

North Ayrshire Council

Education
Service
Standards
and Quality
Report

2021-22

September 2022



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath





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Foreword

I am delighted to be able to present this Standards and Quality Report which captures the extensive improvement work that has been undertaken over the last year across the Education Service in North Ayrshire. It is fair to say that 2021-22 was far from a normal year for our staff, children, young people and their families. Yet, despite the challenges presented by the ongoing pandemic, I have been incredibly impressed with the commitment and determination of our school communities to improve outcomes for our learners.

This report sets out the progress we have made in the last year in education. It describes what we have done to try to ensure that all our young people achieve their very best. In many ways, the pandemic has hit hard, particularly in parts of Scotland with higher rates of unemployment and lower wealth, but I am very encouraged to note that the process of recovery, particularly in educational outcomes, is already well underway across North Ayrshire.

Attainment is improving and I am very proud of our learners for their achievements, but there is always room for further improvement, particularly in terms of reducing the poverty-related attainment gap, which has been affected by Covid-19. I am confident that our schools – staff and learners alike – are well-equipped to meet that challenge. We are driven by a deep

desire to improve the life chances of every child in North Ayrshire. I would like to thank our dedicated staff teams for the fantastic work they do day in, day out to make that happen.



[Councillor Shaun Macaulay](#)
Depute Leader of North Ayrshire Council
and Portfolio Holder for Education

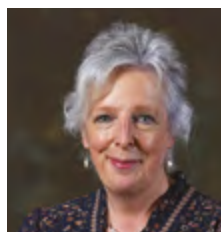
Introduction

On behalf of the Communities and Education Directorate, I am very proud to introduce our Standards and Quality report for 2021-22. The report demonstrates the enormous contribution and improvements made by our learners, staff and partners over the period, in circumstances which have been at best uncertain.

Key themes include creating the best possible conditions for learning, supporting learners to achieve their potential, participation of children and families in the life of the school community, and health and wellbeing in its widest sense. These priorities have been underpinned by our commitment to fairness and equity in North Ayrshire, including our continuing determination to reduce the poverty related attainment gap. The report celebrates many successes, with many more unable to be included here. Overall, despite the challenges of recent years, attainment is again improving and we continue to identify further interventions to ensure this continues.

We continue to value hugely our partnership with families and with our wider communities, all of whom play a vital role in ensuring our children and young people have the best start in life.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in our journey so far and we look forward to continuing to work together with you.



Dr Audrey Sutton
Executive Director
of Communities and Education

Education in North Ayrshire is delivered through:

48

Primary Schools



Partnership early learning and childcare settings

16

8

Secondary Schools



Pupils

18,061



1

Through School



Teachers

1,411

1

Specialist ASN Campus



372

Early learning and childcare staff



Council-managed early learning and childcare

41

639 support staff



This report details progress made towards our Service Improvement Plan priorities from session 2021-22. Our priorities are displayed on the next page. Incorporated within this document is information relating to our progress towards the National Improvement Framework priorities for 2021-22, which were:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in 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

Education Service Improvement Plan Priorities 2021-22

Priority 1

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

HIGH LEVEL ACTIONS

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

Priority 2

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

HIGH LEVEL ACTIONS

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

Priority 3

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

HIGH LEVEL ACTIONS

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

Priority 4

We will work with all young people to build their resilience supporting their mental health and physical wellbeing.

HIGH LEVEL ACTIONS

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

Education Service Priority 1

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

Investing in our Learning Estate

Work continued in the 2021-22 academic year to ensure our early years and schools could continue to deliver high quality learning experiences for all our learners. This year we celebrated the opening of Lockhart Campus, which brought together pupils from four additional support needs schools: James Reid, James MacFarlane, Stanecastle, and Haysholm, to a new state of the art campus in Stevenston. Lockhart Campus is providing a stimulating environment for around 200 pupils from across North Ayrshire. The facilities at Lockhart which include a sensory room, swimming pool and hydrotherapy suite, play facilities, music and drama, as well as a range of IT equipment, help staff to better meet the needs of the children and young people, supporting them to engage with their learning.

Ensuring our learning estate is fit for purpose is a priority for us and we work closely with our colleagues and external partners, including Scottish Futures Trust, to deliver high quality learning environments. Lockhart Campus is the most recent addition to our learning estate. However, we have several projects underway including: a new early years' centre at Marress House in Irvine; a new early years, primary and secondary school campus in Ardrossan;

a new early years and primary school to replace the existing Moorpark Primary in Kilbirnie; and a new early years and primary school in Montgomerie Park in Irvine. An extensive refurbishment programme is nearing completion to ensure all our early years settings can deliver the best possible learning experiences for our children.



“Lockhart is a fantastic learning environment for my son. His communication skills have developed so much in the past year due to the quality of the trained staff. The classroom is relaxed and has the essential facilities and resources to ensure my son’s learning can thrive. We look forward to this coming school year, especially as Covid restrictions have eased, which will improve everyone’s access to the fantastic facilities at the Lockhart Campus for pupils to enjoy and parents to come and see.”

– Parent

Ongoing Response to the Pandemic

In 2021-22, we regularly revised our local authority resilience plan in response to national guidance. This involved working closely with NHS colleagues to establish outbreak protocols as well as facilitating installation of CO2 monitors across our learning establishments to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Each establishment also had their own resilience plan and risk assessment to ensure disruption to learning was minimised.

Early Years Outdoor Play Strategy

The enhanced outdoor spaces in all our early learning and childcare facilities have led to a focus on outdoor learning for children and families. This work was piloted and developed through the Children and Young People’s Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) and has informed the development of an Early Years Outdoor Play Strategy.

We are now moving into full implementation of the strategy across all providers of early learning and childcare. We have 4 members of the Quality Improvement Team who are Forest School trained, and they will assist in the delivery of the strategy’s key messages to offer children opportunities for adventure, variety and challenge across all areas of the curriculum, whilst enhancing their all-round development. Children in our

pilot sites spend 50% of their time outdoors and staff stated, ‘children are a lot more confident, sociable and willing to engage in risky play’.

We have created a Glow Tile which allows staff access to a variety of supporting material, documents, and online training to develop their confidence, knowledge, and skills. The implementation of a new Outdoor Monitoring Tool will support establishment leaders to assess the quality of their outdoor play, resources, and spaces.

The strategy will be embedded to allow children to learn naturally through risky play, planting and growing, sustainability, life cycles, real life experiences and cooking. Our vision is that all young children will have access to high quality outdoor play experiences which will support them to reach their developmental milestones.





Mini Case Study:

PEF investment in play pedagogy at Castlepark Primary

An Early Years Practitioner (EYP) was employed to extend the benefits of play into the early stages of primary. This provided high quality play experiences every day for P1 and P2 children. The evaluation of the programme confirmed that high quality play experiences contributed to the improvement of the children's skills. Small group working led to improvements in attainment across all areas of the core curriculum, including improvements in the achievement of curriculum for excellence levels by June 2022. The EYP was also central to the Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) Transition Programme, facilitating a range of indoor and outdoor play experiences. There is an intention to build on this programme in session 2022-23.

Leadership Development

In North Ayrshire, we believe in investing in the skills and quality of our staff. In terms of leadership development, we have transformed our approach, rooting our work firmly in facilitation. Our sustainable approach to leadership development has been successful and is making a difference in schools and early learning and childcare settings across the service. In line with national developments, our model is designed to make professional learning equitable and relevant to practitioners and, integral to raising attainment in young people. Working directly with schools and education leaders, we collaborate to pinpoint areas of development in line with their improvement plans. In response to their identified needs, we design and facilitate bespoke, outcome focussed leadership professional learning opportunities that are specific to that establishment, its staff and the learners they serve. This approach enables all stakeholders to have a professional voice whilst working collaboratively to improve practice and its design supports the development of practitioner skills relevant to their context which enables them to continue on a sustainable leadership trajectory.

We have facilitated 26 bespoke leadership programmes with nine school establishments and key partners across Education including: Educational Psychologists, The Promise team, Mental Health and Wellbeing and HT networks. In addition to this we have delivered professional learning in Leadership of Pedagogues, Leadership for Learning, practitioner enquiry for years one to four

early career teachers (Building Blocks) and the GTCS Standards and Professional Update to a total of 270 practitioners across the service. We are measuring the impact of this work in schools and our evidence demonstrates that we are building staff capacity by empowering practitioners to develop their professional voice, ensuring sustainability by modelling the tools to support solution focused change in order for practitioners to lead in their own context and, ultimately, to improve the service provided to young people.



Education Service Priority 2

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

Despite the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we maintained high quality education provision in schools with a seamless switch to remote learning in individual classes whenever this was needed. We invested in additional teaching staff to provide targeted support for those who missed learning due to illness or self-isolation.

Ensuring the Quality of Learning and Teaching

We have continued to work on our revised learning, teaching and assessment policy, which will be launched at the start of session 2022-23. Authority-wide interventions to raise attainment and close the gap, particularly in literacy and numeracy have been led by our Professional Learning Academy (PLA) in partnership with our schools. In particular, this year we have focused on:



“My daughter has improved massively since starting the (PLA) Reading Recovery programme. Her confidence has grown, and she is more willing to try to read words that she does not know on her own. The progress she has made in such a short period of time is amazing.”

– Parent



Mini Case Study:

PEF at Caledonia Primary School

Two classroom assistants participated in a 12-week intervention with the PLA based on supporting progress in numeracy (using North Ayrshire's Numeracy Framework). Both classroom assistants were very positive about the initial input and were timetabled to groups of P3 pupils who were not yet on track with their learning in numeracy. The classroom assistants continued to use the strategies with groups across the school. The feedback from class teachers was incredibly positive regarding the confidence the pupils were able to demonstrate and the PLA staff were extremely complimentary about the commitment that staff showed to the intervention. The pre and post data noted that all pupils benefitted from the intervention with percentage point improvement ranging from 18-38. Both classroom assistants spoke enthusiastically of the impact of the intervention on their skills and knowledge and the increased skill and confidence of the children. Going forward into next session, it is planned to give time for the trained members of support staff to share their learning with other classroom assistants so that these strategies can be used throughout the school.

Examples of our work to improve learning outcomes

Intervention	Number of Staff	Number of Pupils	Impact of Intervention(s)
<p>Literacy: Attention & Listening An 8 week intervention delivered to primary classes to develop attention and listening skills through modelled activities and lessons.</p>	12	300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-intervention practitioner confidence in leading whole class activities to develop attention & listening increased by an average of 59% Post intervention pupil rating scale highlighted a listening skills increase of 48%
<p>Literacy: Boosting Reading 2 day training for Classroom Assistants to upskill them in supporting pupils with their reading. Once trained, CAs can deliver the 10 week intervention in their school. This training is also delivered to S6 pupils who can work with younger S1 pupils.</p>	40	68	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of Classroom Assistants rated the overall effectiveness of this training as 'excellent'
<p>Literacy: Non-Fiction Writing PLA staff modelled writing lessons for 10 weeks to P3 and P5 classes. Research based approaches were shared with teachers to ensure the needs of all learners were met and understanding of the genre was enhanced.</p>	30	850	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-intervention practitioner confidence in teaching non-fiction writing increased by 78% Post-intervention 98% of pupils could identify the features of procedural writing compared to 4% pre intervention
<p>Literacy: Note Making An 8 week intervention teaching learners the skill of note taking in order to enhance their writing across the curriculum.</p>	14	525	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-intervention the frequency of when practitioners explicitly taught note making skills had an average increase of 50% Post-Intervention 98% of pupils could successfully use the Cornell notes format – no pupils could do this pre-intervention
<p>Literacy: Phonological Awareness An 8 week intervention where speech and language therapists work with small groups and whole classes to develop phonological awareness skills – a key foundation for reading</p>	10	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-intervention pupils average score was 92% compared to 55% pre-intervention
<p>Literacy: Oracy in the Classroom A pilot intervention working with 9 teachers from different schools to promote talking and listening -an area that can be overlooked. Talking and Listening skills have been identified as a strong predictor of later life chances and through this intervention has become a priority in the schools involved.</p>	9	270	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-intervention practitioner awareness of ways to develop talking and listening skills increased by 75% 100% of practitioners are continuing to embed oracy skills in their own classrooms and their wider schools

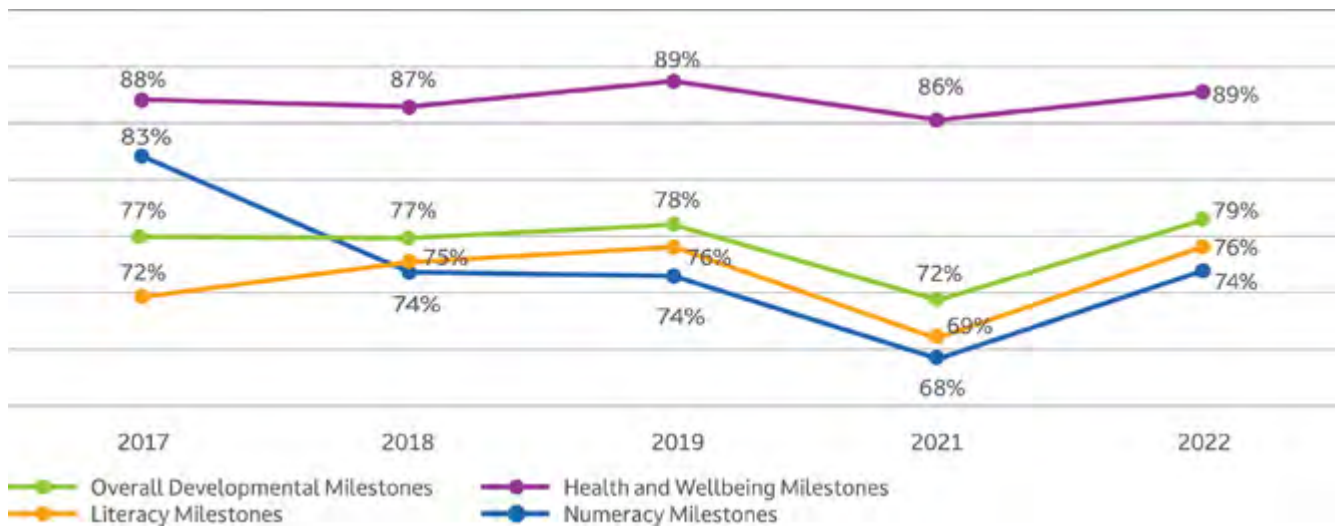
Intervention	Number of Staff	Number of Pupils	Impact of Intervention(s)
<p>Numeracy: Bar Modelling A 12 week intervention designed to equip learners with the strategies used to tackle word problems in numeracy & maths. PLA led training for teachers and modelled lessons in class.</p>	22	550	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-intervention practitioners expressed this intervention gave the pupils effective strategies to independently tackle word problems Post-Intervention pupil assessments showed an average increase of 25%
<p>Numeracy: Big Ideas of Maths A 12 week intervention working in P2 and P3 classes. The PLA teacher modelled lessons and team taught with staff to make connections in key areas as well as developing pupil awareness through meaningful contexts.</p>	5	126	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of practitioners felt inspired to implement and embed the pedagogical approaches modelled Post intervention pupils showed an average increase of 37%
<p>Numeracy: Classroom Assistants Supporting Numeracy A 12 week intervention designed to upskill classroom assistants to support pupils with numeracy. This intervention is linked to the North Ayrshire Numeracy Framework which all schools have been trained in. Modelling and coaching approaches were used by PLA staff.</p>	13	61	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-Intervention Classroom Assistant confidence in effectively supporting pupils increased by an average of 58% 100% of Classroom Assistants felt more valued and feel they have a purposeful role in supporting pupils in numeracy
<p>Numeracy: Number Sense A 12 week intervention working with the whole class and additional support groups to develop a secure understanding of number.</p>	5	105	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-intervention 100% of practitioners felt the strategies modelled could be easily embedded into their daily practice Post-interventions pupils showed an average increase of 47%
<p>Pedagogy: OLEVI Programme An accredited 10 week programme where teachers/classroom assistants engage in professional dialogue facilitated by PLA staff to ensure high quality learning and teaching in North Ayrshire.</p>	15	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Classroom Assistants who participated rated all aspects of the training as 'excellent' Teacher confidence in leading learning with colleagues in their school increased by 60%
<p>Pedagogy: Coaching Successful Learners A 10 week programme working with school leavers in S5/6 to help provide them with focussed goal planning and key employability skills to prepare them for life beyond school.</p>	2	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following this programme S5/6 pupils who agreed they reflected on their learning and planned their next steps increased by 77% S5/6 Pupils felt that as a result of their participation in the programme, they were "more pro-active"

Improving Attainment (Early Years & Broad General Education)

The percentage of children reaching their early years milestones by primary 1 has increased in 2022, bringing the overall performance back to pre-pandemic levels. We have had slightly more children achieving their overall milestones than any other year recorded.

The pandemic has impacted on learner progress at some stages. However, our most recent curriculum for excellence data (as yet unpublished from June 2022) shows signs of recovery in that a higher proportion of our learners at P1, P4 and P7 are achieving the expected level of attainment in literacy and numeracy than last year.

Percentage of Pre-school pupils reaching their developmental milestones by the time they move to primary school



The pandemic has impacted on learner progress at some stages. However, our most recent curriculum for excellence data (as yet unpublished from June 2022) shows signs of

recovery in that a higher proportion of our learners at P1, P4 and P7 are achieving the expected level of attainment in literacy and numeracy than last year.

Percentage of primary pupils achieving the expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy





Mini Case Study:

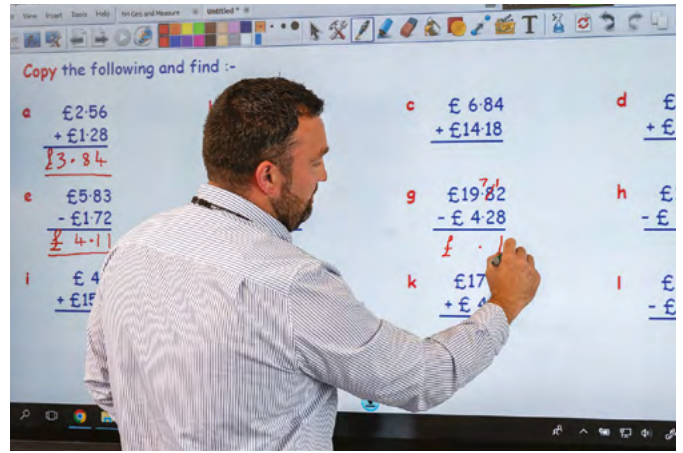
PEF at Elderbank Primary

There has been investment in additional staffing to coordinate targeted support in numeracy and literacy to raise attainment. Interventions have been put in place for an increasing proportion of the school roll. Additional time and support was put in place to support specific aspects of learning in literacy and numeracy. Support was provided through a blend of in-class and small-group settings. The interventions were bespoke and responsive to the specific needs of individual learners. Additional training for Classroom Assistants further increased the effectiveness of interventions. Robust assessment methods were used to determine the starting point and to measure progress for individual learners. The collaboration between teaching staff and support staff has been strong and has contributed to improved learning outcomes for the targeted groups, which is reflected in the most recent Curriculum for Excellence Achievement Levels.

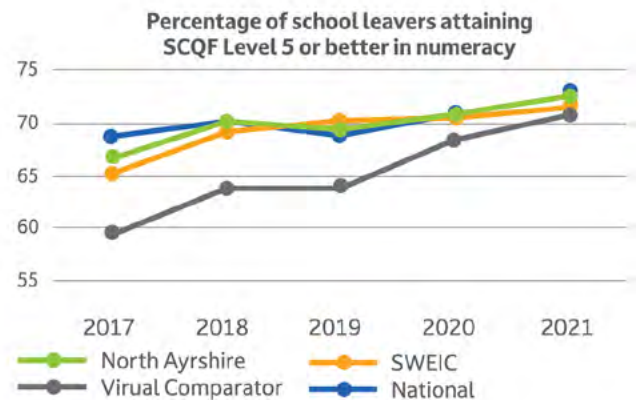
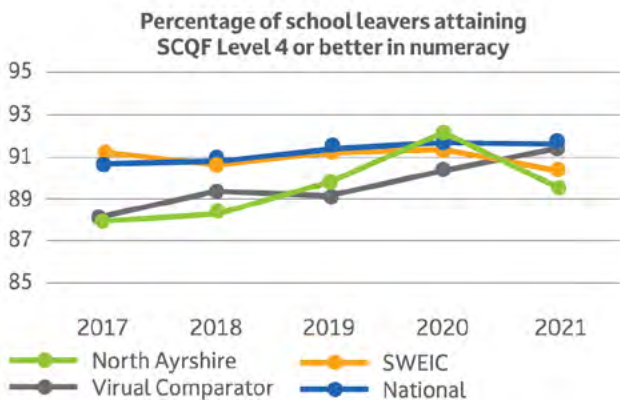
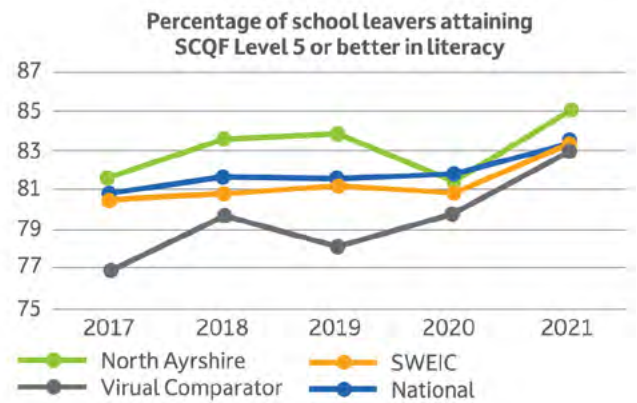
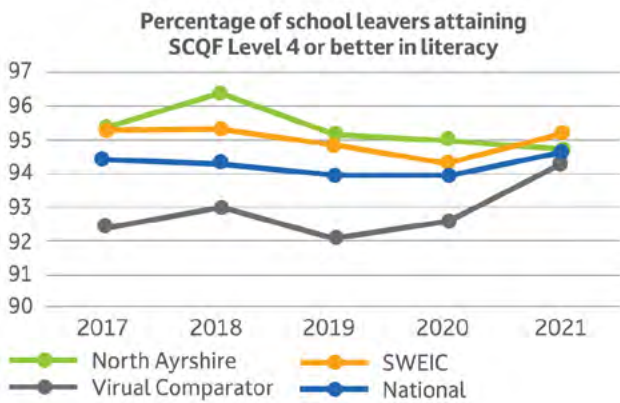
Improving leavers' attainment in literacy and numeracy

Performance of North Ayrshire school leavers in attaining Literacy at Level 4 and Level 5 displays a positive 5-year trend. Our schools remain above or in line with the Virtual Comparator, our regional authorities and the National performance in all 5 years of this analysis. In 2021, achievement of Level 5 Literacy was the highest in the 5-year comparison at 85%.

The performance of North Ayrshire school leavers in Numeracy at level 5 shows a positive 5-year trend. Our schools remain above Virtual Comparator, and at 72.3%, attainment of North Ayrshire leavers at Level 5 numeracy is the best it has been in the last 5 years. While Level 4 Numeracy has decreased slightly in 2021 to 89.6%, it is still in line with a broadly positive trend across last 5 years.



The performance of North Ayrshire school leavers in Numeracy at level 5 shows a positive 5-year trend.



Improving attainment for all

This measure focuses on the average total tariff score of the candidates' latest and best qualifications. Tariff points are assigned to each unit or course achieved by learners – in all SCQF-graded awards, not only those provided by SQA. This acknowledges to a greater extent the drive towards wider achievement qualifications and encourages schools to offer curricular choices tailored to a variety of pupil abilities and aspirations. The average total tariff score for lowest attaining 20% of leavers in 2021 was a significant improvement on 2019 & 2020.

The lowest attaining learners are achieving as well in North Ayrshire as they would elsewhere in Scotland. In addition, the average total tariff score of the middle attaining 60% of leavers is the highest on record in the 5-year trend. Though slightly below the Virtual Comparator, a positive 5-year trend is evident, particularly in the years since the change of curriculum structure in S4. Similarly, the average total tariff score of the highest attaining 20% of leavers is the highest on record in the 5-year trend. Though slightly below Virtual Comparator a consistent 5-year positive trend is evident.

School Leavers Average total tariff points in North Ayrshire

(compared to Virtual Comparator and Scotland):

	2016-17			2017-18			2018-19			2019-20			2020-21		
	NAC	VC	Scot	NAC	VC	Scot	NAC	VC	Scot	NAC	VC	Scot	NAC	VC	Scot
Lowest 20%	174	133	172	170	141	164	145	119	151	140	129	151	161	162	165
Middle 60%	806	762	843	815	795	858	697	734	821	782	835	889	845	898	956
Highest 20%	1786	1757	1831	1785	1786	1851	1665	1746	1829	1797	1875	1930	1862	1933	1998

The average complementary tariff scores are calculated using the same principles but display the average tariff score for only

the five best qualifications achieved per candidate. Further information about tariff points can be found [here](#).

School Leavers Average complementary tariff points in North Ayrshire

(compared to Virtual Comparator and Scotland):

	2016-17			2017-18			2018-19			2019-20			2020-21		
	NAC	VC	Scot	NAC	VC	Scot	NAC	VC	Scot	NAC	VC	Scot	NAC	VC	Scot
Lowest 20%	150	120	148	150	124	143	134	109	134	126	114	133	141	140	144
Middle 60%	592	580	634	611	604	646	556	563	623	611	618	657	643	654	692
Highest 20%	1220	1218	1269	1229	1227	1281	1189	1200	1267	1255	1268	1313	1254	1286	1339

Reducing the Poverty-Related Attainment Gap

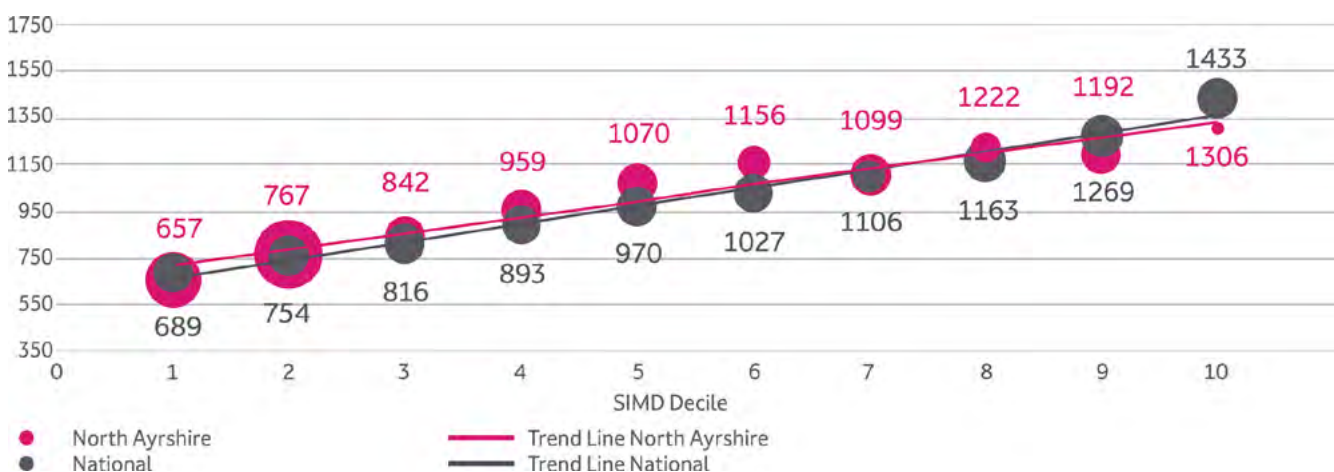
A key area of focus for the service has continued to be reducing the poverty related attainment gap between learners living in North Ayrshire’s most and least deprived areas. The disruption to learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in our attainment gaps increasing both in the data and the experiences shared by our staff working with learners. Through Attainment Scotland Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) we have continued to target key areas we believe make the most difference which include offering high quality professional learning to our staff; supporting targeted and universal nurturing approaches; providing family learning support; enhancing leadership skills in schools; helping staff and learners with their mental health; and improving data literacy across schools.

North Ayrshire school leavers in 2021 who lived in SIMD deciles 1 to 8 have performed in line with or above school leavers living in the same SIMD deciles across the rest of the country.

Significantly, this accounts for the vast majority, just under 91%, of our school leavers in North Ayrshire in 2021. The proportion of school leavers living in SIMD deciles 9 and 10 in North Ayrshire is significantly smaller than the national share and the attainment performance of this group in North Ayrshire, while improved on previous years, remains lower than the national cohort, and is an area for improvement.

North Ayrshire school leavers in 2021 who lived in SIMD deciles 1 to 8 have performed in line with or above school leavers living in the same SIMD deciles across the rest of the country.

Average Total Tariff Score by SIMD – All school leavers 2021



Breadth and Depth

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 proportion of leavers achieving 5 qualifications or more at level 3 or better is higher than the corresponding national and SWEIC figures.

The number of school leavers attaining 5 qualifications or more at Level 5 or better is higher than the SWEIC figure for the first time in six years. Attainment at this level has been increasingly gradually throughout

that period. A higher percentage of school leavers left school in North Ayrshire in 2021 with at least one Level 6 qualification (Higher) than across the SWEIC or nationally.

A higher percentage of school leavers left school in North Ayrshire in 2021 with at least one Level 6 qualification (Higher) than across the SWEIC or nationally.

5 or more at Level 3						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
National	90.9%	90.8%	90.1%	89.0%	89.6%	90.5%
North Ayrshire	92.9%	91.9%	91.3%	89.4%	89.8%	91.0%
SWEIC	92.3%	92.0%	91.4%	89.8%	89.9%	90.8%

5 or more at Level 4						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
National	87.2%	87.4%	86.7%	85.4%	85.8%	87.1%
North Ayrshire	89.3%	88.0%	86.7%	83.6%	84.3%	85.8%
SWEIC	88.6%	88.6%	87.9%	85.4%	85.4%	87.0%

5 or more at Level 5						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
National	61.0%	62.2%	64.4%	64.3%	67.5%	70.5%
North Ayrshire	58.3%	60.5%	63.2%	60.7%	65.3%	69.6%
SWEIC	60.8%	63.0%	64.1%	63.5%	66.4%	69.0%

1 or more at Level 6						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
National	65.0%	64.8%	66.2%	66.2%	68.2%	70.2%
North Ayrshire	63.8%	62.2%	65.4%	65.0%	67.3%	70.6%
SWEIC	64.5%	64.1%	65.0%	64.0%	65.8%	68.6%



3 or more at Level 6						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
National	48.6%	48.9%	50.3%	50.9%	54.7%	56.6%
North Ayrshire	44.3%	44.9%	46.7%	44.4%	51.7%	53.8%
SWEIC	47.4%	47.4%	47.0%	47.5%	51.9%	53.9%

5 or more at Level 6						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
National	33.9%	34.5%	35.5%	36.0%	40.2%	42.1%
North Ayrshire	28.4%	31.5%	30.9%	28.3%	35.6%	37.6%
SWEIC	32.5%	33.7%	32.0%	32.7%	36.3%	38.5%

1 or more at Level 7						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
National	21.7%	22.0%	23.2%	22.1%	25.6%	28.0%
North Ayrshire	19.7%	19.4%	19.9%	18.0%	23.5%	23.9%
SWEIC	20.7%	20.8%	20.6%	20.0%	23.5%	24.9%

We are conscious that all attainment should be viewed through the lens of the current context of the continued challenges presented by the ongoing pandemic. However, our learners have performed well in many attainment measures, and where there has been a dip in performance, it is encouraging to note that our evidence shows that recovery is now well underway. We are grateful to all who helped and supported our children and young people to cope, develop and learn during an unprecedented situation.

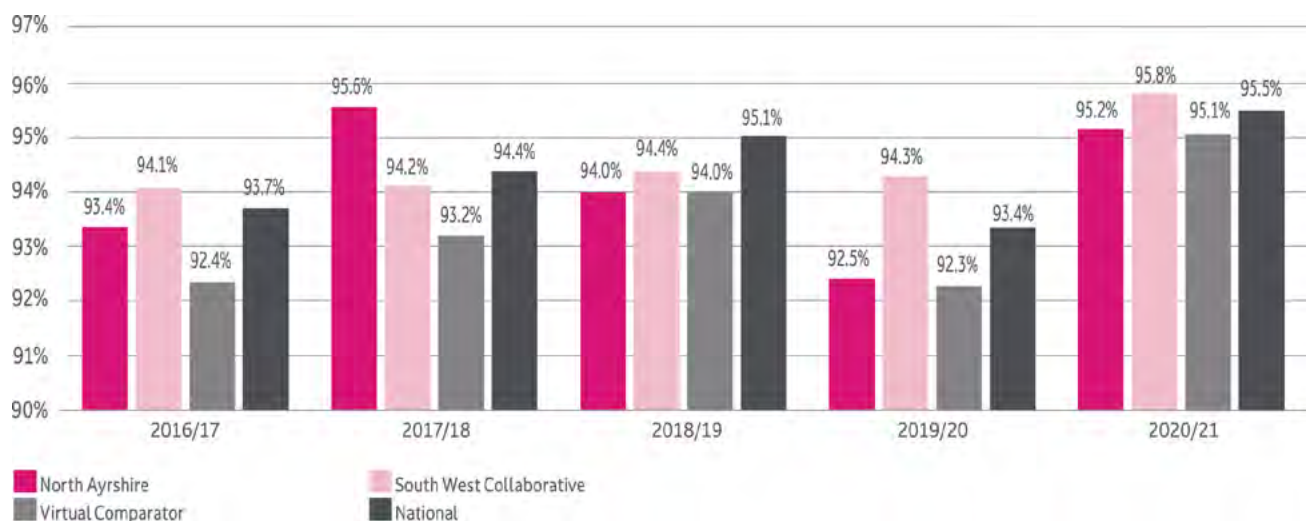
Supporting Care-Experienced Learners

Care experienced children and young people were supported through a range of interventions including the MCR Pathways mentoring programme, home tuition, an active schools programme during the summer period, and therapeutic counselling for some of our learners with the greatest level of need. We have continued to engage in partnership working with our Health and Social Care Partnership on delivering 'The Promise'. Scottish Government funding has supported North Ayrshire's Champion's Board to raise awareness and reduce stigma associated with being care experienced. In addition, this funding has been used to co-locate social work staff in some of our schools. Feedback provided on this activity

highlights this is all having a positive impact on our care experienced learners. Continued positive learning outcomes were reported to North Ayrshire Council Cabinet through the annual attainment report in June 2021. A copy of the paper can be viewed [here](#).

Developing the Young Workforce

To support the senior phase (S4-S6) of secondary schools, we employed Developing the Young Workforce coordinators who work collaboratively with a range of post-school agencies, employers, and internal services to support all North Ayrshire's school leavers to move into a positive destination. Feedback from schools indicates that DYW coordinators are having a positive impact in supporting learners. In 2021, the proportion of leavers in North Ayrshire moving into a positive destination is the second highest figure in the 5-year comparison (95.2%). This figure remains above the Virtual Comparator which is consistent with the previous 5 years where North Ayrshire is above or in line with the virtual comparator. Schools continue to work hard in strong partnership with Skills Development Scotland, Ayrshire College, employability services and other partners to maximise the percentage of school leavers entering and sustaining positive destinations.





Mini Case Study:

PEF at Largs Academy

At Largs Academy, one of the improvement priorities for session 2021-22 was to improve curricular pathways to ensure progression for learners at all levels. The pupil target group was learners who may not have previously achieved qualifications beyond SCQF level 4. New courses were introduced into the senior phase to support specifically the lowest 20% attainment group. To facilitate this, there was investment in additional staffing, equipment and learning resources. The aim was to improve attainment in the lowest 20%, to create a more meaningful and inclusive curriculum offer for all learners and to improve attitudes to school. The result has been an improvement in the proportion of learners in the target group who achieved qualifications at SCQF level 5, 6 and 7. In addition, pupil and parent evaluations demonstrated high satisfaction with the new offer.

Education Service Plan

Priority 3

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

Family Learning

Providing families with opportunities to engage in learning and school life has remained important in 2021-22 through the work of our Family Learning Team. During 2021-22 the Family Learning Team offered all schools across the local authority an extensive Programme of Interventions to ensure schools could link their chosen programmes closely with their school's improvement plan.

The Family Learning Team engaged with 1013 families during 2021-22, with families participating in 25 different interventions. The most effective interventions have been:

- Family Outdoor Club (including John Muir Award and Bronze Wild Challenge)
- Family STEM (including the Young STEM Leader Award)
- Transition Programmes (both starting Primary 1/starting S1)
- Family Food/Fitness
- Family Numeracy

The impact of these programmes has been significant for children and their families, especially following the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2021, families across 13 schools in North Ayrshire have had the opportunity to participate in the Young STEM Leader (YSL) Programme. 114 young people have achieved their YSL Level 2 Award, allowing young people to develop their personal skills, qualities, and behaviours in a STEM leadership context. By delivering STEM activities, events and interactions in their school, learners have consolidated their existing knowledge and understanding of STEM concepts.





100% of completed evaluation forms report families felt more able to support their child's learning at home, felt included in their child's learning, and agreed there had been an increased confidence in STEM.

Schools have also requested Family Learning interventions to support children starting Primary 1 as well as moving from Primary 7 to secondary school. The pandemic impacted extensively on these transitions due to the limited access to schools' buildings for Parents/Carers. In partnership with schools, Family Learning worked around the restrictions with the delivery of virtual Time to Talk Transition Sessions, as well as meeting families out with the school grounds. The variety of interventions ensured parents/carers had the opportunity to meet key school staff, receive important information regarding the transition, as well as ask any questions.

Interventions which focused on Health and Wellbeing have also been extremely effective, with over 400 families participating in programmes that encouraged them to learn about their community and green spaces, cook and exercise as a family as well as explore Mental Health while creating a toolkit to aid conversations that start the important process of talking openly about how family members feel.

100% of completed evaluation forms report families felt more able to support their child's learning at home, felt included in their child's learning, and agreed there had been an increased confidence in STEM.





Mini Case Study:

PEF at Auchenharvie Academy

To enhance and expand existing authority-wide support for family learning, Auchenharvie Academy has created a school-based family learning team, supporting families through both targeted and universal approaches. Families were key stakeholders in the identification of needs and the creation of programmes of support, the key elements of which are outlined below:

Approach	Intended Impact	Evaluation
A 'parents in partnership' initiative to targeted S1 families	To break down any barriers parents/carers have in engaging with the school, allow families to become more familiar with the secondary setting and to build relationships between staff and our new S1 families.	We engaged with 56 targeted families based on SIMD, FME and primary information. 8 of these families engaged with the programme (14%). 3 of these families are continuing to engage and support NA Plus.
Literacy Qualification – available to Auchenharvie Cluster	To empower parents/carers to reach their own full potential.	Invited all families in the cluster – 10 engaged . (More could have managed if offered out with the school day.) 3 of the 10 completed the full qualification with the other 7 completing sections of it due to family commitments and COVID.
An interactive study skills document for families to access and support at home	To support families during the lead-up to exams with step-by-step methods for studying and websites to support this.	Created due to families asking for a resource. Initial feedback is really positive with other North Ayrshire schools asking to share the resource and also schools in Glasgow sharing with their families.
A revamp to the workings of our NAPLus (New and Pre Loved Uniform Store)	To allow a delivery service to families in the three towns area rather than parents coming to the school – reducing the stigma.	The need and want for this resource is growing. 50 families have been supported through this resource. Offering the delivery service is fantastic but is completely dependent on volunteers.
Prom initiative	To allow all pupils to attend prom with little or no cost to the families.	A project which started in Auchenharvie has now grown to supporting families across North Ayrshire. Within Auchenharvie 15 of our young people in S6 have accessed prom supplies. There are future plans to open this to the community once a month where dresses/accessories can be accessed for a donation to NA Plus.

Reducing the Cost of the School Day

In response to the cost-of-living crisis, which has significantly impacted our learners and their families, we have continued to reduce the cost of the school day through North Ayrshire Council's pledged £500k of recurring funding. In 2021-22, we invested:

- £150k to extend school and community food networks and provide all school pupils with a reusable water bottle
- £100k to schools to set up a clothing and equipment store to ensure this is not a barrier to accessing education
- £250k to support 1,000 additional families per year to become digitally included by accessing learning and activities at home as well as in school. This included 1022 Chromebooks for P5 and S2 pupils in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) and/or Clothing Grants. 250 iPads from last year's order of 600 were also distributed to P2 pupils in receipt of FSM/Clothing Grants.

As part of our commitment to ensuring children and young people are at the centre of our efforts to reduce the Cost of the School Day (CoSD), we also held a CoSD conference in May 2022. We brought together over 170 pupils from across North Ayrshire Primary and Secondary Schools for a full day of activities led by Education staff and the Youth Services team. Elected Members and Community Planning Partners joined the pupils and staff to allow the continued co-design and co-development of a renewed action plan to mitigate the impact of child poverty in North Ayrshire

The following issues were highlighted by the children and young people as key areas that impact upon costs associated with the school day. These will be among the main issues tackled in the action plan to be developed for session 2022-23.

Key areas that impact upon costs associated with the school day



Education Service Plan

Priority 4

We will work with all young people to build their resilience, supporting their mental health and physical wellbeing

Supporting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing

Supporting positive mental health and wellbeing (MHWB) continues to be a priority for North Ayrshire Council. We embarked on a MHWB Roadshow and visited education staff in the majority of our establishments. We shared curricular resources and supported staff to implement early intervention approaches e.g., our 'Be Amasin' (Anxiety Management and Support in North Ayrshire) resource. We developed an online 'one-stop' shop where staff can find resources and guidance around all things health and wellbeing. Staff feedback indicates there has been a positive impact on the learning environment.

Following an audit of need, where we consulted a wide range of stakeholders, a number of priority areas were identified to support community mental health and wellbeing. As a result, a new North Ayrshire Family Centred Wellbeing Service (FCWS) was developed. This new service is currently working in 2 North Ayrshire localities to deliver bespoke family support, including signposting to help families with routines, boundaries, and practical support as required. Examples of other supports funded, include Aberlour Sustain North Ayrshire (family support

service); Play, Art and Dance Therapies; and Barnardo's support in educational establishments. We have begun to address financial insecurity through the appointment of a Welfare Rights Officer to work across our Secondary establishments and also through the implementation of an education outreach project in the Three Towns in partnership with Better Off North Ayrshire.

We commissioned the Exchange Counselling Service to support children in Primary 1-5 and deliver awareness raising sessions to Education staff to enhance practice, ensuring early intervention should any child require some additional support.

We have also developed resources to support specific issues that have arisen including school-based anxiety. This includes tools to support children and young people's resilience and wellbeing. Most recently we have undertaken research on staff wellbeing and we are now looking to develop specific resources to support this in a more targeted way.




Nurture

Nurture groups were available in 37 schools, providing targeted support to small groups of learners who experience difficulties engaging with learning in their classroom. Data shows Nurture group support provided by a dedicated nurture teacher and classroom assistant has a significant impact on learners with most learners making significant gains across all measures. Data analysis of Nurture groups running for a number of years, shows that progress can be sustained long after a pupil has attended a nurture group. Given this success the future focus will be on evolving, establishing and embedding a culture of whole school nurture underpinned by robust quality assurance measures ensuring all pupils are nurtured with their health and wellbeing needs being met.

In order to ensure that establishments are supported to take this forward, we support them with their own self-evaluation of nurturing approaches through quality assurance visits and the use of the Applying Nurture as a whole school approach framework. All schools have developed a Promoting Positive Relationships policy with guidance from the local authority PPR policy. We undertake a whole school nurture survey each year and this demonstrates the range of nurturing practice that is evident in our local authority. Our survey for session 21/22 also highlighted that of the 832 teachers, classroom assistants and establishment senior management who responded, 78% (n = 649) felt confident applying what they have learned about nurturing approaches in practice.

In order to ensure that nurture extends beyond the reach of targeted groups there is a key focus on whole school nurture as part of our wider promoting positive relationships approach. We have introduced a promoting positive relationships steering group that ensures a coordinated approach to whole school nurture and mental health and wellbeing is taken forward. We have developed a range of professional learning to meet the needs of all of our establishments, including:



Whole school nurture

The compassionate and connected community

Nurturing North Ayrshire's recovery;

De-escalation and building on positive relationships (built upon the principles of non violent resistance).



Mini Case Study:

PEF at Pennyburn Primary

Based on an analysis of need, the school employed an Area Inclusion Worker to support the development of positive and sustainable relationships with an identified group of the most vulnerable learners and their families. The focus of the work was tailored to the individual needs of the children, with different supports offered to different groups, and included interventions such as: an anxiety management programme; enhanced transition support; tailored support for individual families to support them with distressing domestic circumstances; the development of a community garden; support to help children maximise their attendance; facilitating access to financial support and food. A range of approaches to evaluating this work was undertaken including the analysis of progress tracking, professional dialogue, discussions with children and their parents and observations of practice. The impact of this work was positive for the children in the target groups. Following the success of the support provided by the Area Inclusion Worker, this approach has subsequently been adopted across a range of schools, particularly in schools with the highest proportion of learners in SIMD Quintile 1.



Overview of Pupil Equity Funding

All local authorities benefit from Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) and 95% of schools in Scotland have been allocated funding for pupils in P1-S3 known to be eligible for free school meals. For every child that is registered, the school receives £1,200 in addition to their normal budget through PEF.

North Ayrshire Council has received Pupil Equity Funding for five years, details of which are outlined in the table below.

Year	PEF Funding
2017-18	£4.39m
2018-19	£4.41m
2019-20	£4.46m
2020-21	£4.30m
2021-22	£5.15m

Pupil Equity Funding must provide targeted support for children and young people affected by poverty to achieve their full potential. Although the funding is allocated on the basis of free school meal eligibility, Head Teachers can use their professional judgement to determine which pupils receive targeted interventions.

All schools work with their school community to decide how to invest PEF and are encouraged to use participatory budgeting approaches to inform decision making. Examples of how PEF has been used in North Ayrshire's schools this year are threaded through the previous sections of this document.



Monitoring and tracking of PEF financial performance

Financial governance of PEF is monitored by the Education Service's Attainment Challenge Programme Board via regular updates on the spend profile throughout each year. In addition, financial reports are provided to all schools monthly to track spend. This enables school leadership teams to effectively plan and utilise the funding to deliver intended outcomes.

The table below shows that, overall across the Education Service, between 76-79% of the total PEF spend is invested in staffing costs, with between 21-24% invested in resources and materials.

Description	PEF spend profile 2020-21	PEF spend profile 2021-22
Teaching Staff	£1.6m	£1.9m
Support Staff	£1.5m	£1.6m
Resources & Materials	£0.8m	£1.1m
Totals	£3.9m	£4.6m

Measuring the impact of PEF

Pupil Equity Funding should be used to reduce the poverty related attainment gap through targeted support for children, young people and their families which will lead to improvements in literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing.

Pupil Equity Funding is issued directly to schools and is managed at school level. Head teachers have full autonomy to allocate PEF to address poverty related attainment gaps in their school. Schools are also responsible for measuring and evaluating the impact of PEF interventions. Approaches vary on a school-to-school basis but in most circumstances measurement of PEF impact focuses on the pupils who benefit from the intervention at school level through qualitative and quantitative data. The impact of a range of PEF interventions is included throughout this report and is also contained within individual school Standards and Quality Reports.

PEF Spending – Thematic Areas

Thematic Area	Examples of Approaches	Intended Impact
Family Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents in partnership initiative • Family qualifications • Interactive study skills document for families • Prom initiative • Support with financial worries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equip families with appropriate tools when working at home with young people. • Create opportunities for parents/ carers to achieve qualifications • Actively seek to reduce the COSD
Primary to Secondary Transition Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen and develop transition programme between secondary and link primary schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils will feel confident in their transition to secondary school and it will help to build a relationship with parents
Learning and Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the consistency and quality of L+T for pupils • Promote teacher collaborative enquiry • Improve the quality of feedback from pupils on L+T 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a positive learning environment in which pupils can achieve their full potential. Support the development of excellent learning and teaching
COVID recovery HWB teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure targeted individuals attend • Support targeted individuals to have positive HWB so they are more ready to learn in class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are nurtured and in a good position to learn
Class Teacher to support raising attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with individual groups of children identified requiring support – bespoke approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase attainment
Nurture Teacher & Practitioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurture base established • P1 – 3 target to improve overall HWB and skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest of class has focussed time with teacher & CA. • Children in nurture base develop skills and are equipped to return to class and continue learning
Classroom Assistants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employed to support learning specifically in P1-3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise attainment in literacy and numeracy • Increase pupil confidence • CA upskilled in delivering literacy & numeracy support in P1-3

Thematic Area	Examples of Approaches	Intended Impact
Subscriptions to learning websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clicker8, Nessy, SumDog etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve pupil engagement in writing • Improve pupil engagement with reading texts • Maintain engagement in numeracy • Support children with dyslexic type difficulties
Breakfast Club Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast club reintroduced following the pandemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving children a healthy start to the day and allowing them to engage in social situations before class
Early Intervention P1, P2 and P3 focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted children who are not yet on track with their learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted intervention builds on attainment and achievement data
Inclusion Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion worker supports individual pupils and identified groups to engage positively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned HWB interventions for specific pupils/families to help children reach full potential • Pupils develop strategies to cope with challenging situations • Pupils will build communication skills and confidence





North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath