

## APPENDIX B

### EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY TRACKER – INDICATOR DATASETS

#### 1 DATA CONTEXT

- 1.1. Nationally Benchmarked Education Measures for each academic year are released at various times of the subsequent year, concluding with the release of Education Outcomes for Looked After Children in July/August in the following year when all validated data is available. As a result, this report provides a compendium of data covering the various data releases covering the 2021/22 academic year that have been made available in the past 12 months,
- 1.2. The data contained within this report should be considered alongside the [2021-22 Attainment and Achievement Data Report](#) presented to this Committee in November 2022, prior to all validated data sets being available, which reflected Local Benchmark outcomes.
- 1.3. When developing the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan, Officers look at all live and validated data sets available at that time to inform planning but each release of a data set throughout the year triggers a review of the ACC National Improvement Framework Plan. This approach ensures that the Plan continues to be ideally placed to support improvement.
- 1.4. The full re-instatement of Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) in both primary and secondary schools had improved the availability of local datasets in the 2021/22 academic year.
- 1.5. However, the absence of ACEL data covering Third/Fourth Levels and the introduction of the Alternative Certification Model (ACM) in the Senior Phase for 2021/22 had impacted on the ability to track continuous progression solely through data trends.
- 1.6. As a result, the Service has incorporated a greater element of professional judgement and observational assessment within both self-evaluation and planning. This has enabled the Service to respond to changes in an agile and decisive way and not be negatively affected by the lack of trend data. Taking this approach guides the service to look at final validated data carefully in order to determine the accuracy of earlier professional judgements made.

## **2.0 HIGH LEVEL ANALYSIS**

- 2.1 Analysis of available attainment and achievement data confirms that the ACC National Improvement Framework Plan 2021/22 was appropriate to meet the needs, educational and pastoral, of pupils and supported their progress throughout the academic year.
- 2.2 There were some undeniable residual and legacy impacts on attainment and achievement data arising from the pandemic, that correlated with national and international research on the impact of the pandemic on children and young people. These were limited to specific subject areas and phases, as noted below, rather than impacting on the educational journey of pupils as a whole.
- 2.3 Analysis of the 2021/22 Curriculum for Excellence data at Primary level shows that future potential impacts of most significant periods of COVID-19 disruption had been well mitigated by the Service with a substantive recovery in the majority of phases and organisers, with some closing of the gaps to national and Virtual Comparator data.
- 2.4 At Secondary level, the picture is more complex with the S3 and Senior Phase results closely tracking the national pattern and experiencing some reduction in attainment in comparison with 2020/21. This is largely due to changed examination assessment methodologies in place over examination years 2020, 2021 and 2022.
- 2.5 Baselining of the 2021/22 secondary data with 2018/19 however, offers a more consistent overall picture of long-term improvement in the outcomes at Senior Phase. At the same time, the following note repeated across various national publications relating to Senior Phase outcomes should also be kept in mind when considering data within this document

*'Care must be taken when comparing the attainment of cohorts over the past 3 years and when comparing these years to the attainment of earlier cohorts. any changes between the attainment levels of the last 3 cohorts and those of previous years should not be seen as an indication that performance has improved or worsened, without further evidence'*

*Source: LGBF 2021/22 Report*

## **3.0 ATTAINMENT FOR ALL**

### **Primary Phase - Attainment**

- 3.1 Across the range of Primary phases, the trends for the majority of Components (Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking and Numeracy) showed significant recovery in outcomes from 2020/21 in keeping with national trends.
- 3.2 The 2021/22 data, although improved overall, indicates some level of residual impact from the pandemic in Reading and Writing when compared with the pre-COVID period with the levels of achievement in P4 being the most affected and yet to recover to 2018/19 levels.
- 3.3 Primary 7 outcomes, in contrast, showed strong trend outcomes across each of the four Components and the combined Literacy & Numeracy themes, matching or exceeding prior high tide levels.

Chart 3.1 % of P1 pupils achieving Early Level by Component

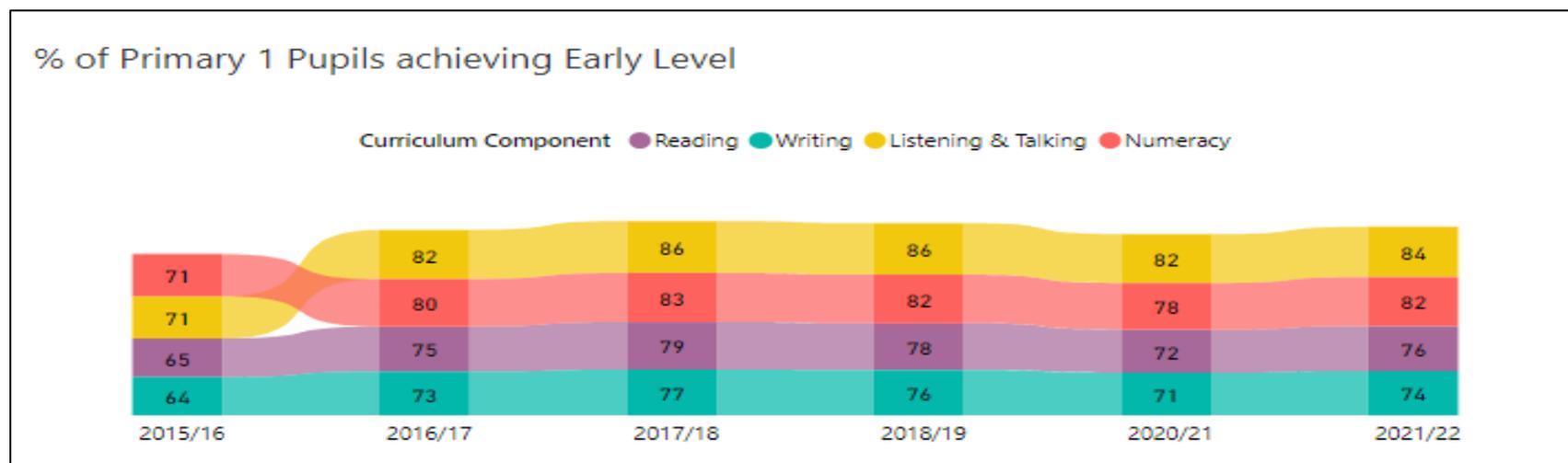


Chart 3.2 % of P4 pupils achieving First Level by Component

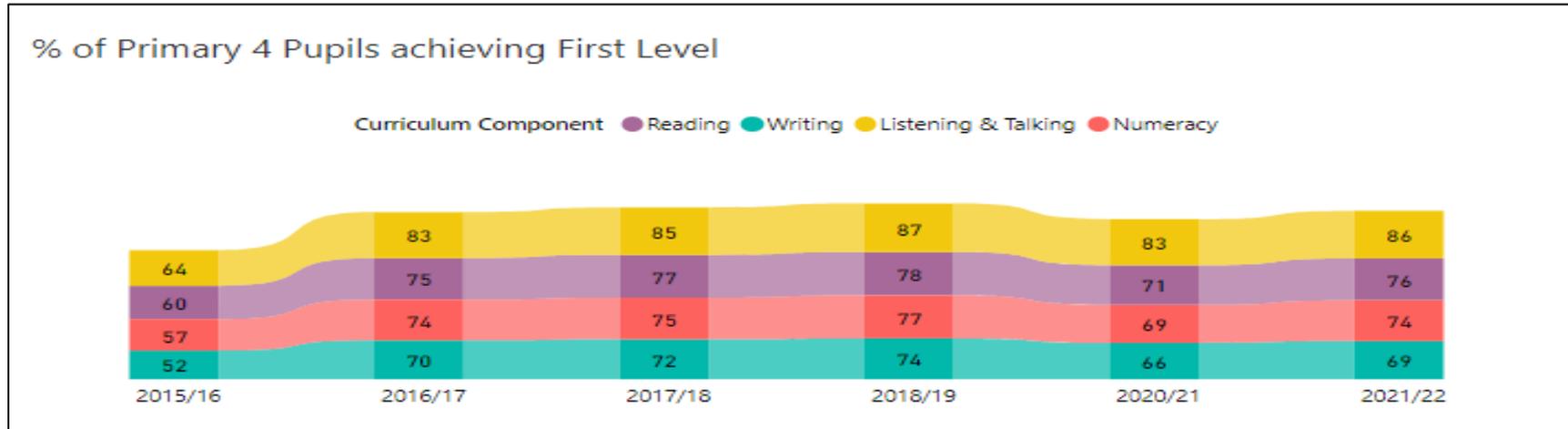
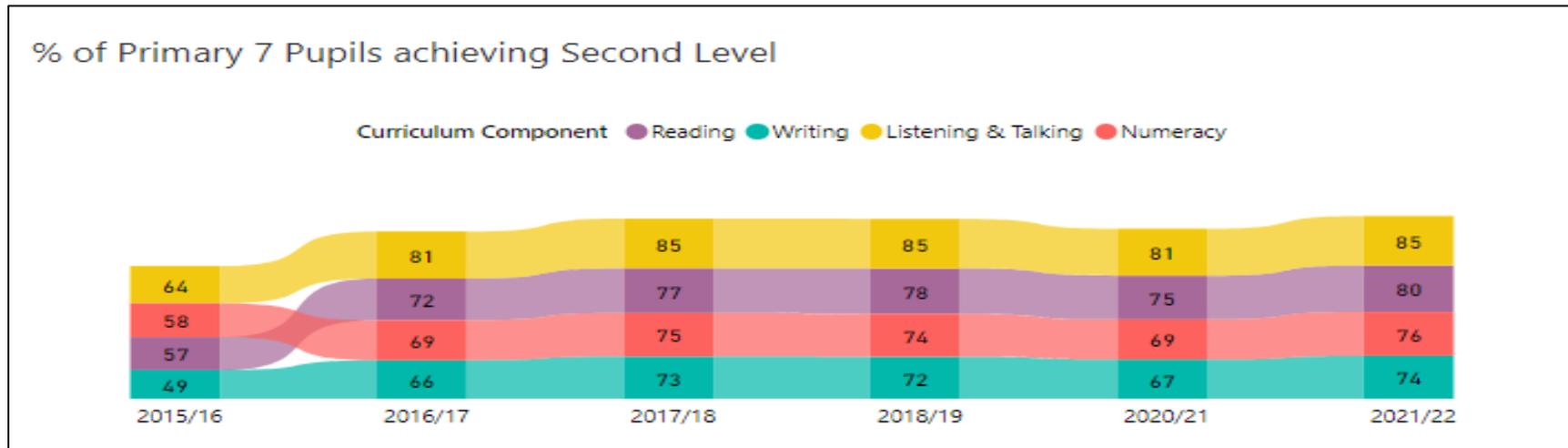


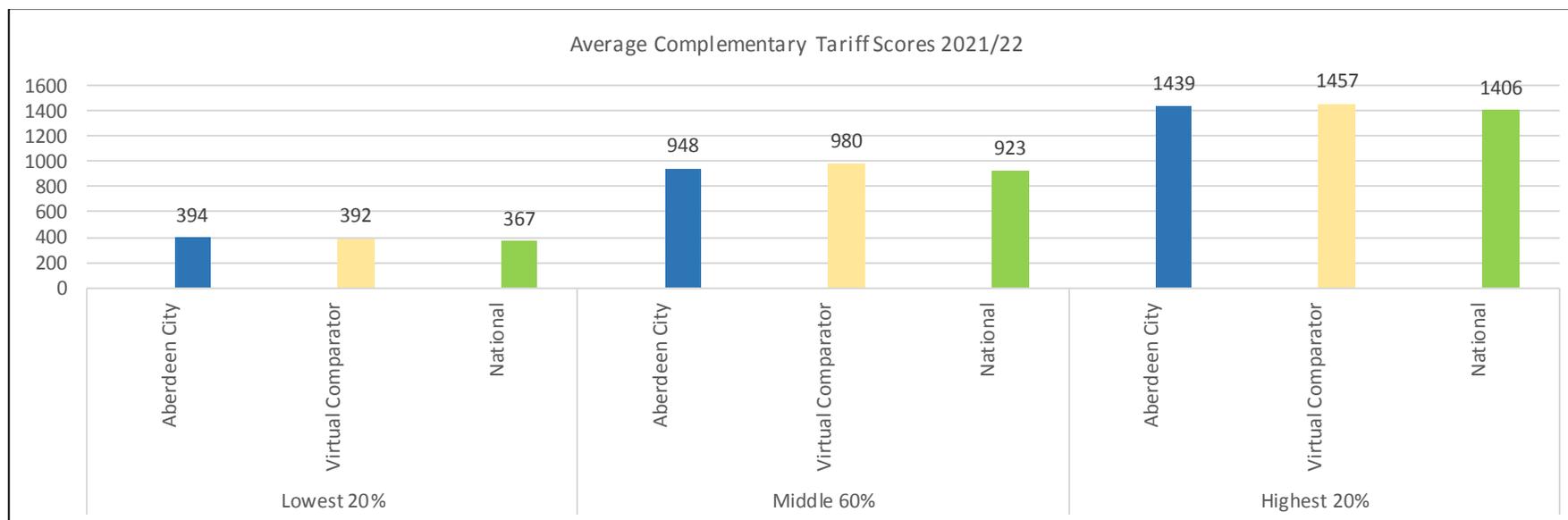
Chart 3.3 % of P7 pupils achieving Second Level by Component



## Senior Phase - Attainment

- 3.4 Average Complimentary Tariff Point Scoring is a data methodology used in the Insight Tool which facilitates comparisons of attainment between cohorts, schools and local authorities when the number of courses sat by pupils differs. Scoring is based on the allocation of SCQF Credit Points for each attained qualification or unit (higher levels of qualification attract more SCQF Credit Points) but for a fixed volume of attainment, and weighting taking account of the national value of the qualification attained.
- 3.5 In effect this, for comparison purposes, captures the 'best or highest' overall educational outcomes of Senior Phase pupils rather than the cumulation of all SCQF Credit Points, which is a measure of the volume of learning across a pupil's education journey.
- 3.6 In 2021/22 the Average Complementary Tariff Point (ACTP) scoring (by quintile cohort) for Aberdeen City was greater than the national figure with the performance of the Lowest 20% of outcomes also matching the Virtual Comparator.

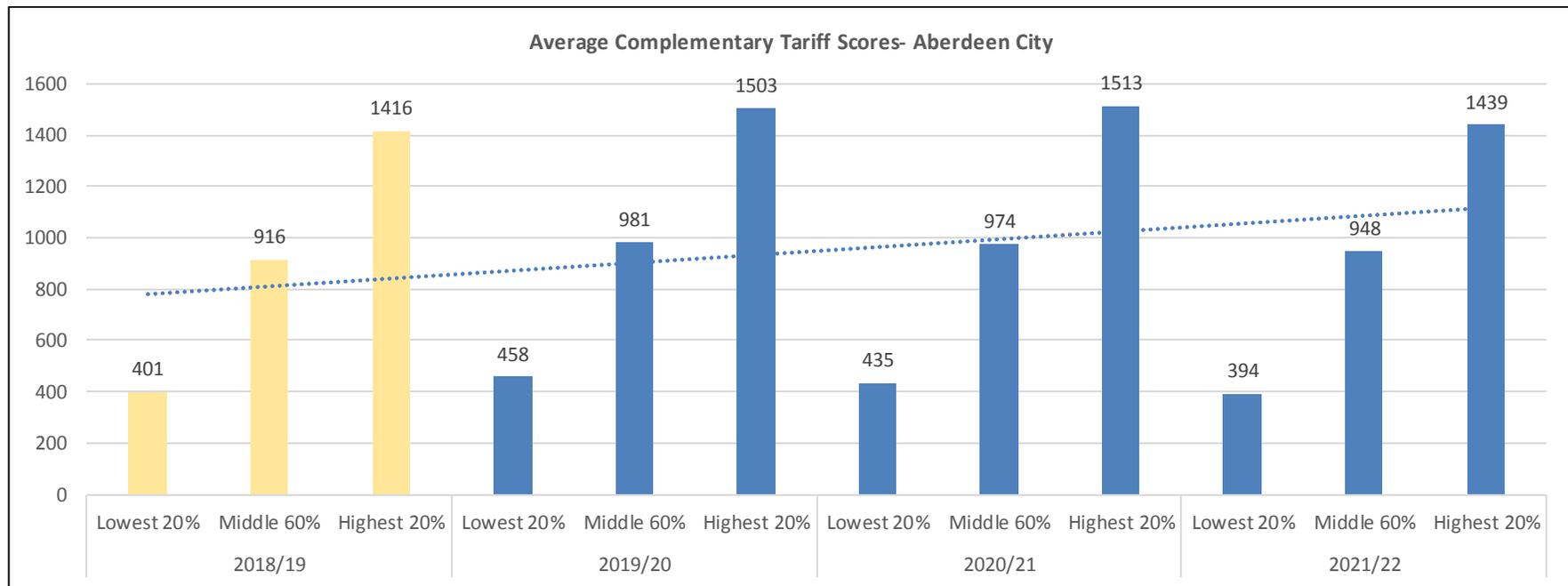
Chart 3.6 Average Complementary Tariff Point Scores 2021/22 – Benchmarks



3.7 Reflecting on time series outcomes, looking at the education improvement journey over time, the ACTP scores for the Lowest 20% had reduced very marginally. The scores for both the Middle 60% of and the Highest 20% were demonstrating a more sustained Improvement trend although with a lesser closing of the distances to the Virtual Comparator scoring. As noted above, the introduction of ACM assessments in 2021/22 was an influential factor in the small reductions in ACTP scores between 2020/21 and 2021/22.

3.8 In each of the chart years, the Aberdeen City outcomes at each quintile cohort level, exceeded the National figures.

Chart 3.7 Average Complementary Tariff Scores by Cohort Quintile (Time Series)



## 4.0 LITERACY AND NUMERACY

### Primary Phase – Literacy and Numeracy

- 4.1 In terms of CfE outcomes, the overall picture in 2021/22 was one of general improvement in outcomes, with reversion to the levels of achievement in the 2018/19 pre-COVID-19 period. There was also noticeable closing of the gap to National data which had widened in 2020/21.
- 4.2 At the same time, there are instances, by component and phase, which demonstrated less robust improvement with more limited gains on national levels with Literacy achievement at P1 being the most statistically significant. This likely was as a result of restrictions around ELC attendance and social gathering, known to support literacy development, during the COVID-19 Public Health restrictions.
- 4.3 On this basis, in overview, the data offers assurance that the direction of travel for Literacy and Numeracy is positive but that the rate of improvement requires speeding up for particular aspects of CfE achievement to close the marginal gaps to Scotland levels.

Table 4.1 a % of P1 pupils achieving expected levels in Literacy and Numeracy

	Aberdeen		National	
Year	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
Literacy	65%	70%	71%	74%
Numeracy	78%	82%	81%	84%

Table 4.1 b % of P4 pupils achieving expected levels in Literacy and Numeracy

	Aberdeen		National	
Year	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
Literacy	61%	66%	64%	67%
Numeracy	69%	74%	72%	75%

Table 4.1 c % of P7 pupils achieving expected levels in Literacy and Numeracy

	Aberdeen		National	
Year	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
Literacy	64%	71%	66%	71%
Numeracy	69%	76%	72%	76%

### Secondary (S3) Phase– Literacy and Numeracy

- 4.4 CfE assessments at S3 were not undertaken in either of the previous years which limits effective progression benchmarking. In these terms, the 2021/22 outcomes represent a renewed baseline against which future improvement tracking will be projected.
- 4.5 On in-year terms, however, Literacy at Third Level was below that of the Scotland figure with the outcome at Fourth Level also being lower than the National figure of 48%, although with both being close to the Virtual Comparator.
- 4.6 Numeracy, at both Third and Fourth Levels, by contrast, matched or exceeded the Scotland figures with a sustained long term improvement trend.

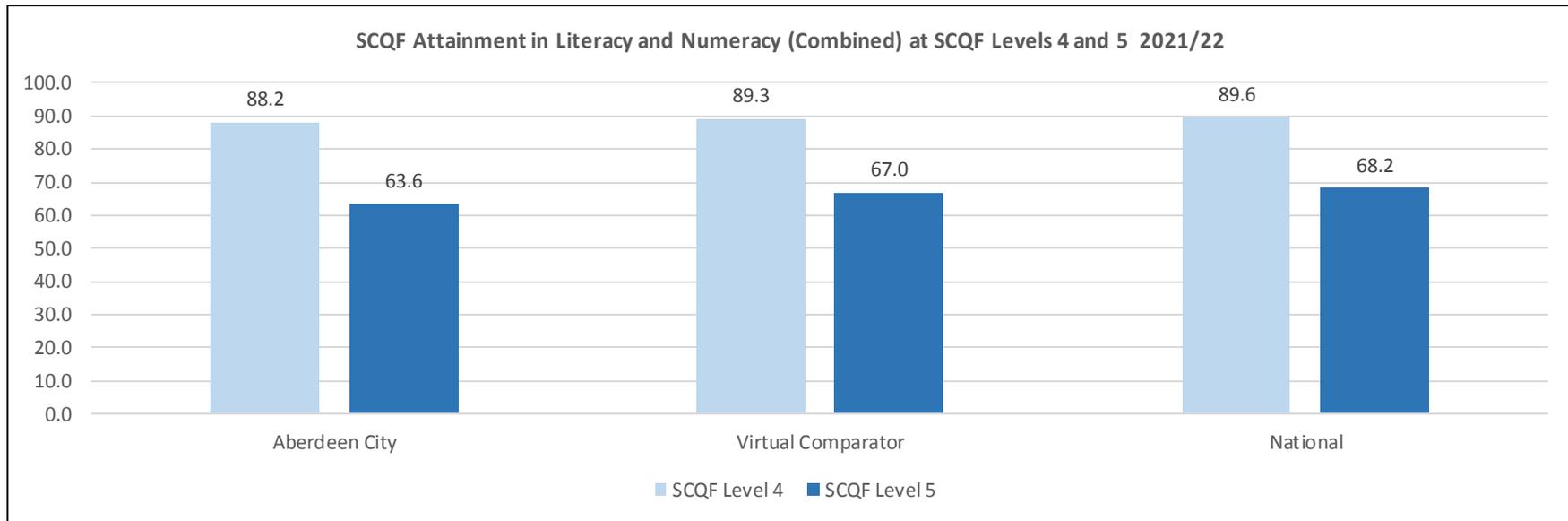
Table 4.4 % of S3 pupils achieving expected levels in Literacy and Numeracy at Third and Fourth Level 2021/22

	Aberdeen		National	
Level	Literacy	Numeracy	Literacy	Numeracy
Third Level	80%	89%	85.5%	89%
Fourth Level	44%	61%	48%	59%

### Senior Phase - Literacy and Numeracy

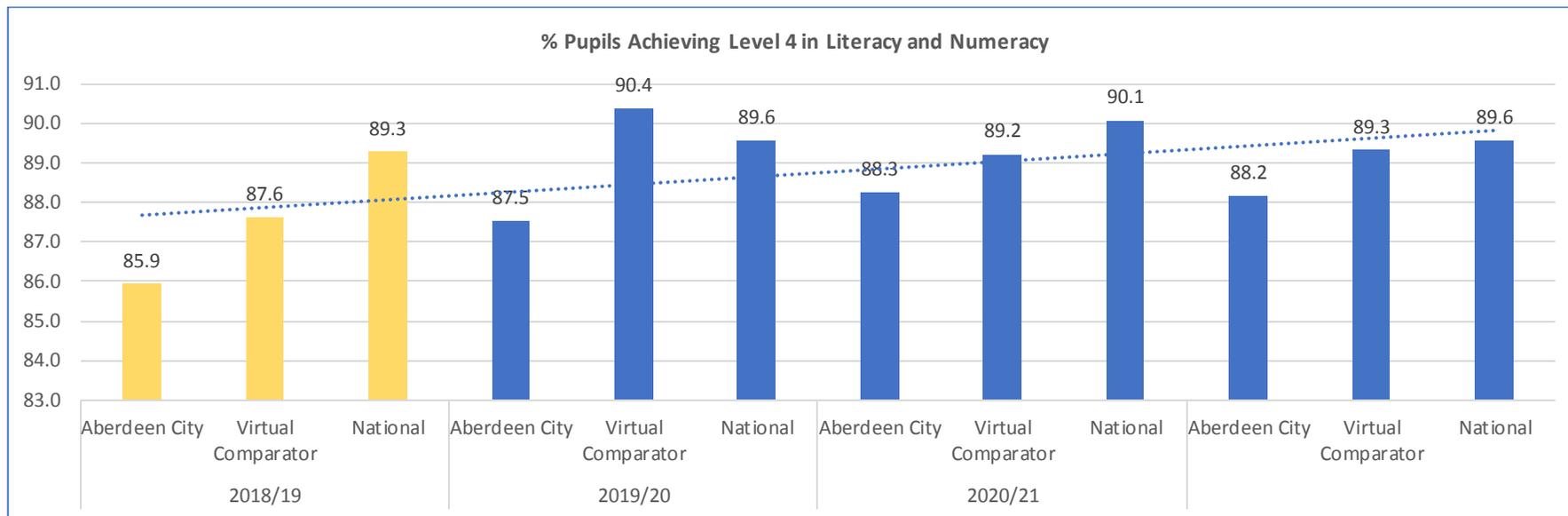
4.7 Pupil Candidate outcomes for Literacy and Numeracy combined were largely in line with the standing benchmarks at both SCQF Levels 4 and 5, although a more statistically significant gap was observable at Level 5 to the Virtual Comparator. This gap in numeracy and mathematics is being addressed by secondary schools working collaboratively to identify shared short-, medium- and long-term interventions.

Chart 4.7 % of pupil candidates achieving SCQF Levels 4 and 5 Literacy And Numeracy combined by Benchmarks



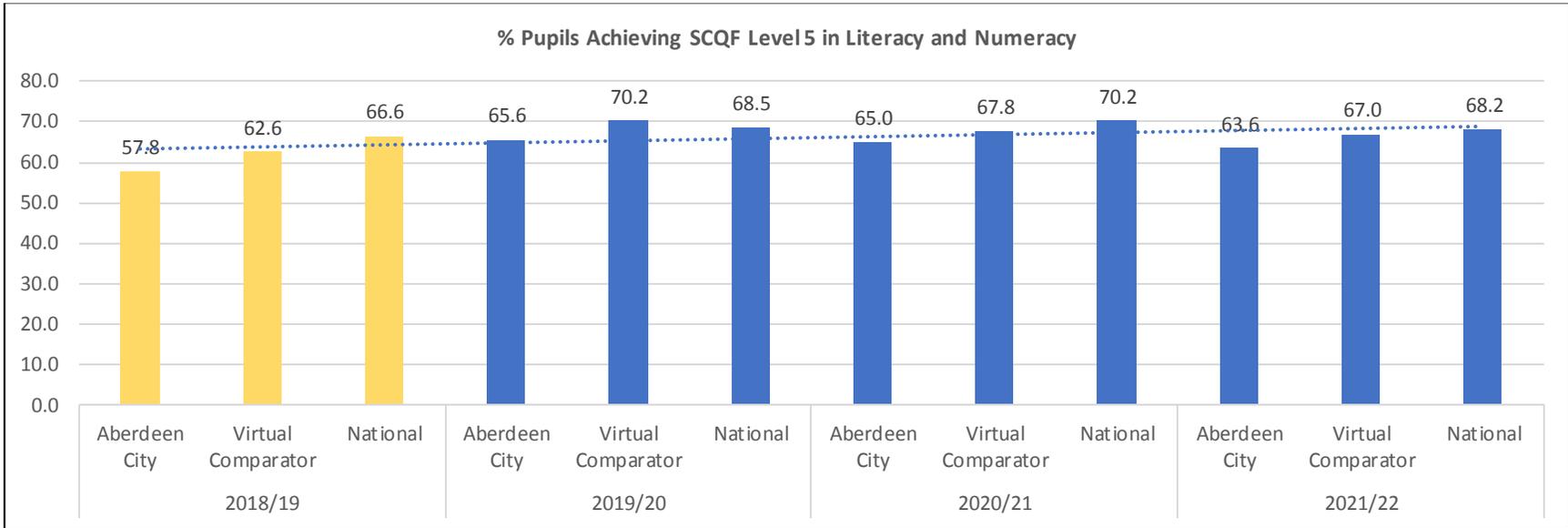
4.8 In concert with a rising trend in outcomes, the gap to both National and Virtual Comparators at SCQF Level 4 in 2021/22 had reduced to levels which were marginally above the rates that infer statistical significance (+/-1%) These differentials were the lowest recorded over the five-year period since introduction of the National Certification model.

Chart 4.8 % of pupil candidates achieving SCQF Level 4 Literacy and Numeracy combined by Benchmarks



4.9 At SCQF Level 5, there is a similar but more varied improvement journey in terms of the differentials between Aberdeen City outcomes and those of the benchmarks across the four years noted below. Much of this relates to the circumstances of examination diets in 2019/20 and 2020/21 but, as with SCQF Level 4, the long trend indicated that, in 2021/22, the distance to the Virtual Comparator and National figures had closed materially from where this stood in 2018/19.

Chart 4.9 % of pupil candidates achieving SCQF Level 5 Literacy and Numeracy combined by Benchmarks



**5.0 ATTAINMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF DEPRIVATION**

**Primary Phase – Literacy and Numeracy**

- 5.1 Primary One to Seven outcomes, as a combined measure, for Literacy and Numeracy showed an improving position on 2020/21, suggestive of positive recovery in outcomes from the previous year.
- 5.2 The rate of year-on-year improvement is greatest at SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) Levels 1 and 2 across both Literacy and Numeracy components with Numeracy overall being the stronger performance area. Literacy, across the Quintiles, however, demonstrated a marginally higher rate of improvement which was consistent with national trends.

Table 5 P1-7 Combined – Pupils achieving expected ACEL levels – Literacy and Numeracy by SIMD Quintile

		2020/21		2021/22	
	SIMD Quintile	Literacy	Numeracy	Literacy	Numeracy
P1, P4 and P7 combined	Quintile 1	47%	57%	58%	66%
	Quintile 2	51 %	60%	61%	69%
	Quintile 3	60%	70%	64%	72%
	Quintile 4	69%	77%	74.5%	82.5%
	Quintile 5	78%	84.5%	79%	87%

### Primary Phase Achievement – Most Deprived

- 5.3 Achievement levels of the Most Deprived Quintile (SIMD 1) across each phase are outlined below. These indicated significant year-on-year gains across the majority of Components with consequential narrowing of the gap to the Least Deprived (SIMD 5) The greatest improvements were being seen in Primary 1 and 7, and more limited change at Primary 4.
- 5.4 Relating the 2021/22 outcomes to 2018/19 baselines, Primary 1 achievement had returned to pre-Covid levels, with a materially reducing gap to SIMD 5 achievement in Reading and Writing
- 5.5 At Primary 4, there was a less positive improvement trend against the baseline year and a marginally worsened position in terms of the distance to outcomes of the Least Deprived. This triggered a focussed writing project to help improve outcomes in this area.
- 5.6 Achievement levels in Primary 7 demonstrated the greatest positive change on 2018/19 baselines and a consistent pattern of relative improvement between SIMD 1-4 and SIMD 5 outcomes.

Chart 5.3 a – P1 Pupils achieving expected ACEL levels - SIMD Quintile 1

Year	Curriculum Component	Achieved Level (%)	Difference from Quintile 5 (%)
2018/19	Reading	67%	21%
	Writing	64%	22%
	Listening & Talking	79%	15%
	Numeracy	75%	13%
2020/21	Reading	58%	26%
	Writing	55%	30%
	Listening & Talking	71%	19%
	Numeracy	68%	20%
2021/22	Reading	66.5%	16.5%
	Writing	66%	15%
	Listening & Talking	76%	15%
	Numeracy	75%	13.5%

Chart 5.3 b – P4 Pupils achieving expected ACEL levels - SIMD Quintile 1

Year	Curriculum Component	Achieved Level (%)	Difference from Quintile 5 (%)
2018/19	Reading	67%	19%
	Writing	62%	20%
	Listening & Talking	77%	16%
	Numeracy	61%	23.5%
2020/21	Reading	57%	27%
	Writing	50%	31%
	Listening & Talking	76%	14%
	Numeracy	53%	29%

2021/22	Reading	59%	28%
	Writing	53%	28%
	Listening & Talking	74%	21%
	Numeracy	57%	31%

Chart 5.3 c – P7 Pupils achieving expected ACEL levels by SIMD Quintile 1 and Curriculum Components

Year	Curriculum Component	Achieved Level (%)	Difference from Quintile 5 (%)
2018/19	Reading	67%	17%
	Writing	56%	26%
	Listening & Talking	72%	20%
	Numeracy	58%	25%
2020/21	Reading	56.5%	30%
	Writing	46%	35%
	Listening & Talking	69%	19%
	Numeracy	47%	35.5%
2021/22	Reading	70%	19%
	Writing	67%	15%
	Listening & Talking	80%	12%
	Numeracy	65%	20%

### Secondary (S3) Phase - Achievement

- 5.7 Curriculum for Excellence achievement of S3 pupils in the highest quintile of deprivation (SIMD1) offers some assurance that, in the absence of available data for 2019-20 and 2020-21, considerable progress was being made in both the outcomes of this cohort and the gap to those pupils in the lowest 20% of deprivation (SIMD 5). National CfE assessments at S3 were suspended in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Chart 5.7 % of S3 pupils by SIMD 1 Achieving Third Level or Better

Year	Curriculum Organiser	Achieved Level (%)	Difference from Quintile 5 (%)
2018/19	Reading	65%	30%
	Writing	65%	30%
	Listening & Talking	64.5%	32%
	Numeracy	59%	36%
2021/22	Reading	70.5%	22%
	Writing	65%	26%
	Listening & Talking	67%	26%
	Numeracy	77%	17%

### Senior Phase - Literacy and Numeracy

- 5.8 The year-on-year outcomes for each quintile at SCQF Level 4 Literacy and Numeracy showed statistically significant improvements on 2020/21 with the percentage point improvement increasing as the data moved from Least to Most Deprived. This pattern of exponentially higher rates of improvement at the higher Quintiles of deprivation was repeated in terms of comparison with the 2018/19 baseline.
- 5.9 At SCQF Level 5, a similar pattern of improvement from 2020/21 to 2021/22 was recorded across the Quintiles, with the exception of a dip in Quintile 1 attainment from 44.7% to 41.9%.
- 5.10 Long trend data for SCQF Level 4 indicates that in both 2019/20 and 2020/21, there was a dip in outcomes across the lower Quintiles with this being most pronounced in 2019/20, coinciding with most significant impacts in attainment at a national level. 2020/21, however showed some recovery in Quintiles 3-5 at that stage.
- 5.11 The attainment of pupils at SCQF 5 Literacy and Numeracy by contrast has shown almost universal year-on-year outcome improvement in each Quintile since the 2018/19, including in 2019/20, with the exception of Quintile 4 in 2019/20 and Quintile 1 in 2021/22 mentioned above.

5.12 The spread of improvement, both year-on-year and in comparison, with the baseline was less clear at SCQF Level 5 with those pupils in Quintile 2 showing the most improvement from 2020/21 and Quintile 3 noting the most improved position on 2018/19.

Chart 5.8 % of pupils achieving SCQF Levels 4 and 5 in Literacy and Numeracy by SIMD Quintile \*

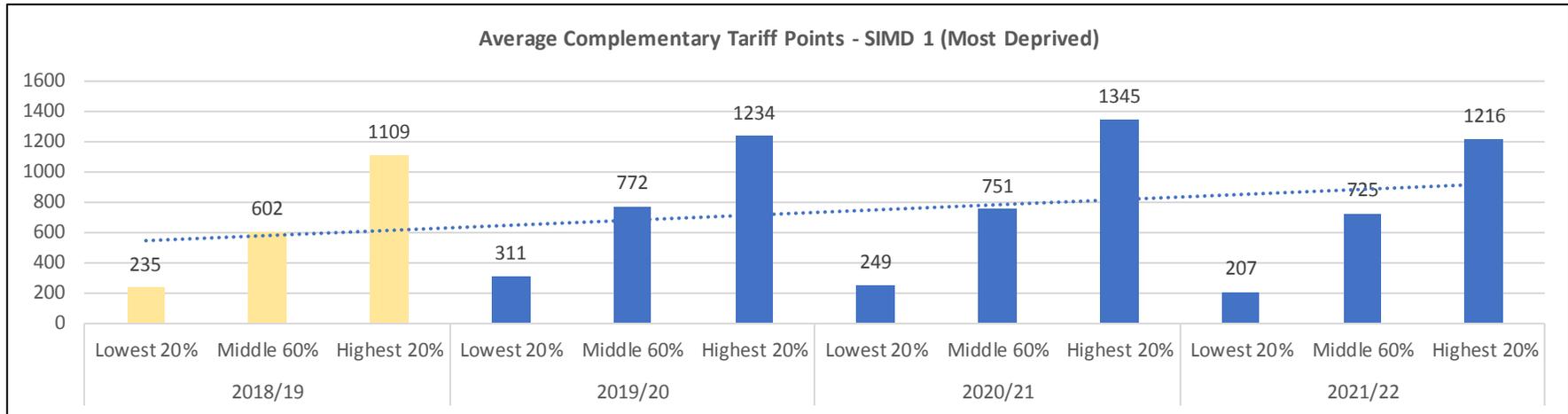
Year	SIMD Quintile	SCQF Level 4 -Literacy and Numeracy Combined	SCQF Level 5 – Literacy and Numeracy Combined
2018/19	Quintile 1 - 20% Most Deprived	75%	36%
	Quintile 2	81%	46%
	Quintile 3	89%	50%
	Quintile 4	92%	65%
	Quintile 5 - 20% Least Deprived	93%	76%
2020/21	Quintile 1 20% Most Deprived	71%	45%
	Quintile 2	76.5%	47%
	Quintile 3	84%	56%
	Quintile 4	89%	65.5%
	Quintile 5 20% Least Deprived	93.5%	77%
2021/22	Quintile 1 20% Most Deprived	78%	42%
	Quintile 2	82%	56%
	Quintile 3	90%	64%
	Quintile 4	91%	70%
	Quintile 5 20% Least Deprived	95%	80%

\* All figures are rounded to nearest whole number

**Senior Phase - Attainment**

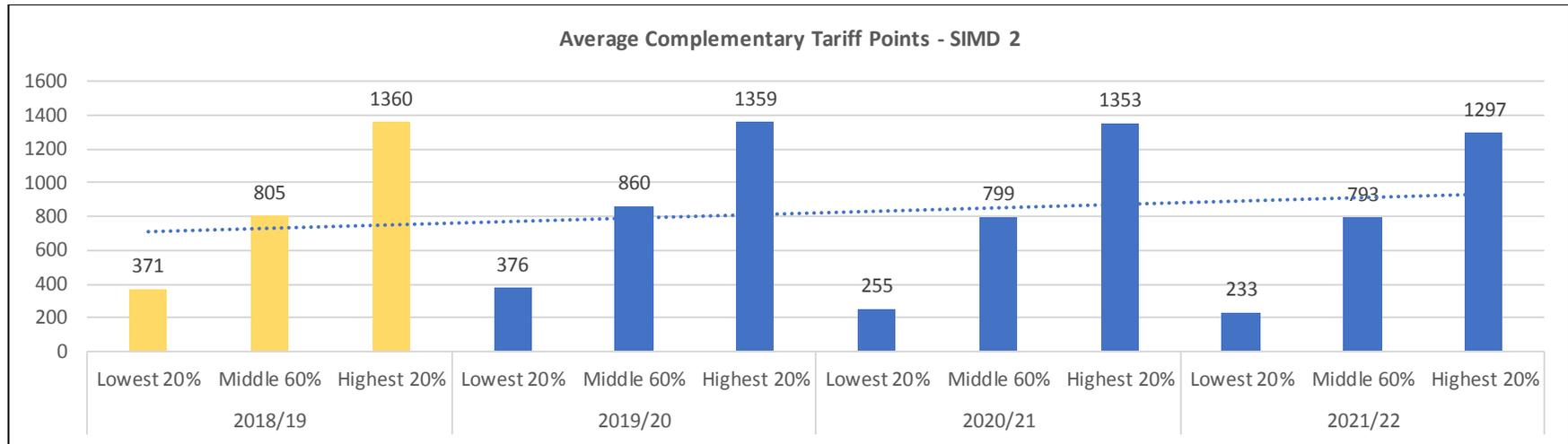
- 5.13 In regards to interpretation of the data charts below, considerable caution should be exercised in comparative analysis between SIMD groupings (Charts below) not least as the cohort sizes vary significantly and proportionately reduce moving down ( SIMD 5 to 1) the poverty related cohorts in each chart. The trendline reflects the long-term direction of travel of each performance quintile group in aggregate.
- 5.14 It is also important to recognise that the profiles of those in the Lowest Quintiles of attainment, regardless of SIMD placing, may include those who have multiple levels of disadvantage out with deprivation levels e.g., significant additional support needs, for whom attainment of tariff score qualifying outcomes is a less effective methodology for gauging cohort improvement. These pupils are more likely to be fully supported on an individual basis through targeted interventions to achieve their fullest academic and social potential within the education framework.
- 5.15 Focusing on the outcomes of pupils defined as being within the Most Deprived Quintile (SIMD 1) in comparison with the 2018/19 baseline, Average Complementary Tariff Scores, the measure of ‘best’ cohort attainment overall ( see 3.4 above) show a pattern of improvement. The tariff scores of the Middle 60% of attainment rose from 602 to 725 in 2021/22. The Highest 20% of candidate outcomes rose, although the figures for the Lowest 20% fell by 11.9% from 235 to 207. This suggested the need to maintain our approach to testing new ways of working for those with multiple challenges through our Edge of Care Pilots.
- 5.16 The 2021/22 outcomes for this Most Deprived Quintile, when compared with the Virtual Comparator and National Benchmarks, showed outcomes for each attainment cohort that were above the Comparator, an advance on the 2018/19 baseline with extended positive distances. Each of the three attainment quintile group scores also exceeded, or closely matched the National figures which was an across-the-board phase shift from the position in 2018/19, where only the Lowest Quintile of attainment exceeded the National comparator.

Chart 5.16 Average Complementary Tariff Scores by Attainment Cohort – SIMD Quintile 1 ( 20% Most Deprived)



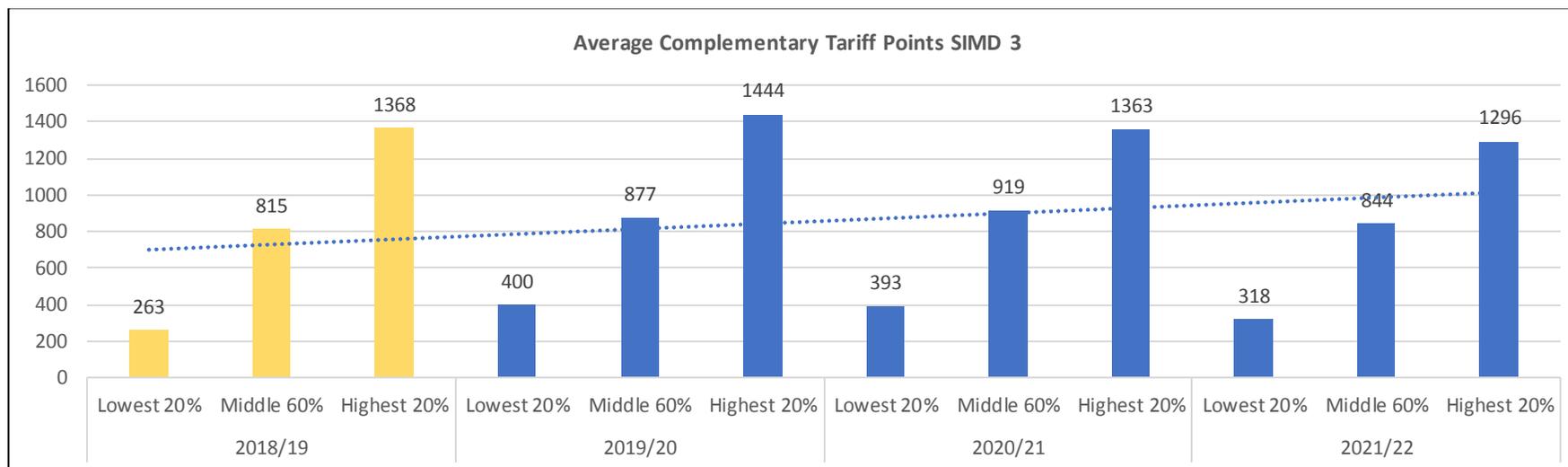
5.17 At SIMD 2, the change trend on baseline ACTP Scores was less well defined with each of the three attainment groupings closely matching, or just under the levels, of the two Comparators in 2021/22 and some limited value losses on 2018/19 amongst the Lowest 20% of attainment. There is no significant data trend for Aberdeen City or either of the Comparators around overall value reductions from the baseline year to 2021/22 for this Deprivation Quintile.

Chart 5.17 Average Complementary Tariff Scores by Attainment Cohort – SIMD Quintile 2



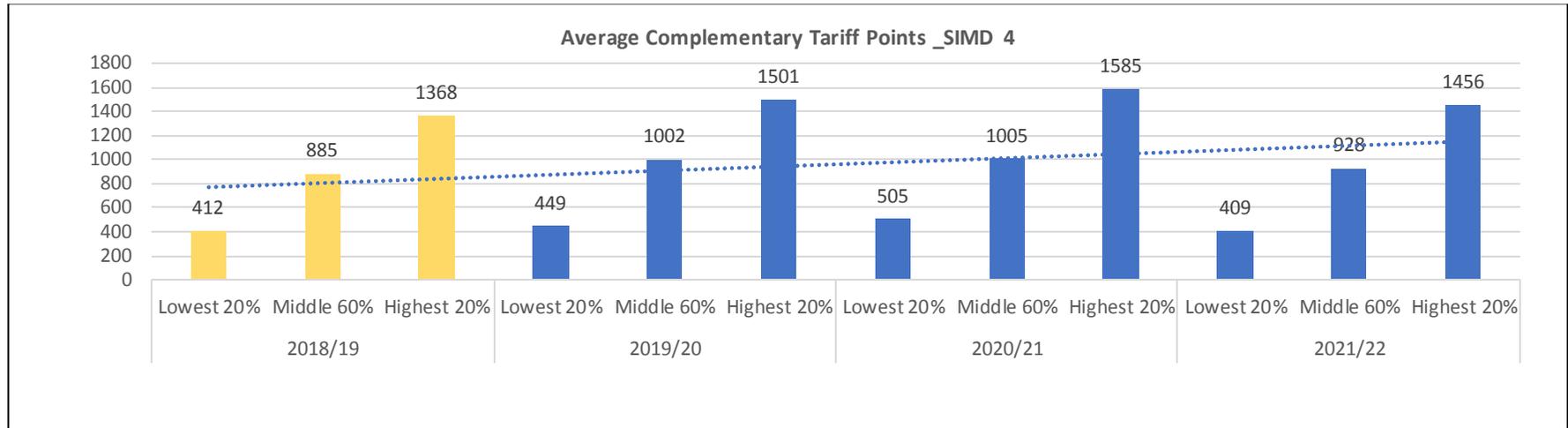
5.18 SIMD 3 aggregate outcomes for the City showed a very stable position against the baseline year with only the scores of the Lowest 20% of attainers demonstrating significant variation of +20.9% and those of the Highest 20% being marginally reduced. Both of the Virtual Comparator and National benchmark values grew over the same period, creating a small extension of the differences to Aberdeen City overall and for each attainment quintile grouping.

Chart 5.18 Average Complementary Tariff Scores by Attainment Cohort - SIMD Quintile 3



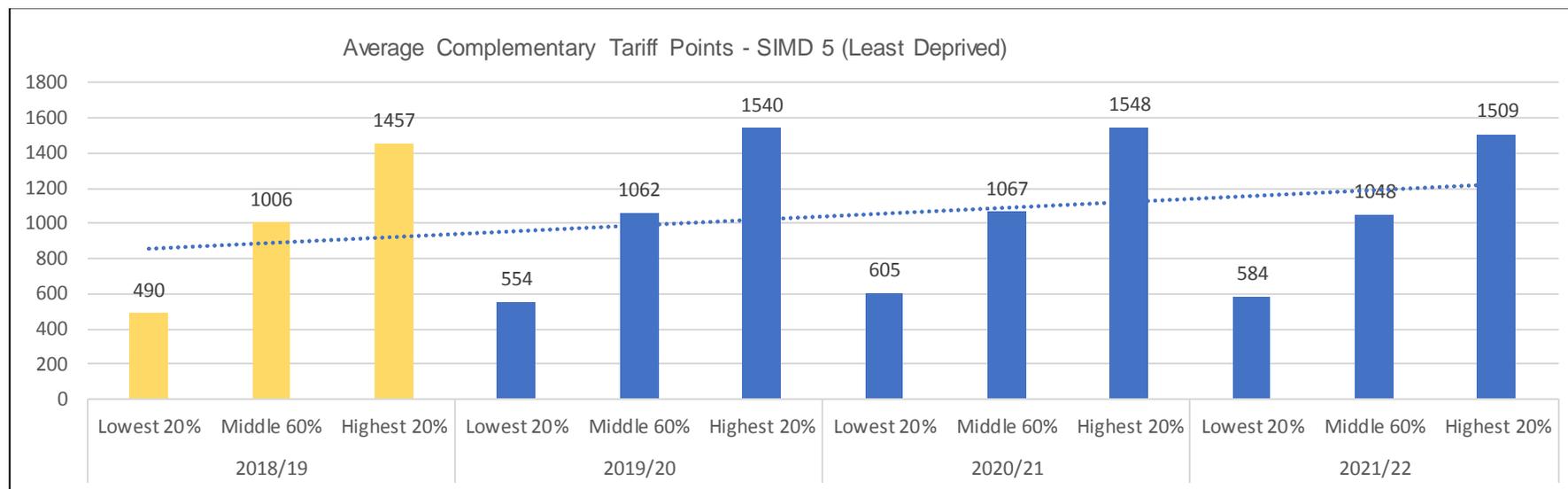
5.19 The outcomes for pupils at SIMD 4 in 2021/22 showed general improvements in the Middle 60% and Highest 20% of attainment of +4.9% and +6.4% respectively against the baseline, whilst the scoring of the Lowest 20% was static. Overall, the rate of improvement for Aberdeen City was greater than the Virtual Comparator and National trend with closing of the gap to these benchmarks, although only exceeding both of the Comparator scores at the Highest 20% of attainment, which is in itself is a gain on the 2018/19 position.

Chart 5.19 Average Complementary Tariff Scores by Attainment Cohort – SIMD Quintile 4



- 5.20 In aggregate, the Tariff scores for Aberdeen City at SIMD 5 had improved on the baseline with the marginal gap to the National comparator that existed in 2018/19 being entirely closed, having improved across each of the three quintile-based attainment cohorts.
- 5.21 This had resulted in Aberdeen City exceeding or matching the National scores in the Lowest and Highest 20% of attainment respectively whilst the Middle 60% remained unchanged. In 2018/19, the Tariff scores for each attainment cohort, and the Lowest 20% in particular, were lower than the National benchmark. Comparing with the Virtual Comparator indicated that Aberdeen City was displaying a slightly faster rate of improvement than the Comparator in each attainment cohort with the Lowest 20% now above the Comparator figure for 2021/22 but not at a rate that closed the attainment gaps for the Middle 60% and Highest 20%

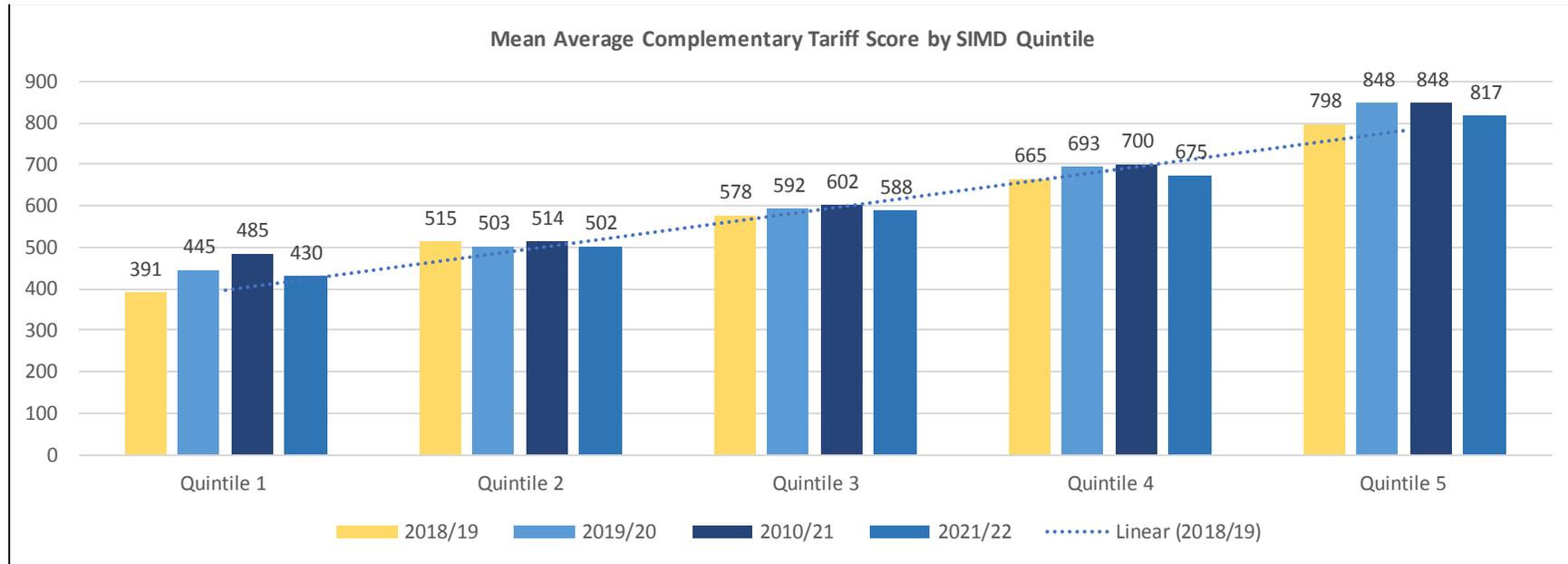
Chart 5.20 Average Complementary Tariff Scores – SIMD Quintile 5 – 20% Least Deprived



- 5.22 The chart below provides Mean Data around relative performance by SIMD Quintile which offers an additional weighted trend approach to Average Complimentary Tarriff Score data, and provides supplementary information to that available through the publication of National Benchmark measures.
- 5.23 Use of Mean Average Complementary Tariff Score modelling primarily assists in mitigating against year-on-year and SIMD Quintile variations by cohort size but is not, in itself, part of the National Benchmark suite.
- 5.24 This data indicates that the performance of pupils defined as being in SIMD 1 ( Most Deprived) are proportionately the most improved on the 2018/19 baseline, sharing the improving trend demonstrated by Quintiles 3, 4 and 5.
- 5.25 The outcomes for SIMD 2 pupils shows the least variation across the time series with a marginal fall in scoring against both the baseline and previous year outcomes. This could be regarded as a static position over time which, unlike the remaining Quintiles, has been less affected by variations in assessment models and improvement activity, which will warrant life review

of progress through the newly adopted tracking system in place to better understand the challenges.

Chart 5.22 Mean Average Complementary Tariff Scores by SIMD Quintile



## 6.0 CLOSING THE ATTAINMENT GAP

### Primary Phase - Literacy and Numeracy

- 6.1 There had been a material year-on-year closing of the gaps between the majority of SIMD based bands and the Least Deprived cohort (SIMD 5) with greatest absolute and relative gains being made at SIMD's 1 and 2.
- 6.2 As outlined above, Numeracy outcomes in general demonstrated the stronger outcomes in absolute values but, in terms of closing the gap, Literacy showed greater progress with the Mean Gap reducing by just under seven percentage points.

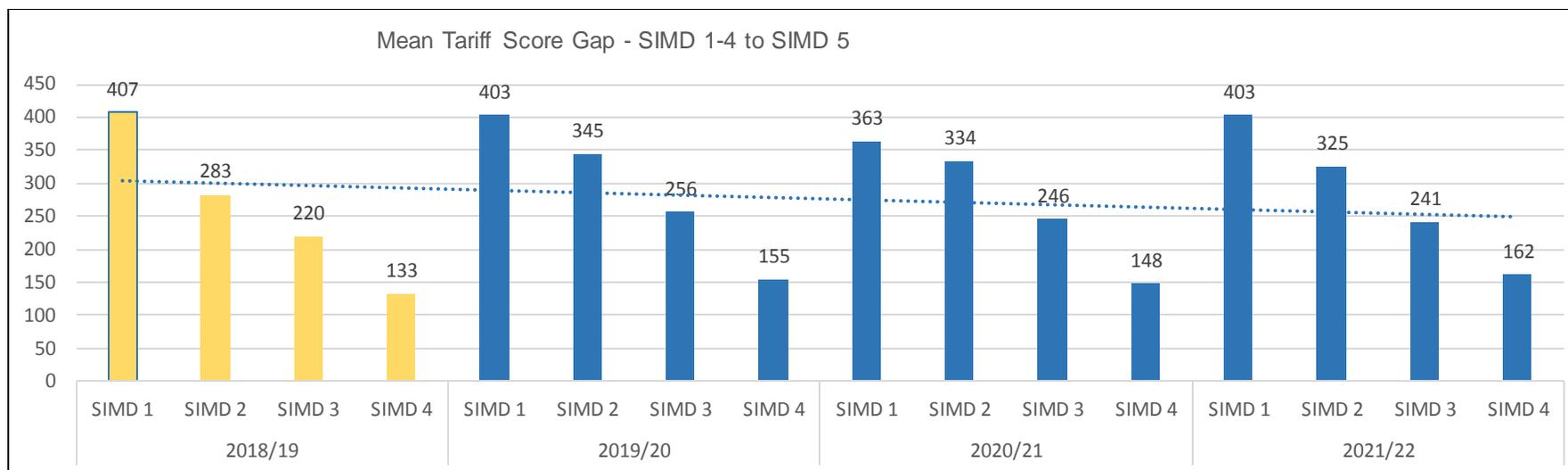
Table 6.1 – P1,4 and 7 combined CfE achievement - Differentials to SIMD 5 by Percentage Points

		2021/22		2020/21	
		Literacy SIMD Gap (Percentage Points)	Numeracy SIMD Gap (Percentage Points)	Literacy SIMD Gap (Percentage Points)	Numeracy SIMD Gap (Percentage Points)
P1, P4 and P7 combined	Quintile 1	-21 p.p	-21 p.p.	-31 p.p	-28 p,p
	Quintile 2	-18 p.p.	-17 p.p.	-27 p.p	-24.5 p,p
	Quintile 3	-15 p.p.	-15 p.p.	-18 p.p	-14 p,p
	Quintile 4	-4 p.p	-4.p.p	-9 p.p	-7 p.p
	Mean Gap	-15p.p	-14 p.p	-21 p.p	-18.5 p.p

## Senior Phase – Attainment

- 6.4 The data for 2021/22 indicated marginal shifts in the gaps between SIMD's 1-4 in relation to the outcomes at SIMD 5 when compared with 2020/21. This is influenced by application of the Alternative Curriculum Model which created a cross-phase adjustment in outcomes.
- 6.5 Taking this into account and considering the longer-term direction of travel against the 2018/19 baseline year, the outcomes of the Most Deprived Quintile (SIMD 1) in comparison with the Least Deprived (SIMD 5) have remained stable which is a source of assurance that the impacts of the pandemic, which had been expected to affect the attainment of those pupils from areas of the highest deprivation most, have been well managed by the Education Service and its partners.
- 6.6 The mean data does, however, indicate that for pupils in SIMD 2 there were continued impacts, related to the pandemic and post pandemic periods, in terms of closing the gap to the Least Deprived. This is a result of outcomes of this cohort being static whilst those in SIMD 5 were on an improving trend over the long term.
- 6.7 Statistically, the outcomes for pupils in SIMD's 3 and 4 show more limited changes which are within normal tolerances in terms of whether these represent areas that are suggestive of a material shift in educational outcomes for either of these Quintiles, particularly as both cohorts are demonstrating longer term improvement (see above).

Chart 6.4 Average Complementary Tariff Scores – Differentials to SIMD 5 by Quintile Mean Figure



### Senior Phase - Literacy and Numeracy

- 6.8 At SCQF Level 4 in Literacy and Numeracy, the differential between SIMD 1 ( Most Deprived) and SIMD 5 (Least Deprived) outcomes for Aberdeen City in 2021/22 showed a year-on-year improvement of 6 percentage points from -22.7p.p. in 2020/21 to 16.7 p.p with SIMD 1 attainment of 77.9%, the highest outcome for this cohort against that measure to date.
- 6.9 This was the largest positive change in a single year over the course of the four years from the 2018/19 baseline and was, by a slim margin, the lowest gap over the course of the extended lifetime of this national measure.
- 6.10 In comparison with the two benchmarks the City, in 2021/22, had closed the year-on-year gap at a rate which exceed both the Virtual Comparator and National outcomes, resulting in closer alignment with the benchmarks, after an extending of the gap in both previous years.

Table 6.8 Attainment Gap between Most and Least Deprived Pupils - Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 4

Year	Establishment	Percentage Candidate Attainment	Attainment Gap between Most and Least Deprived Pupils
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		(%)	( Percentage Points)
2018/19	Aberdeen City	75.6	-17.2
	Virtual Comparator	79.4	-16.6
	National	80.6	-14.7
2020/21	Aberdeen City	70.8	-22.7
	Virtual Comparator	82.3	-14.3
	National	80.5	-15.1
2021/22	Aberdeen City	77.9	-16.7
	Virtual Comparator	83.0	-12.9
	National	81.8	-14.2

- 6.11 As reflected in the chart below, the outcomes across the majority of SIMD–based Quintiles for Literacy and Numeracy were overwhelmingly positive at SCQF Level 5 in 2021/22, although the improvement trend for those in the Most Deprived Quintile has been less continuous.
- 6.12 Although significantly improved on the 2018/19 baseline and following the national upwards trends in 2019/20 and 2020/21, potentially reflecting the impacts of differing assessment models in these years, the 2021/22 outcome fell year-on-year.
- 6.13 Consequently, and as the attainment of the Least Deprived Pupils ( SIMD 5) sustained a more continuous period of consecutive improvement, despite having a lower rate of improvement, the distance between SIMD 1 and 5 had extended in 2021/22 but reduced slightly on the baseline year.

Table 6.11 Attainment Gap between Most and Least Deprived Pupils - Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 5

Year	Establishment	Percentage Candidate Attainment (%)	Attainment Gap between Most and Least Deprived Pupils (Percentage Points)
2018/19	Aberdeen City	36.25	-39.52
	Virtual Comparator	47.06	-37.18
	National	49.17	-33.69

2020/21	Aberdeen City	44.72	-32.71
	Virtual Comparator	53.29	-33.18
	National	51.7	-32.97
2021/22	Aberdeen City	41.86	-38.54
	Virtual Comparator	54.48	-31.72
	National	53.67	-31.79

## 7.0 EDUCATION OUTCOMES FOR CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 7.1 Considerable caution needs to be exercised around interpreting and comparing both year-on-year and trend patterns arising from the education outcomes of Care Experienced Children and Young People at a local level.
- 7.2 Due to the variations in numbers involved this is best conducted in the context of the Virtual Headteacher role where support of individual pupils, and detailed ongoing data evaluations from the cohort outcomes, is most effectively delivered.
- 7.3 On this basis, and as it is not possible to publish continuity of data against each level of qualification, due to necessary suppression because of the numbers of pupils involved, trend summaries for Care Experienced Children and Young People are not specifically offered in this report. Annual Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework reporting, however, contains in-year datasets which capture the outcomes of Care Experienced Children and Young People in some additional detail.
- 7.4 Publication of the wider nationally benchmarked Educational Outcomes of Looked After Children data in mid-August 2023 will offer the first opportunity for sample size appropriate comparison.

## 8.0 ATTENDANCE

- 8.1 Overall, the level of attendance by Openings ( half-days) in session 2022 was marginally reduced from 91.45% to 91.12% but with an increase in Primary School attendance year-on-year.
- 8.2 Accounting for the rise in both school rolls, and the number of Possible Openings from the 2021 Session, (+1.55%) the level of change in Unauthorised Absence is the most numerically influential factor between years with Primary Schools

experiencing a proportionately greater increase than Secondary Schools, although the overall percentage of Unauthorised Absence was below that in Secondary.

- 8.3 In the absence of any clear outlying data trend highlighting differentials in approaches or drivers of Unauthorized Absence at school level, the small rise year-on-year was understood to be a consequential impact of a variety of circumstantial factors aligning with the changing characteristics of the pupil profile, including a greater proportion of pupils with Additional Support Needs, rising in term enrolments, which can be unsettling for new pupils, and some residual post pandemic influences.
- 8.4 Authorised Absence and Exclusions were statistically unchanged from the previous year at Authority level with the former being the most significant value influence on the increase in Total Absence at Secondary.

Table 8a School Pupil Attendance and Absence by sector ( Openings)

School Type	Session Year	% Attendance	% Authorised Absence	% Unauthorised Absence	% Exclusions	% Total Absence
Primary	2021	91.97	6.15	1.87	0.003	8.03
Secondary		90.72	6.49	2.75	0.04	9.28
Aberdeen		91.45	6.30	2.23	0.02	8.55
Primary	2022	92.24	5.54	2.21	0.01	7.76
Secondary		89.52	7.30	3.13	0.001	10.48
Aberdeen		91.12	6.28	2.58	0.02	8.88

## 9.0 EXCLUSIONS

- 9.1 In terms of Exclusion data there are, evidenced by national statistics, a wide variety of influences which have an impact on the rates of exclusion, of which policy, is only one. Of equal influence are aspects relating to the characteristics of pupil cohorts and the proportions of each characteristic within the pupil body.

- 9.2 From the national publication for 2021, those pupils with Additional Support Needs were more likely to experience an increased frequency of exclusion than those without Additional Support Need, and there was some evidence that ethnic background, and competence levels in English language were associated with differential experiences of exclusion.
- 9.3 As noted in the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework report to this Committee, there is also narrative at a national level that an increase in dysregulated behaviours among pupils had coincided with a more complete return to normal school-based attendance models.
- 9.4 This latter factor, and the increased physical presence of pupils in schools from 2021/22 onwards, on the basis of current data ( which for 2022/23 is yet to be validated and subsequently published by the Scottish Government through the Statistics in Schools release later in the year) is likely to be the main statistical driver of exclusion data in 2022/23.
- 9.5 At the same, the duration of exclusions had shown an improvement with this reducing from an average of 3.7 days to 3.5, an indication that the educational impacts on these pupils, in terms of the effects of temporary exclusion, were being managed and maintained to a minimum.

Table 9 a Cases and Numbers of Exclusions per 1,000 pupils

Year	Number of Exclusion Incidents	Exclusion Incidents Per 1,000 pupils	Number of pupils excluded
2018/19	1221	52.9	626
2020/21	408	17.9	294
2021/22	477	19.7	309

## 10.0 SCHOOL LEAVER DESTINATIONS

- 10.1 The overall initial destination outcomes for 2021/22 were marginally below that of the previous year ( which was the highest figure recorded to date) and reflected the extent to which variations in leaver choices were influenced by the accessibility of opportunities. With a larger % of leavers choosing continued education as a destination, with the positive assurance that this presented in pandemic years, this was an expected outcome.

10.2 This most recent data indicates some ‘settling’ of the post school destination data for Aberdeen to levels, and proportions in each category, similar to that in 2018/19 which previous to 2020/21 been the highest outcome for the City’s school leavers

Table 10.a Percentage of School Leavers in an Initial Positive Destination

Year	% of school leavers in a positive initial destination
2018/19	93.7%
2020/21	95.4%
2021/22	93.9%

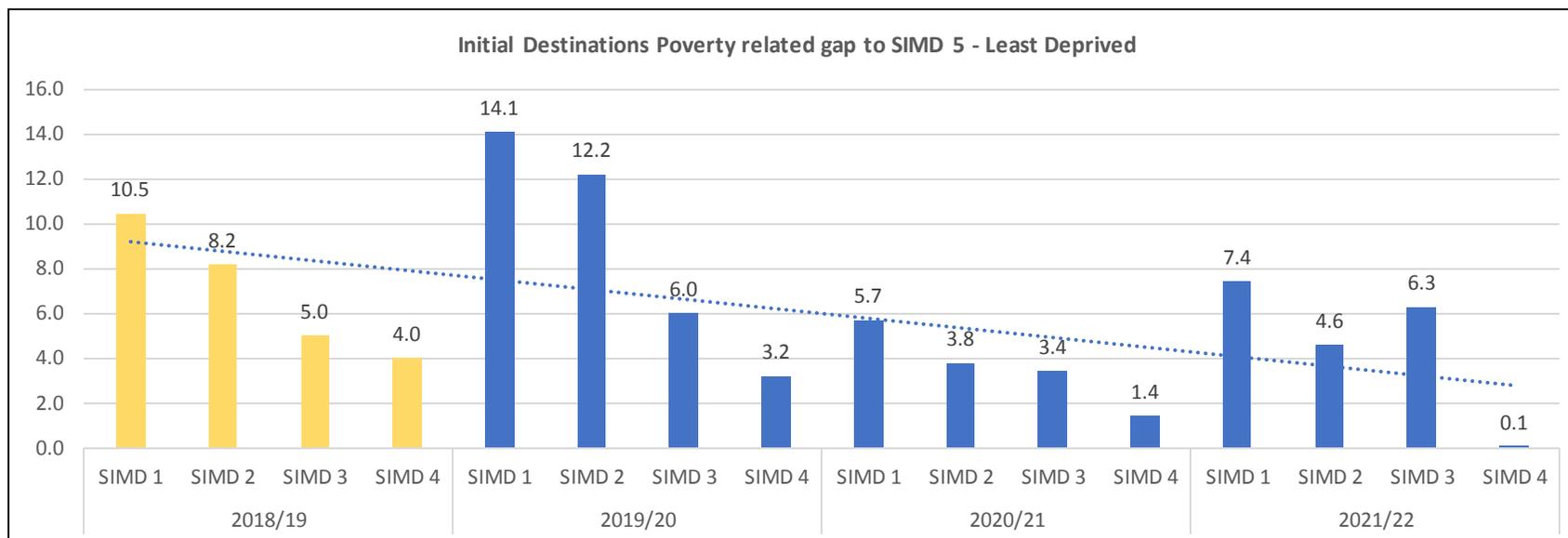
Table 10.b School Leaver Outcomes by Initial Destination – Breakdown (%)

Year	Positive Destination	Higher Education	Further Education	Training	Employment	Voluntary Work	Personal Skills Development	Unemployed Seeking	Unemployed Not Seeking	Unknown
2018/19	93.7	39.6	33.4	2.0	17.7	0.5	0.4	4.0	1.4	0.8
2020/21	95.4	45.7	30.8	4.1	13.8	0.5	0.3	2.2	1.8	0.6
2021/22	93.9	43.7	29.4	2.6	17.4	0.4	0.4	3.2	1.9	1.1

10.3 Accounting for the variabilities in economic circumstances and COVID-19 restrictions, which are heavy influences in both of the previous years, the trajectories around the deprivation related gap indicate an improving trend against the 2018/19 baselines. 2019/20 figures at both local and national levels were materially influenced by the early stages of the pandemic with the survey point falling in the Autumn of 2020.

- 10.4 Destinations for pupils in SIMD levels 1,2 and 4 are all equally improved on 2018/19 in terms of percentage point change, with the gap between SIMD 4 and 5 eradicated in 2021/22, whilst the outcomes for SIMD 3 pupils shows a marginal increase in the poverty related gap from the baseline.

Chart 10.3 Poverty Related Gap to the Least Deprived Quintile (SIMD 5)



## 12.0 LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK

- 12.1 The data shared above, highlights that there continues to be evidence of sustained improvement year on year. In order to determine our rate of progress against other Local Authorities, the service also makes supplementary use of the Improvement Service Local Government Benchmarking data to establish an understanding of progress over time.
- 12.2 As reported in Appendix B within the [Performance Management Framework Report Appendix B](#) in March 2023, this national Improvement Service tool is routinely updated when validated data is available. This data helps Service judgements on how we are performing against national averages over time, and how we are performing against the other Local Authorities (our

Family Group) thought to be most like us in terms of SIMD based population characteristics, Considering our position against others helps us to draw high level conclusions to inform next steps.

12.3 The following charts and narratives function as summary of the outcomes that were captured in that report. The Family Groupings for each Local Education Authority are based on four groups of eight authorities, constructed on the basis of similarity of Deprivation Levels.

12.4 The Aberdeen City grouping consists of the following Education Authorities, with significant variations in population, economic and geographic environments which are all influential in the ability to form direct comparisons but is an additional form of benchmarking supported by the Accounts Commission, and which is scrutinised by Audit Scotland in terms of establishing Best Value Assessments of local authority provision and delivery.

Table 12.1 Local Government Benchmarking Framework – Family Group 1

Authority	Geography
East Renfrewshire	Mixed
East Dunbartonshire	Urban
Aberdeenshire	Rural
Edinburgh, City of	Urban
Perth & Kinross	Rural
Aberdeen City	Urban
Shetland Islands	Rural

Orkney Islands	Rural
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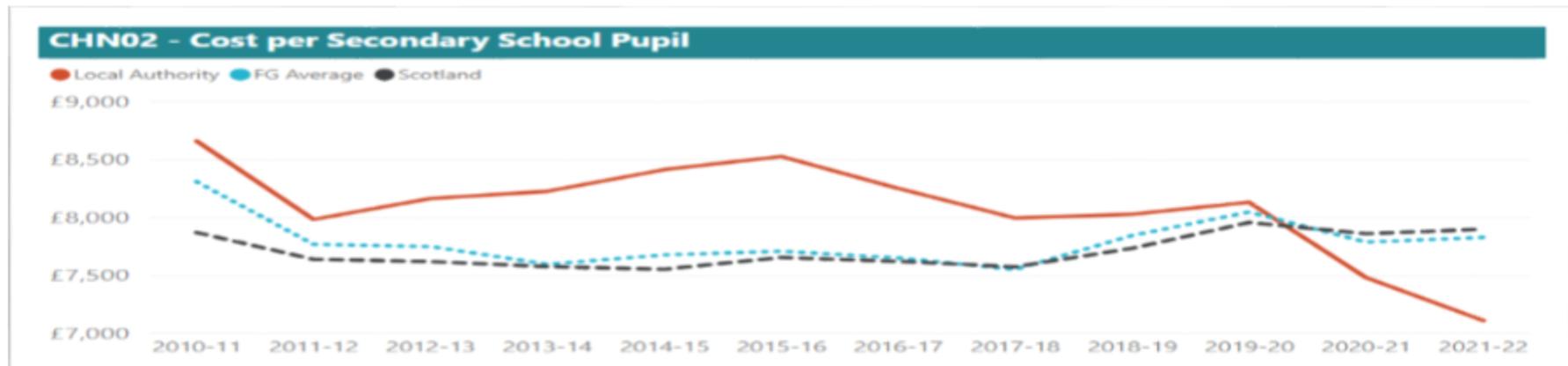
### Summary of Children’s Services Outcomes

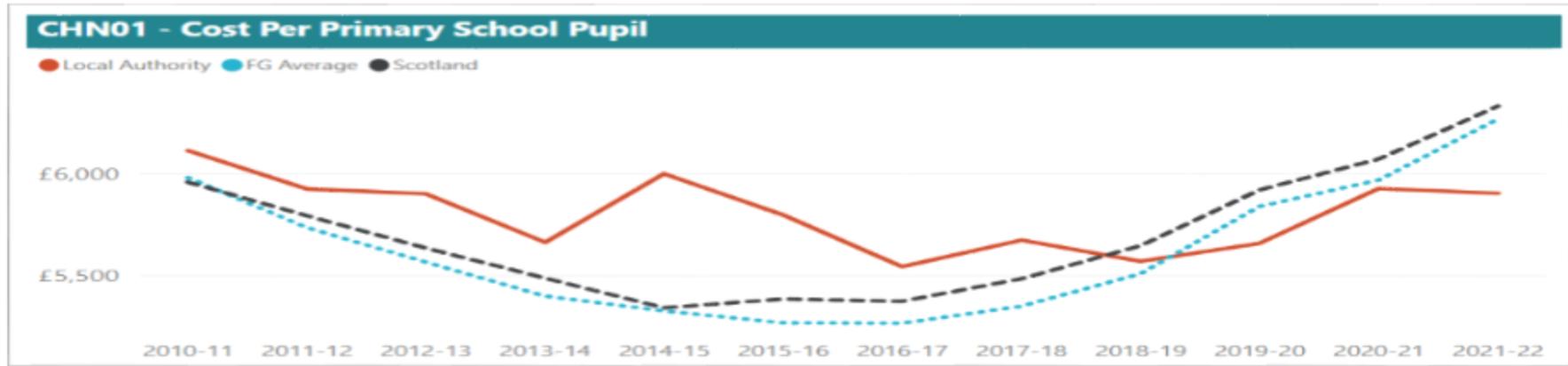
12.4 On publication of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework Report, the 2021-12 suite of outcomes relating to the Children’s Services theme, incorporating attainment and achievement measures for Aberdeen City, was showing the greatest proportion of improved metrics year-on-year of all local authorities. At the same time, it also highlighted that the pace of improvement was not uniform across all these measures and that further progress was needed to match the Family Group outcomes in particular.

### Cost Measures

12.5 The cost of per pupil primary and secondary education in 2021/22 was significantly lower than both the national average and the family group and have been on a reducing trend over an extended timeline.

Charts 12 a and b – Cost per Secondary and Primary School Pupil

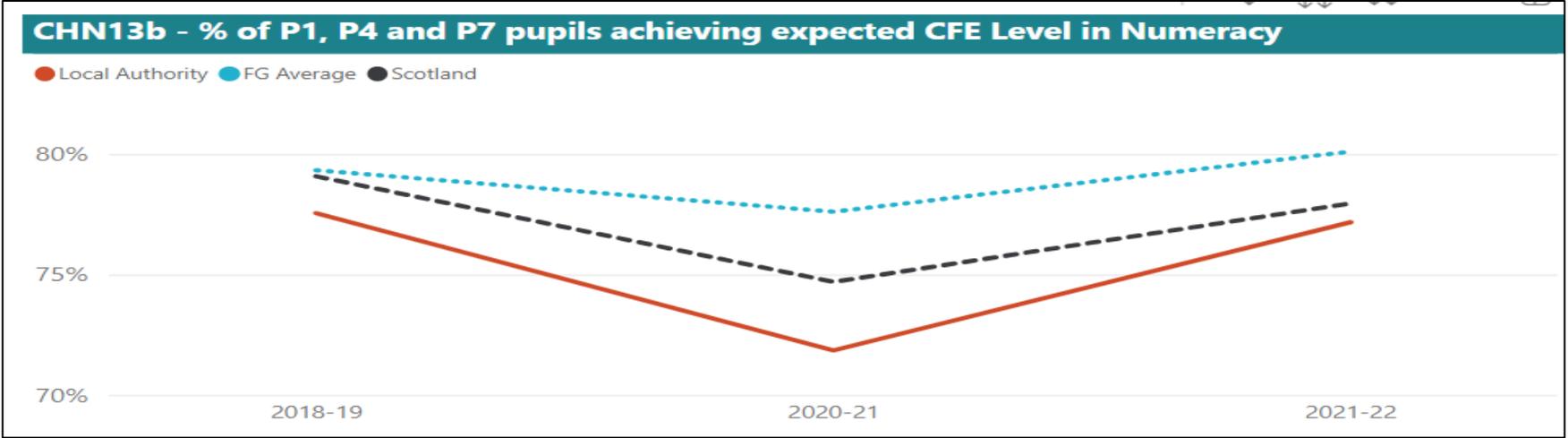
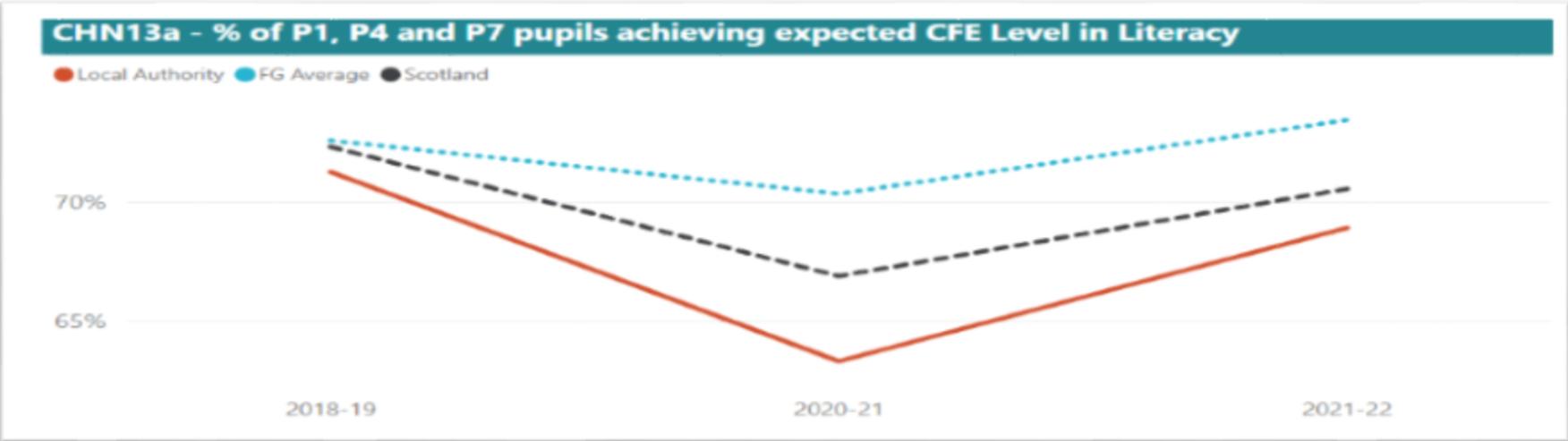




### Primary Phase – Literacy and Numeracy

- 12.6 The impact on Literacy and Numeracy achievement at P1-7 over the course of the pandemic, in the absence of a national Curriculum for Excellence assessment programme in 2019/20, was subsequently reflected in the outcomes for 2020/21, with the City mirroring the National and Family Group trends.
- 12.7 The 2020/21 outcome incurred an extension of the gap to both benchmarks, a situation which had been recovered to a substantial extent in 2021/22 but still showed that the City, at an aggregated level, had some scope for additional improvement to close the distance to the benchmarks, particularly around Literacy. The detailed information above demonstrates where this was already being achieved in specific phases and curriculum areas.

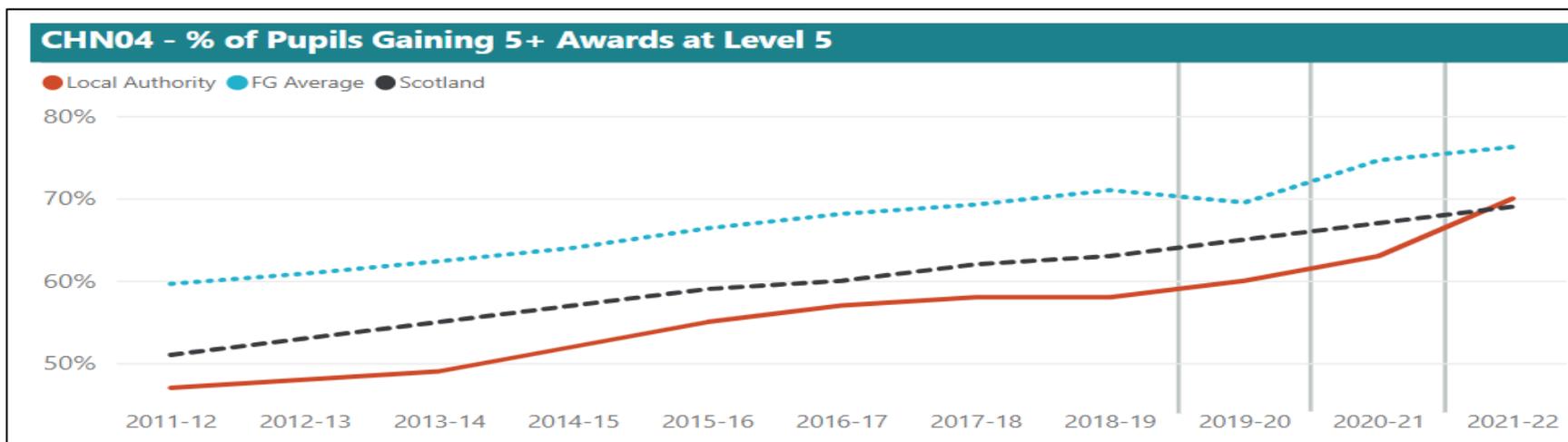
Charts 12 c and d – Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (P1-7) 2018-22

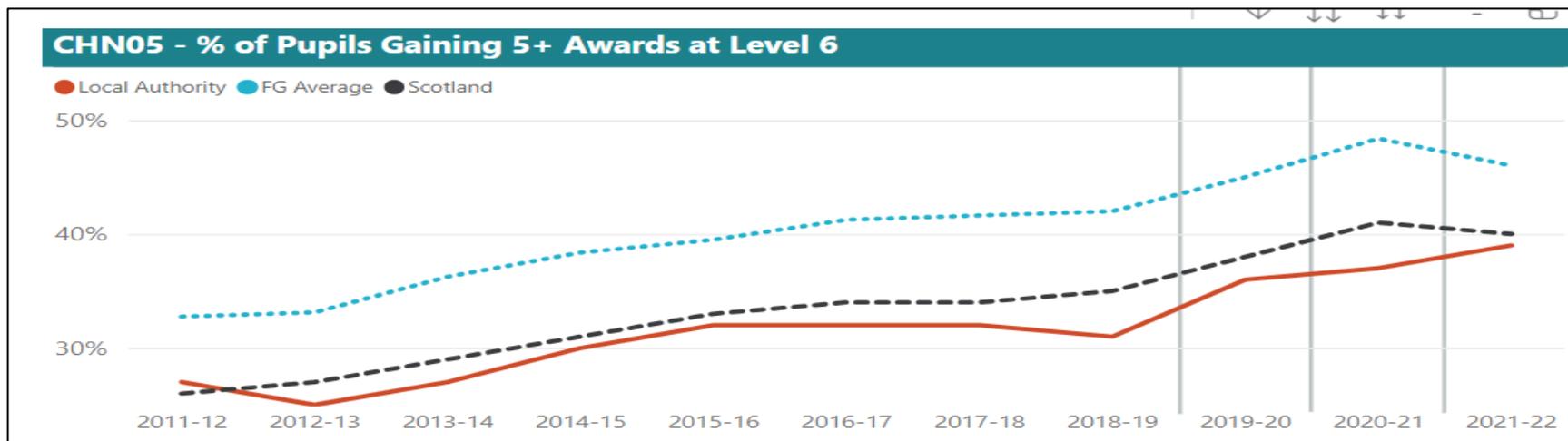


## Breadth and Depth in Senior Phase Attainment

- 12.8 These measures reflect the extent to which Senior Phase attainment, against four specific measures from the National Improvement Framework evidential base, are being met. These are distinct from the SCQF indicator data captured above and are an indication of higher-level outcomes across a range of subjects in aggregate.
- 12.9 The percentage of City pupils in Senior Phase attaining 5 or more awards at SCQF Levels 5 and 6 have closely tracked both the National and Family Group trends over time and in 2021/22 entirely closed the statistical gap to the former and has shown material gains against the Family Group averages.
- 12.10 Long term, both of the Level 5+ measures demonstrated advances that were ahead of the National, Average and Median rate of improvement with the greater positive movement being reflected against the outcomes of the Most Deprived cohort. At Level 6+. The improvement rates of both indicators were behind the three comparator measures of improvement with the outcomes of those in the Most Deprived Quintile, as a result of the 2021/22 dip in attainment, being more pronounced. This year-on-year fall in outcomes of the Most Deprived was noted across more than a third of all authorities.

Charts 12 e and f – Pupils Attaining 5 or more awards at SCQF Levels 5 and 6

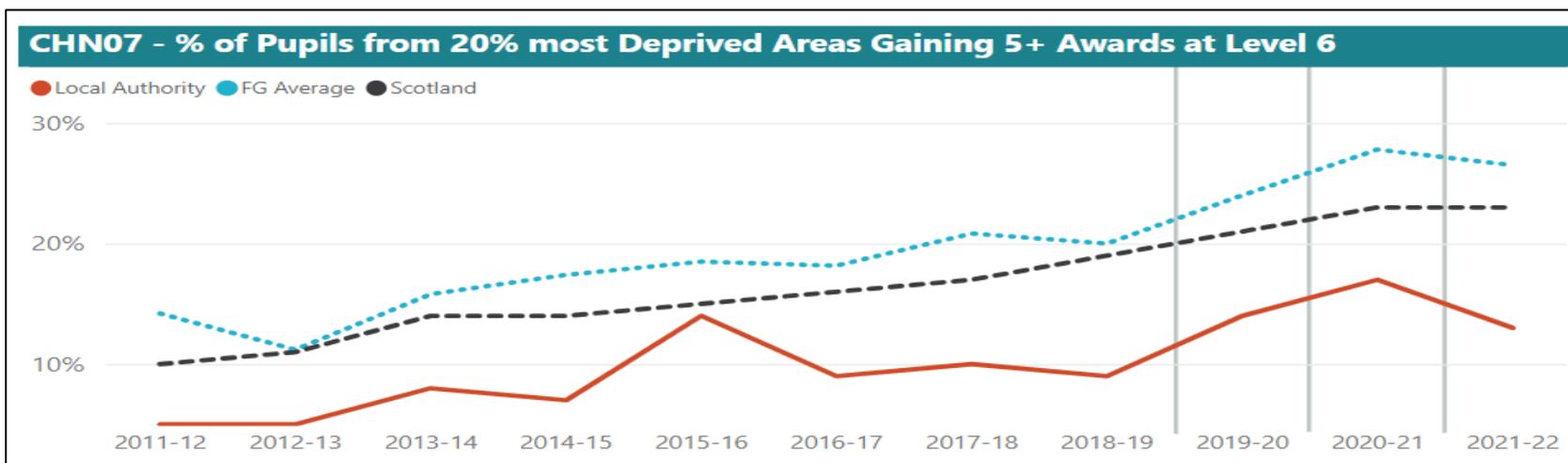
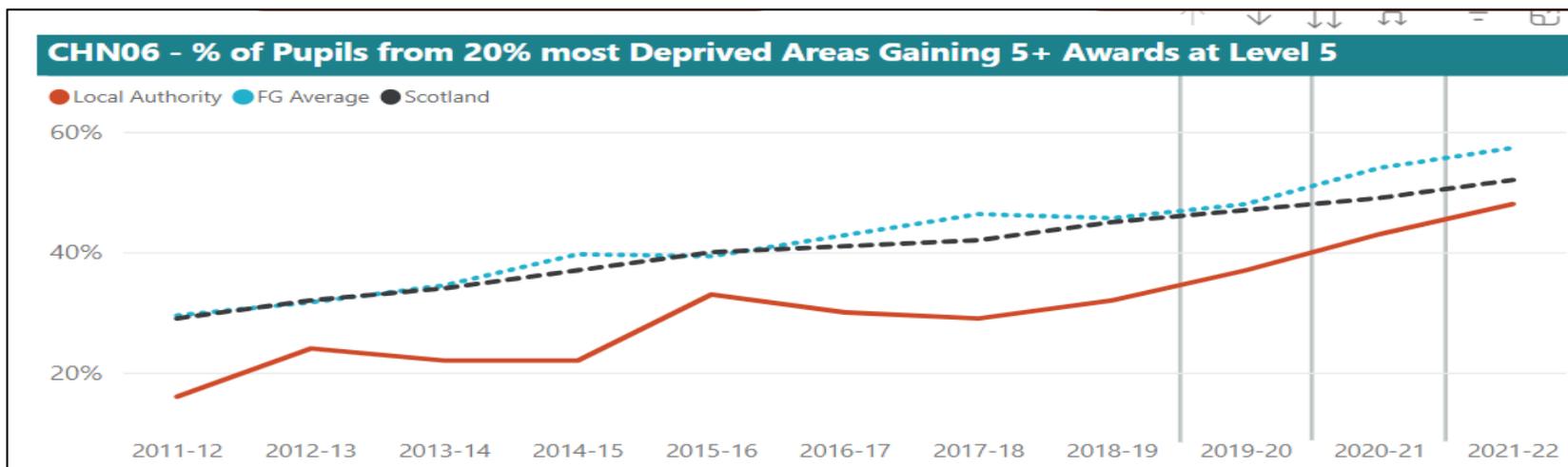




12.11 Attainment against the deprivation related award measures demonstrated diverging outcomes and trends in 2021/22, with the rate of improvement at SCQF Level 5 rising at a rate that exceeded the benchmarks, consequently resulting in sustained material gains on both over time.

12.12 At SCQF Level 6, there was a less robust trend in improvement with an unexpected dip in outcome in 2021/22, subsequent to two years of consecutive growth that was similar to, if not greater than the benchmarks. The backgrounds to this year-on-year change are outlined in the sections above relating to attainment.

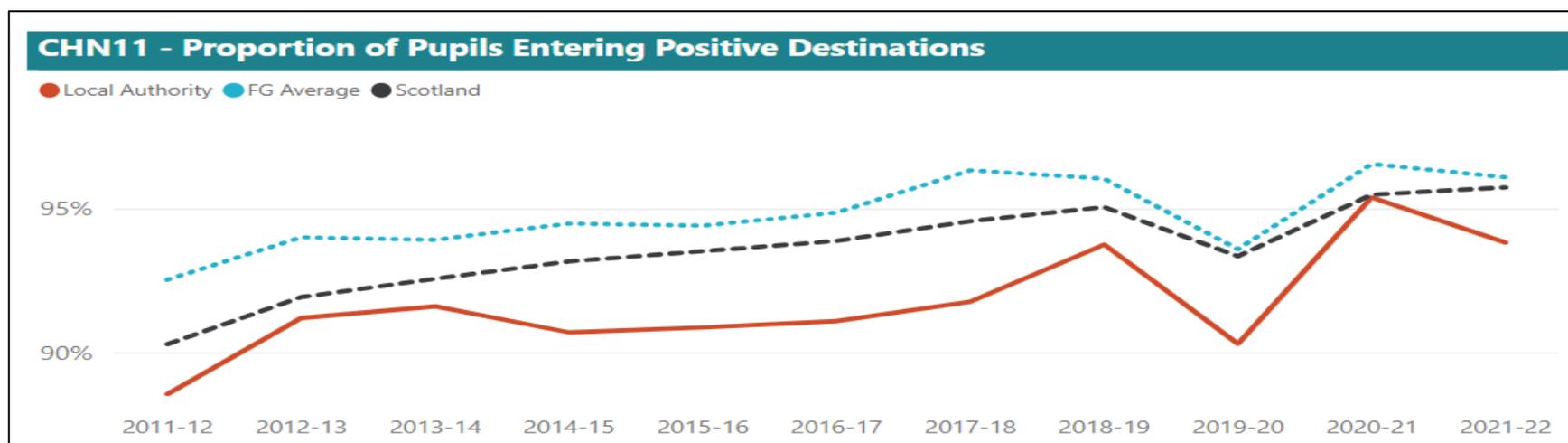
Charts 12 g and h – Pupils from SIMD 1 ( Most Deprived Areas) Attaining 5 or more awards at SCQF Levels 5 and 6



## Post School Destinations

- 12.13 The extended trend in Positive Destinations of school leavers for Aberdeen City had been consistently below that at a national and Family Group level but had been on an improvement curve between 2014/15 and 2018/19, despite material economic impacts arising from the oil and gas downturn towards the end of this timeline.
- 12.14 2019/20 and 2020/21, reflecting the peak years of the pandemic impacts, saw Aberdeen City experience disproportionate impacts (negative and positive respectively) in the percentage of school leavers achieving a positive destination.
- 12.15 2021/22 however, saw re-instatement of the underlying linear improvement trend that was developing in pre-pandemic years, although it is clear that as noted above and in previous reports to this Committee around post school outcomes of our young people, employment-based opportunities remain depressed in comparison with almost all of the City's deprivation and geographic comparators. This is a circumstance that has now been prevalent over an extended period and contributes significantly to the distance between the City's overall Positive Destinations and those of different benchmarks.

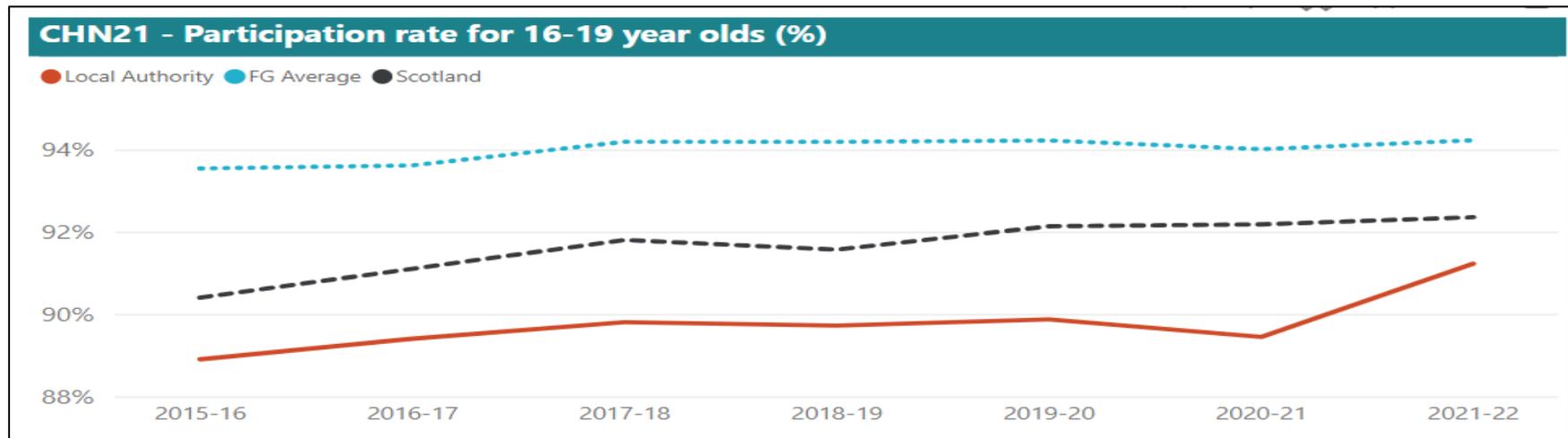
Chart 12 i – Percentage of Initial School Leavers in a Positive Destination



12.16 The Annual Participation Measure which captures destination outcomes of 16–19-year-olds across a full 12 monthly period has traditionally seen Aberdeen City performing at levels below both the National and LGBF benchmarks but with a material rise in 2021/22, at a significantly faster rate than the majority of local authorities.

12.17 The context around this increase and influences within the more recent timeline (2018/19 onwards) are intimately linked to the circumstances outlined in the paragraphs above around Initial School Leaver Destinations and were touched on in the previous PMF report content to this Committee on the Interim Participation Snapshot.

Chart 12.j – Annual Participation Measure

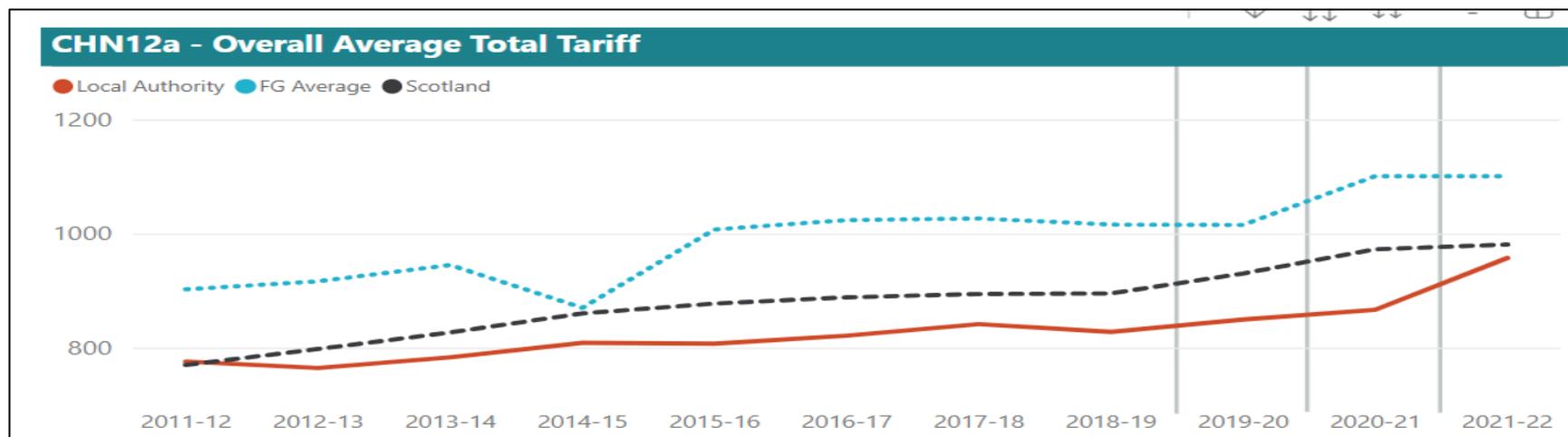


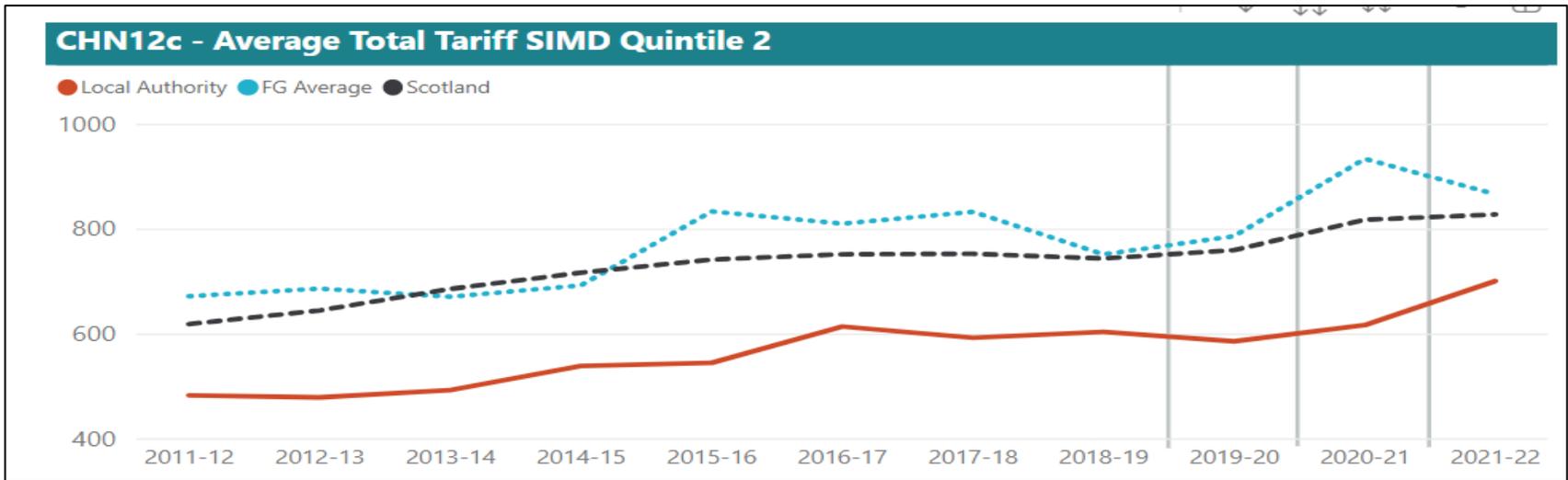
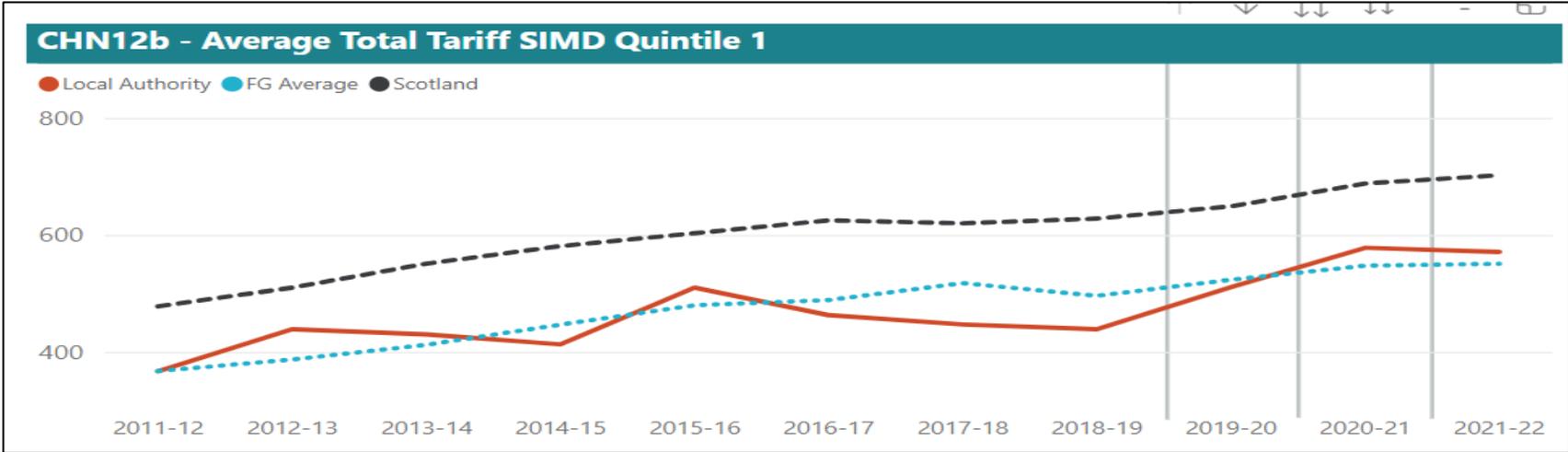
### Overall Average Total Tariff Point Scores

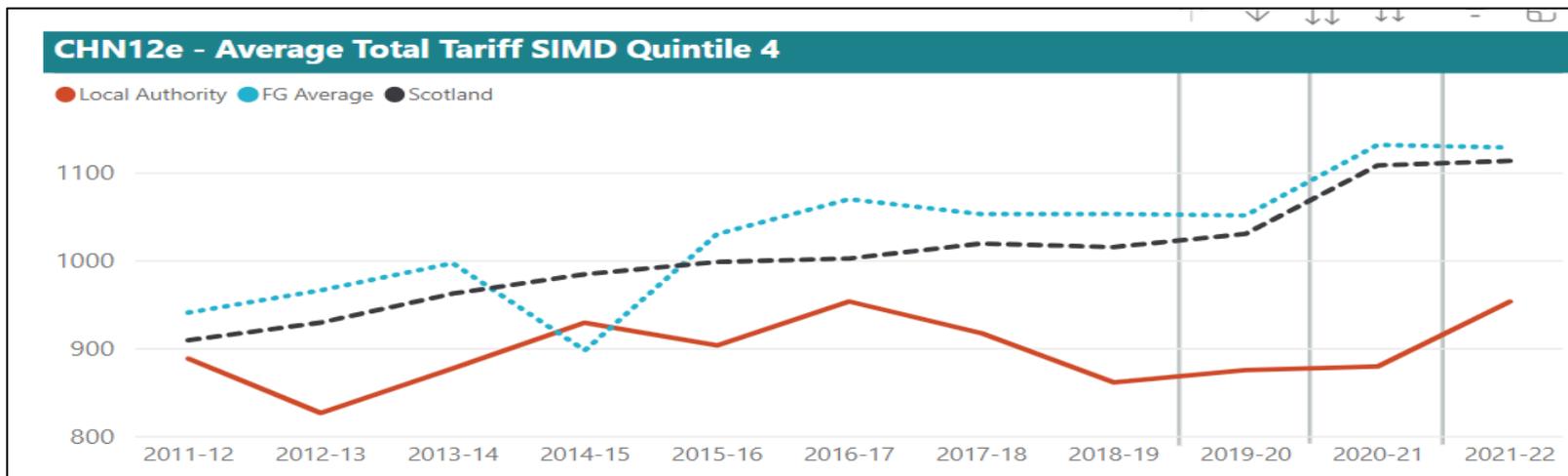
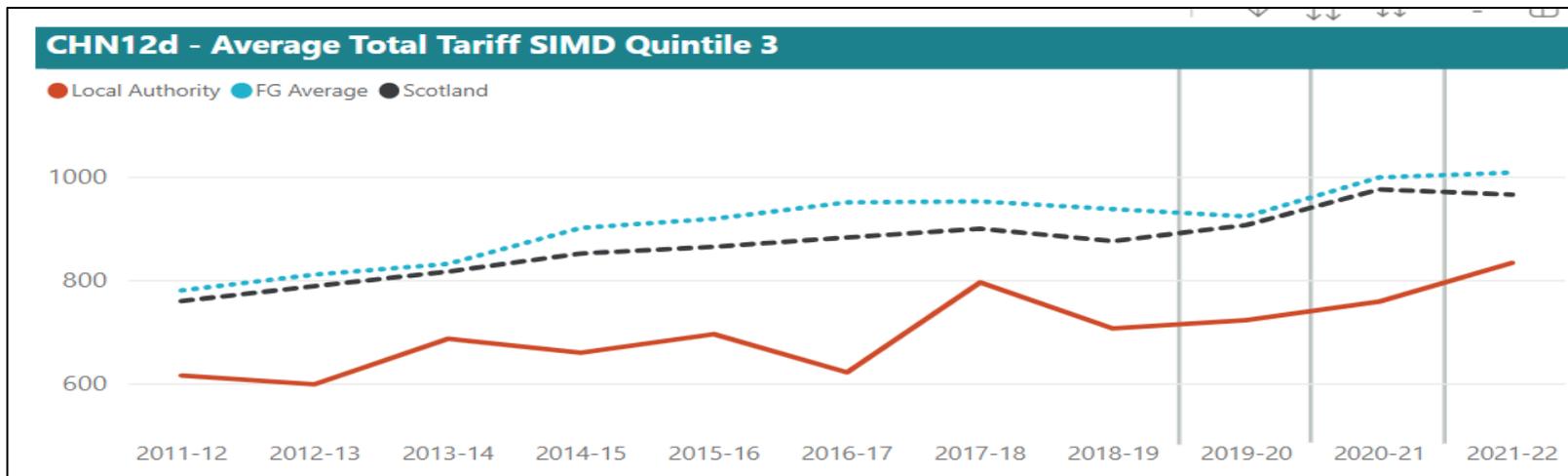
12.18 The charts below highlight Aberdeen City's direction of travel over the longer term and performance relative to the two standard benchmarks defined by the Local Government Benchmarking Framework.

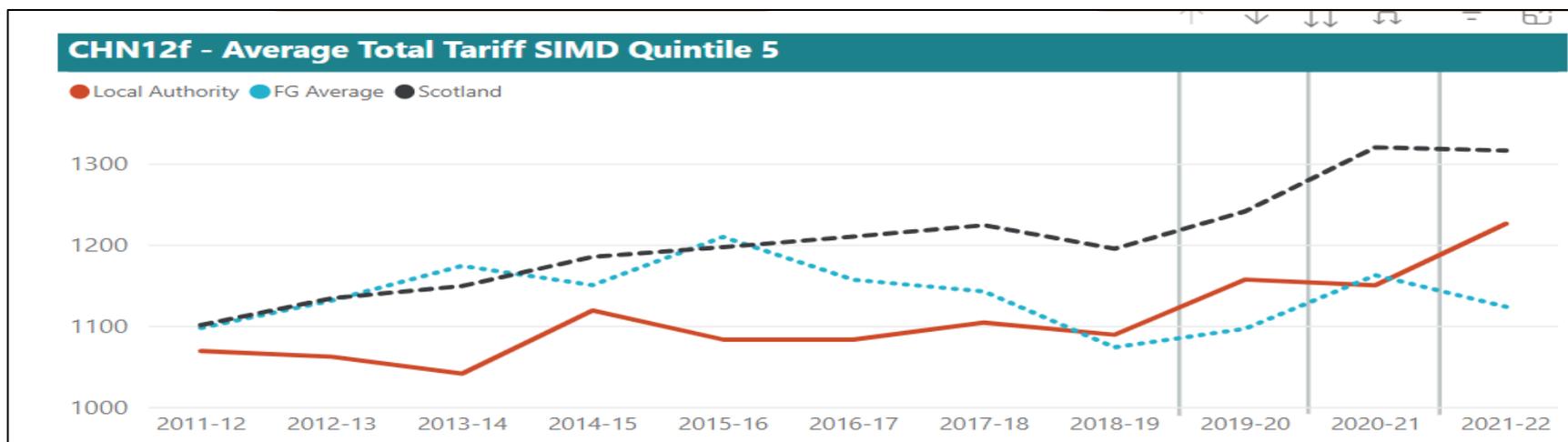
- 12.19 An element of caution should be exercised in comparing this data directly with that referred to above as the metadata descriptor for this information differs from that captured in the post review National Benchmark Measures which form the basis of the analysis under paragraph 5.3.
- 12.20 Overall, the City's journey and trend pattern had closely followed that of the Scotland benchmark and, in 2021/22, closed the pre-existing gap in performance to a statistically insignificant level.
- 12.21 A similar linear pattern was being displayed at each of the SIMD Quintiles although the extent of alignment with the national level outcomes, despite more recent improvements relative to the national data in SIMD 2,3,4 and 5, tracking against Aberdeen City outcomes is generally at levels below Scotland averages.
- 12.22 The long-term improvement data trends covering the timelines outlined in the charts below indicate that the City's outcomes had risen at a substantially faster rate than the National, average and median levels in each of the lower three quintiles (SIMD 1, 2 and 3) but was behind each of these comparators at SIMD 4 and 5, with the greatest distances being noted at SIMD 4.

Charts 12 k-p Overall Average Tariff Points by Whole Cohort and SIMD Quintiles







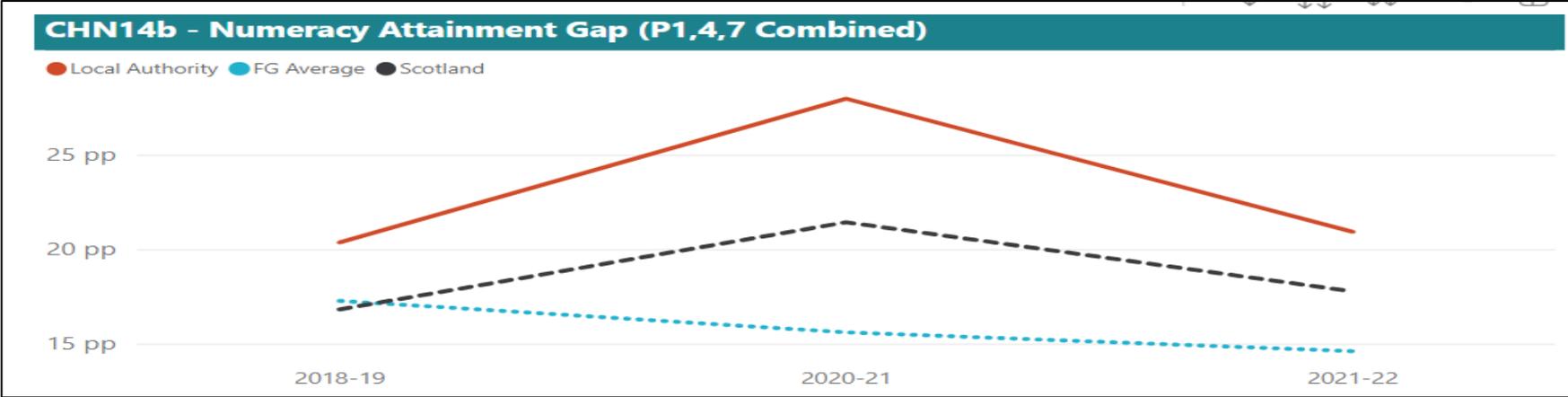
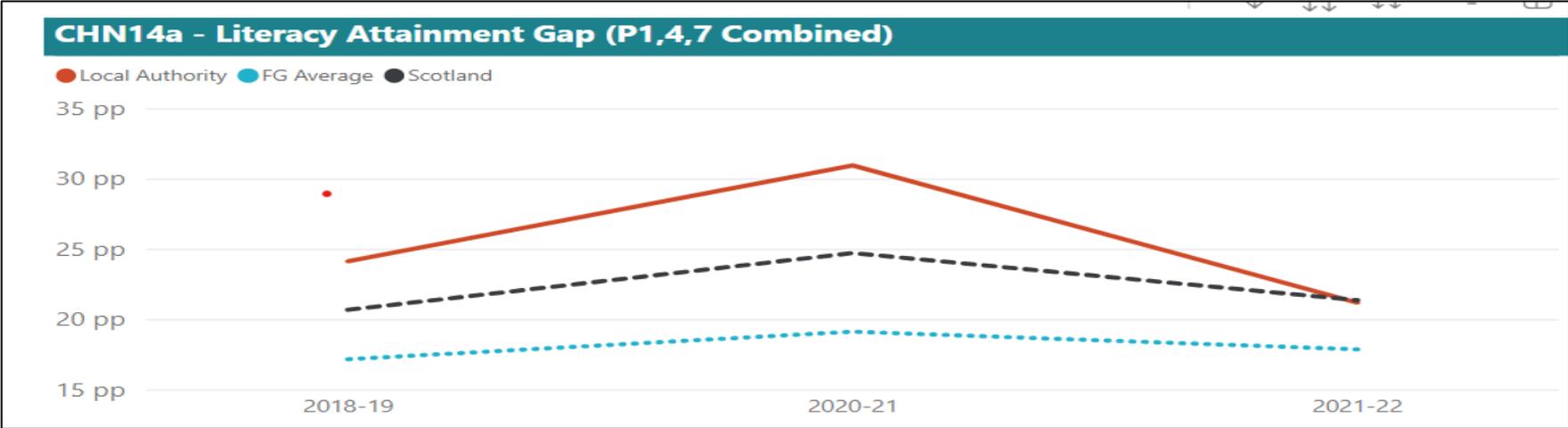


## Closing the Gap

### Primary Phase – Literacy and Numeracy

- 12.22 In common with the Average Tariff Point data above, there is a variable picture in terms of the extent to which the City has been closing the gap between the Most and Least Deprived for the two high level measures of Literacy and Numeracy respectively at P1-7 combined.
- 12.23 The City, in 2021/22, had materially closed the deprivation related gap in Literacy and removed the distance to the National outcome in comparison with both previous years. Numeracy mirrored a similar data pattern over the three-year period but showed a lesser rate of improvement with minimal change on the 2018/19 baseline and an outcome which was poorer than the Scotland level.

Charts 12 q -r P1-7 Literacy and Numeracy Deprivation Related Gap between the Least and Most Deprived SIMD Quintiles



### **13.0 DATA EVIDENCE CONCLUSIONS**

- 13.1 Contextually the pandemic, its consequences for the models of delivery for education, and the challenges that this has posed to our teaching professionals in evaluating the impacts on our young people's attainment and achievement through a data led approach, are evidenced across the Indicator suite that forms the basis of this tracking report.
- 13.2 At the same time, taking account of the data availability restrictions that arose during and across this extended period, there is firm statistical evidence that, both in the short term and over the course of the Service's Improvement Journey to date, the outcomes of pupils are, in the main, showing advances.
- 13.3 These advances are more materially, but admittedly not universally, highlighted amongst those pupils who are defined as being in the Highest Levels of Deprivation where the professional expectations of the potential negative impacts of the pandemic on this cohort were initially significant.
- 13.4 At the same, the granular data has also highlighted is that there were individual cohorts and subjects, at both Senior Phase and in Broad General Education, where, in terms of sustained improvement trends, the mitigations put in place by the Service have had a lesser influence in countering the circumstances of the pandemic. This data is leading to a clearer understanding of the points of new or renewed focus necessary to drive continuous improvement in the outcomes of all our pupils.
- 13.5 Comparatively, over the extended period, there was strong data-based evidence that:
- (a) a significant tranche of the deprivation related pupil outcomes for Aberdeen City, where these were behind the benchmark measures in 2018/19, had gained ground by 2021/22 and that;
  - (b) the direction of travel for general attainment and achievement in the City over the course of the pandemic, and subsequent recovery period, matched that of the National and comparator authorities in each of these years.
- 13.6 Taking these factors into account, although acknowledging that data-based interpretation forms only a part of the assessment of the Education Improvement Journey, this evidence, when taken in context with the various other detailed reports to Committee over the past 12 months, offers proportionate assurance that the National Improvement Framework approaches taken by the Service have been positively impactful and appropriate to the circumstances in each year to date.

13.7 In review, analysis of the extended and National Benchmark Measures data, supports the professional judgements expressed within the report to the November 2022 meeting of this Committee.