

Perth And Kinross Council

**Learning And Families Committee
25 October 2023**

**Scrutiny And Performance Committee
11 December 2023**

RAISING ATTAINMENT UPDATE

**Report by Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)
(Report No. 23/280)**

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report provides an update to progress on the Education and Children's Services Raising Attainment Strategy 2020-2023. Specifically, it provides information on a range of performance measures across the National Improvement Framework (NIF) for education priorities.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Learning and Families Committee:

- Considers and comments as appropriate on the contents of the report.

It is recommended that the Scrutiny and Performance Committee:

- Scrutinises and comments as appropriate on this report.

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

- 3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:

- Section 4: Background
- Section 5: Performance Summary
- Section 6: Conclusion
- Appendices

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A renewed [Raising Attainment Strategy](#) was approved by the Lifelong Learning Committee in August 2020 ([Report No. 20/140 refers](#)), building upon the previous version for the period 2016-2019.
- 4.2 The Education Improvement Plan 2023/2024 was approved by the Learning and Families Committee in August 2023 ([Report No. 23/224 refers](#)) and was subsequently submitted to the Scottish Government. This annual Education Improvement Plan meets the requirement set out by the Scottish Government

on planning and reporting progress on the priorities set out in the NIF for education.

- 4.3 This Raising Attainment Update report provides an update on key achievements for the academic session 2022/2023 on the progress against the NIF. Appendix 1 provides more detailed reporting on the attainment data pertinent to the Raising Attainment Strategy.
- 4.4 The Raising Attainment Strategy outlines the approach within Perth & Kinross Council's (PKC) Education & Children's Services (ECS) in the pursuance of the current relevant priorities of the NIF which are:
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy;
 - Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged;
 - Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing; and
 - Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.
- 4.5 These priorities guide the reporting of progress using a range of measures describing both excellence – performance for all; and equity – focusing on poverty-related and other gaps in outcomes.
- 4.6 The Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress (the Framework) has been developed to support the next phase of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC). It aims to set high expectations, including three year stretch aims with annual milestones, developed across all 32 education authorities, to help ensure progress is made in recovering from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and in achieving the mission of the SAC.
- 4.7 The SAC report noted that there has been some progress in closing the poverty related attainment gap but 'at a limited pace' during this period of recovery from COVID-19. The pandemic disrupted the learning of children and young people and affected the wellbeing of many. It is also evident that there has been a disproportionate impact on children and young people affected by poverty.
- 4.8 Data published by [Public Health Scotland, Early Child Development Scotland 2021 to 2022](#) statistics in April 2023 indicates that there were increases in the proportion of children with a developmental concern assessed during the 13-15 months, 27-30 months and the 4-5 year child health reviews. Consideration is being given to what actions are required to mitigate the impact of these developmental concerns and to ensure that children are supported to achieve their potential.

5. PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

- 5.1 Appendix 1 provides information on the progress made in academic session 2022/2023 towards each of the four NIF priorities relevant to this report. Key performance measures reported include:

Improvement in attainment particularly in literacy and numeracy

- 79.8% of P1 children have met all developmental milestones prior to starting school.
- For primary pupils, achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels has maintained or improved on 2022 attainment - largely the highest seen in almost all curricular areas and stages.
- For secondary pupils in S3, achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels at Level 4 have improved from 52% to 64%.
- National 5 (N5) Levels pass rate is 81% - higher than our comparator authorities and the Scottish average.

Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged

- The poverty-related attainment gap for P1, P4, P7 and S3 has narrowed for all stages.
- The poverty-related attainment gap, in terms of pass rates, is better than the Scottish average for N5, Higher and Advanced Higher.
- The percentage of care-experienced primary school pupils at P1, P4 and P7 achieving expected levels in literacy and numeracy combined, increased by 14%.
- Attainment, in terms of pass rates in Senior Phase of our Looked After Children, has improved at National 4 as part of a consistent trend from 2020-2023, while National 5 pass rates have remained stable at 74%.

Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

- School attendance was maintained at around 92.5% in primary but decreased from 88% to 87% in secondary schools. Plans to arrest this decline in attendance are part of the Education Improvement Plan 2023/2024.
- Exclusion rates remain on a steady downward trajectory once account has been taken of Covid related school closure.

Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people

- Participation in positive activities (16–19-year-olds) is slightly improved on 2021 data and sits positively within a national context.
- Effective partnership takes place between schools, colleges, universities, employers and the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Board.
- Training was provided in March 2022 to enable more school staff to undertake health and safety checks in order to approve work placements. Twilight sessions were run by the central PKC work experience team and ongoing support to schools has seen work experience placements increase from 260 in 2021/22 to 450 in 2022/23.

5.2 Key areas to focus improvement activity on for academic session 2023-2024 are to improve the number of young people attaining at Level 6 (Higher and equivalent) by the point of leaving school, and to prioritise improved outcomes for key priority groups, including young carers; those most affected by poverty, and children and young people looked after at home.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The report outlines, in detail, a range of measures describing progress in raising attainment and related outcomes for children and young people across Perth and Kinross.
- 6.2 Notable improvements are seen in many key measures. There are some positive indications of the narrowing of poverty-related gaps in many outcomes; to which, a sustained focus will be maintained to reduce these poverty-related gaps further.

Author

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ANNEX

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes/None
Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement	None
Corporate Plan	None
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	None
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objective No. (ii).

Corporate Plan

1.2 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Objectives:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objective No. (ii).

1.3 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Vision, Values and Priorities in respect of the following key Priority area:

- Best Start

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 All actions are taken forward within the Education and Children's Services revenue budget.

Workforce

2.2 N/A

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 N/A

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

The proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- (i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

The proposals have been considered under the Act; however, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report. This is because the Committee are requested to note the contents of the report only and the Committee are not being requested to approve, adopt or agree to an action or to set the framework for future decisions.

Sustainability

3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the

achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:

- In the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets.
- In the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaption programmes.
- In a way that it considers most sustainable.

3.3.1 N/A

Legal and Governance

3.4 N/A

3.5 N/A

Risk

3.6 N/A

4. Consultation

Internal

4.1 Service Managers within Education and Children's Services were consulted in the preparation of this report. Consultation on the stretch aims was conducted with Headteachers and Education Officers.

External

4.2 N/A

5. Communication

5.1 N/A

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

2.1 No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

3. APPENDICES

3.1 Appendix 1 - Attainment Report 2022-2023