

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday 21 May 2019

Senior Phase Attainment, 2017-18

Item number
Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 note the progress and areas for improvement in educational attainment in the Senior Phase in City of Edinburgh secondary schools.
 - 1.1.2 agree to receive further annual reports on attainment/improvements in performance in the Senior Phase.
 - 1.1.3 note the continued hard work of pupils, staff and parents to support the successful delivery of national qualifications in session 2017-18.

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Educational Attainment in the Senior Phase for Secondary Schools, 2018

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides the members of the Education, Children and Families Committee with a summary of the key outcomes in relation to attainment/improvements in performance in the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) secondary schools for the Senior Phase (S4 to S6) in the academic session 2017-18. The report focuses on the attainment of school leavers for session 2017-18.

3. Background

- 3.1 This report complements the report *Educational Attainment in the Broad General Education for Primary and Secondary Schools, 2018* which was discussed at committee on 09/10/18.
- 3.2 The focus on attainment and accountability is well embedded in the authority and head teachers are fully engaged in improving performance at school level and working together with other schools, CEC officers and other partners to achieve this. Overall evaluative statements made in this report are arrived at using a range of school self-evaluation approaches. As the information provided in this report is focussed on attainment/improvements in performance for one academic session only, the resulting findings are indicative rather than conclusive.
- 3.3 The national Senior Phase benchmarking tool for attainment and achievement, *Insight*, analyses the attainment of school leavers in four key areas: Improving Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy; Increasing Participation (by improving leaver destinations); Improving Attainment for All; and Attainment Versus Deprivation. This report uses these measures to analyse progress; fuller details of the measures used, as well as more detailed analysis (including graphs and tables) are contained in the appendix to this report.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The appendix, *Edinburgh Learns – Improving quality in learning: Senior Phase Attainment, 2017-18* provides a detailed breakdown of improvements, as well as areas for development, in the attainment of leavers last session. The overall picture shows improvements in most areas of Edinburgh's data, but these improvements are in some cases mitigated in comparison to the performance of our Virtual Comparator, or the national picture.
- 4.2 **Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy** (see pp4&5)
Improvements - the percentage of leavers achieving at SCQF levels 4 and 5 has increased (or remained steady) year-on-year and are broadly in line with national figures.
Areas for Improvement - the figures for level 5 remain consistently below those of the Virtual Comparator. Note however that the gap has been closing, year-on-year.
- 4.3 **Improving leaver positive destinations** (see pp6&7)
Improvements - following a drop in 2016-17, the figure for this session has increased significantly and is now the highest over the five-year period (and, in fact, beyond). The figure for 2017-18 is very much in line with the national one.
Areas for Improvement - the figures are consistently below those of the Virtual Comparator. Note however that the difference in 2017-18 was not significant (unlike in 2016-17).
- 4.4 **Improving attainment for all** (see pp8-10)
Improvements - the attainment of the highest-attaining 20% of leavers has been consistently above the Virtual Comparator (and national figures) for five years. The figures for the middle-attaining 60% have increased year-on-year for five years, and are consistently above the national figures.
Areas for Improvement - the figures for the middle-attaining 60% are consistently and significantly below the Virtual Comparator. The figures for the lowest-attaining 20% are consistently and significantly below the Virtual Comparator; they are also consistently below the national figures.
- 4.5 **Closing the gap: attainment versus deprivation** (see pp11-13)
When comparing the attainment of leavers from the 20% most-deprived areas with those from the 20% least-deprived, in terms of those achieving one or more awards at SCQF levels 3 to 6, the following can be noted:
Improvements - there is evidence of closing the gap at SCQF level 3 by this measure. The figure for the most deprived at level 6 reversed a decrease from the previous session.
Areas for Improvement - the gap has increased at SCQF levels 4 and 5 by this measure. There is a two-year decreasing trend at level 5 by this measure.

- 4.6 Improving attainment for care-experienced young people** (see pp14&15)
Improvements - there has been a slight increase in the percentage of “Looked After” leavers who achieved one or more award at level 3.
Areas for Improvement – the percentage of “Looked After” leavers who achieved one or more awards at levels 4 and 5 has decreased. There is no clear overall pattern of attainment in this area.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Actions taken in the light of the attainment data are outlined in each section of the full report (see appendix 1).
5.2 We will report on the success of these actions in a year’s time.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There are no financial implications contained in this report.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.2 Consultation and engagement took place with school senior managers and officers within the local authority.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Attainment Report 2007-2008, 17 March 2009](#)
8.2 [Attainment Report 2008-2009, 18 March 2010](#)
8.3 [Attainment Report 2010, 25 January 2011](#)
8.4 [Attainment Report 2011, 15 November 2011](#)
8.5 [Standards and Quality Report 2012, 9 October 2012](#)
8.6 [Educational Attainment/Improvements in Performance 2013, 10 December 2013](#)
8.7 [Educational Attainment 2014, 3 March 2015](#)
8.8 [Educational Attainment 2015, 24 May 2016](#)
8.9 [Update on Attainment in City of Edinburgh Schools 2015-16, 7 March 2017](#)
8.10 [Educational Attainment in Primary and Secondary Schools 2017, 22 May 2018](#)
8.11 [Educational Attainment in the Broad General Education for Primary and Secondary Schools, 2018](#)

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 Edinburgh Learns: Improving quality in learning – Senior Phase Attainment, 2017-18

EDINBURGH LEARNS

Improving quality in learning: Senior Phase Attainment, 2017-18



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Executive Summary

“Young people’s achievement will be improved and the poverty related attainment gap will be reduced.”

Children’s Partnership Plan 2017-20

Our goal is for all Edinburgh’s children to thrive and take their place as highly skilled workers in a world-class city. To achieve this, they must develop excellent skills for learning, life and work, regardless of socio-economic barriers or other additional needs. It is a vision that is both ambitious and inclusive.

The City of Edinburgh Council is committed to the delivery of a high-quality education service for all children and young people, and to working in partnership with parents and communities. A culture of continuous improvement underpins all activity and is the responsibility of all staff working within schools and centres, supported by the Quality Improvement and Curriculum Service.

The role of officers is to provide guidance and support schools to continually adapt and improve so that the needs of all learners can be met. The Quality Improvement and Curriculum Service places self-evaluation at the heart of all activity, supporting schools to make effective use of data, improvement planning, research and innovative practice.

The focus on attainment and accountability is well embedded in the authority and head teachers are fully engaged in improving performance at school level and working together with other schools, CEC officers and other partners to achieve this.

This report provides a summary of attainment in the Senior Phase for City of Edinburgh schools for session 2017-18, as well as giving an overview of the work of the Quality Improvement & Curriculum Service and secondary schools to support to improvement of attainment across the city.

Background to measures used in this report

Overall evaluative statements made in this report are arrived at using a range of school self-evaluation approaches. As the information provided in this report is focussed on attainment/improvements in performance for one academic session only, the resulting findings are indicative rather than conclusive.

*How good is our school?*⁴ is the Education Scotland quality framework which schools used in 2017-18 to evaluate improvements in performance. They used the national measures of success set out in the Quality Indicator (QI) 3.2, Raising Attainment and Achievement. This QI concerns the standard of attainment over time as well as the overall quality of learners' achievements.

The national Senior Phase benchmarking tool for attainment and achievement, Insight, analyses the attainment of school leavers in four key areas: Improving Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy; Increasing Participation (by improving leaver destinations); Improving Attainment for All; and Attainment Versus Deprivation (see Appendix 1 for more detail on these measures).

In respect of SQA national examinations in the Senior Phase, attainment is expressed in terms of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). A list of the SQA qualifications included in the framework can be found in Appendix 2.

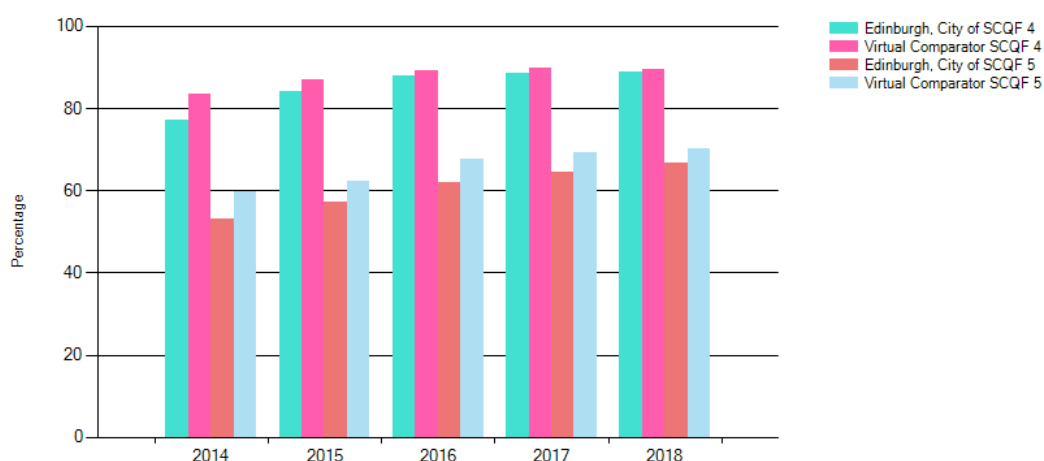
Evaluative statements in this report are based on the Education Scotland, Inspectorate of Education's six-point scale which can be found in Appendix 3.

Note: to aid readability, in most cases, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

The graph and tables below show the percentage of leavers attaining literacy and numeracy at SCQF levels 4 and 5, compared to the Virtual Comparator and the national figures, for the last five academic sessions.

Figure 1: leaver attainment in literacy and numeracy, SCQF levels 4 and 5



Literacy and Numeracy at Level 4 or better

Year	Edinburgh, City of (CEC)	Virtual Comparator (VC)	National
2014	77%	83%	81%
2015	84%	87%	86%
2016	88%	89%	88%
2017	89%	90%	89%
2018	89%	90%	89%

Literacy and Numeracy at Level 5 or better

Year	CEC	VC	National
2014	53%	60%	55%
2015	57%	62%	59%
2016	62%	68%	64%
2017	65%	69%	66%
2018	67%	70%	67%

Improvements

- The percentage of leavers achieving at each level has increased (or remained steady) year-on-year and are broadly in line with national figures.

Areas of concern

- The figures for level 5 remain consistently below those of the Virtual Comparator. Note however that the gap has been closing, year-on-year.

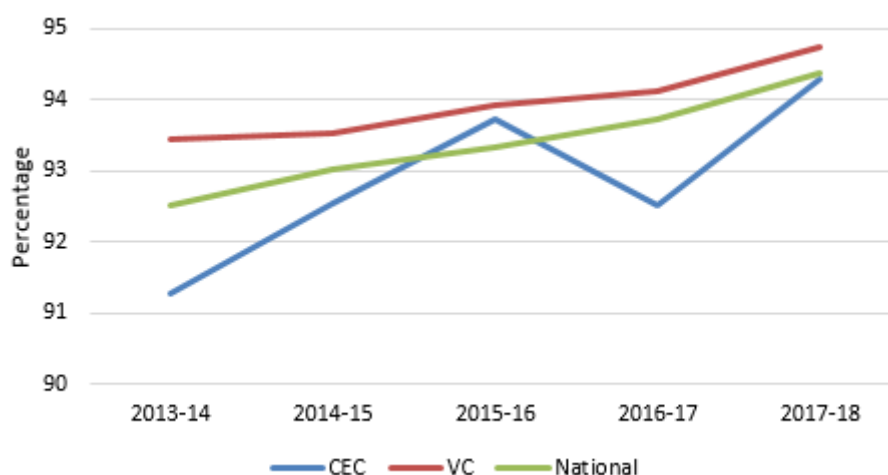
Actions

- The removal of units as a compulsory part of National 5 course has presented challenges for schools in this area and there is need to identify and share good practice, particularly in promoting alternative pathways to qualifications in literacy and numeracy at level 5.
- This support will be offered via Subject Leaders' meetings for Curricular Leaders of English and Mathematics.
- Several secondaries are currently taking part in intensive training and support to improve attainment in writing (this is a project working across both primary and secondary sectors).
- The South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) has identified improvements in mathematics: one of the workstreams for this area is to develop support materials and build networks to share effective delivery of alternative pathways.
- Several secondary schools have volunteered to be part of a SEIC workstream which seeks to use improvement science to identify effective pedagogies and practices to raise attainment in mathematics.
- Schools will be offered additional targeted support in mathematics by the Edinburgh Learns Team.

Improving leaver positive destinations

The table and graph below show the percentage of school leavers entering a positive initial destination for the last five academic sessions.

Figure 2: leaver initial destinations



	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
CEC	91.3%	92.5%	93.4%	92.5%	94.3%
VC	93.5%	93.5%	93.9%	94.1%	94.8%
National	92.5%	93.0%	93.3%	93.7%	94.4%

Improvements

- Following a drop in 2016-17, the figure for this session has increased significantly and is now the highest over the five-year period (and, in fact, beyond). The figure for 2017-18 is very much in line with the national one.

Areas of concern

- The figures are consistently below those of the Virtual Comparator. Note however that the difference in 2017-18 was not significant (unlike in 2016-17).

Actions

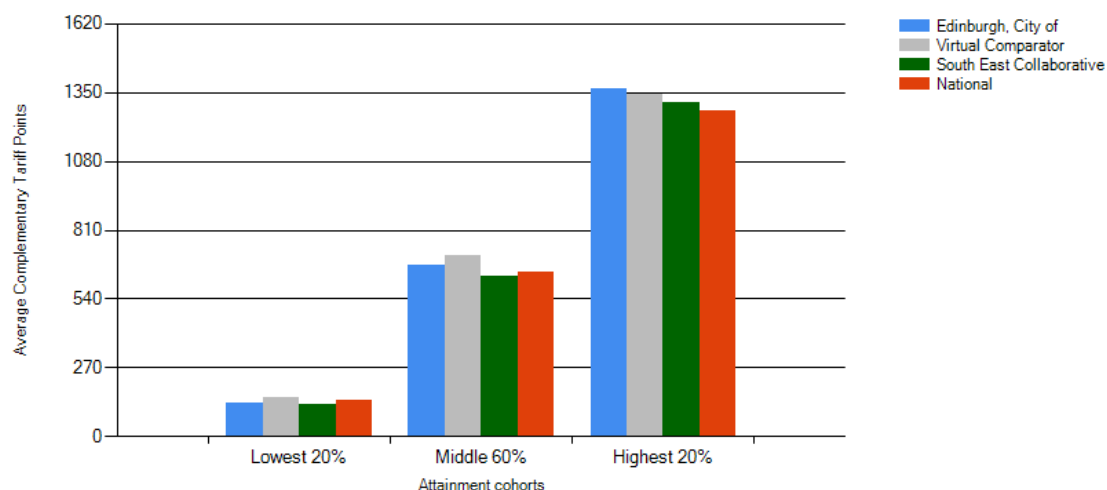
- There has been a strong focus on support in this area following the drop in positive destinations in session 2016-17. This has included focus visits from QIEOs.
- We have developed stronger links with Skills Development Scotland; this includes monthly data updates.

- There has been an increased focus on developing links with employers and providers of further education.
- Schools are provided regular support via the Depute Head Teachers' 16+ Network which allows sharing of effective practice as well as dissemination of information. These networks are regularly attended by representatives from SDS, Edinburgh College and Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) staff.
- The forthcoming Edinburgh Learns Pathways framework will provide additional advice and support.
- Schools will be supported to engage further with the Career Education Standard.

Improving attainment for all

The graph below shows the average complementary tariff points for leavers, based on the attainment of the lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20%.

Figure 3: leaver attainment by cohort



	Lowest 20%	Middle 60%	Highest 20%
Edinburgh, City of	132	671	1366
Virtual Comparator	151	710	1341
South East Collaborative	128	632	1311
National	143	645	1281

Improvements

- The attainment of the highest-attaining 20% has been consistently above the Virtual Comparator (and national figures) for five years.
- The figures for the middle-attaining 60% have increased year-on-year for five years, and are consistently above the national figures.

Areas of concern

- The figures for the middle-attaining 60% are consistently and significantly below the Virtual Comparator.
- The figures for the lowest-attaining 20% are consistently and significantly below the Virtual Comparator; they are also consistently below the national figures.

As a complement to these measures, the tables below show the percentage of school leavers attaining a variety of measures for SCQF levels 3 to 7.

Figure 4: leaver attainment by SCQF measures for City of Edinburgh, compared to Virtual Comparator and national figures

CEC 2018	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7
1 or more	99%	96%	86%	67%	28%
3 or more	95%	91%	75%	51%	6%
5 or more	89%	85%	63%	37%	

National 2018	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7
1 or more	98%	96%	88%	66%	23%
3 or more	95%	92%	77%	50%	4%
5 or more	90%	87%	64%	36%	

VC 2018	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7
1 or more	98%	97%	89%	69%	28%
3 or more	95%	93%	79%	55%	5%
5 or more	91%	88%	68%	42%	

Improvements

- All but one of the figures for session 2017-18 have improved compared to 2016-17. Some notable examples include: the percentage of leavers achieving five or more awards at level 6 has increased by 2 percentage points; the percentage achieving one or more at level 7 has increased by 3 percentage points.
- The figures for level 7 (Advanced Higher or equivalent) are above the national figures, and above the Virtual Comparator.

Areas of concern

- The figures for levels 4 and 5 are below both the national figures and the Virtual Comparator.
- The figures for level 6 are below the Virtual Comparator.

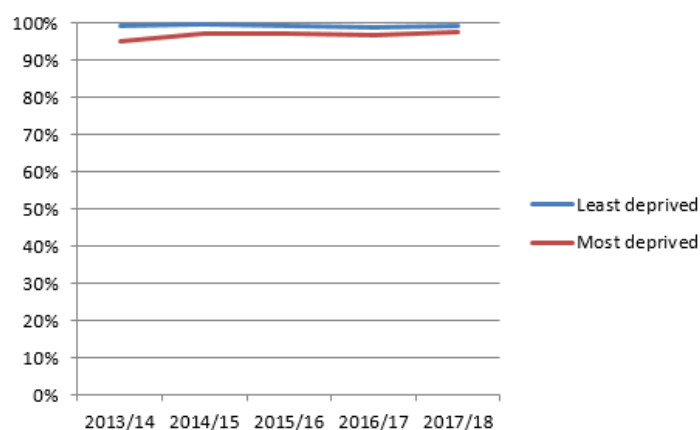
Actions

- There has been an increased focus on developing appropriate curricular pathways and provision. The introduction of the Edinburgh Learns Pathways framework will strengthen this area, which should result in improvements for the lowest-attaining 20%.
- Improved attendance will also result in improvements in attainment: work is underway to support schools with this as well.
- The introduction of a council-wide tracking and monitoring system will support schools to identify young people at risk of not achieving.
- The Edinburgh Learns Team will deliver a suite of high-quality professional learning, with a focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. This should help facilitate improvements in attainment for all.
- Subject Lead Teachers will continue to facilitate improvements in the delivery of SQA National Qualifications (SQA have made changes to the Highers this session, 2018-19, and Advanced Higher will be updated next session).

Closing the gap: attainment versus deprivation

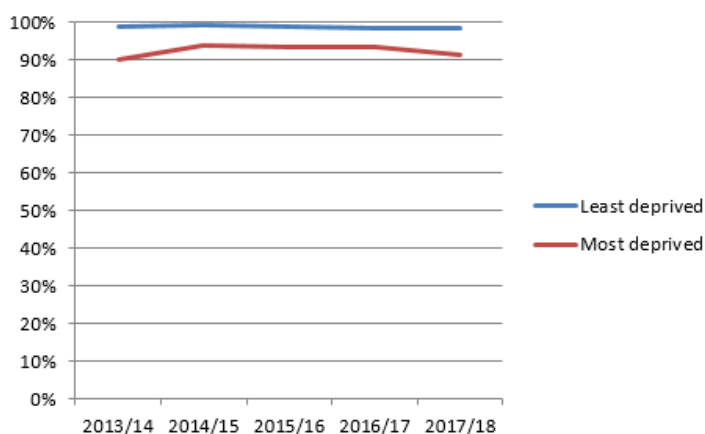
The graphs and tables below compare the attainment of leavers from the most deprived 20% (SIMD deciles 1 and 2) with that of the least deprived 20% (SIMD deciles 9 and 10) for the past five sessions by considering the percentage of leavers who have gained at least one qualification at SCQF levels 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Figure 5: leaver attainment – one or more SCQF level 3



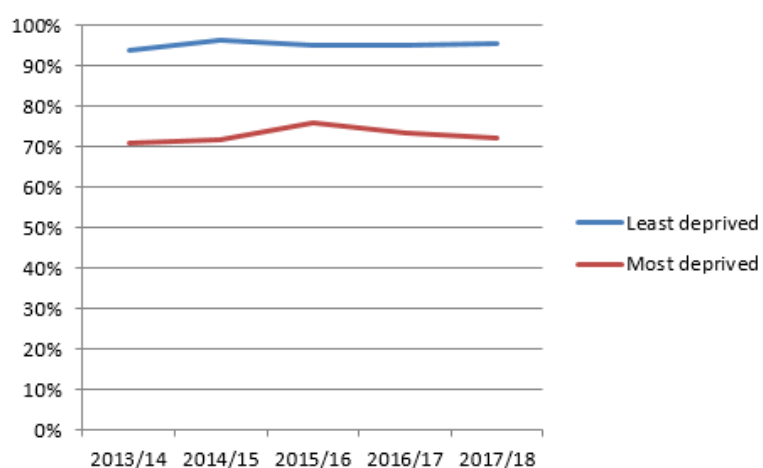
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Least deprived	99.3%	99.6%	99.5%	99.0%	99.3%
Most deprived	95.0%	97.1%	97.3%	96.7%	97.8%
Gap	4.2%	2.5%	2.2%	2.3%	1.5%

Figure 6: leaver attainment – one or more SCQF level 4



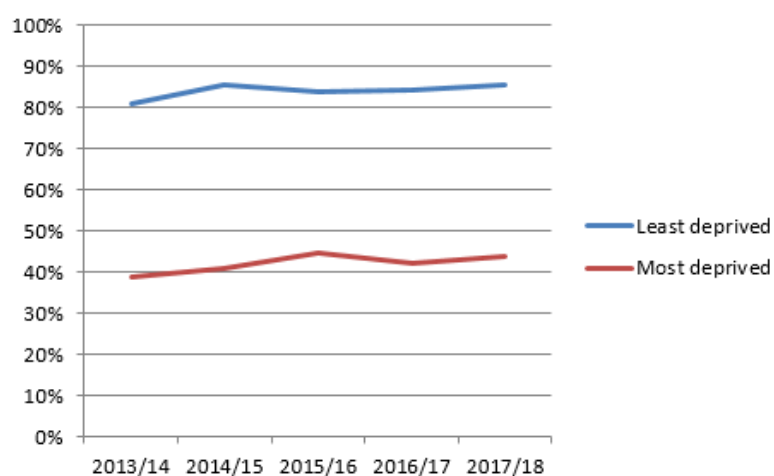
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Least deprived	98.9%	99.2%	99.0%	98.5%	98.6%
Most deprived	90.3%	93.7%	93.5%	93.6%	91.4%
Gap	8.6%	5.4%	5.5%	4.9%	7.1%

Figure 7: leaver attainment – one or more SCQF level 5



	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Least deprived	94.0%	96.3%	95.1%	95.3%	95.7%
Most deprived	71.1%	71.9%	75.8%	73.6%	72.1%
Gap	22.9%	24.4%	19.3%	21.6%	23.7%

Figure 8: leaver attainment – one or more SCQF level 6



	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Least deprived	81.0%	85.5%	84.0%	84.4%	85.5%
Most deprived	38.8%	41.1%	44.7%	42.2%	43.8%
Gap	42.1%	44.4%	39.3%	42.1%	41.7%

Improvements

- There is evidence of closing the gap at SCQF level 3 by this measure.
- The figure for the most deprived at level 6 reversed a decrease from the previous session.

Areas of concern

- The gap has increased at SCQF levels 4 and 5 by this measure.
- There is a two-year decreasing trend at level 5 by this measure.

Actions

- The Edinburgh Learns Equity framework includes advice to schools about closing the poverty-related attainment gap.
- The Edinburgh Learns Team will be offering targeted support in sharing effective pedagogies and practices for closing the gap.
- Session 2017-18 saw the introduction of Pupil Equity Funding and work is ongoing to identify and share effective practice in the deployment of these funds.

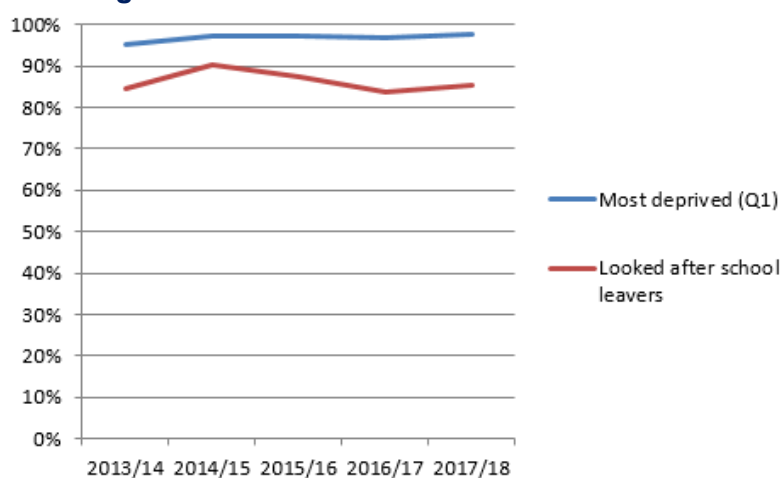
Improving attainment for care-experienced young people

In the academic session 2017-18, 61 City of Edinburgh leavers were classified as “Looked After Children” (LAC) compared to a national figure of 1012.

28 of these young people left school by the end of S4; 22 by the end of S5; and 11 by the end of S6.

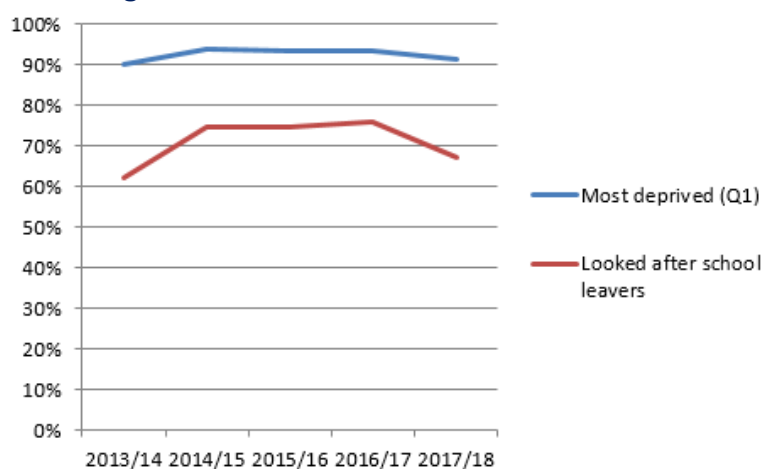
The graphs below compare the attainment of LAC leavers in City of Edinburgh with the attainment of leavers in City of Edinburgh from the most deprived area, for the past five sessions. The measures used are achieving one or more award at each of SCQF level 3, 4 and 5.

Figure 9: leavers achieving one or more level 3



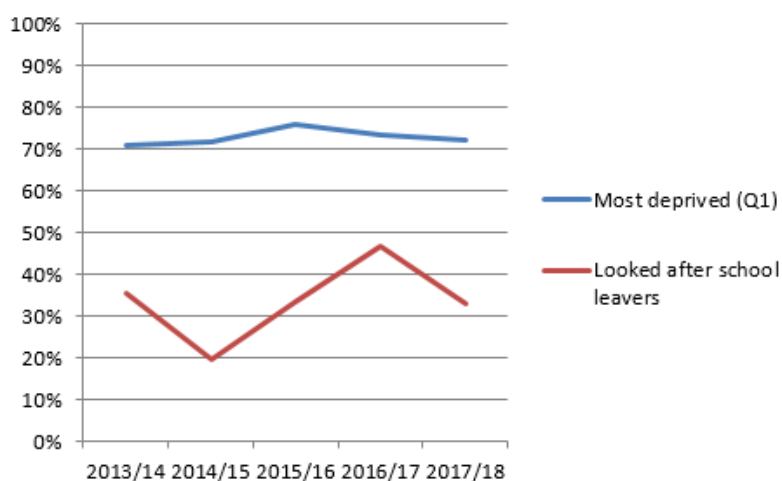
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Most deprived	95%	97%	97%	97%	98%
Looked after school leavers	84%	90%	87%	84%	85%

Figure 10: leavers achieving one or more level 4



	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Most deprived	90%	94%	93%	94%	91%
Looked after school leavers	62%	75%	75%	76%	67%

Figure 11: leavers achieving one or more level 5



	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Most deprived	71%	72%	76%	74%	72%
Looked after school leavers	36%	20%	33%	47%	33%

Improvements

- There is a slight improvement at level 3 by this measure.

Areas of concern

- Figures at levels 4 and 5 have decreased.
- There is no clear pattern over time.

Actions

- All Edinburgh Learns Frameworks contain specific guidance or actions to raise awareness and improve quality of service for this cohort
- All Professional Learning delivered by Edinburgh Learns Teaching and Learning Team focuses on the specific needs of care experienced in terms of ethos, differentiation and support
- All Supported Self Evaluation (local authority reviews) will feature tracking of care experienced pupils by the review team – this will be reviewed by the EL Quality Improvement Strategic Group
- All schools are required to track, monitor and report the attendance and attainment of care experienced youngsters through the authority database.
- All secondary schools will review arrangements for Pupil Support Groups to ensure appropriate tracking of wellbeing and inclusion needs for this cohort
- All frontline staff (including teaching, support and social workers) will be made aware of the specific needs of this group through the new promotional film and actions within the Care Experienced Fund
- Identified youngsters (S3-S6) in selected schools will have an MCR Pathways Mentor
- Identified youngsters (S1 and S2) in selected schools will access supportive group work

Appendices

Appendix 1

The new attainment measures

Prior to Curriculum for Excellence it was standard practice for all pupils in S4 to be presented for SQA qualifications at appropriate levels. Under CfE schools and partners are able to offer greater personalisation and choice in the Senior Phase (S4 to S6) in a range of ways, for example by designing the Senior Phase as a three-year experience rather than planning each year separately, or by delivering qualifications over a variable timeframe in response to young people's needs and prior achievements.

It is therefore important that we look at the attainment of young people at *the point of exit* from school (leavers), not at some specific point during their school career (e.g. in S5) or in specific qualification types (e.g. Highers). *Insight* analyses the attainment of school leavers (combining those from S4, S5 and S6) against a number of attainment measures. The four key measures now used for measuring the attainment of leavers are:

- **Improving Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy:** the percentage of leavers attaining literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 4 or better and SCQF level 5 or better;
- **Increasing Participation:** the percentage of leavers achieving a positive initial destination (approximately three months after leaving school);
- **Improving Attainment for All:** the average total tariff points of leavers based on the attainment of the lowest performing 20%, middle 60% and highest 20%.

The table below shows the tariff points carried by each SQA qualification.

Course	Result	Tariff Points
National 3	Pass	12
National 4	Pass	33
National 5	A	84
	B	74
	C	64
	D	59
Higher	A	204
	B	182
	C	160
	D	149
Advanced Higher	A	480
	B	440
	C	400
	D	380

- **Attainment Versus Deprivation:** tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of pupils from the most deprived areas relative to pupils from the least deprived areas: the average total tariff points of leavers, by decile, using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

The Virtual Comparator

Instead of comparing schools with each other, *Insight* creates a Virtual Comparator for each school in order to measure progress. The Virtual Comparator is created by matching each pupil in a school to ten other pupils from across Scotland, randomly selected to match the pupil in terms of age, gender, level of additional support needs and SIMD decile.

National Improvement Framework – measures for Senior Phase

In 2018 three measures were agreed for use in measuring progress in closing the poverty-related attainment gap. These measures involve comparing the performance of school leavers from the 20% most-deprived areas in Scotland (SIMD quintile 1) with those from the 20% least-deprived areas (SIMD quintile 5).

The measures focus on school leavers achieving one or more awards at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6.

Appendix 2

List of SQA qualifications included in Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework.

SCQF level	Qualifications included
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Level 3	National 3
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Level 4	National 4
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Level 5	National 5
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Level 6	Higher
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Level 7	Advanced Higher
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Note that there are other (ungraded) qualifications which also accrue tariff points on Insight, for example National Progression Awards.

Appendix 3

Education Scotland scale for evaluating performance:

Excellent	Outstanding or sector leading	(Level 6)
Very Good	Major strengths	(Level 5)
Good	Important strengths with areas for improvement	(Level 4)
Satisfactory	Strengths just outweigh weaknesses	(Level 3)
Weak	Important weaknesses	(Level 2)
Unsatisfactory	Major weaknesses	(Level 1)