HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: **People Committee**

Date: **6 December 2017**

Report Title: **Educational Attainment**

Report By: **Director of Care and Learning**

1.   **Purpose/Executive Summary**

1.1   This report provides an analysis of Highland pupil attainment to 2016/17, informing the work on closing the poverty related attainment gap.

2.   **Recommendations**

2.1   Members are asked to:

i.   Scrutinise and comment on this performance information.

ii.   Note the information provided on quality improvement linked to closing the poverty related attainment gap.

3. Background

3.1 Flexibility of Curriculum Models

3.1.1 Curriculum for Excellence provides schools with the flexibility to develop curriculum models best suited to their local circumstances and individual candidates. Different curriculum models provide the opportunity for learners to study a different mix of awards and qualifications at the most appropriate time during their Senior Phase (S4-S6). Learners will have experienced a variety of presentation patterns, informed by discussions with teachers and parents and carers in their best interests, both in terms of the number of subjects and whether individuals are studying for a qualification over one or two years.

3.1.2 Those entered for National 5 this year include pupils from S4/5/6, of whom some will have progressed to National 5 in one year from the Broad General Education, and others in two years or progression from National 4. Some candidates may, for some subjects, bypass National 5 altogether, and progress directly to Higher either in one year in S5 or S6 or as a 2 year higher over S4/5.

3.1.3 The flexibility to the senior phase offers more individualised progression for pupils, and often offers more choice within the curriculum. It also means that attainment data judgements should be based on information about school leavers, as delay of entries etc. will not be evident through the local data. Accordingly, care should be taken when interpreting any local data.

3.2 Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool – Insight

3.2.1 Insight is the national dashboard to measure school and Authority performance in four key areas: literacy and numeracy, attainment for all, attainment versus deprivation, and leaver destinations. It is used to reflect on and analyse attainment data.

3.2.2 Rather than compare data with actual Authorities or schools with broadly similar characteristics, Insight creates a "virtual comparator". This is done by selecting key characteristics which make up an Authority or school: gender balance; staying-on rate; percentage of time spent in mainstream education; ASN and deprivation based upon the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). From these areas, Insight matches ten pupils from around Scotland to every one of the pupils in Highland, and treats this matched group as the virtual school or Authority.

3.2.3 Insight is powerful as a self-evaluation tool, containing a huge variety of filters to enable schools and the authority to dig deeper to find their improvement focus. It is not a reporting tool to demonstrate accountability. While we ask schools to present data and discuss their improvement agenda using Insight, it is best used to inform and frame improvement, rather than in isolation within any one filter.

3.2.4 Schools are asked to look at the big questions around gaps in their attainment, and focus on local benchmarking in September (most recent attainment data from August results) to inform immediate tracking and monitoring interventions for pupils that have stayed on at school. A discussion will take place around this data and interventions with their Quality Improvement Officer, followed by a more summative report being produced and discussed around National measures (final

leavers data) in February when this is updated on Insight.

3.2.5   The average tariff scores are based on points awarded for different qualifications and awards. The complementary tariff points (new measure to Insight last session) take the average best set of results, to align and compensate for any differences of S4 presentation policy across the country, and therefore levels the playing field to give a more balanced comparison.

3.2.6   For the purpose of this report, there will be comment on National leavers attainment data from last session, as well initial 'local' dashboard data for pupils who received results in August.

4.   The Highland Picture

4.1   Highland's young people continue to perform at a high level.

4.2   **Positive destinations – Appendix 1**

4.2.1   Positive destinations for young people continue to paint a strong picture, with Highland exceeding national and virtual comparator and national percentages for the percentage of all pupils reaching a positive destination on leaving school.

4.2.2   Destinations for young people from our most deprived areas, as well as pupils with additional support needs, also show a strong picture, with improvement in recent years and performance considerably above our virtual comparator and national standard.

4.2.3   This improvement is as a result of focus in schools and support from the 16+, transitions and QI teams around 'Developing the Young Workforce' (DYW). This has involved: staff CPD, support in school, improved Hi-hope website and work experience facility; as well as schools and Local Authority working positively with partners (DYW regional groups, Skills Development Scotland, colleges, employers and 3rd Sector organisations).

4.3   **Performance in Literacy and Numeracy – Appendix 2**

4.3.1   Although more work is required at National 4 literacy/numeracy to bring performance into line with the virtual comparator, there is a rising trend in the percentage of pupils attaining National 4 (N4) and National 5 (N5) literacy/numeracy. The gap with the virtual comparator has closed and is now in line for N5 attainment. This picture is mirrored in attainment in literacy and numeracy for pupils with additional support needs. 2016/17 local data for S5 based on S4 shows an improvement from last session, but there is still work to do in attainment at both N4 and N5, to bring us in line with the virtual comparator.

4.3.2   Schools are encouraged to progress learning in literacy and numeracy in the senior phase by working with target groups to complete an additional unit at the level above their current course presentation where appropriate. This provides these pupils with an extended unit in literacy/numeracy and, if pupils are staying on, also prepares for smoother progression to the next course award in the following session.

4.3.3   Continued work to support improvement in this area is ongoing, in the form of

CPD and a Highland moderation strategy in literacy and numeracy in the Broad General Education (Primary & Secondary), to ensure a more fluid and informed progression into the senior phase.

4.4 Improving Attainment for All – Appendix 3

4.4.1 The '**Improving attainment for all**' data for our leavers in 2016/17 shows a 3 year increasing trend for 80% of our leavers, resulting in Highland overtaking the National and virtual comparator average. More work requires to be done in this area around our lowest attaining 20% of pupils, as this has been below both the National and virtual comparator in recent years.

4.4.2 The Quality Improvement Team have analysed the underlying dataset for the lowest attaining 20% cohort, and are working with schools in supporting evaluation of specific pupil attainment in this set, supporting schools to improve outcomes and learner journeys for our lowest attaining pupils (see also the associated report on the education of looked after children).

4.4.3 The **improvement focus** is targeted towards S4 attainment / pathways as data suggests pupils perform less well in this stage in comparison with the National and virtual comparator. There is better progress across the senior phase, resulting in a more positive picture at the end of S5 and S6 leavers' data. S6 based on S4 roll recent data also suggests action in our lowest attainment cohort. Actions require immediate focus around pupils intending to leave school at the end of S4. QIOs and the 16+ team continue to work with schools in identifying this target group early to ensure improved outcomes and pathways.

4.4.4 **The Breadth and Depth** data table shows S4/5/6 leavers' information in the form of percentage of levels achieved upon leaving school. The table shows Highland figures compared to Virtual comparator. It details attainment which is in line with or above the virtual comparator for our mid to high achieving pupils, but requiring improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving level 3 and level 4 awards. This is further data to support the analysis of improving outcomes for our lowest attainment cohort.

4.5 Attainment versus Deprivation – Appendix 4

4.5.1 The **attainment versus deprivation** graphs show S4/5/6 leavers' data to be positive in comparison with the virtual comparator with regard to our most deprived zones. However, the most recent local data for 2017 displays these zones as below the virtual comparator. As this local data is not definitive (pupils from these zones could have improved progression/attainment through S6 prior to leaving), close attention will be paid to this leavers data versus deprivation later in the session.

5. Identifying and Closing Our Poverty Related Attainment Gap

5.1 If Highland is to be successful in closing the attainment gap, we will require all schools to focus on delivering improved outcomes for their targeted pupils. The role of the authority will be to provide the maximum support in working towards this goal.

5.2 Data analysis shows that targeting and improving attainment in our lowest

attaining cohorts will help close our attainment gap. When analysing attainment for all data averages across all three attainment cohorts, we can see that the largest gap between the most and least deprived is in our lowest attainment cohorts where we are lower than our virtual comparator. The gap narrows and is in line for our mid attaining cohort, and narrows and is above our virtual comparator for the highest attaining. The improvement measures detailed above is addressing this for our senior phase pupils.

5.3   Identifying and closing the attainment gap in the Broad General Education (BGE) is more challenging, with limited historic data available. A new National BGE dashboard is in production, for implementation next session, to support schools and the authority with self-evaluation in the BGE and to analyse professional judgement data as well as baseline assessment data.

5.4   There has been considerable support for schools in helping them to identify their attainment gaps. The 'Risk Matrix' was launched last year - a SEEMIS package for school staff to identify pupils 'at risk of disengaging', in order to target analysis and intervention. Four primary data days and four secondary data days were offered, to support of schools to use data affectively to identify and address their attainment gaps. More CPD is on offer this session around this.

5.5   Central support around the 'Pupil Equity Fund' (PEF) has taken the form of: clear guidelines and supporting paperwork, a data toolkit resource, PEF curriculum development officers in literacy and Health & Wellbeing, and a dedicated PEF officer to monitor and track equity funding, interventions and measures.

6.   Actions to Improve Outcomes in Literacy

6.1   Across Highland, we are developing early years pedagogy to ensure strong foundations in literacy and numeracy. We are also working closely with the educational psychology team to provide support, resources and strategies to tackle persistent difficulties in both literacy and numeracy through primary and secondary school.

6.2   We have Development Officers and QIO strategic leads heading up our strategic literacy and numeracy teams. The range of professional learning they offer focuses on teaching for conceptual understanding rather than of process; it supports consistent, well-moderated professional judgement on development and achievement in numeracy and literacy. We aim to support teachers to be more skilled in focussing accurately on the difference in attainment between the most and least disadvantaged children, and how to take further action as a result.

6.3   Some of the actions to achieve this are listed below.

6.4   Emerging Literacy -
- 1 day training events delivered to target all early years/P1 staff across Highland – 9 sessions offered across 4 areas.
- All probationer teachers trained in developmental approach.
- Ten Local Networks operating across the Local Authority to support practitioners in taking a developmental approach. There will be 'Year 1' networks for practitioners that are new to Emerging Literacy and 'Year 2' networks which are for practitioners who were supported in the 2016/2017 session. The networks will allow for practitioners to reflect on learning and

teaching, interrogate data and be provided with further training on taking a developmental approach.

- Early Years Emerging Literacy Training for Early Years Practitioners

6.5   Tackling Persistent Difficulties in Literacy
- A literacy development officer has been appointed specifically to provide resources and training to schools that promote:
  - An improved understanding of the pedagogy of phonics and reading.
  - Staff confidence in developing a strategic learning plan.
  - Better awareness of appropriate reading to schemes and programmes to develop the pupils' individual needs.
  - Use of the strategies outlined in Highland Literacy, building on the strategies of emerging literacy.
  - Use of new age and stage appropriate instruction and materials

6.6   The actions to achieve this are:
- Development Officer to build a bank of resources and modules for school use – to be uploaded to Literacy Blog.
- Engagement at Head Teacher meetings to encourage school context engagement
- Online video resources in paired reading, shared reading and cued spelling.
- Appoint and train a literacy leader in each ASG who will train classroom staff in working with struggling readers and spellers.
- Training for parents in paired reading – Development Officer to work with schools in delivering parent workshops.

6.7   More information, background and monitoring details can be found in the literacy in-depth improvement plans attached to the wider Highland Improvement Plan.

7.   Actions to Improve Outcomes in Numeracy

7.1   Building on the extensive work that has taken place around the Highland Numeracy Project and integration across Highland schools, the numeracy strategy now focuses on early years. The aim is to improve staff understanding of progression in early numeracy, and strategies to identify and address gaps in early numeracy development.

7.2   Actions to achieve this include
- Work with Educational Psychologist and Early years support team to develop Emerging Numeracy approaches.
- Further develop CPD to specifically support ELCs, practitioners and PSAs.
- Develop model of delivering CPD within schools.
- Develop profiling trackers for nursery/P1 stages and strengthen links.
- Develop the use of diagnostic assessments in nursery as part of transition.
- Promote the Early Years blog.

7.3   There will also be work to extend and enhance Highland Numeracy Strategies in secondary schools.
- Support the use of diagnostic assessments in secondary BGE to identify gaps.
- Support Maths and Support for Learning Departments to address the gaps.
- Promote the concrete, imaging, abstract teaching model.
- Deliver CPD for secondary staff in the use of concrete materials.

- Support schools using Pupil Equity funds to choose the most effective concrete materials.
- Support primary and secondary schools to share meaningful transition information.
- Promote and support the 'Persistent Difficulties in Numeracy' Educational Psychology resource.
- Share examples of effective transition on Glow/Blog.
- Participate in the Northern Alliance (Headteacher led) initiative on Mathematics.

7.4 More information, background and monitoring details can be found in the numeracy in-depth improvement plans attached to the wider Highland Improvement Plan.

8. Actions to improve Outcomes in Health and Wellbeing

8.1 Through school plans and PEF spend, schools are addressing one or more of the areas of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

8.2 With attainment being only one of the five key areas involved in improving outcomes, schools are also focusing on improving attendance for target groups, inclusion and home support as well as improving engagement and participation.

8.3 Actions to achieve this include
- Appoint an 'Active Play' Development Officer to work with Inspiring Scotland and the 3rd sector to deliver 10 week blocks of training on play (throughout year with PEF schools).
- Share Online resource available for support assistants on Mindfulness.
- Health & Wellbeing Working Group to continue to develop packs and twilights which will be rolled out to schools.
- Continue to update GLOW with shared practice and resources (throughout the year) – also set up a yammer group for practitioners to share expertise.
- Create and launch online tool for delivery of Equality and Diversity training.
- Run CPD sessions around Health & Wellbeing indicators – various locations throughout the year.
- Run an INSET on play (Go2Play and Ground for Learning's Playtime revolution).
- Run High 5 training sessions (throughout year).
- Organise and run conference on Play linked to Inspire Scotland work (February 2018).
- Link with the Educational Psychology team to support nurture training with school staff – to include as Head teacher conference workshops to promote this support.

9. Other Actions

9.1 The Council continues to view closing the attainment gap as a challenge across children's services, and the Highland Practice Model underpins all of our planning and interventions for individual children and young people.

9.2 The associated report at this Committee on the education of Looked After Children is also being taken forward across the Service.

9.3 Now school improvement plans are in place and underway, support for schools involves measuring outcomes and planning for year 2. This has been a theme in the recent Head teacher conferences and Area PEF meetings, as well as being integrated into ongoing 'use of data' and self-evaluation CPD.

9.4 A 'Highland Interventions for Equity' tile on Glow is being produced, where we can start to populate successful case studies of interventions and strategies from across Highland schools, as one means of sharing good practice. The Head Teacher conference in May will also focus on sharing good practice around the excellence and equity agenda.

9.5 A further report will be produced around Pupil Equity Funding later in the session, which will include more detail on interventions and impact.
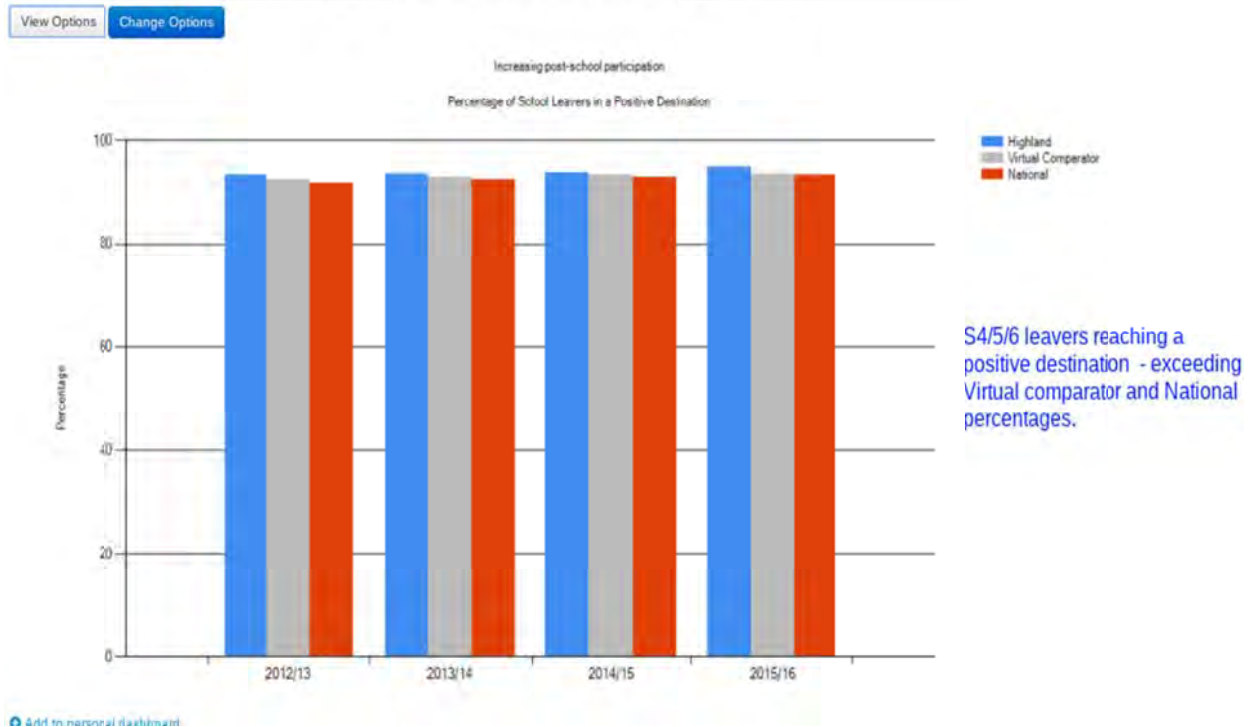
10. I**mplications**

10.1 **Resources –** While there is some dedicated funding to improve attainment, this is largely dependent on mainstream resources.

10.2 **Equalities** - It is important to put in place strategies to maximise the opportunities for all pupils in Highland. This is particularly important in our areas of deprivation.

10.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural)** – It is recognised that the attainment gap is very much a consequence of disadvantage for individuals and communities, and measures to close the gap can also help address the experience of poverty for children and families. It is important to ensure the negative factors that may be encountered by pupils who live in the more remote parts of Highland are also addressed, albeit the funding for PEF does not properly take account of this.

10.4 **Gaelic** – The opportunities available to Gaelic Medium pupils need to be maximised.

10.5 There are no **legal; climate change/carbon clever; risk** implications.
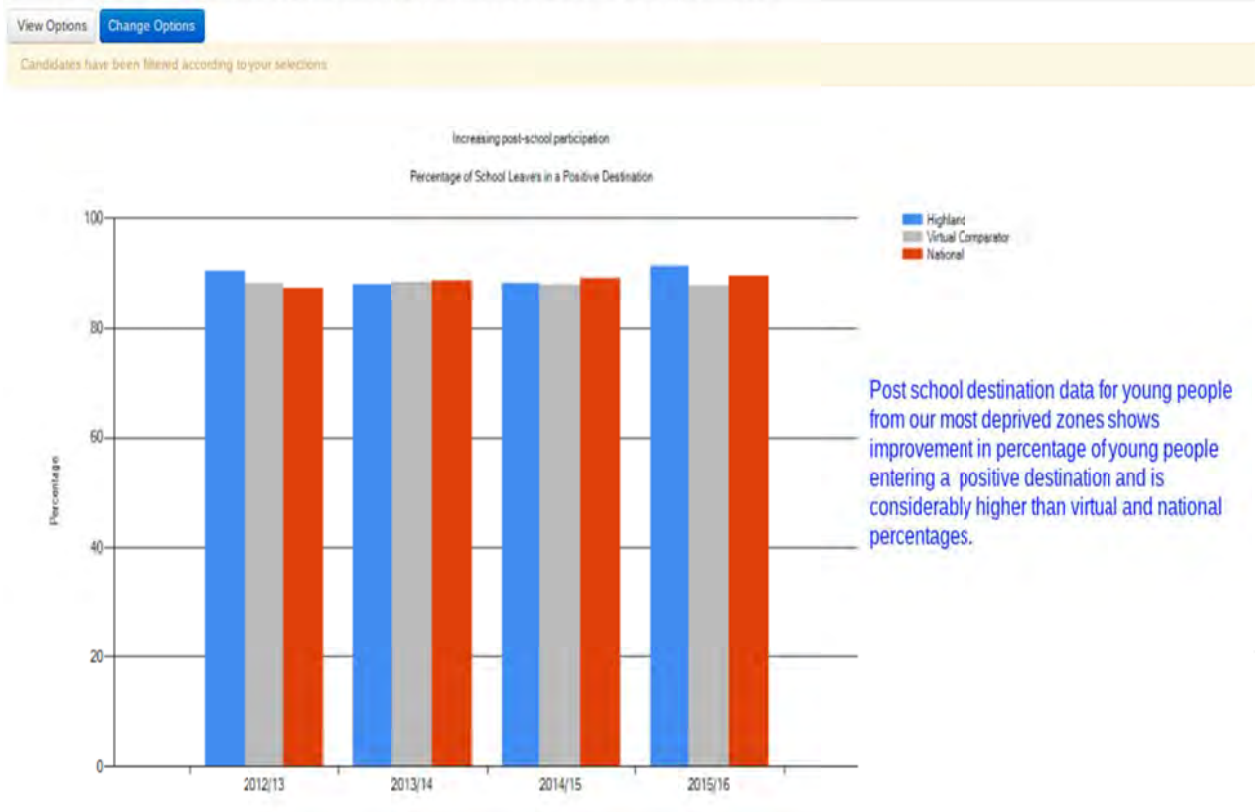
Designation   Director of Care and Learning

Date   22 November 2017

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National Benchmarking Measure: Leaver Initial Destinations

View Options | Change Options

Increasing post-school participation

Percentage of School Leavers in a Positive Destination

Legend: Highland / Virtual Comparator / National

S4/5/6 leavers reaching a positive destination - exceeding Virtual comparator and National percentages.

⊕ Add to personal dashboard

National Benchmarking Measure: Leaver Initial Destinations

View Options | Change Options

Candidates have been filtered according to your selections

Increasing post-school participation

Percentage of School Leavers in a Positive Destination

Legend: Highland / Virtual Comparator / National

Post school destination data for young people from our most deprived zones shows improvement in percentage of young people entering a positive destination and is considerably higher than virtual and national percentages.

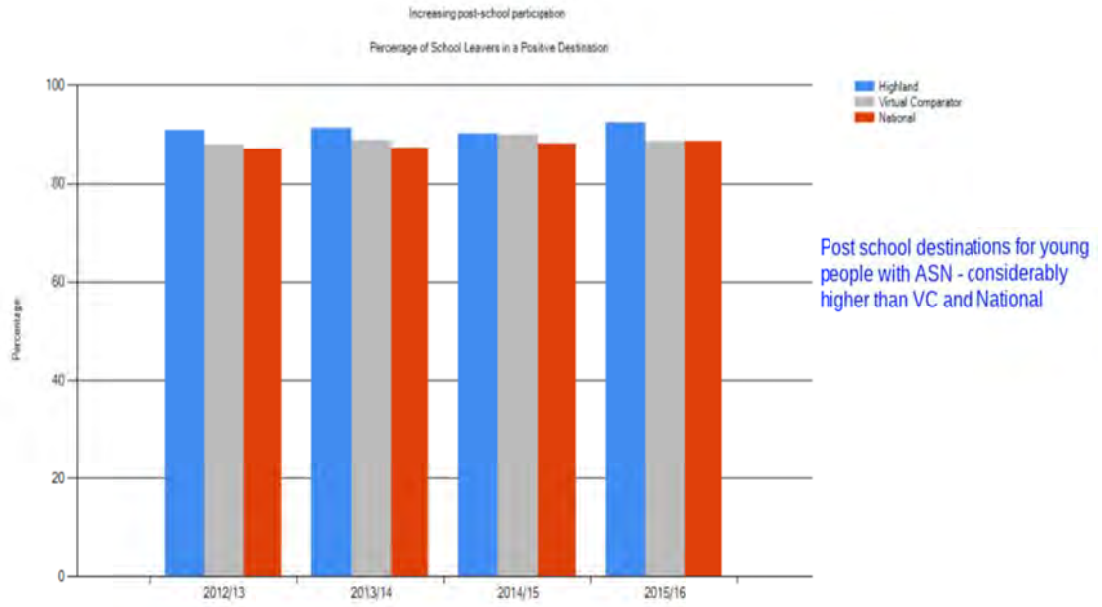# National Benchmarking Measure: Leaver Initial Destinations

Candidates have been filtered according to your selections

Increasing post-school participation

Percentage of School Leavers in a Positive Destination

Post school destinations for young people with ASN - considerably higher than VC and National

Local Benchmarking Measure: Literacy and Numeracy

View Options | Change Options

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Candidates Attaining Literacy and Numeracy

Legend: Highland SCQF 4 / Virtual Comparator SCQF 4 / Highland SCQF 5 / Virtual Comparator SCQF 5

Our local 16/17 literacy & numeracy data for S5 based on S4 roll would suggest an increase in percentage of pupils attaining N4/5 literacy and numeracy by the end of S5 and a slight narrowing of the gap between the VC from last session for N4.

National Benchmarking Measure: Literacy and Numeracy

View Options | Change Options

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Leavers Attaining Literacy and Numeracy

Legend: Highland SCQF 4 / Virtual Comparator SCQF 4 / Highland SCQF 5 / Virtual Comparator SCQF 5

S4/5/6/ leavers data displaying attainment in literacy and numeracy - showing a rise in presentations in both N4 and N5 and a narrowing of the gap with VC for both N4 and N5 with more work to be done to improve the number of pupils attaining at N4.

Add to personal dashboard

National Benchmarking Measure: Literacy and Numeracy

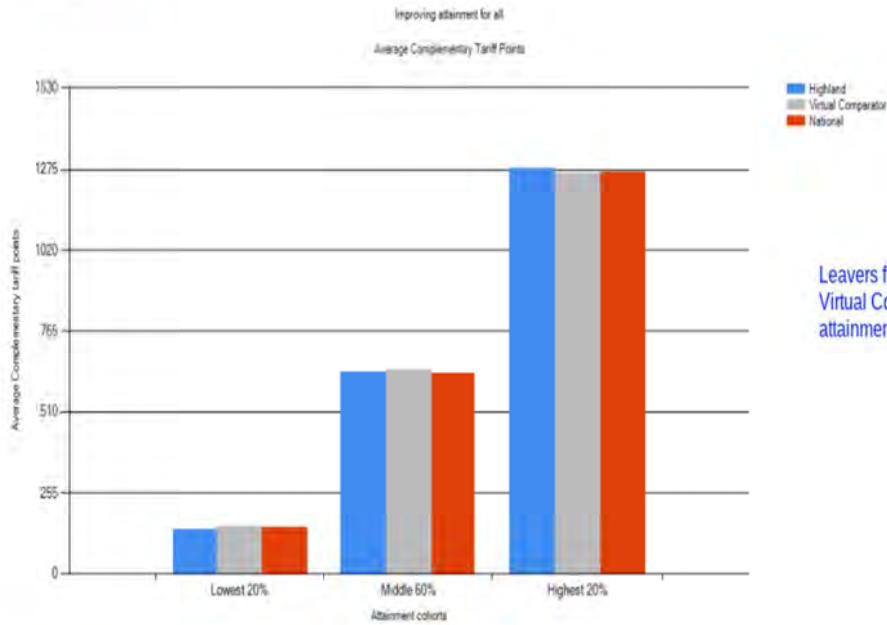Candidates have been filtered according to your selections

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Leavers Attaining Literacy and Numeracy

Legend:
- Highland SCQF 4
- Virtual Comparator SCQF 4
- Highland SCQF 5
- Virtual Comparator SCQF 5

- Pupils with ASN - attainment in Literacy and numeracy at National 4 /National 5 in comparison with Virtual Comparator. Increasing percentage of attainment at both N4 and N5 and a closing of the gap with VC with N5. More work required at National 4 attainment.

National Benchmarking Measure: Improving Attainment for All
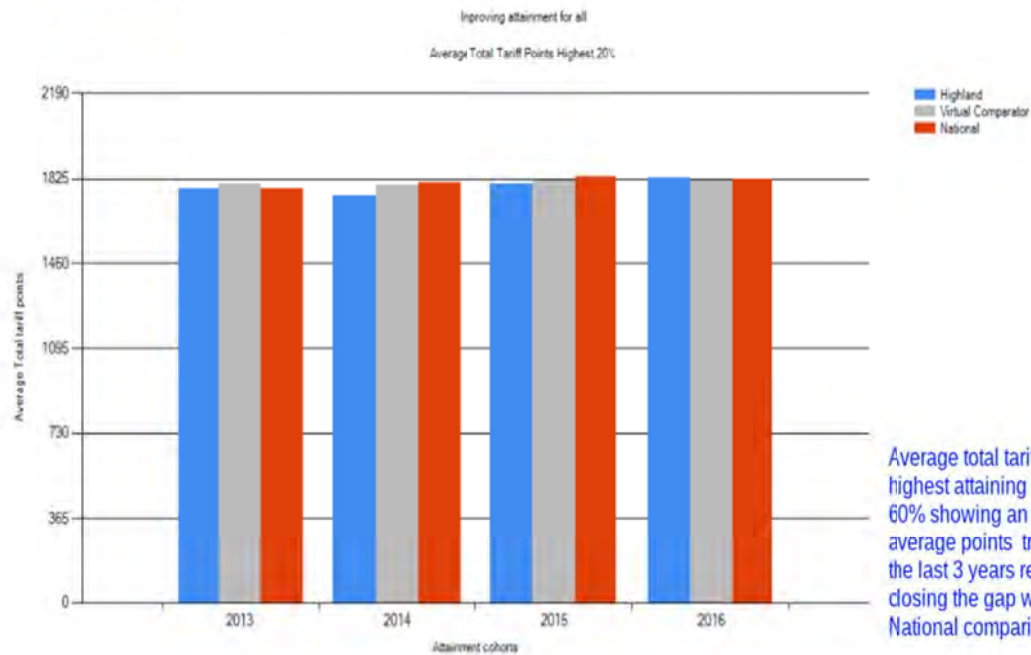

Leavers from S4/5/6 attaining in line with or above Virtual Comparitor and/or Natonal across all 3 attainment cohorts

National Benchmarking Measure: Improving Attainment for All Highest 20%
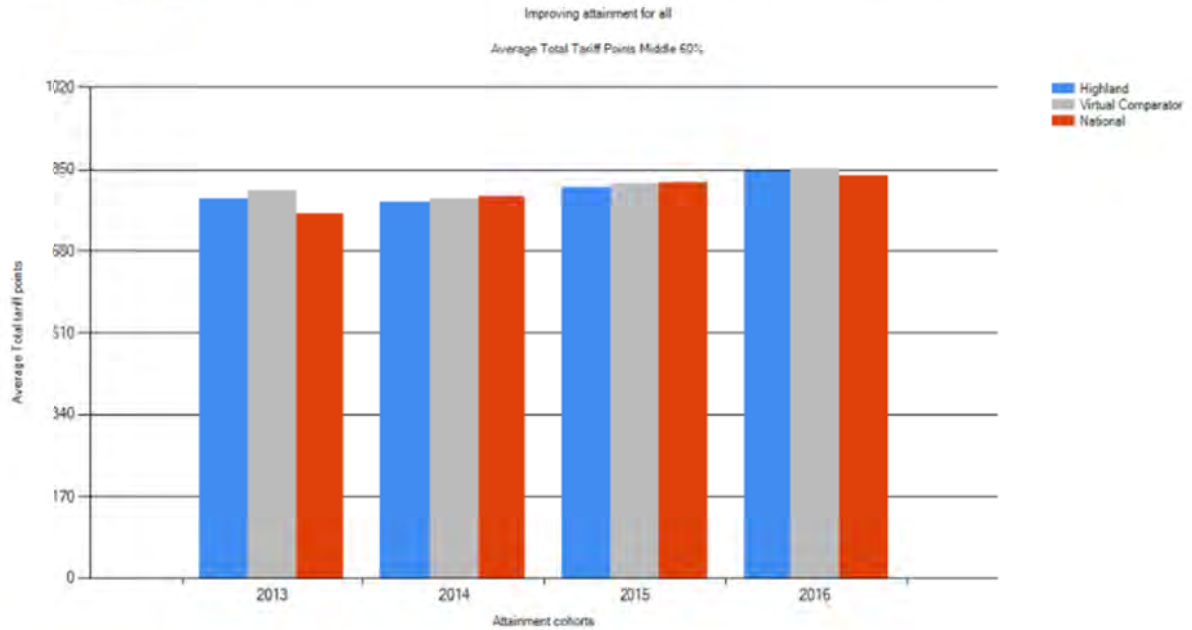

Average total tariff points for our highest attaining 20% and middle 60% showing an increasing average points trend over the last 3 years resulting in closing the gap with Virtual and National comparison.

National Benchmarking Measure: Improving Attainment for All Middle 60%

Improving attainment for all

Average Total Tariff Points Middle 60%

Add to personal dashboard

Local Benchmarking Measure: Improving Attainment for All

The selected year is **2017**

Improving attainment for all

Average Complementary Tariff Points

Our S6 cumulative attainment based on their S4 roll - shows attainment for an entire year group across their senior phase. While our highest attaining pupils are performing above / inline with vc and National , our remaining cohorts are slightly below VC/ National.
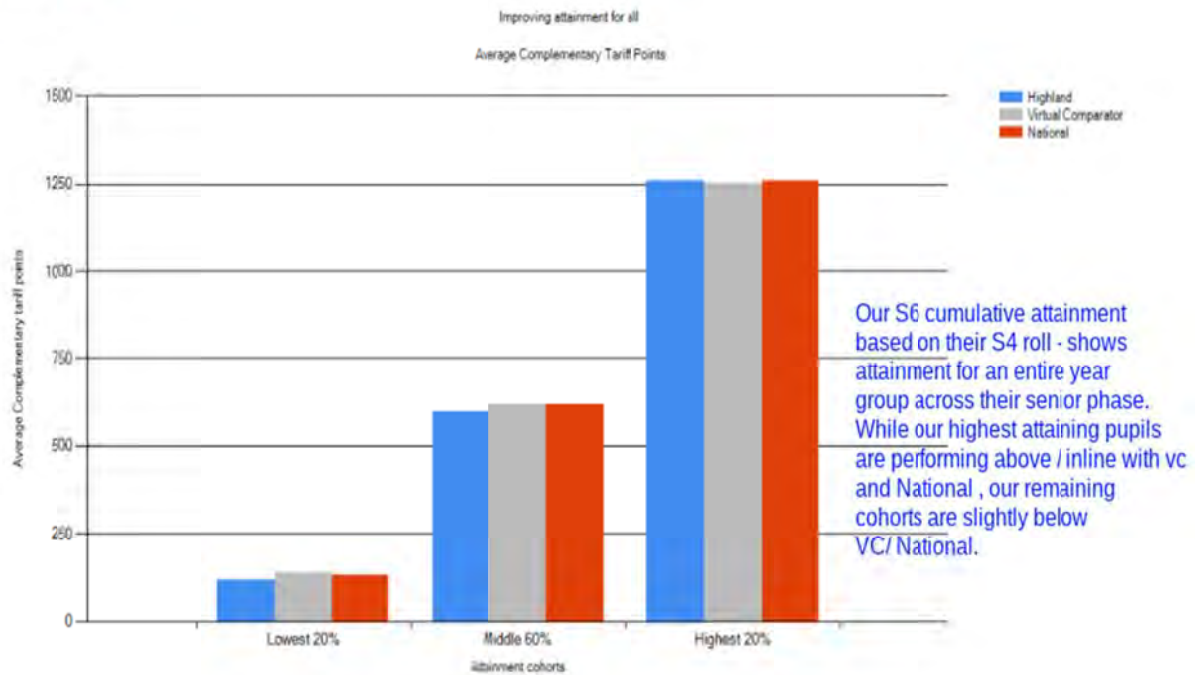
HIGHLAND LEAVERS DATA
BREADTH & DEPTH

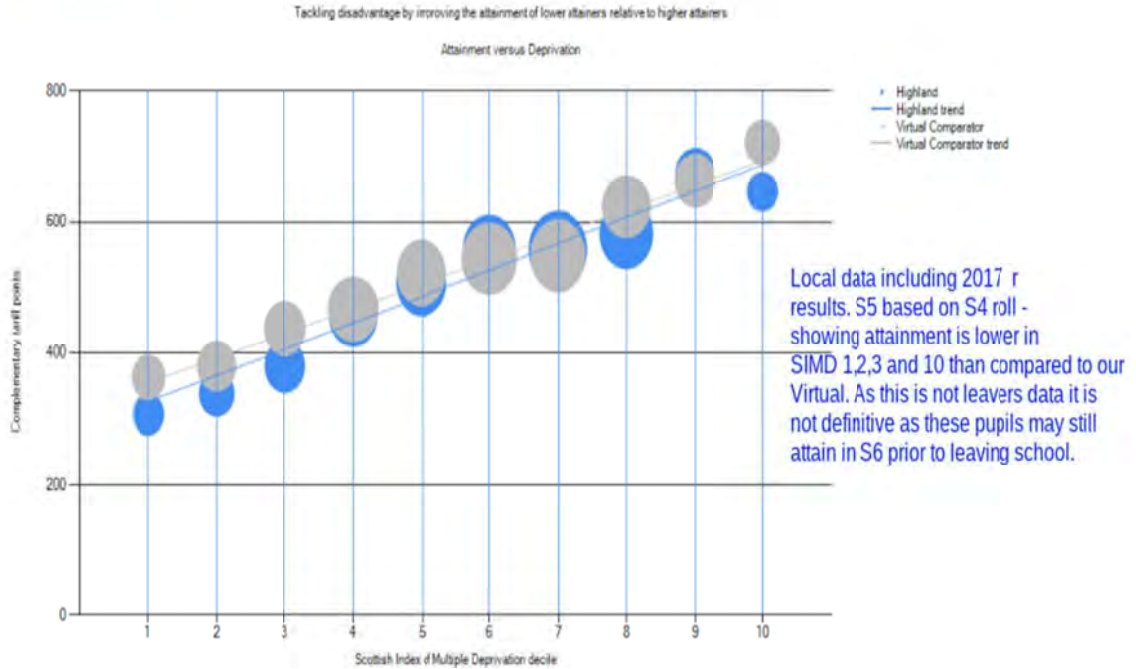| Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Number in Cohort
1 or more	97.34%	97.26%	97.06%	95.67%	88.12%	65.22%	21.90%	2516
2 or more	95.99%	95.87%	95.59%	93.48%	81.16%	56.92%	10.41%	2516
3 or more	93.96%	93.72%	93.44%	91.69%	75.08%	49.17%	3.06%	2516
4 or more	91.69%	91.34%	91.02%	88.95%	69.36%	41.02%	0.28%	2516
5 or more	88.24%	88.00%	87.76%	85.14%	62.04%	32.51%	0.00%	2516
6 or more	83.39%	83.23%	82.95%	80.01%	53.93%	22.89%	0.00%	2516
7 or more	73.85%	73.65%	73.37%	70.51%	43.96%	11.13%	0.00%	2516
8 or more	59.50%	59.42%	59.34%	56.52%	31.12%	3.18%	0.00%	2516
9 or more	40.06%	40.02%	40.02%	37.96%	18.96%	0.44%	0.00%	2516
10 or more	20.63%	20.59%	20.59%	19.63%	8.70%	0.00%	0.00%	2516

VIRTUAL COMPARATOR DATA
BREADTH & DEPTH

Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Number in Cohort
1 or more	98.39%	98.25%	98.14%	96.77%	87.70%	66.47%	22.00%	25160
2 or more	97.39%	97.20%	97.02%	94.84%	81.46%	57.15%	9.54%	25160
3 or more	95.94%	95.76%	95.46%	92.99%	75.93%	49.32%	3.19%	25160
4 or more	94.45%	94.28%	93.94%	90.97%	69.74%	42.07%	0.44%	25160
5 or more	91.78%	91.60%	91.32%	87.79%	61.99%	34.25%	0.03%	25160
6 or more	86.95%	86.75%	86.49%	82.51%	53.26%	23.35%	0.00%	25160
7 or more	76.29%	76.10%	75.91%	71.94%	42.59%	12.33%	0.00%	25160
8 or more	59.96%	59.77%	59.55%	56.20%	30.22%	4.17%	0.00%	25160
9 or more	39.91%	39.77%	39.65%	36.83%	18.10%	0.88%	0.00%	25160
10 or more	22.02%	21.90%	21.81%	19.96%	8.49%	0.10%	0.00%	25160

Local Benchmarking Measure: Attainment versus Deprivation

View Options   Change Options

The selected year is **2016/17**

Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers

Attainment versus Deprivation

Local data including 2017 r
results. S5 based on S4 roll -
showing attainment is lower in
SIMD 1,2,3 and 10 than compared to our
Virtual. As this is not leavers data it is
not definitive as these pupils may still
attain in S6 prior to leaving school.

National Benchmarking Measure: Attainment versus Deprivation

View Options   Change Options

The selected year is **2015/16**

Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers

Attainment versus Deprivation

S4/5/6 leavers data shows most
attainment in line or above
virtual comparator except decile
4 and 10. Attainment in our most
deprived zone is higher than our
virtual comparator