



Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee

Wednesday, 26 January 2022

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Meeting of the **Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee** is to be held at **Remote Locations via Video Conference**, on **Wednesday, 26 January 2022 at 09:30**.

BUSINESS

1. Sederunt

2. Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests *

3. Resolution

Consider, and if so decide, adopt the following resolution:
"That under Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting for Items 14 and 15 of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act."

4. Minutes of meeting - 24 November 2021

7 - 14

5. Written Questions **

6.* Improvement and Modernisation Plan - Raising Attainment Curriculum Breadth and Digital Progress Update

15 - 28

Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)

- 7.* **Analysis of Secondary School Attainment Insight Benchmarking Measures 2021** 29 - 46
Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)
- 8.* **Initial Analysis of Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels 2021** 47 - 70
Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)
9. **Moray Education Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Project Update** 71 - 94
Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)
- 10.* **Universal Free School Meals - Primary Schools - Implementation** 95 - 100
Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)

Call In Reason - Councillors Eagle and Feaver

Whilst the school meals are welcome there are concerns in the paper over how this is funded, we believe there needs to be debate to ensure this will be fully funded and ensure the role out work to attract young people to the offer. Is Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) still linked to free school meals?

- 11.* **ICT Strategy for Schools** 101 - 106
Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)

Call in Reason - Councillors Eagle and Feaver

This is a major part of the modernisation and improvement programme and my group have been waiting on an update for this. For us the digital element is absolutely critical to the service moving forward and we have several questions on the paper.

12.* OECD Report on Curriculum for Excellence and Working Paper etc

107 - 116

Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)

Call In Reason - Councillors Eagle and Feaver

This was a major report on the curriculum for excellence with potentially huge changes for Moray Council's policies moving forward, we believe Councillors should have a chance to understand, debate and question the plans being highlighted.

13. Question Time ***

Consider any oral question on matters delegated to the Committee in terms of the Council's Scheme of Administration.

Item(s) which the Committee may wish to consider with the Press and Public excluded

14. Childrens Services Transformation Proposal [Para 1]

- Information relating to staffing matters;

15.* Moray and Nairn Educational Trust Disbursement 2021 2022 [Para 4]

- Information relating to any applicant or recipient of any financial assistance provided by the Authority;

Summary of Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee

To exercise all the functions of the Council as Education Authority within the terms of relevant legislation with regard to school education, nurseries and child care, Gaelic, children's services, leisure, libraries and museums, sport and the arts, CLD, life long learning, youth justice and child protection.

Only items marked * can be considered and determined by all members of the Committee

Moray Council Committee meetings are currently being held virtually due to Covid-19. If you wish to watch the webcast of the meeting please go to:
http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_43661.html
to watch the meeting live.

GUIDANCE NOTES

* **Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests** - The Chair of the meeting shall seek declarations from any individual or political group at the beginning of a meeting whether any prior decision has been reached on how the individual or members of the group will vote on any item(s) of business on the Agenda, and if so on which item(s). A prior decision shall be one that the individual or the group deems to be mandatory on the individual or the group members such that the individual or the group members will be subject to sanctions should they not vote in accordance with the prior decision. Any such prior decisions will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.

** **Written Questions** - Any Member can put one written question about any relevant and competent business within the specified remits not already on the agenda, to the Chair provided it is received by the Proper Officer or Committee Services by 12 noon two working days prior to the day of the meeting. A copy of any written answer provided by the Chair will be tabled at the start of the relevant section of the meeting. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than 10 minutes after the Council has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he or she can submit it in writing to the Proper Officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within 7 working days.

*** **Question Time** - At each ordinary meeting of the Committee ten minutes will be allowed for Members questions when any Member of the Committee can put a question to the Chair on any business within the remit of that Section of the Committee. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than ten minutes after the Committee has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he/she can submit it in writing to the proper officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within seven working days.

THE MORAY COUNCIL

Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee

SEDERUNT

Councillor Sonya Warren (Chair)
Councillor Aaron McLean (Depute Chair)

Councillor George Alexander (Member)
Councillor James Allan (Member)
Councillor Frank Brown (Member)
Councillor Lorna Creswell (Member)
Councillor Tim Eagle (Member)
Councillor Ryan Edwards (Member)
Councillor Claire Feaver (Member)
Councillor Graham Leadbitter (Member)
Councillor Shona Morrison (Member)
Councillor Laura Powell (Member)
Councillor Derek Ross (Member)
Councillor Amy Taylor (Member)

Mrs Anne Currie (Non-Voting Member)
Reverend Tembu Rongong (Non-Voting Member)
Mrs Susan Slater (Non-Voting Member)
Ms Angela Stuart (Non-Voting Member)

Clerk Name:	Tracey Sutherland
Clerk Telephone:	07971 879268
Clerk Email:	tracey.sutherland@moray.gov.uk

**Minute of Meeting of the Education, Children's and Leisure Services
Committee**

Wednesday, 24 November 2021

Various Locations via Video-Conference,

PRESENT

Councillor George Alexander, Councillor James Allan, Councillor Frank Brown, Councillor Lorna Creswell, Councillor Tim Eagle, Councillor Ryan Edwards, Councillor Claire Feaver, Councillor Aaron McLean, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Derek Ross, Mrs Susan Slater, Ms Angela Stuart, Councillor Amy Taylor, Councillor Sonya Warren

APOLOGIES

Mrs Anne Currie, Councillor Laura Powell, Reverend Tembu Rongong

IN ATTENDANCE

Also in attendance at the above meeting were the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Head of Education, Head of Education Resources and Communities, Acting Head of Children's Services, Head of Housing and Property, Design and Construction Manager, Quality Assurance and Localities Manager and Sport, Culture Service Manager and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer as clerk to the meeting.

Councillor Leadbitter was also in attendance in an ex-officio role.

1. Chair

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Sonya Warren.

2. Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests *

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, there were no declarations from Group Leaders or Spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how Members will vote on any item on the agenda or any declarations of Member's interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

3. Minute of Meeting of 6 October 2021

The minute of the meeting of 6 October 2021 was submitted and approved.

4. Written Questions **

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

5. Education Revenue Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2021

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee of the budget position for Education as at 30 September 2021.

Following consideration, where Officers answered questions with regards to budget overspends the Committee agreed to note the budget position at 30 September 2021.

Councillors Allan and Creswell joined the meeting during the discussion of this item.

6. Performance Report - Education - Period to September 2021

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 30 September 2021.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of September 2021; and
- ii) note the actions being taken to improve performance where required.

7. Initial Attainment Report for Secondary Schools 2021

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the SQA Attainment across the Council's secondary schools and for this data to be fully scrutinised as part of raising attainment improvements and strategy.

Following consideration, in which officers answered questions with regards to student behaviour, positive destinations of students who left secondary in 2021 and temporary staffing, the Committee agreed to:

- i) note the Senior Phase Attainment across our Secondary Schools for session 2020/21 and notes the initial processes in preparation for exams in session 2021/22;
- ii) note that initial school based attainment meetings took place in August and September 2021 and actions for improvement were noted during Alternative Certification Model Quality Assurance and Data Meetings during March to June 2021;
- iii) acknowledge and commend practitioner commitment, extensive preparation and support of young people throughout the session as well as young people's resilience and dedication throughout last session's Alternative Certification Model period; and
- iv) note that a follow up report on Insight measures will be reported to Committee in January 2022 which will be informed by further Insight

attainment meetings with schools taking place during November and December 2021.

8. Legislative Changes and Impact on Education

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) provided Committee with an update on Legislative changes, the potential impact on Education so that the Council are prepared for implementation.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note both reports and the potential implications in education in Moray which may arise from the recommendations within the reports.

9. Education Resources and Communities and Education Capital Budget Monitoring Report

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of projects and proposed expenditure for Capital Budgets within Education, Children's and Leisure Services for 2021/22.

Following consideration, in which Officers answered questions in regards to Ccovid costs associated to Linkwood Primary and Lossiemouth High School and wi-fi in schools the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

10. Education Resources and Communities Revenue Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2021

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the budget position for Education Resources and Communities as at 30 September 2021.

Following consideration in which Officers answered questions about Fit Life memberships, the Committee agreed to note the budget position at 30 September 2021.

11. Performance Report - Education Resources and Communities - Period to September 2021

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 30 September 2021.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note performance in areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of September 2021; and
- ii) note the actions being taken to improve performance where required.

12. Learning Estate Options Appraisal for Inveravon Primary School

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) asked the Committee to consider the next steps for Inveravon Primary School.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) support community engagement as part of the Options Appraisal process to identify future options that should be considered; and
- ii) receive a further report in due course.

13. Expansion of Music Service

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) provided Committee with proposals regarding the expansion of the Moray Music Service (including the option for Moray to include in its curriculum an inclusive and fully funded option for pupils to receive tuition in piping and drumming) in response to the Notice of Motion passed at Council on 15 September 2021.

In terms of Standing Order 83, the meeting agreed to suspend Standing Order 75 and continue beyond 12.45pm in order to conclude consideration of this item.

Councillor Brown moved to agree recommendations (ii) and (iii) and defer a decision on recommendations (i) and (iv) until such time as the consultation has taken place and the funding position has been clarified. This was seconded by Councillor Morrison.

Councillor Alexander sought clarification on the timescale for the consultation and the report back to Committee.

In response the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) confirmed that the report back would be within the timelines for the Council budget setting process.

As there was no one otherwise minded the Committee agreed to:

- i) consult with children and young people and their families and carers to determine demand across a number of different instruments to inform their decision making;
- ii) consider investing in a Moray Music Fund open to eligible groups through a bidding process as detailed in section 3.10; and
- iii) defer the decision to incorporate in the Council's budget setting process on the expansion of the music service and the inclusion of Pipes and Drums tuition in Moray until such time as the consultation has taken place and the funding position has been clarified.

14. Moray Artificial Turf Pitch Developments

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) provided Committee with an update in relation to the proposed replacement plan for Moray's artificial turf pitches and to consider the feasibility study report in connection with a pitch for the Forres area.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:

- i) to note the options in regards to replacement of Moray's artificial turf pitches;
- ii) to proceed to competitive tender stage for a full replacement of the Buckie artificial turf pitch using a similar 3G surgance replacement with additional mitigation measures to reduce the migration of polymeric infill into the environment;
- iii) that Council Officers continue to work in collaboration with Forres Community Football Trust in regards to the development of an artificial turf pitch and associated facilities in Forres and a future decision on preferred location for this development is brought back to a subsequent Committee;
- iv) to note that work is ongoing to create a sustainable maintenance and replacement plan for all artificial turf pitches from 2022 onwards; and
- v) approve that Moray Council sign up to the Sports for Climate Action Initiative to ensure that future developments within the Service pursue climate action in a consistent and mutually supported fashion.

15. Moray's Sport and Leisure Service Update

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of progress made in relation to the implementation of the Sport and Leisure Service Business Plan and agree to continue the Council support towards the Active Schools and Community Sports Hub programmes.

The Committee joined the Chair in commending all the staff within the Sport and Leisure Service on their hard work over the last 18 months in what has been an unprecedented time.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note the progress made in regards to the implementation of the Sport and Leisure Service Business Plan;
- ii) approve the extension of the Active Schools and Community Sports Hub programmes from existing budget for a further one year period from 1 April 2022 in partnership with sportscotland at a cost of £177,000; and
- iii) note that closer working across the sector in Moray is being successfully developed through the Sport and Leisure Strategic Group, and that any proposals for more integrated working, including sharing of resources and

staff, developed by this group will be reported back to Committee in due course.

16. Children and Families Social Work Services Revenue Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2021

A report by the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Moray informed the Committee of the budget position for Children and Families Social Work Services as at 30 September 2021.

Following consideration, in which officers answered questions regarding underspends and Out of Area Placements the Committee agreed to note the budget position at 30 September 2021.

17. Performance Report - Children and Families and Criminal Justice Social Work - Period to September 2021

A report by the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care informed the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 30 September 2021.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of September 2021; and
- ii) note the actions being taken to improve performance where required.

18. Childrens Services Plan Annual Report 2020 21

A report by the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care asked the Committee to review and endorse the Children's Services Plan Annual Report 2020-21.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to endorse the Children's Services Plan Annual Report (2020-21) (Appendix 1) prior to submission to the Scottish Government by the deadline of 31 December 2021.

19. Question Time ***

Under reference to para 8 of the minute of the meeting of 6 October 2021, Councillor Brown sought clarification on whether, given the response from the Scottish Government regarding the Dick Bequest Fund, should the Committee reconsider the decision made.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) confirmed that a report with options could be brought back to the Committee for further consideration but 2 thirds of the Committee would first need to decide if there had been a material change in circumstances to require suspending standing orders, otherwise the 6 month rule would apply.

Under reference to para 10 of the minute of the meeting of 6 October 2021, Councillor Brown sought an update on his question regarding the Council's position around the use of mobile phones in schools.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) confirmed that an email had been circulated to members following the last meeting but said she would re-circulate to members following the meeting.

Councillor Brown requested the running order of future agendas be considered as he was conscious that Children and Families Officers were having to hang around the meeting until the end of the agenda before the reports are considered and felt that they should be moved to the beginning of the agenda.

In response, the Chair confirmed that she had raised this issue with Officers before and they had confirmed that although they are dialled into the meeting they are able to carry on with other work until their reports are reached on the agenda. She further stated that the religious, teacher and parents representatives are not involved in the social work element of the agenda so if the order was switched round, they would then be waiting for the start of the education related items. The Chair agreed to discuss again with Officers and determine whether a compromise could be reached.



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON 26 JANUARY 2022**

**SUBJECT: IMPROVEMENT AND MODERNISATION PROGRAMME: RAISING
ATTAINMENT CURRICULUM BREADTH AND DIGITAL
PROGRESS UPDATE**

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

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for budget to appoint a specialist ICT Education consultancy to support the development of the Raising Attainment: Curriculum Breadth and Digital workstream within the Council's Improvement and Modernisation Programme (IMP).
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (A) 2 of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to considering Capital and Revenue Budgets and long term financial plans.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that Committee agrees to the allocation of up to £50,000 from the earmarked reserves for transformation, for the appointment of a specialist ICT Education consultancy to assist Officers with the development of the Raising Attainment: Curriculum Breadth and Digital workstream to enable the council to make an informed decision on any investment in this area.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council has established an Improvement and Modernisation Programme to deliver transformational change across the authority, which was first approved by the Council on 12 December 2018 (para 5 of the minute refers).
- 3.2 The Improvement and Modernisation Programme contains eight workstreams and one of these workstreams is focused on Education related projects.
- 3.3 The report to Moray Council on 12 May 2021 outlined two Education workstreams for development. The Raising Attainment - Curriculum breadth and Digital Delivery workstream aims to provide and enable a digital learning environment to improve equity and access to curriculum in order to deliver

outcomes including improved attainment and improved employability skills (**Appendix 1**). The report also noted that “work based on digital solutions require further development and consideration of issues, risks and benefits in order to ensure that the investment has been properly scoped and options for progress assessed” (para 3.17 of the report refers).

- 3.4 These issues, risks and benefits relate to the challenges faced due to the age profile of equipment in some schools, the continued use of a profile based system across the school estate and broadband limitation in some schools. This is in addition to exploring best value options including if devices can be utilised by learners at both home and at school.
- 3.5 It is also relevant that the Scottish Government has made a commitment to provide 700,000 primary and secondary aged pupils with access to an appropriate digital device, and where necessary a home internet connection, by the end of this parliamentary term. This represents a significant transformational investment in learning.
- 3.6 There are a number of complex and specialist considerations in the further development and definition of this workstream and while this is a new area of work in Moray there are councils within Scotland and wider that have developed their digital approach to education delivery including the use of digital devices by teachers and learners to support curriculum delivery and attainment. Therefore, initial enquiries were made which established that other councils had engaged the support of external expertise to guide and support their projects and ensure that the most up-to-date technical advice and expertise was available to them.
- 3.7 Taking this into account, preliminary work was undertaken to identify the nature of support that was available on the market, including a Prior Information Notice to ascertain the extent of providers of the services identified as being of interest for the development of work in Moray, in particular who would have the skills and experience to help support the Council to further develop its digital approach to raising attainment and to improving access to digital technology for all of our learners. **Appendix 2** sets out the identified requirement. It is considered that this would ensure that the Council has access to expert advice and knowledge to support the key areas of strategic definition including how digital technology can support learning outcomes; the use of 1:1 devices; advice on ICT infrastructure options across the learning estate and deployment of the solutions. This insight and expertise from prior experience in this area will assist in the management of the risks associated with the programme of work should the Council decide to invest in due course.
- 3.8 Specifically, the PIN invited expressions of interest from consultancy firms who:-
 - can demonstrate a creative and an innovation approach throughout the process of developing the Council’s Digital Inclusion Strategy;
 - can meaningfully engage with all stakeholders and most importantly our learners in Moray in developing our strategy;
 - can work with Officers as a trusted expert and advise both education and ICT colleagues;

- who share our aims and values;
 - can access digital platforms for the 1:1 device options appraisal that Council does not currently operate; and
 - have a proven track record of success in this area with other local authorities and can share their insights.
- 3.9 The PIN has identified one supplier who is able to deliver the requirements, that would be ready to work at pace, have appropriate experience (at scale and size) and can deliver tangible project outputs within a short lead in time.
- 3.10 Following the outcome of the PIN, Committee approval is sought for the allocation for up to £50,000 funding, from earmarked reserves for Council priorities, for the appointment of a specialist ICT Education consultancy to assist with the development of the Raising Attainment: Curriculum Breadth and Digital workstream to enable the council to make an informed decision on any investment in this area.
- 3.11 It is considered that this cost is warranted in the context of the extent of the investment under consideration and the long-term benefits of improved learning outcomes for Moray Learners and therefore represents best value.
- 3.12 If approved, this external support will be used to assist and advise on the development of the workstream in order to prepare a report to clarify the scope, costs and benefits of the projects in more detail and to enable the Council to determine how to proceed.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

The Improvement and Modernisation Programme is the development of the commitment in the Corporate Plan to a programme of modernisation and improvement to contribute to a financially stable Council.

The report also relates to “Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray” as part of the LOIP and the to the priority “provide a sustainable education service aiming for excellence” as part of the Corporate Plan

(b) Policy and Legal

None.

(c) Financial implications

This reports recommends that up to £50,000, from the earmarked reserves for transformation, for this workstream. Although this amount is the upper limit that is permitted to be awarded through the Council’s Procurement Quick Quote regulations, where possible efforts will be taken to reduce this expenditure.

(d) Risk Implications

At this stage, the following high level risks are highlighted that may impact on the delivery of this project

The Council has yet to formally determine whether to invest in this workstream and hence the extent of any investment. There is a risk that the level of investment that emerges as being required will be in excess of the scale envisaged by the council and that the investment may not proceed or may require significant modification to fall within an acceptable affordability margin.

Local authorities are waiting for guidance in terms of the provision of 1:1 devices, which could include financial assistance or the direct provision of devices. There is a risk that uncertainty delays local progress or that the eventual national solution is not consistent with the preferred approach in Moray. It is considered that the engagement of the external expertise proposed will assist in managing this risk by ensuring an outcome led strategic approach which should be sufficiently adaptable to work with the device provision that emerges nationally.

(e) Staffing Implications

Should the workstream progress following this stage, the major staffing implication is securing time from teachers and pupils involved in a demanding workload. This will require to be a key consideration in terms of membership of project management and reference groups as well as involvement in the tests of change and any pilots.

(f) Property

There are inter-dependencies between this project and the modernisation of the Council's Learning Estate. Officers will ensure good communication between these initiatives and the Learning Estates Manager will also sit on the Digital Inclusion Project Management Group.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

For the purposes of this report an Equality and a Socio Economic Impact Assessment are not required. The completion of the Digital Inclusion Strategy and Implementation Plans will however need to be assessed.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

There are no immediate climate change implications directly arising from this report. The future commissioning and de-commissioning of digital devices will however have an impact on the carbon footprint and this will need to be assessed in due course.

(i) Consultations

Head of Transformation, Head of Education (Chief Education Officer), Head of Finance, Procurement Manager, Quality Improvement Manager (East), Head of Education Resources, Communities and Education and Social Care, Learning Estates Manager, Quality Improvement Manager (West), Head of HR, ICT & Organisational Development, ICT Infrastructure Manager, ICT Applications Manager, Learning Technologists, Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Through approving funding for the appointment of a specialist ICT and Education Consultancy, Committee is asked for their support in further

developing the Council's Raising Attainment: Curriculum Breadth and Digital workstream to enable the council to make an informed decision on any investment in this area

Author of Report: Robin Paterson, Project Manager (Education)
Background Papers:
Ref: SPMAN-1468114179-17 / SPMAN-1468114179-18 /
SPMAN-1468114179-19

Appendix 1

**Improvement and Modernisation Programme: Transformation to Achieve
EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT AND TRANSFORMATION**

The Council's Corporate plan sets a clear direction for providing a sustainable education service aiming for excellence under the Our People priority: provide opportunities where young people can achieve their potential to be the best they can be.

It commits to improvement work focused on the areas of:

- ✓ Reducing the impact of poverty
- ✓ Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy
- ✓ Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all
- ✓ Reviewing and transforming the learning environment
- ✓ Improvement in children and young people's health and well-being

And indicates we will know we have made progress when:

- ❖ The attainment gap between most and least disadvantaged children will reduce
- ❖ Improved attainment at both the Broad General Education and Senior Phase
- ❖ Young people are better prepared for life beyond school and for the workplace
- ❖ A plan will be in place for an affordable, sustainable school estate
- ❖ Improved outcomes for our most vulnerable young people and families

This investment programme for Education has been developed to advance and accelerate the priorities set out in the corporate plan supported by the strategic education priorities of providing services that are fair, ambitious, improving and responsive in line with Council's values. In particular the investment proposals are targeted towards an overall strategic focus on improving attainment by:

- Early intervention and targeted resources to improve outcomes for all children, young people and their families
- Providing and enabling a digital learning environment to improve equity and access to curriculum
- Developing staff skills to improve learning and teaching, including digital
- Quality focus on improving learning and teaching
- Releasing and enabling leadership capacity

The Programme has been structured into 2 workstreams to reflect the main thematic areas of work: Raising Attainment for All Learners and Raising Attainment - Curriculum breadth. The table below summarises the Curriculum Breadth workstream.

Investment/New Proposal		Impact/Outcomes
<p>EDUCATION PROJECT B: Raising Attainment - Curriculum breadth and Digital Delivery - Providing and enabling a digital learning environment to improve equity and access to curriculum</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Improvement in attainment, ✓ Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive destinations ✓ Reviewing and transforming the learning environment ❖ Improved attainment at both the Broad General Education and Senior Phase ❖ Young people are better prepared for life beyond school and for the workplace ➤ Providing and enabling a digital learning environment to improve equity and access to curriculum ➤ Developing staff skills to improve learning and teaching, including digital ➤ Quality focus on improving learning and teaching ➤ Releasing and enabling leadership capacity
<p>Raising Attainment - Curriculum breadth</p>	<p>Create a Virtual Innovation Academy aimed at raising attainment, strengthening learning and teaching and expanding curriculum offer to meet the needs of all learners in the senior phase to enable positive sustained and quality destinations based upon labour market intelligence</p> <p>invest in devices and technology to support and embed digital innovation and strengthen digital literacy for all</p> <p>increase the number of subjects available across Moray as well as increasing attainment (Note: Overlap with Digital Devices)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise attainment across BGE and Senior Phase • Broaden an accessible curriculum offer • Improve the quality of learning and teaching, integrating digital technologies to enhance and support pedagogy • Provide opportunities for school leavers to gain employment in a growing sector • Workforce development and career progression and additional capacity for digital use • Equitable digital access for learning

Investment/New Proposal		Impact/Outcomes
<p>Schools Digital (Devices/Curriculum)</p> <p><i>(overlap with VIA to be addressed)</i></p>	<p>Investment in Digital Devices to establish a proactive programme to allocate pupils and teachers with an appropriate device to enable remote and distance learning.</p> <p>Roll out of devices to staff and pupils P6+ with a 4 year refresh (2100 devices per year)</p> <p>Ongoing Recurring Annual Costs for replacement of devices and staffing costs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase skills of staff • Increase the use of digital learning and innovation • Maximise use of technology in the classrooms • Increase opportunities for collaboration, extending access to learning and breadth of subject choices • A consistent experience for learners use of technology in Moray schools

WORKING DRAFT

PIN: Digital Inclusion

1.0 Invitation

Moray Council is submitting this Prior Information Notice (PIN) to ascertain if there are ICT consultancy firms who would have the skills and experience to help support this Authority to further develop its digital approach to raising attainment and to improving access to digital technology for all of our learners.

2.0 Overview

Our preference is to work with a single supplier, however, the wide ranging scope outlined in this PIN may mean that the Authority could consider procuring more than one provider in relation to different elements of our strategy where there is a commitment from the providers to work jointly on an agreed approach.

Our key considerations in making an appointment will be around the development of an inclusive strategic approach that delivers educational results, Correspondingly, while our preference would be to procure a single consultancy firm who would be able to provide devices as well as providing digital consultancy this would not be a critical selection criteria for the successful appointment of a consultancy firm.

To this end, we are looking for a consultancy:-

- who can demonstrate a creative and an innovation approach throughout the process of developing the Council's Digital Inclusion Strategy;
- that is outcomes driven and places educational attainment at the centre of this project;
- that can meaningfully engage with all stakeholders and most importantly our learners in Moray in developing our strategy;
- that we can work with as a trusted expert and who shares our aims and values; and
- who will embrace a project management approach.
- With a track record of success in this area

This will mean that the consultancy we are looking for can work at pace, has appropriate experience (at scale and size) and can deliver tangible project outputs within a short lead in time from the acceptance of any contract.

3.0 Scope

There are four key work activity areas which we would like to develop. These areas are:-

3.1 Strategic Definition

Acknowledging the rapidly changing landscape of the use of digital technology in the education sector in recent years, Moray Council is looking for support in developing our vision for the deployment of digital technology throughout our learning estate.

This will be articulated in the development of a high level Strategy which will focus on how digital technology can support learners to realise their learning outcomes from the early learning childcare phase (age 3) through to the senior secondary school phase (age 18).

The key output in relation to this work activity area would be a 4 Year Digital Inclusion Strategy for Moray Learners that articulates our vision and outcomes that is aligned to our education priorities.

The strategy will also need to be sensitive to the rurality of Moray and challenges with broadband capacity and will inform the development of underpinning project business cases.

3.2 Roll out of 1:1 Devices

The Scottish Government has made a commitment to provide 70,000 primary and secondary school pupils with access to an appropriate digital device by the end of the current parliamentary term. Although Moray Council has previously allocated in the region of 12,000 devices to primary and secondary school pupils as part of our response to the COVID pandemic, this is a significant transformational investment for our learning estate. In the developing of our approach, we can see that there will be learning we gain from other organisations and we would like to secure specialist support in undertaking our options appraisal and the development of our business case.

Moray Council will have access to a limited number of ICT platforms and we would therefore require support in being able to access a wide range of platforms as part of the options appraisal or test of change.

The key output in relation to this work activity area would be supporting the 1:1 options appraisal process (including the use of platforms not currently accessed by the Council), supporting a test of change/proof of concept and supporting the development of a business case.

3.3 Infrastructure Advice

In relation to the options appraisal leading to the rollout of 1:1 devices, expert advice on ICT connectivity and infrastructure issues in terms of supporting the Council's learning estate will also be a key output.

ICT infrastructure issues are accentuated by the geographically isolated located of many of Moray's rural schools.

3.4 Mentoring

The final work activity area would be in relation to providing ongoing mentoring and support to Council Officers. This would relate to advising Council Officers in relation to the development of ICT Policy, Procedures, Practices and Plans.

The key output in relation to this work activity would be able to advise Council Officers on the resolution of issues and to offer workable solutions on a broad range of ICT and education related challenges.

4.0 Style of Working

Digital Inclusion is part of the Council's Improvement and Modernisation Programme. This Council wide transformational change programme is underpinned by a strong project management approach and the expectation is that the consultancy firm that we decide to engage with would also share and work to a project management methodology.

Furthermore, our way of working is based on co-production and inclusion.

In order to maximise the use of the technology for educational benefits and to support a positive learning environment, the direct involvement of learners and teachers is paramount.

The development of digital solutions needs to be inclusive to ensure fitness for purpose now and in the future. This will mean supporting teachers to maximise the use of digital connectivity and to make this their preferred way of working. Engaging with staff and helping them to upskill so that they can take full advantage of innovations in digital technology is an important part of the culture change we wish to develop.

The consultancy selected will therefore be working with Officers and education staff but will also engage with parents, primary and secondary school pupils. A co-productive approach will be especially important in terms of the options appraisal and proof of concept stages of our strategy development.

We will therefore seek to seek work with a consultancy that shares our commitment of adopting an inclusive partnership based approach; working co-productively with staff, parents and learners.

5.0 Duration

At this stage, it is proposed that any contract developed would be for up to 3 years. Based on a review of progress, a further extension of 2 years would be considered.

If you need clarification on any of the above points, please submit your questions via the excel portal.



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON 26 JANUARY 2022**

**SUBJECT: ANALYSIS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ATTAINMENT – INSIGHT
BENCHMARKING MEASURES 2021**

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

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the attainment of secondary schools in Moray for session 2020/2021 following Initial Attainment Report for Secondary Schools 2021 (24 November 2021 Committee) further to National Insight benchmarking toolkit update in October 2021.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- (i) scrutinise and note the position in respect of attainment of the young people in Moray following Insight benchmarking update;**
- (ii) note that post-Insight attainment meetings with secondary schools have taken place during November and December 2021 where Head Teachers and central officers have agreed actions for improvement at school level and;**
- (iii) note that at a future meeting of this Committee, a follow-up Insight report will be presented in consideration of school leaver data including post-school destinations following data publication in February/March 2022; and**
- (iv) agree to acknowledge and commend practitioner commitment, preparation and support of young people as they prepare them for the SQA 2022 Examination diet.**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Performance in the Senior Phase is profiled by four key national measures on Insight, the Senior Phase Benchmarking Toolkit. This provides a holistic approach to:

- Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy
- Improving attainment for all
- Increasing post-school destinations
- Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers

3.2 The exam results are available to schools in August each year and analysis of these results for cohort groups appeared within the Insight toolkit in October; the data relating to leaver destinations is not available until December and therefore, this information does not appear in Insight until February of the following year (February 2022). The complete picture of leaver attainment and the achievement of young people in Moray is available from March onwards each year and will be reported to a future Committee in May 2022.

Insight Benchmarking Measures – National Measures

3.3 As noted in paragraph 3.2 above, the data for the four National benchmarks will be available each year in late February, once the school leavers' data has been compiled. It is especially important to reiterate that this represents data for all school leavers from S4-6 for the school year 2020/21, as opposed to individual cohorts of learners. The National Measures exclusively profile our school performance for learners at the point of exit from secondary school education.

Insight Benchmarking Measures – Local Measures

3.4 In September each year it is possible to profile school performance within the local measures and in the breadth and depth of awards gained by learners on a cohort by cohort basis (i.e. for S4, S5 and S6 pupils).

3.5 The Local measures that are pertinent to report on a cohort by cohort basis at this time are:

- Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy
- Tacking disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers (attainment versus deprivation)
- Improving attainment for all

Virtual Comparator

3.6 Insight creates a virtual comparator school based on selecting young people from across Scotland that matches the characteristics of the young people in the school or local authority in question. The performance of the school can then be assessed in relation to that of the virtual school. A similar methodology is used in Insight to generate a virtual local authority for benchmarking local authority performance. It is important to note that

features such as similar curriculum models or structures are not included in the comparison.

Breadth and Depth

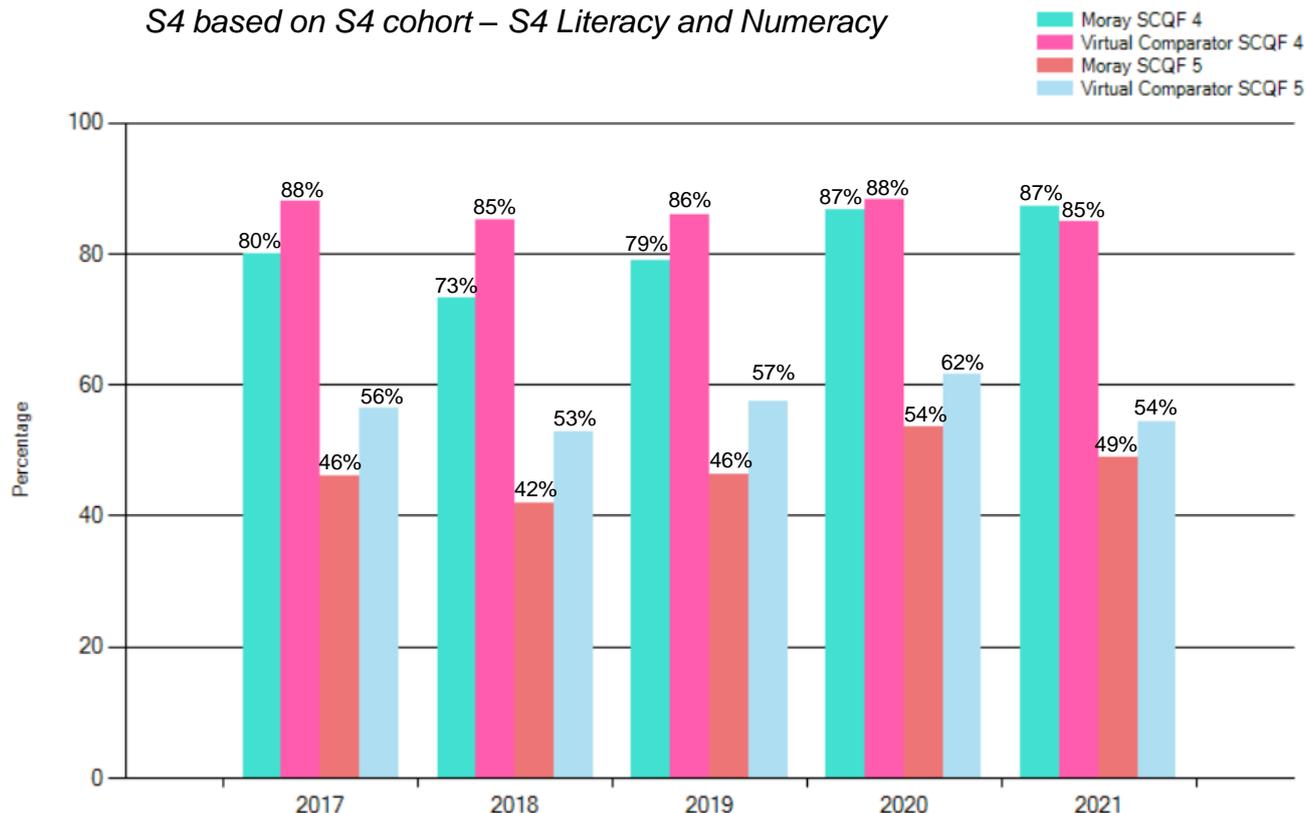
- 3.7 Insight allows us to profile the breadth and depth of qualifications completed by learners in each year in the senior phase. This is seen as a direct alternative to the previous method of reporting on performance of pupils attaining 1+, 3+ and 5+ awards at SCQF levels 5, 6 and 7 in the previous format in STACs (Standard Tables and Charts). This year we are again able to profile the attainment of our S6 cohort throughout the senior phase (from S4-S6). Breadth and Depth has previously been considered at the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee meeting on 24 November 2021 – Initial Attainment Report for Secondary Schools.

Tariff Score Methodology

- 3.8 In the local measures of Improving Attainment for All and Tackling Disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers, learner performance is measured by the number of tariff points they have accrued during the Senior Phase. The number of tariff points a young person accrues in their school career is currently based on their 'latest and best performance'. For example, if a learner achieves an A pass at National 5 in S4 this would accrue 84 points, but would be superseded by their performance at Higher in the same subject in S5 and again by performance at Advanced Higher in S6. The points are not aggregated for an improved performance in a given subject area.
- 3.9 The total tariff points for the candidate across all of their subjects is calculated as a cumulative measure of their latest and best attainment in each subject to the given point in time plus points for any standalone units which are unrelated to any other subject qualification. Measures presented in the tool are then an average of the total tariff points for the relevant candidates in the cohort.
- 3.10 The complementary tariff measure is the sum of tariff points accumulated across the latest and best achievement in subjects which a learner has achieved, up to a maximum of 120 SCQF credit points. The subjects which contribute to the 120 SCQF credit points in the complementary tariff measure are those in which the learner has achieved the highest tariff points relative to the amount of learning in that subject (subject tariff points/SCQF credit points for that subject).
- 3.11 For purposes of this paper, we will consider complementary tariff points as that gives a truer reflection of a young person's attainment regardless of school curricular models.

3.12 Local Measure – Improving Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

S4 based on S4 cohort – S4 Literacy and Numeracy



S4	SCQF4 – Literacy & Numeracy			SCQF5 – Literacy & Numeracy		
	Moray	VC	Gap	Moray	VC	Gap
2017	80%	88%	-8%	46%	56%	-10%
2018	73%	85%	-12%	42%	53%	-11%
2019	79%	86%	-7%	46%	57%	-11%
2020	87%	88%	-1%	54%	62%	-8%
2021	87%	85%	+2%	49%	54%	-5%

3.13 In S4, SCQF4 level Literacy and Numeracy (combined) has remained at 87% achievement with drop in the Virtual Comparator (VC) in session 2021 to 85%. This has resulted in positive achievement above the VC in session 2021 as highlighted in green above, with improvement in trend overall. While the attainment gap between Moray and the VC for SCQF5 Literacy and Numeracy (combined) has reduced over time, it is noted that while this is a positive trend in attainment gap narrowing against the VC, SCQF5 Literacy and Numeracy (combined) remains below the VC.

S4 based on S4 cohort – S4 Literacy

	SCQF4 – Literacy			SCQF5 – Literacy		
	Moray	VC	Gap	Moray	VC	Gap
2017	93%	94%	-1%	73%	74%	-1%
2018	90%	92%	-2%	71%	73%	-2%
2019	91%	92%	-1%	72%	75%	-3%
2020	93%	93%	0%	74%	78%	-4%
2021	94%	92%	+2%	78%	75%	+3%

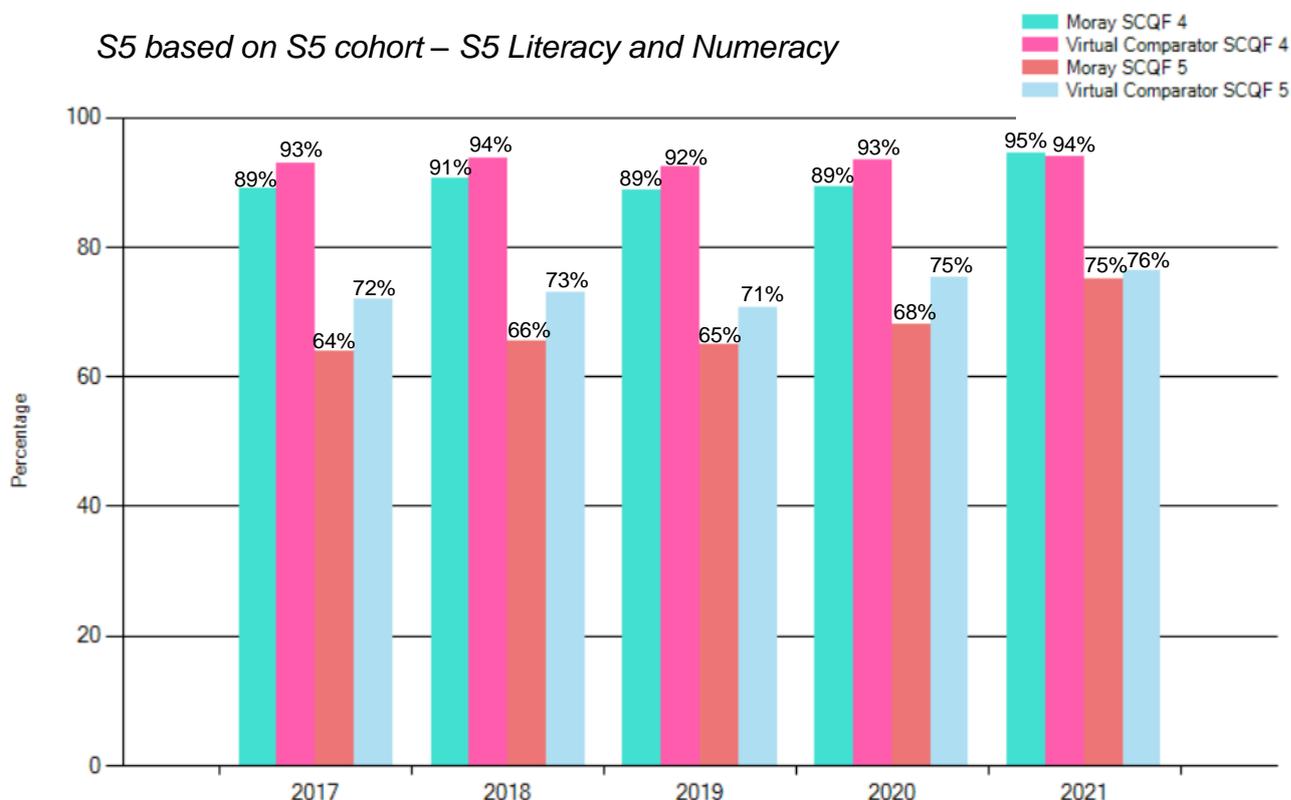
3.14 At SCQF4 level Literacy, performance in S4 is in line with the VC overall with positive trend witnessed over past three years. At SCQF5, performance remains slightly below the VC over time, with positive trend reversal in session 2021 with performance 3% above the VC.

S4 based on S4 cohort – S4 Numeracy

	SCQF4 – Numeracy			SCQF5 – Numeracy		
	Moray	VC	Gap	Moray	VC	Gap
2017	82%	90%	-8%	48%	60%	-12%
2018	78%	88%	-10%	44%	57%	-13%
2019	82%	89%	-7%	51%	61%	-10%
2020	90%	91%	-1%	59%	65%	-6%
2021	89%	87%	+2%	52%	58%	-6%

3.15 At SCQF4 level Numeracy, performance in S4 has improved over the past two years in line with the VC with attainment 2% above the VC in 2021. At SCQF5 Numeracy, the attainment gap between Moray and VC has reduced over time. Where attainment has fallen for both Moray and the VC in session 2021, a 6% attainment gap is noted at SCQF5 Numeracy between Moray and the VC.

S5 based on S5 cohort – S5 Literacy and Numeracy



S5	SCQF4 – Literacy & Numeracy			SCQF5 – Literacy & Numeracy		
	Moray	VC	Gap	Moray	VC	Gap
2017	89%	93%	-4%	64%	72%	-8%
2018	91%	94%	-3%	66%	73%	-7%
2019	89%	92%	-3%	65%	71%	-6%
2020	89%	93%	-4%	68%	75%	-7%
2021	95%	94%	+1%	75%	76%	-1%

- 3.16 In S5, SCQF4 level Literacy and Numeracy (combined) has increased to 95% with overall stability in the VC over the 5 year trend period. Moray has exceeded the VC by 1% at SCQF4 Literacy and Numeracy (combined) in 2021 as highlighted in green above. While the attainment gap between Moray and the VC for SCQF5 Literacy and Numeracy (combined) has reduced over time, it is noted that a marginal gap of 1% now exists in 2021 for SCQF5 Literacy and Numeracy (combined), below the VC.

S5 based on S5 cohort – S5 Literacy

	SCQF4 – Literacy			SCQF5 – Literacy		
	Moray	VC	Gap	Moray	VC	Gap
2017	96%	97%	-1%	84%	87%	-3%
2018	96%	97%	-1%	86%	88%	-2%
2019	96%	96%	0%	87%	87%	0%
2020	95%	96%	-1%	87%	88%	-1%
2021	97%	97%	0%	90%	90%	0%

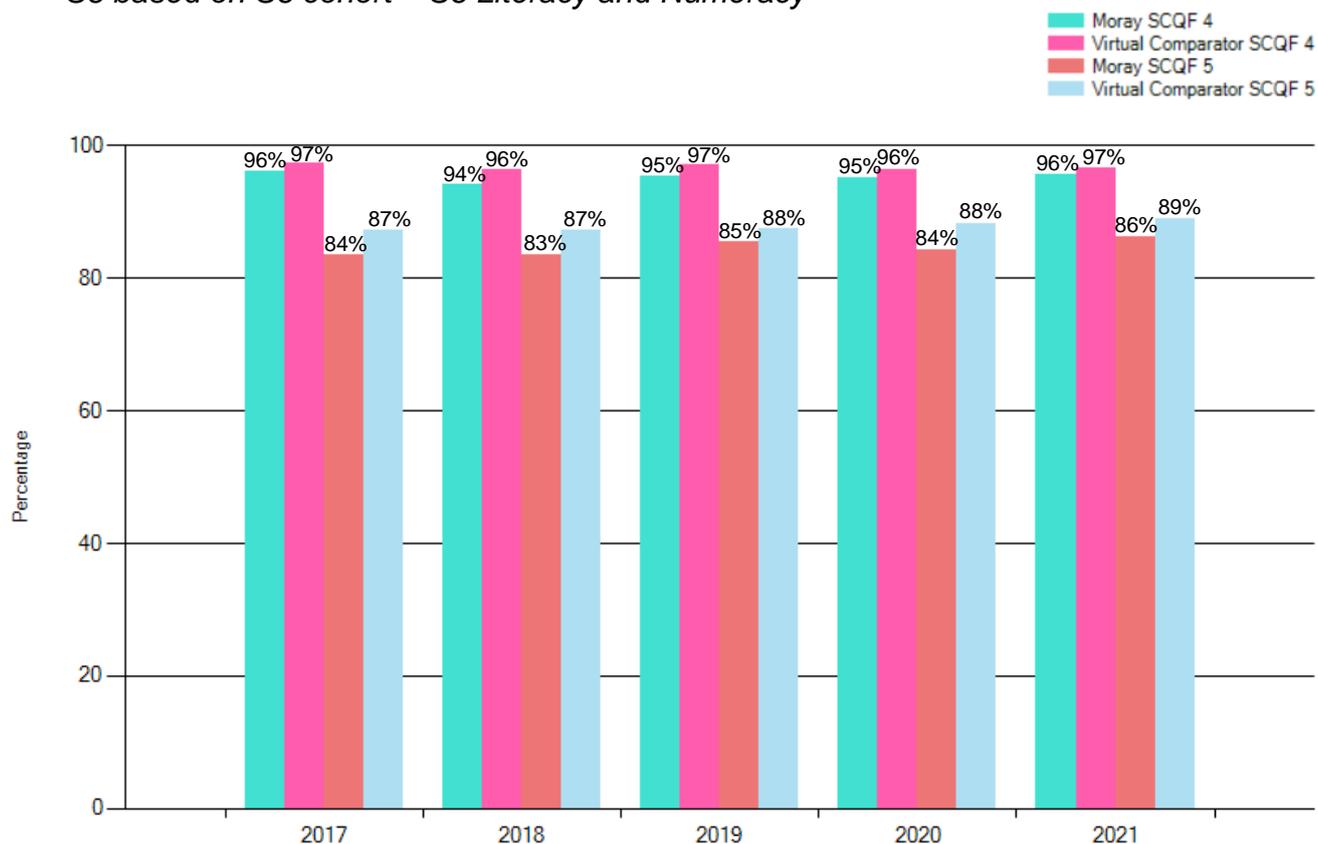
- 3.17 At SCQF4 level Literacy, performance in S5 is in line with the VC overall with positive trend witnessed overall in line with VC. At SCQF5 level Literacy, performance remains slightly below the VC over time, with positive trend overall in the past three years with performance in line with the VC.

S5 based on S5 cohort – S5 Numeracy

	SCQF4 – Numeracy			SCQF5 – Numeracy		
	Moray	VC	Gap	Moray	VC	Gap
2017	90%	94%	-4%	65%	74%	-9%
2018	91%	94%	-3%	67%	75%	-8%
2019	90%	94%	-4%	66%	73%	-7%
2020	91%	95%	-4%	69%	77%	-8%
2021	95%	95%	0%	77%	78%	-1%

- 3.18 At SCQF4 level Numeracy, performance in S5 has improved in 2021 compared with previous years (marginally below VC) and is now in line with the VC in 2021. At SCQF5 Numeracy, the attainment gap between Moray and VC has been notable over time. In 2021 for SCQF5 level Numeracy, closure in attainment gap is noted at SCQF5 Numeracy between Moray and the VC with marginal variance of 1% noted.

S6 based on S6 cohort – S6 Literacy and Numeracy



S6	SCQF4 – Literacy & Numeracy			SCQF5 – Literacy & Numeracy		
	Moray	VC	Gap	Moray	VC	Gap
2017	96%	97%	-1%	84%	87%	-3%
2018	94%	96%	-2%	83%	87%	-4%
2019	95%	97%	-2%	85%	88%	-3%
2020	95%	96%	-1%	84%	88%	-4%
2021	96%	97%	-1%	86%	89%	-3%

3.19 In S6, SCQF4 level Literacy and Numeracy (combined) has increased to 96% with overall stability in the VC over the 5 year trend period with very marginal attainment gap overall. Also noting proximity to 100% achievement. While the attainment gap between Moray and the VC for SCQF5 Literacy and Numeracy (combined) has remained marginally below and stable over time, it is noted that a marginal gap of 3% exists in 2021 on S6 point of exit for SCQF5 Literacy and Numeracy (combined), marginally below the VC across the 5 year trend period.

S6 based on S6 cohort – S6 Literacy

	SCQF4 – Literacy			SCQF5 – Literacy		
	Moray	VC	Gap	Moray	VC	Gap
2017	98%	99%	-1%	96%	97%	-1%
2018	97%	98%	-1%	95%	96%	-1%
2019	97%	99%	-2%	95%	97%	-2%
2020	97%	98%	-1%	97%	96%	-1%
2021	98%	98%	0%	96%	97%	-1%

3.20 At SCQF4 level Literacy, performance in S6 is in line with the VC overall with positive trend witnessed overall in line with VC. In 2021, SCQF4 level Literacy is in line with the VC at 98%, noting proximity to 100% achievement. At SCQF5 level Literacy, performance remains slightly below the VC over time, with positive trend overall in the past five years on point of exit, with performance in line with the VC at 96% in 2021, noting proximity to 100% achievement also, at SCQF5.

S6 based on S6 cohort – S6 Numeracy

	SCQF4 – Numeracy			SCQF5 – Numeracy		
	Moray	VC	Gap	Moray	VC	Gap
2017	96%	98%	-2%	85%	88%	-3%
2018	94%	97%	-3%	84%	88%	-4%
2019	96%	98%	-2%	87%	88%	-1%
2020	95%	97%	-2%	84%	89%	-5%
2021	96%	97%	-1%	87%	90%	-3%

3.21 At SCQF4 level Numeracy, performance of S6 in 2021 compared with previous years remains marginally below VC, noting proximity at 96% in 2021 to 100% level achievement by point of exit of this S6 cohort. At SCQF5 level Numeracy, the attainment gap between Moray and VC has been marginal overall, for the past 5 years. In 2021 for SCQF5 level Numeracy, slight attainment gap of 3% is noted at SCQF5 Numeracy between Moray and the VC.

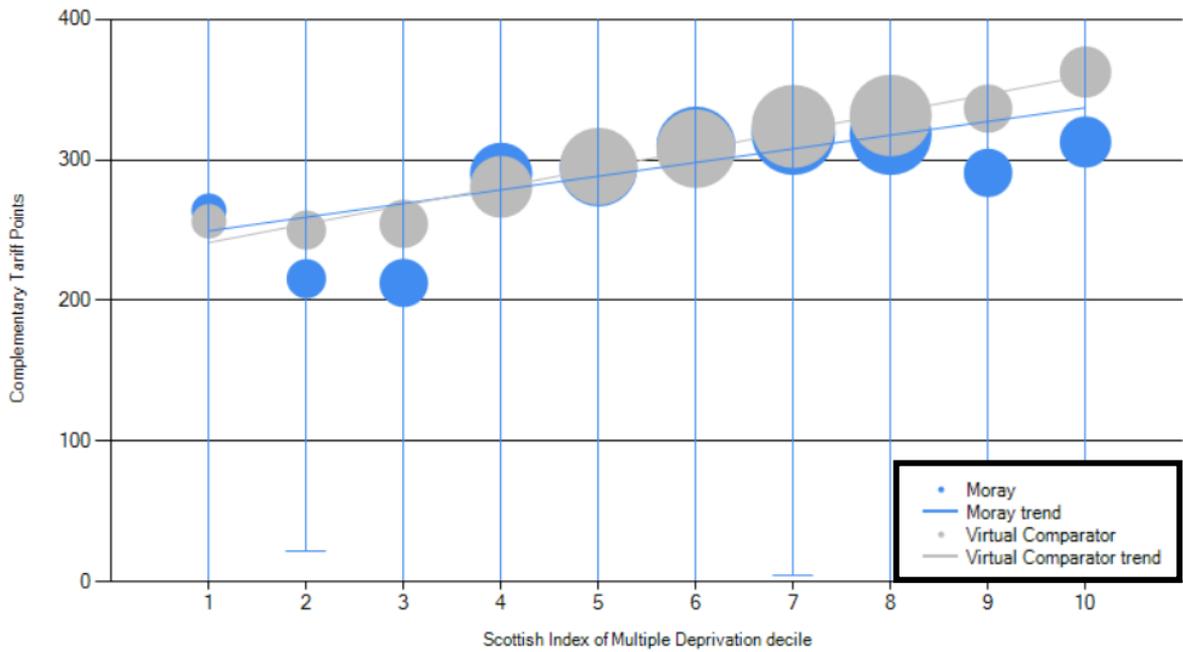
Local Measure – Initial Leaver Destination: Post-school destinations

3.22 This will be reported on as both a Local and National Measure following Insight Benchmarking update in February/March each year, when leaver data becomes available. This will be reported to a future meeting of Committee.

Local Measure - Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers – Attainment vs Deprivation

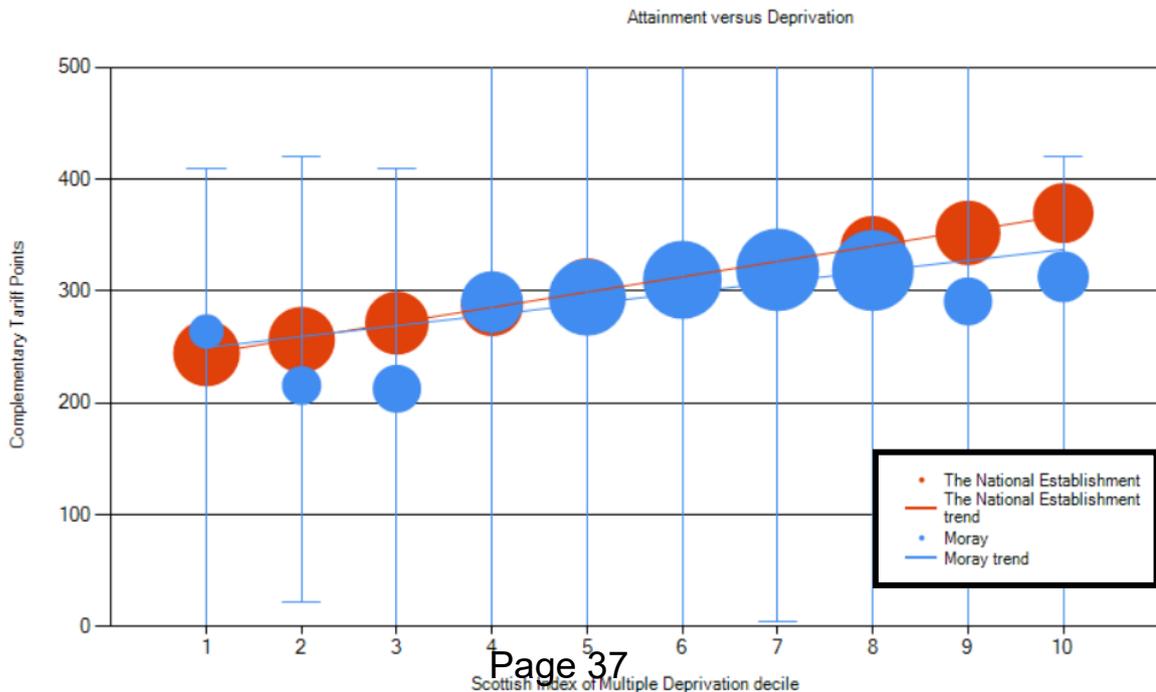
3.23 The graphs show 2020/2021 attainment data for S4, S5 and S6 (using complementary tariff scores) for Moray profiled against National data. This is broken down into ten deciles according to Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data. Thus, decile 1 refers to the attainment of young people with postcodes within data zones identified as being the 10% most deprived in Scotland according to SIMD, whilst decile 10 refers to those young people with postcodes in the top 10% of the least deprived data zones according to SIMD. In Moray there are few data zones ranked in decile 1. While in Moray it is acknowledged that SIMD does not always indicate inequity that may arise as a result of postcode and locality (including rurality), as a National measure it provides a measure of attainment based on this indicator. It is also useful in considering wider potential external factors which may impact on attainment of Moray’s young people as indicated by data zone.

Average Tariff Score of S4 learners by SIMD decile – Moray v VC

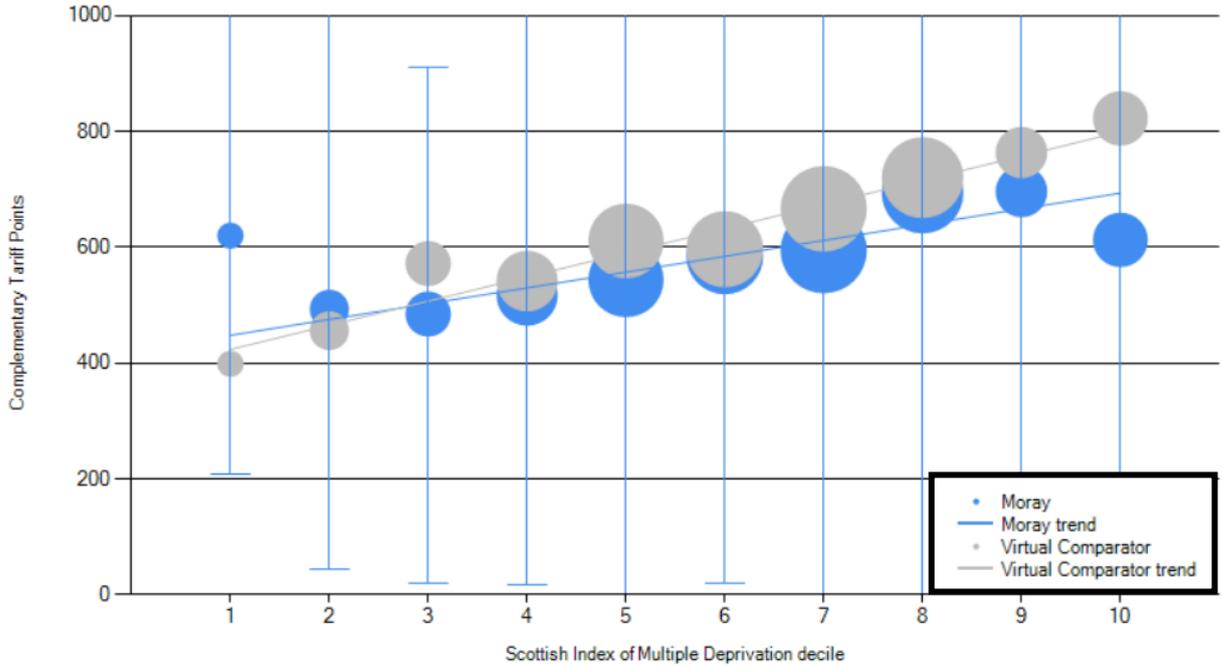


3.24 Overall, the S4 cohort in 2021 performed in line with the VC. A slight gap is noted between Moray and VC as SIMD increases (where gap between Moray and VC trend lines widens as SIMD nears to SIMD 10). Performance at SIMD 2 (22 pupils) and SIMD 3 (43 pupils) is lower than the VC overall. Learners at SIMD 1 (15 pupils), SIMD 4 (86 pupils), SIMD 5 (150 pupils), SIMD 6 (159 pupils), SIMD 7 (185 pupils) is in line with, or marginally above the VC. Performance overall at SIMD 8 (172 pupils) is marginally below the VC. At SIMD 9 (41 pupils) and SIMD 10 (51 pupils), performance is lower than that of the VC. Performance is similar to the National picture highlighted below. In line with our local profile, nationally there are more learners in lower SIMD deciles (SIMD 1-3) than in Moray as indicated by bubble size. Variance in tariff points achieved across by all learners is noted by blue vertical lines within each SIMD decile as illustrated in both graphs.

Average Tariff Score of S4 learners by SIMD decile – Moray v National

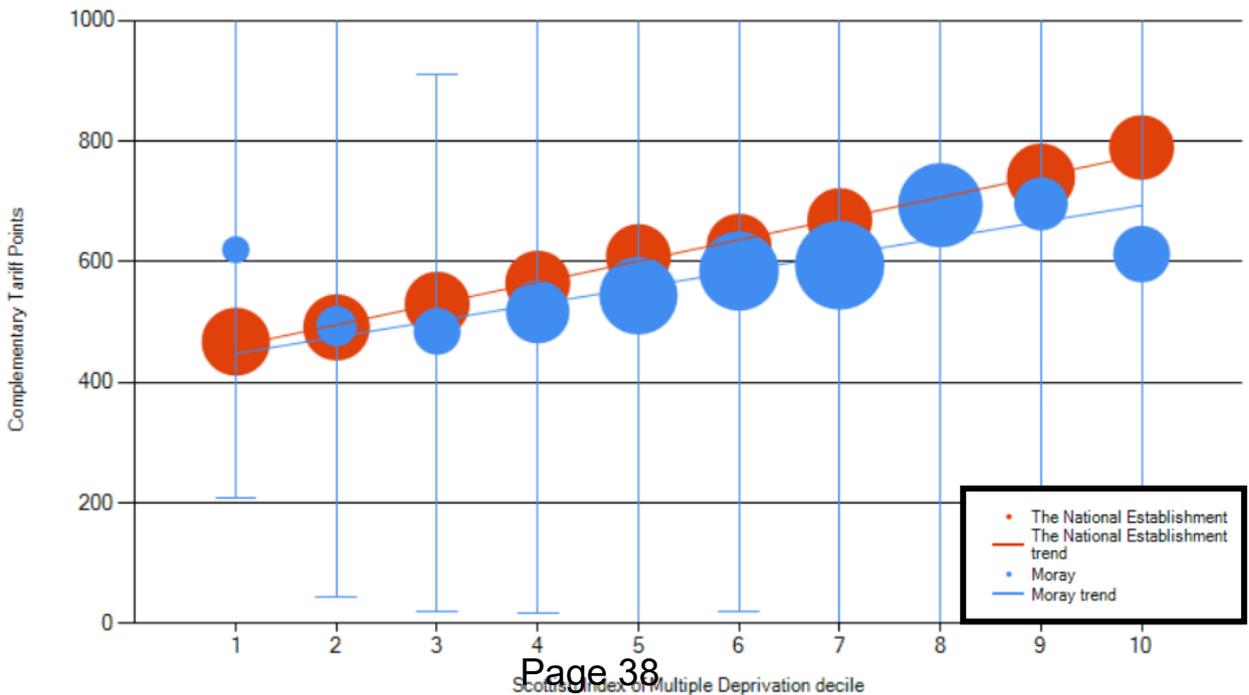


Average Tariff Score of S5 learners by SIMD decile – Moray v VC

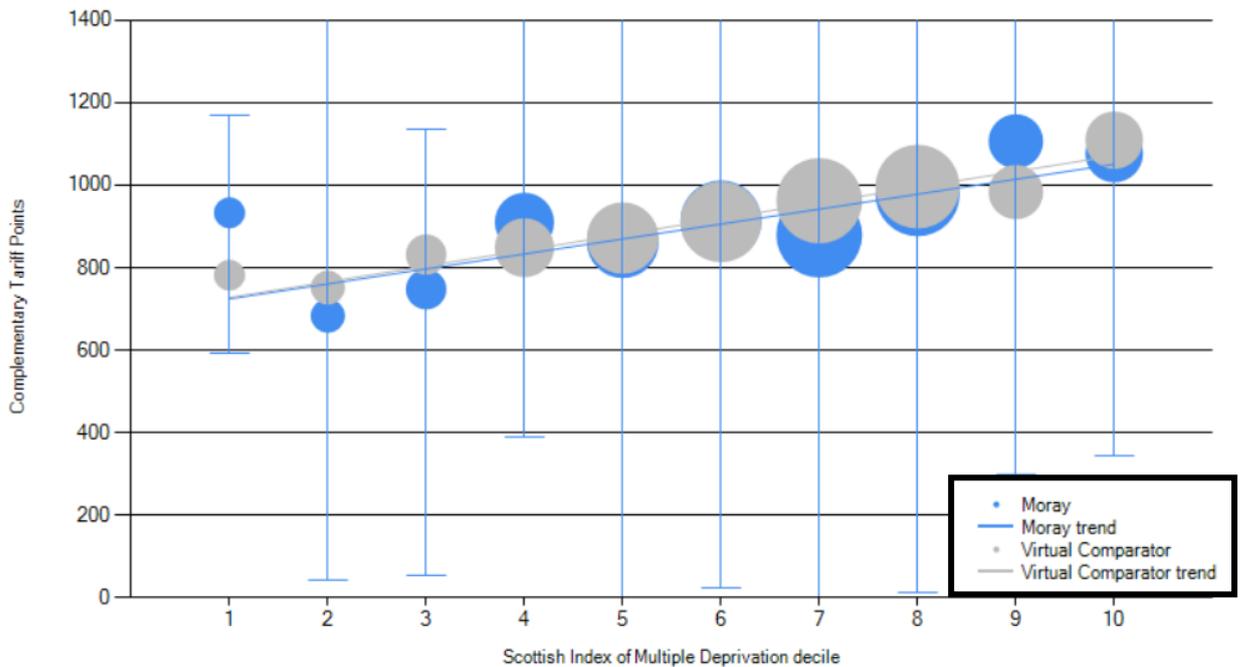


3.25 Overall, the S5 cohort in 2021 performed marginally below the VC. A slight gap is noted between Moray and VC as SIMD increases, more notably at upper deciles SIMD 7 (172 pupils), SIMD 9 (42 pupils) and SIMD 10 (53 pupils). Performance at SIMD 3 (28 pupils) and SIMD 5 (124 pupils) is below the VC. Pupils at lower decile SIMD 1 (4 pupils) and SIMD 2 (18 pupils) perform above the VC. At SIMD 4 (72 pupils), SIMD 6 (126 pupils) and SIMD 8 (146 pupils), performance is in line with the VC overall. Performance is similar as common with S4 data above to the National picture highlighted below. In line with our local profile, there are more learners nationally in lower SIMD deciles (SIMD 1-3) than in Moray as indicated by bubble size, with performance of S5 against VC above similar to performance against National comparator below. Variance in tariff points achieved across by all learners is further noted in S5 (blue vertical lines).

Average Tariff Score of S5 learners by SIMD decile – Moray v National

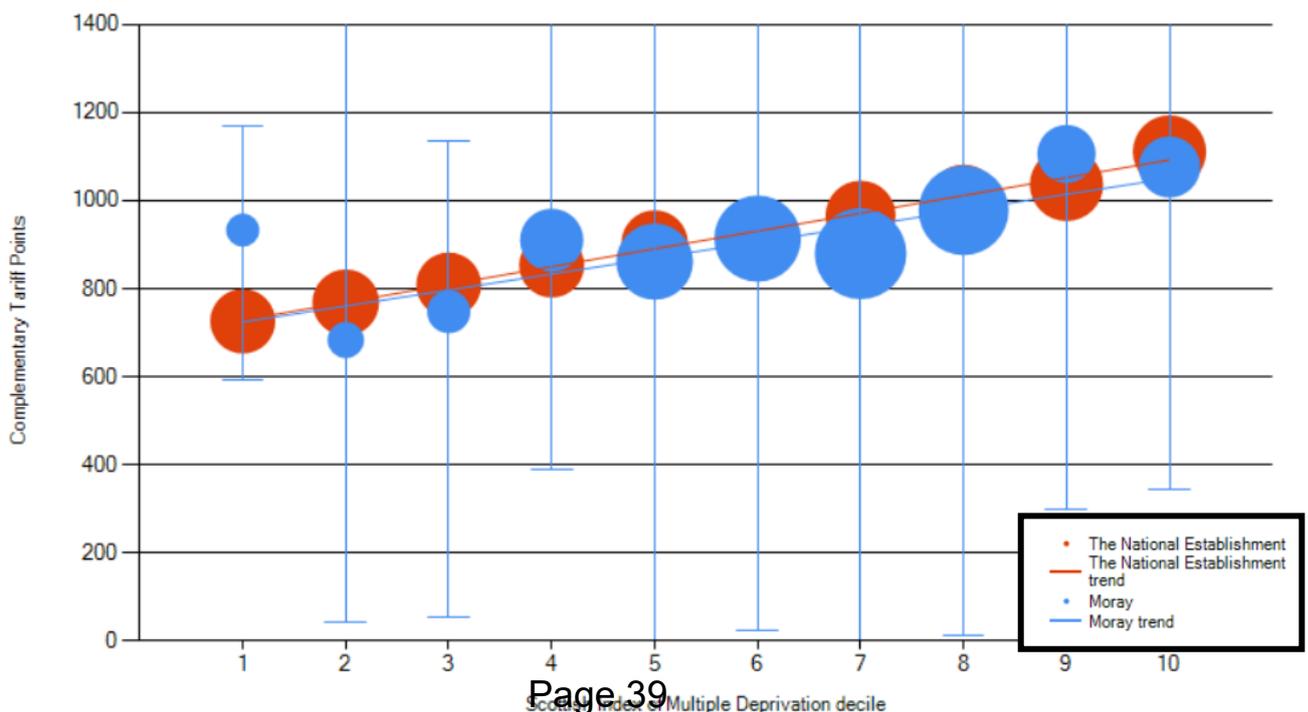


Average Tariff Score of S6 learners by SIMD decile – Moray v VC



3.26 Overall, the S6 cohort in 2021 by point of exit performed in line with, or above the VC). A very slight gap is noted between Moray and VC as SIMD increases. Performance at SIMD 2 (7 pupils), SIMD 3 (12 pupils) and SIMD 7 (99 pupils) is lower than the VC overall with variance in tariff score achieved in the latter SIMD in particular. Learners at SIMD 5 (64 pupils), SIMD 6 (85 pupils), SIMD 8 (93 pupils) is in line with, or above the VC. Performance overall at SIMD 1 (4 pupils), SIMD 4 (36 pupils) and SIMD 9 (29 pupils) is above the VC. Performance against the VC is similar to the National picture highlighted below. It is noted once more that nationally there are more learners in lower SIMD deciles (SIMD 1-3) than in Moray as indicated by bubble size. Variance in tariff points achieved across by all learners is noted by blue vertical lines within each SIMD decile as illustrated in both graphs.

Average Tariff Score of S6 learners by SIMD decile – Moray v National

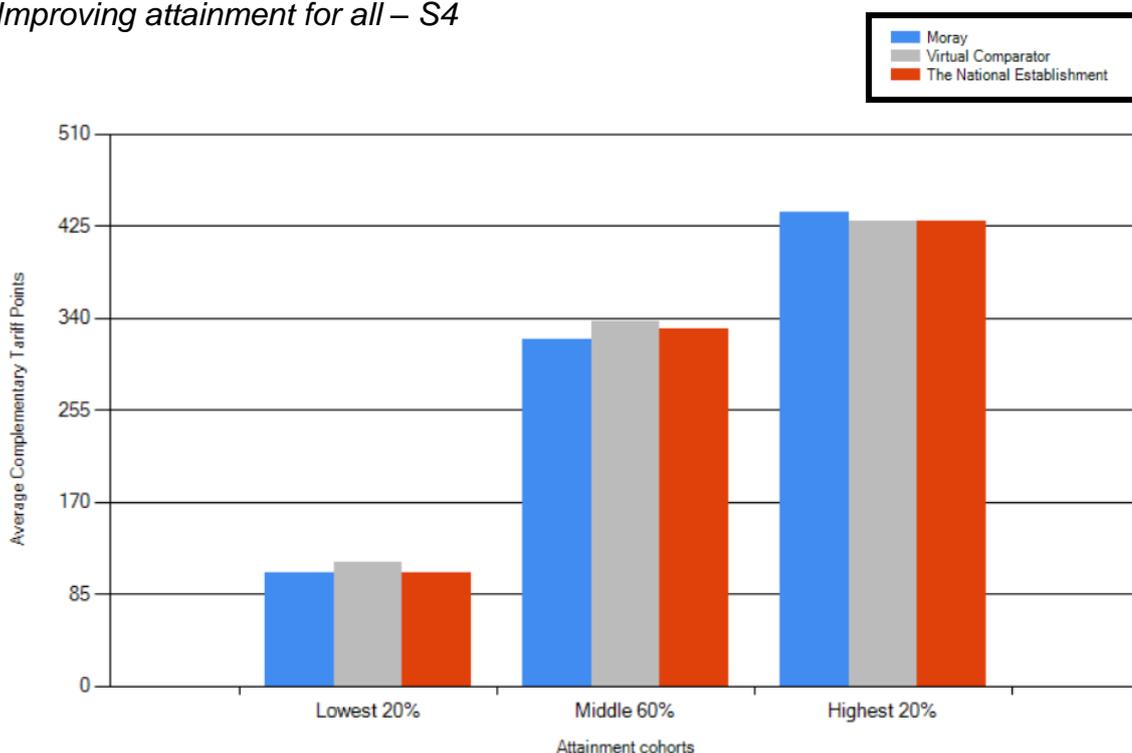


3.27 Within Moray, our secondary schools continue to further analyse data sets in order to identify learners at risk of underachievement which may be for a variety of reasons including social, emotional, additional support needs or wider health reasons. SIMD data available to schools allows further focus within School Improvement Plans supported by Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) where available, to close identified attainment gaps.

Local measure – Improving attainment for all (average complementary tariff points)

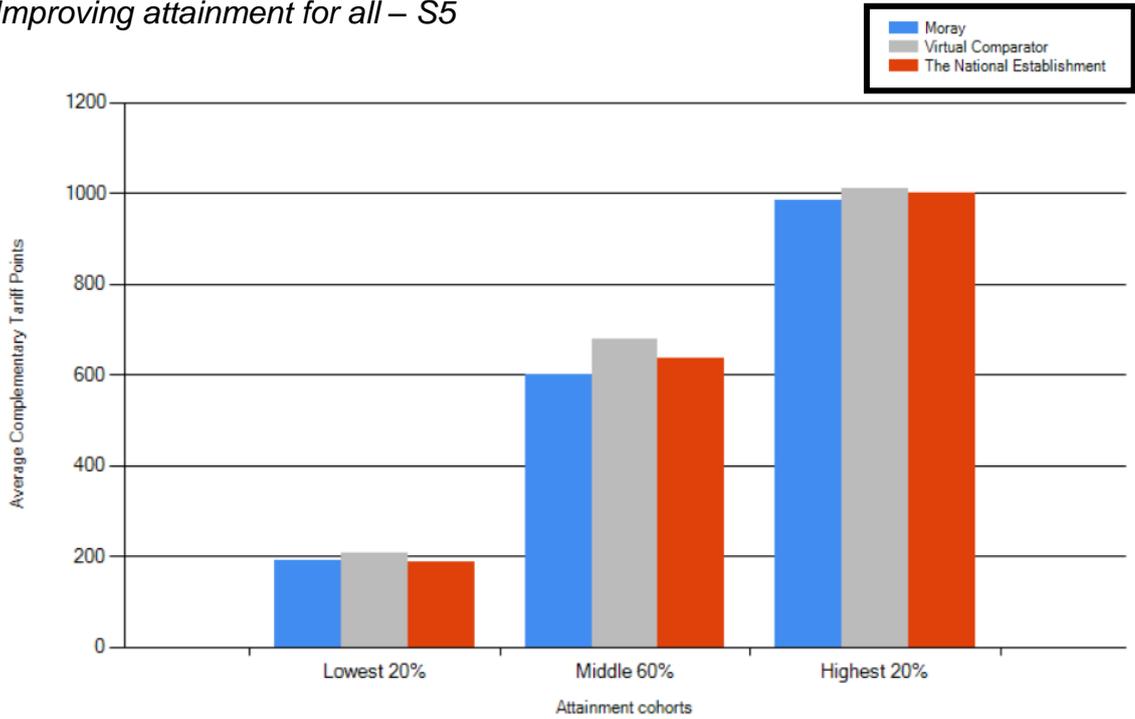
3.28 This benchmarking measure considers the average complementary tariff score for the lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% of attainers within the relevant cohort. The local measure (all candidates) will compare Moray with the VC and National comparators.

Improving attainment for all – S4



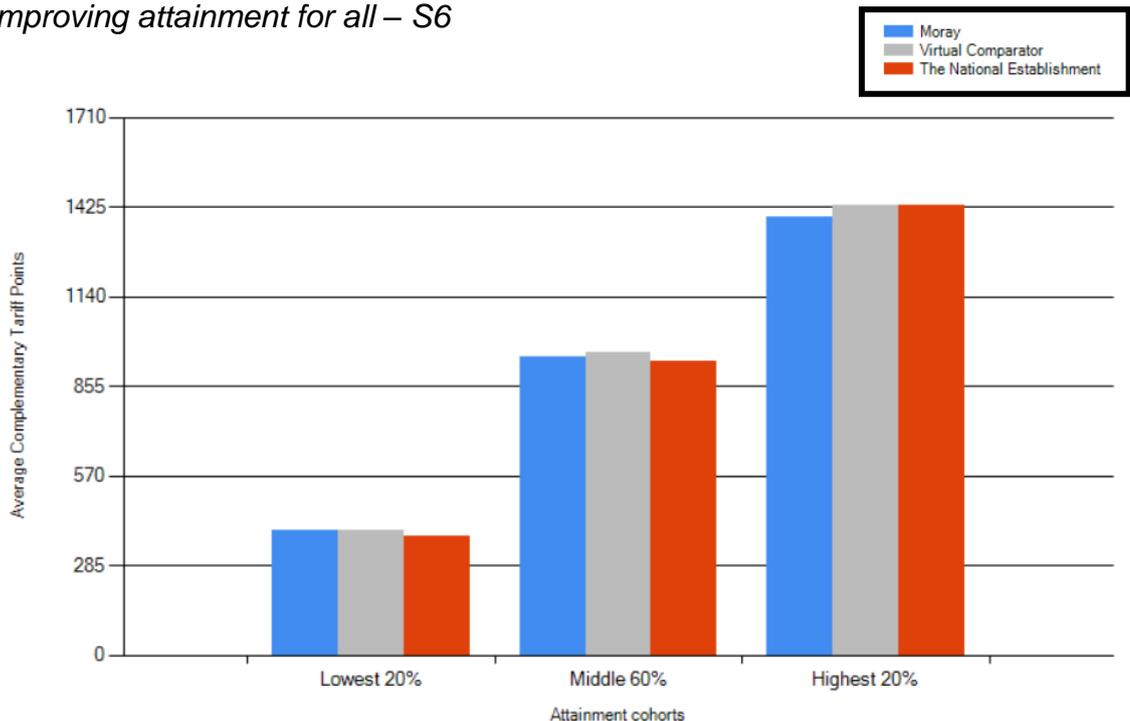
3.29 In S4, performance for the top 20% is greater than the VC and National comparators. The lowest 20% of attainers in the cohort perform in line with the National comparator, slightly below the VC. The Middle 60% are slightly below both the VC and National comparators.

Improving attainment for all – S5



3.30 In S5, performance for the top 20% is marginally below the VC and National comparators. The lowest 20% of attainers in the cohort perform in line with the National comparator, slightly below the VC. The Middle 60% are below the VC and marginally below the National comparator.

Improving attainment for all – S6



3.31 In S6, performance for the top 20% is marginally below the VC and National comparators. The lowest 20% of attainers in the cohort perform in line with the VC, slightly above the National comparator. The Middle 60% are marginally below the VC and marginally above the National comparator.

- 3.32 Within Moray, we have a wide range of partnership approaches for curriculum provision and also use increasing consortia arrangements across our schools. This includes a range of National Qualification provisions across our schools; Young Applicants in Schools Scheme (YASS) which provides S6 pupils the chance to study Open University modules; wider achievement through a range of partners and accreditation in partnership with Moray College, UHI. The attainment through Moray College continues to be an area of continued focus with some positive attainment noted in previous initial attainment committee report. Further work with College is now required in reviewing curriculum offer. We continue to support and develop our partnership opportunities across Moray to ensure a positive and improving range of subjects and qualifications for our young people, in line with national guidelines and expectations.
- 3.33 Officers provide schools with centrally collated attainment data immediately following the publication of SQA exam results in August, both to enable them to compare their performance and identify best practice across subject areas within the authority and inform initial discussions regarding attainment and progress in this area. Schools continue to track and monitor individual learner's and cohorts, ensuring learning conversations with pupils at individual subject and whole school level focus on target grades and supporting young people in order to achieve best possible outcomes.
- 3.34 Working with the National Insight Advisor, we are in the planning stages of a local authority training programme to support leadership at all levels and planning for improvement based on data sets presented. May in-service days will support this raising attainment intervention and review our targets as identified in the Moray Raising Attainment Strategy previously reported to Committee.
- 3.35 Schools and central officers continue to review school attainment data with a view to raising attainment. This includes review of additional courses for raising tariff scores and opportunities for naturally occurring accreditation through existing course delivery. Subject group meetings are soon to take place with a set agenda in order to review course and curriculum offer and strengthening accreditation, also including an aspect of sharing good practice across Moray to support improvement.
- 3.36 Where the Coronavirus pandemic continues to impact on the day to day operation of our schools coupled with variability in staff and pupil absence, the impact on examinations and performance in session 2021/2022 remains unknown. Learning Experiences akin to Preliminary Examinations take place in January/February 2022 with final SQA examinations scheduled for April/May 2022. Schools and practitioners continue to plan and deliver learning and teaching in support of preparing learners for the SQA Examination diet, where current learners across S4-S6 have not yet undertaken a formal examination diet due to the Alternative Certification Models previously in place in session 2019/2020 and 2020/2021.

Actions for Improvement

3.37 There are a number of initiatives being undertaken in Moray and across the Northern Alliance to support raising attainment.

- The implementation of the Moray Raising Attainment Strategy
- Consistent and supported use of data for analysis and improvement across all schools including local authority and school level performance monitoring, meetings and scrutiny activities
- Rigorous and consistent tracking and monitoring of pupil progress across all schools for Senior Phase, including increased focus on Literacy and Numeracy tracking
- Continued implementation of our Moray Learning and Teaching Strategy supported at this time by Our Moray Standard for Remote Learning and Teaching
- Ongoing support for middle leaders in schools through SQA appointee opportunities, subject group meetings and Subject Leader proposal
- Central officer focus on school visits on attainment, data analysis and improvement; for which next steps and actions are followed up on subsequent visits
- SQA Coordinator and Curriculum Working Groups are ongoing to support SQA good practice and approaches and development of a consortia approach to curricular opportunities
- Continuation of additional period allocation in the Senior Phase in all secondary schools to provide additional time in S4 for National Qualifications and more opportunity for literacy and numeracy interventions across S4-6
- Practitioner support through a range of professional learning opportunities
- Northern Alliance range of supports including Emerging Literacy, Maths and Numeracy, Curriculum and Data for Improvement
- Continued review through school attainment meetings with a focus on areas for improvement which will be monitored
- Follow-up school attainment meetings will take place post-February in order to support further Insight data release incorporating school leaver destinations

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 (3) provide a sustainable education service aiming for excellence and (4) day to day service delivery in line with council values of ambitious, improving and responsive. 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.

b) Policy and Legal

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

c) Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

d) Risk Implications

There are risk implications as to how this attainment dataset will continue to be used as comparator data for the next 3-5 years and may skew future performance reporting. The data presented herein reflects year 2 of an Alternative Certification Model (ACM) differing to the previous session's ACM, with planned reversion to a final examination diet this session.

There is also the consideration that more young people will continue to stay on at school beyond S4 and S5 due to coronavirus pandemic and the associated uncertainty. Likewise, concerns regarding wellbeing and Mental Health and impact on learner outcomes and attainment.

Schools further note increases in Additional Support Needs among pupils, impacting on number of courses studied and levels of study. This has noted impact on attainment measures outlined above and is anticipated to increase based on Broad General Education cohort information. A number of young people, due to their additional support needs, access a personalised curriculum with individual targets and outcomes.

Uncertainty surrounds potential change as a result of the unknown direction of the Covid-19 pandemic with further contingency scenarios by SQA beyond the identified examination based diet return this session.

All of the above are likely to have an effect on SQA results and overall performance data in future years. Changes in assessing qualifications in 2020 and 2021 as a result of cancellation of examinations as well as uncertainty continuing this session (2022) creates risks relating to accountability and data comparability.

e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report other than risks associated with staff absence due to Covid-19 related absence/isolation periods impacting on course delivery and service continuity.

f) Property

None.

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 (including Curriculum and Subject Groups; QA meetings) 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, Paul Connor, Principal Accountant, Equal Opportunities Officer, Human Resources Manager, Tracey Sutherland, 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 That Committee scrutinises and notes the position in respect of attainment of young people in Moray with regard to National Qualifications in 2021 against Insight Benchmarking measures presented and;**
- 5.2 Committee is asked to acknowledge work underway in order to prepare young people for 2022 examinations across Moray Schools during the continued Coronavirus pandemic and associated uncertainty and;**
- 5.3 The Committee is asked to consider the potential impact on examinations and performance for session 2021/2022**

Author of Report: Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager

Background Papers:

[Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee, 24 November 2021 – Initial Attainment Report for Secondary Schools Committee Report](#)

Ref: SPMAN-1315769894-216



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON 26 JANUARY 2022**

**SUBJECT: INITIAL ANALYSIS OF ACHIEVEMENT OF CURRICULUM FOR
EXCELLENCE LEVELS 2021**

**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 2021 and provided to the Scottish Government at the end of October 2021 regarding Teacher Professional Judgements (TPJ) on children achieving Curriculum for Excellence levels (ACEL) at P1, P4 and P7. This data appears in the Scottish Government report published in mid-December 2021.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) 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 the Committee:**
- i) scrutinises and notes the content of this report and;**
 - ii) agree to acknowledge the impact of Covid-19 on work to close the poverty related and wider attainment gaps and progress of Moray schools despite this considerable disruption.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Scottish Government 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 attainment gap, delivering both excellence and equity.

- 3.2 The updated 2022 National Improvement Framework (NIF) and Improvement Plan was published in December 2021 and replaces the 2021 NIF and Improvement Plan. In determining key activity and priorities for 2022, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills notes in her foreword to the NIF and Improvement Plan 2022 that Nationally, the Scottish Government are mindful of the findings of the 2021 ACEL data collection which shows a decline in literacy and numeracy levels as well as an increase in the poverty related attainment gap.
- 3.3 The Scottish Government remain committed to excellence and equity and are aware of continued disruption due the pandemic as ongoing, impacting on schools and early learning and childcare settings. This includes operational challenges including increased staff absence and minimising risk, limited capacity for improvement work at this time. Schools and settings continue to focus on the health and wellbeing of all while remaining committed to raising standards and achievement in literacy and numeracy.
- 3.4 The NIF and Improvement Plan 2022 comprise a vision for education in Scotland, underpinned by a set of key principles and priorities, reflecting the OECD's 2021 review of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). It identifies a number of key drivers of improvement which will be instrumental in addressing the priorities. It is further recognised that improvement plans and priorities have been informed by another difficult year for the whole education system in dealing with health, social, and educational impacts of Covid-19. These priorities link directly to the NIF and to improving services for children taking into consideration the Moray's Children's Services plan. These are:
- School and ELC Leadership
 - Teacher and practitioner professionalism
 - Parent/carer involvement and engagement
 - Curriculum and assessment
 - School and ELC improvement
 - Performance Information
- 3.5 The drivers provide a focus and structure for gathering evidence which can then be analysed to identify where we can make further improvements. Headteacher meetings have previously been focussed around the drivers ensuring that there is a shared understanding of expectations as well as sharing practice across Moray. This has now evolved to addressing each of the six areas of our Schools and Curriculum Development Strategic Plan 2020-23 which centres around plans to improve and develop the following areas:
- Improving outcomes for all
 - Curriculum
 - Learning, Teaching and Assessment
 - Supporting all Learners
 - Leadership
 - Self Evaluation for Self Improvement

3.6 The fourth NIF driver listed in section 3.4 above – Curriculum and Assessment - relates 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 2022 now includes many of the actions in response to the OECD recommendations.

3.7 Teacher Professional Judgement data collected by Scottish Government on ACEL with codes as shown in brackets is as follows:

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

3.8 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.

3.9 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
Early	The end of P1
First	The end of P4
Second	The end of P7
Third	The end of S3
Fourth	Some pupils will achieve this by the end of S4

3.10 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.

3.11 Following request for ACEL data submission for P1, P4 and P7 stages, data was collected in June 2021 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.

3.12 ACEL data was submitted to Scottish Government in October 2021 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. Full cognisance of disruption on schools has been taken in undertaking data collection and Quality Assurance activities.

- 3.13 The Scottish Government ACEL National data was published in December 2021, providing a range of data across all of Scotland's local authorities as well as specific cohort and characteristic data.
- 3.14 The National Improvement Framework has set stretch aims across a number of key measures and these are noted within the data sets for each stage, P1, P4, P7 and S3, as a longer term aim of local authorities to work towards for cohorts in both Literacy and Numeracy. It is noted that stretch aims below were set prior to Covid-19 and its ongoing impact and are under review by Scottish Government with consideration of local stretch aims.

Stage	Literacy	Numeracy
P1	74%	83%
P4	68%	75%
P7	66%	70%
S3 – Third Level	87%	88%

Authority Approaches

- 3.15 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 attainment continue to be our Education vision in Moray. These are:

- Raising Attainment Strategy and Toolkit
- Learning and Teaching Strategy and supporting materials
- Remote Learning and Teaching Strategy and Toolkit
- Assessment and Moderation Guidelines
- Tracking and Monitoring Guidelines and Tracking Tools/System
- Quality Improvement team support and challenge regarding data analysis, tracking and monitoring and attainment discussions with all schools

Primary 1 – Early level ACEL

- 3.16 The percentages noted below present the P1 ACEL data for the past 5 years for Moray in comparison with the National averages. Please note that there was no Scottish Government data collected in 2019/2020 per section 3.10.

Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
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
Stretch Aims					74	83
2018	Moray	82	75	67	63	72
	National	87	81	78	75	85
2017	Moray	82	74	65		70
	National	85	80	77		83

3.17 Moray figures highlighted in green above indicate where performance exceeds National average; amber highlight indicates where performance is marginally below and red highlight as below National average. P1 data for 2021 shows that Listening and Talking and Reading are in line with National averages, comparable with pre-pandemic attainment in 2019:

Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2019	Moray	85	77	76	71	79
2021	Moray	85	77	71	69	78
% Change	Moray	0	0	-5	-2	-1

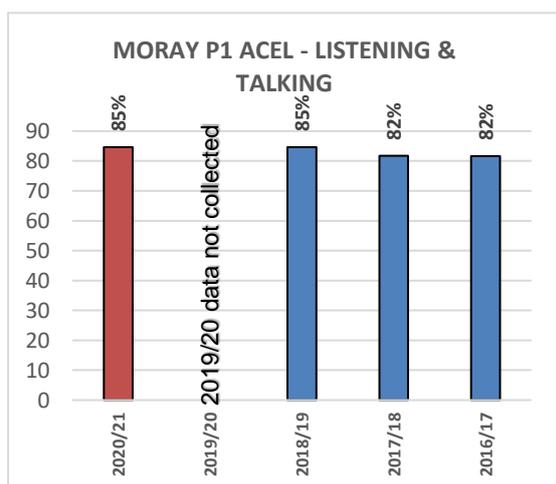
3.18 Writing is marginally below (3%) National average and below 2019 pre-pandemic Writing attainment (5% lower), impacting on overall Literacy achievement compared with National average (2% below). While Numeracy remains comparable to 2019 pre-pandemic attainment, attainment is 3% below National average. Literacy and Numeracy overall remain below NIF Stretch Aims set in 2018, pre-pandemic (see yellow highlight in section 3.10).

3.19 In consideration of change in Moray figures, review of changes in National averages from pre-pandemic (2019) to during pandemic (2021) provides further contextual data:

Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2019	National	87	82	79	76	85
2021	National	84	77	74	71	81
% Change	National	-3	-5	-5	-5	-4

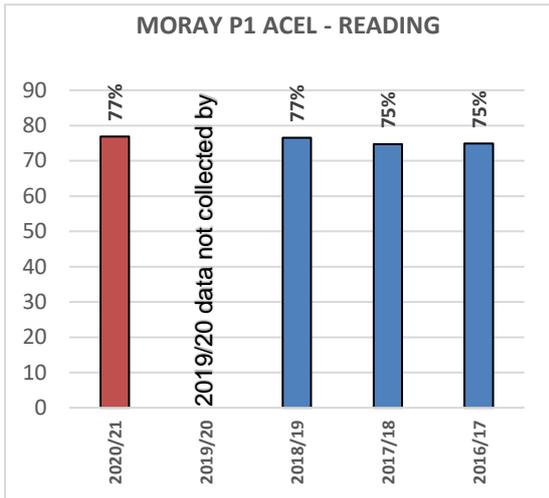
3.20 On review of Moray attainment data in section 3.10 and 3.11 above compared with National average change over time, variances are in line with or favourable compared with National average trend change over time (2019-2021).

3.21 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 on trends over time is provided to the right of each graph.



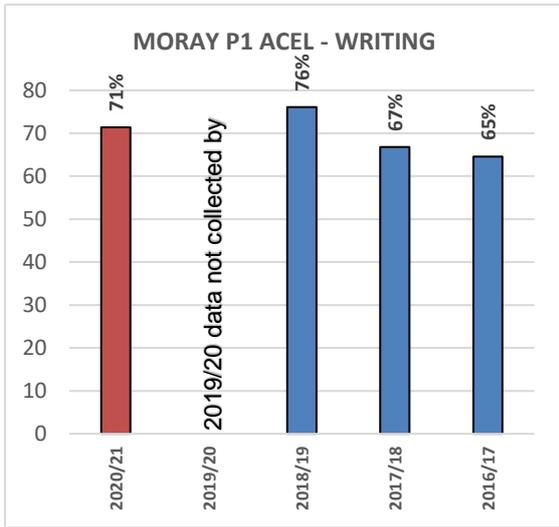
P1 Listening and Talking

- Data trend over time remains in line with pre-pandemic data
- 2018/2019 achievement at 85% is same as 2018/2019 pre-pandemic ACEL level achievement



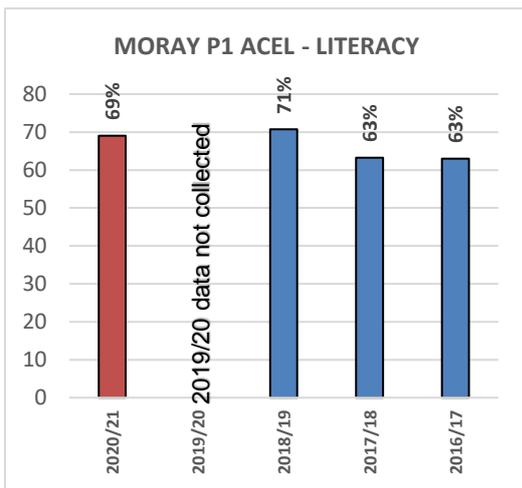
P1 Reading

- Data trend over time remains in line with pre-pandemic data
- 2018/2019 achievement at 77% is same as 2018/2019 pre-pandemic ACEL level achievement



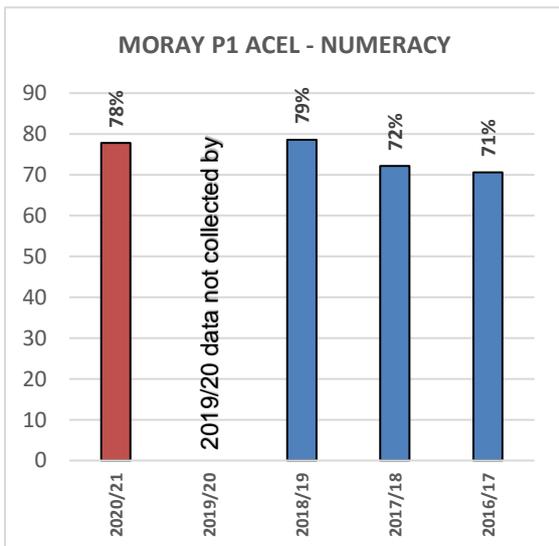
P1 Writing

- Data trend over time shows reduction in ACEL data in 2020/21 (-5%) compared with pre-pandemic data in 2018/19.
- 2020/21 data remains higher than 2017/18 and 2016/17



P1 Literacy

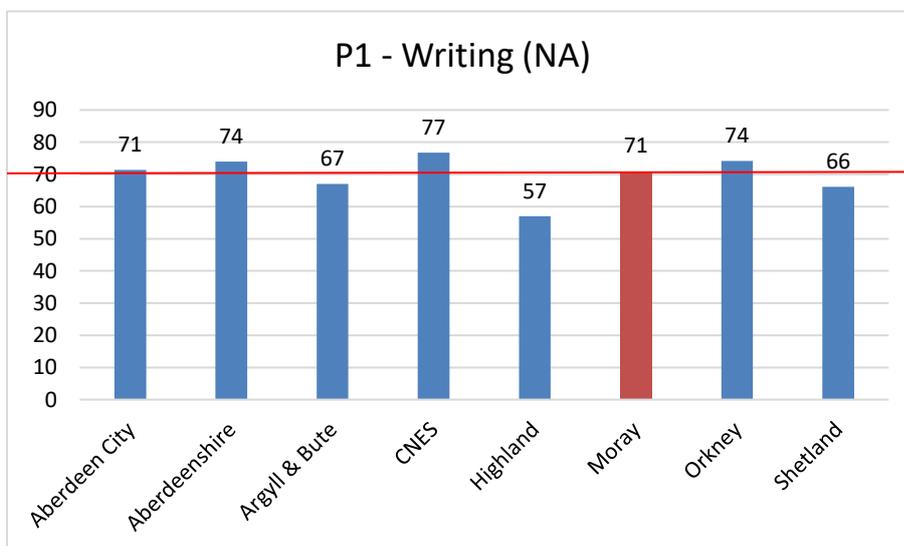
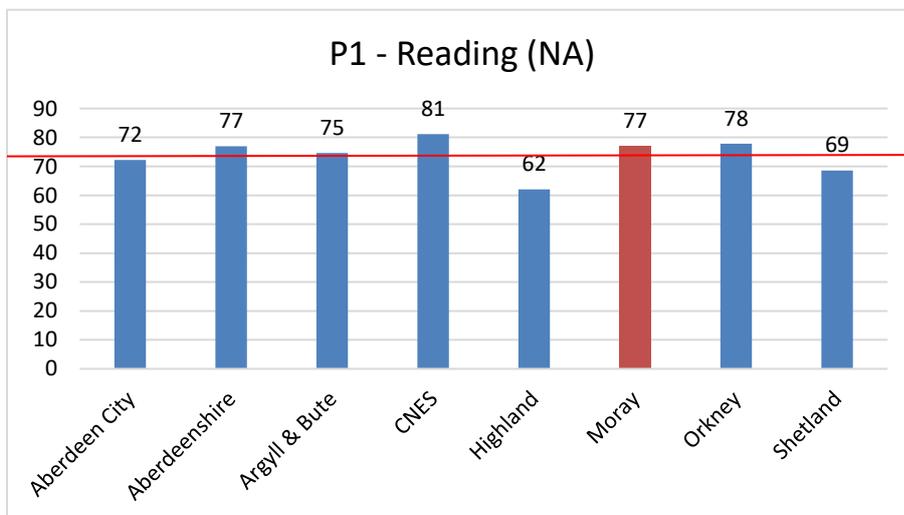
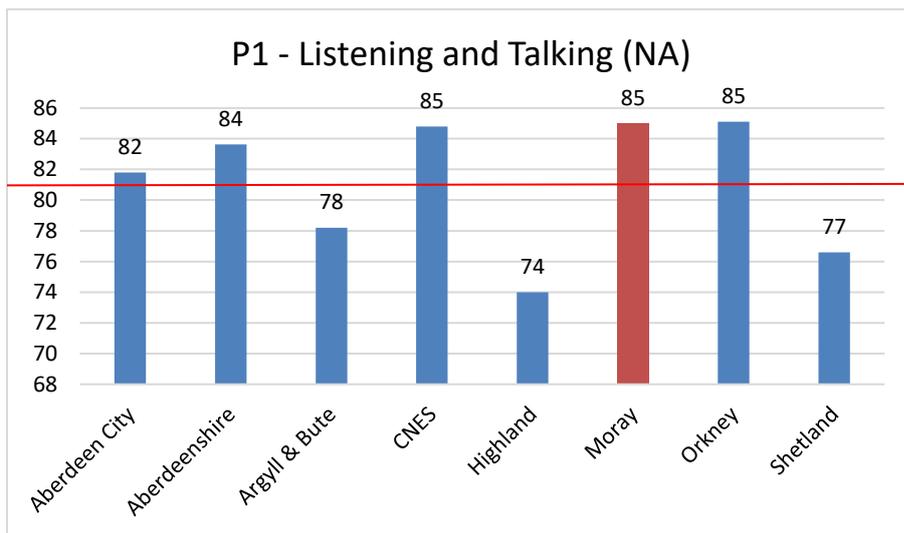
- Data trend over time shows slight reduction in ACEL data in 2020/21 (-2%) compared with pre-pandemic data in 2018/19.
- 2020/21 data remains higher than 2017/18 and 2016/17
- Reduction in Writing ACEL data in 2020/21 has resulted in this reduction in P1 Literacy overall

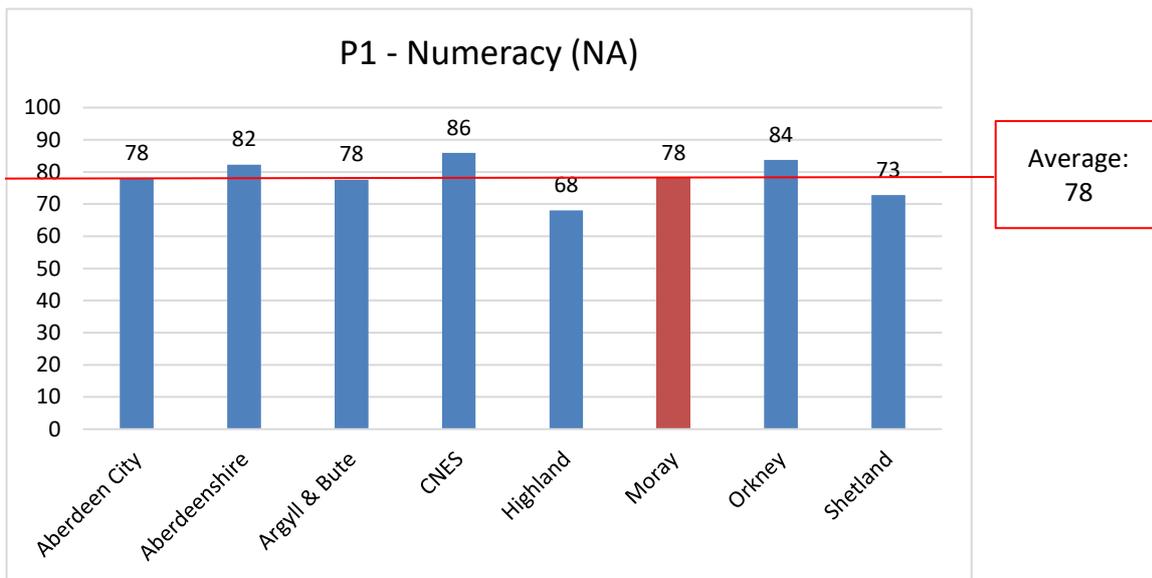
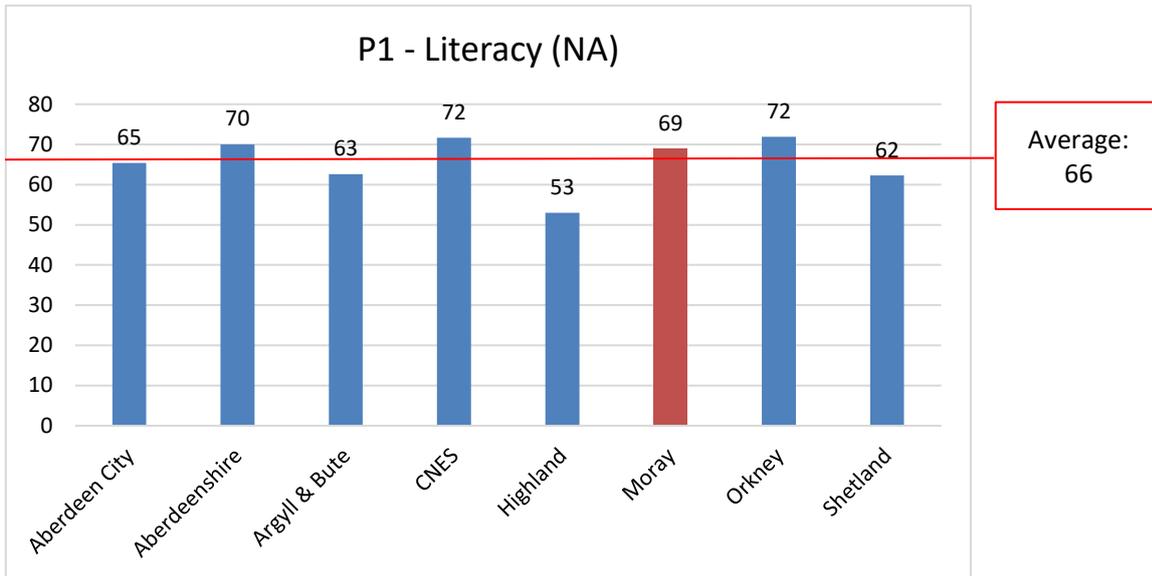


P1 Numeracy

- Data trend over time shows slight reduction in ACEL data in 2020/21 (-1%) compared with pre-pandemic data in 2018/19.
- 2020/21 data remains higher than 2017/18 and 2016/17

3.22 The following extracted data set as published by the Scottish Government is presented in graph form below for Moray alongside 7 other local authorities forming our Regional Improvement Collaborative; The Northern Alliance (NA).





P1 ACEL data across all Literacy measures (Listening and Talking, Reading, Writing) including Literacy overall, exceed Northern Alliance mean averages. Numeracy is in line with the mean average for Northern Alliance.

Primary 4 – First level ACEL

3.23 The percentages noted below present the P4 ACEL data for the past 5 years for Moray in comparison with the National averages. Please note that there was no Scottish Government data collected in 2019/2020 per section 3.10.

Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2021	Moray	82	73	66	61	64
	National	82	73	67	64	72
2020	Moray	<i>2019/20 data was not collected by Scottish Government</i>				
2019	Moray	78	72	63	60	65
	National	85	78	73	70	77
Stretch Aims					68	75
2018	Moray	72	66	57	53	60

	National	85	77	72	69	76
2017	Moray	73	72	63		59
	National	83	77	71		75

3.23 Moray figures highlighted in green above indicate where performance exceeds National average; amber highlight indicates where performance is marginally below and red highlight as below National average. P4 data for 2021 shows that Listening and Talking and Reading are in line with National averages, favourable in comparison with pre-pandemic attainment in 2019:

Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2019	Moray	78	72	63	60	65
2021	Moray	82	73	66	61	64
% Change	Moray	+4	+1	+3	+1	-1

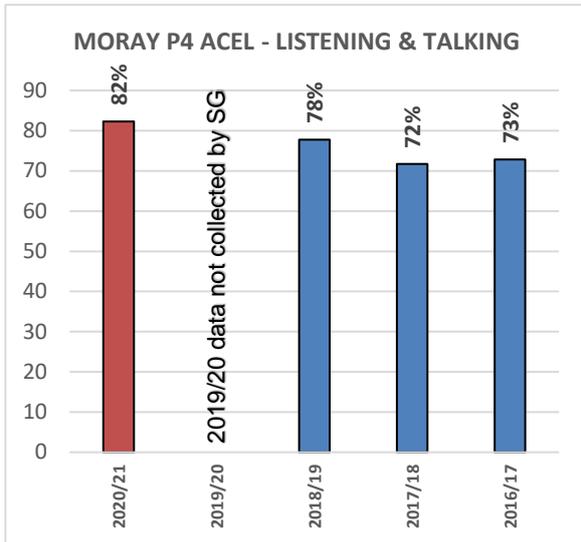
3.25 Writing is marginally below (1%) National average but above 2019 pre-pandemic Writing attainment (3% higher), impacting on overall Literacy achievement compared with National average (3% below). While Numeracy remains comparable to 2019 pre-pandemic attainment (1% below), attainment is 8% below National average. Literacy and Numeracy overall remain below NIF Stretch Aims set in 2018 (see yellow highlight in section 3.21).

3.26 In consideration of change in Moray figures above, review of changes in National averages from pre-pandemic (2019) to during pandemic (2021) provides further contextual data:

Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2019	National	85	78	73	70	77
2021	National	82	73	67	64	72
% Change	National	-3	-5	-6	-6	-5

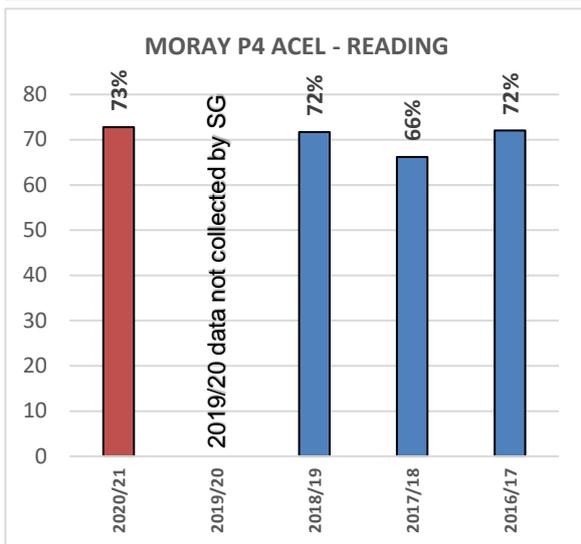
3.27 On review of Moray attainment data in section 3.21 and 3.22 above compared with National average change over time, variances are favourable compared with National average trend change over time (2019-2021) for all elements of Literacy (Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking) and Literacy overall. While Numeracy ACEL for 2020/21 in Moray has remained comparable to session 2018/19, 8% variance between Moray ACEL and National average is less than variances noted in 2018/19 (12%) and 2017/2018 (16%) per table in 3.21 above, highlighting narrowing of attainment gap over time.

3.28 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 on trends over time is provided to the right of each graph.



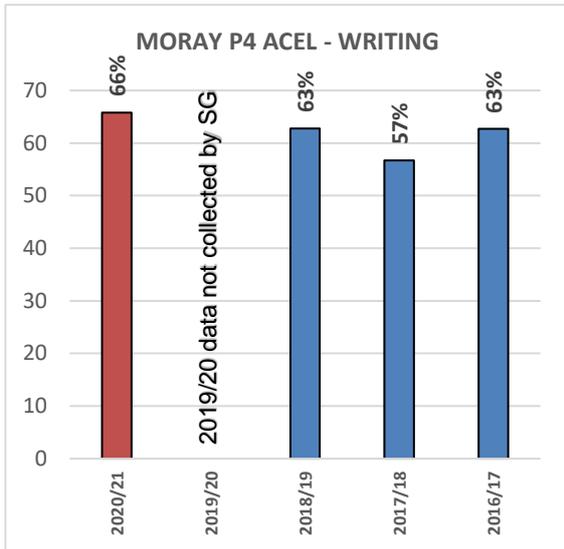
P4 Listening and Talking

- Data trend over time highlights improvement in performance compared with pre-pandemic data
- 2020/2021 achievement at 82% is highest ACEL level achievement over time for P4 Listening and Talking



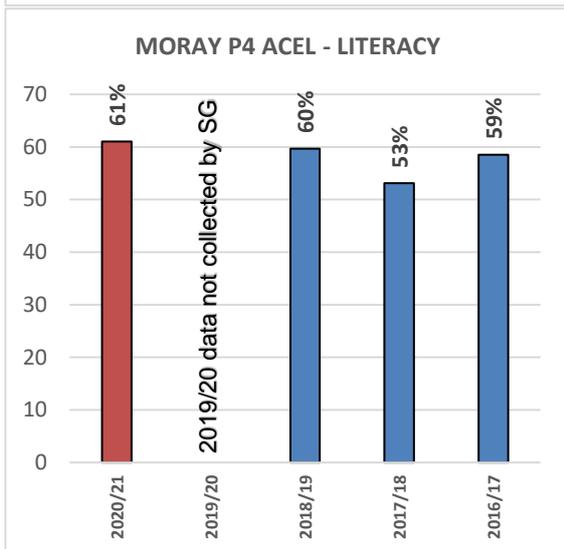
P4 Reading

- Data trend over time remains in line with pre-pandemic data and slightly above 2018/2019
- 2020/2021 achievement at 73% is highest ACEL level achievement over time for P4 Reading



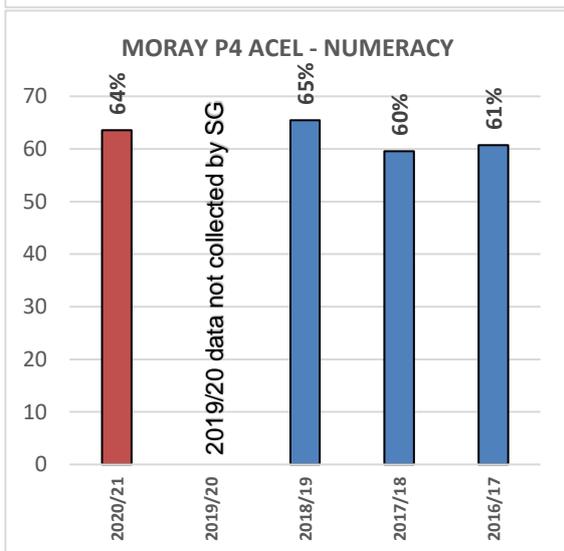
P4 Writing

- Data trend over time highlights improvement in performance compared with pre-pandemic data
- 2020/2021 achievement at 66% is highest ACEL level achievement over time for P4 Writing



P4 Literacy

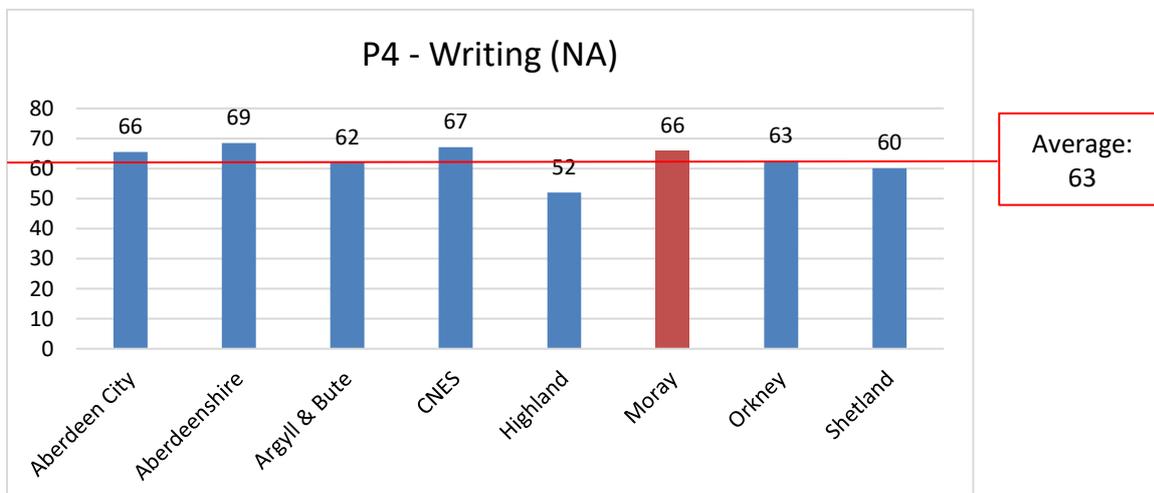
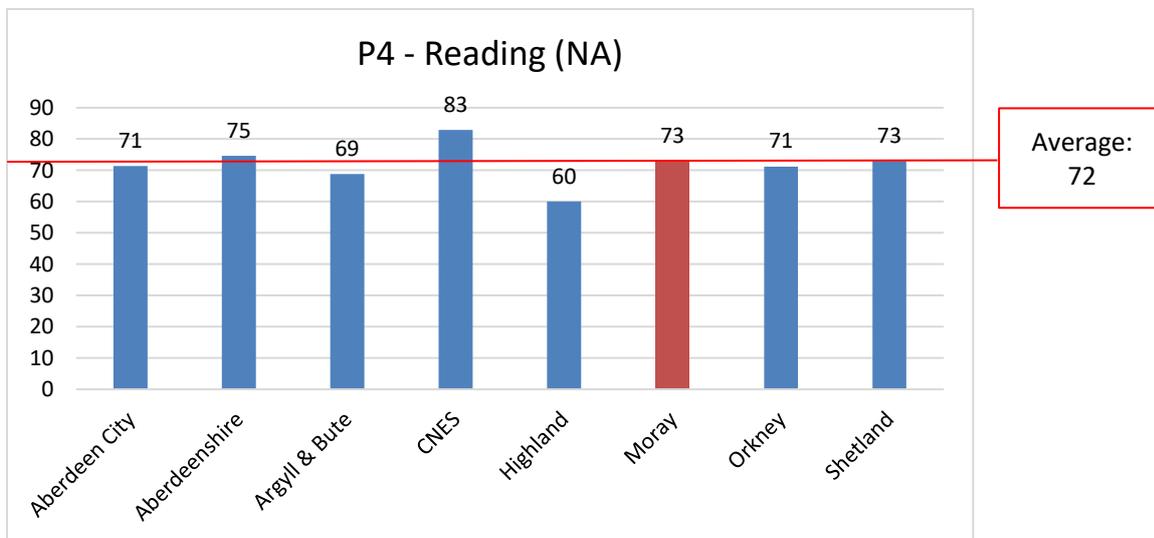
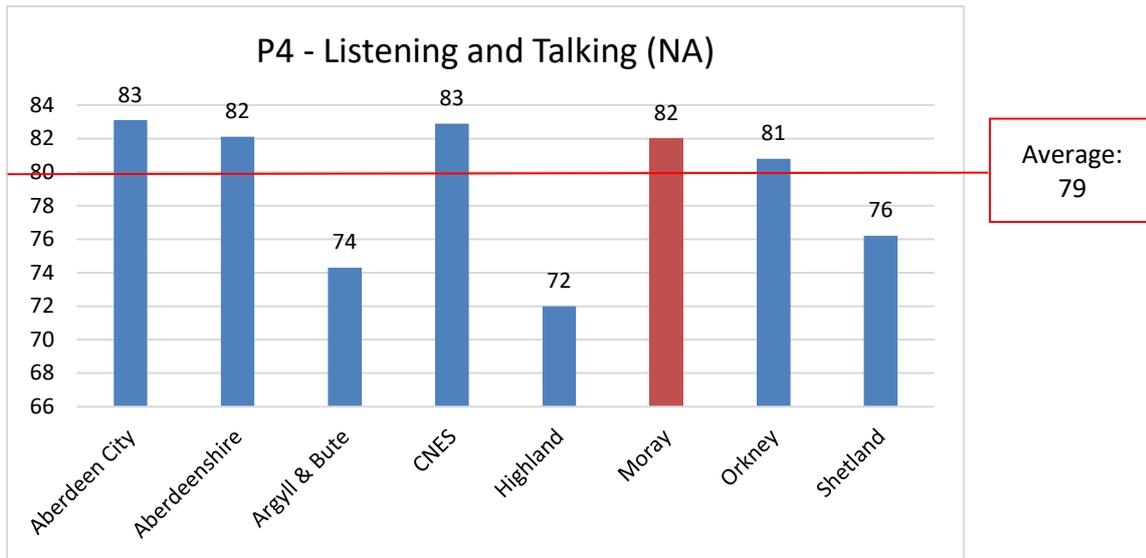
- Data trend over time shows slight increase in ACEL data in 2020/21 (+1%) compared with pre-pandemic data in 2018/19
- 2020/2021 achievement at 61% is highest ACEL level achievement over time for P4 Literacy overall

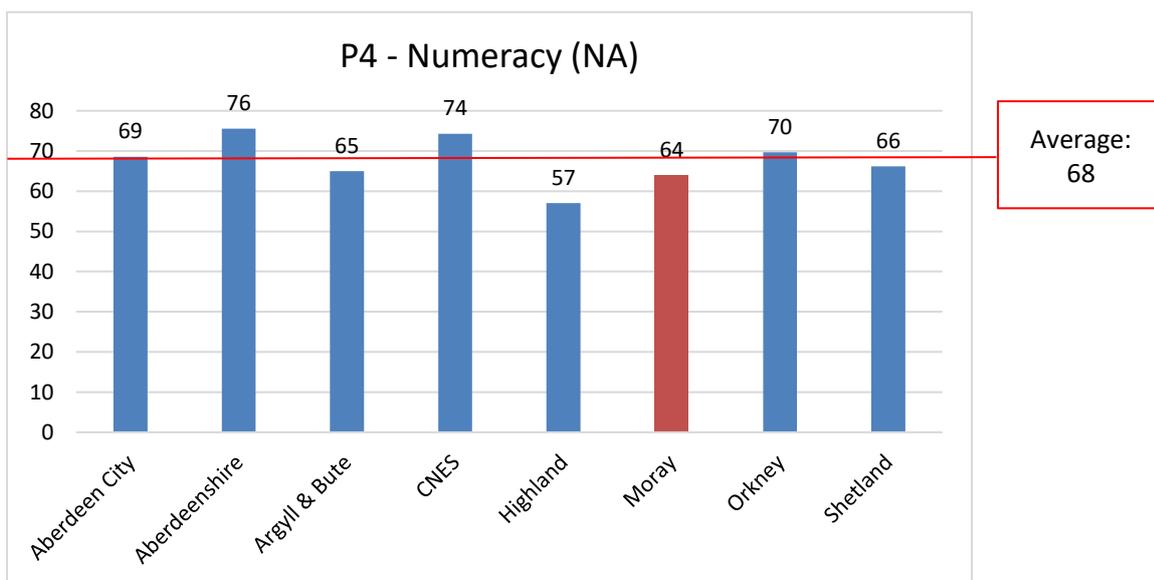
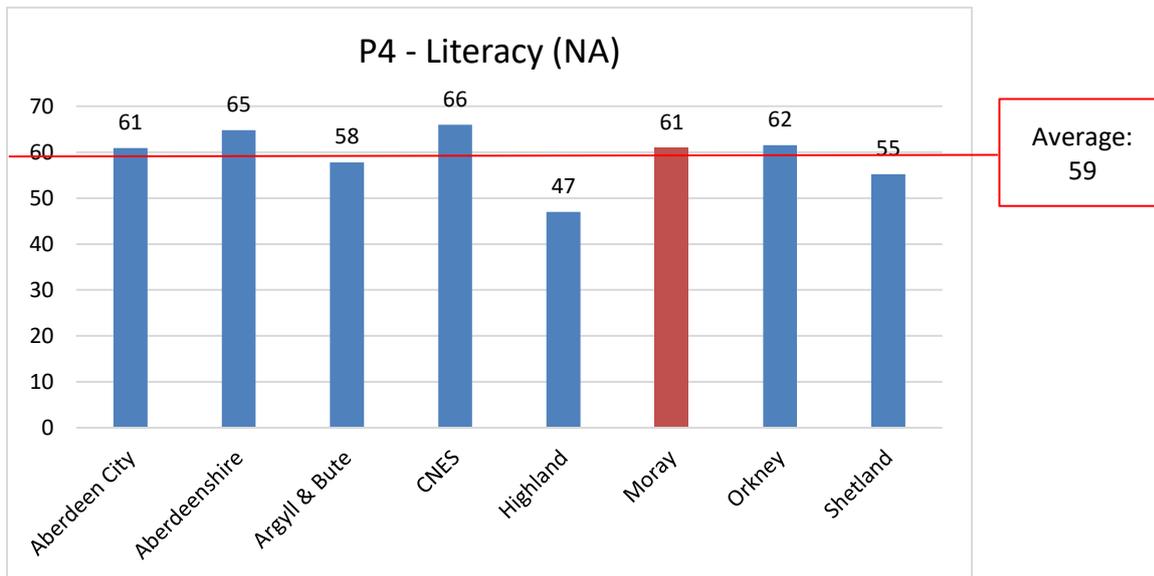


P4 Numeracy

- Data trend over time shows slight reduction in ACEL data in 2020/21 (-1%) compared with pre-pandemic data in 2018/19
- 2020/21 data remains higher than 2017/18 and 2016/17

3.29 The following extracted data set as published by the Scottish Government is presented in graph form below for Moray alongside 7 other local authorities forming our Regional Improvement Collaborative; The Northern Alliance (NA).





P4 ACEL data across all Literacy measures (Listening and Talking, Reading, Writing) including Literacy overall, exceeds Northern Alliance mean averages.

Numeracy is below the mean average for Northern Alliance by 4%.

3.30 Primary 7 – Second level ACEL

The percentages noted below present the P7 ACEL data for the past 5 years for Moray in comparison with the National averages. Please note that there was no Scottish Government data collected in 2019/2020 per section 3.10.

Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
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

Stretch Aims					66	70
2018	Moray	75	71	61	59	61
	National	84	79	73	70	75
2017	Moray	74	68	59		58
	National	81	76	69		70

- 3.31 Moray figures highlighted in amber above indicate where performance is marginally below National average; red highlight indicates where performance is further below National average. P7 data for 2021 shows that Listening and Talking is marginally below National average. Reading, Writing, Literacy (overall) and Numeracy are below National averages.

In comparison with pre-pandemic ACEL attainment data for Moray for 2019:

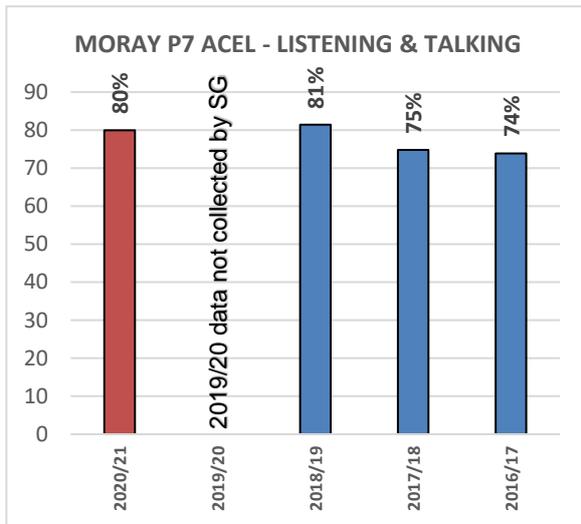
Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2019	Moray	81	76	67	64	66
2021	Moray	80	71	64	62	62
% Change	Moray	-1	-5	-3	-2	-4

- 3.32 Listening and Talking is marginally below (1%) 2019 ACEL data as with Writing (3%) and Literacy overall (2%) also marginally below. Further regression in trend is noted for Reading (5%) and Numeracy (4%). Literacy and Numeracy overall remain below NIF Stretch Aims set in 2018 (see yellow highlight in section 3.26).
- 3.33 In consideration of change in Moray figures, review of changes in National averages from pre-pandemic (2019) to during pandemic (2021) provides further contextual data:

Year:		LT	R	W	LIT.	NUM.
2019	National	86	80	74	71	76
2021	National	82	76	69	66	72
% Change	National	-4	-4	-5	-5	-4

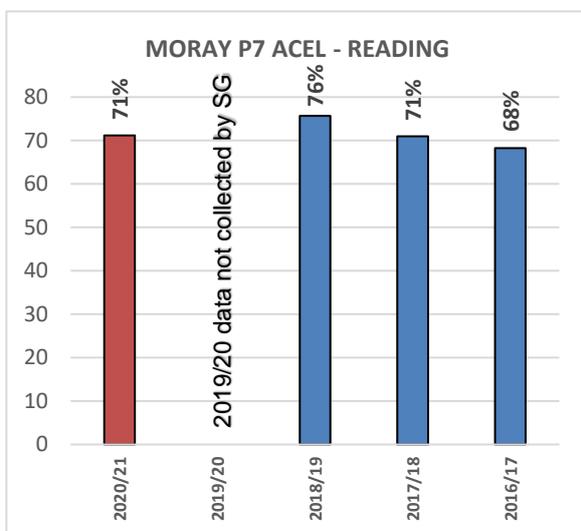
On review of Moray attainment data in section 3.26 and 3.27 above compared with National average change over time, variances are comparable with National average trend change over time (2019-2021) for all elements of Literacy (Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking), Literacy overall and Numeracy. While Numeracy ACEL for 2020/21 in Moray has remained comparable to session 2018/19, 10% variance between Moray ACEL and National average is the same as the variance noted in 2018/19 (10%) and 2017/2018 (14%) as illustrated in 3.26 above.

3.34 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.



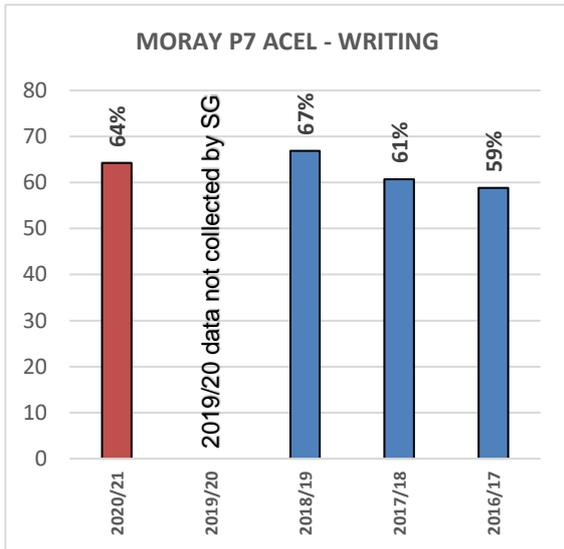
P7 Listening and Talking

- Data trend over time highlights similar performance compared with pre-pandemic data
- 2020/2021 achievement at 80% is slightly below highest ACEL level achievement over time for P7 Listening and Talking in 2018/2019 (81%)



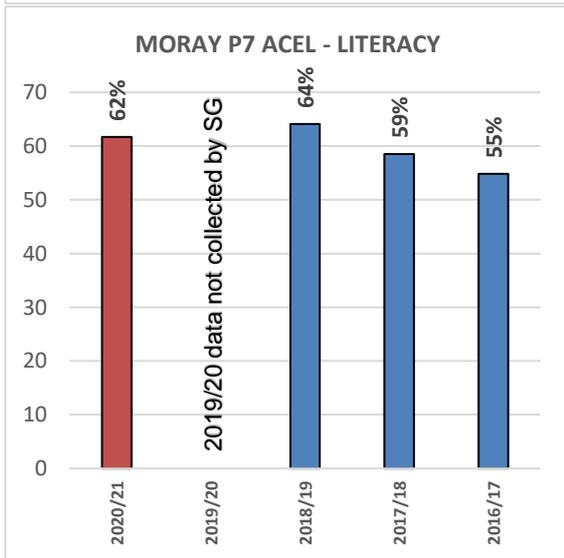
P7 Reading

- Data trend over time shows reduction (5%) in ACEL level achievement compared with session 2018/2019, returning to attainment level witnessed in 2017/2018 (71%).
- 2020/2021 achievement at 71% is second highest ACEL level achievement over time for P7 Reading



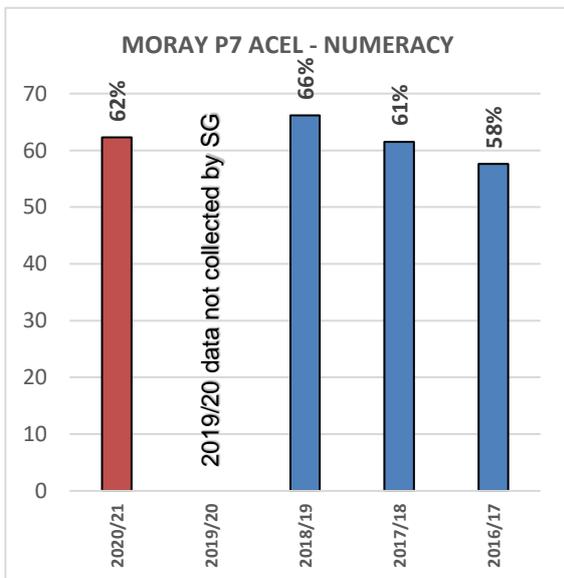
P7 Writing

- Data trend over time shows slight reduction (3%) in ACEL level achievement compared with session 2018/2019, remaining higher than ACEL data in 2017/2018 (61%) and 2016/17 (59%)
- 2020/2021 achievement at 71% is second highest ACEL level achievement over time for P7 Writing



P7 Literacy

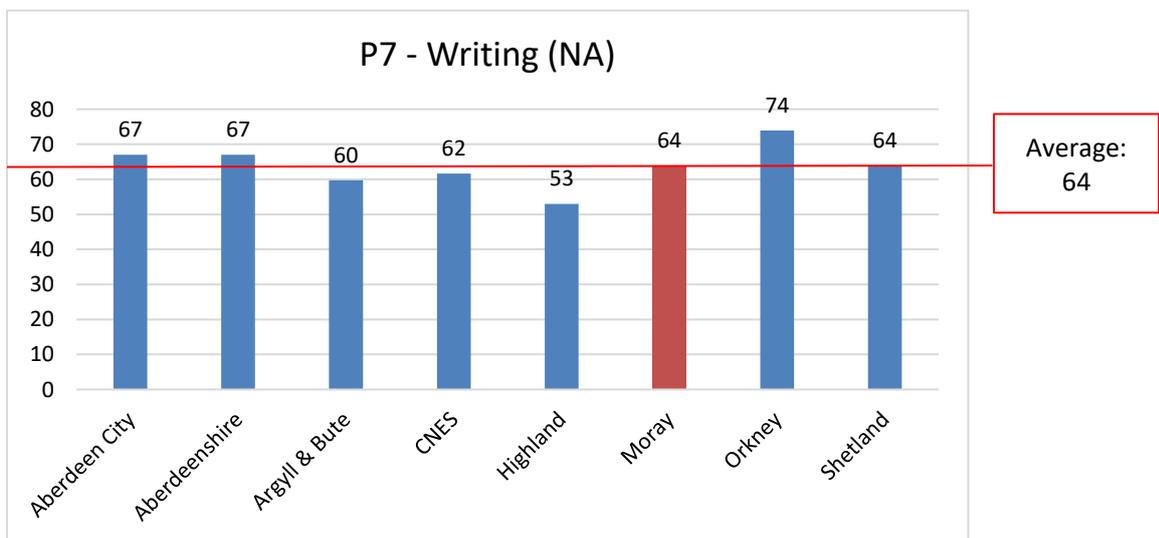
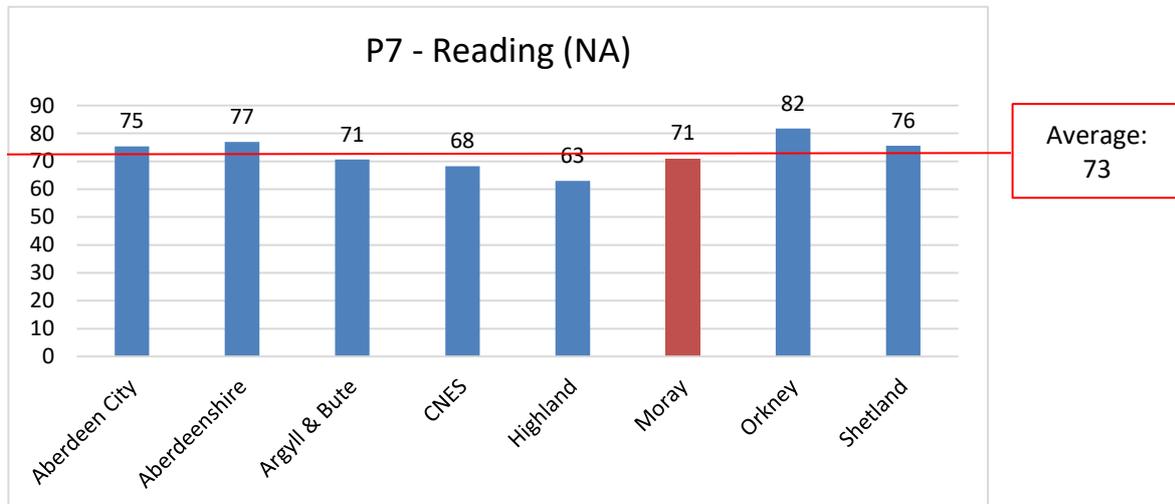
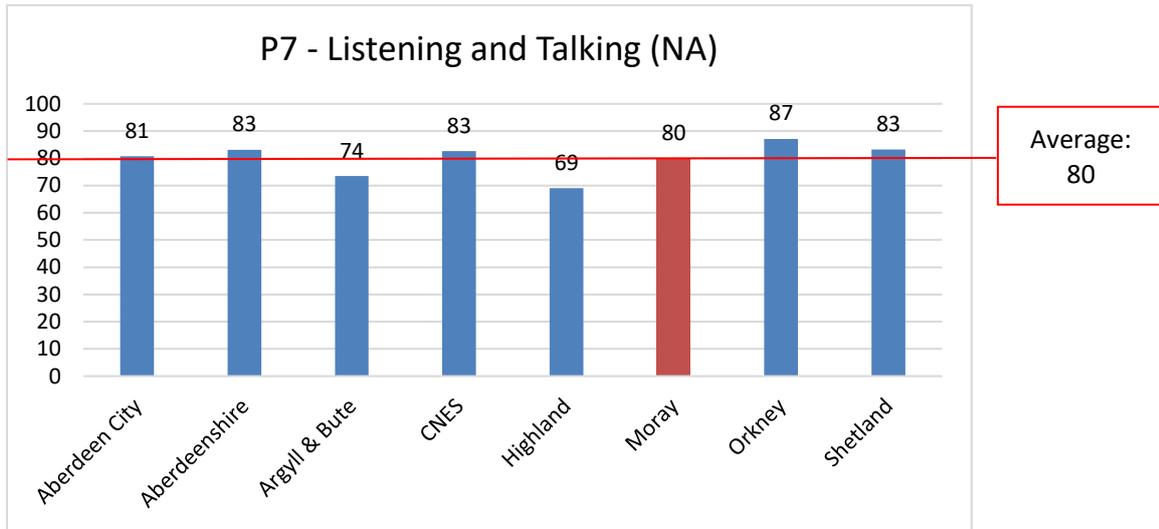
- Data trend over time shows slight decrease in ACEL data in 2020/21 (2%) compared with pre-pandemic data in 2018/19 (64%)
- 2020/2021 achievement at 62% is second highest ACEL level achievement over time for P7 Literacy overall

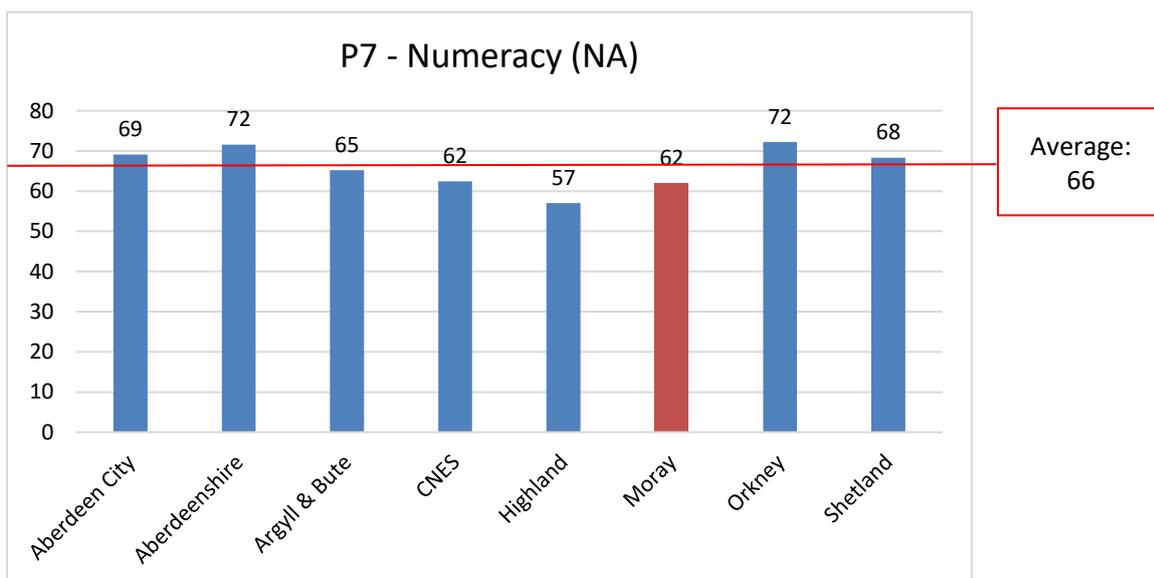
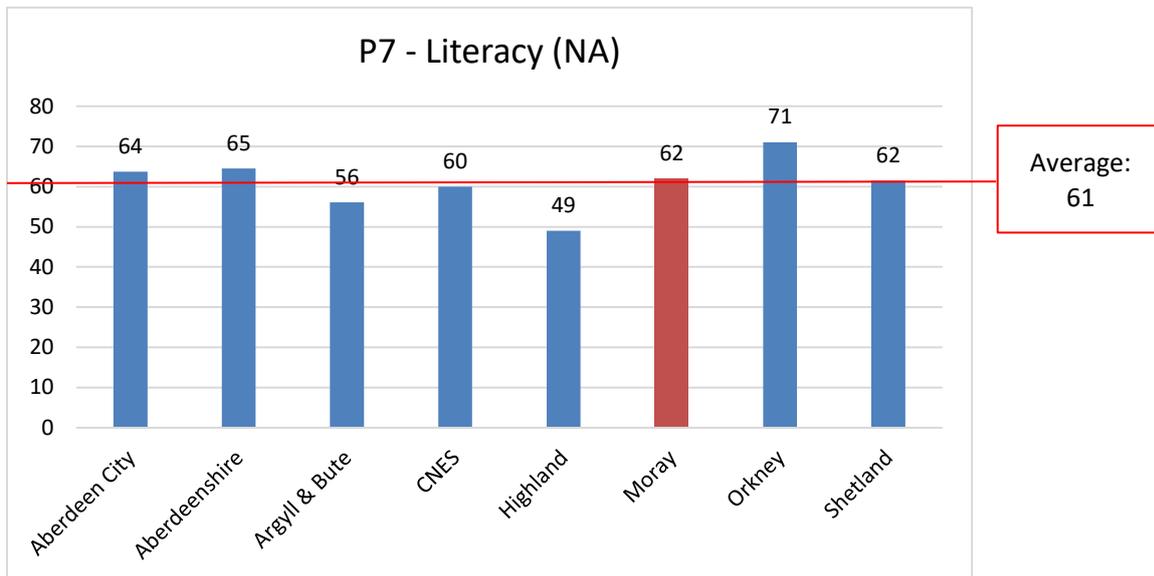


P7 Numeracy

- Data trend over time shows reduction in ACEL data in 2020/21 (4%) compared with pre-pandemic data in 2018/19.
- 2020/21 data remains higher than 2017/18 and 2016/17 ACEL data and second highest ACEL over time for P7 Numeracy

3.35 The following extracted data set as published by the Scottish Government is presented in graph form below for Moray alongside 7 other local authorities forming our Regional Improvement Collaborative; The Northern Alliance (NA).





3.36 P4 ACEL data for Literacy measures (Listening and Talking, Reading) equals the Northern Alliance mean average (80% and 64% respectively). Reading (71%) is slightly below the Northern Alliance average (73%) with Literacy overall (62%) slightly above Northern Alliance mean average (61%).

3.37 Numeracy is marginally below the mean average for the Northern Alliance by 4% (Moray – 62%; Northern Alliance – 66%).

3.38 On review of data sets presented and on analysis, the following areas are noted for specific focus from data and trends reviewed:

- P1 – Writing (trend)
- P4 – Writing (impact on Literacy overall)
- P4 – Numeracy (trend)
- P7 – Reading (trend)
- P7 – Writing (impact on Literacy overall)
- P7 – Numeracy (trend)

3.39 In order to build and maintain improvement while further cognisant of ongoing disruption to our Education system as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, we will work towards the following in our Moray Primary Schools:

- Continued focus on maximising learner outcomes in our schools with focus on Health and Wellbeing, Literacy and Numeracy as core foundations of our Curriculum and focus for key learning activities
- Continued emphasis on provision of high quality learning experiences in line with Our Moray Standard for Learning and Teaching and local school context interpretation and focus areas
- Continued focus 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 activity in our schools, within and across stages to ensure shared understanding of National standards for learner achievement of a level
- Where mitigations allow, moderation activity between schools (including use of virtual platforms) to ensure continued shared understanding across Moray of ACEL and application of national benchmarks
- Development of core progressions and learning pathways in specific curriculum areas, led by newly appointed QIO (Curriculum) and supported by local roll-out and development in line with OECD review and forthcoming next steps based on recommendations presented
- Continued engagement with the Education Scotland Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officer (QAMSO) training offered to all Moray practitioners, providing knowledge of common understanding of standards and expectations for Associated Schools Group working and planning together
- Continued school engagement with key learning progressions including the Northern Alliance Numeracy progression, with further promotion to Secondary School practitioners in support of learner curriculum transitions
- Review of curriculum content and coverage – ELC to Primary – including quality of play based approaches in line with Moray’s Play Strategy to ensure learner attainment is maximised by point of P1 ACEL data collection based on TPJ
- Engagement with Northern Alliance and Education Scotland offers of support, in line with the NIF Improvement Plan 2022 priorities
- Professional Learning supported by the Quality Improvement Officers (Curriculum; Learning and Teaching) to ensure curriculum content and pedagogical approaches are suited to maximising learning achievements and meeting learning needs
- Support from Education Scotland Attainment Advisor for Numeracy interventions in order to close poverty related and wider attainment gaps

3.40 Where it is noted that the Scottish Government did not collect National ACEL data in session 2019/20 common with Primary ACEL data as with session 2020/21, we continue to gather and interrogate our internal data sets to inform improvement planning at school and local authority level. In order to build and maintain improvement in our secondary schools, we will:

- Review impact of bespoke Literacy and Numeracy periods across the BGE in addition to English and Maths provision to further strengthen attainment.

This is particularly relevant to P7 Literacy and Numeracy data highlighted, in order to close identified attainment gaps (where P7 in session 2020/21 are now in S1 in session 2021/22)

- Further development of Curriculum and Subject Group meetings with specific focus on Broad General Education and Senior Phase attainment and interventions for raising attainment
- Offer opportunities for cross-sector (Primary-Secondary) moderation of learning, teaching and assessment
- Continued moderation within and across secondary schools supported by QAMSOs where appropriate to support clarity in standards and expectations for ACEL
- Continued emphasis on tracking and monitoring learner progress and achievement throughout the year with progress meetings built in to Quality Assurance calendars in our schools to support Teacher Professional Judgements on learner level achievement
- Further extend the use of attainment datasets across all schools and departments, supported by professional learning opportunities to upskill all staff in this area
- Review of the local authority Raising Attainment Strategy and targets in light of the Coronavirus pandemic as further intelligence and data emerges, supporting scrutiny activities and targeted support provision
- Review of the impact of additional staffing in schools through additional Covid monies, Pupil Equity Funding and other funding streams including Principal Teachers (Raising Attainment)/Principal Teachers (Alternative Curriculum)
- Working with Head Teachers (Primary and Secondary), continue to drive forwards improvements in performance as a Moray Education System, looking inwards and outwards for improvement strategies
- Continue to build capacity in Senior and Middle leaders, strengthening data literacy to drive forward school and system level improvement

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 (3) provide a sustainable education service aiming for excellence and (4) day to day service delivery in line with council values of ambitious, improving and responsive. 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.

(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 8 of Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000).

(c) Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

(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 failure 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 on National Improvement Framework areas.

The impact of Coronavirus on learner attendance at school, potential disruption due to staff absences and any return to remote learning for individual or groups of pupils remain unknown at this time and as such, may continue to directly impact future data collection and evidence gathering for ACEL TPJ. Depending on disruption experienced across other local authorities across Scotland, this may present inequity in data profiles presented due to local circumstances experienced.

(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 (including Curriculum and Subject Groups; QA meetings) 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, Paul Connor, Principal Accountant, the Equal Opportunities Officer, the Human Resources Manager and Tracey Sutherland, 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 It is recommended that Committee scrutinises and notes the contents of this report which details Teacher Professional Judgements (TPJ) on Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) in P1, P4 and P7 and;**

5.2 That Committee further note progress of Moray schools and practitioners to close poverty related and wider attainment gaps identified while operating with notable challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic; key focus areas have been identified for targeted intervention.

Author of Report: Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager
Ref: SPMAN-1315769894-213



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON 26 JANUARY 2022**

**SUBJECT: MORAY EDUCATION EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE
EXPANSION PROJECT UPDATE**

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

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Committee of the projected financial pressures on the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) expansion budget taking account of rising demand and changing Scottish Government grant settlement.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Council in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Committee considers and notes:

- i) the projected financial pressures within the ELC sector and the potential implications for Moray to maintain the legislative requirement of 1140 hours;**
- ii) that detailed work including investigation led by Internal Audit will be undertaken to provide greater clarity on the final financial position for 2022/23 and work will progress through Cosla in relation to the grant allocation and the phasing of the new approach to funding ELC;**
- iii) the initial options identified to accommodate the budget pressures in Moray and that work will continue to develop options to be reported back to Committee for consideration against the various scenarios that may emerge;**
- iv) that the situation outlined in this report may have significant policy and service implications for the Early Learning and Childcare service in 2022/23 and future years and this will require further consideration by Committee once a final position on the**

grant settlement is known and can be factored into the local position; and

- v) that in light of the above, and the lead in time required to clarify the financial position and develop and implement options to address any possible funding gap should that be required by the Council, that the budget pressures will be reported to and considered by the Council on 22 February as part of the budget setting process.

3. **BACKGROUND**

Scottish Government Funding and Commitment

- 3.1 To date the Scottish Government have provided a capital and a revenue element to support the provision of the expansion of ELC to 1140 hours, as per the statutory requirement. This was based on a submission by Council to plan for the expansion from 600 hours to 1140 hours to allow parents to return to work, particularly mothers with an increased entitlement to free childcare for 3 to 4 year olds and those identified as vulnerable 2 year olds.
- 3.2 A national multi-year funding package was agreed by COSLA Leaders and Scottish Ministers and the distribution methodology confirmed by COSLA Leaders on 27 April 2018.
- 3.3 On 1 May 2018 confirmation was received from Scottish Government that the funding, as set out in Moray Council's financial template, would be received in full. The funding was allocated as a specific grant for investment in ELC and authorities have been required to report to the Scottish Government on how this funding has been applied. The full package of funding for Moray was as follows:

A. Revenue Funding

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 and recurring
£1,109,181	£5,847,000	£9,675,000	£10,792,000

It should be noted that this funding was in addition to the funding already allocated to Early Years that was approved by members as part of the Council's budget.

B. Capital Funding

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	TOTAL
£2,400,000	£2,800,000	£1,900,000	£7,740,000

Capital is reported separately.

- 3.4 The revenue funding package for Moray was initially expected to become the ongoing recurring funding. The original funding award was based on a formula that takes into account the number of eligible children and was also informed by a national finance planning template completed by all Councils in 2018. It

was thus tailored to local plans for roll out of increased hours. The Moray ELC project plan involved a phased approach to the roll out of increased hours. Moray relies heavily on partner nurseries to provide the ELC service. The local plan also involved removing the leadership and management of school nursery provision from Head Teachers to a new structure with Nursery managers. This facilitated the ability to offer year-round childcare in Moray Council nurseries allowing us to offer 1140 hours across Moray.

- 3.5 Recently the Scottish Government has confirmed a new funding formula for 2022/23 based on National Records of Scotland (NRS) 2018 population estimates, in line with the general distribution of funding i.e. based on statistical drivers of spend rather than local circumstances. The total amount of grant available across Scotland reflects the current national up-take of ELC, and was also top-sliced to fund pilot projects for ELC for children who have deferred entry into primary school.
- 3.6 The revised funding is based on the national up-take of ELC which has led to a reduction in the grant allocation across Scotland since some local authorities in Scotland have experienced a downward pressure on the up-take of 1140 hours of childcare provision and are reporting an underspend.
- 3.7 Initial work undertaken during the early years of the project indicated that Moray would buck the national trend with parents opting for existing hours, particularly in some areas where the use of grandparents or extended family members for childcare was seen as more advantageous. The offer of additional hours allows families to use their allocation flexibly for example they may use a childminder for some of the hours and a nursery place for others. They can use the hours to support parental shift patterns which would mean that the child can be in a setting for up to 10 hours a day. Families using the hours in this way would then be entitled to a lunch and a light tea as part of the offer. Due to the flexibility for families, it is difficult to accurately predict what demand will be as individual families make choices to suit their circumstances.
- 3.8 In contrast to the national position, Moray is currently experiencing an increase in the up-take of early years provision from August 2021 which is in line with our original Delivery Plan (*para 4.4 of the confidential report to full council on 27th September 2017 refers*). This, puts pressure on the number of hours available and the costs associated with delivering 1140 hours for example additional meal provision and additional staffing.
- 3.9 Early indications were that the new funding formula for revenue budget would be substantially less than previous years for Moray moving forwards which would not allow the current service to be replicated, regardless of any increase in demand. This has transpired to be the case and as part of the first of a 3 year phasing of the new funding approach, current information is that the settlement from Scottish Government to Moray for ELC will reduce by £1.4m in 2022/23. This compounds with the issues set out in this paper that are driven by the positive demand for ELC services in Moray to create a situation that will require to be reviewed by the Council moving forward.

- 3.10 However, the reduction in grant settlement is greater than had been anticipated in Moray, especially as the first stage of a reduction over 3 years and there are concerns and questions from a number of Councils in Scotland. Therefore, the matter has been raised with Cosla and Council Leaders who have made an approach to the Scottish Government expressing concerns and seeking a review of this element of the grant allocation prior to it being finalised in late February 2022.
- 3.11 As part of the expansion, attached to the SG grant funding there was an expectation that a sustainable hourly rate would be consulted on in each Local Authority and set so that partners could deliver the service and remain financially viable. Moray relies on 39 partner nurseries to assist in delivering the ELC service. The Council does not have premises or staff to deliver the full service without partner support. The high proportion of partner providers and absence of alternative, mean that ensuring that a sustainable hourly rate is paid to partners is a priority in ensuring the future sustainability of ELC services in Moray.
- 3.12 Therefore, the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee agreed a revised hourly rate on 31 March 2021 (para 14 of minute refers) which has been applied since August 2021. While this has resulted in a higher rate being paid to partners in Moray than in other local authority areas, there is now a requirement as part of the SG grant funding that all Councils review and pay a sustainable hourly rate to partner providers and work is being undertaken nationally to assist in the process of identifying this rate. Therefore, many Councils will not yet be managing the financial and budget impact of a sustainable hourly rate, which includes partner commitment to and provision for payment of the living wage.

Service Development and Expansion

- 3.13 The expansion of ELC hours from 600 to 1140 hours is an ambitious Scottish Government policy and has been phased in during the COVID pandemic. This has undoubtedly put pressure on the Education Service and other support services to roll out a legislative requirement whilst dealing with a pandemic, putting in place mitigations and interventions as well as creating an alternative service during lockdown periods e.g. Childcare for Key Workers.
- 3.14 The ELC service in Moray has grown both in terms of staffing, across the central ELC team and in settings, and in the number of children accessing their funded hours.
- 3.15 The success of the growth of the service and the support being offered is reflected in the ELC Continuous Improvement report highlighted to Committee on 6 October 2021 (*para 3.10 of the report refers*).
- 3.16 The table below provides a comparison of our Scottish Government returns for Moray and reflects the growth. Although the number of children indicates a drop in numbers, when this is compared to the breakdown of hours used and lunches provided, there is a very different picture. This provides the evidence that more families are taking up the increased hours, however, this puts pressure on settings, Council and partner to offer hours. A growing service

will incur additional revenue costs particularly related to staffing to cover the hours on offer.

	June 2019	June 2020	June 2021	2022
Local authority – number of children	718	477	565	621 (projected)
PVI/3 rd sector – number of children	1274	1252	902	965 (as at November 2021, does not factor January and April 2022 intake)
Overall number of hours of care provided	127,937	149,610	160,036	164,741 (as at November 2021)

- 3.17 Overall it is indicated that Moray is projecting a further increase in uptake of 1140 hours places in June 2022 compared to August 2021. This should be seen as a success story as the original plan indicated a lower uptake however parents are using full entitlement which is different to the original consultation response. **Appendix 1** indicates current capacity within local authority services again highlighting the uptake of hours. Enrolment for ELC places from August 2022 takes place in January 2022.
- 3.18 Further testament to the uptake of 1140 hours is attached in **Appendix 2** with a case study from one of the PVI, partner nurseries (Fochabers Nursery and Out of School club). This provides vital evidence of the benefits to the service of the increase in sustainable rate. This allows them to cover additional staffing costs, training costs and also meet the requirement to pay the Real Living Wage.
- 3.19 In reviewing the figures in the table, it is of note that the uptake of the number of hours for each place has increased and so while the number of places has reduced over the implementation phase, the number of hours of childcare has increased significantly.

Additional revenue costs associated with an increase in the uptake of hours is highlighted in the latest catering figures and this point is highlighted further in the financial analysis below (para 3.25 refers).

Year	Lunches	Light teas
2019-2020	47714	1384
2020-2021	61835	2822
2021-2022 (to date)	90805	5070

- 3.20 In considering future funding arrangements, there is a concern that the focus for the Scottish Government has been predominately on those Councils that have underspent. However there also needs to be recognition that Councils such as Moray that have seen positive and expanding demand for 1140 hours within their ELC services are struggling to ensure that their ELC provision is

sustainable within the available SG funding for the expansion. Moray is one of a small number of Councils who are projecting an overspend for 2022/23 and the recent reduction in grant allocation adds to this pressure.

- 3.21 For Moray, the cost pressures reflect the fact that provision of ELC is very much a demand led service. This means an increase in up-take as indicated above will also be reflected in an increase in costs and work is underway to refine current projections taking account of this and the issues set out below.

Revenue Budget Position and Projected Budget Pressure

- 3.22 It should be recognised that circumstances have moved on since the original grant application. For awareness the following points arise from the original planning template:

- Future pay awards were not factored in as this was not allowed within the format. In total this is an additional cost of £284k
- The payment of a sustainable hourly rate is beyond the original hourly rate The hourly rate paid by the Council was very low as it was being subsidised by higher rates paid by parents for additional hours and as the roll out of increased hours took place the ability of partner providers to generate additional income in this way diminished
- The financial planning template did not allow for Additional Support Needs (ASN) staffing costs to be taken into account.
- Wraparound childcare was not developed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and concerns around the cost/benefit margins

- 3.23 While some of the additional cost pressures are linked to the points above (notably the ASN pressures), the main issue in Moray has been the level of demand that continues to be experienced. An analysis of components of the budget and movements within them are analysed the financial impact of this is provided in **Appendix 3** and is summarised below

- 3.24 For the first 3 years of the expansion of ELC, revenue expenditure was consistently below the level of grant. This enabled additional capital costs amounting to £2 million to be funded from revenue. In addition to this underspends totalling £0.53m are held in ear-marked reserves – this was following absorption of additional Covid costs totalling £0.8m. This historic underspend has turned into a projected overspend.

- 3.25 Although there has been growth in service provision, there are components of the budget which have grown at a greater rate than the growth in service delivered and these are being investigated further to understand the causes and trends for the future as the projections for 2022/23 are based on the projections for 2021/22 so key to understanding the projections for the service must be the movement from 2020/21 to 2021/22.

The most significant elements with additional costs from Appendix 3 impacting on the budget forecasts are summarised below.

		2021/22 Impact	Full Year Impact	Clarification for Projections
Council Settings	Staffing and other costs have increased on a formula basis to accommodate expansion to 1140 hours and uptake of places. Cost increase is higher than hours increase which may relate to staff time required to cover child hours being more than 100% and/or to pay awards	365,000	700,000	Review formula and process for staffing Investigate to understand increase in staff costs compared to increase in hours provided
Partnership Settings	Uplift to sustainable hourly rate estimates been revised in light of January 2021 intake	200,000	380,000	Consider and apply uptake projection for 22/23
ASN hours	No allowance for the cost of ASN at early learning settings in the grant funding, however a significant requirement for ASN support has emerged	330,000	700,000	Factor in increasing ASN and covid impact into projections
ELC Meals (including staffing)	Uptake of meals and costs have increased by greater % than the increase in hours Council Catering service also supplies meals for partner providers	320,000	720,000	Review impact of using full hours available on demand for/provision of meals Consider whether growth factor required for 22/23 Check cost/process for charging for supply to partners

- 3.26 As can be seen from the above, the pressure on the ELC budget has arisen from the operational pressures of running the service to meet the legislative requirements. This pressure has only come to light in recent months and was highlighted to Committee on 24 November in the Education Revenue paper (*para 5.3 of the report refers*), hence the reason for this paper.
- 3.27 The balance of the impact of all of the issues is shown in Appendix 3 with a full year effect of £1.9m for 2022/23, although the further work noted above requires to be undertaken to refine the projections and future growth also needs to be factored in. Therefore, there are a number of factors that could lead to an increase in the £1.9m figure, for example ASN requirements, increase uptake of places and associated costs for meals, staff and partner rates.
- 3.28 In addition to this the reduction in grant funding needs to be taken into account, which brings the total budget pressure to £3.3m for 2022/23, with the potential to escalate both for 2022/23 and in future years if further grant reductions are to follow as part of the 3 year phased change to funding previously referred to.
- 3.29 The delay in developing wrap around care, which has been due to the pressures of the Covid pandemic and questions around the viability of the income stream have meant that the potential for income to offset costs has not been realised. While this would merit further consideration in due course, there is also a statement of intent on the programme for government to provide wrap around care which could have an impact. Therefore, the potential for income may be more limited than previously anticipated.
- 3.30 The budget gap that has emerged is of significant concern and as noted above, it is vital to understand the reasons for the situation having arisen at this stage of the project in order that lessons can be learned. This will be used to inform the further work that is planned to ensure the reliability of future forecasting and financial stability for the service moving forward.
- 3.31 It is acknowledged that this report provides some information on the financial pressures that have emerged since November but that it does not provide adequate detail to fully explain the serious financial position that is being reported. There are many questions that remain unanswered and that require further explanation to ensure that the reasons for this situation are established and that improvements are made for the future. Therefore, Internal Audit has been asked to lead an investigation to ascertain the reasons for delays in forecasting the overspend and the extent of the variance between the current budget and that required to fully implement based on demand now and in future. The outcomes will be used to ensure that the methodologies and processes in place are reviewed and robust moving forward. Internal Audit will be supported by officers in ELC and Accountancy who have specialist knowledge in these areas which will be necessary to ensure insight and understanding into the particular factors to be taken into account in service and financial planning in relation to ELC.

- 3.32 It is recognised that more detailed consideration will be required to provide assurances to the committee on the processes and forecasting to be applied in future and a further report will be provided to committee as soon as possible on the outcome of the above investigation and the learning that needs to be applied. This and the final position on the SG funding position will be necessary to enable the council to take decisions on how to manage the budget pressures moving forward.

Possible options to ease budget pressures

- 3.31 As noted already in the report, there are a number of issues that require clarification or further work in order to ensure the projected financial position for 2022/23 is as accurate as possible. Critically the national grant position needs to be finalised and costs associated with projected increase in service demand needs to be refined.
- 3.32 Pending the outcome of the above, the service is taking urgent action to identify measures to contain the escalation of costs in the context of current service delivery, in particular in relation to staff costs, provision of meals and partner costs. There may be service implications from this and these will be reported in the next report to Committee.
- 3.33 Preliminary options for possible future cost reductions have been collated based on the premise that the current and future shortfall of funding cannot be met from Council reserves or core budget. These have varying issues and risks associated with them and further work will be undertaken to develop options as the longer term budget is clarified with information being brought back to Committee for consideration when this is available.
- 3.34 However, it should be noted that none of these options in isolation is likely to meet the whole of the projected shortfall in budget and a combination may be necessary. A number of the options represent significant changes to the service. Options that reduce places have not been included at this stage as that could bring into question the Council's position on and ability to deliver the early years expansion policy, which is a commitment associated with the ELC funding. However, if the projected ELC financial position does not improve, the scale and nature of the service that can be provided within budget may be something the council requires to consider in light of the very challenging overall financial position facing the council in future years.
- 3.35 Some of the options below could be perceived as a deterioration from the current service provision. There would also be a considerable lead in time required which would mean that the council would have no option but to meet the additional costs at least for a temporary period until reduced costs can be implemented. Therefore, this will require to be raised as part of the report on the Council's budget setting on 22 February 2022.

3.36 For information at this stage, the current options are summarised in the table below along with potential impact in meeting statutory duty to offer 1140 hours of ELC.

Option	Strengths	Weaknesses	1140 hour impact
1. Request additional financial assistance from Scottish Government	Shortfall of funding is systemic and would not be adequately addressed through a savings exercise. Political lobbying solution may be able to influence the funding formula deployed for Moray.	Moray is a small authority and our political influence may be limited compared to larger local authorities that do not have an overspend.	If the future formula provided a sustainable level of funding, then there would be sufficient finance to meet the statutory duty of offering 1140 hours of early learning and childcare. However, the recent SG budget shows a reduction in the ELC allocation.
2. Freeze/reduce the sustainable hourly rate to partners	From solely a financial perspective this option could partially or fully meet the funding shortfall.	High risk for a number of reasons; Potential legal challenge from partners who are in a 3 year contract and could view this as a breach of contract. Reputational risk for the authority. Partners unable to pay Real Living Wage which will impact on National Standard and also potentially business sustainability. Partner settings pressed to close due to unstable financial status of their setting. The cost of partner providers is less than the cost of Council settings so bringing the service in-house is not an option to mitigate this risk.	There is a high risk that this option would mean that the volume of supply of early learning and childcare in Moray would reduce and that meeting the statutory 1140 hour requirement was no longer viable.

Option	Strengths	Weaknesses	1140 hour impact
3. Bring all ELC provision in house	This option would mean that there would be no need for a contract to be in place with local private and third sector childcare providers. There would therefore be no hourly rate to be paid by the Council.	Since early learning childcare is based on a demand led approach (there is a legislative requirement for local authorities to provide early learning and childcare), costs of provision will still nevertheless be unavoidable. There is no evidence that Council services would be lower cost – this would have to be assessed before pursuing this further Council may have difficulties in accessing the number of properties required as well as a number of further complexities that may have costs	The continuity of 1140 hours of service delivery will be difficult to maintain if bringing delivery in-house was assessed as being financially beneficial.
4. Establish a Council private income stream through offering wrap around hours for year round services.	The recent investment in the Council ELC estate would facilitate this approach and, based on high levels of parent satisfaction, this could be a popular choice for many parents. Proposed costings can be found in Appendix 4.	Income margins may be smaller than originally indicated. Possible resistance to change from private providers as seeing this as unfair competition. The Scottish Government programme of government also includes a commitment to wrap around childcare and while details are not yet available, this could impact on any potential for income generation	This option would not have any impact on the delivery of 1140 hours of early learning and childcare.
5. Close some (Council run) Nursery settings	This option could offer a saving. The option could also be applied to partner settings	Since the provision of early learning and childcare is a demand level service, additional pressure for places would be exerted at other settings within different ASG areas. Places may have to be offered in alternative settings which could increase travel	In the context of anticipated increased future demand and current high levels of uptake, the adoption of this option would likely mean that the Council is unable to meet its statutory obligation of offering 1140 hours of early learning and childcare.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

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

This report relates the priority 'Provide a sustainable education service aiming for excellence' from the Corporate Plan and to 'Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray' from the LOIP.

(b) Policy and Legal

The Care Inspectorate inspects all registered services regulated under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, which includes nursery classes and playgroups.

The authority has a duty to provide a quality early learning and childcare place for every 3 and 4 year old whose parents wish it and for eligible 2 year olds.

(c) Financial implications

Financial implications for 2021/22 are for an underlying overspend, however, mitigations can be put in place to accommodate that in 2021/22 making use of the ELC reserves from previous years as it is unlikely that any remedial action can be taken in time to mitigate this projected out-turn.

The implications for future years if no action is taken is for a continued overspend / budget pressure in the context of an already over-committed Council budget and projected need to make savings in the order of £20m over the period 2023/24 to 2024/25.

(d) Risk Implications

If ELC funding is not supported this would mean services are short staffed which, in turn, would mean children and families will not receive their full 1140 hours legislative requirement of ELC.

The pressure on our peripatetic managers given the extensive support required for year round settings could impact negatively on ability to lead improvement.

A more detailed assessment of risks and options will be undertaken to inform decisions on the way forward once the clarifications and refinements referred to in this report are available.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are risk implications for the current staffing structure. Due to budget pressures three local authority ELC services may not be able to offer all January 2022 intake children spaces as minimum ratios cannot be maintained. There are then further staffing implications for the April 2022 intake.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

An Equality Impact Assessment will be required if mitigating actions are implemented.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

There are no climate change or biodiversity implications arising directly from this report.

(i) Consultations

Depute Chief Executive, Head of Education (Chief Education Officer), Head of Education Resources and Communities, Continuous Improvement Officer (West), Continuous Improvement Officer (East) and Principal Teacher Early Years Education Service, Chief Financial Officer, Human Resources Manager, Equal Opportunities Manager and Tracey Sutherland, 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 The national funding model associated with the grant allocation for the early years expansion has been changed and current indications are that this represents £1.4m funding reduction for Moray in 22/23 as the first of a 3 year phased approach to the reduction.

5.2 The expanding demand for ELC and 1140 hours provision in Moray has resulted in a projected budget pressure for 2022/23 of £1.9m, subject to refinement. Urgent action is being taken to contain costs where possible and an investigation will be undertaken lead by Internal Audit to inform a further report to the committee to identify changes to be applied, the service implications of this and to consider options to address the total shortfall in budget once further clarity referred to in the report is available.

5.3 Pending the above, the Council will require to accommodate the budget pressure estimated at £3.3m for 2022/23 at least on a temporary basis as any measures to reduce cost would have a lead in time of several months.

Author of Report:

Hazel Sly, Early Years' Service Manager

Ref:

SPMAN-1315769894-217 / SPMAN-1315769894-219 /
SPMAN-1315769894-220 / SPMAN-1315769894-221 /
SPMAN-1315769894-222

Appendix 1**Capacity across Local Authority settings**

Setting	Model	Capacity
Kinloss	TT	100%
Hopeman	TT	84%
Burghead	TT	100%
Hythehill	TT	100%
St Gerardines	TT	100%
East End	TT	100%
New Elgin	TT	100%
Milnes	TT	91%
Portgordon	TT	70%
Findochty	TT	70%
St Peters	TT	100%
St Thomas'	TT	100%
Keith	TT	100%
Mortlach	TT	100%
Tomintoul	TT	45%
Roths	TT	111%
Seafiel ¹	YR	80%
Pilmuir	YR	61.60%
Linkwood	YR	75%
Lhanbryde ²	YR	62%
Lady Cathcart	YR	98%
Millbank ³	YR	AM 100% PM 60%
Aberlour	YR	90%
Cullen	YR	48%

1. Seafiel - Note this is a mean average across the week as Seafiel AM sessions are all full apart from a Monday where there are 2 spaces. The PM spaces vary between 12-17 as indicated below.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM	38	40	40	40	40
PM	23	25	27	28	23
Daily capacity	76%	81%	83.75%	85%	79%

2. Lhanbryde - High level of ASN so may need to cap places.

3. Millbank -Although a year service families continue to request clear AM/PM sessions.

Appendix 2**1140 ELC Case Study****Fochabers Nursery & Out of School**

When initial plans began to be made to make the move from 600 hours to 1140 hours, our expectation was that many parents would not take up the full hours. Reality has proved to be very different. It is the exception at Fochabers and at our other two nurseries in the area that parents request reduced hours.

Costs have increased greatly, without the increases to the hourly rate that the Moray Council have made over the phasing in of 1140, we would not have been able to cope financially.

It has not just been a simple pro-rata increase in costs from 600 to 1140 hours, but additional costs incurred. It wasn't just a case of simply increasing staff hours, many more staff have been needed in order for us to cover lunches and remain in ratios. More staff mean more training, uniform, holiday pay and associated costs. We also now require lunch auxiliaries at two of our nurseries, we cannot afford to have qualified, experienced staff tied up serving lunches, clearing up and washing up. Our pension costs have increased greatly, not only due to the government increasing employer contributions but with staff hours increasing more staff then qualified for the pension.

More staff members whether, permanent, supply, full-time or part-time all require training, both compulsory training and towards their annual 12 hours of Post Registration Training and Learning (PRTL). Training courses can incur attendance costs and usually incur staff cover costs.

Increasing from 3 hours 10 minutes a day to 6 hours per day (we are term time only) has brought increased administration and the need for more Senior staff. Increased income and staffing have increased our accounting costs too.

We are required to pay the Real Living Wage but do pay all staff above this. We feel that £9.90 (recently increased from £9.50) is an insulting rate for a qualified, experienced professional to earn. There also has to be a differentiation between staff. We have staff working towards qualifications, qualified staff, senior staff and management. We also have to try to compete with the wages the Council are able to pay which are higher for comparable jobs. When the government states that we should all pay the Real Living wage they and councils should not make their calculations based on that is all that is paid.

It needs to be understood that an appropriate sustainable rate with built in reinvestment potential, and appreciating that you cannot pay every staff member as little as £9.90, is the only way to sustain their vision of high quality provision for 1140 hours. This is even more important in Moray where PVI providers educate 65-70% of ELC children. One size does not fit all council areas.

We are not only seeing an extremely high take up of the full 1140 in our nurseries we are seeing an increase in the numbers of children. Our 2-3 Club is in extremely high demand, and this looks to sustain over the next couple of years this then feeds through to our nurseries.

As with everyone, Covid has had a major impact on our services. Thankfully due to the way the Moray Council handled the pandemic, in relation to ELC, the financial impact was mitigated for our group.

Jessica Myers
Manager

Fochabers Nursery
Mosstodloch Early Learning
Garmouth & Kingston Pre-school
Charity No SC010021

Appendix 3

REVIEW OF ELC FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS**Position to date**

For the first 3 years of the expansion of ELC, revenue expenditure was consistently below the level of grant. This enabled additional capital costs amounting to £2 million to be funded from revenue. In addition to this underspends totalling £0.53m are held in ear-marked reserves – this was following absorption of additional covid costs totalling £0.8m. This historic underspend has turned into a projected overspend. Although there has been growth in service provisions, there are components of the budget which have grown at a greater rate than the growth in service delivered. Components of the budget and movements within them are analysed below. The projections for 2022/23 are based on the projections for 2021/22 so key to understanding the projections for the service must be the movement from 2020/21 to 2021/22.

Note: hours delivered on current information are expected to show a 9% increase. The increase in grant from 2020/21 to 2021/22 is 11.5%. It is therefore reasonable to expect increased cost arising from expansion of the service to be contained within the overall funding envelope.

Partner provider uplift

This was assessed as affordable, with additional costs estimated as £1.2m. On review it seems reasonable that the level of headroom within the budget as described above was sufficient to cover this. As well as the underspends referred to above, there was also anticipated to be a reduction in expenditure specifically relating to the period of expansion: project management, additional HR, other transitional costs.

Current projections are that the increased costs of partner providers are likely to be in the order of £1.4m. The original projection was based on what accountancy staff understood to be the most up-to-date hours delivered but subsequently it was found that the January 2021 intake were not included and so the estimated impact of the uplift was understated. Since then there has been a marked drop of hours delivered by partner providers. It is not known whether there will be a bounce-back effect with the next intake. Current projections of spend are based on current numbers and hourly rates. The contribution of this element to the projected overspend in 2021/22 is £200,000. The full year effect of £380,000 will be seen in 2022/23.

Council settings

An element of growth is expected, as new facilities are opened and hours extended. There was no draft establishment for the Council settings, with staffing following a formula based on the capacity of each site. Staffing costs are forecast to increase by £365,000 compared to 2020/21, with an anticipated full year effect of £750,000.

ELC meals

Uptake of meals from 64,203 in 2020/21 to an anticipated (based on taken to date) 152,244 in 2021/22 which is an increase of 137%. Cost of meals in 2021/22 was £290,000, estimated cost for 2021/22 is £720,000, an increase of £430,000 (includes additional staff) or 148%.

Staff costs will be stepped and not directly pro rata, so estimated costs based on draw down to date are reasonable. However, the significant increase in uptake was not predicted. Estimated costs for 2021/22 were £400,000. The increased uptake contributes £320,000 to the projected overspend. No growth is currently projected for 2022/23.

	June 2019	June 2020	June 2021	2022 projected
Overall number of hours of care provided	127,937	149,610	160,036	174,000
Growth rate		17%	7%	9%
Meals		49,098	64,657	145,000
Growth rate			32%	124%

ASN

There is no allowance for the cost of ASN at early learning settings in the grant funding, however a significant requirement for ASN support has emerged. In 2021/22 this is partly sheltered by use of the ASN budget. Going forward the full anticipated cost impact of £700,000 is allocated to ELC.

Issues going forward

Accountancy report an increase in costs between all year round nurseries and term-time only nurseries which is proportionately higher than the increase in hours. Service to work with accountancy to verify establishments are correct.

Increase in meals uptake is higher than expected but increased costs are not pro rata but at a higher rate. Service to investigate reasons for increased uptake to assist in future planning; accountancy to investigate cost increase with catering service.

ASN requirements – service issue, part of ASN review?

Summary – highlighted items contribute to swing from surplus

	Est Actual	Estimate	Comparison with 2020/21
	2021-22	2022-23	
Council nurseries	5,143,000	5,843,000	Above volume increase – pro rata expected

Central staffing and costs			1,498,000	1,549,000	
Partnership Nurseries			6,880,000	7,260,000	Impact of uplift underestimated
Expansion Costs			270,000	25,000	
Additional ASN hours			330,000	700,000	Not previously allocated to ELC
ELC meals (including addl staffing)			720,000	720,000	Sig higher uptake
Total Costs			14,841,000	16,097,000	
Funding			10,792,000	-10,792,000	
Council			-3,402,000	-3,402,000	
Budget shortfall			647,000	1,903,000	

Appendix 4Non funded hours – Proposed costingsPartner rates

Nursery	Times	Prices	Average hourly rate
Ark childcare	9-1 (lunch included) 1-5 (Tea included) 5-6.30	£19.50 £19.50 £2.95 per half hour	£4.87
VIP	8 – 5.30 8 – 1 1 – 5.30	£48 £27 £23	£5.11
Stramash	8.30 – 1 8.30 – 3.30 8.30 – 5.30 1 – 5.30	£25 £38 £45 £25	£5.55
Magic Roundabout	9 – 1 1 – 5 8 - 9	£18.50 £18.50 £4.50	£4.62
Rainbow Castle	Various	£6.00 per hour after funded hours	£6.00
Childminder's Moray	Various	£4-£5 per hour	£4.17 per hour (although can vary between childminders)

LA proposed rate

Linkwood Nursery (suggestions)	1pm – 3pm 3pm – 5pm 5pm – 6pm	£9.50 £9.50 £5.00	£4.75-£5.00
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**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON 26 JANUARY 2022**

**SUBJECT: INFORMATION REPORT: UNIVERSAL FREE SCHOOL MEALS
(PRIMARY SCHOOLS) - IMPLEMENTATION**

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

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The report provides an update to Committee on the status of the Scottish Government (SG) initiative to provide universal Free School Meals (FSM) for all primary school children within the 2021/2022 timeframe.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Council in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 SG and Local Authority (LA) Leaders reached a joint agreement in May 2021 on the implementation of a phased approach to universal free school meals for primary children. A phased introduction of universal and targeted FSM support was planned for academic year 2021/22:
- Phase One – July 2021 – Commencement of FSM holiday support to all children and young people who are eligible for FSM on the basis of low income
 - Phase Two – August 2021 – Expansion of Universal FSM to P4 children
 - Phase Three – January 2022 – Expansion of Universal FSM to P5 children
 - Phase Four – Aug 2022 – Expansion of Universal FSM to P6-P7 children

- 2.2 A total of £49.75 million has been allocated to local authorities in 2021/22, with the following funding distribution and allocation to Moray, provided through a redetermination of the General Revenue Grant to local authorities, in March 2022:
- £250,000 – Phase One – FSM holiday support
 - £525,000 – Phase Two and Three – expansion of universal FSM to P4 and P5. It has been determined that this will cover loss of revenue and additional food costs for these two Phases.
- 2.3 Further financial work is underway to recommend distribution of funding for Phase 4. Neither SG nor COSLA have indicated when the specifics of this funding analysis will be shared with local authorities.
- 2.4 The joint agreement also established governance arrangements for the delivery of the programme in 2021/22. A Scottish Government and COSLA jointly chaired Governance Board was established to monitor implementation and oversee the financial monitoring of the programme and the development of proposals. A Programme Operations Group (with officials from SG, Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) COSLA, Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES), Directors of Finance, Assist Facilities Management (ASSIST FM) FM and Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE)) was also established and reports to it and undertakes all the required survey work with local authorities on potential capital and infrastructure costs.
- 2.5 An initial review by Catering showed an average of 47-56% take up of school meals pre-COVID within the Associated School Groups in Moray. Specifically within the target P4-P7 FSM target group this ranged from 22% (Lossiemouth ASG) – 41% (Keith ASG) although within these averages a maximum 75% and minimum 18% are recorded at specific schools.
- 2.6 A directed online survey of all primary children families (resulting in a response rate of 35%) indicated that 80% would take up FSM. Following discussion with other local authorities a planning figure of 78% (1852 additional children) was used to ascertain the impact of the implementation of universal FSM to primary school children in Moray.
- 2.7 Catering have assessed that the current capacity/capability (kitchen outputs, staff support and dining spaces) would support the Phase Two extension of FSM provision to P4 from Aug 21 without any significant impact in Moray. This assessment was confirmed with Head Teachers and QIMs. A similar assessment applies to Phase Three of the implementation of FSM to P5 from January 2022. This is not the case for all LAs.
- 2.8 Impact analysis of the provision of FSM for up to 78% of all primary school children resulting from the Phase Four implementation of FSM to P6-7 planned for August 2022 has highlighted a number of significant risks and issues and additional capital and ongoing revenue requirements that have not been considered within SG funding calculations.

2.9 The following additional costs to implement universal FSM have been determined and a detailed breakdown on a school-by-school basis shared with SFT:

- **Capital**

An estimated capital budget of £1.2M is required to support the:

- Reinstatement of two servery kitchens to production - Portgordon and Findochty.
- Expansion of dining spaces at three schools – Aberlour, Bishopmill and Cluny.
- Additional kitchen equipment (10x combi ovens, 20x fridges and freezers, 3x food mixers, 2x pass-through dishwashers, 2x potato rumpers and 1x food steamer) and servery equipment (9x mobile hot and cold trolleys)
- Additional dining room seating and tables

For all construction costs we have applied the Learning Estate Investment Programme metric of £3700/m² and added an additional uplift of 30% to account for market volatility (with respect to materials and resources)

- **Revenue**

An estimated total ongoing annual revenue budget of £1.17M is required to support increased costs to cover the delivery of an estimated additional 1852 school meals per day, this includes:

- Loss of income – loss of £2.30 per paid meal for P4-P7 pupils taking school meals (2019/2020 figures) equates to £522K. The allocated P4-P5 general revenue grant will cover this for 2022/23 but no current SG commitment to commit to this as an annual increase beyond this point; however, they are working on a national cost per meal rate that will seek to cover loss of income, additional food and increased catering staff costs.
- Additional food costs – an additional 1852 meals x current food costs (£1.35/meal) for 189 days equates to £472K.
- Increase in catering staff to support additional meal production and serving estimated at an additional 20.41 FTE equates to £451K.
- Additional education staff to support lunchtime supervision is averaged across all schools as an additional 7.5hrs. Increases will require changes to the current DSM formula.
- Energy increase estimated to be 14kWh/year to account for reinstated kitchens and additional meal production.

- Cleaning time and materials, increased food waste disposal and additional equipment and building repair and maintenance costs.
 - Additional building rates to account for increased dining room space (Rebate for initial 12 months)
- 2.10 The Scottish Future Trust intend to collate impact assessments from all LAs and provide a national level impact report to SG within the next few weeks.
- 2.11 The established Moray Council Universal FSM working group, with representation from Education, Property, Catering and Finance, will continue to engage with SFT directly and await a formal response from SG to the impact assessment.
- 2.12 Senior officers will also continue to engage on the risks and issues related to the FSM roll out programme through COSLA, ADES, ASSIST FM and APSE who will represent LA interests within the dedicated Programme Operations Group.

3. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

This report supports the LOIP outcomes:

Building a better future for children and young people in Moray

- A place where children and young people thrive;
- A place where they have a voice, have opportunities to learn and can get around;
- A place where they are able to reach their full potential.

and the Aims of the Corporate Plan to:

- Provide opportunities where young people can achieve the potential to be the best they can be.

(b) Policy and Legal

There are no policy or legal implications arising from this report.

(c) Financial implications

The redetermination of the General Revenue Grant to local authorities in March 2022 will support the P4-P5 FSM roll out loss of revenue and increased food costs only.

The P6-P7 roll out will require greater catering and dining room capacity together with additional staffing to support delivery of an anticipated additional 1895 meals across Moray primary schools.

Capital costs within 2021/22 to support refurbishments, new construction and catering equipment purchase is estimated at £1.2M. Ongoing revenue costs for additional staffing, meal production costs and loss of revenue have been estimated at £1.7M.

(d) Risk Implications

The following key strategic risks have been identified and reported to SFT:

- With no funding as yet in place to support the financial commitments, Moray Council would only be able to successfully support the implementation of universal FSM to the P4-P5 year groups for the majority of primary schools.
- The lack of availability of contractors to undertake and complete design and construction works before the current Aug 22 target for P6-P7 rollout.
- The ability of the supply chain to deliver kitchen (e.g. combi ovens, fridges, freezers) and dining room (hot/cold trolleys) equipment within project timescales expected.
- The lack of sufficient Education and Catering staff resources to recruit to support additional meal production and delivery within project timescales expected.
- The SG is currently proposing a rate of £3.33/per head to produce a primary school meal, which would cover loss of income, and additional food and catering staffing costs. This falls short of the pre-Covid Local Financial Returns (LFR) for Moray, and other rural LA, actual meal production costs. Should the SG in progress work to update the national cost per meal rate persist with the current discrepancy it will result in a further shortfall of funding required to produce the additional 1895 FSM meals in Moray.

(e) Staffing Implications

Additional catering staff (20.41 FTE) and educational staff hours (7.5 hrs per primary school per week) will be required from start of 2021/22 academic year.

The additional education staff hours will require a change to the DSM budgeting formula.

(f) Property

The additional production capacity requirement will require servery kitchens at Portgordon and Findochty primary schools to be reinstated as operational kitchens for the start of the 2021/22 academic year.

The additional dining space requirements will require expansion of dining facilities at Aberlour, Bishopmill, Cluny primary schools.

Minor works will be required at a number of primary schools to support the use of mobile hot and cold servery stations.

Survey work will be undertaken as soon as possible to determine the full scale and scope of works required.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

The implementation of universal FSM will support non-stigmatising provision of services and supports health and well-being of our young people.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

Planned construction projects will seek to adopt low carbon design and construction methods to deliver the dining space expansions and reinstatement of production kitchens in identified primary schools.

The procurement process for acquiring new catering or servery equipment required to support the increase in school meal output in a number of primary schools will endeavour to source and acquire low energy use solutions.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Committee is asked to consider and note the information contained in this report. A further update will be provided following a response from SG on the funding allocation for P6-P7 FSM implementation.

Author of Report: Andy Hall, Programme Manager (Learning Estate),
Education Resources & Communities

Background Papers:

Ref: SPMAN-1315769894-207



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON 26 JANUARY 2022**

SUBJECT: INFORMATION REPORT: ICT STRATEGY FOR SCHOOLS

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

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Committee on the progress made towards the development of the Raising Attainment: Curriculum Development and Digital project within the Improvement and Modernisation Programme (IMP) and the revised strategy for the use of ICT within schools.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (A) (35) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to ensuring that the organisation, administrative and management processes of the Council are designed to make the most effective contribution to achieving the Council's objectives and to keep these procedures under review.
- 1.3 The Committee is asked to note the progress update on the development of the Raising Attainment: Curriculum Development and Digital project within the Improvement and Modernisation Programme (IMP) and the revised strategy for the use of ICT within schools and in particular the effect that the covid pandemic and staff shortages have had on this work.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the meeting of this Committee on 6 October 2021, it was agreed to provide an update to the November meeting on the progress of work in relation to the Digital Strategy, which had been delayed due to Covid and changes in staffing (para 10 of the minute refers). Since that meeting, appointments have been made to the vacant posts referred to and officers will all take up appointment by early December. This does, however, mean that the reduced staffing available for this work has continued to have an impact and to limit progress. New officers will require some lead in time to become familiar with all areas of work in their remit in order that they can advance council priorities and this will be a key focus of their early induction to their new roles.

Strategy for the use of ICT within schools

- 3.1 Reference is made to the report to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee on 18 November 2020 when progress against the ICT Strategy for Schools and Curriculum Development approved by Children and Young People's Services Committee on 27 May 2015 (paragraph 13 of the minute refers) was reported along with the impact of covid and planned work to update the strategy taking account of lessons learned from the previous strategy, the experience of COVID-19 and best practice guidance around digital learning and teaching.
- 3.2 The Committee noted the work being undertaken towards the development of a revised ICT Strategy for Schools and Curriculum Development and it was planned that a revised strategy would be reported to this Committee in June 2021.
- 3.3 At the time the Schools and Curriculum Development ICT Strategy Group had been tasked with developing a strategy to determine how ICT should be used in education in the future so that all schools were equipped for the Classroom of 2020. The strategy was therefore building the capability for the digital classroom and was largely developed around 3 core themes of infrastructure, hardware and people to create an appropriate environment for digital learning and teaching.
- 3.4 The strategy group was reformed following the initial covid response period in Oct 2020 in order to continue the development of the revised strategy and met regularly until June 2021 when staff turnover impacted on progress. As part of the strategy development the three work streams became Digital Inclusion, Curriculum and Learning & Teaching and the working title was reviewed to be Digital Innovation Strategy. This was to encompass more than just the actual technology used within schools but also to include the training, learning and teaching elements.
- 3.5 With changes within Education the draft strategy requires additional work due to revised proposals and emerging issues reported by schools, including suitability of device options
- 3.6 In addition to the strategy work, ICT have continued to follow the lead of the strategy group whilst responding to the schools urgent needs during covid. As part of this process ICT rolled out in excess of 2000 1:1 laptops as part of the SG Digital Inclusion Project and schools refresh project. To allow staff and pupils to work from home or in school securely with these devices, a solution was rapidly put in place called Always on VPN. ICT hope to further enhance this provision to improve resilience (i.e. enable load balancing and failover) but this will be dependent on the final direction the strategy takes. In more general terms, work has progressed in identifying connectivity issues across the school estate and recent appointments to an additional post within the ICT service have created further capacity to move forward with this.

- 3.7 The Learning Technologists have also maintained networks of colleagues in other Local Authorities and are keeping abreast of approaches in other authorities including platforms, devices and partnerships with companies. They have also supported ICT colleagues in the work to establish any barriers currently being faced.
- 3.7 Following the recent appointment of the Project Manager (Education), a project management approach has been developed which will involve both staff and pupils in testing a range of possible 1:1 device options. This approach will help to ensure the best fit option for Moray primary, secondary and ASN pupils.

Raising Attainment: Curriculum Development and Digital

- 3.8 As reported to the Council on 15 September 2021, the Curriculum and Digital project is at an early stage and due to the rapidly evolving development of technology and its uses in education, it will particularly benefit from specialist input and learning from elsewhere. With the recent appointment made to the Project Manager (Education) this work has now commenced, including discussions with external parties on options being deployed elsewhere and how this might fit with the Scottish Government commitment to ensure that all children have access to a laptop or tablet. A plan is being prepared to take this work forward in order that options can be presented for consideration taking account of learning through covid and in other council areas. It will be important to ensure that there is involvement from staff in schools and users of the technology and this is being incorporated into planning work.

4 SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

The strategy for the use of ICT within schools will incorporate best practice guidance from the National Improvement Framework and support the outcomes contained within the Corporate Plan and LOIP with respect to the vision for Education in Moray.

(b) Policy and Legal

Statutory requirements and council policies will be considered in the preparation and delivery of the strategy.

(c) Financial implications

No additional financial resources are required to support the development of the strategy, however, the Raising Attainment: Digital and Curriculum project will rely on investment through the IMP and will assist in the delivery of the strategy. The investment options will form part of the project work being developed and will be reported to committee/council as appropriate in due course.

(d) Risk Implications

The main risk at this point, is resourcing to develop the work outlined in this report. There is a small central team and both the central team and school resources are particularly stretched as they manage the covid education recovery, the impacts of which are likely to be long term. It is vital to have input from these staff to the development of digital technology in education to ensure an effective impact and so the pace of work will have to be adjusted to take account of the whole range of service priorities to be managed, which may mean speeding and slowing progress.

There is as yet little clarity on the Scottish Government intended roll out of devices and there is also a risk that the council progresses work and later finds this is not well aligned to emerging national priorities. However, the counter of this would be to hold off progress and on balance it is considered better to make local progress on as flexible a basis as possible and to take account of advice as it becomes available.

(e) Staffing Implications

Staff are critical to the success and adoption of the strategy to meet the challenges of achieving the objectives of the council's corporate plan. Consultation will take place with all stakeholders to ensure their input is incorporated into the final strategy and plan.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities

Central to the new strategy is to tackle digital inclusion. Provision of devices on a fair and equitable basis would support addressing digital exclusion and some of the equalities issues associated with that. However it is also noted that there are geographic issues of internet access that need to be taken into account

(h) Consultations

The Head of Education, Head of HR, ICT and OD and Project manager (Education) and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted in the preparation of this report and comments incorporated.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Progress on the development of the Raising Attainment: Curriculum Development and Digital project within the Improvement and Modernisation Programme (IMP) and the revised strategy for the use of ICT within schools has been significantly impacted by the covid pandemic and staff shortages. However, recent appointments will help to advance this and planning is underway to develop options for investment to be reported to a future meeting.

Author of Report: Denise Whitworth
Background Papers: Previous Committee Reports
Ref: SPMAN-1468114179-16



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE 26 JANUARY 2022**

SUBJECT: INFORMATION REPORT: ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD) REPORT ON CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE AND WORKING PAPER – UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION STUDENT ASSESSMENT

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

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Committee with oversight of the two published OECD reports which were instructed by the Scottish Government.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Committee agree to note the potential implications for education in Moray which may arise from the recommendations within the reports**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In 2020, the Scottish Government, invited the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to assess the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) in primary and secondary schools. The assessment was undertaken by the OECD Implementing Education Policies team, which conducts comparative analysis of education policy implementation and offers tailored support to help countries in the design and effective implementation of their education policies.
- 3.2 This report, presents the findings of the reviewers based on their analysis of documentation, academic literature and experiences from other OECD countries; and on group interviews, school visits and events conducted online with stakeholders from across Scotland. No Moray school contributed to the review.

4. **THE FINDINGS**

- 4.1 The OECD report was published on 21 July 2021. The review finds that CfE continues to offer a vision and a philosophy of education widely supported and worth pursuing but highlights 12 recommendations for consideration.

Balance Curriculum for Excellence so students can fully benefit from a coherent learning experience from 3 to 18 years

1. **Re-assess CfE's aspirational vision against emerging trends in education** to take account of evolutions in education and society: Scotland should consider updates to some of its vision's core elements and their implications for practice, in particular, the role of knowledge in CfE; and define indicators aligned to the vision to help understand students' progress across all four capacities set out in CfE.
2. **Find a better balance between breadth and depth of learning throughout CfE** to deliver Scotland's commitment to providing all learners with a rich learning experience throughout school education: Scotland could consider how the design of CfE can better help learners consolidate a common base of knowledge, skills and attitudes by the end of the Broad General Education (BGE), and nurture and hone this base for them to progress seamlessly through the Senior Phase and the choices it offers.
3. **Adapt the Senior Phase to match the vision of CfE:** Scotland could consider adapting the pedagogical and assessment practices and the structure of learning pathways in the Senior Phase to enhance learners' experience of upper-secondary education and help them develop CfE's four capacities continuously.
4. **Continue building curricular capacity at various levels of the system using research** by developing the environment of curriculum design support around schools, including in supporting exchange and collaboration between practitioners for curriculum design and experimentation within and across schools; and collaboration between schools and universities.

Combine effective collaboration with clear roles and responsibilities

5. **Ensure stable, purposeful and impactful stakeholder involvement with CfE:** System leaders at national and local levels could continue encouraging the involvement of stakeholders (and in particular, students) with CfE by better structuring each engagement initiative they offer, clarifying its purpose, designing it accordingly, and letting stakeholder input inform decision making.
6. **Revise the division of responsibilities for CfE:** System leaders and stakeholders could revise the current allocation of responsibility for CfE, including responsibilities for its strategic direction, its reviews and updates, and the response to schools' needs of support with curriculum issues. The revised allocation should be stable over time to fulfil Scotland's commitment to shared ownership of CfE.

7. **Structure a coherent communication strategy to support developments of CfE:** System leaders, with the Learning Directorate and Education Scotland at the forefront, could develop a communication strategy in support of CfE's next developments and collaborate with practitioners, scholars and other CfE stakeholders as they do so.

Consolidate institutional policy processes for effective change

8. **Provide dedicated time to lead, plan and support CfE at the school level:** In support of the next phase of development of CfE, Scotland could consider the provision of additional dedicated and ring-fenced time for all teachers, for curriculum planning, for monitoring of student achievement and in support of moderation of assessment outcomes.
9. **Simplify policies and institutions for clarity and coherence:** To align the institutional structures with clear ownership of CfE, Scotland could explore assigning leadership and development responsibilities for curriculum (and perhaps assessment) to a specialist stand-alone agency; and consider refreshing the remit of an inspectorate of education regarding CfE.
10. **Align curriculum, qualifications and system evaluation to deliver on the commitment of *Building the Curriculum 5*:** Scotland could first identify modes of student assessment that could be used in school and external settings at Senior Phase levels, in alignment with the four capacities and CfE philosophy; and second, re-develop a sample-based evaluation system to collect robust and reliable data necessary to support curriculum reviews and decision making.
11. **Develop a systematic approach to curriculum review:** Scotland could consider establishing a systematic curriculum review cycle with a planned timeframe and specific review agenda, led by the specialist stand-alone agency.

Lead the next steps for Curriculum for Excellence with a long-term view

12. **Adopt a structured and long-term approach to implementation:** Building on the system's existing strengths, Scotland should consider how to take on board the recommendations in this report as a coherent package rather than individual policy actions for the next steps.
- 4.2 The OECD report will have significant implications for Scottish Education, for schools and local authorities and will likely guide and inform our work and strategic direction in Moray over the next five to ten years. Many of the recommendations will require significant change and some of the recommendations may well also be significant in terms of the financial implications involved once expectations are fully known.

- 4.3 The OECD report highlights the inconsistencies and variability in supports provided to teachers locally and nationally and as such there is a perception that a “postcode lottery” exists when it comes to support for teachers’ roles as curriculum makers and designers. The report also highlights that teachers in Scotland have some of the highest class contact time in the developed world and that this prevents teachers from having sufficient time for curriculum design, innovation and assessment and moderation activities. The Scottish Government has since indicated through the Education Recovery: Key Actions and Next Steps, report released in October 2021 they will “continue discussions, through the SNCT, on **reducing teachers’ class contact time** by an hour and a half per week, with the aim of giving teachers the time they need to reflect on, plan and collaborate in the interests of good quality learning and teaching”. This proposed change to class contact time will have an impact on budgets and also on the learning estate and will require resource to plan and implement the change so that the staffing formulae within the Devolved School Management (DSM) scheme takes account of this requirement.
- 4.4 In the context of developing an empowered system, local leadership capacity should be freed up to support curriculum development and whilst the OECD found that some Head Teachers welcomed local authority priorities for curriculum development, others found these constraining in a system where local school-level autonomy and flexibility were to be key drivers. To that end, there is a balance to be reached between central prescription and local empowerment.
- 4.5 The OECD team who conducted the review note that there are too many agencies/groups involved in shaping the curriculum and that their roles and remits are unclear. Reviewers recommend that a standalone agency for the curriculum be established and that this will require a review of the remits of current agencies such as the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and Education Scotland. Current confusion around remits has resulted in key messages around the curriculum being lost as other key initiatives such as the National Improvement Framework and the work of Regional Improvement Collaboratives have been driven forward. OECD recommend that communications about the curriculum need to be stronger, clearer and more accessible and believe that national structures around the curriculum need to be simplified. Reviewers also note that stakeholders with responsibilities should have the capacity and resource to match their responsibilities and that duplication should be avoided.
- 4.6 OECD noted that the unclear remits around curriculum have resulted in a plethora of guidance on curriculum being available which are both overwhelming and unhelpful.

The Senior Phase and Qualifications

4.7 In response to the cancellation of SQA exams in 2020 and 2021 and the controversy which surrounded this decision and the processes put in place to allocate awards, the Scottish Government further commissioned the OECD to provide a comparative analysis of the upper-secondary school assessment system in Scotland to allow further reflection on how the Scottish system could adapt in future. Assessment, and particularly assessment across the senior phase, features heavily in the report. The report notes that there is a need to fully implement Building the Curriculum 5 across the senior phase and identified the significant and unhelpful changes which occur from the mostly formative assessment in the Broad General Education to the traditional single stage and subject exams in the Senior Phase. The authors note that assessment practices in the senior phase constitute a, '**clash between 19th century assessments and a 21st century curriculum**'. This area is considered more fully in the working paper entitled 'Upper-secondary education student assessment in Scotland: A comparative perspective'. The working paper provides some helpful additional context on why some national education systems continue to rely on a formal exam diet and suggests that teacher judgement should have more weighting as we move forward. This report was published in August and there are three main themes which emerge from this report;

1. How external assessment could be more innovative in order to capture a wider range of student capabilities.
2. The role of teacher assessment and the emphasis placed on continuous school-based assessment
3. Improved integration of academic and vocational strands within the assessment system

4.8 The Covid pandemic undoubtedly highlighted that countries with a heavy reliance on external examinations faced a greater crisis in determining student awards and grades than those countries which drew on multiple sources of assessment evidence and thus were able to adapt to the unprecedented circumstances more swiftly and easily.

4.9 The OECD comparative study provides a range of options for moving beyond the legacy system currently used to assess students in Scotland and these are;

1. Exploring the replacement of examinations at age 16 by a school graduation certificate
2. Developing a more resilient upper-secondary assessment system
3. Seeking better alignment of assessment with curriculum and pedagogy through broadening the forms of assessment
4. Reconfiguring and increasing the role of school-based assessment and adapting the central moderation system
5. Systematically investigating students' perceptions and views of assessment arrangements
6. Further developing the role of vocational qualifications in broadening the curriculum

- 4.10 The Covid-19 pandemic has further exposed the risks of over-reliance on a largely high-stakes assessment regime and the future of qualifications and assessment in the Senior Phase will be a key priority during Covid-19 recovery. It is argued that we have a 21st century curriculum operating with a 19th century assessment model and this needs to be challenged to ensure a Senior Phase, including qualifications, which leads young people effectively to the world beyond school, and one which parents, employers and society at large understand.
- 4.11 The OECD comparative study will likely generate significant debate about the future direction of upper secondary assessment in Scotland and this is a debate which is to be welcomed and which is much needed. The Scottish Government announcement that it plans to replace the SQA, along with the many other recommendations arising from OECD in both reports published in 2021 provide unique opportunities to make significant changes to how we approach senior phase assessment in Scotland.
- 4.12 The lack of an on-going evaluation strategy was highlighted as an area of considerable concern. Reviewers noted that the lack of any formal review has limited the ability of the curriculum to take account of emerging trends which would have been picked up through periodic review. The OECD go on to note that measures used to judge the impact of the education system should reflect the 4 capacities of Curriculum for Excellence and not only those of being a successful learner currently in place. Their view is that a more holistic and accurate evaluation framework will help the system better understand progress and identify next steps. The highly politicised nature of education was also seen as unhelpful at times and the reviewers noted that a clear evaluation strategy encompassing periodic reviews could help to guide change in a more manageable way.
- 4.13 The reviewers also noted that '**efforts to reduce the attainment gap will not be possible solely through schooling – we need coalitions with housing, welfare and health policy**' which raises further questions around how to measure and judge the system as we move forward.
- 4.14 The OECD noted that despite extensive engagement being undertaken with stakeholders there is a lack of clarity around the extent to which consultations had informed final policy. They noted that consultation should draw on all levels of the system and that the feedback loop must be clearer. In general terms the OECD suggest less consultations but with a clearer feedback loop.
- 4.15 The need for research (at school and wider system level) was identified as necessary to help shape future innovations. OECD conclude that there should be no more prescriptions from above, changes should be practitioner led with horizontal collaboration so that those at classroom level can drive and shape change beyond their own department and school. The OECD noted that a 'top down' approach would not realise improvement.

- 4.16 The need to invest in curriculum capacity was highlighted in order to ensure that practitioners have the time they need to undertake school-based research and drive innovation. The OECD also noted the need to ensure adequate time for the recording of pupil progress and moderation of professional judgements.

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 The Scottish Government has accepted all 12 recommendations in the report and has published how it intends to take them forward on the following link. [Curriculum for Excellence: Scottish Government response to OECD Review](#). Scottish Government has confirmed that pupils taking national qualifications this year and next will not be affected and will take decisions on how to progress work around assessment in the senior phase following publication of the working paper. The Scottish Government has confirmed a planned exam diet for 21/22 school session.
- 5.2 The Scottish Education Council will be reconvened. The Council will have a refreshed membership, including young people, and a renewed purpose to support the delivery of the OECD's recommendations.
- 5.3 A new Children and Young People's Education Council will also be created to ensure that the voices of those who are most affected by any changes in education are always heard in strategic discussions.
- 5.4 Professor Ken Muir CBE, who was until recently Chief Executive of the General Teaching Council for Scotland, will lead work to replace the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) with a new specialist agency for both curriculum and assessment. Further consideration of changes to the qualifications and assessment system will be heavily informed by the next OECD report, expected by the end of August. His remit is detailed in the following link. [Reform of the SQA and Education Scotland: advisor draft remit](#)
- 5.5 Professor Muir and an advisory panel will also look at reforms to Education Scotland, including removing the function of inspection from the agency. A wider consultation period has started with engagement with practitioners at all levels and with many professional bodies and associations. Officers will be working with school leaders to provide a Moray response and staff at all levels are encouraged to submit individual and group responses as appropriate.

6. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

This report was informed by the priorities within the Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan and in particular to Our People, Our Place and Our Future and A Growing and Diverse Economy and Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray.

(b) Policy and Legal

The Standards In Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000 places an obligation on Local Authorities to secure improvement in all schools. The OECD report will change expectations of school staff and influence how the quality of schools is determined in the future.

(c) Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

(d) Risk Implications

These reports come at a time when the education system is still coming to terms with the impact of Covid-19 with continued disruption across all schools and nursery settings. There is a risk that school leaders and staff will feel overwhelmed by more change and new expectations of their practice. The central team will continue to engage in dialogue with school leaders and through collaboration, workload will be shared to ensure readiness to implement any expectations.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report, however they may become apparent as related work is taken forward, including reduction of teacher contact time.

(f) Property

There are no property issues arising from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

None arising directly from this report.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

None arising directly from this report.

(i) Consultations

The Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), the Head of Education Resources and Communities, Quality Improvement Managers, Quality Improvement Officers, Head Teachers, Early Years Service Managers, Senior HR Advisor, Paul Connor, Principal Accountant, LNCT Joint Secretaries, the Equal Opportunities Officer and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer, have been consulted on this report and agree with the sections of the report relating to their areas of responsibility.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Committee is asked to consider the OECD reports which pave the way for major reform across Education and to take cognisance of the associated review and consultation currently underway to take forward key recommendations contained within the reports.

Author of Report: Vivienne Cross, Head of Education (Chief Education Officer)

Background Papers: [OECD Report – Scotland’s Curriculum for Excellence](#)
[OECD Working Paper – Upper-secondary education student assessment](#)
[Education Recovery: Key Actions and Next Steps](#)
[Curriculum for Excellence: Scottish Government response to OECD Review.](#)
[Reform of the SQA and Education Scotland: advisor draft remit](#)

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