

***A Quality Improvement Framework for the
Education, Learning and Leisure Service.***

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Section 1: Background and purpose of framework

The Education, Learning and Leisure Service is the largest of Aberdeenshire Council's Services, providing a range of opportunities for people of all ages right across Aberdeenshire. The service is responsible for pre-school education, primary and secondary schools, additional support needs, community learning and development, as well as services such as libraries, sports and leisure, museums, heritage and culture.

The service employs around 8000 people and has an annual revenue budget of around £247M. In terms of establishments the service operates over 400 facilities, including schools, leisure centres, swimming pools, community centres, libraries, museums and other cultural venues. Aberdeenshire has a population of around 239 000, the fifth largest of Scotland's local authorities and the service is committed to delivering the council's vision of "*servicing Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea – the very best of Scotland.*"

The service is committed to serving the people of Aberdeenshire by:

- Supporting and empowering individuals, families and groups
- Enabling lifelong learning and employability
- Advancing community development and well-being

To be able to deliver successfully on these commitments, the Education, Learning and Leisure service must encourage, nurture, develop, exhibit and practise a culture and set of behaviours, activities and initiatives characteristic of the very best organisational practice. Of prime importance amongst these are:

- Being able to clearly articulate its vision through inspirational leadership
- Having open and effective systems in place that allow it to be self aware about its current strengths and weaknesses
- Making use of a range of robust sources of data about performance, and having in place effective management systems which allow data to be accessed, analysed and used to inform management decision making
- Having in place management processes that ensure there is systematic implementation of the policies, strategies, objectives and plans of the council and service
- Having a commitment to the development of its employees within a developing learning community

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- Having a commitment to developing and maintaining partnership working

Most importantly, these elements need to come together in such a way that their primary focus is on the delivery of outcomes which meet the needs of Aberdeenshire's citizens. A key advantage of a single Education, Learning and Leisure service is that it presents the opportunities to meet these needs in a more joined up, effective and responsive way, than would be possible via a series of separate services.

As a result, the profile of Aberdeenshire Education, Learning and Leisure – in terms of its Performance, its Reputation, its Leadership and its People – will continuously evolve towards being “the very best”, as illustrated in the profile of a Top Performing Education, Learning & Leisure service. (See Appendix 1).

This process is also supported through the ‘Kaizen for Daily Improvement’ (KDI) Programme which has the aim of embedding the practice of day-to-day continuous improvement in all areas of the service. The role of KDI in supporting improvement as part of the Quality Improvement Framework is set out in more detail in section 4.

The purpose of the Education, Learning and Leisure service Quality Improvement framework is to define how all of these elements should interrelate in a way that is consistent with the Council's own quality framework, and which provides a common quality architecture within which the existing quality frameworks for each area of the service can operate. **At the heart of the process is need for effective self evaluation, which will enable and support continuous improvement at every level of the organisation.**

The Framework

The framework is based on the overarching “six key questions” structure set out in “*A Framework for evaluating the quality of services and organisations*” (HMLe, 2006), which themselves, have been developed to be consistent with the principles of the Excellence Model of the EFQM, (European Foundation for Quality in Management). This model is, in one form or another, the predominant model used to support quality improvement across the public service.

It is also consistent with the corporate approach to quality improvement and performance management adopted by the Council. The corporate framework (the Aberdeenshire Improvement Model – AIM) makes explicit reference to the nine criteria of EFQM, whilst the model developed by HMLe uses six key questions.

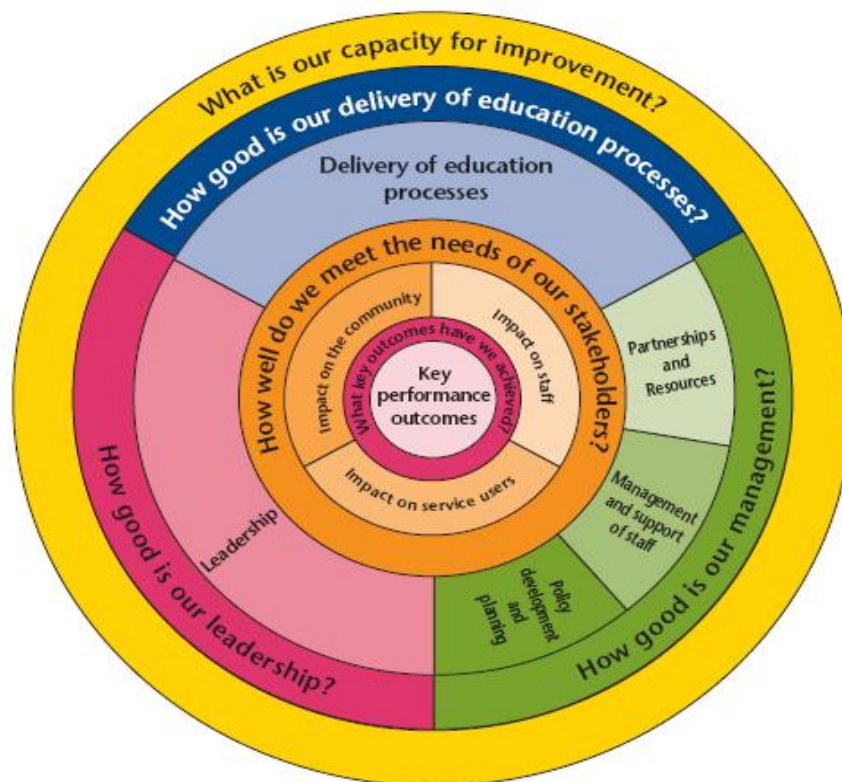
Because of the familiarity of this model and its associated terminology, across a range of public sector functions in Scotland, there is a strong case for

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adopting the “How good is our..” nomenclature when referring to the Education, Learning & Leisure service’s quality framework. Accordingly, the framework may be referred to under the heading “How good is our Education, Learning & Leisure service”, or HGIOELL.

Figure 1 (below) illustrates how the six high level questions fit together in the framework, with the focus being on delivery of key performance outcomes.

Fig 1: Overarching HGIOELL framework



(NB In this diagram, “education processes” refers to all Education, Learning and Leisure processes)

Figure 2 (below) provides more details on how each of the high level questions are broken down into 10 more specific “key areas”, which can form the basis for self evaluation activity.

Figure 3 (below) illustrates how the HGIOELL framework integrates with existing subsidiary quality frameworks and the structure of the EL&L service.

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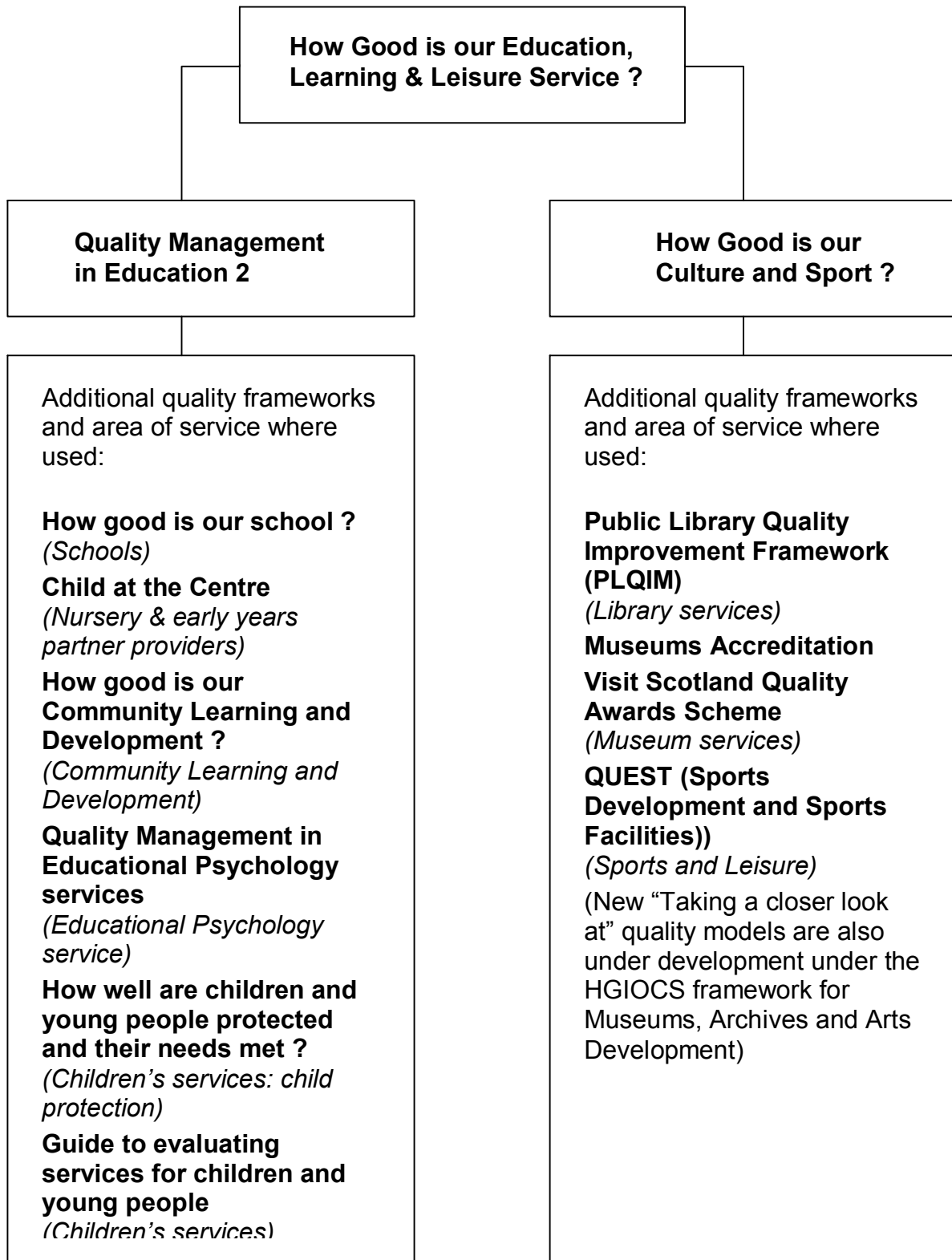
Fig 2: Six high level questions of the HGIOELL framework

Impact on paid
staff and
volunteers

Leading people
and developing
partnerships
Leadership of
innovation,
change and
improvement

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Fig 3: How Good is Our Education, Learning & Leisure Service Quality framework and subsidiary frameworks



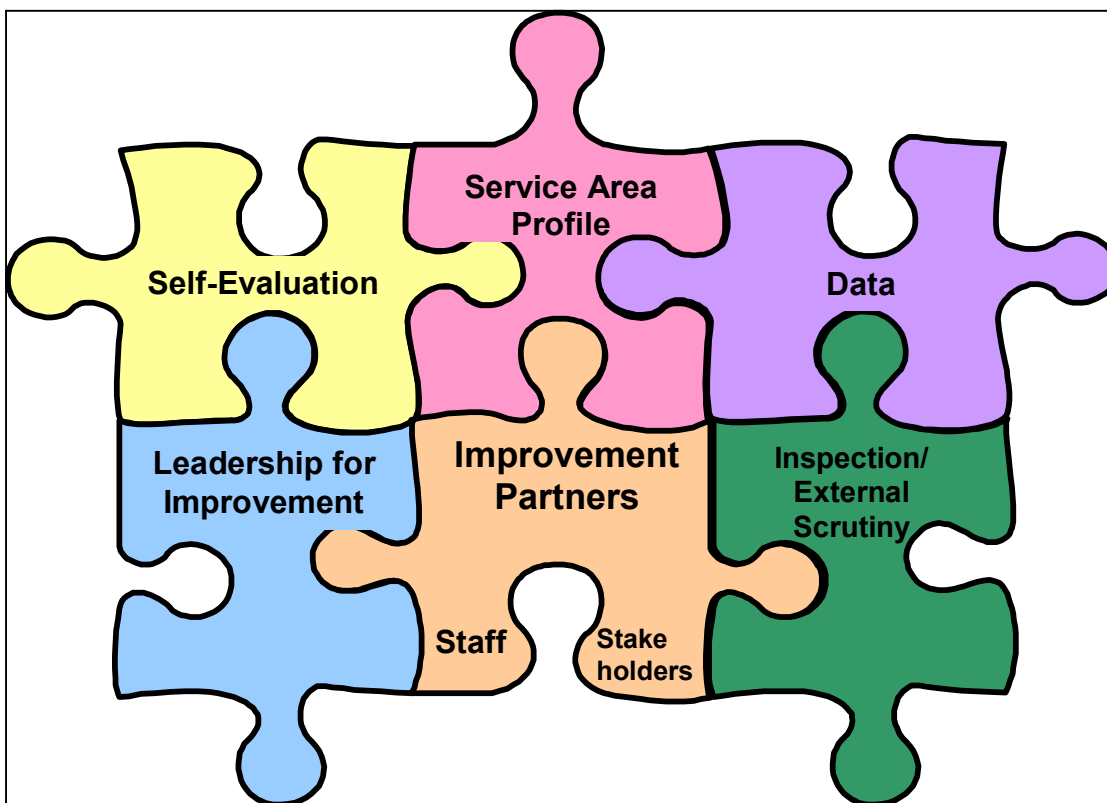
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Section 2: Making the Framework work in each Service Area

The framework requires that the various elements of the quality improvement “jigsaw” come together in a way that enables and supports improvement and makes a contribution to delivery of outcomes for stakeholders. The form that these elements take in different service areas can vary. However, there is merit, in the context of a quality framework across the Education, Learning and Leisure service, in adopting a common approach and vocabulary when it comes to putting the policy into practice.

Figure 4 illustrates the main elements of Quality Improvement practice within the framework.

Fig 4: Elements of Quality Improvement practice



In more detail, these are:

Self Evaluation

Self evaluation is at the heart of the improvement process. It is through reflective self evaluation that practitioners become empowered to become agents for improvement in the delivery of services, and it also is the root source of data upon which evaluative judgements can be made.

Service Area Profile

This provides a range of contextual information about each area of service delivery, within which improvement planning will operate.

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Data

A data rich environment in which robust and reliable data from a wide range of sources is used for improvement purposes is an essential element of the improvement framework.

Leadership for Improvement

Improvement requires leaders at every level to be active in setting the agenda for improvement and leading their teams in the improvement planning process. To be able to achieve this, staff must be able to interact with their line managers in an informed, supportive, challenging and professional dialogue about improvement in their establishment, team or area of the service.

Improvement Partners

In many parts of the service, partnership working is an essential element of service delivery. It follows therefore, that an important element of the improvement planning process involves managers, establishment/team leaders engaging with their improvement partner(s) in an informed, supportive, challenging and professional dialogue about improvement priorities within their area of the service.

Inspection/ External scrutiny

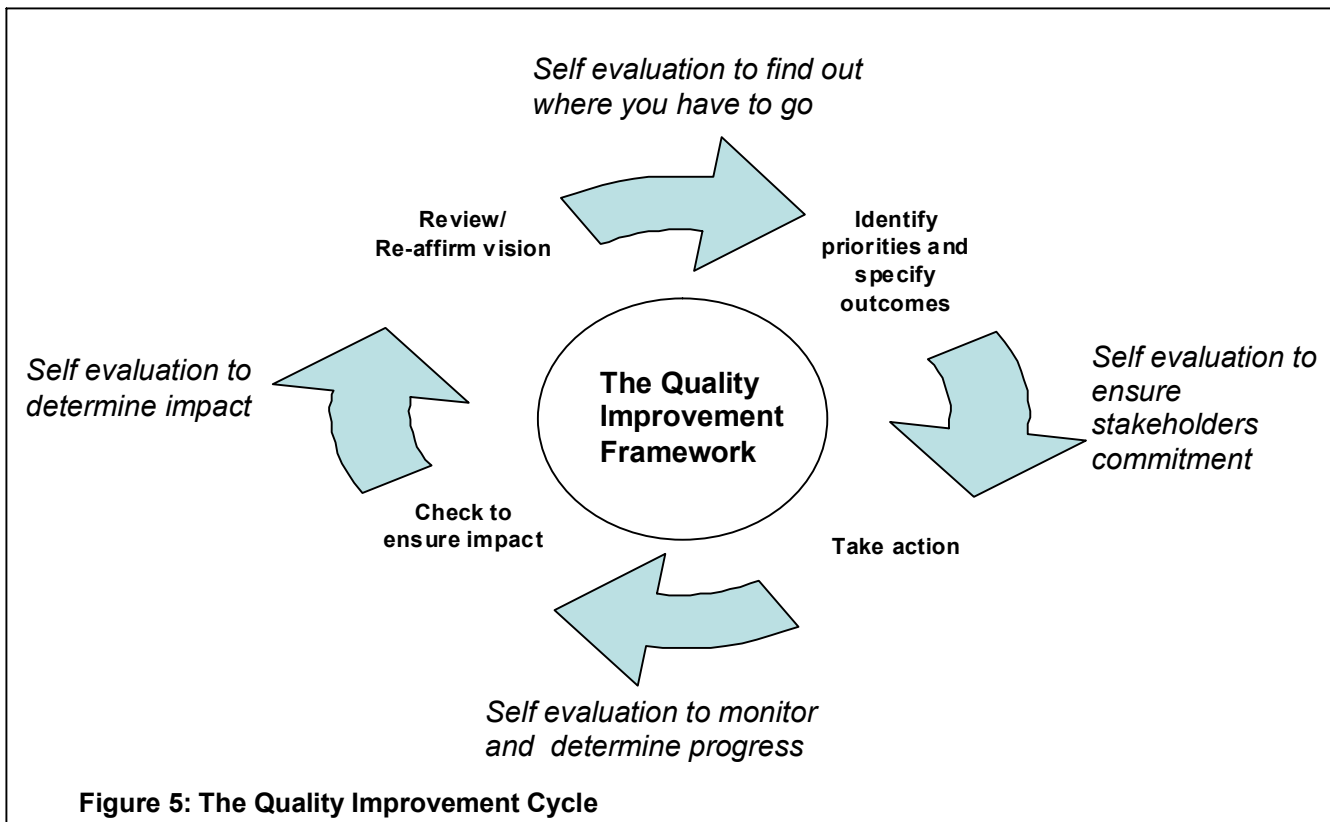
An external scrutiny process can play an important role in supporting improvement by providing validation of practitioner's/establishment's own evaluations, highlighting good and improving practice, and assisting in the identification of priorities for improvement. It also provides important information and accountability to stakeholders

An outline of how these elements of Quality Improvement practice are implemented in each service area is provided in Appendix 2.

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Section 3: Quality Improvement Framework and Performance Management.

The quality improvement framework provides the hub around which the planning for improvement cycle sits. The cycle involves agreeing/re-affirming the vision, identifying improvement priorities and specifying outcomes, carrying out continuous improvement activity across the service, and measurement of performance to monitor impact. **Self evaluation has an important role in each phase.**



Performance management is about ensuring that the processes and practice of monitoring performance is organised and managed in a way that supports, and is aligned with, the service's strategic objectives. The quality improvement framework supports performance management through the logical structure of its 6 high level questions. It is important, therefore, that the performance management system also reflects this structure.

It is also important that the system operates in the same way across each service area. The fact that all of the main frameworks share a common structure (under the six high level questions), will facilitate this process and allow each service area to contribute to performance monitoring and evaluation of the EL&L service.

To achieve this, a number of operational aspects need to be in place. These include:

- Improvement Plans, at appropriate levels, within service areas which reflect the priorities of the EL&L Service plan.

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These annual plans set out the Improvement Priorities, at the appropriate level within the service area, and the associated desired Outcomes for stakeholders. They should detail the planned actions/projects to be implemented in order to meet the priorities, identify key personnel or teams responsible with timescales and key milestones, as well as criteria for success. This is important as this will be a key source of evidence when evaluating under key question one, "What key outcomes have we achieved?".

- A set of key Quality/Performance Indicators (QIs/Pis) , which can be linked to the 6 key questions. In many cases, these can simply be the Quality Indicators from the quality frameworks themselves, but would also include, where appropriate, Statutory (and other) Performance Indicators. QIs/Pis will have a role, both in monitoring the extent to which we are successful in delivering on our planned outcomes and objectives, but also in monitoring how effectively the service is being run.
- A system for collecting, analysing, evaluating, presenting and reporting on performance. In order to arrive at an accurate, rounded view, it is useful if the evaluation is arrived at as a result of a "triangulation" of different types of evidence. This will culminate in the production of Standards and Quality reports, or statements, at appropriate levels, within each service area.

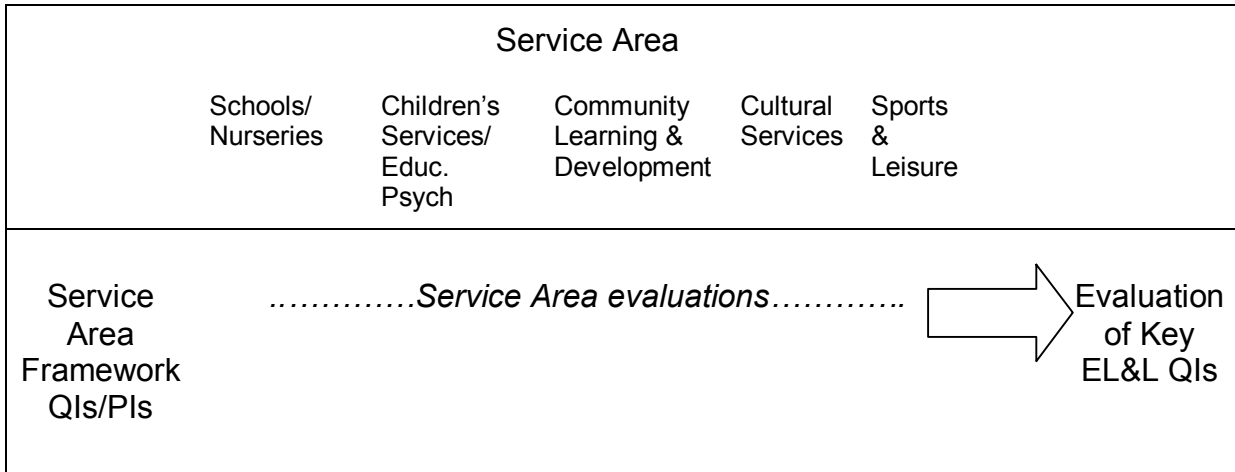
Based on evidence arising from ongoing and scheduled self evaluative activity, the annual Standards & Quality report, or statement, will be structured around the particular quality framework document for each service area. It will be written to an agreed common format and will reference the evidence upon which the evaluations have been arrived at.

The report will include a summary evaluative statement in relation to each of the 6 high level questions and statements which highlight improvements since last year, areas of particular strength and areas for development and improvement.

- This information, together with the actual evaluations in relation to each key Quality Indicator, will form the basis of the annual Standards & Quality report for the EL&L Service as a whole, and for monitoring and reporting on performance across the service.

Thus, each Service Area will contribute evaluations and evidence in relation to some, or all of the QIs under each high level question. The Service Area evaluations will inform the corresponding EL&L Service level evaluation (right hand column in table below).

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The key Quality Indicators (or Key Performance Indicators) for the EL&L Service will reflect the six high level questions of the HGIOELL framework, but will also include indicators which reflect the objectives and strategic priorities of the service.

Whilst the operational implementation of these processes across the service areas will require flexibility, and it is recognised that different service areas are at different stages in their use of, and familiarity with HGIOELL style quality frameworks, it will be necessary for the activity that underlies it to recognise and reflect certain fixed points in the overall Service wide calendar for improvement activity. These will include the annual service level and service area level improvement priorities (within the context of the EL&L Service Plan), and associated budgets, which will be available in March each year, as well as the service level Standards and Quality report, which is compiled in December of each year. As well as recognising these service level fixed points, improvement activity at service area level and below will need to take account of:

- The fact that the Improvement Plan (IP) at each level is informed by the Improvement Plan at the adjacent “higher” level.
- The fact that the Standards & Quality report/statement (S&Q Rep) at each level is informed by the report at the adjacent “lower” level.
- Operational cycles relating to how services are delivered in different service areas. For example, for schools, Clusters and CSNs, the normal cycle of the school session will be important.
- The fact that, whilst Standards and Quality reports or statements will be annual at all levels, the EL&L Service Plan will be determined over a three year period, to reflect its more strategic scope and link to other strategic plans, such as the Council’s Strategic Priorities, the Community Plan and the Single Outcome Agreement.

It will be necessary for each service area, and associated levels below, to develop a more detailed “Quality Improvement Calendar”, which takes these factors into account and provides detail on the range of ongoing self evaluative activity throughout the year..

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The following examples provide an outline of a possible calendar , in terms of roles and responsibilities for self evaluative activity at the level of the Team Leader/ Head Teacher and Team Member/Teacher:

Team Leader (CLD/Culture/Sport)/Head Teacher

- Throughout: Responsible for managing the Quality Improvement processes within the team/establishment and ensuring that all staff are engaged with them. Monitoring of performance, as appropriate EDRS/PDRS activity with staff throughout the year.
- Jan – March: Improvement Plans progress checking
- April – May: As part of a whole school, collegiate activity, take into account where the Team/school currently stands in relation to its vision/aims, the previous S&Q report and higher level Improvement priorities, formulate Improvement priorities for new Plan. Produce Improvement Plan and consult on it with stakeholders
- June: Agree and finalise Improvement plan
Agree evaluations, draw together evidence and write Standards & Quality report
- July-December: Engagement with Line manager on Plan (Leadership for Improvement engagement)
Amendments to plan, as appropriate

Team member/Teacher

- Throughout: Collegiate responsibility for self evaluation. As part of day to day activity, periodically conduct self evaluation in relation to key QIs. This will involve discussion with colleagues and with line manager, and, where appropriate ,recording of evidence in line with the Team/School Quality Improvement Calendar (using glow) Improvement activity, as per agreed Improvement Plan
- Jan- Mar: EDRS/PDRS activity, part of which relates to self evaluation
Improvement Plan progress check
- Apr-June: Input to process of agreeing evaluations for Standards and Quality report
Involvement in consultation leading to agreement of new Improvement Plan
- Jul-Dec Involvement in Leadership for Improvement engagement

(A more detailed illustration of a Quality Improvement Calendar for a secondary school is provided in Appendix 3).

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Service Level Performance Reporting

Performance in relation to the Key Quality/Performance Indicators for the Service will form the basis of reporting to elected members and stakeholders generally. This will be achieved through the annual Standards and Quality report for the service, which will use HGIOELL as the framework for reporting. However, other Quality and Performance indicators will be used to monitor progress in relation to achievement of the strategic objectives of the service and in relation to the efficient management and delivery of services.

For some Performance Indicators, performance may also be reported in relation to appropriate target levels for performance, and consideration will also be given to including appropriate benchmarking of performance.

The aim will be, in line with corporate arrangements for performance reporting, to provide a simple and effective means for Senior Management, Councillors and stakeholders generally, to assess where the Service is in terms of the quality of its provision and the extent to which is meeting the needs of the citizens of Aberdeenshire, the achievement of its strategic objectives, and the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

As well as “high level, strategic” Indicators, different service areas will make use of a range of additional PIs to monitor performance at the appropriate level, within each service area.

Service Plan Reporting

There is a statutory requirement that the Service reports annually on the progress it has made in delivering on its “educational improvement objectives”. This will continue to be achieved through the revised Service Report, which reports on progress in relation to the strategic objectives of the Service , as set out in the Service Level Plan.

The performance information reported in the Service Report will inform the Standards and Quality report, (under PI1.1 Improvements in Performance).

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Section 4: Using Kaizen for Daily Improvement to support delivery of the Framework

The 'Kaizen for Daily Improvement' Programme is one of the Council's main initiatives to engage the organisation's people in workplace improvement activity, with the aim of being recognised for delivery of *World Class* services.

The aim of the KDI programme is to embed the practice of day-to-day continuous improvement in all areas. This will be achieved by developing the staff culture, as witnessed by behaviours, attitudes and Continuous Improvement skills and knowledge. This contributes to a number of the elements of Quality Improvement practice as set out in Section 2.

Observable Outcomes sought through the KDI programme are:

- Changed behaviours – a demonstrated culture of Continuous Improvement
- Mindset focused on customers and processes
- Better operational practices – self-monitored, lean and a benchmark exemplar
- Improved performance, i.e.

Flexible, self-managing workforce

Increased capacity

Reduced operating costs

Better customer satisfaction

The embedding of a continuous improvement culture is predicated on the notion of self-evaluation activity within a project based context, against a predefined set of performance-related behaviours, which within the KDI Programme, have been graded as 'Bronze-Silver-Gold'.

Bronze – *Doing things well*

Silver – *Doing things better*

Gold – *Being the best*

The Improvement "journey" envisaged through undertaking the Kaizen for Daily Improvement Programme, as set out in Fig. 6, reflect a similar set of aims as those described, using different evaluative terms within the Quality Improvement Framework, as the journey from practice and provision that is "good" to "very good" to "excellent".

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Fig.6 : Levels of Achievement

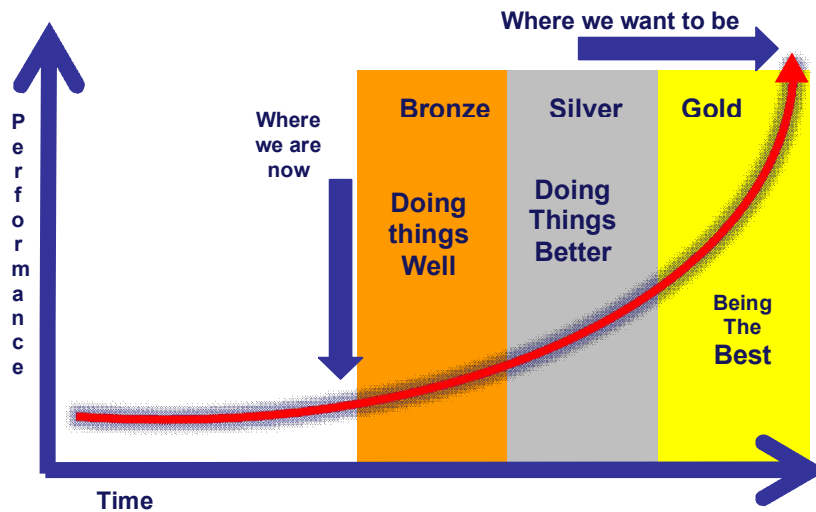
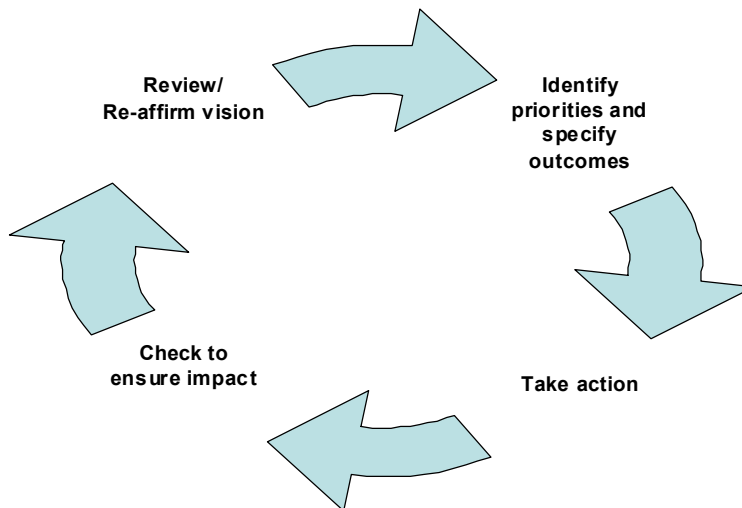


Figure 5 in Section 3, and repeated below, sets out the cycle of Improvement Activity envisaged as part of the Quality Improvement Framework. Kaizen for Daily Improvement provides a particular focus for this in terms of a number of actions which are designed (by orientation of the audit at Bronze Level) to develop the mindset of Continuous Improvement by focusing on improvement in the five Bronze qualifying requirements.



A combination of audit-workshop-action is what affects a change in the cultural mindset of staff teams.

Bronze workshops include:

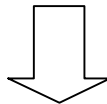
- Vision workshop to develop a team vision that aligns with the corporate goals
- 5S workshop to create an organised workplace
- NVA workshop to identify and eliminate wasteful activities in the workplace
- Process & Procedures workshop to establish standards

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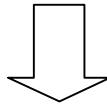
- Metrics workshop to develop an ethos of self-monitoring of performance
- Skills and training matrix development to build a robust team

Silver level is very much a *transformation* phase. The Qualifying Requirements of Silver address the shifting of effort from *'doing it well'* (Bronze Level) to *'do it better'*. The emphasis is upon developing planning and problem-solving behaviours and team working, including the attitudes and practices of leaders/managers towards an empowered workforce, in which their role is to enable self-managing teams.

The Bronze Award focused, and continues to focus on putting people and customers first



The Silver Award focuses on improving our effectiveness



The Gold Award focuses on attaining excellence

The Silver Qualifying Requirement map onto the *'enabling and results criteria'* of the EFQM model and to Key Areas of HGIOELL:

TEAMWORKING maps onto *Leadership* and *People Management* – Key Areas 7 & 9

PERFORMANCE maps onto *Processes* – Key Area 5

WORKLOAD maps onto *Resource Management* – Key Area 8

PROBLEM-SOLVING maps onto *Processes* and *People Management* – Key Areas 5 & 7

CUSTOMER FOCUS maps onto *Customer Results* – Key Areas 1, 2 & 4

To draw a parallel with the EFQM Model scoring (which has a scale up to 1000), 'Bronze' is like moving a Team's score from 300 to 500, whereas 'Silver' is 500 to 700 – but the slope is considerably steeper (see Fig 5).

The attainment of 'Silver' will be a longer term continuous improvement journey. It would not be untypical for this journey to take up to a year.

The Continuous Improvement Team within EL&L will support Managers and staff to utilise the audit cycle (Fig.5) and move through the levels of achievement (Fig. 6) as part of their improvement journey towards excellence.

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Appendices

- 1. Profile Grid exemplifying a top performing Education, Learning and Leisure Service**
- 2. Implementation of Quality Improvement practice in each service area**
- 3. Examples of Quality Improvement Calendar for a secondary school**

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Appendix 1: Profile of a Top Performing Education, Learning & Leisure Service

Performance

- All targeted Single Outcome Agreement outcomes achieved
- All targets within EL&L Plans are achieved
- Standards improve annually
- All targeted PIs in top Quartile
 - Service
 - National and comparator indicators
- All inspection reports are satisfactory or better
- Very good service inspection reports
- Quality improvement is embedded into all areas of the service
 - self evaluation key strength
 - outcome focussed

Reputation

- Positive public feedback on quality of educational provision
- Positive public feedback on quality of Leisure and Culture provision
- Excellent relationships with partners in public and private sectors
- Nationally recognised as providing a high quality provision
- Government, HMLe, LTS. Partners and stakeholders very positive about Education, Learning & Leisure Services
- Well known as a leading and innovative service
- Positive media coverage
- Well known for winning awards

Leadership

- Directorate Management Team (DMT) recognised as delivering strong, visible and effective leadership based upon the Council's vision
- DMT contribute to corporate direction of Council
- High professional and ethical standards are promoted
- Shared vision for future of Education, Learning & Leisure
- Work with partners to provide seamless leadership in educational opportunities within the authority
- Distributive leadership is evident throughout the service. Innovation and risk taking based upon our shared vision is encouraged
- Members add value to improvement agenda through modern scrutiny approach as priority

People

- Staff are well motivated and share our vision for Education, Learning & Leisure in Aberdeenshire
- Line managers recognise their leadership role. All staff recognise themselves as leaders and their contribution to Aberdeenshire Council
- Committed to improving the service with a an innovative, risk taking, can do attitude
- Positive working relationships with
 - Elected Members
 - Aberdeenshire Secondary Head Teachers Association
 - Primary Head Teachers Council
 - Trade Unions

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Appendix 2: Implementation of the elements of the Quality Improvement Practice in each service area.

This appendix provides further detail on how each of the elements of the Quality Improvement framework “jigsaw” outlined in section 2, operate in each of the following Service Areas of the Education, Learning and Leisure Service.

1. Schools and Nurseries/Early Years Partner Providers
2. Children’s Services
3. Educational Psychology Service
4. Sports and Leisure
5. Cultural Services
6. Community Learning and Development

1. Schools and Nurseries/Early Years Partner Providers

Self Evaluation

Self evaluation involves professional dialogue and reflection on teaching and learning practice to improve the “how” and “what” of learning within and across the school community. **This is the where self evaluation can be most effective in leading to improvements in learning and teacher and better outcomes for children and young people.**

It requires that staff at all levels (particularly teaching staff, but not exclusively so) are involved and that they take ownership of the improvement process by regularly taking opportunities to reflect on and discuss how effective teaching and learning practice has been, and to use the outcomes from such reflections and discussions as ways of improving practice at every level. Head Teachers and senior and middle managers in the school have an important role to play in establishing and maintain an ethos within the school which allow this practice to flourish, and to ensure that appropriate systems and procedures are in place to facilitate the process.

At school level, for self evaluation for improvement to be based on rounded, accurate views of practice, it is also important that the evidence is triangulated using evidence from a range of people’s views (from teachers, from learners, from parents), from direct observation of teaching and learning practice, and from analysis of a range of key quantitative and qualitative data. The formal framework for self evaluation at the establishment level is “How good is our school?”, for schools, and for nurseries and early years partner providers, “The Child at the centre”.

Leadership for improvement

There is an engagement (called the “Leadership for Learning” visit), at which Quality Improvement Officers and Heads of Service, can meet with school managers, staff, learners and other partners.

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It focuses on the school's strategic direction, leadership of learning and teaching, approaches to change and improvement (including the school's Improvement plan), leadership and management of staff, effective use of resources and how the school builds community. In practice the event is likely to consist of a series of conversations with school staff, learners and other stakeholders. All elements of the Leadership for Learning visit will reflect the need to support and to challenge establishments in relation to their implementation of, and plans for, improvement that leads to better learning outcomes for children and young people.

The main agenda items for the visit are drawn up by the Area QIO, following consultation with the Head Teacher, Area Head of Service and the Head of Education to reflect school, authority and national priorities.

In practical terms the Leadership for Learning visit, normally includes:

1. A collegiate presentation from SMT supported by evidence and data collected using recognised audit materials, along with follow up discussion.
2. Timetabled engagement with staff, learners and other stakeholders in
 - Individual, small group and focus groups discussions
 - Opportunities to demonstrate good practice
 - Classroom visits
3. Plenary discussion identifying major themes and identifying next steps.

The Leadership for Learning visit is followed up by a short written report prepared by the QIO. Senior school staff are required to incorporate the agreed next steps, within an appropriate timescale, within the School's Improvement Plan. Any major changes to the Improvement Plan arising as a result of the Leadership for Learning visit, will need to be subject to normal collegiate consultative processes. The Head Teacher ensures that next steps are planned, implemented and monitored through the school's Improvement Plan.

Service Area profile

The focus is the school and the profile presents basic contextual information on the school: name, address, location, facilities, CSN, HT, QIO, roll, outline of local community etc

Data

The main sources of data will include:

- School roll and pupil profile data
- School attainment data
- Wider achievement data
- Leavers destinations data
- Attendance and absence data
- Exclusions data
- School self evaluation data in relation to HGIOS QIs
- Staffing data
- Curriculum structure data (class sizes etc)
- Budgetary/financial data

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Improvement Partners

The school's partners for improvement will vary depending on local community circumstances, but will always include the parents/carers. In addition, it could also include: CLD, Cultural Services, Sports and Leisure, local employers, FE Colleges, HE institutions, Third sector groups, other local community groups

External Scrutiny

Each school is subject to external inspection by HMiE and, for pre-school provision, the Care Commission. The frequency of standard school inspections is every 6-7 years.

2. Children's Services

Self-evaluation

Children's Services use "Quality Management in Education Authorities 2" (QMIEA 2) as their formal framework for self-evaluation. In addition, in line with advice in "Guide to evaluating services for children and young people" other, specific indicators may be used within a given high level question, to meet a specific purpose – for example, it may be appropriate to use some of the indicators relating to Child Protection set out within "How well are children and young people protected and their needs met?"

Service Area Profile

Aberdeenshire Children's Services is made up of a number of discrete services, including: the Sensory Impairment Service; English as an Additional Language Service (EAL), the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) and Aberdeenshire Special Technology Services (ASPECTS). However, several Children's Services are delivered jointly, through the work of a number of partners and agencies, including Aberdeenshire's Housing and Social Work Service. The profile will provide basic contextual information about these services and partnerships.

Data

The main sources of data include:

- Data relating to Authority's objectives and targets relevant to individual teams.
- National data and data provided by comparator Authorities
- Performance data showing trends over times relating to Looked After Children (LAC), those with Additional Support Needs (ASN) and also

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those and other groups in risk of having negative outcomes on leaving full-time education.

- Stakeholder survey data regarding satisfaction with service being provided
- Data relating to the number of children/young people in receipt of specific services
- Exclusions and Out of Authority Placement data
- Data relating to sustainability targets
- Staffing data
- Budgetary data

Leadership for Improvement Engagement

No single approach is used within the range of services. Instead, it is incumbent upon each service manager to encourage and support distributive leadership through developing practices in line with staff numbers and organisation, service delivery, location and the requirements of the work. Regular team meetings and staff involvement with improvement plans would be common to all the services that make up Children's Services.

Improvement Partners

- Stakeholders including children/young people and their parents/carers
- EL&L management
- Partner agencies including Social Work, Health and voluntary organisations
- Children Service's staff

External Scrutiny

- Children's Services have been subject to specific external scrutiny by HMIE as part of INEA2 and in relation to individual school inspections by HMIE.

3. Educational Psychology Service

Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation leading to effective action is central to the Educational Psychology service's drive to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. All staff are involved in self-evaluation and it forms an integral part of their daily practice

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The formal framework and tool kit adopted by the service is “Quality Management in Local Authority Educational Psychology Services” (QMILAEPS). The evidence supporting self-evaluation is drawn from four main sources, namely: performance data; relevant documentation; stakeholders’ views and direct observation of practice and is reported annually in the EPS’s annual Standards and Quality Improvement Plan. The effectiveness of the Service’s self-evaluation has been validated by independent agencies in the form of HMIE inspection and assessment for the Charter Mark award.

Self-evaluation within the EPS is an ongoing process and involves the application of the “plan, do, review” principle across the various activities of the Service. This approach is supported by range of mechanisms including supervision, service development work groups, area team meetings, full service team meetings and service development days. The service also provides plentiful opportunity for all staff to take on responsibility for contributing to service improvement.

Service Area Profile

The profile will contain basic contextual information about the Educational Psychology (EPS) service in terms of staffing, partnerships and core work streams including consultation, assessment, intervention, training and research directed at building capacity, developing potential and achieving excellence at the levels of the child and family, educational establishments and the authority.

Data

The main sources of data include:

- Data relating to the Service’s contribution to the Authority’s objectives and targets
- Performance data showing trends over times relating to Looked After Children (LAC), those with Additional Support Needs (ASFL) and also those and other groups in risk of having negative outcomes on leaving full-time education
- Stakeholder survey data regarding the EPS’s impact and stakeholders satisfaction with service being provided
- Compliments and complaints received and how complaints were resolved.
- Exclusions and Out of Authority Placement data
- Data relating to training evaluations
- Data relating to research output such as published articles
- Data relating to sustainability targets
- Staffing data
- Budgetary data

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Leadership for Improvement Engagement

All members of the EPS are expected to lead on specific aspects of service improvement through involvement in the following range of developmental activities. Firstly, Service Development Days take place annually at which key developmental themes, identified through self-evaluation and team discussions, are progressed and led by individual educational psychologists (EPs). Development days are complemented by monthly full service team meetings (chaired in rotation by individual EPs) and Service Development Work Groups (chaired by Senior EPs) at which the progress of the service is evaluated and the necessary action agreed and taken. The Educational Psychology Work Allocation Spreadsheet (EPWAS) ensures that service tasks (including service development) are equitably distributed across the EPS. Finally, peer supervision enables each psychologist take on the role of sharing good practice with colleagues.

Improvement Partners

- Stakeholders including children/young people and their parents;
- School staff
- EL&L management
- Partner agencies including Social Work, Health and voluntary organisations
- Educational Psychology Service staff
- National professional organisations including the Health Professions Council, the British Psychological Society and the Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists

External Scrutiny

- Educational Psychology Services are subject to specific external scrutiny by HMIE as part of INEA2 and will continue to be evaluated as part of the inspection of local education authorities
- In order to obtain the Award of Customer Excellence (Charter Mark) the Service is required to undergo annual scrutiny by an accredited external assessment body.

4. Sports and Leisure

Self Evaluation

Self evaluation will be developed through the new How good is our Culture and Sport framework as it is introduced. Currently, self evaluation takes place under the QUEST framework for Sports Development and Sports and Leisure Facilities, which encompasses a wide range – though not all – of the Sports and Leisure Service.

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Service Area Profile

The service profile within sport and leisure will provide contextual information focused around a number of separate but linked areas. Namely:

- Provision of facilities (for example swimming pools, holidays sports courses)
- Provision of sports development initiatives aimed at increasing participations and raising achievement
- Provision of support for the Voluntary sector, including Aberdeenshire sports council
- Provision of grants
- Active Schools

Data

Data which will form the basis for self evaluation will include:

- Quantitative Performance indicators relating to usage (e.g. numbers of users at swimming pools, dry sports centres)
- Qualitative PI's relating to success in sport
- Financial information, for example subsidy per user
- National data on exercise/fitness.
- User feedback
- Less formal feedback from staff following consultation.
- Partner information – for example anti crime statistics, health statistics.
- Internal audit reports and information

Leadership for Improvement Engagement

Strong, visible and effective leadership is provided by senior managers with clear aims, objectives and Improvement Plans, set out in the Sport and Leisure Improvement Plan (the Sport and Leisure Strategy and Business plan). This is supported by effective organisation within the section, with clear priorities set and regular review of progress through team meetings and 1-to-1 sessions with individual managers.

Quality improvement is a key agenda item in all meetings with policy and action cascaded down and up the chain. The Lifelong Learning and Leisure Management Team looks at the strategic and policy developments, whilst area meetings consider operational leadership improvement – with Sports and Leisure Management Team considering both.

This complements an ongoing 'open space' initiative involving the Lifelong Learning and Leisure section which has generated a number of cross service areas for improvement – which are then being looked at by specific project groups.

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Improvement Partners

Key improvement partners are as follows:

- Community Learning and Development Colleagues
- Schools and Education staff
- Sports Organisations and voluntary groups
- Sportscotland
- Police
- Health Authority
- Local Leisure Trusts

External Scrutiny

There are no current holistic external scrutiny mechanisms for the wider Sport and leisure service – though it is anticipated that a mechanism will be implemented as part of the HGIOCS process.

Parts of the service – for example Sports development do subject themselves to external accreditation (QUEST) though none are planned in the immediate future, and Active schools are subject to Sportscotland scrutiny.

5. Cultural Services

Self Evaluation

Self evaluation is being developed across the Cultural Services team, in line with the new national Quality Improvement Framework, How Good is our Culture and Sport. Staff at every level, from front line assistants of our libraries, museums and arts venues, to team managers, will be supported to gather service information and share that intelligence as part of our process of continuing improvement, extending the reach and impact of the cultural services we provide.

Analysis of the Libraries, Museums and Arts sectors, will take place using the “Taking a Closer Look..” models, some of which are based on existing national frameworks such as PQLIM for Libraries.

The Museums Accreditation standards provide a quality framework for the grading of our Museum facilities and services and require staff to assess performance and areas for improvement on a continuous basis. All of Aberdeenshire’s museums are accredited at present.

Leadership for Improvement

The Cultural Services Senior Management **Team** will provide visible and effective leadership, clearly articulating to staff teams where and how the work of Cultural services staff contributes to both the Council’s vision and overall

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corporate direction. Senior Managers will promote both high standards and ambition in the practices we adopt and services we provide at all levels, encouraging and empowering staff to take responsibility for their own areas of work. Line managers will encourage all staff to become involved in the agenda for improvement, providing clear mechanisms for feedback from frontline staff and encouraging service innovation.

Priorities have been established and will be reviewed in line with the Action Plan within the Cultural Strategy, which is under development. These serve as the basis for planning work with teams and with managers through 1-2-1 meetings.

The full Cultural Management Team meets every 6 weeks, with the Cultural Services Manager meeting directly with the Principal Officers for Arts, Museums and Libraries and Cultural Team Leaders on an individual basis in the intervening weeks. The Cultural Services Manager meets with the Head of Lifelong Learning & Leisure on a similar basis. 1-2-1s are held on a quarterly basis with an annual EDRS forming one of these sessions. An annual Planning Day has been introduced where delivery of the Cultural Strategy is examined, alongside performance management information and future planning scenarios are discussed.

Members of the senior Cultural Services Management Team hold and arrange service specific team meetings with their direct reports on a regular basis. Cultural Services Team Leaders are responsible for developing area based cultural team meetings, and linking to the Area Committee, Community Planning and ELL Heads of Service Area Teams.

Consideration is being given to establishing a network of “critical friends” from the national cultural sector who would attend meeting sessions in a support and challenge role, to encourage new approaches to service delivery and distributive leadership.

Service Area Profile

The Cultural Services Team delivers a combination of front line services through a network of venues and a range of partnership based projects and developmental initiatives which help deliver our strategic aims. The profile will contain contextual information focused around these projects and venues.

Our directly managed venues comprise

- 36 libraries including 6 based in community schools
- 6 mobile libraries
- A Libraries Resource Centre
- 12 Museums of which 5 are open seasonally, and 3 by appointment
- A Museum Resource Centre
- North East Folklore Archive & Aberdeenshire Recording Centre
- Duff House

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- A Media Unit Studio

We also promote community use of schools which includes access to some cultural facilities, and work with local organisations and venues to deliver activity in their independent venues.

An increasingly important aspect of our work is to build capacity within the voluntary sector by providing financial assistance and offering professional advice and guidance to those who require it.

Data

The main sources of data supporting self evaluation will include:

Libraries

- Numbers of library visits
- Numbers of media issues
- Value of grants brought in by library services

Museums

- Number of museums visits
- Value of grants brought in by museum services

General

- Number of hits on 6 different websites
- Aberdeenshire arts website
- North East Folklore Archive data
- Duff House
- Library
- Museums

Improvement Partners

Much of the work delivered by cultural services staff is based on a partnership model of delivery. Our delivery, **funding** and strategic partners range from local, regional, and national to international in nature.

Key partnerships include;

Local – Aberdeenshire schools, Education Learning and Leisure funded Arts & Heritage organisations, Community Planning Group, other Aberdeenshire Council Services (notably Planning & Environmental Services, Economic Development and Social Work), Aberdeen City Council, Scottish Enterprise Grampian,

National – Scottish Arts Council, Scottish Screen, Creative Scotland (from 2010) Museums and Galleries Scotland, Scottish Libraries and Information Council, Scottish Government Culture Division, VOCAL, COSLA, Event Scotland, VisitScotland, British Council.

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External Scrutiny

At present cultural services in Scotland are not subject to external inspection within the HMIE framework. Performance within national standards is evaluated in part through the submission of annual CIPFA returns on the authority's cultural spend and compilation of annual Statutory Performance Indicators for Museums and Libraries.

Benchmarking with other Authorities around particular aspects of delivery does take place, but the diversity and complexity of Local Authority structures prohibits like for like comparisons with other Local Authority Cultural Services at present.

6. Community Learning and Development

Self Evaluation

Self-evaluation is about reflection and discussion on Community Learning & Development practice in order to improve services for young people, adults and communities.

The process of reflecting on and discussing participants' outcomes as well as our practice with fellow practitioners in the learning community helps to identify strengths and weaknesses. By identifying and describing the strengths and weaknesses in our area we can focus on what we need to do to make improvements.

Within the Council, CLD Team Leaders and Strategy Development Officers, and locally Senior CLD Workers, have an important role to play in establishing and maintaining an ethos within the learning community which allows self-evaluation of practice to flourish, and for ensuring that appropriate systems and procedures are in place to facilitate the process. However all staff contribute to the process of self-evaluation.

For self evaluation for improvement to be based on rounded, accurate views of practice, it is also important that the evidence is triangulated using evidence from a range of people's views (from practitioners, from partners, from learners, from young people, from communities), as well as from direct observation of CLD practice, and from analysis of a range of key quantitative and qualitative data.

Leadership for improvement

The CLD Senior Management Team (manager, team leaders and strategy development officers) meet regularly to ensure that the management of strategic priorities, the effective and efficient use of resources, staff support and supervision including staff development and review, improvement planning, self evaluation and peer review are carried out systematically and

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professionally creating a positive approach to continuous improvement for the benefit of the individuals and communities with whom we work.

At a local level, which can either be area and network depending on the issue under consideration, CLD teams and partners come together at least once a year to reflect on the quality of the services they provide, to gather information from each other and from participants on the impact of the services they deliver, and to come to a shared view how well they are doing and how they can make things better. Once every two years, members of another team and the CLDSMT, undertake a peer review at area level, which consists of a series of conversations with staff, participants and other stakeholders, as well as analysis of evidence of progress and performance. It may also include observations of local practice.

Service Area profile

The focus is the “learning community” which is the geographic area surrounding an academy. The profile contains contextual information, which will be gathered by staff and partners, and will be presented in the community profile format that has been developed by the Community Planning Partnership.

Data

The main sources of data will include:

- measures relating to Adult Literacy & Numeracy;
- improvements in citizenship, enterprise and other important skills as measured by, for example, Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) accredited programmes and The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award;
- trends in attainments, for example, in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) awards achieved by CLD participants;
- destinations of participants in CLD activities;
- measures relating to health improvements resulting from community health promotion activities;
- measures relating to crime and community safety; and
- measurable outcomes from strategic and operational plans.

Improvement Partners

The learning community’s partners for improvement will vary depending on local community circumstances but will always include adult learners, young people and communities. The CLD strategy is located within the Lifelong Learning theme of the Community Planning Partnership. Some of the key strategic partners are:

Aberdeen College
Banff & Buchan College
Aberdeen University
RGU

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Aberdeen Foyer

WEA

Lead Scotland

Councils of Voluntary Service

Skills Development Scotland

Aberdeenshire Volunteer Centre

Other Council Services in particular Schools, Cultural Services, Sports
and Leisure, Economic Development

External Scrutiny

The CLD service is subject to regular inspection by HMIE as part of the “Learning Community” inspections of the areas surrounding academies that are undertaken at the same time as the Academy inspection. The frequency is every 6-7 years.

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Appendix 3: Example of Quality Improvement Calendar for a Secondary School

1. Faculty/dept Thematic Review meetings (1) to consider outcomes of 2009 thematic reviews.	Aug – Sept 09	PT and SMT Link/Rector
2. Preparation of Thematic Review report on QIs 2.1, 5.2 and 5.4	By Oct 09	SMT
3. Faculty/dept Review meetings (2) to consider STACs data and analyses.	Sept 09	PT, SMT Link, Rector
4. Meeting of PTs with Head of Service re QI procedures	15 Sept	Identified PTs, HoS
5. Submission of Self-evaluation documentation and Whole School Profile to HoS/QIO in advance of Self-evaluation meetings	7 Oct 09	Self-evaluation documentation & School Profile
6. Leadership for Learning Visit with HoS and QIOs and confirmation of S&Q Rep and IPP	7 Oct 09	HoS, QIO, SMT
7. Focus and materials for Thematic Review issued	3 Nov 09	
8. Aberdeenshire In-service - AECC	16 Nov 09	
9. School-based In-service	17 Nov 09	
10. SMT Link meets with Faculty/dept to plan collection of Thematic Review evidence	Dec 09 - Jan 10	SMT Link, PT, faculty/dept staff
11. Faculty/dept and whole school progress checks and self-evaluations undertaken.	Nov – Dec 09	Progress Check and self-evaluation forms
12. Draft Progress Check and Whole School Self-evaluation Report prepared by SMT with indicative priorities for 2010-11.	Dec 09 – Jan 10	Issued to all staff for consultation.
13. Faculty/dept Review meetings (3) to consider self-evaluations and align potential improvement priorities with whole school priorities, HMle recommendations and Service Plans	Jan – Feb 09	Progress Check and Self-evaluation documentation
14. Aberdeenshire In-service	16 Feb 09	
15. School-based In-service	17 Feb 09	
16. Forms for Faculty/dept Improvement Plans issued	March 10	Improvement Plan form
17. SMT Link meets with Faculty/dept to review Thematic Review evidence	March 10	SMT Link, PT, faculty/dept staff
18. Faculty/dept Thematic Review meetings (1) to review outcomes of 2010 Thematic Reviews	April 10	PT and SMT Link/Rector
19. Action planning in faculties/depts	May 10	Improvement Plan form
20. SMT preparation of Standards & Quality Report	From May10	SMT
21. Faculty/dept Review meetings (4) to focus on 5-14 and gender issues in attainment	May 10	PT and SMT Link/Rector
22. Detailed Quality Improvement Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compilation of faculty/dept plans • whole school priorities converted to action plans by SMT against areas of responsibility 	From May	
23. Additional School-based In-service	4 May	
24. Consultation on S&Q Rep and IP	8 June	All Staff, Parent Council, pupils
25. S&Q Rep and IP submitted to Area Office and HoS	By end of term	

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