

Agenda Item	16.
Report No	CLH 14/18

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Care, Learning and Housing

Date: 30 May 2018

Report Title: Regional Improvement Plan

Report By: Director of Care and Learning

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report introduces the latest draft of the Regional Improvement Plan.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Note and comment on the draft Regional Improvement Plan.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Northern Alliance is the Regional Improvement Collaborative between eight local authorities, across the north of Scotland: Orkney, Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Western Isles, Highland, Moray, and Shetland. The Alliance came into being in 2014 when a number of these Local Authorities first worked together to tackle teaching staff shortages in their schools.
- 3.2 The Scottish Government's Review of Educational Governance has determined that Local Authorities across Scotland group themselves in a similar way to promote collaboration.
- 3.3 Each Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) has been tasked to produce its own Regional Improvement Plan.

4. Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan

- 4.1 The Northern Alliance has developed an initial draft of its Regional Improvement Plan. The Alliance seeks to deliver on the following high level improvement priorities:
- Priority 1: Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy
 - Priority 2: Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
 - Priority 3: Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
 - Priority 4: Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people
- 4.2 The aforementioned priorities are aligned to the aims of the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the National Improvement Framework (NIF). However, while the priorities outlined in the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan highlight the aims of the NIF, the activities and outlook of the Northern Alliance are far broader. The Alliance champions a child and family-centred approach to address the attainment gap and to drive improvement.
- 4.3 An initial draft of the Plan was submitted to the Chief Inspector of Education for 30 January 2018, for feedback.
- 4.4 Following commentary from Education Scotland, the next draft of the Regional Improvement Plan will be refined through additional analysis and consultation. This has been circulated across the authority (and other authorities) for consultation and is attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 4.5 The revised Regional Improvement Plan is expected to be submitted to Education Scotland for sign off in autumn 2018.

5. Implications

5.1 Resource

As previously reported, additional resource has been provided by the Scottish Government to support the Alliance in years one and two, but in future years it is likely that all activity will have to be supported by core budgets. It is envisaged that some efficiencies will be possible through this collaboration.

5.2 Legal

All activity will have to take place within the context of legislation on education and children's services.

There are likely to be developments with an Education Bill, to be published before the summer.

5.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural)

The rural context of the Northern Alliance was one of the key drivers for the establishment of the Northern Alliance, and has informed this plan.

5.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever

It is possible that travel requirements across the Northern Alliance will be a significant issue in taking forward this work.

5.5 Risk

All risks will need to be taken account of, in taking forward this plan. The Northern Alliance is developing a register of such risks.

5.6 Gaelic

The Alliance should include a focus on developments via the medium of Gaelic.

Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 21 May 2018

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APPENDIX 1

The Northern Alliance

Draft Regional Improvement Framework Plan 2018



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1. Introduction

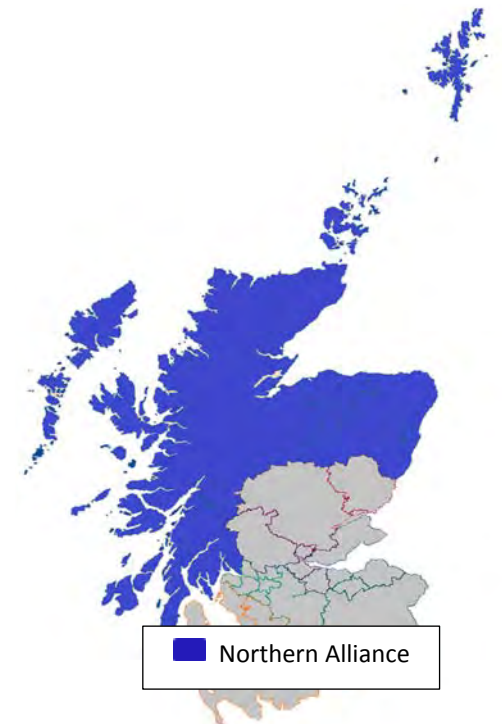
The Northern Alliance is a collaboration between eight local authorities, across the North and West of Scotland: Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Eilean Siar [Western Isles], Highland, Moray, Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands. Our shared vision is to improve the educational and life chances of our children and young people. To remove the barriers to learning and improve children's outcomes, the collaborative seeks to build on the strengths of shared service development, create professional networks and deliver continuous professional development. The Northern Alliance exists to make a difference to the lives of children and young people by ensuring that the professionals who work with them collaborate for improvement and impact.

The reach of the Northern Alliance is vast, covering 58.4% of the landmass of Scotland, yet it represents a small percentage of the Scottish population. This area has amongst the highest levels of rurality and the lowest levels of population density within a context of economic fragility and poverty. It also includes two of Scotland's cities. The geography and common challenges experienced across the region moved the Alliance to identify new ways of working and adopt a shared approach to the communities it represents in the north of Scotland and in the islands.

In response to the Governance Review of Scottish Education, the Alliance has sought to further develop its culture of collaboration. This has resulted in the sharing of expertise in a range of areas: curriculum development, school estates, early years and Integrated Children's Services development, as well as establishment of local and regional networks. Partnership working has enabled the Northern Alliance to deliver programmes such as Emerging Literacy and Leadership Development, which are already benefiting schools and teachers across the region. The Raising Attainment in Literacy, Language and Communication workstream is currently providing direct support to practitioners in 47% of primary schools across the Northern Alliance.

A key strength of the Northern Alliance is found in its commitment to distributed leadership at all levels. This approach allows flexible and organic partnerships to emerge, which cross professional and geographic boundaries. This 'bottom up' approach is reflected in the origins of a number of the Alliance's workstreams such as the Equalities group and more generally, in the practitioner informed approach that shapes all our activities.

By building on our collective experiences as a regional improvement collaborative we are confident we can make a meaningful difference to the lives of children and young people. To measure our impact the Alliance is committed to evaluating performance data through the use of pupil data. Alongside the use of quantitative data we draw on qualitative data to capture information from teachers and practitioners, which is collated into the formal evaluation of programmes. Our commitment to ongoing evaluation across all of the programmes allows the Alliance to measure impact and target improvement. We aim to grow and develop this approach with other partners – such as NHS, universities and national agencies.



Central to the work of the Alliance is the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the shared aim to achieve equity in educational outcomes, with a focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap. This is of particular interest to the Northern Alliance given the aforementioned challenges experienced by the region. To this end, the high level priorities outlined in the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan are aligned to the aims of the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the National Improvement Framework [NIF hereafter]. This initial plan covers the period up until the end of the school year in 2019 although this may be subject to change following the outcome of the Scottish Governments consultation on the Education Bill.

The Northern Alliances seeks to deliver on the following priorities:

- Priority 1: Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy
- Priority 2: Closing the outcome gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
- Priority 3: Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Priority 4: Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.



As a group of eight local authorities we are committed to improving outcomes and closing the gap, which exists across our wide and varied communities and crucially, keeping the child and family at the centre of all that we do. Schools, teachers and headteachers have a clear role to play, but for too many young people and families, this is not enough. Some of our young people and their families require family support workers, social workers, school nurses and many others besides. While the priorities outlined in the Regional Improvement Plan highlight the aim of the NIF, the activities and outlook of the Northern Alliance is far broader. The Alliance champions a child and family-centred approach to address the achievement gap and to drive improvement.

To realise our vision, we work in a multi-layered way. Some programmes are directed, such as those which support the above mentioned priorities. The Emerging Literacy, Numeracy, Maths Attainment and Modern Foreign Languages programmes contribute to directly improving attainment. A significant number of our workstreams cut across all the priorities and are reflective of the leadership ethos which we have promoted over the last three years. These workstreams not only reflect the wider imperative to improve all children's services, but have come about by middle managers and leaders recognising themselves the benefits of collaboration to improve services more quickly and sustainably. However, not all schools will be involved in all improvement activities at any given time.

The development of the plan is an ongoing iterative process and a second phase of the plan will be developed and submitted to Education Scotland in August 2018. The Regional Improvement leads and Scottish Government are due to meet ahead of the next iteration of the plan to discuss evidence of impact and the application of improvement methodology. Resource allocation for the workstreams will be mapped out in the next iteration of the plan (phase 2) but initial workforce planning considerations and factors are outlined in a separate document.

The Northern Alliance is a committed learning collaborative and as such will continue to develop and learn as programmes embed and develop, we are committed to working in partnership nationally, regionally and locally and welcome wider collaborations and learning which develop impact and drive improvement across the country. We will add to and amend the Regional Improvement Plan as we learn from what works well, where change is needed and importantly to react to feedback and requests from schools and teachers to aid their work with children and young people.



2. Northern Alliance Work streams


Regional Improvement Lead												
Website development			Reporting				Communications			School to School Networking		
Emergency Literacy programme <i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Findlay <i>Programme Lead:</i> James Cook	Maths Attainment & Numeracy Programme <i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Findlay <i>Programme Lead:</i> David Clark	Leadership Development / NIF Programme <i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Findlay <i>Programme Lead:</i> Vincent Doherty	Early Years and Child Care Programme <i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Bill Alexander <i>Programme Lead:</i> Craig Clement	Performance / Data Sharing Programme <i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Findlay <i>Programme Lead:</i> Reyna Stewart	Children's Services Planning Group <i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Bill Alexander <i>Programme Lead:</i> Ian Kyle	MFL Development Group <i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Findlay <i>Programme Lead:</i> Laurence Findlay	Poverty / Closing the Gap Development <i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Helen Budge <i>Programme Lead:</i> Shetland QIO	Future Delivery Models / Estates <i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Wilf Weir <i>Programme Lead:</i> Peter Diamond	IT transformation [E-Learning] <i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Bernard Chisholm <i>Programme Lead:</i> Bernard Chisholm	Equalities <i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Findlay <i>Programme Lead:</i> Caroline Hastings	Systems Improvement <i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Findlay <i>Programme Lead:</i> L Findlay (interim)	Community Learning & Development <i>Programme Sponsor:</i> TBC <i>Programme Lead:</i> Avril Nicol
Focus: Raising Attainment in literacy	Focus: Review of attainment in mathematics, T&L approaches	Focus: Developing high quality leadership at all levels	Focus: Delivering 1140 hours EYCC policy	Focus: Create shared data set for NA work	Focus: To ensure alignment and coherence across NA ICS plans and workstreams	Focus: To develop 1+2 languages, embed teacher subject knowledge	Focus: To explore rural poverty and its impact on attainment	Focus: To develop innovative approaches to future of children's estate	Focus: To explore development and impact of Esgoil model across the region	Focus: champion equalities and children's rights across the NA	Focus: To develop shared approaches to system leadership and improvement across the NA	Focus: To develop shared approaches to community learning & development
Outcome: Impact on closing the gaps, teacher subject knowledge and attainment	Outcome: TBC - Identify key areas for development, strengthen T&L, create curriculum pathway for BGE	Outcome: the quality of leadership in schools and then across all services	Outcome: Improving access, quality and closing economic / attainment gap	Outcome: Shared agreement re data to help drive performance of NA programmes	Outcome: Work towards shared improvements across the NA, sharing of best practice, innovation in approach	Outcome: Increase teacher subject knowledge, extend qualified teacher numbers, raise attainment	Outcome: identify key indicators of rural poverty: reduce impact on attainment	Outcome: reduce costs: share best practice, create innovative plans for future services	Outcome: Wider access to full curriculum, cost reduction, transformation of T&L	Outcome: improve the health & wellbeing of children & young people	Outcomes: innovation & improvement, leading to more systemic approaches to improving outcomes & meeting LAs statutory obligations in an integrated manner	Outcome: improving employability skills for young people, improve family learning & parental engagement
Number of Schools: 486 Year groups - P1, EY	Number of Schools: 81 Year groups - S1-4	Number of Schools/Settings: 250 Year groups - All P/S	Number of Schools/Settings: All Year groups - EYCC	Number of Schools: All Year groups: N/A	Number of Schools: N/a - all partners Year groups: N/A	Number of Schools: 30 Year group: P1-7	Number of Schools: 150 Year groups: All	Number of Schools: All/ all partners Year groups: N/A	Number of Schools: tbc Year groups: tbc	Number of Schools: tbc Year groups: tbc	Number of Schools: all Year groups: N/A	Number of Schools: tbc Year groups: tbc



3. Northern Alliance Priorities

High Level Priorities

Priority 1 Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy	Priority 2 Closing the outcome gap between most and least disadvantaged children	Priority 3 Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing	Priority 4 Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Empower leaders to confidently lead the raising attainment agenda at school, ASG, authority and across the Northern Alliance via implementation of impactful professional learning ❖ Develop shared approaches to assessment and moderation ❖ Work across the Northern Alliance to shape a literacy and numeracy strategy to improve attainment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Work in collaboration to develop programmes to support the implementation of the Pupil Equity Fund ❖ Use PEF data across the Northern Alliance to analyse common focus to frame future improvement priorities ❖ Establish consistent criteria in how we all measure / baseline gaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Work across the Northern Alliance to reduce the impact of adverse childhood experiences and chronic neglect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Establish and implement a strategy on Developing the Young Workforce to increase the number of young people reaching a positive and sustained destination ❖ Curriculum re-design and learner journey

Workstreams Cutting Across All Priorities 		
Leadership Development	Performance and Data Sharing	Systems Improvement
Equalities	Community Learning and Development	IT Transformation (E-learning)
Children's Services Planning Group	Early Learning and Childcare	Future Delivery Models/Estates



4. The Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan – How This Will Be Achieved

PRIORITY AREAS		KEY DRIVERS	
1	Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy	SL	School Leadership
2	Closing the outcome gap between the most and least disadvantaged children	TP	Teacher Professionalism
3	Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing	PE	Parental Engagement
4	Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people	ACP	Assessment of Children's Progress
		SI	School Improvement
		PI	Performance Information

Priority 1: Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy					
Improvement Activity	This Is How We Will Do It	By When	Leads	Improvement Outcomes	
				This Is What We Will Measure? (Evidence of Impact)	What Is the Difference? (What is the Impact over a period of time)
<p><u>Literacy</u> Learners benefit from high quality research informed pedagogy, beginning in Early Learning and Childcare and beyond, which is delivered by confident practitioners with enhanced subject knowledge, supported by senior leaders who enable ongoing progress</p> <p>Key Drivers: ACP SL TP PI</p>	<p>In 2017/2018, supporting 47% of schools in taking a developmental approach to Emerging Literacy through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> professional learning which is co-designed by education practitioners and allied health professionals, delivered across the Northern Alliance enabling network collaboration at a universal level between education and allied health professionals local networks of practice to support ongoing professional learning at Local Authority level and at cluster level online collaboration to support "families" of practitioners who support learners across similar demographics buddy networks of practice to support ongoing professional learning in clusters of schools access to online resources to support ongoing learning and teaching 	<p>June 2017</p> <p>Sept 2017; Jan 2018; March 2018</p> <p>Nov 2017</p>	<p>Lead: James Cook</p>	<p>CfE Achievement of a Level Judgement Data for P1 in Listening and Talking, Reading and Writing to show the early impact of taking a developmental approach to Emerging Literacy. Analysis will evaluate whole cohort outcomes and outcomes linked to SIMD.</p> <p>2016/2017 Achievement of CfE Levels - provides control group / intervention group impact for Highland.</p> <p>2017/2018 Achievement of CfE Levels - to provide comparison for Northern Alliance schools involved in the programme.</p> <p>CfE Levels for P4 in listening and talking, reading and writing - for those who have been part of the programme since the early level - will show improvement for those children.</p>	<p>Scottish Government Stretch Aim: By 2020, at least 85% of children within each SIMD quintile will have successfully achieved early level literacy.</p> <p>Control Group Baseline: June 2019 - P4 children not involved. Intervention Group Baseline: June 2020 - P4 children who became involved during 2016/2017 session.</p>

<p>Empower leaders and teachers to confidently lead the raising attainment agenda at school, ASG and across the Northern Alliance via implementation of impactful professional learning</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL PI</p>	<p>In 2018/2019, continue to scale the support of the number of schools across the Northern Alliance taking a developmental approach to Emerging Literacy through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing the skills of lead practitioners in each local authority to support practitioners at local level • enhancing buddy networks which build capacity at school and cluster level to enable a whole-school approach to emerging literacy • expanding on the resources to support the five key areas of concepts of print, executive functions, oral language, phonological awareness and pre-handwriting • sharing practice examples which have had an impact on practice and bettered outcomes for children 	<p>June 2018</p> <p>Nov 2017; March 2018</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Support 2018/19</p> <p>2018/19</p>	<p>Lead: James Cook</p>	<p>Measured through the local networks to demonstrate the impact on practice which is leading to better outcomes for children</p> <p>CPD evaluations will identify the following:-</p> <p>Which areas have made the biggest impact to practice;</p> <p>How, qualitatively, is a developmental approach bettering outcomes for children</p>	<p>Increased Confidence / Impact of practice reflections</p>
<p><u>Numeracy</u> Develop teacher confidence and leadership in relation to numeracy</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL PI TP</p>	<p>Between 2018-2021, the numeracy programmes will improve attainment across the Northern Alliance by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertaking a literature review / research of educational projects and best practice • improving the learning and teaching of 'hard to teach' areas in numeracy • observing one pupil throughout the year to develop an understanding of hard to teach areas • developing networks of educational practitioners, including EPs, and allied health professionals to co-design professional learning, which will be delivered across the Northern Alliance • establish networks of practice (school cluster level) • Track one class throughout the year. • Practitioner enquiry (participation) 	<p>Nov 2017</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>November 2018 - onwards</p>	<p>Lead: Dave Clark [TBC]</p>	<p>Northern Alliance Numeracy Data - longitudinal surveys in increasing pupil confidence / less maths anxiety</p> <p>Attitude surveys [numeracy]- Increase in teacher confidence</p> <p>Gloss assessment (NZ)</p> <p>SNSA Data [Dec '18]</p> <p>Numeracy - CfE level of judgement (primary 4)</p>	<p>By 2021 in the 60 identified schools, the poverty related attainment gap (including aspects of rural poverty) will close by 10%</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop baseline data sets to include aspects of rural poverty • Qualitative survey on 'hard to teach' areas • Undertake literature review • Produce exemplar support based on initial views of 'hard to teach' areas • Organise professional development clusters to develop professional learning 	Jan 2018 - August 2018			
<p>Develop teacher-confidence, professional understanding and leadership in relation in secondary maths attainment</p> <p>Key Drivers: TP SL PI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide professional networking opportunities • Utilise digital platforms (glow and website) to enhance and develop networking • Create virtual communities/communities of practice • Ensure leadership development programme in place for head teachers, senior leaders, subject and curriculum leaders • Review of presentation policies • Review of maths attainment in Northern Alliance • Twinning of Schools • Transition for primary to secondary 	From Feb 2018 - onwards	<p>Leads: Head teachers, SCEL and Dave Clark</p> <p>Education Scotland support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Qualitative</u> • Capture attendance at networking events and follow up survey from events • Evaluation reports to assess the development of a culture of learning and impact on practice • Longitudinal study of maths teachers • Annual Survey • <u>Quantitative:</u> • Assessment of link between attainment data and professional learning to identify impact of leadership development programme (3 year programme S1-S4) • SNSA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from schools indicate improved quality of professional learning for staff • Clear, coherent and rigorous learning pathways established from the BGE to Senior Phase • A range of interventions created that develop mathematical thinking in "difficult" areas especially for students in SIMD 1-4. • Alliance –wide framework for effective maths faculty leadership with change leadership and learning at its core.
<p>To improve the numeracy levels of secondary pupils and improve attainment in S4 maths.</p> <p>Key Drivers: TP SL PI</p>	<p>Effective leadership of change and of learning within maths faculties.</p> <p>Effective planning of learning, teaching and assessment.</p>	June 2018	Lead: Dave Clark	Insight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of maths faculties across the Alliance meeting or exceeding their VC. • Levels of numeracy at L4 and L5 improve for pupils in SIMD 1-4. • SNSA scores show incremental improvement year on year. • N5 attainment in maths rises across the Alliance by ____ % by20__ .
<p>Ensure all primary teachers across the Northern Alliance see themselves as</p>	<p>Develop moderation work in and across primary and secondary Focus on tracking and monitoring of languages across the BGE</p>	June 2018	Lead: Laurence Findlay	Insight data set Annual 1+2 survey of primary languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • XX% increase in uptake in Modern Languages in the Senior Phase by 2021 • XX% increase in passes at A to C at National 5

<p>teachers of language</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL PI PE TP ACP</p>					<p>Level in Modern Languages by 2021</p>
<p>Develop strong connections and synergy between emerging literacy and language learning ensuring a connected curriculum and a more integrated approach to raising attainment in literacy</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL PI PE TP ACP</p>	<p>Align progression frameworks for languages across the Northern Alliance</p> <p>Develop links between emerging literacy approaches to phonics with 1+2</p>	<p>Jun-19</p>		<p>CfE and Insight data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School inspection data showing positive progress with implementation of 1+2 by 2021
<p>Focus on improvement literacy through languages</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL PI PE TP ACP</p>	<p>Champion community languages through parental engagement and storytelling</p> <p>Develop a measure to gather data on community languages</p>	<p>Feb 2018 onwards</p>		<p>Insight data set</p>	
<p>Develop teacher confidence and leadership in relation to literacy and languages</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL PI PE TP ACP</p>	<p>Include language development as an integral part of all literacy CLPL for teachers</p>	<p>Feb 2018 onwards</p>		<p>Draw on case studies to measure parental engagement;</p>	
<p>Develop shared approaches to assessment and moderation</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL PI PE TP ACP</p>	<p>Teachers to develop a greater shared understanding of standards (improved standardisation) by facilitating opportunities for professional networking</p> <p>Create virtual communities of practice to develop teacher judgement</p> <p>Introduce 'critical friend' approach to moderation (teachers moderating</p>	<p>Throughout school session 2018/19</p>	<p>Lead: Regional Improvement Lead</p>	<p>Teacher confidence survey: sampling across the Northern Alliance</p> <p>Use of web analytics to track use of online communities and resources</p> <p>QAMSOs to assess teacher judgement</p> <p>collectively tracking teacher judgement across the Northern Alliance</p>	

	across the Northern Alliance region)			Review of embedding standardisation in assessment and moderation	
<p>Increase and improve parental engagement</p> <p>Key Drivers: PE</p>	<p>Audit current engagement activity;</p> <p>Identify common issues; identify areas for improvement and agree where collaboration can support effective programme development e.g.</p>	From Feb 2018 onwards	Lead: Avril Nicol Education Scotland support	<p>Introduce and embed Adult Achievement Award – initially in 3 LAs</p> <p>Measure uptake of SQA modules for accreditation of</p> <p>Measure consistent understanding of Family Learning – to support application of agreed measures</p>	<p>Increase in number of parents/carers engaged with children’s learning (in and out of school)</p> <p>increase in (number /time) parents engaged in supporting children’s learning/attainment</p> <p>increase number of parents who understand the child’s curriculum/school teaching programme</p> <p>Increase in participation of parents/carers in supporting school curriculum</p>
<p>Develop shared approaches to family learning across the Northern Alliance region</p> <p>Key Drivers: PE</p>	<p>Inter-generational learning programmes</p> <p>ESOL - family learning practice</p>				
<p>Target wider family e.g. grandparents / carers through Adult and Family learning programmes</p> <p>Key Drivers: PE</p>	<p>Targeted Literacy, numeracies, IT literacy programmes</p> <p>CPD/Workforce development to support Family Learning / Parental Engagement</p> <p>Develop training for schools /staff</p> <p>Bolster training for parents/ grandparents/ carers on project linked activity:</p> <p>Develop targeted but inclusive engagement initiative to target least engaged parents</p>	From Feb 2018 onwards		TBC	<p>Increase in number of parents/carers engaging in adult learning activity;</p> <p>Increase in number of parents achieving accreditation through adult learning</p> <p>Increase number of parents reporting positive relationships with schools;</p>



<p>Work across the Northern Alliance partners to deliver financial awareness and measure financial literacy</p> <p>Key Drivers: PE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop professional understanding of financial literacy - (To be financially literate, individuals must demonstrate knowledge and skills needed to make choices within a financial marketplace that all consumers face regardless of their particular characteristics) • Establish networks of practice between LAs and at locality level (Youthbanks; Credit Unions; links to Welfare Reform – benefits uptake rates) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From April 2018 	<p>Lead: Avril Nicol</p> <p>Education Scotland support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial awareness training delivered in all 8 LAs • Development of agreed Financial Literacy Measures 	<p>TBC</p>
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Priority 2: Closing the outcome gap between most and least disadvantaged children					
Improvement Activity	This Is How We Will Do It	By When	Leads	Improvement Outcomes	
				This Is What We Will Measure? (Evidence of Impact)	What Is the Difference? (What is the Impact over a period of time)
<p>Review of attainment across the Northern Alliance with a specific focus on our most disadvantaged children in order to identify 'the gap' (linked to Maths project outlined under Priority 1)</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL PI PE TP ACP</p>	<p>Group review attainment in maths across the Northern Alliance (stats review)</p> <p>Establish statistical milestones, which identify effective practice e.g. S4 scores</p> <p>Gap between SIMD levels is analysed and described, and common themes identified</p> <p>Review of Presentation policies</p> <p>Review of Inspection outcomes for best practice/key themes</p> <p>Work with Education Scotland on maths support and development from national thematic programme</p>	June 2018	<p>Leads: HT, DHT, PT (Maths)</p> <p>Performance workstream</p>	Insight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased attainment for the lowest 20% of cohort Clear articulation of the attainment gap in different areas
<p>Identification of key development areas through consultations with schools and teachers through a survey</p> <p>Key Drivers: TP SI SL</p>	<p>Effective Pedagogy shared and developed</p> <p>Strategic /operational effective practices</p>	Feb 2018 - ongoing	<p>Lead: Ed. Psycs. All work stream leads</p> <p>Education Scotland support</p>	<p>L & T impact on engagement</p> <p>Use of 'toolkits' / curriculum frameworks</p> <p>Exclusions and attendance data in specific areas / cohorts e.g. LAC or SIMD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better of understanding of curriculum pathways
<p>Ensure all young people receive their entitlement to languages learning given the wider attainment benefits this brings for all learners regardless of background or ability</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL</p>	<p>Provide clear consistent guidance for schools in relation to timetabling and presentation in Modern Languages to ensure a common approach across all our schools</p> <p>Involvement of key practitioners in developing T&L tools to support learning</p>	By 2020 in line with the Government 1+2 strategy	Lead: Laurence Findlay	<p>Insight analytical data set</p> <p>Use of rural deprivation measure [once developed]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> XX% increase in National 5 passes of A to C in Modern Languages in SIMD 1—3 and SIMD 9-10 by 2021 Almost all learners receiving their entitlements to L2 and L3 as per national 1+2 policy by 2021

<p>Key Drivers: ACP SL TP PI</p>	<p>processes / partnerships with SW and other colleagues - Information for Foster Carers - the development of support and guidance for designated managers and class practitioners - develop shared policies relating to LAC in education - tracking and monitoring processes for looked after and care experienced children and young people being educated in the local authority and those placed in another local authority - Financial tracking – out of authority placements</p>				
<p>Agree stages for earlier intervention – Early Years / P7-S1/ S3-4</p> <p>Using intergenerational learning to deliver ESOL</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL PI PE TP</p>	<p>Joint residential programmes e.g. health and wellbeing bespoke summer schools – residential. Share best practice in relation to interventions to support young people and families at all ages and stages</p>	<p>From July 2018</p>	<p>Lead: Avril Nicol</p>	<p>Share best practice Develop agreed impactful programmes to be delivered in all 8 Las in holiday periods Improved learner outcomes – Literacy/ Numeracy/ Health & Wellbeing - feedback from teachers</p> <p>Evaluation surveys – increased confidence, participation measures Increased participation</p>	<p>Increase in numbers of families engaged in ESOL family learning Improved (assessed) levels of ESOL for parents/carers and children Increased uptake of further adult learning by parents/carers Impact: improved pupil attainment, increased integration/employability of parents/carers</p>
<p>Appropriate learning pathways and early interventions which target whole families</p> <p>Key Drivers: PE ACP PI</p>	<p>Individualised / flexible learning pathways – including element of family learning Youth work in schools Increased collaborative working with further and higher education to support curriculum delivery Sharing curricular models across the NA Mechanisms for school leaders to share best practice in use of PEF funding</p>	<p>From June 2018</p>	<p>Lead: Avril Nicol</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>Reduction of Out of Authority Placements</p> <p>Increased attainment in your lowest 20% of cohort placements</p>

Priority 3: Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing						
Improvement Activity	This Is How We Will Do It		By When	Leads	Improvement Outcomes	
					This Is What We Will Measure? (Evidence of Impact)	What Is the Difference? (what is the Impact over a period of time)
Work across the Northern Alliance to reduce the impact of adverse childhood experiences and chronic neglect Key Drivers: PI PE TP	Promoting understanding of ACEs and their impact		From March 2018	Lead: Bill Alexander	Pooling of staff resource across LA teams	TBC
	Earlier identification and assessment of chronic neglect					
	Responding to chronic neglect					
	Strategies to promote resilience					
Develop an effective partnership across the different NHS boards and the Northern Alliance focused on improvement of young people's health and wellbeing Key Drivers: PI ACP	Mapping exercise of current health related services for children and young people across the Northern Alliance		Dec-18	Lead: Laurence Findlay	Audit exercise Individual Children's Services Plans	TBC
	Consider collective arrangements for the commission and decommissioning of health related services					TBC
Promoting health and wellbeing, resilience for children and young people across the Northern Alliance	Family learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent application of tried and tested Programmes such as: • No Knives Better Lives • Reduce substance abuse [to be developed] • Under Pressure to be Sexy - healthy attitudes towards sex and relationships 	Ongoing from November 2017	Lead: Avril Nicol	Audit current use of programmes across NA – establish baseline Further develop assessment tools for wellbeing Identify schools delivering the MVP programme and review impact (check what assessment	Lowest 20% ; increased attendance in lower SMID areas and reduced exclusion

<p>Key Drivers: SL PI PE TP ACP</p>	Essential Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring Violence Prevention • Skills building – confidence, leadership, self-esteem, personal development, anger management 			tools are in place) – expectation for lower rates of bullying or violent behaviour and increased levels of respect among all within the school community.	
	ESOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult learning – recognising need to support parents to support children • Skills development • Improve neuro linguistic programming, emotional intelligence [NLP] 			Data on weapons	
	Progression from PEEP & Bookbug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share practice e.g. language skills – bilingual settings, Gaelic/Doric – build on programmes • Progression from PEEP and other parenting programmes to support families and parenting skills • We will achieve this by focusing on parents specifically within the lower SMID areas • Empowering parents to allow them to support their children to attend and achieve at school 			CLD data in relation to adult learning	Children’s Services Plans reports
<p>Champion Equalities and Rights Respecting Schools across the Northern Alliance (children's rights)</p>	Increase the number of LAs that have a service level agreement with Unicef UK	Identify the number of schools across the NA who have an SLA with Unicef UK.	From June 2018 onwards	Leads: Caroline Hastings, Laurence Findlay, Education Scotland support	Quantitative data on the number of schools registered and progressing towards RRSA Awards	Across the Northern Alliance at least 30% of schools will be registered and progressing towards RRSA by 2020
	Retain UNICEF Rights Respecting status across the Northern Alliance	Identify 'champions' across the Northern Alliance partners / LAs to support the delivery of RRSA.			Quantitative data on the number of schools who have already achieved Silver or Gold Awards	In Las where there is already a SLA in place, there will be a 5% increase in the number of school achieving silver and gold of the award June 2019

<p>Key Drivers: SL PI PE TP</p>					<p>Qualitative assessments from a random selection of participating schools at different levels to measure impact of participation at set intervals</p>	<p>RRSA assessments and base line data will evidence a 20% increase of CYP who feel included and listened to [children's voice] by June 2020</p>
<p>Enabling Youth Voice (Youth Democracy)</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL PI PE TP</p>	<p>CLD staff across the Northern Alliance to promote youth led participatory groups and volunteering opportunities for CYP</p>		<p>From June 2018 onwards</p>	<p>Leads: Caroline Hastings, Equalities Group / Avril Nicol, CLD Group</p>	<p>Qualitative and quantitative data on the number of youth led groups and their function</p> <p>Quantitative data on the number of Children and Young People attaining wider achievement awards</p>	<p>5% increase in the number of CYP achieving wider achievement awards such as Saltire May 2018 to May 2019. ACVO data</p>
<p>Increase the number of LGBT+ Children and Young People in school who feel safe, supported and included</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL PI PE TP</p>	<p>Development of LGBT+/Alliance (or Gender and Sexual Orientation Alliance, GSA) groups in secondary schools to support children and young people who identify as LGBT+ and their allies.</p>	<p>Awareness training in schools</p> <p>Sharing of National Guidance (GSA)</p> <p>Sharing of best practice - what works locally</p>		<p>Leads: Caroline Hastings ; Schools</p>	<p>Quantitative GREC data and SEEMIS data. Qualitative local/regional data gathered through a random survey of schools across the Alliance, repeated annually</p>	<p>5% increase in the number of LGBT+/Alliance groups by May 2019 10% increase in the number of LGBT+ Children and Young People in school who feel safe, supported and included by May 2019</p>
<p>Working collaboratively across the Northern Alliance to ensure all staff are enabled to support young people's health and wellbeing/becoming resilient</p> <p>Key Drivers: TP</p>	<p>Joint CPD in emotion coaching</p> <p>Protecting children and adults against abuse through effective professional learning</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Leads: Avril Nicol</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>Improvement in ability to measure levels of resilience in young people Better understanding of impact of emotion coaching</p>
	<p>Capture current picture of relevant available CPD - across Northern Alliance members</p>	<p>Work collaboratively to agree measures - e.g. linked back to Bounce Back programmes</p>	<p>End of Feb 2018</p>			

<p>Support the development of effective equality and diversity policies to contribute to a reduction of prejudice-based bullying across the Northern Alliance</p> <p>Key Drivers: TP</p>	<p>Gathering examples from existing Equality and Diversity Policy in Schools</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Leads: Caroline Hastings</p>	<p>Quantitative data on the number of schools with equality and diversity policies</p> <p>Qualitative and quantitative data gathered on the levels of prejudice-based bullying comparing schools with and without an equality and diversity policy [GREC and SEEMIS data].</p> <p>GREC data</p>	<p>5% increase in the number of schools with an equality and diversity policy by May 2019</p> <p>Schools that have an effective equality and diversity policy will see a 5% reduction of prejudice-based bullying</p>
<p>Work across the Northern Alliance to ensure we are celebrating diversity and global citizenship through learning</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL PI PE TP</p>	<p>Actively facilitate parental engagement in languages learning in line with approaches used to engage parents with literacy and numeracy</p> <p>Ensure all languages courses develop an awareness of global citizenship and cultural diversity</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Leads: Laurence Findlay</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>In each local authority, XX% of schools will have active parental engagement with regards language learning by 2021</p>

Priority 4. Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people						
Improvement Activity	This Is How We Will Do It		By When	Leads	Improvement Outcomes	
					This Is What We Will Measure? (Evidence of Impact)	What Is the Difference? (What is the Impact over a period of time).
Add value to DYW agenda by ensuring languages are within DYW agenda across the Northern Alliance Key Drivers: SL TP PI	Link languages experiences in schools to the wider DYW agenda and skills agenda/provide an employment context for learners	Agree common expectations and principles for a languages approach to DYW in the Northern Alliance Provide CLPL for teachers linked to languages and DYW and further ensure DYW CLPL has an integrated languages component as required	Dec-18	Lead: Laurence Findlay	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every secondary school Modern Languages department to have at least one business/employer link by 2021 • XX% increase in uptake of SQA Language in Work units from S3 onwards by 2021
		Ensure all our schools, primary and secondary, have access to business champions who can bring relevance to languages learning Greater connectivity and synergy across languages and DYW policy areas				
	Embed languages across the curriculum (5 – 15) with a clear focus on skills development	Develop contexts for learning linked to DYW/languages Further develop partnerships with SCILT with regards Business Champions and Business Branches				
Collaborate across the Northern Alliance to review all Northern Alliance employability strategies /plans and consider areas of common interest where we could add greatest value	Wider achievement	Review plans Arrange for DYW leads to meet to identify skills pathways Share skills pathways Share best practices Engage key stakeholder e.g. better linking with colleges and Adult Learning staff Increase engagement of primary schools with DYW, and develop improvement plans to raise aspirations in CYP from primary stage Youth Aspiration Survey: - roll out across a small cohort (primary and secondary)	Phase one data gathering by end March 2018	Lead: Avril Nicol	Participation measures in place across the Northern Alliance – SDS extract Improved data available – e.g. Northern Alliance data sets Youth Aspiration Surveyroll out across a small cohort (primary and secondary)	Clearer picture from Youth Aspiration Surveyroll out across a small cohort (primary and secondary) Increased numbers of senior phase pupils mentored to develop skills for work
	Employability – senior phase, essential skills	Support pupils into the 'Career Ready' programme Linking curriculum areas of CfE to employment opportunities and skills 16-18 named person role implementation/improvement Pre-16 activity agreements	Phase two reporting end June 2018			

<p>Key Drivers: SL PI</p>	<p>Internship opportunities and skills for work development</p>	<p>Have flexile arrangements for Activity Agreements to take place across LAs 'Named person' role 16+key worker role Retaining contact with those who were known now not known, embed in each targeted school with consistent approach managing a gap</p>				
<p>Improve participation of 16-19 years of school leavers</p> <p>Key Drivers: SI PI</p>	<p>Targeted work Sharing areas of best practice across the Northern Alliance Establishing good partnership arrangements with further and higher education to support pupil pathway planning Opportunities for wider accreditation through volunteering and experience of work</p>		<p>June 2019</p>	<p>Lead: Regional Improvement Lead</p>	<p>Measures to be added from existing data sets</p>	<p>TBC</p>

Cross Cutting Themes: activities which support the delivery of the Regional Improvement Plan					
Improvement Activity	This Is How We Will Do It	By When	Leads	Process Measures that support the Regional Improvement Plan	
				This Is What We Will Measure? (Evidence of Impact)	What is The Impact Over Time?
<p>Improve performance and data sharing across the Northern Alliance by seeking consistency in data collection, the use of methodologies and the quality data</p> <p>Key Driver : PI</p>	<p>Data sharing agreement Data review Establish a national protocol for data sharing within and outwith the collaborative</p>	<p>Jun-18</p>	<p>Leads: Reyna Stewart, Education Scotland and Regional Improvement Lead</p>	<p>SEEMIS</p>	<p>Establishment of Data Sharing Agreement Across the Northern Alliance 2018</p> <p>Identification of baseline data for individual workstream</p>
<p>Ensure school improvement teams are working collaboratively and effectively across the Northern Alliance</p> <p>Key Drivers: PI ACP TP</p>	<p>Review internal working arrangements in light of the Three Pillars (CfE, GIRFEC and Developing the Young Workforce) Review reporting arrangements - once plan approved and enacted and report to the improvement advisory forum (quarterly) Identify as an alliance schools with greater need of targeted support e.g. cluster work / buddying activities Focus on self-evaluation for improvement</p>	<p>From March 2018</p>	<p>Leads: Laurence Findlay and Andrew Griffiths</p>	<p>NIF return External inspections</p>	<p>Increased confidence in self-evaluation over 18-21 month period as move forward greater alignment.</p>
<p>Sharing best practice in quality assurance in Children's Services</p> <p>Key Drivers: PI ACP TP</p>	<p>Shared approach to QA across the Northern Alliance Peer review Linking across self-evaluation activities Preparing for Children's Services Inspection 3 Supporting an outward looking and a coordinated approach across the 8 authorities</p>	<p>From March 2018</p>	<p>Leads: Susan MacLaren and subgroup</p>	<p>Children's Services Reports from individual LAs</p>	<p>TBC</p>

<p>Sharing best practice approach quality improvement across ELC</p> <p>Key Drivers: ACP TP PI</p>	<p>Consider the best improvement methodologies for supporting improvement across the Northern Alliance</p>	<p>From March 2018</p>	<p>Leads: Regional Improvement Lead and 8 LAs</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p>Supporting activity across social work and children's services</p> <p>Key Driver : PI</p>	<p>Consolidating and coordinating the Children's Services Network Consolidate and build the network Co-ordinate the workstreams Supporting and developing Social Work leadership Ensuring peer support networks for practitioners across the Northern Alliance Identifying, sharing and responding to new challenges Being a collective voice</p>	<p>From December 2017 - ongoing</p>	<p>Leads: Bob Driscoll, Heads of Service across eight local authorities</p>	<p>ACORN</p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p>Workforce Development - developing staffing and curriculum to provide an agile qualified and responsive Workforce (further elaborated in workforce plan).</p>	<p>Review of existing curriculum offered in Island/rural schools Explore the staffing requirements of Island/Rural Schools Develop an agile, appropriately qualified and responsive workforce to provide the services required</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Leads: Regional Improvement Lead and 8 LAs</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>TBC</p>
	<p>Supporting the social care workforce in skills development Dealing with challenge and the changing social care environment Supporting recruitment Building resilience (and staff retention) Range of activities, including: Practice papers, joint (and virtual events), networking, job shadowing and exchange Promote wellbeing of the workforce.</p>	<p>From March 2018 - ongoing</p>	<p>Leads; Sandra Campbell, with sub group.</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>TBC</p>

<p>Key Drivers: SL PI TP SI</p>	<p>A co-ordinated approach across the 8 authorities, and with partners: colleges, universities, chamber of commerce.</p> <p>Include skills development for Gaelic medium provision.</p> <p>TIES STEM Development of DLITE OU pilot 1+2 languages (professional)</p>	<p>From March 2018</p>	<p>Leads: Regional Improvement Lead and 8 LAs</p>	<p>TIES - end of next academic year 2018</p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p>Leadership Development in Schools across the Northern Alliance led by sector leading Head teachers / teachers</p> <p>Key Drivers: SL TP SI</p>	<p>Identifying sector HT and teachers to champion educational improvement across the Northern Alliance to a school led system.</p> <p>Establishment of a NA strategic group to lead this initiative</p> <p>Representation from all LA's expected and when appropriate teachers and middle leaders will be invited to engage in the group's work</p> <p>A draft template for a leadership development framework to be created</p> <p>A scoping exercise to be carried out to ascertain what existing effective practice and approaches to leadership development are currently in place. Liaison with SCEL will support this</p> <p>A rationalisation of the current position and commissioning of work to address potential gaps will lead to the creation of a NA Leadership Development Framework for Schools. This framework to be endorsed and validated by SCEL</p> <p>A co-ordinated professional learning plan will be confirmed to support leadership development at all levels</p>	<p>January 2018 and onwards</p> <p>January 2018</p> <p>March 2018</p> <p>June 2018</p> <p>October 2018</p>	<p>Leads: Vincent Docherty supported by focus group; Headteachers leadership group – SCEL fellows</p> <p>NA group</p> <p>NA group</p> <p>CPL leads to be consulted. Sub-group to pursue.</p> <p>NA group assisted by Yvonne McCracken and SCEL</p> <p>NA group in liaison with PCL leads</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>Increased self-identification as leaders by staff at all levels in schools</p> <p>Access by all staff in schools to a clear leadership development programme supported by high quality professional learning</p> <p>50% of staff in schools will be engaged in some aspect of formal leadership training</p> <p>Leadership positions in schools filled with appropriately prepared leaders</p> <p>As a result of the leadership development programme and other influences all HMI inspections will see the QI 1.3 evaluated as Good or better</p>

<p>Share best practice in management School Estates and considering future education delivery model</p> <p>Key Drivers: SI TP</p>	<p>Develop digital culture for training staff Utilise IT infrastructure that is available to deliver a virtual learning environment – Esgoil Explore and develop commissioned provision opportunities</p> <p>Build a conversation with Island/rural communities around sustainability and learning futures Map community assets and barriers to sustainable community participation</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Leads: Wilf Weir / Bernard Chisholm</p>	<p>Qualitative - teachers views if they are confident using it</p>	<p>% children across the NA meet the DD standard</p> <p>Evidence community facilities are better used</p> <p>IT infrastructure - Esgoil</p>
<p>Partnership provision providing improved outcomes (for example e-learning and virtual classroom development)</p> <p>Key Drivers: SI TP</p>	<p>Explore existing solutions used in rural/island areas and build on/adapt these to other rural/island settings</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>		<p>TBC</p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p>Survival and sustainability in island and rural settings</p> <p>Key Drivers: SI TP</p>				<p>TBC</p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p>Develop a digital culture to improve learning provision</p> <p>Key Drivers: SI TP</p>	<p>Identify existing infrastructure and identify future options</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Leads: Wilf Weir / Craig Clements</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>TBC</p>



<p>Work across the Northern Alliance Early Years Programme for the promotion of preventative and early intervention to support families</p> <p>Key Drivers: PI TP SI ACP</p>	<p>A shared strategy, building on best practice linking with literacy and numeracy developments Promote and increase understanding of importance of attachment and supportive approaches Co-ordination of Early Years Workstreams</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Early Years Network across all 8 LAs</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p>Develop quality improvement across early learning and childcare</p> <p>Key Drivers: SI</p>	<p>A co-ordinated approach across the 8 local authorities Consider the most appropriate Improvement methodologies to audit quality of provision</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Leads: Regional Improvement Lead and 8 LAs</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>TBC</p>



5. Governance and Reporting

It is important to be clear about the Northern Alliance's approach to governance. The Alliance does not adopt a 'hard' governance model but one that is nonetheless robust, transparent and accountable. It is appropriate to be clear about how we anticipate accountability for improvement in attainment sitting within each of the eight local authority's internal governance framework and structures. The governance arrangements within the Northern Alliance will be subject to constant review for all those involved. The collaborative is also aware that further changes may be required to be made to governance framework subject to the outcome of the Scottish Government's wider consultation on the Education Bill. The following roles and responsibilities are outlined below underpin the current governance model:

Regional Improvement Forum

The Regional Improvement Forum is a key leadership group which will be made up of the eight Directors from each partner authority and the Regional Improvement Lead. It provides for strong collaborative leadership across the Northern Alliance to drive forward strategic developments in relation to curriculum, learning and teaching and other outcomes-focussed areas of agreed collaborative practice. This group will regularly monitor and scrutinise collaborative projects being undertaken across the Northern Alliance and will have strategic oversight of the deployment of shared resources as appropriate to ensure these are focussed on agreed improvement priorities and outcomes. It will focus on the regional delivery of the SAC/NIF key drivers and focus on developing impactful evidence based improvement programmes, which can then be scaled up to close the attainment gap and accelerate attainment across all sectors.

We anticipate the Improvement Forum will support each of the constituent local authorities with its improvement journey but the body itself will not be accountable for the improvement. Given it is an alliance of the willing partners rather than a formal decision making structure, it will not be a part of the formal governance structures of each of the eight authorities. Where the forum does offer advice and recommendations for significant change in professional practice, policy or resource allocation, it will be the responsibility of each authorities representative on the forum to seek the necessary approvals from his/her own governance structures rather than being able to accept an instruction from the forum without the approval of council.

This model has now been operating for a short period and the additionality it offers as a challenge group, best practice model and shared expert forum can be seen in the variety of projects and programmes now underway across the region.

Regional Improvement Advisory Forum

The Regional Improvement Advisory Forum will include the eight Directors together with wider governance partners including Education Scotland, Care Inspectorate, universities and training providers and Scottish Government. This Forum will add a quasi-external perspective as well as challenge to the improvement endeavours and the thinking of the Northern Alliance, focussing on enhancing our collaborative work and practice through focussing on the latest research and innovation from across Scotland, the UK and indeed from a global perspective. There is an opportunity also to enlist input from national and international expertise.

The Improvement Advisory Forum would also be central to the evaluation of impact of the Northern Alliance. The review of improvement data from programmes, progress data and scrutiny of evaluation is central to effective governance. Learning and research from across Scotland and beyond will also feed into this forum so that we can learn and react quickly to new evidence based impactful practice. The formal publication of evaluation of impact and an annual report on the activity and outcomes will be presented to this forum for scrutiny, as well as to each of the Local Authority governance structures.

Local Authority

Local authorities maintain their key strategic role in leading forward educational services at a local level to ensure local needs are best met within existing resources. Each of the eight authorities will retain their own governance and scrutiny arrangements, through committees and other means on to govern education and children's services and will remain the accountable body for school performance and all other aspects of the day to day leadership and management of schools as enshrined in legislation.

Convention of Convenors

We have created a Convention of Convenors (of Education/Children's Services) bringing together the lead elected members from each of the eight authorities with the Directors and Regional Improvement Lead. On a six monthly basis this will provide them with the essential opportunity to monitor the progress being made across the Northern Alliance in terms of meeting shared objectives and improving outcomes for young people. This Convention will be modelled on the successful Convention of Highlands and Islands. Whilst each authority area is unique, many of the



same challenges are shared and this forum will provide a powerful opportunity to ensure political appraisal of the key work being led forward at a regional level. Evaluation of impact on children and young people's outcomes, scalability, shared approaches and new developments will be shared and reviewed by this important group. They will also have an important role in disseminating approaches and ways of working to their relevant Councils and the wider political networks/groups.

Scottish Government

The Scottish Government sets national policy and direction with regards to education and children's services and also sets the inspection framework. The Northern Alliance is committed to working closely in partnership with the Scottish Government to achieve the aims and objectives as outlined in the National Improvement Framework. We clearly share the same aims and welcome their involvement and scrutiny. By working in partnership we believe that the additionality of the regional approach can be shared with national partners and help shape and develop practice across Scotland. As previously discussed the Northern Alliance is aware that the outcome of the Scottish Government's consultation on the Education Bill will inform how the collaborative develops in the future.

Northern Alliance Governance Framework Diagram

