
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

18 February 2020

Cabinet

Title: Out of School Care in North Ayrshire – Provision of support to the community, voluntary and private sectors

Purpose:

- i) To advise Cabinet of the outcome of a review of out of school care in North Ayrshire by the Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme Out of School Care workstream.
- ii) To seek Cabinet approval for a new Out of School Care Policy (Appendix 1) which outlines a range of support measures to be provided for the community, voluntary and private sectors by North Ayrshire Council.

Recommendation: It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) Notes the outcome of work by the Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme Out of School Care workstream; and
- b) Approves the North Ayrshire Council Out of School Care Policy and the range of support measures proposed within it to be provided by North Ayrshire Council.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme (ELCEP) Board has carried out a review of Out of School Care (OSC) in North Ayrshire. This included commissioning the Scottish Out of School Network (SOSCN) to support this work.
- 1.2 The ELCEP Board has prepared an OSC policy for North Ayrshire Council which sets out the ways in which North Ayrshire Council could support the sector to be more sustainable and to deliver high quality OSC experiences for children and families.
- 1.3 The measures proposed within the policy relate to the provision of free lets for OSC providers within school establishments; the delivery of a learning and development pathway to build knowledge and capacity amongst OSC staff; and the support for the creation of an OSC Network that will enable the sector to share practice, information and resources. It is expected that these measures will make a significant contribution to the overall sustainability and potential growth of the sector

2. Background

- 2.1 The Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme (ELCEP) Board has been responsible for the review of Out of School Care (OSC) provision in North Ayrshire. OSC is a term that covers after school and before school provision, breakfast clubs and holiday care provision. All OSC services in North Ayrshire are delivered by the community, voluntary or private sectors.
- 2.2 As part of this review, the Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN), the national support body for out of school care, was commissioned in January 2019 to undertake a consultancy project to assess the current sustainability and quality of OSC services in North Ayrshire.
- 2.3 Historically in the early 2000s, out of school care was nationally funded by the National Lottery, government grants and local authority funding.
- 2.4 In 2011, as a result of required budget savings, the Council was no longer able to support OSC services, and the decision was taken to reduce levels of officer support and financial assistance to the community, voluntary and private sector OSC services.
- 2.5 OSC services are now wholly reliant on fees paid by parents and it is very difficult to sustain services, particularly during holiday periods, without additional financial support either directly through grants or indirectly through free/low-cost rents or paid-for qualifications and training for staff. It is acknowledged that it is not all a question of additional funding as some services are able to be self-sustaining, but this is usually in larger urban areas with large working populations, where paying-customers are more numerous and/or where premises may be free or subsidised.
- 2.6 In addition, any childcare service which provides care for children on non-domestic premises for a total of more than two hours per day and on at least six days per year, must register with the Scottish Care Inspectorate and meet the National Care Standards. Whilst in the past there were extensions given to OSC staff to achieve their formal qualification appropriate to their role within the organisation, this is no longer the case.
- 2.7 If a service cannot meet the required qualifications and standards that apply and pay salaries commensurate with the expectation of the market, then an OSC service may be lost and the families relying on the service may be disadvantaged as a result. Without access to wrap-around child care, the aspiration of the Council to help more people into work and out of poverty may be impacted.
- 2.8 The review of out of school care in North Ayrshire by the Council and Community Planning Partners aims to support the provision of out of school care services by the community, voluntary and private sectors, to ensure that the council meets its Priority Outcomes as set out in the Council Plan 2019-24:
 - North Ayrshire has an inclusive, growing and enterprising economy.
 - North Ayrshire's children and young people experience the best start in life.
- 2.9 North Ayrshire Council recognises that out of school care is one of the many ways that we can make sure that every child and young person is healthy, happy, safe and

achieving their potential. OSC is an important service for working families and relevant to all sections of the community in geographic areas of North Ayrshire.

2.10 Next Steps

Following consideration of the work of the Out of School Care workstream, the ELCEP Board identified 3 key areas where it felt the Council could make a positive contribution to support OSC services. These are:

1. Premises: Provide free lets in education establishments which have an ELC facility open from 8am until 6pm.
2. Qualifications and Training: Establish and deliver a learning and development pathway in partnership with OSC providers that ensures, as a minimum, that all staff working in OSC fulfil their duties and the requirements of the Scottish Social Services Council.
3. Local OSC Network: The Council will support an OSC network to provide networking opportunities, shared training and information resources for all OSC providers. OSC providers will be expected to lead and shape its growth into a self-sustaining network that benefits all.

2.11 The ELCEP Board considers that these proposed actions by the Council are fair, reasonable and proportionate to achieving sustainable ongoing improvement, in support of a strong and flourishing educational experience within the OSC sector.

3. Proposals

3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) Notes the outcome of work by the Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme Out of School Care workstream; and
- b) Approves the North Ayrshire Council Out of School Care Policy and the range of support measures proposed within it to be provided by North Ayrshire Council.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

4.1 The current Community Contract between North Ayrshire Council and local signatory Community Associations has resulted in a reduction in venue assistant costs as a result of joint measures taken including negotiated "Keyholding," which has helped to balance the costs within the halls and centres budget. This will minimise any impact of free lets to OSC providers.

Considering the potential for OSC providers to make greater use of schools with early years centres, open between 8am until 6pm, which already have janitorial costs built in, the provision of free lets to OSC providers can be managed at little or no additional cost. Financial implications can be managed within existing budgets.

Human Resources

- 4.2 It has been identified that a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) be identified as the primary link between the Council, its Community Planning Partners and OSC services. An officer has been identified to support OSC Services and assist with the development of a Local Network.

Legal

- 4.3 None.

Equality/Socio-economic

- 4.4 In supporting Out of School Care partners within the community and voluntary sector inequalities of provision and quality of OSC services will be reduced and families will be supported into work, thus reducing poverty.

Environmental and Sustainability

- 4.5 None.

Key Priorities

- 4.6 The following Council Plan priorities will be addressed by the current proposals:

- Active and strong communities;
- Children and young people experience the best start in life; and
- Inclusive, growing and enterprising local economy.

Community Wealth Building

- 4.7 The proposals support the following pillars of community wealth building:

- Advancing community enterprises; and
- Supporting local business activities and increasing the variety of ownership models.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The following stakeholders have been engaged throughout this process:

- OSC providers and staff
- Third Sector Interface
- SOSCN – Scottish Out of School Care Network (National support agency).

Audrey Sutton
Interim Executive Director (Communities)

For further information please contact **Caroline Amos, Head of Service**, on **01294 324416**.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 – Out of School Care Policy and Memorandum of Understanding

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

OUT OF SCHOOL CARE POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The expansion in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in North Ayrshire has prompted a review of out of school care in North Ayrshire. This policy has been written to set out how the Council aims to support the provision of out of school care services by the voluntary and private sectors across the authority, and to ensure that the council meets its Priority Outcomes as set out in the Council Plan 2019-24:

- North Ayrshire has an inclusive, growing and enterprising local economy.
- North Ayrshire's children and young people experience the best start in life.

North Ayrshire Council recognises that out of school care (OSC) is one of the many ways that we can make sure that every child and young person is healthy, happy and safe and achieving their potential. OSC is an extremely important service for all working families and is therefore relevant to all sections of the community in all geographic areas.

OSC is a term that covers after school and before school provision, breakfast clubs and holiday care provision.

2. Our Commitment

- 2.1 North Ayrshire Council is committed to making known and reinforcing the benefits of high quality OSC; and supporting and encouraging the development of accessible and sustainable OSC.
- 2.2 The Council is committed to promoting improvement and to embedding quality within all OSC provision in the authority.
- 2.3 The Council seeks to develop innovative and inclusive services in partnership with communities and families, private and voluntary partners, and schools.
- 2.4 The Council is committed to ensuring that children are at the heart of the services they are part of and that OSC is a positive experience for them within which they are fully engaged.
- 2.5 The Council is committed to ensuring that all OSC in North Ayrshire is compliant with the current legislative frameworks and policy developments that relate to OSC provision in Scotland.

3. Working Together

- 3.1 Following re-organisation in 2016 all OSC provision in North Ayrshire is delivered by the independent sector – private businesses or third sector organisations.
- 3.2 Following a review by the Scottish Out of School Care Network which was carried out with the private and third sector organisations, several recommendations were put forward which seek to support the improvement and sustainability of the current OSC provision in North Ayrshire.
- 3.3 The Council recognises the diverse mix of provision currently available as well as the shortfall of provision in some areas and seeks to work with providers to uphold and sustain provision where it currently exists and to explore options to expand provision into areas where there is none.
- 3.4 Provision of high quality, flexible and affordable OSC requires commitment from a number of partners. The Council recognises that everyone must work together as partners, with children and families placed at the heart of the services that are delivered.
- 3.5 Council therefore recognises the following organisations as partners in the delivery of OSC in North Ayrshire:
 - a. Current private and third sector providers of OSC
 - b. HSCP
 - c. Schools and community associations.
 - d. Parent Councils
 - e. Third Sector Interface (TACT)
 - f. Business Gateway
 - g. SOSCN
- 3.6 The Council and its partners will therefore:
 1. Promote the value of high-quality OSC provision as part of the wider Council Plan priorities.
 2. Acknowledge the contribution made by OSC provision to the economic growth of North Ayrshire and the financial sustainability of working families.
 3. Ensure that OSC provision is developed in partnership with children and families
 4. Ensure that all providers work together to provide year-round provision that meets the requirements of the Care Inspectorate and other regulatory bodies.
 5. Ensure effective communication processes and systems are in place to support regular positive discussions, and sharing of practice, resources and ideas.
 6. Work together to ensure that each child's OSC experience promotes positive outcomes through effective interventions and constructive learning and development opportunities.

4. Implementation of the Policy

- 4.1 The Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme Board has been responsible for the review of OSC provision in North Ayrshire and for the initiation and development of this policy. This Board has been established to provide leadership and governance of the programme of work on the expansion in early learning and childcare and will oversee the implementation and monitoring of this policy until its function will be complete in August 2020. Thereafter the OSC policy will be monitored by the Communities Directorate.
- 4.2 To support the Council's commitment to OSC and to its partners, it will:
- 1 Establish and deliver a learning and development pathway in partnership with OSC providers that ensures, as a minimum, that all staff working in OSC fulfil their duties and the requirements of the Scottish Social Services Council. Training will be delivered at convenient times and in accessible venues that enable OSC staff to attend. Training delivered by the Council will be provided free of charge. OSC providers are expected to support staff to attend and engage with the learning and development pathway and take responsibility for their own personal development.
 - 2 Provide free lets in education establishments which already have an ELC facility, open from 8am until 6pm, within it. Providers will have a standardised let agreement that secures the use of the premises for the OSC service. Where providers do not currently occupy an education establishment but want to take advantage of the free let, the Council will support them to explore the option to move their service into the nearest suitable education establishment.
 - 3 Support the formation and development of an OSC Network for all OSC providers which aims to provide networking opportunities, shared training and information resources, an equipment/toy library, bank staff, and possibly over time, shared administrative functions. The Council will provide resource to establish, develop and co-ordinate the network. OSC providers will be expected to lead, shape and contribute to its growth which will be for the benefit of all.

5. Legislative Framework

- 5.1 SOSCN recommends the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child as the overarching policy framework that guides the provision of OSC.
- 5.2 The Children and Young people (Scotland) Act 2014 also acknowledges children's rights to be at the heart of planning and delivery of services.
- 5.3 Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) 2006 which focuses on children wellbeing.

- 5.4 Health and social care legislation also apply to OSC: Care Inspectorate and Health and Social Care Standards; SSSC Codes of Practice; and Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act.

6. Monitoring and Reviewing

- 6.1 The Council will monitor the effectiveness of the policy in a number of ways. These are:
1. Monitoring comments and complaints received through the OSC network or other sources.
 2. Annual review of the policy by the Communities directorate with the OSC Network
 3. Reporting on the Care Inspectorate inspection gradings and feedback from parents and children on their OSC experiences.

7. OSC Policy Memorandum of Understanding: (see next page)

Memorandum of Understanding

2019-2020

This MoU is an agreement made between the following parties:

Party A

Organisation Name:	NAC Communities Directorate
Address:	Cunninghame House Irvine
Telephone:	

Party B

Organisation Name:	Out of School Care Partner Provider ()
Address:	
Telephone:	

1. SUBJECT

1.1. North Ayrshire Council has the following key priorities:

- Active and strong communities;
- Children and young people experience the best start in life; and
- Inclusive, growing and enterprising local economy.

1.2. The Equality Act 2010 (Authorities subject to the Socio-economic Inequality Duty) (Scotland) Regulations 2018, sets out a duty to have due regard to the desirability of exercising functions in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage.

1.3. Following a report presented to Cabinet on (Insert date) the Council identified a need to support the provision of quality care, offered within the current Out of School Care (OOSC) provision across North Ayrshire and to increase access to OOSC. The Council also acknowledged that a lack of access to OOSC could have a significant impact on the potential economic benefit to those in work or looking for work and would present a potential barrier for parents and others responsible for child care, seeking another positive destination that would assist them into work.

2. COMMITMENTS

Party A (North Ayrshire Council - Communities Directorate) commits to:

1. Making known and reinforcing the benefits of high quality OOSC and supporting and encouraging the development of accessible and sustainable OOSC.
2. The Council is committed to promoting improvement and to embedding quality within all OOSC provision in the authority.
3. The Council seeks to develop innovative and inclusive services in partnership with communities and families, private and voluntary partners, and schools.
4. The Council is committed to ensuring that children are at the heart of the services they are part of and that OOSC is a positive experience for them within which they are fully engaged.
5. The Council is committed to ensuring that all OOSC in North Ayrshire is compliant with the current legislative frameworks and policy developments that relate to OOSC provision in Scotland.

In delivering our Commitments, the Council will provide the following support:

1. Establish and deliver a learning and development pathway in partnership with OOSC providers that ensures, as a minimum, that all staff working in OSC fulfil their duties and the requirements of the Scottish Social Services Council. Training will be delivered at convenient times and in accessible venues that enable OOSC staff to attend. Training delivered by the Council will be provided free of charge. OOSC providers are expected to support staff to attend and engage with the learning and development pathway and take responsibility for their own personal development.
2. Provide free lets in education establishments which already have an ELC facility, operating from 8am until 6pm within it. Providers will have a standardised let agreement that secures the use of the premises for the OOSC service. Where providers do not currently occupy an education establishment within an ELC facility but want to take advantage of the free let, the Council will support them to explore the option to move their service into the nearest suitable education establishment. Where services use other provision within the Council's portfolio of property, they will require to continue to meet the agreed letting costs.
3. Support the formation and development of an OOSC Network for all OOSC providers which aims to provide networking opportunities, shared training and information resources, advice on accessing external funding opportunities, an equipment/toy library, bank staff, and possibly over time, shared administrative functions. The Council will provide resource to establish, develop and co-ordinate the network and designate a member of staff, to be a single point of contact for the network. OOSC providers will be expected to lead, shape and contribute to its growth which will be for the benefit of all its members.

Party B (OOSC Partner Provider) commits to:

1. Promote the value of high-quality OOSC provision.
2. Acknowledge the contribution made by OOSC provision to the economic growth of North Ayrshire and the financial sustainability of working families.
3. Ensure that OOSC provision is developed in partnership with children and families and that consultation is planned and robust.
4. Provide year-round provision where that meets the requirements of Parents and carers, the Care Inspectorate and other regulatory bodies.
5. Regular and ongoing communication to support positive discussion, share best practice, resources and ideas across the OOSC Network.
6. Work together to ensure each child's OOSC experience, promotes positive outcomes, effective interventions and constructive learning opportunities.

3. POLICIES

- a. This agreement is a voluntary undertaking between both parties.
- b. In the event of dispute both parties agree to meet in good faith to discuss a resolution as soon as practicable.
- c. Either party may withdraw from this MoU at any time by giving notice in writing.

4. AMENDMENTS

Both parties agree to commit to review the MoU on an annual basis and to amend as necessary.

Both parties understand and agree to this MoU as having been negotiated together in partnership.

PARTY A REPRESENTATIVE

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

PARTY B REPRESENTATIVE

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____