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| **FOR DISCUSSION/INFORMATION**  |
| Meeting:  **Finance Committee – 19. 05.25** |
| Presented by | **Ann Baxter** |
| Author/**Contact** | **Ann Baxter** | Department / Unit | **Executive Board** |
| Date Created | **30 April 2025** | Telephone | **Ext 2359** |
| Appendices Attached | **Appendix 1 - Summary Financial Position Statement** |
| Disclosable under FOISA | **Yes** |
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1. **PURPOSE**

To provide an Operational / Financial Summary Update on the Cumbernauld Campus Nursery.

1. **BACKGROUND**

As part of the Business Plan and related Governance, The Cumbernauld Campus Nursery Development Board (NDB) formally reports quarterly to the Finance Committee. Position Statements are to be sent monthly to Committee members and the College Executive Board. NDB Minutes are made available on The Clan.

1. **DETAIL**

The report includes updates on:

* 1. The NDB Meetings of 27h November, 22nd January 2025, 6th February 2025, 19th March and 30th April.
	2. The Summary Financial Position.
1. **STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**

The Board retains an overview of NCL governance and progress against NDB Business Plan.

1. **RISK**

The Cumbernauld Campus Nursery is not performing to projections within the Business Plan.

1. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Possible financial exposure if not performing to forecast.

1. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Compliance with Nursery Legislation – The Education (Scotland) Act 1980, The Children

and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 – this

Act led to the formation of The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

1. **WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no workforce implications at this juncture other than at operational levels.

1. **REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are potential reputational implications if not compliant.

1. **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no equalities implications.

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| **CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**The Finance Committee is asked to consider the information contained in this report and raise or discuss any issues. |

**Detail**

* 1. **Nursery Operational Update – April 2025**

Occupancy Update

Numbers are continuing to increase in all rooms. In terms of places, the 0 - 2, and 2 - 3 rooms are full and the 3 - 5 room is now at 81%. There is a waiting list for both under 3 rooms. Children have moved rooms, which has increased occupancy in the 3 - 5 room and the Nursery is able to offer out places for the under 3 rooms on an ongoing basis. There are children who have increased their days and/or hours as the children are now eligible for Council Funding, which has increased occupancy in in new term after the Easter break.

Occupancy comparative based on places

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Aug 23 | Jun 24 | Aug 24 | Oct 24 | Jan 25 | Apr 25 |
| 0 - 2 | 83% | 97% | 97% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| 2 - 3 | 56% | 91% | 97% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| 3 - 5 | 32% | 49% | 54% | 57% | 73% | 81% |
| Whole Nursery | 40% | 59% | 63% | 68% | 79% | 86% |

Applications for 2025/26

The Nursery currently has a waiting list for children under 3, some of whom they will be able to offer places to over the summer period and into the new term in August.

The Nursery is beginning to receive applications through student funding for places for student children for the start of term in August.

The Nursery currently has applications for over 40 3 to 5-year olds for academic session 2025/26 for Council Funded places. These applications are currently being processed by North Lanarkshire Council, and places will be offered to parents around the middle of May 2025. There are also late applications which can only be processed in line with the Council Guidelines.

Full Year Provision

The Nursery currently has 20 children requiring childcare over the full year and this is continually increasing. There is also an increasing number of enquiries and applications from parents who will require full year provision both for Council Funded places, and private clients (working parents).

There were 19 children attending the Nursery during the Easter break, which is almost double the number of children attending during the previous non-term time week in October.

Curricular Interaction

The Nursery is continuing to support 2 NC Childhood Practice students as well as one HNC Childhood Practice student and 2 Level 5 students. The Nursery is also providing a placement for a Foundation Apprenticeship student, this programme allows students still attending school to take part in work-based learning, gaining real-world experience while still in school. The Nursery is working with the Sports Department to arrange some coaching sessions for the children, giving their students the opportunity to work with a younger age group. There are also plans to link with nursery staff in offering Forest School Activities within the Nursery outdoor play area and working towards forest and outdoor activities within the local area (Cumbernauld Glen and local community spaces). This will link in with Health and Well Being activities and opportunities within the college. The Nursery is also planning to offer a variety of courses/workshops for parents, including Healthy Eating, Bookbug Sessions, Introduction to Forest School, as well as offering support and providing information for parents about community support groups, eg. Hope for Autism. There are also opportunities for staff to increase their skills, gain further qualifications, and to work with academic staff to provide opportunities and to support children and families.

Marketing

The Nursery is working with the marketing department and the video, along with selected images which showcase the Nursery is being used on the college website, social media platforms, flyers, posters, media and press releases, educational resources and out-of-home advertising. The Nursery is continuing to promote the services they offer via the Facebook page run by parents, and local community social media.

The video creates a soft introduction to the Nursery, highlighting the safe and happy environment on offer. Looking ahead, there are plans to produce supporting/complimentary videos. These will focus on specific aspects such as Forest Learning, STEM, Healthy Eating, or similar topics that showcase the key strengths of the Nursery. These videos will help further build the Nursery’s credibility and positive reputation.





**1.2 Summary Financial Position**

As per Appendix 1, the Nursery has performed significantly better than budgeted for 2023/24 with a favourable variance of c£104k and a reduced operating deficit of c£73k against a budgeted deficit of c£177k. Inclusive of central costs of c£82k, it is a deficit of c£156k against a budgeted deficit of c£260k.

For 2024/25 year to date, based upon August to March results, there is an unfavourable variance of £2k overall with an operating surplus of c£55k against a planned surplus of c£57k. Inclusive of central costs (£52k against budgeted £57k), it is a surplus of c£4k against a budgeted surplus of c£1k, a £3k favourable variance to date. Occupancy rates based upon hours are 62% against the budgeted 65% although financial variances are favourable.

For 2024/25 full-year forecast, based upon current intake and applications, there is a small adverse variance forecast of £10k overall with an initial forecast operating surplus of c£50k against a planned surplus of c£61k. Inclusive of central costs (£78k against budgeted £85k), it is a forecast deficit of c£27k against a budgeted deficit of c£24k, a £3k unfavourable variance. Occupancy rates based upon hours are forecast at 62% against the budgeted 65% although financial variances are favourable.

The Nursery remains confident of bringing in the budget to plan through increased recruitment drives, enhanced marketing and further cost savings as the year progresses.

It should be recognised that the Nursery is only in the infancy of the revised operating hours and it will take time to fully become established in this market. The Nursery is continuing to receive applications and the staff are confident that the numbers will continue to increase, pulling in parents who specifically need the longer hours. The flexibility of the Council Funded places continues to be promoted on the dedicated Facebook page, and the Nursery plans to offer temporary childcare during non-term-time weeks (Easter, Summer) to fill places, in turn attracting parents to the Nursery on a full-time basis.