
To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 21 January 2021

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Examinations Results 2020

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report summarises attainment in the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) National Qualifications in 2020, based on the key measures contained within the Insight benchmarking tool.
 - 1.2 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 exam diet could not take place. Results were awarded based on teacher estimates and are therefore not directly comparable with previous years.
 - 1.3 Skills Development Scotland are currently tracking school leavers' destinations. Insight is normally updated in spring and a further report providing data on our school leavers' attainment will be submitted to the Education and Children Service's Policy Board when this data becomes available. This report will provide data on the attainment of all pupils in the senior phase by stage.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members of the Education and Children's Services Policy Board are asked to:
 - note the content of this report with the caveat that the data is not directly comparable with previous years;
 - note the efforts of pupils and the school communities in bringing about these results; and
 - agree that a further report will be brought to the Education and Children's Services Policy Board when leavers data becomes available.

3. Background

- 3.1 Insight is a performance evaluation tool provided by the Scottish Government to schools and education authorities as a way of benchmarking performance in four key measures:
- Attainment in literacy and numeracy;
 - Improving attainment for all;
 - Attainment versus deprivation; and
 - Leavers' destinations.
- 3.2 This report provides data and commentary on the performance of each of our senior phase cohorts (S4, S5 and S6) over the last three years and against our comparators for three of the measures detailed above. Leavers' destinations will become available in February/March 2021 and will form part of the report to this board in spring 2021 or as soon thereafter if the data release is delayed.
- 3.3 In addition to these local benchmarking measures, this report will provide data in relation to the number and quality of passes at each qualifications level.
- 3.4 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 exam diet could not take place, and an alternative certification model was implemented. The absence of external assessment information, and the Ministerial direction to award estimated grades, means that the 2020 results presented in this report are not directly comparable to previous years. Comparisons between Renfrewshire and national and virtual comparators are available but should be interpreted cautiously.
- 3.5 Within Renfrewshire, moderation processes were agreed with head teachers to support consistency across schools. Schools then worked with departments to collate estimates which incorporated different assessment tools used throughout the session. Prior to submission, analysis of estimates and previous year's trends were shared with schools to help to identify any anomalies that may require further investigation. This process helped to ensure that the estimates submitted were as robust as they could be in challenging circumstances.
- 3.6 The methodology for the Insight 'virtual comparator' (VC) is unchanged in 2020. The virtual comparator allows authorities and schools to make statistically valid comparisons between how young people have performed against young people nationally, who share four similar characteristics. These characteristics are gender, year group, percentage of time spent in mainstream classes, and live within an area with the same Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) decile.

4. Attainment in literacy and numeracy (S4, S5 and S6)

- 4.1 Raising attainment in literacy and numeracy remains a key priority of Renfrewshire Council children's services and this is reflected in one of the key priorities of the National Improvement Framework.

- 4.2 Attainment in literacy and numeracy includes passes at National 4 and 5 in English and maths and passes in some other awards at Scottish Certificate and Qualification Framework (SCQF) levels 4 and 5 which contain certain core elements of literacy and numeracy. The tables which follow, provide data on our performance in literacy and numeracy, alongside our virtual comparator and national figures, for each of our senior phase cohorts.

S4

- 4.3 Table 1 below provides data on attainment in literacy and numeracy in S4 at SCQF Level 4 and SCQF Level 5.

Table 1 - % S4 Pupils Achieving Literacy & Numeracy					
	Year	% Achieved Level 4 Literacy	% Achieved Level 4 Numeracy	% Achieved Level 5 Literacy	% Achieved Level 5 Numeracy
Renfrewshire	2018	93%	88%	78%	54%
Virtual Comparator	2018	91%	86%	72%	54%
National	2018	91%	86%	70%	53%
Renfrewshire	2019	95%	89%	80%	64%
Virtual Comparator	2019	92%	87%	73%	59%
National	2019	91%	87%	72%	57%
Renfrewshire	2020	95%	91%	81%	66%
Virtual Comparator	2020	93%	89%	76%	63%
National	2020	92%	88%	73%	61%

- 4.4 The percentage of pupils achieving SCQF Level 4 and SCQF Level 5 in literacy and numeracy was above both the virtual comparator and the national figure in 2020. Attainment at SCQF level 4 is in line with previous years in literacy and has increased in numeracy. At SCQF level 5, literacy attainment is 1 percentage point higher and numeracy attainment in 2 percentage points higher than in 2019. These increases are consistent with previous years.

S5 (based on S4 roll)

- 4.5 Table 2 below provides data on attainment in literacy and numeracy in S5 at SCQF Level 4 and Level 5.

Table 2 - % S5 Pupils Achieving Literacy and Numeracy					
	Year	% Achieved Level 4 Literacy	% Achieved Level 4 Numeracy	% Achieved Level 5 Literacy	% Achieved Level 5 Numeracy
Renfrewshire	2018	97%	93%	86%	73%
Virtual Comparator	2018	95%	91%	82%	67%
National	2018	94%	90%	80%	66%
Renfrewshire	2019	94%	91%	84%	72%
Virtual Comparator	2019	94%	91%	81%	66%
National	2019	93%	90%	80%	65%
Renfrewshire	2020	96%	94%	86%	76%
Virtual Comparator	2020	94%	92%	82%	70%
National	2020	93%	90%	80%	69%

- 4.6 Renfrewshire remains ahead of the virtual comparator and national figures across SCQF Level 4 and SCQF Level 5 in S5. Attainment in literacy is higher than in 2019 but consistent with the figures in 2018. In numeracy, attainment is higher than previous years at both levels. Attainment remains higher in literacy than in numeracy across both levels.

S6 (based on the S4 roll)

- 4.7 Table 3 below provides data on attainment in literacy and numeracy in S6 at SCQF Level 4 and Level 5.

Table 3 - % S6 Pupils Achieving Literacy & Numeracy					
	Year	% Achieved Level 4 Literacy	% Achieved Level 4 Numeracy	% Achieved Level 5 Literacy	% Achieved Level 5 Numeracy
Renfrewshire	2018	95%	90%	84%	74%
Virtual Comparator	2018	95%	91%	81%	69%
National	2018	93%	89%	79%	68%
Renfrewshire	2019	97%	93%	87%	76%
Virtual Comparator	2019	95%	92%	82%	69%
National	2019	94%	90%	81%	68%
Renfrewshire	2020	95%	92%	85%	74%
Virtual Comparator	2020	94%	91%	82%	69%
National	2020	93%	90%	80%	68%

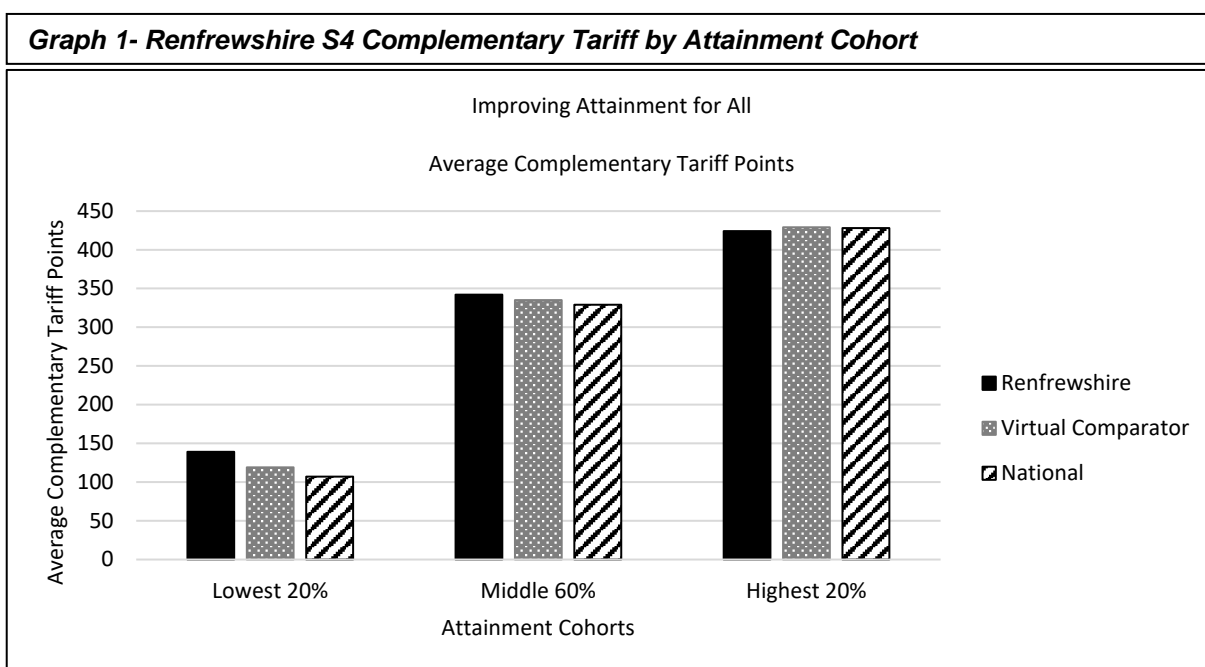
- 4.8 In S6, Renfrewshire remains above its virtual comparator across all measures. This is consistent with previous years. Attainment in literacy is marginally lower than 2019 however remains in line with 2018 figures. The numeracy figures present a similar picture. Attainment in numeracy is marginally decreased since 2019 but remains in line with or ahead of 2018 figures.

5. Improving attainment for all

- 5.1 Each qualification on the Scottish Certificate and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is attributed a number of tariff points. The higher level of qualification, the more tariff points are attributed. Each pupil gains a number of points that represents the number and level of qualifications they have gained. This report uses complementary tariff points, which measures a fixed volume of learning. Complementary tariff points allow for fair comparison across Scotland, regardless of differences in curricular models.
- 5.2 Within this measure, Insight breaks the data down into three groups: the average complementary tariff points for the lowest attaining 20%, the middle attaining 60% and the highest attaining 20% and compares these with the virtual comparator and the national figure.

S4

- 5.3 Graph 1 below shows the average complementary tariff points of S4 pupils by attainment cohort in the 2020 exam diet.



- 5.4 In S4, the average complementary tariff is above both the virtual comparator and national figure for the lowest 20% and middle 60% attainment cohorts. The lowest 20% attainment cohort figure was 139 which is considerably above its comparators, which were 119 for the virtual comparator and 107 for the national figure. The highest 20% attainment cohort is marginally behind both comparators, which were 429 and 428 respectively.
- 5.5 Table 4 shows the average complementary tariff of Renfrewshire S4 pupils over time.

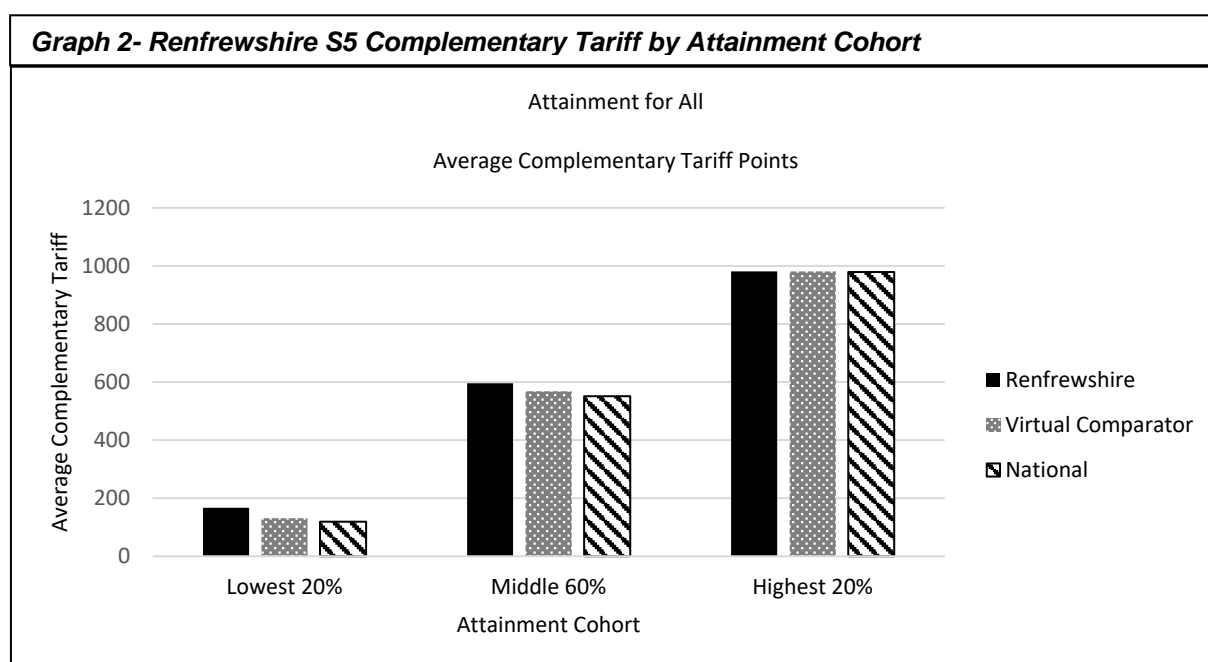
Table 4 - Renfrewshire S4 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Highest 20% Attainment Cohort	423	423	420	419	424

Middle 60% Attainment Cohort	328	329	325	331	342
Lowest 20% Attainment Cohort	124	145	126	145	139

- 5.6 The 2020 average complementary tariff is higher than previous years in the highest 20% and middle 60% attainment cohorts. However, the highest 20% attainment cohort remains broadly consistent with previous years. The average complementary tariff of the lowest 20% attainment cohort has decreased slightly since 2019 however remains up over 3 and 5 years.

S5

- 5.7 The graph below shows the average complementary tariff points of S5 pupils by attainment cohort in the 2020 exam diet.



- 5.8 Graph 2 demonstrates that Renfrewshire is in line with the virtual comparator and national figures across all attainment cohorts. Renfrewshire has a higher average complementary tariff than both the virtual comparator and national figures for the lowest 20% and middle 60% attainment cohorts. The highest 20% attainment cohort figure is consistent with both comparators.
- 5.9 Table 5 shows the average complementary tariff of Renfrewshire S5 pupils since 2016.

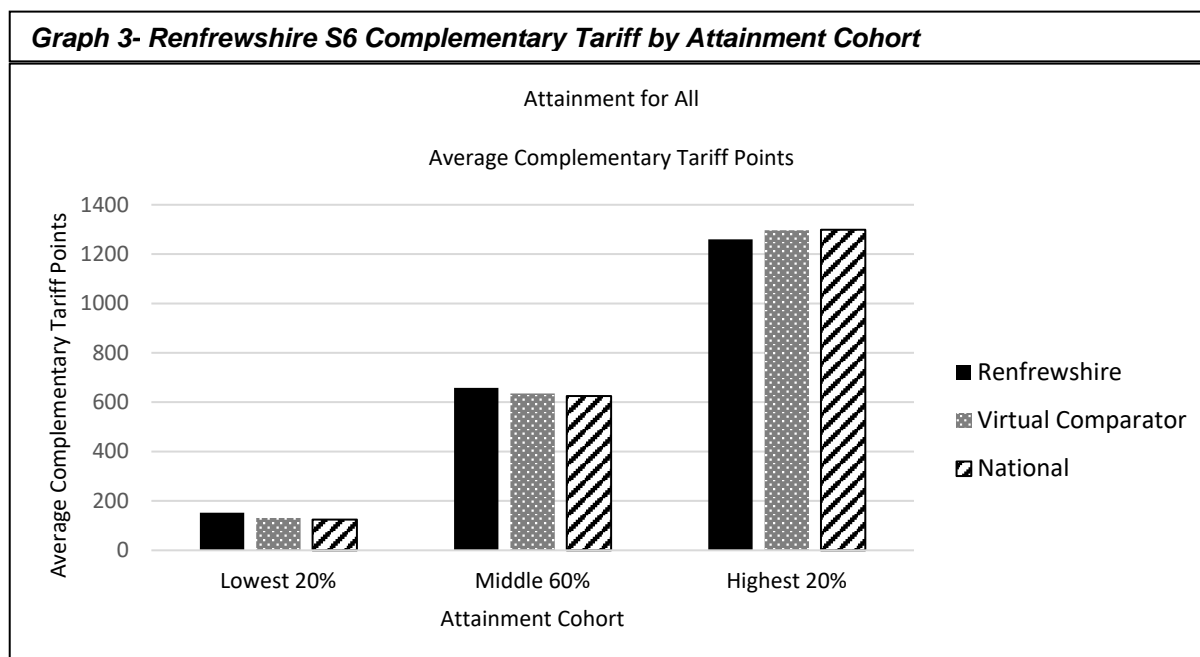
Table 5- Renfrewshire S5 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Highest 20% Attainment Cohort	952	956	961	954	981
Middle 60% Attainment Cohort	549	554	562	546	596
Lowest 20% Attainment Cohort	147	147	170	146	167

- 5.10 Attainment is higher than previous years across all attainment cohorts. The lowest 20% attainment cohort is in line with the figure in 2018 but the middle 60% and highest 20% cohorts are considerably higher than all previous years.

However, as these results were derived from different types of assessment, we cannot identify this as an improvement in attainment.

S6

- 5.11 Graph 3 shows the average complementary tariff points of S6 pupils by attainment cohort in the 2020 exam diet.



- 5.12 In graph 3, we can see that the average complementary tariff for the lowest 20% attainment cohort is above both the virtual comparator and national, which were 131 and 124 respectively. Pupils in the middle 60% attainment cohort are also ahead of both comparators. The highest 20% attainment cohort below both the virtual comparator and national figures.

- 5.13 Table 6 shows the average complementary tariff of Renfrewshire S6 pupils over 5 years.

Table 6- Renfrewshire S6 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Highest 20% Attainment Cohort	1195	1237	1249	1258	1260
Middle 60% Attainment Cohort	608	655	657	653	658
Lowest 20% Attainment Cohort	144	150	152	175	152

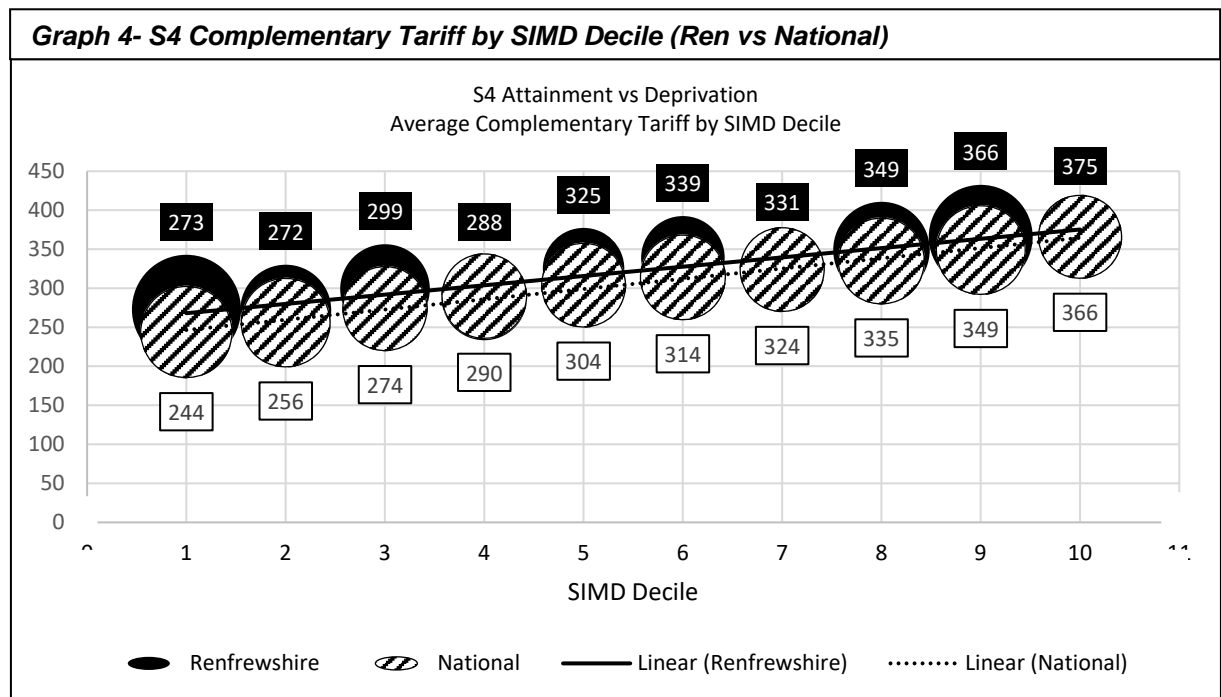
- 5.14 The average complementary tariff for the highest 20% and middle 60% attainment cohorts are in line with 2019 figures. The lowest 20% attainment cohort is lower than in 2019 however remains consistent with previous years.

6. Attainment versus deprivation

- 6.1 The attainment versus deprivation measure provides the average complementary tariff of pupils by SIMD decile. This allows us to identify the attainment gap in Renfrewshire and compare it to both our virtual comparator and national data.

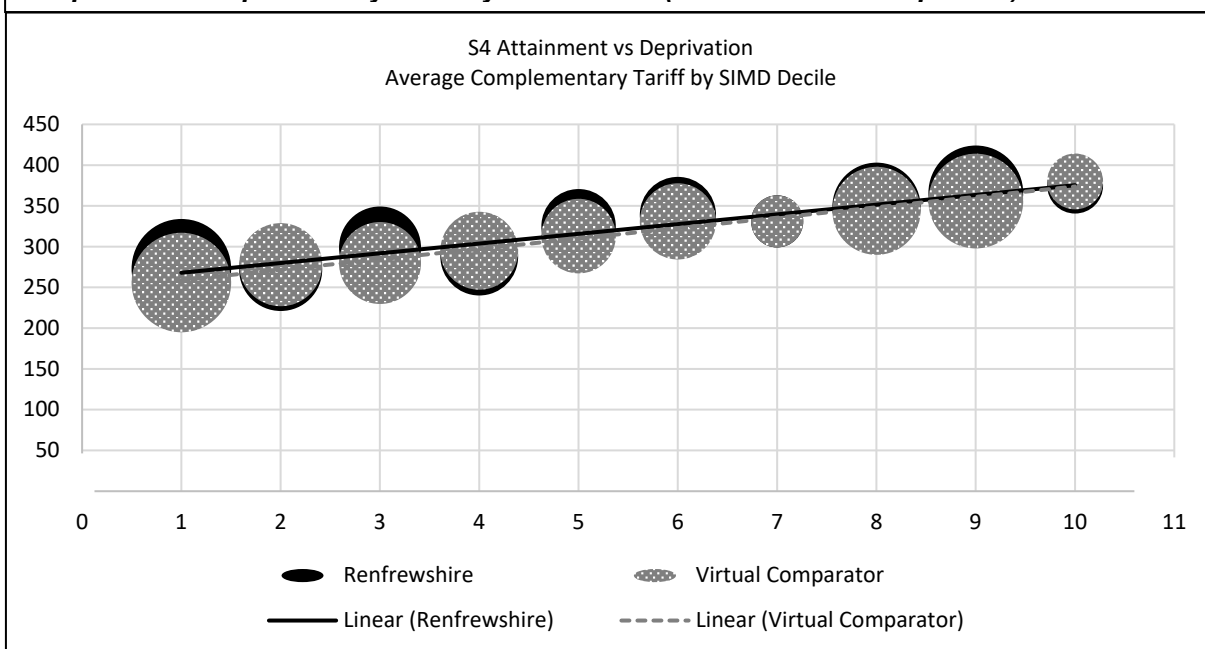
- 6.2 The following charts show SIMD deciles 1 -10 (most deprived to least deprived) plotted along the horizontal axis with the average complementary tariff points plotted on the vertical axis. The size of the circles represents the percentage of pupils who live in each decile. The trend line which runs through the circles represents the difference in attainment between pupils living in the most deprived and the least deprived areas. The steeper the angle, the more pronounced the disparity between the most and least deprived deciles.

S4



- 6.3 In all deciles, Renfrewshire's S4 average complementary tariff is in line with or above national figures. The trendlines show that while the attainment gap is similar to the national figures, pupils in Renfrewshire are consistently achieving higher levels of attainment.

Graph 5- S4 Complementary Tariff by SIMD Decile (Ren vs Virtual Comparator)



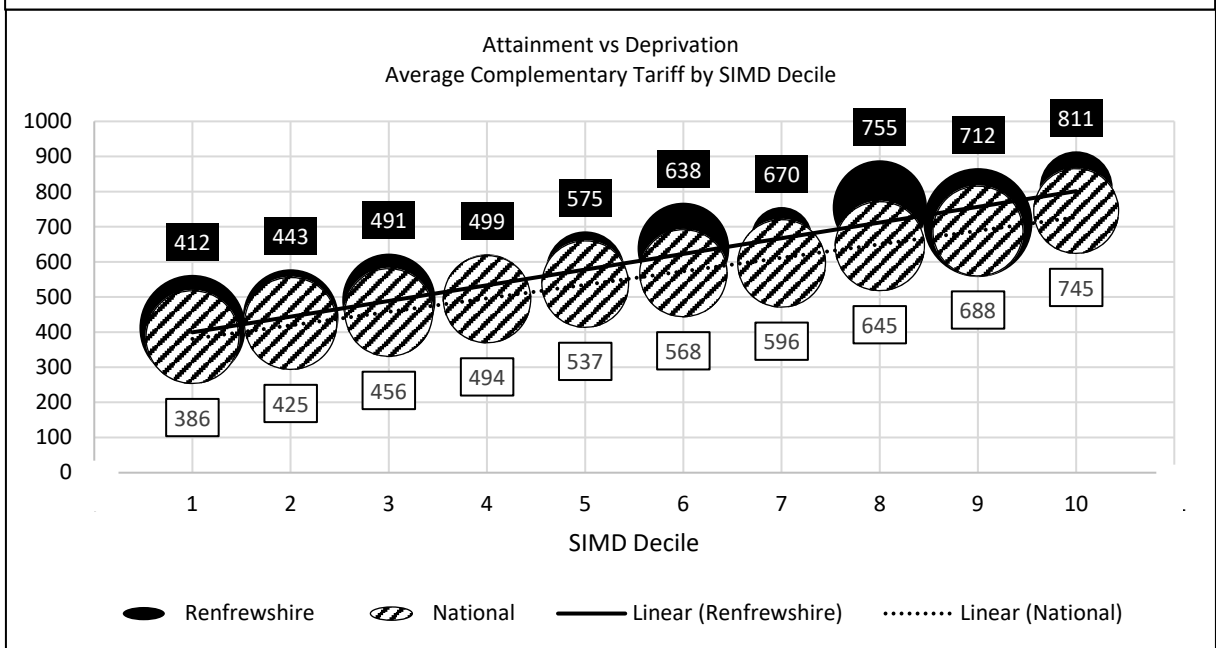
6.4 Renfrewshire's S4 average complementary tariff is very closely aligned with the virtual comparator in 2020. Renfrewshire is behind the virtual comparator in SIMD deciles 2, 4 and 10 but the differences are minimal. The trendlines in graph 5 overlap, indicating that there are very small differences across all deciles.

6.5 Table 7 shows the S4 average complementary tariff of pupils living in SIMD 1-3 (30% most deprived areas) and of pupils living in SIMD 4-10 (70% least deprived areas) over 5 years. It also shows the percentage gap between these two figures.

Table 7- S4 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Pupils Living in 30% Most Deprived Areas	251	266	259	266	280
Pupils Living in 70% Least Deprived Areas	339	338	332	338	340
Percentage Gap	26%	21%	22%	21%	18%

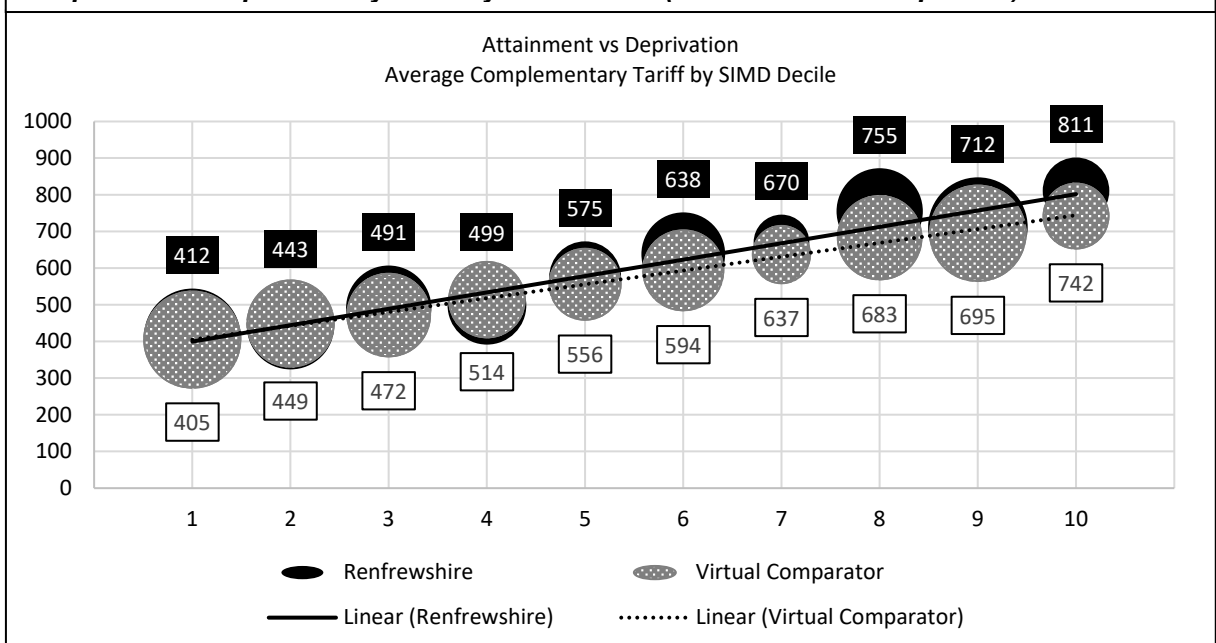
6.6 The average complementary tariff of pupils living in 30% most and 70% least deprived areas have both increased since 2019 however the increase is larger for pupils living in 30% most deprived areas. As a result, the size of the attainment gap is smaller than in previous years.

Graph 6- S5 Complementary Tariff by SIMD Decile (Ren vs National)



- 6.7 The S5 average complementary tariff for Renfrewshire is above national in all SIMD deciles. The trend line indicates that the gap is slightly wider within the least deprived deciles.

Graph 7- S5 Complementary Tariff by SIMD Decile (Ren vs Virtual Comparator)



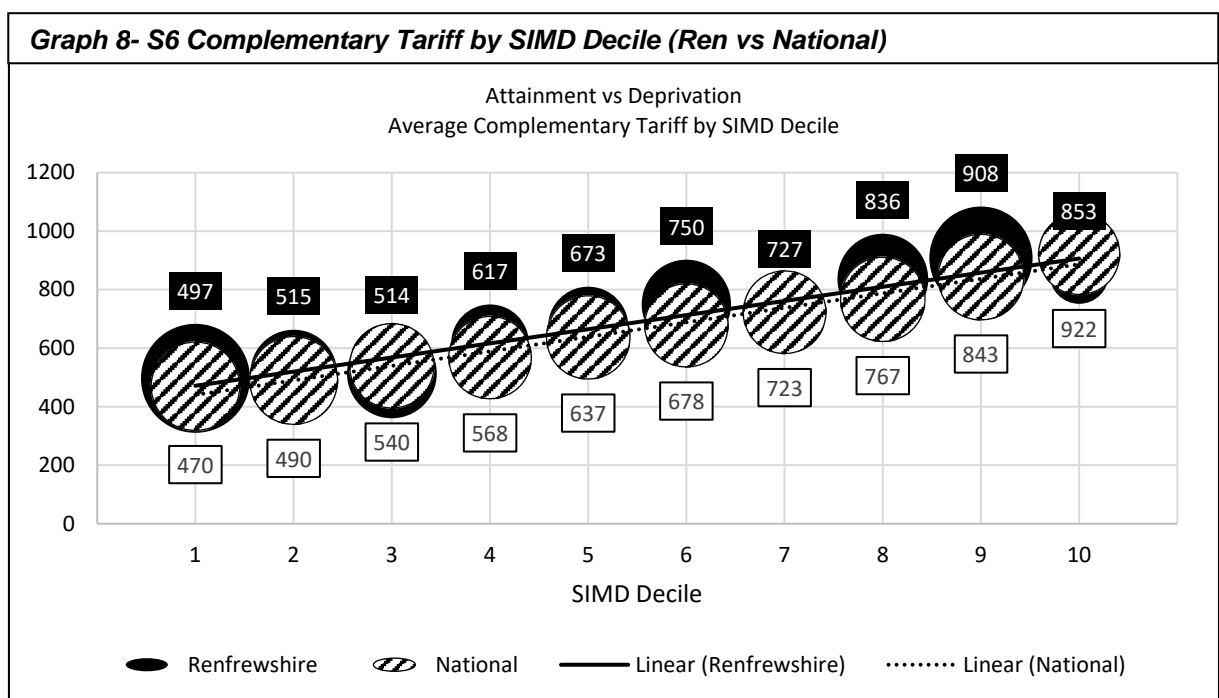
- 6.8 A similar pattern exists when comparing Renfrewshire to the virtual comparator. Renfrewshire is above national in all deciles except 2 and 4, however the differences are marginal. The trend lines indicate that Renfrewshire is closely aligned with the virtual comparator in the lower deciles however further ahead in the higher deciles.
- 6.9 Table 8 shows the S5 average complementary tariff of pupils living in SIMD 1-3 (30% most deprived areas) and of pupils living in SIMD 4-10 (70% least

deprived areas) over 5 years. It also shows the percentage gap between these two figures.

Table 8- S5 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Pupils Living in 30% Most Deprived Areas	411	401	434	417	445
Pupils Living in 70% Least Deprived Areas	626	642	638	626	668
Percentage Gap	34%	38%	32%	33%	33%

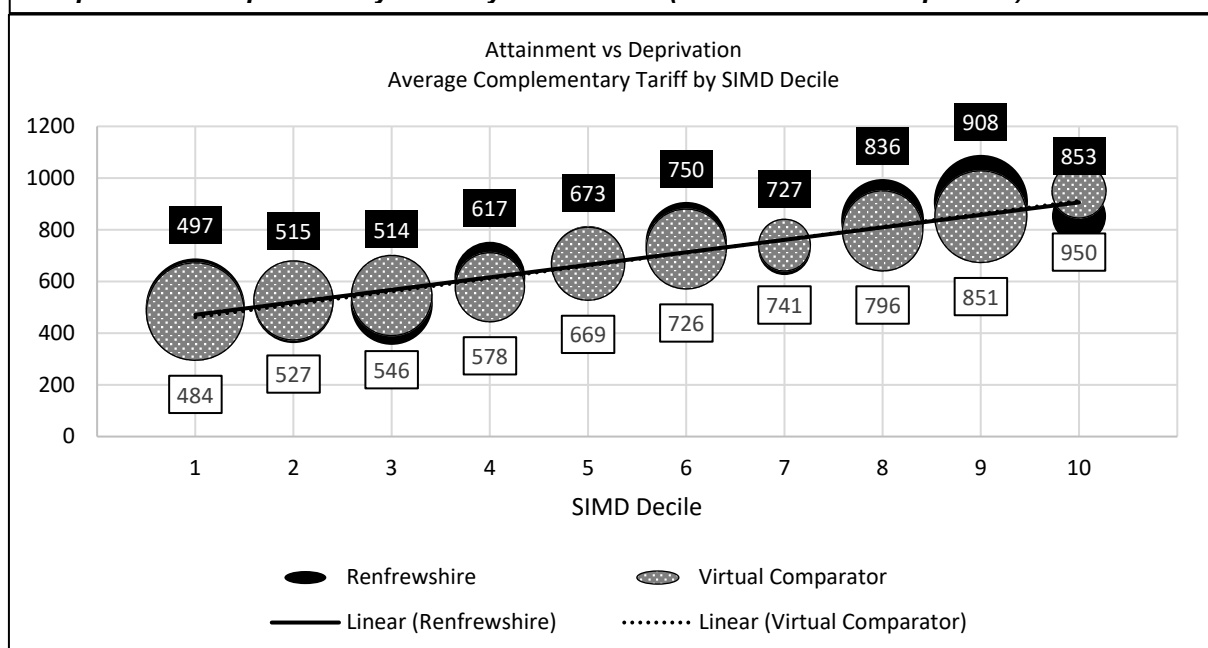
- 6.10 The average complementary tariff has increased for both the 30% most deprived and 70% least deprived groups in 2020. However, the size of the attainment gap remains unchanged as both groups of pupils have increased at similar rates.

S6



- 6.11 The S6 average complementary tariff is higher than national in all SIMD deciles except for deciles 3 and 9. The Renfrewshire trend is above the national trend however the difference between them is marginal.

Graph 9- S6 Complementary Tariff by SIMD Decile (Ren vs Virtual Comparator)



- 6.12 The S6 virtual comparator is very closely aligned with Renfrewshire's figures as seen in the trend lines in graph 9. Renfrewshire is above the virtual comparator in most deciles, but the differences are marginal.

Table 9 - S6 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Pupils Living in 30% Most Deprived Areas	455	499	489	512	507
Pupils Living in 70% Least Deprived Areas	746	768	786	774	780
Percentage Gap	39%	35%	38%	34%	35%

- 6.13 The average complementary tariff for pupils living in the 30% most deprived areas has decreased marginally since 2019 but remains up on previous years. The average tariff for pupils in 70% least deprived areas has increased slightly since 2019 but also aligns with previous year's data. There is no consistent trend in the size of the attainment gap at this stage. The figure in 2020 is lower than 2016 but has been variable over the 5-year period.

7. Breadth and depth

- 7.1 In addition to the key measures available in Insight, the service also looks at the percentage of the cohort who achieved any number of awards at various SCQF levels. These are known as 'breadth and depth' measures. We look at this data in conjunction with the Insight measures to allow us to gain a broader understanding of attainment across Renfrewshire and between schools.
- 7.2 The tables on the following pages show performance over time of some of the key breadth and depth measures and how we compare to the virtual comparator. SCQF 5 is National 4 or its equivalent, SCQF Level 5 is National 5 or its equivalent, SCQF Level 6 is Higher or its equivalent; and SCQF Level 7 is Advanced Higher or its equivalent.

S4

- 7.3 Table 10 includes data on the number of awards achieved for S4 pupils at SCQF Level 4 and Level 5 for Renfrewshire and the virtual comparator.

Table 10- S4 Breadth & Depth								
S4 A-C	3 or more awards at SCQF level 4 or better		5 or more awards at SCQF level 4 or better		3 or more awards at SCQF level 5 or better		5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 or better	
	Ren	VC	Ren	VC	Ren	VC	Ren	VC
2018	91%	89%	82%	79%	63%	58%	45%	40%
2019	92%	89%	83%	77%	64%	60%	47%	41%
2020	93%	91%	86%	83%	69%	68%	53%	50%

- 7.4 In S4, Renfrewshire remains above the virtual comparator at SCQF Level 4, with a higher proportion of pupils achieving 3 or more and 5 or more awards since 2019 than in previous years. At SCQF Level 5, Renfrewshire is in line with the virtual comparator at 3 or more awards and ahead in 5 or more awards. The increases between 2019 and 2020 are higher than previous years for both Renfrewshire and the virtual comparator, suggesting that this may be due to the alternative certification model.

S5

- 7.5 Table 11 includes data on the number of awards achieved for S5 pupils at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6 for Renfrewshire and the virtual comparator.

Table 11- S5 Breadth & Depth (% of S4 Roll)												
S5 A-C	1 or more awards at SCQF level 5 or better		3 or more awards at SCQF level 5 or better		5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 or better		1 or more awards at SCQF level 6 or better		3 or more awards at SCQF level 6 or better		5 or more awards at SCQF level 6 or better	
	Ren	VC	Ren	VC	Ren	VC	Ren	VC	Ren	VC	Ren	VC
2018	88%	86%	72%	71%	54%	52%	60%	57%	37%	36%	19%	16%
2019	86%	84%	70%	68%	53%	50%	59%	56%	36%	34%	18%	17%
2020	89%	86%	75%	72%	59%	56%	65%	62%	44%	42%	22%	20%

- 7.6 At SCQF Level 5, Renfrewshire is above the virtual comparator at 1 or more, 3 or more and 5 or more awards. This is consistent with previous years where Renfrewshire has been ahead by similar percentage points. This pattern is replicated at SCQF Level 6 as Renfrewshire's results are consistently above the virtual comparator over 3 years. As with S4, there have been some large increases across these measures for both Renfrewshire and the virtual comparator.

S6

- 7.7 Table 12 includes data on the number of awards achieved for S6 pupils at SCQF levels 5, 6 and 7 for Renfrewshire and the virtual comparator.

Table 12- S6 Breadth & Depth (% of S4 Roll)												
S6 A-C	3 or more awards at SCQF level 5 or better		5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 or better		1 or more awards at SCQF level 6 or better		3 or more awards at SCQF level 6 or better		5 or more awards at SCQF level 6 or better		1 or more awards at SCQF level 7 or better	
	Ren	VC	Ren	VC	Ren	VC	Ren	VC	Ren	VC	Ren	VC
2018	74%	72%	61%	57%	64%	62%	46%	44%	32%	30%	19%	20%
2019	74%	72%	59%	57%	63%	61%	44%	43%	30%	28%	20%	18%
2020	74%	71%	60%	57%	65%	62%	47%	45%	33%	32%	21%	22%

7.8 In S6, Renfrewshire has performed above the virtual comparator in all measures at SCQF Level 5 and Level 6. This is consistent with previous year's trends. While there has been increases since 2019, the figures at this stage are all in line with previous years. Attainment at SCQF Level 7 is marginally below the virtual comparator in 2020.

8. Conclusion and next steps

- 8.1 The results detailed within this report cannot be used to directly compare attainment with previous years. Renfrewshire's submitted estimates were subject to school level moderation and across most measures appear similar to previous years. However, they are not directly comparable to data presented for diets undertaken in exam conditions and variations are evident across some measures.
- 8.2 It has been announced that the 2021 exam diet will not take place. An alternative certification model has been developed. Schools in Renfrewshire are working to ensure teacher provisional grades will be subject to robust moderation and are implementing procedures to gather a range of evidence from pupils.
- 8.3 A further report on finalised leavers' data and the attainment of our looked after children will be presented to this board in spring 2021 or as soon thereafter as the data becomes available.

Implications of this report

1. Financial Implications

None.

2. HR and Organisational Development Implications

None.

3. Community Plan/Council Plan Implications

Children and Young People

- High levels of attainment and achievement provide our children and young people with the best start in life

4. Legal Implications

None.

5. Property/Assets Implications

None.

6. Information Technology Implications

None.

7. Equality and Human Rights Implications

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because for example it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. Health and Safety Implications

None.

9. Procurement Implications

None.

10. Risk Implications

None.

11. Privacy Impact

None.

12. COSLA Policy Position - none

List of Background Papers

(a) none
