? YES
2. Please give a brief description of the policy, procedure, strategy or practice being assessed.	The report provides an update and interim evaluation of ASPIRE Dundee.
3. What is the intended outcome of this policy, procedure, strategy or practice?	Positive impact on children's personal and social development. Improved self-confidence, social skills, concentration and continued team working. Increase in attainment and achievement. Increase in strategic partnership working.
4. Please list any existing documents which have been used to inform this Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment.	Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation Analysis
5. Has any consultation, involvement or research with protected characteristic communities informed this assessment? If yes please give details.	Dundee University Research team have carried out detailed evaluation.
6. Please give details of council officer involvement in this assessment. (e.g. names of officers consulted, dates of meetings etc.)	Lina Waghorn, Head of Service.
7. Is there a need to collect further evidence or to involve or consult protected characteristics communities on the impact of the proposed policy? (Example: if the impact on a community is not known what will you do to gather the information needed and when will you do this?)	Ongoing evaluation by Dundee University. Ongoing consultation and communication with stakeholders.

Part 2: Protected Characteristics

Which protected characteristics communities will be positively or negatively affected by this policy, procedure or strategy?

NB Please place an X in the box which best describes the "overall" impact. It is possible for an assessment to identify that a positive policy can have some negative impacts and visa versa. When this is the case please identify both positive and negative impacts in Part 3 of this form.

If the impact on a protected characteristic communities are not known please state how you will gather evidence of any potential negative impacts in box Part 1 section 7 above.

	Positively	Negatively	No Impact	Not Known
Ethnic Minority Communities including Gypsies and Travellers			X	
Gender			X	
Gender Reassignment			X	
Religion or Belief			X	
People with a disability			X	
Age			X	
Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual			X	
Socio-economic	X			
Pregnancy & Maternity			X	
Other (please state)				

<p>1. Have any positive impacts been identified? (We must ensure at this stage that we are not achieving equality for one strand of equality at the expense of another)</p>	<p>Report outlines evaluation to date.</p>
<p>2. Have any negative impacts been identified? (Based on direct knowledge, published research, community involvement, customer feedback etc. If unsure seek advice from your departmental Equality Champion.)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>3. What action is proposed to overcome any negative impacts? (e.g. involving community groups in the development or delivery of the policy or practice, providing information in community languages etc. See Good Practice on DCC equalities web page)</p>	<p>Ongoing consultation and communication with all stakeholders.</p>
<p>4. Is there a justification for continuing with this policy even if it cannot be amended or changed to end or reduce inequality without compromising its intended outcome? (If the policy that shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination you must stop and seek legal advice)</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>5. Has a 'Full' Equality Impact Assessment been recommended? (If the policy is a major one or is likely to have a major impact on protected characteristics communities a Full Equality Impact Assessment may be required. Seek advice from your departmental Equality lead.)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>6. How will the policy be monitored? (How will you know it is doing what it is intended to do? e.g. data collection, customer survey etc.)</p>	<p>Ongoing external evaluation.</p>

Part 3: Impacts/Monitoring

Name of Service or Partnership	Children and Families Service
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Type of Document	
Human Resource Policy	
General Policy	
Strategy/Service	X
Change Papers/Local Procedure	
Guidelines and Protocols	
Other	

Part 4: Contact Information

Signature of author of the policy:		Date: 7/10/16
Signature of Executive Director/Head of Service:		Date: 7/10/16
Name of Executive Director/Head of Service:	Michael Wood	
Date of Next Policy Review:	October 2017	

