

## ITEM No ...3....

**REPORT TO:** CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE – 9 MARCH 2020

**REPORT ON:** CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE (CfE) ATTAINMENT LEVELS AND SQA ATTAINMENT UPDATE

**REPORT BY:** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

**REPORT NO:** 47-2020

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 This report informs the Children and Families Services Committee of the progress and attainment of Dundee's pupils in relation to Curriculum for Excellence and the SQA results they achieved in 2019. CfE Teacher Judgements are based on returns submitted to the Scottish Government in August 2019 and published in December 2019. Senior phase attainment data for S4-S6 school leavers in academic session 2018-19 has been extracted from the national Insight Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that members of the Children and Families Services Committee note the contents of this report and the improvements in outcomes for our children and young people.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **4.0 CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE (CfE) ATTAINMENT**

4.1 Curriculum for Excellence is designed to help children and young people gain the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, thus developing the required skills for learning, life and work. This is the fourth year for which Scottish teacher judgements of pupils' progress through the Curriculum for Excellence levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy have been collected. The data, outlined in Table 1 to Table 6, shows levels of achievement over the last four years. It should be noted that nationally this data is no longer considered as experimental in nature. Evidence through moderation with standardised assessment data and SQA data would indicate Dundee's attainment data is robust.

4.2 Data on three organisers of the literacy curriculum (reading, writing, and listening and talking) is collected. In 2018 the Scottish Government introduced a literacy measure to the National Improvement Framework (NIF). A pupil is required to achieve a level in all three organisers in order to be credited with achieving that level in literacy. The literacy measure for 2016 and 2017 shown in Table 1 to Table 6 has been calculated retrospectively.

4.3 In addition, as part of the National Improvement Framework the Scottish Government introduced an overall measure of primary school attainment: P1, 4, 7 combined. The Scottish Government have produced figures for 2018 onwards and again local retrospective figures have been calculated for June 2016 and June 2017 (in Table 1 to Table 6).

4.4 Achievement of expected levels in literacy and numeracy in Dundee primary schools has generally improved over the past four years, and more significantly last year.

4.5 At third level (by the end of S3 for most pupils), achievement in literacy and numeracy has fluctuated. After a fall in 2018 the percentage of S3 achieving expected level has risen again in 2019.

- 4.6 It is positive to note that the robustness of Dundee's CfE Teacher Judgements are improving and we can have greater confidence in their precision. We continue to have a focus on teacher moderation and judgement through high quality professional dialogue and professional learning. Our secondary schools continue to improve the consistency, reliability and robustness of teachers' judgements through on-going moderation within and across schools and through School Improvement Partnerships.

**Table 1: Percentage of pupils in Dundee achieving expected CfE level (Green cells indicate year on year improvement)**

Stage	Area	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
P1	Reading	78%	78%	80%	82%
P1	Writing	70%	73%	72%	76%
P1	Listening & Talking	83%	87%	89%	89%
P1	Literacy	66%	70%	69%	74%
P1	Numeracy	78%	79%	80%	84%
P4	Reading	71%	73%	74%	78%
P4	Writing	62%	66%	65%	70%
P4	Listening & Talking	78%	82%	83%	86%
P4	Literacy	58%	63%	62%	67%
P4	Numeracy	66%	70%	70%	73%
P7	Reading	61%	73%	76%	82%
P7	Writing	51%	62%	69%	77%
P7	Listening & Talking	66%	77%	83%	87%
P7	Literacy	48%	60%	65%	74%
P7	Numeracy	49%	60%	71%	76%
P1,4,7 combined	Reading	70%	75%	77%	81%
P1,4,7 combined	Writing	61%	67%	69%	74%
P1,4,7 combined	Listening & Talking	76%	82%	85%	87%
P1,4,7 combined	Literacy	58%	65%	65%	72%
P1,4,7 combined	Numeracy	65%	70%	74%	78%
S3, 3 <sup>rd</sup> +	Reading	88%	92%	85%	90%
S3, 3 <sup>rd</sup> +	Writing	87%	91%	86%	90%
S3, 3 <sup>rd</sup> +	Listening & Talking	88%	92%	86%	91%
S3, 3 <sup>rd</sup> +	Literacy	84%	89%	84%	89%
S3, 3 <sup>rd</sup> +	Numeracy	79%	84%	80%	85%

**Table 2: Percentage of pupils achieving expected CfE levels in reading by stage, compared to National (Green cells indicate year on year improvement)**

	P1 Early Level		P4 First Level		P7 Second Level		P1, P4 and P7 combined (expected level)		S3 Third Level or better	
	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National
2016/17	78	80	73	77	73	76	75	78	92	90
2017/18	80	81	74	77	76	79	77	79	85	90
2018/19	82	82	78	78	82	80	81	80	90	91

**Table 3: Percentage of pupils achieving expected CfE levels in writing by stage, compared to National (Green cells indicate year on year improvement)**

	P1 Early Level		P4 First Level		P7 Second Level		P1, P4 and P7 combined (expected level)		S3 Third Level or better	
	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National
2016/17	73	77	66	71	62	69	67	72	91	89
2017/18	72	78	65	72	69	73	69	74	86	89
2018/19	76	79	70	73	77	74	74	75	90	90

**Table 4: Percentage of pupils achieving expected CfE levels in listening & talking by stage, compared to National (Green cells indicate year on year improvement)**

	P1 Early Level		P4 First Level		P7 Second Level		P1, P4 and P7 combined (expected level)		S3 Third Level or better	
	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National
2016/17	87	85	82	83	77	81	82	83	92	91
2017/18	89	87	83	85	83	84	85	85	86	91
2018/19	89	87	86	85	87	86	87	86	91	91

**Table 5: Percentage of pupils achieving expected CfE levels in literacy by stage, compared to National (Green cells indicate year on year improvement)**

	P1 Early Level		P4 First Level		P7 Second Level		P1, P4 and P7 combined (expected level)		S3 Third Level or better	
	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National
2016/17	70	74	63	68	60	66	65	69	89	87
2017/18	69	75	62	69	65	70	65	71	84	87
2018/19	74	76	67	70	74	71	72	72	89	88

**Table 6: Percentage of pupils achieving expected CfE levels in numeracy by stage, compared to National (Green cells indicate year on year improvement)**

	P1 Early Level		P4 First Level		P7 Second Level		P1, P4 and P7 combined (expected level)		S3 Third Level or better	
	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National	Dundee	National
2016/17	79	83	70	75	60	70	70	76	84	88
2017/18	80	85	70	76	71	75	74	78	80	89
2018/19	84	85	73	77	76	76	78	79	85	90

- 4.7 The Scottish government collect teacher judgements for all pupils educated in the special sector, regardless of stage. As well as achieving within the defined Curriculum for Excellence levels pupils can also be recorded as 'following individual milestones'. Table 7 through to Table 10 show the CfE Levels achieved by pupils in Dundee and Scotland's Special Sector. Note that as the Special sector collection includes all pupils this covers both the Broad General Education (BGE) and the senior phase; in Dundee pupils in the senior phase were recorded as 'Not Assessed' as CfE Levels are a measure of progress through the BGE. We are piloting data collection in the senior phase special sector which evidences the breadth of attainment across a wider range of awards reflecting the diversity of pupil's learning profiles in this sector.

**Table 7: Percentage of pupils\* achieving CfE Levels in Reading for pupils in the Special Sector, 2018/19**

	Following individual milestones	Working within Early Level	CfE Level Achieved					Not Assessed
			Early Level	1st Level	2nd Level	3rd Level	4th Level	
Kingspark School	24%	45%	6%					25%
Rockwell LC			3%	6%	24%	45%	6%	15%
Dundee Special	21%	38%	5%	1%	4%	7%	1%	24%
Scotland Special	27%	26%	18%	11%	4%	2%	1%	12%

**Table 8: Percentage of pupils\* achieving CfE Levels in Writing for pupils in the Special Sector, 2018/19**

	Following individual milestones	Working within Early Level	CfE Level Achieved					Not Assessed
			Early Level	1st Level	2nd Level	3rd Level	4th Level	
Kingspark School	24%	46%	5%					25%
Rockwell LC			3%	6%	24%	45%	6%	15%
Dundee Special	21%	39%	5%	1%	4%	7%	1%	24%
Scotland Special	27%	28%	18%	10%	3%	2%	1%	12%

**Table 9: Percentage of pupils\* achieving CfE Levels in Listening and Talking for pupils in the Special Sector, 2018/19**

	Following individual milestones	Working within Early Level	CfE Level Achieved					Not Assessed
			Early Level	1st Level	2nd Level	3rd Level	4th Level	
Kingspark School	28%	39%	8%					25%
Rockwell LC			3%	6%	21%	48%	6%	15%
Dundee Special	24%	33%	7%	1%	3%	7%	1%	24%
Scotland Special	26%	25%	19%	11%	4%	2%	1%	12%

**Table 10: Percentage of pupils\* achieving CfE Levels in Numeracy for pupils in the Special Sector, 2018/19**

	Following individual milestones	Working within Early Level	CfE Level Achieved					Not Assessed
			Early Level	1st Level	2nd Level	3rd Level	4th Level	
Kingspark School	28%	41%	6%					25%
Rockwell LC			3%	6%	24%	42%	12%	12%
Dundee Special	24%	35%	5%	1%	4%	6%	2%	23%
Scotland Special	27%	26%	21%	10%	3%	1%	1%	12%

\* NB totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding

Overall, this presents a very positive picture of achievement for our learners across our special sector provision

## **5.0 SECONDARY SENIOR PHASE ATTAINMENT**

### **5.1 Insight**

Insight is the national online benchmarking tool for secondary schools and local authorities. It is designed as an improvement tool to aid schools and local authorities in understanding performance in the senior phase of secondary education. Insight was developed by the Scottish Government and partners with input from a range of key stakeholders including school leaders; teachers; parents; Directors of Education and Quality Improvement Officers. Insight is aligned with the Curriculum for Excellence and the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) assessment framework and is available to teaching staff in secondary schools. It is designed to present data in an easy to interpret way to inform school improvement.

5.2 National Benchmarking data in Insight is based on school leavers and includes details of pupil leaving destinations. Leavers' data is not fully available until the end of each calendar year and the annual update of leaver data does not take place until the following February. At present we have access to stage-based Local Benchmarking measures for 2019. Local Benchmarking measures look at all pupils rather than just leavers; these, stage-based, measures are also used to inform the Local Government Benchmarking Framework.

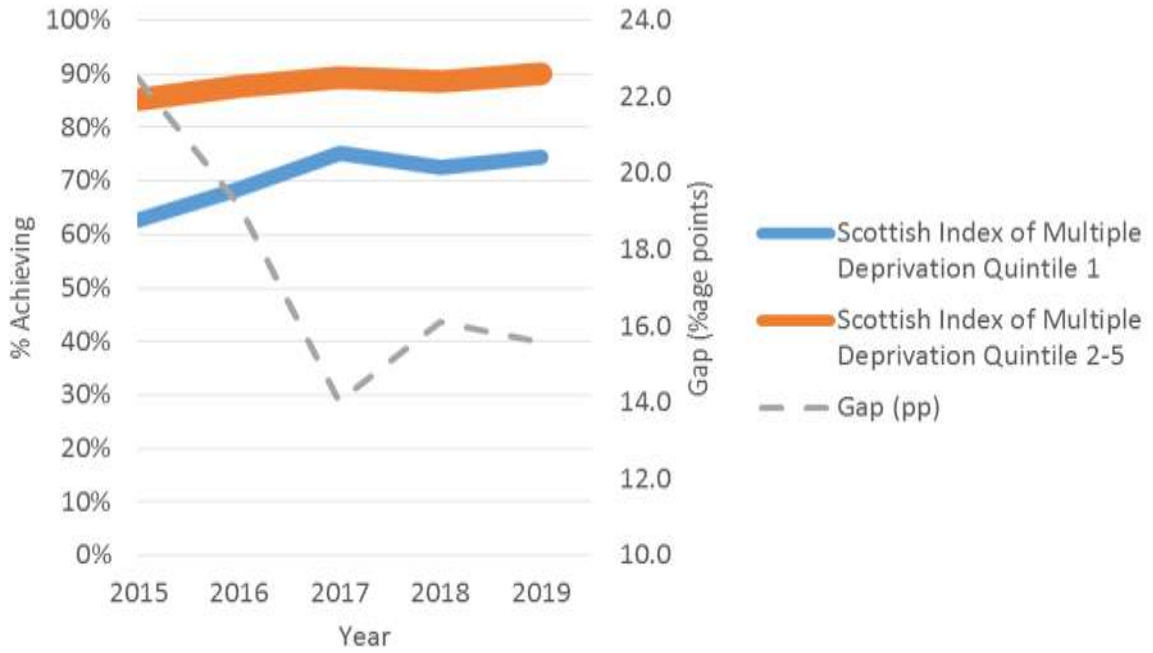
5.3 Insight includes breadth and depth measures for Dundee and each school. Breadth and depth shows the percentage of pupils achieving 'X' or more awards at SCQF Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework ( level 'Y' or better. Comparing 2018 results with 2019:

- In S4 we have seen increases in the percentage of pupils achieving SCQF Level 4 or better awards with most mainstream secondary schools showing an increase in the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more.
- In S5 we have seen increase in the percentage of pupils achieving awards at SCQF Level 6 or better (Higher or equivalent). Here too, most secondary schools have seen an increase in the percentage of their S5 achieving 5 or more awards at this level.
- In S6 results at National 5, Higher, Advanced Higher and equivalent awards have improved compared to last year. All of our schools have seen an increase in the percentage of S6 pupils with three or more awards at SCQF Level 6 or better and the majority of secondary schools have seen an increase in pupils achieving one or more award at SCQF Level 7.

### **5.4 The Attainment Gap**

Dundee is committed to reducing the gaps in attainment that exist between our most and least disadvantaged children and young people. Figure 1 and Figure 2 show attainment in literacy and numeracy at SCQF levels 4, or better, and SCQF level 5, or better, for the past five years; broken down by deprivation group. Data for Dundee and its Virtual Comparator is also presented in Table 11 and Table 12. Over the past five years the gap at SCQF Level 4 between pupils living in the most deprived areas and the rest of Dundee has been decreasing. In 2015 the gap in Literacy and Numeracy attainment at SCQF level 4 between pupils living in the most and least deprived areas was 22.5 percentage points. By 2019 this gap had reduced to 15.6 percentage points. The same gap at SCQF level 5 has fluctuated around approximately 27 percentage points.

**Figure 1: Percentage of Dundee pupils (S6, based on S4) attaining literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 4 or better, by deprivation group**



**Table 11: Percentage of pupils (S6, based on S4) attaining literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 4 or better, by deprivation group. (Green cells indicate year on year improvement)**

		<b>Dundee City Council</b>				
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Quintile 1	63%	69%	75%	73%	74%
	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Quintiles 2-5	85%	88%	89%	89%	90%
	Gap (pp)	22.5	19.2	14.0	16.1	15.6

Figure 2: Percentage of pupils (S6, based on S4) attaining literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better, by deprivation group

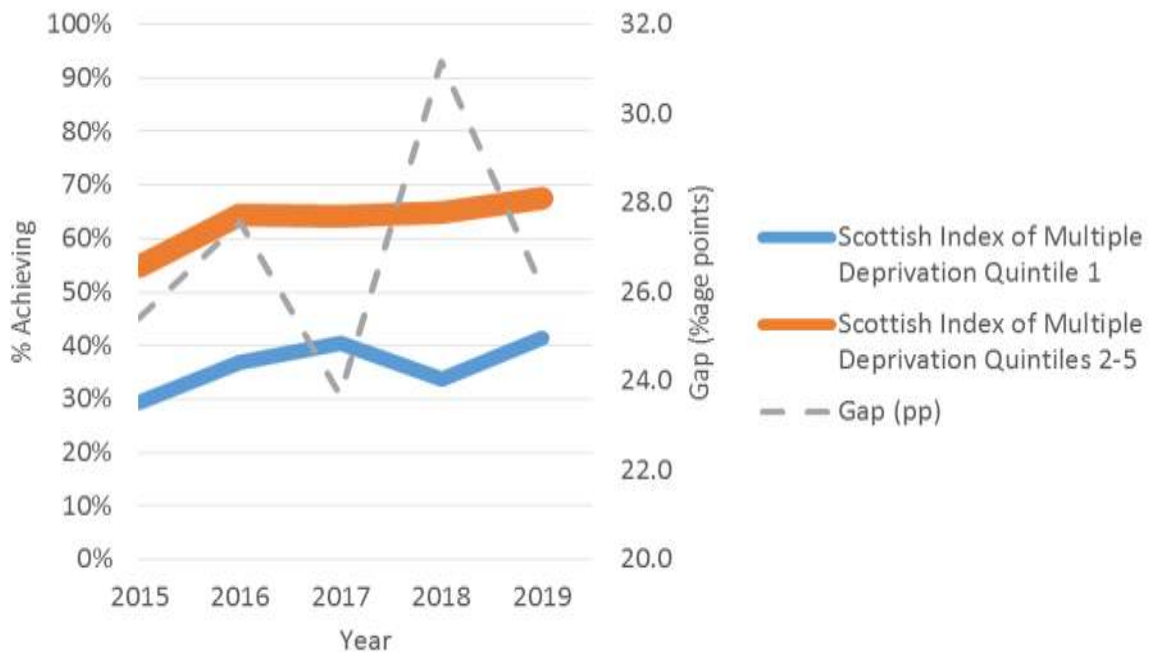


Table 12: Percentage of pupils (S6, based on S4) attaining literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better, by deprivation group. (Green cells indicate year on year improvement)

		Dundee City Council				
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Quintile 1	29%	37%	40%	34%	42%
	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Quintiles 2-5	55%	64%	64%	65%	68%
	Gap (pp)	25.4	27.6	23.7	31.1	26.1

## 5.5 Literacy and Numeracy

Figure 3: Percentage of Pupils (S6, based on S4) Attaining Literacy and Numeracy

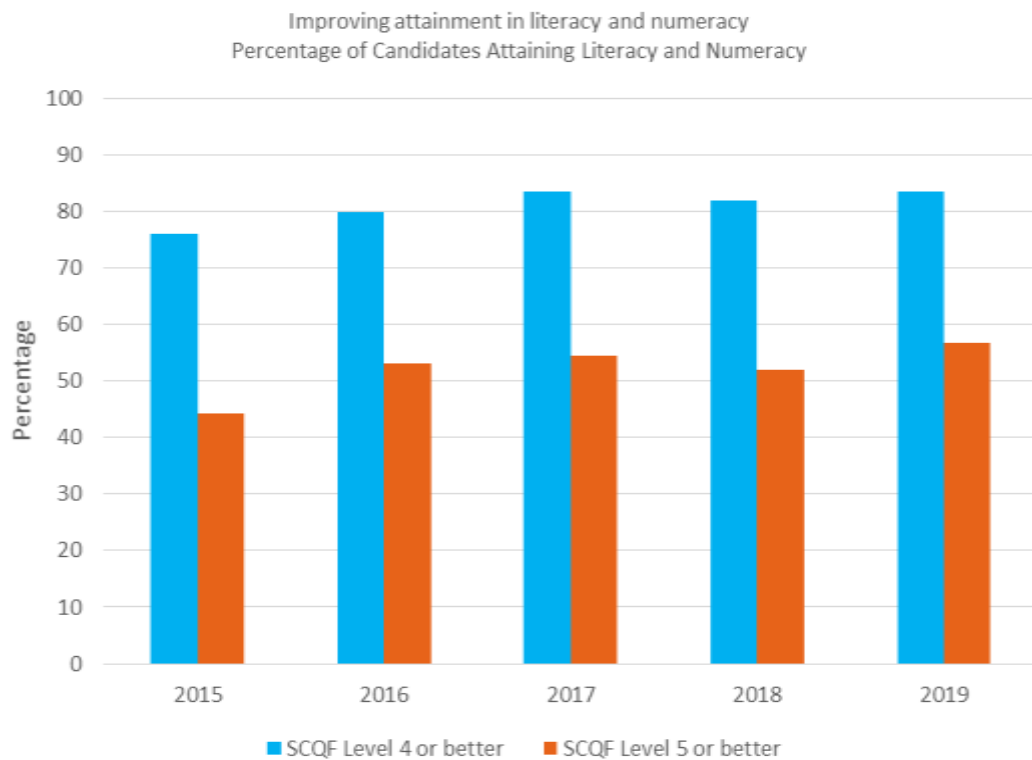


Table 13: Percentage of Pupils (S6, based on S4) Attaining Literacy and Numeracy (Green cells indicate year on year improvement)

		SCQF Level 4 or better	SCQF Level 5 or better
Year	2015	76.1	44.3
	2016	79.8	53.0
	2017	83.6	54.5
	2018	82.0	51.9
	2019	83.6	56.8

5.6 Figure 3 and Table 13 show the percentage of senior phase pupils (S6, based on S4) attaining literacy and numeracy at SCQF levels 4 and 5 or better for Dundee City for the last five academic sessions. Dundee saw steady improvement in the percentage of leavers attaining literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 4 or better between 2015 and 2017. In 2018 performance saw a decrease with 82.0% of Dundee's school leavers attaining literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 4 or better. This has now recovered in 2019.

5.7 At SCQF level 5 or better Dundee also saw improvement from 2015 to 2019 with only a slight reversal in 2018.

5.8 Dundee as a corporate parent is also committed to improving outcomes for looked after/care experienced children and young people. Table 14 shows the literacy and numeracy attainment for our looked after school leavers. The actual number of looked after senior phase pupils in any one year is relatively small. This leads to certain inevitable statistical fluctuations in year-on-year results. However, the overall trend at both SCQF levels 4 and 5 is one of notable improvement and 2019 has shown the highest level attaining at SCQF Level 4 or better of the past five years. This reflects a wide range of recent initiatives and improvement approaches for



looked after/care experienced young people both when at home and in school. Such initiatives include: a new charter outlining a range of commitments, principles and standards from all Social Work, Teaching and Support staff; targeted support to kinship carers; enhanced nurturing approaches in children's houses; the adoption of a new Inclusion Policy by Head Teachers; the use of LAC-specific additional funding to provide additional support to those at risk of exclusion; mentoring in all 8 secondary schools; and the extension of engagement and participation methods to allow children and young people's voices to be heard.

**Table 14: Percentage of looked after pupils (S6, based on S4) attaining literacy and numeracy (Green cells indicate year on year improvement)**

		SCQF Level 4 or better	SCQF Level 5 or better	Number of Looked after Leavers
<b>Year</b>	2015	29.2	4.2	24
	2016	25.8	9.7	31
	2017	44.4	11.1	27
	2018	54.8	16.1	31
	2019	57.6	15.2	33

### 5.9 Improving Attainment for All

Insight uses Tariff scales/points to provide a summary view of a wide range of achievement and different awards from a variety of providers. Tariff scores are based on the latest and best results a pupil achieves at school. For example, if a pupil has National 5 French and Higher French only the tariff points from the Higher award would be counted. Table 15 shows some example tariff scores. It can be seen that at each SCQF level increment, the tariff score more than doubles. Significantly, a pupil attempting Advanced Highers in S6 has the potential to gain considerably more points than a pupil leaving with only Highers or National 5's. An S4 pupil with six awards at National 4 would score just under 200 points. A high achieving S6 pupil with six National 5's, five Highers and three Advanced Highers could have around 2,000 points. Insight divides each cohort into three sections for the Improving attainment for all measures: the top attaining 20% of pupils, the middle 60% and the lowest 20%.

**Table 15: Example tariff scores for National awards**

	Pass	
National 4	33	
	Grade C	Grade A
National 5	64	84
Higher	160	204
Advanced Higher	400	480

5.10 Across Scotland local authorities and schools have different curriculum models in the senior phase. For instance, some authorities offer seven or even eight subject options in S4, whereas Dundee, like many local authorities, offers the CfE recommended six. This makes it hard to benchmark tariffs between authorities as pupils sitting eight subjects have the opportunity to accrue more points than those sitting six. To address this the Insight tool introduced a complementary tariff scale. The complementary tariff only includes a pupil's results from their best 120 SCQF credits: generally speaking a pupil's best five results.

**Table 16: Average Complementary Tariff Points (Green cells indicate year on year improvement)**

		<b>Lowest attaining 20%</b>	<b>Middle attaining 60%</b>	<b>Highest attaining 20%</b>
<b>Year</b>	2015	99	479	1169
	2016	83	532	1196
	2017	96	532	1187
	2018	81	469	1140
	2019	86	525	1174

- 5.11 Following a fall in Dundee's tariff scores in 2017/18, tariff scores have recovered in 2018/19.
- 5.12 Overall attainment for looked after school leavers shows an improving trend over five years (Table 17). Although the overall trend is improving there is still a large gap between looked after pupils and the rest of the school population. This remains an area of high priority for our Children and Families Services

**Table 17: Average complementary tariff score for looked after school leavers (Green cells indicate year on year improvement)**

		<b>Lowest attaining 20%</b>	<b>Middle attaining 60%</b>	<b>Highest attaining 20%</b>
<b>Year</b>	2015	10	109	335
	2016	12	103	531
	2017	12	164	500
	2018	20	126	384
	2019	18	137	475

### **Complex Additional Support needs**

- 5.13 Pupils from special sector schools are not included in Insight's results. However we believe it is important to recognise the achievements of all our learners and therefore are delighted to report that in Kingspark School a total of 22 pupils gained awards at National 2 and National 3. Table 18 shows the subjects and level of awards achieved by pupils from Kingspark School.

**Table 18: Number awards gained by pupils at Kingspark School**

Award	National 2	National 3
Art and Design		1
English and Communication	10	
Food, Health and Wellbeing	20	
Lifeskills Mathematics	10	
Music		1
Performance Arts	2	
Physical Education	10	

- 5.14 Likewise we are pleased to report that from Rockwell Learning Centre a total of 27 pupils gained awards at National 3 to National 5 level. Table 19 shows the subjects and level of awards achieved by pupils from Rockwell Learning Centre.

**Table 19: Number awards gained by pupils at Rockwell Learning Centre**

Award	National 3	National 4	National 5
Applications of Mathematics	8		
Biology		2	
Computing Science	10		
English	5	1	4
History	5		
Hospitality: Practical Cookery	11		
Mathematics		6	
Media	10		

## 6.0 The Way Forward

6.1 In seeking to improve the attainment and achievement of all school leavers there is a commitment to the delivery of a quality educational experience for all children and young people from the earliest stages of their educational journey. The Scottish Attainment Challenge and associated funding, including Pupil Equity Funding, remains key to accelerating improvements in young peoples' attainment and narrowing of the poverty-related attainment gap. Following evaluation of Dundee's Attainment Challenge, the following changes and adaptations to Dundee's attainment challenge activity have taken place in session 2019/20:

- the creation of a single city-wide Schools' Improvement Plan for Raising Attainment
- The publication of Taletta's on-line resource to support parents/carers and their children in navigating the rapidly evolving senior phase (S4-S6) school years
- the involvement of 14 schools in improvement activity with the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change
- the creation of a Children & Families Service Pedagogy Team aimed at improving the quality and consistency of high level learning and teaching across the service
- Increased activity supported by Dundee's Attainment Advisor in formulating bespoke plans for school improvement supported by outcome measures (including gap measures) in the areas of attainment, attendance, inclusion, participation and engagement
- a strengthened approach to middle leadership in secondary schools through the transition towards revised middle leadership structures
- further diversification of the senior phase curriculum across secondary schools supported by the Senior Phase Partnership Review group
- working with Education Scotland to raise attainment across the S1-S3 broad general education (BGE)
- a continued focus on developing leadership at all levels
- a heightened focus on collaboration and benchmarking through increased activity within and beyond the Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative
- continued activity taking forward the Developing Scotland's Young Workforce priorities in Dundee.

**7.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 This Report has been subject to an assessment of any impact on equality and diversity, fairness and poverty, environment and corporate risk. There are no major issues.

**8.0 CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 The Council Management Team were consulted in the preparation of this report.

**9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 None.

Paul Clancy  
Executive Director

Audrey May  
Head of Service (Chief Education Officer)

February 2020