



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON 20 FEBRUARY 2024**

**SUBJECT: INITIAL ANALYSIS OF ACHIEVEMENT OF CURRICULUM FOR
EXCELLENCE LEVELS 2023**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides Committee with a summary of the Moray data collected in June 2023 and provided to the Scottish Government at the end of October 2023 regarding Teacher Professional Judgements (TPJ) on children achieving Curriculum for Excellence levels (ACEL) at P1, P4, P7 and S3. This data appears in the Scottish Government report published in December 2023.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (C) 1 of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to exercising all of the functions of the Council as Education Authority within the terms of relevant legislation with regard to nursery, primary and secondary education.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:-

- (i) scrutinises and notes the content of this report;**
- (ii) acknowledges work underway by Education and across our schools using resources available in order to address identified areas of underperformance and improve outcomes for all children and young people;**
- (iii) notes ACEL results for P1, P4, P7 and S3, improvement over time and progress in relation to Stretch Aims set using available data intelligence, as part of the Scottish Government and Education Scotland Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress requirements; and**
- (iv) notes actions underway and planned in support of improving outcomes for all learners and their ACEL achievement.**

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Scottish Government first published the National Improvement Framework (NIF) for Scottish Education in January 2016. The First Minister at that time described the document as being key in driving work to continually improve Scottish Education and close the poverty related attainment gap, delivering both excellence and equity.
- 3.2 The updated [2024 NIF and Improvement Plan](#) was published in December 2023 and replaces the 2023 NIF and Improvement Plan. In determining key activity and priorities for 2024, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills notes in her foreword that nationally, being out of school and early years settings during the pandemic has also had a profound impact on our children and young people where there are a number of societal and socio-economic factors which are outwith the control of schools and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings, but which can have a significant impact on learning and achievement.
- 3.3 The Cabinet Secretary further recognises that schools and education settings have faced unprecedented upheaval over the last 3 years as a result of the pandemic and cost of living crisis. The Scottish Government remain committed to working together in realising the ambition of achieving equity and excellence for all Scotland's children and young people. This includes tackling inequity and ensuring there is collective responsibility to ensuring continuous improvement for children and young people. Schools continue to focus on the health and wellbeing of all while remaining committed to raising standards and achievement in literacy and numeracy. As highlighted in the recent [National discussion on Scottish Education](#), "the most powerful message emanating from the National Discussion in Scotland is the need to educate **all** learners in Scotland for an uncertain and unpredictable future".
- 3.4 The NIF and Improvement Plan 2024 continue to be underpinned by a set of key principles and priorities. The International Council of Education Advisers (ICEA) view the national discussion and Hayward review of assessment as providing the opportunity for fresh and innovative ideas to drive improvement. They emphasise importance of focus on building capacity of teachers and ensuring that they are supported during the forthcoming period of change, ensuring clear prioritisation to ensure the system does not become overwhelmed. As a result, in their most recent report, the International Council of Education Advisers said that there must be investment in education professionals' learning to address the changing needs of people. As such, this led to the Cabinet Secretary's announcement in October 2023 that a new Centre for Teaching Excellence will be created to deliver this key recommendation.
- 3.5 The NIF and Improvement Plan 2023 identify a number of key drivers for improvement which are considered instrumental in addressing the key priorities of the NIF. Following key national review of the NIF 2023 and in line with findings of wider national reviews including Professor Ken Muir's Report – [Putting learners at the centre: towards a future vision for Scottish Education](#) and the National Discussion on Education outlined above, focus is now on

achievement rather than attainment, where this was seen to be more in line with the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence where we look to develop successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. In this regard, the vision for education in Scotland and our aspiration for all learners to achieve highest possible levels in ACEL are:

- Excellence through raising achievement and improving outcomes: ensuring that every child and young person achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, as well as the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to shape a sustainable future as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors
- Achieving equity: ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed, no matter their background or shared protected characteristics, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap

3.6 Key drivers for improvement are considered within the NIF as:

- School and ELC Leadership
- Teacher and practitioner professionalism
- Parent/carer engagement and family learning
- Curriculum and assessment
- School and ELC improvement
- Performance Information

3.7 The drivers provide a focus and structure for gathering evidence which can then be analysed to identify where we can make further improvements. In Moray, our Strategic Education Meetings focus in on these drivers, with central officer link remits aligned to support key developments. Our current Education Strategic Plan focusses on the following core improvement areas:



3.8 The fourth and sixth drivers listed in 3.6 above – Curriculum and Assessment and Performance Information - relate to the range of evidence on which children and young people learn and achieve throughout their education and how well this prepares them for life beyond school, for example ACEL. It also includes curricular improvement to reflect the key links between curriculum and assessment and this driver within the NIF and Improvement Plan 2024 now includes a number of the actions in response to the reports identified further above. In Moray, as with across Scotland we continue to work towards achieving the vision set out in 3.5 above.

3.9 With specific regard to ACEL, Teacher Professional Judgement data is collected from local authorities by Scottish Government with codes as shown in brackets is as follows:

- Literacy – Reading (R)
- Literacy – Writing (W)
- Literacy – Listening and Talking (LT)
- Numeracy - Numeracy (N)

3.10 Schools are required to submit data on CfE levels for each child in primary schools stages P1, P4 and P7 and each young person in secondary school stage S3. The levels reported are Early, First, Second, Third and Fourth. CfE levels are determined by teachers following a review of key evidence of learner achievement, including classwork, homework, assessment, ongoing formative assessments and holistic task achievement. Teachers also work together and engage in a process of moderation to ensure common understanding of what achievement of a level looks like overall, guided by teacher planning, national guidance and benchmarks. Schools ensure levels achieved, learner progress and future predictions are recorded using tracking and monitoring approaches in line with our agreed and universal Moray Tracking Language.

3.11 The data collected refers to the anticipated levels of attainment at the following stages noting this may be earlier or later for some children and young people depending on individual needs, as detailed from Education Scotland.

Level	Stage <i>(this may be earlier or later for some learners)</i>
Early (E)	The end of P1
First (1 st)	The end of P4
Second (2 nd)	The end of P7
Third (3 rd)	The end of S3
Fourth (4 th)	Some pupils will also achieve this by the end of S3

3.12 Data for secondary school pupils (S3) was not collected by Scottish Government in 2020/2021 and was not collected for any pupils (P1, P4, P7, S3) in 2019/2020 in recognition of Covid-19 impact on data consistency, fit for purpose nature and wider external pressures on school and education authority staff.

- 3.13 Following annual request for ACEL data submission for P1, P4, P7 and S3 stages, data was collected in June 2023 using our Seemis Progress and Achievement module. This followed ongoing work in schools on assessment, moderation and professional commitment to all areas of teacher professional judgement.
- 3.14 ACEL data was submitted to Scottish Government in October 2023 following a range of Quality Assurance processes from school staff and central officers. The initial data provided by schools was, in some cases, further quality assured by central officers directly with schools and where necessary provided with additional support and guidance to ensure the submission of robust and reliable data.
- 3.15 The Scottish Government ACEL national data was published in December 2023, providing a range of data across all of Scotland's local authorities as well as specific cohort and characteristic data.
- 3.16 As requested by Scottish Government and Education Scotland guided by the [Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress](#), Stretch Aims have been set in discussion with both organisations, and provide a basis for measurement and review, to guide improvement activities moving forwards across the service. In respect of ACEL, the following provisional Stretch Aims were set for session 2022/2023:

	2023 Stretch Aim	2026 Stretch Aim
Primary (P1, P4 ,P7 combined) Literacy	67%	74%
Primary (P1, P4, P7 combined) Numeracy	73%	78%
Secondary (S3) Literacy (3 rd level or above)	75%	88%
Secondary (S3) Numeracy (3 rd level or above)	89%	89%

Authority Approaches

- 3.17 In order to support schools with ongoing improvements in attainment at Broad General Education level, a strategic approach within all Moray schools continues to be adopted. The development and implementation of the following strategy areas is supporting more cohesive and planned methodology to ensure practices to improve achievement for all learners continue to be our Education vision in Moray. These are:
- National Improvement Framework Self-evaluation
 - National Improvement Framework Plan 2023-2024 outlining our actions for Raising Achievement for all Learners
 - Learning and Teaching Strategy and support materials
 - Supporting All Learners Strategy
 - Assessment and Moderation Guidelines
 - Tracking and Monitoring Guidelines and Tracking Tools/System
 - Additional Support Needs (ASN) Strategic Review
 - Quality Improvement team support and challenge regarding data analysis, tracking and monitoring and attainment discussions with all schools

Primary 1 – Early level ACEL

- 3.18 The percentages noted below present the P1 ACEL data for the past 6 years for Moray in comparison with the national averages. Please note that there was no Scottish Government data collected in 2019/2020 per section 3.12.

Year		P1				
		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2023	Moray	86	78	75	71	81
	National	87	81	78	76	85
2022	Moray	84	76	73	69	78
	National	86	79	77	74	84
2021	Moray	85	77	71	69	78
	National	84	77	74	71	81
2020	Moray	<i>2019/20 data was not collected by Scottish Government</i>				
2019	Moray	85	77	76	71	79
	National	87	82	79	76	85
2018	Moray	82	75	67	63	72
	National	87	81	78	75	85

- 3.19 Moray figures where highlighted in green above indicate where performance exceeds national average; amber indicates where performance is marginally below and red highlight as notably below national average. P1 data for 2022 shows that all Literacy elements and Numeracy are noted as below national averages. The table below shows further comparison of 2023 data with 2022 as previous year with similar colour coding to highlight changes:

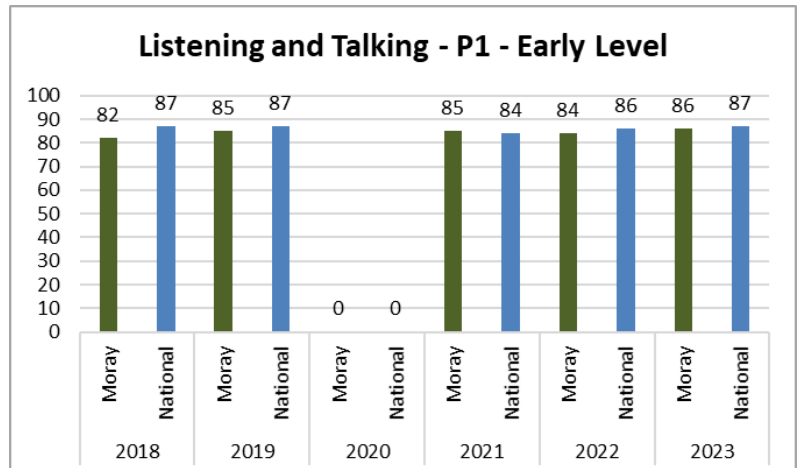
Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2022	Moray	84	76	73	69	78
2023	Moray	86	78	75	71	81
% Change	Moray	+2	+2	+2	+2	+3

Listening and Talking, Reading, Writing and Literacy overall have all increased by 2% from 2022 in Moray. Numeracy ACEL has increased by 3% from 2022. While ACEL remains below National comparator as outlined in 3.18 above, positive improvement in performance is noted year on year, 2022 to 2023 as highlighted in the table above.

- 3.20 The following graphical representation of data trends over time are further presented for P1 for Listening and Talking, Reading, Writing, Literacy (Overall) and Numeracy. Further commentary is provided alongside each graph.

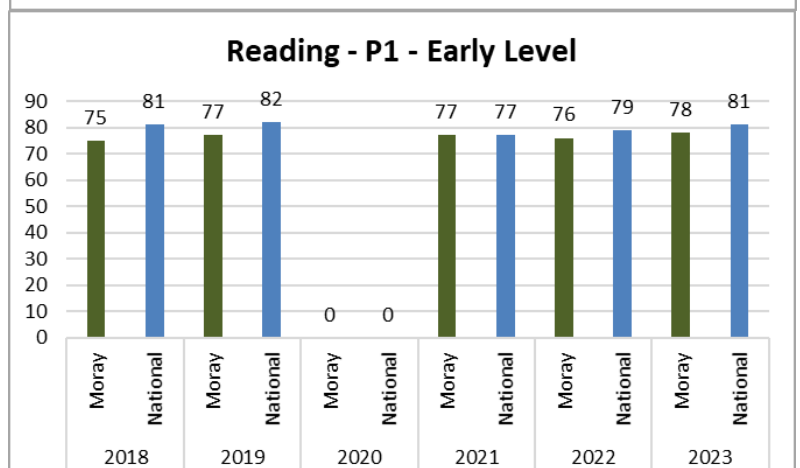
P1 - Listening and Talking

Data trend over time remains in line overall with pre-pandemic data from 2019 and 2% above 2022 ACEL. P1 Listening and Talking is in line with 2022 national average (86%), 1% below 2023 national average. 2023 ACEL is highest recorded for Moray across the 2018-2023 trend period.



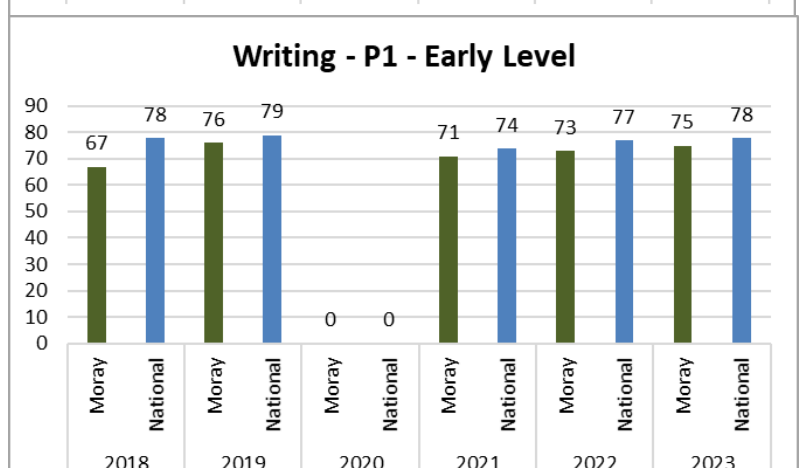
P1 – Reading

Data trend over time remains in line overall with pre-pandemic data from 2019 and 2% above 2022 ACEL. P1 Reading is 1% below 2022 national average, 3% below the 2023 National average. 2023 ACEL is highest recorded for Moray across the 2018-2023 trend period.



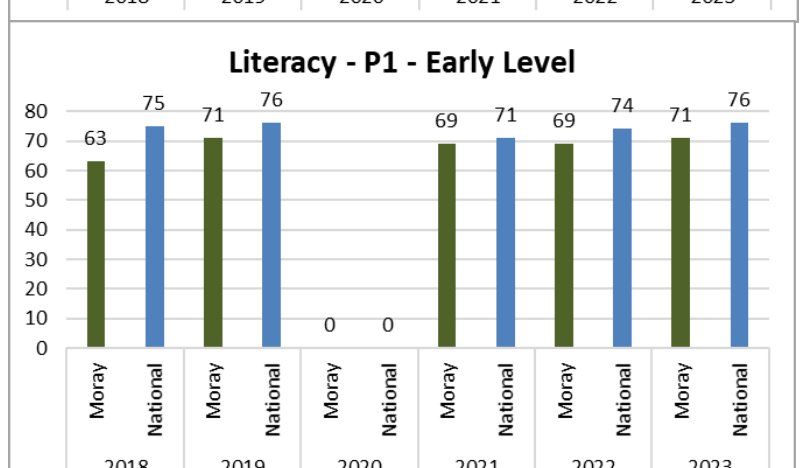
P1 – Writing

Increase in Writing of 2% is noted from 2022, slightly below pre-pandemic data from 2019 by 1%. National average has increased by 1% from 2022 with Moray increasing by 2%, now 3% below National average. Positive 2% increase noted year on year, 2021, 2022 and 2023.



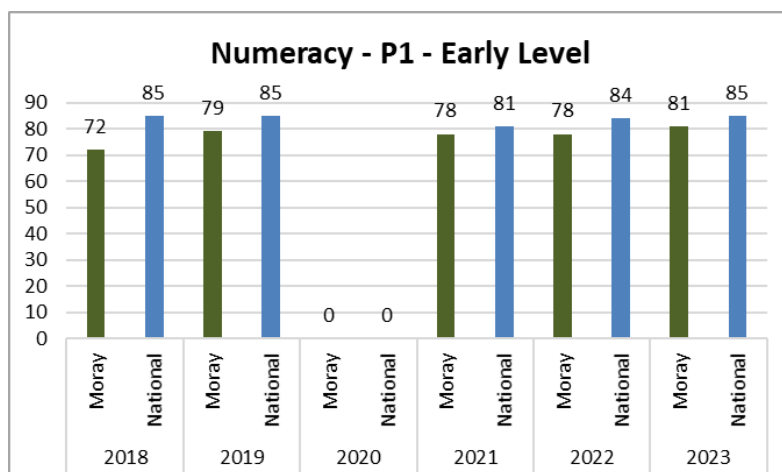
P1 – Literacy

Literacy overall has increased by 2% to 71% comparable with pre-pandemic 2019. National average has also increased by 2% from 2022 leading to a 5% gap remaining between Moray and national average (3% gap between 2022 national average and 2023 Moray).



P1 – Numeracy

Numeracy has increased by 3% from 2022 to 81%, highest performance recorded across the trend period presented. National average has increased by 1% from 2022 resulting in a 4% gap between Moray and national averages in 2023. This gap has reduced by 2% compared with 2022.



Primary 4 – First level ACEL

- 3.21 The percentages noted below present the P4 ACEL data for the past 6 years for Moray in comparison with the national averages. Please note that there was no Scottish Government data collected in 2019/2020 per section 3.12.

Year		P4				
		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2023	Moray	84	76	69	66	73
	National	87	78	72	70	77
2022	Moray	81	73	67	61	69
	National	85	76	70	67	75
2021	Moray	82	73	66	61	64
	National	82	73	67	64	72
2020	Moray	2019/20 data was not collected by Scottish Government				
2019	Moray	78	72	63	60	65
	National	85	78	73	70	77
2018	Moray	72	66	57	53	60
	National	85	77	72	69	76

- 3.22 Moray figures where highlighted in green above indicate where performance exceeds national average; amber indicates where performance is marginally below and red highlight as notably below national average. P4 data for 2023 shows that all Literacy elements and Numeracy are noted as below national averages. The table below shows further comparison of 2023 data with 2022 as previous year with similar colour coding applied:

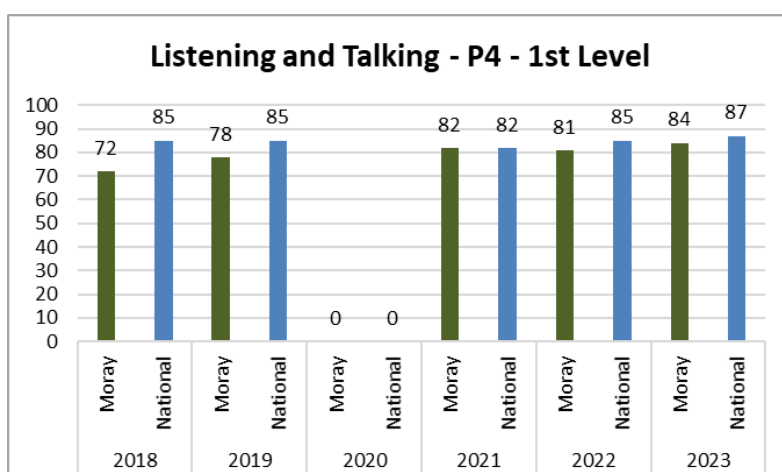
Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2022	Moray	81	73	67	61	69
2023	Moray	84	76	69	66	73
% Change	Moray	+3	+3	+2	+5	+4

Listening and Talking and Reading have increased by 3% from 2022. Writing has also increased by 2% from 2022. In 2023, a 5% improvement in Literacy overall is noted as a positive improvement in performance compared with 2022. Numeracy ACEL has also increased by 4% from 2023. While ACEL remains below National comparator as outlined in 3.21 above, positive improvement in Moray performance is noted year on year, 2021-2023.

3.23 The following graphical representation of data trends over time are further presented for P4 for Listening and Talking, Reading, Writing, Literacy (Overall) and Numeracy. Further commentary is provided alongside each graph.

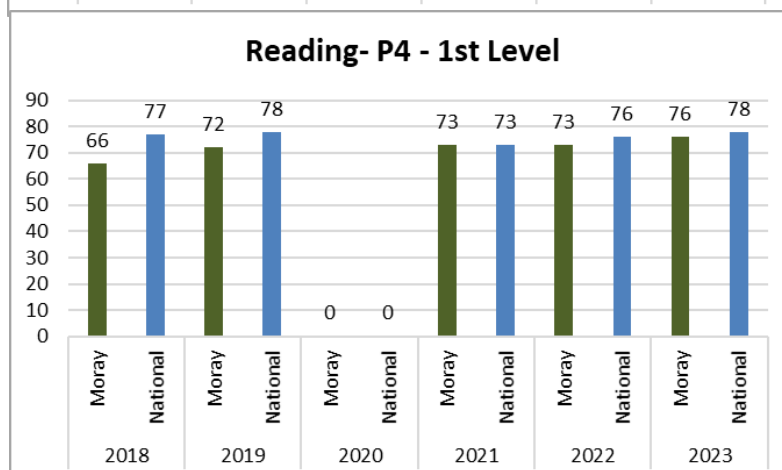
P4 - Listening and Talking

Data trend over time remains positive overall compared with pre-pandemic data from 2019 and 3% above 2022 ACEL, highest across trend period at 84%. P4 Listening and Talking is 3% below 2023 national average, noted as 1% below 2022 national average when Moray gap with 2022 national was 4%.



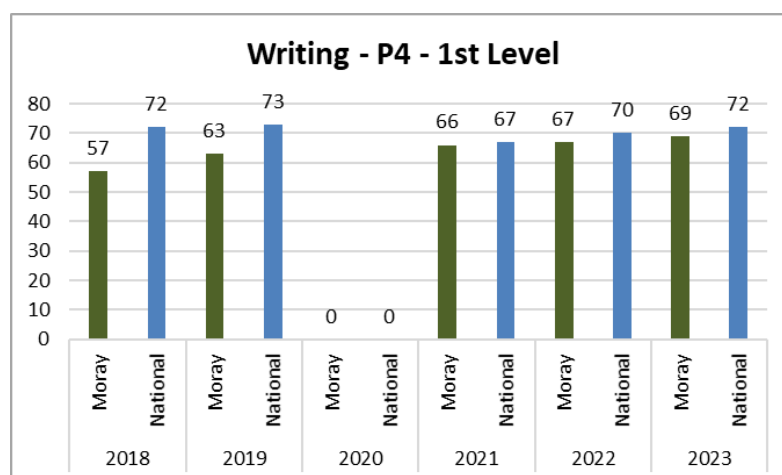
P4 – Reading

Data trend over time remains positive overall compared with pre-pandemic data from 2019 and 3% above 2022 ACEL (76% compared to 73%). P4 Reading is 2% below 2023 national average, where 2023 is noted as highest performance across the trend period presented at 76%.



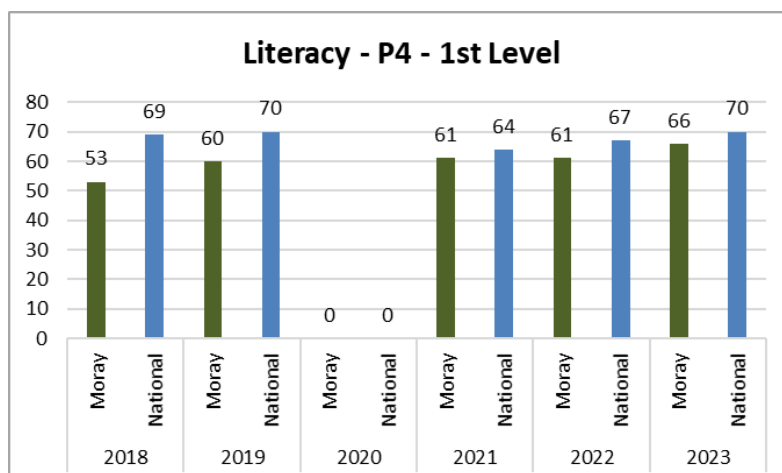
P4 – Writing

Increase in Writing of 2% is noted from 2022, positive overall compared with pre-pandemic data from 2019 by 6%. National average has increased by 2% from 2022 with Moray increasing by 2%. Moray remaining 3% below national. Highest performance across the trend period presented at 69%.



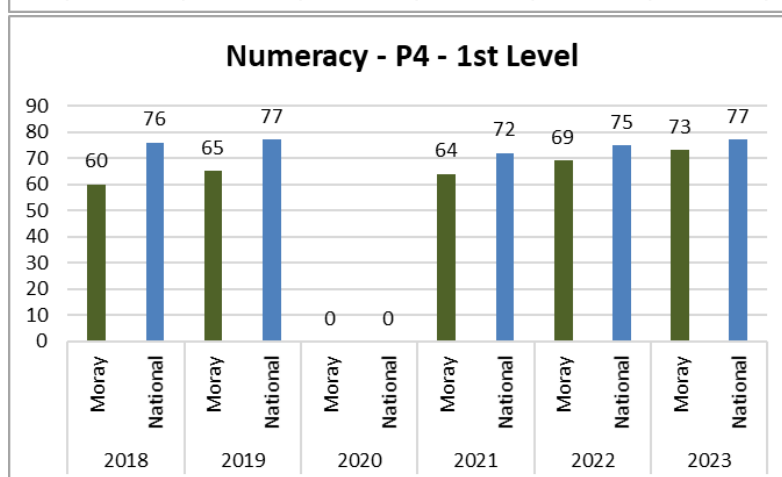
P4 – Literacy

Literacy overall has increased by 5% compared with 2022. National average has increased by 3% from 2022 leading to a 4% gap between Moray and national average in 2023 (6% gap in 2022). Highest performance across the trend period presented at 66%.



P4 – Numeracy

Numeracy has increased by 4% and is favourable compared with 2022 and pre-pandemic 2019 average (65%). National average has increased by 2% from 2022 to 77% leading to a 4% gap between Moray and national averages in 2023 (6% gap in 2022). Highest performance across the trend period presented at 73%.



Primary 7 – Second level ACEL

- 3.24 The percentages noted below present the P7 ACEL data for the past 6 years for Moray in comparison with the national averages. Please note that there was no Scottish Government data collected in 2019/2020 per section 3.12.

Year		P7				
		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2023	Moray	82	78	70	66	74
	National	87	81	75	73	78
2022	Moray	83	74	70	65	69
	National	86	79	73	71	76
2021	Moray	80	71	64	62	62
	National	82	76	69	66	72
2020	Moray	<i>2019/20 data was not collected by Scottish Government</i>				
2019	Moray	81	76	67	64	66
	National	86	80	74	71	76
2018	Moray	75	71	61	59	61
	National	84	79	73	70	75

3.25 Moray figures where highlighted in green above indicate where performance exceeds national average; amber indicates where performance is marginally below and red highlight as notably below national average. P7 data for 2023 shows that all Literacy elements and Numeracy are noted as below national averages. The table below shows further comparison of 2023 data with 2021 as previous year with similar colour coding applied:

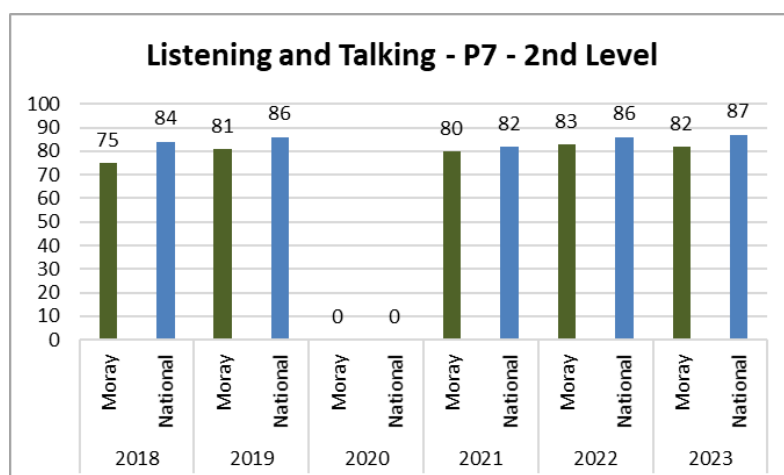
Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2022	Moray	83	74	70	65	69
2023	Moray	82	78	70	66	74
% Change	Moray	-1	+4	0	+1	+5

Listening and Talking has marginally reduced by 1% from 2022. Reading has witnessed increase by 4% with Writing remaining at 70%. Literacy overall has increased by 1%, with largest increase noted in Numeracy of 5%.

3.26 The following graphical representation of data trends over time are further presented for P7 for Listening and Talking, Reading, Writing, Literacy (Overall) and Numeracy. Further commentary on trends over time is provided to the right of each graph.

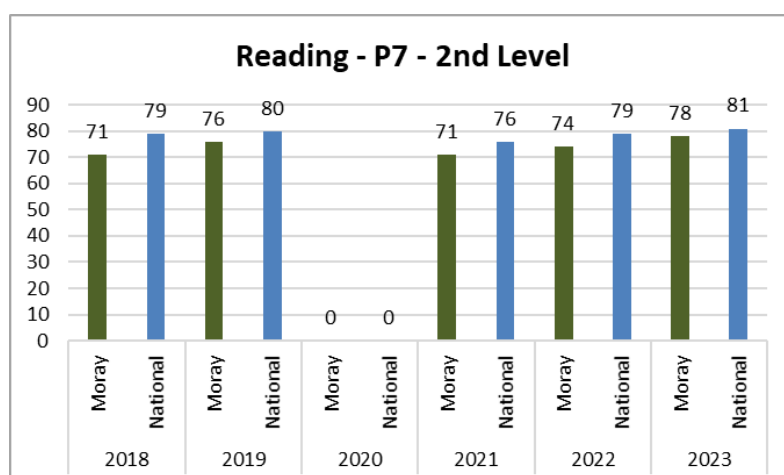
P7 - Listening and Talking

P7 Listening and Talking has reduced marginally by 1% to 82%, with increase in national average by 1% to 87%. A 5% gap is now present in 2023, compared with 3% in 2022. Performance remains 1% higher than 2019 pre-pandemic average for Moray.



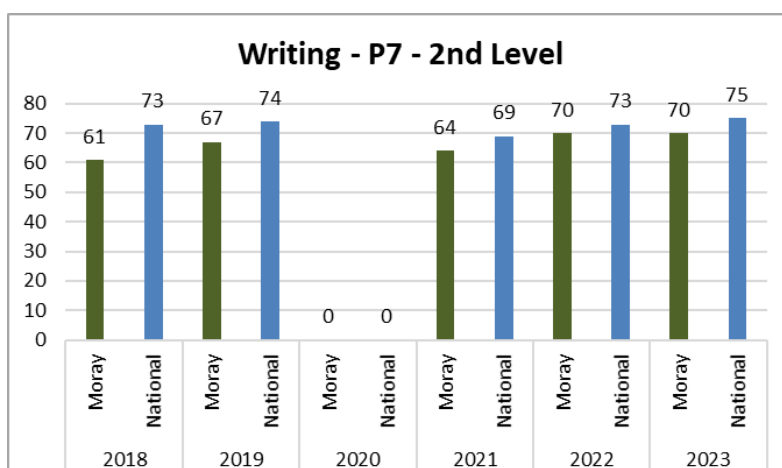
P7 – Reading

Data trend over time remains positive with 4% increase from 2022 to 78%. Increase in national average to 81% highlights a 3% gap in 2023 compared with 5% in 2022. Compared with pre-pandemic data from 2019 (76%) and trend over time, 2023 performance at 78% is highest across the trend period presented, with 3% and 4% increases noted from 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023.



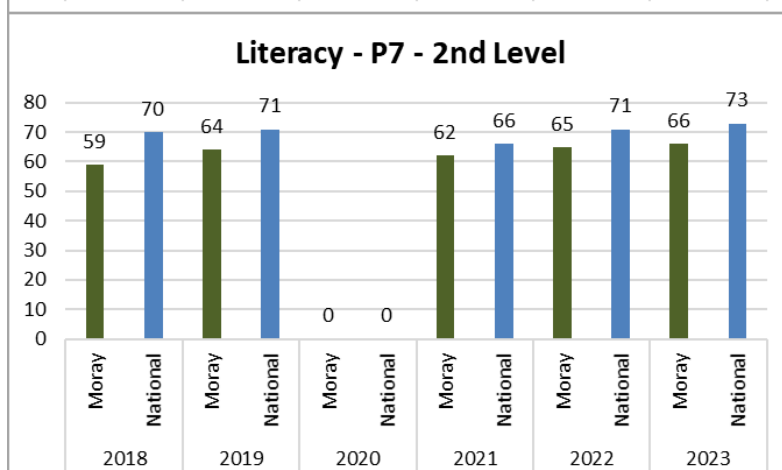
P7 – Writing

Writing remains comparable in performance to 2022 at 70%, positive overall compared with pre-pandemic data from 2019 by 3%. National average has increased by 2% from 2022 with Moray below national average by 5% compared with 3% in 2022.



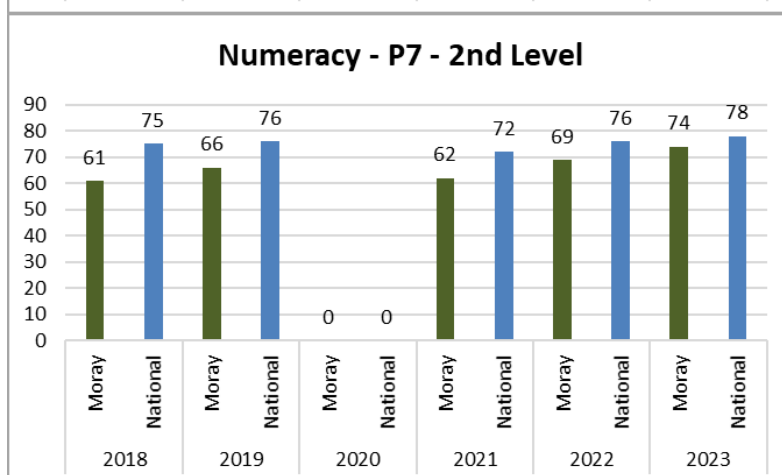
P7 – Literacy

Literacy overall has increased to 66%, 1% increase on 2022 and highest year's performance across trend period presented. National average has increased by 2% from 2022 to 73% leading to a 7% gap between Moray and national averages in 2023 (6% gap noted in 2022).



P7 – Numeracy

Numeracy overall has increased by 5% to 74% and is favourable compared with 2022 (69%) and pre-pandemic 2019 average (66%). National average has increased by 2% from 2022 leading to a 4% gap between Moray and national averages in 2023 (7% gap noted in 2022, 10% gap in 2021). Positive improvement in performance and highest across trend period.



Secondary 3 (S3) – Third level ACEL and Fourth level ACEL

- 3.27 The percentages noted below present the S3 ACEL data for the past 6 years for Moray in comparison with the national averages for ACEL 3rd level and ACEL 4th level. Please note that there was no Scottish Government data collected in 2019/2020 or 2020/2021 for S3 pupils per section 3.12.

ACEL 3rd level

Year		Third level				
		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2023	Moray	89	89	87	86	87
	National	91	90	89	88	90
2022	Moray	82	80	77	72	86
	National	89	88	87	86	89
2021	Moray/National	<i>2020/21 data was not collected by Scottish Government</i>				
2020	Moray/National	<i>2019/20 data was not collected by Scottish Government</i>				
2019	Moray	90	88	87	83	92
	National	91	91	90	88	90
2018	Moray	88	84	82	79	82
	National	91	90	89	87	89

ACEL 4th level

Year		Fourth level				
		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2023	Moray	62	63	57	54	58
	National	63	62	60	56	63
2022	Moray	44	45	43	37	55
	National	55	54	52	48	59
2021	Moray/National	<i>2020/21 data was not collected by Scottish Government</i>				
2020	Moray/National	<i>2019/20 data was not collected by Scottish Government</i>				
2019	Moray	35	31	29	24	56
	National	57	55	52	48	59
2018	Moray	40	34	32	27	37
	National	55	53	51	46	56

- 3.28 Moray figures where highlighted in green above indicate where performance exceeds national average; amber indicates where performance is marginally below and red highlight as notably below national average. S3 data for 2023 at 3rd and 4th level ACEL achieved in S3 shows that all Literacy elements with the exception of Reading are noted as below national averages, marginal for some measures. The table below shows further comparison of 3rd and 4th level 2023 data with 2022 as nationally published ACEL data by Scottish Government, with colour coding applied to highlight changes in performance year on year, 2022 to 2023.

ACEL 3rd level

Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2022	Moray	82	80	77	72	86
2023	Moray	89	89	87	86	87
% Change	Moray	+7	+9	+10	+14	+1

ACEL 4th level

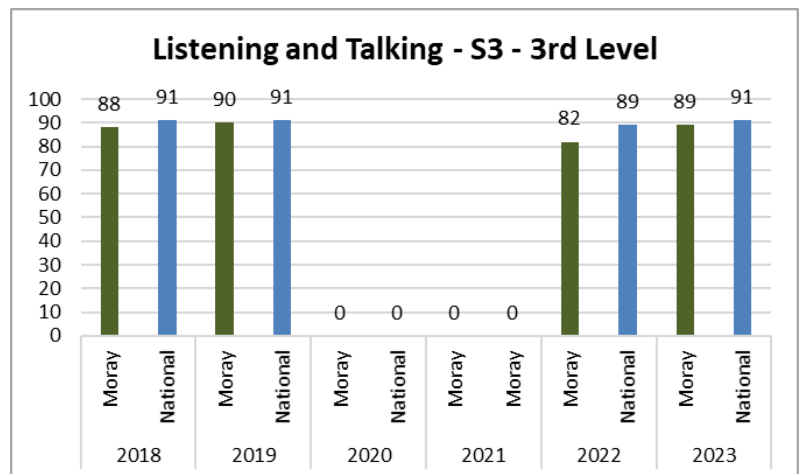
Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2022	Moray	44	45	43	37	55
2023	Moray	62	63	57	54	58
% Change	Moray	+18	+18	+14	+17	+3

Listening and Talking, Reading, Writing and Literacy overall in particular have witnessed notable increase on 2022 Moray ACEL averages at 3rd and 4th levels, resulting in 14% increase in Literacy overall at 3rd level and 17% increase at 4th level. Numeracy has also witnessed slight increase at 3rd and 4th level compared with 2022 ACEL of 1% and 3% respectively.

3.29 The following graphical representation of data trends over time are further presented for S3 for Listening and Talking, Reading, Writing, Literacy (Overall) and Numeracy at third and fourth levels. Further commentary on trends over time is provided to the right of each graph.

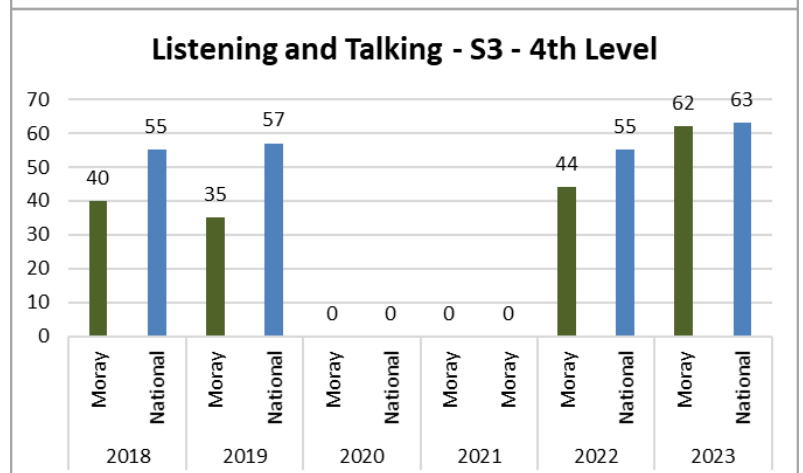
S3 - Listening and Talking 3rd level

2023 ACEL (89%) in line with 2022 national average, marginally below 2023 national average of 91% - 2% gap. Comparable to 2019 pre-pandemic performance of 90% with positive increase in performance noted at 3rd level.



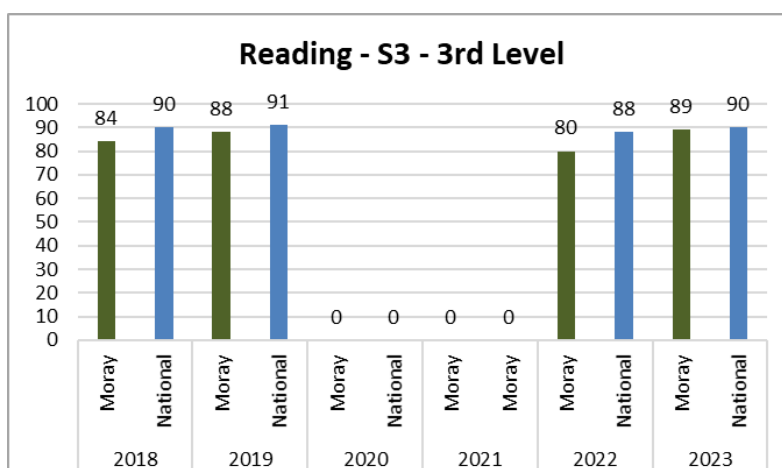
S3 - Listening and Talking 4th level

2023 ACEL of 62% highest across the trend period, in line overall with 2023 national average and 7% above 2022 national average. Positive improvement in performance compared with 2022, in 2023.



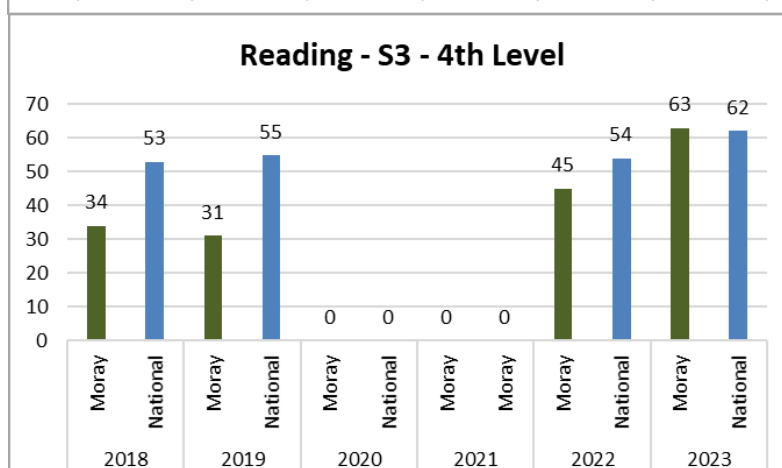
S3 – Reading 3rd level

2023 data highlights 9% improvement in performance compared to 2022 and highest performance overall across the trend period, comparable to pre-pandemic 2019. Overall, in line with 2023 national average (1% below), 1% above 2022 national average.



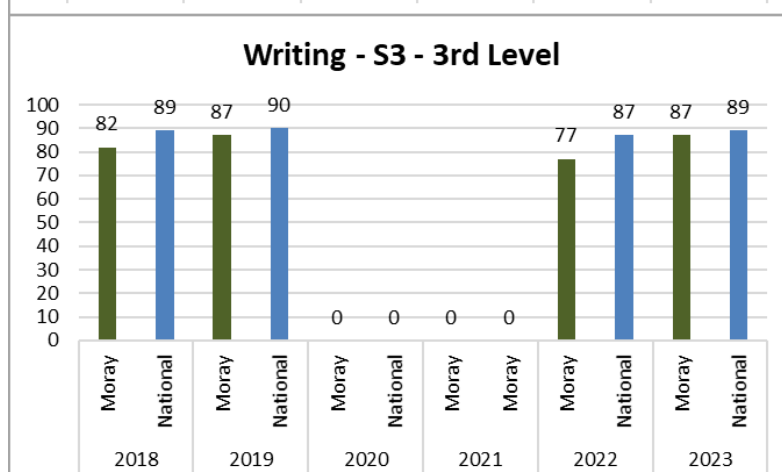
S3 – Reading 4th level

2023 data highlighting positive improvement in performance, 1% above 2023 national average (62%) at 63%. Highest performance across the trend period presented and positive compared with pre-pandemic Moray averages.



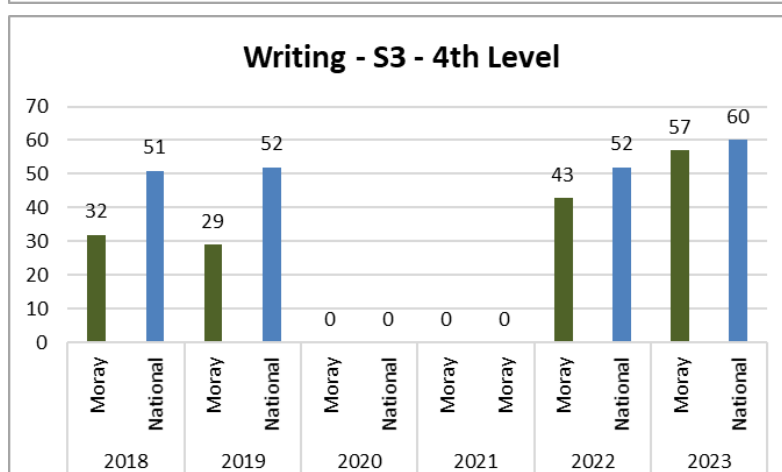
S3 - Writing 3rd level

2023 data highlighting positive improvement in performance, in line with 2022 national average, and marginally below 2023 national average (87% compared with 89%), with 2% increase in national average. Performance comparable to 2019 pre-pandemic average.



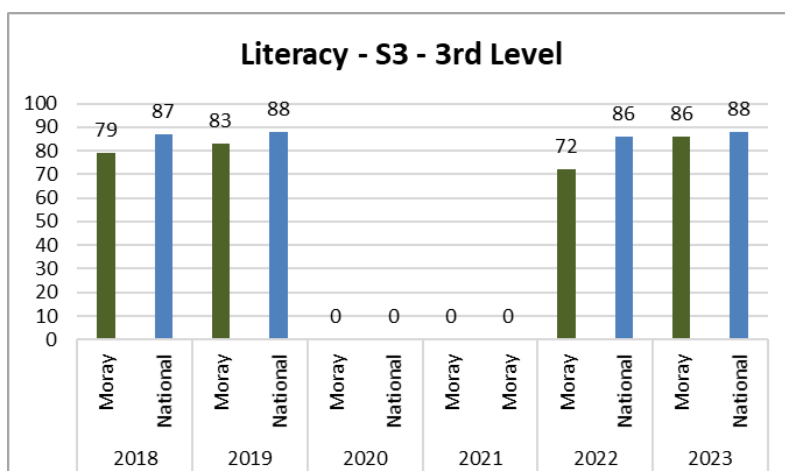
S3 - Writing 4th level

2023 data highlighting positive improvement in performance to 57%, 5% above 2022 national average and marginally below (3%) 2023 national average, which had witnessed increase from 2022 to 2023 of 8%. Significant reduction in attainment gap is presented.



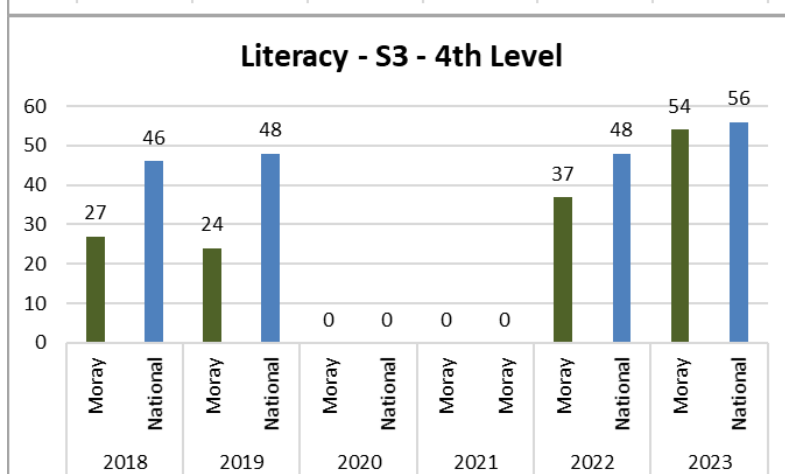
S3 - Literacy 3rd level

2023 data highlights improvement in performance, with 2023 (86%) in line with 2022 national average, 2% below 2023 national average which has witnessed increased. Highest performance across trend period presented. Positive increase in performance overall.



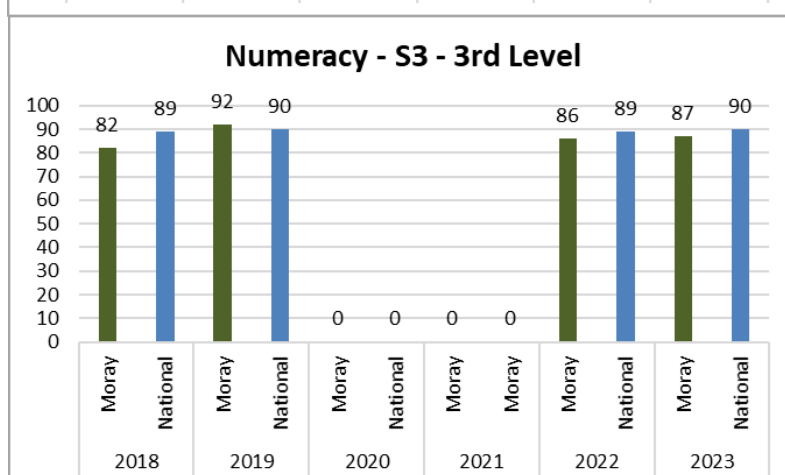
S3 - Literacy 4th level

Literacy at 4th level has increased to 54%, higher than previous years recorded and above 2022 national average. 2% below 2023 national average which has also witnessed increase from 2022 to 2023 (48% to 56%). Positive increase in performance overall.



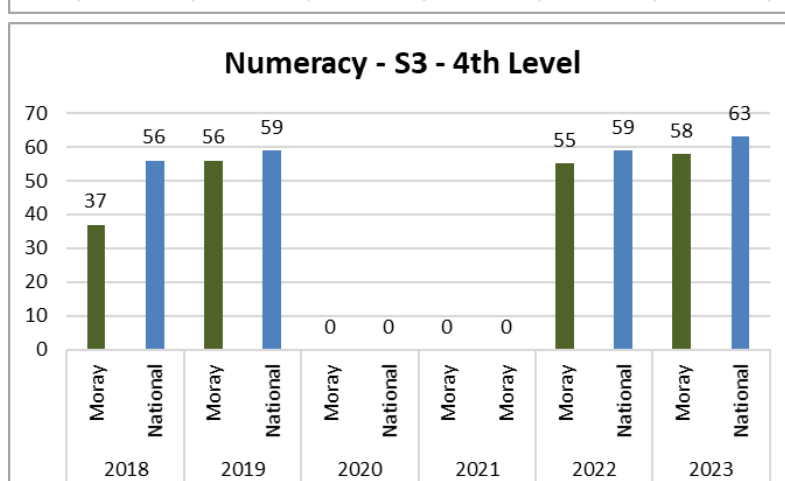
S3 – Numeracy 3rd level

Numeracy at 3rd level has increase by 1% to 87%. National average has increased by 1% from 2022 leading to a 3% gap between Moray and national average in 2023 (also 3% in 2022). Marginally below national average in 2023.



S3 – Numeracy 4th level

Numeracy at 4th level has increased by 3% to 58% and is favourable compared with pre-pandemic 2019 average (56%). National average has increased to 63% leading to a 5% gap between Moray and national averages in 2023 (4% gap in 2022).

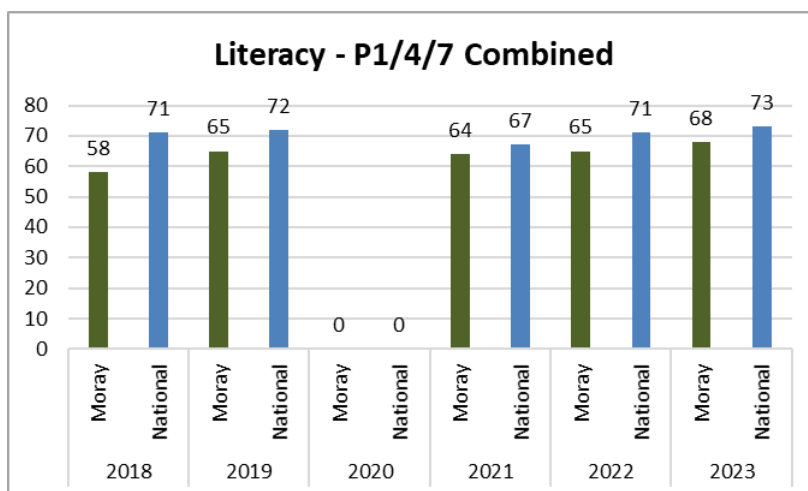


P1/P4/P7 Literacy and P1/P4/P7 Numeracy Combined Measure and Stretch and Stretch Aims

3.30 Data analysis relating to S3 Literacy (Combined) and S3 Numeracy have been provided in 3.29 above. Further analysis for P1/P4/P7 combined measure for Literacy and Numeracy is provided below.

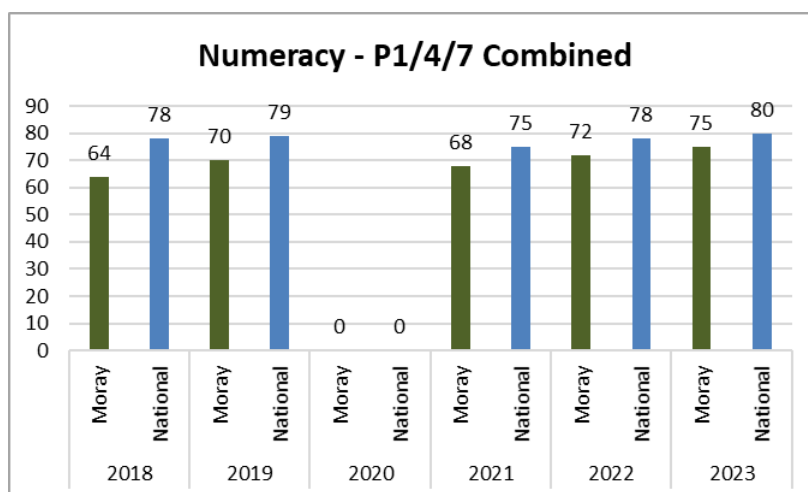
P1/P4/P7 - Literacy (Combined)

P1/P4/P7 Literacy (combined) has increased to 68% and is 3% higher than 2022. National average has increased by 2% from 2022 leading to a 5% gap between Moray and national averages in 2023. This compares with a 6% gap between Moray and Scotland based on 2022 averages. Highest performance noted in 2023 across the trend period outlined.



P1/P4/P7 Numeracy (Combined)

P1/P4/P7 Numeracy (combined) has increased by 3% to 75% and is favourable compared with 2022 (72%) and 2021 (68%) averages. National average has increased by 2% from 2022 (78% to 80%) leading to a 5% gap between Moray and national averages in 2023 compared to a 6% gap noted in 2022.



P1/P4/P7 and S3 Literacy and Numeracy (Combined) Stretch Aims

3.31 Following review of all data and analysis, the following Core Stretch Aims which had been set as requested by Scottish Government and monitored by Education Scotland following publication of the Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress nationally in relation to ACEL. Stretch Aims set were reported previously to this Committee on 25 January 2023 (para 11 of minute refers) in [Appendix 1](#). The NIF Plan was then refreshed in line with Education Scotland's update to the [Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress](#) reported to this Committee on 19 September 2023 (para 10 of minute refers) in [Appendix 2](#).

	2023 ACEL Stretch Aim	2023 ACEL Actual	2026 Aspirational Stretch Aim
Primary Literacy (P1, P4 ,P7 combined)	67%	68%	74%
Primary Numeracy (P1, P4 ,P7 combined)	73%	75%	78%
Secondary (S3) Literacy (3 rd level or above)	75%	86%	88%
Secondary (S3) Numeracy (3 rd level or above)	89%	87%	89%

- 3.32 On review of data sets presented and on further detailed analysis at individual school level, support and challenge discussions have followed between the central Quality Improvement team and Head Teachers regarding data submitted and security of ACEL teacher professional judgements on learner level achievement.
- 3.33 In Primary, this has been undertaken through central Quality Improvement Visits during Term 4 in April to June 2023 as part of our revised Moray Quality Improvement Framework and analysis, focussed on Quality Indicator 3.2 (Raising attainment and achievement) from How Good is Our School 4.
- 3.34 In secondary, this has been undertaken through initial discussion with Senior Leadership Teams in Term 4 (April to June 2023), with ACEL forming a key part of discussions at Secondary Attainment and School Performance Meetings led by the Head of Education and Quality Improvement Manager (Schools) During September to December 2023. Secondary School Achievement and Performance Frameworks formed the basis for discussions.
- 3.35 Following completion of roll-out of Seemis Progress and Achievement for Tracking and Monitoring in June 2023, a data analysis tool (AnalyseM) was developed in support of senior leader and wider school staff data analysis. Development and training of this data analysis toolkit was completed in December 2023, with development underway of the secondary version, due for roll-out in February 2024. Our Strategy and Guidance for Tracking and Monitoring in the Broad General Education will be further reviewed for roll-out in May/June 2024 for session 2024/2025.
- 3.36 While Primary data is below national averages overall, improvement (year to year - 2021 to 2022; 2022 to 2023) based on Moray data is noted in data presented above. While very marginal regression is noted in P7 Listening and Talking, with performance in P7 Writing also remaining constant, overall positive improvements in performance are noted for Moray comparing favourably overall with agreed Stretch Aims as noted in 3.31 above, with 2023 performance exceeding stretch aims in 3 of 4 key measures, marginally below fourth Stretch Aim for S3 Numeracy (3rd level or above) at 87% (Stretch Aim – 89%).

3.37 While Secondary data is marginally below national averages overall, notable improvement based on last year of data publication (2022) is highlighted across measures in 3.29 and 3.30 above.

3.38 In order to build and maintain improvement the following work is planned for, or ongoing with our Moray Schools:

- Following the ADES-Education Scotland Collaborative Improvement Event in February 2023 and NIF Improvement Plan 2023-2024 development, Moray Improvement Groups have been formed to take forward development of revised Moray Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in line with current thinking and practice to support improvements in attainment for children and young people
- Literacy Progression and Toolkits have been developed in order to support practitioners in delivery and assessment of children's learning across levels in Literacy
- Development of core progressions and learning pathways across curriculum areas led by central officers are nearing completion with phased roll-out and sharing underway
- Following full roll-out of Seemis Progress and Achievement for Broad General Education Tracking and Monitoring, a new data analysis tool has been created for Primary (AnalyseM) with work underway in development of the Secondary tool to support attainment, achievement, wider characteristic and attendance/exclusion monitoring. This will further support identification and narrowing of attainment gaps emerging at school and local authority level
- Continued roll-out and training on the new National Standardised Assessment (NSA) platform with support from our regional trainer, with successful completion of the Introduction to NSA, and NSA in the Additional Support Needs/English as an Additional Language virtual training sessions to date and further data analysis sessions using NSA planned
- Continued strengthening of Moray's approaches to Moderation for ACEL TPJ through the Moray Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officer (QAMSO) team
- Stretch Aims continue to be used as a focus for future improvement activities, with ongoing monitoring at local authority level to gauge progress and areas for further focussed improvement
- Continued emphasis on provision of high quality learning experiences in line with Our Moray Standard for Learning and Teaching and local school context interpretation. Investment in Power Up Your Pedagogy across our schools has led to development of teacher learning communities, strengthening pedagogical practice through reflection and working together
- Continued emphasis on tracking and monitoring learner progress and achievement throughout the year with pupil progress meetings built in to Quality Assurance calendars in our schools to support Teacher Professional Judgements on learner level achievement
- Continued moderation activities in our schools, within and across stages and within Associated Schools groups to ensure shared understanding of national standards for learner achievement of a level

- Continued quality assurance of curriculum content and coverage including quality of play based approaches in line with Moray's Play Strategy to ensure learner attainment is maximised by point of P1 ACEL
- Engagement with Education Scotland offers of support, in line with the NIF Improvement Plan 2024 priorities
- Roll out of key strategies including the approved Support All Learners strategy and the Parental Involvement and Engagement strategy
- Continued work on the review of Additional Support Needs and emerging changes which will ensure targeted resources for children and young people who require enhanced supports. This includes training for teaching and non-teaching staff in order to support a diverse range of learners where they may have specific needs
- Working with our Education Scotland Attainment Advisor, continue to support schools with their Pupil Equity Funding planning, allocations and spending to support enactment of interventions to close identified poverty and wider related attainment gaps based on intelligence and data
- Further allocations through Strategic Equity Funding and Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund continue to be monitored with funds identified for allocation based on intelligence and need in line with national guidance

3.39 In order to build and maintain improvement in our secondary schools, along with a number of areas noted in 3.31 above, we will also:

- Continue development and roll-out of the revised Secondary Improvement Model (SIM), with targeted visit programme this session supported by Secondary Achievement and School Performance Meetings across our eight secondary schools, guided by our Secondary Attainment and Performance Framework
- Core and Core plus Stretch aims have been set for all Secondary Schools as key performance measures which will strengthen support and challenge of school achievement and review of performance year on year
- Through Moray Improvement Group 10, Subject Group Networks have been reviewed with meeting structure in place, allocated time to meet and increased collaboration opportunities across the session. This has increased focus on the Broad General Education and provided a reporting forum for Head Teachers to view key messages for in-school developments, support and next steps
- Continued moderation within and across secondary schools supported by QAMSOs where appropriate to support clarity in standards and expectations for ACEL following sessions across subject groups during the May 2023 local authority Inset Day
- Increased focus on tracking and monitoring learner progress and achievement throughout the year in S1 to S3, with further early indication progress checks with secondary schools in the lead up to June ACEL census in February 2024. Attendance and exclusion monitoring with key policy review planned for later this session
- Continued partnership working with our Education Scotland Attainment Advisor, support identified schools with targeted use of Scottish Attainment Challenge Strategic Equity Funding to support localities of greatest need to raise attainment due to poverty related and wider factors

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

Reflective of priorities within the Corporate Plan with particular regard to (People) in providing a sustainable education service aiming for excellence, progress in achieving better performance and improved inspection outcomes, empowering and raising aspirations. With regards to the 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan LOIP), (2) building a better future for our children and young people in Moray through equity of learning experience offered across our schools; supporting ambitious and confident children, able to reach their full potential.

(b) Policy and Legal

It is the duty of the Council to secure improvement and the quality of school education which is provided in schools managed by Headteachers and to raise standards of education (Section 7, 8 of Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000).

(c) Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Continued support from finance is required in order to ensure timely financial updates in order to guide spending plans in line with statutory reporting and external scrutiny requirements.

(d) Risk Implications

There are risk implications if we cannot support national expectations and requirements in relation to this key national policy directive. The risks associated with inability to support expectations and requirements are the potential negative impact on school inspection reports and in the failure to improve learner achievement and attainment. This would have a direct impact on any reporting to the Scottish Government and Education Scotland on National Improvement Framework areas and progress or achievement of Stretch Aims as part of the Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress.

The ongoing legacy impact of Coronavirus on learner attendance at school, engagement in learning and behaviours exhibited may continue to directly impact on ACEL as reported by schools and noted in para 3.3 above. Effects of reduced funding and resource in order to support emerging needs will continue to have potential to impact on attainment.

A number of schools continue to observe and increase in children and young people with specific Additional Support Needs (ASN) and Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs (SEBN) where due to these needs, access a personalised curriculum with individual targets and outcomes. This requires schools to allocate resources available in a targeted way and has an impact on overall attainment levels and universal supports available. Increased reports of anti-social and disruptive behaviours

among a very small minority of young people in secondary, has impacted on learning and diverted staff from supporting wider pupils/groups.

Industrial Action impacted on in-school attendance of children and young people and direct teaching time last session. Coupled with unplanned school building closures and move to remote learning due to heating failures in specific schools and snow closures within specific Associated Schools Groups, further disruption to in-school learning resulted in some schools. This may have impacted on attainment and is outwith school control.

It is acknowledged that budget pressures and resulting savings may arise in the future, leading to potential reduction in resources and supports available to schools. This will have a direct impact on attainment levels for children and young people, were reduced universal or targeted supports to schools accessible. Schools will require timely and accurate financial information in order to plan for interventions, using all funding available to them including Pupil Equity Funding.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

An Equality/Socio Economic Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform Committee on performance.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

No climate change or biodiversity implications have been determined due to the scrutiny and performance based nature of activities reported and no findings related to such implications contained herein. Move to virtual meetings and platforms where possible for certain activities (e.g. Moderation using Microsoft Teams, Subject Groups) has reduced potential impact of carbon emissions and pollution caused by staff travel by car to central locations.

(i) Consultations

Senior Officers in Education, Communities and Organisational Development, the Equal Opportunities Officer, the Human Resources Manager and Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1** Key attainment messages in relation to ACEL based on TPJ are presented within this paper for P1, P4, P7 and S3 for Literacy (Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking) and Numeracy for 2023 and over time. Noted improvements in performance across almost all measures from 2022 have been identified and analysed. While noted within the paper that performance remains marginally below or below national averages overall, improvements are noted within key literacy elements and numeracy at different stages and levels compared with data available from previously published national datasets available (2021/2022 datasets). Where improvements are noted in Moray data, variance is further noted against national average comparators, also witnessing improvement over time with the gap between Moray and national performance narrowing.
- 5.2** Moray schools continue to use all resources available to them in including Pupil Equity Fund and Strategic Equity Fund as appropriate, in order to initiate targeted and universal supports and approaches. As a result, attainment gaps have witnessed reduction across most measures from 2022 to 2023, with further commitment from schools to ensure progression pathways in place support teacher planning and moderation activities continue at school, inter-school and ASG level to strengthen practitioner confidence in learner level achievement (TPJ).
- 5.3** Positive progress towards Stretch Aims has been realised overall as outlined in para 3.31, required by Scottish Government and Education Scotland as part of the revised framework for recovery and accelerating progress as both prudent and aspirational targets for improvement. As an Education service and across our schools, we continue to strengthen practice and employ resources in order to raise achievement for all learners. Key service actions as outlined in our [NIF Plan 2023-24](#).
- 5.4** Committee is invited to scrutinise data and key messages reported and acknowledge work planned or ongoing to improve ACEL, centrally and across Moray schools with most recent 2023 ACEL and performance over time outlined within this paper.

Author of Report: Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager

Background Papers: [NIF Plan 2023-2024](#)
[National Discussion on Scottish Education](#)
[Putting learners at the centre: towards a future vision for Scottish Education](#)
[Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress](#)
[Stretch Aims Appendix 1](#) (initial stretch aims)
[Education NIF Appendix 2](#) (updated stretch aims)

Ref: