

Creating a World-Class Education Service: Positive Destination Update

Report by Dr Grace Vickers, Head of Education

1. Purpose of Report

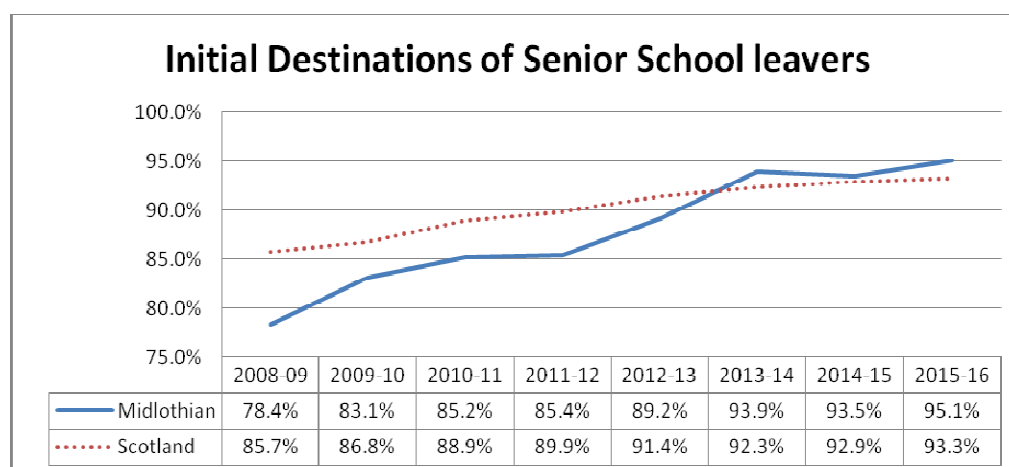
The purpose of this report is to inform Midlothian Council that 95.1% of school leavers have now secured a positive destination. This is the highest recorded figure that Midlothian has ever achieved with Midlothian school leaver destinations now 1.8% higher than the national average. The Scottish Government report, *Initial Destinations of Senior Phase School leavers*, published on 7 March 2017 provides information on initial destinations of school leavers and outlines the performance across the 32 local authorities with Midlothian now ranking joint 4th place.

2. Background

2.1 Positive Destinations in Midlothian

In previous years Skills Development Scotland (SDS) provided information on the destinations of secondary students who left school during or at the end of the school year. School Leaver destination data is now tracked through Scottish Government's *Insight* tool which provides a wide range of performance data relating to secondary schools.

The Initial Destinations of Senior Phase School Leavers report published by the Scottish Government on 7th March 2017 confirmed that Midlothian Council has significantly improved positive destinations. A copy of this report is included as appendix 1. We are delighted to report that we have a continued pattern of improvement, and that **95.1%** of our school leavers have now achieved an initial positive destination, this is up 1.6% on last year. This improvement pattern is important because in 2011/12 only 85.4% of school leavers entered a positive destination thus showing a 9.7% improvement over the five year period 2011/12-2015/16. School Leaver destinations are now 1.8% higher in Midlothian than the national average with Midlothian Council ranking joint 4th place when comparing the 32 local authorities in Scotland.



This significant and continued improvement has been achieved through the dedication and persistence of staff from schools, Lifelong Learning & Employability and through effective partnership working with public agencies and third sector partners.

Although we have superseded our ambitious target of 95%, work associated with positive destinations remains a priority for Midlothian Council. We are continuing to work closely with our schools and partner agencies to ensure positive outcomes for all leavers.

This includes:

- Increasing vocational pathways in the senior phase
- Strengthening school/college partnerships
- Improving young people's employability skills
- Expanding the work experience offers
- Introducing foundation apprenticeships in schools
- Promoting pathways in science, technology, engineering and maths
- Strengthening school-business partnerships
- Supporting young people at risk of negative destinations
- Expanding use of the new online market place and guarantee for those in Midlothian.

3. Report Implications

3.1 Resource

We now have had confirmation of external funding from Scottish Government for youth activity agreement funding £102,248 which will assist us in maintaining these key services.

3.2 Risk

Whilst we are ambitious that all young people secure a positive destination we cannot take for granted the sustained effort and resources that will be required to achieve this.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☒ Community safety
- ☒ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☒ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☒ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Positive Destinations

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

This work is a key priority for Midlothian Community Planning Partnership.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Key elements of our current and future approaches for Positive Destinations are to work with younger students including nursery and primary and families to assist them to make positive transitions in a preventative manner.

3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Involving all sectors of our communities in support of young people and involving young people in designing and coproducing our approach and future opportunities is vital.

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

The approach undertaken will continue to target those at risk of not achieving a positive destination from identified equalities groups and ensure individual needs are proactively taken into account when supports and opportunities are developed.

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

This positive five year trend of school leavers securing a positive destination enables young people to actively contribute to the economy of Midlothian.

3.10 IT Issues

None

4 Recommendations

Midlothian Council is recommended to:

- Note the progress made in positive destinations.
- Congratulate our school leavers on securing an initial positive destination.
- Thank staff, partners and the third sector for their continued hard work and commitment ensuring that young people progress into positive destinations.

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