

---

## NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

30 May 2023

### Cabinet

---

**Title:** Educational Achievement of Care Experienced Learners in North Ayrshire in 2022

---

**Purpose:** To update Cabinet on:

- i. Curriculum for Excellence Broad General Education (BGE) attainment levels of care experienced learners in 2022;
- ii. Senior Phase attainment of care experienced school leavers in 2022;
- ii. Post-school participation of care experienced learners

---

**Recommendation:** That Cabinet:

- a) Notes the content of the report, including the progress being made by learners, specifically in literacy and numeracy;
- b) Notes the achievements of school leavers in SQA examinations in 2022.

---

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report summarises the key performance measures of care experienced<sup>1</sup> and looked after learners<sup>2</sup>, focusing specifically on the published 2022 attainment data and trends over time. Overall, educational outcomes for care experienced learners have improved over the last five 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 Care experienced school leavers are achieving better 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 5 years. The proportion of care experienced learners entering a positive destination has been above the national figure for the last 5 years.

---

<sup>1</sup> Care Experienced is a term we use in education; it has no statutory basis. Care experienced is an umbrella term which can mean children / young people who are: Looked after at home through a Compulsory Supervision Order; Looked after away from home; Previously looked after, where at some point in their lives they have had any of the above experiences.

<sup>2</sup> Looked after young people include those: Looked after at home through a Compulsory Supervision Order (CSO) or Looked after away from home in a residential children's house, in a foster placement or a kinship placement.

## 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 is shown in the charts in Appendix 1. In 2022 there were 842 care experienced young people enrolled in North Ayrshire schools.

2.2 This report focuses on the following key measures:

- Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy across the Broad General Education for care experienced learners for 2022.
- Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy and overall attainment in all qualifications at Senior Phase level for care experienced school leavers in 2022.
- Average Total Tariff Score of school leavers and the impact of the stage at which they leave school.
- Post-school participation of care experienced school leavers for 2022.

2.3 **Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy in Broad General Education for Care Experienced Learners** (These highlights are supported by charts in Appendix 2)

2.3.1 The charts at Appendix 2 indicate that the attainment of care experienced learners at BGE stages P1, P4 and P7 continues to recover steadily towards pre-pandemic levels. At all stages, achievement of Literacy and Numeracy levels have increased for care experienced learners from 2021 figures. This mirrors the recovery journey overall for all learners in North Ayrshire, with a similar pattern occurring for the full cohort groups. Nevertheless, there remains a gap between the achievement of care experienced learners and all learners across North Ayrshire.

2.4 **Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy and overall attainment in all qualifications at Senior Phase level for Care Experienced school leavers** (These highlights are supported by charts in Appendices 3-5)

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. Therefore, care must 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 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 leavers than for the overall school leaver cohort in North Ayrshire. However, North Ayrshire care experienced school leavers perform generally better than their counterparts nationally and in the SWEIC authorities (see Appendix 3).

2.4.3 For Level 4 Literacy (81.6%) and Numeracy (79.6%), care experienced leavers in North Ayrshire are above both the National and the SWEIC performances. These figures are also the highest recorded in the 5-year trend. For Level 5 Literacy (51%) and Numeracy (32.7.%), leavers are also above both the National and SWEIC performances.

2.4.4 Care experienced leavers in North Ayrshire are continuing a positive 5-year trend of attainment in the number of Level 4 and Level 5 qualifications achieved (see Appendix 4). In 2022, 90.3% of North Ayrshire's care experienced leavers attained at least one qualification at SCQF Level 4 or better, the highest performance in 5-year trend. In 2022, 67.7% of care experienced leavers achieved at least one qualification at SCQF Level 5, which is also the highest performance in the 5-year trend. The percentage of care experienced learners achieving at least 1 Level 6 award fell in comparison to 2021 with 34.4% achieving this. However, this is in line with all school leavers and at 34.4%, this is still the second highest performance for NAC care experienced leavers in the last 5 years.

2.4.5 The average total tariff score for NAC care experienced leavers continues to increase, with the figure in 2022 rising to 457, the best performance to date. There is still a significant gap between the attainment of care experienced learners and those who are not care-experienced, both locally and nationally. In North Ayrshire, the gap is gradually closing. Over the last three years from 2020-22, the gap between care experienced average total tariff scores and all North Ayrshire school leavers has been on average 491 points, compared to an average of 526 points for the three years previously from 2017-2019. Whilst this is clear progress, there is still a significant amount of work to be done to reduce the gap more consistently and at a faster rate.

2.5 **Post-school participation of care experienced school leavers** (These highlights are supported by charts in Appendix 6)

2.5.1 The overall percentage of North Ayrshire care experienced school leavers entering a positive destination has remained consistently above the national performance for this group over the last five years. In 2022, the percentage of NAC care experienced school leavers in a positive destination is 91.4%, the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest figure recorded since 2016.

## 2.6 **Proposed Improvement Actions**

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 time, 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 Education Service Improvement Plan makes specific reference to actions impacting positively on care experienced learners.

## 3. **Proposals**

3.1 It is proposed that Cabinet:

- a) Notes the content of the report, including the progress being made by learners, specifically in literacy and numeracy;
- b) Notes the achievements of school leavers in SQA examinations in 2022.

## 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 leavers.

## **Climate Change and Carbon**

4.5 None.

## **Key Priorities**

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

This work relates to the following priorities in the Education Service Plan 2022-23:

**Priority 1:** Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

**Priority 2:** Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people

**Priority 3:** Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

## **Community Wealth Building**

4.7 The Council will continue to consider 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 (Communities and Education)

For further information please contact **Kevin Herron, Senior Manager (Education)**, on **01294 324450**.

## **Background Papers**

Appendix 1: LAC Census Rolld (2014-2022)

Appendix 2: Care Experienced ACEL (2019-2022)

Appendix 3: LAC Leavers Literacy & Numeracy attainment insight (2022)

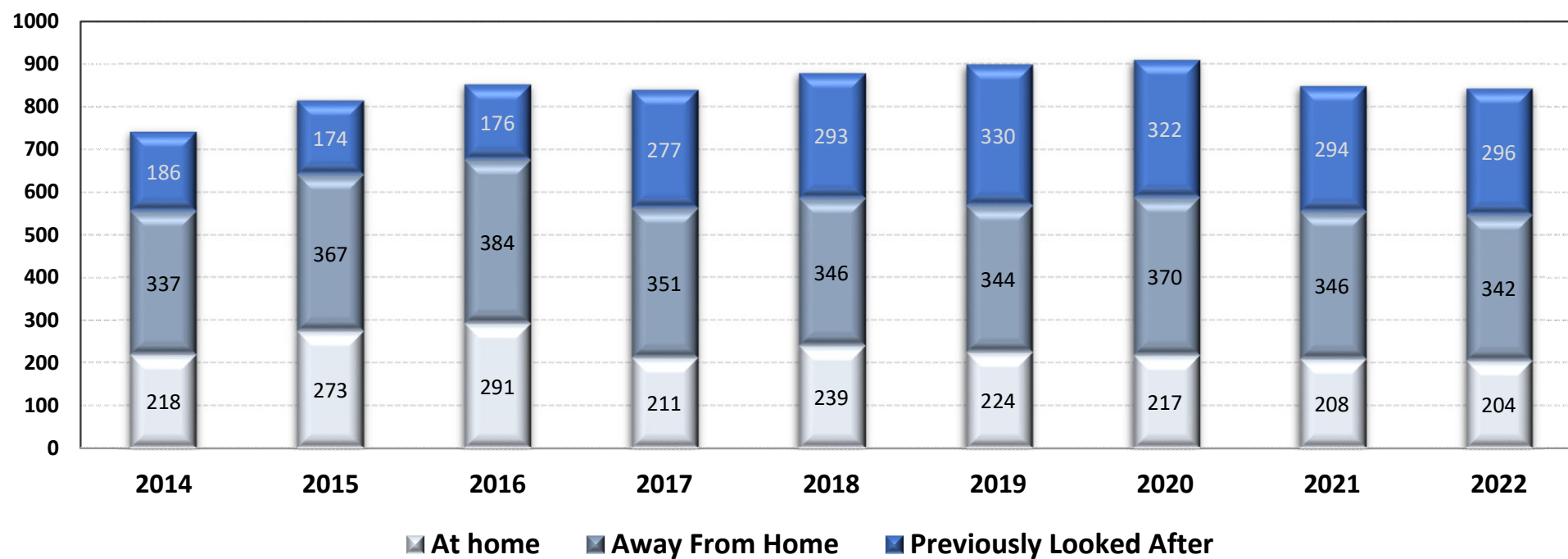
Appendix 4: Care Experienced and LAC Leavers Highest SCQF Levels

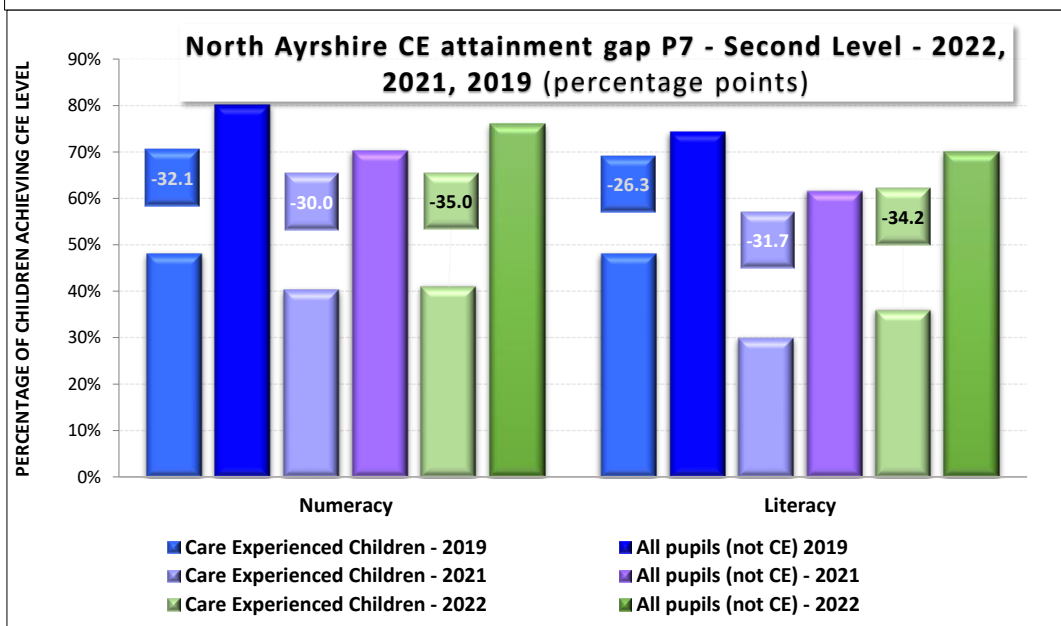
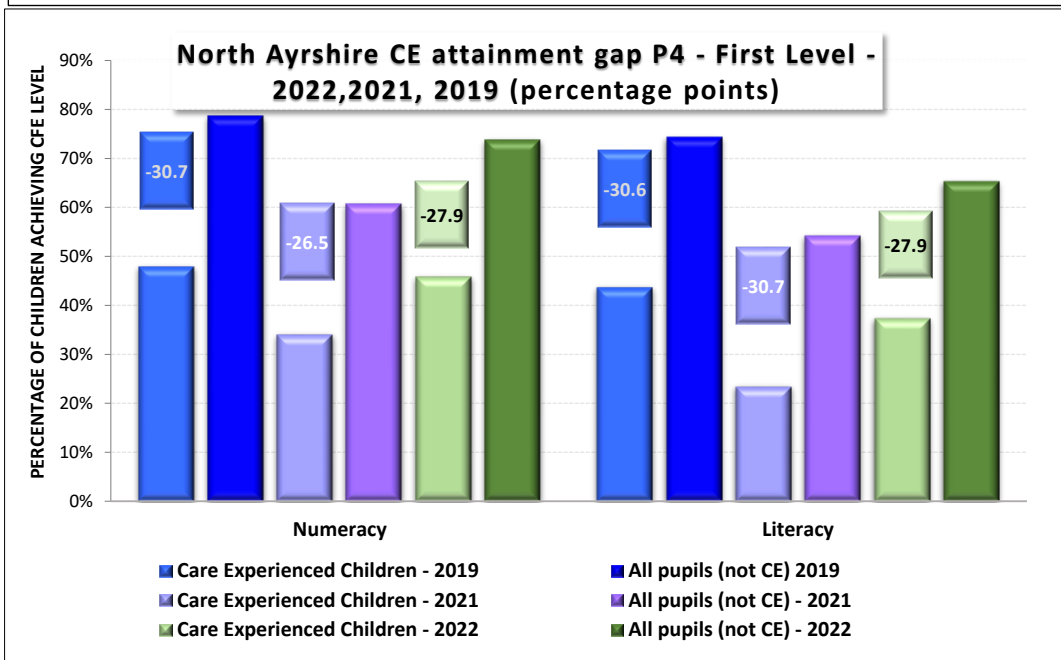
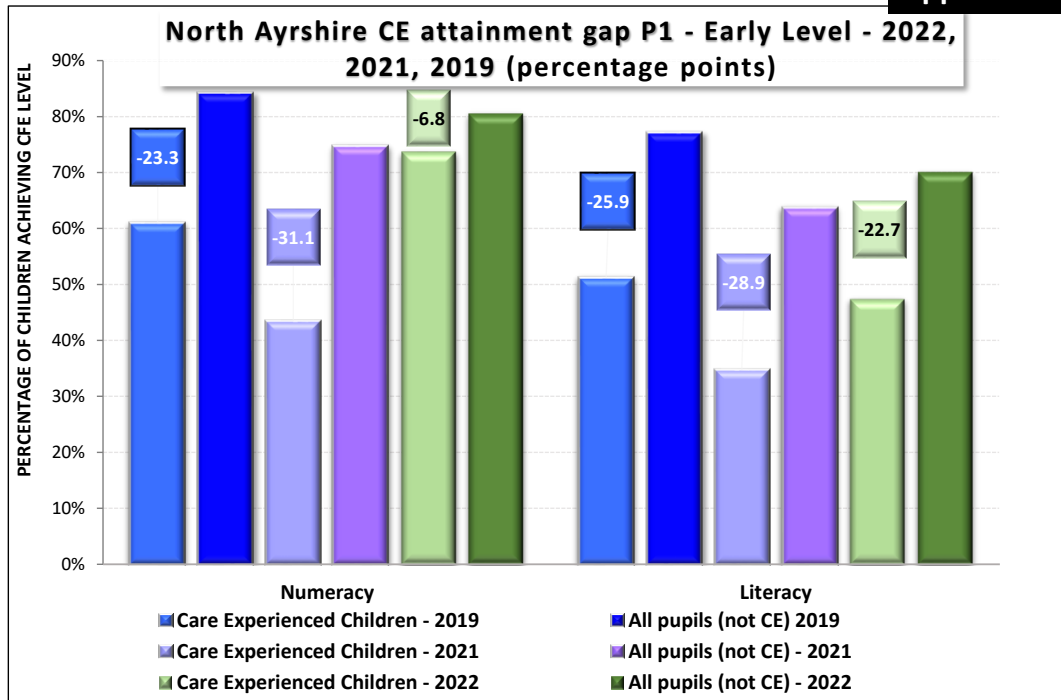
Appendix 5: Care Experienced and LAC Leavers ATTS

Appendix 6: Insight LAC Leavers entering Positive Destination 2016-2022)

## Care Experienced Pupils - All Schools

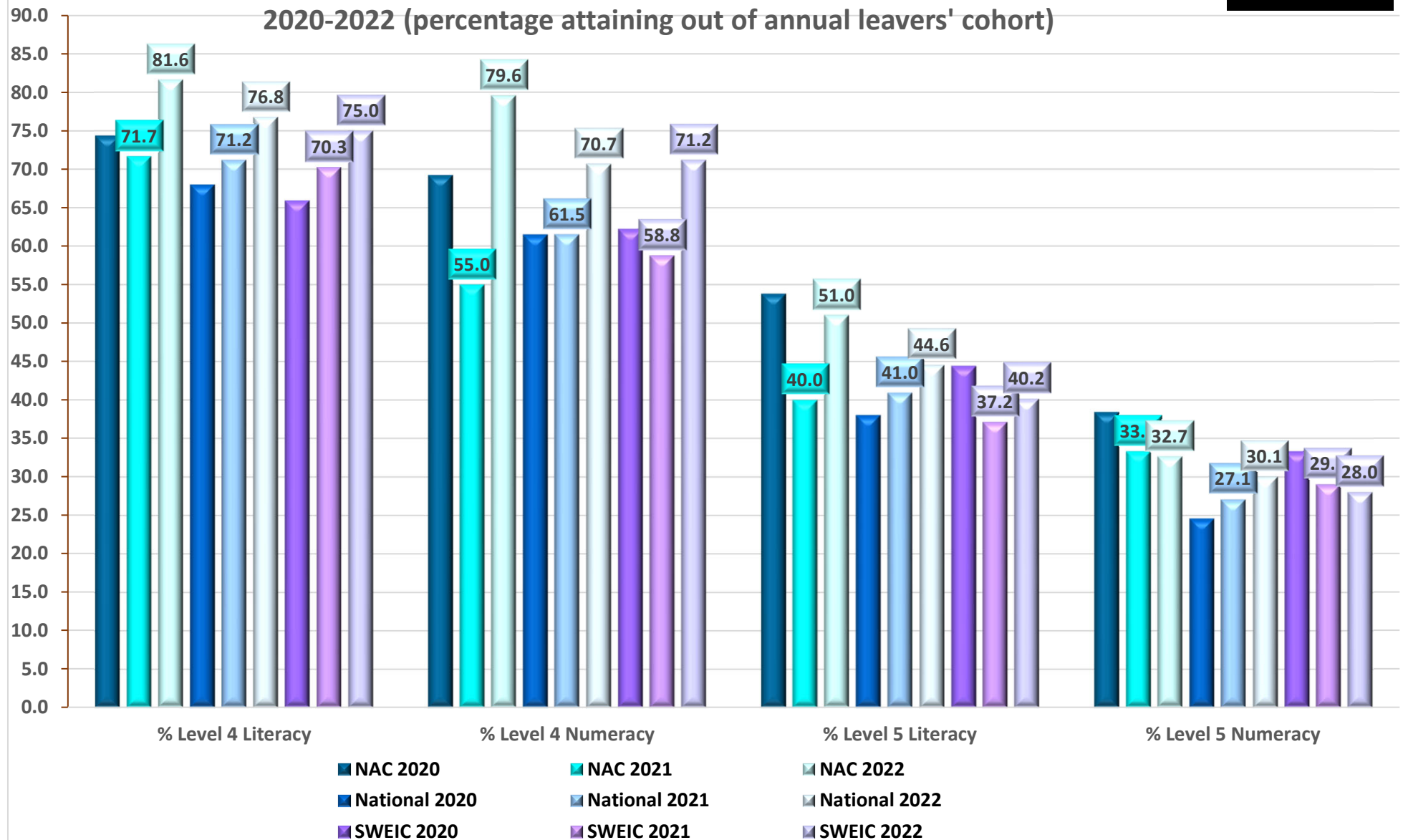
Appendix 1





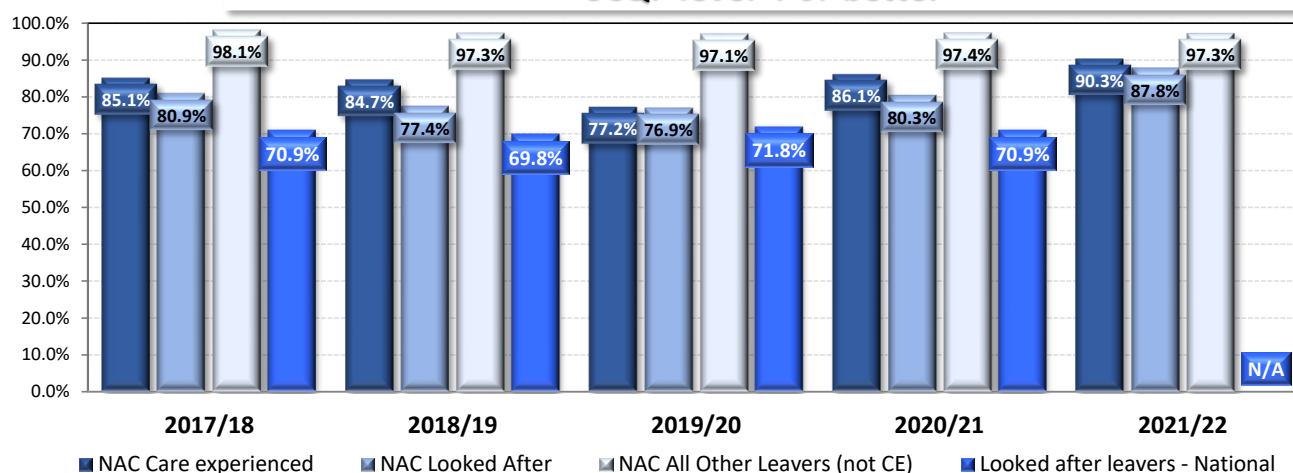
# LAC attainment in Literacy and Numeracy - North Ayrshire vs. National and SWEIC - 2020-2022 (percentage attaining out of annual leavers' cohort)

Appendix 3

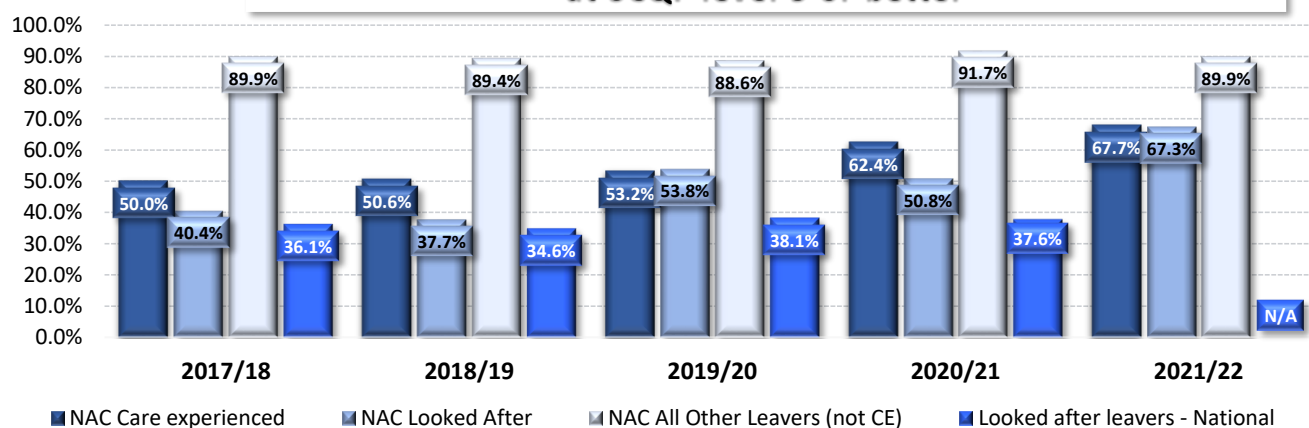




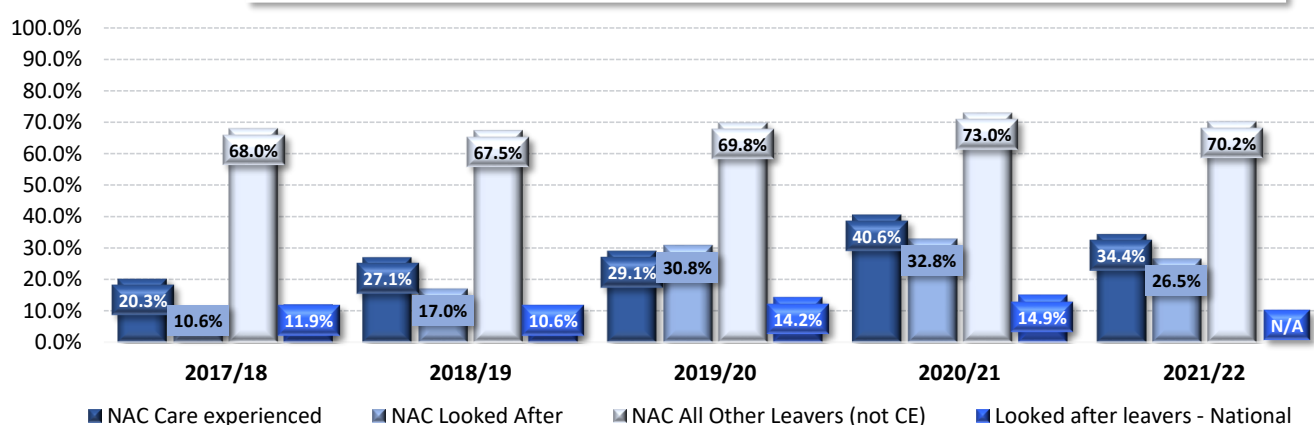
### Percentage of School Leavers achieving 1 or more qualification at SCQF level 4 or better

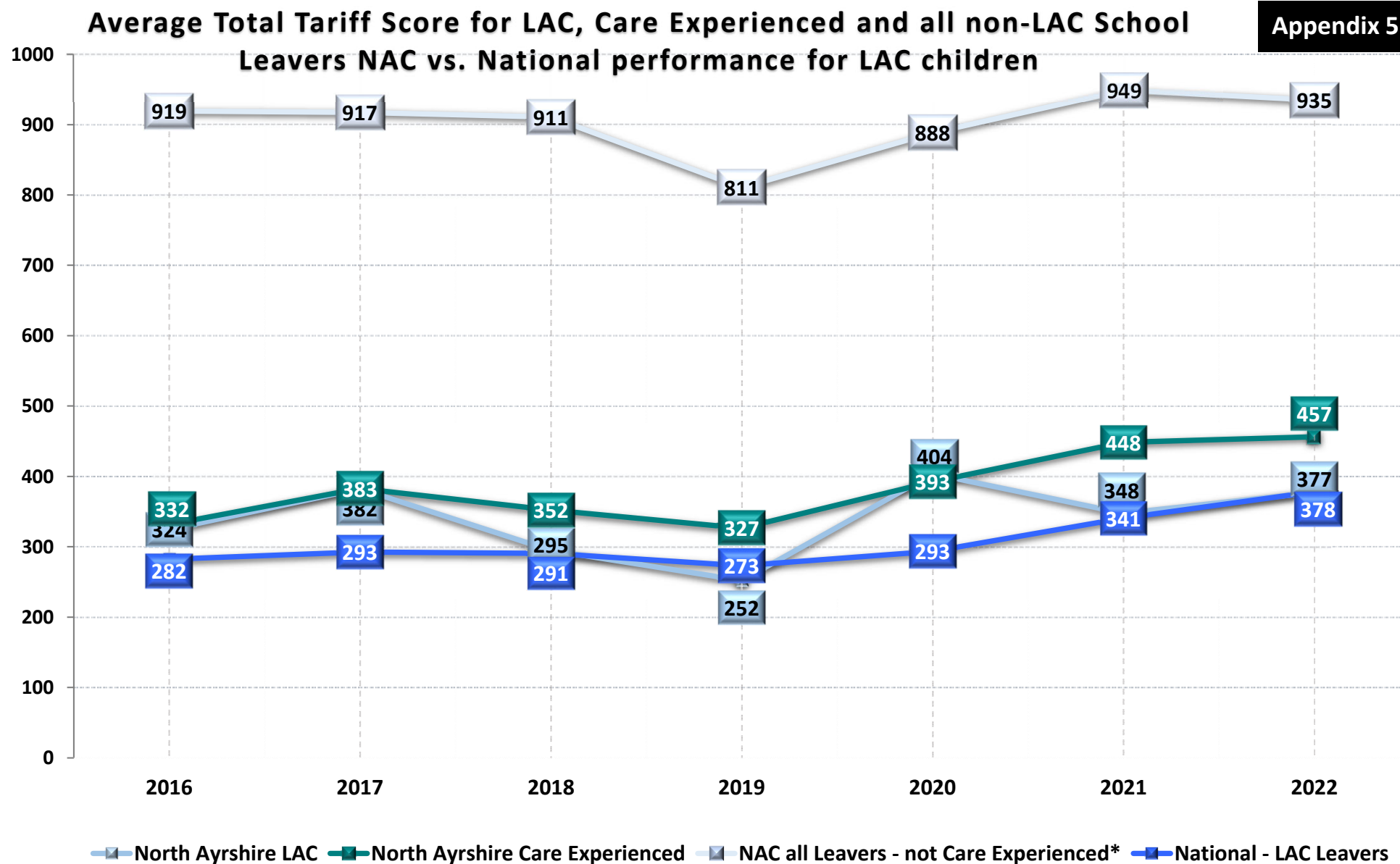


### Percentage of School Leavers achieving 1 or more qualification at SCQF level 5 or better



### Percentage of School Leavers achieving 1 or more qualification at SCQF level 6 or better





\*not looked after and not previously looked after - and unable to determine status for 2016 only

## Percentage of Care Experienced and Looked After Leavers entering a Positive Destination

Appendix 6

