
To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 14 March 2024

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Attainment of 2022/23 School Leavers

1. Summary

- 1.1. 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. This report will provide data and commentary across these measures for the 2022/23 leavers cohort.
- 1.2. The time period covered by these statistics means that the results will be affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The 2022/23 school leavers have experienced significant disruption in their learning. This is the first cohort since the pandemic who are not impacted by the cancellation of exams in 2020 however their results do include the alternative certification model in 2021. The impact of this disruption and different approaches to certification for previous leavers cohorts means that care should be taken when making comparisons over time.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Members of the Education and Children's Services Policy Board are asked to note:
 - the content of this report; and

- the efforts of our young people and the school communities in bringing about these results.
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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 will provide data and commentary on the performance of the 2022/23 leavers cohort in these four key measures. A leavers cohort includes all pupils that left school within a year, regardless of the stage they were at when they left school.
- 3.3. The time period covered by these statistics means that the results will be affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Within the 2022/23 cohort are S6 pupils who underwent alternative certification within the 2021 diet. Pupils leaving in S4 and S5 have only been presented in exam diet years however have also had their learning significantly impacted by school closures. When comparing to previous years, we must be mindful that these are not like for like comparisons due to 2 years of exam diet cancellations. There has also been shifts within leavers cohorts as more pupils stayed on in school during the pandemic years due to lack of alternative options, particularly within employment.
- 3.4. The INSIGHT tool uses a 'virtual comparator' (VC) to allow 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, stage of leaving, percentage of time spent in mainstream classes, and Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) decile. INSIGHT also allows us to compare our performance with national data.

Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

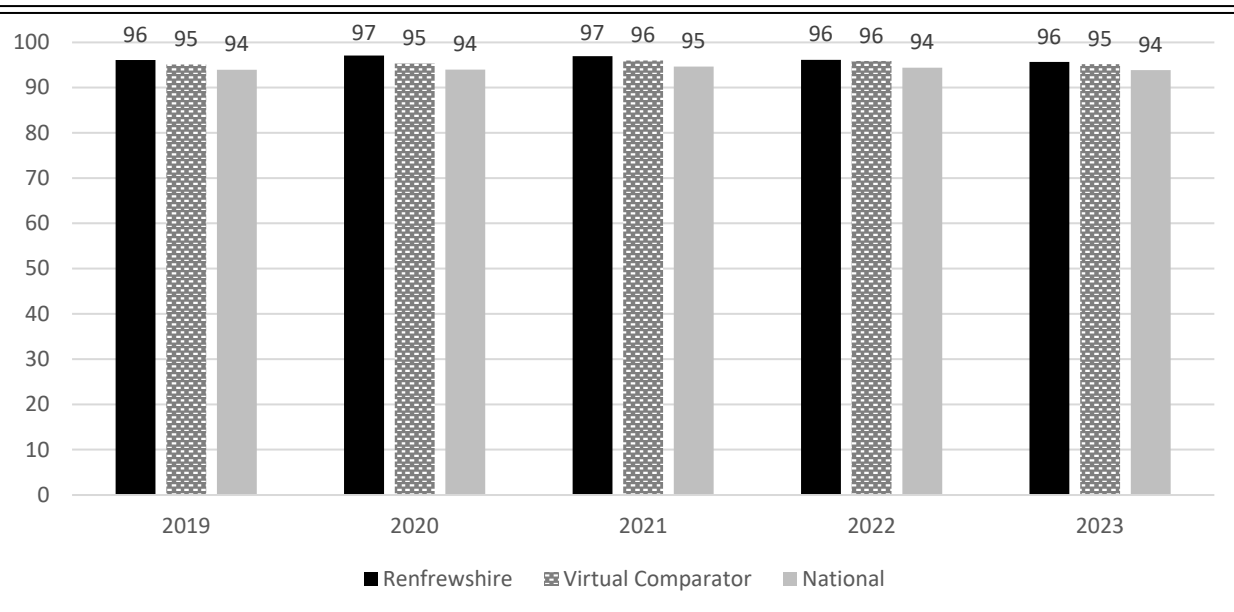
- 3.5. Raising attainment in literacy and numeracy remains a key priority of Renfrewshire Council Children's Services. This is also one of the Scottish Government's key priorities as detailed in its National Improvement Framework.
- 3.6. Attainment in literacy and numeracy includes passes at National 4 and 5 in English and Maths. It also includes 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 of our school leaver cohort in literacy and numeracy compared to our virtual comparator and national figures.

Attainment in Literacy

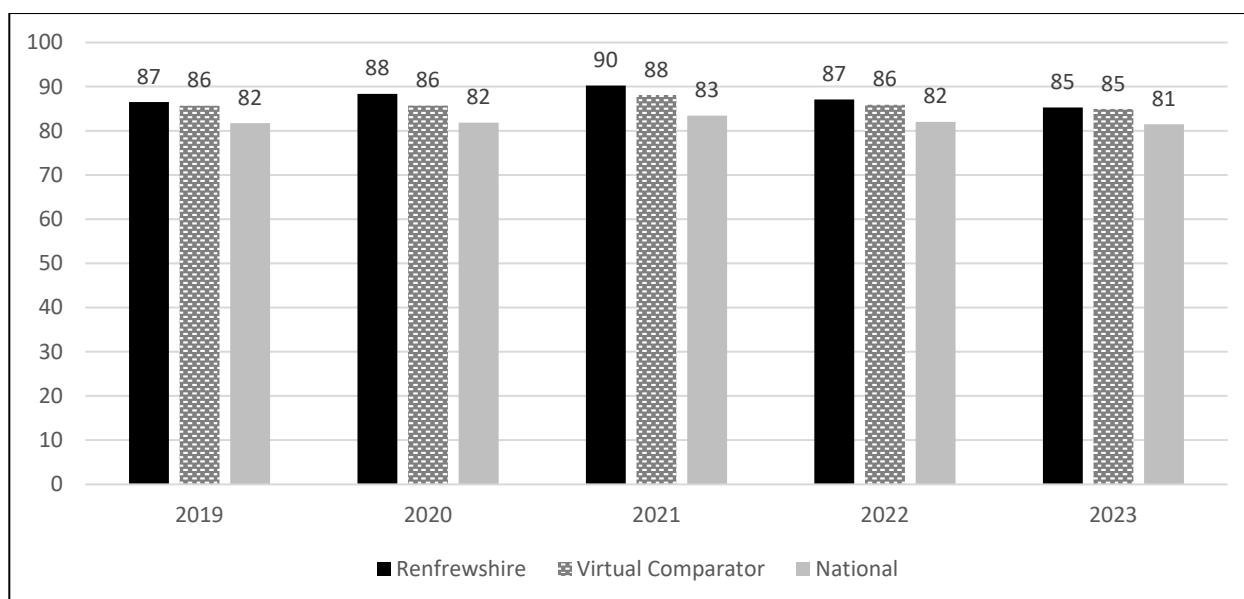
- 3.7. The graphs that follow show the percentage of leavers achieving SCQF level 4 and SCQF 5 in literacy over 5 years.

Graph 1: Percentage of Leavers Achieved SCQF Level 4 or Above in Literacy.



- 3.8. The percentage of leavers in Renfrewshire achieving literacy at SCQF level 4 or above has remained relatively constant over the past 5 years. Renfrewshire remains ahead of the national figures and in line with the virtual comparator in this measure. In the 2022/23 leavers cohort 96% of Renfrewshire pupils achieved this literacy at SCQF level 4, compared with 94% nationally and 95% for the virtual comparator.

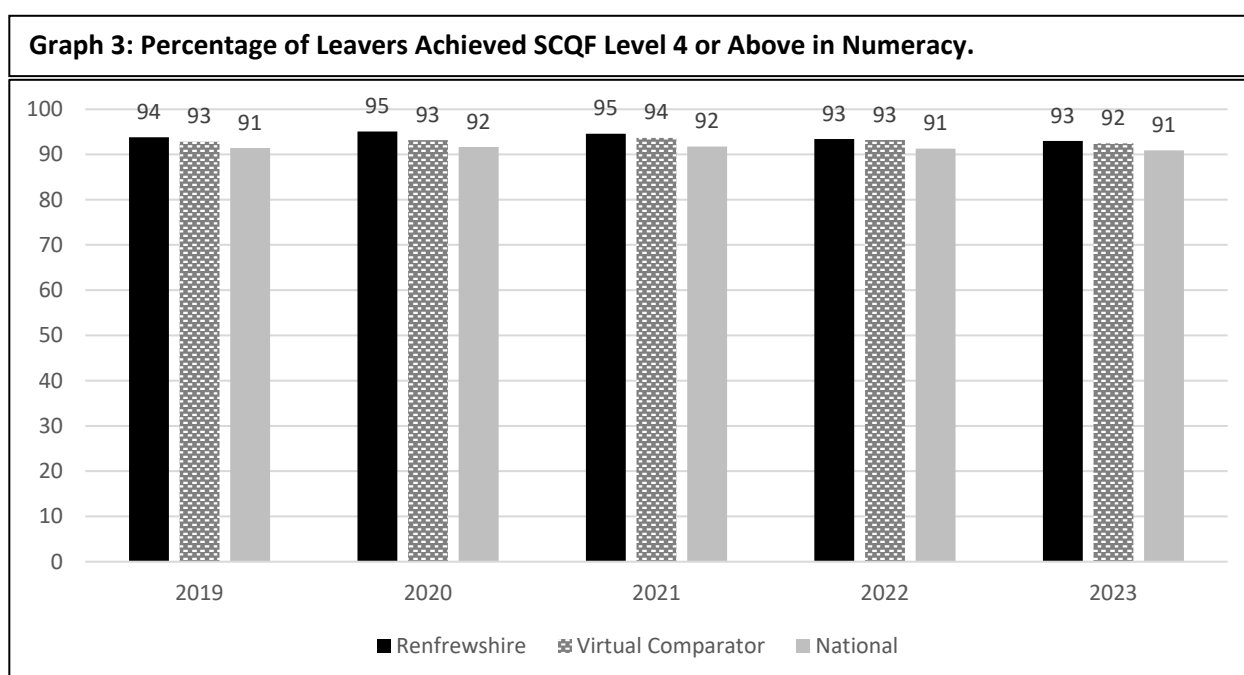
Graph 2: Percentage of Leavers Achieved SCQF Level 5 or Above in Literacy.



- 3.9. Attainment in literacy at SCQF level 5 or above is slightly lower than previous years however this is consistent with both the virtual and national comparator figures. Renfrewshire remains in line with the virtual comparator and ahead of national figures in this measure. In the 2022/23 leavers cohort 85% of Renfrewshire pupils achieved this measure, compared with 81% nationally and 85% for the virtual comparator.

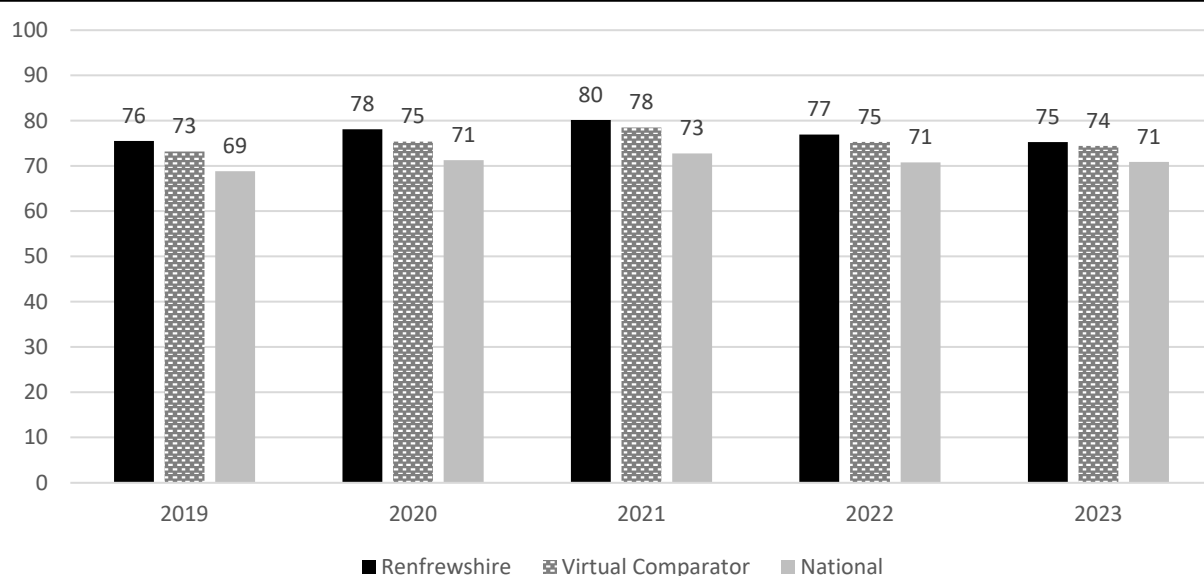
Attainment in Numeracy

- 3.10. The graphs that follow show the percentage of Renfrewshire leavers who have achieved SCQF level 4 and SCQF level 5 in numeracy over 5 years.



- 3.11. Patterns of attainment in numeracy are similar to literacy, although literacy attainment is higher across both levels. At SCQF level 4, numeracy attainment is broadly consistent over 5 years. Renfrewshire is consistently ahead of national figures over 5 years and remains in line with the virtual comparator. In the 2022/23 leavers cohort 93% of Renfrewshire pupils achieved SCQF level 4 numeracy, compared with 91% nationally and 92% for the virtual comparator.

Graph 4: Percentage of Leavers Achieved SCQF Level 5 or Above in Numeracy.

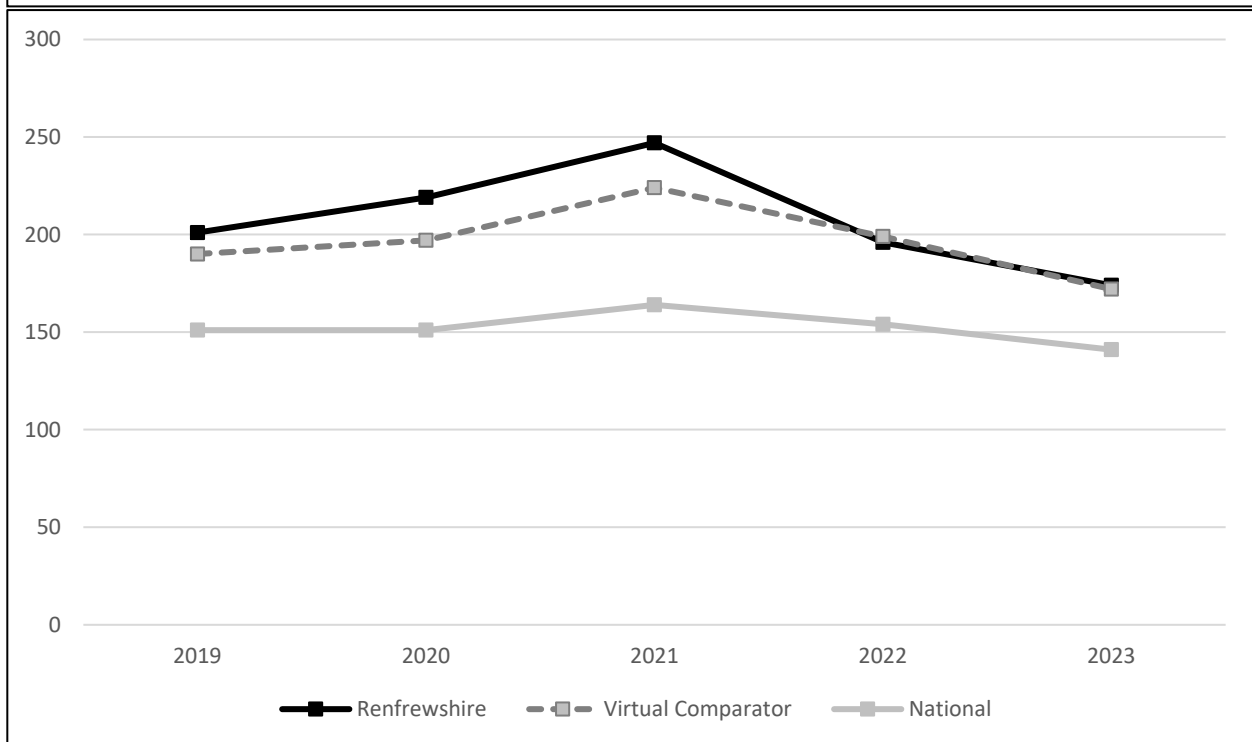


- 3.12. The percentage of Renfrewshire school leavers achieving SCQF Level 5 or above in numeracy has decreased slightly on previous years, however, remains broadly in line with pre-pandemic levels. Renfrewshire remains ahead of the virtual comparator and national figures in this measure. In the 2022/23 leavers cohort 75% of Renfrewshire pupils achieved this measure, compared with 74% nationally and 71% for the virtual comparator.

Improving Attainment for All

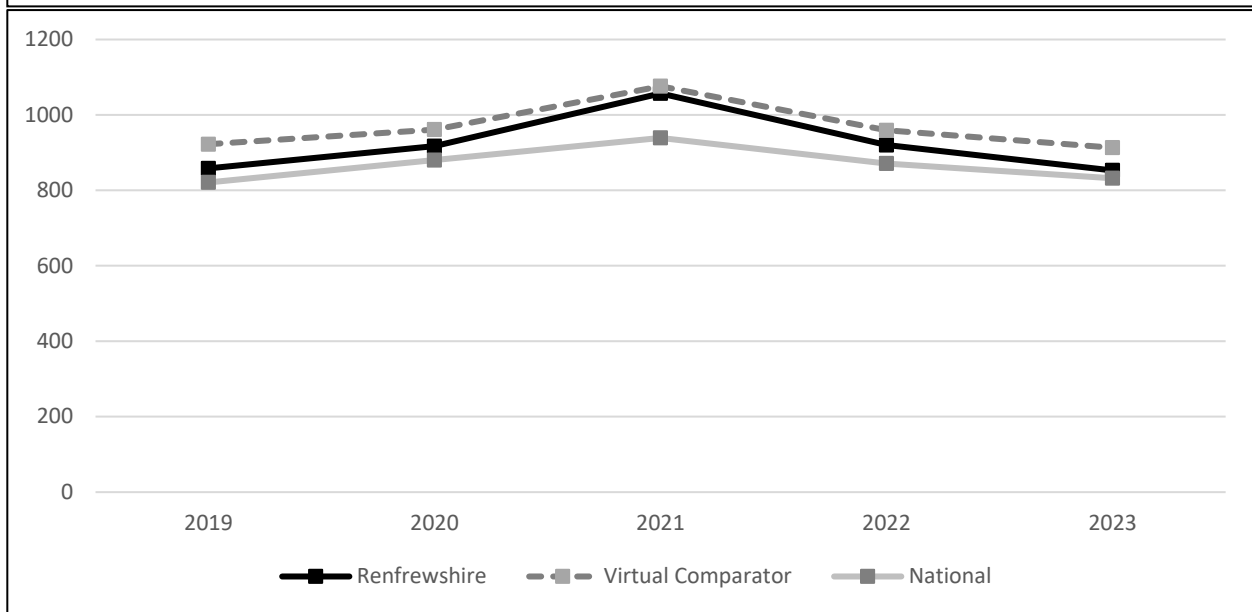
- 3.13. Each qualification on the Scottish Certificate and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is attributed a number of tariff points. The higher the level of qualification, the more tariff points are attributed. On leaving school, pupils will have a total tariff score which incorporates their latest and best achievements in the senior phase.
- 3.14. Within this measure, INSIGHT breaks the data down into three groups of leavers: the lowest attaining 20%, the middle attaining 60% and the highest attaining 20%. It then calculates the average total tariff points for each of these groups and compares their attainment with the virtual comparator and the national figure. Graphs demonstrating trends in each of these groups are shown below.

Graph 5: Average Total Tariff of Lowest 20% Attainment Cohort



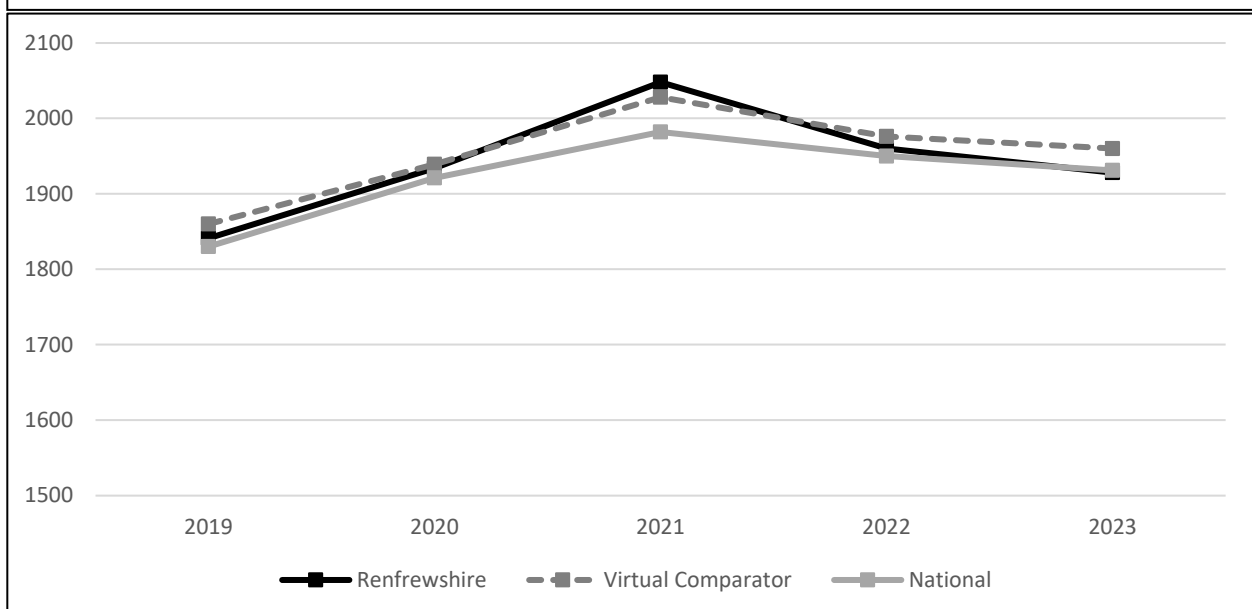
- 3.15. The average total tariff of the lowest attaining 20% of leavers in Renfrewshire has decreased on previous years and is lower than pre-pandemic levels. The comparator data follows the same pattern over time. Renfrewshire remains ahead of the national figure but is not in line with the virtual comparator. In the 2022/23 leavers cohort, the average total tariff in Renfrewshire was 172. This compares to 141 nationally and 172 for the virtual comparator. 172 tariff points is approximately equivalent to 2 National 5 awards at B or C grades and 1 National 4 pass.

Graph 6: Average Total Tariff of Middle 60% Attainment Cohort



The performance of the middle 60% attainment cohort in Renfrewshire tracks closely with comparator data. Renfrewshire attainment is lower than previous years but remains in line with pre-pandemic levels. Renfrewshire has consistently been behind the virtual comparer over 5 years and in 2022/23 is in line with the national figure. In the 2022/23 leavers cohort, the average total tariff in Renfrewshire was 853. This compares to 832 nationally and 913 for the virtual comparator. 853 tariff points is approximately equivalent to 2 B grade and 3 C grade Higher awards.

Graph 7: Average Total Tariff of Highest 20% Attainment Cohort



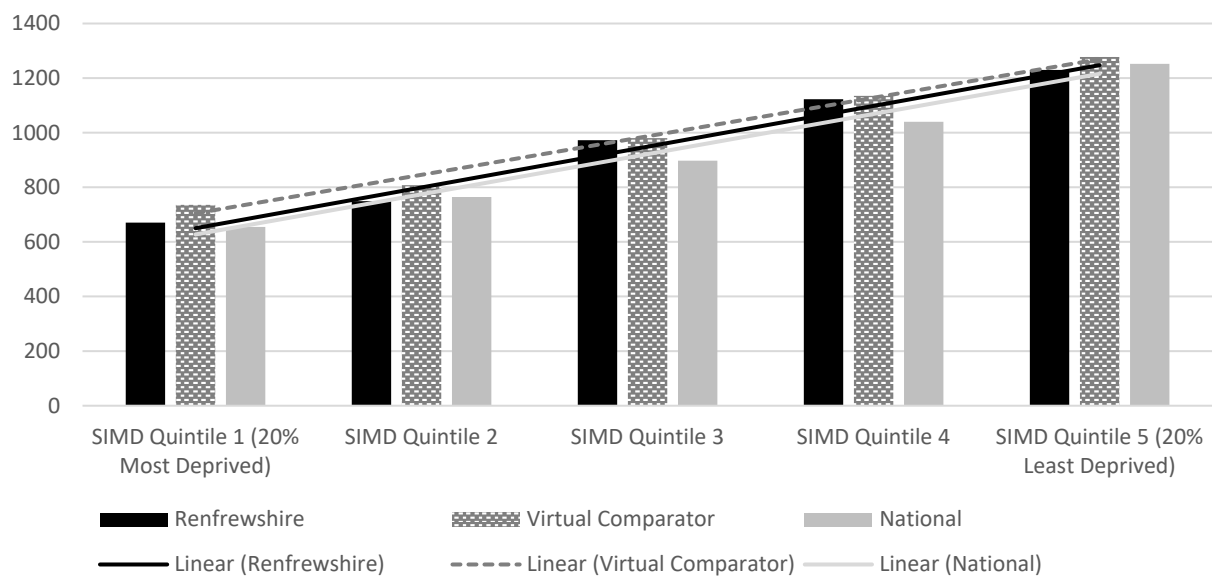
3.16. The average total tariff of school leavers in the highest 20% attainment cohort has increased over 5 years, despite a decrease since the previous year's cohort. Renfrewshire in line with the national figure and marginally below the

virtual comparator within the latest data. There was a sharp peak in 2021 for Renfrewshire and the comparators which is likely to be the result of the inclusion of 2 years of alternative certification replacing exam diets. In the 2022/23 leavers cohort, the average total tariff in Renfrewshire was 1928. This compares to 1931 nationally and 1960 for the virtual comparator. 1928 tariff points is approximately equivalent to 5 Higher A grades plus 2 Advanced Higher B grades.

Attainment Versus Deprivation

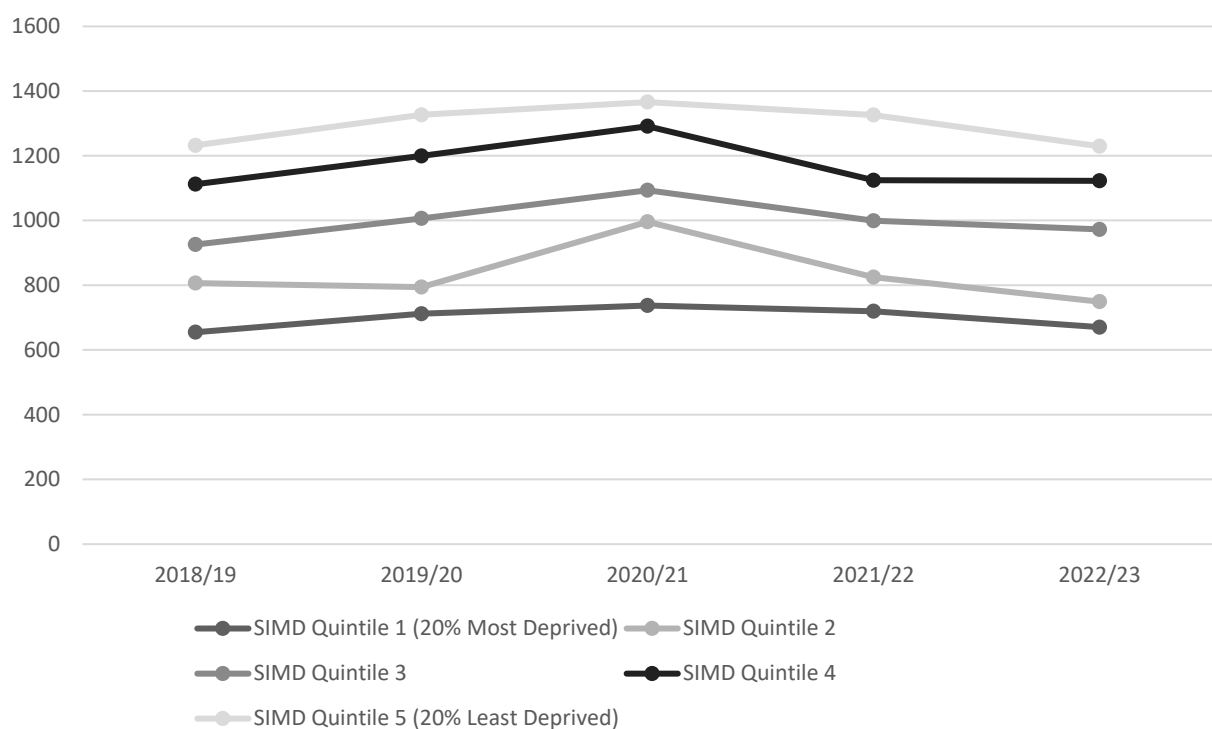
- 3.17. Closing the poverty related attainment gap is an overarching priority of Children's Services. Schools in all sectors are getting increasingly better at identifying their most vulnerable pupils and using strategies to try and mitigate the impact of poverty on their attainment. The Scottish Government measures progress towards closing the poverty related attainment gap using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) quintiles. SIMD quintiles represent the 20% most deprived areas to the 20% least deprived areas.
- 3.18. The following chart shows the average total tariff points by SIMD quintiles for Renfrewshire and its comparators.

Graph 8: Average Total Tariff of 2023/23 Leavers by SIMD Quintile



3.19. In the 2022/23 leavers cohort, Renfrewshire's average total tariff behind the virtual comparator across all quintiles. Renfrewshire is ahead of the national figures in quintile 1, 3 and 4. The size of the attainment gap between SIMD quintile 1 and quintile 5 is similar across Renfrewshire and the comparator data. Renfrewshire has a 45% attainment gap, compared with 42% for the virtual comparator and 48% nationally.

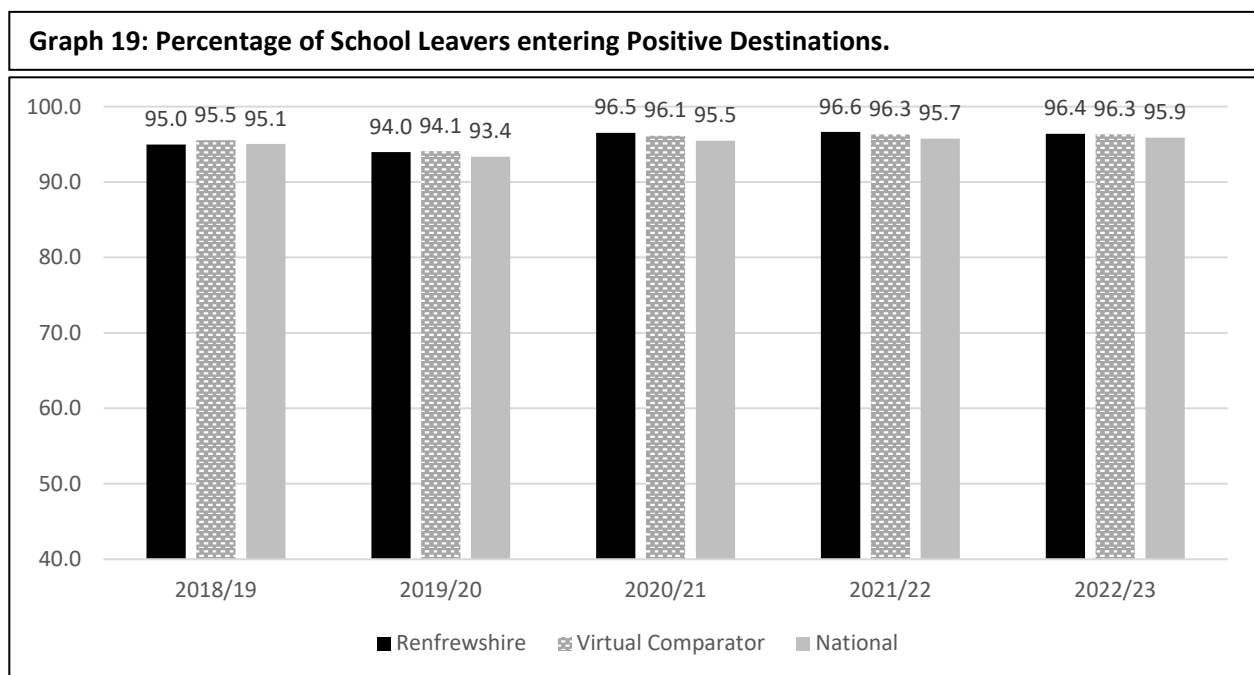
Graph 9: Average Total Tariff of Renfrewshire School Leavers by SIMD Quintile



- 3.20. Graph 9 shows the average total tariff of school leavers in Renfrewshire over 5 years by SIMD quintile. These figures show similar patterns of attainment across all 5 quintiles. The size of the attainment gap has decreased slightly from 47% in 2018/19 to 45% in 2022/23, however this is in part due to a greater decrease in attainment of pupils living in quintile 5 in the latest data. Attainment of pupils living in quintile 1 is higher than pre-pandemic level, increasing from 655 in 2018/19 to 670 in 2022/23.
- 3.21. The service and schools continue to support the Council's and the Scottish Government's priority of closing the poverty attainment gap through improving and targeting our provision, utilising the Scottish Attainment Challenge and pupil equity funding.

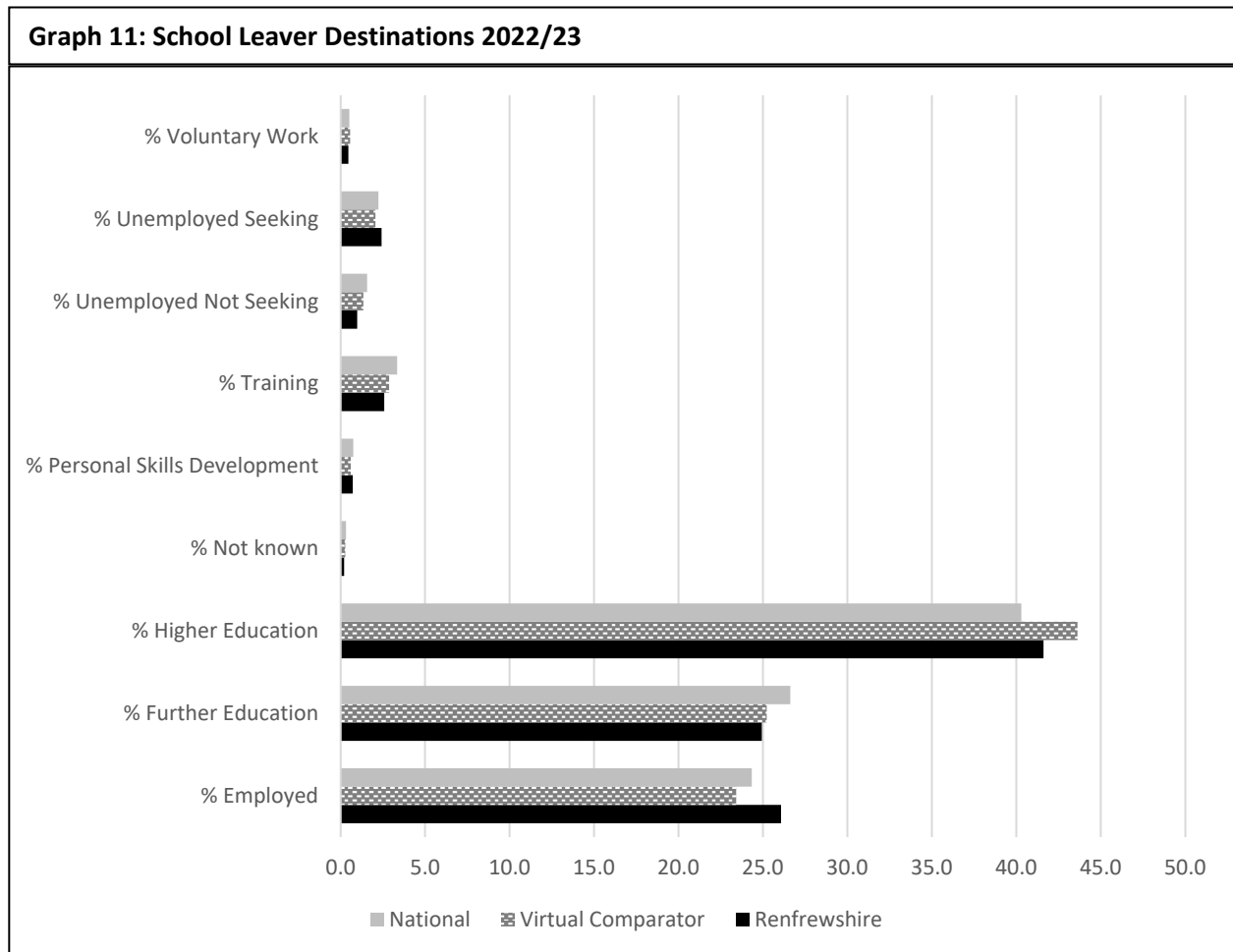
Leaver Destinations

- 3.22. This measure identifies the percentage of school leavers that have entered a positive destination. Positive destinations include higher education, further education, employment, activity agreements, personal skills development and voluntary work.



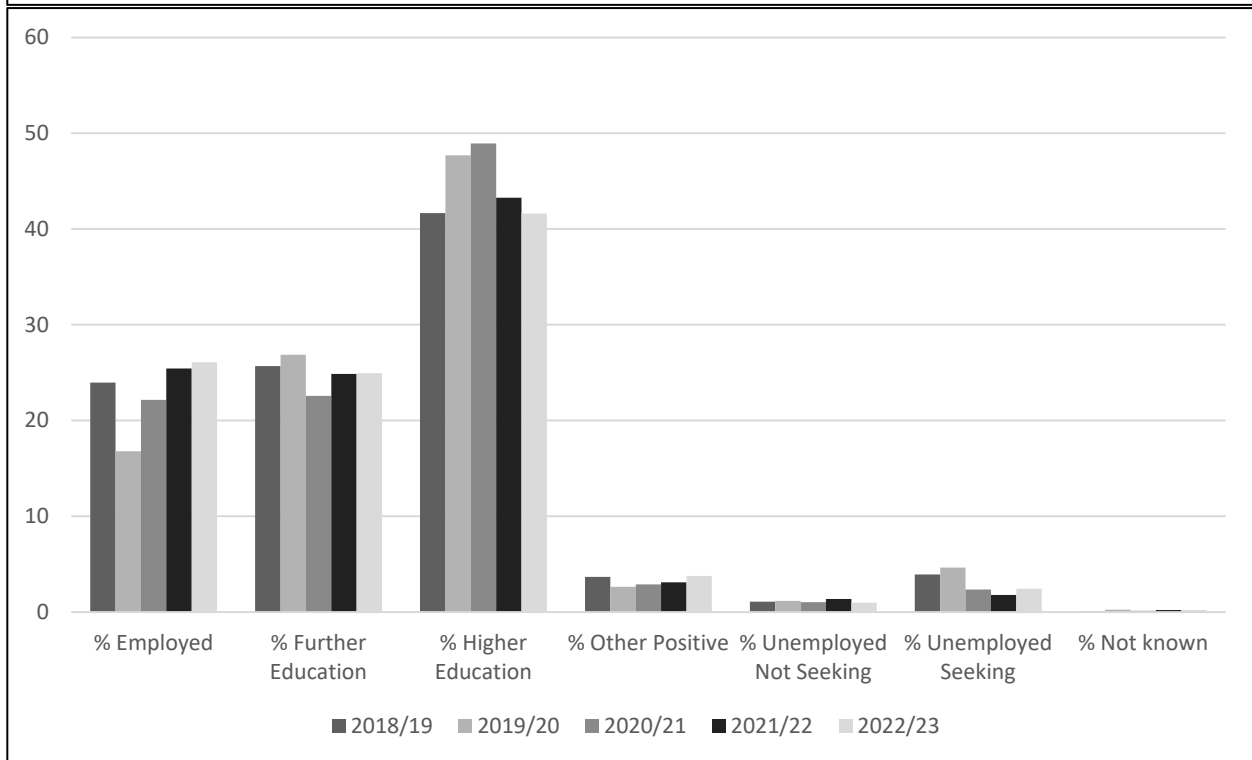
- 3.23. The percentage of leavers entering a positive destination is in line with the previous year at 96.4%. This is an increase over 5 years and Renfrewshire remains in line with the virtual comparator and marginally ahead of the national figure.

3.24. The graph below shows the breakdown of the destinations of the 2022/23 leavers cohort.



In the 2022/23 leavers cohort, 41.6% of Renfrewshire’s leavers entered higher education, 24.9% went into further education and 26.1% were employed. Compared with national figures, Renfrewshire has a higher proportion of pupils entering higher education and employment. The proportion of Renfrewshire leavers entering higher education is behind the virtual comparator however Renfrewshire is above the virtual figure in employment and in line within further education.

Graph 12: Renfrewshire School Leaver Destinations (5 Years)



3.25. Patterns within destination type have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. Employment figures continue to increase following a dip during the pandemic and are now higher than in 2018/19. Conversely, the proportion of pupils entering higher education had increased during the pandemic years but has now returned to previous levels. Improvements over the previous 5 years have been largely as a result of a decrease in the percentage of leavers who are unemployed seeking, which in 2022/23 was 2.4%.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Renfrewshire continues to perform well against its comparators across the majority of measures. While we have not seen significant improvement from the previous leavers cohort this is replicated in national trends suggesting this is in part due to challenges comparing different assessment models undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, we recognise the scope for further improvement, particularly in relation to reducing the poverty related attainment gap. We will continue to make this a priority as we strive for even further improvement.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - none
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
 - Our Renfrewshire is thriving – looking at attainment in this way provides schools and Children’s Services with a robust way to evaluate the quality of education provision.
 - Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all – attainment data is examined in the context of deprivation to ensure that we are working towards equity and excellence.
4. **Legal** – none
5. **Property/Assets** – none
6. **Information Technology** - none
7. **Equality & Human Rights**

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 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 & Safety** – none
9. **Procurement** - none
10. **Risk** - none

- 11. **Privacy Impact** – none
 - 12. **Cosla Policy Position** – not applicable
 - 13. **Climate Risk** - none
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