

REPORT TO: CHILDREN, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 4 MARCH 2024
REPORT ON: ACHIEVEMENT OF CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE LEVELS 2022/23
REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE
REPORT NO: 66-2024

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels 2022/23 report provides information on the proportion of primary school pupils who have achieved the expected Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in literacy and numeracy relevant to their stage in academic session 2022/23.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Children, Families and Communities Committee notes the contents of this report and the improvements in literacy and numeracy attainment in the primary school sector.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Curriculum for Excellence defines five levels of learning. The first four levels in the Broad General Education (BGE) phase are Early Level, First Level, Second Level, Third/Fourth Level, with progression to qualifications described under a fifth level, the Senior Phase.

4.2 The path pupils are expected to follow through the levels reflects the stages of maturation of pupils and the changing ways in which they engage with learning as they develop. Some pupils will start learning at these levels earlier and others later, depending upon individual needs and aptitudes. Table 1 shows the three curriculum levels in the primary sector.

Pre-School: Primary 1	Early Level
Primary 2 – Primary 4	First Level
Primary 5 – Primary 7	Second Level

Table 1 BGE Curriculum Levels (Primary)

4.3 This report focused on the BGE in the primary sector, providing information in relation to the relevant Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) children’s services indicators and descriptions. These are:

- % of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Literacy
- % of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Numeracy
- Literacy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils
- Numeracy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils

4.4 Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) data are based on teachers' professional judgements of individual pupil performance. This report refers to the school year 2022/23; the data reflect what pupils have achieved by the end of the school year – ie, June 2023. This report is based on data published by Scottish Government on 12 December 2023. The Scottish Government note that achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels in 2020/21 and 2021/22 were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and that 2022/23 results may also be affected by the ongoing impact of the pandemic on pupils' learning. This should be kept in mind when making comparisons over time.

4.5 The full details of Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) data for Dundee's primary pupils from 2016/17 to 2022/23 is available in Appendix 1.

5.0 ACHIEVEMENT OF CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE LEVELS – LITERACY

% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Literacy

5.1 It is important to note that a pupil is only reported to have achieved the expected level in 'literacy' if they have achieved the expected level in all three of the literacy organisers: reading, writing, and listening and talking.

5.2 Prior to 2018/19 the proportion of primary pupils in Dundee achieving their expected literacy levels was significantly lower than the national average (Figure 1, below). Since 2018/19 Dundee's primary literacy attainment levels have been similar to the Scottish average. Both Dundee and Scotland demonstrate continuing recovery, post-pandemic, in 2022/23.

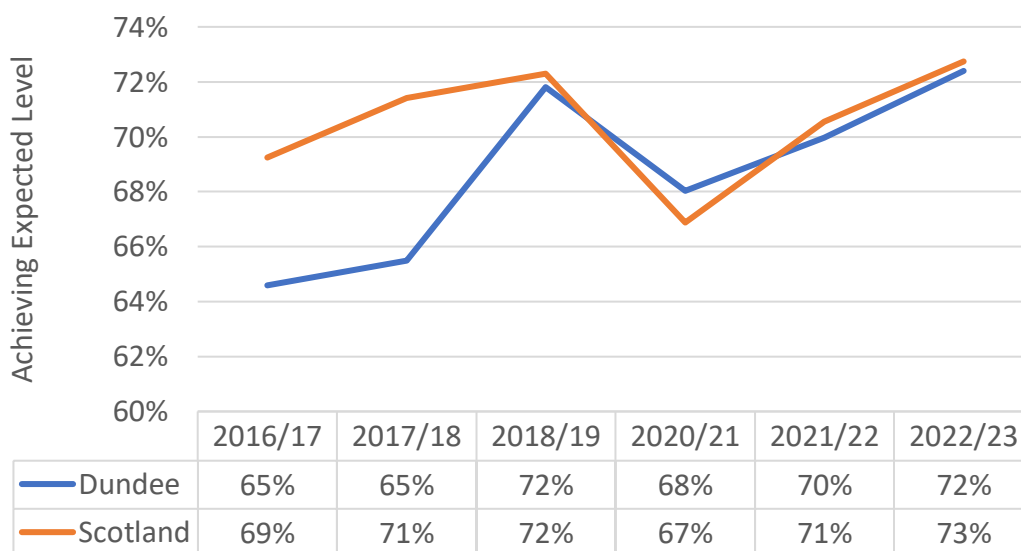


Figure 1: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving their expected level in Literacy.

Closing the attainment gap in literacy: Primary 1, 4 & 7

5.3 In Dundee, 45% of primary pupils live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) Quintile 1 (20% most deprived areas). The Scottish average living in SIMD Quintile 1 is 23%. Since 2018/19 primary pupils living in SIMD Quintile 1 in Dundee have shown higher levels of literacy attainment when compared to the Scottish average (Figure 2, below). This position has been maintained, with improvement, in 2022/23. Despite the ongoing impact of the pandemic, the proportion of pupils living in our most deprived areas in Dundee who have attained their expected level in literacy is the highest on record.

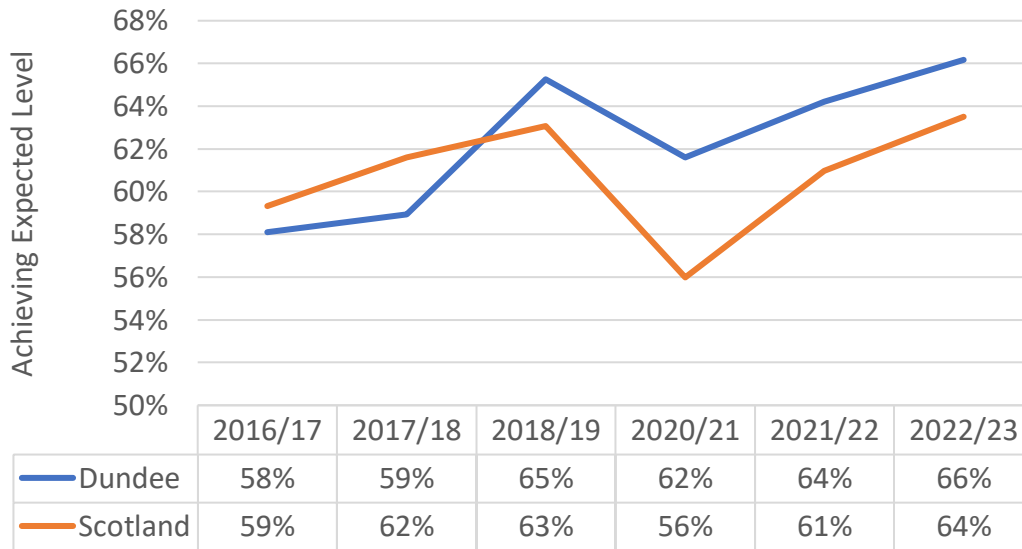


Figure 2: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined from SIMD Quintile 1 (most deprived) achieving their expected level in Literacy.

5.4 Since 2018/19 primary pupils living in SIMD Quintile 5 (20% least deprived areas) in Dundee have also shown slightly higher levels of literacy achievement when compared to the Scottish average (Figure 3, below). With continuing improvement in 2022/23, achievement levels for Dundee pupils in the least deprived quintile now exceed those seen in 2018/19.

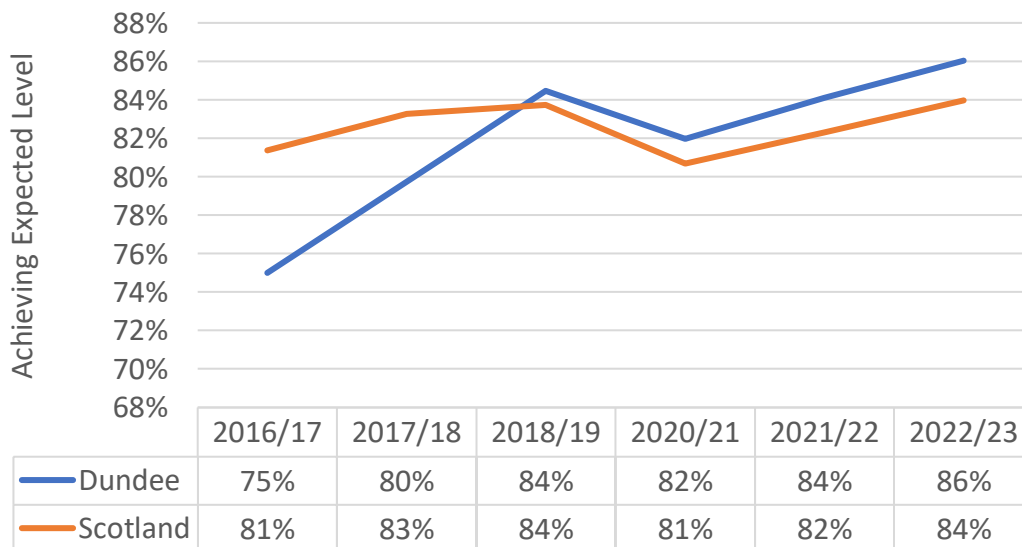


Figure 3: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined from SIMD Quintile 5 (least deprived) achieving their expected level in Literacy.

5.5 Despite overall improvements seen in literacy achievement since 2016/17, the gap in achievement between pupils from the most and least deprived quintiles has remained relatively steady at around 20 percentage points (Figure 4, below). This is as a result of record performance for pupils living in the least deprived areas as well as those living in the most deprived areas. The poverty-related attainment gap within Dundee is currently smaller than the national average.

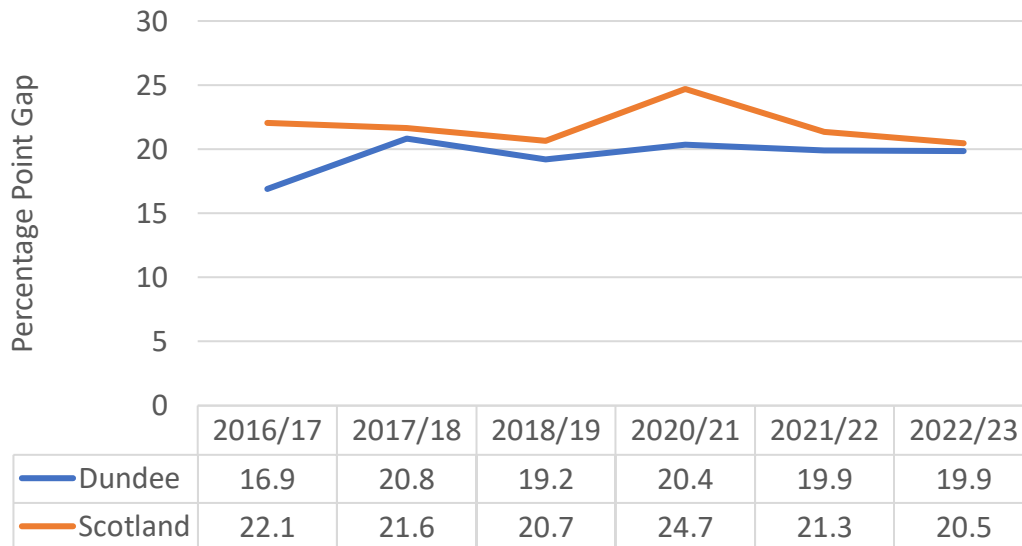


Figure 4: Percentage point gap between P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined from SIMD Quintiles 1 and 5 achieving their expected level in Literacy.

5.6 As detailed in Appendix 2, Dundee has higher levels of attainment in P1, P4 & P7 Literacy combined for each SIMD Quintile when compared to the Scottish average.

6.0 NUMERACY

% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Numeracy

6.1 Prior to 2020/21 primary pupils in Dundee had significantly lower levels of numeracy attainment than the national average (Figure 5) but were showing improvement. In 2022/23, both Dundee and Scotland are showing higher levels of attainment than the pre-pandemic peak in 2018/19. Dundee is one percentage point lower than Scotland as a whole. The proportion of pupils who have attained their expected level in numeracy is the highest on record.

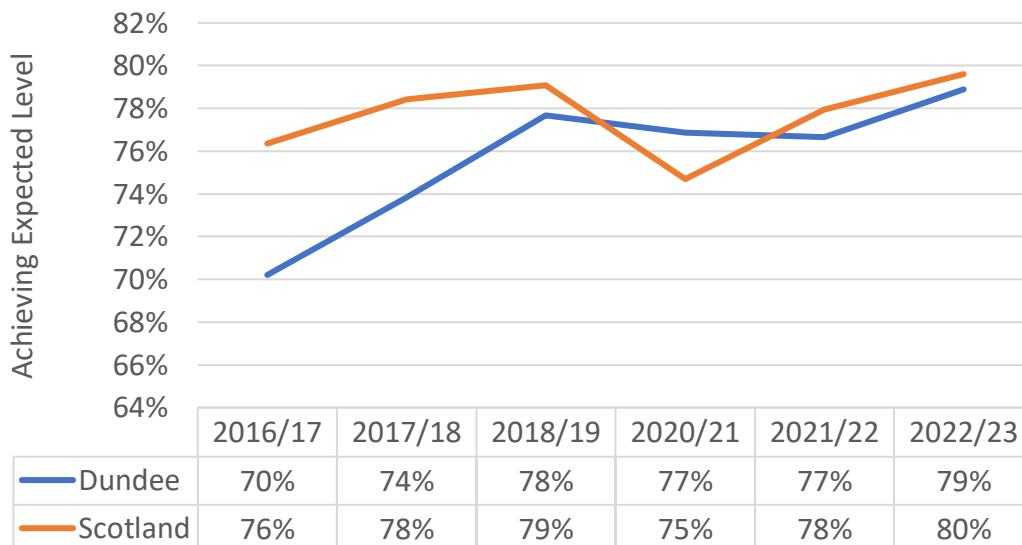


Figure 5: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving their expected level in Numeracy.

Closing the attainment gap in numeracy: Primary 1, 4 & 7

6.2 Dundee primary school pupils living in SIMD Quintile 1 (most deprived) have seen an improvement in numeracy attainment since 2016/17 (Figure 6, below). Since 2020/21 Dundee has had a higher proportion of primary pupils from SIMD Quintile 1 achieving their expected level in numeracy than Scotland's average. Dundee has shown continuing improvement in 2022/23. As with literacy, the proportion of pupils living in our most deprived areas in Dundee who have attained their expected level in numeracy is the highest on record.

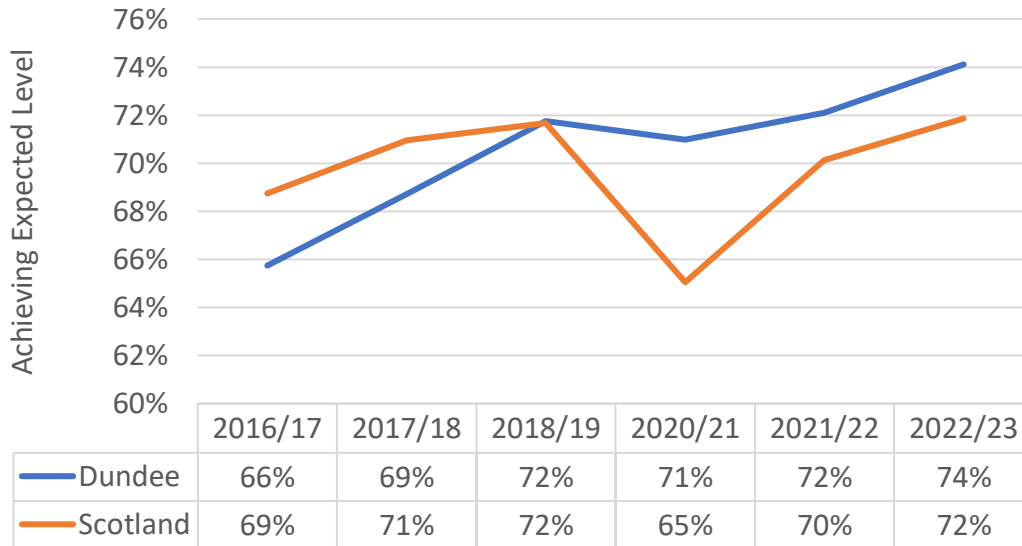


Figure 6: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined from SIMD Quintile 1 (most deprived) achieving their expected level in Numeracy.

6.3 Dundee primary school pupils living in SIMD Quintile 5 (least deprived) saw improvement in the numeracy attainment until 2020/21 (Figure 7, below). The percentage achieving their expected level was higher than the national average in 2020/21 but fell by 2 percentage points in 2021/22. 2022/23 has seen a recovery by Dundee and we are now showing our highest level of achievement in this quintile, one percentage point ahead of Scotland.

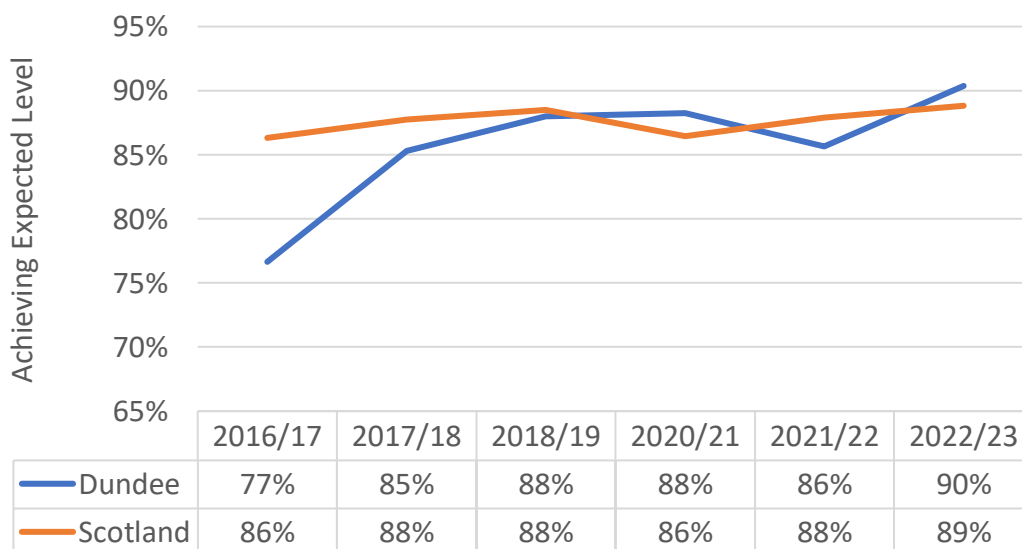


Figure 7: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined from SIMD Quintile 5 (least deprived) achieving their expected level in Numeracy.

6.4 The poverty-related attainment gap remains wider than that seen in 2016/17 but smaller than the gap seen overall in Scotland (Figure 8, below).

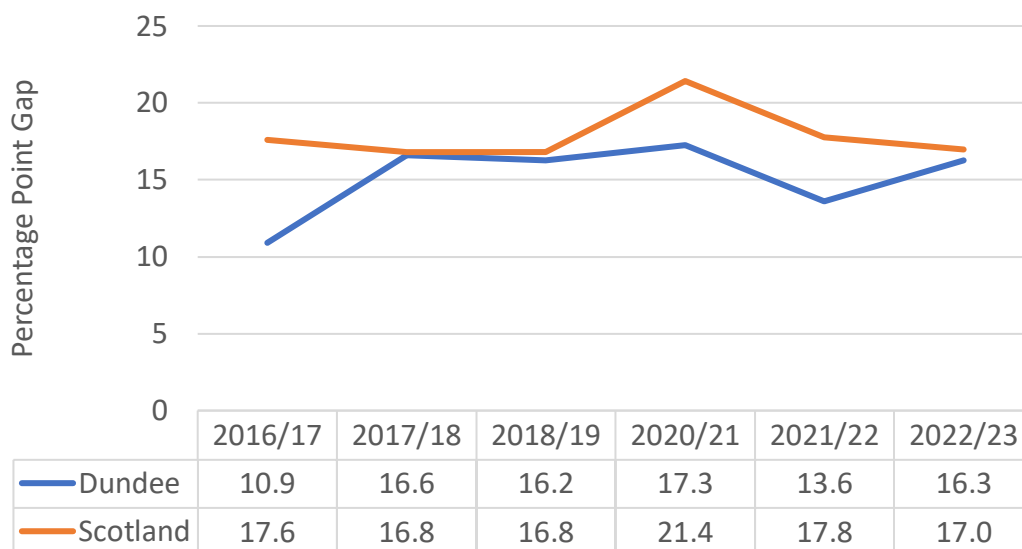


Figure 8: Percentage point gap between P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined from SIMD Quintiles 1 and 5 achieving their expected level in Numeracy.

6.5 As detailed in Appendix 2, Dundee has higher levels of attainment in P1, P4 & P7 Numeracy combined for SIMD Quintiles 1, 3, 4 and 5 when compared to the Scottish average. The proportion of pupils in Quintile 2 attaining the expected level is the same as the Scottish average.

7.0 CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

7.1 In seeking to continue to recover from the impact of COVID-19 and to accelerate progress, the Children and Families Service has a relentless focus on the delivery of a quality educational experience for all pupils from the earliest stages of their educational journey. Key strategies and actions to further improve the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy include:

- Embed the 'Every Dundee Learning Matters' (EDLM) Improvement Strategy, with support from University of Glasgow Professors, to ensure that Head Teachers engage in supportive and challenging peer inquiry focused on school improvement and have enhanced opportunities to share effective practice;
- Redesign Head Teacher Learning Together Days to take place each term with a focus on hearing, and learning, directly from school leaders and practitioners about what is working well in Dundee in relation to improving the presence, participation and progress of pupils, particularly those at risk of 'missing out';
- Work with Education Scotland Attainment Advisors to review the use of all Attainment Scotland Fund (ASF) monies, including Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) and Strategic Equity Fund (SEF), to ensure additional resources are used effectively to close poverty-related attainment gaps – and to improve the sharing of effective practice;
- Plan and undertake quality improvement visits and activity at universal, targeted, and intensive ("team around the school") levels using a data informed approach to determine the level of support assigned to individual schools;
- Education Officers and Managers, alongside targeted Head Teachers, to engage in a bespoke 'Self-Evaluation for Continuous Improvement' programme with Education Scotland to enhance knowledge, understanding and skills in self-evaluation and leading school improvement;
- The Pedagogy Team will continue to provide professional learning at universal and targeted levels informed by data (attainment data and teacher feedback) and will support all Quality

Assurance and Moderation Support Officers (QAMSOs) to ensure a sound understanding of the learning, teaching, and assessment cycle.

- Mobilise an Improving School Attendance strategy group, supported by Education Scotland, and work alongside colleagues across Tayside to improve school attendance rates.

8.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make any recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services, or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate Senior Manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

9.0 CONSULTATIONS

9.1 The Council Leadership Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are in agreement with its content.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None.

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Chief Education Officer

February 2024

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APPENDIX 1: ACEL RETURNS

The full details of Dundee's primary BGE Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) data from 2016/17 to 2022/23 are presented in the table below.

Organiser	Stage	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Reading	P1	78%	80%	82%	79%	82%	81%
	P4	73%	74%	78%	76%	79%	80%
	P7	73%	76%	82%	78%	79%	82%
	P1,4,7 combined	75%	77%	81%	78%	80%	81%
Writing	P1	73%	72%	76%	74%	77%	77%
	P4	66%	65%	70%	69%	70%	73%
	P7	62%	69%	77%	72%	71%	76%
	P1,4,7 combined	67%	69%	74%	71%	72%	75%
Listening & Talking	P1	87%	89%	89%	85%	87%	86%
	P4	82%	83%	86%	87%	83%	86%
	P7	77%	83%	87%	82%	87%	88%
	P1,4,7 combined	82%	85%	87%	85%	86%	87%
Literacy	P1	70%	69%	74%	71%	74%	72%
	P4	63%	62%	67%	65%	66%	71%
	P7	60%	65%	74%	68%	70%	74%
	P1,4,7 combined	65%	65%	72%	68%	70%	72%
Numeracy	P1	79%	80%	84%	81%	83%	84%
	P4	70%	70%	73%	75%	73%	76%
	P7	60%	71%	76%	74%	74%	77%
	P1,4,7 combined	70%	74%	78%	77%	77%	79%

Table 2: Percentage of Dundee primary school pupils achieving their expected CfE Levels, 2016/17 to 2022/23, by Stage and CfE Organiser. There was no collection in 2019/20.

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APPENDIX 2: ACHIEVEMENT OF CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE LEVELS; P1, P4 & P7 COMBINED BY QUINTILE

Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL)




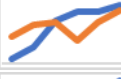

P1, P4 and P7 combined

% achieving expected level in

Literacy

		'16/17	'17/18	'18/19	'20/21	'21/22	'22/23	
SIMD Quintile 1	Dundee	58%	59%	65%	62%	64%	66%	
	Scotland	59%	62%	63%	56%	61%	64%	
SIMD Quintile 2	Dundee	64%	64%	72%	67%	68%	70%	
	Scotland	64%	67%	68%	61%	65%	68%	
SIMD Quintile 3	Dundee	71%	70%	76%	71%	72%	77%	
	Scotland	70%	72%	73%	66%	70%	73%	
SIMD Quintile 4	Dundee	75%	74%	79%	75%	79%	80%	
	Scotland	75%	76%	77%	73%	76%	78%	
SIMD Quintile 5	Dundee	75%	80%	84%	82%	84%	86%	
	Scotland	81%	83%	84%	81%	82%	84%	

Numeracy

		'16/17	'17/18	'18/19	'20/21	'21/22	'22/23	
SIMD Quintile 1	Dundee	66%	69%	72%	71%	72%	74%	
	Scotland	69%	71%	72%	65%	70%	72%	
SIMD Quintile 2	Dundee	69%	73%	79%	77%	76%	76%	
	Scotland	72%	75%	76%	70%	74%	76%	
SIMD Quintile 3	Dundee	77%	78%	83%	80%	79%	83%	
	Scotland	76%	79%	79%	74%	78%	80%	
SIMD Quintile 4	Dundee	78%	79%	83%	84%	84%	85%	
	Scotland	81%	82%	83%	80%	82%	84%	
SIMD Quintile 5	Dundee	77%	85%	88%	88%	86%	90%	
	Scotland	86%	88%	88%	86%	88%	89%	

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACEL	Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels
ADES	Association of Directors of Education in Scotland
ASF	Attainment Scotland Fund
BGE	Broad General Education
CI	Collaborative Improvement
CfE	Curriculum for Excellence
EDLM	Every Dundee Learner Matters
LGBF	Local Government Benchmarking Framework
PEF	Pupil Equity Fund
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SEF	Strategic Equity Fund
QAMSOs	Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officer

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