THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Education Committee

Date: 27 February 2020

Report Title: Analysis of Secondary School Interim Attainment

Report By: Chief Executive

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 The report is to update Committee on the attainment of secondary schools in Highland for session 2018/19.

1.2 The report is in response to the recently published Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR).

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

    i   scrutinise and note the position in respect of attainment of the young people in the Highlands;

    ii   note that as a result of attainment meetings, HTs and central officers will agree actions for improvement;

    iii   note that a follow up meeting of this Committee will take place in May 2020, when the performance of individual schools will be scrutinised along with the school actions for improvement for session 2020/21in relation to the recently published BVAR; and

    iv   agree the future actions to raise attainment and achievement for all young people across the Highlands.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource - The Paper was informed by the priorities within the Corporate Plan and as a response to the BVAR audit.

3.2 Legal - There are no legal implications from the recommendations of this report.

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island) - Planned improvements should support better outcomes for all young people and will take cognisance of the specific challenges of inequality, poverty and rurality.

3.4   Climate Change / Carbon Clever - There are no climate change implications arising.

3.5   Risk - There are no risk implications arising from this report.

3.6   Gaelic - The delivery of better outcomes for young people will take cognisance of needs of Gaelic Medium and Gaelic Learners.

4.   Introduction

4.1   Performance in the Senior Phase is profiled by four key national measures on Insight, the Senior Phase Benchmarking Toolkit. This provides a holistic approach to:

- Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy
- Improving attainment for all
- Increasing post-school destinations
- Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers.

4.2   The exam results are available to schools in August each year and analysis of these results for cohort groups appear within the Insight toolkit in September. The data relating to leaver destinations is not available until December and therefore, this information does not appear on Insight until February of the following year. The complete picture of leaver attainment and the achievement of young people in Highland will be available from March onwards each year.

4.3   The development of this approach is to drive continuous improvement with a focus on attainment earlier in the pupil's education journey. This links to improving the Council's nationally benchmarked position in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) where the Council has set stretching targets for continuous improvement into quartile 2 nationally within the Council's Corporate Plan. The Council will have early indication of progress when the LGBF is reported to Council on 12 March 2020 for 2018/19 with the annual report to Council on the Corporate Plan due in September 2020. Information on the LGBF can be found at https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20009/performance/608/how_we_compare_to_other_councils

4.4   Insight Benchmarking Measures – National Measures

As noted in paragraph 4.1, the data for the four national benchmarks will be available each year in late February, once the school leavers data has been compiled. It is especially important to reiterate that this represents data for all school leavers from S4-6 for the school year 2018/19, as opposed to individual cohorts of learners. The National Measures exclusively profile our school performance for learners at the point of exit from secondary school education.

4.5   Insight Benchmarking Measures – Local Measures

In September each year it is possible to profile school performance within the local measures and in the breadth and depth of awards gained by learners on a cohort by cohort basis (i.e. of S4, S5 and S6 pupils).
The Local measures that are pertinent to report on a cohort by cohort basis currently are:
- Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

- Improving attainment for all
- Tacking disadvantages by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers

4.6 Virtual Comparator

Insight creates a virtual comparator school based on selecting young people from across Scotland that match the characteristics of the young people in the school or local authority in question. The performance of the school can then be assessed in relation to that of the virtual school. A similar methodology is used in Insight to generate a virtual local authority for benchmarking local authority performance. It is important to note that features such as similar curriculum models or structures are not included in the comparison.

4.7 Breadth and Depth

Insight allows us to profile the breadth and depth of qualifications completed by learners in each year of the senior phase. This is seen as a direct alternative to the previous method of reporting on performance of pupils attaining 1+, 3+ and 5+ awards at SCQF Levels 5, 6 and 7 in the previous format in STACs (Standard Tables and Charts). This year we are again able to profile the attainment of our S6 cohort throughout the senior phase (from S4-S6).

4.8 Tariff Score Methodology

In the local measures of Improving Attainment for All and Tackling Disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers, learner performance is measured by the number of tariff points they have accrued during the Senior Phase. The number of tariff points a young person accrues in their school career is currently based on their 'latest and best performance' i.e. if a learner achieves an A pass at National 5 in S4 this would accrue 84 points but would be superseded by their performance at Higher in the same subject in S5 and again by performance at Advanced Higher in S6. The points are not aggregated for an improved performance in a given subject area.

The total tariff points for the candidate across all their subjects are calculated as a cumulative measure of their latest and best attainment in each subject to the given point in time plus points for any standalone units which are unrelated to any other subject qualification. Measures presented in the tool are then an average of the total tariff points for the relevant candidates in the cohort. The complementary tariff measure is the sum of tariff points accumulated across the latest and best achievement in subjects which a learner has achievement, up to a maximum of 120 SCQF credit points. The subjects which contribute to the 120 SCQF credit points in the complementary tariff measure are those in which the learner has achieved the highest tariff points relative to the amount of learning in that subject (subject tariff points / SCQF credit points for that subject).

For this paper, we will refer to complementary tariff points as this reflects a young person's attainment regardless of school curricular models.

5. Local Measure – Improving Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

5.1 S4 based on S4 cohort

	Highland (%)			VC (%)		
Local Measure	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
Level 4 Literacy and Numeracy	82.79	78.92	81.46	86.42	82.18	81.62
Level 5 Literacy and Numeracy	46.75	44.45	50.40	52.54	47.28	51.68
Further information	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
Level 4 Literacy	90.82	89.85	90.99	92.87	90.87	90.36
Level 5 Literacy	68.64	67.79	73.72	70.63	68.39	70.39
Level 4 Numeracy	84.61	82.85	84.13	88.69	85.55	85.18
Level 5 Numeracy	50.31	47.99	52.86	56.67	50.90	55.95

The Levels for Literacy and Numeracy for the S4 cohort in 2019 has improved from 2018 but remains slightly below that of the virtual comparator by 0.16% for Level 4 and below the virtual comparator for Level 5 by 1.28%. However, for Level 5 this is an improvement on the gap between the Highland attainment and virtual comparator achieved in 2018 (2.83%).

Literacy Level 4 and 5 attainment have been variable over the last 3 years but in 2019 Level 4 performance (+0.63%) and Level 5 performance was above the virtual comparator (+3.33%).

Numeracy attainment at Levels 4 and 5 are variable. In 2019, Level 4 is below that of the virtual comparator (1.05%). This is an improvement on 2018, when the gap between Highland and the virtual comparator was wider (2.70%). Level 5 attainment in 2019 is well below the virtual comparator (3.09%) and this is an increase on the attainment gap in 2018 (2.91%).

5.2 S5 based on S5 cohort

	Highland (%)			VC (%)		
Local Measure	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
Level 4 Literacy and Numeracy	91.02	88.80	91.49	93.12	92.75	91.74
Level 5 Literacy and Numeracy	66.77	65.27	67.02	72.02	70.20	67.40
Further information	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
Level 4 Literacy	95.85	94.33	95.16	96.93	96.65	95.93
Level 5 Literacy	84.51	83.33	85.01	87.23	86.40	85.08
Level 4 Numeracy	91.96	90.19	93.18	94.13	93.88	93.28
Level 5 Numeracy	69.35	67.22	69.00	74.39	72.41	69.69

For S5, Literacy and Numeracy has improved from 2018 to 2019 at Level 4 but is slightly below that of the virtual comparator (0.25%). Level 5 Literacy and numeracy has also improved from 2018 to 2019 but is again below virtual comparator (0.38%).

Highland is performing below the virtual comparator for Literacy measures, but with improvements in 2019. Level 4 is below the virtual comparator (0.77%) but this is an improvement on 2018, which had an attainment gap of 2.32% between Highland and the virtual comparator.
Literacy at Level 5 has improved in 2019 and is now broadly in-line with the virtual comparator. This is an improvement of over 3% on the attainment gap in 2018.

Highland is performing below the virtual comparator with numeracy measures at both Level 4 and Level 5 with both measures improved in 2019. Level 4 is now slightly below the virtual comparator (0.1%) a significant improvement on 2018. Level 5 is also below the virtual comparator (0.69%) with an improvement on 2018, which had an attainment gap of 5.19%.

5.3 **S6 based on S6 cohort**

	Highland (%)			VC (%)		
Local Measure	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
Level 4 Literacy and Numeracy	94.11	95.52	94.51	95.52	96.57	96.80
Level 5 Literacy and Numeracy	81.42	81.00	81.62	84.88	85.50	85.03
Further information	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
Level 4 Literacy	97.61	97.72	97.46	98.14	98.33	98.33
Level 5 Literacy	93.07	94.81	94.79	94.79	95.66	95.92
Level 4 Numeracy	94.76	96.39	95.14	96.99	96.98	97.23
Level 5 Numeracy	83.04	82.39	82.75	86.19	86.60	86.08

For S6, Level 4 literacy and numeracy have remained at the same Level from 2018 to 2019 with increased gap between virtual comparator and Highland (from 1.05% to 2.29%).

For Level 5 literacy and numeracy, there has been improvements from 2018 to 2019 but Highland is still considerably below virtual comparator, but the gap has narrowed from 2018 to 2019 (from 4.5% to 3.41%)

Level 4 literacy has remained at a very similar Level over the last 3 years but the attainment gap between Highland and the virtual comparator has increased (from 0.53% to 0.61% to 0.87%).
Level 5 literacy is a similar picture; attainment has shown no significant changes, but the attainment gap has increased from 2018 to 2019 (from 0.85% to 1.13%)

Level 4 numeracy attainment has decreased from 2018 to 2019 by 1.25%. The attainment gap between Highland and the virtual comparator has increased (from 0.59% to 2.09%). Level 5 attainment shows a slight improvement from 2018 to 2019,

with an increase of 0.39%. This is below the virtual comparator but narrows the attainment gap (from 4.71% to 3.33%).

5.4   Literacy and Numeracy

There needs to be more focused work to close the literacy and numeracy gaps in S4 attainment.

Schools are discussing the review of the senior curriculum which includes targeted Literacy and Numeracy support to ensure learners have access to opportunities to achieve at the highest Levels; this has been particularly successful in many of our schools to close the gaps in this area. This has been discussed at recent attainment meetings.

6.   Local Measure – Improving Attainment for All (using Complementary Tariff)

This measure allows us to examine how different ability cohorts are attaining in relation to the appropriate virtual and national cohorts. Three ability cohorts are identified: Those in the bottom 20% of tariff points scored, those in the top 20% of tariff points scored and those that fall within the middle 60% of tariff points scored. The tables below show the average number of tariff points, using the Complementary tariff score method, accrued by learners in each year group during the last three academic sessions.

6.1   **S4 (based on S4 roll)**

S4 Tariff scores	Lowest 20%			Middle 60%			Highest 20%		
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
Highland	101	98	92	344	335	337	517	520	521
VC	132	103	100	386	359	362	582	579	586
National	125	106	103	384	367	369	588	587	594

Our S4 cohort of the lowest 20% are performing less well in comparison with both the virtual comparator and the national figures. Our attainment for our lowest 20% of attainers is on a downward trend as is the virtual comparator and national figure.

The middle attainers perform lower than both the virtual comparator and the Scottish figures, although this has improved slightly from last session. However, there is very little change to attainment gap between Highland and the virtual comparator.

Our highest attainers have also improved very slightly from last session although are performing below the virtual comparator and the national average. The attainment gap has increased between Highland and the virtual comparator.

For lowest 20% of attainers, schools which have performed above the virtual comparator are:
Ardnamurchan High School, Farr High School, Gairloch High School, Golspie High School, Kingussie High School, Kinlochleven High School, Lochaber High School, Mallaig High School.

For the middle 60% of attainers, schools which have performed above the virtual comparator are:
Ardnamurchan High School, Farr High School, Mallaig High School.

For the highest 20% of attainers, schools which are performing well are:
Ardnamurchan High School, Dornoch Academy, Farr High School, Fortrose Academy, Gairloch Academy, Grantown Grammar and Kingussie High School.

6.2   **S5 (based on S5 roll)**

S5 Tariff scores	Lowest 20%			Middle 60%			Highest 20%		
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
Highland	220	187	183	679	656	661	1124	1110	1134
VC	256	240	199	736	729	677	1187	1181	1181
National	238	235	208	725	730	703	1189	1188	1194

The S5 group have reduced the tariff points achieved from last year's Level for the lowest 20%. However, this is an improvement when compared to the virtual comparator, as the attainment gap between Highland and the virtual comparator has narrowed.

The middle 60% are fluctuating over the 3-year period and is below the VC and the national figures. The attainment gap between Highland and the virtual comparator has narrowed from 2018 to 2019.

The highest 20% have also fluctuated over a 3-year period and are below comparator figures. The attainment gap between Highland and the virtual comparator has increased from 2018 to 2019.

Schools which have performed well against the virtual comparator for the lowest 20% of attainers are:
Ardnamurchan High School, Farr High School, Glenurquhart High School, Grantown Grammar and Ullapool High School.

Schools which have performed well against the virtual comparator for the middle 60% of attainers is:
Fortrose Academy.

Schools which have performed well against the virtual comparator for the highest 20% of attainers are:
Fortrose Academy and Grantown Grammar.

6.3 **S6 (based on S6 roll)**

S6 Tariff scores	Lowest 20%			Middle 60%			Highest 20%		
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
Highland	409	427	379	1125	1123	1085	1924	1888	1847
VC	471	486	464	1184	1202	1182	1951	1963	1950
National	489	493	467	1200	1216	1191	1959	1978	1959

The S6 for the lowest 20% have reduced their tariff points and are still below the national figures. The attainment gap between Highland and the virtual comparator has increased from 2018 to 2019.

The middle 60% have reduced their tariff points are below VC and national data. The attainment gap between Highland and the virtual comparator has increased over the last 3 years.

The highest 20% has fallen from last session and is below VC and national Levels. The attainment gap between Highland and the virtual comparator has increased over the last 3 years.

Schools which have performed well against the virtual comparator for the lowest 20% of attainers are:
Ardnamurchan High School, Grantown Grammar, Kilchuimen High School and Ullapool High School.

Schools which have performed well against the virtual comparator for the middle 60% of attainers are:
Fortrose Academy, Nairn Academy and Ullapool High School.

Schools which have performed well against the virtual comparator for the highest 20% of attainers are:
Fortrose Academy, Gairloch High School, Mallaig High School and Portree High School.

The review of the secondary school curriculum will provide opportunity for innovative practice in some areas of curricular provision, with wider accreditation in the senior phase. This will support appropriate learner pathways to broaden opportunities to gain a range of tariff points. This has been discussed at recent attainment meetings.

7. **Local Measure – Initial Leaver Destination – post school destinations**

This will be reported on as both a Local and National Measure in March each year when leaver's data becomes available.

7.1 Local Measure - Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers – Attainment vs deprivation

The graphs show 2017/18 attainment data for S4, S5 and S6 (using complementary tariff scores) for Highland profiled against national data, broken down into ten deciles

according to Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data. Thus, decile 1 refers to the attainment of young people with postcodes within data zones identified as being the 10% most deprived in Scotland according to SIMD, whilst decile 10 refers to those young people with postcodes in the top 10% of the least deprived data zones according to SIMD.

Attainment versus Deprivation
Average Tariff Score of S4 learners by SIMD decile (2019)
(Highland versus Scotland)
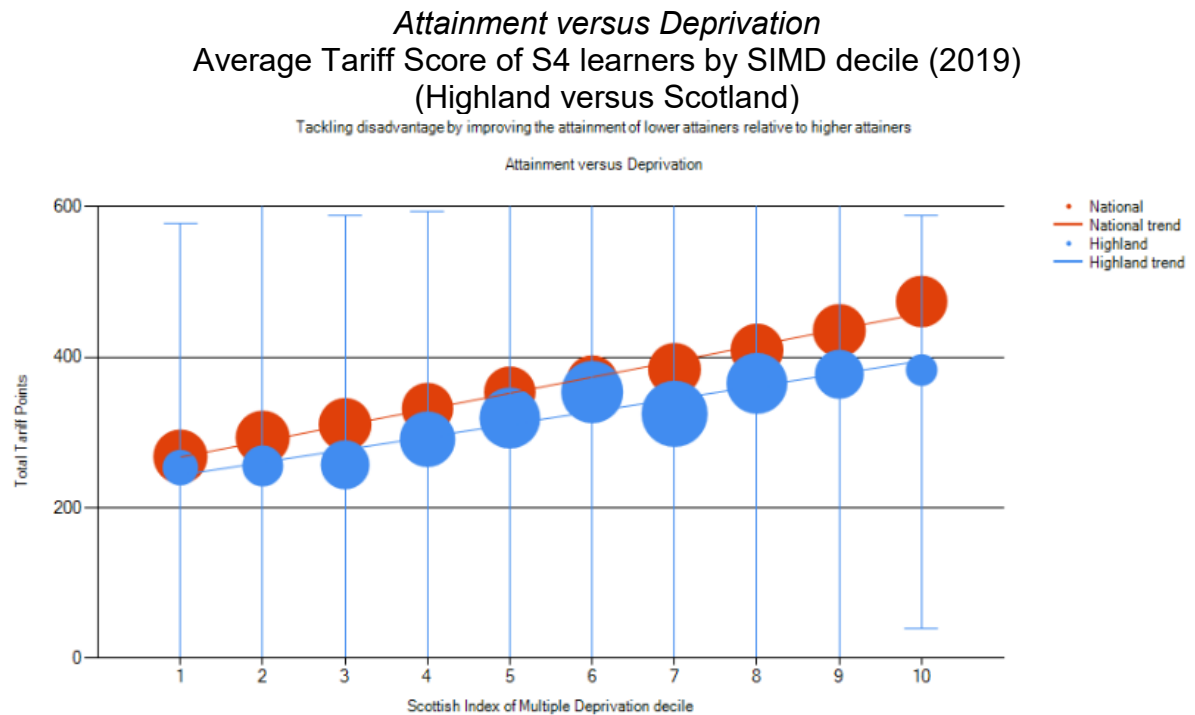
For S4 learners, Highland performance is below national attainment; with the attainment gap increasing at SIMDs 7, 8, 9 and 10. However performance at SIMD 1 is broadly in-line with national attainment.

Attainment versus Deprivation
Average Tariff Score of S5 learners by SIMD decile (2019)
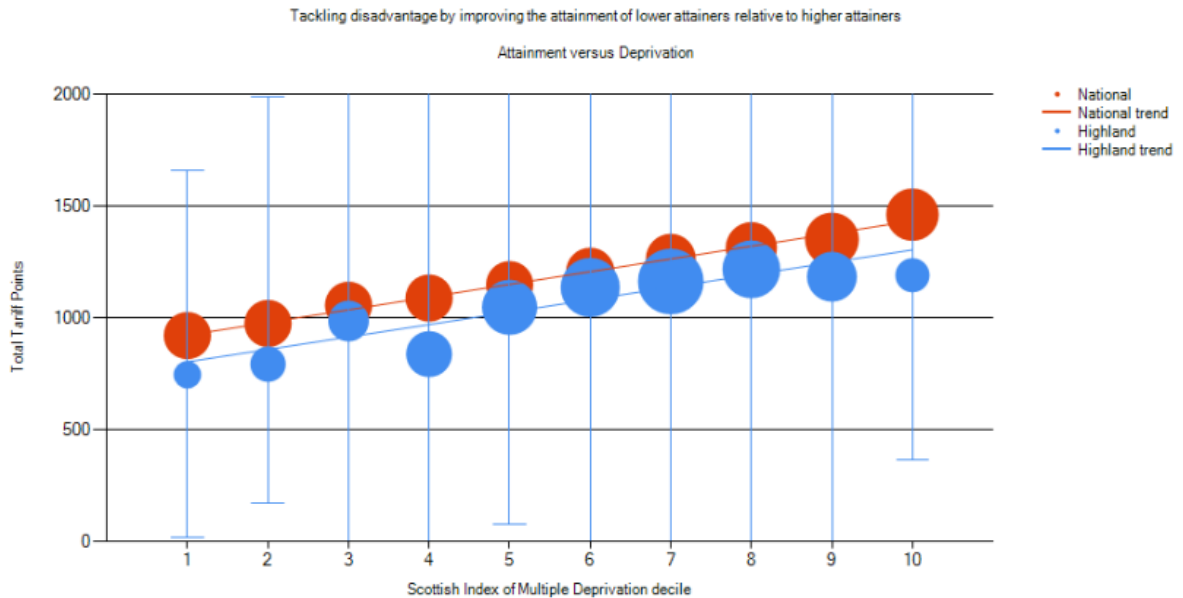### (Highland versus Scotland)

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

Attainment versus Deprivation
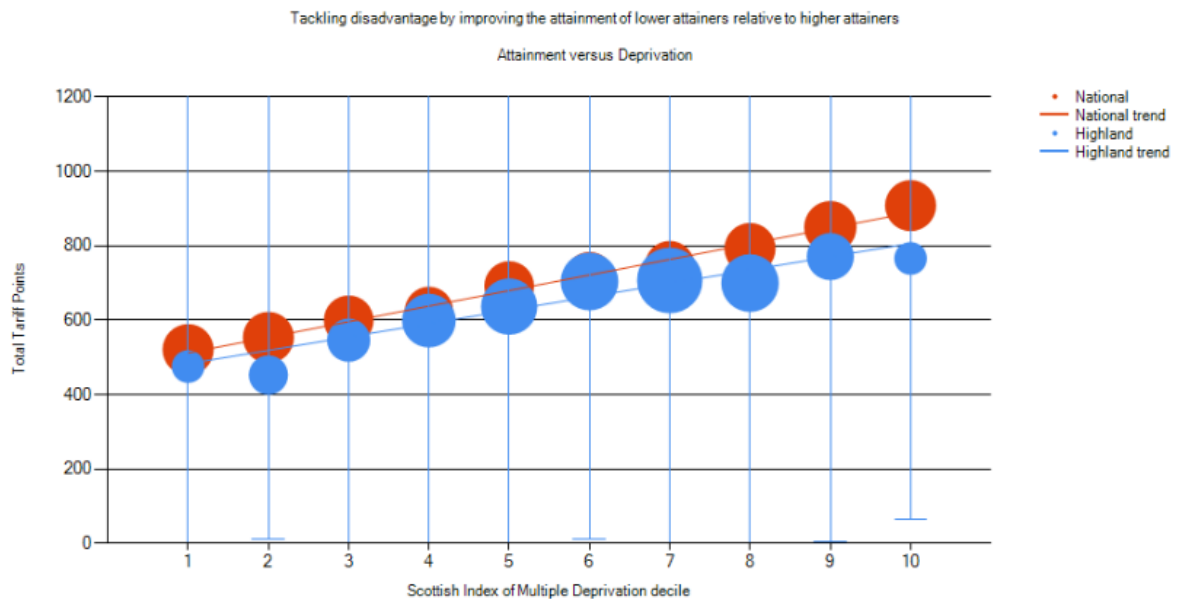
For S5 learners, Highland attainment is generally slightly below national attainment, with the gap increasing for SIMDs 2, 8, 9 and 10. However SIMDs 4, 5, 6 and 7 are broadly in line with the national picture.

Attainment versus Deprivation
Average Tariff Score of S6 learners by SIMD decile (2019)
(Highland versus Scotland)

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

Attainment versus Deprivation

For S6 learners, the attainment gap increases for SIMDs 1, 2 ,4 and 10. In general performance is lower than the national attainment.

8.   Breadth and Depth: All Candidates

For the S4 cohort in 2017 it is now possible to consider the breadth and depth of qualifications which they went on to study in S6 in 2019, to profile their journey through the whole Senior Phase. The tables below illustrate the number of awards accrued at each Level during S4 in 2017 and by the equivalent cohort in S5 (based on the original S4 roll) in 2018, and their final attainment at point of exit in 2019.

8.1

S4 Highland Breadth and Depth 2017								
Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	No in Cohort
1 or more	95.49%	95.41%	95.28%	94.00%	82.25%	2.94%	0.04%	2417
2 or more	93.42%	93.34%	93.26%	91.44%	71.20%	0.41%	0%	2417
3 or more	91.10%	91.06%	90.82%	88.29%	61.36%	0.21%	0%	2417
4 or more	88.13%	88.04%	87.75%	83.82%	50.02%	0.04%	0%	2417
5 or more	81.22%	81.13%	81.01%	75.92%	40.46%	0.04%	0%	2417
6 or more	64.46%	64.42%	64.38%	59.95%	28.59%	0.00%	0%	2417
7 or more	13.86%	13.86%	13.86%	12.12%	3.10%	0.00%	0%	2417
8 or more	0.74%	0.74%	0.74%	0.58%	0.00%	0.00%	0%	2417
9 or more	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0%	2417
10 or more	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0%	2417

S4 Highland Breadth and Depth 2017 - VC								
Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	No in Cohort
1 or more	97.58%	97.51%	97.40%	95.84%	83.24%	1.32%	0%	24170
2 or more	96.13%	96.05%	95.93%	93.72%	73.40%	0.05%	0%	24170
3 or more	94.30%	94.23%	94.08%	91.44%	64.57%	0.00%	0%	24170
4 or more	92.13%	92.04%	91.88%	88.32%	55.73%	0.00%	0%	24170
5 or more	87.88%	87.84%	87.69%	83.15%	46.28%	0.00%	0%	24170
6 or more	77.43%	77.39%	77.25%	72.13%	35.08%	0.00%	0%	24170
7 or more	45.20%	45.18%	45.03%	40.99%	16.22%	0.00%	0%	24170
8 or more	15.17%	15.15%	15.03%	13.21%	4.34%	0.00%	0%	24170
9 or more	3.32%	3.31%	3.28%	2.74%	0.71%	0.00%	0%	24170
10 or more	0.57%	0.57%	0.55%	0.39%	0.04%	0.00%	0%	24170

S5 Highland Breadth and Depth 2018								
Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	No in Cohort
1 or more	95.96%	95.84%	95.76%	94.28%	86.20%	55.89%	0.74%	2428
2 or more	94.03%	93.90%	93.82%	92.34%	79.00%	44.44%	0.08%	2428
3 or more	92.17%	92.05%	91.80%	89.95%	71.38%	35.75%	0%	2428
4 or more	89.50%	89.46%	89.13%	86.16%	63.47%	25.29%	0%	2428
5 or more	85.34%	85.21%	84.97%	81.55%	55.40%	16.14%	0%	2428
6 or more	76.48%	76.28%	76.19%	72.73%	43.70%	1.65%	0%	2428
7 or more	46.38%	46.25%	46.13%	43.25%	21.50%	0.33%	0%	2428
8 or more	18.95%	18.90%	18.90%	17.01%	5.56%	0.04%	0%	2428
9 or more	5.72%	5.72%	5.72%	5.23%	0.95%	0.00%	0%	2428
10 or more	1.81%	1.81%	1.81%	1.52%	0.29%	0.00%	0%	2428

S5 Highland Breadth and Depth 2018 - VC								
Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	No in Cohort
1 or more	98.08%	98.02%	97.94%	96.45%	87.41%	61.07%	0.61%	24280
2 or more	96.91%	96.84%	96.73%	94.68%	81.05%	50.07%	0.02%	24280
3 or more	95.42%	95.35%	95.16%	92.94%	74.70%	40.54%	0%	24280
4 or more	93.66%	93.57%	93.42%	90.53%	68.03%	30.67%	0%	24280
5 or more	90.72%	90.65%	90.50%	86.95%	59.70%	19.67%	0%	24280
6 or more	85.00%	84.90%	84.74%	80.85%	49.49%	2.47%	0%	24280
7 or more	66.50%	66.42%	66.29%	62.71%	32.20%	0.29%	0%	24280
8 or more	38.21%	38.15%	38.03%	34.98%	13.72%	0.04%	0%	24280
9 or more	16.18%	16.14%	16.03%	14.11%	4.14%	0.00%	0%	24280
10 or more	5.45%	5.42%	5.36%	4.42%	0.82%	0.00%	0%	24280

S6 Highland Breadth and Depth 2019								
Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	No in Cohort
1 or more	96.31%	96.18%	96.14%	94.71%	87.16%	60.44%	19.66%	2437
2 or more	94.34%	94.21%	94.13%	92.65%	80.39%	51.58%	8.41%	2437
3 or more	92.65%	92.53%	92.24%	90.40%	73.25%	44.73%	2.54%	2437
4 or more	89.99%	89.91%	89.70%	86.70%	65.45%	37.26%	0.45%	2437
5 or more	86.09%	86.01%	85.72%	82.36%	59.05%	29.59%	0.04%	2437
6 or more	78.54%	78.33%	78.13%	74.81%	50.55%	18.34%	0%	2437
7 or more	60.44%	60.28%	60.11%	57.45%	37.09%	8.49%	0%	2437
8 or more	38.16%	38.08%	38.04%	36.23%	22.81%	2.46%	0%	2437
9 or more	19.45%	19.45%	19.45%	18.79%	10.09%	0.12%	0%	2437
10 or more	7.96%	7.92%	7.92%	7.55%	3.49%	0.04%	0%	2437

S6 Highland Breadth and Depth 2019 - VC								
Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	No in Cohort
1 or more	98.13%	98.08%	97.99%	96.49%	87.86%	65.38%	21.47%	24370
2 or more	96.97%	96.91%	96.77%	94.77%	81.89%	56.93%	9.14%	24370
3 or more	95.51%	95.44%	95.27%	93.08%	76.22%	49.74%	3.22%	24370
4 or more	93.81%	93.73%	93.56%	90.73%	70.57%	42.57%	0.36%	24370
5 or more	91.04%	90.95%	90.80%	87.38%	63.83%	34.86%	0.01%	24370
6 or more	86.01%	85.92%	85.71%	82.09%	56.09%	24.28%	0%	24370
7 or more	74.04%	73.94%	73.77%	70.60%	45.38%	13.83%	0%	24370
8 or more	56.02%	55.93%	55.83%	53.19%	32.26%	5.41%	0%	24370
9 or more	36.68%	36.61%	36.52%	34.47%	19.40%	1.42%	0%	24370
10 or more	19.87%	19.82%	19.73%	18.39%	9.38%	0.28%	0%	24370

8.2   Breadth and depth data for this cohort of young people show that in S4, 61.36% achieved 3+SCQF Level 5, which is below the virtual comparator (3.21%), 40.46% achieved 5+ SCQF Level 5 which is also below the virtual comparator (5.82%). When the young people moved into S5 they achieved 1+SCQF Level 6 at 55.85 %, which is below the virtual comparator (5.22%), 3+ SCQF Level 6 which is also below the virtual comparator (6.79%). When this cohort moved into S6, attainment is lower than the

virtual comparator for 3+ SCQF Level 6 (5.01%) and is also lower for 5+SCQF Level 6 (5.27%) and lower for 1+ SCQF Level 7 (1.81%)

It is clear that, irrespective of which Level is selected and independent of the variance in curricular models between local authorities, the most recent cohort of learners in Highland who attempt a suite of national qualifications are currently on average achieving fewer qualifications in the Senior Phase by the end of S6 than our virtual comparator authority.

8.3   Within Highland, we have a wide range of partnership approaches for curriculum provision and use increasing consortia arrangements across our schools. This includes a range of National Qualification provisions across our schools: Young Applicants in Schools Scheme (YASS) which provides S6 pupils the chance to study Open University modules; wider achievement through a range of partners and accreditation in partnership with Highland College, UHI. The attainment through Highland College is variable and has, for some young people, prevented them from achieving breadth and depth measures as well as the full number of tariff points; this will be addressed, and actions agreed at the forthcoming College Attainment meeting. We continue to support and develop our partnership opportunities across Highlands to ensure a positive and improving array of subjects and qualifications for our young people, in line with national guidelines and expectations.

8.4   Officers, including the change team, provide schools with centrally collated attainment data immediately following the publication of SQA exam results in August; to enable schools to compare their performance and identify best practice across subject areas within the authority and to inform initial discussions regarding attainment and progress in this area. This has also extended to all schools receiving a data pack of 5-year data for all Highland Schools as well as data for Highland averages, virtual comparator, Northern Alliance and National Attainment Levels, in a range of measures to support the use of data in raising attainment and identifying trends, as well as recognising gaps and ensuring interventions are in place. This is also being supported by more rigorous tracking and monitoring of pupil progress and anticipated Levels of attainment; schools have with recent intervention provided early indication of attainment last session and this will be a focus for forthcoming attainment meetings.

8.5   The new Education Improvement Team, led by the interim Head of Education, is conducting further attainment analysis using Insight data to assist secondary schools in evaluating their current Senior Phase provision. This includes the curriculum offer and approaches to learner pathways as well as discussion around the authorities BVAR audit. (See Appendix1)

9.   Actions for Improvement

Highland Raising Attainment Strategy
- Initial discussions regarding the implementation of a Highland Raising Attainment Strategy which will support our Corporate Plan priorities for education
- Rigorous and consistent tracking and monitoring of pupil progress across all schools, including the discussion around early intervention
- Consistent and supported use of data for analysis and improvement across all schools using family improvement groups to support and challenge

- ASG attainment plans linked to robust data and outcomes
- Central officer focus (the Education Improvement Team) on school visits on attainment, data analysis and improvement, for which next steps and actions are followed up on subsequent visits. Delivered through accountable line management structures
- Continued review through school attainment meetings with a focus on areas for improvement which will be monitored and reviewed through target setting relating to key BVAR measures (Appendix 2) targets
- Follow-up school attainment meetings will take place post February with elected members scrutinising ward schools 2020 (Appendix 3 Schedule)

Highland Learning and Teaching Strategy
- Launch and implementation of Highland Learning and Teaching Strategy/Academy
- Suite of resources for schools to support high quality learning and teaching, assessment and moderation and tracking and monitoring

Leadership
- Ongoing support for middle leaders in schools through SQA appointee opportunities, re-introduce subject group meetings and middle leadership opportunities through the Highland Leadership Academy
- Practitioner support through a range of professional learning opportunities
- Each HT will have a plan for improvement which will be the subject of peer scrutiny at attainment meetings during September and October 2020
- New thematic approach to raising attainment using new format for Head Teacher meetings and Professional Learning Workshops (for DHTs), including themes; Learning and Teaching, Raising Attainment, Supporting Learners, Self-Evaluation for Self-Improvement, Curriculum, Leadership at all Levels

Curriculum
- SQA and Timetabling Working Groups ongoing to support SQA good practice, approaches and development of a consortia approach to curricular opportunities.
- Additional discussion on the senior phase in all secondary schools to provide time for additional National Qualifications in S4 and more opportunity for literacy and numeracy interventions across S4-S6.

Northern Alliance
- Northern Alliances range of initiatives; Emerging Literacy, Stages of Early Arithmetic Learning, Maths and Numeracy, Leadership

Designation: Chief Executive

Date: 18 February 2020

Author: Nicky Grant, Interim Head of Education

HIGHLAND COUNCIL
SENIOR PHASE ATTAINMENT MEETINGS
SESSION 19/20

OVERVIEW AND ARRANGEMENTS

Attainment meetings, as you know, are a normal part of your school's self-evaluation cycle. Beth Brown (Strategic Quality Improvement Manager) issued the 'Big Questions' document earlier in the session but, due to the continuing re-organisation of the education service, we have been unable to meet up until this point.

We are now looking forward to meeting with you. Our Senior Phase attainment meetings for session 19/20 achievement will take place on the following dates and times at the following venues:

A major driver for our discussion this year will be the recent Best Value Report on Highland Council prepared by Audit Scotland:

__Page 20 BVAR Report – [click here](#)__

 Much in the same way as our schools are inspected, local authorities are also inspected and one element of the report is the performance of the council in terms of its education service.

As such we will discuss the key performance indicators (K.P.I.s) for education that form part of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (L.G.B.F.) which are referenced in the BVAR.

Along with L.G.B.F data we will also discuss S.Q.A. data along with the local benchmarking information from the September Insight data release.

The format for reporting is included for your use.
Please ensure Insight is available to access on the day as part of the meeting structure.

The challenge questions attached will be used to support the discussion and will be chosen to be specific to your school context. We will also focus on the actions for improvement from session 2018/19 attainment.

Senior Phase Attainment Meeting Schedule – Session 19/20

 Please note that Nicky Grant, Head of Education and Donna Manson, Chief Executive will only be attending a selection of meetings.

The discussion from the attainment meeting will be presented as Areas of Strength and Areas for Improvement and will be reviewed and discussed in further visits throughout the session. There will be Actions for Improvement and these will provide an ongoing focus from last session and towards next session. It is hoped that the information from these meetings will be used to share good practice and continue to raise attainment in Highland.

SQA RESULTS DATA AND INSIGHT SEPTEMBER LOCAL MEASURES DATA - COHORT INFORMATION

Using the SQA results data and the Highland analysis along with the Insight local measure data available in the September release, explore the following areas; exemplify using data analysis evidence as appropriate and comparisons to Highland, VC and national.

<u>Overview</u>
Identify areas of strength, areas for improvement and actions using the above information - September Insight update presents local data which informs tracking and support for pupils still in school; February Insight update presents national data which informs strategic, whole school planning

<u>Literacy and Numeracy</u>
- Literacy and Numeracy attainment, also consider this in line with highest SCQF Level achieved
- Literacy and Numeracy attainment approaches in place to ensure positive attainment for all young people
- Literacy and Numeracy attainment progression in line with S3 Achievement of a Level data
- Literacy and Numeracy attainment over time – last 5 years for cohorts and groups

<u>Improving Attainment for All (Complementary Tariff)</u>
- Improving attainment for all – lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% for session 2018/19 and trends for last 5 years for S4, S5 and S6
- Improving attainment for all – as above consider for groups – gender, ASN, LAC (plus any other)
- Improving attainment for all – for each cohort consider the highest SCQF Level achieved
- Contribution of wider achievement awards on overall attainment

<u>Breadth and Depth</u>
- S4, S5 and S6 attainment for N3, N4, N5, Higher and AH, usual measures – 1+, 3+, 5+
- Consider attainment Level should RPA not be in place, as will be the case from 2020
- Use Insight to examine learner journeys eg progression of cohorts looking at S6 back to S4,S5

<u>General</u>
- Explore gender, ASN and LAC attainment (plus any other relevant)
- Consider presentation percentages for subjects/Levels in comparison with VC and National percentages
- Impact of PEF strategies to support senior phase attainment
- Early presentation and S3 accreditation approaches
- UPS senior phase strategies
- Impact of tracking and monitoring systems to raise attainment

<u>Departmental Performances</u>
- Overview of English and Maths results for 2019 and trends, also reference to SCQF Literacy and Numeracy Levels and in line with ACEL

- Positive departmental results – 2019 and trends
- Good practice strategies for sharing across Highland
- Departmental results requiring improvement – 2019 and trends

<u>Partnership Summary</u>
- Partnership contribution to whole school performance

<u>Learner Pathways</u>
- Present a range of learner pathways for 3 or 4 young people to showcase your curriculum offer and their attainment journey.

CHALLENGE QUESTIONS

A range of HGIOS4-based challenge questions supporting discussions from Insight data analysis.

Challenge questions to be chosen appropriate to the areas of strength and the areas for development and resulting conclusions included in overall commentary. They could be chosen by the school and /or QIO.

- ☐ Do all staff engage in analysis of attainment data using SQA and Insight sources? What could be done to further improve this?
- ☐ Does this use of attainment data inform aspects of the school and department improvement plan?
- ☐ How are improved outcomes for learners being identified and measured?
- ☐ Where are the areas of strength and areas for improvement within the school?
- ☐ How do you know?

Consider evidence from a range of sources within Insight

- ☐ What trends are emerging?
  Consider positive improvement of attainment over time in subject areas/whole school.
- ☐ Does the department/school data demonstrate that our learners are making very good progress?
  How do we know?
- ☐ Within the department/school has attainment improved over time? How do we know this? What action is being taken to maintain/improve this?
- ☐ Has attainment of individual and groups of learners improved over time? How do we know this?

What action is being taken to maintain/improve this?

- ☐ How does the curriculum experienced by learners reflect attainment?
  Consider progression, tracking and monitoring, interventions.
- ☐ Does the curriculum promote equity and raise attainment for all young people?
- ☐ What attainment information identifies development needs for individual learners and groups of learners?
- ☐ What department and whole school approaches are contributing to improvements in literacy and numeracy attainment?
- ☐ Are almost all young people attaining at appropriate Levels?

How do you know?

- [ ] Is attainment in literacy and numeracy a central feature of priorities for improvement and raising attainment?

  What evidence supports this for leavers, cohorts or groups?

- [ ] Are our learners making very good progress from prior Levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy?

  How do departments contribute to this?

- [ ] How transitions and cross-sector working used to support and improve attainment?

- [ ] Are all young people successful in moving on to a sustained and positive destination on leaving school?
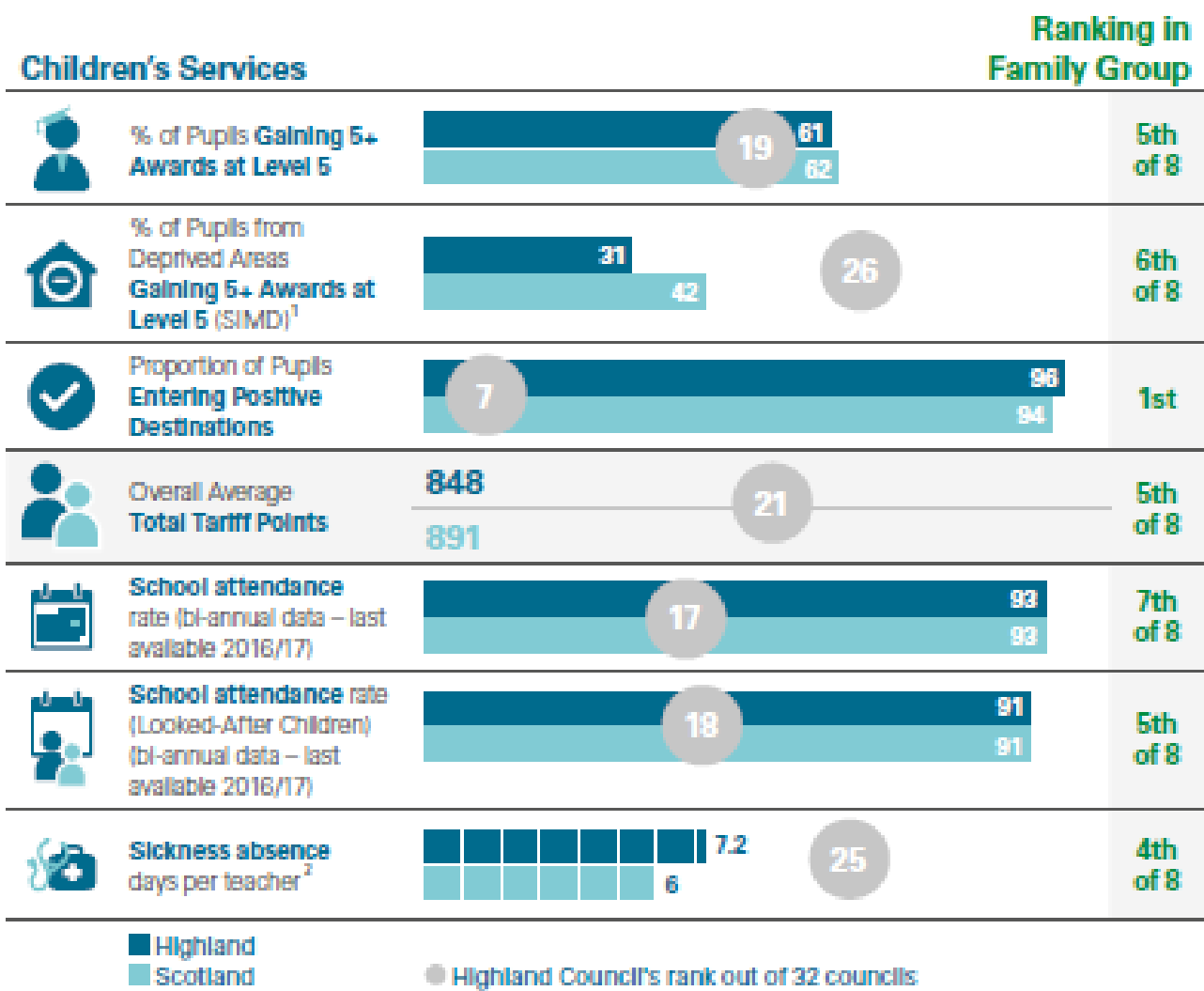
- [ ] How well are we utilising accreditation to recognise and celebrate achievement?

46. The council's KPIs include eight Children's Services indicators. Seven of these are taken from the LGBF. The council's analysis shows that seven of these eight indicators are improving. However, our analysis of these seven LGBF indicators against family grouping and national comparators shows poor performance for the majority (Exhibit 4). Highland Council is in a family group with Angus, Argyll and Bute, East Lothian, Midlothian, Moray, Scottish Borders and Stirling councils for Children's Services indicators. This family grouping analysis is not routinely reported to elected members and the public and contributes to a lack of scrutiny of performance information. The council could make better use of this analysis to help support continuous improvement.

Exhibit 4
Highland Council's performance against Children's Services KPIs in 2017/18
Highland Council performed poorly against the national average and similar councils for most indicators

Children's Services		Ranking in Family Group
% of Pupils **Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5**	19 — 81 / 62	5th of 8
% of Pupils from Deprived Areas **Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5** (SIMD)[1]	31 / 42 — 26	6th of 8
Proportion of Pupils **Entering Positive Destinations**	7 — 96 / 94	1st
Overall Average **Total Tariff Points**	848 / 891 — 21	5th of 8
School attendance rate (bi-annual data – last available 2016/17)	17 — 93 / 93	7th of 8
School attendance rate (Looked-After Children) (bi-annual data – last available 2016/17)	18 — 91 / 91	5th of 8
Sickness absence days per teacher[2]	7.2 / 6 — 25	4th of 8

■ Highland
■ Scotland
● Highland Council's rank out of 32 councils

Notes:
1. Four councils did not submit data for this indicator.
2. Highland Council is in a family group with Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Scottish Borders, Dumfries and Galloway, Eilean Siar, Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands Councils for Corporate Services indicators.

Source: Audit Scotland analysis of Highland Council 2017/18 LGBF data

Appendix 2

We aim to improve attainment and have set the following targets for breadth and depth:

Measure	2019			2020
	Highland (%)	Virtual comparator (%)	National (%)	Highland (%)
5+ SCQF Level 5	59	64	63	61
5+ SCQF Level 6	30	35	35	32

Appendix 3

Alness Academy ASG

Proposed Attainment Pro Forma Profiling Learner Journey

Contents

1. Curriculum for Excellence – Achievement of Level to date

2. Alness Academy Literacy & Numeracy data
   2.1   SCQF Level 3 and 4
   2.2   SCQF Level 4 and 5
   2.3   SCQF Level 5 and 6

3. Social Context of Alness - Attainment Versus Deprivation

4. Positive Destinations Alness ASG

1. Curriculum for Excellence – Achievement of a Level to date

	CfE levels	Alness ASG						Highland						Scotland					
	June	P1	P4	P7	P1,4,7	S3 3rd Lvl or better	S3 4th Lvl	P1	P4	P7	P1,4,7	3rd Lvl or be	S3 4th Lvl	P1	P4	P7	P1,4,7	3rd Lvl or be	S3 4th Lvl
Reading	2016	67%	54%	63%	61%	78%	12%	73	67	68		86	32	81	75	72		86	39
	2017	28%	54%	41%	41%	65%	9%	70	71	69	70	89	48	80	77	76	78	90	51
	2018	54%	62%	48%	55%	92%	56%	74	68	71	71	89	53	81	77	79	79	90	53
	2019	65%	64%	63%	64%	65%	40%	72	69	70	70	90	49	82	78	80	80	91	55
Writing	2016	67%	39%	51%	52%	74%	11%	68	58	60		84	31	78	69	65		84	37
	2017	35%	45%	35%	39%	65%	9%	68	64	59	63	88	46	77	71	69	72	89	48
	2018	59%	56%	51%	56%	92%	56%	73	63	63	66	87	50	78	72	73	74	89	51
	2019	55%	58%	50%	54%	70%	38%	71	62	60	64	87	45	79	73	74	75	90	52
Numeracy	2016	49%	39%	45%	44%	80%	35%	77	66	61		82	45	84	73	68		86	41
	2017	35%	41%	33%	37%	56%	10%	72	68	59	66	86	51	83	75	70	76	88	56
	2018	51%	58%	46%	52%	83%	32%	77	66	66	70	85	53	85	76	75	78	89	56
	2019	70%	64%	51%	61%	75%	40%	75	66	62	67	89	57	85	77	76	79	90	59
L&T	2016	80%	58%	72%	69%	68%	12%	82	75	76		84	33	85	81	77		87	49
	2017	41%	65%	43%	50%	65%	9%	76	79	76	77	90	50	85	83	81	83	91	51
	2018	81%	61%	61%	68%	92%	56%	82	78	79	80	90	52	87	85	84	85	91	55
	2019	67%	62%	68%	66%	68%	38%	79	79	74	77	90	50	87	85	86	86	91	57

Free School Meals - Yes

	CfE levels	Alness ASG Combined			Highland		
	June	P1,4,7	S3 3rd Lvl or better	S3 4th Lvl	P1,4,7	S3 3rd Lvl or better	S3 4th Lvl
Reading	2018	38%	76%	47%	49%	78%	38%
	2019	44%	75%	50%	48%	75%	27%
Writing	2018	34%	76%	47%	45%	75%	36%
	2019	38%	67%	42%	42%	72%	23%
Numeracy	2018	33%	71%	12%	49%	68%	32%
	2019	48%	67%	42%	47%	68%	27%
L&T	2018	64%	76%	47%	64%	81%	39%
	2019	42%	75%	42%	59%	75%	27%

2. Alness Academy Literacy & Numeracy data

SCQF Level 3 and 4 Literacy

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Candidates Attaining Literacy

SCQF Level 3 and 4 Numeracy

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Candidates Attaining Numeracy

SCQF Level 4 and 5 - Literacy

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Candidates Attaining Literacy

Legend:
- Alness Academy SCQF 4
- Virtual Comparator SCQF 4
- Alness Academy SCQF 5
- Virtual Comparator SCQF 5
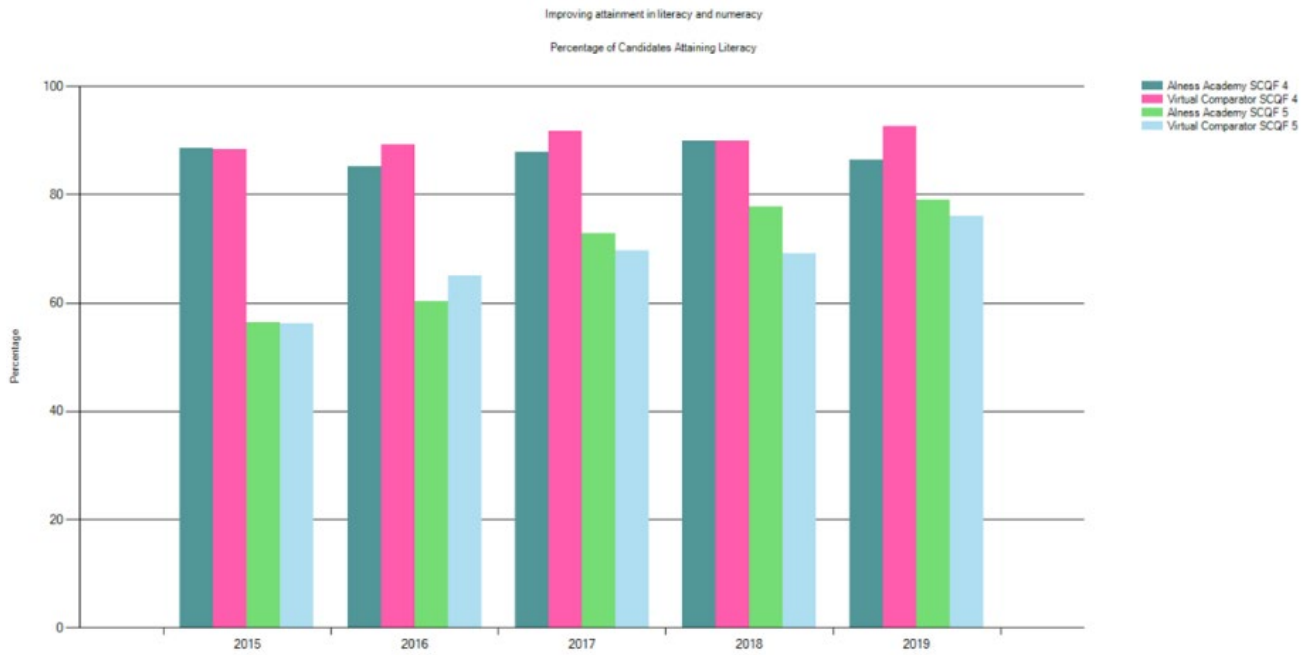
SCQF Level 4 and 5 – Numeracy

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Candidates Attaining Numeracy

Legend:
- Alness Academy SCQF 4
- Virtual Comparator SCQF 4
- Alness Academy SCQF 5
- Virtual Comparator SCQF 5
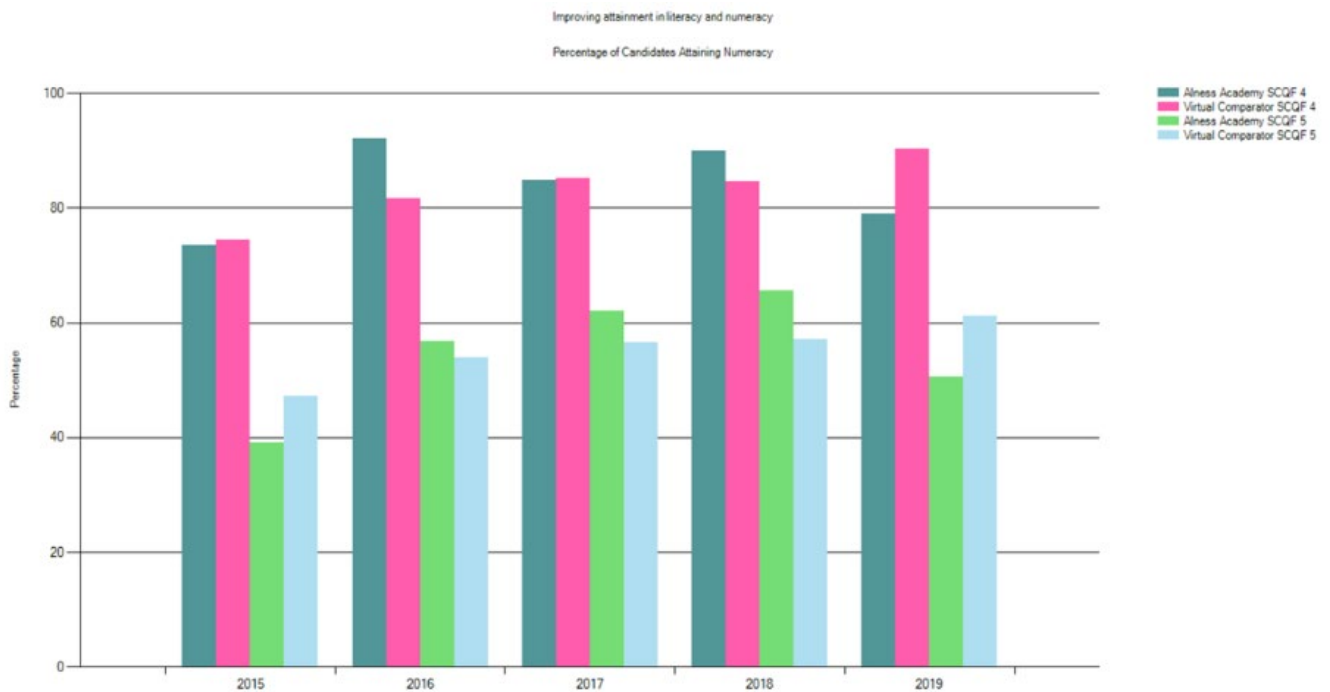
SCQF Level 5 and 6 - Literacy

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Candidates Attaining Numeracy
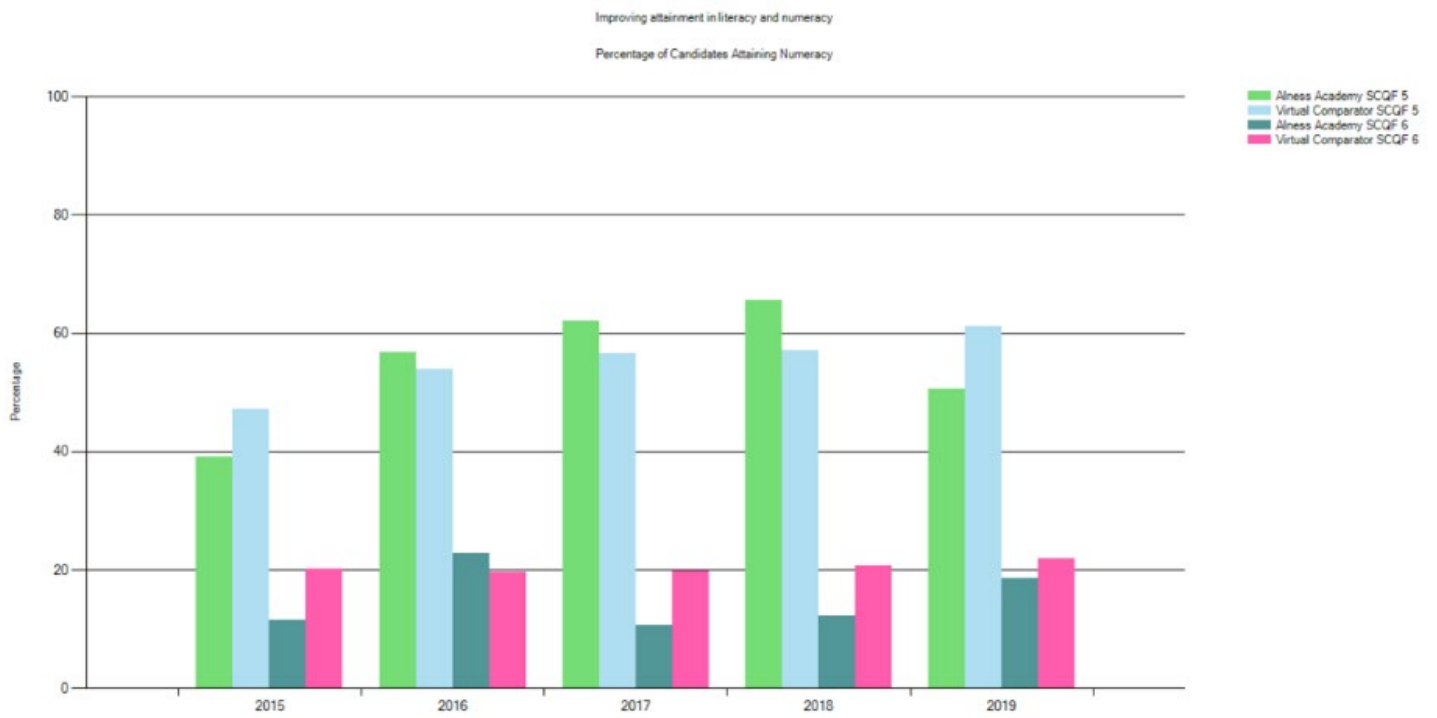
SCQF Level 5 and 6 – Numeracy

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Candidates Attaining Literacy

3. Social Context of Alness - Attainment Versus Deprivation

Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers
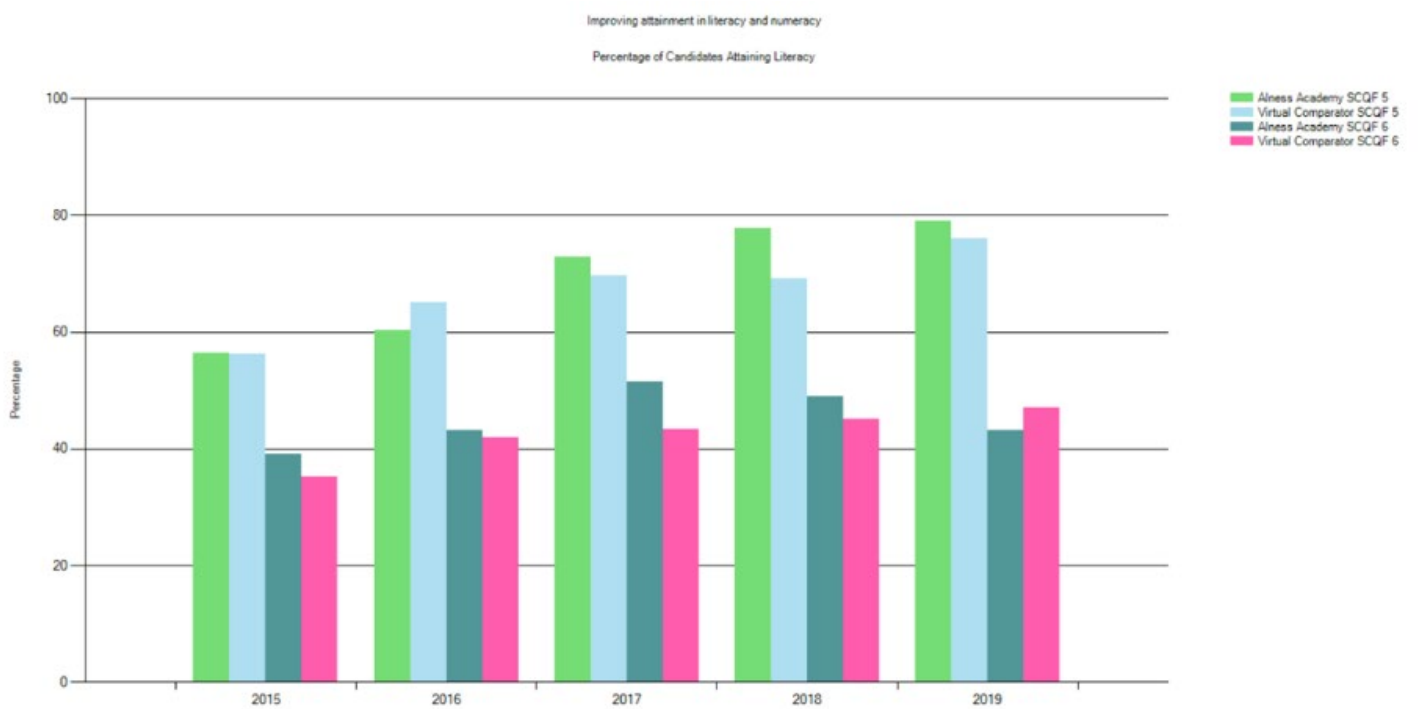
Attainment versus Deprivation
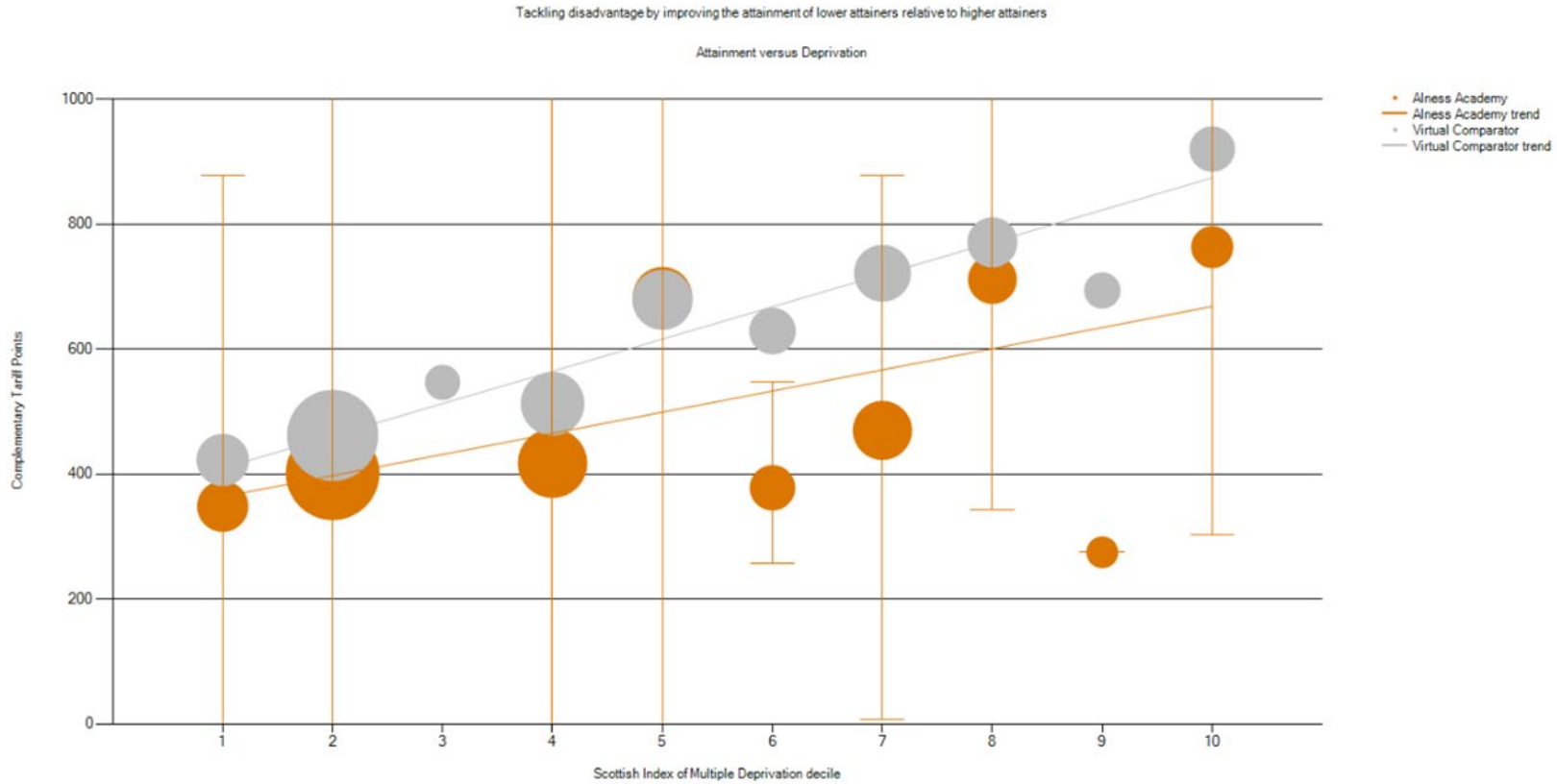
Establishment	Number in Cohort	SIMD 1 Average	SIMD 2 Average	SIMD 3 Average	SIMD 4 Average	SIMD 5 Average	SIMD 6 Average	SIMD 7 Average	SIMD 8 Average	SIMD 9 Average	SIMD 10 Average
Alness Academy	81	348	401	0	417	684	378	470	711	274	763
Virtual Comparator	810	422	462	547	512	679	629	721	771	694	920

4. **Positive Destinations Alness ASG**

Increasing participation
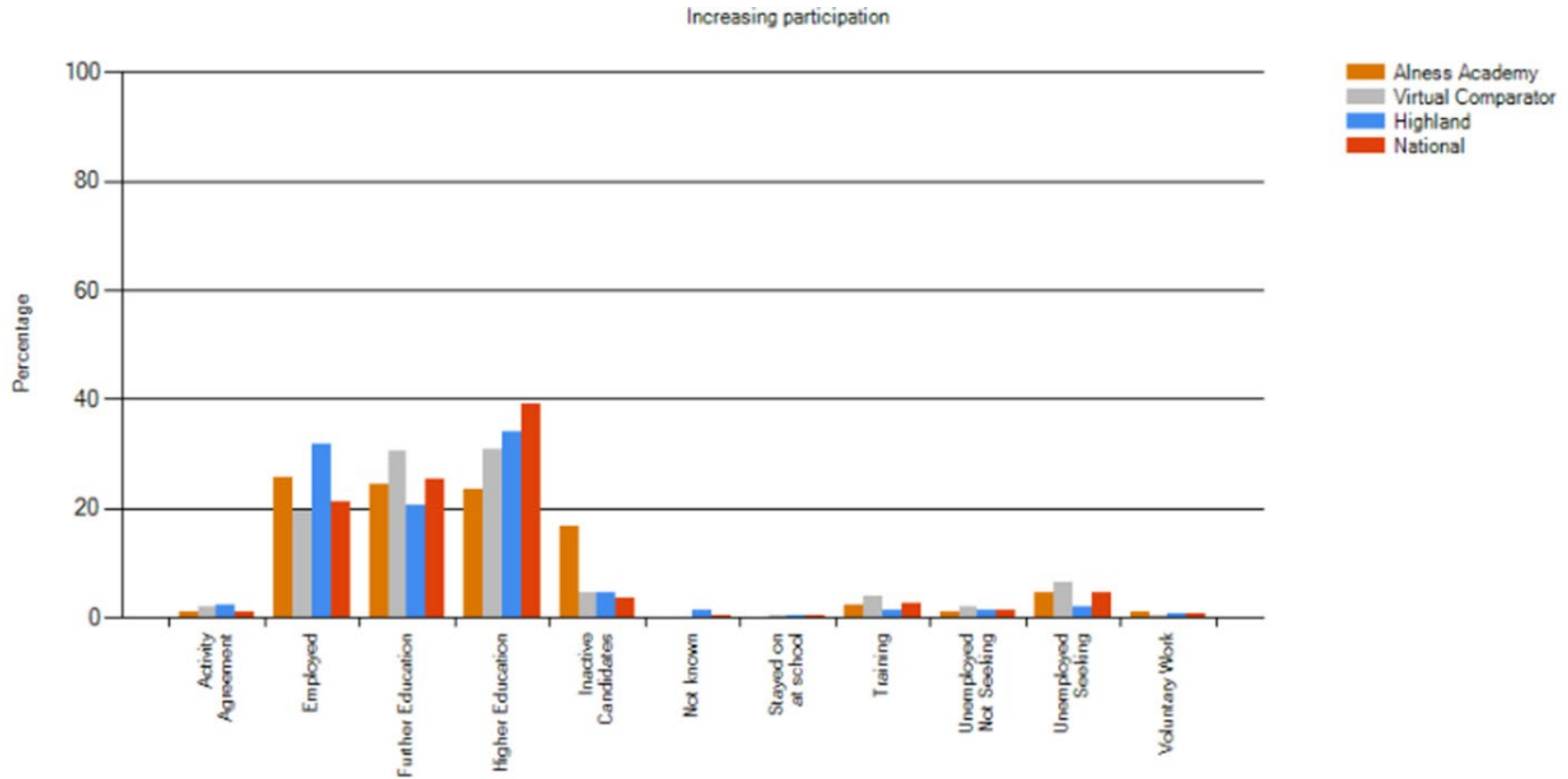
Establishment	Year	% Activity Agreement	% Employed	% Further Education	% Higher Education	% Not known	% Training	% Unemployed Not Seeking	% Unemployed Seeking	% Voluntary Work	Number in Cohort
Alness Academy	2014/15	3.39	35.59	27.12	25.42			5.08	3.39		59
Virtual Comparator	2014/15	0.51	20.68	28.31	37.12	1.02	4.75	1.53	5.76	0.34	590
Alness Academy	2015/16	1.32	32.89	28.95	22.37	1.32		1.32	11.84		76
Virtual Comparator	2015/16	1.18	18.82	31.97	35.79	0.13	3.29	1.32	7.11	0.39	760
Alness Academy	2016/17	1.89	39.62	24.53	26.42		1.89	1.89	3.77		53
Virtual Comparator	2016/17	0.57	20.94	29.62	37.36	0.38	3.58	1.32	6.04	0.19	530
Alness Academy	2017/18	2.35	25.88	37.65	24.71		2.35	1.18	4.71	1.18	85
Virtual Comparator	2017/18	1.18	20.24	32.82	36	0.12	2.59	1.65	4.94	0.47	850