
To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 1 November 2018

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Examinations results 2018

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report summarises attainment in the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations in 2018, based on the key measures contained within the Insight benchmarking tool.
 - 1.2. The data contained in this report will be subject to minor changes as the SQA process value-added units and will also account for any re-marking through their post-results service. In addition, Skills Development Scotland is also currently tracking school leavers. Insight will be updated in February 2019 and a further report providing data on our school leavers' attainment will be submitted to the education and children's policy board in spring 2019. 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 policy board are asked to:
 - note the content of this report;
 - 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 policy board in spring 2019.

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:

- 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 2019 and will form part of the report to this board in spring 2019.

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. 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, year group, percentage of time spent in mainstream classes, and live within an area with the same Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) decile. Insight also allows us to compare our performance with the national picture.

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

3.5.1 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.

3.5.2 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, compared to our virtual comparator and national figures, for each of our senior phase cohorts.

3.5.3 S4

Table 1 provides data in attainment in literacy and numeracy in S4 at SCQF Level 4 and Level 5. Renfrewshire continues to perform well in literacy, remaining above our virtual comparator and the national figures.

Table 1- % S4 Pupils Achieving Literacy & Numeracy					
	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 5 Numeracy
Renfrewshire	2016	93%	84%	71%	56%
Virtual Comparator	2016	92%	88%	67%	54%
National	2016	91%	86%	66%	53%
Renfrewshire	2017	96%	89%	75%	60%
Virtual Comparator	2017	93%	89%	72%	57%
National	2017	92%	88%	70%	56%
Renfrewshire	2018	92%	86%	78%	54%
Virtual Comparator	2018	91%	86%	72%	54%
National	2018	91%	85%	70%	53%

The percentage of pupils achieving SCQF Level 4 and SCQF Level 5 in literacy was above both the virtual comparator and the national figure in 2018. Attainment in literacy at SCQF Level 4 has decreased by 4 percentage points to 92% and at SCQF 5 has increased by 3 percentage points to 78%. The increase in SCQF Level 5 literacy has been consistent over 5 years and this year's figure represents a 22 percentage point increase since 2014.

Attainment in numeracy has declined in 2018. However, Renfrewshire still performs well against its comparators. The percentage of pupils in S4 achieving numeracy has decreased by 3pp at SCQF Level 4 to 86% and decreased by 6pp at SCQF Level 5 to 54%. Nevertheless, both figures are in line with the virtual comparator and above national. The decline at SCQF level 4 in literacy and numeracy reflects the picture nationally due, at least in part, to changes to the exam structure. The data in table 1 demonstrate this as both the virtual comparator and national figures have also declined.

3.5.4 S5 (based on S4 roll)

Table 2 provides data on attainment in literacy and numeracy in S5 at SCQF Level 4 and Level 5. This year's figures demonstrate considerable gains, particularly in literacy.

Table 2-% S5 Pupils Achieving Literacy & Numeracy					
	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 5 Numeracy
Renfrewshire	2016	95%	91%	80%	69%
Virtual Comparator	2016	94%	89%	77%	64%
National	2016	93%	89%	76%	64%
Renfrewshire	2017	94%	89%	83%	72%
Virtual Comparator	2017	95%	91%	80%	67%
National	2017	93%	89%	79%	66%
Renfrewshire	2018	97%	93%	86%	73%
Virtual Comparator	2018	95%	92%	81%	67%
National	2018	94%	90%	80%	66%

Attainment in literacy and numeracy in S5 is particularly strong with increases across all measures. The percentage of S5 pupils achieving SCQF Level 4 literacy has increased by 3 percentage points to 97% and the percentage achieving SCQF Level 5 has increased by 3 percentage points to 86%. Both these figures are above the virtual comparator and national figure.

Attainment in numeracy has also improved. The percentage of S5 pupils achieving SCQF Level 4 numeracy has increased by 4pp to 93% and the percentage achieving SCQF Level 5 has increased by 1pp to 73%. In 2017, the percentage achieving SCQF Level 4 had decreased but this year's figure has reversed this decline. Renfrewshire is above both the national and virtual comparator at both levels.

3.5.5 S6 (based on the S4 roll)

Table 3 provides data on attainment in literacy and numeracy in S6 at SCQF Level 4 and Level 5. These figures show continued improvement at SCQF Level 5 in both literacy and numeracy.

Table 3- % S6 Pupils Achieving Literacy and Numeracy					
	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 5 Numeracy
Renfrewshire	2016	95%	87%	78%	68%
Virtual Comparator	2016	93%	87%	75%	64%
National	2016	92%	86%	75%	64%
Renfrewshire	2017	95%	92%	81%	72%
Virtual Comparator	2017	94%	90%	78%	67%
National	2017	93%	89%	77%	66%
Renfrewshire	2018	94%	90%	84%	74%
Virtual Comparator	2018	95%	91%	81%	69%
National	2018	93%	89%	79%	68%

In S6, attainment in literacy has been consistent at SCQF Level 4 and has improved at SCQF Level 5. The percentage of pupils achieving SCQF Level 5 literacy has increased to 84%, up by 3 percentage points since 2017 and 14 percentage points since 2014. In 2018, Renfrewshire was above both the virtual comparator and national figures. The percentage achieving SCQF Level 4 is largely consistent with previous years at 94%. This is above the national figure and in line with the virtual comparator.

In numeracy, a similar pattern exists with increases at SCQF Level 5. The percentage of pupils achieving SCQF Level 5 in numeracy has increased to 74%. This is an increase from 72% in 2017 and 60% in 2014. This is above both the virtual comparator and national figures, which were 69% and 68% respectively. The percentage of pupils achieving SCQF Level 4 has decreased slightly to 90%. This is a marginal decline since 2017 but still represents a considerable improvement over 5 years. The 2018 figure is above national but below the virtual comparator.

3.6. Improving attainment for all

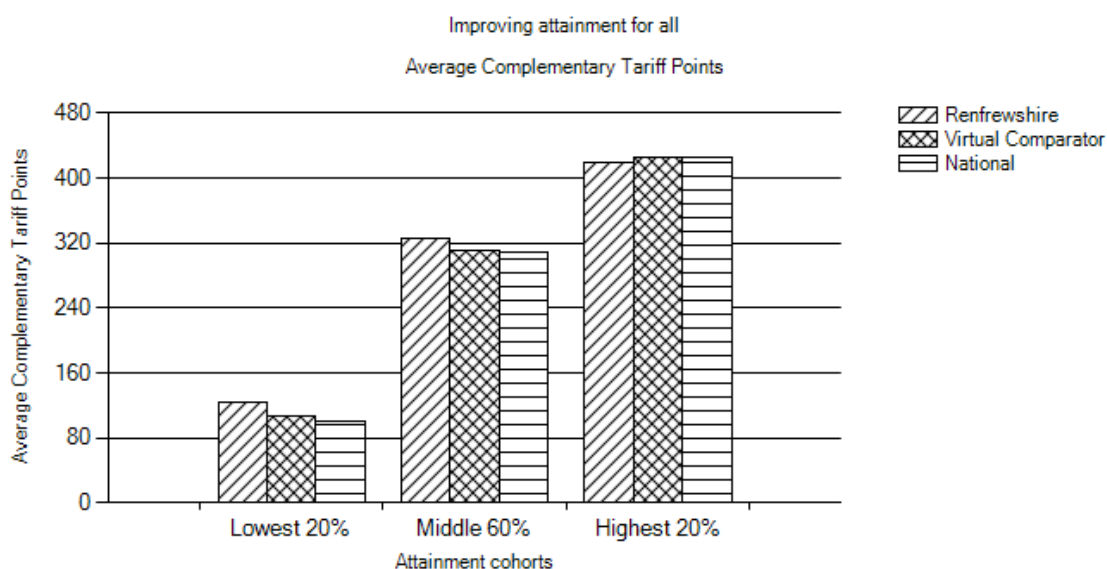
3.6.1 Each qualification on the Scottish Certificate and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is attributed a number of tariff points. The higher level of qualification, the more tariff points are attributed. Each pupil gains a number of points that represents the number and level of qualifications they have 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.

3.6.2 Within this measure, Insight breaks the data down into three parts: the average complementary tariff points for the lowest attaining 20%, the middle 60% and the highest attaining 20% and compares these with the virtual comparator and the national figure.

3.6.3 S4

Graph 1 shows the average complementary tariff points by attainment cohort in the 2018 exam diet.

Graph 1- Renfrewshire S4 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort



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 is considerably above its comparators, which were 106 for the virtual comparator and 100 for the national figure. The highest 20% attainment cohort is marginally behind both comparators, which were both 425.

Table 4 shows the average complementary tariff of Renfrewshire S4 pupils over time.

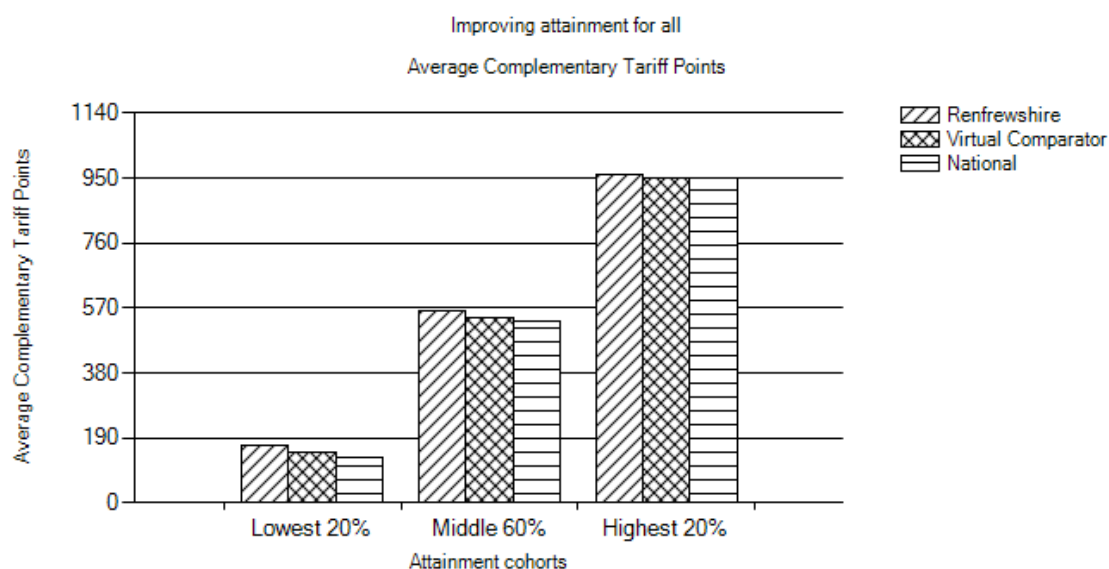
Table 4- Renfrewshire S4 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Highest 20% Attainment Cohort	415	419	423	423	420
Middle 60% Attainment Cohort	306	323	328	329	325
Lowest 20% Attainment Cohort	124	123	124	145	125

The average complementary tariff has declined very slightly across all 3 attainment cohorts since 2017. The lowest attainment cohort has seen the largest reduction. However, it is in line with previous years and remains considerably above its comparators. The largest increase over 5 years has been in the middle 60% attainment cohort, which has increased by 19 points.

3.6.4 S5

The graph below shows the average complementary tariff points by attainment cohort in the 2018 exam diet.

Graph 2- Renfrewshire S5 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort



Graph 2 demonstrates that Renfrewshire has a higher average complementary tariff than both the virtual comparator and national figures for all three attainment cohorts. The difference is particularly high in the lowest 20% attainment cohort, which is 23 points ahead of its virtual comparator and 36 points ahead of the national figure.

Table 5 shows the average complementary tariff of Renfrewshire S5 pupils since 2014.

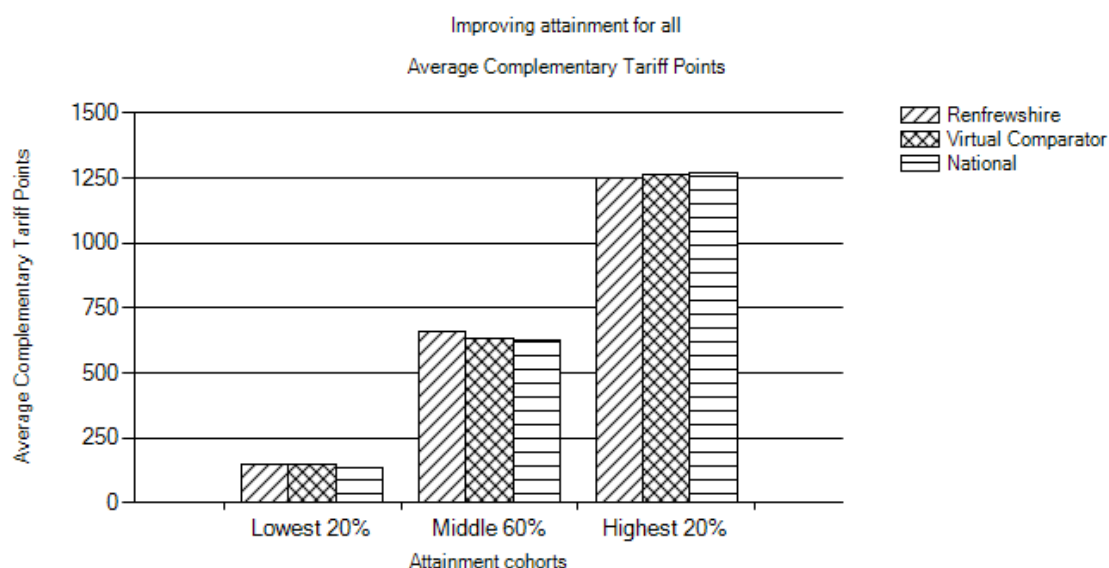
Table 5- Renfrewshire S5 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Highest 20% Attainment Cohort	944	931	952	956	960
Middle 60% Attainment Cohort	477	502	549	554	560
Lowest 20% Attainment Cohort	130	142	147	147	170

Table 5 shows that all attainment cohorts have improved since 2017, with the biggest increase in the lowest 20% attainment cohort which has increased from 147 to 170. This is a considerable increase over 5 years. The middle 60% and highest 20% attainment cohorts have also increased since 2017 and over 5 years.

3.6.5 S6

Graph 3 shows the average complementary tariff points of S6 pupils by attainment cohort in the 2018 exam diet.

Graph 3- Renfrewshire S6 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort



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 149 and 135 respectively. Pupils in the middle 60% attainment cohort are also ahead of both comparators in 2018. The highest 20% attainment cohort remains marginally behind both the virtual comparator and national figures.

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

Table 6- Renfrewshire S6 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Highest 20% Attainment Cohort	1211	1235	1195	1237	1248
Middle 60% Attainment Cohort	595	600	608	655	656
Lowest 20% Attainment Cohort	123	134	144	150	152

All attainment cohort have increased their average complementary tariff since 2017 and over 5 years. The middle cohort has increased marginally since 2017 but the average complementary tariff has increased by over 60 points since 2014. The largest increase since 2017 is in the highest 20% attainment cohort, which has increased by 11 points.

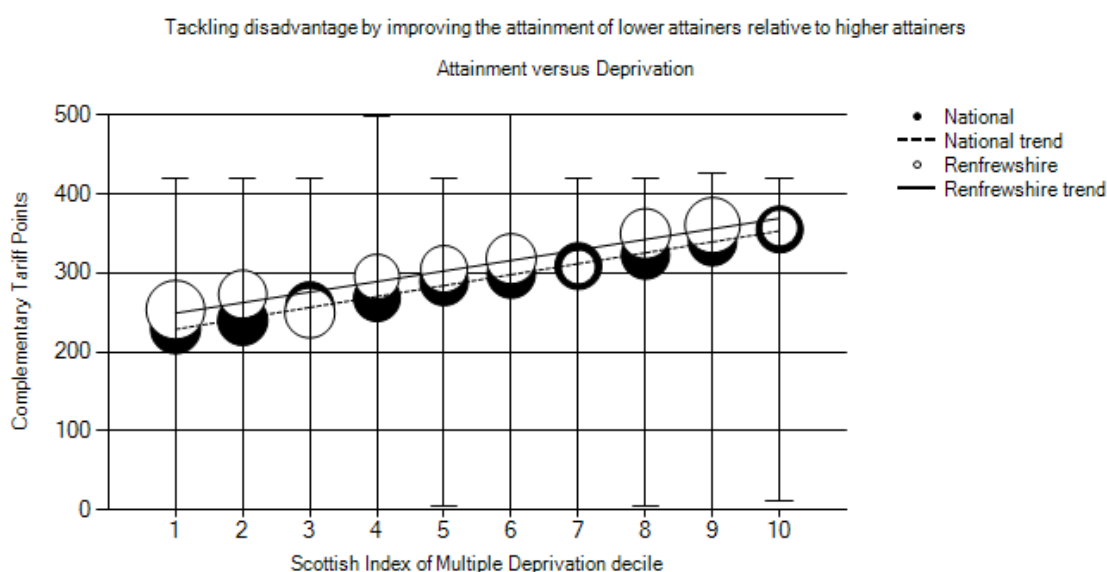
3.7 Attainment versus deprivation

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.

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 represent the percentage of pupils who live in each decile. The trend line which runs through the circles represents the difference in attainment between the most deprived neighbourhoods and the least deprived. The steeper the angle, the more pronounced the disparity between the most and least deprived deciles.

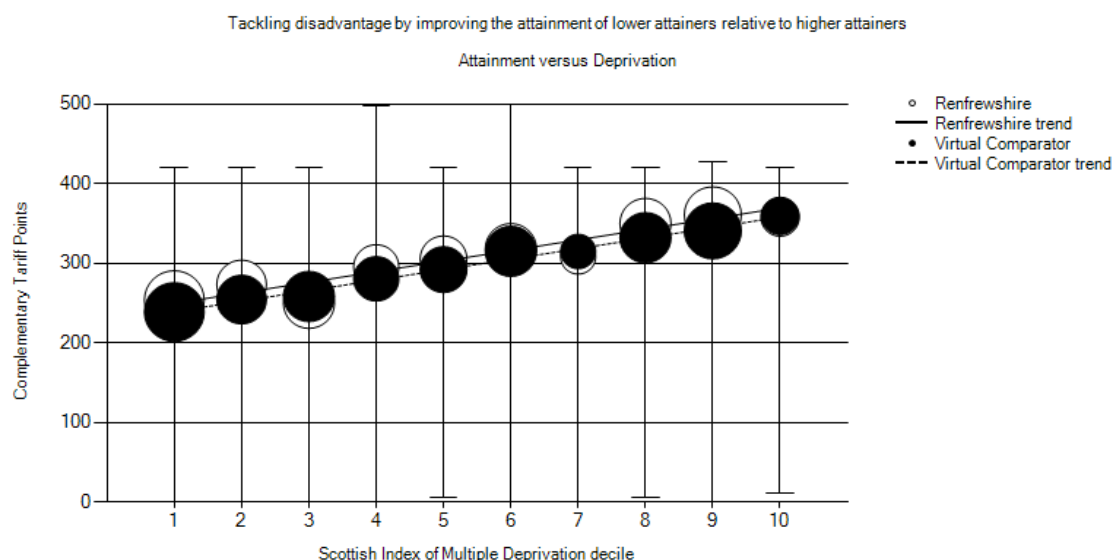
3.7.3 S4

Graph 4- S4 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings against National



S4 pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas perform well against both the virtual comparator and nationally. In all deciles, except deciles 3 and 7, Renfrewshire's average complementary tariff is higher than national. The trendline in graph 4 shows that while the attainment gap is similar to the national figures, pupils in Renfrewshire are achieving higher levels of attainment.

Graph 5- S4 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings against Virtual Comparator



Renfrewshire's average complementary tariff is higher than the virtual comparator in all deciles except 3,7 and 10. Renfrewshire only has approximately 5% of pupils living in deciles 7 and 10 which may account for the variation in these deciles.

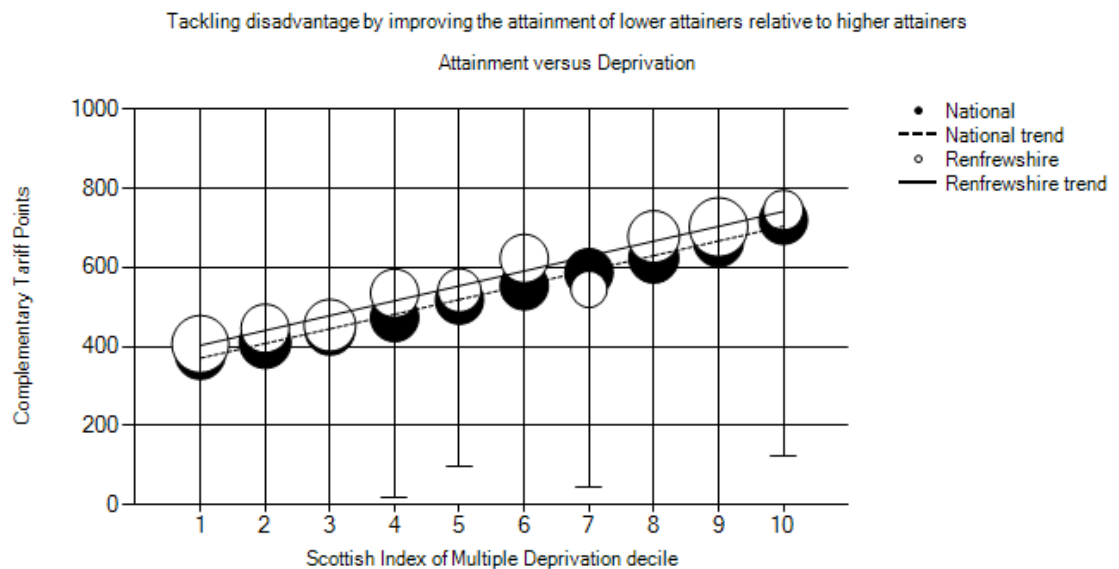
Table 7- S4 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Pupils Living in 30% Most Deprived Areas	244	251	251	266	258
Pupils Living in 70% Least Deprived Areas	322	330	339	338	331
Percentage Gap	24%	24%	26%	21%	22%

The attainment gap between pupils living in 30% most and 70% least deprived pupils is largely unchanged on previous years however both of these groups have a higher average complementary tariff than national and virtual comparator.

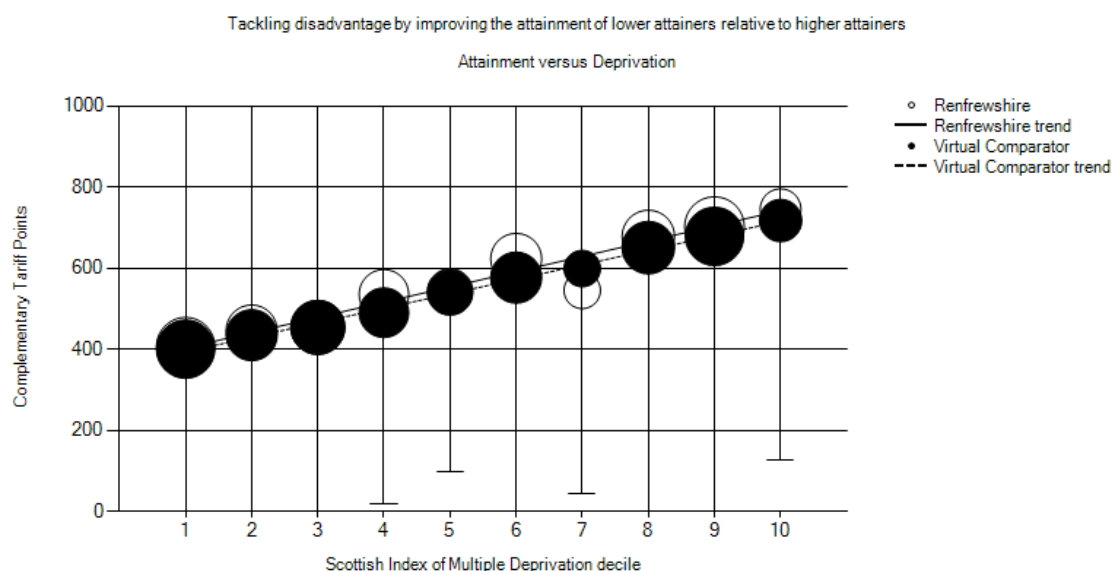
3.7.4 S5

Graph 6- S5 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings against National



The average complementary tariff for Renfrewshire is above national and virtual comparator in all SIMD deciles, except for decile 7. In graph 6 above, the Renfrewshire trend is considerably higher than the national trend. The circle size for SIMD decile 7 is considerably smaller than the others as it includes only 4% of the cohort.

Graph 7- S5 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings against Virtual Comparator



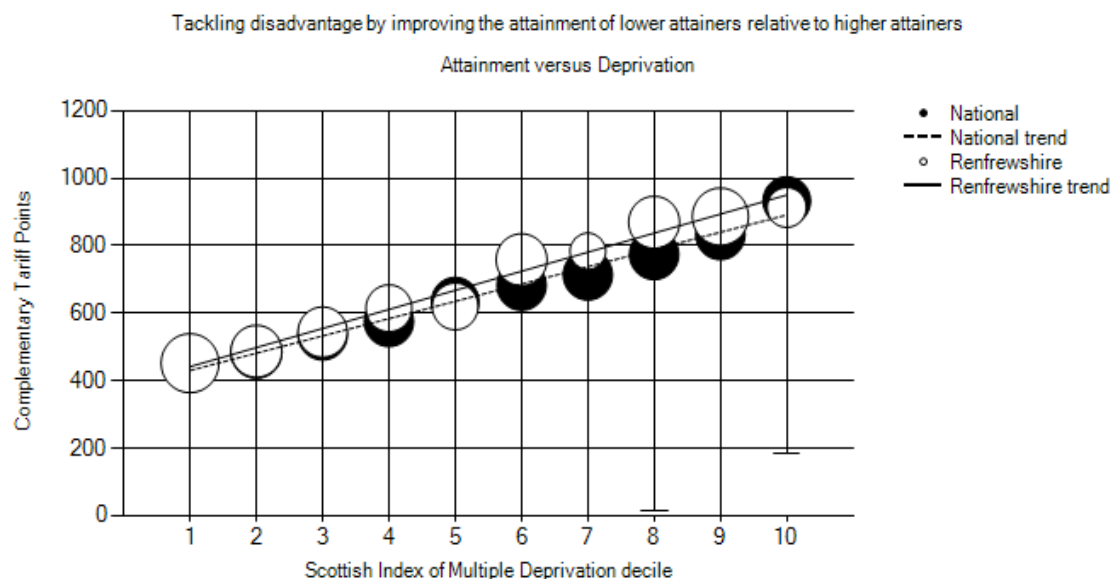
A similar pattern exists when comparing Renfrewshire to the virtual comparator. The Renfrewshire trend line is above the virtual comparator trend, although this difference is narrower than in graph 7.

Table 8- S5 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Pupils Living in 30% Most Deprived Areas	362	382	411	401	433
Pupils Living in 70% Least Deprived Areas	580	602	626	642	636
Percentage Gap	38%	37%	34%	38%	32%

The average complementary tariff for pupils living in the 30% most deprived areas has increased from 401 to 433. Renfrewshire has now surpassed the virtual comparator, which in 2018 was 428, as well as continuing to be above national. The average complementary tariff of pupils living in the 70% least deprived areas has decreased slightly, from 642 in 2017 to 636 in 2018. Renfrewshire is still above both the virtual comparator and national, as both figures also declined. The attainment gap has reduced from 38% in 2017 to 32% in 2018.

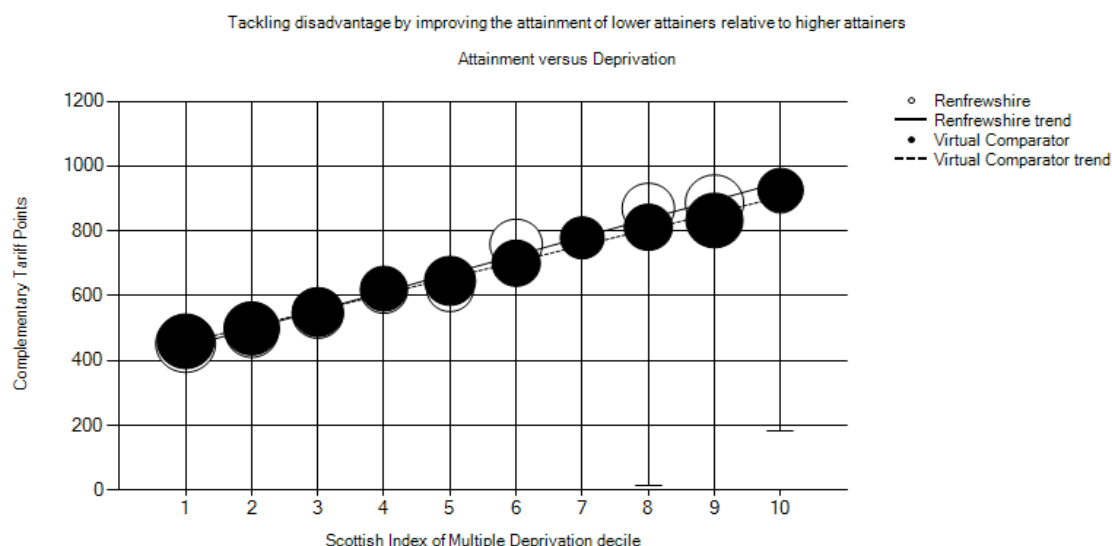
3.7.5 S6

Graph 8- S6 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings against National



The average complementary tariff is higher than national in all SIMD deciles except for 5 and 10. The Renfrewshire trend is above the national trend, with the gap widening in the higher deciles.

Graph 9- S6 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings against Virtual Comparator



Renfrewshire has a higher average complementary tariff than the virtual comparator in deciles 5 to 9. In graph 9 above, we can see that Renfrewshire is very closely aligned with the virtual comparator across all deciles. Within deciles 1 to 4, the Renfrewshire trendline closely matches the virtual comparator with a wider gap emerging at the higher deciles.

Table 9- S6 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Pupils Living in 30% Most Deprived Areas	436	450	455	499	488
Pupils Living in 70% Least Deprived Areas	722	738	746	768	785
Percentage Gap	40%	39%	39%	35%	38%

The average complementary tariff for pupils living the 30% most deprived areas has decreased since last year, however is still up over 5 years. Renfrewshire is above national but below the virtual comparator in this measure. The average complementary tariff of pupils living in 70% least deprived areas has increased since last year and over 5 years. It is above both national and the virtual comparator. The attainment gap in this measure has decreased slightly over 5 years.

4. Breadth and depth

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 The tables on the following page shows performance over time of some of the key breadth and depth measures and how we compare to the virtual comparator. 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.

4.2.1 S4

Table 10 includes data on the number of awards achieved for S4 pupils at SCQF level 4 and 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
2016	92%	90%	84%	81%	62%	59%	46%	40%
2017	93%	91%	85%	83%	62%	61%	45%	41%
2018	91%	89%	80%	77%	62%	58%	45%	40%

In S4, Renfrewshire remains above the virtual comparator at SCQF Level 4, despite a decline in the percentage achieving 3 or more and 5 or more awards at this level. At SCQF Level 5, Renfrewshire has maintained last year's figures while the virtual comparator has decreased. As a result, Renfrewshire is now above the virtual comparator by over 4 percentage points at both 3 or more and 5 or more awards at SCQF Level 5.

4.2.2 S5

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
2016	85%	85%	72%	68%	54%	51%	58%	56%	37%	35%	17%	16%
2017	86%	86%	72%	70%	56%	53%	59%	57%	38%	35%	17%	16%
2018	88%	86%	72%	70%	54%	52%	60%	57%	37%	35%	19%	17%

Table 11 provides information on the breadth and depth in S5. At SCQF Level 5, Renfrewshire is above the virtual comparator at 1 or more, 3 or more and 5 or more awards. This pattern is replicated at SCQF Level 6 as Renfrewshire's results are consistently above the virtual comparator over 3 years. The percentage of pupils achieving 1 or more and 5 or more awards at this level has increased since 2017 and over 3 years. At 3 or more awards there has been a marginal decrease since 2017 leaving the results unchanged since 2016.

4.2.3 S6

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
2016	70%	69%	55%	54%	60%	60%	42%	42%	28%	28%	14%	18%
2017	74%	71%	59%	56%	63%	60%	47%	44%	31%	30%	18%	19%
2018	74%	72%	61%	57%	64%	62%	46%	44%	32%	30%	19%	19%

In S6, the breadth and depth data demonstrates improvement across SCQF Levels 5,6 and 7. In 2018, Renfrewshire was consistently performing equal to or above the virtual comparator. In previous years Renfrewshire has been below the virtual comparator at SCQF Level 7. In 2018, this figure was 19%, an increase over 3 years and equalling the virtual comparator.

5. Conclusion and next steps

- 5.1 The data from the 2018 exam diet demonstrates improvement across a range of key measures. Nevertheless, several challenges remain, not least, to ensure we continue to alleviate the impact of poverty on attainment across all levels; to improve levels of attainment in numeracy in S4; and to ensure our senior phase meets the needs and aspirations of all our young people.

Benchmarking meetings are taking place with each of our secondary schools where head teachers, their leadership teams, and officers from children's services discuss school and subject performance and agree next steps for improvement. These meetings also include conversations with focus groups of middle managers and young people. In addition, they will focus on the measures contained in this report along with course performance; presentation policies; the attainment of looked after children; the option choice process; and attendance. Areas for improvement are being agreed with head teachers and monitored by children's services as part of the service's quality improvement framework.

A further report on finalised leavers' data and the attainment of our looked after children will be presented to this board in spring 2019.

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
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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
