
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

25 May 2021

Cabinet

Title: Education Service Standards and Quality Report 2019-20 and Future Performance Reporting Update

Purpose: To seek approval for the Education Service's Standards and Quality report for the academic year 2019-20 and to seek approval from Cabinet on the future approach to performance reporting.

Recommendation: That Cabinet:

- (a) Approves the Education Service's Standards and Quality report for the 2019-20 academic year provided at Appendix 1; and
- (b) Approves the proposed revised approach to aligning Education Service's annual service planning to the National Improvement Framework priorities.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides information on the performance of the Education Service in the 2019-20 academic year which aligns with the statutory duty for each education authority to annually report on performance as outlined in the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 and Education (Scotland) Act 2016.
- 1.2 In addition, this paper informs Cabinet of the Education Service's decision to align future service planning and performance reporting to the National Improvement Framework (NIF) priorities from 2022-23 academic year onwards. This will streamline performance management and reporting as well as fulfilling corporate reporting requirements, via the Council Plan Performance Management Framework, as well as Scottish Government statutory duties for education authorities.

2. Background

Education Authority Statutory Duties

- 2.1 The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 outlines a statutory duty for education authorities to annually publish a Standards and Quality report. In addition, there is a statutory duty outlined in the Education (Scotland) Act 2016, for education

authorities to produce an annual plan and report on progress towards achieving NIF priorities.

The current NIF priorities are:

- (i) Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- (ii) Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- (iii) Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- (iv) Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.

Education Service Planning Arrangements

- 2.2 The Education Service Plan 2021-22 (provided in summary at Appendix 1) is focused on ensuring that our children and young people experience the best start in life in aspiring communities. The plan incorporates the NIF priorities, noted in section 2.1 above, under the four priorities below:

CURRENT NAC EDUCATION PRIORITIES	ALIGNMENT WITH NIF PRIORITIES
Priority 1: We will create the conditions for our children and young people to access the highest quality learning experiences from ages 3-18	
Priority 2: We will support our children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens	NIF Priority 1: Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy NIF Priority 2: Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people NIF Priority 4: Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
Priority 3: We will offer opportunities to our young people and their families to play a more active role in school life and encourage more participation in learning	
Priority 4: We will work with all young people to build their resilience, supporting their mental health and physical wellbeing	NIF Priority 3: Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

Education Service Performance Reporting Arrangements

- 2.3 The current Education Service Plan is subject to six-monthly performance reporting to Elected Members and North Ayrshire Council's Executive Leadership Team through the Council's Performance Management framework.
- 2.4 The Education Service's contribution to the Council Plan quarter four/ end of financial year report is adapted to fulfil the Education Service's statutory duties to publish a NIF progress report and a Standards and Quality report at the end of each academic year.
- 2.5 At present, one report is produced that fulfils NIF and Standards and Quality reporting duties. However, due to the Education Service's aspirations to improve public communication, these reports will be separated in future years. This action recognises that the reports are intended for differing audiences and serve different purposes. The table below provides further detail on the rationale for this revised approach:

REPORT	AUDIENCE	PURPOSE	ANNUAL COMPLETION DATE
NIF annual report	Scottish Government / Education Scotland	To provide a comprehensive overview of the progress the local authority has made towards delivering NIF priorities	End of October
Standards & Quality Report	Parents / Carers / Local Communities / General Public	To share the highlights of the Education Service's work to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.	End of December

- 2.6 In order to progress with further enhancing communication, the Education Service has developed a separate Standards and Quality report for the academic year 2019-20. This has been tailored to fulfil the interests of a public audience as outlined in section 2.5 above and has been included at Appendix 1.
- 2.7 At present, actions within the Education Service Plan are aligned to the priorities noted in section 2.2 as opposed to the NIF priorities noted in section 2.1. It is considered that reporting on two sets of similar priorities could be confusing for our communities. Therefore, from academic year 2022–23, the Service intends to use the NIF priorities in section 2.1 as the main priorities in the Education Service Plan. A fifth priority will be added, which will focus on creating the right conditions to maximise the achievement of the four main priorities and realise the ambition of ensuring our children and young people experience the best start in life.
- 2.8 The proposed changes will not alter the focus of the Service in delivering improved outcomes for children and young people. This is principally about realigning and reorganising the key actions within the plan under revised headings.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 It is proposed Cabinet:

- (a) Approves the Education Service's Standards and Quality report for the 2019-20 academic year provided at Appendix 1; and

- (b) Approves the proposed revised approach to aligning Education Service's annual service planning to the National Improvement Framework priorities.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

4.1 None

Human Resources

4.2 None

Legal

4.3 The priorities and reporting within Education support the achievement of the UNCRC requirements.

Equality/Socio-economic

4.4 This new approach will provide improved communications and information for local communities regarding the performance of the Education service.

Environmental and Sustainability

4.5 None

Key Priorities

4.6 Children and young people experience the best start in life; and Active and strong communities.

Community Wealth Building

4.7 The priorities and reporting within Education prepare children, young people and families for participation in economic activity and contribution to community participation.

5. Consultation

5.1 The Education Service Leadership Team has consulted with a range of key partners in the development of this report, notably young people and a range of partners involved in the design and delivery of educational provision.

Dr Audrey Sutton
Executive Director – Communities and Education

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

Background Papers



NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Communities and Education Directorate

Education Service Standards and Quality Report

May 2021

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1. FOREWORD: Cllr John Bell

Photo

I am proud of the success and achievement brought to you in this report. We have set out the progress we have made towards delivering our joint aims of achieving excellence and equity for our learners in the 2019-20 academic year. Our approach has taken account of the feedback from consultation with our stakeholders across the Council and our school communities to ensure the delivery of the locally agreed priorities of the Council Plan as well as the National Improvement Framework priorities. In the delivery of the plan we have worked closely with our partners across the Council and communities of North Ayrshire.

The last academic year has been one of the most challenging in recent Scottish Education history due to the impact of Covid-19. Almost all aspects of education provision have been impacted by the pandemic with many children, young people, staff and communities detrimentally affected. The Scottish Government took the decision to close schools on the 20th of March 2020 and I am proud of how our Education Service has worked closely with partners to build the creativity of all within our school communities to ensure continuity of education provision.

Dr Audrey Sutton – Executive Director of Communities and Education

Photo

The Communities and Education Directorate's vision is that our communities aspire to achieve their potential and the Education Service is focussed on the Council Plan Priority that North Ayrshire's children and young people have the best start in life.

Our Children's Services Strategic Planning suite of documents provides the context for our work, planning for and reporting through our Children's Services Strategic Plan and our Child Poverty Report and Action Plan. These plans can be found here [North Ayrshire Children's Services Strategic Partnership \(CSSP\) – North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership](#)

The Education Standards and Quality Report shows the extraordinary contribution that the Education Service has made to this work over the past year and sets out our priorities as we move forward into the future.

2. ABOUT NORTH AYRSHIRE

The Education Service in North Ayrshire is responsible for the education of more than 18,000 pupils across the authority's primary, secondary, and additional support needs schools. A further 2,250 children attend early learning and childcare settings in North Ayrshire.

The Education Service is part of North Ayrshire Council's Communities and Education Directorate, led by Dr Audrey Sutton (Executive Director), which works towards developing a society where everyone, has the same life chances to grow,

prosper and have fulfilling and healthy lives. The Education Service has a central role in supporting delivery of the Council Plan priority to ensure North Ayrshire's children and young people have the best start in life. Strategic leadership of the Education Service is led by Andrew McClelland (Head of Service) and Caroline Amos (Head of Service).

Education in North Ayrshire is delivered through:

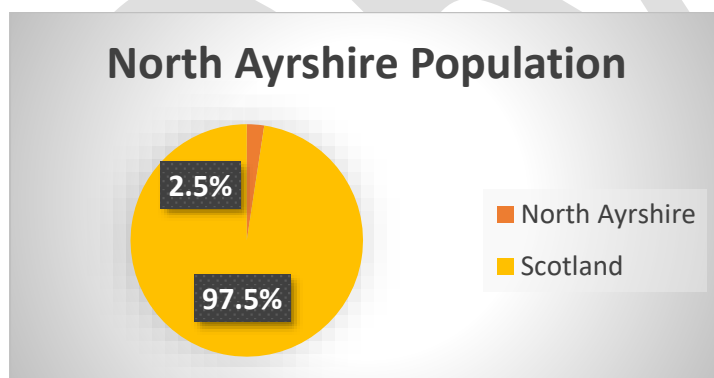
- 48 primary schools
- 8 secondary schools
- 1 through school (from Early Years to Secondary)
- 4 schools for children and young people with additional support needs.
- 6 council-managed early learning and childcare centres and 36 early years classes.
- 16 centres where early learning and childcare is provided in partnership

The Council employs (based on annual census figures – 2019)

- 1376 Teachers (and an additional 64 Teachers employed through the Attainment Scotland Fund)
- 498 Local Government Staff in Schools
- 385 Early Years Staff in Schools and Centres

On 30 June 2019, the population in North Ayrshire was 134,740.

Chart 1: North Ayrshire vs. Scotland Population



The population estimate for those aged between 0 - 15 in 2019 for North Ayrshire was 22,468 and the estimate for those aged between 16 - 24 in 2019 for North Ayrshire was 13,456.

Socio-demographic information and poverty and inequality in North Ayrshire

High levels of inequality exist in North Ayrshire, particularly poverty and the associated effects this has. North Ayrshire is one of the most deprived areas in Scotland. Deprivation levels are significantly higher than the Scottish average. The latest 2020 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) highlighted continuing levels of deprivation in North Ayrshire. 52 of our 186 datazones now fall within the 15% most deprived in Scotland. 39,139 people live within these deprived areas representing 28.8% of North Ayrshire's population, significantly above the Scottish average.

In addition, unemployment levels in North Ayrshire are high, there are significant numbers of people on low income and almost a third of children live in poverty.

To contextualise this, the percentage of children living in relative poverty is as follows:

Glasgow (rank #1) = 28%

NAC (rank #2) = 23.4%

EAC (rank #3) = 22.9%

Percentage of children living in absolute poverty:

Glasgow (rank #1) = 22.9%

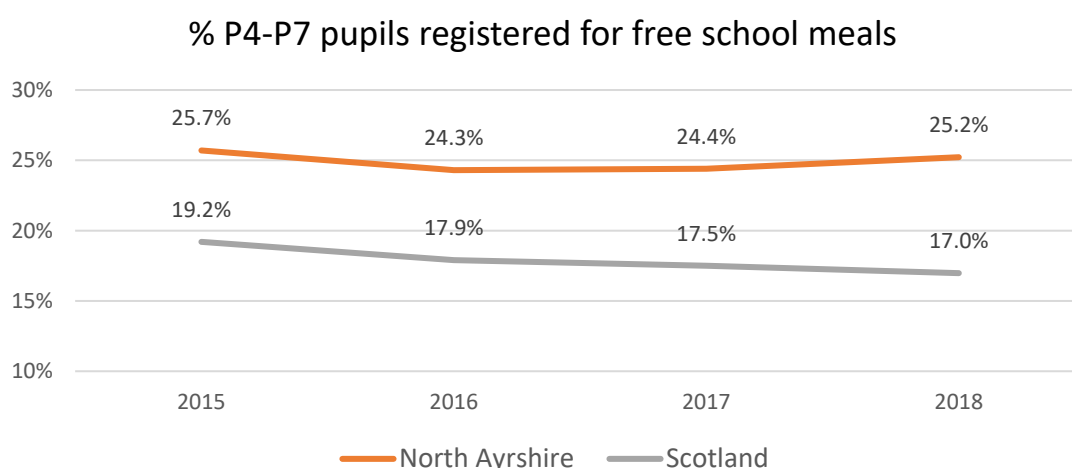
NAC (rank #2) = 19.0%

EAC (rank #3) = 18.8%

Inequalities in outcomes can be seen across all sectors including education, employment, income and health and wellbeing. They are the result of an imbalance in power, money and resources across society, further compounded by the recent economic conditions of recession, austerity and welfare reform.

New data on child poverty was released in October 2020. This new estimate is based on Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) data but is based on family income levels, after housing costs. The data only covers the age group of 0 to 16-year olds.

The new data shows that an estimated figure of over **6,500 children (28.3%) age 0-16 could be living in poverty in North Ayrshire.**



As a Scottish Attainment Challenge local authority, our focus continues to be on closing the poverty related attainment gap. The most recent national evaluation of this work can be accessed at [attainment-scotland-fund-evaluation-fourth-interim-report-year-5.pdf](#). We have a continued focus on the development of collaboration, the increasing use of and capacity within the system in relation to data and evidence, and the governance and support arrangements in place nationally and locally. The most recent summary of North Ayrshire's progress by Education Scotland notes:

"There are improving trends in the attainment of children and young people most affected by socio-economic disadvantage. In particular, young people living in areas of socioeconomic disadvantage are achieving well in literacy and numeracy. The poverty related attainment gap has closed significantly for S3 learners."

The cost of the school day (COSD) continues to be a major priority for us. In 2020 we established a working group comprising of Elected Members, young people, parents, head teachers and staff of educational establishments, senior officers from the Council and HSCP, CPP partners and officers.

North Ayrshire has previously participated in work with Public Health and Young Scot to develop local approaches to Cost of the School Day, providing a sound basis for the current work, with excellent practice in schools being contributed to the working group deliberations.

The aim of the Cost of the School Day (COSD) Working Group was to further drive forward a whole systems approach to reducing the cost associated with education. We already have strong approaches to this across North Ayrshire and we continue to look for new whole-system commitments from the Council and its CPP and community and business partners.

3. IMPACT OF COVID-19

Remote Learning

Although this report covers session 2019-20, the impact of the pandemic is such that we want to highlight recent activity in relation to this.

Our schools moved to remote learning in January, with a mix of online and paper-based resources provided. Phased reopening of our schools commenced on 22nd February. Schools moved to remote learning from 20 March 2020 until the end of the academic year in June 2020. During this time, digital devices and internet access were procured and issued to those pupils who needed them most.

To ensure our pupils could access online learning we provided:

1217 Wi-Fi iPads
189 cellular iPads
306 Wi-Fi units
900 Chrome books
582 anywhere SIMs

Family Learning

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Family Learning Team (FLT) consulted Head Teachers to identify vulnerable families who received a 'learning at home' resource pack with an accompanying resource booklet.

A Family Learning Team website has been established to provide an online resource for parents/older pupils to access learning activities that are easy to replicate at home. This includes pictorial and video guides as well as links to appropriate organisations and resources.

Approximately 90 families received regular contact from the team to support learning at home, access to digital platforms and support to apply for food bank vouchers, free school meals and school uniform.

Mental health & wellbeing

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the secondary school counselling services continued throughout lockdown via telephone counselling.

There has been a specific focus on developing positive mental health resources to support children and young people, staff and families during this period of lockdown and school closures. This is accessed through a specially developed blog and there is now a focus on how the overall strategy can continue to support recovery when lockdown ends.

Nurture

We continue to work towards our vision of being a nurturing authority through our "Nurturing North Ayrshire's Recovery" approach by building emotional resilience in children and developing stronger relationships. Following lockdown, it was found that children who had experienced nurture approaches coped well with the return to school.

Early Years

Early Years and Primary registration for those starting school in August 2020 moved to an online application process. The full implementation of 1140 hours of early learning and childcare was delayed until August 2021 on the advice of Scottish Government, although progress continued to be made in North Ayrshire as we developed the roll out of centres where preparations were underway.

School Childcare Hubs

Emergency childcare provision for children of key workers was put in place on the 25th March 2020 at 6 locality hub school buildings to support key worker families during the lockdown period. This included childcare for identified early years children in all hubs. To meet the needs of small groups of identified vulnerable pupils, four additional hubs were set up across the authority. As of the 19th of May 2020, over 2,500 children and young people had accessed this provision.

Food Provision

In addition to Community Hubs our Food Hubs led by our Facilities Management team provided 60,000 shopping vouchers for children eligible for school meals since July 2020, worth £1.7 million. Prior to this our Food Hubs had delivered the equivalent of 1.26 million meals.

School Leavers

The challenge school leavers faced in June 2020 was assessed and we continue to work with internal and external partners to ensure that appropriate support and provisions are in place. School staff are working with careers officers, maintaining contact with leavers and monitoring impact & changes in plans.

Completion of some employability and skills courses was impacted by Covid-19 and the nature of some of the vocational courses is that digital completion was not possible. We continued to work with schools and partners to mitigate any negative impact and in almost all cases, pupils have been awarded their qualification.

COVID Recovery Investments

Investments in COVID recovery and renewal in Education include enhancements to staffing entitlements in schools through recruitment to fixed term posts as well as additional support for DYW, including positive destinations and participation, early years staffing, classroom assistant support, resources and health and safety.

4. ABOUT THE EDUCATION SERVICE

The Communities and Education Directorate's vision is to create a society where everyone has the same life chances to grow, prosper and have fulfilling and healthy lives.

The Education Service is focussed on the Council Plan Priority that North Ayrshire's children and young people have the best start in life.

Our Children's Services Strategic Planning suite of documents provides the context for our work, planning for and reporting through our Children's Services Strategic

Plan, our Child Poverty Report and Action Plan. These plans can be found here [North Ayrshire Children's Services Strategic Partnership \(CSSP\) – North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership](#)

The national and local context is as follows:

Alignment to Local and National Plans

This plan is aligned to local and national plans as follows:



Within this, the Education Service has 4 identified priorities:

- We will expand our early learning and childcare provision to make sure all eligible children are able to access 1140 hours of free care each year.
- We will support our children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, and responsible citizens.
- We will offer opportunities to our young people and their families to play a more active role in school life and encourage more participation in learning opportunities.
- We will work with our young people to build their resilience, supporting their mental and physical well-being.

COMMUNITIES & EDUCATION DIRECTORATE

COUNCIL PLAN 2019-24
Education Service Delivery Plan 2021-22

Aspiring Communities - A society where everyone has the same life chances to grow, prosper and have fulfilling and healthy lives.

What we'll do to ensure our children and young people experience the best start in life

We will create the conditions for our children and young people to access the highest quality learning experiences from ages 3-18.

1. We will create high quality indoor and outdoor learning experiences and environments that are fit for the purpose of delivering an innovative education service, including an expansion of Early Learning and Childcare to 1140 hours across the NAC early years estate.
2. We will ensure our learning estate provides a safe environment in the context of COVID-19.
3. We will develop continuous professional learning pathways that build the capacity of our staff and create future leaders of service delivery and learning that ensure high quality experiences and the best possible outcomes for our children and their families.

We will support our children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

1. In response to COVID-19, we will redesign and implement programmes to achieve excellence and equity for our learners, with a clear focus on reducing the poverty-related attainment gap.
2. In the context of COVID-19, we will maintain a focus on high quality learning, teaching and assessment in our schools, including in-school and remote learning contexts.
3. We will ensure our children and young people are equipped with the right skills for learning, life and work and that high numbers of our school leavers are entering positive and sustained post-school destinations.

We will offer opportunities to our young people and their families to play a more active role in school life and encourage more participation in learning.

1. We will further refine our draft Parental Engagement Policy.
2. We will build on our well-established programme to support families with their child's learning, considering the additional demands resulting from COVID-19.
3. We will ensure our children, young people, staff and communities are empowered to shape the education service in our schools.
4. We will develop and implement a clear communications strategy to ensure all stakeholders are kept informed of developments, strategy and policy.

We will work with all young people to build their resilience, supporting their mental health and physical well-being.

1. We will develop a range of wellbeing supports and advice for staff to ensure they are able to meet the needs of our children and young people.
2. We will develop a comprehensive approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing in partnership with other agencies, cognisant of the impact of COVID-19.
3. We will continue to develop our nurturing approaches and review provision in light of the potential impact of COVID-19.
4. We will focus on promoting positive relationships.

The National Improvement Framework priorities are embedded in the Service's activity. These are:

1. Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
2. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children & young people
3. Improvement in children & young people's health & wellbeing
4. Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.

Progress against these priorities is reported at Section 7 below.

5. OUR LEARNING ESTATE

North Ayrshire Council has an excellent track record of producing a high standard of quality educational establishments.

A key priority of the North Ayrshire Council Plan is ensuring children and young people have the best start in life and that we have active and strong communities. The Council's "New Green Deal" policy ensures that sustainability underpins the goal of developing low-carbon and energy efficient educational establishments. Our Community Wealth Building strategy is increasingly informing our work to strengthen local approaches to procurement and democratic use and ownership of assets. This continues our place-based approach and informs how we provide a safe, welcoming, nurturing, and inspiring environment which promotes achievement and wellbeing and enhances life chances for young people.




We want the children and young people of North Ayrshire to understand, feel part of and contribute to their community, engaging and supporting them to be the best they can be. We also recognise that the current COVID-19 pandemic has initiated change across the education sector, and this requires our schools to be more flexible, functional and futureproof, in ways which previously were not envisaged.

Early Learning and Childcare

Scottish Government funding of £11.44m was secured to invest in the expansion of early learning and childcare, to meet the requirements of providing 1140 hours of early years education for each eligible child. North Ayrshire Council's ELC capital programme comprises of 42 projects, including 27 refurbishments, 14 extensions, and 1 new provision.

In the period April 2019 - April 2020, the following capital projects were completed across our Early Learning Estate:

- Blacklands Primary School Early Years Class,
- Caledonia Primary School Early Years
- Castlepark Early Years Centre,
- Corsehill Primary School Early Years,
- Hayocks Primary School Early Years,
- Kilwinning Early Years Centre,
- Lawthorn Primary School Early Years
- St Mark's Primary School Early Years
- Woodlands Primary School Early Years

Corsehill Early Years Class	Woodlands Early Years Class	St Marks Early Years Class
		

Secondary School Improvements

In the period April 2019- April 2020, a major capital project to transform the PE Department and provide additional Drama facilities was completed at Auchenhavrie Academy.

Auchenhavrie Academy- PE Dept.



New Capital Projects

The Communities Directorate has coordinated a range of statutory and non-statutory public engagement exercises as part of the process to secure funding to build a new Ardrossan Community Campus and a new primary school in the Montgomerie Park area of Irvine. The new Ardrossan Community Campus will be an all-through campus, which will provide a state-of-the-art learning environment for up to 1450 children aged between 2-18 in the Ardrossan area, alongside a range of facilities which are accessible to the public including a library and a swimming pool. This was approved by North Ayrshire Council in April 2020 and is a key component of an exciting Ayrshire Growth Deal project to regenerate the North Shore area of the town.

6. HOW WE ENGAGE WITH PARTNERS

Our work is based on maximising the impact of partners across the system. A selection of notable multi-agency approaches is highlighted below:

- Our Children's Services Planning strategic approach to multi-agency locality working is evidenced by the Wellness Model, initially piloted in Kilwinning, is now developing in Largs. Working in partnership with HSCP, Education, local GP practices and third sector organisations, the Wellness Model partnership continues to enhance wellbeing provision for children and their families.
- An NHS Improvement Officer has provided training on *Mental Health Improvement: A Practical Approach* which has now been delivered across the authority by the Family Learning Team as well as being part of the Mental Health and Wellbeing resource tool for parents.
- 44 parents and 12 young people took up the opportunity to enrol in community accredited learning courses, in partnership with Ayrshire College. Five parents were supported to access a photography course and all other students achieved Exploring Mental Health and Wellbeing level 3 and 4 qualifications.
- A Principal Teacher of Primary Science continues to enhance knowledge across education staff, enhancing STEM opportunities for learners. This has increased the number of Young STEM Leaders in schools, particularly in secondary schools. Partnership with the Family Learning Team (FLT) has enhanced opportunities for families to take part in Family STEM programmes: 299 families participated in 2019/20. The FLT now plans to be a Centre for Young STEM Leaders in the 20/21 session, to enhance knowledge and understanding of STEM career opportunities and access to STEM Ambassadors.
- The North Ayrshire Council Ranger service continues to enhance outdoor learning opportunities for learners through professional opportunities for education staff. Many establishments provide opportunities for learners to achieve their John Muir Award.
- Third sector organisations, including Save the Children, Aberlour, Barnados and Children 1st work in partnership with Education to provide wellbeing support to children and their families. Continued support and training from Save the Children provided 60 Primary 1 families with knowledge and understanding on how to support early learning in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.
- The Scottish Book Trust supported the Council with the Bookbug and Primary 2 and 3 gifting programme. Teacher and practitioner training sessions provided opportunities for 586 parents and carers to be involved in the gifting programme, promoting how to nurture learning at home.

7. HOW ARE WE DOING?

Priority 1: We will expand our early learning and childcare provision to make sure all eligible children are able to access 1140 hours of free care each year

- As of March 2020, fifteen Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) establishments were delivering 1140 hours of free ELC, with over 1200 children benefiting from this new provision. This provision, which includes a healthy lunch or evening meal, has been received positively by parents and carers, many of whom have been enabled to take up training, further education or work.
- Following the publication of the Care Inspectorate 'Space to Grow' guidance document, the Council developed its own Standard Design Brief for early years to continue to create high quality learning environments encompassing indoor and outdoor learning and nurturing spaces.
- Sixteen funded provider nurseries and 79 childminders were successfully awarded contracts to work in partnership with North Ayrshire to support delivery of 1140. Strong partnership working with funded providers has also led to the development of a new professional learning programme which is centred on the 4 ELC quality principles.
- The ELC expansion programme has provided a range of local employment opportunities and this year 14 Modern Apprentices have completed their training and secured employment from August 2019.

Priority 2: We will support our children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

- North Ayrshire's Literacy Strategy was completed following consultation with young people, staff and senior leaders. Work to support establishments in the full implementation of this strategy continues.
- 12 programmes and 31 twilight sessions have been delivered by North Ayrshire's sector-leading Professional Learning Academy (PLA) as of March 2020. PLA programmes, in the first half of the academic year, have positively impacted on 325 practitioners with over 900 pupils benefiting across North Ayrshire schools. Significant improvement has also been reported in individual programmes, most notably the Reading Recovery & Strathclyde Higher Order Reading Skills programmes, which support literacy development of primary school children.
- A Foundation Apprenticeship course in Social Services & Healthcare was established through partnership working with the Health & Social Care Partnership's Learning & Development team. A class of 16 learners from across Ayrshire were fully engaged in their learning and this is the first step on a progression pathway for careers in Social Services, Health, Social Care and related sectors.

Table 1: School leaver attainment in SCQF literacy & numeracy levels

Area of focus	Performance Measure	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Literacy	% of school leavers attaining SCQF level 4 in literacy	96%	95%	96%	95%	95%
	% of school leavers attaining SCQF level 5 in literacy	79%	81%	84%	84%	81%
Numeracy	% of school leavers attaining SCQF level 4 in numeracy	89%	88%	88%	90%	92%
	% of school leavers attaining SCQF level 5 in numeracy	68%	67%	70%	69%	71%

In 2019-20 academic year, there was an increase in school leavers attaining SCQF level 4 and level 5 in numeracy. School leavers attaining SCQF level 4 and 5 in literacy has remained consistent and is aligned with performance over the last three academic years.

An Alternative Certification Model was used by the SQA in 2020 due to the pandemic conditions which will have influenced performance in the 2019-20 academic year.

Table 2: Breadth and depth of leavers attainment in 2019-20 academic year

Performance Measure	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
% of school leavers achieving 1 or more awards at SCQF level 5 (National 5) or better	85%	86%	88%	87%	86%
% of school leavers achieving 5 or more awards at level 5 (National 5) or better	58%	61%	63%	61%	65%
% of school leavers achieving 1 or more awards at SCQF level 6 (Higher) or better	64%	62%	65%	65%	67%
% of school leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF level 6 (Higher) or better	28%	31%	31%	28%	36%

In the last academic year 2019-20, there was an increase in the percentage of school leavers achieving five or more awards at level 5 (national 5) or better and level 6 (higher) or better. In addition, there was an increase the percentage of school leavers achieving one or more award at SCQF level 6 (higher) or better. The percentage of school leavers achieving five or more awards at level 5 (national 5) is broadly consistently with performance in previous years.

Table 3: Attainment of Curriculum for Excellence levels in BGE

Due to the covid-19 pandemic and the resulting closure of schools in June 2020, assessment of achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in the Broad General Education phase were not completed. The table below provides an overview of data from the last available academic year 2018-19.

Area of focus	Performance Measure	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Literacy	PRIMARY (P1, P4, P7) % of pupils achieving or exceeding the expected CfE level in Literacy	64%	70%	72%	74%
	SECONDARY (S3) % of pupils achieving or exceeding the expected CfE level in Literacy	70%	86%	91%	93%
Numeracy	PRIMARY (P1, P4, P7) % of pupils achieving or exceeding the expected CfE level in Numeracy	74%	77%	80%	79%
	SECONDARY (S3) % of pupils achieving or exceeding the expected CfE level in Numeracy	82%	81%	92%	90%

In the 2018-19 academic year, there was an increase in the percentage of pupils achieving or exceeding the expected level in numeracy at both primary and secondary stages. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in numeracy within primary and secondary has remained consistent and is aligned with performance over the last three academic years.

Priority 3: We will offer opportunities to our young people and their families to play a more active role in school life and encourage more participation in learning opportunities.

- 2,698 families took part in family learning interventions during the 2019-20 academic year with 19 families being supported individually.
- An additional 32 families from Additional Support Needs (ASN) schools also engaged with the Family Learning Team through the launch of the parent hub and family cooking sessions which were delivered in all 4 ASN schools.
- A new Family Learning evaluation was rolled out in term 4 of the 2019-20 academic year. Of the completed evaluations, over 97% of parents/carers reported that they have gained more knowledge on how their child/young person learns in school and how to support their learning at home, 100% of parents responded that they were able to prepare their child for transition onto Primary/Secondary school and 97% feel more included in their school community.
- 425 families took part in health and wellbeing programmes throughout 2019/20. 157 families took part in programmes focusing on emotional wellbeing, 123 on physical wellbeing programmes through outdoor learning, and 145 families explored nutritional health through targeted cooking programmes.

Priority 4: We will work with our young people to build their resilience, supporting their mental and physical well-being.

- There were 143 referrals to the secondary school counselling service. Of these, 36 young people completed their counselling sessions with over 90% of pupils reporting improvement following this support.
- Counselling is one of a range of mental health supports available across the authority, with one secondary school establishing a wellbeing hub which provides supports and resources to support pupils. This includes peer to peer support from pupils trained in Scottish Mental Health First Aid as well as targeted programmes to combat low self-esteem and other aspects of mental health.
- Nurture in North Ayrshire continues to develop and grow with primary nurture group provision sustained at 25 nurture groups. Secondary nurture group provision was also expanded so that all 9 secondary schools in North Ayrshire now have targeted nurture provision. Early years nurture groups continue to support children in nine establishments and practice is evolving to meet the changing demands of the early years' expansion.
- We have recently expanded our NA counselling offer to include 10 and 11 year olds who can be referred to the service and we have also procured the services of The Exchange who offer a counselling service for 5-10 year olds across all NA primary schools.

- Our 2 Mental Health and Wellbeing Principal Teachers continue to engage with partners to provide support to children and young people, parents, carers and staff.
- Our 7 Nurturing North Ayrshire Recovery units have been accessed online by a wide range of staff.
- We have rolled out Let's Introduce Anxiety Management Training (LIAM) across 3 of our secondary schools and two of our primary schools.
- The Educational Psychology Service is actively working with families and establishment teams to support 438 children and young people across North Ayrshire, 25 children and young people in day placements, 12 children and young people in residential placements and 28 looked after children and young people being educated outwith North Ayrshire.
- The Educational Psychology Service continues to offer coaching and support for a wide range of mental health and wellbeing issues including emotion coaching, lego therapy positive behaviour planning and nurturing approaches. Nurturing approaches are also delivered to Children's Houses and fostering and adoption groups.
- See Me Staff Training has been delivered to 22 staff.
- A COVID blog that has mental health and wellbeing content for children and young people, parents and staff has had 1447 visitors to the site who have accessed and made use of its content.

8. WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW?

Services across the Education and the Communities Directorate in North Ayrshire are working hard to ensure that children and young people in North Ayrshire have the best start in life. Our main focus is on Covid recovery for 2020-21 and we continue to live with the virus. In parallel, we will maintain a focus on the same strategic priorities as we did in 2019-20, with the twin aims of achieving excellence and equity for all our learners.

By reflecting on our progress and the context that we are currently operating in, we have identified the following priorities for the academic session 2020-2021 and beyond:

Education Recovery

Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be the top priority for the Education Service. The Council's Education Recovery Board (ERB) comprises officers from across the Council as well as trade union representatives. This Board oversees the Local Education Resilience Plan which sets out the overarching plan for educational recovery.

As a result of the work carried out by the ERB and the wider Education Service, over 18,000 learners and 2000 staff across North Ayrshire returned to full time face to face education in August 2020. North Ayrshire's Local Resilience Plan has been updated to reflect the steps taken to enable this safe return. The ERB continues to be developed to add value and inform strategic decisions being taken by the Education Service during the ongoing pandemic.

The Education Service will continue to maintain strong communication with staff, Head Teachers, parents and young people to ensure that everyone is empowered with the information that they need to navigate their journey through the pandemic. At all times the safety, health and wellbeing of children and young people and staff will be at the forefront of all decision making.

National Improvement Framework:

1. Continued improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
2. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children & young people
3. Continued improvement in children & young people's health & wellbeing
4. Continued improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

Quality Assurance

North Ayrshire Council has adapted its approaches to quality assurance to meet the ever-changing demands of learning and teaching during COVID-19. The local authority 'Quality Improvement Framework' has been updated to reflect the current context of remote learning. This guidance affords flexibility to schools in developing their own approaches to quality assurance in the current context to meet the needs of each setting. Head teachers report that quality assurance is part of the culture of the local authority and that the process of consulting and agreeing approaches with schools is collegiate and collaborative.

We will continue to report to Cabinet and to residents of North Ayrshire in future years against the above priorities in line with guidance from Scottish Government, Education Scotland and HMIE.