The Northern Alliance

Draft Regional Improvement Framework Plan January 2018

DRAFT

Contents

1. Introduction

The Northern Alliance is a collaboration between eight local authorities, across the North of Scotland: Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Eilean Siar [Western Isles], Highland, Moray, Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands. Our shared vision is to improve the educational and life chances of our children and young people. To remove the barriers to learning and improve children's outcomes, the collaborative seeks to build on the strengths of shared service development, create professional networks and deliver continuous professional development. The Northern Alliance exists to make a difference to the lives of children and young people by ensuring that the professionals who work with them collaborate for improvement and impact.

The reach of the Northern Alliance is vast, covering 58.4% of the landmass of Scotland, yet it represents a small percentage of the Scottish population. This area has amongst the highest levels of rurality and the lowest levels of population density within a context of economic fragility and poverty. The geography and common challenges experienced across the region moved the Alliance to identify new ways of working and adopt a shared approach to the communities it represents in the north of Scotland and in the islands.

In response to the Governance Review of Scottish Education, the Alliance has sought to further develop its culture of collaboration. This has resulted in the sharing of expertise in a range of areas: curriculum development, school estates, early years and Integrated Children's Services development, as well as establishment of local and regional networks. Partnership working has enabled the Northern Alliance to deliver programmes such as Emerging Literacy and Leadership Development, which are already benefiting schools and teachers across the region. The Raising Attainment in Literacy, Language and Communication workstream is currently providing direct support to practitioners in 47% of primary schools across the Northern Alliance.

A key strength of the Northern Alliance is found in its commitment to distributed leadership at all levels. This approach allows flexible and organic partnerships to emerge, which cross professional and geographic boundaries. This 'bottom up' approach is reflected in the origins of a
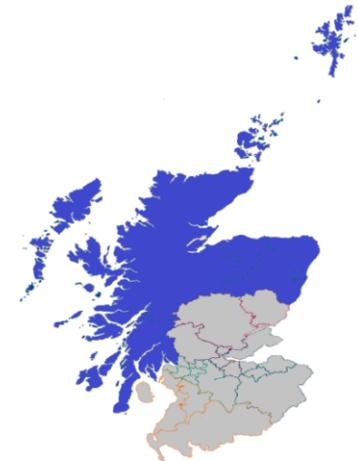
number of the Alliance's workstreams such as the Equalities group and more generally, in the practitioner informed approach that shapes all our activities.

By building on our collective experiences as a regional improvement collaborative we are confident we can make a meaningful difference to the lives of children and young people. To measure our impact the Alliance is committed to evaluating performance data through the use of pupil data. Alongside the use of quantitative data we draw on qualitative data to capture information from teachers and practitioners, which is collated into the formal evaluation of programmes. Our commitment to ongoing evaluation across all of the programmes allows the Alliance to measure impact and target improvement. We aim to grow and develop this approach with other partners – such as NHS, universities and national agencies.

Central to the work of the Alliance is the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the shared aim to achieve equity in educational outcomes, with a focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap. This is of particular interest to the Northern Alliance given the aforementioned challenges experienced by the region. To this end, the high level priorities outlined in the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan are aligned to the aims of the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the National Improvement Framework [NIF hereafter]. This initial plan covers the period up until the end of the school year in 2019 although this may be subject to change following the outcome of the Scottish Governments consultation on the Education Bill.

The Northern Alliances seeks to deliver on the following priorities:

- Priority 1: Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy
- Priority 2: Closing the outcome gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
- Priority 3: Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Priority 4: Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.

As a group of eight local authorities we are committed to improving outcomes and closing the gap, which exists across our wide and varied communities and crucially, keeping the child and family at the centre of all that we do. Schools, teachers and headteachers have a clear role to play, but for too many young people and families, this is not enough. Some of our young people and their families require family support workers, social workers, school nurses and many others besides. While the priorities outlined in the Regional Improvement Plan highlight the aim of the NIF, the activities and outlook of the Northern Alliance is far broader. The Alliance champions a child and family-centred approach to address the achievement gap and to drive improvement.

To realise our vision, we work in a multi-layered way. Some programmes are directed, such as those which support the above mentioned priorities. The Emerging Literacy, Numeracy, Maths Attainment and Modern Foreign Languages programmes contribute to directly improving attainment. A significant number of our workstreams cut across all the priorities and are reflective of the leadership ethos which we have promoted over the last three years. These workstreams not only reflect the wider imperative to improve all children's services, but have come about by middle managers and leaders recognising themselves the benefits of collaboration to improve services more quickly and sustainably. However, not all schools will be involved in all improvement activities at any given time.

The development of the plan is an ongoing iterative process and a second phase of the plan will be developed and submitted to Education Scotland in August 2018. The Regional Improvement leads and Scottish Government are due to meet ahead of the next iteration of the plan to discuss evidence of impact and the application of improvement methodology. Resource allocation for the workstreams will be mapped out in the next iteration of the plan (phase 2) but initial workforce planning considerations and factors are outlined in a separate document.

The Northern Alliance is a committed learning collaborative and as such will continue to develop and learn as programmes embed and develop, we are committed to working in partnership nationally, regionally and locally and welcome wider collaborations and learning which develop impact and drive improvement across the country. We will add to and amend the Regional Improvement Plan as we learn from what works well, where change is needed and importantly to react to feedback and requests from schools and teachers to aid their work with children and young people.

2. Northern Alliance Workstreams

Northern Alliance Workstreams

Regional Coordination Programme Lead

Regional Impact Plan	Reporting	Regional NIF
Website development	Communications	School to School Networking
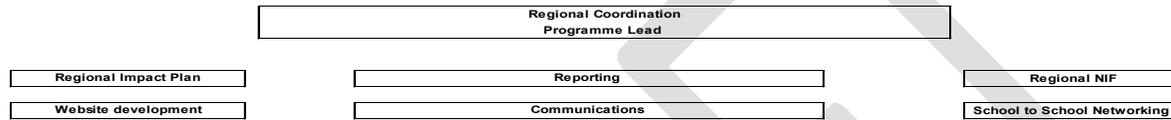
	Emergency Literacy programme	Numeracy Programme	Maths Attainment Programme	Leadership Development / NIF Programme	Early Years and Child Care Programme	Performance/ Data Sharing Programme	Children's Services Development Group	MFL Development Group	Improvement Cycle Development Work	Technology/T ASSC Programme	Poverty/Closing the Gap Development	Future Delivery Models / Estates	IT transformation [Esgoil]	Equalities	School Improvement	Community Learning & Development
Programme Sponsor	Laurence Findlay	Laurence Findlay	Laurence Findlay	Laurence Findlay	Bill Alexander	Laurence Findlay	Bill Alexander	Laurence Finlay	Laurence Finlay	Maria Walker	Helen Budge	Wilf Weir	Bernard Chisholm	Laurence Findlay	Maria Walker	Maria Walker
Programme Lead	James Cook	Felicity Martin	David Clark	Vincent Doherty/SCEL regional officer	Katherine Diamond (TBC)	Reyna Stewart	Byrony Revell	Laurence Finlay	Sacha Will, SG Improvement Service (Programme Officer)	Craig Clements	Shetland QIO	James XX, Orkney	Bernard Chisholm	Caroline Hastings [tbc]	Andrew Griffiths	Avril Nicol
Focus	Raising Attainment in literacy	Raising Attainment in mathematics	Review of attainment in mathematics, T&L approaches	Raising attainment in NIF areas	Delivering 1140 hours EYCC policy	Create shared data set for NA work	To ensure alignment and coherence across NA ICS plans and workstreams	To develop !+2 languages, embed teacher subject knowledge	Embed Improvement methodology in schools/education	To review offer of TASSC across the region	To explore rural poverty and it's impact on attainment	To develop innovative approaches to future of children's estate	To explore development and impact of Esgoil model across the region		To develop shared school improvement methodology	
Outcome	Impact on closing the gaps, teacher subject knowledge and attainment	Impact on closing the gaps, numerical confidence of teachers and pupils, reduce maths anxiety	Identify key areas for development, strengthen T&L, create curriculum pathway for BGE	Improving attainment, closing attainment gap	Improving access, quality and closing economic/ attainment gap	Shared agreement re data to help drive performance of NA programmes	Work towards shared improvements across the NA, sharing of best practice, innovation in approach across the region	Increase teacher subject knowledge, extend qualified teacher numbers, raise attainment	Improvement methodology driving system level improvement, empowered leadership to raise attainment	deliver central aligned service for NA, improve access for children, cost reduction	identify key indicators of rural poverty: reduce impact on attainment	reduce costs: share best practice, create innovative plans for future services	Wider access to full curriculum, cost reduction, transformation of T&L		Improving attainment, closing attainment gap	
Number of Schools	486	60	81	Schools/Settings: 250	Schools/Settings: All	All	N/a - all partners	30	30, headteachers /senior managers	All	150	All/ all partners	tbc	TBC	all	TBC
Year groups	P1, EY	P3/4	S1-4	All P/S	EYCC	N/A	N/A	P1-7	all	All	All	N/A	tbc		N/A	

3. Northern Alliance Priorities

High Level Priorities

Priority 1 Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy	Priority 2 Closing the outcome gap between most and least disadvantaged children	Priority 3 Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing	Priority 4 Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people
❖ Empower leaders to confidently lead the raising attainment agenda at school, ASG, City and across the Northern Alliance via implementation of impactful professional learning ❖ In collaboration with the Northern Alliance, develop shared approaches to assessment and moderation. ❖ Work across the Northern Alliance to shape a literacy and numeracy strategy to improve attainment	❖ Work in collaboration to develop programmes to support the implementation of the Pupil Equity Fund ❖ Use PEF data across the Northern Alliance to analyse common focus to frame future improvement priorities. ❖ Establish consistent criteria in how we all measure / baseline gaps	❖ Work across the Northern Alliance to reduce the impact of adverse childhood experiences and chronic neglect.	❖ Collaborate with the Northern Alliance to establish and implement a strategy on Developing the Young Workforce to increase the number of young people reaching a positive and sustained destination ❖ Curriculum re-design and learner journey

Workstreams Cutting Across All Priorities					
Workforce Planning	Leadership Development	Early Learning and Childcare	Future Delivery Models/Estates	Integrated Children's Services	Performance and Data Sharing
Esgoil	Improvement Cycle Development Work	Community Learning and Development	Technology TASSC	Equalities	School Improvement

4. Northern Alliance 'Northern Star' Workstream Diagram

[Please note this is still in design phase]
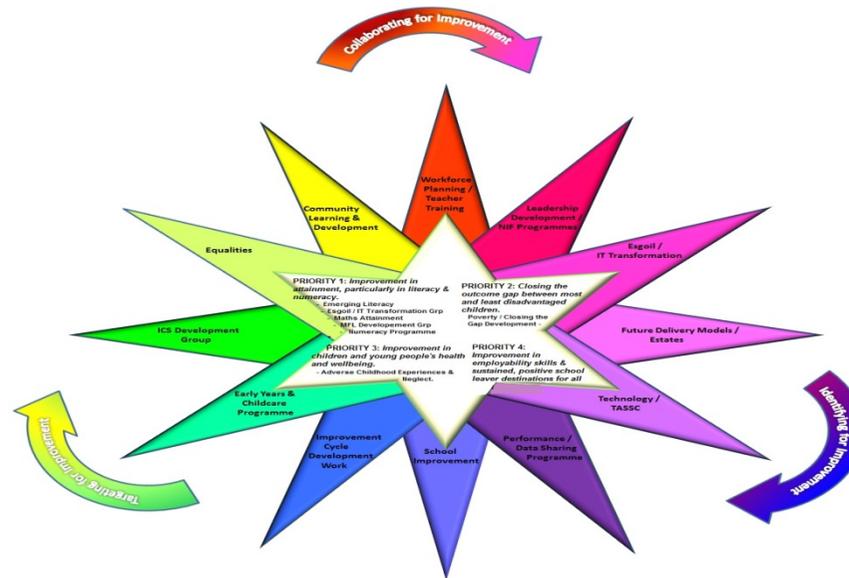
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5. <u>The Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan – How This Will Be Achieved</u>

PRIORITY AREAS	KEY DRIVERS	
1 Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy 2 Closing the outcome gap between the most and least disadvantaged children 3 Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing 4 Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people	SL TP PE ACP SI PI	School Leadership Teacher Professionalism Parental Engagement Assessment of Children's Progress School Improvement Performance Information

Priority 1: Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy				
Improvement Activity	**This is how we'll do it**	**By Whom**	**By When**	**Evidence of Impact**
By 2020 at least 85% of children within each SMID quintile will have successfully achieved early level literacy: ❖ **Learners benefit from high quality research informed pedagogy, beginning in Early Learning and Childcare and beyond, which is delivered by confident practitioners with enhanced subject knowledge, supported by**	• In 2017/2018, supporting 47% of schools in taking a developmental approach to Emerging Literacy through: • professional learning which is co-designed by education practitioners and allied health professionals, delivered across the Northern Alliance. • enabling network collaboration at a universal level between education and allied health professionals • local networks of practice to support ongoing professional learning at Local Authority level and at cluster level	• Literacy lead: James Cook • Launch Events • Local Networks	• June 2017 • September 2017 January 2018 March 2018	• CfE Achievement of a Level Judgement Data – P1 Listening and Talking, Reading and Writing to show how taking a developmental approach to emerging literacy contributes to achievement of a level. Analysis will evaluate on whole cohort outcomes and outcomes linked to SIMD • CfE levels for P1 reading

senior leaders who enable ongoing progress **Key Drivers:** ACP SL TP PI ❖ **Empower leaders and teachers to confidently lead the raising attainment agenda at school, ASG and across the Northern Alliance via implementation of impactful professional learning.** **Key Drivers:** SL PI	• online collaboration to support "families" of practitioners who support learners across similar demographics. • buddy networks of practice to support ongoing professional learning in clusters of schools. • Access to online resources to support ongoing learning and teaching. • In 2018/2019, continue to scale the support of the number of schools across the Northern Alliance taking a developmental approach to Emerging Literacy through: • developing the skills of lead practitioners in each local authority to support practitioners at local level. • enhancing buddy networks which build capacity at school and cluster level to enable a whole-school approach to emerging literacy • expanding on the resources to support the five key areas of concepts of print, executive functions, oral language, phonological awareness and pre-handwriting. • sharing practice examples which have had an impact on practice and bettered	• Buddy Network/ Yammer Launch • Reflection Events • Partnership Group Meetings • Resources • Lead Practitioners • Practice Examples • Collected and shared 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 via Northern Alliance website • **2018/2019** Mirror support structure of 2017/2018 with:	• Nov 2017 • June 2018 • Nov 2017; March 2018 • Ongoing • Support 2018/2019 • 2017/18 and 2018/19 • 2018/19	writing listening and talking improved in areas where practice has been adopted. Level of improvement to provide benchmarking for future roll out • Confidence/ Impact of practice reflections – measured through the local networks to demonstrate the impact on practice which is leading to better outcomes for children • CPD evaluations will identify the following: - which areas have made the biggest impact to practice; how, qualitatively, is a developmental approach bettering outcomes for children

	outcomes for children.	additional Buddy Networks local support through lead practitioners		
Numeracy ❖ **Develop teacher confidence and leadership in relation to numeracy** **Key Drivers:** SL PI TP	• In 2017/2018, the numeracy programme will improve attainment across the Northern Alliance by: • developing professional understandings e.g. how to identify 'hard to teach' areas in numeracy • develop networks of educational practitioners and allied health professionals to co-design professional learning, which will be delivered across the Northern Alliance. • Establish networks of practice (school cluster level). • Track one pupil throughout the year. • Literature review / research of educational projects and best practice. • Practitioner enquiry (participation)	Numeracy lead: Felicity Martin Launch Events	• Nov 2017 • Ongoing • Nov 2018 - onwards	• Northern Alliance Numeracy data – longitudinal surveys in increasing pupil confidence /less maths anxiety • Attitude surveys [numeracy] – increased teacher confidence • Gloss assessment (NZ) • SNSA data [Dec '18] • Numeracy - CfE level of judgement data (primary 4)
❖ **Ensure all primary teachers across the Northern Alliance see themselves as teachers of language.**	• Develop moderation work in and across primary and secondary. • Focus on tracking and monitoring of languages across the BGE.	Lead: Laurence Findlay	• June	• Increased uptake in languages in the Senior Phase: • Insight data set • Annual 1+2 survey of primary languages

❖ **Develop strong connections and synergy between emerging literacy and language learning ensuring a connected curriculum and a more integrated approach to raising attainment in literacy.** ❖ **Focus on improvement literacy through languages.** ❖ **Develop teacher confidence and leadership in relation to literacy and languages.** **Key Drivers:** SL PI PE TP ACP	• Align progression frameworks for languages across the Northern Alliance. • Develop links between emerging literacy approaches to phonics with 1+2. • Champion community languages through parental engagement and storytelling. • Develop a measure to gather data on community languages. • Include language development as an integral part of all literacy CLPL for teachers.		• 2019 • June 2019 • From Feb 2018-onwards	• Improved literacy attainment at all curriculum levels and in SQA examinations: • CfE and Insight data • Increase in the diversity of languages studied in the Senior Phase • Insight data set • Draw on case studies to measure parental engagement; Grampian Regional Equality Council [GREC]; data to assist in developing measure; British Sign Language [BSL] used as 1+2 in special schools • School inspection data: • 1+2 policy summary of inspection findings (Moray) • Collaborative links between secondary English and Modern Languages departments focussing on literacy

				development: • Case studies of good practice
❖ **Develop teacher confidence, professional understandings and leadership in relation in secondary maths attainment.** **Key Drivers:** TP SL PI	• Provide professional networking opportunities. • Utilise digital platforms (glow and website) to enhance and develop networking. • Create virtual communities/communities of practice. • Ensure leadership development programme in place for head teachers, senior leaders, subject and curriculum leaders. • Review of presentation policies • Review of maths attainment in Northern Alliance • Twinning of Schools • Transition for primary to secondary	Lead: Headteachers, SCEL Fellow, Dave Clark Lead: Dave Clark	• From Feb 2018- • From Feb 2018- onwards onwards	• Qualitative • Capture attendance at networking events and follow up survey from events • Evaluation reports to assess the development of a culture of learning and impact on practice • Longitudinal study of maths teachers • Annual Survey • Quantitative: • Assessment of link between attainment data and professional learning to identify impact of leadership development programme (3 year programme S1-S4) • SNSA

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❖ **In collaboration with The Northern Alliance, develop shared approaches to assessment and moderation.** **Key Drivers:** `TP` `PI` `ACP`	• Teachers to develop a greater shared understanding of standards (improved standardisation) by facilitating opportunities for professional networking. • Create virtual communities of practice to develop teacher judgement. • Introduce 'critical friend' approach to moderation (teachers moderating across the Northern Alliance region).	Lead: Regional Improvement Lead	• Through out school session 2018/19	• Teacher confidence survey: • sampling across the Northern Alliance • Use of web analytics to track use of online communities and resources • QAMSOs to assess teacher judgement • Collectively tracking teacher judgement across the Northern Alliance • Review of embedding standardisation in assessment and moderation
❖ **Increase and improve parental engagement.** ❖ **Develop shared approaches to family learning across the Northern Alliance region.** ❖ **Target grandparents / carers through Adult and Family learning.** **Key Drivers:** `PE`	• Inter-generational learning programmes to be developed • ESOL – family learning practice developed for ESOL families • Literacy, numeracies, IT literacy • CPD/Workforce development • Bolster training for parents/ grandparents/ carers on project linked activity: - e.g. taking children shopping, contributing to wider learning.	Lead: Avril Nicol	• From Feb 2018 onwards	• Introduce and embed Adult Achievement Award – initially in 3 LAs. • Measure uptake of SQA modules for accreditation of. • Measure consistent understanding of Family Learning – to support application of agreed measures

❖ **In collaboration with the Northern Alliance partners to deliver financial awareness and measure financial literacy.** **Key Drivers:** PE	• Develop professional understanding of financial literacy - (To be financially literate, individuals must demonstrate knowledge and skills needed to make choices within a financial marketplace that all consumers face regardless of their particular characteristics.) • Establish networks of practice between LAs and at locality level (Youthbanks; Credit Unions; links to Welfare Reform – benefits uptake rates)	Lead: Avril Nicol	• From April 2018	• Financial awareness training delivered in all 8 LAs • Development of agreed Financial Literacy Measures

Priority 2:   Closing the outcome gap between most and least disadvantaged children

Improvement Activity	This is how we'll do it	By Whom	By When	Evidence of Impact
❖ **Review of attainment across the Northern Alliance with a specific focus on our more most disadvantage children in order to identify 'the gap'** **Key Drivers:** SL PI PE TP ACP	• Group review attainment in maths across the Northern Alliances (stats review) • Establish statistical milestones, which identifies effective practice e.g. S4 scores. • Gap between SMID levels is analysed and described, and common themes identified • Review of Presentation policies • Review of Inspection outcomes for best practice/key themes • Work with Education Scotland on maths support and development from national thematic programme	Leads: HT, DHT, PT (Maths) Performance workstream	• June 2018	• Measures to be identified • Increased attainment for the lowest 20% of cohort • Clear articulation of the attainment gap in different areas
❖ **Identification of key development areas through consultations with schools and teachers** **Key Drivers:** TP SI SL	• Effective Pedagogy shared and developed • Curriculum pathways developed to be more inclusive and flexible • Strategic /operational effective practices	Lead: Ed. Psycs. All work stream leads	• Feb 2018 - ongoing	• L & T impact on engagement • Use of 'toolkits' / curriculum frameworks • Better of understanding of curriculum pathways • Exclusions and attendance data in specific areas / cohorts e.g. LAC or SIMD

❖ **Ensure all young people receive their entitlement to languages learning given the wider attainment benefits this brings for all learners regardless of background or ability.** **Key Drivers:** `SL`	• Provide clear consistent guidance for schools in relation to timetabling and presentation in Modern Languages to ensure a common approach across all our schools. • Involvement of key practioners in developing T&L tools to support learning	Lead: Laurence Findlay	• By no later than 2020 in line with the Government 1+ 2 strategy	• Uptake and presentation rates in Senior Phase Modern Languages linked to SIMD data • All learners receiving their entitlement to languages learning. • Insight analytical data set. • Use of rural deprivation measure [once developed]
❖ **Work in collaboration with The Northern Alliance to develop programmes to support the implementation of the Pupil Equity Fund.** **Key Drivers:** `SI` `PI`	• Establish systems to share best PEF practice across The Northern Alliance. • Identify how schools are making innovative use of PEF • Use expertise to create CLPL opportunities for other Head Teachers	Lead: Regional Improvement Lead	• From March 2018	• Evidence best use of PEF • CLP opportunities for schools • Case studies used on an annual basis using a good practice guide • HMIe evidence from inspections
❖ **Reduce child poverty [including rural poverty] in line with the provisions set out in the Child Poverty Act 2017**	• Develop an overall deprivation measure. • Work collaboratively to address the unique challenges that rural communities face. • Enable staff to continue career long professional learning regardless of area – utilise eLearning and online communities. • Utlise eSgoil.	Lead: Wilf Weir	• Ongoing	• Development of deprivation measure • Use of said measure to evidence impact • Work with ADES • Work with SG

Key Drivers: SI PI	• Continue to work with Scottish Government on tackling rural poverty.			
❖ **Ensure young people have access to wider achievement opportunities and accreditation.** **Key Drivers:** PI	• Accredited learning (youth and adult). • Menu of Accreditation opportunities. – DofE, Youth Achievement and Dynamic Youth Awards; John Muir Trust; Sports Leader; Princes Trust	Lead: Avril Nicol	• Feb 2018-2019	• Increase in uptake of DYA and YAA AND DofE – 3% uplift across NA • Particular focus on increased uptake from SIMD 1-3 . 5% Uplift across NA
❖ **LAC in Education (attainment)** **Key Drivers:** ACP SL TP PI	• Identify key leads in relation to vulnerable children and want to improve – ASN • ASN network sharing best practice • Review youth engagement across the Northern Alliance [year of the young person] • Adopt a virtual school approach to improving outcomes for Looked After Children • Share practice and progress from the established Virtual School in Aberdeen, in particular: - partnership working to improve engagement, participation and outcomes for Looked after and care experienced children and young people - improved understanding of processes	Lead: Bill Alexander Lead: Larissa Gordon	• March 2018 • March 2018	• Absence, Attendance, Exclusion data • Qualitative the views of our Looked After Children e.g. champions board (champion's board).

	- / partnerships with SW and other colleagues - Information for Foster Carers - the development of support and guidance for designated managers and class practitioners - develop shared policies relating to LAC in education - tracking and monitoring processes for Looked After and care experienced children and young people being educated in the local authority and those placed in another local authority. - Financial tracking – out of authority placements			
❖ **Agree stages for investment in earlier intervention – Early Years / P7-S1/ S3-4.** ❖ **ESOL using language as an area for intergenerational learning.** **Key Drivers: SL PI PE TP**	• Joint residential programmes e.g. health and wellbeing bespoke summer schools – residential. • Work collectively to harness holiday periods to target energy regarding SQA or Adult Learning	Lead: Avril Nicol	• From July 2018	• Share best practice • Develop agreed impactful programmes to be delivered in all 8 Las in holiday periods. • Improved learner outcomes – Literacy/ Numeracy/ Health & Wellbeing - feedback from teachers • Evaluation surveys –

				• increased confidence, participation measures. • Increased participation
❖ **Alternative learning programmes and Early interventions which target whole families.** ❖ **Key Drivers:** PE ACP PI	• Individualised/ flexible learning pathways – including element of family learning • Youth work in schools • Increased collaborative working with further and higher education to support curriculum delivery • Sharing curricular models across the NA • Mechanisms for school leaders to share best practice in use of PEF funding	Lead: Avril Nicol	• From June 2018	• Reduction in Out of Authority Placements. • Reduction in out of area placements • Increased attainment in your lowest 20% of cohort

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Priority 3:	Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing			

Improvement Activity	This is how we'll do it	By Whom	By When	Evidence of Impact
❖ **Work across the Northern Alliance to reduce the impact of adverse childhood experiences and chronic neglect** **Key Drivers:** PI PE TP	• Promoting understanding of ACEs and their impact. • Earlier identification and assessment of chronic neglect • Responding to chronic neglect • Strategies to promote resilience	Lead: Bill Alexander	• From March, 2018.	• Pooling of staff resource across LA teams
❖ **Develop an effective partnership across the different NHS boards and the Northern Alliance focused on improvement of young people's health and wellbeing** **Key Drivers:** PI ACP	• Mapping exercise of current health related services for children and young people across the Northern Alliance:	Lead: Laurence Findlay	• Dec 2018	• Audit exercise • Individual Children's Services Plan.

❖ **Promoting health and wellbeing, resilience for children and young people across the Northern Alliance.** ❖ **Family learning** ❖ **Essential skills** ❖ **ESOL** ❖ **Progression from PEEP & Bookbug** **Key Drivers:** SL PI PE TP ACP	• Consistent application of tried and tested Programmes such as: • No Knives Better Lives • Reduce substance abuse [to be developed] • Under Pressure to be Sexy - healthy attitudes towards sex and relationships • Mentoring Violence Prevention • Skills building – confidence, leadership, self-esteem, personal development, anger management. • Adult learning – recognising need to support parents to support children • Skills development • Improve neuro linguistic programming, emotional intelligence [NLP] • Share practice e.g. language skills – bilingual settings, Gaelic/Doric – build on programmes • Progression from PEEP and other parenting programmes to support families and parenting skills • We will achieve this by focusing on parents specifically within the lower SMID areas • Empowering parents to allow them to support their children to attend and achieve at school	<u>Lead: Avril Nicol.</u>	• Ongoing from November 2017	• Audit current use of programmes across NA – establish baseline • Share best practice/impact • Develop CPD action plan to support out • Further develop assessment tools for wellbeing • • Data on weapons • CLD data in relation to adult learning • Children's Services Plans reports • Lowest 20% cohort increased attendance in lower SMID areas and reduced exclusion

❖ **Work across the Northern Alliance to ensure we are celebrating diversity and global citizenship through languages learning** **Key Drivers:** TP PE	• Actively facilitate family learning within a languages context in line with approaches used to engage parents with literacy and numeracy • Ensure all languages CLPL is linked to global citizenship and cultural diversity	Lead: Laurence Findlay	• Ongoing	• Greater parental engagement with languages learning. • Reduction in the reporting of racial incidents due to increased cultural awareness: GREC data
❖ **Champion Equalities across the Northern Alliance** ❖ **Enabling Youth Voice** **Key Drivers:** SL PI PE TP	• Champion Equalities and Rights Respecting Schools across the Northern Alliance. (children's rights) • All LAs to have a service level agreement with Unicef UK, and identify a strategic lead to co-ordinate delivery of RRSA in schools, and to promote children's rights and participation in schools and communities • Youth democracy. CLD staff across the Northern Alliance to promote youth led participatory groups and volunteering opportunities for CYP	Leads: Laurence Findlay	• June 2018	• Retain UNICEF Rights Respecting status across the Northern Alliance. • Across the Northern Alliance at least 30% of schools will be registered and progressing towards RRSA. In Las where there is already a SLA in place, there will be a 5% increase in the number of school achieving silver and gold of the award • Additional measures to be added from existing data sets • RRSA assessments and base line data

				will evidence increase of CYP who feel included and listened [children's voice]. • 5% increase I the number of CYP achieving wider achievement awards such as Saltire
❖ **Working collaboratively across the Northern Alliance to ensure all staff are enabled to support young people's health and wellbeing/becoming resilient** **Key Drivers:** TP	• Joint CPD in emotion coaching • Protecting children and adults against abuse through effective professional learning • Capture current picture of relevant available CPD – across Northern Alliance members • Work collaboratively to agree measures – e.g. linked back to Bounce Back programme	Lead: Avril Nicol	• Initial picture by end Feb 2018 • Agreed measures by end Feb 2018	• Clear picture of available training • Better understanding of impact of emotion coaching • Agreed measures in place

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Priority 4:	Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people				
Improvement Activity	**This is how we'll do it**	**By Whom**	**By When**	**Evidence of Impact**	
❖ **Ensure languages are within DYW agenda across the Northern Alliance** ❖ **Link languages experiences in schools to the wider DYW agenda and skills agenda/provide an employment context for learners** ❖ **Embed languages across the curriculum (5 – 15) with a clear focus on skills development** **Key Drivers:** SL TP PI	• Agree common expectations and principles for a languages approach to DYW in the Northern Alliance. • Provide CLPL for teachers linked to languages and DYW and further ensure DYW CLPL has an integrated languages component as required. • Ensure all our schools, primary and secondary, have access to business champions who can bring relevance to languages learning. • Greater connectivity and synergy across languages and DYW policy areas • Develop contexts for learning linked to DYW/languages. • Further develop partnerships with SCILT with regards Business Champions and Business Brunches.	Lead: Laurence Findlay	• December 2018	• Greater opportunities for young people to undertake experience of work linked to languages • Increase in businesses working with schools on joint DYW/languages ventures • Increase in Senior Phase uptake with links to industry/skills	
❖ **Collaborate across the Northern Alliance to review all Northern Alliance employability strategies /plans and consider areas of**	• Review plans. • Arrange for DYW leads to meet to identify skills pathways. • Share skills pathways. • Share best practices. • Engage key stakeholder e.g. better linking	Lead: Avril Nicol.	• Phase one data gathering by end March 2018	• Participation measures in place across the Northern Alliance – SDS extract • Improved data available – e.g.	

common interest were we could add greatest value. ❖ **Wider achievement** ❖ **Employability – senior phase, essential skills** **Key Drivers:** SL PI	with colleges and Adult Learning staff. • Increase engagement of primary schools with DYW, and develop improvement plans to raise aspirations in CYP from primary stage • Youth Aspiration Survey: - roll out across a small cohort (primary and secondary). • Linking curriculum areas of CfE to employment opportunities and skills. • 16-18 named person role implementation/improvement • Pre-16 activity agreements • Have flexile arrangements for Activity Agreements to take place across LAs • 'Named person' role • 16+key worker role • Retaining contact with those who were known now not known, embed in each targeted school with consistent approach managing a gap		• Phase two reporting end June 2018	Northern Alliance data sets • Clearer picture from Youth Aspiration Survey - roll out across a small cohort (primary and secondary) • Link with CfE and Insight data (primary and secondary) • Measures to be added from existing data sets • Measures to be added from existing data sets

Improve participation of 16-19 years of school leavers	• Targeted work • Sharing areas of best practice across the Northern Alliance • Establishing good partnership arrangements with further and higher education to support pupil pathway planning. • Opportunities for wider accreditation through volunteering and experience of work	Lead: Regional Improvement Lead	• June 2019	• Measures to be added from existing data sets
Key Drivers: SI PI				

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Across All Priorities				
Improvement Activity	**This is how we'll do it**	**By Whom**	**By When**	**Evidence of Impact**
❖ **Improve performance and data sharing across the Northern Alliance by seeking consistency in data collection, the use of methodologies and the quality data.** **Key Driver :** PI	• Data sharing agreement • Data review • Establish a national protocol for data sharing within and outwith the collaborative.	Leads: <u>Regional Improvement Lead; Reyna Stewart and 8 authorities.</u>	• June 2018	• SEEMIS
❖ **Ensure school improvement teams are working collaboratively and effectively across the Northern Alliance** ❖ **Sharing best practice in quality assurance in Children's Services**	• Review internal working arrangements in light of the Three Pillars (CfE, GIRFEC and Developing the Young Workforce) • Review reporting arrangements - once plan approved and enacted and report to the improvement advisory forum (quarterly) • Identify as an alliance schools with greater need of targeted support e.g. cluster work / buddying activities. • Focus on self-evaluation for improvement.	Leads: <u>Regional Improvement Lead; Andrew Griffiths.</u> Leads: <u>Susan MacLaren and</u>	• From March 2018 • From March 2018 • From March 2018	• NIF return • Increased confidence in self-evaluation over 18-21 month period as move forward greater alignment; • External inspections. • Measures to be used from existing data set. [TBC]

		subgroup.		Children's Services Reports from individual LA • TBC
❖ **Sharing best practice approach quality improvement across ELC** **Key Drivers:** ACP TP PI	• Shared approach to QA across the Northern Alliance • Peer review • Linking across self-evaluation activities • Preparing for Children's Services Inspection 3 • Supporting an outward looking approach • A coordinated approach across the 8 authorities • Consider the best improvement methodologies for supporting improvement across the Northern Alliance.	Leads: Regional Improvement Lead; and 8 LAs		
❖ **Supporting activity across social work and children's services** **Key Driver :** PI	• Consolidating and coordinating the Children's Services Network • Consolidate and build the network • Co-ordinate the workstreams • Supporting and developing Social Work leadership • Ensuring peer support networks for practitioners across the Northern Alliance • Identifying, sharing and responding to new challenges	Leads: Bob Driscoll, Heads of Service across eight local authorities.	• From December 2017 - ongoing	• ACORN • Measures to be used from existing data set. [TBC]

	• Being a collective voice			
❖ **Workforce Development - developing staffing and curriculum to provide an agile qualified and responsive Workforce (further elaborated in workforce plan).**	• Review of existing curriculum offered in Island/rural schools. • Explore the staffing requirements of Island/Rural Schools. • Develop an agile, appropriately qualified and responsive workforce to provide the services required. • Supporting the social care workforce in skills development. • Dealing with challenge and the changing social care environment. • Supporting recruitment. • Building resilience (and staff retention). • Range of activities, including: Practice papers, joint (and virtual events), networking, job shadowing and exchange. • Promote wellbeing of the workforce. • A co-ordinated approach across the 8 authorities, and with partners: colleges, universities, chamber of commerce.	<u>Leads: Regional Improvement Lead and 8 authorities.</u> Leads; Sandra Campbell, with sub group. <u>Leads: Regional Improvement Lead and 8 authorities.</u>	Ongoing • From March 2018 – ongoing • From March 2018	• Measures to be used from existing data set. • TIES – end of next academic year '2018.

Key Drivers: SL PI TP SI	• Include skills development for Gaelic medium provision. • TIES • STEM • Development of DLITE • OU pilot 1+2 languages (professional)			
❖ **Leadership Development in Schools across the Northern Alliance led by sector leading Head teachers / teachers.** **Key Drivers**: SL TP SI	• Identifying sector HT and teachers to champion educational improvement across the Northern Alliance to a school led system. • Establishment of a NA strategic group to lead this initiative. Representation from all LA's expected and when appropriate teachers and middle leaders will be invited to engage in the group's work • A draft template for a leadership development framework to be created • A scoping exercise to be carried out to ascertain what existing effective practice and approaches to leadership development are currently in place. Liaison with SCEL will support this. • A rationalisation of the current position and commissioning of work to address potential gaps will lead to the creation of a NA Leadership Development Framework	<u>Leads: Vincent Docherty supported by focus group; Headteachers leadership group – SCEL fellows</u> - NA group NA group - CPL leads to be consulted. Sub-group to pursue. - NA group assisted by Yvonne McCracken	• January 2018 and onwards • January 2018 • March 2018 • June 2018 • October 2018	The impact emerging from this work-stream will be: • Increased self-identification as leaders by staff at all levels in schools • Access by all staff in schools to a clear leadership development programme supported by high quality professional learning • 50% of staff in schools will be engaged in some aspect of formal

		and SCEL		leadership training
	for Schools. This framework to be endorsed and validated by SCEL. • A co-ordinated professional learning plan will be confirmed to support leadership development at all levels	- NA group in liaison with PCL leads		• Leadership positions in schools filled with appropriately prepared leaders • As a result of the leadership development programme and other influences all HMI inspections will see the QI 1.3 evaluated as Good or better • This work to be show-cased at NA Learning Festival February 2019 •
❖ **Share best practice in management School Estates and considering future education delivery model**	• Develop digital culture for training staff • Utilise IT infrastructure that is available to deliver a virtual learning environment – Esgoil. • Explore and develop commissioned provision opportunities.	Leads: Wilf Weir/ Bernard Chisholm.	• Ongoing • Ongoing	• % children across the NA meet the DD standard; • Evidence community facilities are better used • IT infrastructure– Esgoil • Qualitative –

❖ **Partnership provision providing improved outcomes (for example e-learning and virtual classroom development)**	• Build a conversation with Island/rural communities around sustainability and learning futures • Map community assets and barriers to sustainable community participation.		• Ongoing	teachers views if they are confident using it
❖ **Survival and sustainability in Island and rural settings.**	• Explore existing solutions used in rural/island areas and build on/adapt these to other rural/island settings. • Identify existing infrastructure and identify future options.	<u>Leads:</u> <u>Wilf Weir /</u> <u>Craig</u> <u>Clements</u> <u>[TASSC]</u>	• Ongoing	
❖ **Develop a digital culture to improve learning provision.** **Key Drivers:** SI TP				

❖ **Work across the Northern Alliance Early Years Programme for the promotion of preventative and early intervention to support families**. **Key Drivers**: PI TP SI ACP ❖	• A shared strategy, building on best practice linking with literacy and numeracy developments • Promote and increase understanding of importance of attachment and supportive approaches • Co-ordination of Early Years Workstreams	Leads: Regional Improvement Lead; Early Years Network across all 8 LAs.	• Ongoing	• Measures to be established
❖ **Develop quality improvement across early learning and childcare.** ❖ **Key Drivers:** SI	• A co-ordinated approach across the 8 local authorities • Consider the most appropriate Improvement methodologies to audit quality of provision	Leads: Regional Improvement Lead and 8 authorities.	• Ongoing	• Measures to be established

6. Governance and Reporting

It is important to be clear about the Northern Alliance's approach to governance. The Alliance does not adopt a 'hard' governance model but one that is nonetheless robust, transparent and accountable. It is appropriate to be clear about how we anticipate accountability for improvement in attainment sitting within each of the eight local authorities internal governance framework and structures. The governance arrangements within the Northern Alliance will be subject to constant review for all those involved. The collaborative is also aware that further changes may be required to be made to governance framework subject to the outcome of the Scottish Government's wider consultation on the Education Bill. The following roles and responsibilities are outlined below underpin the current governance model:

Regional Improvement Forum

The Regional Improvement Forum is a key leadership group which will be made up of the eight Directors from each partner authority and the Regional Improvement Lead. It provides for strong collaborative leadership across the Northern Alliance to drive forward strategic developments in relation to curriculum, learning and teaching and other outcomes-focussed areas of agreed collaborative practice. This group will regularly monitor and scrutinise collaborative projects being undertaken across the Northern Alliance and will have strategic oversight of the deployment of shared resources as appropriate to ensure these are focussed on agreed improvement priorities and outcomes. It will focus on the regional delivery of the SAC/NIF key drivers and focus on developing impactful evidence based improvement programmes, which can then be scaled up to close the attainment gap and accelerate attainment across all sectors.

We anticipate the Improvement Forum will support each of the constituent local authorities with its improvement journey but the body itself will not be accountable for the improvement. Given it is an alliance of the willing partners rather than a formal decision making structure, it will not be a part of the formal governance structures of each of the eight authorities.
Where the forum does offer advice and recommendations for significant change in professional practice, policy or resource allocation, it will be the responsibility of each authorities representative on the forum to seek the necessary approvals from his/her own governance structures rather than being able to accept an instruction from the forum without the approval of council.

This model has now been operating for a short period and the additionality it offers as a challenge group, best practice model and shared expert forum can be seen in the variety of projects and programmes now underway across the region.

Northern Alliance

Regional Improvement Advisory Forum

The Regional Improvement Advisory Forum will include the eight Directors together with wider governance partners including Education Scotland, Care Inspectorate, universities and training providers and Scottish Government. This Forum will add a quasi-external perspective as well as challenge to the improvement endeavours and the thinking of the Northern Alliance, focussing on enhancing our collaborative work and practice through focussing on the latest research and innovation from across Scotland, the UK and indeed from a global perspective. There is an opportunity also to enlist input from national and international expertise.

The Improvement Advisory Forum would also be central to the evaluation of impact of the Northern Alliance. The review of improvement data from programmes, progress data and scrutiny of evaluation is central to effective governance. Learning and research from across Scotland and beyond will also feed into this forum so that we can learn and react quickly to new evidence based impactful practice. The formal publication of evaluation of impact and an annual report on the activity and outcomes will be presented to this forum for scrutiny, as well as to each of the Local Authority governance structures.

Local Authority

Local authorities maintain their key strategic role in leading forward educational services at a local level to ensure local needs are best met within existing resources. Each of the eight authorities will retain their own governance and scrutiny arrangements, through committees and other means on to govern education and children's services and will remain the accountable body for school performance and all other aspects of the day to day leadership and management of schools as enshrined in legislation.

Convention of Convenors

We have created a Convention of Convenors (of Education/Children's Services) bringing together the lead elected members from each of the eight authorities with the Directors and Regional Improvement Lead. On a six monthly basis this will provide them with the essential opportunity to monitor the progress being made across the Northern Alliance in terms of meeting shared objectives and improving outcomes for young people. This Convention will be modelled on the successful Convention of Highlands and Islands. Whilst each authority area is unique, many of the same challenges are shared and this forum will provide a powerful opportunity to ensure political appraisal of the key work

being led forward at a regional level. Evaluation of impact on children and young people's outcomes, scalability, shared approaches and new developments will be shared and reviewed by this important group. They will also have an important role in disseminating approaches and ways of working to their relevant Councils and the wider political networks/groups.

Scottish Government

The Scottish Government sets national policy and direction with regards to education and children's services and also sets the inspection framework. The Northern Alliance is committed to working closely in partnership with the Scottish Government to achieve the aims and objectives as outlined in the National Improvement Framework. We clearly share the same aims and welcome their involvement and scrutiny. By working in partnership we believe that the additionality of the regional approach can be shared with national partners and help shape and develop practice across Scotland. As previously discussed the Northern Alliance is aware that the outcome of the Scottish Government's consultation on the Education Bill will inform how the collaborative develops in the future.

Northern Alliance Governance Framework Diagram
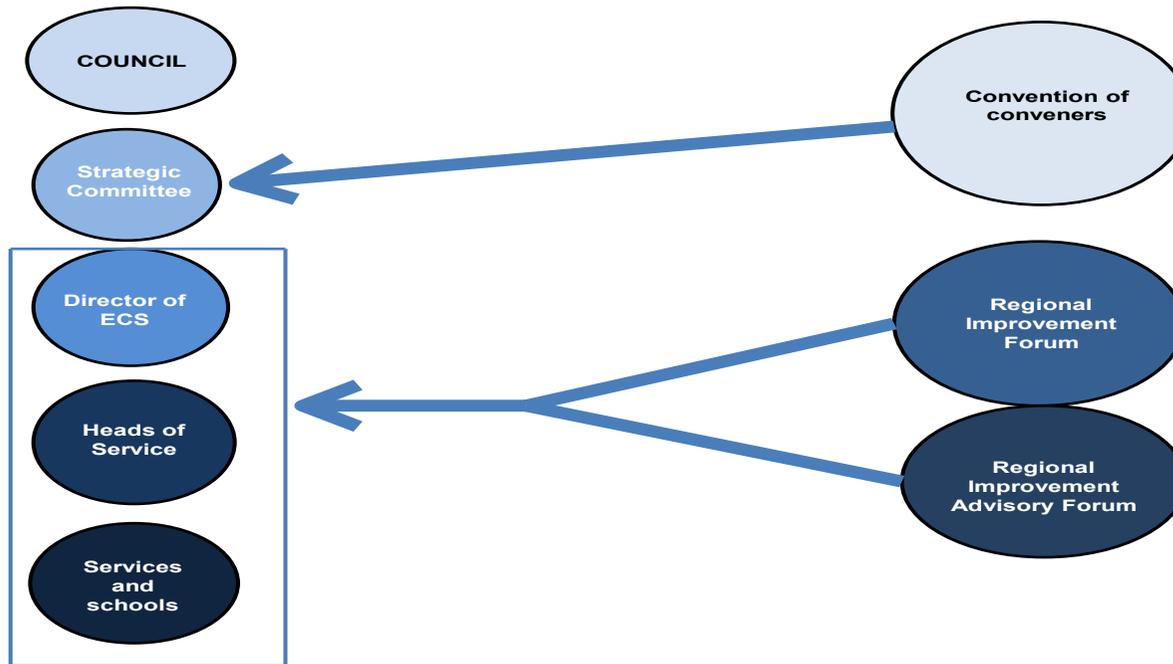
7. Next Steps

The Northern Alliance's Regional Improvement Plan is ambitious and reflects the multi-layered approach of the collaborative. The development of the plan is part of an ongoing iterative process. The initial plan maps out the work which will be taken forward to best support schools and improve the outcomes for our children and young people. Phase 2 of the plan, which will be submitted to Education Scotland in Autumn 2018, seeks to further develop this blueprint through additional analysis and consultation. It is the ambition of the Northern Alliance that it will become an improvement collaborative that is practitioner led. To achieve this aspiration the collaborative is committed to engaging with all stakeholders and enabling them to contribute to the development of the plan as well as the wider work of the Alliance.

An immediate next step is to consult with the profession for further feedback to continue to refine the plan. The Northern Alliance will consult with schools, teachers, parents, guardians and children and young people. A consultation exercise will take place from February 2018 onwards and the responses received to the initial phase of the Regional Improvement Plan will shape the second phase. In order to deliver education improvement it is imperative the collaborative consult with schools on an ongoing basis to ensure the work of the Alliance is based on the needs and improvement priorities of schools. The 'bottom-up' approach adopted by the Northern Alliance will also be supported by identifying champions from across the workstreams to advocate and reach out to peers.

The Northern Alliance will establish a training calendar that will showcase all of the proposed training events for the academic year 2018/2019 and clearly outline the professional learning opportunities offered by the collaborative. This will require further work to identify the best platform that will allow schools and staff to access opportunities.

In addition, the Northern Alliance will work with all partners. In preparation for the second phase of the plan, the Regional Improvement Lead will be meeting with the Chief Executive of NHS Grampian and key stakeholders from Further and Higher Education to secure their contribution and commitment to further iterations of the plan.

As previously stated the collaborative has developed organically and the workstreams outlined in this document reflect the significant work that is already underway albeit at varying stages. The first phase of the plan is an opportunity to allow those workstreams at the more embryonic stage to take root and grow. In the next iteration of the plan the collaborative will seek to build on those workstreams that have developed. To this end, in Phase 2 of the plan we will seek to shape a literacy and numeracy strategy to improve attainment and ensure that regional expertise is fully utilised. National directives and initiatives such as STEM and how they can be addressed on a regional basis, will also be incorporated into the next iteration. The Northern Alliance will look to add value by including subject specific support and advice across all eight curriculum areas. Phase 2 will consider how the collaborative can set up professional learning networks linking to different curriculum areas.

Through robust monitoring and close scrutiny of the impact of evidence the collaborative will demonstrate the extent to which we are improving the outcomes for our children and young people. Phase 2 is an opportunity to be clearer on how we will measure progress. The Alliance will undertake a mapping exercise across the partnership to identify baseline data and if no baseline is available whether an indicative baseline can be adopted. The Performance and Data Sharing workstream is working closely with Education Scotland to take this forward with a view to developing a data sharing agreement. Alongside refining the data available, and, improving consistency across the improvement plan, a key action of Phase 2 will be evaluating which improvement methodology can be applied to best meet the needs of the Northern Alliance.

The Alliance is a committed learning collaborative and, as such, will continue to develop and learn as programmes are embedded and developed. It is anticipated that the Regional Improvement Plan will undergo further iterations as we identify what is having a positive impact and as we listen to feedback from schools and practitioners. Advice from Education Scotland is that Regional Improvement Collaboratives will produce three-year plans regional plans with an annual performance plan, although this is still to be confirmed. The Regional Improvement Plan offers the Northern Alliance an opportunity to continue to grow and improve on Education and Children's Services issues through shared expertise, scale and capacity and by working with all our partners. The Northern Alliance is committed to achieving the best for all our children and young people by supporting a school-led and teacher-led system of improvement.