Performance Report Insight Data February 2020

Report by Executive Director: Children, Young People and Partnerships

Report for Information

1 Recommendations

PRS is asked to note the progress and areas for improvement in educational attainment in the Senior Phase in Midlothian secondary schools.

2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary

To inform PRS of trends in attainment and achievement of school leavers in Midlothian using the "National Benchmarking Measures" from Insight.

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3   Background/Main Body of Report

3.1   Each year young people in secondary schools in Midlothian achieve a range of awards and qualifications available on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) at different stages throughout the senior phase (S4 to S6).

3.2   The Scottish Government developed a statistical benchmarking tool 'Insight' to assist schools and local authorities in the analysis of attainment of young people in the senior phase through nationally agreed benchmarking measures and course breadth and depth data. General information on the 'Insight' tool is available online at: http://www.gov.scot/Education/Schools/curriculum/seniorphasebenchmarking

3.3   As well as providing the national average, Insight also uses a virtual comparator for each school and Education Authority and is considered to be the key benchmark for helping schools and authorities understand their strengths and areas for improvement. The Virtual Comparator takes the characteristics of each pupil in Midlothian and matches them to 10 similar pupils from other local authorities across Scotland.

3.4   This report will explore how the Education Service has performed over the five-year period since 2015 to 2019 in relation to the national average and its Virtual Comparator focusing on three nationally agreed "National Benchmarking Measures" from Insight:

- **Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy** (shown as the percentage of School Leavers attaining Literacy and Numeracy)

- **Improving attainment for all** (shown as the Average Complementary Tariff Score of School Leavers)

- **Tackling disadvantage** by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers (shown as the Average Complementary Tariff Score versus Deprivation)

3.5   These three national measures focus on the total cumulative achievements recorded at the point at which the young person leaves school. The leavers cohort is the most important since it is the most consistent point of comparison given the various routes and pathways available to schools in designing their curriculum to meet the needs of their young people as they progress through the senior phase. Course breadth and depth data for school leavers is also provided in **Appendix 1** to this report.

3.6   Comparison of measures over time in Insight should be treated with caution as earlier years' figures relate to different qualifications, assessment arrangements and progression pathways. Breadth and depth measures are heavily influenced by a school's curricular model

therefore the results may also not be fully comparable with previous years.

3.7   The data in this report is taken from the February 2020 release of Insight and reflects the most up to date position on school leavers' attainment June 2019.

3.8   The reports in Insight are based on attainment in SCQF credit rated qualifications achieved in the senior phase and include the results of completed National Courses and Skills for Work and Personal Development courses that are sent to SEEMIS from the SQA. College presentations are also included as are D awards or other achievements from ungraded National Certificates and National Progression Awards. Young people's attainment delivered through wider awards providers such as Duke of Edinburgh and Youth Scotland are also included.

3.9   The main highlights for Midlothian are provided in paragraphs 3.10 to 3.17. A detailed breakdown of Midlothian's performance in each of the National Benchmarking Measures is provided in Appendix 1.

Midlothian Performance to 2019

3.10   Overall, the three National benchmarking measures reported by the Scottish Government Insight tool in the February 2020 update indicate that attainment in Midlothian has improved overall over the five-year period to 2018/19 but that further improvements could still be made, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 6, the middle 60% attaining group and in relation to closing the attainment gap for young people with additional support needs and our looked after young people. The key points from each benchmarking measure are:

3.11   **Improving attainment for all** (see Appendix 1, section 2) – In 2018/19 the average complementary tariff score for the Lowest, Middle and Highest attaining groups indicates that:
   • The Lowest 20% and Highest 20% attainment groups in Midlothian are above or in line with the Virtual Comparator whilst the Middle 60% attaining group is lower;
   • The 2019 performance of the Middle 60% (525) and Lowest 20% (130) groups show a slight drop on the previous year with the Highest 20% group (1222) showing an increase;
   • Both the Lowest 20% and Highest 20% attaining groups in Midlothian show an overall improved trend over the last 5 years;
   • The Middle 60% attainment group in Midlothian shows a slight drop in trend over the same period. As a result, the gap between the Lowest 20% and Highest 20% attainment groups has stayed relatively similar over the five year period.

3.12   Insight testing found that Midlothian's performance in the Lowest 20% group was **statistically greater than its Virtual Comparator** in 2019 but found no other significant comparisons in recent years as improvements have been made.

3.13   **Improving Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy** (See Appendix 1, section 3) – In 2018/19, 97.3% of Midlothian school leavers attained Literacy at SCQF level 3 or above with 98.1% attaining the same level in Numeracy. At SCQF Levels 5 and 6 or better, a higher proportion of leavers attained Literacy than Numeracy, consistent with previous years and the national picture.

3.15   Midlothian's performance at SCQF Levels in both Literacy & Numeracy in 2018/19 shows a decrease of 0.9% on the previous year at SCQF Level 3 with the performance at SCQF Level 4 increased by 0.5%. Midlothian's performance at SCQF Level 4 or better has increased by 3.8 percentage points since 2014/15 while at SCQF Level 3 the percentage performance shows an increase of 1.9 percentage points.

3.16   Midlothian's performance at SCQF Level 5 in Literacy & Numeracy in 2018/19 decreased by 2.6% on the previous year. Over the five-year period, the performance has improved overall, increasing by 7.5% since 2014/15. Insight testing found that "Midlothian's performance in **Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 5, 2019 is greater than your Virtual Comparator** "

3.17   Further improvements still need to be made at SCQF Level 6 to bring young people's performance in line with those with similar characteristics. At SCQF Level 6 or better, the percentage in 2018/19 decreased 3.5 percentage points on the previous year and also shows a fluctuating trend over the five-year period.

3.17   Midlothian's performance at SCQF Levels 3 to 5 for Numeracy have typically been above the Virtual Comparator and National average with Insight finding the following comparisons significant:

    o Midlothian's performance in **Numeracy at SCQF Level 3, 2019** is **much greater than your Virtual Comparator**
    o Midlothian's performance in **Numeracy at SCQF Level 4, 2019** is **much greater than your Virtual Comparator**
    o Midlothian's performance in **Numeracy at SCQF Level 5, 2019** is **greater than your Virtual Comparator**

3.18   **Attainment versus Deprivation** (see Appendix 1, section 4) – Midlothian's average complementary tariff scores across the SIMD deciles over the five year period are roughly in line with the Virtual Comparator, school leavers living in the most deprived areas typically have a lower tariff scores on average than those living in the least deprived areas.

3.19   **Breadth and Depth Data** (see Appendix 1, section 5) – In 2018/19 86.0% of Midlothian school leavers left with one or more passes at SCQF Level 5 or better, While at SCQF Level 6 or better, 56.1% left with one or more passes. Midlothian's performance in 2018/19 across the reported breadth and depth measures shows a decrease on the previous year in most areas in line with the Virtual Comparator. Figures for '1 or more at Level 3' and '1 or more at Level 5' are **significantly above the Virtual Comparator**

3.20 Midlothian's performance across the reported SCQF Level 5 to 7 measures show a fluctuating but overall improved trend over the five year period. The most significant increases have been in the percentage attaining '5 or more at Level 6' and '1 or more at Level 7' which increased by 3.9% and 1.8% respectively.

3.21 **Closing the attainment gap** – As with the national average, Midlothian school leavers living in the 20% most deprived areas (SIMD Quintile 1) typically have lower attainment compared to those living in the 20% least deprived areas (SIMD Quintile 5). The attainment gap between school leavers living in SIMD Quintile 1 and those in SIMD Quintile 5 is wider at higher levels of qualifications. The attainment gap increases from 2 percentage points on average at SCQF Level 3 to 48 percentage points on average at SCQF Level 6. Overall the gap shows a reduction over the last five years, across SCQF Levels 3, 4 & 6.

3.22 **Improving the attainment of care experienced leavers** –
- 81.25% of Looked after school leavers gained 1 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 4 in 2018/19, an increase of 8.5% on the previous year.
- 56.3% of Looked after school leavers gained 1 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 5 in 2018/19, an increase of 38.1% on the previous year.
- The gap between leavers who are looked after and those who are not decreased at SCQF Levels 4 & 5 in 2018/19. Similar to the SIMD trends, the attainment gap between school leavers who are looked after and those that are not looked after is wider at higher levels of qualifications. Overall the trend has fluctuated widely due to the small numbers in the looked after cohort.

3.23 **Improving the attainment of leavers with additional support needs** –
91.8% of school leavers with an additional support need gained 1 or more qualification at SCQF Level 4 in 2018/19. In line with the three previous years and an increase of 4.5% since 2014/15. There have also been improvements on the previous year at SCQF Level 5 & 6 with the gap decreasing across the 3 reported SCQF Levels. Again, similar to the SIMD trends, the attainment gap between school leavers with SN and those without ASN is wider at higher levels of qualifications.

Next Steps for Improvement

3.24 The key areas of focus for raising attainment in the senior phase are:

- Continue to improve the attainment of the middle 60% attaining group to raise their performance above the virtual comparator.

- Continue to improve the attainment of Literacy & Numeracy at SCQF Levels 5 & 6, with a real focus at SCQF Level 6 to bring the performance in line with the Virtual Comparator.

- Improve the attainment of school leavers in breadth & depth measures, particularly in:

- o 1 or more awards at Level 6 or better; and
- o 3 or more awards at level 6 or better.

- • Continue to improve the attainment outcomes for young people in SIMD Quintile 1, care experienced and with additional support needs at higher levels of qualifications (SCQF Levels 5 and 6)

3.25 Raising educational attainment and achievement for all and reducing the attainment gap at all stages remain a key priority for the Education Service. Our vision and values within Midlothian Council align with the Key Priorities in the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education 'Achieving Excellence and Equity' (Scottish Government, January 2016) and Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education (Scottish Government, June 2016).

3.26 The Education Service will continue to work with key stakeholders to improve the quality and design of the curriculum, the analysis and use of data and planning learning, teaching and assessment to ensure that all children and young people attain and achieve as well as they can.

3.27 Improving attainment and achievement and closing the attainment gap is also a key focus of the South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC). The Education Service will continue to work with staff from across the SEIC to support continuous improvement in learning and teaching and raising attainment.

4   Report Implications (Resource, Digital, Risk and Equalities)

4.1   Resource

   None

4.2   Digital

   None

4.3   Risk

   No risk associated with the content of this report. There is a risk that young people's attainment will be affected by the impact of the lockdown period and the ongoing constraints in schools due to the pandemic.

4.4   Ensuring Equalities

   The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

4.5   Additional Report Implications (See Appendix A)

APPENDIX A – Additional Report Implications

A.1 **Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan:**
- Reducing the gap in learning outcomes
- Reducing the gap in health outcomes
- Reducing the gap in economic circumstances

Key priorities within the Education Service Plan:
- Improve attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Close the attainment gap
- Improve children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Improve employability skills and sustained positive destinations for all young people

Key Priorities within the Integrated Children's Services Plan:

- Raise the educational attainment and reduce the number of care experienced young people being excluded from school.
- Improve access to specialist services to help children and young people.
- Improve outcomes and experiences for care experienced young people transitioning into adulthood.

A.2 **Key Drivers for Change**

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- x☐ Holistic Working
- ☐ Hub and Spoke
- ☐ Modern
- ☐ Sustainable
- ☐ Transformational
- x☐ Preventative
- ☐ Asset-based
- x☐ Continuous Improvement
- ☐ One size fits one
- ☐ None of the above

A.3 **Key Delivery Streams**

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- ☐ One Council Working with you, for you
- x☐ Preventative and Sustainable
- x☐ Efficient and Modern
- x☐ Innovative and Ambitious

A.4 **Delivering Best Value**

The Education Service continues to review the use of all resources available to support children and young people's attainment and health and wellbeing.

A.5   Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The Education Service is committed to working closely with our partners and all stakeholders to improve provision for children and young people. The Education Service 2020/2021 Improvement Plan sets out how we will improve our engagement with both parents and young people to ensure that their voice influences and shapes our service delivery.

A.6   Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The performance measures detailed within this report are scrutinised by the Quality Improvement Team and external bodies such as Education Scotland. Further scrutiny at individual school level leads to the identification of improvement priorities at school level.

A.7   Adopting a Preventative Approach

The report highlights where the Education Service needs to focus resources to improve outcomes for identified individuals and groups to ensure young people achieve their potential and enter a sustained positive destination on leaving school.

A.8   Supporting Sustainable Development

By ensuring that we continue to develop and improve the Education Service we provide to children, young people and their families through a partnership approach we shall prepare young people well for the future as effective contributors, successful learners, responsible citizens and confident individuals who will make a positive contribution to their communities and society.