

APPENDIX B

National Benchmark Measures – Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) 2023/24, Aberdeen City

Introduction

The following offers an initial evaluation of data relating to the Achievement of Curriculum Levels in 2023/24 derived from the publication of this information on 10th December 2024, focusing on the core measures at primary and secondary (S3 -Third Level or better) stages, These link directly to Aberdeen City's current National Improvement Framework Plan, and the National Performance Benchmark Measures for education.

Context of Achievement

Alongside the quality of teaching, the most influential drivers of pupil engagement, and subsequently overall achievement, relate to attendance levels, relative poverty and English Language skills. In 2023/24, Aberdeen City had a consistently high level of pupil attendance in both phases and a relatively small proportion of pupils in the Most Deprived quintile (just over 10% of all pupils in most stages captured in this document) The impact of this latter influence on measurable change is described in the Data Variability paragraph below.

Aberdeen City in the 2023/24 academic year had a significantly greater proportion of Broad Education pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) than most education authorities, varying from 19.1% in primary schools to 17.2% in secondary phases, EAL was the largest single contributing factor to the number of pupils with Additional Support Needs (ASN).in the city with over 4,100 pupils in this category.

In general terms, the proportion of pupils recorded as having English as an Additional Language was around twice that of the national levels. This, based on current understandings, was a strong endemic influence on the differentials between outcomes for Literacy and Numeracy noted across the majority of measures.

The relative impacts of each of these factors on 2023/24 achievement will be better understood, and contextualised against benchmarks, through the process of advanced data analysis by the Service and Data Insights colleagues on the release of additional Broad General Education Toolkit information.

Traffic Light Visualisation

Across the sections below, covering Curriculum for Excellence datasets, the following 'traffic light' legends are applied to define movement of 2023/24 academic year values in comparison with 2022/23 outcomes.

The application of these legends is based on variations in datasets of > +/- 1 percentage points, which takes some account of purely statistically based influences, such as changes in cohort characteristics (see below) and proportional levels of deprivation. These aids are offered to visually assist interpretation of the data contained in these sections. Data-based 'traffic lighting' does not automatically infer change that has had a material impact on educational outcomes.

Legend
Improving Year-on-year
Unchanged year-on-year
Deteriorating year on year

Data Variability within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) Quintile Data

In regards to the interpretation of data tables 2,3, 5 and 6 below, caution should be exercised in comparative analysis between SIMD groupings, both in-year, and between years, as the cohort sizes vary significantly and proportionately reduce moving down deprivation quintiles (SIMD 5 to 1) and this can influence the extent of % change.





In general, the outcomes for smaller cohorts, and changes in these numbers from one year to another, can be more statistically sensitive to the performance of a relatively low number of pupils, resulting in % variations that exceed the impact of the same number of pupils achieving the similar educational outcomes in the largest SIMD cohort (SIMD 5)

1. Achievement in Primary 1,4 and 7 Combined

Key Findings

- The percentage of primary school pupils achieving the expected Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels for both Literacy and Numeracy in 2023/24 was higher than in 2022/23 and was the highest to date for these core organiser measures. This mirrors the national landscape.
- The year-on-year and three year improvement rate for Literacy is the stronger of the two core organisers and is closing the distance to Numeracy outcomes. This trend also mirrors the national landscape.

Table 1. P1,4 and 7 Combined by Curriculum Organisers, Aberdeen City

Aberdeen	Organiser	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Short Trend - Annual	Long Trend - Annual
P1, P4 and P7 combined	Literacy	69	71	73		
P1, P4 and P7 combined	Numeracy	77	78	79		

2. Achievement in the Context of Deprivation, P 1,4 and 7 Combined

Key Findings

- The proportion of P1,4 and 7 (Combined) pupils achieving the expected levels in both Literacy and Numeracy has risen across almost every SIMD Quintile on 2022/23.

- Literacy achievement is demonstrating slightly greater, and more consistent improvement in comparison with Numeracy but overall is showing lower achievement levels across the five Quintiles

Table 2. P1,4 and 7 Combined outcomes by Curriculum Organisers and SIMD Quintile , Aberdeen City

Year	SIMD	Literacy	Numeracy
2023/24	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	60	68
	SIMD Quintile 2	65	72
	SIMD Quintile 3	72	78
	SIMD Quintile 4	77	83
	SIMD Quintile 5- least deprived	83	87
	Local Authority Total	73	79
2022/23	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	57	65
	SIMD Quintile 2	63	71
	SIMD Quintile 3	69	76
	SIMD Quintile 4	76	81
	SIMD Quintile 5- least deprived	81	86
	Local Authority Total	71	78
2021/22	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	58	66
	SIMD Quintile 2	61	69
	SIMD Quintile 3	64	72
	SIMD Quintile 4	74	82
	SIMD Quintile 5- least deprived	79	87
	Local Authority Total	63	72

3. Closing the Poverty Related Achievement Gap, P1, 4 and 7 Combined

Key Findings

- The gap between the proportion of primary school pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) from the Most and Least deprived areas who achieved the expected level in Literacy remained at 23 percentage points in 2023/24 but was slightly lower than in most years prior to 2021/22.
- The gap between the proportion of primary school pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) from the Most and Least deprived areas who achieved their expected level in Numeracy narrowed from 20 percentage points in 2022/23 to 19 percentage points in 2023/24.





Table 3. P1,4&7 (Combined) – Percentage Point Distances to Least Deprived Quintile by Curriculum Organisers and SIMD Quintile, Aberdeen City

Year	SIMD	Literacy	Numeracy
2023/24	SIMD Quintile 1- Most Deprived	-23	-19
	SIMD Quintile 2	-18	-15
	SIMD Quintile 3	-11	-9
	SIMD Quintile 4	-6	-4
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		
2022/23	SIMD Quintile 1- Most Deprived	-23	-20
	SIMD Quintile 2	-18	-15
	SIMD Quintile 3	-11	-10
	SIMD Quintile 4	-5	-5
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		
2021/22	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	-21	-21
	SIMD Quintile 2	-18	-17
	SIMD Quintile 3	-15	-15
	SIMD Quintile 4	-4	-4
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		
2018/19	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	-24	-20
	SIMD Quintile 2	-18	-14
	SIMD Quintile 3	-13	-9
	SIMD Quintile 4	-4	-4

Secondary Phase**4. Achievement Secondary (Senior 3 pupils – Third Level or better)****Key Findings**

- For S3 pupils, the proportions achieving Third Level or better for Literacy, and Numeracy were marginally lower than in 2022/23 across both organisers but within the statistical tolerances outlined above which suggests that there is limited educational impact to be interpreted from this variation,

Table 4. S3 (Third Level or better) outcomes by Levels achieved and Curriculum Organisers – Aberdeen City

Aberdeen	Organiser	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Short Trend - Annual	Long Trend - Annual
S3 Third Level or Better	Literacy	80	82	81		
S3 Third Level or Better	Numeracy	89	90	89		

5. National Benchmark Measure Achievement in the Context of Deprivation – S3 Third Level or better, Aberdeen City**Key Findings**

- Outcomes across a majority of SIMD quintiles, and for Literacy overall, were marginally lower than in 2022/23, However, the % of pupils achieving the expected levels within the two most deprived quintiles individually, and in combination were the highest values to date in 2022/23. Nonetheless, the outcome for the SIMD 2 quintile represented a more significant year-on-year change.
- Numeracy achievement in 2022/24 overall, and across some SIMD quintiles, dipped in comparison with 2022/23. Although both SIMD 2 and 3 fell by roughly similar margins, the outcome for the SIMD 3 cohort represents the more significant trend in that this a second consecutive year of reduced achievement, and the 2022/23 figure for SIMD 2 was a high tide mark for this measure

Table 5. S3 (Third Level or Better) by SIMD Quintile, Aberdeen City

Year	SIMD	Literacy	Numeracy
2023/24	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	63	77
	SIMD Quintile 2	71	83

	SIMD Quintile 3	80	84
	SIMD Quintile 4	87	90
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived	91	97
	Local Authority Total	81	89
2022/23	SIMD Quintile 1 - most deprived	65	76
	SIMD Quintile 2	77	87
	SIMD Quintile 3	78	87
	SIMD Quintile 4	86	90
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived	92	96
	Local Authority Total	82	90
2021/22	SIMD Quintile 1 - most deprived	63	77
	SIMD Quintile 2	76	83
	SIMD Quintile 3	79	89
	SIMD Quintile 4	84	93
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived	89	95
	Local Authority Total	80	89

6. National Benchmark Measure - Closing the Poverty Related Attainment Gap, (S3 Third Level or better), Aberdeen City

Key Findings

- The gap between the proportion of S3 pupils from the Most and Least deprived areas who achieved Third Level or better in Literacy in 2023/24 was similar to that in 2022/23.
- The gap between the proportion of S3 pupils from the Most and Least deprived areas who achieved Third Level or better in Numeracy in 2022/23 was unchanged.
- For both Literacy and Numeracy, the 2023/24 gaps between the Most and Least Deprived were substantially lower than in the years prior to 2021/22. Data from 2018/19, the last prior year where assessments were conducted is included in this table as a means of demonstrating this trend

Table 6. S3 Third Level or better, Percentage Point Distances to the Least Deprived Quintile, (SIMD) Aberdeen City

Year	SIMD	Literacy	Numeracy
2023/24	SIMD Quintile 1 - Most Deprived	-28	-20
	SIMD Quintile 2	-20	-14
	SIMD Quintile 3	-11	-13
	SIMD Quintile 4	-4	-7
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		
2022/23	SIMD Quintile 1 - Most Deprived	-28	-20
	SIMD Quintile 2	-15	-9
	SIMD Quintile 3	-14	-9
	SIMD Quintile 4	-6	-6
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		
2021/22	SIMD Quintile 1 - most deprived	-26	-19
	SIMD Quintile 2	-13	-13
	SIMD Quintile 3	-14	-6
	SIMD Quintile 4	-5	-3
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		
2018/19	SIMD Quintile 1 - most deprived	-31	-35
	SIMD Quintile 2	-20	-19
	SIMD Quintile 3	-14	-14
	SIMD Quintile 4	-7	-4
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived		

No data is applied against SIMD 5 outcomes as this measure reflects the attainment gap between SIMD 5 and that of other SIMD quintiles