

# Public Document Pack

## **Argyll and Bute Council** **Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal Agus Bhòid**

Executive Director: Douglas Hendry



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1 March 2024

### **SUPPLEMENTARY PACK 1**

**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE - ON A HYBRID BASIS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD AND BY MICROSOFT TEAMS on THURSDAY, 7 MARCH 2024 at 10:30 AM**

I enclose herewith **item 8 (FINAL ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT REPORT - SESSION 2022-2023)** which was marked to follow on the Agenda for the above meeting.

Douglas Hendry  
Executive Director

### **ITEM TO FOLLOW**

**8. FINAL ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT REPORT - SESSION 2022-2023**  
(Pages 3 - 26)

Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education

### **Community Services Committee**

Councillor Gordon Blair	Councillor Math Campbell-Sturgess
Councillor Garret Corner	Councillor Audrey Forrest
Councillor Amanda Hampsey	Councillor Daniel Hampsey (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Graham Hardie	Councillor Andrew Kain
Councillor Paul Donald Kennedy	Councillor Liz McCabe
Councillor Dougie McFadzean	Councillor Julie McKenzie
Councillor Yvonne McNeilly (Chair)	Councillor Iain Paterson
Councillor Gemma Penfold	Councillor Dougie Philand
Margaret Anderson	Lorna Stewart
Daniel Semple	

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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATION**

**COMMUNITY SERVICES**  
**7 MARCH 2024**

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**FINAL ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT REPORT – SESSION 2022-2023**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on final attainment across all Argyll and Bute Secondary Schools.
- 1.2 This update follows the release on 28 February of data on the Scottish Government's Insight tool. The Insight tool is designed to allow fair comparison of a group of pupils in Argyll and Bute with larger groups of pupils taken from all the other 31 local authorities with similar backgrounds (gender, additional support needs, stage, and SIMD band). This is known as the Virtual Comparator (VC) and is a key feature of Insight. Insight also allows comparison of attainment in Argyll and Bute with average attainment nationally.
- 1.3 This report focusses on attainment data made available by the Scottish Government in February 2024. Members will recall that data on pupil attainment and wider achievement was shared in the December 2023 paper *Education Performance Data Analysis 2022-23*.

[ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL NAME OF COMMITTEE \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](http://argyll-bute.gov.uk)

- 1.4 The report offers analysis of attainment levels across Argyll and Bute secondary schools post-SQA appeals, and of the overall success of appeals in the authority.
- 1.5 The report goes on to present updated attainment information from Insight. Presented data incorporates the results of appeals. It also refers to the Insight tariff points allocated to candidates' wider achievement attainment described in December's report. Tariff points are applied by Insight to levels of attainment – for example a Higher A award gains more tariff points than a Higher B award, and both gain more than a National 5 A award. Tariff points allow a score to be calculated for each candidate that summarises a wide range of achievement and awards from a range of providers. Tariff points also allow comparisons to be

made between pupil cohorts, schools, local authorities and their virtual comparators.

- 1.6 Analysis of attainment includes that of school leavers, the specific attainment of whom is a feature of the February Insight update.

Specifically, the areas analysed in this report are:

- Literacy and Numeracy
- Average attainment for all candidates,
- Attainment in the context of levels of deprivation
- Young people's initial destinations on leaving school in summer 2023 and at Christmas 2023.

- 1.7 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- a) Consider the information in this report, particularly as it relates to the attainment performance of school leavers;
- b) Note the increase in attainment brought about by successful appeals, at authority level and school-by-school;
- c) Note that the information contained in this report constitutes all attainment across both National Qualifications and Wider Achievement courses, the latter of which was described in the December report without the associated tariff points having been included in statistics.

**FINAL ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT REPORT – SESSION 2022-2023**

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**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 In August 2023, the Council received notification from the SQA of awards for all pupils in Argyll and Bute entered for National Qualifications in session 2022/23.
- 2.2 In December 2023, the Council received updated attainment data from the SQA, incorporating the results of appeals submitted by or on behalf of candidates.
- 2.3 In 2023, as in 2022, pupil attainment was determined through a diet of examinations, following the cancellation of examinations in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid-19. Nonetheless, SQA has urged caution in the comparison of 2023 results with those in 2022, as different levels of support for candidates applied to the two exam diets: internal and external assessment elements in some courses were different across the two years, and SQA advice was offered to candidates in 2022 on the range of topics to be assessed in examinations for some courses to support their studying and revision activities. This was not the case in 2023.
- 2.4 Additionally, as a result of the alternative assessment models adopted in 2020 and 2021, meaningful comparison should not be drawn between 2023 attainment data and data from those years.
- 2.5 This report is the third report focusing on the attainment of young people to have been brought to Committee in school session 2023-2024. The August 2023 report summarized the initial attainment pattern immediately following the release of attainment results by the SQA. In December 2023, a report gave an overview of attainment across all ten authority secondary schools, incorporating both authority post-appeal data and data from The Scottish Government's Insight tool.
- 2.6 The data in this report reiterates and further analyses the impact of appeals on attainment. It also presents and evaluates the newly-released data on the attainment of young people who left school in 2023.

### 3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- a) Consider the information in this report, particularly as it relates to the attainment performance of school leavers;
- b) Note the increase in attainment brought about by successful appeals, at authority level and school-by-school;
- c) Note that the information contained in this report constitutes all attainment across both National Qualifications and Wider Achievement courses, the latter of which was described in the December report without the associated tariff points having been included in statistics.

### 4.0 DETAIL

#### 4.1 SQA Appeals

For the 2022-2023 exam diet, SQA revised the appeals process. Unlike in 2021-22, when evidence of candidate attainment could be submitted and such information was considered in terms of any change in grade, in 2022-23, the appeal process was limited to an administrative check relating to the accuracy of the final grade entered, and a check on addition of marking. As a result, there has been an overall reduction in the number of appeals submitted and the number of amended grades, both nationally and in Argyll and Bute.

The table below details pre- and post-appeals attainment at grades **A-C** for Argyll and Bute in comparison to the national figures.

2023 National Qualifications	Argyll & Bute			National		
	SQA Results August	Post Appeal	Change	SQA Results August	Post Appeal	Change
		December			December	
<b>Adv. Higher</b>	79.44%	<b>79.44%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	79.8%	<b>80.20%</b>	<b>0.40%</b>
<b>Higher</b>	77.12%	<b>77.60%</b>	<b>0.48%</b>	77.1%	<b>77.40%</b>	<b>0.30%</b>
<b>Nat 5</b>	76.93%	<b>77.50%</b>	<b>0.57%</b>	78.8%	<b>78.90%</b>	<b>0.10%</b>

Post-appeals, it can be seen that at Advanced Higher the post-appeal A-C pass rate has remained unchanged, and is now 0.76% below the national post-appeal figure.

At Higher, the post-appeal A-C pass rate has risen by 0.48%, and has therefore increased to 0.2% above national post-appeal percentage (0.02% above in August 2023)

At National 5, the post-appeal A-C pass rate has risen by 0.57%, and is now 1.4% below national percentage (1.97% below in August 2023).

The table below details pre- and post-appeals attainment at grades **A-D** for Argyll and Bute in comparison to the national figures.

2023 National Qualifications A-D	Argyll & Bute			National		
	SQA Results August	Post Appeal	Change	SQA Results August	Post Appeal	Change
		December			December	
Adv. Higher	93.00%	93.00%	0.00%	92.70%	92.80%	0.10%
Higher	92.07%	92.30%	0.23%	90.50%	90.60%	0.10%
Nat 5	90.67%	91.00%	0.33%	90.50%	90.50%	0.00%

Post-appeals, it can be seen that at Advanced Higher the post-appeal A-D pass rate has remained unchanged, and is still 0.2% above the national post-appeal figure.

At Higher, the post-appeal A-D pass rate has risen by 0.23%, and has therefore increased to 1.7% above national post-appeal percentage.

At National 5, the post-appeal A-C pass rate has risen by 0.33%, and is now 0.5% above the national percentage.

The tables below outlines the extent to which attainment at grades A-C and A-D in each of the ten secondary schools increased once successful appeals were taken into account:

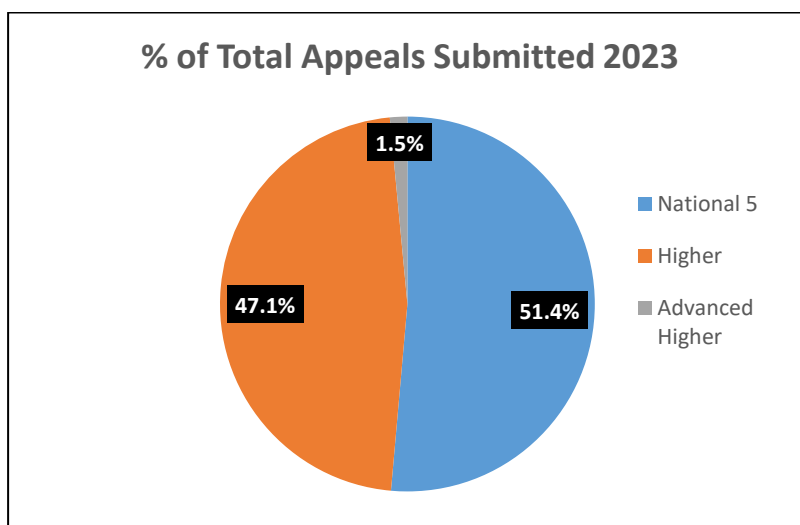
2023 Post Appeals % increase (A-C)	Argyll & Bute	OHS	CGS	HA	DGS	IHS	LJC	RJC	TA	TiHS	ToHS
	% (A-C) Change August 23 to Post Appeal December 23										
Adv. Higher	0.0 %	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Higher	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	1.3%	1.6%	0.7%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Nat 5	0.6%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	0.0%	1.0%	0.1%	0.5%

2023 Post Appeals % increase (A-D)	Argyll & Bute	OHS	CGS	HA	DGS	IHS	LJC	RJC	TA	TiHS	ToHS
	% (A-C) Change August 23 to Post Appeal December 23										
Adv. Higher	0.0 %	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Higher	0.23%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.02%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Nat 5	0.33%	0.12%	0.0%	0.08%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

**Key to School abbreviations:**

CGS	Campbeltown Grammar School	OHS	Oban High School
DGS	Dunoon Grammar School	RJC	Rothesay Joint Campus
HA	Hermitage Academy	TA	Tarbert Academy
IHS	Islay High School	Ti HS	Tiree High School
LJC	Lochgilphead Joint Campus	To HS	Tobermory High School

For information the below chart details the spread of appeals in Argyll and Bute across the three National Qualification Levels of National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher.



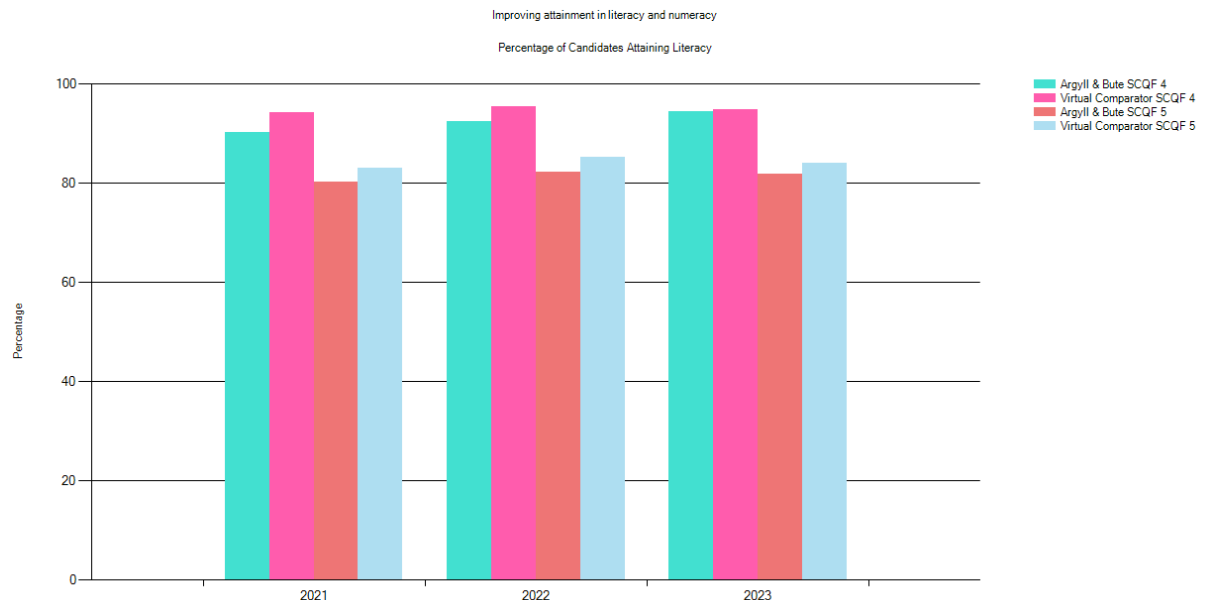


4.2 The Scottish Government’s Insight tool allows analysis of attainment from a variety of perspectives. Below, attainment analysis is provided from three such perspectives: attainment in Literacy and Numeracy – a key element of the Scottish Government’s National Improvement Framework; average attainment of young people in the context of the top 20% of attainers, the middle 60% of attainers and the lowest 20% of attainers; and attainment in the context of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). For each attainment focus, data is supplied for all pupils in S4-S6, and for those who left school in 2023 – data which was unavailable in the October insight update.

4.3 **Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy**

SCQF (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) levels 4, 5 and 6 Literacy and Numeracy are achieved primarily via the passing of National 4, National 5 or Higher English or Maths. The subject Applications of Maths is also an increasingly accessed means of attaining the above SCQF levels in Numeracy. Additionally, the above SCQF levels can be achieved via the completion of separate Literacy and Numeracy units at levels 4, 5 or 6, which do not require an examination.

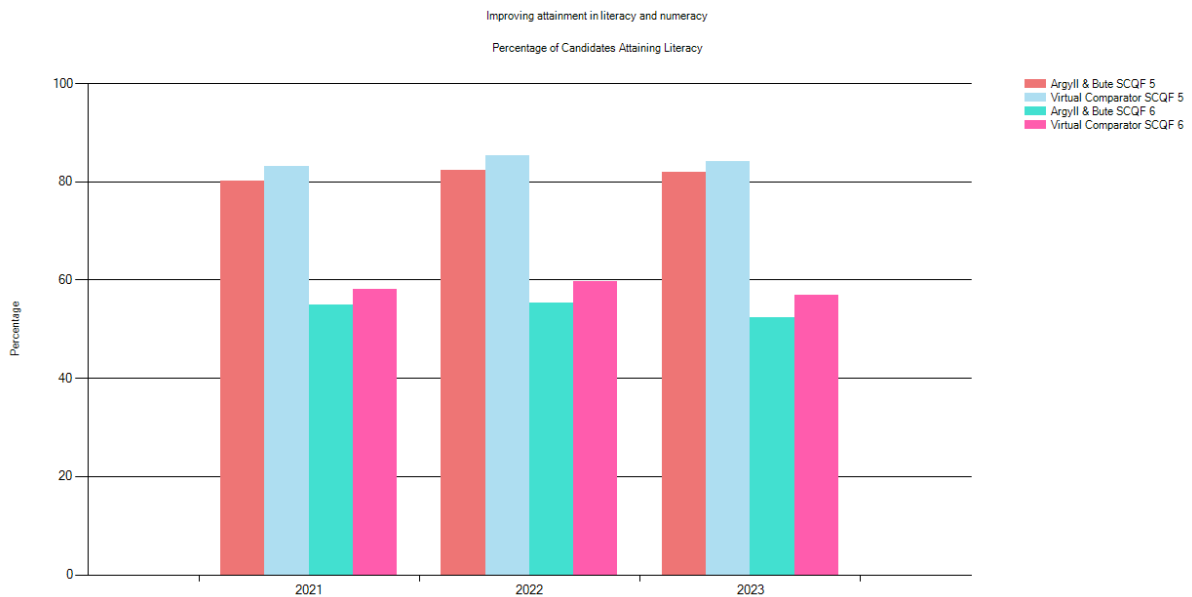
**Literacy SCQF levels 4 and 5 – cumulative attainment by end of S6 based on original S4 roll (including post appeal results and wider achievement accreditation)**



Attainment of Level 4 Literacy stands at 94.5%, 2% higher than the 2022 figure, and represents an increasing trend over the last three years. This figure is 0.4% below the Virtual Comparator (VC), with the gap between Argyll and Bute and the VC having reduced by over 2% in the last year.

Attainment of Level 5 Literacy stands at 81.9%, a reduction of 0.5% on the 2022 figure. This figure is 2.2% below the VC, the gap with the VC having closed by 1% since 2022.

**Literacy SCQF levels 5 and 6 – cumulative attainment by end of S6 based on original S4 roll (including post appeal results and wider achievement accreditation)**



In 2023, by the end of S6 or before, 52.4% of young people in Argyll and Bute had attained Level 6 Literacy, which represents a reduction of 2.9% on the 2022 figure. Attainment is 4.3% below the VC figure, the same gap as in 2022, indicating that attainment at Level 6 Literacy fell nationally in 2023.

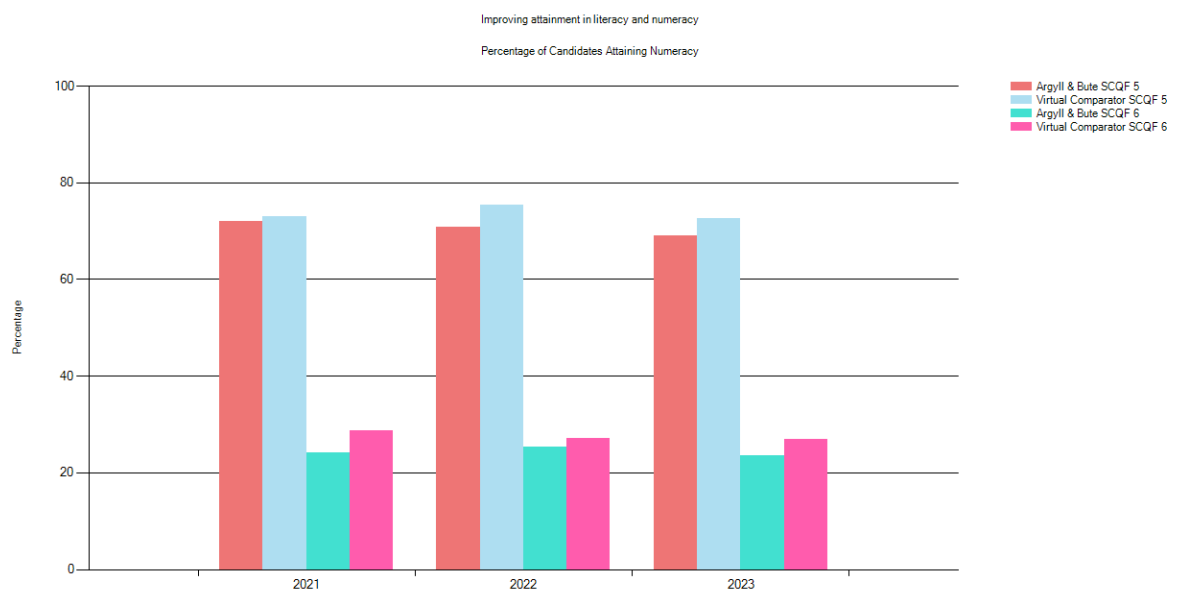
**Numeracy SCQF levels 4 and 5 – cumulative attainment by end of S6 based on original S4 roll (including post appeal results and wider achievement accreditation)**



In 2023, by the end of S6 or before, 87.9% of young people in Argyll and Bute achieved Numeracy at Level 4, a reduction of 2.6% on the 2022 figure. This is 4.0% below the VC figure. This gap is slightly greater than in 2022.

69.0% of young people achieved Level 5 Numeracy by the end of S6 or before, which is a slight reduction on 2022, reflecting a national trend. Compared to 2022, the gap between Argyll and Bute and the VC has reduced by 1.1%.

**Numeracy SCQF levels 5 and 6 – cumulative attainment by end of S6 based on original S4 roll (including post appeal results and wider achievement accreditation)**



In 2023, 23.5% of Argyll and Bute young people achieved Level 6 Numeracy by the end of S6 or before. Attainment is 3.3% less than the VC, which also fell in 2023.

### Literacy SCQF Levels 4 and 5 – school leavers



Of school leavers in 2023, 92.1% achieved Level 4 in Literacy. Although the gap with the VC increased in 2023, it remains smaller than the 2021 figure

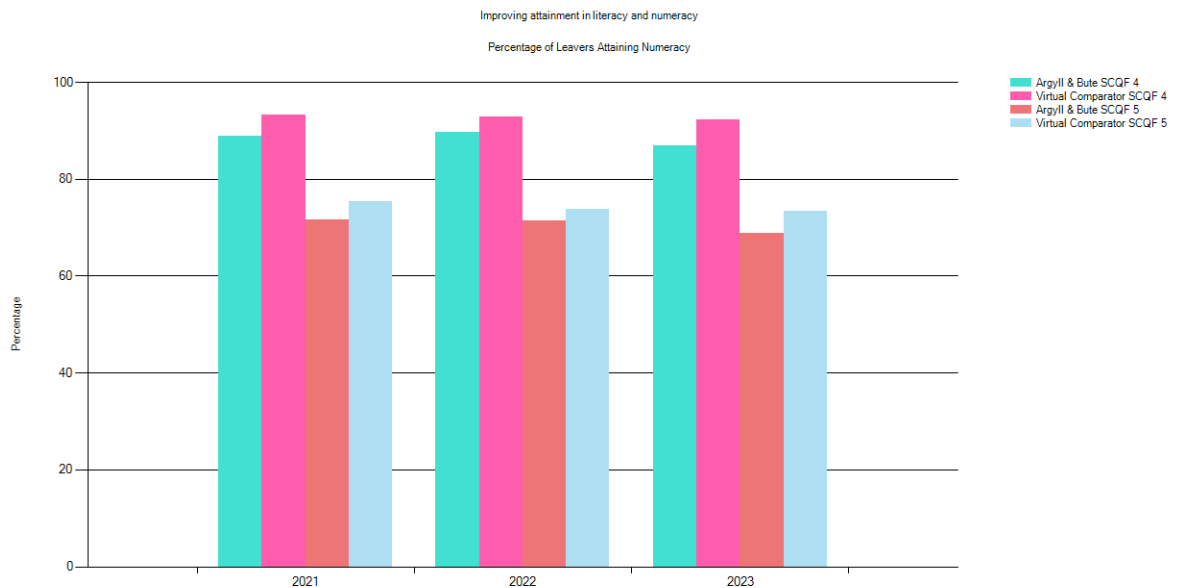
80.9% of leavers achieved Literacy at Level 5. The gap to the VC is 2.7%, which represents an increase on the gap in 2022, but is considerably less than the gap of 4.2% in 2021.

### Literacy SCQF Levels 5 and 6 – school leavers



51.6% of school leavers achieved Level 6 Literacy in 2023, compared to 53.9% in 2022. The VC figure also fell in 2023 by a comparable margin.

### Numeracy SCQF Levels 4 and 5 – school leavers



In 2023, 86.8% of school leavers from S4-S6 achieved Level 4 Numeracy, a decrease of 2.9% on 2021, and 5.4% below the VC figure.

68.9% of 2023 school leavers achieved Level 5 Numeracy, which is a 2.4% reduction on the 2022 attainment level. The gap with the VC has also widened.

## Numeracy SCQF Levels 5 and 6 – school leavers



22.9% of school leavers in 2022 achieved Level 6 in Numeracy, in comparison to the VC figure of 26.3%. The gap to the VC is as it was in 2021.

### Raising Literacy and Numeracy attainment in schools

As part of Attainment Meetings with individual secondary Head Teachers, key steps have been discussed to improve literacy and numeracy attainment in all secondary schools.

Effective, high-quality leadership is a research-proven catalyst for raising attainment, and across all of our secondary schools, the Principal Teachers who lead learning in subject areas across our schools are being supported to develop their skills and capacities to raise attainment, and to develop the capabilities of the teachers they lead and manage.

In this context, Principal Teachers are developing in their teams four key drivers in raising attainment:

- A culture of high expectations underpinning aspirational presentation policies within schools.
  - Subject Principal Teachers are being challenged and supported in relation to their data, ensuring that, as well as monitoring pupils' progress towards success in courses, they are also ensuring that as high a proportion of the relevant pupil cohorts are given the chance to achieve as possible. *Percentage of cohort presented* is now a key element of data analysis, and target setting with young

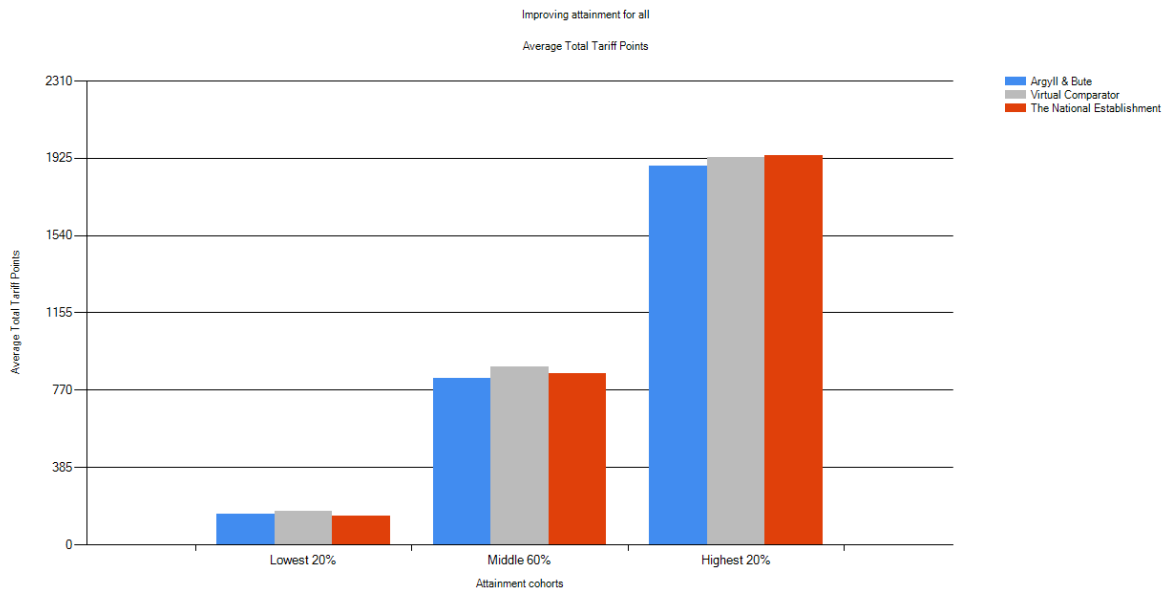
people is an important element of the focus on maximized attainment.

- Rigorous tracking and monitoring of pupils attainment in literacy and numeracy at frequent, regular intervals;
  - In both the Senior Phase (S4-S6) and in the Broad General Education (S1-S3), secondary teachers are working to ensure that the ongoing progress of every young person in literacy and numeracy throughout their time in school is understood, and is the central factor in planning next steps in learning for each young person.
- Frameworks of supportive intervention for pupils achieving below their potential in literacy and numeracy;
  - As a natural consequence of rigorous tracking and monitoring of attainment, teachers are expanding the number and scope of interventions with young people to address underperformance, and are developing their skills in ensuring interventions are personalized and focused on assessed need.
- High-quality, learner-centred learning and assessment experiences in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum continuing into the Senior Phase.
  - Through the Guided Approaches to Pedagogical Enquiry (GAPE) programme, an increasing number of teachers across secondary schools are developing their practice in leading learning which ensures young people know what they are learning, why they are learning it, how they will know they are learning effectively, and how their learning links to the development of their wider skills.

#### 4.4 Improving attainment for all

This measure details the average attainment of pupils in three attainment cohorts – the highest 20% of attainers, the middle 60% of attainers and the lowest 20% of attainers – using the tariff points gained for the passing of courses at different levels.

**Average cumulative attainment by the end of S6, based on original S4 roll (after appeals and Wider Achievement Accreditation)**

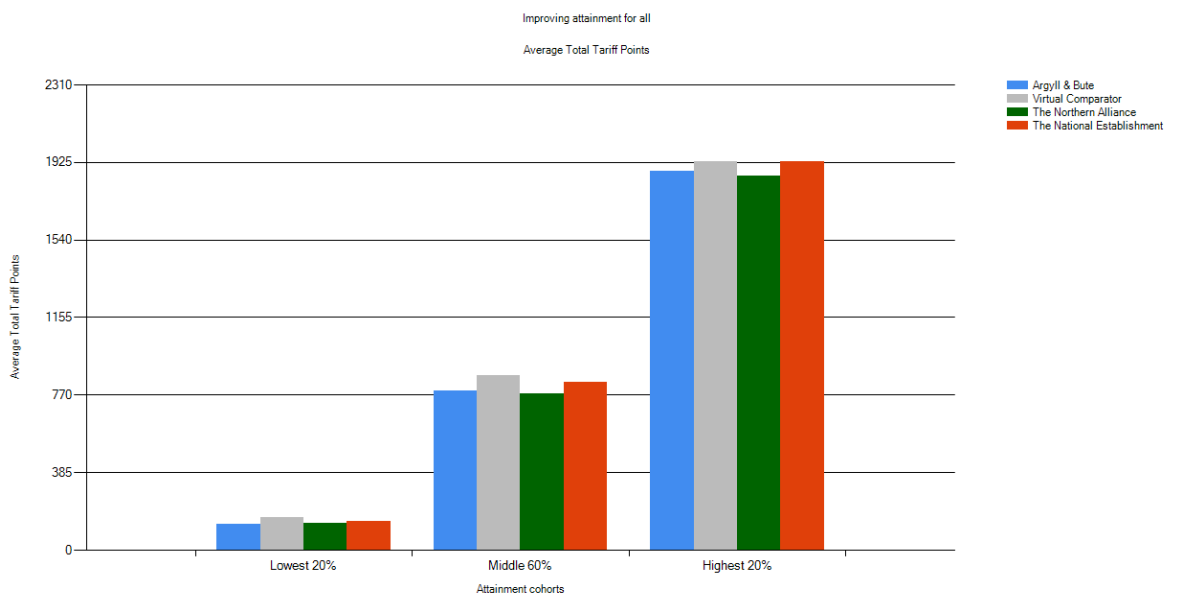


It can be seen that the attainment in 2023 of the highest attaining young people in Argyll and Bute is marginally below both the VC and the attainment of the same cohort nationally.

For the middle 60% of attainers, in 2023 Argyll and Bute pupils performed in line with pupils nationally, but slightly below the level of the VC.

In 2023, the lowest attaining cohort achieved above the national average, but slightly below the VC level.

### Average cumulative attainment – school leavers





For school-leavers, the average 2023 attainment of Argyll and Bute's highest achieving cohort was above that of the Northern Alliance group of local authorities and slightly lower than the VC and the rest of the country.

In 2023, the middle-attaining cohort of leavers also, on average, attained at a higher level than the similar cohort in the Northern Alliance and were slightly below national cohort and the VC.

The attainment of the lowest-attaining cohort of young people in Argyll and Bute was on par with that of the national and Northern Alliance cohort, with the VC attainment being slightly higher.

### **Raising Attainment for all in schools**

Head Teachers in all secondary schools are being challenged and supported to continually examine their curriculum structures and options frameworks to ensure that they allow all young people to attain and achieve to their maximum potential. This includes planning future learning and attainment pathways with pupils and their families at the earliest opportunity, to ensure that, as well as the required breadth of the S1-S3 Broad General Education, there is also the focus on depth of learning, specialisation and coherent progression in S1-S3 which reflects each young person's aspirations and interests and prepares them for high levels of Senior Phase attainment.

Secondary Head Teachers are also being challenged and supported to ensure their Senior Phase curricula are wide and dynamic. This will ensure that there are meaningful attainment and achievement opportunities for all young people – not only in the traditional academic context, but also in terms of vocational and skills-focused courses and certification. In line with clear national thinking, schools are also working to develop the culture where there is parity of esteem between academic and vocational attainment, and all young people have access to relevant, stimulating courses which take them towards their preferred post-school positive destination.

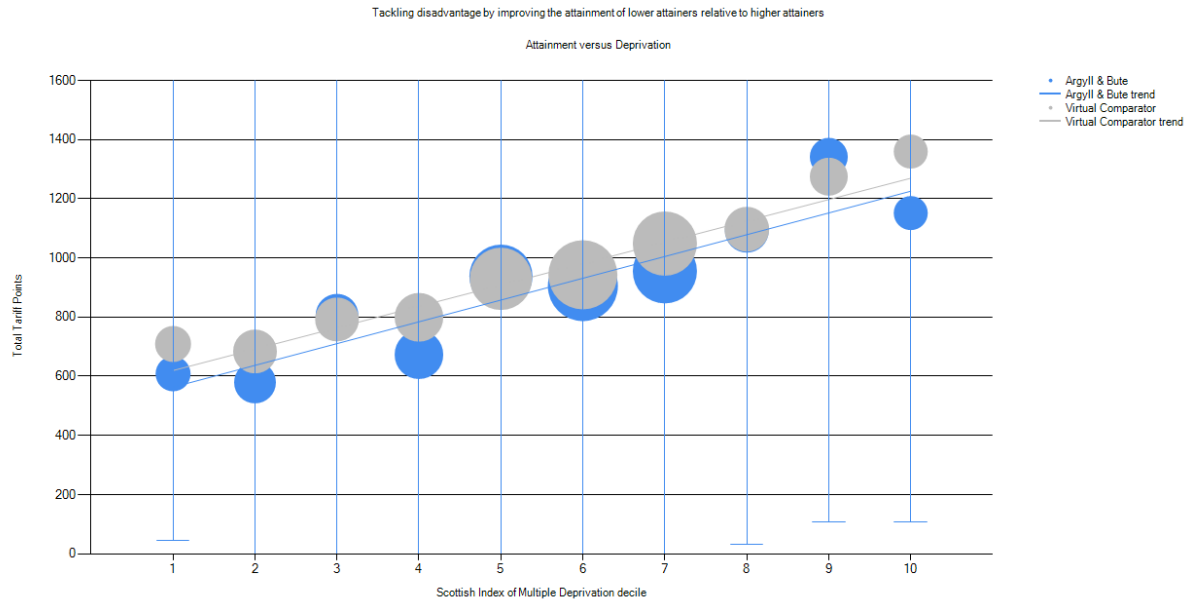
By ensuring these types of wide, accessible and equitable senior-phase curricula are in place in our schools, the attainment and achievement of all young people will increase, regardless of their academic ability or to which percentage of attainers they belong.

#### **4.5 Attainment in Context of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)**

Analysis of attainment in the context of SIMD allows schools and the Education Service to evaluate how attainment is affected by social disadvantage, and take actions accordingly to ensure equity of opportunity and close the poverty-related attainment gap. Argyll and Bute's attainment Stretch Aims focus on

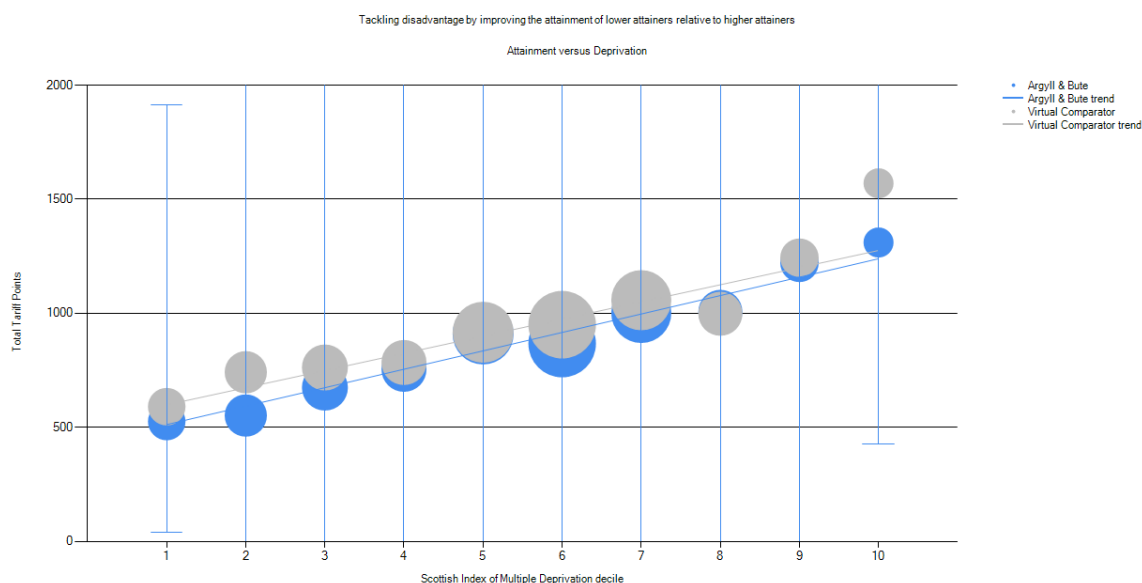
reducing the gap in attainment between the most and least disadvantaged young people in the authority.

**Average attainment by SIMD decile compared with Virtual Comparator Data (at the end of S6, based on original S4 roll) – after appeals and Wider Achievement accreditation**



From the above graph, it can be seen that in Argyll and Bute, pupils in SIMD centiles 1, 2, 4 and 7– the first two deciles being the least advantaged young people in the authority – are performing below the VC. The rest of the deciles are broadly in line with the VC, apart from decile 10 – the most advantaged young people – which is below the VC, and decile 9 which is above. The small numbers in deciles 9 and 10 mean it is difficult to draw statistical conclusions, as the performance of one or two pupils can make a significant difference to the data.

## Average attainment by SIMD decile – school leavers



Argyll and Bute school leavers from 2023 are shown here to be attaining at the same level as or slightly less than the VC, although deciles 2 and 10 show a more pronounced difference to the VC.

### Raising attainment and achievement for our most disadvantaged young people

As part of annual school improvement planning process, in their Standards and Quality Reports all secondary schools now complete detailed analysis of the impact their Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) allocation has had on identified groups of the least advantaged young people. In their School Improvement Plans, Head Teachers also present detailed planning of how their PEF allocation will be spent in the coming year to reduce inequality and support the wellbeing and progress of pupils from the most deprived backgrounds. Additionally, Head Teachers must account for the attainment and achievement of the most disadvantaged pupils in their schools as part of the annual Attainment Meeting with the Executive Director, Heads of Service, Education Manager and Education Officer.

Examples of the types of interventions being facilitated by PEF are included in section 4.8 of the December 2023 paper *Education Performance Data Analysis 2022-23*. (link above).

The Mentoring Programme established in three of our secondary schools in partnership with MCR Pathways is targeting the most disadvantaged young people in Argyll and Bute. The programme seeks to empower the young people, develop their confidence and broaden their horizons through being paired with

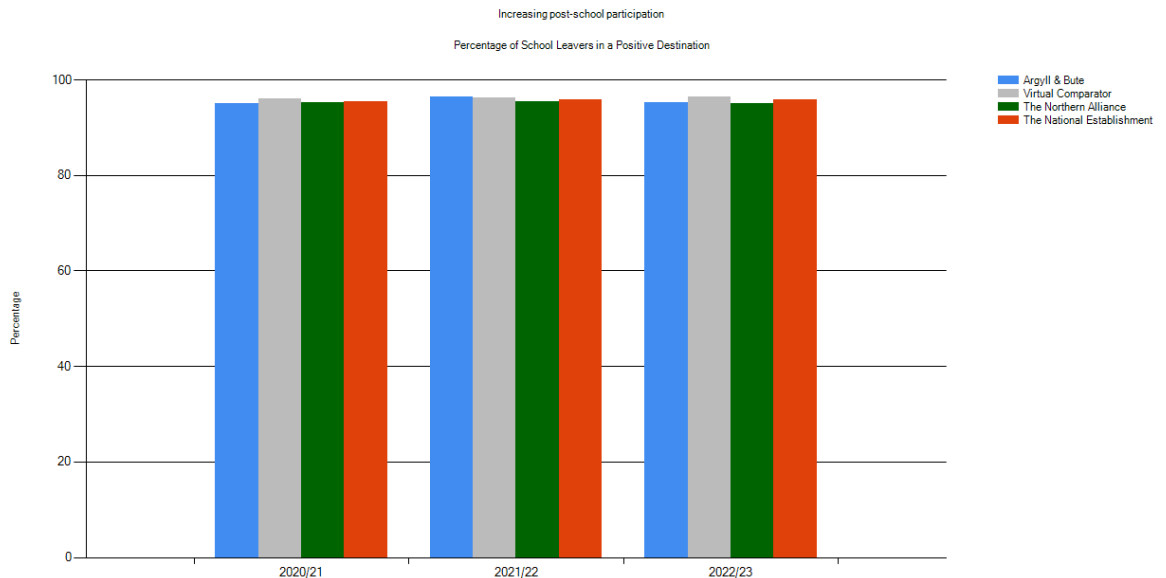
a volunteer mentor from their community. The programme has had a very successful start in Argyll and Bute, and we will seek to extend it in the coming two years.

The appointment of the Virtual Head Teacher for Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) has increased the focus on the wellbeing, achievement and attainment of this cohort of young people, and has seen detailed tracking of both progress and wellbeing, with targeted interventions central to ensuring they attain their potential.

#### 4.6 Initial Destinations of young people in Argyll and Bute

As detailed in the report to committee in December 2023, the Participation of 16-19 year-olds in Argyll and Bute is strong, with 95.6% of all such young people in employment, training or education, placing Argyll and Bute Council 8<sup>th</sup> out of all local authorities in Scotland for Participation.

The year-on-year initial destinations of school leavers significantly influences the Participation levels. The graph below illustrates the percentages of school leavers in Argyll and Bute securing a positive destination (employment, training, or continuing education) on leaving school in 2023.



[Add to personal dashboard](#)

Of those young people who left school in 2023, 95.3% moved into a positive destination. It can be seen that the percentage of Argyll and Bute school leavers in a positive destination is greater than that of the Northern Alliance local authorities and is marginally below the rest of the country and the VC figure.

The Education and Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) teams continue to extend their work with schools, establishing and developing school-employer partnerships to allow meaningful work-based vocational learning for young people. Bespoke and individualised curricula are in place for many pupils, contextualised by their own interests and professional aspirations. There is particular focus on this type of engagement with young people who are disengaged or disadvantaged, and who would otherwise be least likely to attain a positive destination post-school.

Schools are also working closely with further and higher education establishments, to ensure all those who wish to pursue such a pathway are able to do so, regardless of situation or place. Additionally, Education has partnerships with a range of third sector agencies, and work closely with them to develop in young people the key skills for life and work required to attain and sustain positive destinations.

## 4.7 **Attainment of Care-Experienced Young People**

The very small size of the Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) cohort, and the sometimes challenging situations they face, means that year-on-year tracking of attainment trends is difficult, and attainment can fluctuate from year to year.

### **Literacy and Numeracy**

The February Insight update supplied data relating to CEYP who left school in 2023:

#### **Literacy**

63.6% of CEYP school leavers achieved Level 4 Literacy (figure for all young people in Argyll and Bute: 90.1%)

54.6% of CEYP school leavers achieved Level 5 Literacy (figure for all young people in Argyll and Bute: 80.9%)

27.3% of CEYP school leavers achieved level 6 Literacy. (figure for all young people in Argyll and Bute: 51.6%)

#### **Numeracy**

72.7% of CEYP school leavers attained Level 4 Numeracy (figure for all young people in Argyll and Bute: 86.8%)

36.4% of CEYP school leavers attained level 5 Numeracy (figure for all young people in Argyll and Bute: 68.9%)

9.1% of CEYP school leavers attained Level 6 Numeracy (figure for all young people in Argyll and Bute: 22.9%)

### **Improving Attainment for All**

In terms of their attainment across all subjects, Care Experienced young people in Argyll and Bute who left school in 2022 showed relatively strong attainment. The highest achieving 20% of CEYP school leavers attained more highly than CEYP across the Northern Alliance authorities and was on par the rest of Scotland. The same pattern was evident for the middle and lowest attaining groups among CEYP.

### **CEYP School Leaver Initial Destinations**

90.9% of CEYP school leavers progressed to a positive post-school destination in 2023 (figure for all young people in Argyll and Bute: 95.3%). This is marginally less than the VC, and above both the Northern Alliance authorities and national figures for CEYP.

A factor in the positive post-school destinations for care-experienced young people is the personalised curriculum pathways which are in place for some CEYP pupils. These have involved a mixture of in-school learning and work-placements, during which skills for life and work are developed. Such activities have the added benefit of re-engaging with educational provision some CEYP whose attendance at school had fallen away.

### **Narrowing the Attainment Gap and Ensuring best outcomes for CEYP**

Reducing the attainment gap between CEYP and their peers, and ensuring they match their peers in attaining positive, sustained destinations is a priority for Argyll and Bute Council. Ensuring their welfare, engagement and voice is key to achieving such aims.

Care-Experienced young people are supported to achieve to their maximum potential in Literacy and Numeracy, and across all their subjects, which often involves the overcoming of significant barriers.

The recent appointment of the Virtual Head Teacher (VHT) for CEYP – creating a framework to rigorously address the needs and fulfil the entitlements of all such young people – is a measure of the prioritisation within the service of equity for all CEYP, and an unrelenting focus on their wellbeing and attainment.

The VHT for CECYP tracks and monitors the attainment of this cohort, and co-ordinates a range of interventions to support young people in maximising their attainment and achievement, and entering into positive destinations.

Targeted one-to-one support for CEYP is provided both within schools and, when necessary, in the settings outwith schools which best suits the young people's needs.

The attainment of CEYP is closely tracked to identify those most in danger of not attaining in literacy and numeracy, and personalised interventions follow to support the achievement of awards.

As a result, the attainment in Literacy and Numeracy of CEYP is maximised in terms of what they are capable of at this time in their lives.

The VHT is also engaging in a cycle of visits to external education providers who support Argyll and Bute care experienced children, to scrutinise provision and ensure the education needs of our young people are being met.

The VHT works alongside school colleagues and partners from Skills Development Scotland to ensure that every care experienced young person is aware of their options for further education and employment, and is supported to access the required information through this transition period.

It is clearly understood that attainment of young people is heavily dependent on their physical and emotional wellbeing. This is particularly true for CEYP, where obstacles to wellbeing can be more pronounced and impactful.

A Health and Wellbeing Family Liaison Officer works to support the wellbeing of CEYP, working with families/carers to support young people with attendance, self-esteem and resilience, and to ensure they have the space and opportunity in their lives to focus on their own achievement and attainment.

The VHT and her team also work with schools to ensure they are considering all supports for CEYP - e.g. staged intervention framework, support bases, bespoke timetables. Links are made with agencies such as Who Cares to ensure each young person's voice is heard. The VHT also contacts work experience placements to check on welfare and progress, and raises awareness with partner agencies to widen understanding of CEYP challenges.

#### **4.8 Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations**

On 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024, the Scottish Government published the annual Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations. The document provides information on the attainment and initial destinations of school leavers in Scotland and reports on school leavers' attainment in National Qualifications. Among key information contained within the report relevant to this paper are the following:

- Of all 32 local authorities in Scotland, Argyll and Bute is placed 10<sup>th</sup> equal for school leavers having achieved at least one Level 5 National Qualification (National 5, or National 5 Skills for Work), with 86.2% of our school leavers having done so. The National Average is 84.8%

- Argyll and Bute is placed 15<sup>th</sup> for young people having achieved at least one Level 6 National Qualification (Higher or Higher Skills for Work), with 57.0% of our school leavers having done so. The national average is 57.9%
- Of all 32 local authorities in Scotland, Argyll and Bute is placed 10<sup>th</sup> for school leavers having achieved at least one SCQF Level 5 award (National 5, National 5 Skills for Work, or any other SCQF Level 5 award such as Level 5 Foundation Apprenticeships, National Progression Awards, National Certificates or SVQ2 Awards), with 89.1% of our school leavers having done so. The National Average is 87.9%
- Argyll and Bute is placed 15<sup>th</sup> for young people having achieved at least one SCQF Level 6 award National Qualification (Higher, Higher Skills for Work, or any other SCQF Level 6 award such as Level 6 Foundation Apprenticeships, National Progression Awards, National Certificates or an SVQ3 Award), with 62.6% of our school leavers having done so. The National Average is 65.6%.

### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 This report updates previous reports to committee on key attainment performance data. It incorporates data from the Scottish Government's Insight tool, which was most recently updated in late February 2023 to include all post-appeal attainment, accreditation for wider achievement qualifications and attainment data relating to all 2022 school leavers.
- 5.2 Central Officers continue to take forward the programme of support and challenge with schools across the authority, involving a range of actions and measures to support schools to secure further improvement in examination attainment and accredited wider achievement outcomes for young people. Increasing attainment and achievement, and ensuring that all young people achieve to their potential, regardless of location, circumstance or potential barriers, is at the heart of the work of the Education Service.
- 5.3 Heads of Service and Managers continue to meet regularly with Head Teachers to ensure appropriate levels of both scrutiny and collaboration are in place in relation to performance and securing positive outcomes for young people. This work is reinforced and enhanced by central staff through their involvement with national performance networks, such as the Northern Alliance group of local authorities and the Association of Directors which allows them to share best practice with wider Local Authority colleagues.
- 5.4 Additionally, the Education Service has reviewed and improved the process for analysis and evaluation of attainment data. Attainment Meetings with individual



secondary Head Teachers take place in October/November, at which all aspects of attainment from S1-S6 are analysed and key improvement strategies to raise attainment are discussed and agreed.

- 5.5 Secondary school Head Teachers will present individual school performance analysis for session 2022-2023 at Local Area Committees in June 2024. Additionally, in May 2024 young people will speak personally to elected members about their own educational journeys and pathways, illustrating the many personalised pathways to attainment which are available to young people in Argyll and Bute's secondary schools. Invitations for members to visit schools to meet young people will be issued in coming weeks.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 **Policy:** This report links directly to Outcome 3 in the Argyll and Bute Single Outcome Agreement (Education Skills and Training Maximises Opportunities for All). OCTF: Key Objective 1; NIF: Priority 1
- 6.2 **Financial:** None
- 6.3 **Legal:** None
- 6.4 **HR:** None
- 6.5 **Fairer Scotland Duty:**
- 6.5.1 Equalities – None
- 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – None
- 6.5.3 Islands – None
- 6.6 **Risk:** The performance of Argyll and Bute schools in national examinations and wider achievement qualifications can significantly enhance or detract from the Council's reputation and attractiveness as an area to work and live in.
- 6.7 **Customer Service:** This report provides elected Members with an overview of Service Performance.

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**Councillor Yvonne McNeilly - Policy Lead for Education**

**Wendy Brownlie**

Head of Education – Performance and Improvement

**Jennifer Crocket**

Chief Education Officer/ Head of Education – Wellbeing, Inclusion and Achievement

**Simon Easton**

Education Manager: Senior Phase and 16 Plus

**7 March 2024**