
To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 20 January 2022

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: National Qualifications Results 2021

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report summarises attainment in the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) National Qualifications in 2021, based on the key measures contained within the Insight benchmarking tool.
 - 1.2 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2021 exam diet could not take place for the second year running. An alternative certification model was put in place, but unlike the 2020 awards, teachers made evidence-based estimates of final attainment based on demonstrated attainment.
 - 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 (S4, S5 and S6).
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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
 - 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 virtual comparator for three of the measures detailed above. Leavers' destinations will become available in February/March 2022 and will form part of the report to this board in spring 2022 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 The methodology for the Insight 'virtual comparator' (VC) is unchanged in 2021. 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	2019	95%	89%	80%	64%
Virtual Comparator	2019	92%	88%	73%	58%
National	2019	91%	87%	72%	57%
Renfrewshire	2020	95%	92%	82%	66%
Virtual Comparator	2020	93%	90%	76%	63%
National	2020	92%	89%	74%	61%
Renfrewshire	2021	95%	82%	82%	55%
Virtual Comparator	2021	93%	88%	76%	59%
National	2021	92%	86%	73%	56%

- 4.4 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 2021. Both figures were unchanged since 2020. In numeracy, Renfrewshire is below the virtual comparator and national figures in 2021.

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	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%
Renfrewshire	2021	96%	94%	88%	76%
Virtual Comparator	2021	95%	93%	84%	72%
National	2021	94%	91%	82%	70%

- 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 at SCQF Level 5 is higher than in 2020. However, all other figures are unchanged. Attainment remains higher in literacy than in numeracy across both levels. This mirrors the trend within the virtual comparator and nationally.

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	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%
Renfrewshire	2021	96%	94%	87%	78%
Virtual Comparator	2021	94%	92%	83%	72%
National	2021	93%	91%	81%	71%

- 4.8 In S6, Renfrewshire remains above its virtual comparator across all measures. This is consistent with previous years. Attainment in both literacy and numeracy has increased since 2020 but remains broadly in line with the previous year.

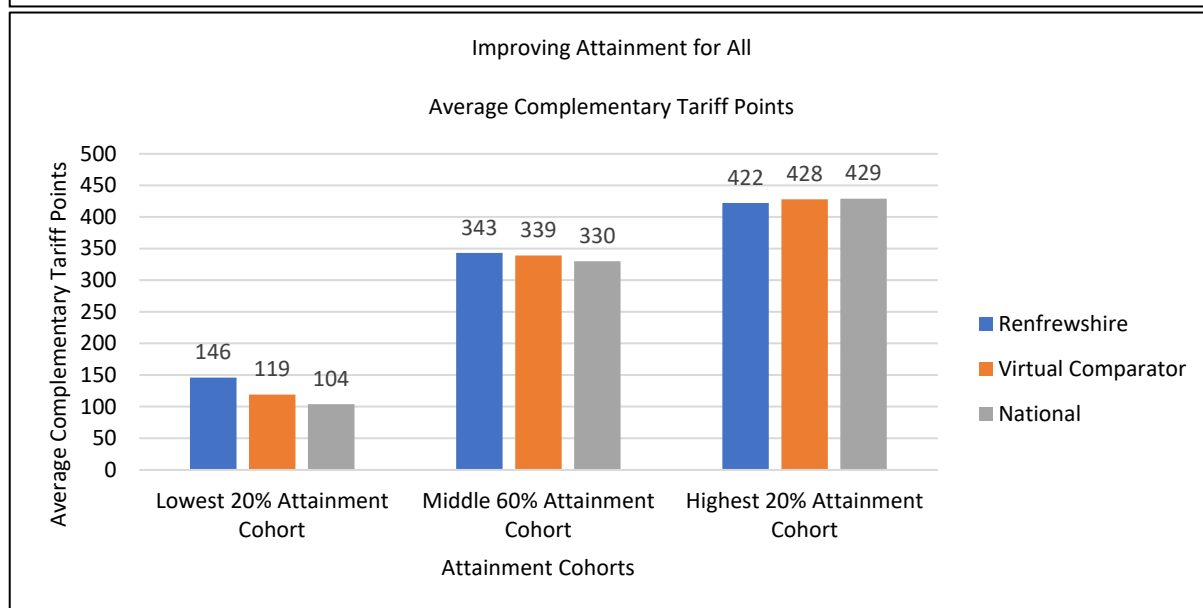
5. Improving attainment for all

- 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 2021 exam diet.

Graph 1- Renfrewshire S4 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort 2021



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 146 which is considerably above its comparators, which were 119 for the virtual comparator and 104 for the national figure. The average complementary tariff for the highest 20% attainment cohort remained marginally behind both comparators.

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

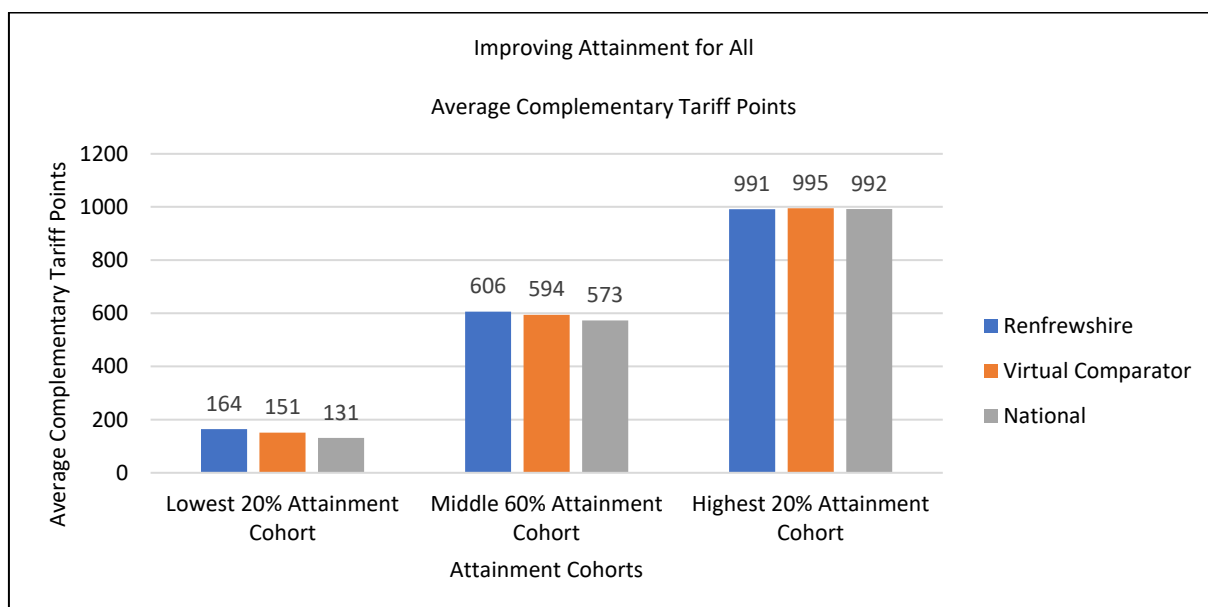
Table 4- Renfrewshire S4 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Highest 20% Attainment Cohort	423	420	419	424	422
Middle 60% Attainment Cohort	329	325	331	341	343
Lowest 20% Attainment Cohort	145	126	145	139	146

5.6 The 2021 average complementary tariff is higher than previous years in the lowest 20% and middle 60% attainment cohorts. The highest 20% attainment cohort remains broadly consistent with previous years despite a small decrease.

S5

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

Graph 2- Renfrewshire S5 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort 2021



5.8 Graph 2 demonstrates that Renfrewshire is above the virtual comparator and national figures in the lowest 20% and middle 60% attainment cohort. In both attainment cohorts, Renfrewshire is further ahead of the national figure than the virtual comparator. The highest 20% attainment cohort figure is below both comparators however the differences are very marginal.

5.9 Table 5 shows the average complementary tariff of Renfrewshire S5 pupils since 2017.

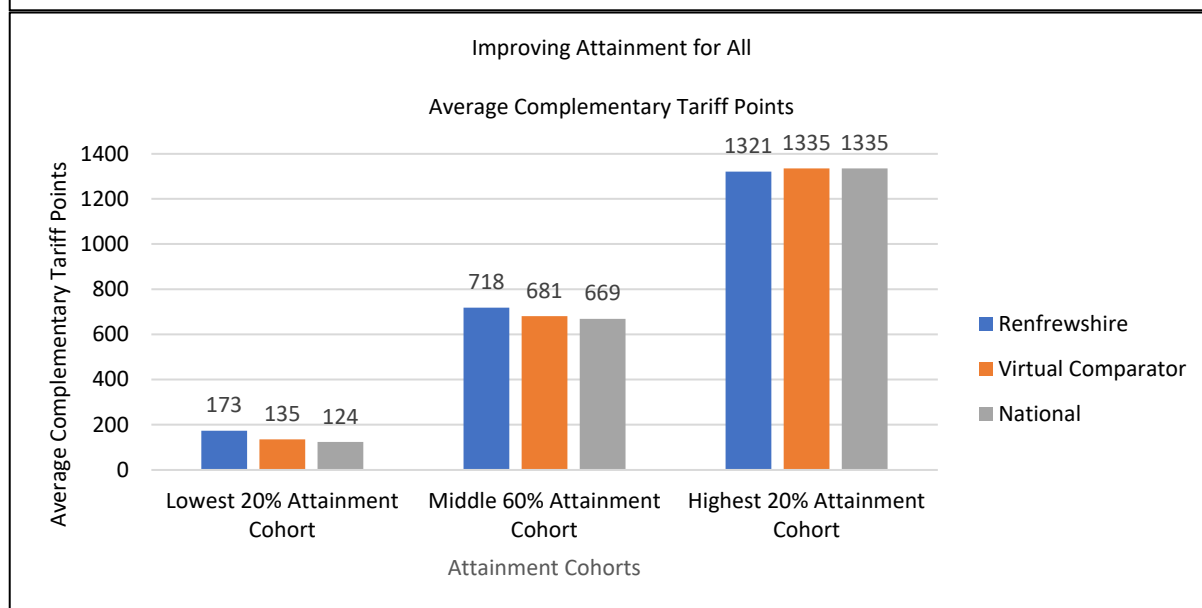
Table 5- Renfrewshire S5 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Highest 20% Attainment Cohort	956	961	954	981	991
Middle 60% Attainment Cohort	554	562	546	597	606
Lowest 20% Attainment Cohort	147	170	146	167	164

5.10 Attainment is higher than previous years in the middle 60% and highest 20% attainment cohorts. The 2021 figures are more closely aligned with 2020 than any of the previous years. The lowest 20% attainment cohort is in line with previous years despite a minor decrease since 2020.

S6

5.11 Graph 3 shows the average complementary tariff points of S6 pupils by attainment cohort in the 2021 exam diet.

Graph 3- Renfrewshire S6 Complementary Tariff by Attainment Cohort 2021



5.12 In graph 3, we can see that the average complementary tariff for the lowest 20% attainment cohort is considerably above both the virtual comparator and national, which were 135 and 124 respectively. Pupils in the middle 60% attainment cohort are also ahead of both comparators. The highest 20% attainment cohort is 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					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Highest 20% Attainment Cohort	1237	1249	1258	1261	1321
Middle 60% Attainment Cohort	655	657	653	660	718
Lowest 20% Attainment Cohort	150	152	175	152	173

5.14 The average complementary tariff is higher than in 2020 across all attainment cohorts. The highest 20% and middle 60% attainment cohorts have a higher average complementary tariff than any of the previous 4 years. The lowest 20% attainment cohort is above the 2020 figure but remains in line with 2019.

6. Attainment versus deprivation

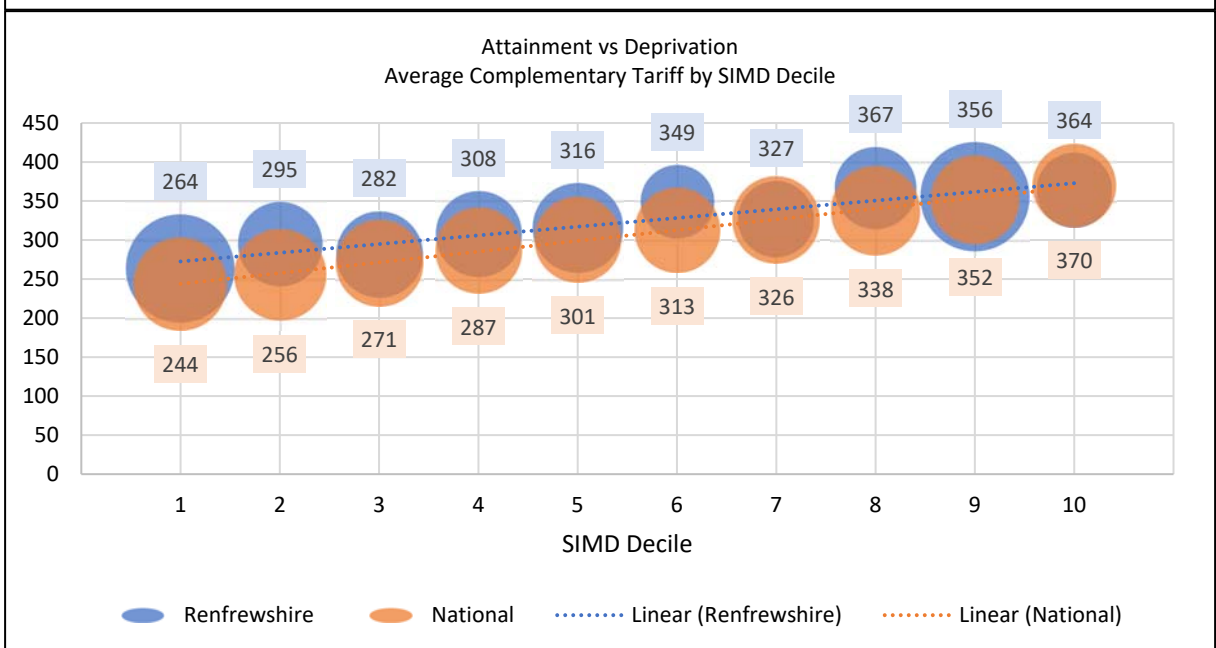
6.1 The attainment versus deprivation measure provides the average complementary tariff of pupils by SIMD decile. This allows us to identify the attainment gap in Renfrewshire and compare it to both our virtual comparator and national data.

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.

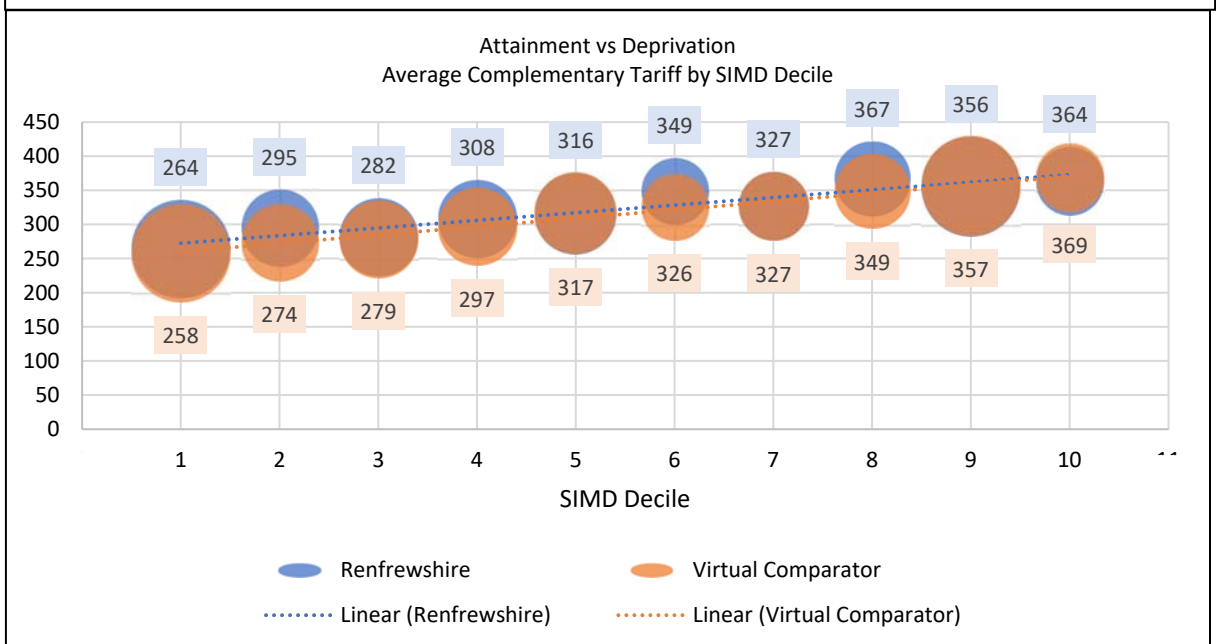
S4

Graph 4- S4 Complementary Tariff by SIMD Decile (Ren vs National) 2021



- 6.3 Renfrewshire's S4 average complementary tariff is in line with or above national figures in all deciles except for decile 10. The trendlines indicate that the size of the gap between most and least deprived pupils is larger nationally than in Renfrewshire due to lower attainment of pupils living in decile 1 and 2.

Graph 5- S4 Complementary Tariff by SIMD Decile (Ren vs Virtual Comparator) 2021



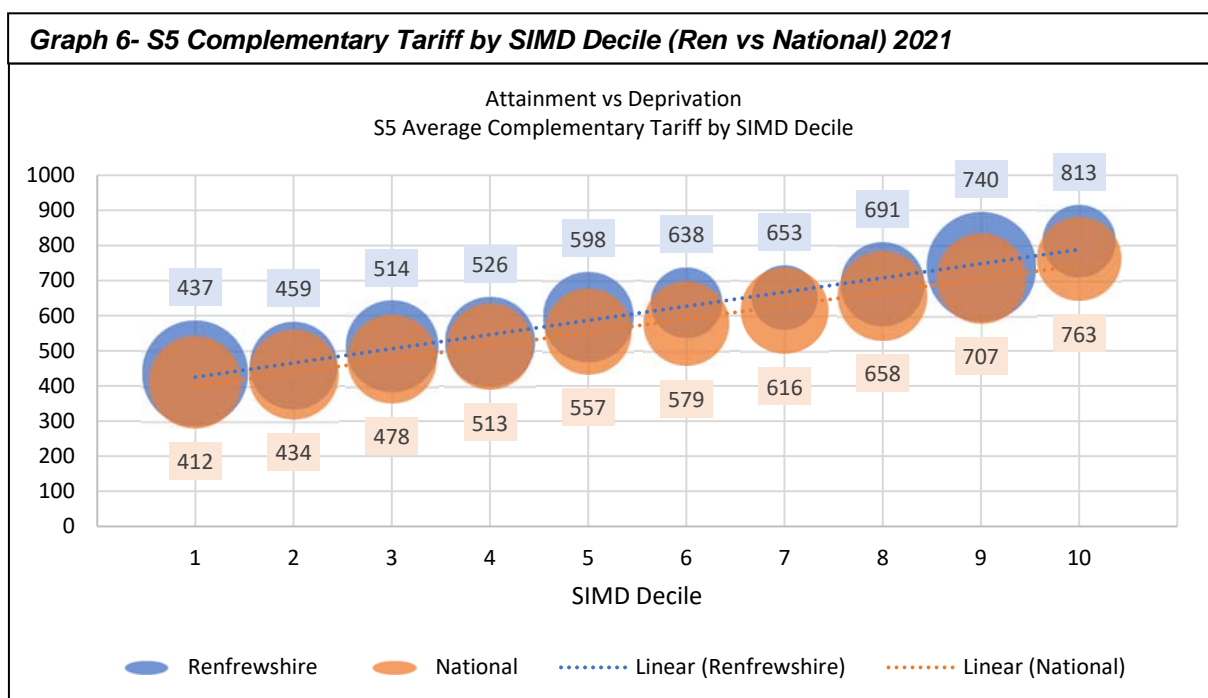
6.4 Renfrewshire's S4 average complementary tariff is very closely aligned with the virtual comparator in 2021. Renfrewshire is behind the virtual comparator in SIMD deciles 5, 9 and 10 but the differences are minimal. The trendlines in graph 5 indicate that Renfrewshire has higher attainment in the lower deciles, but the gap narrows as the deciles increase.

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- Renfrewshire S4 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Pupils Living in 30% Most Deprived Areas	266	259	266	280	277
Pupils Living in 70% Least Deprived Areas	338	332	338	339	341
Percentage Gap	21%	22%	21%	17%	19%

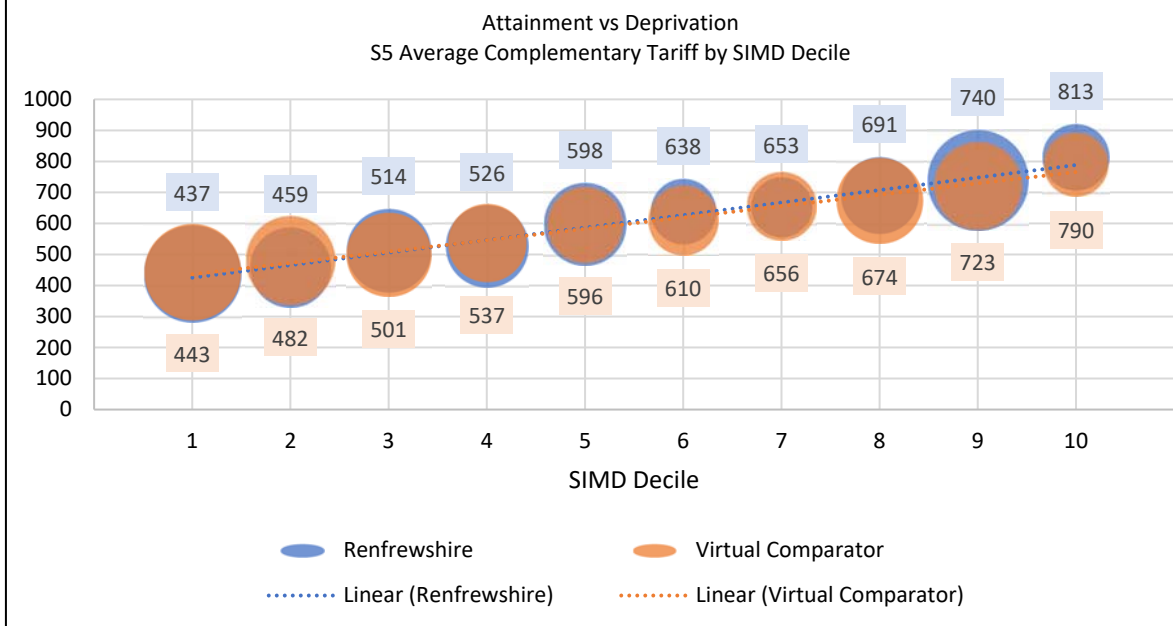
6.6 The average complementary tariff of pupils living in 30% most and 70% least deprived areas are closely aligned with the figures in 2020. There has been a minor decrease for pupils living in 30% most deprived areas which means the gap is increased slightly. However, the size of the gap remains smaller than it was between 2017 and 2019 when an exam diet took place.

S5



6.7 The S5 average complementary tariff for Renfrewshire is above national in all SIMD deciles. The trend lines follow a similar pattern, but Renfrewshire's overall attainment is higher.

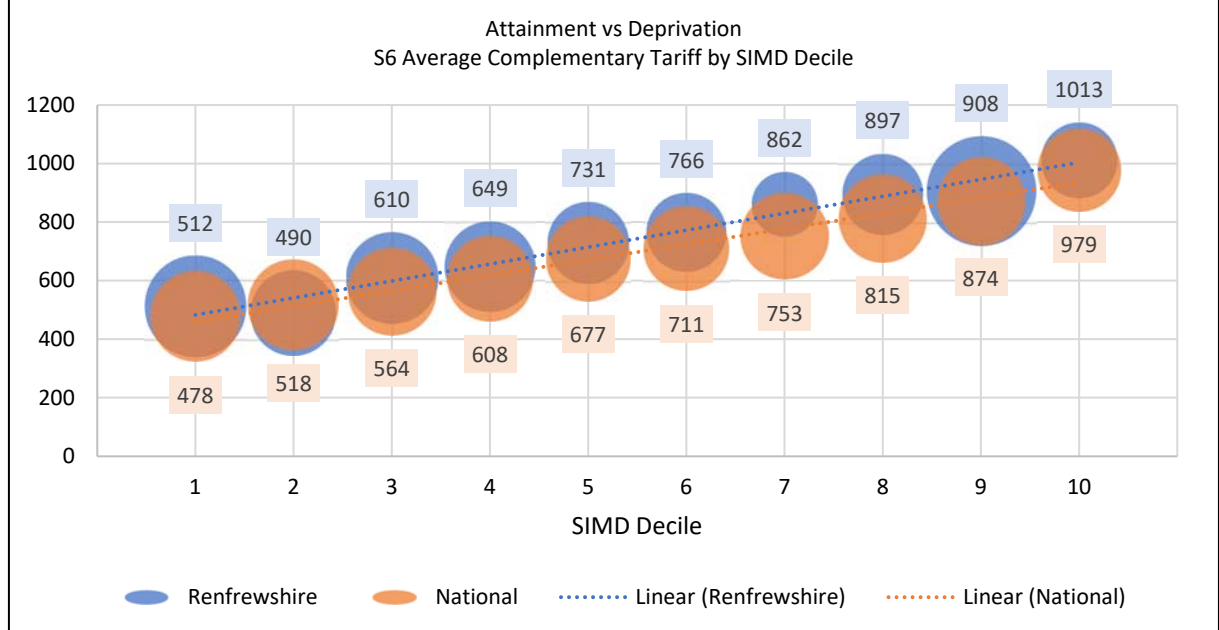
Graph 7- S5 Complementary Tariff by SIMD Decile (Ren vs Virtual Comparator) 2021



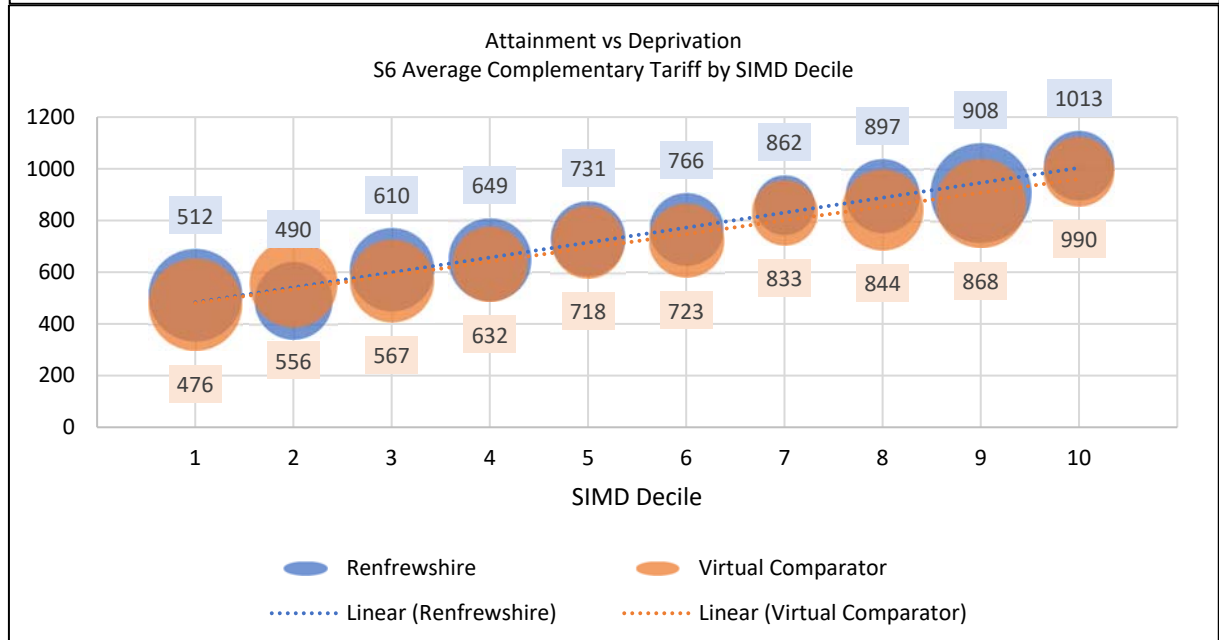
- 6.8 Graph 7 indicates that Renfrewshire and its virtual comparator are very closely aligned across all deciles. The trendlines on this graph overlap and therefore the size of the attainment gap is very similar. Renfrewshire is behind the virtual comparator in deciles 1,2,4 and 7 however these differences are marginal.
- 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- Renfrewshire S5 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Pupils Living in 30% Most Deprived Areas	401	434	417	445	467
Pupils Living in 70% Least Deprived Areas	642	638	626	668	665
Percentage Gap	38%	32%	33%	33%	30%

- 6.10 The average complementary tariff has increased for the 30% most deprived and marginally decreased for the 70% least deprived groups in 2021. As a result, the size of the attainment gap is smaller than in previous years.

Graph 8- S6 Complementary Tariff by SIMD Decile (Ren vs National) 2021

- 6.11 The S6 average complementary tariff is higher than national in all SIMD deciles except for decile 2. 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) 2021

- 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 all deciles except for decile 2.

Table 9 – Renfrewshire S6 Average Complementary Tariff by SIMD Groupings					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Pupils Living in 30% Most Deprived Areas	499	489	512	507	537
Pupils Living in 70% Least Deprived Areas	768	786	774	780	830
Percentage Gap	39%	35%	38%	34%	35%

- 6.13 The average complementary tariff for pupils living in the 30% most deprived and 70% least deprived areas have increased since 2020 and are higher than all previous years. As both groups have increased attainment, the size of the gap remains similar to previous years.

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
2019	92%	89%	83%	77%	64%	60%	47%	41%
2020	93%	91%	86%	83%	69%	68%	53%	50%
2021	93%	91%	84%	81%	69%	67%	50%	48%

- 7.4 In S4, Renfrewshire remains above the virtual comparator at SCQF Level 4. The proportion of pupils achieving 3 or more and 5 or more are in line with previous years. At SCQF Level 5, Renfrewshire is ahead of the virtual comparator at 3 or more and 5 or more awards. These patterns are similar to previous years although there has been some variability in the figures due to different assessment methods.

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
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%
2021	89%	88%	77%	76%	61%	61%	65%	64%	45%	44%	23%	21%

- 7.6 At SCQF Level 5, Renfrewshire is above or in line with 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. Several of these measures are higher than previous years 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
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%
2021	77%	74%	63%	61%	69%	65%	54%	50%	39%	35%	24%	24%

- 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. Attainment at SCQF Level 7 is in line with the virtual comparator, where in previous years Renfrewshire has been marginally behind.

8. Conclusion and next steps

- 8.1 The 2021 results need to be considered in the context of the uniquely challenging circumstances and the never-before-used alternative certification model. Considered in this context, it would not be helpful to directly compare attainment to previous years. What is clear is that young people across Renfrewshire have performed exceptionally well, and they should be congratulated for all that they have achieved.

- 8.2 A further report on finalised leavers' data and the attainment of our looked after children will be presented to this board in spring 2022 or as soon thereafter as the data becomes available.
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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.

13. Climate Risk

None.

List of Background Papers

(a) none

*Children's Services
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