

# Fraserburgh Primary School Merger Place and Wellbeing Assessment Report



# About the report

This is a report of a Place and Wellbeing Assessment held in November 2023 to look at the proposal for the Fraserburgh Primary School Merger (Fraserburgh North Primary and St Andrews Primary). The Place and Wellbeing Assessment aims to build on the strengths of the proposal and the work done to develop that proposal, including the Integrated Impact Assessment, and produce recommendations that will support the Fraserburgh Primary School Merger.

A Place and Wellbeing Assessment involves a workshop pulling together expertise and perspectives from a range of attendees to consider how a plan, policy or decision impacts on delivering a place that enables wellbeing and reduces inequality. To do this, attendees consider the impact on each of the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes and those who are experiencing inequality in that place. This paper is the output of one of these assessments.



The [Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#) are the evidenced features that every place needs to have for the places we live, work and relax in, to positively enable health and wellbeing.

To get a better understanding about inequalities in the Project Towns, the Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme gathered data with the support of the Public Health Scotland's Local Intelligence Support Team (LIST) and the Community Link Leads. This data has been used to highlight the people within each town who are being impacted most by poor health and wellbeing. The process for gathering data can be followed through [this guide](#).

The data for Fraserburgh, at the time of the assessment, highlighted five key areas of focus. These are:

- Poverty
- Mental Health
- Substance Use
- Police Interventions
- Access to services

# Navigating the document

Read the [Background to the Strategy](#) (Pages 3 & 4)

Links to the [Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme](#) (Page 5)

Read the [Report Summary](#) (Pages 5 & 6) for an overview of the key themes from the assessment.

Find the [Recommendations summary table](#) (Pages 7 - 11)

Read [Appendix 2: Discussion of Specific Population Groups](#) (Pages 12 – 18) for further detail of the discussion relating to impacts on specific population groups at greatest risk of experiencing inequalities.

Read [Appendix 2: Summary of Discussion by Place and Wellbeing Outcome](#) (Page 19 - 48) for further detail. It lists the key evidence and research and a summary of the discussion that took place.

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[Appendix 3](#): lists the participants (Page 49)

## Background to the Fraserburgh Primary School Merger

Following consultation and extended engagement around the options for the provision of primary schools in Fraserburgh in 2014 and 2018, a possible option to reduce the number of primary schools in Fraserburgh from four to three, was identified. Refinement of that option led to the proposal to merge two of the primary schools, those being Fraserburgh North and St Andrews. A site identification and evaluation exercise were undertaken, indicating that the preferred location for the new primary school project would be on land that is based within the current Fraserburgh Academy site.

The proposal to merge the two primary schools, with a new purpose-built primary school building located on the Fraserburgh Academy site, has been subject to an extensive consultation process, in line with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. All

stakeholders were granted the opportunity (in various formats) to contribute to the consultations process, based on the proposal document. Following the completion of the formal consultation process in February 2023, the proposal document, along with summaries collated from the consultation processes, were presented to the relevant Aberdeenshire Council committees before finally being presented to Full Council in September 2023, where it was approved.

The proposal for the merger of the two primary schools and relocation to the Fraserburgh Academy site has been subject to a detailed Integrated Impact Assessment, as per the statutory requirement of Aberdeenshire Council. An Integrated Impact Assessment is used to assess the policies and practices necessary to meet the requirements of anti-discrimination and equalities legislation. It also affords an opportunity for the Council to consider the impact on the education service. In addition, an Integrated Impact Assessment can provide more information to develop and deliver services that meet the needs, in this case, of children and parents. Through the Integrated Impact Assessment process there were three main adverse effects and subsequent mitigation steps identified:

1. Negative impact identified around the transition period.
  - Mitigation - Careful transition planning will ensure positive transition to the new school.
2. Reduced outdoor spaces of Fraserburgh Academy.
  - Mitigation - Offset by delivery of a new Multi Use Games Area provision at the Fraserburgh Academy site.
3. Concerns around the potential site location and the need to protect children from environmental impacts which are not present in current environment, such as: noise, pollution, proximity to other schools and congestion.
  - Mitigation - Careful consideration and design will ensure safe and appropriate facilities are delivered to meet the needs of children attending.

Most recently this project (along with another project in South Aberdeenshire) was unsuccessful in its bid for funding from the Scottish Governments Learning Estate Investment Programme. The impact of the unsuccessful funding application was not known at the time of this assessment and so time frames for the school merger and new build are still to be confirmed.

# Links to Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme

The ambition of the [Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme](#) is to improve Scotland's wellbeing by reducing the significant inequality in the health of its people. The programme objective focusses on the evidenced impact that the places where we live, work and relax have on our health and wellbeing. This impact can be positive or negative and the programme aims to ensure these unintended consequences are fully considered when we make decisions about a place.

Our objective is to support delivery of the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes. A process used for doing so is a [Place and Wellbeing Assessment](#). This paper is the output of one of these assessments.

A 'How to Guide' for [Place and Wellbeing Assessments](#) has been designed to support others to undertake their own assessments.

There is high-level evidence and research that sits behind our Place and Wellbeing Outcomes and links to health and wellbeing. Full details on all of this evidence can be found on our Wiki page on the [Shaping Places for Wellbeing Knowledge Hub](#). You will find some of this evidence listed in the body of the report.

## Report Summary

The Fraserburgh Primary School Merger Proposal contributes to delivering and supporting many of the aspects of a place that enable the wellbeing of those who live, work and relax in Fraserburgh, specifically in the North of the town, where the worst outcomes from inequalities are reported. The review of this proposal is an opportunity to broaden the contribution of place to both overall wellbeing and to reduce inequality in some communities. The following broad themes were identified through the assessment discussions:

### The Importance of the Transition Process

The group were made aware early in the discussion that there will be an extensive transition process, supported by the Learning Estates Team, to help bring these two primary schools together into one building but more importantly into one community. This process was repeatedly identified and referred to as being of key significance to address some of the points raised within the discussions. It was clear from the overall conversation that the content of that transition process will be crucial in supporting aspects of the project to positively influence specific Place and Wellbeing Outcomes, including 'Identity and

belonging', 'Active travel' and 'Influence and sense of control'. Through consideration of the specific population groups and the wider assessment discussion, it became apparent that there are certain community groups that have not engaged with the project so far and that would be perceived to be hard to reach. As part of the transition process, it would be important to ensure that these groups are engaged, to maximise the reach of the transition activities and to reduce the potential negative impacts experienced as a result of moving and merging two schools together. The opportunity for partnership working in the local community to extend the reach of this transition process was recognised and will be explored in the recommendations.

## The Opportunities

A common thread throughout this assessment was highlighting the opportunities that this project brings to Fraserburgh and specifically to an area of Fraserburgh that is struggling with inequalities and deprivation. In the consideration of many of the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes the group agreed on the positive opportunities that could be provided because of the project and how those opportunities supported the specific Outcomes. Whilst the opportunities were recognised, it is important to acknowledge that they are not guaranteed and that for these opportunities to be realised and experienced, there is still work to be done. Some of that work will be underpinned and guided by the excellent expertise, experience, and knowledge that the Learning Estates Team have, whilst other opportunities may require different and new ways of thinking and working to be fully realised. This provides a platform for new and creative ways to use collaboration and partnership working to act on and maximise the positive impact of these opportunities. The recommendations in this report have identified some of the potential avenues for maximising the links between this project and the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes, offering clear mechanisms for aligning this project with evidence-based features required to create places where communities thrive.

# Recommendations

For ease of reference, all the recommendations contained in this Report are outlined in the table below:

Place and Wellbeing Theme	Place and Wellbeing Outcome	Recommendation	
<b>Movement</b>	<b>Active Travel</b>	1	As part of the transition processes for the new school, the Learning Estates Team will work with the communities at the two primary schools to explore the new daily journeys that will be required for children in the area.
		2	The Shaping Places for Wellbeing Team will help develop evidence underpinning the benefits of Active Travel for children and adults, in accessible formats, to be shared with the school communities, to help develop and support a culture shift towards favouring Active Travel as the preferred mode of travel.
		3	The Learning Estates Team, alongside the team developing the new school, will work to make links and support the team developing the wider Fraserburgh Active Travel Plan, to include the routes to the new school as part of a wider Active Travel Network for the town.
		4	The team developing the new school should clarify the infrastructure required to support Active Travel to the new school site with colleagues from the planning team responsible for the Local Development Plan.
		5	In preparation for the move to the new school site, the two current schools should make links with local charities and organisations, that may be able to offer support to low-income families

			around access to resources required for Active Travel, including weather appropriate clothing and bikes and scooters.	
	<b>Public Transport</b>	No specific recommendations were identified for this Place and Wellbeing Outcome.		
	<b>Traffic and Parking</b>	6	The proposals for the new school should be used by the Learning Estates Team and Banff and Buchan Area Management Team to raise awareness of the importance of low traffic neighbourhoods around school buildings but also around the surrounding walking routes, as a means of helping to influence local decisions around traffic speed restrictions.	
		7	Information and identified solutions from the traffic consultant review of the crossing sites around the school should be made accessible to the local community as part of the extensive transition processes implemented by the Learning Estates Team, to help raise awareness of safe crossing sites that can be promoted to children and families.	
8		The Local Community Planning Group should make local emergency service partners aware of the main travel routes to the school to identify potential challenges which will need to be considered and mitigated.		
<b>Spaces</b>	<b>Streets and Spaces</b>	9	The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will share the qualitative information they have collated through their work in the local community, in the format of the qualitative data profile, qualitative summary and infographic, with the Learning Estates team, to help improve awareness of community perspectives that may not have been represented in the consultation undertaken to date.	



		10	The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will explore the evidence supporting improved attendance and attainment associated with new school buildings, with support from the expertise and knowledge of the Learning Estates team and wider Education teams, to develop accessible resources that can be shared with local communities.
	<b>Natural Spaces</b>	11	The Banff and Buchan Area Management team will make links with the Learning Estates team to outline current community garden and community growing groups within Fraserburgh to facilitate inclusion of the new school in the Fraserburgh wide joint approach to food growing.
		12	The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will explore the evidence around outdoor spaces and health and wellbeing and develop an accessible resource that can be shared with local families to increase awareness.
	<b>Play and Recreation</b>	No specific recommendations were identified for this Place and Wellbeing Outcome.	
<b>Resources</b>	<b>Services and Support</b>	13	The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will contact the Aberdeenshire Council Early Years team in Fraserburgh to share information from community groups around the nursery provision in Fraserburgh and to explore any additional support that can be provided.
		14	The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will identify opportunities to make links between the primary schools and various support services, including the Employability Team and the Community Learning and Development Team, to help develop opportunities for parents and carers to access upskilling in IT literacy.
	<b>Work and Economy</b>	No specific recommendations were identified for this Place and Wellbeing Outcome.	

	<b>Housing and Community</b>	15	The Learning Estates Team have a wealth of experience in terms of handling vacant buildings and repurposing sites. This should be shared with the Banff and Buchan Area Management Team, with opportunity to collaboratively explore the options for the two old school sites.
		16	The Banff and Buchan Area Management Team will pursue a means to achieve closer links with the Councils Housing team, to explore opportunities for improving the provision of housing stock in the area, both through improving attractiveness of current stock and by exploring the options for affordable housing.
		17	The Education and Children Services Directorate will oversee the planning for the use of the old school sites, in the form of initial collaborations as outlined above, and ensure they begin as early as possible, once approval for the New School development is confirmed by Full Council.
<b>Civic</b>	<b>Identity and Belonging</b>	18	The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will explore the evidence around school uniforms, with specific focus on the role of the school uniform in creating identity and belonging and the impact of the cost of living on the affordability of school uniforms.
		19	The Learning Estates team will circulate the national guidelines and recommendations on school uniform to all members of the assessment group once publicly available.
		20	Details of the transition process will be shared with the Shaping Places for Wellbeing project team as appropriate for signposting and communication with community organisations and groups.
	<b>Feeling Safe</b>	21	The Learning Estates Team should share any evidence from studies looking at the impact of Passivhaus buildings on educational spaces, learning environments and behaviour in schools.

		22	Discussions between the academy and the new primary school teams should explore management solutions to address the issues linked to public access to the land at the side of the campus.
		Additionally, this outcome is linked to recommendation 20.	
<b>Stewardship</b>	<b>Care and Maintenance</b>	23	The school staffing team should continue to develop links with the local Police Scotland team, in particular the community officers, to develop relationships between children and Police and to explore any active steps that can be taken to help reduce the likelihood of vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
		24	The Area Management Team will share information and learning from successful projects that have tackled vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
	<b>Influence and Control</b>	25	The Learning Estates Team should link with the Shaping Places for Wellbeing team and the Lived Experience Network to help future engagement with communities and to expand the reach of communications relating to the new school.
		26	The Learning Estates Team should document and share the best practice undertaken with the consultation processes for this project, to help develop consultation processes across the council services.
		27	The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will work with the Learning Estates Team to identify how the Place and Wellbeing Assessment process may be used for future projects relating to school mergers and new school builds, with support to implement that assessment process as appropriate.

# Next Steps

The recommendations in this report will be reviewed by the key people involved in producing or reviewing the plan to see what can be incorporated into the next version of the plan, what needs further consideration and where collaboration is needed to take them forward. It is recognised that not all recommendations will be suitable to take forward due to time, capacity or other constraints.

## Appendix 1

### Discussion of Specific Population Groups

In order to consider the impact of the Fraserburgh Primary School Merger Proposal on the Fraserburgh area and its community, the group began the assessment with a discussion of the specific population groups that are at risk of experiencing the greatest impacts caused by inequalities. The population groups were clustered together to facilitate the discussion within the time restrictions of the assessment.

#### Older People, Children and Young People

The learning estates team provided clarity around the consultation processes that had been undertaken with pupils from both the primary schools involved in the merger and pupils at the secondary school, that will be the site for the new primary school building. This process had included surveys and focus groups, which provided platforms for children to be involved through various formats. Additionally, consultation included engaging with early years nurseries to capture the views of families with much younger children, who are yet to enter the primary school system.

With regards to older people, more generic public consultation was the only form of engagement offered, with no specific targeted approach. This was due to the presumption that this population are not anticipated to be impacted by the new school proposal, as this population are not currently users of the facilities at the two current primary schools and would not be expected to be users of the new building. It was recognised that there is a large cohort of older people who are residents living in the surrounding area for the new school site, and that they would be the main cohort of this population group that could be directly impacted by this project. The public consultation was open to these individuals and so it was hoped that any impacts would have been considered through that process.

## Women, Men (including trans men/women and issues relating to pregnancy and maternity)

The learning estates team clarified that a key part of the design process involved consideration of gender related facility provision, to ensure that there are spaces and facilities (specifically toilet and changing facilities) available for males and females as well as universal facilities that can be used by anyone regardless of gender. This process was ongoing and part of a bigger piece of work being done across Aberdeenshire Council, through a working group that looks at schools and wider public buildings. In addition to reviewing the toilet and changing facilities the design process was also inclusive of spaces for nursing mothers, ensuring these are also accessible compliant and available on each of the floors in the new building, to remove the need to change floors to access appropriate facilities.

## Disabled People (including physical disability, learning disability, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, long term medical conditions, mental health problems), Carers (including parents, single parents, and elderly carers)

The conversation around the provision of gender inclusive changing and toilet facilities naturally led into the learning estates team outlining that they have an accessibility brief and that the new building design had been developed in line with the Aberdeenshire Council accessibility strategy, ensuring the provision of accessible facilities across both floors of the new building. It was raised at this point that the new school will be an enhanced provision school (to account for the current enhanced provision status of Fraserburgh North Primary) and so it exceeds the requirements identified for most mainstream schools across Aberdeenshire. It was recognised that the work done around the accessible provision and the guidance for that provision, is not standard across all local authorities. As part of the Northern Alliance group, Aberdeenshire (along with 6 other local authorities) are working to enhance the current guidance, to ensure that it is representative and inclusive of all aspects of accessibility.

## Minority Ethnic People, Refugees and Asylum Seekers and People with different religions or beliefs

In considering this cluster of population groups, the conversation again reverted to the previous discussion around suitable provision of changing and toilet facilities. The learning estates team again outlined that one of the additional considerations in the inclusion of universal (closed off units) facilities is to ensure there is access to spaces for people with different religious beliefs, for example to be able to adjust specific clothing (such as hijabs) with dignity.

Whilst it was identified that there are a wide range of ethnicities currently accessing the two primary schools, the consultation process undertaken did not target specific ethnic population groups in the local area, but rather offered the opportunity to receive the information material in translated format to facilitate engagement. The group recognised that despite the translated materials, the representation of ethnic groups in the consultation process was still low, and the group acknowledge that these groups are often identified as hard to reach and seldom heard. As such, it was suggested that during the next design phase of the school more work should be undertaken with colleagues and partner organisations that are already engaged with those hard-to-reach communities, to try to encourage engagement in the consultation and ensure representation. This recommendation was further supported by both current head teachers at the primary schools, who recognised that the families associated with the schools would use their connections with people within the schools, who they trust and have built relationships with, to have their voices heard. As such, the involvement of staff and parent council from both schools will be crucial to ensuring the voices of these groups are included in the future discussions and to ensure the building meets the needs of all the family members linked to the school, not just the pupils. The learning estates team confirmed this would be a high priority for when the design stage is taken forward.

The learning estates team had previous experience of providing specific prayer rooms (with wash facilities etc.) in new build schools, but they were not well used and ended up being repurposed. With that knowledge, the Aberdeenshire Council learning estates team reached consensus that these spaces were not required in primary schools but must be considered in the secondary school settings.

## Relationships (lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual people and people who are married, unmarried, in a civil partnership)

It was identified that the consultation process had not included any direct engagement with these population groups, but that they had been included through engagement with the wider community. The learning estates team clarified that the current consultation processes do not outline a need to specifically focus on engagement with these population groups. Within the context of Fraserburgh and underpinned by the information gathered through the Shaping Places for Wellbeing work, it was proposed that single parent families and unmarried families need to be considered, and it was felt that these groups would have been represented through the wider community consultation with the school communities.

A wider reflection of how to access these population groups (as well as the previously discussed groups) was raised, with recognition of the Lived Experience Network in Aberdeenshire that works with many of the population groups being discussed in the assessment, along with the third sector organisations that currently have connections and relationships with these groups. It was felt that these connections could support future

consultation processes, to help maximise engagement with groups that have not traditionally engaged, but who may experience the worst inequality outcomes or challenges around this type of project.

The discussion was expanded around the availability of useable spaces in Fraserburgh for community groups offering support to some of these population groups, and the opportunity for the new building to enhance that provision. The current Fraserburgh North School is seen as a type of 'Family Hub' that can provide physical space for groups, but it was felt that the new building could develop this further and provide an asset to the wider community groups who are seeking safe spaces to use.

## People living in poverty and people on low income, People experiencing homelessness, People involved in the criminal justice system, and People with low literacy/numeracy

The discussion began once again by highlighting that there are focused networks across Aberdeenshire that engage with population groups who are being considered within this assessment, and with regards to people in poverty and on low income, there are several current programmes of work that could support any future engagement or consultation.

Based on the geographical location of the project and the associated catchment areas falling into the most deprived quintile, using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation classifications, the proposal recognises that there will be a high proportion of families accessing the current schools (and subsequently the new school) that would be identified as being in poverty or on low incomes. As such it was felt that a large proportion of the engagement and consultation to date, would be representative of that specific population group. The group did acknowledge that due to the current uncertainty around timeframes for development and the worsening landscape around cost of living and poverty, it was important to ensure that those voices continue to be involved in future consultations and that assumptions are not made based on previous consultations that may be outdated and no longer indicative of contemporary situations and perspectives.

It has been identified through the Shaping Places for Wellbeing work in Fraserburgh, that there are families within the school community, experiencing poverty and low income, that would struggle to identify with a new school and who may feel it is not for them or that they are not deserving of the new facility. The provision of facilities and resources that are not currently available to the primary schools may further impact that apprehension or create barriers to identifying with the new building and facilities. The group recognised the importance of ensuring families from both current schools understand and identify with the concept that the new school being built is based on a sense of community and not solely on the physical building and facilities provided. It is anticipated that there will be challenges

around that community building element, as it is recognised that whilst merging two schools that are physically very close to each other, the communities within those schools are very separate and diverse. It was felt that consideration of the relationship building work to bring the two school communities together will be essential with the leadership and staffing to support that merger being of great significance.

The learning estates team clarified that the proposal document being assessed, is wholly based on educational benefits, so is focused on the educational provision in the area not the physical building. With that being said, the design of the building is such that it should support the removal and reduction of any barriers to children accessing the curriculum and accessing what it is they need from their education. The proposal therefore points out the educational benefits associated with the new building. Future consideration will need to be given to the practices undertaken within that physical environment, to ensure barriers are not created or developed.

The discussion moved on to the recognition in the proposal that there will be a review of catchment areas and boundaries allocated to the new school, with recognition that this has the potential to impact on those living in the most deprived intermediate zones in Fraserburgh. Individuals within the assessment group were able to provide context around the current allocations associated with catchment areas, outlining that there is a trend in Fraserburgh currently to apply out of zone, due to not being content with the school offering within the allocated catchment area, but also due to uncertainty around the proposed merger and the associated impact. This observation from school intakes over the last few years, highlights the importance and potential impact that rezoning catchment areas has and the consequences of the associated uncertainty and concern it causes for parents and families.

The learning estates team outlined that the work on the rezoning of catchment areas will start in early 2024. The proposal is looking to largely keep the two catchment areas the same, but with consideration of removing the new housing developments (not yet built) from these zones, to ensure that the children and families living in the areas of most deprivation, with the greatest associated needs, within those catchment areas, are the ones who benefit from this new facility and new school. The team outlined that they are confident with their abilities and experiences around rezoning, and provided some clarity of what that process will entail and how that will hopefully offer confidence and reassurance to families.

The group broadened out their discussion at this point to consider the merging of the two school communities, with the importance of that process recognised and the timeframes associated with that work highlighted. The learning estates team have a strong programme of work around merging schools, which starts long before the pupils move into their new building. The team are confident with delivering the process, as well as with the inclusion of families, staff and pupils in that process, which considers all aspects of the merger (travel,



uniform, school name etc.) but are aware that it is important to get the order of things right, so that the integration work is undertaken with the right cohorts.

Within the consideration of this specific group, uniform was identified as being an aspect that needed to be discussed, recognising the cost implications of changing uniforms and how that impacts on children and families from deprived areas. This is the focus of a Scottish Government working group looking at uniforms, who are considering all associated impacts of school uniforms, including those linked to poverty. The head teachers will be key to informing the approach taken to this aspect of the new school and it will require a lot of consideration, to ensure the financial burden is kept to a minimum whilst balancing the societal and cultural pressures associated with having the appropriate uniforms. Links with the Place and Wellbeing Outcome of Civic: Identity and Belonging was recognised, and this topic will be considered in greater detail in that section.

Regarding the groups with low literacy/numeracy skills, it was identified that the new facilities will be fully equipped with modern IT equipment and resources, supporting children to develop their IT literacy skills. However, many of the families supporting children outside of school will not have the access to equipment or the IT literacy to be able to support children appropriately with their learning. It was proposed that there could be an opportunity to work with partner organisations who offer support services within the local community, focused on upskilling parents and carers around IT skills, with the new building potentially offering a space for delivery of that support. This was explored further by the group under the outcome 'Resources: Services and Support'.

## People in remote, rural and/or island locations

The consultation was undertaken with the local communities and so will innately be representative of the communities within Fraserburgh who have the experience of living in a rural-urban town, that whilst being densely populated, is remote in terms of geographical location. Previous work with Scottish Futures Trust has been undertaken in Fraserburgh, with that work recognising the impact of rural poverty and accessibility from surrounding settlements. Whilst this new school cannot address those challenges, it does provide an opportunity with regards to the provision of community space within the local community, but within the limitations of being a primary school provision and so restricted to the catchment areas it supports.

## Staff including people with different work patterns (part time and full time, short term, job share and seasonal)

The proposal clarified the inclusion of the trade unions within the consultation process which is worthy of noting. Additionally, it also recognises the potential for positive impacts on staff within the school, as it provides an opportunity to bring together larger cohorts of staff,

providing opportunities for shared learning and shared best practice. The potential advantages are clearly identifiable, but it is worth recognising the sensitivity around the transition period, which will be bringing staff from two different schools together and the potential challenges that can come with that process, in the form of uncertainty, apprehension and challenges with identity. Once again, the learning estates team are confident in their transition work processes, with inclusion of staff in all aspects to ensure they feel part of the journey. It is anticipated that the new school will have positions for all current staff if they wish to take on those new roles.

The community had raised issues around 'wrap around care' provision within the local community, which has an impact on parents seeking meaningful employment. The school will have the spaces available for clubs and out of school activities, that can provide an aspect of that wrap around care, but it will be dependent on other people to deliver those as this is not included in role of the teaching staff.

# Appendix 2

## Summary of Discussion and Recommendations by Place and Wellbeing Outcome

### Movement

#### Active Travel

Everyone can:

- easily move around using good-quality, accessible, well-maintained and safe segregated wheeling, walking and cycling routes and access secure bike parking.
- wheel, walk and cycle through routes that connect homes, destinations and public transport, are segregated from, and prioritised above, motorised traffic and are part of a local green network.

#### Evidence and research:

- Health benefits of active travel, such as increased physical activity levels, will vary in different groups.<sup>1</sup>
- Active travel can increase social interactions.<sup>1</sup>
- More active travel could lead to increased exposure to air pollutants or more accidents, but the health benefits of active travel, for example from physical activity, outweigh the risks caused by air pollution or accidents.<sup>1</sup>
- Walkable neighbourhoods have the potential to increase physical activity and social interactions.<sup>1</sup>
- Walking or cycling to school helps children achieve a healthy weight and the beneficial effects may be greater for children from deprived areas.<sup>2</sup>
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<sup>1</sup> [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Associations of active travel with adiposity among children and socioeconomic differentials: a longitudinal study | BMJ Open](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Women and Biking: A Case Study on the use of San Francisco Bike Lanes. University of California, Berkley\).](#)

## Summary of discussion:

The group approached the discussion of the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes by focusing on the overarching themes. This enabled the group to explore the theme, recognising that the outcomes are interlinked, and that conversation would cross over. For this report the summary of that discussion has been broken down into the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes, to help with clarification of the key points and how they map to this framework.

The assessment discussion considered the theme of 'Movement' with the group consolidating their discussion of the three key outcomes for this theme, including Active Travel, Public Transport and Traffic and Parking. With a focus on Active Travel, the discussion considered concerns raised by local communities around the distance required to travel to the site for the new school. These concerns were mainly focused around the impact on children walking to school by themselves, recognising that families feel it will no longer be an option at the new school, based on the distance, which will be doubled for some families, and the safety of the journey. Concerns had been raised that the new school will require children to walk through areas of the town which are perceived to be unsafe, and it was felt that this will reduce the likelihood of active travel, or where there is no alternative option to active travel, families feel it will be putting their children at risk. The assessment group were made aware that there is a consistent approach across Aberdeenshire, regarding the distance travelled to schools, and that the new school is situated within the accepted distances. As such, it is the responsibility of the parents or carers to get children to school safely, with the council offering support for travel where the distance exceeds two miles. It was also noted that the new school would be located next to the academy and so there are already many children walking to the site. Whilst it was recognised that those children are older, there is an opportunity to make links between these groups and it may provide families with older siblings, the opportunity for their children to walk to school together.

The importance of providing safe walking routes for children and families accessing the school was raised through the consideration of the concerns raised around safety, this discussion broadened out to consider the management of traffic at drop off and pick up times. It was recognised that there are ongoing issues at the current primary school sites with traffic at these times, as well as at the current academy site, and bringing those three schools together into the same location, has the potential to further accentuate the problems. To counteract those problems, the provision of safe walking routes, which encourage active travel to school, needs to be prioritised alongside the development of the new school site.

With the importance of encouraging walking to school clear, the group considered the concerns raised by the local community about the quality and maintenance of the paths, pavements and general footways, on the journey to the new school. It was agreed that there are issues with some of the footways, due to the dated nature of them. Whilst it was recognised, there are limitations due to budgets and resources, which mean new footways

are not possible at this time, the council continue to monitor the state of all footways and rectify where any risks are identified. Additionally, there is a small budget that can be used to assist with work to lower kerbs and footways if there are specific routes identified that are used by families who require accessibility adjustments.

The group were made aware of additional concerns around the exposure to noise pollution at the new site, relating to traffic, with a desire to think about how that may also impact on children walking to school. It was proposed that creating a low traffic neighbourhood around the school may help to support the safety of children walking to school, whilst also reducing the impact of traffic in terms of noise and pollution. Additionally, lowering speed limits around the school, may help to build parents confidence around letting their child walk to school independently. The group recognised that many of the families accessing the new school will not have access to a car and so need to ensure that the environment to walk to school is as safe as possible. The agreed site for the new school is currently covered by a part time 20mph speed limit most of the day due to the academy being located there. Based on Scottish Government proposals, it is anticipated this will be expanded to the whole of the town by 2025, covering all walking routes to the new school.

The opportunities that the new school provides with regards to trying to develop active travel behaviours for children and families were recognised, with acknowledgement that walking to school should be promoted as the preferred means of travelling to school rather than the inferior option for those who do not have access to a car. The group recognised that it would require engagement with the schools, the community and partner organisations to help develop a positive culture towards active travel. Challenges associated with that culture shift were acknowledged by the group, including the high levels of deprivation in the area and the geographical location of Fraserburgh and associated weather, both of which may mean that children and families do not have access to physical resources to support active travel, such as warm waterproof coats. Whilst it is understood that it is out with the remit of this proposal to address those challenges, it is important to identify and acknowledge them to help raise awareness with organisations and services that may be able to provide practical solutions. The group were made aware that St Andrews School does currently have a walk to school scheme that has been successful with many children, who receive awards for walking to school. This provides a good base for the active travel culture that was suggested and demonstrates a willingness from children already attending the school to engage with those opportunities.

The learning estates team made the group aware that access routes to school will be explored within the transition processes when developing the new school, as part of the extensive transition process. This will offer support for children to explore the walking routes to their new school, to help them identify the safest footways and suitable crossing facilities available on those routes.

The group moved on to consider other forms of active travel, including cycling and scooting. The new school will have a large, designated area located at the entrances, for scooter and bike storage, recognising that currently both schools have many pupils that take bikes or scooters to school. The schools also operate the Bike-ability programme to support the development and promotion of safe use of bikes and road usage, and this will continue to be offered, to help support children to use bikes safely to access school. The additional bike shelter space at the new school is recognised as being of importance to help support this work and encourage children to choose this mode of active travel.

The group were made aware that there is an Active Travel Plan for Fraserburgh being developed, looking at the wider town and how it is connected, linking green spaces, beach front and town centre. It was proposed that the formal Active Travel Plan should be made aware of this school project, and work should be undertaken to identify how that plan can support the active travel routes to the new school linking them to additional active travel routes across the town where appropriate. The opportunity that the new school site provides was again highlighted recognising that due to the requirement to get children to school daily, it may help to promote and increase engagement in active travel for some families who do not normally walk to that area of the town, which could be further supported and enhanced, if other active travel routes in Fraserburgh were then connected to the new school.

Finally, the group considered the potential to make links between the Fraserburgh Active Travel Plan and the new housing developments in Fraserburgh. The group acknowledged that it would be important for the Local Development Plan to outline and recognise the need for any new housing developments to provide infrastructure that supports active travel route connections to the primary schools within Fraserburgh, to help make walking and cycling the preferred option for all those accessing schools in the area.

### **Recommendations:**

1. As part of the transition processes for the new school, the learning estates team will work with the communities at the two primary schools to explore the new daily journeys that will be required for children in the area.
2. The Shaping Places for Wellbeing Team will help develop evidence underpinning the benefits of Active Travel for children and adults, in accessible formats, to be shared with the school communities, to help develop and support a culture shift towards favouring Active Travel as the preferred mode of travel.
3. The Learning Estates Team, alongside the team developing the new school, will work to make links and support the team developing the wider Fraserburgh Active Travel Plan, to include the routes to the new school as part of a wider Active Travel Network for the town.
4. The team developing the new school should clarify the infrastructure required to support Active Travel to the new school site with colleagues from the planning team responsible for the Local Development Plan.

5. In preparation for the move to the new school site, the two current schools should make links with local charities and organisations, that may be able to offer support to low-income families around access to resources required for Active Travel, including weather appropriate clothing and bikes and scooters.

## Public Transport

Everyone has access to a sustainable, affordable, accessible, available, appropriate, and safe public transport service.

### Evidence and research:

- Public transport use has the potential to improve access to services and facilities and connect communities.<sup>4</sup>
- Public transport should be accessible, available, affordable and appropriate.<sup>4</sup>

### Summary of discussion:

Whilst most of the conversation for the theme of 'Movement' was focused on the 'Active Travel' Place and Wellbeing Outcome, specific points were raised and discussed relating to the outcome of 'Public Transport', with those specific points outlined in this section.

The discussion around public transport predominantly focused on the provision of school transport, in the form of school buses. As mentioned above, the council are required to provide transport for all pupils who live out with a two-mile journey to their primary school location. The group were made aware that there is an existing bus turning circle on the new school site, currently used for buses offering travel to the academy. This bus turning circle has been identified as a suitable location to cater to the requirements for the new school in addition to the academy. Participants raised concerns around the suitability of the current turning circle, recognising that it is currently a challenging space that has limitations. These concerns were acknowledged and welcomed by the group, with confirmation provided that the design of the new school includes expansion of this area, to allow for safer access and manoeuvring. Within those plans it has been confirmed that this area will also provide the drop off/pick up point for the primary school. To support these decisions and reassure the group around this discussion, it was clarified that as part of the development of the plans for the new school, there had been consultation with colleagues from the Aberdeenshire Council

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<sup>4</sup> [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

Roads and Transport Team as well as engagement with external specialist Traffic Consultants, who provided external expertise to support the development of the plans for the school. This support had included the preparation of a series of proposals and options around the drop off/pick up areas for the new school, with the expansion of the current turning circle being the preferred option.

## Recommendations:

No specific recommendations were identified for this Place and Wellbeing Outcome.

### Traffic and parking

Everyone can benefit from:

- reducing traffic and traffic speeds in the community.
- traffic management and design, where traffic and car parking do not dominate or prevent other uses of space and car parking is prioritised for those who don't have other options.

## Evidence and research:

- Motorised transport has the potential to increase air and noise pollution and greenhouse gases.<sup>5</sup>
- People in deprived areas can be exposed to higher levels of air and noise pollution and certain groups of the population can be more adversely affected by poorer air quality.<sup>5</sup>
- The volume and speed of traffic and long commutes can be detrimental to health.<sup>5</sup>
- Motorised transport can increase the risk of accidental injury and disrupt communities.<sup>5</sup>
- Child road traffic accident injuries are often higher in more deprived areas.<sup>5</sup>
- Lack of suitable parking has the potential to affect health.<sup>5</sup>
- Parking should be prioritised for people who don't have other options.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

<sup>6</sup> Transport use, health and health inequalities: The impact of measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19. <https://publichealthscotland.scot/downloads/transport-use-health-and-health-inequalitiesthe-impact-of-measures-to-reduce-the-spread-of-covid->



## Summary of discussion:

Within the discussion around the Movement theme and linked to the above summary of the 'Public Transport' outcome, in which the group considered the bus turning circle, the conversation and consideration of drop off and pick up points was expanded. This group recognised the suitability and safety of drop off and pick up sites as being a key issue relating to the 'Traffic and Parking' outcome. It was acknowledged by the group that there are ongoing issues at the current two primary school locations, associated with the volume of cars and challenges with parking at drop off and pick up times. There were a few key points for consideration in this discussion, the first being the safety of non-car users, which had been discussed under the 'Active Travel' outcome. The next issue for consideration was identified as being the availability of space for parking, for those who feel it is essential to use cars to access the school. The group agreed that there is work to be done to reduce the number of cars in these locations, some of which has been outlined through the 'Active Travel' outcome, including the reduced speed limits in these areas and the promotion of active travel as the preferred option. Where families feel it is essential to use the car to travel to and from school, the provision of suitable parking spaces, that will not impact on surrounding communities, was felt to be address and provided through the previously discussed drop off and pick up points.

The assessment discussion around Movement, went on to explore the road crossing sites that would support walking access to the new school. These sites are already well used by children accessing the academy, and so the hazards and challenges of these sites are well understood. The access and safe crossing on Alexander Street were raised as a concern, as well as the current crossing provision on Denyduff Road. These crossings have been recognised as an area of concern in the merger proposal, with understanding that whilst they are already an area of concern, the site for the new school will increase the number of children required to use these crossings, with some of those children much younger and not as adept at road safety practices. The group were reassured that the Traffic consultants had provided proposals for improving the Denyduff crossing which will be reviewed and implemented appropriately in line with the new school development.

It is worth noting that the group were reminded of the location of both the local Police Scotland and Scottish Ambulance Service facilities, which are situated on the main walking routes to access the new school. It was proposed that there needs to be consideration of the impact that operational movements from these two essential services may have on people using those routes to access the school, and safety factors identified to ensure there is safe interaction between the vehicles required by these services and the those using the footways to access the new school.

## Recommendations:

6. The proposal for the new school should be used by the Learning Estates Team and Banff and Buchan Area Management Team to raise awareness of the importance of low traffic neighbourhoods around school buildings but also around the surrounding walking routes, as a means of helping to influence local decisions around traffic speed restrictions.
7. Information and identified solutions from the traffic consultant review of the crossing sites around the school should be made accessible to the local community as part of the extensive transition processes implemented by the Learning Estates Team, to help raise awareness of safe crossing sites that can be promoted to children and families.
8. The Local Community Planning Group should make local emergency service partners aware of the main travel routes to the school to identify potential challenges which will need to be considered and mitigated.

## Space

### Streets and spaces

Everyone can access:

- buildings, streets and public spaces that create an attractive place to use, enjoy and interact with others.
- streets and spaces that are well-connected, well-designed and maintained, providing multiple functions and amenities to meet the varying needs of different population groups.

### Evidence and research:

- Attractive neighbourhoods can improve mental wellbeing.<sup>7</sup>
- Navigable streets and spaces allow people to move around easily, safely and access facilities and services.<sup>8</sup>
- Walkable neighbourhoods can provide opportunities to socially interact.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

<sup>8</sup> Quality of Life Foundation. Quality of life literature review; 2019. [www.qolf.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/02/Literature-Review-of-Quality-of-Life-in-the-Built-Environment-Publica-4-1.pdf](http://www.qolf.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/02/Literature-Review-of-Quality-of-Life-in-the-Built-Environment-Publica-4-1.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Carmona M. Place value: place quality and its impact on health, social, economic and environmental outcomes. *Journal of Urban Design* 2019;24:1–48.

## Summary of discussion:

Once again, the group considered the theme of 'Spaces' broadly with the discussion covering each of the three outcomes collectively. Regarding the 'Streets and spaces' outcome there were several key points raised and discussed by the group, a summary of which is provided in this section.

Early in the assessment discussion, whilst the group were considering the population groups, the point had been raised around the old school buildings and what would happen to those buildings and spaces once the new school was developed. There was apprehension within the group, which had also been identified from local communities, that these schools be used or repurposed appropriately, and that they are not left empty for long periods following closure. It was agreed by the group that there is a need to consider options for the closed buildings, with recognition that they hold significance in terms of local heritage and identity for the Fraserburgh community. It was also clear from the discussions, that the plans for the old school buildings should be considered in the same timelines as the new school being developed, so as not to leave them empty for long periods once the new school is built.

The group had a very detailed discussion about the links between the new school building and the opportunity for positive impact on the attendance and attainment of the pupils. Within this discussion, it was identified that some families within the local community did not recognise or understand how a new school building could positively impact on the attendance or attainment of their child, with their experiences being that there are more significant and challenging influences impacting on these factors, that cannot be addressed by a new school. It was challenged within this aspect of the discussion that the new school provides a physical facility that supports quality educational experiences, with the space designed to support children's learning and to create an environment that children feel safe and supported in, and that it was not clear how this would not positively impact on attainment and attendance. In response to those concerns, it was acknowledged that whilst the new school will absolutely offer a high-quality educational space for the children, in certain circumstances the challenges being experienced by children and their families, out with school, are so influential that unfortunately the provision of an optimal educational space will not be enough to positively impact their attainment or attendance. It was recognised that children and families who are experiencing greater challenges out with school, and who may not identify the new school as being an opportunity to enhance educational engagement and outcomes, could be supported and provided with the resources to explore the opportunity further.

The group were made aware that this is an aspect recognised at a national level, with a desire to consider the impact of new school buildings on educational attainment and attendance, however it is a challenging area to explore accurately due to the confounding factors that can influence these outcomes. There is anecdotal evidence which supports the impact that these educational spaces can have on such outcomes, identifying key drivers that include, children

respecting their surroundings and buildings, creating spaces that are safe and warm and which offer a level of comfort that their home environments do not, provision of hot meals, pride in good quality new spaces and equipment which develops a sense of being respected. Experiences from other facilities within Fraserburgh, including the Sport and Community Centre, were noted, which highlighted a reluctance from some local communities and groups to attend new build facilities when opened to the community, due to a feeling of it 'not being for them'. That is not something that has been widely experienced across Aberdeenshire, but it is worth being aware of within this specific town. The group were all in agreement that this project provides a much-needed physical space to improve the opportunities for children and families within this community to access quality educational spaces, both indoors and outdoors, and that it will help remove some of the educational barriers that the current schools are experiencing and having to work to mitigate. In conclusion to this aspect of the discussion, it was noted that the attainment and attendance will be reviewed once the new school is opened, to help identify any potential impact and to develop a better understanding of how the community engage with the new building and surrounding spaces.

### **Recommendations:**

9. The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will share the qualitative information they have collated through their work in the local community, in the format of the qualitative data profile, qualitative summary and infographic, with the Learning Estates team, to help improve awareness of community perspectives that may not have been represented in the consultation undertaken to date.
10. The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will explore the evidence supporting improved attendance and attainment associated with new school buildings, with support from the expertise and knowledge of the Learning Estates team and wider Education teams, and develop accessible resources that can be shared with local communities.

## Natural Space

Everyone can:

- access good-quality natural spaces that support biodiversity and are well-connected, well-designed, safe, and maintained, providing multiple functions and amenities to meet the varying needs of different population groups.
- be protected from environmental hazards including air/water/soil pollution or the risk of flooding.
- access community food growing opportunities and prime quality agricultural land is protected.

### Evidence and research:

- Natural spaces can provide mental health benefits.<sup>10</sup>
- Experts hypothesise that natural spaces can provide a sense of character and distinctiveness to a place.<sup>10</sup>
- Access to and use of natural spaces varies across different income groups.<sup>10</sup>
- There are wider environmental benefits to increasing natural space which can protect population health.<sup>11</sup>
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- Urban green and open spaces contribute to public health and wellbeing, particularly mental health and wellbeing.<sup>14</sup>

### Summary of discussion:

The plans for the new school include allotment space for food growing, to ensure children have access to natural spaces as part of their curriculum and to offer the educational benefits

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<sup>10</sup> [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

<sup>11</sup> INHERIT: exploring triple-win solutions for living, moving and consuming that encourage behavioural change, protect the environment, promote health and health equity [www.inherit.eu/wpcontent/uploads/2017/06/INHERIT-Report-A4-Low-res\\_s.pdf](http://www.inherit.eu/wpcontent/uploads/2017/06/INHERIT-Report-A4-Low-res_s.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-action-on-health-inequalities-reducing-social-isolation](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-action-on-health-inequalities-reducing-social-isolation)

<sup>13</sup> Hartig T, Mitchell R, de Vries S, et al. Nature and health. Annual Review of Public Health 2014;35:207–228.

<sup>14</sup> [Environmental and Human Health - The contribution of green and open space in public health and wellbeing.](#)

associated with that type of natural space. The group recognised that as well as being an excellent opportunity for the school and the children, this space would provide opportunities for wider community links to natural spaces and subsequently the benefits associated with those opportunities. The Learning Estates team have already been approached by a group who work with community garden spaces, and who are working across the area of Banff. Discussions have identified that the new school project in Fraserburgh has the potential to support the development of a community garden space at the school site, and that it would fit with the proposed design of the landscape for the new school. The group were made aware that community food growing opportunities in Fraserburgh are of key importance within the councils Banff and Buchan Area Team, and there are currently several small projects across the town under the remit of community gardens and community food growing. It would be preferential to ensure that any plans to develop community garden space at the new school, are linked to the current provision and that opportunities are identified to develop connections, support existing groups, and ensure a joined-up approach that can offer benefits to the whole town of Fraserburgh, especially when green spaces are of a premium within this town.

Impact on the natural spaces on the site of the new school was considered in detail by the group, recognising that it is outlined in the proposal that the development of the new site would involve reducing the natural space available in that location, currently occupied by Fraserburgh Academy. The proposal clarifies that the new school site is not currently useable or of good quality due to waterlogging and so it is hoped that the development of the site will support the provision of both quality natural spaces as well as useable outdoor spaces. One of the key mitigations outlined in the proposal for reducing the natural spaces, is the development of a Multi-Games Area for the academy, along with a separate Multi-Games Area for the primary school. These areas would provide useable spaces that are fit for purpose and that can support outdoor sporting curriculum activities. Within this discussion the group were made aware that the space proposed for development, whilst classed as natural space, does not support great biodiversity, as it is a former playing pitch that is waterlogged. Developing purpose built outdoor facilities will ensure that the outdoor spaces are better used and provide more suitable opportunities for outdoor activities.

Additionally, the discussion considered the opportunities to improve the biodiversity of the surrounding land as part of the site development. The proposed development of the land for the new school site outlines plans for planting around the site, including mature trees, that will support a broader biodiversity. It is hoped that this will offer better quality natural spaces around the schools, that encourage and develop the biodiversity in that area, and that despite the reduction in size of those spaces the quality will be greatly improved.

It was acknowledged and welcomed that the proposal outlines the development of high-quality outdoor spaces on the new school site, with these spaces providing opportunity for both outdoor learning and learning outdoors. The group were very supportive and

appreciative that the proposal recognises that both educational approaches can offer a variety of important educational benefits for children, many of which are not possible at the current school locations. The group recognised that there are benefits associated with introducing children to outdoor spaces as a core element of their education from an early age, which include developing lifelong engagement with outdoor spaces, linked to improved health and wellbeing. The importance of raising awareness for families, parents and carers around the value and influence of outdoor education, was once again considered, recognising that there may be families who are not currently aware of the benefits, have no experience of them and who do not understand how those benefits may be experienced. As such this new school, with the improved outdoor spaces, will offer a crucial opportunity to engage families and raise awareness of the benefits associated with outdoor spaces for all children and adults.

## Recommendations:

11. The Banff and Buchan Area Management team will make links with the Learning Estates team to outline current community garden and community growing groups within Fraserburgh to facilitate inclusion of the new school in the Fraserburgh wide joint approach to food growing.
12. The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will explore the evidence around outdoor spaces and health and wellbeing and develop an accessible resource that can be shared with local families to increase awareness.

### Play and recreation

Everyone can access a range of high quality, safe, well-maintained, accessible places with opportunities for play and recreation to meet the varying needs of different population groups and the community itself.

## Evidence and research:

- Play is important to the cognitive, physical, social and emotional development and wellbeing of young children.<sup>15</sup>
- Perceptions of poor design, quality and safety can lead to children and young people not using the play and recreation spaces.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

- There are health benefits of undertaking play and recreation in outdoor environments, in particular natural spaces. There are specific benefits for children such as the development of motor skills, understanding risk and environmental awareness.<sup>16</sup>

### **Summary of discussion:**

The discussion around the development of the Multi-game Areas, as part of the proposal for the new school, clarified that there would be two separate Multi-game Areas developed, with one for the academy and one for the new primary school. The group were made aware that these facilities were primarily to provide spaces for curriculum use, with the surface materials and size of the spaces designed to meet the needs of the curriculum. It was acknowledged that these facilities had not been designed to cater to wider community use. This was based on an assessment of the current provision of recreational spaces within Fraserburgh, which identified that there was not a need for additional outdoor community recreation space. Whilst it was made clear that community use was not the primary purpose of these spaces, it was acknowledged that once developed, that if it is deemed to be required and if appropriate, community groups may be able to access these spaces for recreation, out with the curriculum usage, and it will be at the school's discretion.

### **Recommendations:**

No specific recommendations were identified for this Place and Wellbeing Outcome.

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<sup>16</sup> Play Scotland. Getting it right for play power of play: an evidence base. [www.playscotland.org/wpcontent/uploads/Power-of-Play-an-evidence-base.pdf](http://www.playscotland.org/wpcontent/uploads/Power-of-Play-an-evidence-base.pdf)



# Resources

## Services and support

Everyone can access:

- health enhancing, accessible, affordable and well-maintained services, facilities and amenities. These are informed by community engagement, responsive to the needs and priorities of all local people.
- a range of spaces and opportunities for communities to meet indoors and outdoors.
- information and resources necessary for an included life in a range of digital and non-digital formats.

## Evidence and research:

- Services and support can provide people with a sense of belonging to the community.<sup>17</sup>
- People need local facilities and services to live and enjoy healthy independent lives<sup>18</sup>

## Summary of discussion:

The proposal underpinning this assessment is for the provision of a new school building that will support the merging of two existing primary schools within the town of Fraserburgh, as such much of the proposal document outlines the possible impact and contribution that this project can offer to the services and support in the local area, especially within the context of the educational services and the associated branches of those educational services. The group recognised that the proposal has provided clear insight to the aspects associated with services and support. The Learning Estates team clarified that when developing new schools, the intention is to develop a community building that offers education, with the needs of the schools being met during school and term times, but with the potential to support opportunities for the wider community all year round. However, it was raised that there are limitations around that, which must be acknowledged, in terms of the resources required to keep buildings open and running out with school times, including janitorial and cleaning support services. As such it is anticipated, based on assessment undertaken on the current and future community needs, that for this project much of the community needs would be

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<sup>17</sup> [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

<sup>18</sup>

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10511482.2014.900102>; <https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/spatial-planning-and-health-nice>

met using the current academy facilities that are on the same 'Campus Site' as the new primary school, rather than needing to use the new building.

The group discussed the capacity of the new school and the number of pupils that would be seeking to access the school, as it was acknowledged that when the school first opens the number of students will be close to capacity for the building. This was due to there being a suitable number of school places available across the primary school provision for the wider Fraserburgh area and as such it had been agreed that there is not a demand for this school to increase the capacity of school spaces in Fraserburgh. This will mean that the rezoning of catchment areas will be of great importance to ensure that all schools in Fraserburgh are operating in line with their allocated capacity and numbers. The Learning Estates team will be closely monitoring the placing requests out with catchment areas, as it is anticipated that there will be families that will want their children to access the new school, based on the quality of the facilities and the proximity to the academy. It was clarified to the group that priority will be given to all children who live in the allocated catchment area for the new school, and it is very much the focus of the Learning Estates team that this school be accessed by those families who are currently accessing the Fraserburgh North and St Andrews primary schools.

The opportunity for this project to positively impact on the provision of early years care, specifically nursery provision in the area was recognised, with acknowledgement that the current provision at the two existing primary schools varies in terms of days, times and out of term offerings. The group discussed the wider plans to combine the two existing nurseries, and to create an offering in one of the current buildings at the St Andrews School site, rather than move the nursery provision to the new school site. The councils Early Years team are leading on this project, and it was recommended to contact that team to explore what is being proposed in terms of that nursery provision.

As the new school will be providing enhanced IT opportunities to the pupils, through improved facilities and resources, the group considered the need for wider families to develop IT literacy and to have good digital access, to support the pupils learning. The discussion considered the need and provision of support for parents and carers, not necessarily provided by the school, but available within the local community. The group recognised that links with the Employability and Community Learning and Development teams would be important in exploring the provision of this type of support for families. Additionally, the Whole Family Wellbeing Hub being developed in Fraserburgh may also have a role to play in supporting the upskilling of parents and carers, around IT literacy to support children's education.

## Recommendations:

13. The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will contact the Aberdeenshire Council Early Years team in Fraserburgh to share information from community groups around the nursery provision in Fraserburgh and to explore any additional support that can be provided.
14. The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will identify opportunities to make links between the primary schools and various support services, including the Employability Team and the Community Learning and Development Team, to help develop opportunities for parents and carers to access upskilling in IT literacy.

### Work and economy

Everyone benefits equally from a local economy that provides:

- essential goods & services produced or procured locally
- good quality paid and unpaid work
- access to assets such as wealth & capital and the resources that enable people to participate in the economy such as good health and education
- a balanced value ascribed across sectors such as female dominated sectors and the non-monetary economy
- the resources that enable people to participate in the economy such as good health and education.

## Evidence and research:

- There are inequalities in terms of people being able to access 'good' work, training and volunteering. Certain groups in the population are more likely to be unemployed.<sup>19</sup>
- Volunteering can help increase feelings of self-esteem and provide a sense of purpose.<sup>19</sup>
- Volunteering has been associated with improved self-rated health, mental health, life satisfaction and wellbeing, and decreased depression and mortality.<sup>19</sup>
- Experts hypothesise that if a place is lively and vibrant it can provide work opportunities and will encourage people to visit the area.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

## Summary of discussion:

This project has been well aligned with the work of the Developing Young Workforce (DYW) programme, with clear opportunities identified to provide quality experiences to young people around the design and building of the new school. Links have been made with the academy to offer opportunities for students to be involved in the design stages of the new school and the construction of the school, as well as exploring the job creation associated with the physical build. In addition, there will be opportunities for the two primary schools to make links as appropriate to these aspects of the design and build process, relevant to their pupils. It is anticipated that these opportunities will help young people to develop understanding of different jobs and careers which will support them to expand and explore their perspective and knowledge of career opportunities.

The group were made aware that it is common practice across Aberdeenshire to provide opportunities for students, families, and wider community members to be able to speak with the various teams involved in the design and construction of this type of project, to allow for greater understanding and awareness of the work required, the career pathways and the experiences of the employees. With such a large project, it is anticipated that this will provide valuable opportunities for local communities to raise awareness and understanding of a variety of careers.

The groups discussion acknowledged that with the relocation of the new school and subsequent development and expansion of the nursery provision, there is likely to be the creation of opportunities for apprenticeships within the early years setting, which will provide important paid employment and skill development opportunities within the local community. Linked to this conversation, the group also acknowledged that by bringing the academy and the primary school together on the same physical site, there would be increased opportunities to link the academy students with the primary school facilities, with the intention being to provide practical experience of working within a primary school environment, helping to inform and support academy students who are exploring career pathways that may be associated with education.

With the build of the new school being several years away from completion, the group recognised that there may be opportunities to encourage the future workforce, specifically primary school educators, to locate within the Fraserburgh area. It was agreed that a new school often attracts teachers to an area for work, and whilst staff at the two current primary schools will be supported to take up the roles at the new school in the first instance, it is anticipated that the school will create additional staffing roles and as such these may help to create opportunities for additional employment within the local area as well as attracting people to the area to work.

## Recommendations:

No specific recommendations were identified for this Place and Wellbeing Outcome.

### Housing and community

Everyone has access to:

- a home that is affordable, energy efficient, high quality and provides access to private outdoor space.
- a variety of housing types, sizes and tenancies to meet the needs of the community. And of a sufficient density to sustain existing or future local facilities, services and amenities.
- a home that is designed and built to meet need and demand, is adaptable to changing needs and includes accessible/wheelchair standard housing.
- new homes that are located and designed to provide high levels of climate resilience and use sustainable materials and construction methods.
- homes that are designed to promote community cohesion.

## Evidence and research:

- Certain groups of the population can sometimes find it difficult to access good quality affordable housing, which meets their needs.<sup>20</sup>
- Good-quality affordable housing is associated with improved physical and mental health outcomes. Housing can impact on health in three main ways: physical factors, household factors and factors related to place and communities.<sup>20</sup>
- Vacant and derelict land can negatively impact on health.<sup>20</sup>
- Deprived areas are more likely to be exposed to environmental incivilities, vacant and derelict land, and poor maintenance.<sup>20</sup>
- Provision of good quality affordable housing is associated with improved physical and mental health outcomes including quality of life.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

<sup>21</sup> [www.health.org.uk/publications/reports/the-marmot-review-10-years-on](http://www.health.org.uk/publications/reports/the-marmot-review-10-years-on)

## Summary of discussion:

The assessment group discussed the potential for this project to help raise the profile of the north area of Fraserburgh, recognising that new school buildings and the associated influence on surrounding communities, has been experience in other areas of Aberdeenshire. It was recognised that this type of development can positively impact on perceptions of the places where they are built and can also increase the attractiveness of the location, for both private and social housing. Whilst the group recognised this is not a guaranteed outcome of this project, it was a recognised opportunity.

The main discussion associated with the 'Housing and community' Outcome, was focused on the planned rezoning of catchment areas. The group recognised that rezoning also brought opportunities, both in terms of raising the profile of the area and to help support changes in perspectives of living in the North part of Fraserburgh. These opportunities are linked to families being keen to put their children to a newly built primary school. The quality of the spaces and facilities being offered at a new school, will often be a key driver in attracting parents to a catchment area, and in addition this project has the added benefit of the community campus approach, with the new school being built on the existing academy site. These factors were all recognised and discussed, with agreement that this project has the potential to stimulate a step-change for the local area, especially with the additional opportunity that the old school buildings offer, with the potential to develop affordable housing in those locations. A combination of the new school provision and development of affordable housing would help to make the north area of the town more attractive to families who have the potential to positively influence this area of Fraserburgh and the wider town. Caution was raised around the discussion of new housing developments and how that will link to the new school. The group felt it important to distinguish between the opportunities for affordable housing on the old school sites, and the new housing developments in the south of the town. It is anticipated that the rezoning of the catchment areas will move the proposed new housing developments, located in the south of Fraserburgh, into a catchment area for one of the other primary schools within the town, where there is currently additional capacity. This will be an important piece of work that will be balancing a number of competing factors, but as outlined when considering the specific population groups, it is of great importance that this new school provide opportunities to the children and families within the areas of Fraserburgh that are currently experiencing the greatest inequalities and associated impacts, as a means of helping to reduce those inequalities and provide new opportunities.

With the opportunities of the new school at the forefront of the discussion, the group acknowledge that it would be worth exploring links to the councils housing team, to explore how the housing stock in the school catchment area can optimise on the raised profile and increased attractiveness of the area brought about by the new school.

Once again, the discussion circled around to the length of time that the old school buildings will be left unused following the move to the new building. It was felt that this was an issue that would need prioritising as early as possible, as the likelihood of vandalism in this area is high, and any derelict buildings and sites, will encourage that behaviour, leading to a negative impact on the improved 'attractiveness of the area'. It is also well documented that derelict sites can have a negative impact on the mental health of individuals and communities living in their proximity, further highlighting the importance of ensuring the old school sites are repurposed and/or redeveloped in a timely manner. The timeframes and ability to respond quickly to developing those sites, was recognised by the group as being of importance, with discussions to be started as early as possible, and not delayed until the schools are closed. For note it was raised that this cannot be done until the merging of the schools has been approved by Full Council.

The old school sites are recognised to be in a very deprived area of Fraserburgh, where communities are experiencing the worst outcomes associated with inequalities. The area is not well furnished with true community facing building. The one offering in that area is in the form of the old JIC building, which is significant to that part of town, but is falling into a state of disrepair. The group recognised the potential for the old school buildings to offer a new space, within the right location, to carry on the work of the JIC and to help the local community to maintain their identity and belonging attached to the community building. As previously mentioned, ideas for the old schools included using the old infant building to develop the nursery provision in the area, whilst some of the other spaces or buildings could be used to develop affordable housing in this area. The councils housing team have valuable experience of this type of renovation within the area and the group agreed these options should be explored with the support of the Area Management Team.

As part of this discussion, it was raised by the head teachers that both school communities are anxious about the future of the old buildings, as these are of great significance to the communities and there is a lot of identity and pride associated with both buildings. With that in mind, any plans for the development of those buildings and sites needs to be handled with consideration of the community, and ensuring attention is given to the development and repurpose of both buildings, so that the community is aware that there are clear plans for both and that neither are forgotten.

### **Recommendations:**

15. The Learning Estates Team have a wealth of experience in terms of handling vacant buildings and repurposing sites. This should be shared with the Banff and Buchan Area Management Team, with opportunity to collaboratively explore the options for the two old school sites.
16. The Banff and Buchan Area Management Team will pursue a means to achieve closer links with the Councils Housing team, to explore opportunities for improving the provision of

housing stock in the area, both through improving attractiveness of current stock and by exploring the options for affordable housing.

17. The Education and Children Services Directorate will oversee the planning for the use of the old school sites, in the form of initial collaborations as outlined above, and ensure they begin as early as possible, once approval for the New School development is confirmed by Full Council.

## Civic

### Identity and belonging

Everyone can benefit from a place that has a positive identity, culture and history, where people feel like they belong and are able to participate and interact positively with others.

### Evidence and research:

- Community belonging is described as having three elements: community attachment, community identity and social interaction.<sup>22</sup>
- Attachment to place can be associated with good-quality and well-designed public spaces, how welcoming a place is and its aesthetics.<sup>22</sup>
- If people are involved in helping to design and maintain the places they live in, this can build a sense of ownership, belonging and attachment.<sup>22</sup>
- The physical attributes of a place including its design, quality and maintenance can influence perceptions and its reputation – negative perceptions can negatively impact on physical and mental health.<sup>22</sup>
- People in lower income groups are less likely to report being strongly connected to their communities compared with those in higher income groups.<sup>22</sup>
- A sense or feeling of belonging to a community is associated positively with mental health, and an improved quality of life.<sup>23</sup>
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<sup>22</sup> [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

<sup>23</sup> Quality of life literature review [www.qolf.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Literature-Review-ofQuality-of-Life-in-the-Built-Environment-Publica-4-1.pdf](http://www.qolf.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Literature-Review-ofQuality-of-Life-in-the-Built-Environment-Publica-4-1.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> Design for social sustainability – a framework for creating thriving new communities. <https://youngfoundation.org/publications/design-for-social-sustainability/>



## Summary of discussion:

The theme of 'Civic' was woven throughout the assessment discussion, specifically relating to the development of a sense of belonging in the new school and the need to support and enhance this through the transition processes. Both current primary schools have clear identities and communities and there has been discussion around bringing those schools together. Timing around those transition processes was emphasised as being crucial to the success of that process, as it needs to include the people (children, families, and staff) who will be involved in the merger at the time it will occur. Undertaking the transition process and activities too soon will run the risk of creating a negative experience, by engaging the wrong children and families and it may also lead to exasperation. This process will be a very thorough and robust one that has been highly successful in similar projects, but the timing will be dictated by the confirmation of the new building dates, undertaking it prior to having a confirmation date would be inappropriate and increase the likelihood of negative outcomes.

The process undertaken as part of the transition period is all centred-on sense of belonging and sense of purpose, which is reestablished through the curriculum and the offer from the schools, with both current head teachers involved in that process, prior to appointment of the new head teacher.

The importance of specific factors such as uniform is key to the identity and belonging associated with the new school. As previously discussed, when considering the specific population groups, this is a challenging aspect to consider, as it requires complex factors to be reviewed. There is a Scottish Government working group for school uniforms who are currently developing recommendations and policy guidelines around school uniforms, providing a national approach that local authorities will be expected to adopt and adjust for their schools. These will be ready for release shortly and should be used to guide the consideration for the new school rather than duplicating any work. The group agreed that based on the absence of any confirmed time frames, it is not appropriate to make decisions around uniform, and awaiting national level guidance is appropriate. Agreement was reached that it would be appropriate to explore the evidence and work available, that has considered the use of school uniforms, in particular the role of school informs in creating identity and belonging in school settings, balanced against the impact of cost of living on the affordability and accessibility of school uniforms for all families within a community.

## Recommendations:

18. The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will explore the evidence around school uniforms, with specific focus on the role of the school uniform in creating identity and belonging and the impact of the cost of living on the affordability of school uniforms.
19. The Learning Estates team will circulate the national guidelines and recommendations on school uniform to all members of the assessment group once publicly available.

20. Details of the transition process will be shared with the Shaping Places for Wellbeing project team as appropriate for signposting and communication with community organisations and groups.

### Feeling safe

Everyone feels safe and secure in their own home and their local community taking account of the experience of different population groups.

#### Evidence and research:

- Some groups within the population can have limited access to safe and well-maintained environments.<sup>25</sup>

#### Summary of discussion:

The focus of the group's discussion on the 'Feeling safe' Outcome was predominantly around the physical building of the new school and how that can help to create a space where all children feel safe. Initially the group considered children with additional support needs, who were at risk of running away from school or running out of the building. The Learning Estates Team clarified that the spaces within the school had been designed to create feelings of safety, for all children, whilst also ensuring security and barriers to exiting the building without permission. The group were made aware that there have been in depth discussions between the design team and the current school staff, to understand the needs of the pupils, both those in mainstream education and those in enhanced provision, to ensure the safety and security of the building. It was noted that these conversations have offered huge reassurance to parents and staff around their concerns associated with safety.

Specific discussion on the design of the new school, recognised that the whole building should support a sense of safety and security for all children. The design team having considered all factors of the building in line with the requirements for enhanced provision, including the acoustics of the building, the colours in the building, the materials used, the indoor and outdoor spaces and the sizes of those spaces. All of this will support students with enhanced provision requirements, but additionally will create a safe and secure environment for all children attending the school. The new school will also be a Passivhaus building, which means that the environmental factors, such as the temperature of spaces, are consistent across the

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<sup>25</sup> [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

whole building. Research is being done to look at the impact of this on the learning environment, as it is believed that consistent temperature helps to create a calm environment for all staff and pupils. Lighting will also be appropriate throughout the building and again this will help to create that sense of safety and calm. The group recognised that this will be a welcome opportunity to offer a safe and secure space to children in the local area, especially those who are experiencing challenges in their home environment.

As part of this discussion around the benefits of the new building in creating safe and secure spaces, the group also acknowledged the impact that the new school will have environmentally. It was agreed that moving from two schools, which are currently heated through oil fuelled heating systems, to one new school building, which will be fuelled by biomass heating system, will have a positive impact on the environment. It is worth noting that the design for the new school does meet all the targets for the carbon neutral requirements, which are recognised to be very high targets, and this should be recognised due to the positive impact this will have on the local area and wider Aberdeenshire.

The final point in the discussion around 'Feeling safe' was the consideration of the exposure to external factors that are currently noted as a cause for concern at the academy site, specifically related to external access to the land at the side of the school. It has been raised by the academy, on numerous occasions, that there are issues with the public being able to access the footway at the side of the academy site. The group recognised that whilst there is a general awareness of this ongoing problem, unfortunately there are right of access issues, meaning that the schools legally are not able to do anything about. As such, any considerations of this problem need to focus on the management of the areas and access to them from the school, as it is not possible to prevent public access. The group agreed that with the new school being located on this site, management solutions should be explored, with a campus approach possible, to minimise the impact on both secondary school pupils on site and the primary school pupils. It was recognised that the primary school will have bordering fence all around the perimeter, which will minimise any physical interactions, but it should be considered from an observational perspective also.

## **Recommendations:**

21. The Learning Estates Team should share any evidence from studies looking at the impact of Passivhaus buildings on educational spaces, learning environments and behaviour in schools.
22. Discussions between the academy and the new primary school teams should explore management solutions to address the issues linked to public access to the land at the side of the campus.

Additionally, this outcomes is linked to recommendation 20.

# Stewardship

## Care and maintenance

Everyone has access to:

- buildings, spaces and routes that are well cared for in a way that is responsive to the needs and priorities of local communities.
- good facilities for recycling and well organised refuse storage and collection.

## Evidence and research:

- Care and maintenance includes neighbourhood/environmental incivilities such as litter, vandalism and dog fouling.<sup>26</sup>
- Deprived areas are more likely to be exposed to environmental incivilities, vacant and derelict land, and poor maintenance.
- If people perceive their neighbourhoods as being poorly maintained with high levels of environmental incivilities, they are likely to experience worse health outcomes such as lower levels of mental wellbeing.<sup>27</sup>

## Summary of discussion:

The group touched on the discussion of the 'Care and maintenance' Outcome when considering the design of the new school and how it has been developed to provide a safe and calming space. It was recognised that this design brings with it numerous opportunities for the pupils and the local community, and how the sense of ownership and identity is developed alongside the new school can be seen as an opportunity to encourage children and families to have a sense of pride associated with the new building. This has been seen across Aberdeenshire, where communities have strengthened in their sense of pride of place, associated with similar projects.

The group has focused their discussion on the opportunities that this school will bring for specific parts of Fraserburgh that it will directly serve, with recognition of the potential to build relationships based on respect and care for the new school and its facilities. In contrast to that, it was recognised in the discussion that the anticipated positive reception from the immediate community, may not be felt more widely across Fraserburgh. As such there is the

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<sup>26</sup> [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

<sup>27</sup> [https://www.gcph.co.uk/assets/0000/4174/BP\\_11\\_-\\_Built\\_environment\\_and\\_health\\_-\\_updated.pdf](https://www.gcph.co.uk/assets/0000/4174/BP_11_-_Built_environment_and_health_-_updated.pdf)

risk of damage to the school from wider community, and it will be important to link with the local community planning partners, including Police Scotland, if that becomes necessary. As raised on multiple occasion in this assessment, the school brings with it several opportunities for the wider community beyond the catchment areas, and it is important that those opportunities are clear and communicated well, to help embed this school into the wider community of Fraserburgh, so that it is seen as being of value and importance to the whole town. There are examples of successful projects across Aberdeenshire, where schools have worked with Police Scotland to target local young people, who are engaging in vandalism. These projects have worked with those young people, to help them identify an agreed space within a school facility that they can take ownership of and that they can graffiti on. This helped to reduce unwanted vandalism and allowed those children to feel part of the school. Exploring these options may be advantageous to this project as it is recognised that there are issues around vandalism and anti-social behaviour with young people in the area.

Continuing the discussion around vandalism and concerns associated with that, the new school has been designed with a clear understanding of the current challenges being experienced in the local community, specifically around anti-social behaviour, vandalism and fire raising. The structure of the physical building will be a block, due to its Passivhaus design, meaning that it does not have sheltered areas that are easy to hide in. Similarly, the landscaping of the outside has been designed, being cognisant of the local issues, and so should help to reduce the likelihood of serious issues associated with vandalism or fire raising. Additionally, the school will be fitted with CCTV across the campus, and it is hoped this will act as a deterrent for individuals or groups who would be likely to seek out opportunities for vandalism.

### **Recommendations:**

23. The school staffing team should continue to develop links with the local Police Scotland team, in particular the community officers, to develop relationships between children and Police and to explore any active steps that can be taken to help reduce the likelihood of vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
24. The Area Management Team will share information and learning from successful projects that have tackled vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

## Influence and sense of control

Everyone is empowered to be involved a place in which:

- Local outcomes are improved by effective collaborations between communities, community organisations and public bodies.
- Decision making processes are designed to involve communities as equal partners.
- Community organisations co-produce local solutions to issues.
- Communities have increased influence over decisions.
- Democratic processes are developed to be accessible to all citizens.

### Evidence and research:

- Sense of control can be beneficial for mental health and quality of life.<sup>28</sup>
- People on lower incomes tend to have a lower sense of control compared to people on higher incomes.<sup>28</sup>
- People living in more socioeconomically deprived areas can feel less confident about being involved in decision-making compared to less deprived areas.<sup>28</sup>
- Those with a long-term health condition or disability can feel less empowered in decisions about their neighbourhood.<sup>28</sup>

### Summary of discussion:

The details of the consultation process outlined that the proposal aligns well to this specific outcome, with the consultation processes for this project recognised as thorough and extensive. The various forms of consultation along with the engagement with the numerous different stakeholders should be identified as a strength of this proposal, as it demonstrates the projects consideration of the influence from the local community and has facilitated the community to feel a sense of ownership and involvement in the process so far, with that anticipated to continue throughout the project to completion. Discussion through the assessment has identified that despite extensive consultation work, there will still be groups within the community who have not engaged, and that there are partner organisations, projects and groups, including the Shaping Places for Wellbeing project team and the Lived Experience Network, who maybe bale to support this project moving forward to help provide perspectives from those seldom heard groups and to bring those perspectives into the discussions.

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<sup>28</sup> [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

Whilst it is not usual for a project like this to have so much time for consultation stakeholder engagement, the timeframes for this project have offered some advantages. Most notably the Learning Estates Team have been able to work with families for long periods and in some cases, this has provided the opportunity to bring several generations along the journey with the project. Whilst this has offered advantages in this specific situation, it is not normal practice, and it is not ideal for a project to have such a lengthy time frame. Being cognisant of that, the Learning Estates team would be keen to explore process that would enable them to collate the quality and depth of the information, from a wider range of stakeholders, in a much shorter timeframe. It was proposed that the Place and Wellbeing Assessment process does offer a format for that, and that should be explored further.

Maintaining community positivity around this project, if there are delays due to funding, needs to be considered, as it is possible that the community will not stay engaged and supportive if there are further delays out with the control of the Learning Estates Team. Expectations will need to be managed within the community and communication will be key to this, with continuing dialogue with the schools and the wider community. It is important that the community, especially those that have been involved in consultation, understand the reason for any delays that may be experienced and that there is transparency around that information. Once again timing will be key to this, to ensure information is accurate.

The final point for discussion in this assessment, was focused on parent engagement with schools. It is noted that there has been significant disengagement in schools from parents across Aberdeenshire and wider Scotland, with a reduction in volunteers representing the Parent Council groups, since the COVID-19 pandemic. With that in mind it is again worth considering the current experience at the two primary schools and how the new school may provide an opportunity to build and develop parent engagement. The development of the Parent Council and wider parent and carer involvement in the school is an aspect that will be covered through the transition processes associated with this project. There are examples in other areas of Aberdeenshire, where the opportunity for parents to be involved in decisions relating to new schools, including the appointment of Head Teachers, the development of school policies and the discussions on the number of classes the school should have, has encouraged parents to get involved. It is anticipated that learning from those examples, as well as the experience of the Learning Estates Team will help to support the parent engagement in this new school.

## **Recommendations:**

25. The Learning Estates Team should link with the Shaping Places for Wellbeing team and the Lived Experience Network to help future engagement with communities and to expand the reach of communications relating to the new school.

26. The Learning Estates Team should document and share the best practice undertaken with the consultation processes for this project, to help develop consultation processes across the council services.
27. The Shaping Places for Wellbeing team will work with the Learning Estates Team to identify how the Place and Wellbeing Assessment process may be used for future projects relating to school mergers and new school builds, with support to implement that assessment process as appropriate.



# Appendix 3

## Participants

- Maxine Booth – Quality Improvement Manager, Aberdeenshire Council
- Rachael Goldring – Learning Estates Team Leader, Aberdeenshire Council
- Sarah Barrett – Quality Improvement Officer, Aberdeenshire Council
- Peter Wood – Quality Improvement Manager, Aberdeenshire Council
- Sharon Mellin – Head Teacher Fraserburgh North Primary School
- Roselynn Birnie – Head Teacher St Andrews Primary School
- Alistair Millar – Senior Roads Engineer, Aberdeenshire Council
- Angela Keith – Banff and Buchan Area Manager, Aberdeenshire Council
- Irene Beautyman – Place & Wellbeing Partnership Lead, Improvement service and Public Health Scotland
- Susan Rintoul (Assessment Chair) – Project Lead (Dalkeith) Shaping Places for Wellbeing, Improvement service
- Alice Collins (Assessment note taker) – Project Officer Shaping Places for Wellbeing, Improvement Service
- Matthew Smart – Community Link Lead (Fraserburgh) Shaping Places for Wellbeing, Aberdeenshire Council
- Laura Stewart – Project Lead (Fraserburgh) Shaping Places for Wellbeing, Aberdeenshire Council