

1. Context & Rationale

Education Scotland

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected every single person in Scotland. International research and our own experience indicates that children and young people have been affected in different ways, and in particular those who are vulnerable or have Additional Support Needs.

Some children and young people have found it difficult to re-engage in learning on return to the classroom. Others have found it difficult to make as much progress in their learning as they would have liked during lockdown. Some have experienced gaps in their learning now evident on their return to school or setting.

The lack of interaction with their peers has also significantly impacted on children's health and wellbeing. Many report feeling anxious, and some have suffered the loss of significant others. Building relationships and managing transitions will both be important in re-engaging children and young people in their learning, and ensuring that they feel safe and confident in the school or setting.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/covid-19-education-recovery/addressing-the-impact-of-covid-19/>

Aberdeenshire Council

From the 21st June, children, young people and adults living in Aberdeenshire were able to access online digital services to support positive mental health and wellbeing.

Kooth is a service for children and young people aged 10–18 years (up to 19th birthday) that offers a free online counselling and emotional well-being support service. It provides a safe and secure means of accessing support from a professional team of qualified professionals, as well as providing access to many self-help tools and content. To access please register using this link www.kooth.com

Togetherall provides support for young people and adults aged 16 years and upwards. Trained accredited professionals are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, meaning that any adult who may be struggling can choose from a range of safe therapeutic services at a time that best suits them. This service can be accessed by inputting your postcode at <http://www.togetherall.com> and creating a completely anonymous user account.

Inverurie Academy

At Inverurie Academy, we are committed to ensuring that we do all we can to ensure our students achieve their full potential, and our Core Values of ambition, inclusion, integrity and respect continue to be vitally important during COVID-19 as we direct our efforts and resources to the activities that will have the most positive impact.

Our Website link below outlines a summary of the COVID-19 mitigations that are currently in operation, together with useful links to guidance.

<https://inverurie.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/covid/>

Just a few changes that have been made for 2021-22 are:-

-  A removal of our bell system for the session to ease congestion.
-  Continuation of a staggered break and lunch reduce crowds and support recovery.
-  Maintenance of the one-way system around the school.

- 📌 Introduction of a virtual Parent Evening platform to allow video-conferencing to replace in-person parent/carer meetings during 2021-22.
- 📌 Extending our use of Microsoft Teams for Parent Council Meetings.

Students

The Inverurie Academy School Captains have engaged with staff to review the recent article by Michael Fullan (<https://michaelfullan.ca/3460-2/>) and the recent OECD Report (<https://www.oecd.org/education/scotland-s-curriculum-for-excellence-bf624417-en.htm>) with a view to undertaking a legacy research task to find the student voice on some of the key themes arising out of these publications. This is a task that will support recovery and the next chapter for Inverurie Academy.

2. Improvement Plan

Following consultation with our school community, we created a two-year improvement plan to span 2020-22. Modest changes were made at the half-way point to respond to small changes in priority and this improvement plan can be found here on our school website.

A short video has been created by some members of the Staff Team to outline some of the particular priorities they have as part of their role for 2021-22.

<https://inverurie.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/handbook/>

A set of three additional specifically *recovery*-related improvement items will be worked on during the course of 2021-22. These are set out below.

ω	Recovery (<i>made possible through SG Recovery Funding</i>)				
	📌 Create a staged recovery programme for those struggling to attend school regularly to reengage with in-person learning.	LO	Inclusion, L&T	1.2	
	📌 Introduce a wellbeing survey for students to use based on the wellbeing indicators	LO	Inclusion, Attainment	1.3 (2.1)	
	📌 Oversee the skills replenishment programme run in partnership with AFCCT.	LO	Inclusion, Attainment	1.3 (3.3)	

Wellbeing

We will:

- Track wellbeing data with termly SHANARRI surveys of both students and staff
- Create a 'Snapshot of Inverurie Academy' video to strengthen school identity and a sense of belonging
- Introduce Wellbeing Ambassadors as leadership opportunities throughout yeargroups

Impact:

- Provide clear data on the overall wellbeing of students and staff to provide the right support at the right time
- Highlight the depth and variety of issues our young people deal with & provide a vehicle to share this with our wider school community and partners
- Provide further leadership opportunities for students with a journey towards peer education around positive wellbeing

AFCCTrust

We will:

- Support all S2 students in completing the Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust 12 week Mindset Programme
- We will further invest by having a number of staff complete the 'Train the Trainer' course to deliver the Mindset programme in house for future year groups

Impact:

- Scaffold positive mindset for S2 students
- Have a positive impact on behaviour and poor decision making, leading to a reduction of demerits and exclusions
- Link with our restorative practice journey in doing the right thing and managing conflict appropriately
- Improving attendance by providing coping strategies for those who are struggling
- Build on partnerships

IN2Learning

We will:

- Design an online programme of work for S1/S2 students to complete at home including some certified courses
- Provide a small online group for S1 non attenders to phase towards a return to in person learning
- Continue to look for opportunities for FLP's to support SP students struggling with in person learning

Impact:

- Provide appropriate work for those non-attenders with minimal workload for staff
- Provide a group based programme to support those struggling to attend for in school learning
- Further utilise partnerships to offer a wider range of learning opportunities for flexible learning plans (FLPs) specifically within the Senior Phase to ensure all students are achieving and attaining.

3. Recovery Fund Expenditure

During the past two academic sessions, recovery funding has been produced to supplement both the usual funding arrangement for schools and the PEF funding that has been a feature of the past four years. Please find below a summary of the use that this funding has been put to over these two academic sessions.

2020-21		
Recovery Funding		
PEF Funding		
Item	Cost Source	Purpose
Acting DHT (COVID Remit) 0.5FTE	(Recovery Funding)	Support capacity to ensure COVID planning & mitigations in place
PT Digital Literacy	(Recovery Funding)	Support staff CPD to deliver effective online learning
PT Pathways	(Recovery Funding)	Create a pathway to success for vulnerable students
School Nursing Assistant	(Recovery Funding)	Support increased capacity in supporting vulnerable students.
General Staffing Capacity	(Recovery Funding)	Increased capacity to deliver support both generally and to targeted students.
MCR Pathways	(PEF Funding)	To support vulnerable students through mentoring programme
2021-22		
Recovery Funding		
PEF Funding		
Item	Cost	Purpose
Acting DHT (Recovery) 1FTE	(Recovery Funding)	Support key aspects of recovery (see improvement plan) and provide general capacity to continue with strategic priorities despite COVID-19 challenges.

PT Digital Literacy (0.2FTE)	(Recovery Funding)	Create a digital solution for an e-portfolio to replace the old S3 profile. This will support capture of skills by students in addition to progress against curricular areas.
AFCCT Mindset Programme	(Recovery Funding)	A 12 week <i>Mindset</i> programme run by Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust.
General Staffing Capacity	(Recovery Funding)	Increased capacity to deliver support both generally and to targeted students.
Pivotal Education	(Recovery Funding)	Staff-wide training on restorative practice.
Additional School Nursing Assistant Hours	(Recovery Funding)	We have identified an increase need for nursing support (both COVID and non-COVID related) during the recovery phase.
Additional PSW (Attendance) Hours	(PEF Funding)	We are adding a further 15 hours per week to our PSW (Attendance) to encourage attendance at school and timekeeping.
Columba 1400 Partnership	(PEF Funding)	Re-imagining our support for vulnerable students into a coaching programme supported by Columba 1400.

4. Prelim & Assessment

Following advice from the SQA around the planned arrangements for examinations in 2021-22 (<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/98798.html>), Inverurie Academy has put in place the following:-

-  An extended Assessment Period for National 5 has been put in place from the 22nd November to 10th December. During this three-week period, assessments will take place in-class and will supplement the existing regular assessments that take place for each subject. For reasons of practicability, these in-class assessments will be supervised by the class teacher. A programme for this three-week period will be shared with the school community.
-  An Assessment Period for Higher / Advanced Higher will take place 17th January to 28th January. This fortnight will comprise in-class assessments supervised by class teachers with a programme to be shared in advance.
-  The usual mentoring programmes that are run by the school cannot be delivered safely to involve business and community partners. Therefore we will support students to identify aspirational targets through a Google Form and then share this information with support for class teachers to enhance the learning conversations that take place in class.
-  Following review, the number of columns in S5/6 were reduced from six to five to provide more time for learning and recovery in subjects than would previously have been on offer.
-  We have a continued focus on a breadth of courses on offer: National 3/4/5, Higher, Advanced Higher, NPA at Level 5 and 6, Foundation Apprenticeships and the Scottish Baccalaureate. We are committed to maintain these additional courses to ensure we encourage students to be sitting the right course at the right time.
-  During the session, we will sample the views of the school community on some additional changes to our curriculum in S2 and S3, although we are cautious about the capacity the school community has for further change at this time of recovery.

5. WTA & Calendar

Aspects of our School Calendar have necessarily been modified both for safety mitigation and for the purposes of recovery:-

- 🏠 Parent/Carer and Parent Council evenings have been adapted to become virtual events, utilising either the *Parents Evening Booking System* or *Microsoft Teams*.
- 🏠 In-person assemblies have been removed and replaced by occasional virtual assemblies recorded in advance.
- 🏠 We are working with Community Learning & Development to host a *Strengthening Families* course as part of our support for some families as they recover from two periods of lockdown.

6. Learning & Teaching

- 🏠 Our staff team are engaging with *Pivotal Education* to embark on a programme introducing restorative practice to the school. This commences in November 2021.
- 🏠 The Learning & Teaching Project Group will be focusing on differentiation.
- 🏠 The Inver Merit initiative will continue – on ten occasions during the year, S1-S6 students will receive a virtual merit award via email to parents/carers with these merits contributing to a consistent effort merit award in June.
- 🏠 Registration has recommenced with a focus on wellbeing – tasks are provided by the Pastoral Team.

7. Wider Activities

- 🏠 Following careful consideration of the Scottish Government guidelines (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-reducing-the-risks-in-schools/>) a decision was made to restart wider-curricular activities at Inverurie Academy. Activities Fairs were held on 8th (BGE) & 15th September (Senior Phase). From this date, clubs, groups and activities have recommenced.
- 🏠 After Christmas, the Health & Wellbeing Project Group will be supporting the introduction of a values token system to support continued progress in recovery supported by our Core Values.

8. Additional Reference Documents

https://bettereducate.com/uploads/file/48309_ActivateDeepLearningandLiftfromLoss1pdf_ActivateDeepLearningandLiftfromLoss1.pdf

<http://columbancommunity.com/be-the-change>