

Towards the very best...

Education, Learning & Leisure

Standards & Quality Report 2008/09



Aberdeenshire 
COUNCIL

Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea - the very best of Scotland



Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL

Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea – the very best of Scotland

The best area

Helping to create and sustain the best quality of life for all through . . .

- happy, healthy and confident people
- safe, friendly and lively communities
- an enterprising and adaptable economy
- our special environment and diverse culture

The best council

Aiming to provide excellent services for all by . . .

- involving, responding and enabling
- finding new and more efficient ways of doing things
- providing elected leadership for our area
- working with our partners in the North East and beyond
- always looking to the future



Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL

Committed to Education, Learning and Leisure

“We are determined to work together for the best quality of life for everyone in Aberdeenshire, from mountain to sea, and to help through Education, Learning and Leisure to make it the best possible place in which to live and learn, work and play.”

We have adopted as our key values:

Quality, equality, engagement and integrity.

We are committed to serving the people of Aberdeenshire by . . .

- supporting and empowering individuals, families and groups
- enabling lifelong learning and employability
- advancing community development and wellbeing

Our aims are . . .

- the building of capacity
- the realisation of potential
- the achievement of excellence

for everyone in Aberdeenshire - the very best of Scotland.

Foreword

Welcome to the 2008-2009 Standards and Quality Report for the Education, Learning and Leisure service of Aberdeenshire Council.

The report aims to provide information on how the service is performing, based on a range of evidence gathered within the service and by external agencies, such as HM Inspectorate of Education.



Richard Stroud

Cllr Richard Stroud,
Chair of Education,
Learning and Leisure
Committee.

Our key achievements are highlighted and the areas for improvement identified. It also recognises the improvements to the service which have arisen as the result of much hard work and dedication of staff, children and young people, parents/carers and the wider community across Aberdeenshire.

The vision for Aberdeenshire Council is to become the best council in Scotland by providing excellent services for all. This report highlights the contribution the Education, Learning and Leisure service is making towards realising that vision.

Introduction

I am very pleased to present the Standards and Quality report for Aberdeenshire Education, Learning and Leisure for 2008-2009.

The report identifies our key achievements, sets out evidence that identifies where we have been able to improve, and how our work has impacted on our stakeholders, as well as how we have been working to improve our processes, our management and our leadership. It also identifies where we are aware that there is a need for further improvement.

In preparing a report such as this, it is always useful to be able to compare how we are performing as a service in Aberdeenshire with the rest of the country as a whole. In 2009, HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) published "*Improving Scottish Education*", a report which sets out the quality of education services across Scotland, based on evidence collected by HMIe in inspections carried out during 2005-2008. We have taken the opportunity in this report to conduct a similar analysis to that presented in the *Improving Scottish Education* report. This allows our performance to be benchmarked against the national practice. This shows that Aberdeenshire is performing very well in relation to national practice in many areas, but it also highlights some places where we can still improve. We will address these areas through our plans for improvement over the coming years.



Bruce Robertson

Bruce Robertson, OBE,
Director of Education,
Learning and Leisure.

The achievements set out in this report are a consequence of the efforts of our staff and our young people and adult learners, as well as the support of parents/carers, our partners and the wider community. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of these groups for their continuous support. I commend this report to you.

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Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

Improving Scottish Education 2005-08, published by HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in January 2009, is an important report that draws together inspection and review evidence across all sectors of education and child protection services. Our Standards and Quality Report gives us an opportunity to benchmark ourselves against the national figures presented in the *Improving Scottish Education* report.

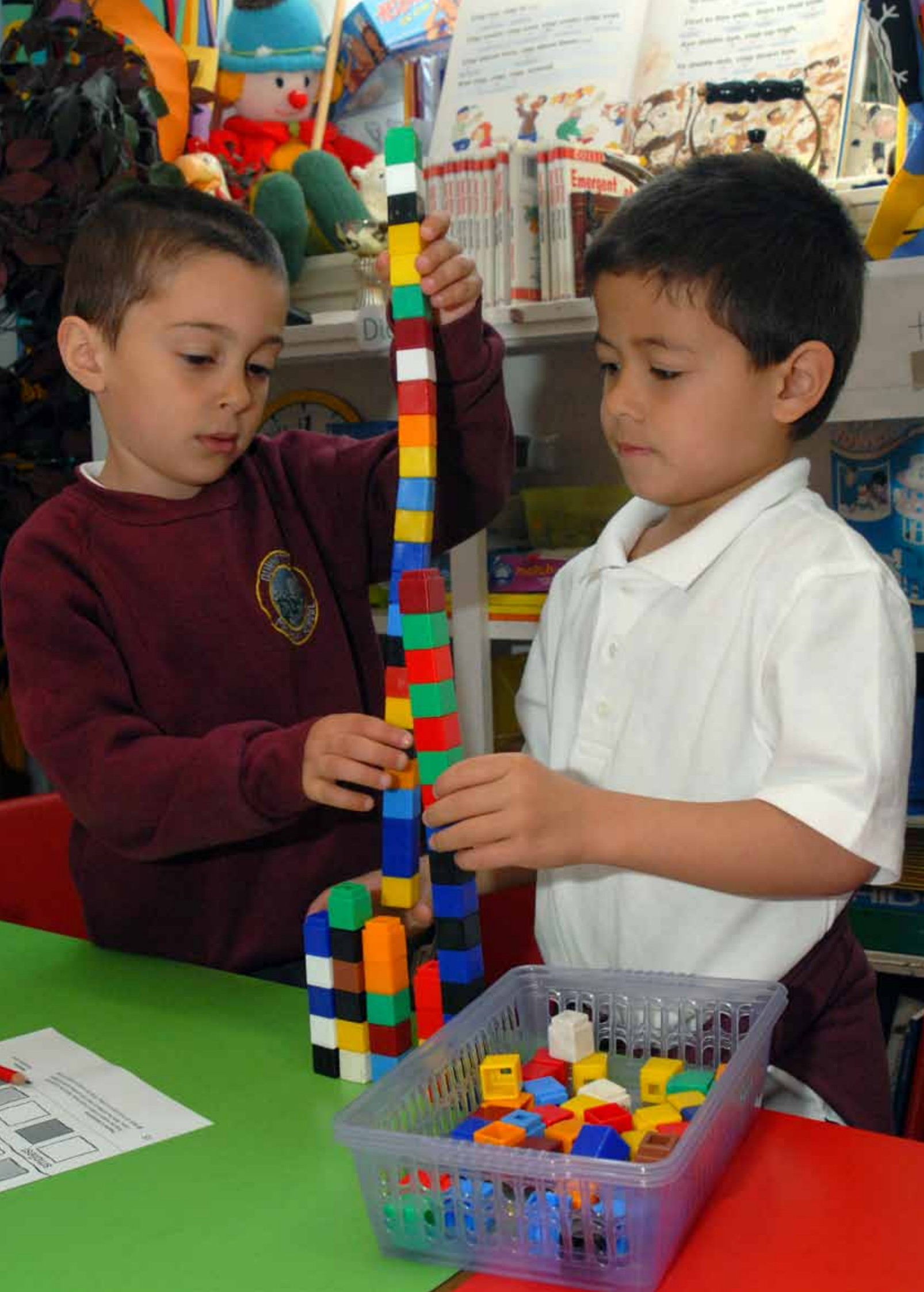
Comparable data for Aberdeenshire are presented in this report and are based on the following number of inspections by sector: 122 pre-school inspections between April 2005 and March 2007; 35 pre-school inspections between April and December 2007; and 37 primary school and 6 secondary school inspections during 2005 to 2007 (with the exception of the leadership quality indicator presented in Section 4, where only 4 secondary schools were evaluated against this indicator). A direct comparison of Community and Learning Development (CLD) provision is not possible, due to a limited number of inspections being undertaken in Aberdeenshire during the reported time period (2006-08). However, evaluation data for five CLD learning communities inspections are available for 2008-09 and are presented for information.

Evaluations at the end of sections 2 – 4 of this report are based on the HMIE six-point scale. The levels on the six-point scale are described as follows:

excellent:	outstanding or sector-leading provision
very good:	provision with major strengths
good:	provision with important strengths and areas for improvement
satisfactory:	provision where strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak:	provision with important weaknesses
unsatisfactory:	provision with major weaknesses

The HMIE four-point scale was used for pre-school inspections until April 2007, with levels described as follows:

very good:	provision with major strengths
good:	provision with important strengths
fair:	provision with important weaknesses
unsatisfactory:	provision with major weaknesses



Section 1: Our key achievements in 2008-09

During 2008-09 we have made good progress in working towards delivery of the outcomes deriving from our strategic priorities. Full details of this can be found in our Service Report. In addition, section 2 of this report outlines some of the achievements and improvements in performance that provides evidence of this progress in relation to the outcomes.

The evidence also highlights a number of notable achievements of the service during 2008-09. These include:

The development and implementation of the Aberdeenshire 3-18 Curriculum Framework

The Aberdeenshire 3-18 Curriculum framework provides the service with a clear local policy framework within which to address the national curriculum agenda described by Curriculum for Excellence.

We have established a robust support framework to manage the development and implementation of the new curriculum, which reflects the key national priorities of curriculum structures, teaching, learning and assessment and numeracy, literacy and health and well being. It also incorporates our own set of learning entitlements, which mean that all learners in Aberdeenshire have an entitlement to:

- **A coherent 3–18 curriculum** in Aberdeenshire which promotes high quality attainment and achievement.
- **Cultural experiences** in Aberdeenshire which provide direct experience, participation and performance with creative practitioners.
- **Environmental experiences** in Aberdeenshire which provide learning in, about and through the full range of environments in Aberdeenshire.
- **Health and well-being** in Aberdeenshire which provides opportunities to pursue a healthy and active lifestyle.
- **Creative and enterprising experiences** in Aberdeenshire which provide interdisciplinary learning opportunities across the curriculum which promote creativity and encourage play, problem solving, innovation, experimentation, independence and critical thinking.
- **Vocational experiences** in Aberdeenshire which provide opportunities for entrepreneurial learning giving young people the chance to experience the risk and responsibility of real business through their experiences.



Also as part of the support structure, Professional Support Groups have been established to support all areas of the curriculum. These groups have a blend of face to face and virtual meetings and are designed to support delivery and improvement of learning and teaching across subjects and sectors.

We are keen that the unique natural environment of Aberdeenshire is exploited to the full as a context for learning. To maximise opportunities for Outdoor Learning we are working with Cairngorm National Park to ensure that our young people benefit from the unique experiences it can offer.

Through our Curriculum Architecture support group we are working with groups of staff from each local cluster of secondary school plus associated primaries to develop a curriculum plan for P6-S1 which will allow for an enhanced curriculum transition experience.

Glow

Aberdeenshire is at the cutting edge in the development, implementation and use of Scotland's national education intranet, *glow*. Progress with *glow* was showcased at a national seminar in Glasgow in June 2009 at which other local authority representatives commented favourably on the ways in which we are developing the use of *glow*. This was also noted by the Minister for Schools and Skills, Keith Brown, MSP, when he spoke at a conference of Parent Council representatives in Aberdeenshire.



- We have in place a dedicated Aberdeenshire *glow* team. The *glow* Staff Tutors have been trained to understand all *glow* functionality to enable them to support and develop the use of *glow* for effective learning and teaching.
- Every school in Aberdeenshire has a member of staff who has undergone the *glow* Mentor or *glow* Champion Training Programme.
- We have rolled out *glow* Bugs an innovative programme developed by the Aberdeenshire *glow* Team. In each primary school, *glow* Bugs report for the M2C (Mountain to Sea) News Station within *glow*. They identify great news from their school, formulate questions,



conduct interviews, write articles and gather data for weather forecasts. *Glow Bugs* are equipped with the skills to shoot and edit video, take digital stills, word process news articles and upload and publish these in *glow*. *Glow Bugs* will support other pupils and staff in understanding and using *glow* in school.



- In June 2009, Parents at Meldrum Primary School became the first parents in Scotland to be given access to *glow*. Once they have access, parents will be able to access their *glow* parent home page, the school *glow* site, Aberdeenshire Council's *glow* site and the National *glow* site. Access to *glow* will be rolled out to all parents over the coming sessions.
- Within *glow* for teachers, we are developing a Virtual school which contains a set of online tools to assist staff in using self evaluation to support planning for learning and improvement planning .
- Within *glow*, we have been active in the development of the use of games based learning to provide engaging, motivating and enjoyable contexts for learning. Examples of this include use of Brain Training, Wii Fit, Wii Musicians, Guitar Hero and Nintendogs. Our *glow* team lead officer led a session on the use of Wii Musicians at the 2009 Scottish Learning Festival.

High Levels of Attainment

Young people in Aberdeenshire continue to achieve success in Scottish Qualifications Authority examinations, with levels of attainment consistently above, or well above, the national average. Further details of levels of attainment are contained in section 2.1.

Year of Homecoming

2009 has been designated as the Year of Homecoming, a time to celebrate Scotland's contribution to the world and to attract the wide diaspora of Scottish nationals and descendants back to their country of origin. Aberdeenshire Council was one of the first local authorities in Scotland to make an express commitment to the support and promotion of the Homecoming national initiative, and the main themes of the programme provide a very good fit to the range of educational and cultural services provided by the Education, Learning and Leisure service.



The service has been directly involved in a huge range of events linked to the Year of Homecoming. These include:

- Involvement of schools in a wide range of Homecoming projects linked to Curriculum for Excellence developments. In addition, over 4500 pupils and staff participated in Aberdeenshire's 12 Heritage Fairs.
- Every school in Aberdeenshire was involved in a schools' visual art project, with the combined end product from all schools providing a magnificent visual catalogue of the life and environment of our school communities. This has been exhibited successfully at Woodhill House, at BP Head Quarters in Dyce, and in the Scottish Parliament building.
- Libraries staff worked with Council Registrars, local family history societies and the City's Archivist to co-ordinate the promotion of genealogy. A number of special "Discover Your Family History" days were scheduled as an aspect of Aberdeenshire's North East Clan Fortnight. In addition, working with a range of regional partners, arts staff supported the production of the "Routes to your Roots" guide to ancestral research in North East Scotland.
- The North East Clan Fortnight was devised as a "shoulder" event to The Gathering, the World's largest gathering of clan representatives and traditional games that took place in Edinburgh in July 2009.
- Cultural Services staff provided a range of activities, from hosting Homecoming themed exhibitions, to promoting the work of local writers within the context of national events such as World Book Day. A major Homecoming finale concert was also organised, which featured Aberdeenshire's specially commissioned Homecoming tune, "Land of the standing stones".
- Recreation, Leisure & Learning staff at Archaeolink worked with the Wallace Collection to present a major display of Scottish swords, including the Rob Roy blade and the blade which killed him, as a contribution to the wider North East Clan Fortnight activities.

Together, the range of events and activities associated with Year of Homecoming that we have organised, or have been involved in, represents a significant legacy of collaborative working across the Education, Learning and Leisure service, that we will build upon, through a range of programmes and projects in the future.



Educational Psychology Service



The strength of the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) within the Education, Learning and Leisure service has been recognised by HM Inspectorate of Education. In their report of March 2008, the Inspectors assessed the EPS as being *very good* on 12 out of 19 quality indicators, the remaining 7 being assessed as *good*. At the time, this was the best report received by any Educational Psychology service in the country.

The Inspectors highlighted a number of aspects of the work of the EPS as being strengths. These included:

- A strong culture of continuous improvement across all team members.
- Very effective leadership across all grades of educational psychology and administrative posts.
- Successfully being able to effect transformational change in challenging situations.
- Providing the educational authority with high quality advice, intervention, training and research.
- Innovative approaches to service delivery through its consultation model.

HM Inspectorate of Education also inspected the EPS in May 2009 in relation to its provision of Post School Psychological services. The report on this inspection found that the EPS “..effectively contributes to discussions around corporate parenting and, along with colleagues in health and social work, makes a significant contribution to improving transitions for looked after and accommodated young people”.

The inspectors also spoke positively about the transitions passport, developed by the EPS for young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders, and noted the EPS’s involvement in Curriculum for Excellence, particularly in relation to enhancing the engagement of children and young people with learning through personalisation and choice.

In 2007, Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Service attained Charter mark status.



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE



Community Learning and Development

A new CLD strategy was produced by the Lifelong Learning Theme Forum in March 2009. This strategy builds on the successes of the previous strategy and the commitment of the Education, Learning and Leisure service and its partners to promote and deliver high quality learning opportunities for young people, adults and communities in Aberdeenshire. Recent Learning Community inspections have found that in general programmes and activities are of high quality and have a positive impact on the personal, family, community and working lives of participants.

Youth work in Aberdeenshire is particularly strong and we are recognised nationally for our work on youth participation and engagement. The innovative and effective youth work in Kemnay received an *excellent* from HMIE. This year Aberdeenshire hosted the national Young Quality Scot Awards in Huntly and the biggest ever sitting of the Scottish Youth Parliament in Peterhead. Aberdeenshire Youth Forum organised and delivered Youth Shine 09. Aberdeenshire Youth Council has been established, and is recognised by the Community Planning Partnership as the Aberdeenshire "Youth Voice".

The Reaching Out regeneration and community capacity building project in Peterhead and Fraserburgh achieved a gold COSLA award in March 09 and is attracting a great deal of national interest.

Sports and Leisure – Developing Healthy Lifestyles

It has become increasingly important that our young people are encouraged to lead healthy and active lifestyles both in and out of curriculum time, and to ensure that active interests are sustainable as people make the transition to adulthood and then maintain their interest throughout their lives. To this end the lifelong learning and leisure service has managed to achieve and in some cases build upon a number of initiatives which include:

- Expansion of the Active Schools Initiative which links curricular and extra curricular activity to every primary school in Aberdeenshire with plans confirmed to introduce it to every academy during 2009/10.
- Revamping of the Councils 'learn to swim' system to increase the capacity to deliver this critical skill to the vast majority of Aberdeenshire children.
- Designing the area's flagship running event 'Run Balmoral' to ensure it caters for more people than ever before at Primary, Academy, disabled and adult participation levels - enabling all levels and abilities to take part in this premier event.
- Generating a planned programme of major improvements to a range of leisure facilities to ensure that they are fit for use for the future, commencing in 08/09 and continuing through until 2011 - with a brand new leisure facility planned for Fraserburgh in 2012.



Section 2: How have we performed in relation to the Outcomes we want to deliver

The outcomes that the Education, Learning and Leisure service seek to deliver derive from our vision, values and aims, Aberdeenshire Council's Strategic priorities, our contribution to the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome agreement and the service's own Service Report. These may be concisely summarised in terms of sets of outcomes that relate to:

- 1) Enabling all young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- 2) Our children being able to develop and flourish in an environment which is safe, healthy, nurturing and which effectively identifies and meets their needs.
- 3) The development of 21st century learning communities in which empowered, professional staff from across the service work in partnerships to support learning across the age range.
- 4) The development of 21st century learning communities which benefit from and make best use of technology and high quality infrastructure.
- 5) Ensuring improved life chances for Aberdeenshire's citizens and for its more vulnerable families.
- 6) The development of strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.
- 7) More of our citizens becoming actively involved in sports and leisure activities.
- 8) More awareness of and active engagement of our citizens in the heritage and cultural life of Aberdeenshire and Scotland.

Progress towards delivery of these outcomes is currently reported in detail elsewhere, in regular Performance reports to the Education, Learning & Leisure committee. For the purposes of this report, the following sets of data and evidence are relevant.

2.1 School Attainment (Outcome 1)

Attainment in Primary Schools

Within primary schools, levels of attainment in Reading, Writing and Mathematics have shown a small but notable improvement over the past 5 years.

Table 2.1.1 : % of pupils achieving the appropriate attainment level at P3, P4, P6 and P7

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Reading	81	81	82	83	84
Writing	75	76	78	77	76
Mathematics	82	83	84	84	83

Attainment in secondary schools (S1/2)

Within the early years of secondary education, attainment is measured in relation to 5-14 Levels in Reading, Writing and Mathematics, as it is in primary. Since 2003, attainment levels have remained stable, or have shown a small increase.

Table 2.1.2: % Pupils at S2 having achieved at least Level E

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Reading	68	72	70	68	69
Writing	55	55	51	53	57
Mathematics	67	68	68	69	71

Analysis of 5-14 attainment data shared by local authorities across Scotland shows that the Aberdeenshire levels of attainment are in line with the national average for Reading and Writing, but well ahead of it for Mathematics.

Attainment in secondary schools (S4-S6) in Scottish Qualifications Authority qualifications

Attainment by the end of S4

Table 2.1.3 : % of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at the specified SCQF Level

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	National (2009)
5+ Awards at SCQF 5	44	43	41	41	38	35
5+ Awards at SCQF 4	86	85	84	84	84	77
5+ Awards at SCQF 3	94	94	93	94	95	91

Whilst the SCQF Level 5 attainment fell in 2009, it remains significantly above the national level, which is also the case at SCQF Levels 3 and 4, where the attainment level is within the top 20% of local authorities in the country.



Table 2.1.4: % of pupils achieving at least SCQF Level 3 in English and Mathematics

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	National (2009)
English & Maths SCQF 3	94	94	93	94	95	91

Attainment in English and Mathematics has remained stable at a level well above the national average and which is consistently within the top 20% of local authorities.

Attainment by the end of S5 at Higher Level (SCQF Level 6)

Table 2.1.5 : % pupils attaining Awards at Higher Level (SCQF Level 6)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	National (2009)
5+ Awards at Higher	13	12	13	12	12	10
3+ Awards at Higher	30	28	27	27	26	23
1+ Awards at Higher	46	45	43	44	44	40

Attainment levels at Higher level are down slightly over the five year period shown. This is, in part, attributable to the fall in the school staying on rate into S5 in Aberdeenshire, relative to the rest of Scotland due to the buoyant economy. Nevertheless, levels of attainment at Higher remain above the national average.

Attainment by the end of S6

Table 2.1.6: % pupils attaining Awards at Higher and Advanced Higher Level (SCQF Levels 6 and 7)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	National (2009)
1+ Award at Adv. Higher	17	16	16	16	16	13
5+ Awards at Higher	25	25	23	24	24	20
3+ Awards at Higher	37	37	35	35	35	31
1+ Awards at Higher	50	50	49	47	49	44

Attainment at Higher and Advanced Higher levels by the end of S6 is slightly down over the five years shown, but remains above the national average.

Table 2.1.7: % pupils attaining an award at at least SCQF Level 3 in English and Mathematics

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	National (2009)
English & Maths SCQF 3	96	96	96	96	95	92

Attainment on this measure has remained broadly stable, at a level significantly above the national average.

School Attainment in relation to Comparator Authorities

It is possible to benchmark the levels of attainment by comparing what we have achieved in relation to the set of five other local education authorities identified by HM Inspectorate of Education as being comparable to Aberdeenshire in terms of a set of characteristics.

Table 2.1.8 : Position of Aberdeenshire in relation to 6 authorities comprising comparator authority grouping

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
S4: 5+ Awards at SCQF Level 5	1st	1st	1st	2nd	3rd
S4: 5+ Awards at SCQF Level 4	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st
S4: 5+ Awards at SCQF Level 3	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st
S4: English & Maths at Level 3	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st
S5: 5+ Awards at SCQF Level 6	2nd	2nd	2nd	2nd	2nd =
S5: 3+ Awards at SCQF Level 6	1st=	2nd	2nd	2nd	3rd
S5: 1+ Awards at SCQF Level 6	2nd	2nd	2nd=	1st	3rd
S6: 1+ Award at SCQF Level 7	1st	1st	1st	2nd=	2nd=
S6: 5+ Award at SCQF Level 6	2nd	2nd	2nd	2nd	2nd=
S6: 3+ Award at SCQF Level 6	2nd	2nd	2nd	2nd	2nd
S6: 1+ Award at SCQF Level 6	3rd	2nd	2nd	3rd	1st=
S6: 5+ Award at SCQF Level 5	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st
S6: English & Maths at Level 3	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st

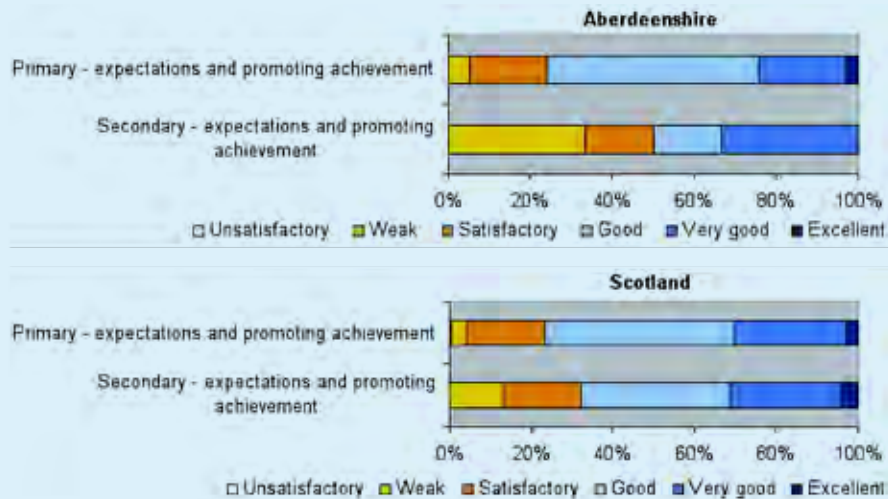


Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

Expectations and Promoting Achievement in Schools

Data compiled for the Improving Scottish Education report comparison highlights that staff set high expectations in relation to children's levels of behaviour and achievement. For primary schools, the percentage of evaluations at *good* or better is similar to the national level (around 75%), while for secondary schools the equivalent percentage is below the national level (50% compared to 68% across Scotland).

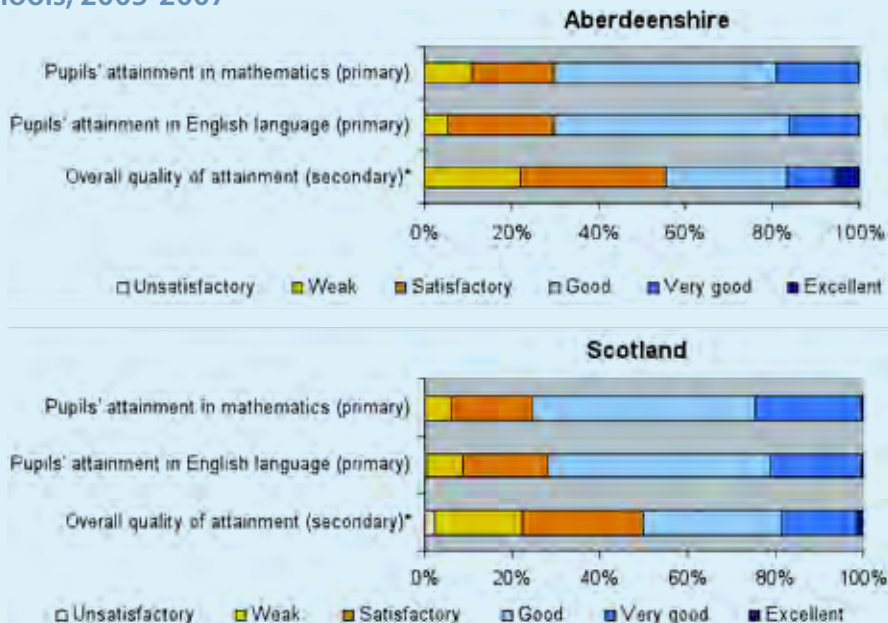
Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Primary and Secondary Schools, 2005-2007



Pupil's Attainment in Schools

In primary schools, some 70% of evaluations were assessed at *good* or better for pupils attainment in mathematics and the English language during 2005-2007. These levels are similar to the national levels (75% and 72% respectively). For secondary schools, the percentage of evaluations at *good* or better was slightly lower than the national level (44% compared to 50%).

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Primary and Secondary Schools, 2005-2007



* This is an average score for S1/S6

2.2 Early Years Provision (Outcome 2)

Table 2.2.1: % of P1 Pupils assessed as having achieved “Mastery” in pre-school baseline assessment

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
43%	44%	44%

Table 2.2.2: % of Pre-school establishments receiving a positive inspection report from HM Inspectorate of Education/The Care Commission (2008-09)

	% pre-school establishments where Inspectors found that:			
	The criteria for a positive inspection was not met	The criteria for a positive inspection was met at the following level		
		Satisfactory or better	Good or better	Very good or better
Aberdeenshire	11	89	61	17
Scotland	8	92	73	30

Table 2.2.3: % of pre-school establishments where children benefit from access to a qualified teacher

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
45%	45%	100%

Table 2.2.4: % of children walking or cycling to school

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
46%	50%	52%

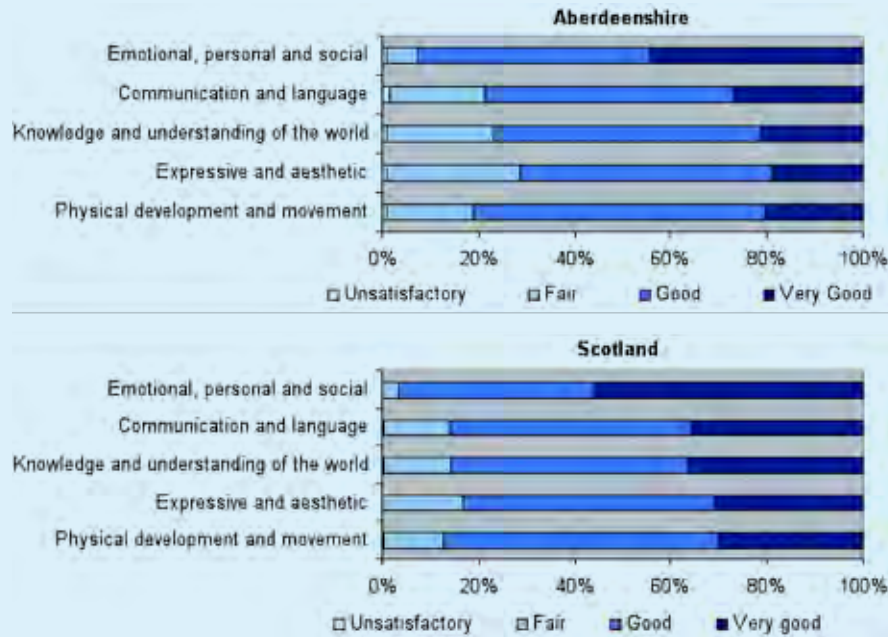


Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

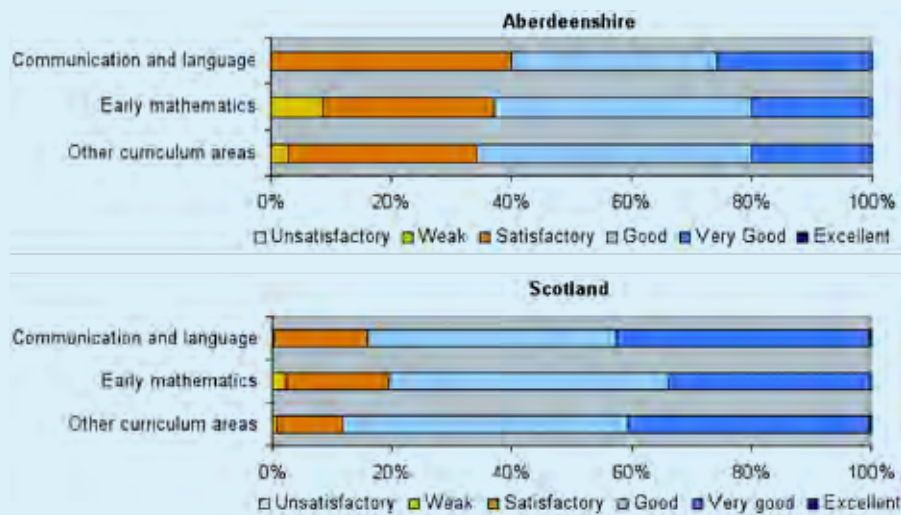
Children's progress in development and learning in Pre-schools

Pre-school children's progress across key aspects of learning and development is similar to the national levels. The percentage of evaluations at *good* or better using the four-point scale is 70% or higher across the learning and development quality indicators, compared to 80% or higher for Scotland. In particular, over 90% of evaluations for the emotional, personal and social quality indicator were assessed at *good* or better across both Aberdeenshire and Scotland.

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Pre-schools, using four-point scale, April 2005-March 2007



Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Pre-schools, using six-point scale, April-December 2007



2.3 Child Protection measures (Outcome 2)

Table 2.3.1: Number of EL&L staff who have undergone appropriate training in child protection measures

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
932	1400	4383

Table 2.3.2: % of Quality Indicators used by HM Inspectorate of Education during Inspection of Child Protection arrangements assessed as good or better

2006-07	2008-09
28%	100%

In August 2009, HM Inspectorate of Education conducted an inspection of services to protect children in the Aberdeenshire Council area. The report found that services were *good* or *very good* across all of the areas inspected.

2.4 Destinations of School Leavers (Outcome 1)

Each year, the destinations of school leavers are tracked by Skills Development Scotland (formerly Careers Scotland). If the school leaver has gone on to employment, training, a place at a higher or further education establishment, or is engaged in voluntary work, s/he is said to have found a "positive destination".



The percentage of school leavers from Aberdeenshire schools at the end of session 2007-08 going on to a "positive destination" was 91%, which was the fifth highest of any local authority area in Scotland. (The national average was 86%). The respective figures of 2006-07 for Aberdeenshire and nationally were the same as in 2007-08.

The percentage of leavers going on to places in higher education establishments in 2008 was 37%, the third highest of any local authority in Scotland.

2.5 Quality of Education as assessed by HM Inspectorate of Education (Outcomes 1, 2, 3 & 4)

Table 2.5.1: Primary and Secondary Schools receiving a positive Inspection Report by HM Inspectorate of Education (2008-09)

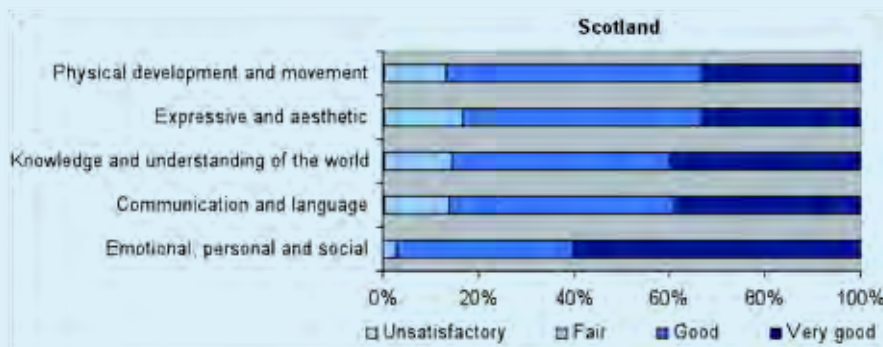
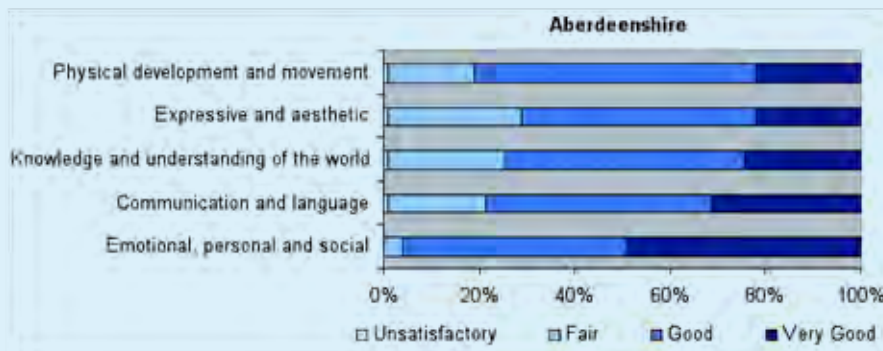
	% schools where Inspectors found that:			
	The criteria for a positive inspection was not met	The criteria for a positive inspection was met at the following level		
		Satisfactory or better	Good or better	Very good or better
Aberdeenshire	11	89	67	22
Scotland	12	88	64	18

Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

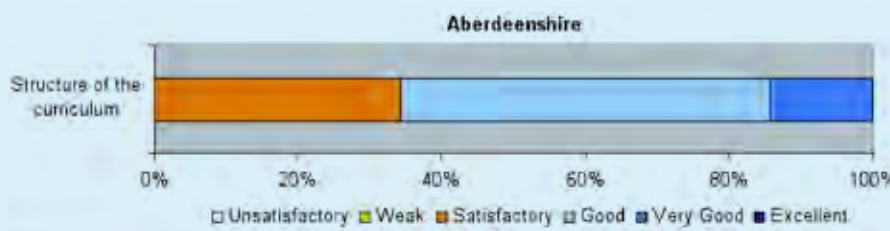
Curriculum Areas in Pre-schools

Data compiled for the Improving Scottish Education report comparison highlights that curriculum programmes in pre-schools are strong. The percentage of evaluations at *good* or better using the four-point scale was 70% or higher across the five quality of programmes quality indicators, as shown below. Using the six-point scale, around two thirds of pre-school evaluations were assessed at *good* or better for the structure of the curriculum quality indicator compared to around four fifths across Scotland.

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Pre-schools, using four-point scale, April 2005-March 2007



Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Pre-schools, using six-point scale, April-December 2007

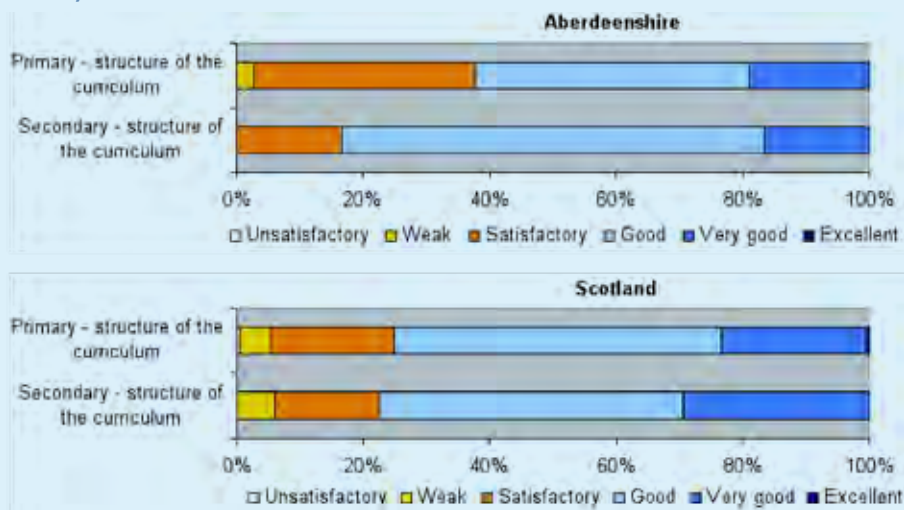


Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

Structure of the Curriculum in Schools

Comparison data also highlights that the structure of the curriculum is strong in schools. For secondary schools, the percentage of evaluations at *good* or better for this quality indicator is above the national level (83% compared to 77%). The majority of evaluations for primary schools were also assessed at *good* or better for the structure of the curriculum indicator, though the percentage was below the national level (62% compared to 75% across Scotland).

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Primary and Secondary Schools, 2005-2007

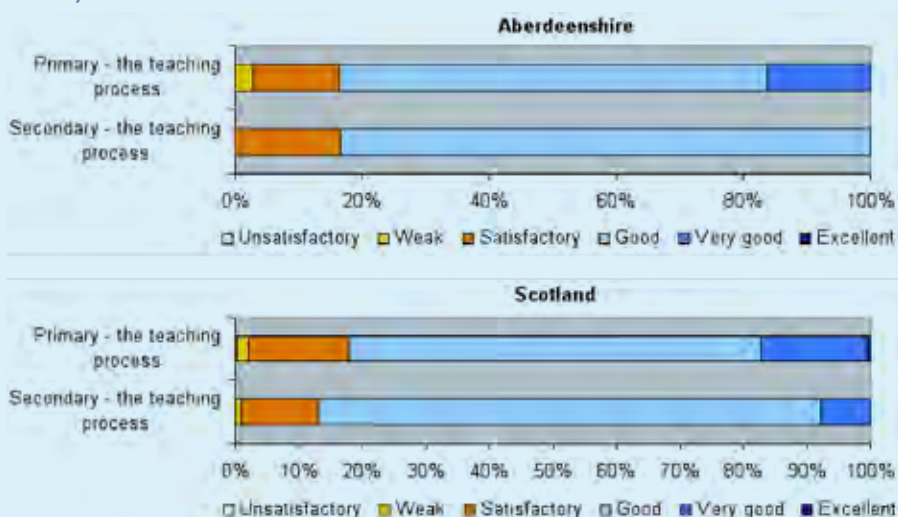


Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

The Quality of the Teaching Process in Schools

The quality of teaching is good in most schools. Over 80% of evaluations were assessed at *good* or better for the teaching process quality indicator in both primary and secondary sectors. Further, the secondary figure was above the national level (84% compared to 82% across Scotland).

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Primary and Secondary Schools, 2005-2007



2.6 School Attendance (Outcomes 3 and 4)

Levels of attendance at Aberdeenshire schools are above the national average in all sectors and well above the national average overall. Absence due to truancy, and other unexplained absence is also below the national average.

Table 2.6.1: % Attendance Rates

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Aberdeenshire	94.7%	94.9%	94.7%
Scotland	93.3%	93.2%	93.3%

Table 2.6.2: % Truancy or unexplained absence rates

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Aberdeenshire	0.5%	0.5%	0.7%
Scotland	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%

2.7 Sustainable Development and Eco Schools (Outcomes 1, 2, 3 & 6)

Table 2.7.1: Aberdeenshire Eco Schools - Progress

Position	2007	2009
Schools registered	162	173 (All)
Bronze Awards	72	111
Silver Awards	42	83
1st Green Flag	9	26
2nd Green Flag	2	9
3rd Green Flag	0	1



2.8 Achievements of and engagement with Young People (Outcome 1 and 6)

Table 2.8.1: Average monthly number of young people taking part in Youth Work opportunities (which may lead to various Youth Awards – e.g. Duke of Edinburgh Award, Youth Achievement Award etc)

2007-08	2008-09
2674	3980

Table 2.8.2: Number of young people achieving accreditation through a variety of awards schemes

2007-08	2008-09
127	166

Table 2.8.3: Number of events/meetings taking place to build community capacity that includes young people

2007-08	2008-09
2106	1085

2.9 Adult Learning (Outcomes 3, 5 & 6)

Table 2.9.1: Number of Adult Literacy Learners

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
2557	2431	2624

Table 2.9.2: % of Adult Learners reporting that they have achieved all of the goals of their Learning Plans

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
43%	64%	41%



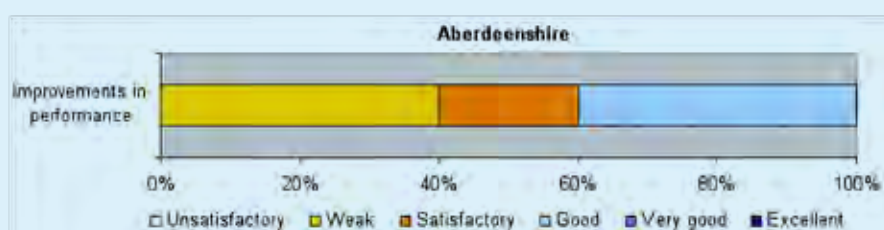
Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

Community Learning and Development – Improvements in Performance

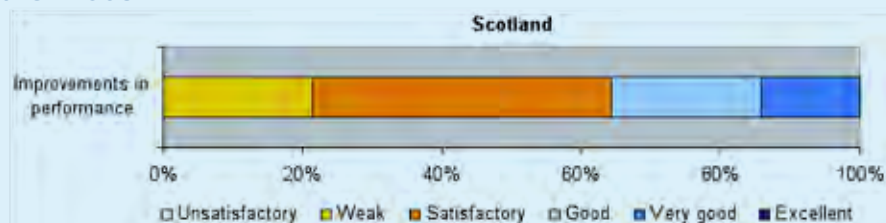
A meaningful, direct comparison of the performance of Community Learning and Development services in Aberdeenshire and Scotland (as presented in the Improving Scottish Education report) is not possible due to a limited number of inspections being undertaken in Aberdeenshire during 2006-2008. However, evaluation data are available for five inspections of CLD learning communities within Aberdeenshire during 2008-09 and analysis of this data provides an indication of Aberdeenshire's recent performance against the national levels reported for 2006-2008.

Improvements in performance were *satisfactory* or better for three of the five CLD learning communities inspected in Aberdeenshire during 2008-09. This is below the equivalent national level for 2006-2008 (60% compared to almost 80% across Scotland). Further, this is an area for improvement, as the remaining two CLD learning communities inspected in Aberdeenshire were assessed as *weak* for this quality indicator.

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in the CLD Sector, 2008-09



Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in the CLD Sector, March 2006 – March 2008



2.10 Cultural Services including Libraries, Museums and Arts (Outcomes 3 & 4)

Overall 08/09 has seen an increase in both attendances at and numbers of cultural opportunities provided. Examples include the following: the number of pupils involved in arts education projects rose by 62% to 13,798. Museum visits rose by 72% to 49,027. Usage of Library services also rose, particularly in relation to use of the online catalogue, which increased by 70%.

Table 2.10.1: % of population making use of learning centre and learning access points in libraries

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
11%	12.4%	14%

Table 2.10.2: Number of books and other media issues from libraries

2007-08	2008-09
1262786	1277510



2.11 Sports, Leisure and Active Lifestyles (Outcomes 5 & 7)

Table 2.11.1: Number of attendances at activities organised by the Council's sports and active lifestyles team

2007-08	2008-09
250913	421499

Table 2.11.2: Number of coaches, volunteers and teachers attending training courses for sports and active lifestyles

2007-08	2008-09
1666	3706

**Table 2.11.3: Number of attendances at swimming pools per 1000 of the population**

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
3165	3172	3248

Other Achievements

In addition to these statistics, drawn from a range of performance measures, the following achievements provide evidence of improvements in the performance of the Education, Learning and Leisure service:

- “Delivering Excellence” COSLA Award. The authority received the Scottish Government’s Delivering Excellence award for a community heating project, based at Aboyne Academy, at the COSLA awards event in St Andrews in March 2008.
- Health Promotion. Over 95% of schools accredited as either “committed” or “commended” as part of the national Health Promoting Schools accreditation scheme.
- Inverurie Academy was awarded Charter Mark status in June 2008. They join Mearns Academy and The Educational Psychology service who had previously been awarded Charter Mark status.
- Banchory Academy was successfully re-accredited for the Investors in People quality award in January 2009.
- Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors – the attainment statistics above confirm that our young people are “successful learners”. The following examples illustrate the extent to which young people are also developing the other three Curriculum for Excellence capacities:
 - » Ellon Academy senior pupils were awarded second place in the Scottish Parliament Debating competition run by the Citizenship forum.
 - » Banff Academy Young Engineers were awarded the prestigious Best Young Engineers Club in Scotland award at the Young Engineers award ceremony in Glasgow in June 2008.
 - » Portlethen Community Schools Network won the top award at the Scottish Book Trust Conference in February 2009 for their involvement in the SALT Festival. This is a community-wide arts festival which provides access to books for more than 1,000 children throughout the school network, as well as author sessions, Scots workshops, community puppet shows and theatre productions. The prize was awarded for best practice around literacy with school children.



- » Strathdon and Crathie primaries were awarded the Rights Respecting School award in August 2008. Newtonhill school also attained this status in June 2009.
- » Hill of Banchory school became only the fourth school in Scotland to be awarded the status of a Cycle Friendly school in 2008. Newtonhill school became the second Aberdeenshire school to attain this status in 2009.
- » Portlethen Academy, in partnership with Maersk have initiated the Maersk Stars scheme which aims to provide formal recognition of the achievements of pupils, in relation to their learning and contributions to the wider school community. The first group of “Maersk Stars” were presented their awards at a ceremony in 2008.
- » Elrick school were awarded first prize in the ICT Learning Awards at the Scottish Education awards ceremony in Glasgow.
- » In September this year Old Rayne School became the first school in Aberdeenshire to achieve their 3rd Eco Schools Green Flag. This achievement is the result of six years hard work since registering for the programme in 2003.
- » St Fergus school were awarded a “Pride of Buchan” award in 2009 to mark their achievement in reaching the final of the Total sponsored “Green Schools” awards scheme. They are the only Scottish school participating in the national UK finals in London.
- » As well as having achieved their second Green Flag award, Tyrie school have also created a wildlife garden and were awarded a Green Butterfly Award by Aberdeenshire Environmental Forum in 2008.
- » In addition, in October 2009, we approved plans to introduce an awards scheme to encourage all of our schools to strive for Green Flag status. This goes significantly beyond our existing target within the Single Outcome Agreement that all of our schools attain a Bronze Eco schools award by 2011.





- » Opportunities for young people to develop their musical abilities and participate in performance events continue to be developed and made available through the work of the music departments in schools, the instrumental service and the support of the Arts Development team. In 2009, funding was obtained to support the introduction of a Youth Pipe Performance Band.
- Aberdeenshire Literacies Partnership continues to make good progress in addressing the needs of literacies learners in order to build the skills and confidence of individuals and communities, and thereby contribute to the wider policy agendas of employability, health and wellbeing, and inclusion.
- Similarly, good progress has been made in meeting the needs of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learners and in implementing the national ESOL strategy.
- Adult learners launched a book that they had written themselves, at an event in Turriff in January 2009. Entitled "I took that chance", the book is now available in libraries across Aberdeenshire.
- The Aberdeenshire Citizen's Panel survey of Community Well-being found that there had been a significant increase (from 9% to 50%) of respondents who believed that the standard and quality of cultural activity in Aberdeenshire was as good in Aberdeenshire as it was anywhere else in Scotland.

Overall Evaluation

Our evaluation of our Improvements in Performance is	Good
------------------------------------------------------	------



Section 3: Meeting the needs of our Stakeholders

3.1 Learners

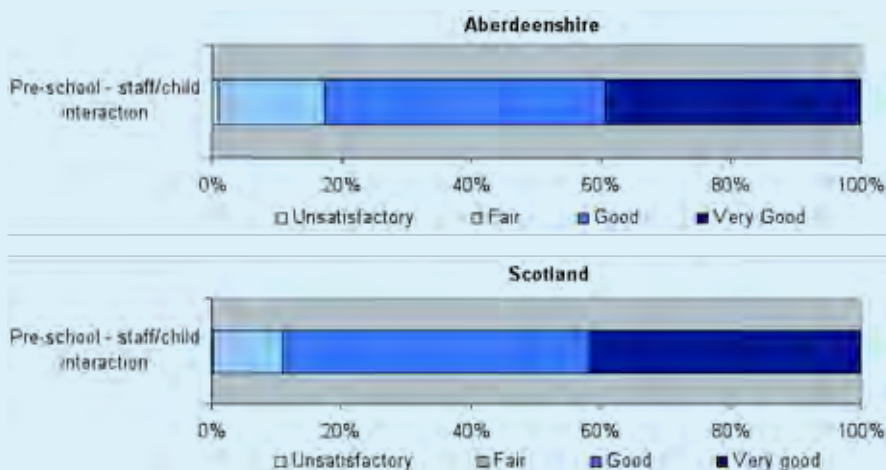
School pupils comprise the largest learner group that we serve across Aberdeenshire. We have a positive impact on the children and young people through the experiences and curriculum provided in our 151 primary schools (82 of which also include nursery and pre-school provision), 17 secondary schools and 4 special schools. In addition, we provide nursery and pre-school provision in partnership with third sector and private providers in 102 establishments across Aberdeenshire.

Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

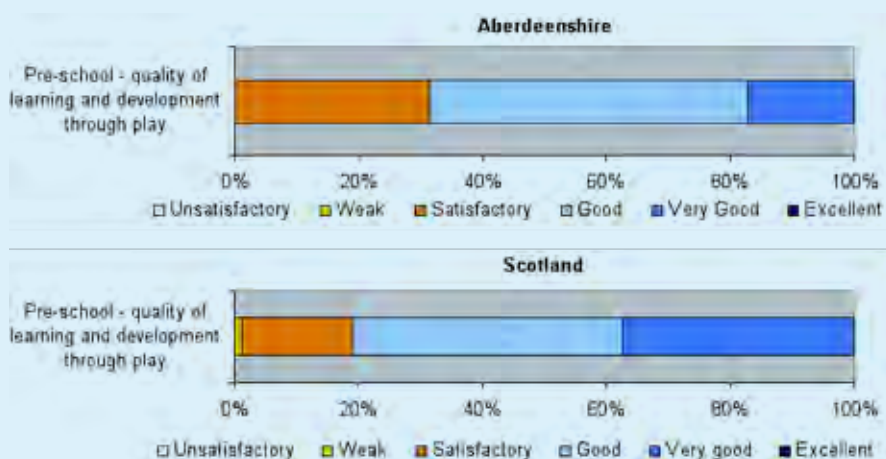
Learning and Development in Pre-Schools

The quality of learning and development through play is good in most pre-schools across Aberdeenshire. Around 70% of evaluations were assessed as *good* or better for this indicator. Further, over 80% of evaluations for the staff/child interaction quality indicator were assessed as *good* or better in pre-schools during 2005-2007.

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Pre-schools, using four-point scale, April 2005-March 2007



Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Pre-schools, using six-point scale, April-December 2007

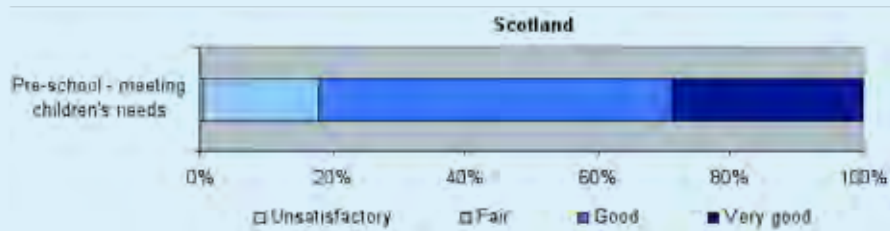
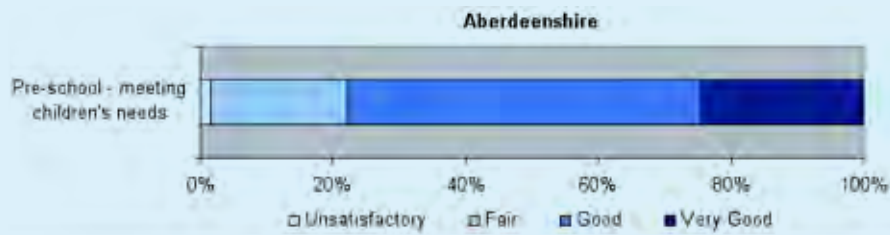


Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

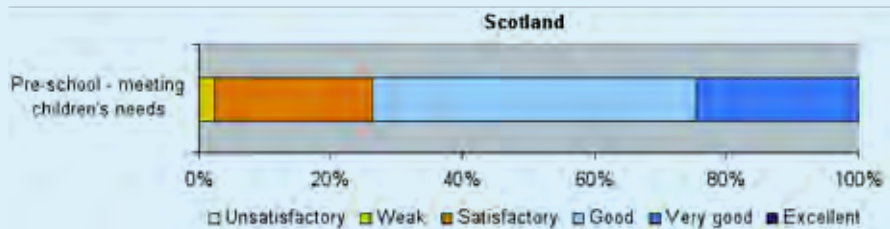
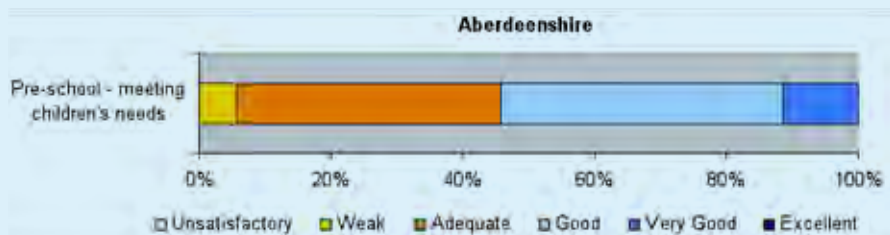
Meeting Learning Needs in Pre-schools

Data compiled for the Improving Scottish Education report comparison also shows that most pre-schools are good at meeting children's learning needs. Almost 80% of evaluations in pre-schools were assessed as *good* or better (using the four-point scale), a similar level to that of Scotland. Using the six-point scale, the percentage of evaluations assessed as *good* or better was below the national level (54% compared to 74%). However, more recent inspection data for pre-schools (2008/09) demonstrates a clear improvement in relation to the meeting children's learning needs quality indicator (using the six-point scale). The percentage of evaluations at *good* or better has improved from 54% to 66%.

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Pre-schools, using four-point scale, April 2005-March 2007



Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Pre-schools, using six-point scale, April-December 2007

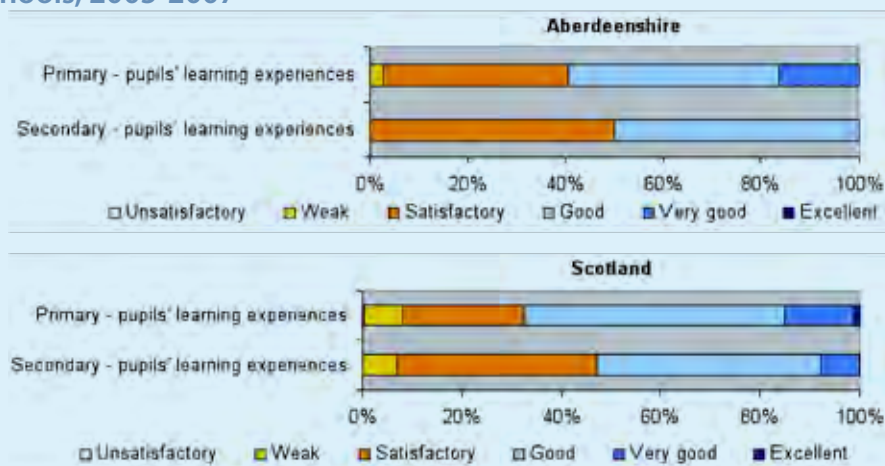


Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

The quality of children's learning experiences and the degree to which staff are able to meet their differing learning needs varied across classes and schools during 2005-2007. For primary schools in Aberdeenshire, around 60% of evaluations were assessed as *good* or better for the pupils' learning experience quality indicator compared to around 70% across Scotland. For secondary schools, around 50% of evaluations were assessed as *good* or better for this indicator across both Aberdeenshire and Scotland. For the meeting pupils' needs quality indicator, the percentage of evaluations at *good* or better was around 50% for both primary and secondary schools in Aberdeenshire. These figures are slightly lower than the equivalent national levels.

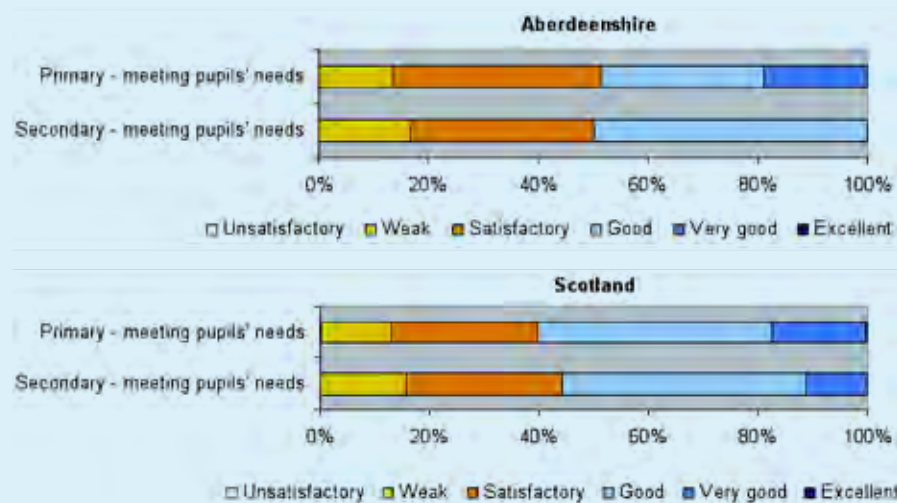
Pupils' Learning Experiences in Schools

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Primary and Secondary Schools, 2005-2007



Meeting Learning Needs in Schools

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Primary and Secondary Schools, 2005-2007



3.1.1 HM Inspectorate of Education Evidence

Primary School Inspections

	% Evaluated as being:			
	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
Pupils' learning experiences	0%	29%	46%	25%
Meeting learners' needs	4%	42%	29%	25%

Secondary School Inspections

	% Evaluated as being:			
	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
Pupils' learning experiences	0%	0%	100%	0%
Meeting learners' needs	0%	0%	67%	33%

Comparison of this, more recent data, with that compiled for the Improving Scottish Education report comparison, demonstrates a clear improvement in relation to the Pupils' learning experiences quality indicator in both primary and secondary sectors. For primary schools, the percentage of evaluations at *good* or *very good* has improved from 59% to 71%, and for secondary schools, from 50% to 100%.

3.1.2 Survey of Stakeholders views

Another source of evidence that demonstrates the extent to which learners' feel that their needs are being met is provided in the responses of pupils to the survey of stakeholders' views that the service conducts annually.

In terms of views about school experiences, the 2009 survey found that primary pupils were more positive than secondary pupils. Around 70% or more of the primary pupils surveyed responded positively to 11 out of the 12 questions relating to school experiences, compared to 6 out of 12 for the group of secondary pupils. However, the vast majority of pupils (96% of both primary and secondary pupils) felt that doing well in school is important. Other positive themes included: being happy with the progress made in school; feeling safe and secure in school; receiving support for learning in school; and receiving recognition from teachers for tasks well done. While the proportions of primary pupils responding favourably to these questions have declined slightly compared to last year, the positive response rates remain above 90%. Another area where the positive response rate for primary pupils has improved compared to last year is the setting of targets for learning (increase by 4 percentage points to 87%).

For secondary pupils, there have also been some improvements in the favourable response rates for these questions. For example, the proportion of positive responses from secondary pupils increased by 5 percentage points for the following questions: receiving recognition from teachers for tasks well done and being happy with the progress made in school.

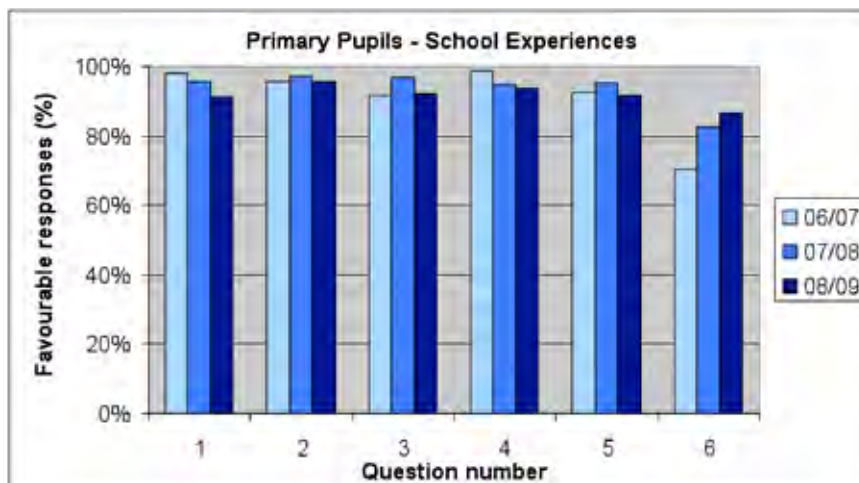
Areas where secondary pupils responded less favourably include: being able to suggest improvements for the school (38%) and lessons being organised in a way that suits the pupils' learning (56%). However, the positive response rate for the latter statement has shown an improvement of 6 percent, compared with last year. Favourable response rates for secondary pupils relating to being proud of their school and their school providing an excellent education also showed improvements compared to last year (up 7 and 6 percentage points respectively). Further details of the pupil survey results and trends are presented below:



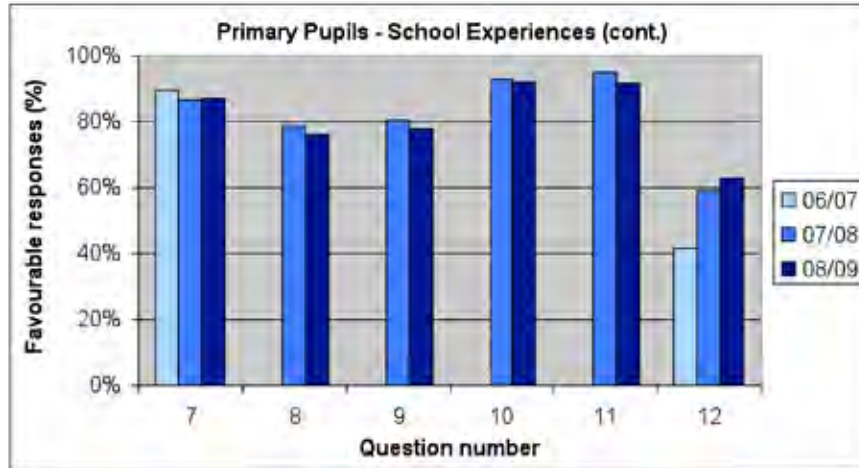
Primary Pupils - School Experiences

Questions

- 1) When I am in school I feel safe and secure
- 2) Doing well at school is important to me
- 3) I get the support that I need to help me learn when I am in school
- 4) My teachers let me know when I have done well
- 5) I am happy with the progress that I have made in school over the past year
- 6) I am allowed to set my own targets for my learning



- 7) Lessons are organised in a way that suits the ways I like to learn
- 8) I have been able to suggest improvements for my school
- 9) My school has a statement of its aims that has been shared with pupils
- 10) I am proud of my school
- 11) My school provides an excellent education
- 12) Pupils/young people have a voice in the running of Aberdeenshire Education, Learning and Leisure's services

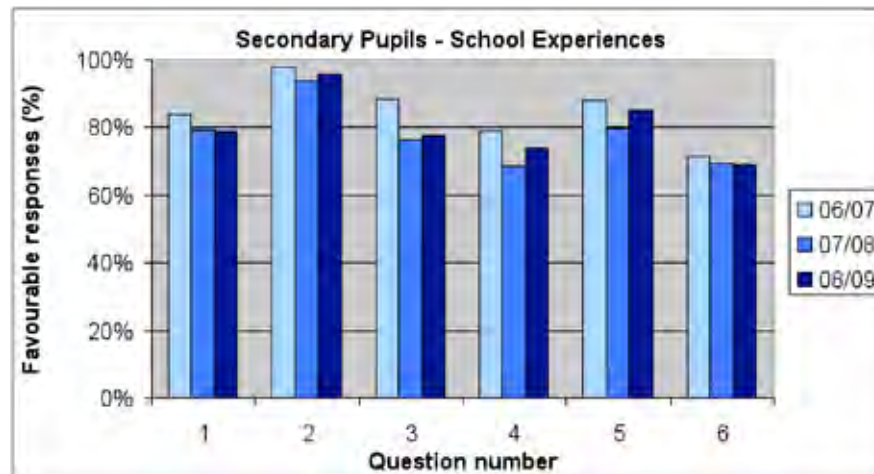


(NB Questions 8-11 were not included in the 2006/07 survey)

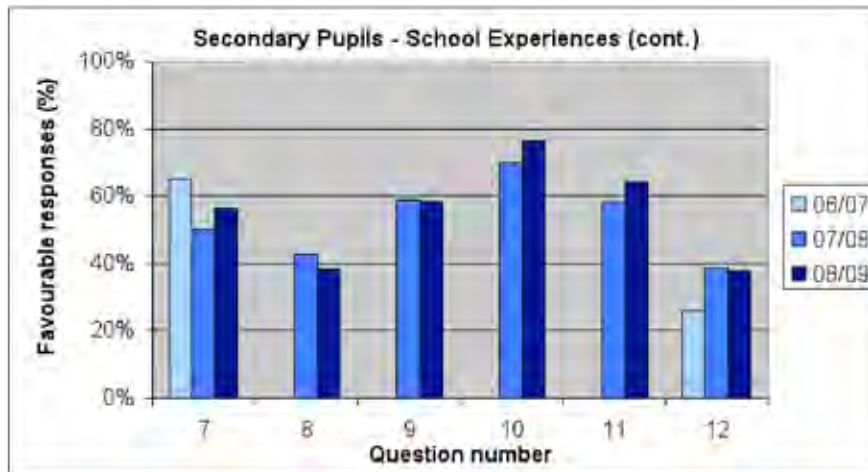
Secondary Pupils - School Experiences

Questions

- 1) When I am in school I feel safe and secure
- 2) Doing well at school is important to me
- 3) I get the support that I need to help me learn when I am in school
- 4) My teachers let me know when I have done well
- 5) I am happy with the progress that I have made in school over the past year
- 6) I am allowed to set my own targets for my learning
- 7) Lessons are organised in a way that suits the ways I like to learn



- 8) I have been able to suggest improvements for my school
- 9) My school has a statement of its aims that has been shared with pupils
- 10) I am proud of my school
- 11) My school provides an excellent education
- 12) Pupils/young people have a voice in the running of Aberdeenshire Education, Learning and Leisure's services



(NB Questions 8-11 were not included in the 2006/07 survey)

In summary, the survey showed that pupils felt that their needs were being well met in school in terms of:

- Their recognition of the importance of doing well in school
- The progress they had made in school over past year
- Feeling safe and secure in school
- Acknowledging the support for learning they receive in school
- Receiving recognition from teachers

However, pupils also made clear that they felt their needs could still be more effectively met by:

- Providing them with a more effective voice in the running of EL&L
- Providing them with more effective ways to suggest improvements for school (secondary)
- Arranging the lessons can be more effectively organised so as to suit individual learning styles (secondary)



3.2 Other learners

As well as meeting the learning needs of children and young people in schools, through our Community Learning and Development (CLD) strategy, we have a positive impact on all of our learners. We are working together to realise the vision of the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership that everyone in Aberdeenshire has access to CLD opportunities that allow them to gain the knowledge and skills, both individually and collectively, to fulfil their potential, and to have the capacity to participate meaningfully in community life. The strategy involves providing and enabling:

- Community capacity building/engaging with communities
- Promoting achievement through learning for adults
- Encouraging achievement through learning for young people
- Ensuring learner support and progression
- Developing the Aberdeenshire Community Learning partnership

The work that is being carried out to implement the strategy focuses on using these priorities to deliver valuable outcomes for young people and adults, parents/carers and families, and their communities.

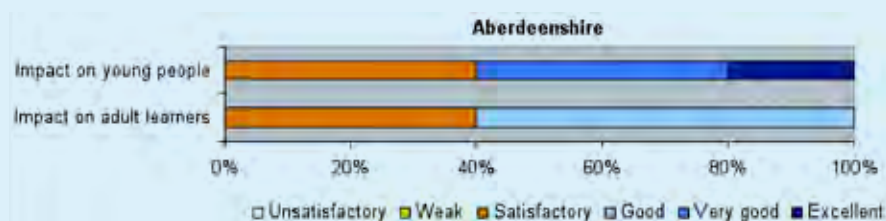
In addition, we continue to tailor services to meet the needs of particular communities – e.g. making available foreign language collections in Russian and Polish in libraries to serve the communities in the Peterhead area, as well as delivering ESOL classes and supporting migrant worker associations in that area.

Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

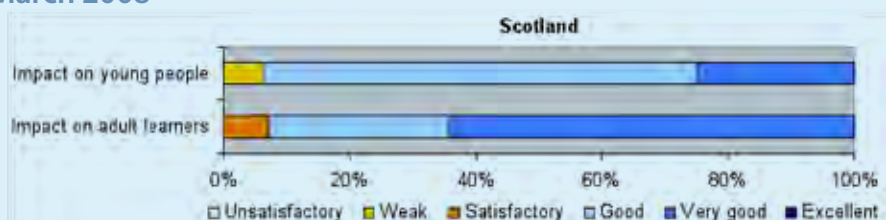
Community Learning and Development – Impact on Participants

The impact of youth work and adult learning was assessed as *good* or better for three of the five CLD learning communities inspected in Aberdeenshire during 2008-09. While this is below the equivalent national levels reported for 2006-2008, (where over 90% of evaluations were assessed at *good* or better), none of the evaluations for Aberdeenshire were assessed at a level below *satisfactory*.

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in the CLD Sector, 2008-09



Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in the CLD Sector, March 2006 – March 2008



3.3 Parents/Carers and families

We have a positive impact on parents/carers and families by:

- Providing a range of quality education, learning and leisure services

And

- Ensuring that we develop and nurture effective partnerships with them
- Enabling effective means of communication and consultation
- Working effectively in partnership with other agencies to identify, assess and meet their needs
- Supporting and developing the work of Parent Councils for each school.

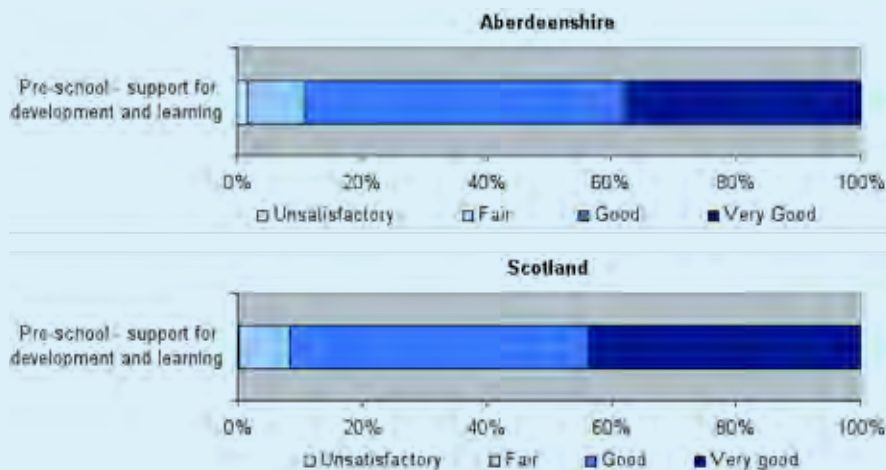


Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

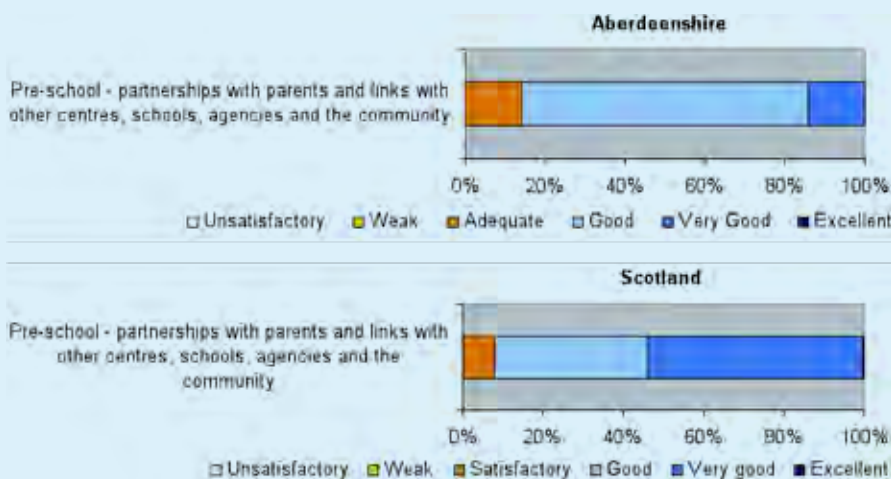
Partnerships – Pre-schools

The Improving Scottish Education report comparison highlights that most pre-schools have good partnerships with parents and links with other centres, schools, agencies and the community (86% of evaluations assessed at *good* or better). Further, around 90% of evaluations for the support for development and learning quality indicator in pre-schools were assessed as *good* or better, a similar level to that of Scotland.

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Pre-schools, using four-point scale, April 2005-March 2007



Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Pre-schools, using six-point scale, April-December 2007

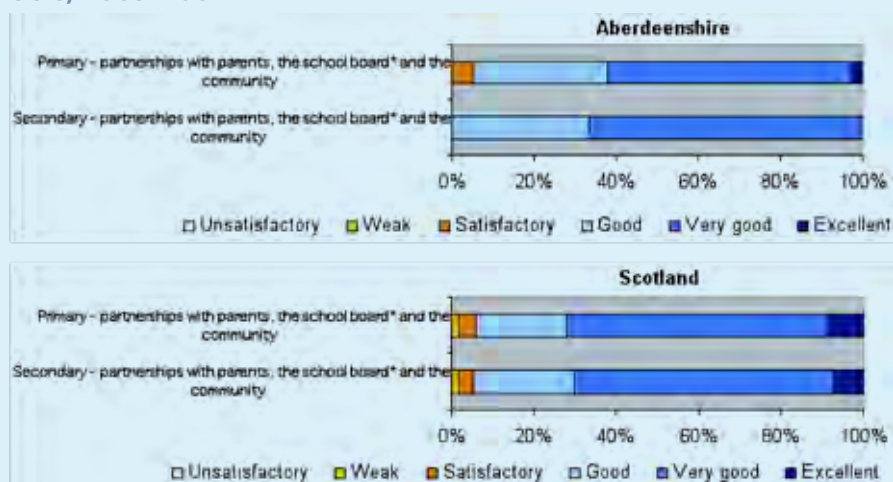


Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

Partnerships – Schools

The vast majority of schools in Aberdeenshire have good partnerships with parents, the school board and the community. The percentage of evaluations assessed as *good* or better for this indicator was 95% for primary schools and 100% for secondary schools during 2005-2007. Both of these figures are above the national levels.

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Primary and Secondary Schools, 2005-2007



3.3.1 HM Inspectorate of Education Evidence

HM Inspectorate of Education regularly highlight partnership with parents as being a particular strength of school during inspections. In the period 2008-09, this was the case in 47% of inspections.

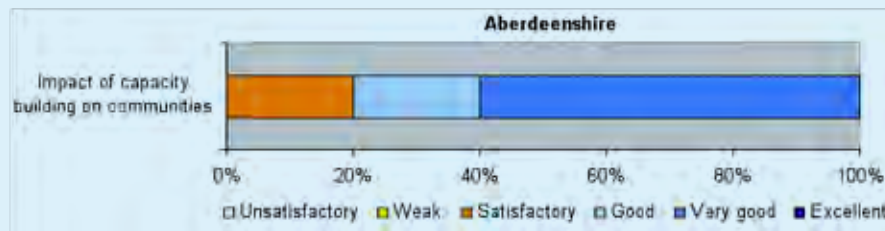
In addition, in the inspections in this period where the quality indicator "The school's success in involving parents/carers and families" was explicitly evaluated, 70% of the evaluations were at *very good* and the remaining 30% were at *good*.

Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

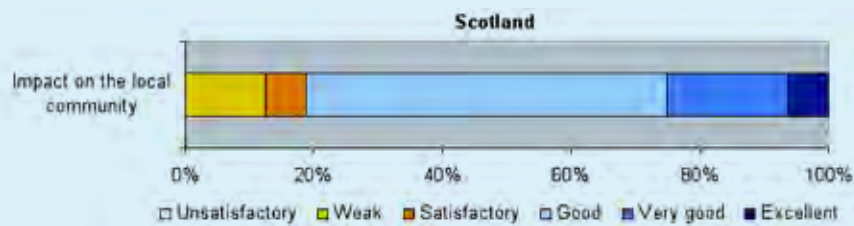
Community Learning and Development – Impact on the Local Community

The impact of community capacity building is good in most CLD learning communities in Aberdeenshire. Some 80% of evaluations during 2008-09 were assessed at *good* or better for this quality indicator, a similar proportion to the equivalent national level for 2006-2008. Indeed, the impact of community capacity building was assessed as *very good* for three of the five CLD learning communities inspected in Aberdeenshire during 2008-09.

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in the CLD Sector, 2008-09



Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in the CLD Sector, March 2006 – March 2008



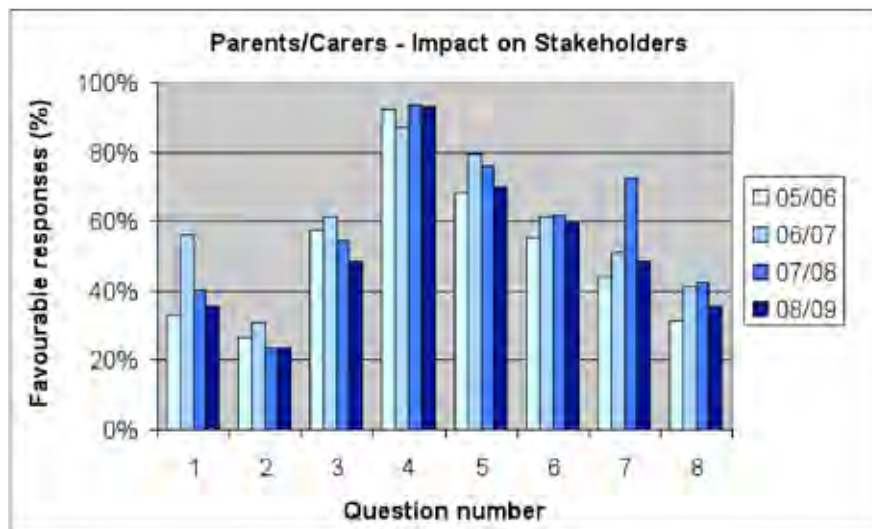
3.3.2 Stakeholder Survey Evidence

The annual stakeholder survey also provides evidence of the positive impact on Parents and Carers. For the fourth consecutive year, parents/carers were most favourable about the education authority's promotion of opportunities for pupils to learn about keeping healthy (over 90%, a similar rate to last year). The second and third highest positive response rates were for the following statements: parents/carers have a good relationship with the school (85%) and my child's school has a clear and coherent statement of its aims (83%). Filtering out the "don't know" responses, also highlights relatively high favourable response rates for the following statements: the education authority is effective in promoting equal opportunities (92% excluding "don't knows" compared to 49% including "don't knows"); and there is a high standard of education in our area (87% excluding "don't knows" compared to 72% including "don't knows"). Further details of Parents/Carers' responses in the survey are provided below:

Questions

- 1) The authority gives our school appropriate resources so that it can continue to improve the quality of education of our children.
- 2) If parents raise an issue of concern about their child with staff in the Council offices, they take appropriate action.

- 3) Different services (e.g. social services, health services) work together effectively with the school to help children and families.
- 4) The education authority promotes opportunities for pupils to learn about keeping healthy.
- 5) There are good opportunities for pupils to participate in sporting initiatives in our area.
- 6) There are good opportunities for pupils to participate in cultural initiatives such as art, music and drama in our area.
- 7) Parents/Carers and families feel that they are treated fairly by the education authority.
- 8) Parents are aware of how the education authority's procedures for supporting individual pupils with additional support needs are implemented.



In summary, Parents/Carers indicated that we are having a positive impact on them and their families in the following areas:

- Promoting opportunities for pupils to learn about keeping healthy
- Good relationship with the school
- School has clear and coherent statement of aims
- Promoting equal opportunities
- High standard of education

However, they also indicated that we could have a more positive impact by working to improve:

- The provision of appropriate resources for schools
- How we share with them knowledge of authority's priorities for improvement
- How we share with them knowledge of procedures for supporting pupils with additional support needs
- How we communicate with them about new initiatives

3.3.3 Enabling effective means of communication and consultation

- Each school is required to consult with Parents/carers about the school's Improvement plan priorities.
- With the introduction, in 2008-09 of the new Management Information system for schools, SEEMIS, all schools are now able to use instant text messaging to inform groups of parents/carers about pupil absences, unexpected closures etc.
- The use of the online School Closures section of the Aberdeenshire corporate website ensures that information about school closures during periods of inclement weather is quickly and effectively shared.
- In 2009, Aberdeenshire was the first education authority to provide Parental access to the national educational intranet, *glow*.
- During 2008-09, the Education, Learning and Leisure service organised two major consultation exercises which involved parents/carers (as well as other stakeholders). The first of these focused on the major curricular proposals contained within the Aberdeenshire 3-18 Curriculum framework. The responses to this consultation meant that work on the new curriculum can proceed on the basis of strong support from parents.
- The second consultation was on the pattern of school holidays for the next five years. As a result of this, the dates for the major school holidays for the next five years have been agreed. These have been published on the Aberdeenshire website and all parents/carers have also been provided with a leaflet containing the information.

3.3.4 Working effectively in partnership with other agencies to identify, assess and meet their needs

We aim to achieve this through the implementation of "Getting it right for Aberdeenshire's children", which is the overarching strategic plan that:

- Sets out our vision for children and young people in Aberdeenshire.
- Explains how National objectives for children and young people in Scotland link with local priorities for improving outcomes and providing better services for everyone in Aberdeenshire.
- Summarises the main planning and decision-making structures for integrated children's services and the new Integrated Assessment Framework for children and young people in Aberdeenshire.
- Sets out our improvement objectives for children's services in Aberdeenshire.

The Integrated Assessment Framework provides a standardised model for assessing needs and planning to meet them. It actively requires children and parents/carers to be active partners to these processes, and for all children's services to work effectively and collaboratively, within a more structured framework for information sharing between services. The number of children and young people who have an Integrated Assessment and plan to meet their needs when required features as a measure of progress within the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement.

In August 2009, HM Inspectorate of Education conducted an inspection of services to protect children in the Aberdeenshire Council area. The report found that services were *good* or *very good* across all of the areas inspected.

3.3.5 Supporting and developing the work of Parent Councils for each school

Since the introduction of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006, Parent Councils have been established in 94% of schools across Aberdeenshire. In addition, the following steps have been taken to involve, support and work with parents/carers through the Parent Council structure:

- Distribution of information from Learning & Teaching Scotland
- Quality Improvement Officers providing training for Parent Council members in the appointment of Head Teachers and Depute Head Teachers to their school
- Involving Parent Councils in the Aberdeenshire early years review
- The establishment of successful parent involvement conferences in September 2008 and October 2009
- Sharing of the performance information with Parent Councils, including attainment and achievement information, Standard and Quality reports, HM Inspectorate of Educations and Care Commission reports.
- All Parent Councils given access to the national educational intranet *glow*, through the setting up of dedicated *glow groups* for each Parent Council. Aberdeenshire Parents/Carers were the first in Scotland to gain access to *glow*.



3.4 Our Staff

In delivering services, our most important and valuable asset is our staff. Over 8000 people are employed within the Education, Learning and Leisure service, including over 3000 teachers.

Through our processes for selection and recruitment, induction, continuous professional development and training (Employee Development Review scheme (EDRS) (for non-teachers) and Professional Development and Review Scheme (PDRS) (for teachers)), leadership development and succession planning, we seek to ensure a positive and improving impact on our staff.

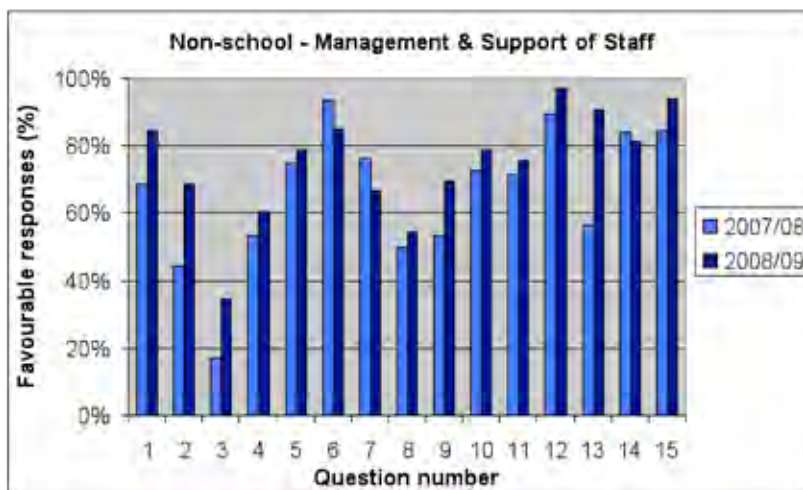
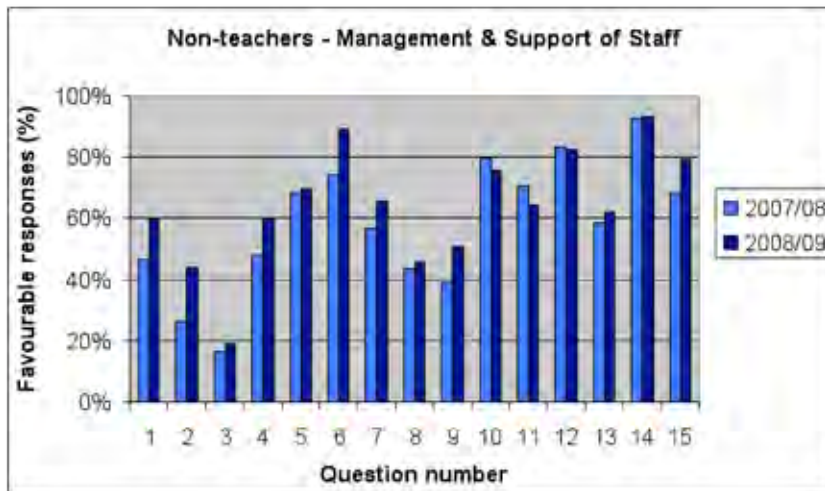
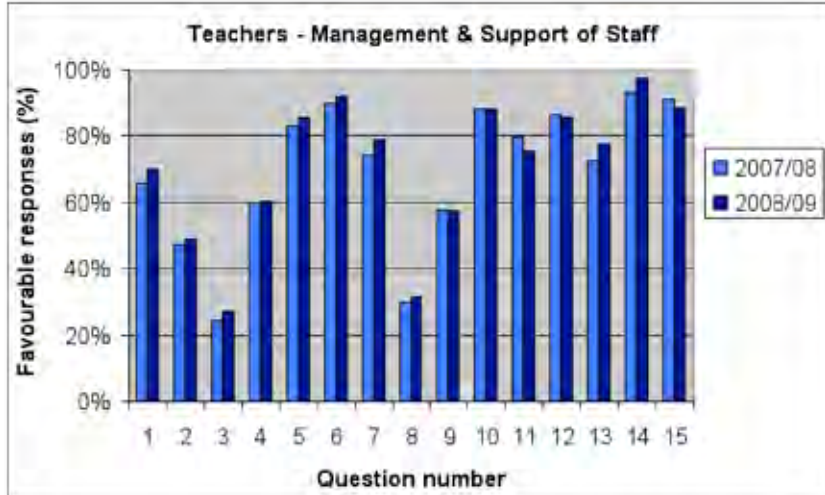
Further information on these processes is available in Section 4, however, evidence from the annual stakeholder survey may be examined in order to assess the extent to which we have been successful or are improving in this regard.



Questions in the survey

- 1) There is a high-quality working ethos in the authority.
- 2) My work for the authority is recognised and valued.
- 3) Morale is high among staff in the authority.
- 4) If I raise a matter of concern, managers take appropriate action.
- 5) I am treated fairly.
- 6) Health and safety information is available to me.
- 7) I get feedback from my line manager about the quality of my work.
- 8) I have sufficient time to fulfil my remit effectively.
- 9) I am given time to carry out continuous professional development effectively.
- 10) Training and development activities that I have undertaken have had a positive impact on my ability to do my job.

- 11) I have access to appropriate training and development opportunities.
- 12) I am confident in dealing with problems and complaints.
- 13) My expertise and professional experience are used effectively in the education authority.
- 14) I have a sound knowledge about the authority's procedures for child protection and promote them.
- 15) I have access to the information I need to do my job effectively.



In summary, the survey indicates that we are making a positive impact on our staff in relation to the following areas:

- Child protection and health and safety guidance
- Confidence in dealing with problems and complaints
- Access to information
- Training and development activities having a positive impact on ability to do job
- Self-evaluation and quality improvement guidance (teachers)
- Regular evaluation of performance (teachers)
- Impact of Curriculum for Excellence on Improvement Planning (teachers)

However, the survey also suggests that we need to improve the extent to which we are having a positive impact on staff in relation to the following areas:

- Morale
- Liaison with other departments and services
- Sharing good practice with staff from other departments
- Time to fulfil remit effectively

Overall Evaluation	
Our evaluation of our Impact on Learners	Good
Our evaluation of our Impact on Parents/Carers and families	Very Good
Our evaluation of our Impact on staff	Good
Our evaluation of our Impact on local communities	Good



Section 4: How good is our delivery of key processes, management and leadership ?

We continually strive to improve the delivery of Education, Learning and Leisure processes, management and leadership across the service. This has involved work in the following areas:

Curriculum 3-18

Implementing a wide ranging consultation process on proposals for a new 3-18 Curriculum framework for Aberdeenshire. As a result, we have been able to make very good progress with the development and implementation of the 3-18 Curriculum framework, which embodies the Scottish Government's proposals for a Curriculum for Excellence. This has involved:

- A 3-18 Steering Group which oversees the on-going development and implementation of Aberdeenshire's Curriculum Framework 3-18.
- A high level timeline for implementation which reflects the national timeline and policy.
- An implementation support plan which sets out the areas of Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Well being as the key focus areas for development across all establishments during this school session 2009-10. Strategy groups for the three dimensions are in place and they are each led by a Quality Improvement Officer with a specific remit to engage all staff in Continuing Professional Development opportunities which familiarise staff with the experiences and outcomes. *Glow* groups have been set up to share advice and practice.
- The 3-18 Steering Group has also commissioned a further strategy group, whose focus will be Learning, Teaching and Assessment.



- Curriculum Architecture work is currently focussed on a curriculum map for P6-S1. Each cluster of secondary school plus associated primaries will work to develop its own P6-S1 curriculum map, within an overall agreed framework, which will allow learning and teaching experiences to be planned which reflect an appropriate balance between subject based and interdisciplinary contexts, and which allow a curriculum which delivers a set of entitlements for each learner to be built.
- Professional Support Groups have been established to support all areas of the curriculum. These groups have a blend of face to face and virtual meetings and are designed to support delivery and improvement of learning and teaching across subjects and sectors.
- Implementing a strategy which embodies the national “Determined to succeed” initiative by addressing the themes of:
 - » Supporting the development of skills for life, skills for work
 - » Engagement with employers
 - » Broadening the reach of Determined to Succeed
 - » Embedding enterprise within the curriculum
 - » Building capacity
 - » Enhancing our international profile.

This initiative is complementary to and supportive of our 3-18 Curriculum framework proposals.

ICT Infrastructure

Continuing to make improvements to the ICT infrastructure of all of our schools. All secondary schools now have sector leading connectivity and a programme exists to further improve the quality of the connections for all primary schools. All secondary schools are now also wireless enabled, which provides much greater flexibility in the planning and delivery of learning experiences supported by ICT. All secondary schools and many offices across the service are now equipped with state of the art video conferencing facilities, which not only allows for meetings to be convened without the need for staff to travel, but also opens up the possibility of much more flexibility in the delivery of teaching and learning using these facilities. In 2008-09, the first pupils in Aberdeenshire obtained qualifications in Gaelic, the teaching and learning for which was facilitated through video conferencing.

Ensuring that Aberdeenshire is leading the rest of the country in the development and use of the national education intranet, *glow*. The Aberdeenshire *glow* Team is now well established and working across all schools supporting staff and pupils. 42,000 *glow* user accounts have been created. Plans are in place to further develop the use of *glow* and to make it integral to almost every aspect of delivering teaching and learning in Aberdeenshire:

- Learning and Teaching Scotland has commissioned Aberdeenshire Council to develop the use of *glow* beyond school. There will be four development strands: Parental Involvement, *glow* and the Education, Learning and Leisure Service, Partners in Learning and Learning with Employers.

- A Virtual School is being developed within which will exist online tools which support working towards a continual cycle of self evaluation, reflection and improvement planning. Aberdeenshire is working in consultation with Learning and Teaching Scotland and the National Curriculum for Excellence team to develop a template, support and guidance for planning for learning through the Aberdeenshire entitlements and the national outcomes and experiences. These will be made available through *glow*.

16+ Learning Choices

Implementing the Aberdeenshire strategy for More Choices, More Chances, which seeks to increase the number of young people who end up in “positive destinations” when they leave school, through their participation in education, employment, training or voluntary work. All young people in Aberdeenshire at age 16 are entitled to an offer which meets their continuing learning needs and we are well placed to achieve our target of all young people ending in positive destinations by 2011, having achieved 91% by 2008. However, it should be noted that this target was set before the onset of the current economic recession.



Quality Improvement and Performance Management

Developing and implementing of a new model for School Improvement, which places self evaluation at the heart of a process involving a key “Leadership for Learning” meeting involving engagement between officers and schools management and staff, appropriate use and analysis of available data, involvement of partners for improvement and linkages to existing external scrutiny processes (HMIe Inspection).

Developing a Quality Improvement Framework for the entire Education, Learning and Leisure service, which is based on the widely recognised “6 key questions” structure within the “Quality Management in Education 2” framework. The new framework will integrate this along with the other currently used frameworks across the service, so that improvement in schools, in community learning and development teams, in libraries, in sports and leisure facilities, in museums and across services for children

will be pursued using a common framework. It will support service level improvement planning and provide the basis for the development of a Performance Management and measurement system for the service which reflects its improvement priorities.

Across Lifelong Learning and Leisure services we have introduced new monthly performance reports to monitor our responsiveness to local circumstances and the take up of services provided.

Meeting the needs of children and families

Implementing of "Getting it right for Aberdeenshire's Children" – Aberdeenshire's plan for Integrated Children's services across the authority. This, not only fulfils our statutory obligation to prepare and implement such a plan, but it is also Aberdeenshire's response to the national Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) agenda.

Preparing for the implementation of the provisions of the Education (Additional Support for Learning)(Scotland) Act 2009, by revising our existing "Pathways to Policy: Supporting Children's Learning" policy framework for additional support needs.



Continuing work to take forward the recommendations of the review of Early Years provision, published in February 2009, with the aim of delivering a more effective and integrated combination of universal and targeted support to parents/carers and young children across Aberdeenshire.

Delivery of Sports and Leisure Services

Initiating an investigation into whether there is a business case for delivering sports and leisure services through a charitable trust or trusts. The investigation will also consider the possible case for delivering cultural services and community learning and development in the same way.

Delivery of services through 21st Century facilities

Implementing the service's Asset Management strategy and capital plan priorities, which enshrine our plans to ensure provision of fit for purpose 21st Century Education, Learning and Leisure facilities within Aberdeenshire. The total value of the capital plan for Education, Learning and Leisure, which have been approved by the council amounts to £588 million for the period from now until 2023. This envisages the building of three new (replacement) secondary schools, ten new (replacement primaries), three replacement Special schools and an extensive programme of upgrading. The plan also provides for one new (replacement) swimming pool complex plus an extensive programme of upgrades to existing pools, museums, libraries and community halls.

In October 2009, the Scottish Government announced which school build projects would be eligible for support through its School Investment Programme. Aberdeenshire was successful in securing funding for two secondary school projects, out of the fourteen in total, announced across Scotland.



Recruitment and selection

Continuing our work to ensure that recruitment and retention of teachers is given a high priority. This has involved:

- A total of 90 new appointments were made to permanent and fixed term (long term temporary) teaching posts in Aberdeenshire schools, for an August 2009 start.
- Making effective use of creative advertising to generate interest from potential applicants for vacancies, which stress the benefits of living and working in Aberdeenshire.
- Aberdeenshire Quality Improvement Officers being present at all Initial Teacher Education Institution “open days” across Scotland, prior to Christmas 2008, to engage with final year students to encourage them to choose Aberdeenshire as the preferred choice for placements and ultimately for employment.
- Appointing Full Release Mentors to provide support for probationers in primary schools, as an alternative to the existing model of probationer support at an individual school level. Ten teachers were appointed to these roles in June 2009.

Leadership Development

Continuing our work to better prepare staff for leadership roles in schools. This has involved:

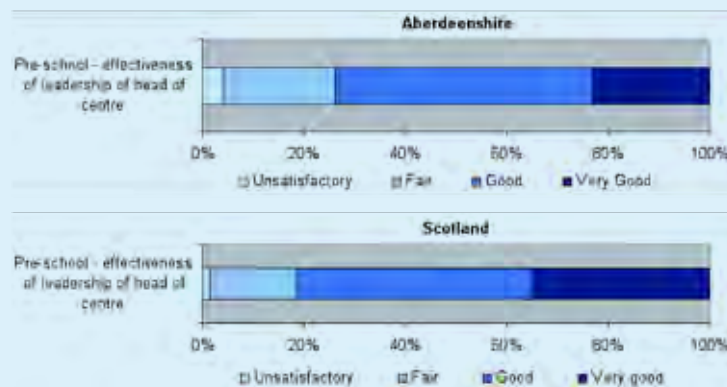
- Officers developing a leadership development programme for teachers. This will aim to enhance the capacity for leadership at all levels in schools including preparing staff to take on senior management positions.
- “Leadership Conversations” led by the Director for existing Head Teachers. These have been well attended and very positive feedback has been received.
- A series of conferences for Senior Management Teams which have focused on key priorities including Curriculum for Excellence.
- Support days for Depute Head Teachers and Principal Teachers in Primary Schools.
- Mentoring Course jointly developed and delivered with Aberdeen University’s School of Education with participants ranging from Class Teachers to Head Teachers.
- The creation of 66 “Sustaining Teacher Learning Communities” in 70 schools within which teachers are undertaking the role of managing and progressing each learning community.
- Opportunities for Coaching and Mentoring support for existing Senior Management Teams are regularly identified and implemented as appropriate.

Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

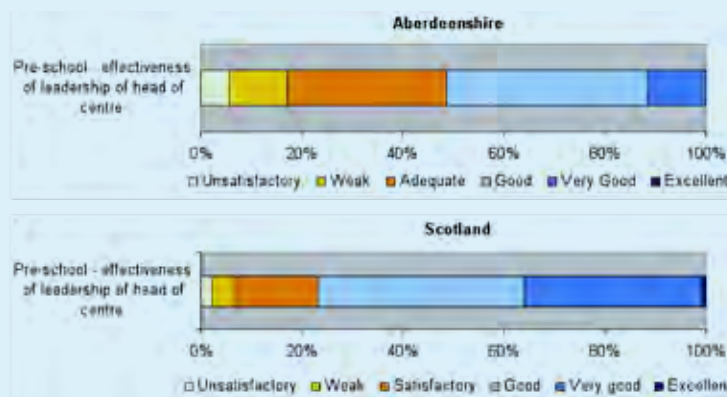
Leadership – Pre-schools

The quality of leadership in pre-schools across Aberdeenshire varied over the period 2005-2007. The effectiveness of leadership indicator was assessed as *good* for most pre-schools between April 2005 and March 2007 (74% compared to 82% across Scotland). However, between April and December 2007 only 50% of evaluations for this indicator were assessed as *good* or better. More recent data (2008/09) demonstrates a slight improvement in relation to the quality of leadership in pre-schools (leadership of improvement and change indicator), with 55% of evaluations assessed as *good* or better.

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Pre-schools, using four-point scale, April 2005-March 2007



Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Pre-schools, using six-point scale, April-December 2007

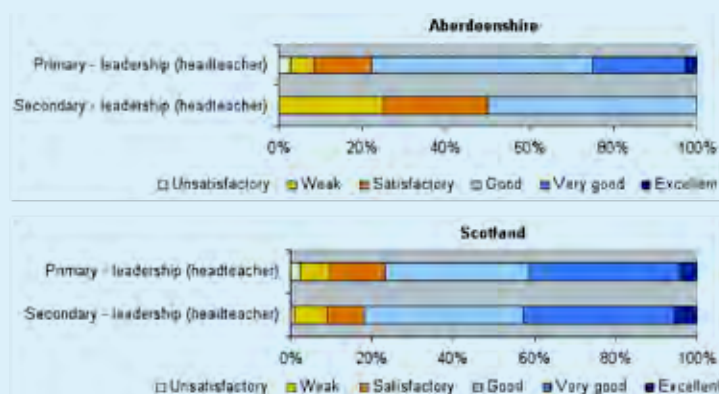


Improving Scottish Education Report Comparison

Leadership – Schools

Leadership is strong in most primary schools across Aberdeenshire, while the quality of leadership across secondary schools is more varied. For instance, during 2005-2007 around 80% of evaluations for the quality of leadership indicator in primary schools were assessed as *good* or better compared to 50% in secondary schools. While the percentage for primary schools is in line with the national level, the percentage for secondary schools is below the national level.

Distribution of Quality Indicator Evaluations in Primary and Secondary Schools, 2005-2007



- Implementing a project to migrate the service to a new Management Information System. During session 2008-09, all 172 schools plus all support services migrated to use the SEEMIS system, which is now in place in 28 of Scotland's 32 local education authorities.
- Working in partnership with Aberdeenshire's Transport and Infrastructure service, public transport contractors, the police and other partners on a range of development aimed at improving road safety in relation to school transport.

Overall Evaluation

Our evaluation of our Delivery of Education, Learning and Leisure Services	Very Good
Our evaluation of our Leadership of change and improvement	Good
Our evaluation of our Leadership and Direction	Good



Section 5: Our Priorities for Improvement

Education Learning and Leisure will play a major part in helping deliver Aberdeenshire Council's Strategic Priorities and the local outcomes in Aberdeenshire's Single Outcome Agreement.

We have also set a number of priorities that take account of national policy and local drivers as well as key findings from inspections, self evaluation and performance information. These priorities are

- Further development of A Curriculum for Excellence through Aberdeenshire's 3-18 Curricular Framework
- Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) particularly in relation to protecting children and development of the Children's Plan
- Further developing the use of *glow*
- Providing new and up-graded schools and facilities for sport, culture and community learning and development in line with the Council's Asset Management Plan
- Implementing a new strategy for Community Learning and Development
- Drawing up new strategies for Sport and Culture
- Introducing new Early Years policies
- Investigating the business case for delivering Sport, Culture and Community Learning and Development through a Trust or Trusts
- Ensuring a rigorous and systematic approach to self evaluation across all parts of the Service and revamping our performance management systems to ensure continuous improvement throughout the Service
- Responding to the findings from inspections and external evaluations and Scrutiny and Audit Committee investigations
- Delivering local outcomes assigned to the Service in the Single Outcome Agreement
- Ensuring ongoing efficiencies in a period of economic uncertainty
- Continuing the recruitment and retention strategy to ensure the very best staff are in place and taking forward a new corporate workforce strategy.

This document is also available on Aberdeenshire Council's web site:

www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk



Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea - the very best of Scotland

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