

**Creating a World-Class Education System:
Raising Attainment - Closing the Gap, an Examination of Attainment
(National Measures for 2014-15 Examination Diet)**

Report by Dr Grace Vickers – Head of Education

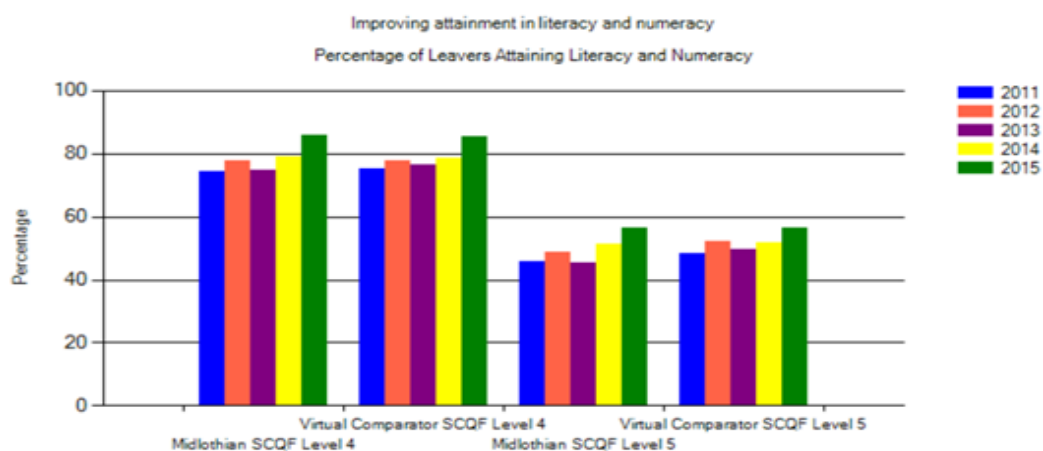
1 Purpose of Report

Further to the December Council Attainment Report outlining the local measures in respect of the 2014-15 examination diet, the purpose of this report is to provide an overview of secondary school examination attainment in session 2014-15 using the new senior phase national benchmarking attainment measures, called 'Insight'. The Report also seeks approval to adopt the term *Achieving a Level*, in line with the National Improvement Framework, as a replacement to the assessment language which is currently in place called *Developing, Consolidating and Secure*.

2. Background

As reported in the previous Attainment Report, during session 2013-14 the new senior phase benchmarking attainment measures, called 'Insight', were implemented replacing the former Standard tables and charts (STACS). The new measures provide a broader and deeper picture of how young people are progressing in our secondary schools and includes a wide range of new qualifications including vocational and wider achievement awards. The new measure also provides important data on the performance of young people in different contexts in order to help focus our improvement targets towards closing the attainment gap. The new measures report on the performance and progress of two main cohorts of students: the National Benchmarking measures report on the progress and performance of the summer leavers cohort from S4, S5 and S6 and the Local Benchmarking measures report on the progress and performance of the students who have continued their education in S4, S5 and S6. There are four Benchmarking Measures used to report on the progress and performance of students: Improving Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy; Increasing Post-School Participation; Improving Attainment for All; and Attainment versus Deprivation. To compliment the data provided by these Benchmarking Measures, Insight also provides Breadth and Depth Course measures which are used to provide data on the percentage of pupils gaining awards at specific levels by the end of each year stage. This data, when used in conjunction with the Benchmarking Measures, provides a richer picture of the progress and performance of Midlothian students. This Council report focuses on the National Benchmarking Measures which were published in February.

2.1 Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy: this measure shows the National Benchmarking data for the percentage of pupils attaining literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 4 and SCQF level 5:



	Year	Midlothian	Virtual Comparator	National
Level 4 Literacy & Numeracy	2011	74.4	75.1	74.9
	2012	77.9	77.6	76.7
	2013	74.6	76.7	77.9
	2014	78.9	78.5	81.3
	2015	85.7	85.3	85.8
	3yr avg	80.2	80.2	81.7
	4yr trend	2.5	2.5	2.7
Level 5 Literacy & Numeracy	2011	45.7	48.5	49.3
	2012	48.9	52.3	52.2
	2013	45.5	49.7	52.5
	2014	51.4	51.3	55.7
	2015	56.3	56.3	58.6
	3yr avg	51.1	52.4	55.6
	4yr trend	2.6	2.0	2.3

This data shows the following key strengths:

- Attainment in level 4 Literacy and Numeracy shows a positive improvement from 74.4% in 2011 to 85.7% in 2015 an improvement of 11.3%.
- Attainment is 0.4% higher than the virtual comparator leavers group and 0.1% lower than the national leavers group.
- Attainment in level 5 Literacy and Numeracy shows a positive improvement from 45.7% in 2011 to 56.3% in 2015 an improvement of 10.6%.
- Attainment is in line with the Virtual Comparator leavers group and 2.3% lower than the National leavers group.

Next steps for improvement: To bring literacy and numeracy at levels 4 and 5 in line with national measures for all school leavers.

2.3 Increasing post-school participation: this measure shows the National benchmarking data for the percentage of pupils either staying on at school or in a positive initial destination:

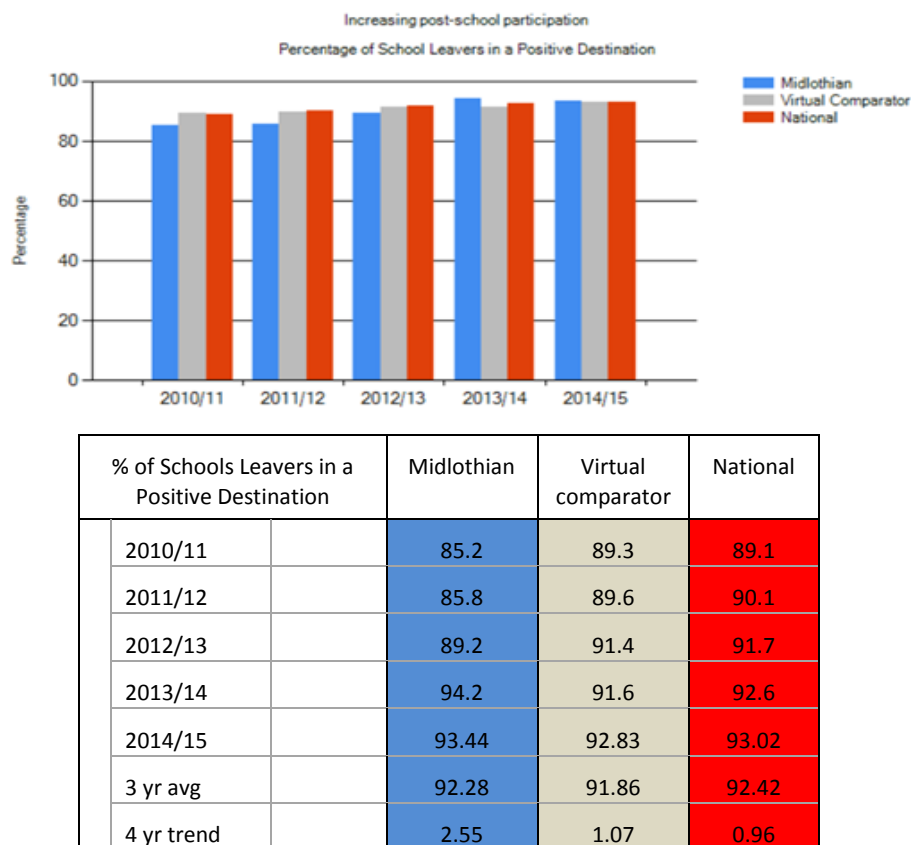


Figure 2: Increasing post-school participation: this measure shows the National Measure for the percentage of pupils either staying on at school or in a positive initial destination.

The data in figure 2 shows the following key strengths and next steps for improvement.

Strengths:

- The percentage of school leavers entering a positive destination has improved from 85.2% in 2010/11 to 93.44% in 2014/15. This has fallen slightly from 2013/14 when destinations reached a 5 year high of 94.2%.
- This compares positively with outcomes for the virtual comparator leaver cohort of 92.83% and national leaver cohort of 93.02%.
- Only one secondary school has less than 90% of leavers entering a positive destination (89.47%).
- All schools have shown sustained improvement over the last 5 years.

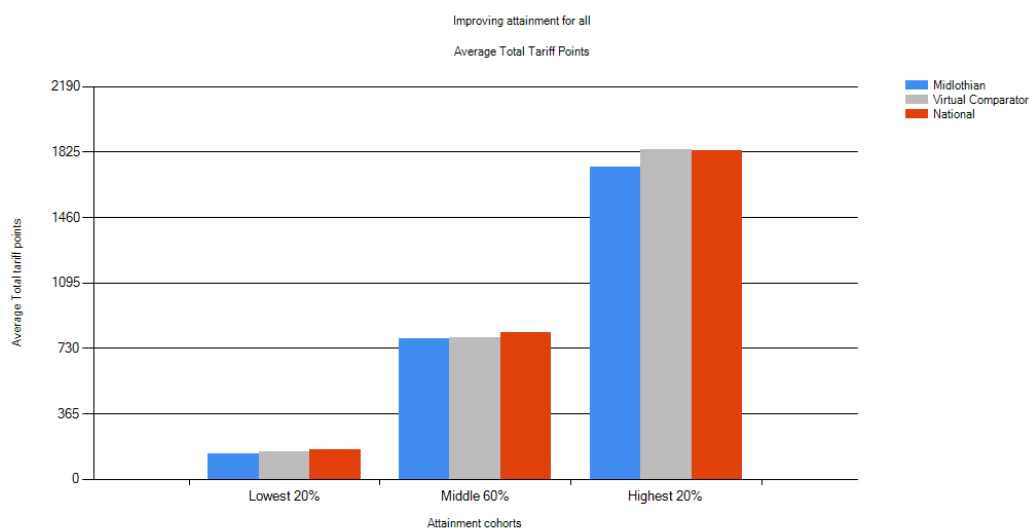
Next steps for Improvement:

- There are relatively high numbers of leavers going into employment (28.6%) compared to a virtual comparator figure 21.7% and a national one of 21%. Whilst this is recognised as a success there is a need to further breakdown the employment destination to consider the nature of employment, progression and salary opportunities.
- There are relatively low numbers of leavers going into Higher Education (29.4%) compared to the virtual comparator figure of 37.5% and a national

one of 38.4%. This potentially reflects a development need to continue to improve levels of attainment by end of S5.

- Maintaining positive destinations remains an ongoing priority for the Council with a target of 95% set for School Leaver Destinations and 90% for the new Participation measures which includes young people 16-19 years.

2.4 Improving attainment for all: this measure shows the national benchmarking data for the average total tariff score of pupils based on the attainment of the lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% by performance;



	Midlothian			Virtual Comparator			National		
Year	Lowest 20%	Middle 60%	Highest 20%	Lowest 20%	Middle 60%	Highest 20%	Lowest 20%	Middle 60%	Highest 20%
2012/13	138	651	1663	146	711	1767	149	760	1789
2013/14	146	710	1754	140	728	1798	162	793	1809
2014/15	145	784	1742	155	789	1836	168	820	1832
3yr avg	143.	715	1720	147	743	1800	160	791	1810
2yr trend	4.0	67	40	5	39	35	10	30	22

Figure 3: Improving attainment for all: the average total tariff score of pupils based on the attainment of the lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% by performance.

The numbers shown in the table are total tariff points gained by Midlothian's lowest performing 20%, the middle performing 60% and the highest performing 20%. Each qualification attained by pupils is given a Tariff score by SQA; highest performing 20% of students attain higher tariff scores as they tend to stay on to S6, complete more courses, and pass courses at higher levels. Figure 3 outlines the following key strengths and areas for improvement:

Key strengths:

- Total tariff scores for the lowest performing 20% of leavers' shows positive progression from 125pts in 2010/11 to 145pts in 2014/15, an improvement of 20pts resulting in a 3 year average of 143pts. This is in line with the

virtual comparator performance of 147pts and behind the national performance of 160pts.

- Total tariff scores for the middle performing 60% of leavers' shows positive progression from 636pts in 2010/11 to 784pts in 2014/15, an improvement of 148pts. This is in line with the virtual comparator on 789pts and behind the national performance of 820pts.
- Total tariff scores for the highest performing 20% of leavers' shows positive progression from 1676pts in 2010/11 to 1742pts in 2014/15, an improvement of 66pts. This is below the virtual comparator (1836pts) and the national average (1832pts).

Next steps for improvement: To close the gap which has emerged for the highest performing leaver groups.

2.5 Attainment versus deprivation: tackling disadvantaged by improving the attainment of lower attaining pupils relative to higher attaining pupils based on the average total tariff score of pupils, by decile, using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD):

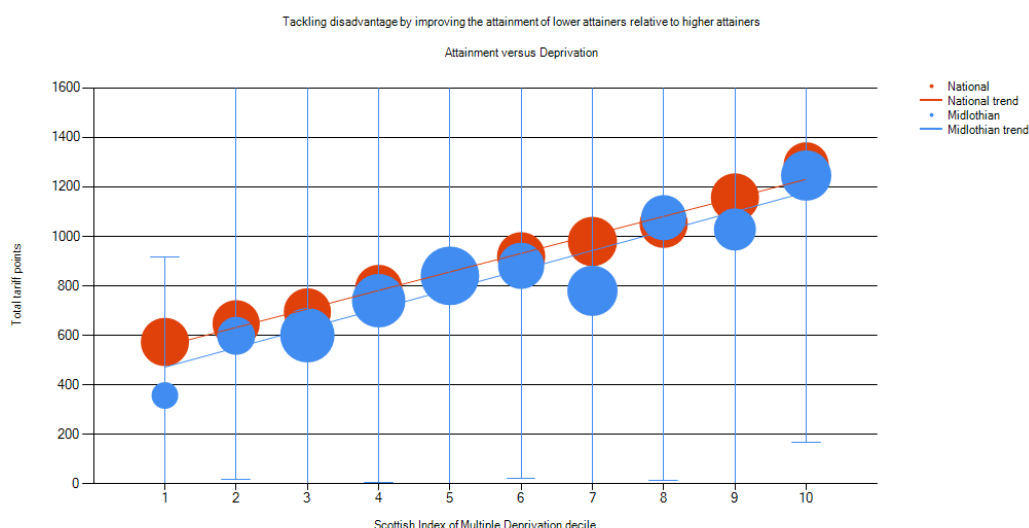


Figure 4: Attainment versus deprivation: tackling disadvantaged by improving the attainment of lower attaining pupils relative to higher attaining pupils based on the average total tariff score of pupils, by decile, using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

The discs presented in figure 4 represent the relative performance of Midlothian leavers in each SIMD deciles compared with the virtual comparator group. The size of the disc gives a visual indication of the number of students in the decile. The gradient of the line indicates the relative level of attainment vs. deprivation for Midlothian leavers. The graph confirms that Midlothian leavers are broadly attaining in line with other similar leavers across the country with the exception of deciles 1, 7 and 9. Figure 4 shows the following key strengths and areas for improvement:

Strengths:

- In 2014/15 Midlothian leavers performance was generally better than the virtual comparator for decile 5 and 8.

Next steps for improvement:

- On leaving the school system students in Decile 1 have attained a tariff score which is less than a third of that attained by students in Decile 10. The average tariff score for students in Decile 1 was 358pts compared with 1246pts in decile 10. Therefore the data confirms that students from

the least advantaged groups are leaving school earlier and as a result attaining fewer qualifications which undermine their ability to access a sustainable positive destination. For this reason, Midlothian's priority remains to maintain students from the least advantaged backgrounds in mainstream education and training until the end of S6. We aim to achieve this by targeting Developing Young Workforce resources to develop progression pathways for all pupils which promote vocational partnerships which are complemented by an educational experience which respects and meets their needs and secures a positive destination.

- To close the gap between the most and the least deprived learners at all stages.
- To continue to share best practice across the six secondary schools in order to ensure robust tracking and monitoring arrangements are in place to both support and challenge further improvements in attainment.

2.6 Assessing progress through the Broad General Education in line with the new National Improvement Framework

The National Improvement Framework was launched on 6th January 2016, the guidance contained within this new framework was shared with all Head Teachers in a professional seminar led by Education Scotland. In addition, further strategic guidance, tailored to Midlothian, was issued in the form of Professional Practice Paper 67 – Guidelines on planning for improvement. As part of our aspiration to create a World-Class Education System in Midlothian, in addition to the senior phase areas for improvement outlined on pages 2, 3, 5 and 6 of this report, the following key strategic outcomes for session 2016/17 have been prioritised:

1. To build excellence by raising attainment overall:
 - 2% increase in the number of children achieving the expected CfE level in Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking, Numeracy and Maths by the end of P1, P4, P7 and S3
 - 2% increase in attendance
 - 2% decrease in exclusions
2. To close the gap between the most and the least disadvantaged:
 - 5% increase in the number of children from SIMD 1 and 2 achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking, Numeracy and Maths by the end of P1, P4, P7 and S3
3. Teaching, Learning and Assessment:
 - To continue to support schools with moderation, tracking and assessment of progress through the Broad General Education (BGE).
 - Visible Learning should continue to underpin the development of assessment capable learners; and to support teachers to *know thy impact*.
4. Self-evaluation for Self-Improvement and Leadership of Change:
 - To implement the School Leadership Programme to support the delivery of the new Education (Scotland) Act; NIF; GIRFEC Named Person; and HGIOS 4
 - To grow our ASGs into Learning Communities in order to continue to build the self-improving system updating resources in line with HGIOS 4 and the new NIF.

Planning ahead, the timeline for the National Improvement Framework has also been published and the key national milestones are outlined below:

2016

- Development and piloting of new national standardised assessments
- Publication of advice and guidance on achievement of a CfE level in literacy and numeracy
- Interim reporting arrangements for schools and local authorities
- Increased moderation and support for teacher professional judgement
- Work with local authorities and parent organisations to improve the consistency of reporting to parents of children's progress
- Further work to develop evidence from early years activity and alignment with school years
- Inclusion of Key Performance Indicators from Developing Young Workforce programme
- Consideration of a wider range of awards and achievements including those gained from Community Learning and Development
- Development of statutory guidance on reporting duties under Education (Scotland) Bill

2017

- Introduction of new national standardised assessments in schools
- New reporting duties under Education (Scotland) Bill
- Introduction of more evidence on early years
- First statutory Framework reporting for schools and local authorities

2018

- Development of standardised assessments for Gaelic Medium Education
- Consideration of evidence of children's progress in other curricular areas
- Dashboard for school, local authority and national use

In line with the priorities for 2016, this report asks for approval to replace the current assessment terminology of *Developing, Consolidating and Secure* which is used in Midlothian to be replaced with the term *Achieving a level* in order to bring in line with the reporting arrangements required by the National Improvement Framework. During session 2016/17, a baseline average will be established and this reporting on CfE levels will be built into our quarterly reporting.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

The Education Leadership Teams, all Head Teachers and staff are committed to closing the attainment gap and this will remain a key priority as we move forward.

3.2 Risk

Addressing Inequalities by closing the attainment gap is of significant importance in order to improve the life chances of children and young people in our care.

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

GIRFEC 5: Our people will be successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

To close the gap by improving 'attainment versus deprivation' and 'attainment for all' outcomes for children and young people.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The Education (Scotland) Bill aims to take preventative action in order to close the attainment versus deprivation gap by implementing key policies and programmes which are designed to target support to children and young people from disadvantaged communities. This second 2015 Attainment Report highlights our commitment to closing the attainment gap which compliments the strategies employed by Midlothian which were highlighted in the National Improvement Framework report which was presented to Council on 3 November 2015.

3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

All Head Teachers update their Parent Councils on progress in terms of attainment and all schools publish their Standards and Quality reports for Parents and other stakeholders.

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

The recommendations in this report should continue to promote equity of attainment for disadvantaged children and support the steps being taken towards narrowing the attainment gap by imposing duties on education authorities and the Scottish Ministers in relation to reducing pupils' inequalities of educational outcome together with a duty to report on progress.

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

There are no impacts arising directly from this report

3.10 IT Issues

Ongoing dialogue is taking place with SEEMiS and Digital Services to ensure that we are on target for the introduction of the new system for data collection in line with the guidance on the National Improvement Framework.

4 Recommendations

Council is asked to:

- Note the significant improvements in performance outlined in this report.
- Note the next steps for improvement outlined on pages 2, 3, 5 and 6 of this report.
- Agree to provide a report to Council in June outlining progress with Visible Learning
- Agree to provide the opportunity for elected members to take part in a seminar on Visible Learning prior to the June Council report.

- To approve that the term 'achieving a level', in line with the new National Improvement Framework, be adopted which will replace the existing assessment terminology of developing, consolidating, secure.

Date 25 April 2016

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Appendix 1: Tariff Table

SCQF Level	Grade	SCQF Points	Tariff Score
7	A	32	480
	B	32	440
	C	32	400
	D	32	380
	Individual units	Varies	$17/2 \times \text{SCQF Points}$
6	A	24	204
	B	24	182
	C	24	160
	D	24	149
	Individual units	Varies	$14/3 \times \text{SCQF Points}$
5	A	24	84
	B	24	74
	C	24	64
	D	24	59
	Individual units	Varies	$11/6 \times \text{SCQF Points}$
4	Course – Pass	24	33
	Added value unit	6	15
	Individual units	Varies	$1 \times \text{SCQF Points}$
3	Total units	18	12
	Individual units	Varies	$2/3 \times \text{SCQF Points}$
2	Total units	18	6
	Individual units	Varies	$1/3 \times \text{SCQF Points}$
1	Individual units	6	1