
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

21 January 2020

Cabinet

Title: Educational achievement of care experienced learners in North Ayrshire

Purpose: To update Cabinet on: (1) Curriculum for Excellence Broad General Education (BGE) attainment levels of care experienced learners; (2) Senior Phase attainment of care experienced learners; (3) Post-school participation of care experienced learners.

Recommendation:

- (i) Agree to note: the content of the report; the progress being made by care experienced learners, specifically in literacy and numeracy; and the achievements of school leavers SQA examinations.
- (ii) Agree to receive an annual progress report on the performance of care experienced learners as part of a suite of annual attainment reports.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report summarises the key performance measures of care experienced learners, focusing specifically on the published 2018 attainment data and trends over time. Overall, educational outcomes for care experienced learners have improved over the last four years. However, there remains a significant gap between the educational outcomes achieved by care experienced learners and all learners, both in North Ayrshire and nationally.
- 1.2 In the Broad General Education, care experienced learners are achieving better in literacy and numeracy than the national care experienced cohort at P4, P7 and S3.
- 1.3 Care experienced school leavers are achieving broadly in line with or better than in literacy and numeracy than their counterparts nationally and in the South West Educational Improvement Collaborative (SWEIC) and there has been a positive trend in average total tariff score over the last 8 years. The proportion of care experienced learners entering a positive destination has been above the national figure for this group for the last 5 years.

2. Background

2.1 Care experienced young people are categorised for the purposes of our management information system SEEMIS as: Looked After at Home, Looked after Away From Home and Previously Looked After. The total number of care experienced young people in North Ayrshire at the annual census date in September each year are shown in the charts in Appendix 1.¹

2.2 This Report focuses on the following key measures:

1. Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy across the Broad General Education for care experienced learners.
2. Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy and overall attainment in all qualifications at Senior Phase level for care experienced school leavers
3. Post-school participation of care experienced school leavers.

2.3 **Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy in Broad General Education for care experienced learners** (see Appendix 2).

2.3.1 The charts indicate that the performance of care experienced learners in 2018 is generally in line with or better than national levels at P4, P7 and S3. However, there is still a significant gap between the performance of care experienced learners compared with the performance of the general population at each stage.

2.3.2 The performance of North Ayrshire care experienced learners in P1 in 2018 is lower than the national cohort of care experienced P1 learners in both literacy (Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking) and numeracy. Internal data shows that the performance of P1 care experienced learners has improved since the publication of this data and will be more in line with the national picture for 2019.

2.3.3 In 2018, the gap between the proportion of care experienced learners and all learners achieving the expected Curriculum for Excellence level is smaller in P4 and S3 than at other stages. It is currently too early to extrapolate trend data from Curriculum for Excellence levels to show a benchmarked attainment picture over time, but this will be included in the next annual attainment report in May 2020.

2.4 **Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy and overall attainment in all qualifications at Senior Phase level for care experienced school leavers** (see Appendix 3).

2.4.1 It should be noted that the cohort size for care experienced school leavers varies from year to year and is generally between 40-50 young people. Care must therefore be taken when analysing variations in performance for this group. For example, one care experienced learner attaining/not attaining a specific qualification may account for more than 2 percentage points of a difference in the overall attainment measures for care experienced learners (whereas in the

¹ Care should be taken when comparing educational performance of Looked After children at national level. While national statistics categorise a looked after cohort according to the Local Authority that is responsible for the child being looked after, our local measures and strategies are concerning all looked after pupils being educated in North Ayrshire schools, irrespective of the authority responsible for the child being looked after. Approximately 15-20% of the pupils identified as looked after in North Ayrshire come from another authority (and a similar proportion of pupils looked after by North Ayrshire are studying in other authorities)

general population, one pupil would make less than 0.07 percentage points of a difference in the same attainment measure).

- 2.4.2 Performance in Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF levels 4 and 5 is consistently lower for care experienced school leavers than for the overall school leaver cohort in North Ayrshire. However, North Ayrshire care experienced school leavers perform consistently as well or better than their counterparts nationally and in the SWEIC authorities (see Appendix 3a).
- 2.4.3 Over the last eight years, the trend for average tariff scores for North Ayrshire care experienced school leavers has been positive. Since 2012, North Ayrshire performance has been above the national figure every year (see Appendix 3b).
- 2.4.4 Appendix 3c presents a comparison between North Ayrshire/National care experienced school leavers in terms of levels of qualification achieved. Over the last four years care experienced school leavers in North Ayrshire have performed better than the corresponding national cohort at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6. For example, in 2018, 47% of care experienced school leavers in North Ayrshire left school with at least one SCQF Level 5 qualification (equivalent to National 5), compared with 39% nationally.
- 2.4.5 A number of care experienced learners in North Ayrshire are currently choosing to leave school at the end of S4 or S5 compared to the general school population. For example, in North Ayrshire the stay-on rate from S4 into S5 is around 70% for care experienced learners, compared to 87% for all learners. This is reflected in the national statistics, which show that around 55-60% of S4 care experienced learners stay on to S5 (compared with 85-90% of all S4 learners).

2.6 Post-school participation of care experienced school leavers (see Appendix 4).

- 2.6.1 The overall percentage of North Ayrshire care experienced school leavers entering a positive destination has remained above the national performance for this group over the last five years.
- 2.7 The Education Service continues to focus on improving positive outcomes for care experienced learners at all stages. It is acknowledged that, whilst educational outcomes for care experienced learners have improved over the last four years, there is still significant scope for further improvement. Attainment and achievement for this group of learners is an area of focus during quality improvement visits in all schools and the annual attainment review in each secondary school. The operational plan for the Education Service makes specific reference to actions impacting positively on care experienced learners.
- 2.8 Scottish Government funding has been allocated to support improvements in outcomes for care experienced young people and the spend for this has been agreed jointly between Education and the Health and Social Care Partnership. This includes specific funding to extend a targeted social work locality model within our schools and funding for a champions board which empowers the care experienced young people themselves to make decisions about what would help to improve outcomes for them. Furthermore, significant additional funding has been secured through the Scottish Attainment Challenge to support a mentoring programme from 2020, which will operate across six

of our secondary schools, following a successful pilot last year in one North Ayrshire school.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 It is proposed that Cabinet agrees to note the content of the report and the achievements of care experienced learners and school leavers as highlighted in this report and agrees to receive an annual progress report on the performance of care experienced learners as part of a suite of annual attainment reports.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

- 4.1 None.

Human Resources

- 4.2 None.

Legal

- 4.3 None.

Equality/Socio-economic

- 4.4 Tackling inequality is a key aspect of this report. The Council is committed to a continued focussed approach to improve outcomes for care experienced learners.

Environmental and Sustainability

- 4.5 None.

Key Priorities

- 4.6 NAC Council Plan 2019-2024: Aspiring Communities: "Children and young people experience the best start in life".

In 2019-20, this work relates to the following high-level action: "We will support our children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens."

Community Wealth Building

- 4.7 The Council will continue to take into account the pillars of community wealth building in any future developments in this area.

5. Consultation

5.1 None specifically related to this report.

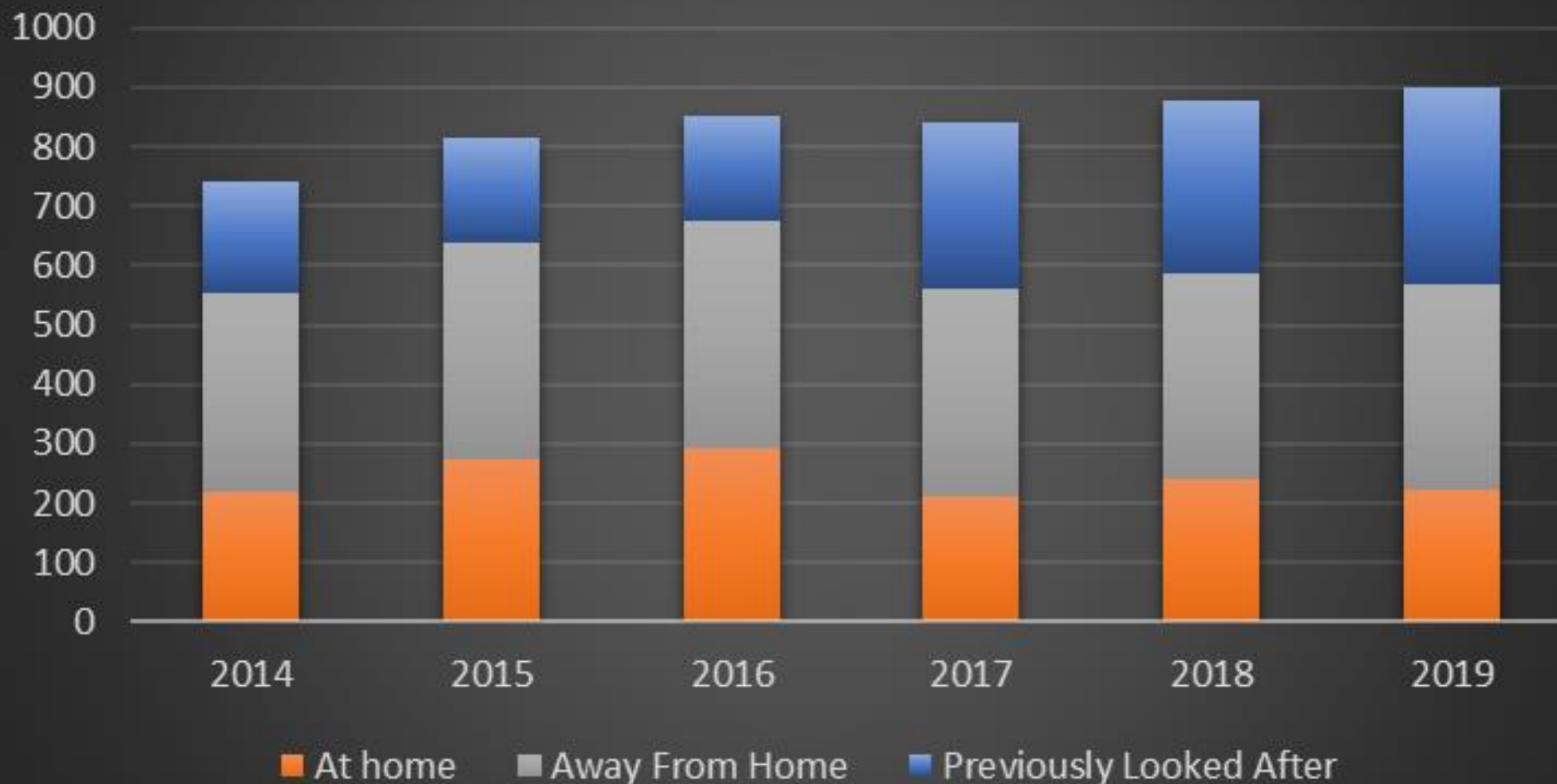
Audrey Sutton
Executive Director of Communities (Interim)

For further information please contact **Andrew McClelland, Head of Service**, on **01294 324413**.

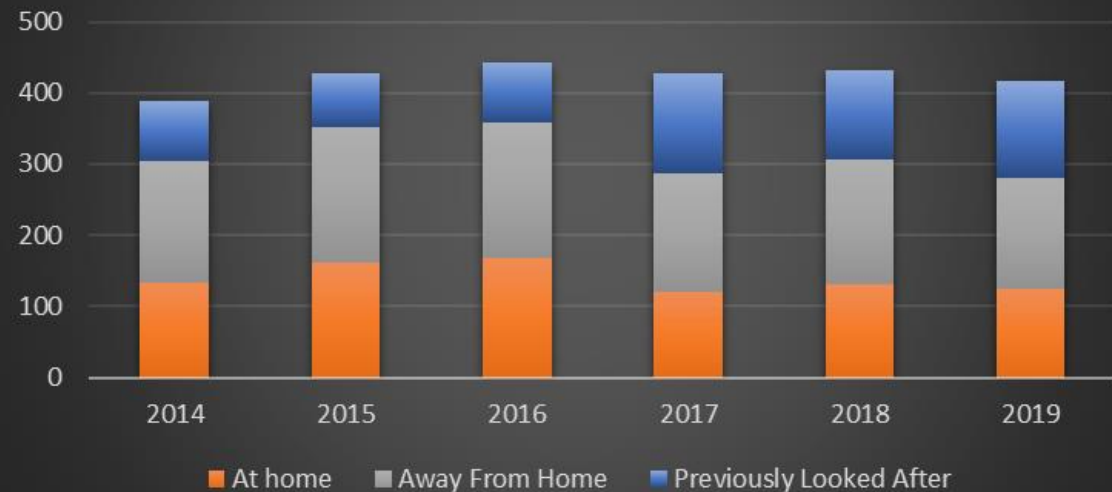
Background Papers

N/A

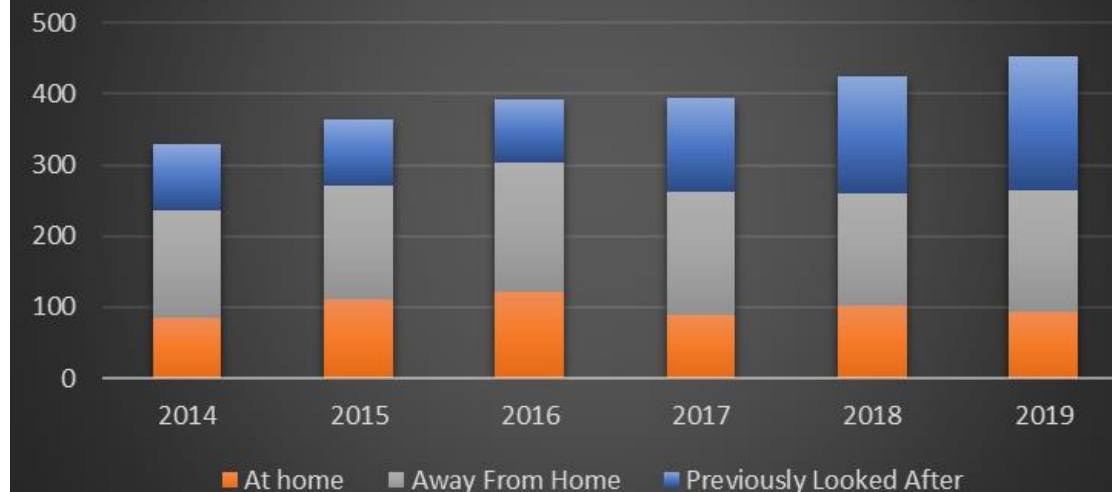
Care Experienced Pupils - All Schools



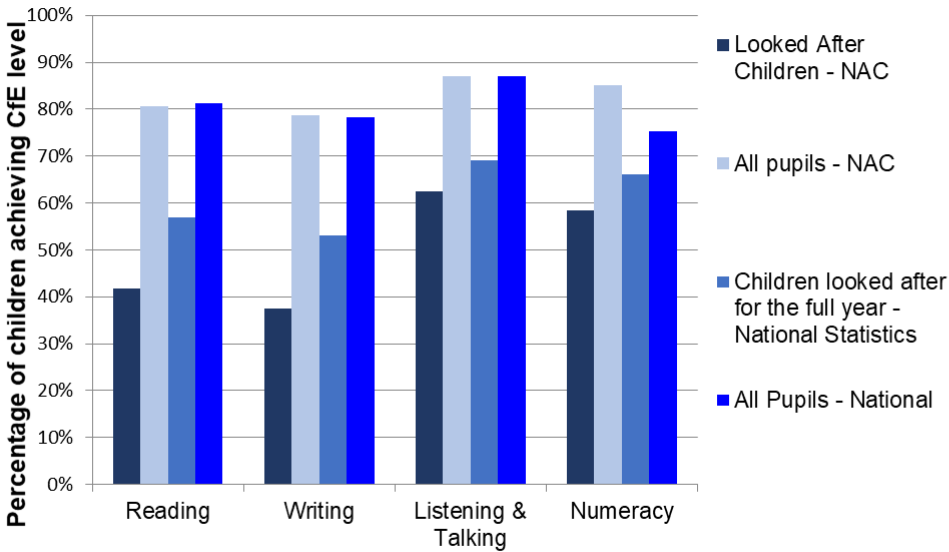
Care Experienced - Pupils - Primary Schools



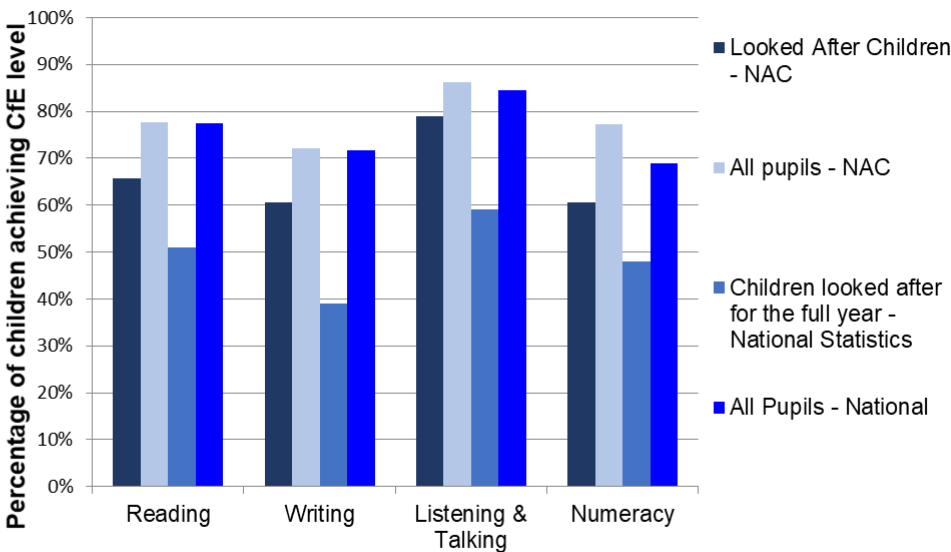
Care Experienced Pupils - Secondary Schools



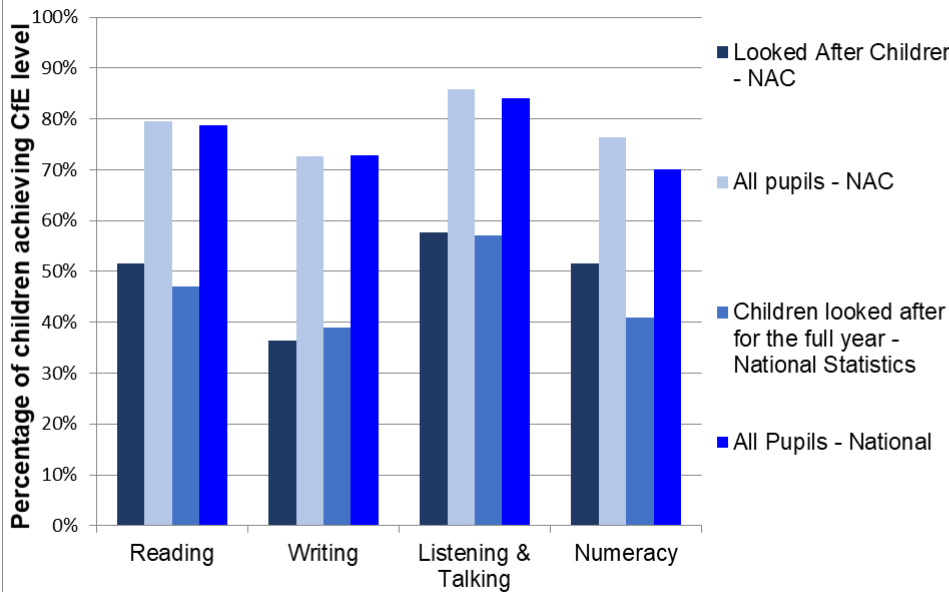
P1 - Early Level



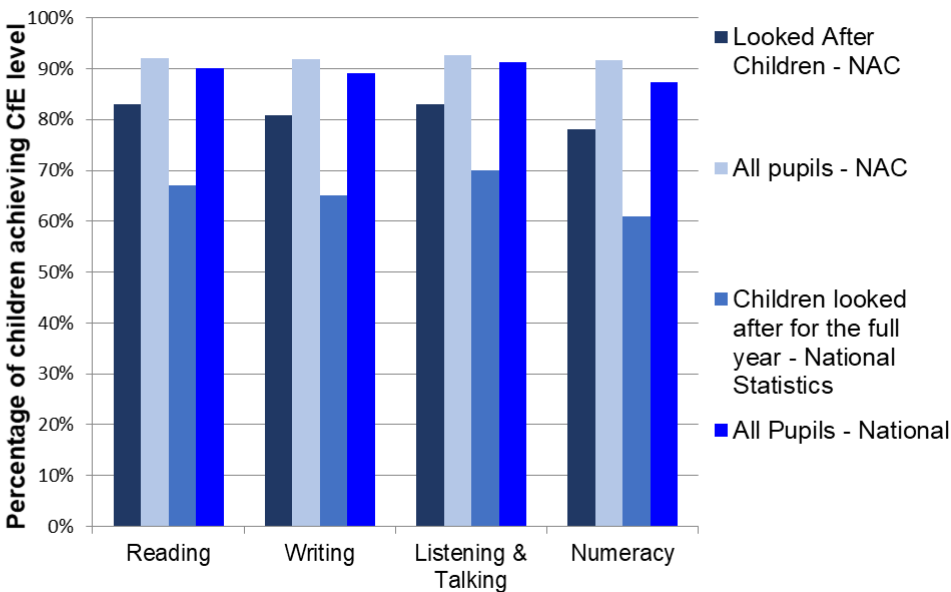
P4 - First Level



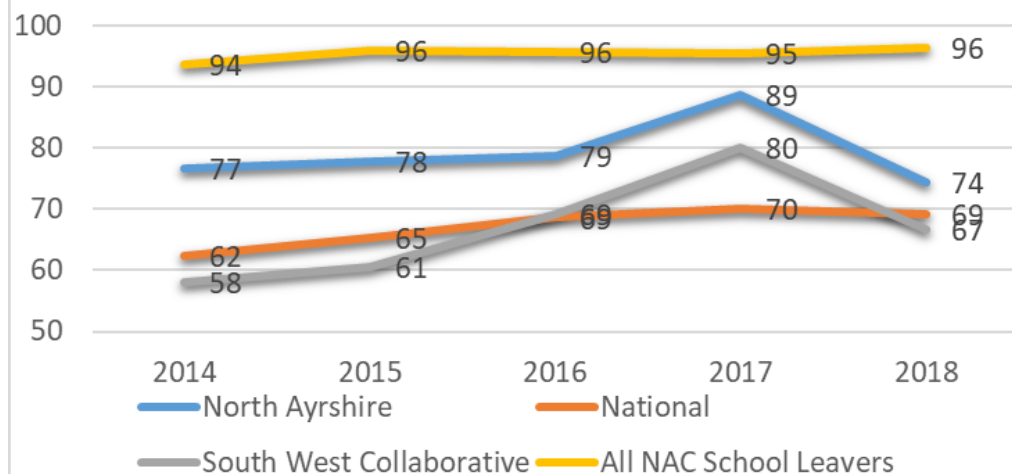
P7 - Second Level



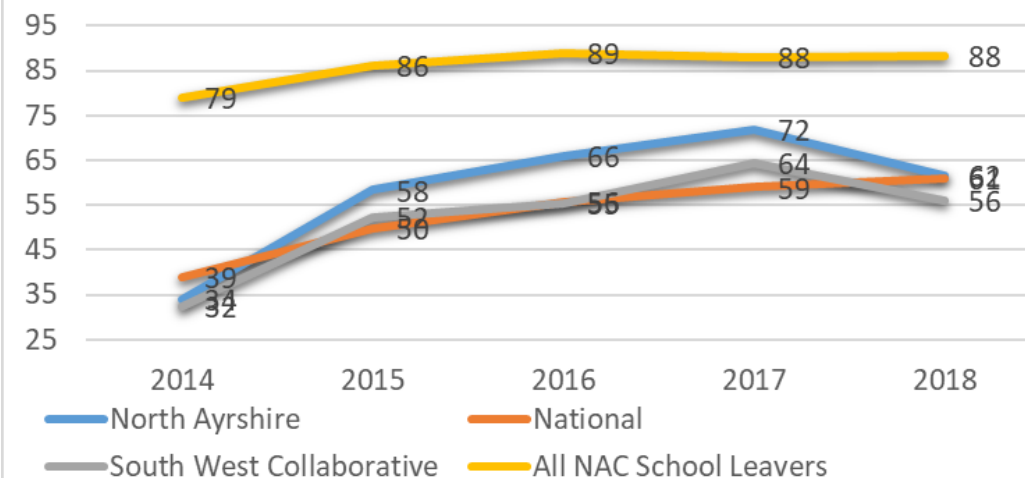
S3 - Third Level or Better



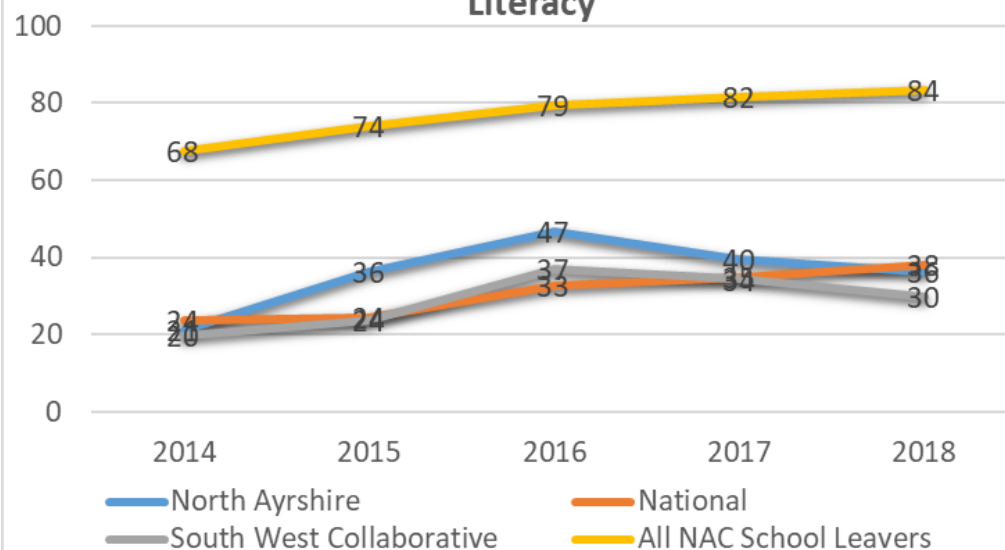
Percentage of LAC Leavers attaining Level 4 Literacy



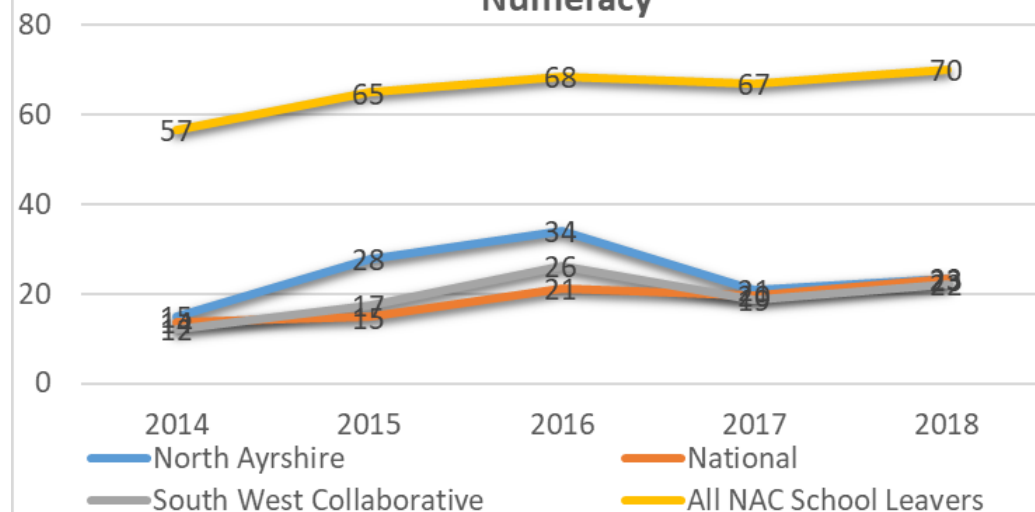
Percentage of LAC Leavers attaining Level 4 Numeracy



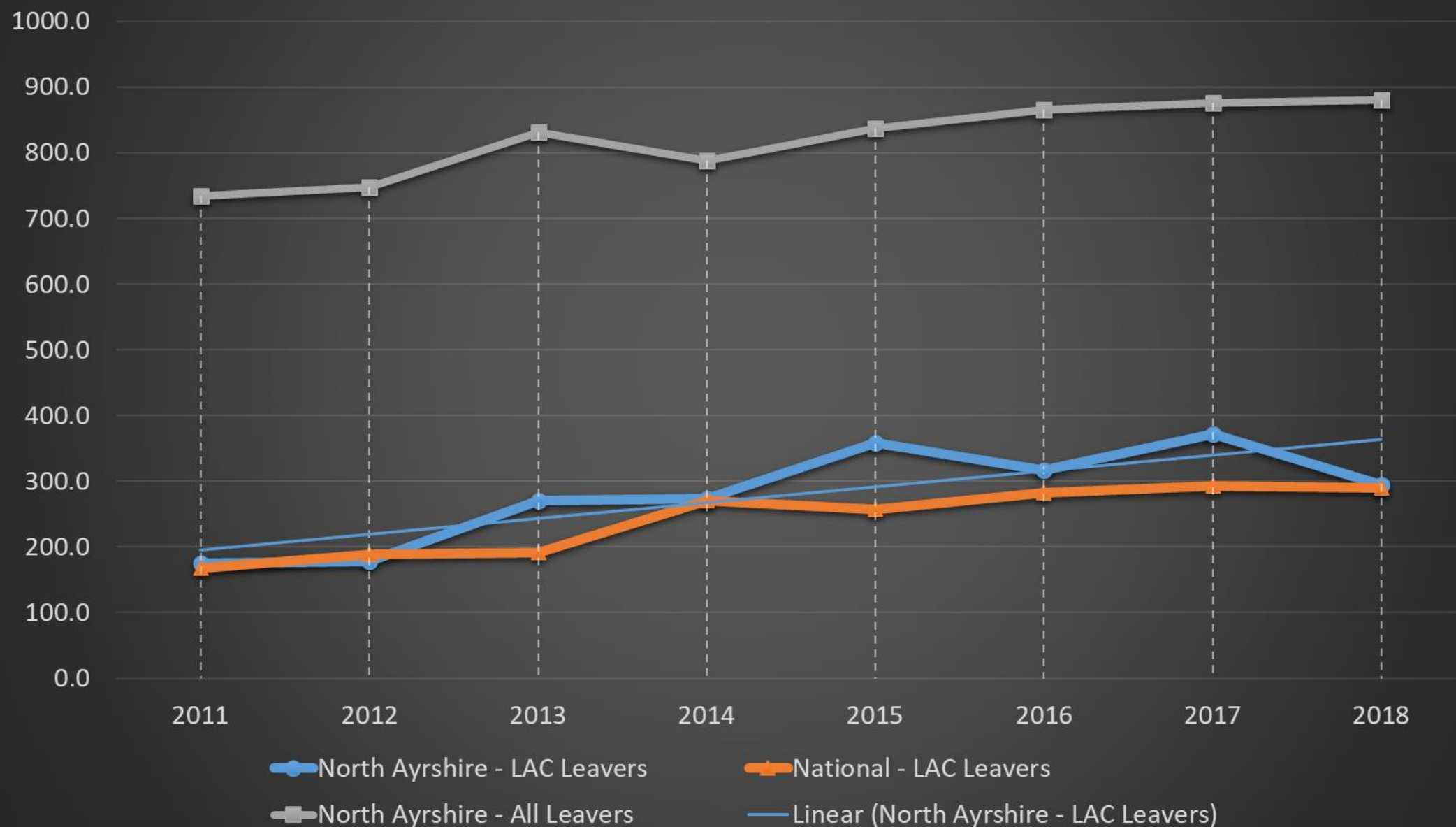
Percentage of LAC Leavers attaining Level 5 Literacy

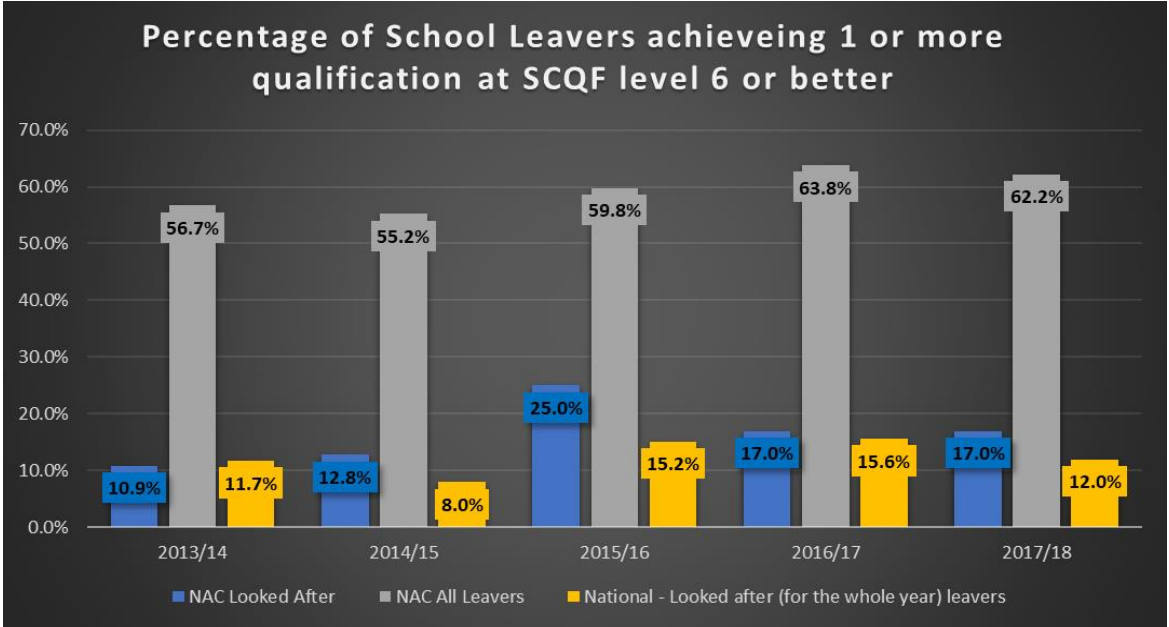
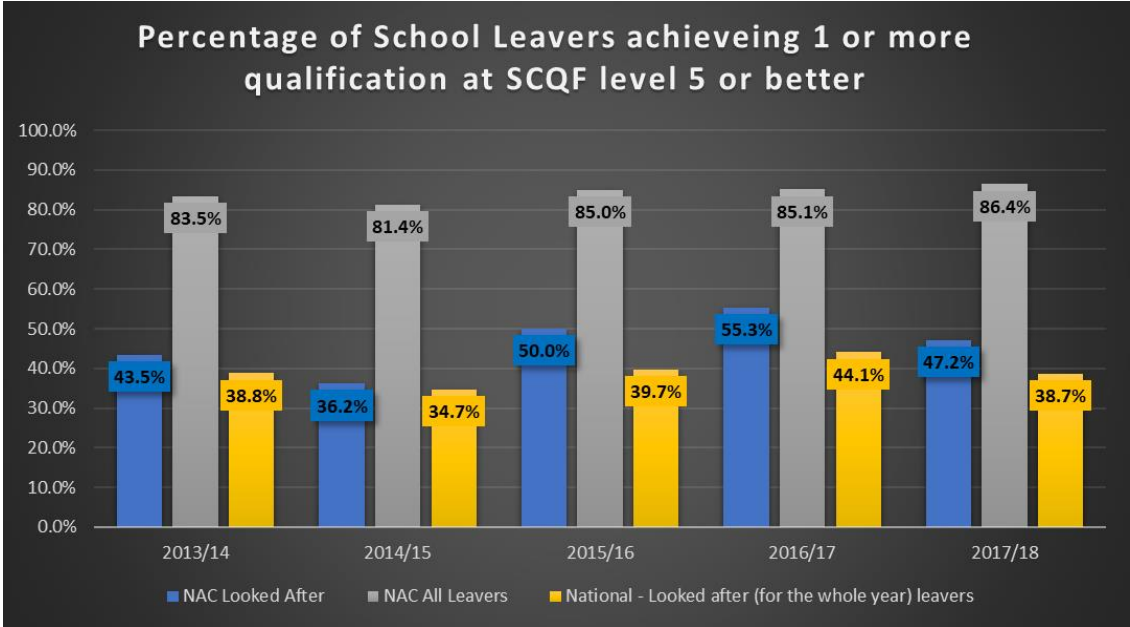
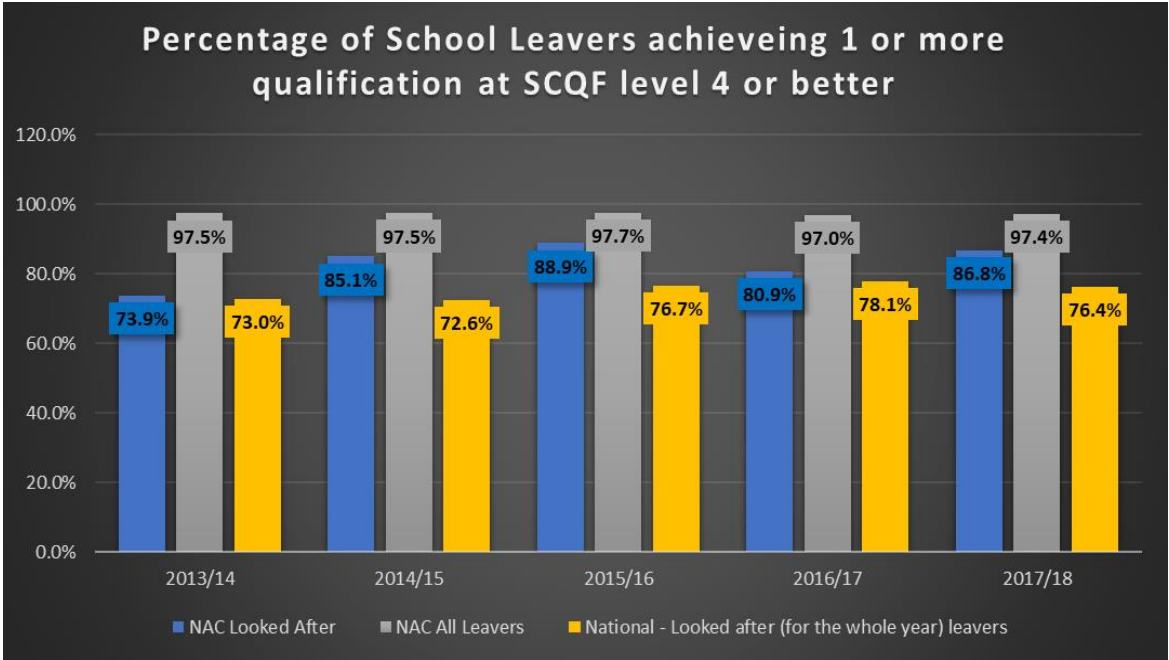


Percentage of LAC Leavers attaining Level 5 Numeracy



Average Total Tariff Score of School Leaver Looked after/All Leavers





Percentage of Looked After Leavers entering a Positive Destination

