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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Education &amp; Communities Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>20 May 2025</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities &amp; Organisational Development</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>EDUCOM/38/25/MR</b>
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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Education Services Standards and Quality Report April 2024 – April 2025</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☒ For Decision ☐ For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to present to the Education and Communities Committee for consideration and approval, the Education Services Standards and Quality Report for April 2024 to April 2025.
- 1.3 Councils are required under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 to publish an annual report on progress towards meeting both national priorities and local improvement objectives.
- 1.4 Inverclyde Council's Education Services Standards and Quality Report – April 2024 to April 2025 is appended to this report. The Standards and Quality Report aims to provide a focused summary of educational progress and a flavour of the work delivered by our schools during this time period. This information has been drawn from a number of sources including School Improvement Plans and Standards and Quality Reports, Education Scotland inspection reports / follow through visits, Care Inspectorate reports, the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Corporate Directorate Improvement Plan and the quality assurance process, including the analysis of performance data. Importantly, the report identifies key areas of strength as well as where Inverclyde Education Services can improve further. These next steps will then form the Improvement Plan for April 2025 – April 2026, detailing how these will be taken forward.
- 1.5 Whilst this report fulfils our legislative requirements, it is also indicative of Education Services' commitment to self-evaluation, continuing improvement and public performance reporting. The Education Service is fully committed to providing a high-quality service which will enable all young people to achieve their full potential. As the full report is quite lengthy, stakeholders have asked for an abridged version of key messages. This will be produced in due course.
- 1.6 For greater detail on the performance of any individual establishment, Elected Members should refer to the school's own Standards and Quality Report and Improvement Plan. These are published on an annual basis on each establishment's website by the end of September.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee approves the content and the publication of the Education Standards and Quality Report April 2024 – April 2025.

**Ruth Binks**  
**Corporate Director**  
**Education, Communities & Organisational Development**

### 3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 Previously, authorities were required under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 to publish an annual report on progress towards meeting both national priorities and local improvement objectives. Statutory guidance under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 as amended by Section 4 of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 imposed new duties on authorities with effect from August 2017. The new duties focus on the following main issues:

- Pupils experiencing inequalities of outcome.
- The National Improvement Framework (NIF).
- Planning and Reporting.

The new duties for planning commenced on 1 August 2017 with an expectation that reports on progress are produced as soon as possible after 31 August 2018.

3.2 The Standards and Quality Report identifies progress made over the last year against authority priorities and the NIF. It contains the findings from our ongoing self-evaluation, including successes and identified next steps for improvement. The Education Services Improvement Plan will then show how Inverclyde Education Services will pursue continuous improvement in key areas over the coming year. Because the Standards and Quality Report is a comprehensive in-depth document, a summary containing key messages will be produced.

### 4.0 Highlights and key messages

- 4.1
- The work of the Education Service in relation to its approaches to consultation with Pupils, Parent Councils and Professional Bodies was cited as good practice in the Education Scotland National Thematic report on support for school improvement.
  - The percentage of our early years settings achieving good or better gradings at external inspection remains amongst the highest in Scotland, being ranked as the highest by the LGBF in 2024.
  - At P1, 4 & 7 Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) combined we have outperformed national data since the pandemic and have continue to exceed pre-pandemic data in 2023/24.
  - In 2023/24 leavers from Inverclyde in SIMD bands 1 – 8 achieved, on average, 100 more tariff points than the national average. Inverclyde consistently outperforms the national average for pupils in SIMD 1-2 and has done over the past 5 years.
  - In 2023/24, 50% of our S4 cohort achieved 5 or more level 5 qualifications, this was an increase of 3% from 2022/23.
  - In 2023/24, 23% of our S5 cohort achieved 5 or more level 6 qualifications, this was an increase of 3% from 2022/23.
  - On average 3% more of our leavers achieve level 4 literacy and numeracy than the national figure, and 5% more achieve level 5 over past 3 years.
  - In October 2024 our Initial School Leavers Destination (ISLDR) figure was 95.4%, our second highest ever figure.
  - In 2024/25 the percentage of 16-19 years old participating in education, employment or training, increased to 93.5% giving us our second highest ever percentage of this measure.
  - Our Junior Wind Orchestra received a Silver Plus award, and the Senior Wind Orchestra received a Gold Plus award at the 2024 Scottish Concert Band Festival.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		N
Legal/Risk		N
Human Resources		N
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		N
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty and Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		N
Environmental & Sustainability		N
Data Protection		N

## 5.2 Finance

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

## 5.3 Legal/Risk

N/a

## 5.4 Human Resources

N/a

## 5.5 Strategic

N/a

## 5.6 Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty

### (a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
N	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty.

## 5.7 Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

## 5.8 Environmental/Sustainability

Summarise any environmental / climate change impacts which relate to this report.

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
N	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

## 5.9 Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

## 6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 N/a

## 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 See appended standards and quality report.



Inverclyde  
council



# **Education Services Standards and Quality Report April 2024 – April 2025**





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## Foreword

Welcome to our Standards and Quality Report for the period April 2024 – April 2025.

This report provides the people of Inverclyde with the performance information needed to understand how well Inverclyde Council is improving education across the authority. The report links to the key drivers of the National Improvement Framework (NIF) and also to the Education Services Improvement Plan which clearly states how Inverclyde Council intends to drive forward further improvements over the coming year.

It is vital that we continue to work in partnership to ensure that the standards and quality which are at the heart of an effective education service are maintained and continue to improve in Inverclyde. We are delighted that these partnerships remain strong and would like to thank all of those who have tirelessly supported our young people to achieve the incredible achievements contained in this report.

Inverclyde Council is committed to delivering a high-quality education provision in learning environments fit for learning and teaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Environments that nurture ambition and aspirations, improve attainment and achievement, and create and widen opportunities for all children and young people to achieve their full potential. Throughout this Standards and Quality Report you will see examples of how this commitment has been demonstrated.

Whilst you will read about our many successes and improving trends in attainment and achievements, this report also outlines some of our key priorities for the coming year. We will continue to put children, families and communities at the centre of our plans, activities and improvements, and build on our strengths and achievements. By doing this we will demonstrate our ongoing commitment to getting it right for every child, citizen and community.

Links to glossaries of education terminology that will support the reading of this document can be found at:

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/my-school/education-glossary/>

[List of Acronyms used in Scottish Education FINAL Jan 25.pdf](#)

A full glossary of terms used can be found at the end of the document.

## Vision and Context

### **Vision - Success for all - Getting it right for every child, citizen and community.**

The 2023/28 Council Plan sets out the vision for the Council as a whole and the ways in which we hope to improve the lives of, and deliver better outcomes for, the people of Inverclyde. In striving to deliver this strategic plan, and by working with our Inverclyde Alliance partners, we will aim to achieve the vision of: "Success for all - Getting it right for every child, citizen and community".

At its heart, the Council Plan 2023/28 aims to ensure that Inverclyde Council is a dynamic service provider, able to respond to the needs of all our communities and one that plays its part actively as part of public life, locally and nationally.

The Council Plan 2023/28 aligns to and supports the Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33, ensuring that partners work together to create conditions that promote success for all and addresses inequalities.

The Inverclyde Commitment is "Success for All – Getting It Right for Every Child, Citizen and Community". We are very aware that life opportunities vary across our population and there are significant challenges in relation to deprivation and inequality. We want to achieve success for all, with everyone in our communities being able to easily access high quality Council services.

### **Education services context**

There are six mainstream secondary schools in Inverclyde, 20 primary schools (ten with nursery classes), one Nursery school and 10 Early Learning and Childcare Centres. In addition to this, Craigmarnock School and Lomond View Academy support pupils with additional support needs (ASN) or those who are unable to sustain a placement in a mainstream school. We also have two ASN provisions to support pupils with language and communication, based at All Saints Primary and Notre Dame High School. Our Virtual School for Care Experienced Young people has been fully functional since August 2022 and is now incorporated alongside the Corporate Parenting team as part of the overall offer from Lomond View Academy, with the Virtual Head teacher being the head of both. We have a provision and outreach service for deaf pupils called Garvel, based across Moorfoot Primary and Clydeview Academy. A statutory consultation has concluded approving the establishment of a new ASN provision at Clydeview Academy, due to open in August 2025.

A number of other services also support pupils with ASN. These include: Inverclyde Communication Outreach Service (ICOS), English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Bilingualism Service (based at Whinhill Primary) and the Visual Impairment and Habilitation Service (based at Craigmarnock).

As of October 2024, there were 4992 primary school pupils and 4463 secondary school pupils. There are also 221 pupils in ASN schools and 1194 children in Local Authority Early Years settings.

## Wellbeing Outcomes

We have a number of wellbeing outcomes (SHANARRI) that we wish to achieve for our children and young people. These are:

- ❖ **Safe:** Our children will be kept safe.
- ❖ **Healthy:** Our children will have the best possible physical and mental health.
- ❖ **Achieving:** Achievement will be raised for all.
- ❖ **Nurtured:** Our children will have a nurturing environment in which to learn.
- ❖ **Active:** Our children will have the opportunity to take part in activities and experiences which contribute to a healthy life, growth and development.
- ❖ **Respected and Responsible:** Our children will feel respected and listened to, share responsibilities and be involved in decisions that affect them.
- ❖ **Included:** Our children will be supported to overcome social, educational, health, employment and economic inequalities and feel valued as part of the community.

Inverclyde has benefited from significant investment as part of the ongoing regeneration of the area. The now completed £200 million schools' estates programme, has delivered new and refurbished schools which are amongst the best in the country, for all pupils in Inverclyde. Our schools are not only helping to develop a strong sense of community but have been built with innovation and sustainability at the forefront of design.

In 2015 we started the very exciting work to decrease the attainment gap linked to deprivation through the Attainment Challenge. The Attainment Challenge is a programme which initially targeted primary schools in seven local authorities with the highest percentage of deprivation. The initial bid to support P1 classes in six primary schools in Inverclyde during the academic year 2015/16 was built upon the premise of start small and think big.

During the academic year 2024/25, Attainment Challenge Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) directly supported all primary stages in 12 schools which serve the most deprived areas in Inverclyde and S1-S3 in all of our secondary schools. The evidence-based learning undertaken through the Attainment Challenge was rolled out to every school in Inverclyde and has enabled the authority to provide a framework to support schools to deliver their Improvement Plans. All schools across Scotland are allocated Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) according to the level of children attending the school who are in receipt of free school meals. Further information on the impact of PEF is contained in the last section of this report. The Strategic Equity Funding the authority receives is reducing over the next three years and in 2025/26 we will receive approximately £590,000; this being less than we received in 2024/25 i.e. £718,000. Whilst the PEF and SEF funding was due to cease in June 2026, we have been informed that this will extend until June 2027. Funding for the final year has yet to be confirmed.

## About the Standards and Quality report

This report sets out the progress made towards outcomes set out in our own service plan for 2024/25 and focuses on the impact we have had.

### How have we gathered the evidence for the Standard and Quality report?

- School's Standards and Quality reports and annual school improvement plans
- Annual meetings with schools e.g. attainment meeting
- Our own internal peer review programme
- Evaluations of the work of the Attainment Challenge
- Questionnaires
- Education Scotland Inspections of schools and national thematic inspections
- Care Inspectorate Scotland inspections.

### Inspection Activity

During 2024/25 we saw the ongoing scrutiny from Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate inspections. Below is an overview of the outcomes of these:

#### Education Scotland inspections

During 2024/25 to date, the authority had four inspections carried out, however at the time of publication of this document, we await the final publication of the outcomes of these:

Establishment	School QI 1.3	School QI 2.3	School QI 3.1	School QI 3.2	Nursery Class QI 1.3	Nursery Class QI 2.3	Nursery Class QI 3.1	Nursery Class QI 3.2
St Francis Primary School and Nursery Class September 2024 Short inspection model		Satisfactory		Satisfactory		Good		Good
Wellington Children's Centre (PVI) February 2025 Full inspection model	Good	Good	Good	Good				
St Mary's Primary School April 2025 Full inspection model	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC				

#### Education Scotland National Thematic inspections

During 2024-25 the Education Service was visited by HMIE as part of a national thematic inspection into how it supports school improvement.

Inverkip Primary School and Nursery Class will be visited in May 2025 as part of a national thematic inspection into the teaching of literacy.

## Care Inspectorate inspections

Establishment	How good is our care, play and learning?	How good is our setting	How good is our leadership	How good is our staff team?
Madeira Nursery (PVI) (August 24)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Kilmacolm Nursery Class (September 24)	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good
Blairmore Early Learning Centre (September 24)	Adequate	Adequate	Good	Adequate
Newark Nursery School (October 24)	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good
Gibshill Children's Centre (November 24)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Wellington Children's Centre – Greenock (PVI)	Good	Adequate	Adequate	Good

## **Link to the Children's Services Plan 2022 – 2025**

We have linked the next step sections of this report to the four priority themes of the next Children's Services Plan 2022 – 2025. These are:

### **Priority Theme 1:**

*To utilise our learning from the Addressing Neglect and Enhancing Wellbeing work stream to further embedded GIRFEC in Inverclyde to improve outcomes for children and their families by developing a strong professional base for identifying, understanding and responding to need at the earliest opportunity, with clear, agreed, high quality multi agency approaches throughout a child's experience.*

### **Priority Theme 2:**

*Mental health is everyone's business, and it affects all aspects of a child and young person's development. The promotion of a whole community approach to understanding mental health, wellbeing and the impact of trauma is essential.*

### **Priority Theme 3:**

*To reduce the inequalities of health and educational outcomes linked to deprivation.*

### **Priority Theme 4:**

*To further improve outcomes, including attainment, for care experienced children, young people and their families by developing a culture of ambition based on strong relationships that recognise the range of difficulties experienced by children and families and provide the scaffolding to protect safe, loving and respectful relationships.*

## Key Achievements

- The work of the Education Service in relation to its approaches to consultation with Pupils, Parent Councils and Professional Bodies was cited as good practice in the Education Scotland National Thematic report on support for school improvement.
- The percentage of our early years settings achieving good or better gradings at external inspection remains amongst the highest in Scotland, being ranked as the highest by the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) in 2024.
- Almost all establishments have achieved at least the bronze Rights Respecting Schools Award, with increasing numbers achieving silver (50%) and gold (35%).
- Our Junior Wind Orchestra received a Silver Plus award, and the Senior Wind Orchestra received a Gold Plus award at the 2024 Scottish Concert Band Festival.
- As of June 2025, Inverclyde will be one of only three local authorities in Scotland to have all of its mainstream secondary schools on the SCQF Ambassador award scheme, with almost all having already achieved bronze level.
- In April 2025 Kilmacolm Primary School achieved a full Education Scotland STEM Nation Award.
- At P1, 4 & 7 Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) combined we have outperformed national data since the pandemic and have continue to exceed pre-pandemic data in 2023/24.
- In 2023/24 leavers from Inverclyde in SIMD bands 1 – 8 achieved, on average, 100more tariff points than the national average. Inverclyde consistently outperforms the national average for pupils in SIMD 1-2 and has done over the past 5 years.
- In 2023/24, 50% of our S4 cohort achieved 5 or more level 5 qualifications, this was an increase of 3% from 2022/23.
- In 2023/24, 23% of our S5 cohort achieved 5 or more level 6 qualifications, this was an increase of 3% from 2022/23.
- On average 3% more of our leavers achieve level 4 literacy and numeracy than the national figure, and 5% more achieve level 5 over past 3 years.
- In October 2024 our Initial School Leavers Destination (ISLDR) figure was 95.4%, our second highest ever figure.
- In 2023/24 the percentage of 16-19 years old participating in education, employment or training, increased to 93.5%. This is an increase of 1% from last year and was our second highest ever percentage of this measure.



## A: Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

**A1** Carry out an evaluation of the peer review programme, with external support, to identify improvements needed for the second 3 year cycle starting in August 2025.

**A2** Engage with emerging approaches to Education Service self-evaluation in partnership with ADES and Education Scotland, including work within family group quads.

**A3** Deliver support and training for self-evaluation, including the implementation of a preparing for inspection resource.

**A4** Create a strategic resource to support establishments with curriculum making and design, including a working group to advise on tracking the curriculum beyond numeracy and literacy, as well as pupils' wider achievements.

**A5** Carry out a review of the approach to curriculum design across S1-3 of the BGE as well as a review / consultation on increasing the flexibility of timetabling courses for S4 to allow more personalisation of learner pathways.

**A1** The Education Service, in partnership with Education Scotland and a peer colleague from another Local Authority, carried out a review of the Peer Review model in February 2025. As well as this, Education Scotland looked at the Peer Review model during their visit to Inverclyde in October 2024 as part of the National Thematic into how Local Authority Education Services support school improvement.

Overall, during both processes, there was overwhelming support for the Peer Review process and all that it has brought to the improvements in outcomes for establishments, in the widest sense.

*In "session 2022/23, Inverclyde Council introduced 'Peer Review' as a new process to support self-evaluation for school improvement. The three-year cycle is an intensive review of school provision which involves headteachers, depute headteachers and local authority officers. This approach is helpful in self-evaluation and improvement planning. School leaders are highly appreciative of the impact of undertaking reviews or being reviewed. The reviews support a detailed analysis and evaluation of their performance against a range of How good is our school? 4<sup>th</sup> edition (HGIOS4) quality indicators (QIs). This supports the rigour and robustness of their self-evaluation processes.*

*There is also evidence that staff undertaking reviews bring more effective practice and improvements back to their own schools. Schools can request a more detailed peer review of specific QIs as part of the second or third year of their 'Peer Review' cycle. These have supported specific changes to support learners, for example in actions around wellbeing, equality and inclusion. Early indications are that there has been a low uptake of this more detailed follow-up 'Peer Review' approach.*

**Quotes from Education Scotland report from visit during National Thematic inspection**

What has been identified is the need to review the overall Framework for Improvement document, which has been in place since 2022/23, in light of both the recommendations of the overall National Thematic report, as well as the work done below in relation to A3 below. There may not need to be the same frequency of formal Peer Review for all establishments going forwards, as more peer related approaches to ongoing quality assurance work is built into the framework, and establishments maintain high levels of performance.

The outcomes of the Peer Reviews continue to be validated by formal scrutiny from both Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate. The table below seeks to outline the overall performance of Inverclyde Education establishments vs the national picture. What this demonstrates is that the overall performance of Inverclyde's education establishments is significantly better than the national picture when it comes to evaluations against the 4 key Quality indicator (QIs) of good or better.

#### **QI evaluations – good or better**

<b>Quality Indicators from HGIOS 4</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.2</b>
Early Years (Inverclyde)	97%	97%	97%	97%
Early Years (National Avg)	64%	65%	78%	68%
Primary (Inverclyde)	96%	96%	92%	92%
Primary (National Avg)	65%	65%	72%	64%
Secondary (Inverclyde)	100%	100%	83%	100%
Secondary (National Avg)	59%	59%	61%	63%

*\*Inverclyde data based on all establishment Standards and Quality Reports (SQR) 23/24, Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland inspections 2017-24 and all Peer Review validations 2022 to date.*

*\*National Avg is all Education Scotland inspection outcomes 2017 – 24.*

**A2** Over the last few months the service has embarked on work in partnership with three other local authority Education Services, also known as a QUAD, which is a new approach that has been established by the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), in partnership with Education Scotland. The outcome of some initial work to share an overall summary of each Education Service's evaluation against a new framework called "How good

is our education authority? has been the establishment of a working group to continue to share practice between the four authorities, the focus being on improvement frameworks. This will provide our service with the chance to compare and benchmark our evolving framework with others, as well as share practice and consider different approaches.

- A3** During session 2024/25 a series of one-day courses focussing on each of the key QIs from HQIOS4 used during inspection has been delivered to support school leaders to take a deeper dive into each QI and begin to collate a summary of their self-evaluation evidence against each. During the first of these days, the newly devised support for inspection pack was also launched.

During each session a keynote was delivered both by experienced leaders from our own schools as well as those from other authorities, particularly where excellence has been achieved and validated through external inspection.

These sessions have been highly evaluated by those who took part, and we have seen the impact of them in subsequent presentations and leaders' approaches to peer reviews and inspections. A "Preparing for inspection" pack has been collated and launched to leaders. Again, this has been well received with leaders reporting that this has been invaluable when preparing for inspection. As in A1, we maintain a very strong performance picture at external inspection over time.

- A4** Curriculum work has been ongoing during 2024/25, however a strategic resource has not been produced due to the need to ensure alignment with our approach to the ongoing national cycle of curriculum review that is under way, as well as a wide range of resource that has been published in relation to this. Instead, it has been decided that a new Curriculum Oversight Board will be established 2025/26 to ensure that there is clear strategic oversight of the range of curriculum development work, which is ongoing, both at establishment and increasingly at cluster level.

In relation to the tracking of wider achievements we have engaged with the development of the "My profile" toolkit. This is being developed by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) in partnership with Education Scotland. The profiling tool will allow young people to upload and showcase their achievements, skills, qualifications and awards, hobbies, learning and more. These can be tagged against appropriate metaskills. As the system is developed young people will be able to link to their school and allow the school to track progress and use this as part of learner conversation and for transition planning. Currently, in Inverclyde, Head Teachers have been shown a demonstration of the system and the plans for the future. Currently the majority of schools in Inverclyde use Gen+, which includes a profiling tool and so no school has begun to use the SDS My Profile Tool. The West Partnership are also exploring using "My Profile" as part of the possible development of the Scottish Diploma of Achievement and the Education Officer team are part of the discussions around this.

- A5** Initial work is underway to review the approach to curriculum design across S1-3 of the BGE. Six senior secondary leaders have completed the Education Scotland Curriculum Innovation course and a further three are beginning this over the 2025/26 session. This is enabling our clusters to develop curriculum transition between the sectors. During the February 2025 INSET, approximately 70 Principal Teacher Curriculum from secondary and special schools attended a session with Education Services and Education Scotland to begin to discuss what the BGE in secondary should look like in the future and gather what would be needed to support staff to innovate the curriculum. As a result of this session, schools have identified

staff who will undertake small tests of change over the session 2025/26, with planning for projects beginning in the summer term of 2024/25.

A consultation was undertaken during the period October – December 2024, to ask stakeholders on their views of the timetabling of courses in the senior phase. The consultation highlighted that almost all stakeholders agreed that a more flexible approach to timetabling was needed to meet the needs of learners. This included allowing learners to select up to seven courses in S4 to allow a wider range of courses to be selected. At the same time, there would be flexibility to allow learners in S4-6 to undertake work based and vocational learning that would mean that the number of courses selected to study in school could be reduced to accommodate this. The changes to the timetable structure for senior phase will be implemented in session 2025/26.

**A6** Continue to roll out the Literacy Strategy, with a focus on the highly effective teaching of listening, talking and writing.

**A7** Revise the existing numeracy strategy in line with national developments inc the outcome of the national thematic inspection.

**A8** Further develop Inverclyde's strategy for play pedagogy beyond P2.

**A9** Continue to develop the data strategy by:

- Implementing the Early years dashboard
- Implementing the S1-3 BGE and Senior Phase trackers

**A6** Very good progress continues to be made regarding the roll out of the Inverclyde Literacy Strategy and Framework. The Listening and Talking aspect of the Literacy Framework was completed and launched in term 4 of session 2023/24 to Senior Leaders in Early Years establishments. The final aspect of the Literacy Framework, focusing on the teaching of Writing, was completed early in session 2024/25 and launched at the October 2024 in-service day to 450 early years practitioners. Very positive feedback was received indicating that the practitioners valued the resource and looked forward to interacting with it to improve their practice. The completed Literacy Framework was presented to Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) and also the Parent Council Chairs in term 1 of session 2024/25.

Strategic Pedagogical Leads (SPLs) facilitated the setup of Inverclyde's Literacy Network following on from the launch of the completed Literacy Framework. Representatives from almost all primary schools and all secondary English Principal Teachers were provided with the opportunity to get together to share ideas, seek support and advice around implementing the Literacy Framework effectively, share best practice and keep on top of current research to provide feed-back to colleagues within their school, ensuring a consistent approach across the authority. The Literacy Network has been very well received, and it is hoped that it continues to be a sustainable model.

To ensure the Literacy Framework remained a key focus for delivering high quality learning, teaching and assessment, further Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) events were arranged to reach the maximum number of practitioners.

Literacy Roadshows were organised across all six cluster areas, where staff were invited to attend and participate in quality CLPL, supporting practitioners to engage with the Literacy Framework, leading to a better understanding of how to teach literacy across all the organisers. Feedback from the attendees was very positive, commenting on the clarity of presentation, the usefulness of the information shared and that they would use it as CLPL to improve their own pedagogy and the pedagogy of their colleagues.

Further CLPL opportunities were also planned for individual establishments as well as an event targeted at Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs) which saw 124 PSAs attend.

The Literacy Framework has built in sustainability. Posters with QR codes linked directly to the Literacy Framework are in every classroom and high quality CLPL is available for staff to access at any time via the Pedagogy and Support for Equity (PASE) Blog.

Since launching the framework, the ACEL Reading data improved by 1% from June 2023 (82.8%) to June 2024 (83.8%), with quintile one Reading increased by 3.7% from June 2023 (75.4%) to June 2024 (79.1%). ACEL quintile one Writing increased by 3.6% from June 2023 (69.1%) to June 2024 (72.7%)

- A7** The Strategic Numeracy and Maths group have continued to meet regularly across the session to lead a review of the strategy. There was engagement from Education Officers, early years, primary and secondary colleagues in the consultation process where staff came together for two face-to-face meetings to update of the aims of the strategy and the support offer, and to feedback on what was presently working and what could improve.

Advice and feedback were also sought from Education Scotland, Attainment Challenge team, Community Learning and Development, STEM Development Officer and Play Associates. Their input supported further improvements to the Strategy. Time was also dedicated to aligning the refreshed strategy with national developments and research from National Response to Improving Mathematics (NRIM), the National Thematic review, Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and Curriculum Improvement Cycle (CIC).

The strategy is now in its final refreshed form and will be launched in May 2025. To support engagement classroom/ playroom QR posters have been created to provide practitioners with a direct link to the strategy and a recorded presentation has been prepared to aid a wider roll out to all staff within establishments across Inverclyde.

The numeracy CLPL offer continues to support the aim of achieving excellence and equity in all our educational establishments.

Officers and practitioners continued to attend National Numeracy and Maths networks, applying learning to support local networks such as Champions, Transitions and Principal Teachers.

The Principal Teacher secondary network has been reestablished to facilitate closer working between middle leaders where practice is shared, and local and national updates are discussed.

Our network of Numeracy and Maths Champions has continued to grow and develop attracting colleagues from across all sectors. We worked together to support practitioners to achieve the aims and improvement outcomes of our Numeracy strategy and provided a sustainable and consistent approach to ensuring improvements in numeracy and maths. Champions shared that the network:

- Enhanced professional dialogue by Providing practical advice and information, enabling active engagement in discussions and sharing of best practices with colleagues across the authority.
- Developed knowledge of new strategies by facilitating the exchange of innovative approaches for supporting numeracy and maths development, leading to the adoption of techniques like numberless word problems and slow reveal graphs.
- Aided personal growth as ongoing dialogue and exposure to new concepts further developed Champions professionally and enhanced their pedagogy.

The service contributed to the West Partnership Numeracy and Maths Conference, sharing our work around P7 to S1 transitions. We saw our highest ever sign up from Inverclyde practitioners with 30 committing to engage with the professional learning offer. The majority of participants who completed an evaluation shared that the information provided was useful and that the sessions would impact on their practice.

**A8** A central focus this year has been the sustained engagement with practitioners through a structured series of '*Improving Our Play*' sessions, aimed at embedding play pedagogy into daily practice and extending its application beyond P2. These sessions encompassed key themes such as theory of play, the creation and enhancement of high-quality learning environments, assessment and planning methodologies, and the sharing of effective practice. These sessions successfully fostered a culture of collegiate collaboration and professional dialogue across a range of settings.

The sessions were well attended by practitioners at various stages, and participant feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Staff have consistently reported that the sessions have been valuable in enhancing their understanding and implementation of play-based approaches.

The development and dissemination of supporting resources have continued, with a growing resource available through the PACE website. This centralised platform provides practitioners with easy access to a comprehensive suite of materials, which staff have indicated is beneficial for refining and sustaining their play-based practice.

Play Associates (Head teachers with lead responsibility for play across the authority) and Education Officers have maintained ongoing support for Heads of Establishments, with guidance provided as required. In addition, the continued use of a self-evaluation framework has proven to be an effective tool in supporting reflective practice and strategic planning in relation to play.

While considerable progress has been made, further work is required to ensure a consistent and coherent approach to play pedagogy across all establishments. The reinstatement of the Play Strategy Group will be instrumental in achieving this goal. It will provide strategic direction, support the planning and monitoring of progress, and help ensure greater consistency in the implementation of play-based approaches across all settings.

**A9** Good progress continues to be made in further developing the data strategy in line with the needs of both the educational establishments and the local authority. The Attainment Challenge Project Lead and the newly appointed Data Lead discussed ways to improve the strategy. Following on from these discussions, adaptations to how data is inputted, presented, stored and shared with colleagues resulted in an improved offer.

Data input has moved from a mainly manual process to an automated process improving the accuracy of the data and becoming more time efficient. Data storage has also improved ensuring data files are cleansed and safe from corruption.

To support establishments in the accuracy of teacher professional judgments around pupil progress, an improved cleansing process has resulted in attainment data being more reliable. This has led to improved confidence in the accuracy of the data we present.

To support the implementation of the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Dashboard, an Early Level Tracking Tool was introduced across all ELC establishments in August 2025. This tool provides a consistent and structured approach for tracking the development and learning of children aged 3 to 5. Children's progress is recorded through Learning Journals, enabling staff to identify areas where individual children require continued support.

To support implementation, comprehensive training was delivered to all Early Years senior leadership teams. Additionally, ongoing support has been embedded through the monthly Deputes Forum, which has served as a platform for professional dialogue, troubleshooting, and sharing implementation strategies. This regular engagement has been instrumental in embedding the tool effectively across settings.

A key component of this work has also been the intentional development of the ELC environment to better support high-quality planning for children's development and learning. An open event hosted at Larkfield ELC in February 2025 exemplified this focus. The event, which was well attended, fostered a culture of collaboration and the sharing of good practice across establishments.

While we have been unable to progress further with the ELC dashboard due to external delays, we have made significant progress in ensuring a consistent approach to tracking is in place across all establishments. To further support transitions and continuity in planning, a newly developed transition record will be introduced in May 2025. This document aligns with the tracking tool and will provide robust data across all Inverclyde ELC settings. It is anticipated that this data will not only evidence progress but also inform future iterations of the tracking tool and planning processes.

Although the development of the ELC dashboard has been delayed, consistent recording on Learning Journals and on the transition record, represents a critical step forward. It will provide a comprehensive overview of children's progress across the Early Level and support more informed transition discussions between ELC and P1 staff. This information will feed into self-evaluation and planning processes at both establishment and authority levels.

An evaluation was conducted to assess the use and impact of the Early Level Tracking Tool across ELC establishments. Key findings included:

- all respondents reported using the tracking tool regularly (daily, weekly, or monthly).
- majority felt confident or very confident using the tool and almost all felt confident using Learning Journals and using the tracking tool in their planning processes.
- majority felt it had positively impacted how children's progress is monitored and reported changes in how they plan for children's learning as a result.
- majority felt more confident discussing children's development with parents and also reported parents better understood their child's developmental journey.

Building on current progress, the next phase will focus on the development of planning and tracking tools tailored to the needs of younger children and those with ASN. These tools will further strengthen the delivery of targeted, responsive support and help ensure all children's developmental needs are met effectively.

In addition, further work is required to strengthen parental engagement. Supporting parents to better understand and be actively involved in their child's learning journey remains a key priority. Enhancing communication and providing accessible information will be central to fostering meaningful home to nursery partnerships.

The data generated from these new tools will also inform wider ELC service planning, contributing to more inclusive and strategic decision making across the sector.

Good progress has been made with secondary establishments using of the BGE and Senior Phase dashboards increasing senior managers confidence in using the toolkit to interrogate their data.

Some progress has been made in agreeing tracking periods to gather attainment data in the BGE and Senior Phase, however further work is required to improve this process. The Data Lead met with senior managers of secondary establishments to identify current issues, particularly around the inclusion of awards, achievements and tariff points. Enhancements of the BGE tracker were agreed following this meeting and will be worked on to improve the tracking process for session 2025/26.

**A10** Begin the process to review the current Digital Strategy, including the ongoing plan to refresh devices in education establishments.

**A11** Develop a framework for training staff to ensure that all have a minimum digital skills level, with the ability to advance this further and further support this by re-establishing the Digital Champions Network.

**A10** The current digital strategy will end in June 2026. Work has begun, in partnership with IT Services, to establish the future infrastructure in Education Establishments to deliver an updated strategy for the next five years. Underpinning the new digital strategy will be a move to Windows 11 and the complete roll out of the new Education Microsoft 365 tenancy. An action plan for these key infrastructure improvements will be in place in August 2025, with completion by June 2026 to enable the new digital strategy to be implemented. Over the 2024/25 session over 500 devices were upgraded. Bandwidth was increased in all establishments to improve connectivity allowed staff and pupils to make better use of digital tools to integrate into learning and teaching.

**A11** The Digital Champions network has met three times over the course of 2024/25 and identified key areas where support will be best targeted – this includes use of Microsoft tools, use of Promethean ActivPanels and applications that will support all learners to access the curriculum. One-page leaflets have highlighted available applications, how they can be used and training that staff can access. A training framework has been developed and will be launched in August 2026 to support new staff to the local authority and provide a pathway for staff who wish to further develop their use of IT to support learning and teaching.



### **Raise Aspirations in Science Education project (RAiSE)**

Inverclyde has been involved in the RAiSE (Raising Aspirations in Science Education) programme with Education Scotland since August 2023, with the project set to conclude in June 2025. The initiative aims to enhance STEM education across the region. Over the 2024/25 session a number of activities have taken place and key highlights are detailed below.

All 20 primary schools, libraries, and community organisations received class kits of Makedo and Sphero Indi, supported by comprehensive professional learning sessions. A community STEM Club was also established in collaboration with Morton in The Community.

A robust professional learning programme was delivered, offering monthly sessions to build staff capacity for engaging STEM lessons. Positive feedback from the 2024 P7-S1 STEM Transition led to the planning of a similar programme for 2025, connecting learners with industry experts.

Planning for the 2025 Inverclyde STEM Festival is underway, incorporating feedback to include more community and youth groups. The festival aims to inspire creativity and hands-on learning across schools and the community. The first STEM Festival was held in June 2024.

Strong partnerships were established with secondary schools, West College Scotland, University of the West of Scotland, STEM Ambassadors, and local businesses. These collaborations facilitated STEM transition events, workshops, and the Inverclyde STEM Festival, providing learners with real-life, contextualised learning opportunities linked to STEM careers. The coordinated approach to STEM education has raised the profile of STEM subjects and careers in schools and the community.

### **Education Scotland STEM Nation Award**

We were delighted to learn in April 2025 that Kilmacolm Primary School in Inverclyde Council had achieved a full STEM Nation Award.

The sciences, technologies, engineering and mathematics (STEM) Nation Award celebrates, promotes and builds on effective practice in STEM education across Scotland. The Government strategy sets out a vision of Scotland as a world-leading STEM nation with a highly-educated and skilled population equipped with the STEM skills, knowledge and capability required to adapt and thrive in a rapidly-changing world.

In order to achieve the full STEM Nation Award settings must gather and submit evidence demonstrating Leadership in STEM, STEM family and community learning, employability and STEM partnership working, STEM curriculum and learner pathways, and equity and equality in STEM. After achieving all five elements, settings upload their STEM action plan for review by Education Scotland and a discussion is then held to explore this in more depth.

Kilmacolm Primary School was praised for their strategic approach to STEM development which focussed on providing leadership opportunities for pupils, families and practitioners in an effort to raise STEM capital across the community. Staff at Kilmacolm Primary School have worked collaboratively within the setting, across the local authority and with a number of partners to undertake professional learning, share good practice and develop a range of enriching STEM experiences for learners and their families.

Kilmacolm Primary School continue to engage families in STEM learning through STEM workshops, Science Week activities and STEM home learning. Pupils are empowered to lead family learning events which are well attended by families.

### **Inverclyde Music Service**

The Inverclyde schools' Instrumental Music Service (IMS) and Inverclyde's Youth Music Initiative (YMI) sit within Inverclyde Council's wider Cultural Services team. IMS Instructors work peripatetically across the schools' estate, providing musical tuition at primary and secondary level. The IMS is a real strength in Inverclyde with many successes on both the local and national stage. The service continues to grow – during the 2023/24 school year 1,488 pupils received lessons through the IMS. In addition, almost 400 young people participated in bands, orchestras and choirs coordinated by IMS Instructors, representing growth from the previous year.

Over the course of the year, the service delivered a series of highly successful concerts, including a sell-out Christmas Concert and the Annual Spring Gala Concert at Greenock Town Hall. These concerts each showcased a wide range of ensembles. In March, both the Junior and Senior String Orchestra pupils took part in the Lyle Kirk Church concert, performing for an appreciative audience.

Pupils from the music service also achieved strong results at the annual Inverclyde Music Festival, with participation by IMS learners at its highest level compared to previous years. At the 2024 Scottish Concert Band Festival the Junior Wind Orchestra received a Silver Plus award, while the Senior Wind Orchestra received a Gold Plus award at the same event.

Inverclyde's young musicians participated in the Young Scottish Musician of the Year competition for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, with 20 entrants to the local heat. With a high standard of play from all participants, competition was tough for progression to the National Final. Ultimately, an S6 pupil from St Stephen's High School went on to represent Inverclyde at the finals playing the flute. The finals were held at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, where he is now a student.

A growing offer through the IMS is pipes and drums tuition. During 23/24 the piping group grew in numbers, with additional financial support received from the Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust and the Beatrice Foundation. Steady progression of learners from chanter to pipes, and drum pads to drums, is laying a solid foundation for the continued formation of Inverclyde Schools Pipe Band.

Through the Creative Scotland-funded YMI project, music making opportunities were offered to all P5 pupils in the authority area, encouraging participation and building confidence. The YMI team also supported external activities and events, including the annual Galoshans Festival in Greenock.

Cumulatively, these accomplishments reflect the continued development and impact of the IMS as a key component of Inverclyde's cultural and educational offering.

**Next steps: Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.**

- A1** Implement a revised version of the Establishment Improvement Framework from August 2025, taking into account feedback and recommendations from the National Thematic inspection and work from the QUAD.

- A2** Embed the numeracy strategy across all settings and continue to grow our numeracy and maths support networks in order to provide consistency of approach and opportunities to share practice leading to improvements in learning and teaching and learner achievements.
- A3** Continue to promote the Literacy Framework and the PASE Blog, as well as carrying out an evaluation of the framework's impact since its launch.
- A4** Continue to improve and ensure the data strategy's sustainability by reviewing and identify possible alternative tools.
- A5** Continue to evolve and review authority tracking systems in place for both the BGE and Senior Phase.
- A6** Establish the Curriculum Oversight Board including membership, terms of reference and related work plan.
- A7** Re-introduce the Strategic Play Pedagogy group and evaluate the overall progress to date and identify next steps to further develop and embed active approaches to pedagogy.
- A8** Complete the review of the Digital Strategy ensuring a revised version is in place for implementation from August 2026

## B: Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged

**B1** Implement the SEF Plan for sessions 24/25 – 25/26: [Education Services in Inverclyde - Inverclyde Council](#)

**B2** Continue to track progress towards agreed Local Authority CORE and CORE+ Stretch Aims by supporting and challenging establishments to raise attainment, reduce the poverty related attainment gap, through analysis of data, improved professional judgements, target setting and improved learning and teaching, particularly for key equity groups.

**B3** To review the referral process for access to the Family Support Worker service (Bernardo's) to ensure timely interventions that meet children and family's needs.

**B4** Continue to work with partners on the development of the Early Interventions programme and the Intensive Family Support Hub as funded through the WFWF (Whole Family Wellbeing Fund)

**B1** Good progress has been made implementing the SEF Plan for the current session. An initial review of the Logic Model led to a more targeted plan with many previous outcomes already embedded.

A key change in moving towards a sustainable model was the move from Coaching and Modelling Officers (CMOs) to Strategic Pedagogical Leads (SPLs). This shift in focus has been effective in supporting establishments deliver their own coaching and modelling approach and also in delivering in-house quality CLPL using the Pedagogy and Support for equity (PASE) Framework.

SEF monthly meetings provide opportunities for establishments to engage in collaborative activities focusing on the progress towards stretch aims, raising attainment, particularly of quintile one children, and the effective use of the PEF to support improved outcomes for children and families impacted by poverty. Head Teachers have commented that this space for professional dialogue around equity is very valuable and provides opportunities for them to evaluate the impact of interventions.

The Project Lead effectively uses collated data to track the progress of most of the stretch aims allowing for this information to be shared with senior leaders. Further work is required to ensure that all stretch aims have effective tracking processes in place resulting in closing the poverty related attainment gap.

The Project Lead works closely with Education Officers in analysing and interrogating establishment attainment data providing opportunities for targeted support and challenge meetings to take place. This has led to a deeper understanding of the establishment context and the processes and interventions used to support improvements in attainment.

The CLD attainment programme was effectively implemented to support S1-3 pupils in gaining broader pathways towards accreditation, awards and achievements.

The Scottish Attainment Challenge funding was due to end in March 2026, however recent information from the Scottish Government has indicated that a further year will be added, meaning that it will end in its current form in March 2027. Although funding will continue for another year, no information has been supplied regarding the amount of funding being granted to the local authority.

To enable a smooth exit from the fund, initial exit plans have been amended to take account this additional funding. Through stakeholder engagement and data interrogation, evidence will continue to direct the pathway through to the end of the programme. The key aim of the exit strategy is to ensure that we continue to plan to use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap as stated in the *“Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress (March 2022).”*

The fund reducing year on year has resulted in a reduction in the capacity we have to target interventions to tackle the poverty related attainment gap. As such strategic planning to build a sustainable model continues to be the key approach.

- B2** Good progress has been made in tracking progress towards most of the agreed Local Authority Core and Core PLUS stretch aims. Ongoing work is taking place to improve tracking regarding BGE and Senior Phase progress toward the agreed stretch aims. The Project Lead and Data Lead continue to work closely with the Attainment Advisor, senior managers, all Head Teachers and partners to improve tracking systems that provide information on progress towards stretch aim.

Progress towards most stretch aims is being tracked at the agreed tracking periods throughout the session and updates provided at monthly Attainment Challenge Head Teachers Meetings and termly Governance meetings. Inverclyde’s Attainment Advisor also reports bi-annually to Education Scotland on progress made towards each stretch aim.

- B3** See A9.

- B4** An Early Intervention Hub has been established in parentship between staff from Education Services in line with the aims and objectives of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF). The Hub provides access to systemic family practice as well as Filial Family and Play Therapy. The WFWF also focuses on systemic changes as a result of which a significant amount of groundwork has been undertaken at a multi-agency level looking at the generation of a pilot Community Joint Support Team approach in session 2025-26. This will provide access to multi-agency support in respect of assessment and planning to meet need at the early intervention level.

<b>Next steps: Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged</b>
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- B1** Implement the SEF Plan for sessions 25/26 and create a plan for session 2026/27: [Education Services in Inverclyde - Inverclyde Council](#). As part of this agree an exit strategy from the attainment challenge programme with a focus on sustainability from June 2027.
- B2** Continue to track progress towards agreed Local Authority CORE and CORE+ Stretch Aims supported by full implementation of the BGE and Senior Phase Trackers.
- B3** Work with partners to evolve a revised family support offer and clear referral system, aligning the early intervention model from the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF), the

Family Link Workers as part of the Lomond View Academy offer and the reduced capacity of the Family Support service from within the Attainment Challenge.

**B4** Carry out a review of the Parental Engagement Strategy by June 2026.

## Evaluation of attainment in Inverclyde

### Curriculum for Excellence reported levels

The ACEL return collects data from all publicly funded schools and gathers information for all pupils in P1, P4, P7 and S3. The return measures national performance in aspects of literacy (i.e. reading, writing, listening and talking) and numeracy, and reports on the percentage of pupils who have achieved the expected level, based on teacher professional judgements relevant to their stage.

This table shows Inverclyde and national averages as of June 2024. Overall Inverclyde only lies below the national average in literacy & numeracy at P7. Otherwise, the Inverclyde performance matches or exceeds the national average.

#### *Attainment across the BGE (June 2024)*

	P1		P4		P7		P1,4,7 combined		S3	
Inverclyde	Inv	Nat	Inv	Nat	Inv	Nat	Inv	Nat	Inv	Nat
Reading	86	81	83	79	83	81	84	80	92	90
Writing	82	79	78	74	74	76	78	76	91	90
Listening & talking	91	87	92	87	90	88	91	87	92	91
Literacy	81	77	77	71	72	74	76	74	90	88
Numeracy	86	85	82	78	77	78	82	80	91	90

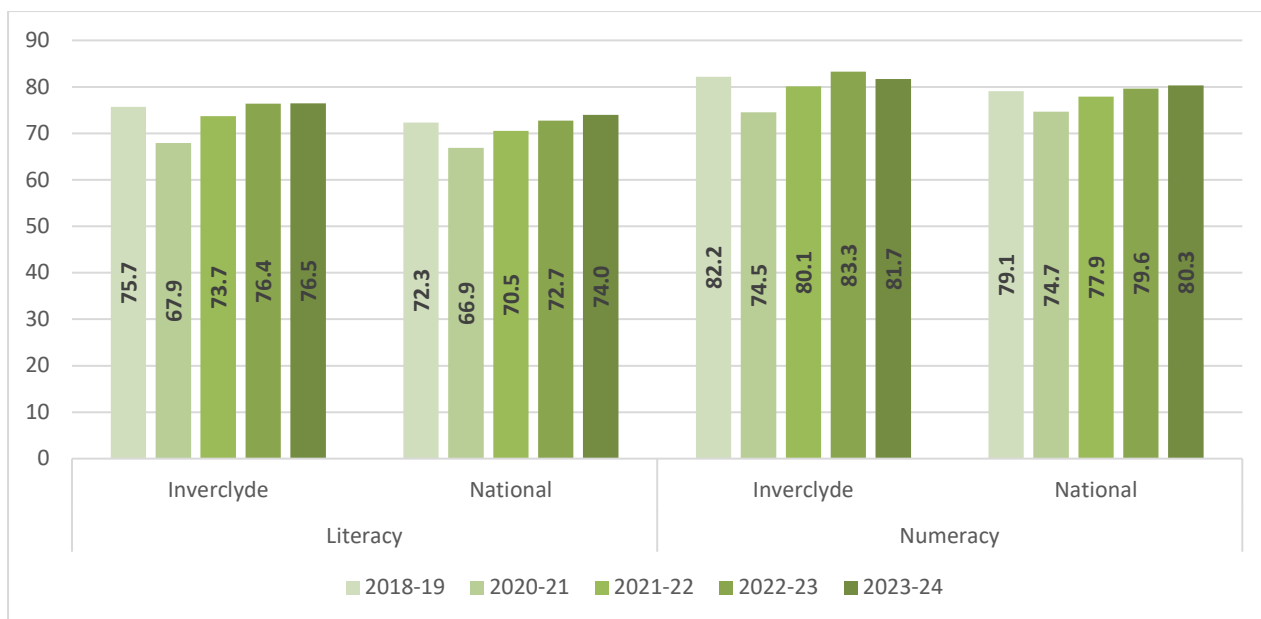
Source: *Scottish Government, 2024*

[Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence \(CfE\) Levels 2023-24 - gov.scot](#)

Below is a comparison of Literacy & Numeracy performance between Inverclyde and National across the years 2018-19 to 2023-24.

- Inverclyde consistently outperforms national averages in both literacy and numeracy.
- Numeracy scores remain higher than literacy across the years for both Inverclyde and national.
- 2020-21 shows a drop, likely due to external factors such as the pandemic, but performance recovers in subsequent years.
- Inverclyde sees stronger growth in literacy and numeracy post-2020-21, staying ahead of national trends.

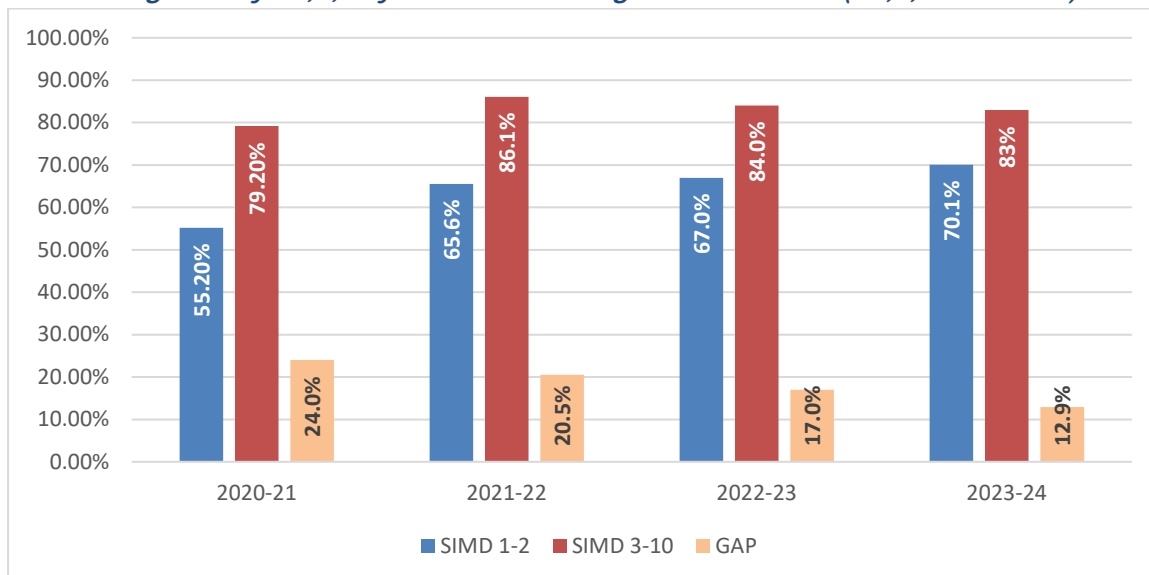
*Percentage of learners achieving expected levels in literacy and numeracy in P1, P4, and P7 combined*



**Source: Scottish Government, 2024** (Supporting documents - Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Levels 2023-24 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot))

In measuring the poverty-related attainment gap, the comparison nationally is drawn between SIMD deciles 1-2 and deciles 9-10. However, Inverclyde have a very small percentage of the school population living in quintile 5 (deciles 9-10), and therefore locally the measure often used is between deciles 1-2 and deciles 3-10. The chart below shows the proportion of P1, P4 and P7 pupils who achieved the expected levels in literacy overall and numeracy for pupils in SIMD 1-2 compared to SIMD 3-10.

**% achieving literacy P1,4,7 by SIMD Band change 20-21 to 23-24 (P1,4,7 combined)**



The chart above compares literacy achievement in SIMD 1-2 (most deprived areas) and SIMD 3-10 (least deprived areas) from 2020-21 to 2023-24, highlighting the attainment gap.

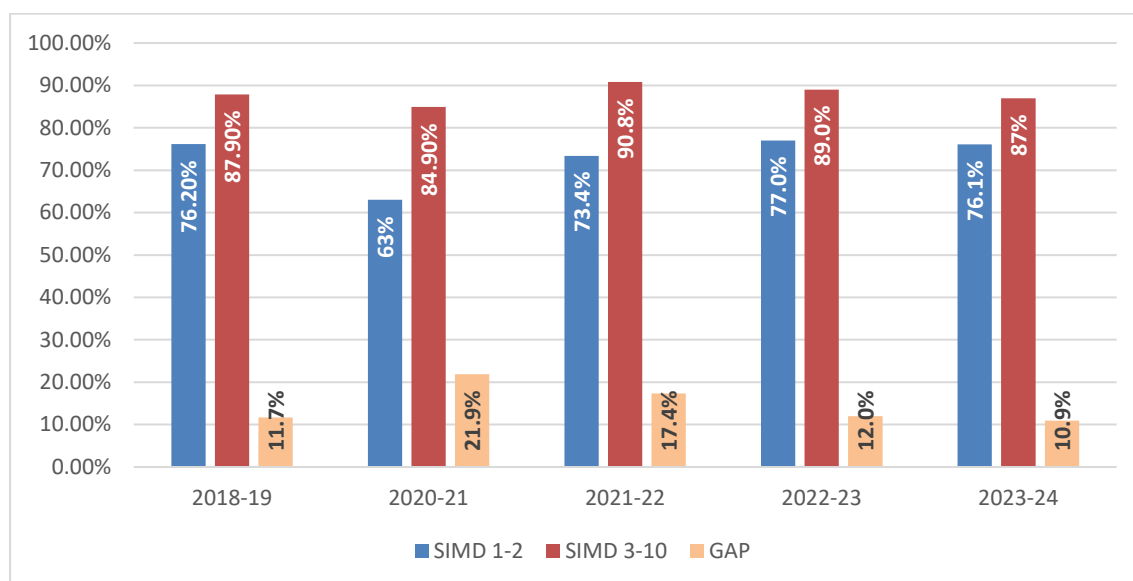
Literacy achievement in SIMD 1-2 has steadily increased from 55.2% in 2020-21 to 70.1% in 2023-24. As you can see the Gap is closing year on year, with the most recent year being lower than before the pandemic.



The chart below shows numeracy achievement between SIMD 1-2 (most deprived areas) and SIMD 3-10 (least deprived areas) over five years (2018-19 to 2023-24), highlighting the attainment gap.

Numeracy in 202-21 saw a significant drop (63%) compared to 2018-19 (76.2%), however the percentage steadily improved over the following years, reaching 76.1% in 2023-24, close to pre pandemic levels. The attainment gap has reached its lowest in five years.

*% achieving numeracy P1,4,7 by SIMD Band change 20-21 to 23-24 (P1,4,7 combined)*



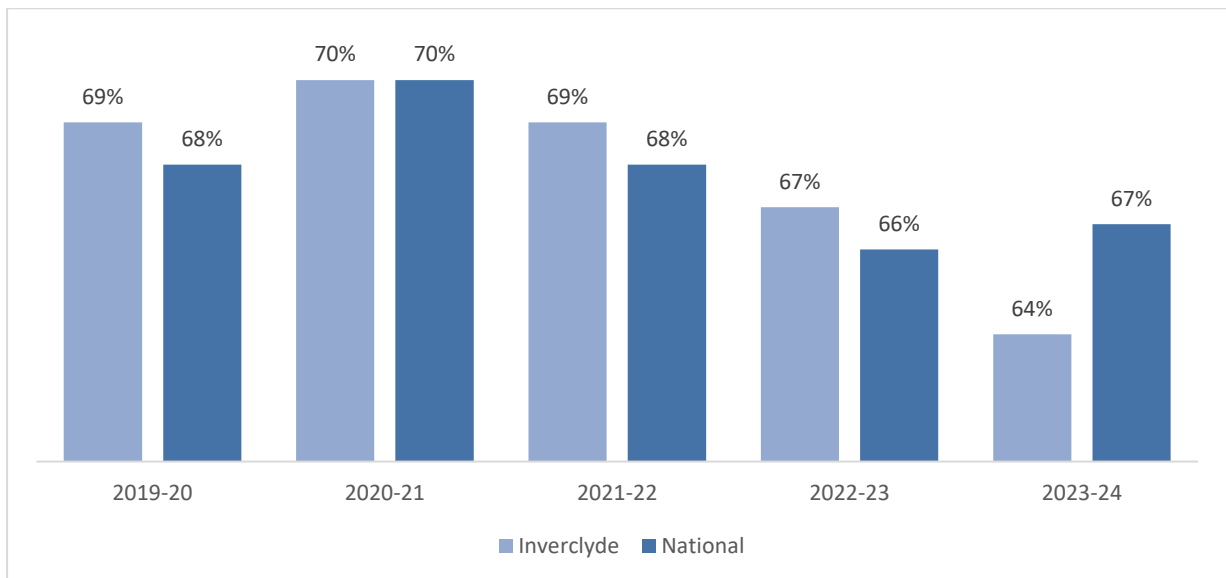
### **Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF): Awards at SCQF level 5 and 6**

The LGBF is a high-level benchmarking tool designed to support senior management teams and elected members to ask questions about key council services. The LGBF helps councils compare their performance against a suite of efficiency, output and outcome indicators that cover all areas of local government activity.

The following charts are a sample from the LGBF suite of indicators which relate to the achievement of awards at SCQF level 5 and 6 for senior phase pupils.

#### *Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at Level 5*

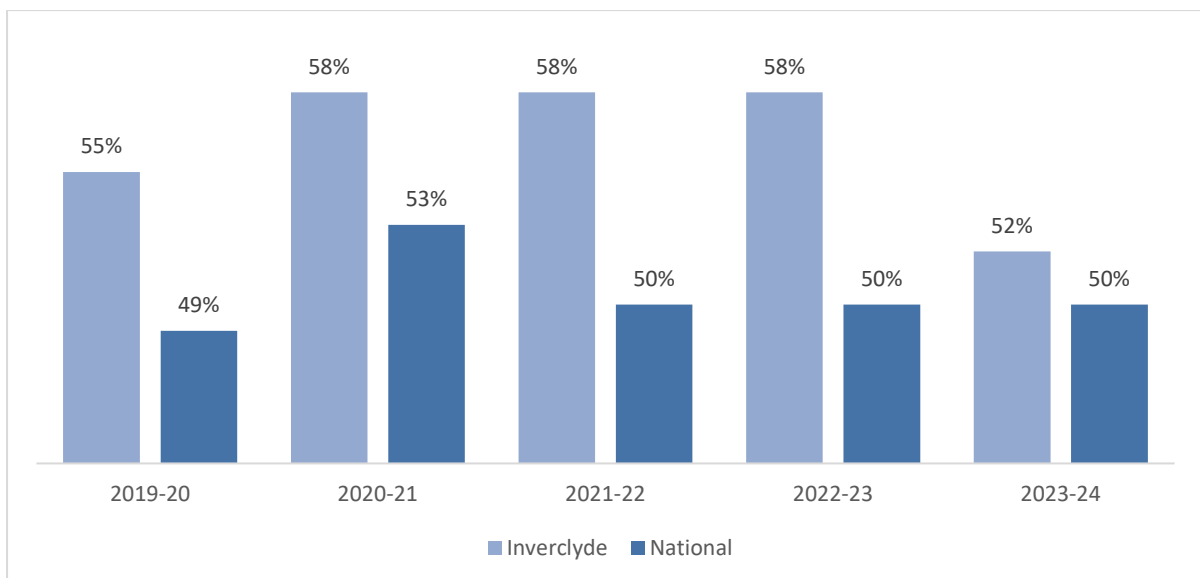
Inverclyde consistently tracked close to the national average from 2019-20 to 2022-23, but in 2023-24, Inverclyde saw a sharper decline to 64%, while the national rate remained steady at 67%, widening the gap.



Source: Improvement Service, 2024 ([Benchmarking](#) | [Benchmarking \(improvementservice.org.uk\)](#))

#### *Percentage of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5*

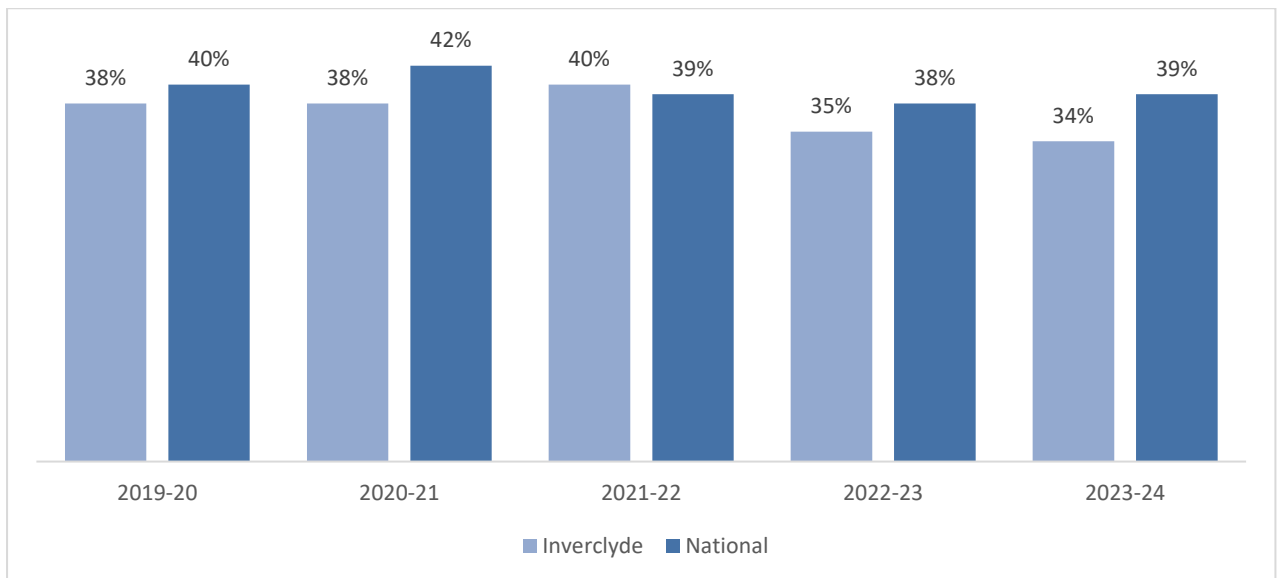
Inverclyde outperformed the national average from 2019-20 to 2022-23, peaking at 58%, before dropping to 52% in 2023-24 — now just slightly above the stable national rate of 50%.



Source: Improvement Service, 2024 ([Benchmarking](#) | [Benchmarking \(improvementservice.org.uk\)](#))

#### *Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at Level 6*

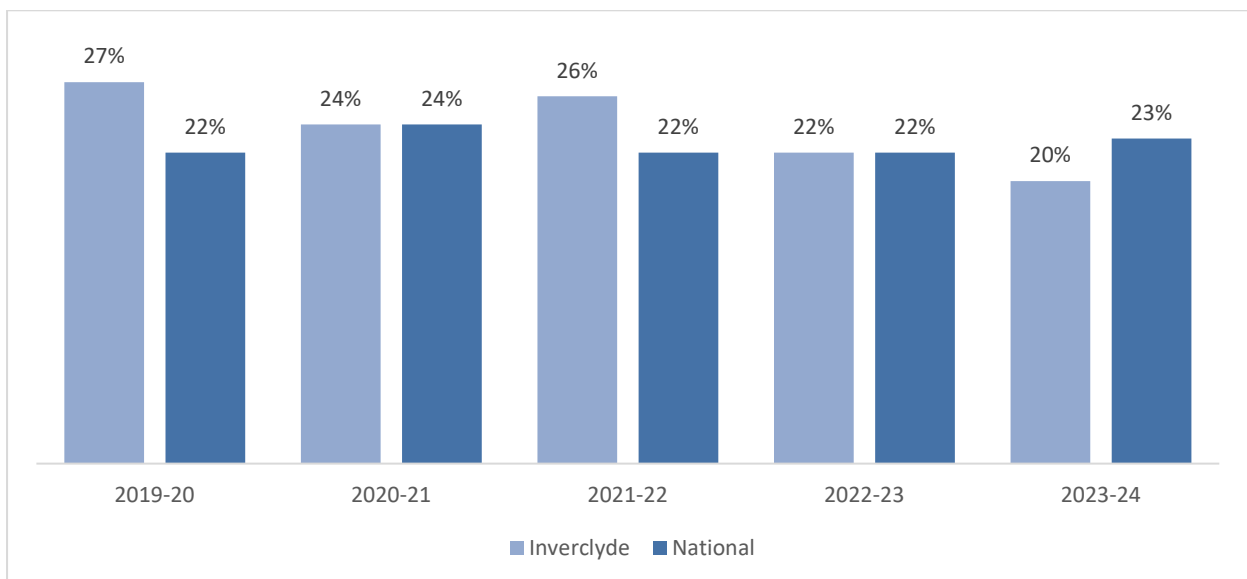
Inverclyde tracked closely with the national average from 2019-20 to 2021-22, but in the last two years, a gap has emerged, with national performance holding steady while Inverclyde declined to 34% in 2023-24.



Source: Improvement Service, 2024 ([Benchmarking | Benchmarking \(improvementservice.org.uk\)](#))

**Percentage of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6**

Inverclyde performed above the national average from 2019-20 to 2021-22, but has since seen a decline, falling below the national figure in 2023-24 for the first time in five years.



Source: Improvement Service, 2024 ([Benchmarking | Benchmarking \(improvementservice.org.uk\)](#))

## INSIGHT Comparison Leavers Data

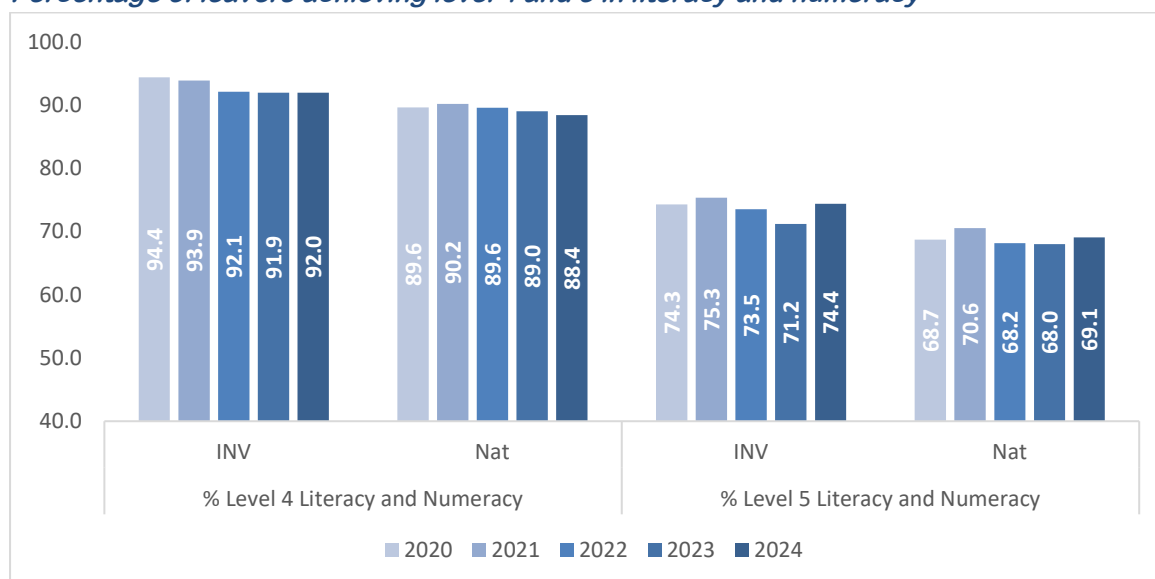
### National Benchmarking Measure: Literacy & Numeracy

This chart shows the overall performance in literacy and numeracy for all pupils in the leaver cohorts between 2019/20 and 2023/24. Overall, in literacy and numeracy, at SCQF level 4 Inverclyde improved its performance, whilst the national figure is still on a downward trend. Level 5 in Inverclyde consistently performs better than the National average.

- Inverclyde maintains a steady advantage over national figures at both Level 4 and Level 5.
- Despite minor fluctuations, Inverclyde has remained above the national average every year.

Inverclyde has consistently been above the national average in each of the past six years.

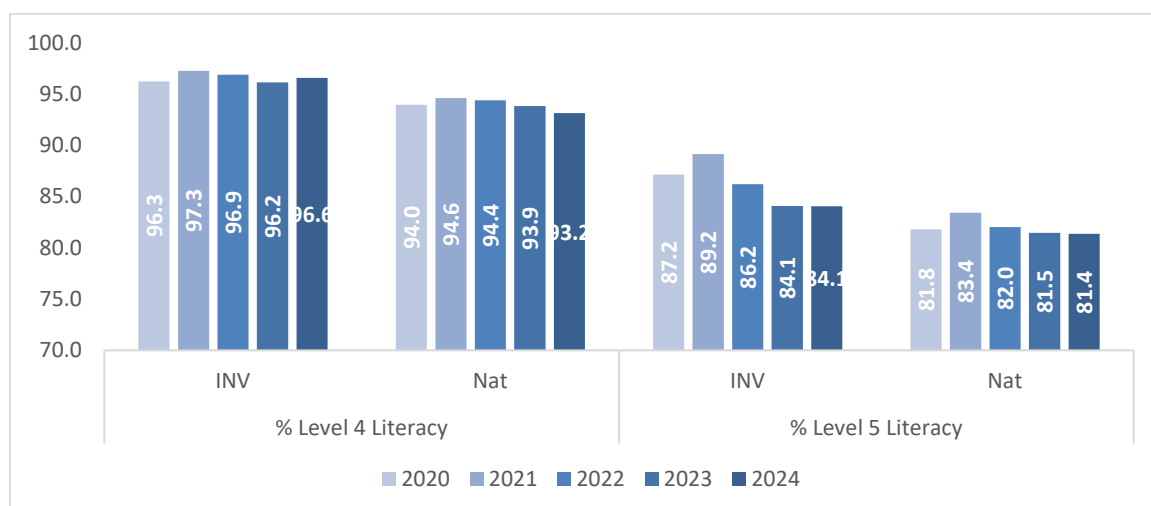
#### *Percentage of leavers achieving level 4 and 5 in literacy and numeracy*



*Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT:National Benchmarking Measure: Literacy and Numeracy)*

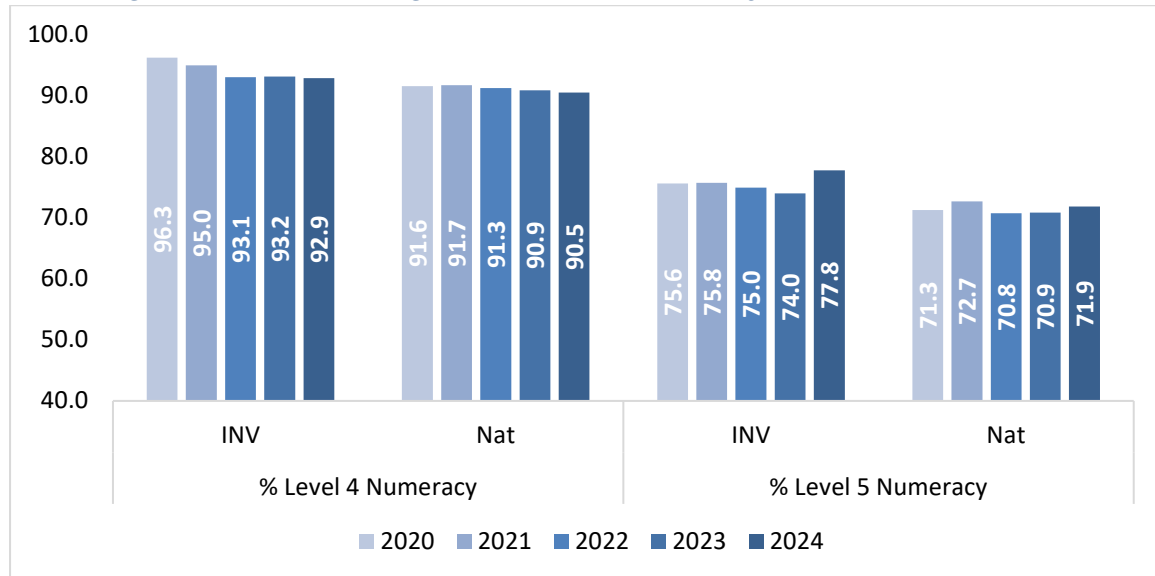
Viewing literacy and numeracy separately shows the same trend of consistently being above the national average.

#### *Percentage of leavers achieving level 4 and 5 in literacy*



*Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT:National Benchmarking Measure: Literacy and Numeracy)*

### Percentage of leavers achieving level 4 and 5 in Numeracy

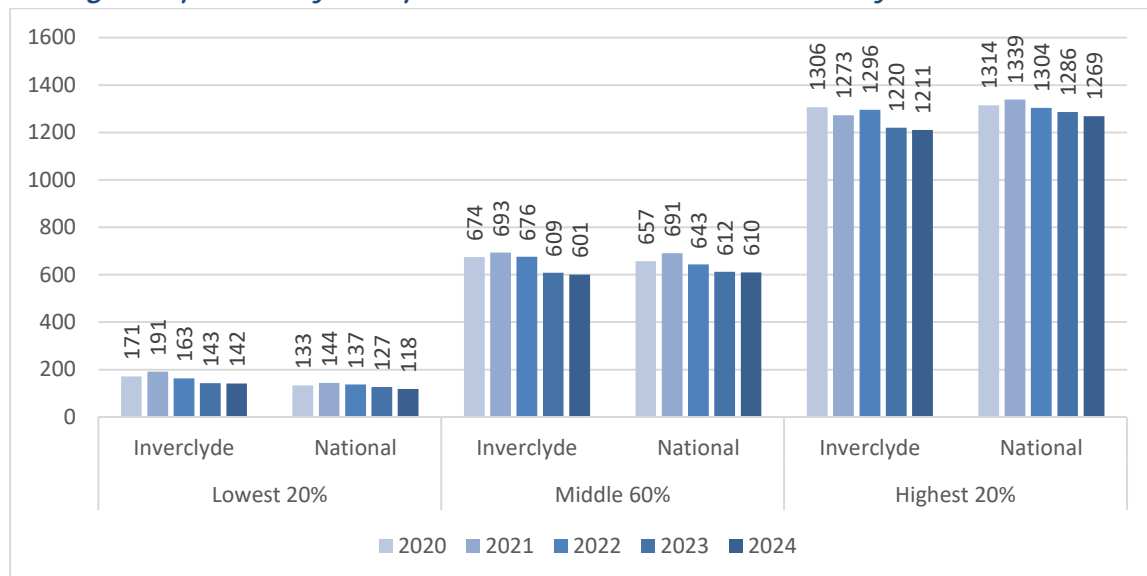


Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT:National Benchmarking Measure: Literacy and Numeracy)

### National Benchmarking Measure: Attainment for All

This graph shows the complementary tariff scores of leavers divided into the lowest, middle and highest percentage of attainment cohorts. The lowest attaining 20% are consistently above the national average. The middle 60% the national figure is slightly above Inverclyde for the last two years. The highest 20% Inverclyde have been below the national average in all but one of the last 5 years.

### Average complementary tariff points for leaver cohorts in selected years



Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT:National Benchmarking Measure: Improving Attainment for All)

## National Benchmarking Measure: Attainment versus Deprivation

This national measure looks at the average total tariff score of school leavers by SIMD. The SIMD enables schools to map their performance against the social context in which they operate. The table below shows the total tariff scores of leavers against their deprivation area for 2023/24. SIMD 1 being the most deprived and SIMD 10 being the least.

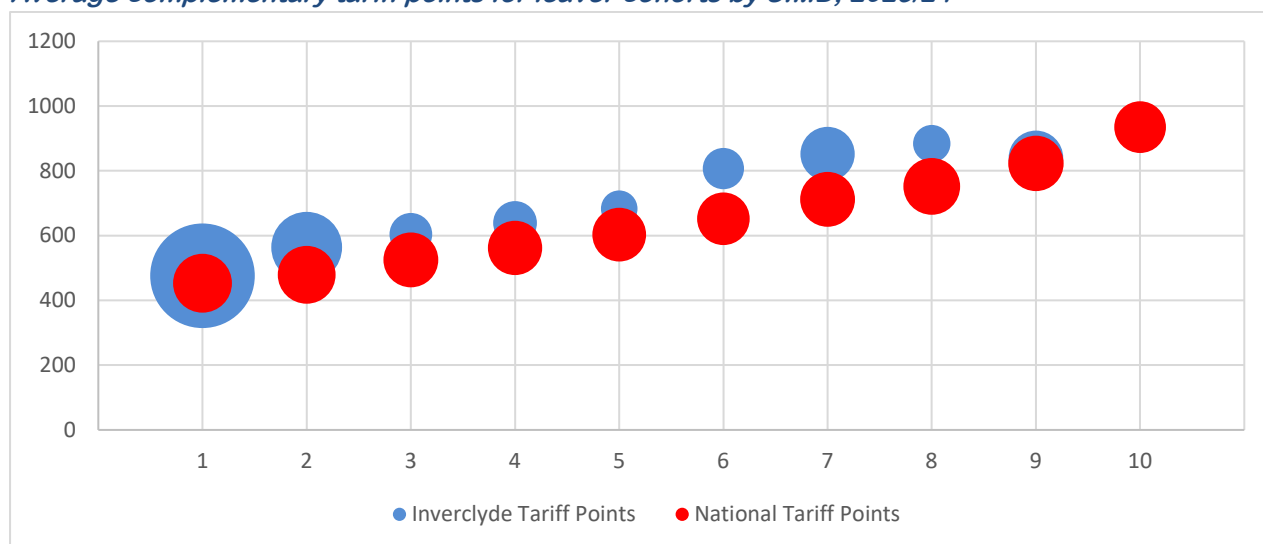
Inverclyde consistently outperforms the national average in tariff points across all 9 of the 10 SIMD deciles. Inverclyde's student population is more heavily concentrated in lower SIMD deciles than the national average, but students in these groups achieve higher tariff points than their national counterparts.

*Average complementary tariff points for leaver cohorts by SIMD, 2022/23*

SIMD Decile		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Inverclyde	Average Tariff Points	476	564	604	639	683	807	852	884	840	886
	% of cohort	36.0%	16.5%	6.0%	6.3%	4.4%	5.6%	9.7%	4.6%	9.8%	1.2%
National	Average Tariff Points	453	479	525	562	603	652	712	752	823	935
	cohort	11.4%	11.0%	9.9%	9.7%	9.5%	9.1%	9.9%	10.6%	10.1%	8.8%

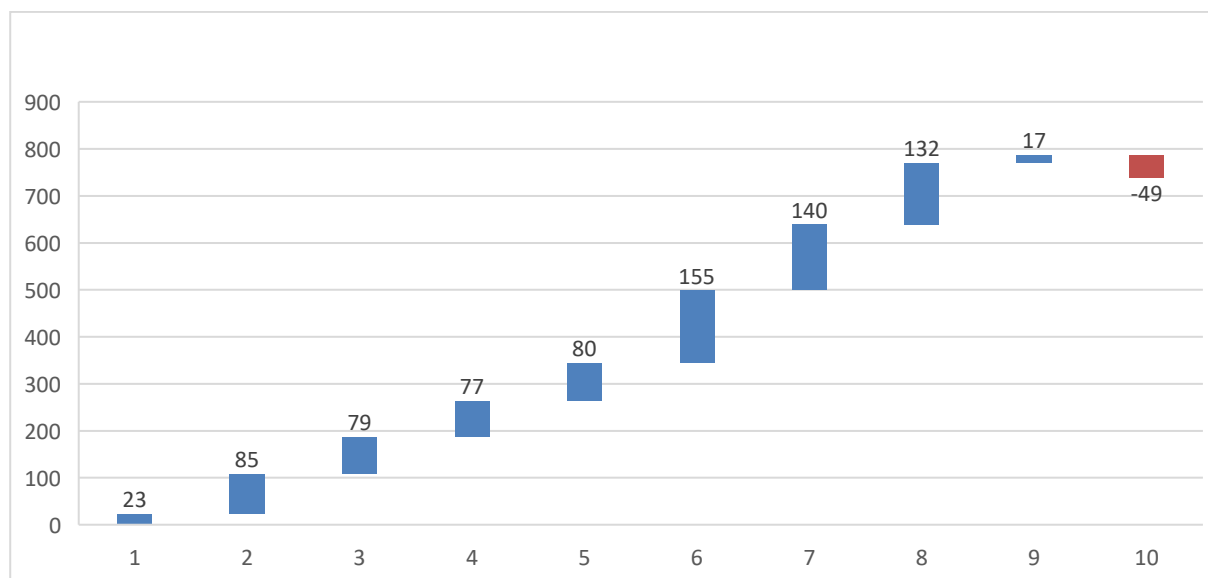
In the chart below the size of the bubble is proportionate to the percentage of individuals in each SIMD decile. It shows that performance in SIMD 6 and 8 was significantly greater than the national establishment. The next chart shows the point gap between Inverclyde and the national average.

*Average complementary tariff points for leaver cohorts by SIMD, 2023/24*



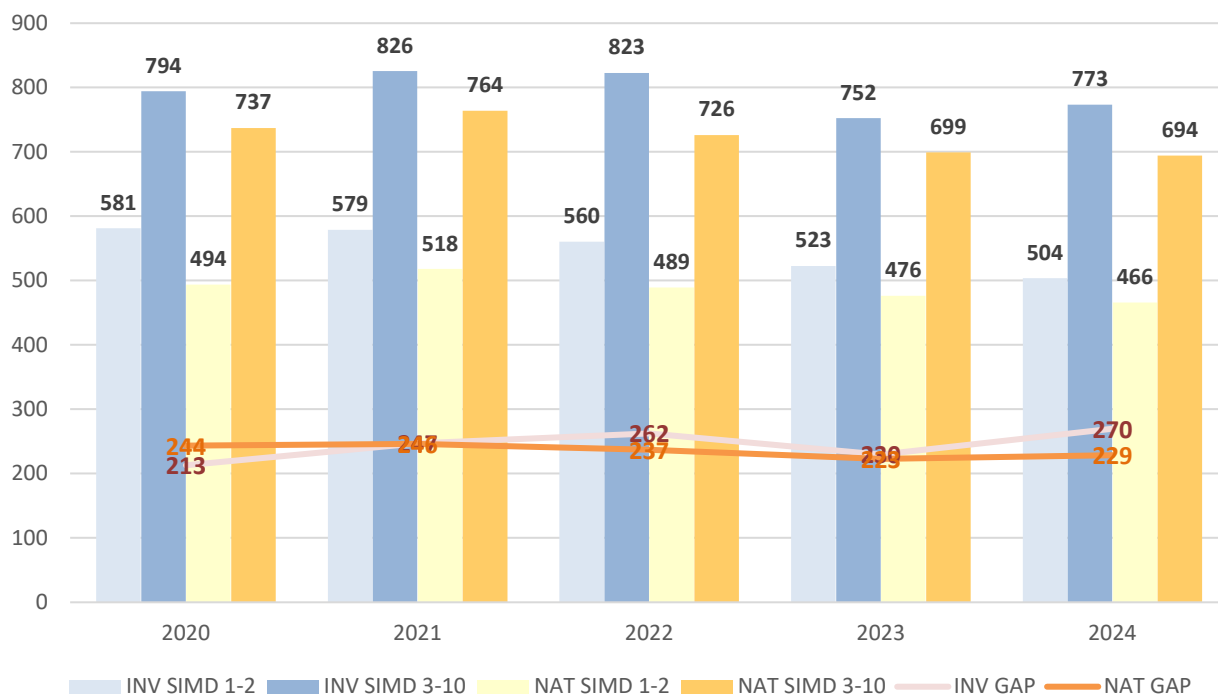
Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT:National Benchmarking Measure: Attainment versus Deprivation)

### Average complementary tariff point gap between Inverclyde and national at each SIMD decile



The charts below groups SIMD pupils into two bands of deciles, 1-2 and 3-10, to allow the measurement of the SIMD attainment gap. Inverclyde's SIMD 1-2 group has declined from 581 in 2020 to 504 in 2024. The national SIMD 1-2 group has also declined from 494 in 2020 to 466 in 2024. Both Inverclyde and National scores are decreasing, but Inverclyde remains consistently higher than the national average.

### Attainment gap by average complementary tariff points by SIMD local banding, 2019/20 to 2023/24



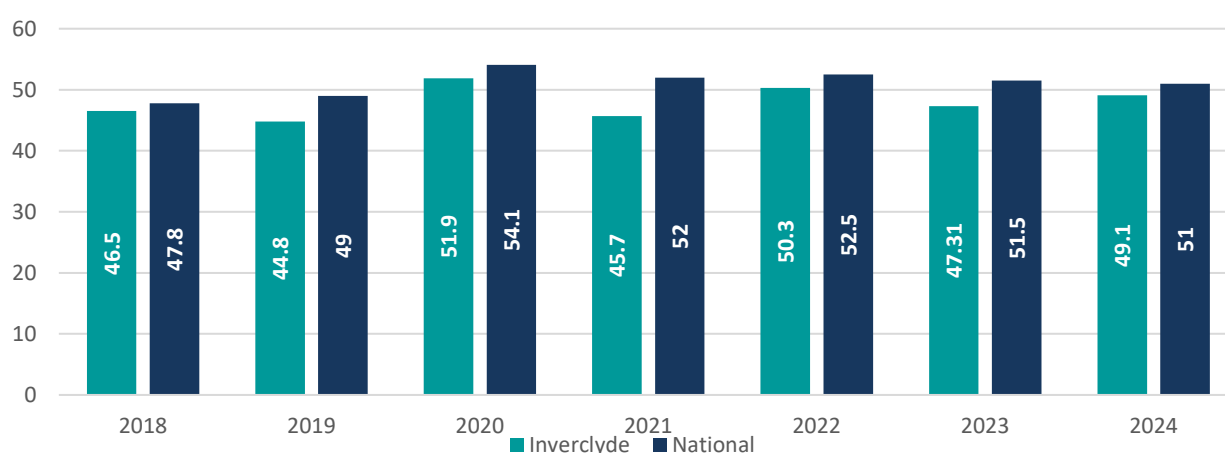
Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT:National Benchmarking Measure: Attainment versus Deprivation)

## **Breadth and Depth: All Candidates**

The charts below show our performance at in key measures in the percentage of pupils gaining awards at SQA national at SCQF levels 5, 6 and 7. Data from 2020 through to 2022 cannot be used for direct comparison with previous years to show improved performance due to the different awarding model that were used over this period.

The national performance has been consistently higher than Inverclyde across all years. National performance peaked in 2020 (54.1%) and has since shown a gradual decline to 51% in 2024. Inverclyde's performance has fluctuated more than the national trend. It peaked in 2020 at 51.9%, then declined significantly in 2021 (45.7%) before recovering to 49.1% in 2024.

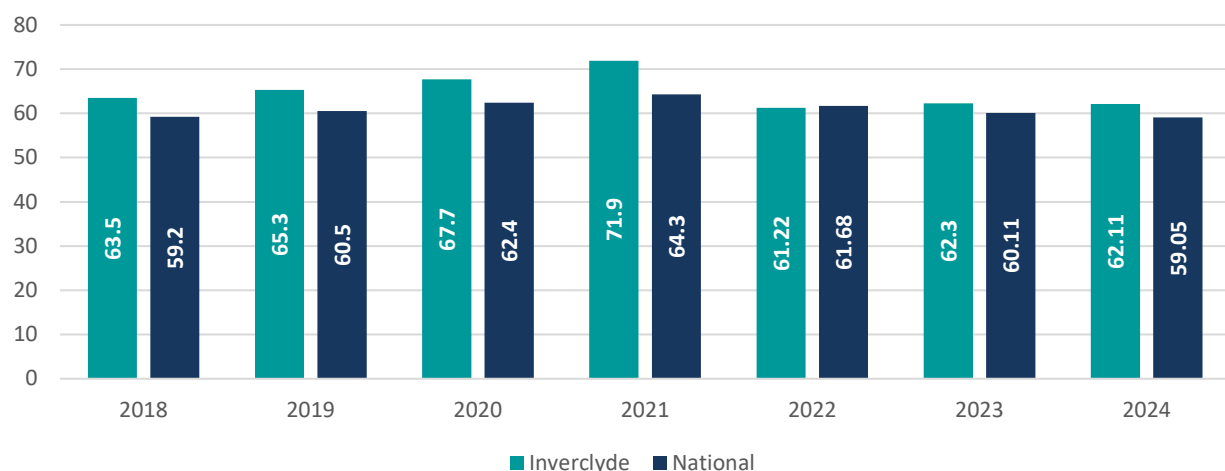
### *% of pupils achieving 5+ Awards at National 5 level (grade A-D) by end S4, 2017/18 to 2023/24*



*Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT::Breadth and Depth: All Candidates)*

At SQA Higher level Inverclyde performed Inverclyde had a consistent 4-5 percentage point lead over the national average from 2018-2020. Inverclyde's drop from 71.9% (2021) to 61.22% (2022) brought its performance closer to the national average. By 2024, the gap is only 3 percentage points (62.11% vs 59.05%) This suggests a levelling-out of performance differences, potentially due to post-pandemic recovery challenges.

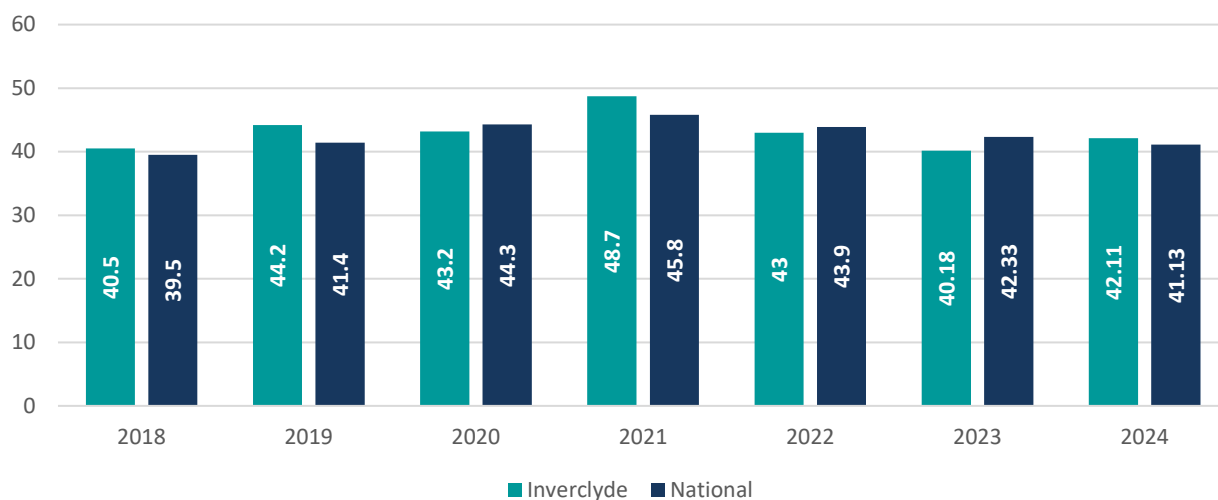
### *Percentage of pupils achieving 1+ awards at Higher level (grade A-D) by end S5, 2017/18 to 2023/24*



*Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT: Breadth and Depth: All Candidates)*

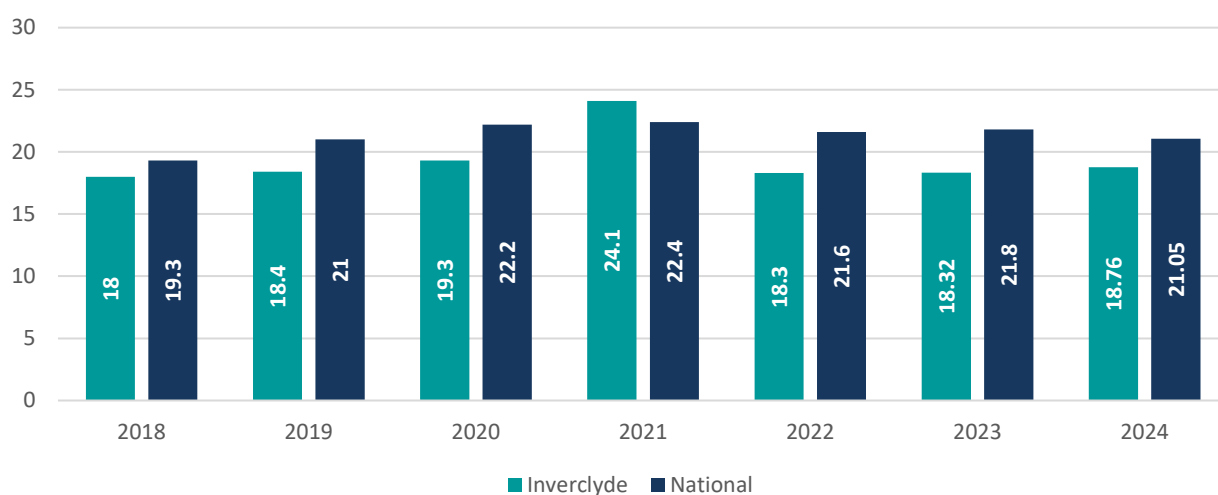
### *Percentage of pupils achieving 3+ awards at SQA Higher level (grade A-D) by end S5, 2017/18 to 2023/24*





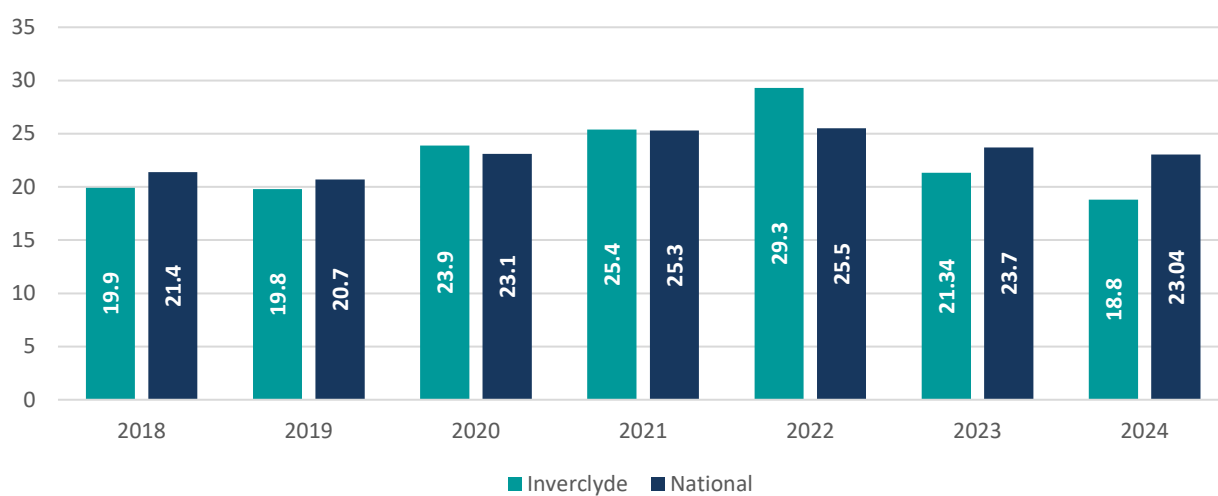
Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT: Breadth and Depth: All Candidates)

**Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ awards at Higher level (grade A-D) by end S5, 2017/18 to 2023/24**



Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT: Breadth and Depth: All Candidates)

**Percentage of pupils achieving awards at Advanced Higher level (grade A-D) by end S6, 2017/18 to 2023/24**



Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT: Breadth and Depth: All Candidates)

## C: Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing

**C1** Continue to roll out the attendance strategy with a particular focus on ensuring highly effective planning for pupils with less than 20% attendance.

**C2** Link with partners and school leaders to refocus on the substance misuse strategy with a particular focus on vaping, including support for pupils to cease.

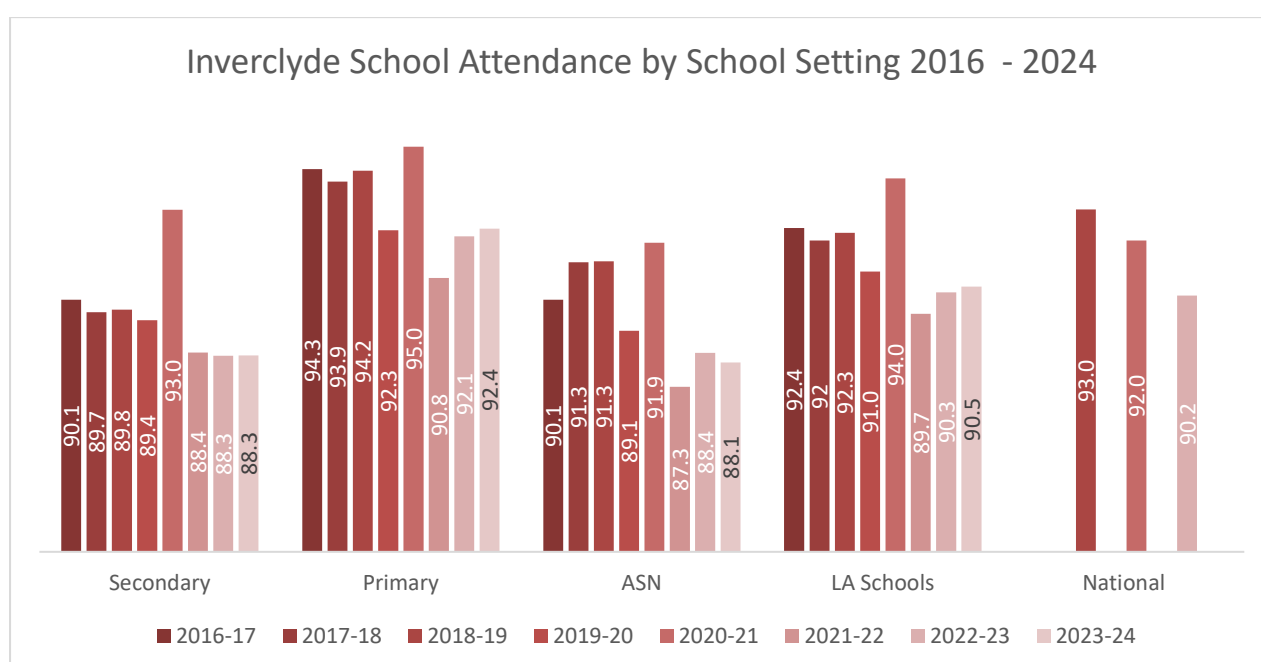
**C3** Review approaches to and guidance around the assessment and tracking of health and wellbeing 3 – 18.

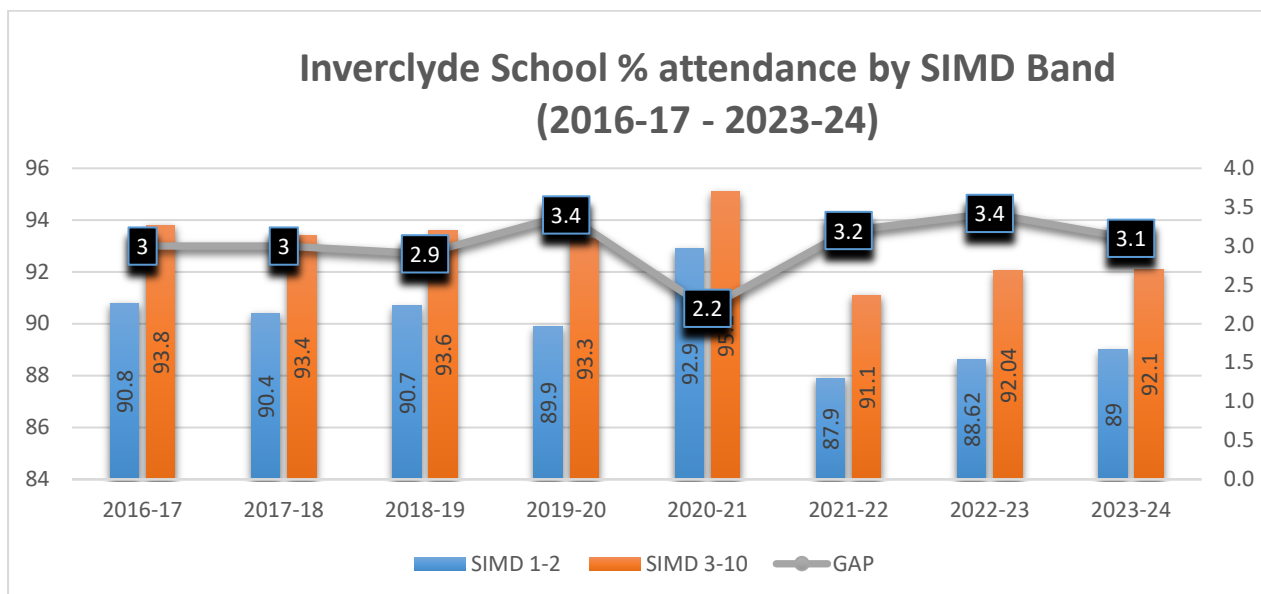
**C4** Review the PSE curriculum 3-18 with a focus on progression and the development of a life skills approach, particularly for senior phase pupils in supporting their preparation for leaving school e.g. personal budgeting.

**C5** Carry out tri-annual review of the Anti-Bullying policy in collaboration with Respect Me, re-launching the revised policy in November 2024, incorporating feedback from the HWB survey, further focus groups and Clyde Conversations.

**C6** Ensure that all establishments are clear on the current reporting arrangements for 2024/25.

**C1** Overall in 2023/24 attendance has improved again on 2022/23 figures. This continues to be most evident in primary. There was a slight dip in ASN establishments, with secondary attendance continuing to plateau. Attendance figures since the pandemic have yet to recover and return to where they were pre 2019. We remain above the national average overall.





The gap in attendance between pupils in SIMD 1-2 and 3-10 opened back post pandemic. However, in 2023-24 the gap showed evidence of beginning to close again and was only 0.2% higher than it had been at its lowest point pre-pandemic.

Very good progress has been made in the roll out of the attendance strategy ensuring it aligns with recent announcements from the Scottish Government and Education Scotland.

The creation of Inverclyde's Attendance Policy links directly to the initial actions from the Inverclyde attendance strategy and is key in supporting establishments create their own attendance policy, which is relevant to their context. The Attendance Policy is a highly valuable framework designed to ensure a clear and consistent approach to supporting establishments in their efforts to improve pupil attendance. The focus on fostering 'pull' factors to attract pupils back to schools highlights a proactive and forward-thinking approach.

Building on a solid foundation of success, the service has been actively developing practice to maximise attendance, reduce absence, and strengthen pupil engagement in learning. The Attendance Policy focuses on equity, collaboration, and excellence in education. Its strategic vision positions it as a vital tool in advancing the well-being of pupils.

Increased tracking and analysis of both authority and establishment attendance data, which is shared with Head Teachers every 2 weeks, ensures that senior leaders have the most up-to-date information allowing them to make informed decisions.

The appointment of a Strategic Attendance Lead, due to take up post in the summer term of 2024/25, will support us to continue to deliver the strategy, work across the children's service partnership as well as support establishment in maximising attendance and supporting absence through developing their own attendance policies.

- C2** Education Officers and Personal and Social Education (PSE) leads have worked closely with the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) Health Improvement Officer to keep abreast of current national developments around vaping and support to cease. This includes updates on the vaping lessons that will be available nationally and the planning and delivery of Vaping Roadshows, funded by the alcohol and drugs Partnership, in all secondary schools.

The Young Person's Substance Officers continue to deliver a robust substance use programme to all secondary schools, with on-going review and refresh to address the ever-changing needs that our young people face. The majority of young people in our secondary schools state that they now have a good knowledge about alcohol and drugs. The majority also have an understanding of risky behaviours and how to reduce risk. A minority of young people state that they have a good understanding about vaping.

- C3** Three secondary schools and one ASN provision are currently piloting the Be Well Survey. The focus this year is on analysing individual pupil data to identify need and set targets. The schools have reported that already this is flagging up areas where further action is required to ensure wellbeing needs are being met.

On taking a snap-shot of pupils in the pilot schools it can be seen that most young people feel safe in school and the majority have a key adult in the school that they can speak to. A minority of young people state that they enjoy coming to school and also a minority take part in extra-curricular clubs and activities.

- C4** We have had an on-going focus on the PSE curriculum, with PSE leads sharing timetables, planners and resources. We have worked in partnership with CLD to produce an online resource bank to support the delivery of PSE, linking to lessons, wellbeing supports and local partners.

CLPL has been offered to all staff in the authority on Financial Education. An Education Officer has attended the CLPL for secondary education and Financial Schools Scotland have given Inverclyde access to a number of Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL) lessons that can be used in both primary and secondary. There are a number of lessons that could be delivered across all levels of the BGE.

- C5** The refreshed Anti-Bullying policy has been drafted and will proceed to Committee in May 2025. The refreshed policy is aligned to the document Respect for All (2024), which is the core guidance provided to local authorities by the Scottish Government related to the creation of policies in this area of work. Following Committee, the policy is scheduled for launch in August 2025 and will be supported by an offer of training for schools.

- C6** The system within SEEMiS that is used to record incidents of bullying or racial incidents has been highlighted with Heads and training webinars offered by SEEMiS have been available for staff to participate in. As a result, we have seen an increase in the number of cases reported on the bullying and equalities system. Training will continue to be offered by SEEMiS on an ongoing basis. Guidance is also included in our Anti Bullying policy on the requirement to record. Incidents are monitored as part of the termly risk register that is compiled.

#### **Next steps: Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing**

- C1** Continue to roll out the attendance strategy as outlined above in C1, ensuring all establishments have their own attendance policies in place during 2025/26 and maintain an ongoing focus on ensuring highly effective planning for pupils with less than 20% attendance.
- C2** Publish and implement the revised Inverclyde Anti-bullying policy in May 2025, and provide support and CLPL for establishments to implement and revise their own in line with it.

- C3** Review the Inverclyde Promoting Positive Relationships and in doing so support all establishments to review their Promoting Positive Relationships policy in line with the Scottish Government action plan relating to behaviour.
- C4** Continue to work with HSCP to further develop knowledge and understanding of the dangers of vaping for our young people in secondary schools by developing learning materials and a further training offer relating to vaping.
- C5** Collate data from individual schools' Health and Wellbeing (HWB) surveys to produce a data set for the authority in order to support HWB planning. Work in partnership with East Renfrewshire Council to compare data sets / identify commonalities and work together on development needs.
- C6** Further develop approaches to Financial Education by working with targeted schools to develop tests of change in partnership with Scotland's Financial Schools through a bespoke CLPL offer for middle leaders and teachers.

## D: Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people

**D1** Link to Curriculum review work in A4, i.e. carry out a review of the approach to curriculum design across S1-3 of the BGE as well as a review / consultation on the number of qualifications that can be taken in S5.

**D2** Fully implement the Leaver's guidance in 2024/25.

**D3** Fully implement the Leaver's transition guidance for pupils with ASN in 2024/25.

**D1** See A4/5.

**D2** Inverclyde's Leavers Guidance was updated and launched in June 2024 in order to further support learners in the senior phase. Working in collaboration with our partners in SDS, HSCP and Employability and Regeneration, roles and responsibilities are now clearly defined. A timeline and quality calendar has been developed which will support establishments to provide the appropriate guidance to senior phase learners as they begin the transition into a positive and sustained post school destination.

As part of the process, a timeline for the Education Officer (Senior Phase) to regularly meet with partners including Employability and Regeneration and SDS Leads has been introduced. This has supported the tracking of data and facilitates the identification, planning and implementation of interventions that support young people in Inverclyde who are furthest from achieving a positive and sustained destination. This has been successful and has supported the delivery of our second highest ever Initial School Leaver Destination Figures in October 2024 of 95.4%. In addition, regular meetings have taken place, as per the quality calendar, with SDS Leads in Inverclyde to identify young people who require a targeted approach. Principal Teachers of Pupil Support were involved in using their existing positive relationships to make contact with young people who were disengaged and not in a positive or sustained destination post school. This contributed to having no 'unknown' young people i.e. young people who are not in employment, education or training that SDS have lost contact with school leavers in 2024.

All secondary schools now track their leavers using the Red/Amber/Green (RAG) system. The Education Officer (Senior Phase) has targeted support meetings alongside SDS and, if appropriate, Employability and Regeneration staff, with establishments who have concerns about learners not achieving a positive and sustained destination. This support for establishments was central to improving communication between partner agencies involved in the transition process. It was a vital component in creating an offer for every young person in Inverclyde. Some specific examples included placing three young people in employment, 10 young people on to online college courses and young people into further education college courses.

Initial leavers have been at their highest ever levels in the last two years (although a slight drop this year from 96.4% to 95.4%) and the APM has demonstrated an increase from 92.6% to 93.5%.

**D3** Education Services continue to support our young people with ASN to achieve a positive post school destination. Targeted support is provided to our learners who attend Craigmarloch School and Lomond View Academy, as well as identified pupils in our mainstream secondary schools. Education, HSCP and NHS staff meet five times per year

for targeted learners to discuss progress and to ensure that the parents and carers of our most vulnerable learners feel supported during the process. Last year, 23 young people made the transition from school into a positive post school destination that was appropriate for their particular needs.

Education Services are waiting on the resource evaluation of our colleagues in HSCP, who are leading on the guidance launch, to ensure that they can adequately staff and resource the promised service level contained in the ASN Leavers Guidance.

**D4** Commit to ensuring that every young person will receive an offer for October 2024 that has a maximum chance of being sustained.

**D5** In order to achieve this, continue to work alongside our partners to continue to improve the offer for our young people who are most at risk of missing out (ASN, CEYP) and pupils from SIMD1), with a particular focus on pathways in construction, engineering, access courses for Higher Education and opportunities to move into employment from school.

**D6** Continue to support an increase in the number of schools who have SCQF.

**D4** Education services have been working alongside colleagues in regeneration and employability to further develop the Inverclyde Offer.

The APM, which is a measure of 16-19 year olds who are in employment, education or training has remained consistent. The June 2024 figure increased from 92.6% to 93.5%, placing Inverclyde above the national average of 92.5%.

Education Service continues to work alongside partners to develop an offer for all learners that has the best chance of being sustained post school. The Street League Training programme remains popular amongst school leavers who are finding it challenging to achieve a positive destination post school. Approximately 11 young people were enrolled in October on the level two, 12 week programme. Young people then have the opportunity to move on to another positive destination or, if that particular individual is not ready for the workplace or further education they can be entered on the level three Street League programme. Young people not only benefit from the Street League Programme, but SDS post school team have a close relationship with some of our most at risk young people and, if required, can provide coaching and pastoral support should it be required.

At a strategic level, senior Education staff now meet regularly with senior staff from Regeneration. This has facilitated discussions around the Inverclyde offer to school leavers. Whilst at an early stage, more focus is now being given to what local authority partners, such as the Trust, can do to provide our school leavers with opportunities to move into a positive destination in areas that our young people have indicated as their intended destination. An example of this for next year is the proposed offer of 10 places based around building skills in the construction industry.

**D5** Education staff have worked closely with the Inverclyde Community Benefits team, commercial and education partners to develop pathways into positive and sustained destinations in the fields of construction and engineering and to develop the employability skills of 'at risk' groups.

## **Babcock/West College Scotland**

This widening access course, supported by Babcock Engineering, was offered in partnership with West College Scotland and Inverclyde Council. Establishments supported young people to apply for this course with 12 young people successfully achieving a place. As this is a widening access project, all young people had to be from SIMD1-3, have an ASN or be care experienced. Further, these young people did not have qualifications that would enable them to enter further education to study for the course they intended to study. At the end of the course, young people had a guaranteed interview for a Modern Apprenticeship with Babcock Engineering. Of the 12 young people who started the course, 10 achieved the National Certificate in Engineering Services award. In addition, 10 of these young people were successful in their interview and secured a Modern Apprenticeship with the organisation that will start in August 2025.

The cohort of 12 young people for 2025/26 has been selected after an application and sift session between West College Scotland, Inverclyde Council and Babcock Engineering. During this sift session, each partner ensured the offer was equitable with cognisance given to SIMD, ASN and care experienced data. An information event will be held in the college in May 2025 to inform parents, carers and young people about the opportunity, tour college facilities and to ask any questions that they have about the project.

## **Ogilvie Construction**

This project, in collaboration with the community benefits team, aims to support young people who are at risk of not achieving a positive destination in their intended sector of industry within construction. Schools nominated young people for the project which is ongoing at present and is attended by 10 young people across most secondary establishments in Inverclyde. The intervention will give young people experience of construction, they will gain a level five working experience award as well as a level six First Aid Award. The project will culminate in the group building an outdoor classroom at Craigmarloch school.

## **Community Benefits**

Closer working relationships with the procurement project officer has facilitated availability of more work experience placements with Inverclyde. Alba Engineering, Balfour Beattie, The Hillhouse Group and Ironside Farrar have all offered work experience placements for young people across the Inverclyde area as part of their obligations under the terms of the community benefits agreement. This will be taken forward in 2025/26 by the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Co-ordinators who are identifying the most suitable candidates for each experience.

- D6** All secondary establishments are now on the SCQF Ambassador journey. The SCQF Ambassador Award aims to fully embed the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) by broadening learning pathways and offering a much wider range of qualifications to all learners. Schools are awarded SCQF Ambassador status of Gold, Silver or Bronze based on their level of engagement and integration of SCQF Principles. St Columba's High School achieved Gold status in 2023 after achieving their bronze award in 2020. Inverclyde Academy achieved their bronze award and have been advised to work towards Gold status due to the high standard of their Bronze application. Clydeview Academy achieved their silver award in December 2024 and are now working towards the Gold award. Notre Dame High School achieved their Bronze Award in January 2025. St Stephen's High School achieved their Bronze



award in February 2025 with Port Glasgow High School beginning their journey towards Bronze in June 2025.

As of June 2025, Inverclyde will be one of only three local authorities in Scotland to have all of its mainstream secondary schools on the SCQF Ambassador award scheme.

<b>Next steps: Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people</b>
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- D1** Continue to review and develop the post school offer in partnership with colleagues in the Environment and Regeneration team.
- D2** Work alongside colleagues in HSCP to implement the ASN leavers guidance in full by June 2026
- D3** All establishments to continue to develop their journey on the SCQF ambassador programme.
- D4** Continue to develop opportunities for more work based learning and qualifications leading to employment and continued business links and partnerships

## E: Getting it Right for Every Child

- E1** Continue to ensure that practice and provision of all establishments is trauma informed.
- E2** Implement the attendance strategy as in C1 with a focus on effective planning for pupils who have less than 20% attendance.
- E3** Implement the revised Child protection audit process alongside the work of the newly formed Child protection subgroup.
- E4** Continue to review and develop capacity of specialist ASN provision. Include a focus on early ASN screening pre 3yr old.
- E5** Continue to support ASN Leaders through CLPL with the assessment processes relating to identifying the needs of ASN pupils.
- E6** Ongoing roll out of PPB training for targeted schools, as well as offering a rolling programme of training to support all practitioners around de-escalation techniques.
- E7** Continue to support establishments with their approaches to developing an inclusive curriculum with a focus on anti-racist education, with a focus on curriculum mapping where anti-racist education and the wider equalities agenda is being delivered.
- E8** Fully implement the missing person policy through the CPC alongside a review of communication and protocols linked to community based anti-social behaviour to ensure pupil safety and appropriate response and support.

- E1** All education establishments in Inverclyde have endorsed the roll out of the National Trauma Transformation Programme (NTTP) through placement of the NTTP in their Improvement Plans. This will continue next session. Establishments have been taking up a post training offer of workshops based on the five Principles of Trauma to examine implementation of trauma informed and responsive approaches in their establishments. This will continue into 2025-26 and be augmented by refreshed leadership training in this area.
- E2** See C1.
- E3** In May 2024 a new Child Protection audit tool was developed by the Child Protection Committee Education Subgroup (CPC) in partnership with Education Scotland. This was then shared with establishment leaders for further feedback and trialled with one school initially.  
  
During 2024/25 members of the CPC subgroup have then led on using the audit tool with a selection of establishments as part of a cycle of validated audits to be carried out; each establishment will complete the audit on an annual basis but have a triannual validation carried out by CPC members. Feedback from Heads has been very positive with the audit tool supporting leaders to ensure that their practice is in line with the Education Service Child Protection guidelines, as well as the ICPC and national policies and practice.
- E4** Due to the increase in the number of pupils requiring specialist provision identified towards the end of session 2023/24, a needs analysis was carried out between June 2024 and October 2024, in order to identify needs for specialist provision across Inverclyde for August

2025. This identified the need for expansion of some of our existing provision, as well as the creation of a new secondary ASN base at Clydeview Academy. This was taken to statutory consultation and approved by committee in April 2025.

During session 2023/24 the service had already expanded the support for Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs with the Lomond View Academy expansion and the introduction of the primary aged provision called NEST. This next stage of the additional support needs expansion supports pupils who need the support of specialist provision to access education relating to communication and complex needs.

We have managed to appropriately place all identified pupils within specialist settings within Inverclyde for August 2025 and we will continue to review and expand as necessary to meet those needs whilst remaining true to the Scottish Governments presumption to mainstream policies.

The service is working with HSCP to develop a pre-3 forum to support communication between health and education to allow us to identify needs as early as possible to facilitate the planning of specialist provision in the coming years. We have also added an early years representative to the Authority Screening Group to discuss pupils identified at early years admission as having additional support needs. This has allowed us to identify pupils earlier and engage with appropriate contextualised assessments to ensure pupils are placed in the correct environment. Since this has been implemented, we have supported three pupils to have an appropriate transition to the correct placement ensuring a smoother start to a family's educational journey.

- E5** This session ASN Leads have had training in assessment of needs at both a single and multi-agency GIRFEC level. This has involved input from partners in Social Work as well as staff from across Education Services. There has also been a focus on equalities, as this is a key element of How Good is Our School? Quality Indicator 3.1.
- E6** Promoting Positive Behaviour (PPB) continues to be important to the support of pupils and staff across all education facilities. We have increased the trainer numbers, with 10 trainers able to support educational establishments across the authority.

Data produced by the Authority Screening Group referencing critical incident and health & safety reports, as well as request for assistance forms, identified five schools to receive targeted support from the PPB team in session 2024/25. This session 110 staff have been trained in a combination of theory and practical courses; this is to support de-escalation, prevent the need for physical intervention and to ensure that when there is a need for physical intervention, correct safety protocols are followed.

We continue to see an increasing trend in critical incident and health and safety reporting. We are confident this is occurring as a direct result of appropriate training and awareness. Staff are more confident in the use of de-escalation strategies with staff within specialist provision sharing an increased confidence in reporting procedures and how to access them.

- E7** Education Officers and Inverclyde practitioners continued to contribute to national networks and policy in relation to equalities, ensuring that local views fed into national policy and supports and that authority networks were accessing the most up to date materials and information.

All establishments continued to have the development of anti-racist education as a priority on their improvement plans for session 2024-25.

The Equalities Co-ordinator Network, introduced in 2023/24, continued to aim to:

- Reinforce our commitment to equalities consistently across all settings and further develop a more inclusive curriculum.
- Ensure we are acting to meet our legislative duties, as outlined in The Equality Act 2010 and General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) Standards for Equality and Diversity.
- Facilitate support for staff directly involved in delivering the Equality Outcomes.
- Offer an opportunity to showcase good practice and improvements that relate directly to one or more of the Protected Characteristics.
- Engage with staff, pupils and families on equalities issues.

Every establishment in Inverclyde continued to have an Equalities Coordinator, with the majority attending network meetings regularly. This session the network worked to further develop practitioner knowledge and confidence but also shifted focus to support and drive forward change within the curriculum. Over 80% of Coordinators report having made moderate to high progress on developing staff knowledge and understanding of race and racism.

Co-ordinators have had opportunities to share what is working well for them within their settings and engage with partners such as Education Scotland and West of Scotland Development Education Centre (WOSDEC) to further develop curriculum content.

We have shared self-evaluation materials, some which support engagement in strategic whole establishment planning and some which guide practitioner planning for learning and teaching. 80% of co-ordinators reported having made moderate to high progress on reviewing policies, curriculum, resources and procedures, up from 38% last year.

The Inverclyde Support Guide has been updated and continue to reference and support engagement with high quality materials and resources. All coordinators have access to this guide.

In partnership with WOSDEC early, second and third level practitioners were provided with CLPL opportunities to build confidence in exploring Anti-racist Education (ARE), engage with the new national Anti-Racist Education resource and collectively consider next steps. Following the WOSDEC sessions, 100% of participants rated confidence in using the ARE resource, likelihood of using it and sharing learning on the resources as high, with most selecting the highest rating on the scale. This is exemplified by feedback from one participant: *"This is fabulous, and the resources will be a real help for educators to lead on this with their children."*

The number of practitioners across Inverclyde who have now completed the national Building Racial Literacy programme continues to grow with 14 having completed the training, 19 completing over this academic session and Inverclyde participating in every cohort of the programme since its launch. The programme seeks to ensure that our educators here in Inverclyde are racially literate and not 'race evasive' and promote anti-racism as a baseline professional value, empowering them to identify and implement anti-racist behaviours and processes in their everyday practice. BRL is named as a key professional learning programme by co-ordinators with some establishments having multiple members of staff trained.

This network also acted as a support for any practitioner who had attended the national Building Racial Literacy (BRL) training. We now have five BRL alumni practitioners who have completed the Leading Anti-Racist Professional Learning (LEARPL) training and three mentors. The training promoted anti-racism as a baseline professional value, empowering practitioners to identify and implement anti-racist behaviours and processes in their everyday practice. Our mentors made use of the LEARPL learning materials to deliver authority wide professional learning to two cohorts of practitioners. Training participants fed back strong appreciation for the informative content, practical resources, and the supportive, non-judgmental approach to learning. The feedback also emphasised the enhanced knowledge gained, as well as opportunities for continued learning through links to further resources.

Equalities Co-ordinators have reported that the primary activities within establishments have been staff engaging in professional learning on race and racism (100% report making progress with 57% rating moderate to complete), reviewing resources and policy using self-evaluation tools, developing pupil-led Anti-racist or Equalities groups, and parental and community engagement. This, in turn, has increased staff confidence and capacity to have racially literate discussions with pupils, decolonising the curriculum, teaching on global citizenship and celebrating diversity. The impact on outcomes for pupils is greater knowledge and understanding of race and racism, with 71% of Coordinators reporting moderate to high progress in this area, nearly doubled from 37% of Coordinators reporting these levels of progress last year. In one class, pre and post-learning scores rose from 4.5% to 95.5% in understanding race, and from 31.8% to 100% in understanding racism, showing the potential power of learning inputs achievable once racial literacy is well embedded.

- E8** The Missing person policy has now been implemented across the authority. During this implementation stage links with HSCP Social work department have increased. Senior Social Workers have delivered awareness training to ASN leaders and heads of establishment to review protocols and expectation when liaising between services. Since the introduction of this policy missing reports have decreased significantly.

Education staff are also sharing practice and improving communication links with local area social work teams and children's houses with visits from the Education Officer for inclusion and the Virtual Head Teacher (VHT). It is hoped that this will continue to improve the positive relationship between services to ensure the correct support for families within Inverclyde.

### **Next steps: Getting it right for every child**

- E1** Develop an ASN strategy to address provision needs from August 2026 onwards, including a focus on training needs for staff, support for families of pupils with ASN as well as ongoing review and development of holiday support and provision for pupils with ASN.
- E2** Continue focus on early ASN screening for all pre-three year old and develop the early years ASN panel.
- E3** Support the establishment of the secondary additional support needs provision at Clydevview Academy.
- E4** Review Included Engaged and Involved 3, in relation to our existing Promoting Positive Relationships (PPR) policy including a focus on implementation of restraint reduction procedures.
- E5** Continue to support Equalities Co-ordinators to embed racial literacy and wider equalities outcomes. Support establishments to create and implement their own equalities policies.
- E6** Continue to support the Signs of Safety training roll out from the HSCP by committing to support Senior Leaders to engage in an initial training programme during 2025/26.

## F: Improving outcomes of care experienced children, young

- F1** Review the use of all care experience children and young person funding by improving the current offer from the education support workers and employing a mental health support worker to target those that need it identified through the fund.
- F2** Update Data Spreadsheet and dashboard to support Virtual Head Teacher and Education Officer with responsibility for ASN to ensure improved tracking and monitoring of all CEYP.
- F3** Continue to utilise the role of the Virtual head in leading aspects of the Children's Services plan and linking with colleagues in children services and social work, to further enhance working relationships and consistency of practice.
- F4** Continue with focused work around the attendance to care experienced young people but move towards a collegiate approach and a creation of a tiered response involving social worker colleagues and our wider third sector partners.

- F1** Good progress has been made in providing additional supports to children and young people via the Care-Experienced Attainment fund. The majority of those assisted were living either at home or with extended family members. We saw an increase in applications to promote participation in groups; activities that would promote their health; wellbeing and help them feel included. This was felt to be positive following on from the pandemic and its impact.

Children and young people were assisted with access to IT equipment and accessories along with some tutoring which helped to ensure they were fully linked in, and their learning promoted.

There was an increase in older young people benefiting from the fund and looking to increase their opportunities post school in relation to college courses and improve their skills through areas such as driving.

Through the project work we have been able to target care-experienced young people who are at risk of non-attendance and support them on the pathways to initial and sustained destinations. Data has indicated that 48% of care-experienced young people in Inverclyde struggle to maintain a positive destination post school and as such this targeted intervention will hopefully increase positive outcomes for young people. Two Education Support Workers were employed to work under the supervision of the VHT to positively impact the outcomes for targeted young people.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to progress the mental health intervention due to staff changes and a delay in the decision-making process. This will be discussed as we progress with the fund for next session.

- F2** The use of data continues to be embedded into monthly tracking and monitoring of pupil progress within the virtual school. The spreadsheet gives clear data on the key indicators

of progress, including attainment, attendance, and exclusions. These are critical in identifying patterns, addressing barriers, and ensuring that each learner receives the support they need to succeed. This system allows us to track attendance to ensure consistent engagement in learning, identifying any emerging concerns quickly and working collaboratively with partners and schools to implement interventions where appropriate, such as local authority support or third sector intervention. It also allows us to record and reflect on exclusion data, to understand underlying causes, implement restorative strategies, and prevent recurrence. The tracking this year led to a working group being set up with secondary colleagues to analyse the data we held across the authority, allowing us to explore patterns and discuss prevention approaches within our schools. The bi-annual school meetings support the interrogation of this data and allows triangulation within these areas as schools provide a clearer picture of each learner's journey.

There has been some slippage with the development of the dashboard for the virtual school, however, it is hoped that by the end of the summer term 2024/25 that there will be a working virtual school dashboard that will allow for easier attainment data to be tracked. Currently, attainment progress is discussed directly with schools through the virtual school meetings and schools are aware of the stretch aims and targets within attainment for our care experienced cohort. We are able to discuss taking meaningful action based on the data for this cohort. This includes care experienced learners being supported through tailored interventions and curriculum adaptations, when necessary, always aiming to access attainment at the highest level. The dashboard will allow for a deeper analysis of the attainment journey for our care experienced learners and support the development of early intervention strategies linked to patterns and trends.

**F3** Within the children's service plan there is progress within the development of a children and families engagement plan to reflect where we are and where we are going in terms of our ability across the authority to reflect the views of our children, young people and families. This has included discussion with all partners supporting our families and has led to the formulation of what we offer across Inverclyde for our most vulnerable children, young people and families. We are now using this information to contribute to improved service delivery for these families.

The continuation of the VHT role to work in partnership with colleagues within social work has allowed for more joint working to take place across this year. We have had multiple sessions with ASN leads within schools and service managers from social work to explore how to improve our joint working, in particular with reference to the Request for Assistance (RfA) process, Inter-Agency Referral Discussion (IRD) process and Child Protection processes. There is also the opportunity for joint training to take place across the two services in relation to signs of safety in the future. We are currently providing colleagues within HSCP with an input specifically related to education, to upskill their knowledge and understanding of the thresholds, interventions and actions education will take when supporting a child or young person who is care experienced/at risk/who they have concerns about. This input is focused on attendance, exclusion, accessing support, communication with families, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) etc.

This year the VHT has represented education across multi agency groups focused on children's hearings, The Promise and child protection data. These have led to multi-agency events taking place to assist with enhancing working relationships. This has included an event for panel members, social workers and school leaders to come together to discuss



their experiences of the children's hearing system and to work collegiately to map out improvements that could be made, it also gave everyone the opportunity to increase awareness and understanding of the parameters each service works within.

The VHT has also spoken at training events within HSCP this year and the practitioner's forum and have used these platforms to discuss the virtual school, education and how to improve relationships.

The child protection data group has led to good practice from education being shared with social work, police, children first and Barnardos. This is something we will now be adopting as a group to assist us in telling the stories that sit behind the data we hold for our children, young people and families going through child protection processes.

- F4** Working with secondary schools for the previous two sessions on attendance projects specific to care experienced learners, allowed us to share learning and interventions that had impact; however, it was important to take the learning from this and imbed it into the wider attendance strategy being launched across the authority. The learning from this as well as the multi-agency group formed to discuss approaches has informed the new strategy. A tiered response has been developed within the strategy to advise establishments of where appropriate and expected support should be accessed. This will support a reduction in the number of RfAs not being acted upon through social work and will assist with clarity of interventions being exhausted before a child, young person and family are referred to SCRA.

<b>Next steps: Improving outcomes of care experienced children, young people and their families</b>
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- F1** Utilise the CEYP data dashboard to support and enhance moderation and benchmarking as well as further support and challenge schools, as well as identify and sharing of good practice where attainment trends are positive.
- F2** Continue multi agency working to further enhance the strategic planning and implementation of the care experienced attainment fund.
- F3** Continue to develop multi-agency opportunities to improve outcomes for our care experienced learners, including identifying training needs and developing systems to support effective communication.
- F4** Work with the strategic attendance lead to continue to analyse data and implement appropriate interventions to support positive attendance for care experienced learners, including the use of authority wide support.

## Glossary of Terms

Abbreviation	In full
ACEL	Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels
ASL	Additional Support for Learning
ASG	Authority Screen Group
ASN	Additional Support Needs
ASNMF	Additional Support Needs Monitoring Forum
BGE	Broad General Education
BRL	Building racial literacy
BYOD	Bring Your Own Device
CEYP	Care Experienced Young People
CLB	Communication and Language Base
CLD	Community Learning and Development
CLPL	Career Long Professional Learning
CMO	Coaching and Modelling Officer
DYW	Developing the Young Workforce
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EY	Early Years
GIRFEC	Getting it Right for Every Child
HMIe	Her Majesty's Inspectors of education
HSCP	Health and Social Care Partnership
HT	Headteachers
HWB	Health and Wellbeing
ICOS	Inverclyde Communication Outreach Service
JST	Joint Support Teams
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LA	Local Authority
MCMC	More Choices More Chances
MVP	Mentors in Violence Prevention
NIF	National Improvement Framework
PEF	Pupil Equity Fund
PRD	Professional Review and Development
PSA	Pupil Support Assistant
PSE	Personal and Social Education
QIM	Quality Improvement Manager
SAC	Scottish Attainment Challenge
SDS	Skills Development Scotland
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SMT	Senior Management Team
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
SQR	Standards and Quality Report
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
VHT	Virtual School Head Teacher