
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

30 November 2021

North Ayrshire Council Cabinet

Title: Education Service – National Improvement Framework
Annual Report 2020-21

Purpose: To outline key progress in pursuance of the National Improvement Framework Priorities in education.

Recommendation: That Cabinet:
a) Agrees the content of the report
b) Approves the publication of the report

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Education (Scotland) Act 2016 imposes a duty on local authorities to prepare and publish plans and annual reports which outline key progress and activity in relation to the priorities of the National Improvement Framework. This paper outlines the background and key points of the National Improvement Framework and includes the annual report from the 2020-21 academic year.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 was amended by the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 to include statutory duties on education authorities to plan, implement and evaluate activity which is designed to enhance equity and support improvement within schools. Specifically, education authorities must promote a reduction in inequalities of educational outcome experienced by pupils as a result of socio-economic disadvantage, and this must be done in the context of achieving the strategic priorities of the National Improvement Framework (the NIF).
- 2.2 The duties of the 2016 Act came into effect in August 2017. The education authority is now required to publish the annual report in relation to the NIF for the 2020-21 academic year.
- 2.3 Education authorities must ensure the delivery of improvement activity within schools which is consistent with the strategic priorities of the NIF.

2.4 The four strategic priorities of the NIF are:

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

3. Proposals

3.1 Agrees the content of the report

3.2 Approves the publication of the report.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

4.1 None.

Human Resources

4.2 None.

Legal

4.3 The production of an Education Authority annual plan and report is a requirement under the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

Equality/Socio-economic

4.4 The Education Authority annual report sets out our progress towards improving educational outcomes for all, but also reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment.

Environmental and Sustainability

4.5 None.

Key Priorities

4.6 Aspiring Communities priority: "Children and young people experience the best start in life"

Community Wealth Building

4.7 None.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 This report demonstrates progress made in pursuance of the National Improvement Framework priorities for education. Consultation on the content of this report is not required. However, a range of stakeholders and partners contributed to this report content and continue to play an active role in enabling the service to realise the NIF priorities and the Council's priority to ensure children and young people experience the best start in life.

Caroline Amos
Executive Director of Communities and Education (Interim)

For further information please contact **Andrew McClelland, Head of Service (Education)**, on **01294324413**.

Background Papers

1 – Appendix 1



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

**NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
EDUCATION SERVICE**

**NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK
ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21**

NOVEMBER 2021

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| INTRODUCTION..... | 3 |
| NORTH AYRSHIRE LOCAL CONTEXT | 4 |
| IMPROVING OUR SERVICE PROVISION..... | 5 |
| PRIORITY 1 – IMPROVEMENT IN ATTAINMENT, PARTICULARLY IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY | 6 |
| PRIORITY 2 – CLOSING THE ATTAINMENT GAP BETWEEN THE MOST AND LEAST DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE | 12 |
| PRIORITY 3 – IMPROVEMENT IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S HEALTH AND WELLBEING..... | 20 |
| PRIORITY 4 – IMPROVEMENT IN EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS AND SUSTAINED, POSITIVE SCHOOL LEAVER DESTINATIONS FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE..... | 26 |

INTRODUCTION

The last year we have lived through has been for all of us like no other. Our schools, centres and education services have continued to deliver a high-quality service through very challenging and difficult times. The staff who work across the education services have shown how well they can adapt to change and how resilient they are to the effects of that change.

We are extremely grateful to all who have contributed to the delivery of education during this time, and we recognise the impact of the pandemic on the lives of our children and young people, which for some has been significant. We also acknowledge the support and partnership work we have continued to develop with our parents, carers and the many others who work with us to ensure positive outcomes for our children and our schools.

Against this context, this Education Annual Report sets out the progress the local authority has made towards achieving

excellence and equity for our learners in the 20-21 academic year. We have continued to progress and improve; the curriculum has continued to be delivered and sound learning has continued to take place.

We are proud of the many successes achieved, including our delivery of the 1140 Early Years Expansion Programme and our development of online learning resources and materials. We were pleased at the way all of our schools focussed on ensuring the health and wellbeing of their communities and we commend the work of our secondary school colleagues in supporting their young people through a revised qualifications system.

We know we still have work to do – we will continue to focus on the attainment and achievement of all to ensure they can move on to a range of appropriate, positive destinations. We will continue to focus on what is important to our communities and ensure we give all of our children and young people the best start in life.



Caroline Amos
Executive Director (interim)
Communities and Education



Councillor John Bell
Cabinet Member for Education
and Depute Leader

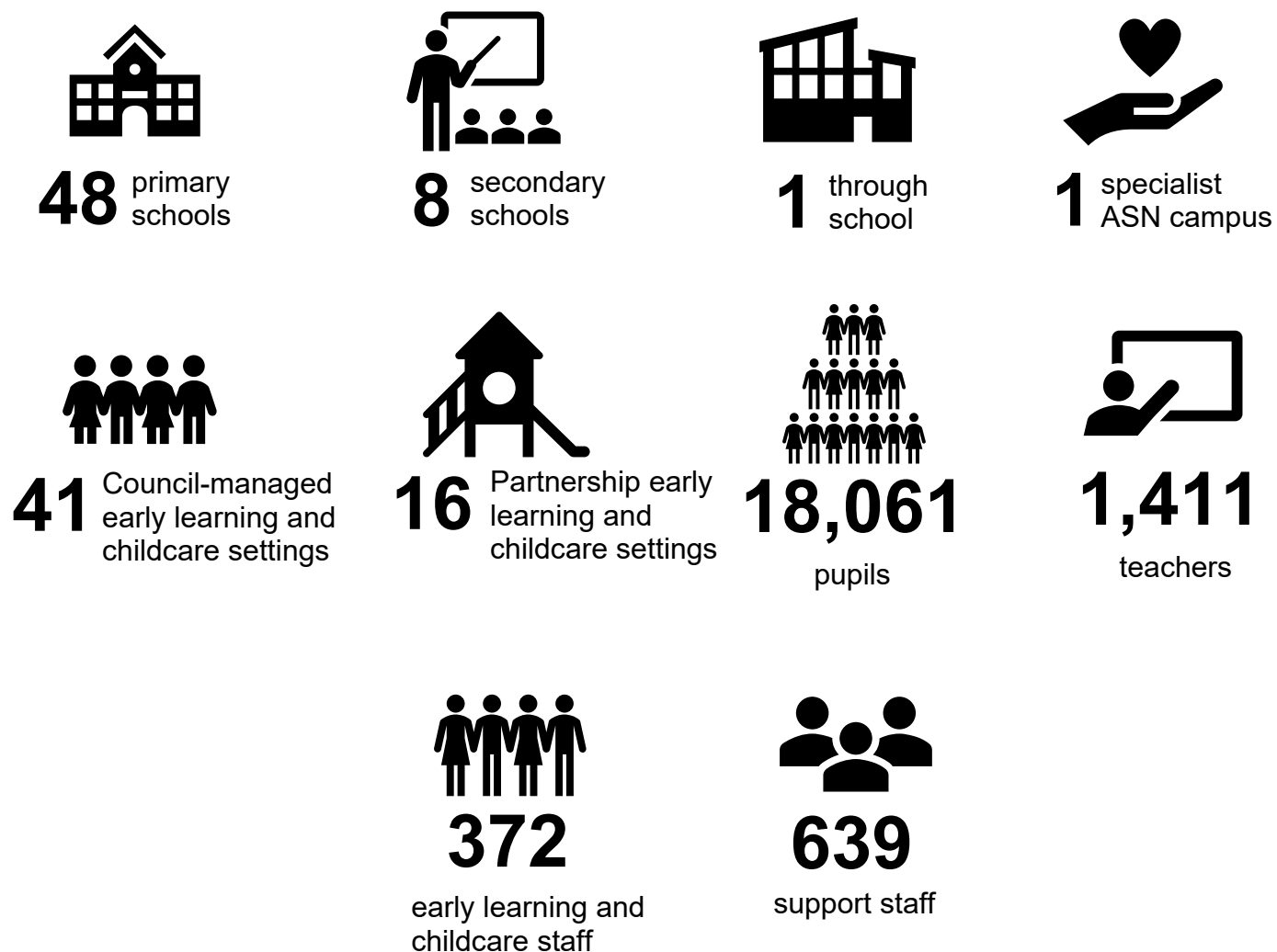
NORTH AYRSHIRE LOCAL CONTEXT

The Education Service in North Ayrshire Council is responsible for the education of 18,061 pupils across the authority's primary, secondary and additional support needs schools. A further 2,064 children attend early learning and childcare settings in North Ayrshire.

The strategic leadership of the education service is provided by Andrew McClelland (Head of Service) and Lindsay Morris (Interim

Head of Service). The education service is part of North Ayrshire Council's Communities and Education Directorate, 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 priority outcome to ensure **North Ayrshire's children and young people have the best start in life**.

Education in North Ayrshire is delivered through:



This report details progress made in pursuance of the four National Improvement Framework priorities.

IMPROVING OUR SERVICE PROVISION

North Ayrshire Council is committed to ensuring children and young people experience the best start in life. As a result, the Education Service has invested heavily in our children and young people's learning through a Council budget commitment of more than £129.2m. This is alongside additional ring-fenced funding such as Challenge Authority and Pupil Equity Funding to reduce the poverty related attainment gap; and newly introduced funding to support Covid-19 recovery.

During the 2020-21 academic year considerable improvements were made to our learning estate. This included a £2.8million investment in the refurbishment of Kilwinning Academy; £3.2million to extend and refurbish Annick Primary School; and the opening of the £25million Lockhart Campus.

This year also saw the award of contracts for a new £10million Moorpark Primary School and a new early years centre at Marress House in Irvine at a cost of £3.75million. Marress House is part of a larger programme to extensively refurbish early years settings to deliver 1140 hours of free Early Learning and Childcare to all eligible children in North Ayrshire. Overall, £11.4million has been awarded to deliver this refurbishment programme and 34 of the 40 planned projects have been completed despite global Covid-19 pandemic delays.

Funding has been secured to make further improvements to our learning estate, which include £14.4million to build a non-denominational primary school to serve

Montgomerie Park and £71m for a new Community Campus in Ardrossan. The Ardrossan Campus will bring together Ardrossan Academy, Winton Primary School and early years class, a community library facility, and a swimming pool for the local community.

The Education Service recognises that delivering better outcomes for our children and young people is dependent on a high-quality, well-trained workforce. As a result, a wide variety of opportunities, which are reflected throughout this report, are made available for staff at all levels. This ranges from bespoke leadership opportunities for school leadership teams to career development opportunities for practitioners at all levels through our sector-leading Professional Learning Academy.

The Communities and Education directorate are clear on the many benefits of working with a wide range of partners to co-create the right supports at the right time by the right people for our children, young people and families. One of our key strengths is our work with community-based partners who have the skills, expertise, passion and knowledge to contribute to our ambitions. A variety of examples are threaded throughout this report from our work with other North Ayrshire Council Services such as: Youth Services and Facilities Management; NHS Health Professionals; Health and Social Care Partnership Children and Families Teams; Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services; and third sector partners working within our local communities.

PRIORITY 1 – IMPROVEMENT IN ATTAINMENT, PARTICULARLY IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY



Throughout 2020-21, The Professional Learning Academy (PLA) continued to provide expertise and support to improve attainment with a particular focus on literacy and numeracy.

Although Covid-19 restrictions prevented in-school delivery of PLA support, several interventions were able to be delivered virtually. Virtual sessions focusing on literacy, numeracy and pedagogy were delivered to practitioners from early years, primary and secondary establishments. A total of 1,075 participants engaged with PLA training sessions and feedback has been extremely positive.

Virtual delivery included PLA twilight sessions for staff, Continued Professional Development (CPD) for Reading Recovery (RR) practitioners, training opportunities for classroom assistants and a collaboration with East Ayrshire Council to deliver training to P1 practitioners around literacy pedagogy. The latter was offered to all local authorities within the South-West Educational Improvement Collaborative (SWEIC) and resulted in 120 practitioners from all 4 local authorities engaging in the year-long programme. Further information is provided in the case study below.

Despite the closure of schools in Term 3 due to Covid-19, sustained levels of learner literacy were reported 3 and 6 months after Reading Recovery. Both Reading Recovery

Teacher Leaders were based in schools so were able to deliver RR. Children received more lessons and staff were supported more regularly. This allowed targeted intervention to be put in place for children not receiving RR and for staff literacy training. All RR teachers have been able to support children during remote learning as well as supporting colleagues with aspects of literacy. This is widely recognised as an impactful intervention with 16 schools signed up to start or continue delivery in the 2021-22 academic year.

Online platforms were also utilised by the PLA during school closure to share a variety of resources with practitioners to enhance remote learning. The Second Level Numeracy Framework training was also adapted to enable staff to continue implementing the framework remotely with virtual training sessions delivered to 150 practitioners. A range of self-study guides for classroom assistants and teachers are also now available online to support with writing, feedback and questioning. Feedback on the content has been very positive and this will continue to be updated to remain relevant for practitioners.

Almost 100 of our classroom assistants participated in virtual training on Boosting Reading to increase the level of support which they can offer to our young people in the classroom. Due to the increased flexibility offered by virtual training sessions, the PLA offered a variety of sessions for support staff to inform their practice including phonological awareness, speech sounds and numeracy framework training.

A summary of a selection of the key interventions being implemented in various schools across North Ayrshire to improve aspects of literacy and numeracy is included in the tables below:

| PROGRAMME TITLE | DESCRIPTION |
|---|--|
| Building Blocks of Literacy | A year-long programme working in collaboration with colleagues in East Ayrshire, South Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway focusing on the P1 literacy curriculum, pedagogy and practice. |
| Talk Boost | Supporting children in P1-P3 (Talk Boost 1) and P4-P7 (Talk Boost 2) to make progress with their language and communication skills. |
| Reading Recovery | Accredited programme which focuses on intensive daily support for P2 learners in developing their reading skills. |
| Phonological Awareness | Targeted intervention with small groups to develop phonological awareness skills |
| Boosting Reading | 10-week targeted intervention supporting the acquisition of good reading skills (available for P3-P7 and S1-S2) |
| Attention and Listening | Developing attention and listening skills through Early, First and Second Levels. |
| Strathclyde Higher Order Reading Skills (SHORS) | Supporting the teaching of reading comprehension through this research-based approach – for Early, First and Second Levels |
| Bar Modelling | A whole class intervention for Second Level Numeracy exploring the bar modelling strategy used to tackle word problems. |
| Number Sense | A whole class intervention based on the principles of Maths Recovery alongside the North Ayrshire First Level Numeracy Framework. |

Case Study – SWEIC professional learning

In 2019 North Ayrshire and East Ayrshire collaborated to deliver professional learning on 'Primary 1 Literacy: Curriculum and Pedagogy' to 30 teachers from both authorities. The programme offered in depth training delivered throughout the year. Teachers were also grouped into trios to network, collaborate and visit each other's classes after each block of training. However, Covid unfortunately put a stop to the final block of visits.

The extremely positive feedback from this professional learning opportunity meant that we did not want Covid to halt further developments of this impactful collaboration. It was decided that going forward into session 2020-21 we would continue the collaboration virtually and also use this adaptation to widen the reach and open up the programme to our SWEIC colleagues in Dumfries and Galloway and South Ayrshire. The programme was delivered to over 120 P1 practitioners across

all 4 local authorities last session. The same robust training was delivered by experienced teachers and speech and language therapists. Through online discussion groups teachers were able to create networks with each other.

The programme covers a wide range of essential 'building blocks' of literacy including the following:

- Language and Communication and Phonological Awareness
- Phonics, Spelling and Handwriting
- The Balanced Reader and Writer

A sample of the feedback from session 2020-21 is provided below:

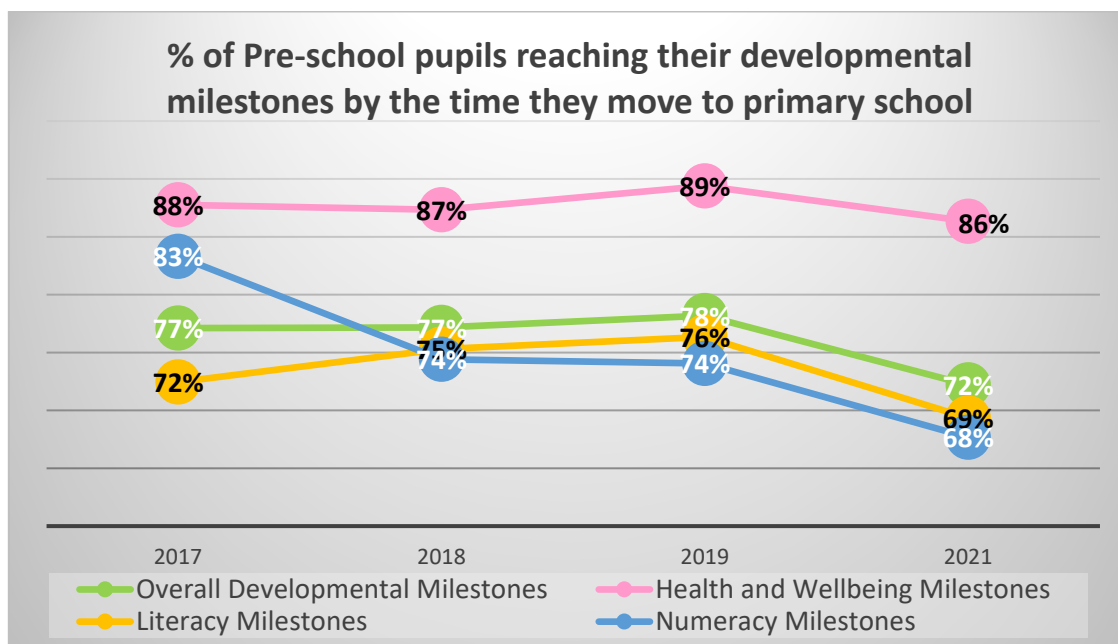
"We now feel more confident in planning, teaching and assessing literacy in Primary 1. The sessions were very detailed and full of

great ideas and examples to try in our own classes”

“We enjoyed attending the discussion groups as it was great to have the opportunity to share practice with other teachers across different authorities.”

With the impact Covid has had on learners it was decided that teachers out with P1 would also benefit from the programme. For session 2021-22 there are over 140 Primary 1 and Primary 2 teachers from across the SWEIC signed up for this professional learning opportunity.

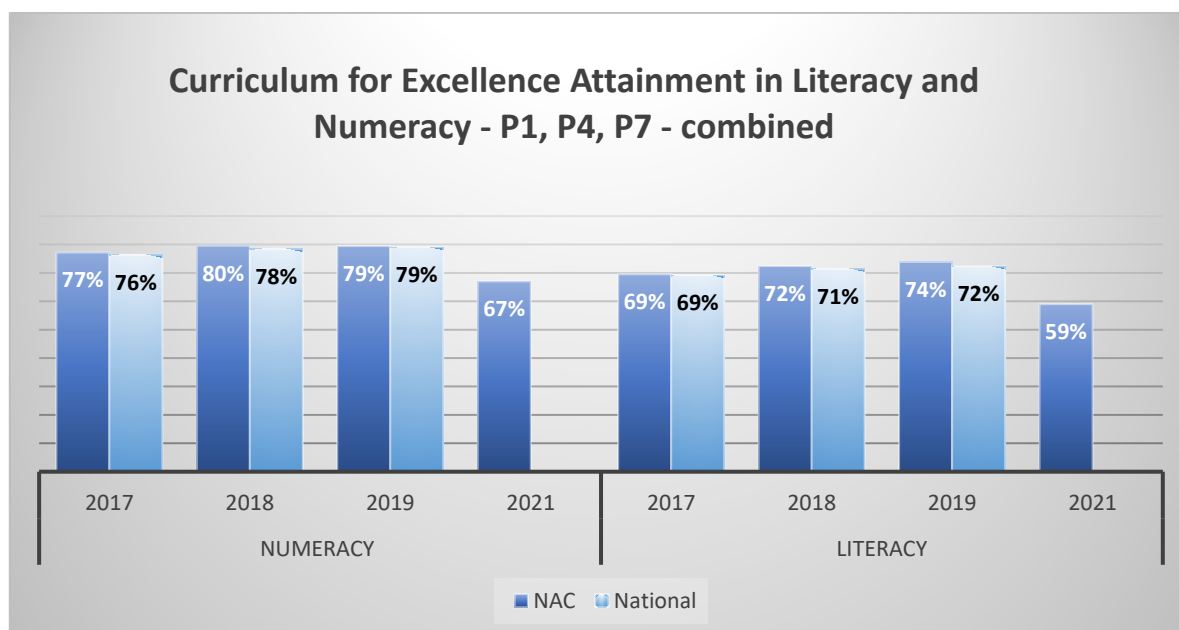
Early Years Milestones



Early years milestones were not captured in 2019/20 academic year due to Covid-19. In 2020-21 academic year, the overall number of learners reaching their developmental milestones by the time they moved to primary one decreased by 3 percentage points overall due to a slight decrease in numeracy, literacy and health and wellbeing milestone

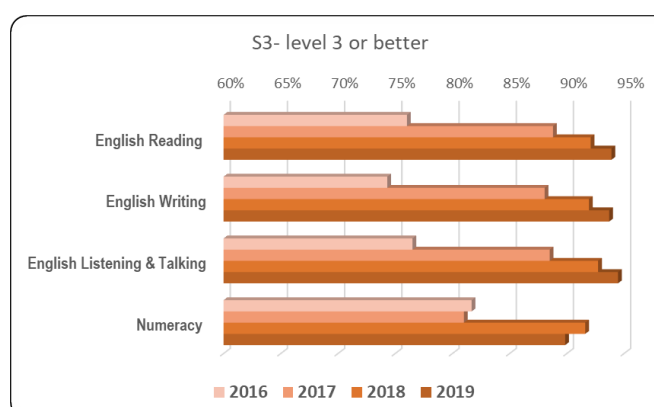
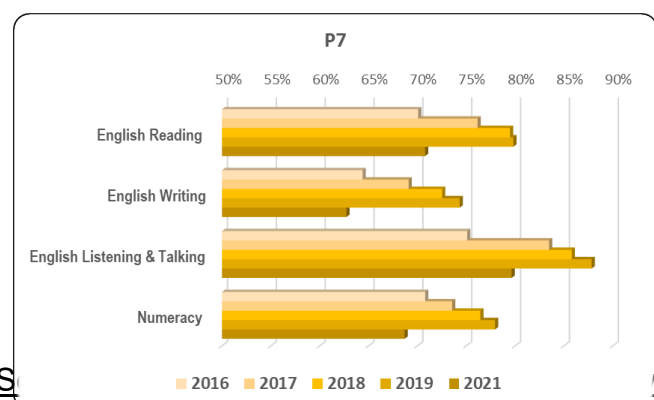
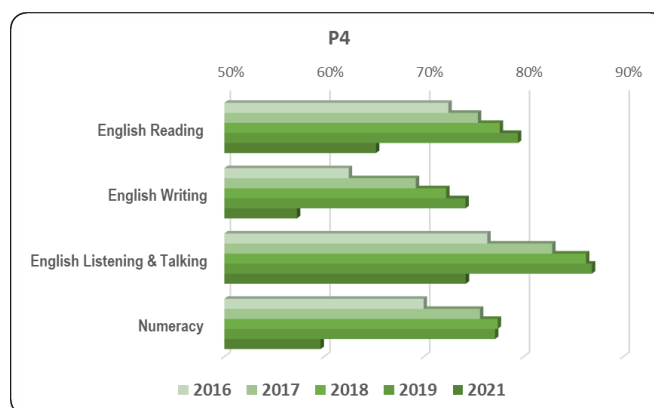
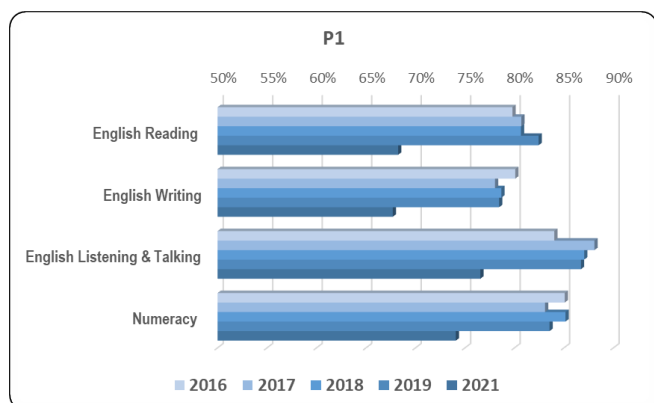
achievement. This can be directly attributed to Covid disrupting learning during the 2019-20 and 2020-21 academic years. Work is underway within the early years service, led by early years practitioners with a specific focus on raising attainment, to mitigate the impact on learners residing in areas of highest deprivation.

Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels



In both numeracy and literacy there was a positive trend of attainment at primary stages up to 2019. No data was collected in 2020 as a result of the pandemic. In 2021, there has been a reduction in the proportion of children who achieved the expected levels of attainment. This is unsurprising because of the well-documented additional challenges presented by the ongoing pandemic,

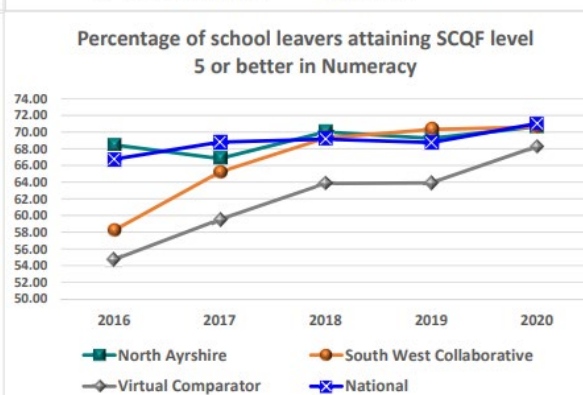
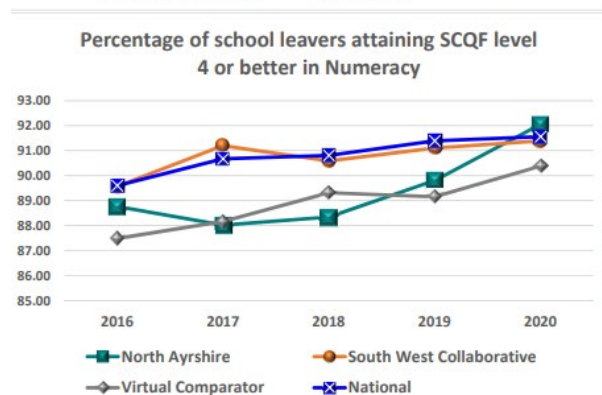
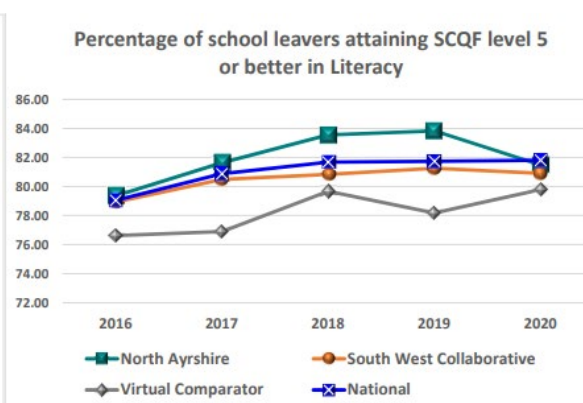
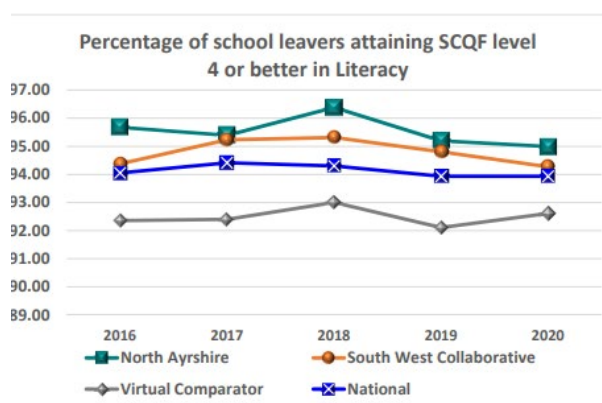
including periods of interrupted learning. It is anticipated that the national figures will also reflect a reduction in attainment levels for 2021. No data was collected for S3 in 2021. Schools are working hard with all learners to ensure that good progress is made and the effects of the pandemic on attainment are limited as much as possible in the years ahead.



Performance of North Ayrshire school leavers in attaining Literacy at Level 4 and Level 5 has been maintained or steadily increased exceeding the performance of the Virtual Comparator, the Southwest Educational Improvement Collaborative (SWEIC) authorities and (with the exception of 2020) the National performance in all 5 years of this analysis. In 2019 and 2020 95% of our leavers were achieving Literacy at least at level 4.

In 2020 performance at level 5 literacy or better has dipped slightly to 81.5% after reaching a maximum performance of 84% in 2019. However, we remain above or in line

with the national cohort and our local comparators for this measure. The performance of North Ayrshire school leavers in Numeracy at level 4 shows an improving picture from 2018 and we outperformed all other benchmarks (Virtual Comparator, SWEIC, and national performance) in 2020. At level 5, North Ayrshire performance in Numeracy has increased overtaking the performance of the Virtual Comparator and SWEIC and is only marginally below the National performance. In 2020, a higher percentage of our school leavers achieved SCQF Level 5 or above in numeracy than at any time in the last 5 years.



Breadth and depth school leaver attainment

Breadth and depth measures highlight that North Ayrshire's school leaver attainment performance is broadly in line with both the SWEIC and national performance. The number of leavers achieving 5 qualifications or more at level 3 is higher than the corresponding national figure and narrowly below performance across the SWEIC.

The number of school leavers attaining 5 qualifications or more at Level 5 as well as

school leavers attaining 5 qualifications or more at Level 6 is slightly below the corresponding national figure and the SWEIC. This can, in part, be attributed to the impact of a previous decision to reduce the number of subjects studied in S4. Performance is anticipated to improve since the reversal of this decision, with the first results visible in the 2020 data.

5 or more at Level 3

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| National | 90.9% | 90.8% | 90.1% | 89.0% | 89.6% |
| North Ayrshire | 92.9% | 91.9% | 91.3% | 89.4% | 89.8% |
| SWEIC | 92.3% | 92.0% | 91.4% | 89.8% | 89.9% |

5 or more at Level 4

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| National | 87.2% | 87.4% | 86.7% | 85.4% | 85.8% |
| North Ayrshire | 89.3% | 88.0% | 86.7% | 83.6% | 84.3% |
| SWEIC | 88.6% | 88.6% | 87.9% | 85.4% | 85.4% |

5 or more at Level 5

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| National | 61.0% | 62.2% | 64.4% | 64.3% | 67.5% |
| North Ayrshire | 58.3% | 60.5% | 63.2% | 60.7% | 65.3% |
| SWEIC | 60.8% | 63.0% | 64.1% | 63.5% | 66.4% |

1 or more at Level 6

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| National | 65.0% | 64.8% | 66.2% | 66.2% | 68.2% |
| North Ayrshire | 63.8% | 62.2% | 65.4% | 65.0% | 67.3% |
| SWEIC | 64.5% | 64.1% | 65.0% | 64.0% | 65.8% |

3 or more at Level 6

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| National | 48.6% | 48.9% | 50.3% | 50.9% | 54.7% |
| North Ayrshire | 44.3% | 44.9% | 46.7% | 44.4% | 51.7% |
| SWEIC | 47.4% | 47.4% | 47.0% | 47.5% | 51.9% |

5 or more at Level 6

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| National | 33.9% | 34.5% | 35.5% | 36.0% | 40.2% |
| North Ayrshire | 28.4% | 31.5% | 30.9% | 28.3% | 35.6% |
| SWEIC | 32.5% | 33.7% | 32.0% | 32.7% | 36.3% |

1 or more at Level 7

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| National | 21.7% | 22.0% | 23.2% | 22.1% | 25.6% |
| North Ayrshire | 19.7% | 19.4% | 19.9% | 18.0% | 23.5% |
| SWEIC | 20.7% | 20.8% | 20.6% | 20.0% | 23.5% |

PRIORITY 2 – CLOSING THE ATTAINMENT GAP BETWEEN THE MOST AND LEAST DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Family Learning

During the 2020-21 school year, family learning continued to be a key component of North Ayrshire's approach to reducing the poverty related attainment gap through providing families with opportunities to engage with and lead learning at home. 36 schools engaged with their Family Learning Worker to plan and provide a range of Family Learning interventions. A blended model continued to support families through face-to-face programmes as well as virtual delivery. A range of programmes were offered across the authority which resulted in 832 families, across 49 schools, accessing Family Learning Interventions. Data was collated over the summer and individual school data reports were shared at the start of the 21/22 session. Reports include statistical information, a range of evidence and qualitative data to demonstrate the family participation in each delivered programme.

In addition, 175 families took part in Family Science Technology Engineering Maths (STEM) programmes. In partnership with SSERC, 141 young people/families achieved their Young STEM Leader Level 2 award, and 28 young people achieved their Level 3 award (16 of these children completed both level 2 and 3). Alongside this work, partnership with the Ranger Service and Wildlife Trust supported 74 families to achieve the John Muir Family Award across 15 schools. The award programmes were facilitated using a range of delivery models, including virtual and in-person learning.

87 parents across North Ayrshire also took part in Mental Health Improvement and Supporting Children's Wellbeing programmes facilitated by the Family Learning Team. Parental feedback evidenced an improved understanding of the impact of Mental Health and Wellbeing (MHWB) on families and the benefits of using specific tools to promote better wellbeing for parents and children at

home. 274 families were also supported with transition into S1, utilising online platforms to build relationships between pupils, families, and their school community. In parallel, 22 families were supported with transition into Primary 1 with a follow-on summer programme requested by 1 primary school.

308 formal evaluations were completed by participating families during this year and feedback described the support provided as extremely effective, in part due to the high-quality delivery by the Family Learning Team. Alongside several other Scottish Attainment Challenge funded workstreams, the Family Learning Team utilised online platforms including Glow to provide education staff with access to resources, newsletters and up to date reports to encourage family learning.

Leadership

Virtual delivery of leadership development sessions has become embedded in our practice through 2020-21. This has allowed the leadership development team to access a wider audience and has made accessing opportunities significantly more cost effective.

Throughout session 2020/2021 over 70 staff meetings and professional development workshops were facilitated. This impacted 1190 teachers and school staff and represents 53% of our school-based workforce. A further 28 staff embarked upon a Future Facilitator Programme and 32 staff signed up to be trained as facilitators in session 2021/22, which is allowing us to develop a self-sustaining model of leadership development.

Self-evaluation activity and qualitative feedback show that our leadership work ensures that leaders are focused on developing themselves to support all of those around them and to ensure pupil outcomes have improved. A direct correlation between

engagement in leadership development training and moving into promoted posts due to increased skills has been identified. As an example, 44% of trained facilitators from across North Ayrshire Council have been promoted or moved into different roles within the last 12 months. Further correlation is evident as there has been a 75% increase in the number of leadership development session participants applying for further study at university to complete a master's programme or a Headship qualification.

Some qualitative impact statements are provided below:

"Our work on leadership development and professional learning is sector-leading due to the focus on continual improvement for our own people, by our own people. We have made significant progress in the last 12 months and are proud to share this work widely."

"Very impressed with the facilitator's ability to distil the brief, open up thinking and help us achieve a sense of direction... where we are now more focused on improvement and recognise that the ownership is very much with us. The opportunity to collaborate and critically evaluate practice has been invaluable."

The Education Service's leadership work has been recognised by the International Association of Facilitators through being awarded a Facilitation Impact Award. This award recognises the impact facilitation has had in improving the quality of leadership development within North Ayrshire Council. Digital platforms are also used across the Service, including a thought-provoking podcast exploring key aspects of leadership development and professional learning. Engagement has been good with over 1232 podcast streams as well as being independently identified by Times Educational Supplement Scotland and the General Teaching Council for Scotland as one of the most influential Scottish Education podcasts.

Data

There has been a continued focus on supporting establishments to interrogate data to inform their understanding of their attainment gaps. Led by our Education Scotland Attainment Advisor, the roll out of the Power BI data visualisation tool continued in 2020-21 and several schools participated in data driven dialogue training.

Supporting Care Experienced Young People

Previously, to meet the needs of care experienced children and young people and their families, North Ayrshire Council introduced a Challenge Fund Project, which co-located a social work team within the Greenwood school cluster. This approach has continued to be rolled out this session with social work teams now located in Greenwood Academy, Elderbank Primary School, Irvine Royal Academy, Auchenhavie Academy, and Kilwinning Academy. This has had a positive impact on the outcomes for children and young people with some notable highlights provided below:

- School based social workers have worked with 78 young people since August 2020.
- Fewer than 5 young people had a Compulsory Supervision Order start while open to the school based social workers.
- 5 young people ended their Compulsory Supervision Order while open to school based social workers.
- 65 young people (83%) were not subject to a child protection investigation starting while open to school based social workers.
- A very small number of families from the target group were registered on the child protection register (fewer than 5), with a similar small number being de-registered due to an improved home situation.

The MCR Pathways mentoring programme for care experienced young people (and those at risk of becoming care experienced) became operational in all six identified secondary schools in term 3 of the 2020-21 academic year. Full implementation was delayed because of Covid-19. A summary of impact is provided from Auchenhavie

Academy, which became operational prior to the pandemic.

As of March 2021, MCR Pathways supported 72 care-experienced and disadvantaged young people between S1-S6 in North Ayrshire. The pilot for the Young North Ayrshire Talent programme launched in October 2018 in Auchenhavrie Academy.

In S1 and S2, young people participate in weekly Group Work sessions facilitated by their Pathways Coordinator focusing on emotional literacy, wellbeing, teamwork, employability skills and self-awareness. From S3, young people are carefully matched with a mentor who meets with them for a period every week, for a minimum duration of one academic year (in fact, most of our mentored relationships last for three years).

| | Lit. & Num. at Nat. 4+ | 5+ qualifications at Nat. 4+ | 1+ qualifications at level 5+ | 3+ qualifications at level 5 + | S4>S5 staying on rate | Positive Destinations |
|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Care-exp. MCR mentored | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 85.7% | 100% |
| Care-exp. non-mentored | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 40% | 75% |
| LA care-exp. | 89.69% | 73.91% | 69.57% | 65.22% | 62.9% | 69.2% |
| National care-exp. | 63.45% | 53.13% | 57.20% | 39.54% | N/A | 66% |
| National universal | 92.36% | 89.80% | 92.03% | 83.61% | 84.7% (LA Universal) | 88.44% |

On all four academic measures, MCR-mentored young people in North Ayrshire performed significantly better than their non-mentored care-experienced peers, and the national care-experienced figures.

Comparing MCR-mentored young people with their care-experienced peers within the local authority, the greatest differences were achievement of three or more qualifications at Nat. 5 or above (+34.78%); one or more qualifications at Nat. 5 or above (+30.43%); and five or more qualifications at Nat.4 or above (+26.09%).

Similarly, when we compare MCR-mentored young people with their care-experienced peers nationally, the greatest differences

were achievement of three or more qualifications at Nat. 5 or above (+60.66%); five or more qualifications at Nat.4 or above (+46.87%); and one or more qualifications at Nat. 5 or above (+42.80%).

MCR-mentored young people had a higher staying-on rate (85.7%) compared with the Local Authority care experienced (62.9%) and Local Authority universal (84.7%). Positive destinations (which MCR counts as college, university or employment only) are 100% above their non-mentored care experienced peers (75%).

Despite the challenges of periods when young people were not in school, Pathways Coordinators successfully maintained

frequent and regular contact with the young people they supported.

MCR Pathways impact case study

“Before J, from Auchenhavrie High School in North Ayrshire, had a mentor, he was struggling with his studies. He was matched with L-A, who shared his gregarious nature and the two clicked right away.

After months of meetings, L-A and J began delving deeper into J’s future plans. Over time, she helped him start to focus and he began opening up about challenges at home. With L-A’s persistent positivity and encouragement, J began to focus more on his schoolwork.

In his last year, J scored better in his exams than he thought he ever could. He began looking enthusiastically at his future, applying for college courses and L-A even helped him make a CV. With his mentor’s encouragement, he applied for an apprenticeship in Joinery and was accepted. He told us that it was his mentor’s encouragement and gentle pushing that helped him at every step.” – Pathways Coordinator

Family Learning – Virtual John Muir Award and STEM case study

Throughout lockdown the family learning team delivered a range of online family learning opportunities. This included the John Muir Family Award (Discovery) which was achieved by 83 pupils and the Young STEM Leader Award which was gained by 156 learners.

The John Muir award, is an 8-week programme encouraging children and their families to connect with, enjoy and care for wild places. To achieve the award young people had to do 25 hours or more of activities which helped them to discover, explore and do something to care for a wild place. This was followed by sharing their experience with others.

The Young STEM leader award aims to inspire more young people to develop an interest in STEM and pursue the study of STEM subjects and relevant future pathways. The programme supports learners to plan and lead fun STEM activities for all the family at home and record their completed work through an evidence log.

Feedback from families participating in both programmes has highlighted this was worthwhile and provided a fun way for families to engage in learning during the lockdown period.

Reducing the Poverty-Related Attainment Gap

The coronavirus pandemic impacted on available data from the current (2020-21) and previous (2019-20) academic years. As a result, there is limited overarching performance data available that is directly comparable to previous years’ data. This can be attributed to the closure of schools in term 4 of the 2019-20 academic year as well as need to prioritise health and wellbeing when schools returned in August. The switch to remote learning in January 2021 – March 2021 also impacted on available impact data.

Literacy

| | Learner group | Performance Measure | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-2019 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | Trend across all years |
|----------------------|---------------|---|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|------------------------|
| Literacy (Strategic) | PRIMAR Y (P1, | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving | - 12.1 | - 13.3 | - 11.8 | - 12.1 | * | - 18.4 | ↓ |

| Pis) | P4, P7) | expected CfE level in literacy | | | | | | | |
|------|-----------------------|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|---|--------|---|
| | SECON DARY (S3) | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving expected CfE level in literacy | - 21.6 | -7.5 | -1.8 | -5.9 | * | * | ↑ |
| | P1 | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving expected CfE level in literacy | -9.9 | - 12.3 | - 10.8 | - 13.2 | * | - 21.7 | ↓ |
| | P4 | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving expected CfE level in literacy | - 12.4 | - 18.6 | - 11.1 | -9.9 | * | - 16.6 | ↑ |
| | P7 | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving expected CfE level in literacy | - 15.3 | -9.9 | - 13.5 | - 13.7 | * | - 17.2 | ↓ |
| | S3 - level 3 or above | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving expected CfE level in literacy | - 21.6 | -7.5 | -1.8 | -5.9 | * | * | ↑ |
| | S3 - level 4 or above | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving expected CfE level in literacy | - 24.4 | - 17.9 | - 14.5 | -4.9 | * | * | ↑ |
| | N5 (see note) | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in proportion of pupils achieving their EY developmental milestones before P1 (Literacy Component) | N/A | -3.5 | 10.6 | -5.6 | * | - 17.6 | ↓ |

*data was not captured due to covid-19

Data provided above indicates that the literacy attainment gap between pupils living in SIMD 1-2 areas and pupils living in SIMD

3-10 areas has increased at all stages of primary.

Numeracy

| AOF | Learner group | Performance Measure | 201 5-16 | 201 6-17 | 201 7-18 | 201 8-201 9 | 201 9-20 | 202 0-21 | Trend across all years |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|---|----------|----------|----------|-------------|----------|----------|------------------------|
| Numeracy (Strategic Pis) | PRIMAR Y (P1, P4, P7) | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving expected CfE level in numeracy | - 11.4 | -9.4 | -9.0 | - 10.0 | * | - 17.4 | ↓ |
| | SECON DARY (S3) | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving expected CfE level in numeracy | - 18.2 | - 12.2 | -0.5 | -6.0 | * | * | ↑ |
| | P1 | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving expected CfE level in numeracy | -8.6 | -7.6 | -6.2 | -8.6 | * | - 17.6 | ↓ |
| | P4 | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving expected CfE level in numeracy | - 10.5 | - 14.9 | - 11.3 | -8.0 | * | - 21.1 | ↓ |
| | P7 | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving expected CfE level in numeracy | - 16.5 | -6.8 | -9.4 | - 13.8 | * | - 13.5 | ↑ |
| | S3 - level 3 or above | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving expected CfE level in numeracy | - 18.2 | - 12.2 | -0.5 | -6.0 | * | * | ↑ |
| | S3 - level 4 or above | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in % achieving expected CfE level in numeracy | - 27.7 | - 16.4 | - 15.4 | - 15.6 | * | * | ↑ |
| | N5 (see note) | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in proportion of pupils achieving their EY developmental milestones before P1 (Numeracy Component) | N/A | -2.9 | -9.0 | -5.9 | * | - 20.4 | ↓ |

*data was not captured due to covid-19

Data provided above indicates that the numeracy attainment gap between pupils living in SIMD 1-2 areas and pupils living in

SIMD 3-10 areas has increased at almost all stages of primary. A slight narrowing of the P7 numeracy gap is reported.

Attendance

| AOF | Learner group | Performance Measure | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-2019 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | Trend across all years |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|------------------------|
| Attendance (Strategic Pls) | Primary (P1 - P7) | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in attendance | - | -1.5 | -1.9 | -1.8 | -2.2 | -2.6 | ↓ |
| | Secondary (S1 - S6) | Gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-10 in attendance | - | -3.4 | -3.8 | -3.9 | -3.7 | -2.4 | ↑ |
| | | | | | | | | | |

The attendance gap between pupils living in SIMD 1-2 areas and pupils living in SIMD 3-10 areas has slightly increased in primary schools and decreased in secondary schools. Covid-19's impact on in-school learning through the switch to remote learning in Term 3 of the 2020-21 academic year and a need for pupils to self-isolate at home if they had symptoms or were in close contact with someone who tested positive has resulted in this academic year not being directly comparable with performance from previous years. The Education Service continues to closely monitor in-school attendance.

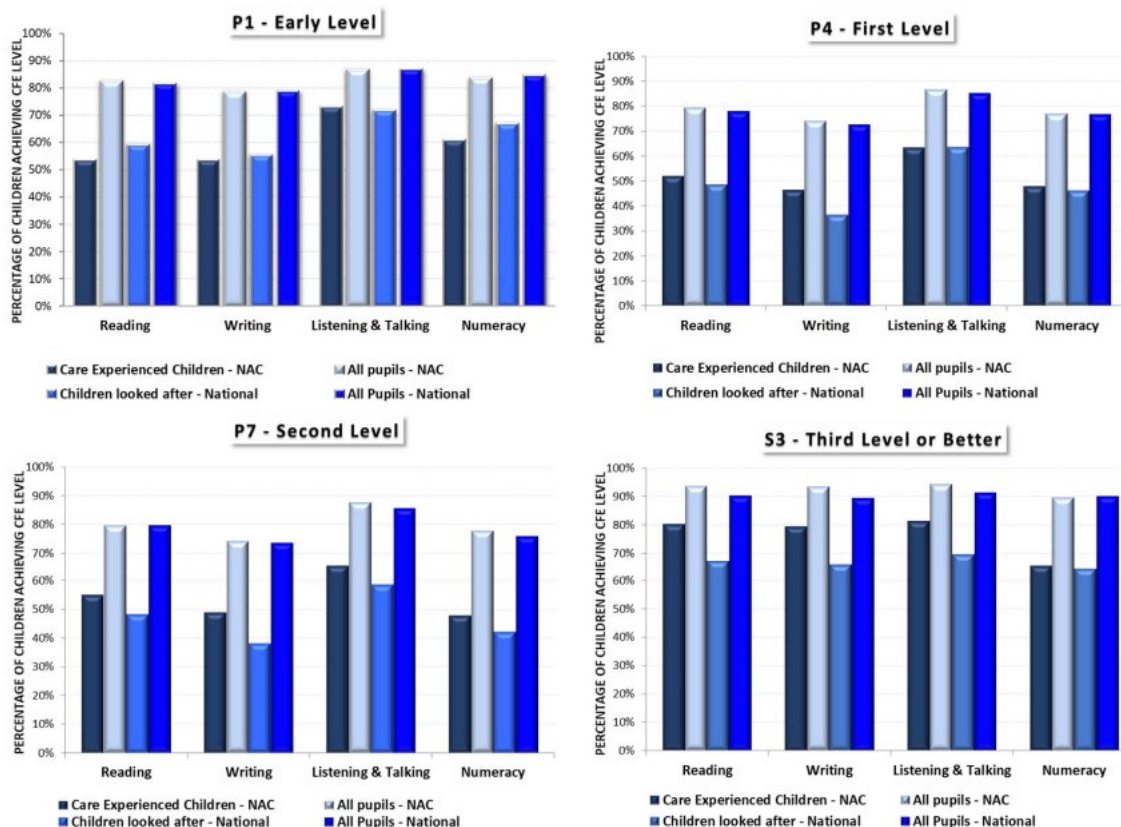
Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy in Broad General Education for care experienced learners in 2019 (most recently available data)

The charts below indicate that the performance of care experienced learners in 2019 is better than national levels at P4, P7 and S3. However, there is still a significant gap between the performance of care

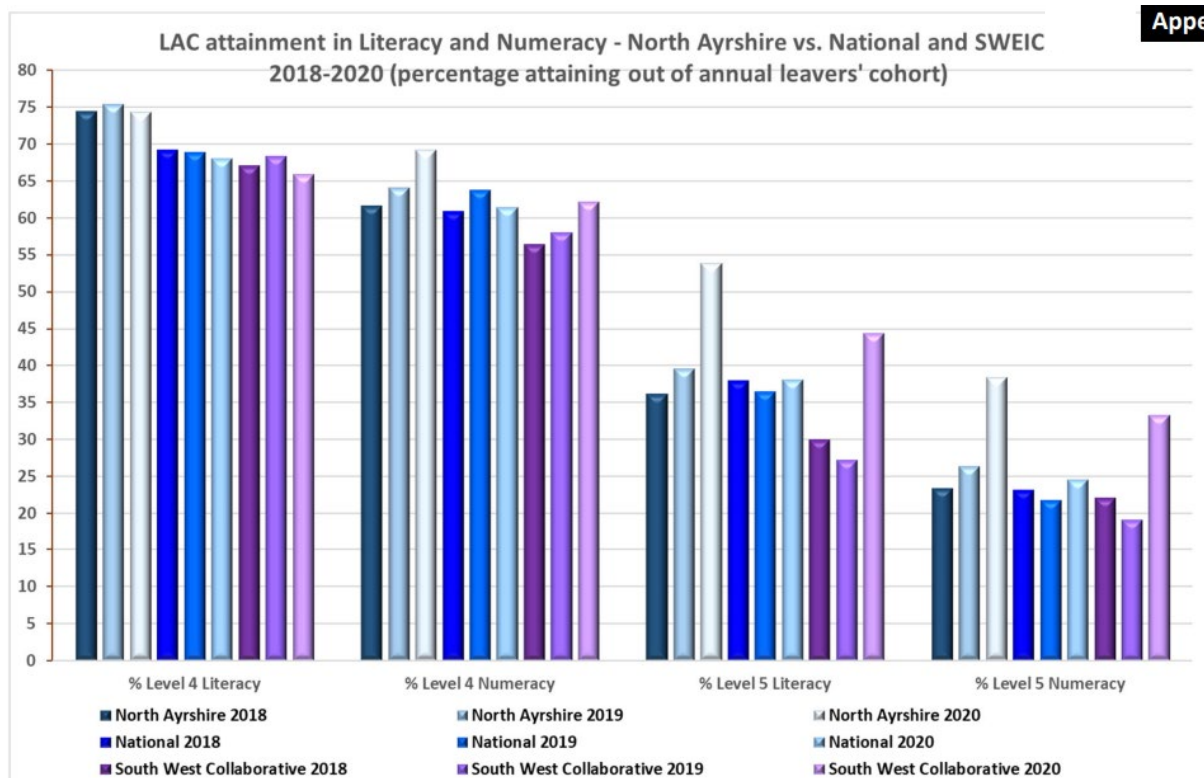
experienced learners compared with the performance of the general population at each stage, which is in line with the national picture.

The performance of North Ayrshire care experienced learners at early level in P1 in 2019 is lower than the national cohort of looked after P1 learners in both literacy (Reading and Writing) and numeracy. A slight improvement in Listening and Talking in 2019 shows attainment in North Ayrshire to be above the national measure. Although performance in P1 remains below the national measures, these statistics are a considerable improvement on previous years and show we are reducing the gap with respect to P1 care experienced pupils' performance nationally.

In 2019, the gap between the proportion of care experienced learners and all learners achieving the expected Curriculum for Excellence level is smaller at S3 than at other stages.



Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy and overall attainment in all qualifications at Senior Phase level for care experienced school leavers



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 generally better than their counterparts nationally and in the SWEIC authorities. From 2018, there has been a positive trend in National 4 numeracy and National 5 literacy and numeracy for North Ayrshire care experienced learners. A higher number of young people are achieving literacy than numeracy at both levels 4 and 5. This is in line with national and SWEIC authority data.

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 as one care experienced young person not attaining / attaining can equate to 2 percentage points.

PRIORITY 3 – IMPROVEMENT IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing

Addressing anxiety:

This academic year the Service worked closely with NHS Education Scotland (NES) staff to create and deliver an implementation model for LIAM (Let’s introduce anxiety management). This was piloted during 2020-21 with several secondary schools. Young people have responded well to this individualised support. An audit of pupil need relating to anxiety and current supports available was carried out which highlighted that this is a growing area of concern in North Ayrshire. Consequently, guidance has been developed to support schools to enhance their response to children and young people experiencing generalised and specific types of anxiety. We are also developing training materials for schools to support children and young people.

School based mental health supports:

The SeeMe programme continued to be delivered this academic year and was adapted due to Covid-19 restrictions. This led to the co-creation of a pilot training session for secondary school staff focused on reducing stigma and discrimination alongside a new online module for S5 and S6 pupils. 25 members of staff and 75 young people from across three secondary schools have expressed an interest in taking this programme forward in their school in 2021-22. The Mental Health Foundation’s Peer Education Project has also been offered to establishments and this will be taken forward by three secondary schools in the next academic year. This alongside the newly published Whole School Approach to Mental Health and Wellbeing will help us to develop a positive and responsive culture and ethos to supporting mental health and wellbeing in our schools.

Suicide prevention:

The Education Service was a key partner in the development of North Ayrshire’s Suicide Prevention Pathway, which provides guidance on managing this challenging situation. Partnership working with Choose Life has also led to further development of the Personal Social Education curriculum with a key focus of raising awareness of suicide prevention.

Wellbeing support for staff:

Responses from the authority wide whole school nurture survey, which was conducted in May 2020, led to the creation of several professional learning opportunities through Nurturing North Ayrshire’s Recovery (NNAR) programme to support staff. In addition, support was provided to probationer teachers through delivery of a self-care module. This was alongside input on how to support learners and their own mental health and wellbeing. A staff wellbeing resource was also made available to all education staff based in schools and HQ.

Wellbeing support for parents and carers:

Building on Positive Relationships (formerly known as Non-Violent Resistance) training has been undertaken by staff working directly with parents and carers who have children potentially at risk of disengaging, disrupting, or experiencing anxiety within a learning environment. Plans are in place to pilot this in the 2021-22 academic session.

Alongside NHS Ayrshire and Arran staff, an online e-module for parents and carers was created and distributed. This module was co-created with a reference group consisting of CAMHS, Education Psychology and parents. Follow up support is also available from the Education Service upon the request of a parent / carer.

Whole systems approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing:

Throughout the 2020-21 academic year, the Education Service continued to contribute to the Wellness Models established in Kilwinning and Largs, which are led by CAMHS. As a result, the number of CAMHS referrals in these areas has reduced with staff noting that referrals are more appropriate when they are made. Children and young people in these areas access appropriate school based and community supports when required. Alongside this work, the Service led the local authority's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework response and the distribution of the Covid-19 pandemic response grant. This provided enhanced community-based supports for children, young people, and their families.

In parallel to work with external organisations, the Education Service has created a whole school approach framework with a key focus on ensuring schools and other education settings are able to access the right supports at the right time for learners. As part of this work, New Perspectives on Change and Loss have been updated to reflect the Covid-19 context with pilots planned for the 2021-22 school year.

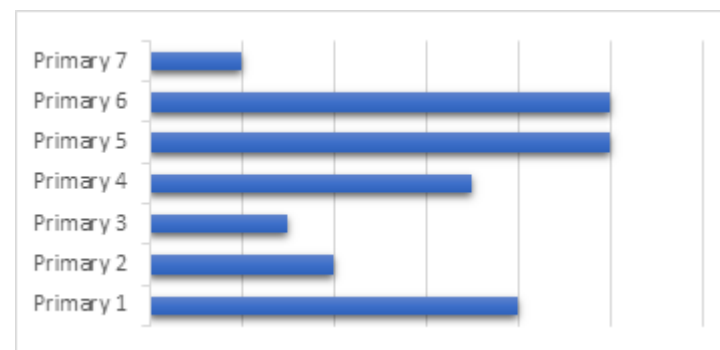
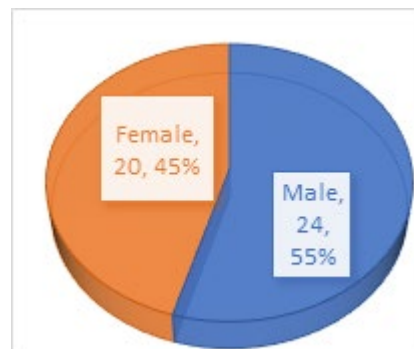
In recognition of the mental health and wellbeing needs of learners accessing an alternative curriculum through the Extended Outreach service, a Barnardo's worker was also employed to provide additional support.

Primary counselling:

A new primary focused counselling service 'The Exchange' was procured to provide counselling to pupils under 10 years of age across North Ayrshire. This service provides wider contextual assessment and support, as well as individual counselling. Support was primarily delivered online due to Covid-19 restrictions with help also made available for learners transitioning to secondary school.

44 referrals have been received between June and September 2021

Referrals per gender and stage for one-to-one support:



Exchange Primary Counselling Service Case Study 1

Background:

We were asked to work with a P7 child who was experiencing issues primarily related to bereavement and transition. The child was struggling to cope with his grief, and this appeared to be compounded by his additional needs. He has a serious long-term medical condition and is non-verbal.

Intervention:

At the beginning, face to face sessions took place with mum present to help with the communication between the practitioner and the child who communicated via sign language. Sessions were tailored to suit the child's needs. Use of visual resources (emoji cards, colours) worked well and very quickly the practitioner established a way of working with the child independently.

Outcome:

Self-regulation was improved through the implementation of strategies developed through the intervention. For example, an emotions scale which was used in therapy

and school to communicate with staff how he was feeling. A Comfort Menu helped the child indicate what he needed (emotionally) from staff and his mother.

Optimism improved through the activities which helped the child communicate positive memories and create a vision for his transition to secondary school. His anxiety reduced

Exchange Primary Counselling Service Case Study 2

Background:

Referral was received for a child who had experienced sexual abuse by a family member. The family, school staff & social workers were concerned about the impact this would have on the child. The child was having emotional outbursts in school and at home.

Intervention:

It was decided that support would be provided for the child through building emotional intelligence and implementing boundaries. Sessions were tailored to a younger age as the child was 5 years old. Role play techniques were used to understand and implement the strategies.

Outcome:

Self-regulation and emotional intelligence were improved through visual activities to display and communicate emotions. The therapist was firm on boundaries and the child's reaction to this improved throughout the sessions. Collaborative work was undertaken by the therapist, parents and school staff to enable the strategies to be continued out with the sessions. Parents & teachers noted that regulation had improved and that the child was communicating her emotions through the 'emotion chart' created within the sessions.

Nurture

During 2020-21 Nurture groups in North Ayrshire were re-established in almost all settings. Partnership working continued to be a key feature of Nurturing North Ayrshire practice with the nurture team leading and contributing to development work, and actively engaging in sharing professional learning with key members of staff in the North Ayrshire Education team including the Educational Psychology (EP) service, the Leadership workstream and the Mental Health and Wellbeing (MHWB) workstream.

The Nurturing North Ayrshire's Recovery programme was successfully completed and delivered in partnership with EPs and the MHWB team. The annual Whole School End of Year Nurture Survey was completed by staff in May. There were 571 respondents. Analysis of the survey showed that 85% of the respondents feel confident in applying nurturing practices in schools, with 85% reporting that there is shared ownership of nurture across the schools. A high number of respondents (93%) reported having confidence in the skills needed to support children who are distressed. These results strongly suggest that drive for sustainability through a whole school approach to nurture is progressing. The survey also reports that staff in schools are keen to continue to enhance and deepen their knowledge of nurture and nurturing approaches through further professional learning opportunities. Regular meetings were held with head teachers, deputies and heads of centre to ensure that good communication was maintained, and the results of surveys and data analysis were shared at meetings to celebrate the success of nurture interventions.

Professional learning was moved to virtual platforms in response to Covid-19 restrictions. This enabled the nurture group training to take place and ensured all staff in nurture rooms engaged with professional learning on the theory and practice of nurture groups. The annual nurture conference was also delivered virtually, and the nurture team engaged in a full day of nurture activity to enhance their skills and share practice.

Nurture in Early Years Settings:

A flexible approach was taken to the delivery of early years nurture. This ensured that in the majority of settings children received a supportive nurturing intervention that positively impacted on their health and wellbeing and inclusion in playroom activities. Nurture Early Years Practitioners (EYPs) in most settings were able to run groups, where this was not possible due to the impact of the Public Health restrictions on the use of space nurture EYPs supported children in the playrooms, this had the advantage of modelling nurturing interactions for all playroom staff.

In total, 32 children were supported in their learning through Nurture in Early Years settings. Progress was evident in Boxall Profile strands A and B. These strands are the focus of planning and curricular activity in Early Years Nurture.

Strand A measures children's ability to give purposeful attention and 50% of children made progress while Strand B measures children's ability to participate constructively and 75 % of children made progress. 6 children continue to access targeted nurture support in the 2021-22 academic session either in early years or primary nurture groups.

Qualitative data shows that children's keyworkers identified progress including developing friendships skills, emotional regulation and managing transitions:

- *"Because he can identify his feelings and talk about them, he seems much calmer,"*
- *"Nurture has given my identified children a feeling of belonging, because they're much more able to control their emotions, allowing them to participate and join in with group games."*

The skills children are acquiring and developing in the nurture group are being transferred to the playroom setting:

- *"His choices in playroom have widened, he's much more aware of how others are feeling, I think that's helped him make friendships."*

Parents also identify changes in children's presentation:

- *"I have noticed such a positive change in the way B accepts situations he may not like, he is able to control his anger better, his relationship with his teacher grew which encouraged him further."*
- *"T really enjoys the nurture room. He asks about it most days; he has really learned a huge amount for this – Well Done Miss P."*

Nurture in Primary School Settings:

In the 25 primary settings nurturing approaches continued to be a key part of the recovery as staff supported children's health and wellbeing needs and development in classes and in targeted nurture groups. Nurture staff continued to engage with on-going professional learning and the specific learning on the use of a variety of establishment-based interventions. After a lengthy consultation and trial period in 2020-21, new measures were agreed for afternoon nurture groups. The Glasgow Motivational and Wellbeing Profile will be used to gather data in session 2021-22.

Analysis of the 2020-21 data indicates that 92% of young people have shown improvement on the developmental Boxall strand and 77% have shown improvement on the diagnostic Boxall strand.

Nurture in Secondary School Settings:

Secondary nurture was minimally affected this session. Nine secondary provisions continued to offer quality health and wellbeing and social emotional learning to first and second year groups. A designated Nurture time offered to secondary pupils was extended due to lockdown disruptions.

The Boxall Profile assessment is completed at the time of entry to and exit from the secondary nurture intervention, using the developmental and diagnostic strands. During the reporting period 83% of young people showed improvement on the developmental

strand and 74% showed improvement on the diagnostic strand.

Case study: A journey through Nurture

“T started nurture when she was in P1. From observations it was obvious she was not ready to learn. She would wander around the classroom and regularly walked out of the classroom without staff permission and was very easily distracted. She joined Nurture in September 2017 and it took several months of a consistent routine, clear boundaries and patience before she started to settle and show her true potential.

As the months passed, she became much more able to focus and concentrate, which was also reflected in her classroom in the afternoon where her class teacher noted a huge difference in her attitude to activities and tasks. She could now complete very short activities for her class teacher without disrupting others. It also meant that she could go with our ASN teacher in the afternoon for a few short sessions (10-15mins) to help her with her numeracy and literacy. She was now a bubbly, happy wee girl who would run into school and give you a big cuddle.

After a slow transition out of Nurture she is now settled in her P4 class and still attends ASN for Numeracy and Literacy. Recent class teachers have kept us updated with her progress and she often appears up at our room (with her teacher's permission) to show us pieces of work of which she is proud. We can really see a difference in her willingness to listen and learn. She will now happily take part in class lessons and is an active member of her classroom community.

Nurture has made a huge impact in T's first few years of school. It provided her with a structure and routine that was lacking at home. It provided her with guidance and enabled her to learn and thrive. If you walked into her classroom now you would not be able to pick her out as she is settled and eager to please.”

Secondary Counselling data (July 2021)

Based only on pupils who had their first session between August 2020 – May 2021

Demographics

Breakdown by stage

| Stage | No. of Pupils | Percentage |
|--------------|---------------|------------|
| S1 | 25 | 20% |
| S2 | 24 | 19% |
| S3 | 25 | 20% |
| S4 | 26 | 20% |
| S5 | 22 | 17% |
| S6 | 5 | 4% |
| Total | 127 | |

Breakdown by gender

| Gender | No. of Pupils | Percentage |
|---------------|---------------|------------|
| Female | 82 | 65% |
| Male | 43 | 34% |
| Other | 2 | 2% |
| Total | 127 | |

Breakdown by care experienced status

| Care experienced status | No. of Pupils | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Not care experienced | 120 | 94% |
| Care experienced | 6 | 5% |
| N/A | 1 | 1% |
| Total | 127 | |

Referrals

| Referral type | No. of Pupils | Percentage |
|----------------------|---------------|------------|
| Pastoral | 68 | 54% |
| Self-referral | 57 | 45% |
| N/A | 2 | 2% |
| Total | 127 | |

The 3 most common reasons cited for attending counselling were anxiety (76%), low mood (63%) and stress (61%). This was followed by self-worth (43%), family problems (38%) and anger (35%).

At the time of analysis, 53 (41.7%) of the YP were ongoing with their counselling sessions and 25 (19.7%) YP have completed their

sessions and have provided both pre and post data.

Impact of Counselling

We use three widely recognised measures to gauge the impact of the counselling service in secondary schools. The average score on the *CORE-YP assessment* dropped from 24.12 to 11.32 after counselling. This is an extremely statistically significant result. Using this measure, 100% of YP showed an improvement after counselling.

The average score on the Total Difficulties strand of the *Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire* (SDQ) dropped from 18.53 to 11.41 after counselling. This is an extremely statistically significant result. Also, from this data, 94.1% of YP showed an improvement on this strand of the SDQ after counselling.

The average score on the Prosocial Skills strand of the SDQ increased from 8.06 to 8.59 after counselling. This is not a statistically significant result. From this data, 52.9% of YP showed an improvement on this strand of the SDQ after counselling.

PRIORITY 4 – IMPROVEMENT IN EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS AND SUSTAINED, POSITIVE SCHOOL LEAVER DESTINATIONS FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE

We are working with the local Health & Social Care Partnership to deliver Foundation Apprenticeships in Health & Social Care.

This industry sector has well publicised staff shortages and struggles to attract younger entrants. The curriculum is designed to offer a Level 6 qualification whilst introducing pupils to careers in that sector. Staff from the council's HSCP Learning & Development Team deliver the vocational Level 6 qualification to Senior Phase pupils from across our schools.

In the first year (Session 19/20) a small group of 8 pupils completed their qualification. An integral part of the qualification is the SVQ Level 2, which involves work placements in Social Care settings, so in the second year of delivery, the pandemic presented challenges that required creative solutions. Early in 2020, when it was evident that work placements were going to have to be suspended, virtual and simulated experiences were created to ensure that the pupils were not disadvantaged. Pupils remained engaged throughout the remainder of the academic session and of the 12 pupils who commenced the course, 10 achieved their full award and 2 achieved a partial award. All pupils from Years 1 & 2 progressed into positive destinations with many choosing progressions in this sector including Level 3 Apprenticeships, Health & Social Care HNC/D at college, Nursing and Paramedics.

Case Study – Developing the Young Workforce at Auchenhavrie Academy

In the 2020-21 academic year, Auchenhavrie Academy utilised PEF funding to support learners into positive pathways and destinations through DYW initiatives. The aim of this intervention was to implement the Career Education Standard throughout the curriculum and work collaboratively with partners to provide pupils with opportunities to enhance their skills and prepare them for the world of work. Over the year, six independent skills programmes (ISPs) and an employability course were delivered in partnership with Ayrshire College. Despite a large proportion of the year being dedicated to home and virtual learning, 51 pupils participated in at least one ISP and achieved at least one Level 4 qualification. Pupils engaged in these programmes have also had increased attendance, positive engagement with learning and demonstrated increased confidence. These courses support learners into a viable post-school destination either following the courses to further education level or in other positive destinations after they leave the school, contributing to the year-on-year positive post-school destinations statistics for Auchenhavrie Academy.

During academic year 2020-21 all work placement opportunities were virtual. These were developed through strong partnership working with the Chamber of Commerce to establish employer links and promote opportunities to pupils. Three virtual work placements ran one day a week over the course of the year. Further information is provided in the table below:

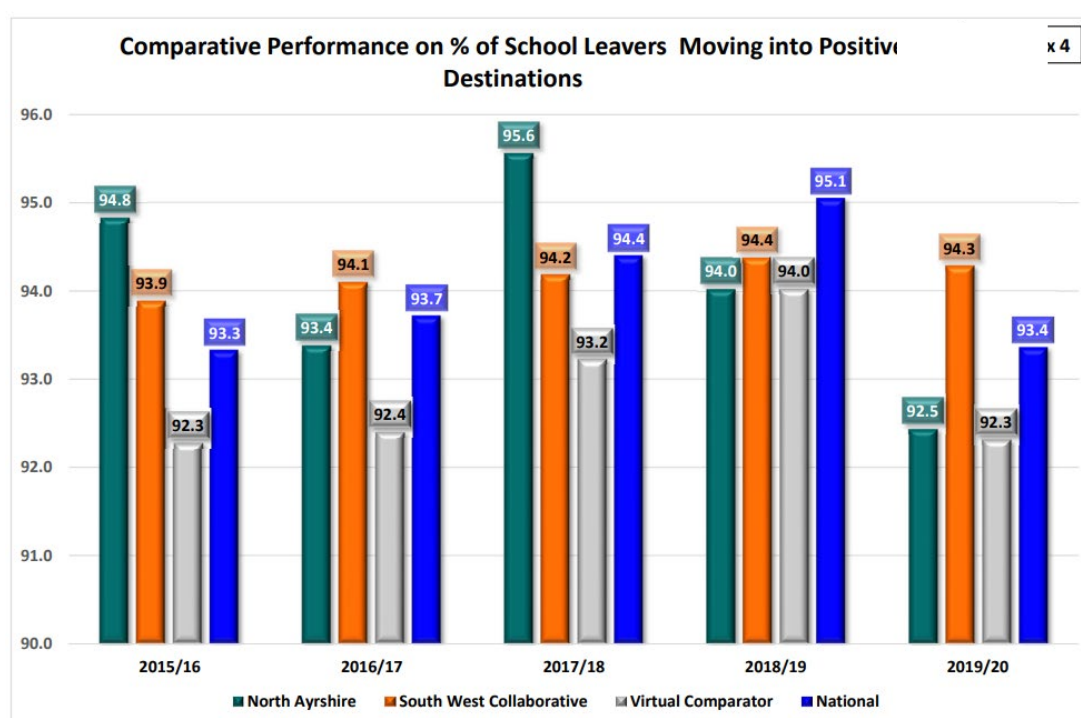
| Work Placement | No. Of Pupils | Impact |
|--|---------------|--|
| British Army | 4 | Pupils noted increased knowledge of jobs and roles within the British Army. Two pupils completed British Army applications. In addition, two pupils have applied for Uniformed Services at the Ayrshire College. |
| Construction (Morrison's Construction) | 9 | Pupils all gained experience in different job roles within the construction industry. They gained the chance to speak to several employees in |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| | | Morrison's Construction. They also had the opportunity to create a CV and participate in a mock interview. All pupils successfully completed the week and achieved a City & Guilds Virtual Certificate. Increased home learning attendance from some pupils was noted. |
| Business Branding (Large Printing Company) | 2 | Pupils gained DYW certificates of achievement for their excellent contribution to the branding and logo design of our two new ISPs. |

In addition, all S4 and S5 pupils completed the Steps to Work award during June 2021. Over the course of the year several departments engaged with the Chamber of Commerce to create employer led virtual

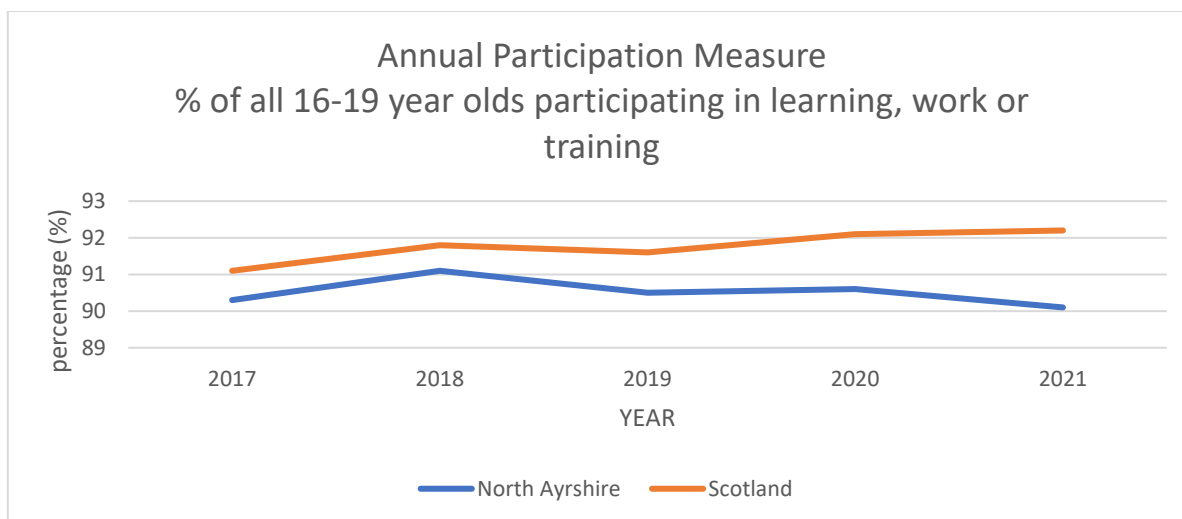
resources and webinars for pupils. These provide insight into pathways from curriculum to career and fuel learner post-school aspirations.

Positive Destinations



Before 2020, the percentage of school leavers moving into positive destinations in North Ayrshire had been one of the highest across Scotland. While 94% of the 2019 school leavers cohort has achieved positive post-school destinations (one percentage point lower than the National performance in the same year but in line with our Virtual Comparator and the SWEIC performance), in 2020 pandemic conditions 92.5% of the cohort entered positive destinations. The 2020 figure is in line with our Virtual Comparator but is lower than both the SWEIC and national performance.

The pandemic had a significant impact both nationally and locally on the type of school leaver destination in 2020. For example, while the proportion of school leavers going into education and training has increased from 74% in previous years to 75.5% in 2020, the proportion of school leavers going into employment has decreased in 2020 by 3 percentage points compared to 2019 and by even more than that compared to previous years.



Skills Development Scotland's annual participation measure illustrates a slight decline in the percentage of young people participating in learning, work or training in 2021 as of August 2021. This reflects the local context and the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on employment

opportunities for young people. The service continues to monitor this and is working closely with partners to ensure opportunities for young people to participate in post-school opportunities are maximised in the year ahead.