

Agenda Item	18.
Report No	CLH 49/18

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Care, Learning and Housing

Date: 18 October 2018

Report Title: **SQA Examinations: Educational Attainment**

Report By: Director of Care & Learning

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an analysis of Highland pupil attainment to 2016/17, informing the work on closing the poverty related attainment gap.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- I. Scrutinise and comment on this performance information.

3. Attainment Report

3.1 The report is attached as Appendix 1.

4. Implications

4.1 Resource

There is some dedicated funding to improve attainment, such as the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) in Schools, and Attainment Challenge funding for schools and the authority. Most activity regarding attainment, is dependent on mainstream resources.

4.2 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural)

It is recognised that the attainment gap is very much a consequence of disadvantage for individuals and communities, and measures to close the gap can also help address the experience of poverty for children and families. It is important to ensure the negative factors that may be encountered by pupils who live in the more remote parts of Highland are also addressed, albeit the funding for PEF does not fully take account of rural deprivation.

4.3 Gaelic - The opportunities available to Gaelic Medium pupils need to be maximised.

4.4 There are no legal; climate change/carbon clever; risk implications.

Designation: Director of Care & Learning

Date: 9 October 2018

Author: Beth Brown Strategic Quality Improvement Manager and the Quality Improvement Team.

Background Papers:

Appendix 1

SQA Examinations: Educational Attainment

Summary

This report provides analysis of Highland pupil attainment in session 2017/18, informing our Highland education improvement agenda, with a focus on reducing the poverty related attainment gap.

Background

Flexibility of Curriculum Models

Curriculum for Excellence provides schools with the flexibility to develop curriculum models best suited to their local circumstances and individual candidates. Different curriculum models provide the opportunity for learners to study a different mix of awards and qualifications at the most appropriate time for them during their Senior Phase (S4-S6). Learners will have experienced a variety of presentation patterns, informed by discussions with teachers and parents and carers in the best interests of the learner, both in terms of the number of subjects and whether individuals are studying for a qualification over one or two years.

Those entered for National 5 this year include pupils from S4/5/6, some of whom have progressed to National 5 in one year from the Broad General Education and others in two years or progression from National 4. Some candidates may, for some subjects, bypass National 5 altogether and progress directly to Higher either in one year in S5 or S6 or as a 2 year higher over S4/5. The flexibility to the senior phase offers more streamlined progression for pupils across their senior phase and often offers more choice within the curriculum, however, it does mean that attainment data judgements should be based on leavers data as delay of entries etc. will not be evident through the local data therefore without having a full understanding of local context care should be taken when interpreting local data.

Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool – INSIGHT

Insight is the national dashboard to measure school and Authority performance in four key areas: literacy and numeracy, attainment for all, attainment versus deprivation, and leaver destinations. It continues to be used to reflect on and analyse attainment data. Rather than compare data with actual Authorities or schools with broadly similar characteristics, Insight creates a “virtual comparator”. This is done by selecting key characteristics which make up an Authority or school: gender balance; staying-on rate; percentage of time spent in mainstream education; ASN and deprivation based upon the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). From

these areas, Insight matches ten pupils from around Scotland to every one of the pupils in Highland, and treats this matched group as the virtual school or Authority.

As a self-evaluation tool, Insight is very powerful. The dashboard itself works through a series of filters, which allows schools to dig deeper into any initial data. Insight is very much a tool for self-evaluation, containing a huge variety of filters to enable schools/ authority to dig deeper to find their improvement focus. It is not a reporting tool to demonstrate accountability, and while we ask schools to present data and discuss their improvement agenda using insight, it is to inform and frame improvement rather than to be used in isolation within any one filter.

Schools are asked to look at the 'big questions' around gaps in their attainment and focus on Local benchmarking in **September** (most recent attainment data from August results) to **inform immediate tracking and monitoring interventions** for pupils that have stayed on at school. This year we have also asked Secondary schools to consider their new S1 and S3 Curriculum for Excellence teacher judgement 'achievement of a level data' and track and target pupils through the BGE phase. A discussion will take place around this data & planned interventions with their QIO followed by a more summative report being produced and discussed around National measures (final leavers data) in February when this is updated on Insight.

The average tariff scores are based on points awarded for different qualifications and awards. The complementary tariff points takes the average best set of results, to align and compensate for any differences of S4 presentation policy across the country, and therefore levels the playing field to give a more balanced comparison.

For the benefit of this report, there will be comment on National leavers attainment data from last session, as well as most recent S6 data based on the cumulative attainment of their cohort over the last 3 years, both approaches to determine summative attainment for reporting purposes. We will also, in some instances, comment on initial 'Local' dashboard data for pupils who received results in August but it should be noted that this data is not a definitive measure of attainment as pupils achieve over different senior models and pathways therefore it is difficult to determine a true picture until the point of exit.

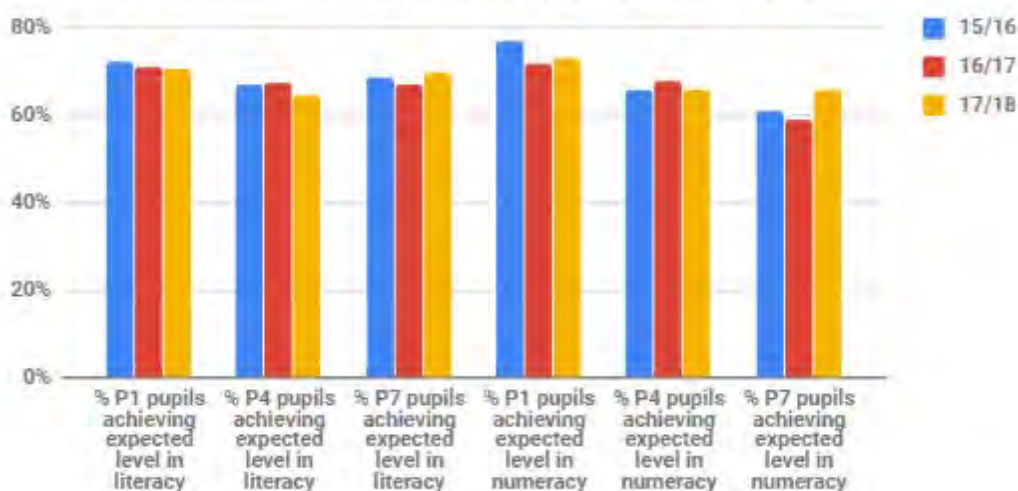
The Highland picture

Highland's young people continue to perform well with increasing trends in percentage attainment year on year.

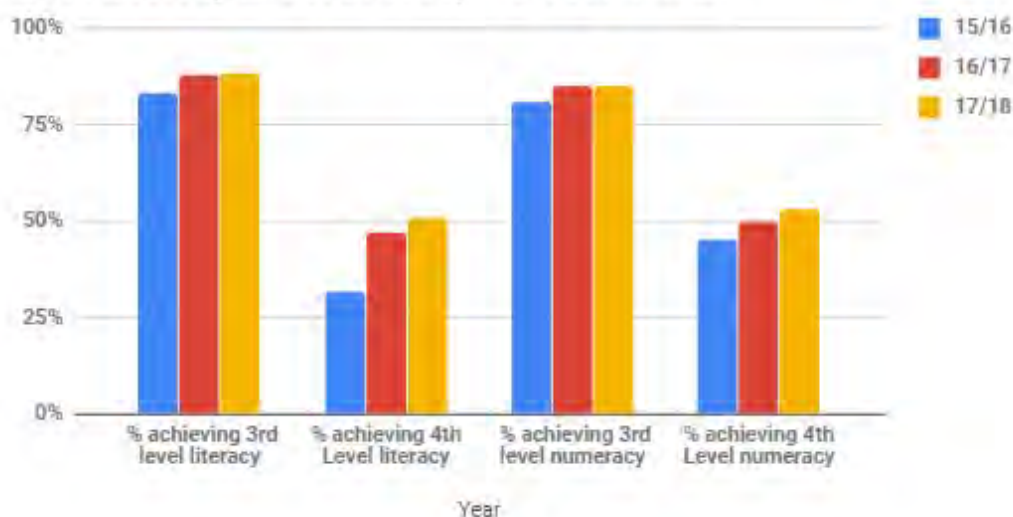
Performance in Literacy and Numeracy

On-going work continues around presentation policies in the senior phase and tracking through Broad General S1-3 to increase percentages of presentations at all levels in literacy and numeracy. Through new authority self-evaluation attainment paperwork, secondary schools are encouraged to target percentage increase in literacy and numeracy from S1 and track year on year based on this. This paperwork frames the 'Big Questions' on attainment to help inform next steps for learners that are staying on, and to reflect and act on 'lessons learned' for leavers attainment. Senior leader and Principal teacher 'Effective Use of Data' CPD is offered every year to keep up to date with effective tracking and use of data to help schools in this regard. The Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Teacher Judgement data for P1,4,7 and S3 is incorporated into this training to encourage smoother progression and planning from primary literacy and numeracy attainment, into S1-3 through to senior phase.

P1, P4, P7 Attainment in CfE Levels - 3 Year Trend



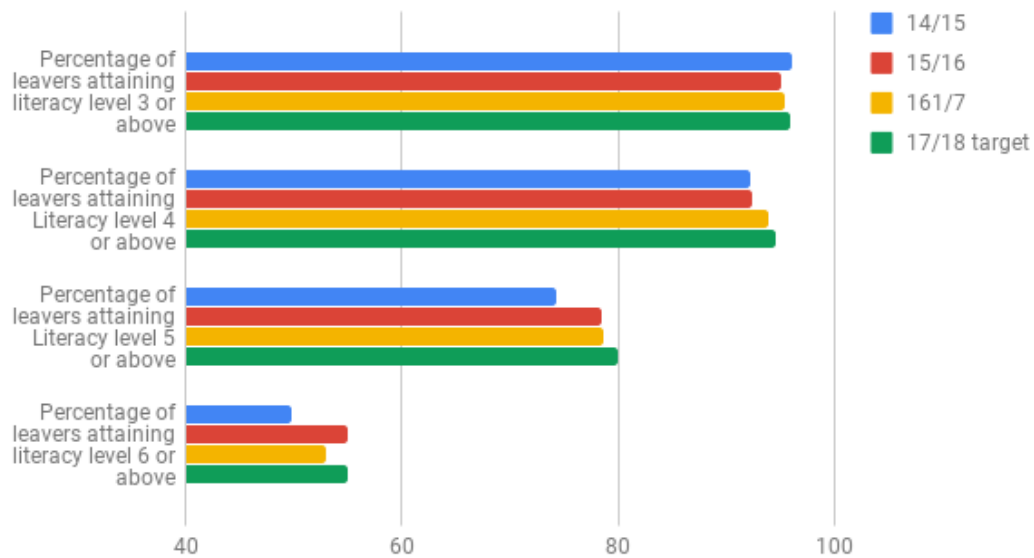
S3 Attainment - Percentage of pupils achieving CfE Level 3 &4 in Literacy and Numeracy - 3 Year Trend



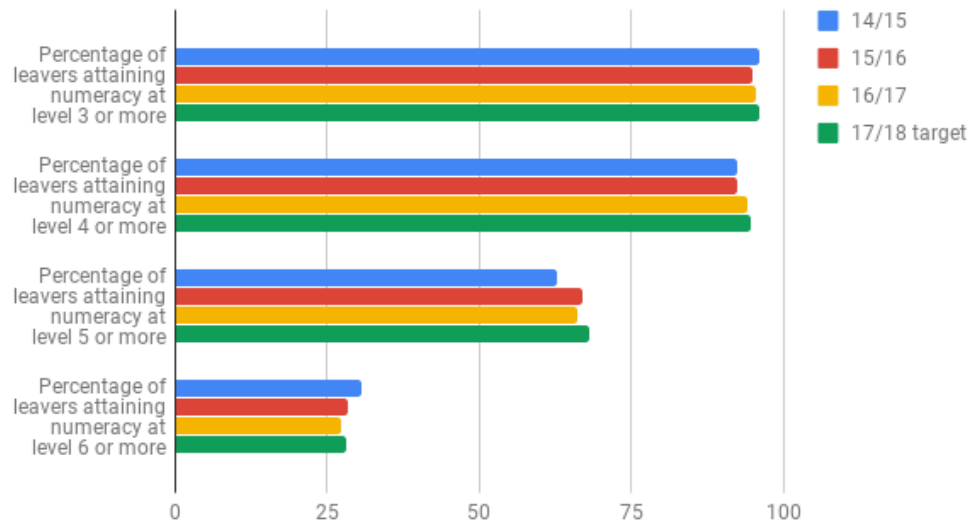
Senior Phase

SCQF Level 3,4,5,6 Literacy and Numeracy attainment Highland 4 year trends

Percentage Leavers Attainment in Literacy



Percentage Leavers Attainment in Numeracy

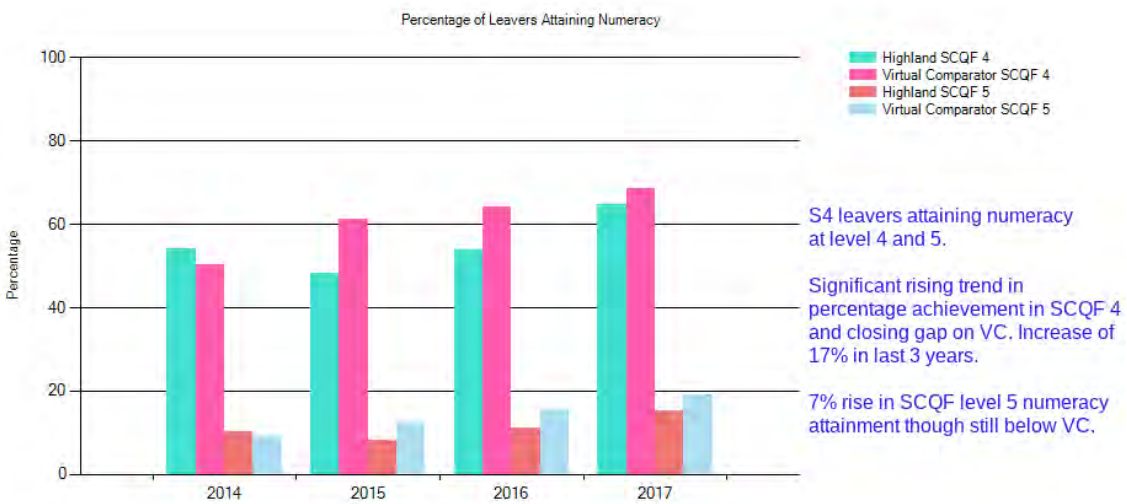
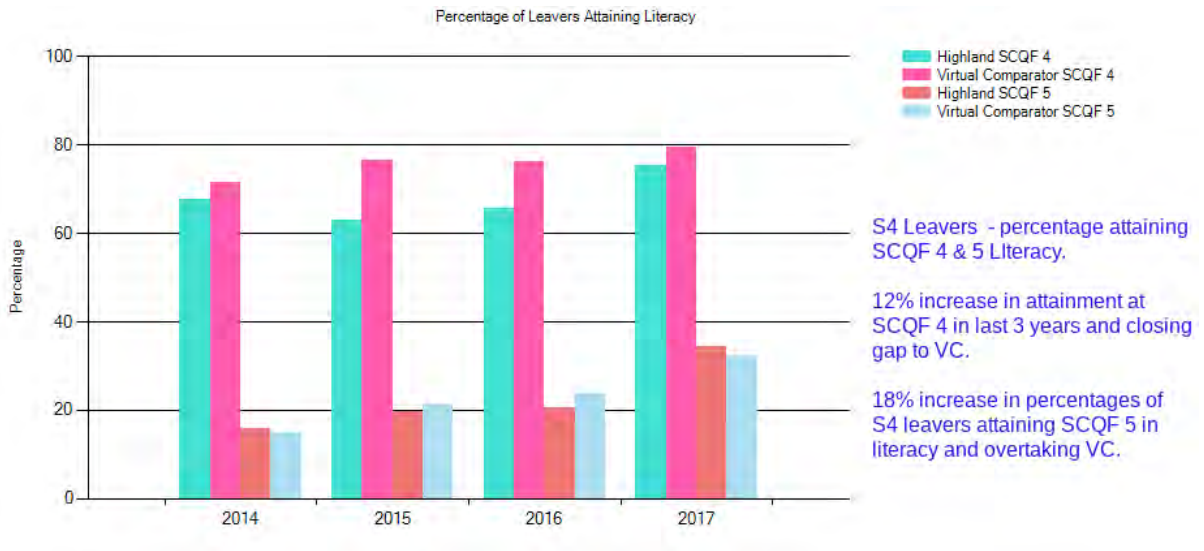


2017 Leavers Literacy & Numeracy Data with Virtual Comparator and 4 year trend

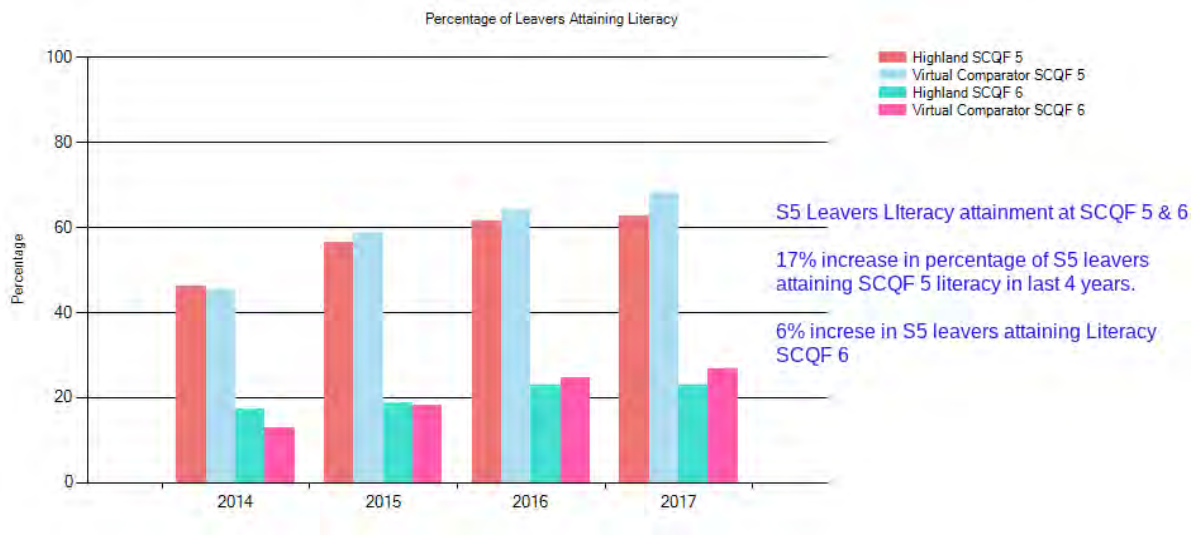
Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy for pupils leaving school in S4

The leavers data and most recent S6 cohort data shows increasing trends across the board. This improvement is also taking place Nationally therefore in many aspects

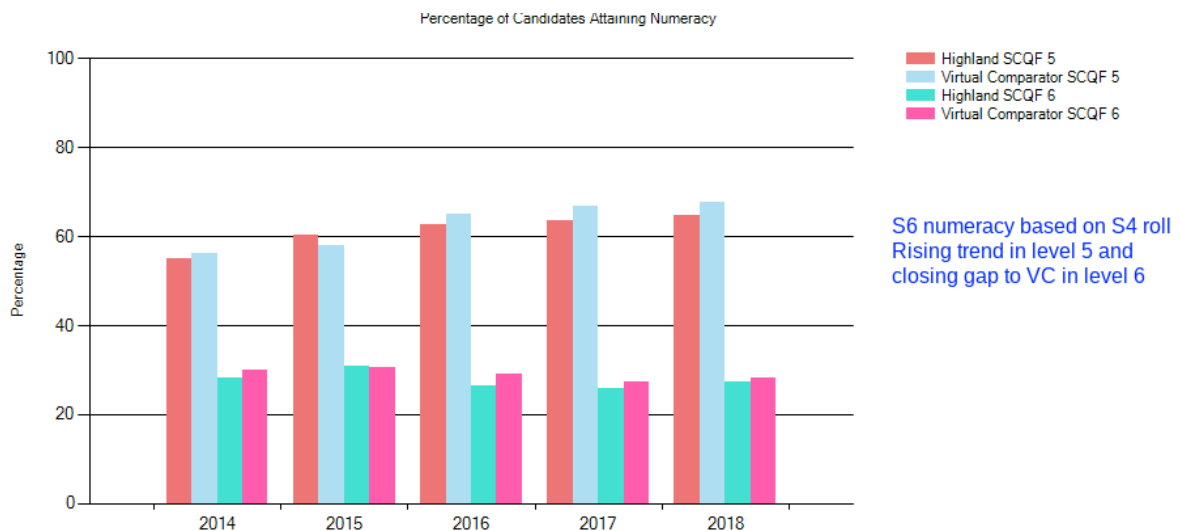
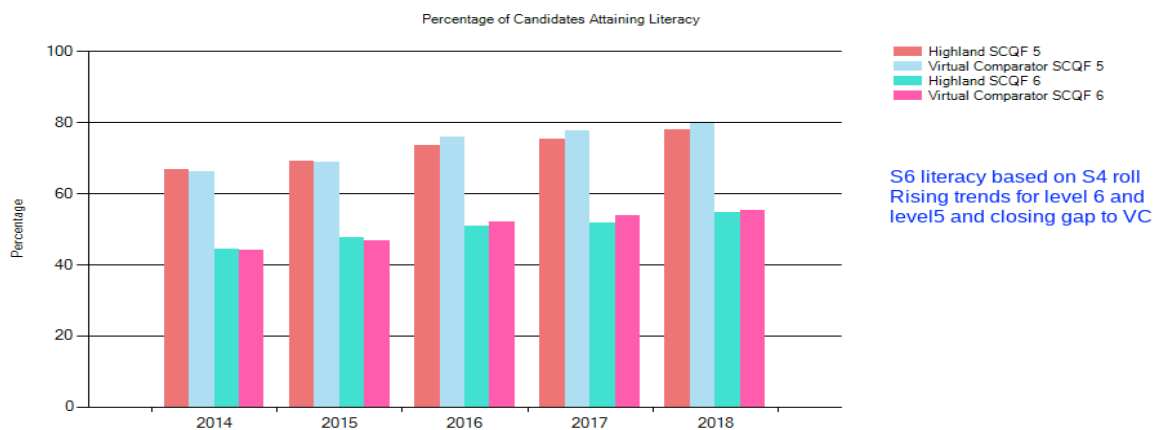
we are still below our Virtual comparator though there are many instances where the gap is closing on this and a few case where we exceed the VC.



S5 Leavers Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 5 & 6



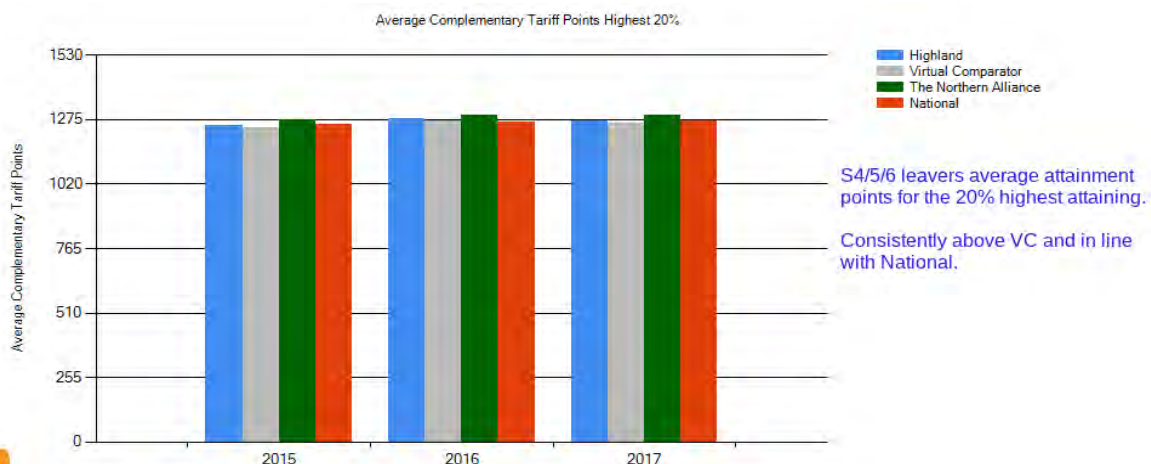
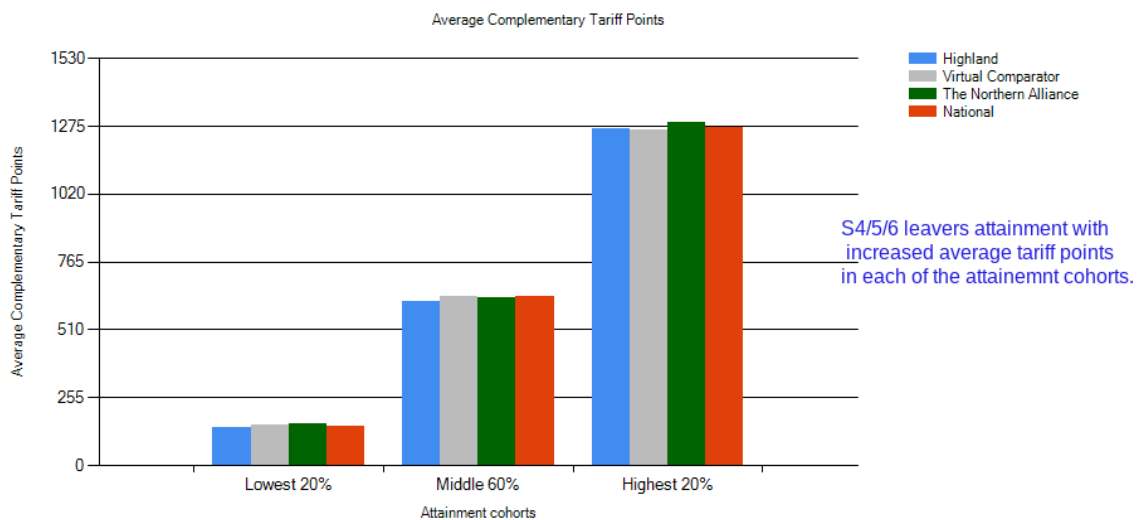
Local Measures - Most recent S6 results based on their cohort attainment from S4 and across the senior phase in Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 5 and 6

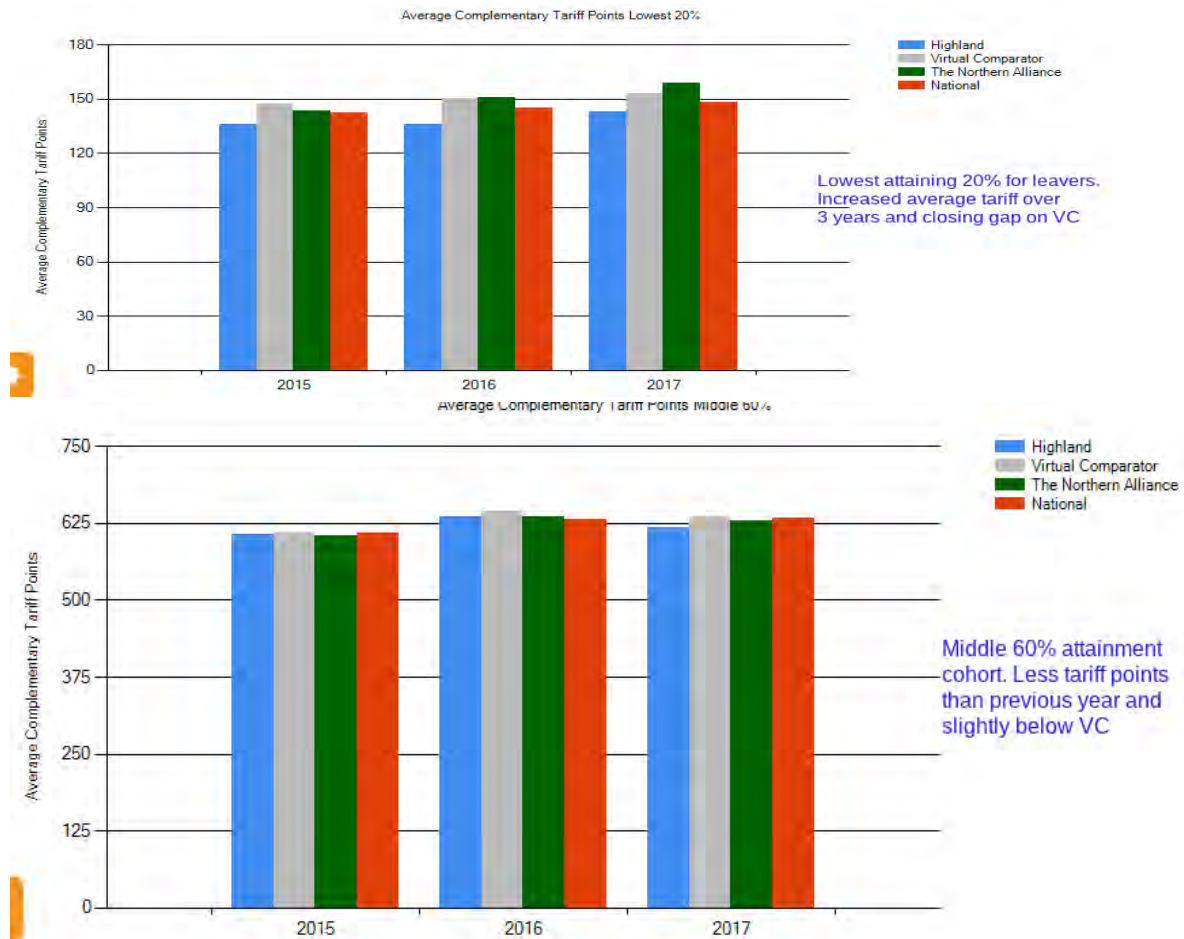


Schools are encouraged to progress learning in literacy and numeracy and plan for pupils completing an additional unit at the level above their course presentation if appropriate. This provides pupils with an extra unit at the next level and, if pupils are staying on, also prepares for smoother progression to the next course award the following session.

Continued work to support improvement in this area is ongoing in the form of Secondary Working groups leading moderation and understanding standards training as well as our Highland moderation strategy in literacy and numeracy in BGE to ensure a more fluid progression into the senior phase.

The **'Improving attainment for all'** data for our leavers in 2017 displays the average points collected by our S4/5/6 leavers across their most recent and best set of attainment. The charts below show an improving picture for the attainment of our highest and lowest attaining with a slight dip for our middle 60%.





2018 Local data - most recent results for all pupils whether they have left school or stayed on into S5 / S6.

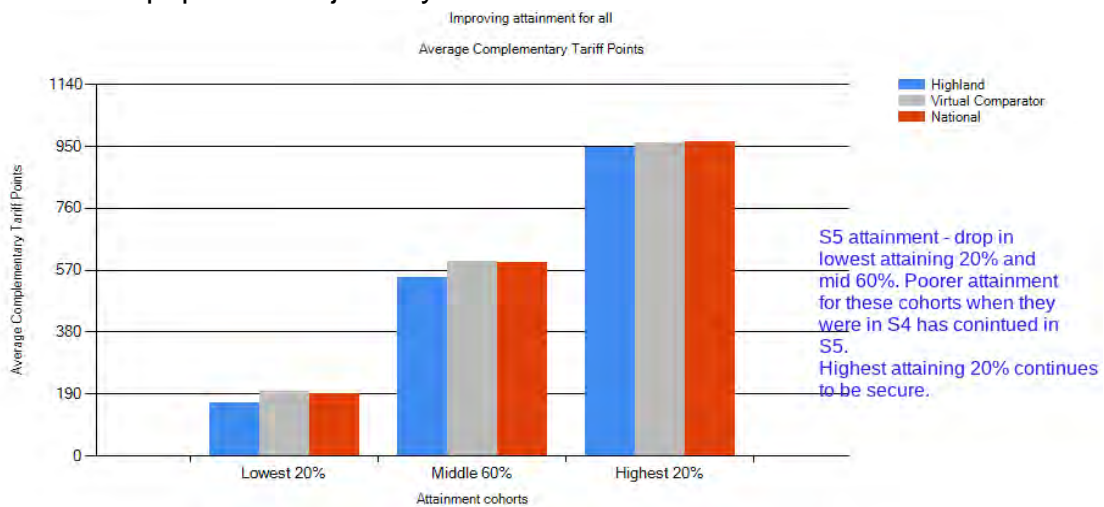
S5 based on S5

The S4/5 data can be influenced by some schools not presenting some pupils for National 5s in S4 but tailoring their curriculum to allow these pupils studying a 2 year higher over S4/5 or S5/6.

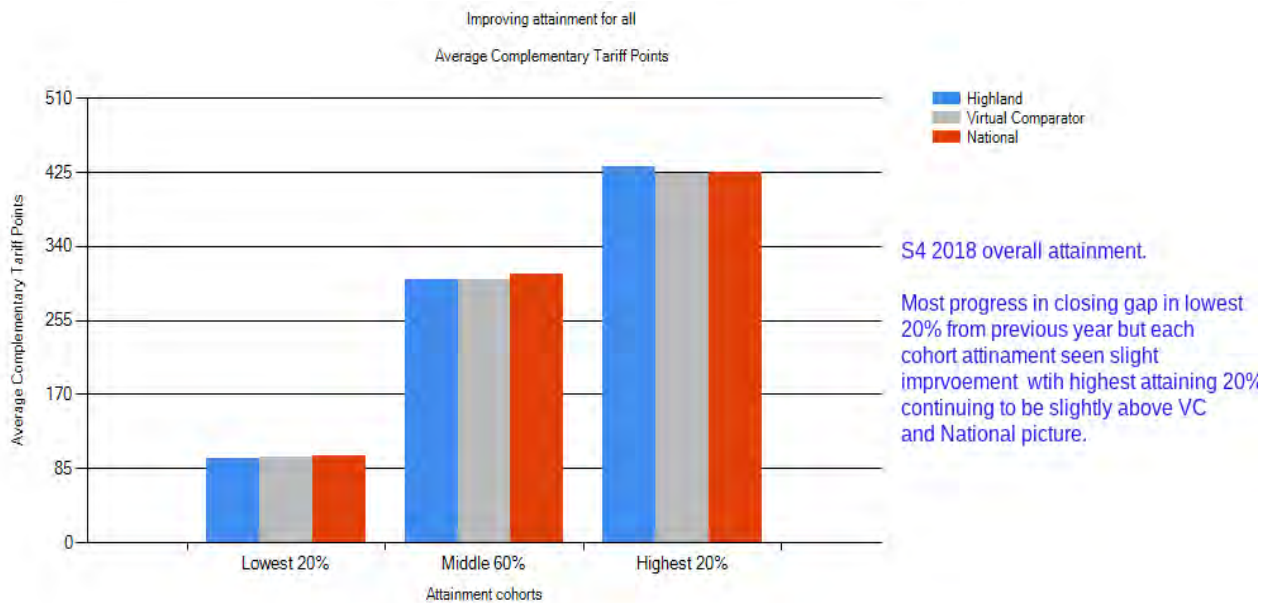
Last session the S4 cohort lowest attaining 20% was below the VC and, this pattern continues to be reflected in this same attainment group for S5 attainment this year. Following the poorer lowest attaining 20% in S4 last session, the quality improvement team analysed the underlying dataset for the lowest attaining 20% cohort and worked with schools in supporting evaluation of specific pupil attainment in this set focusing schools on improving outcomes and learner journeys for our lowest attaining pupils. Schools often find the pupils who feature in this Highland wide attainment cohort are individuals who have disengaged from education in their schools. We therefore encourage schools to use the Risk Matrix (a data package introduced a few years ago) at an earlier stage in S1/2 to identify these pupils earlier and anticipate intervention strategies to keep them engaged in their learning. Schools are also improving in targeting achievement for those at risk of disengaging

in S1-3 (saltire awards, youth achievement etc.) which can then be included in their leavers attainment.

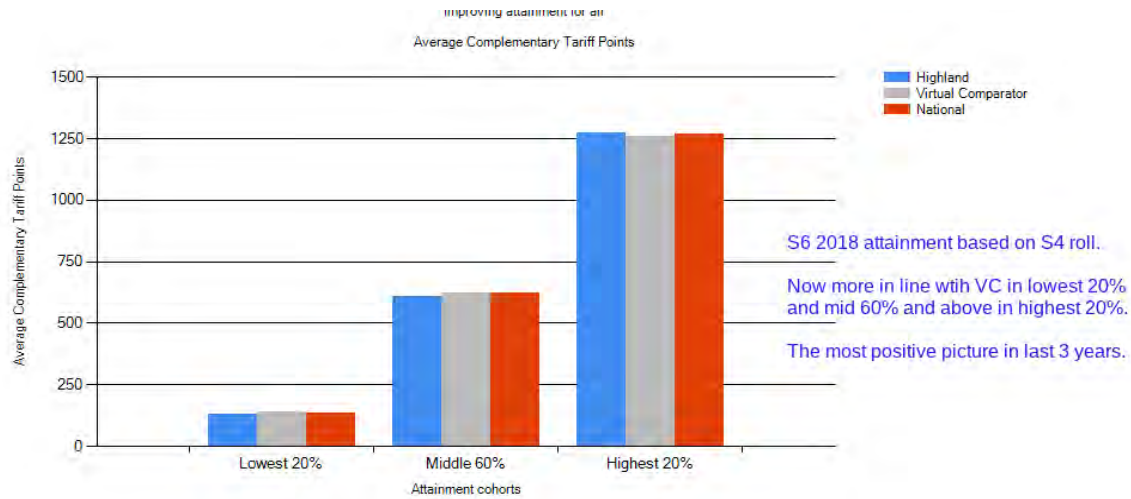
However, the attainment for those that stayed on into S5 for this cohort now needs to be analysed again and the story behind the data discussed with schools with reflection on pupil learner journeys.



S4 2018 Attainment - A positive in the most recent S4 attainment for 2018. This has improved across all attainment cohorts with every cohort now meeting the virtual comparator.

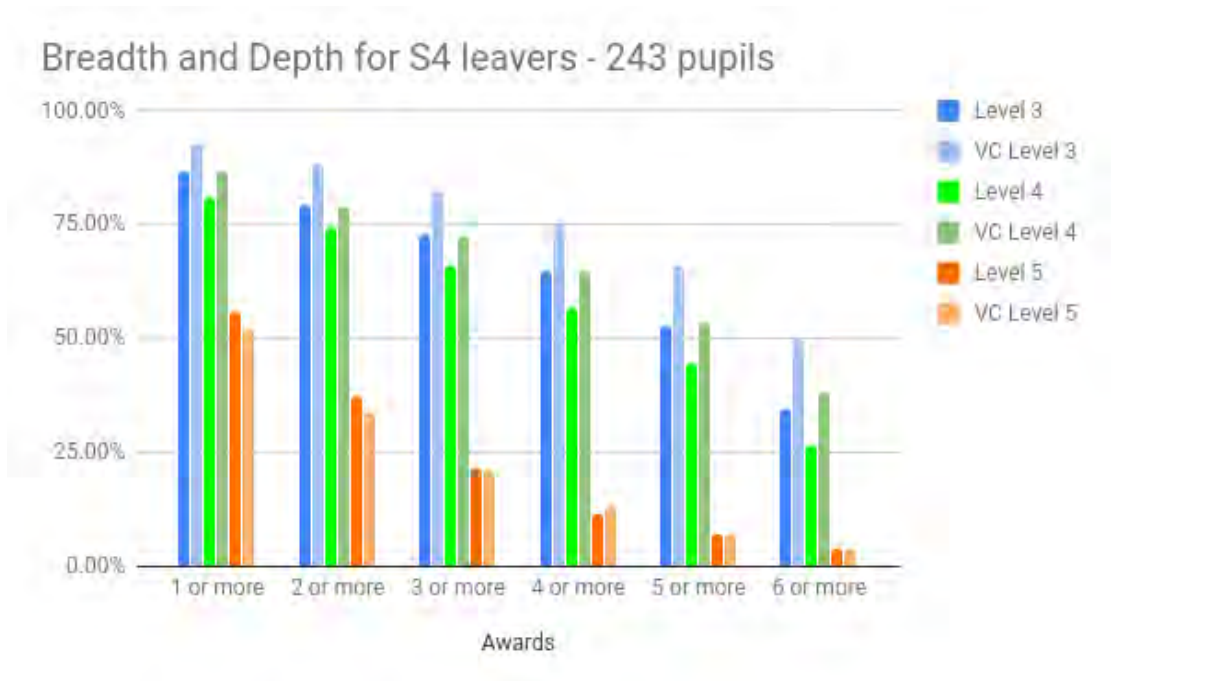
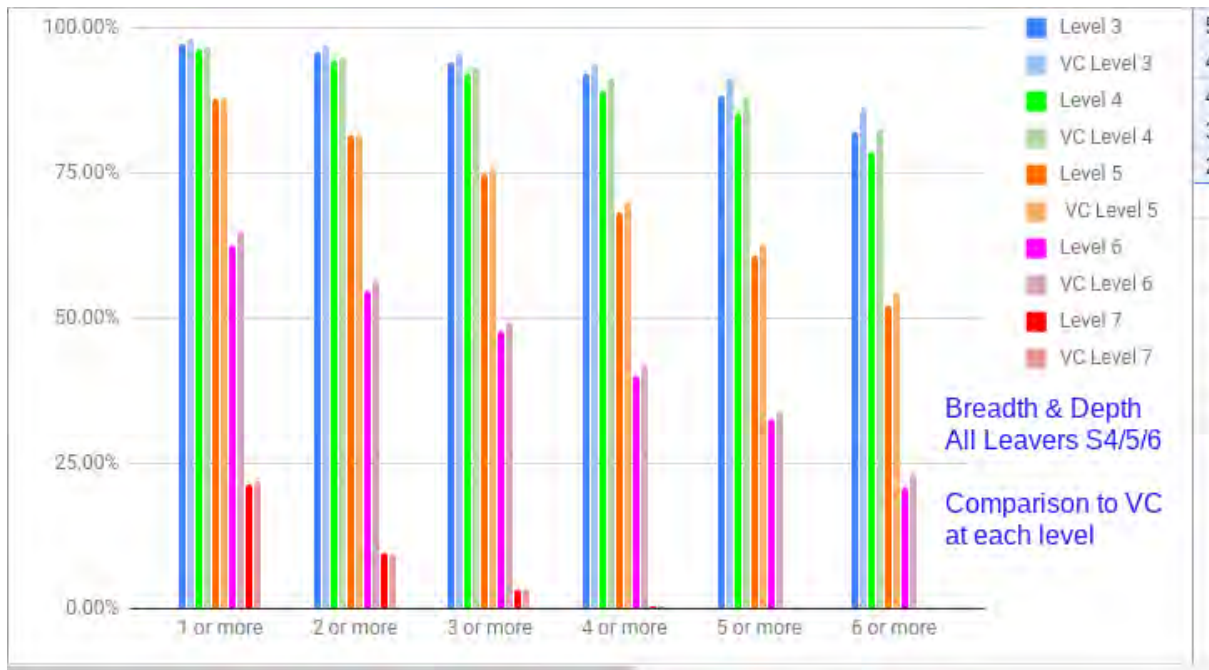


S6 2018 Attainment - cumulative attainment for this cohort over the last 3 years on point of exit. An improved picture across all 3 cohorts and now much more in line with our VC.



Breadth and Depth

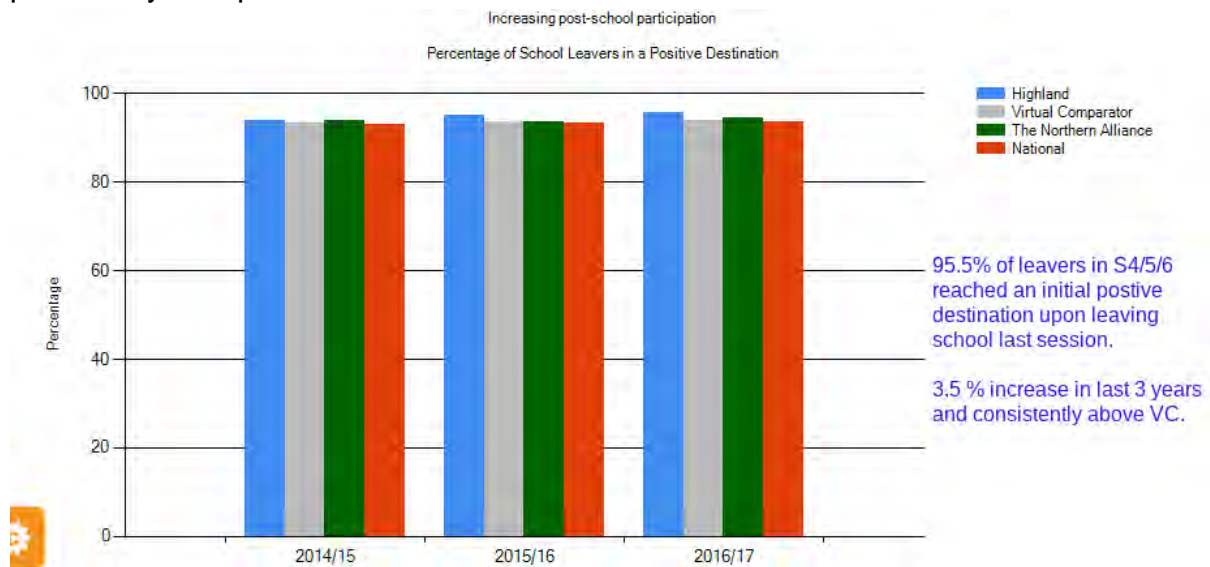
Comparison charts below shows S4/5/6 leavers data in the form of percentage of levels achieved upon leaving school compared to VC. We are slightly below VC in most measures but especially in lower level attainment. When we break this down we can see the most influence on this overall picture is around our 243 S4 leavers last session. We will work with schools to anticipate who their early leavers are and monitor their overall levels achieved, pushing level 3/ 4 courses instead of withdrawing from level 4/5 courses not attained. This strategy should also improve overall attainment for our lowest achieving 20%.



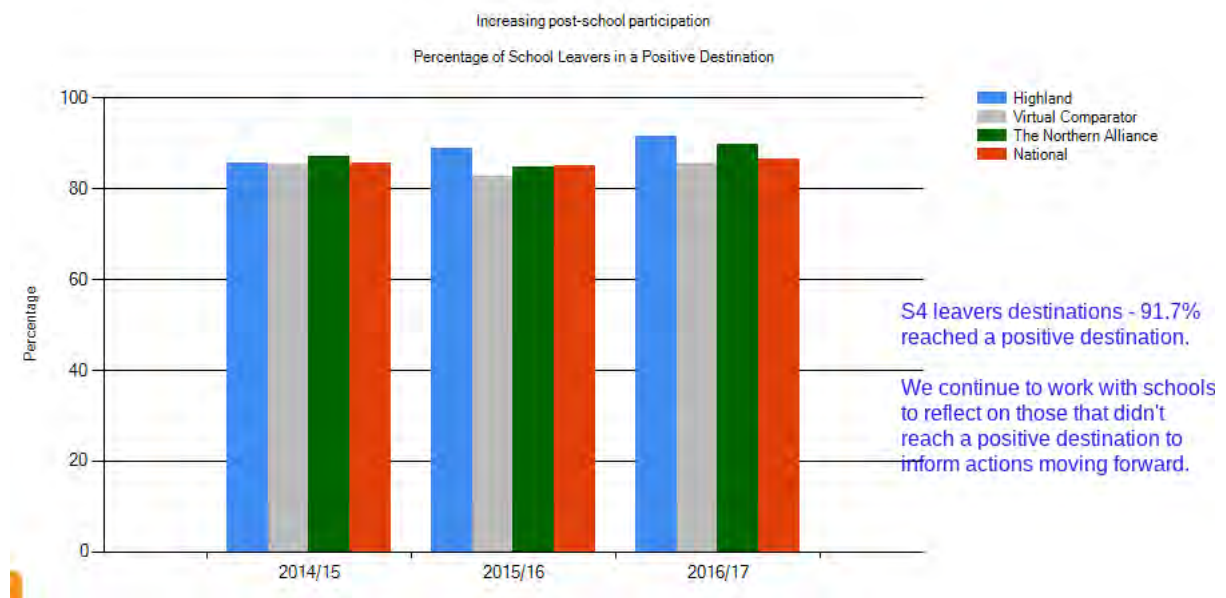
Positive destinations for young people continue to paint a strong picture - the graph below showing a 3 year trend for Highland exceeding national and virtual comparator for percentage of pupils reaching a positive destination on leaving school.

This continued improvement is as a result of focus in schools and support from the 16+, transitions and QI teams around 'Developing the Young Workforce' agenda in the form of staff CPD, support in school, improved Hi-hope website and work

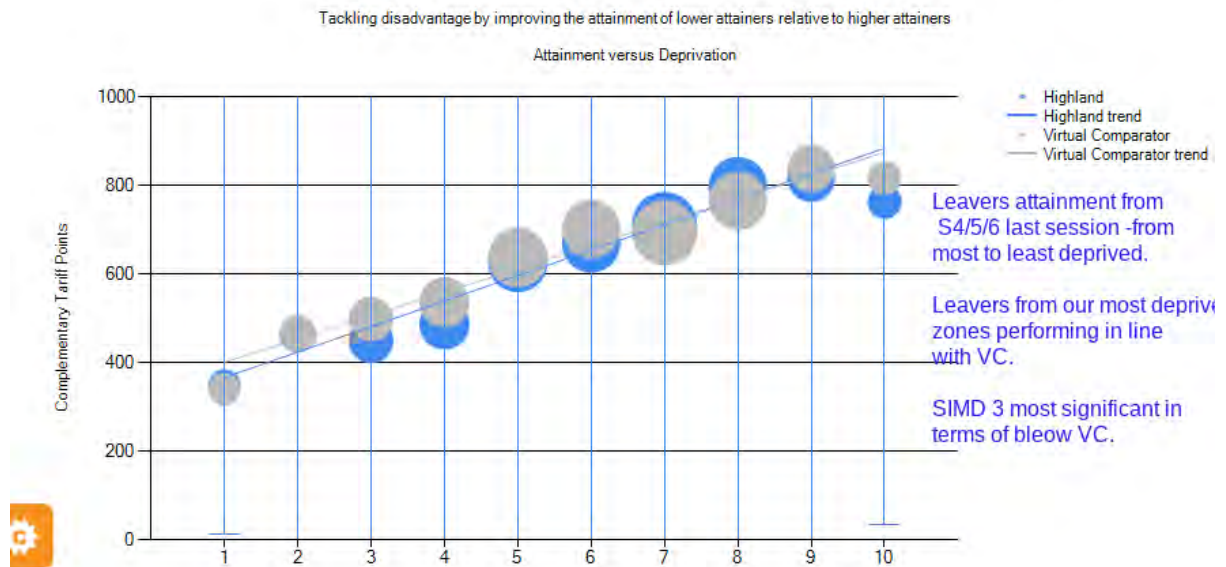
experience facility as well as schools and the Local Authority working positively and proactively with partners.



S4 leavers - Although breadth and depth attainment for our S4 leavers last year is lower than VC, this has not prevented most of the 243 pupils reaching a positive destination - see below. We ask schools to reflect on this data for their own establishment and question if pupils are in appropriate destinations, as well as any interventions that could have happened for those that failed to reach a positive destination.



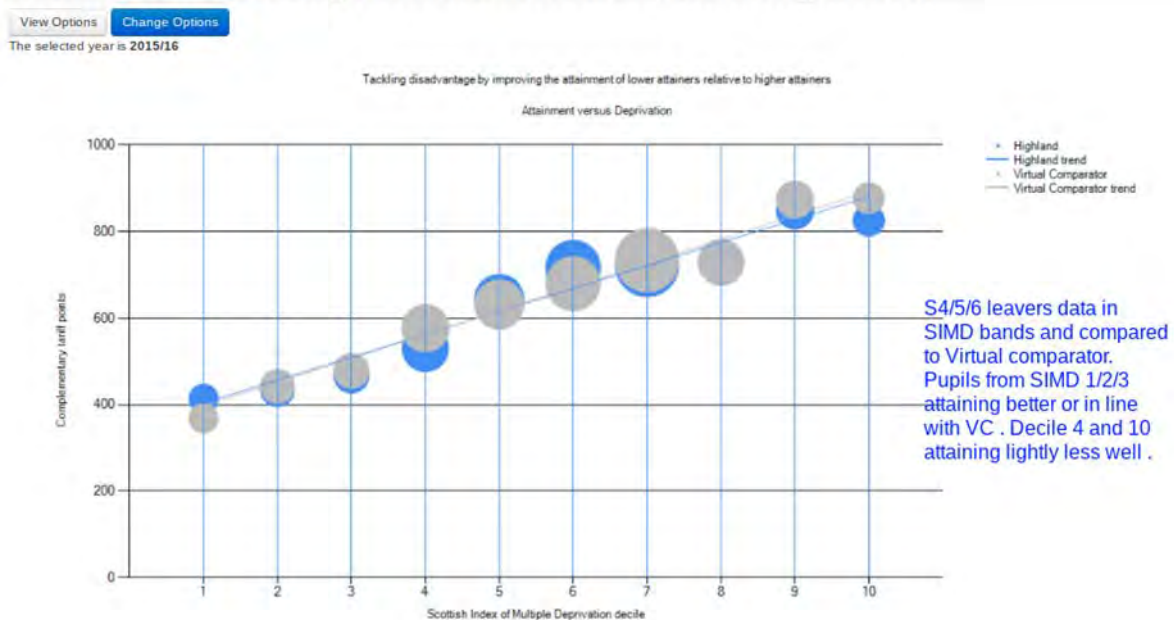
The **Attainment versus deprivation** graphs show S4/5/6 leavers data to be positive in comparison with VC with regard to our two most deprived zones but some investigation around pupil attainment and schools contribution to this in SIMD 3 and 4 is now required.



S5 Leavers Attainment versus Deprivation

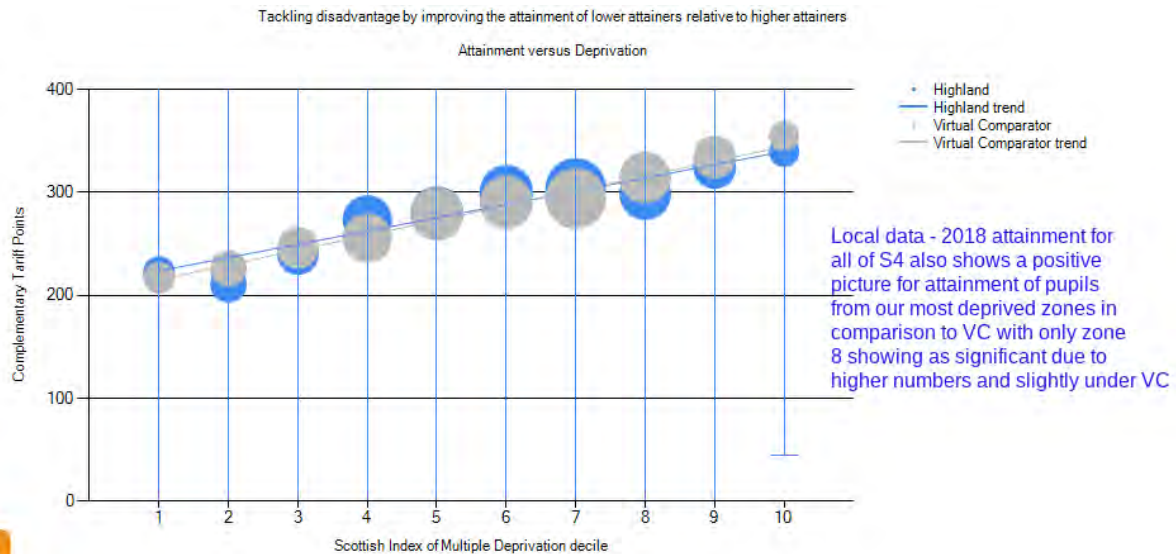
The graph below indicates that the 65 pupils from most deprived zones achieved higher attainment than those from the VC. However the attainment of the 66 pupils in SIMD 3 (the zone where attainment is less than VC in the overall year group graph above) is significantly below VC which indicates that these pupils are having the most influence on the overall picture in SIMD 3 above. We will look at this data to consider which schools these pupils came from and speak to schools directly about curriculum choices and attainment of individuals.

National Benchmarking Measure: Attainment versus Deprivation



Local Data - 2018 S4 Attainment versus Deprivation

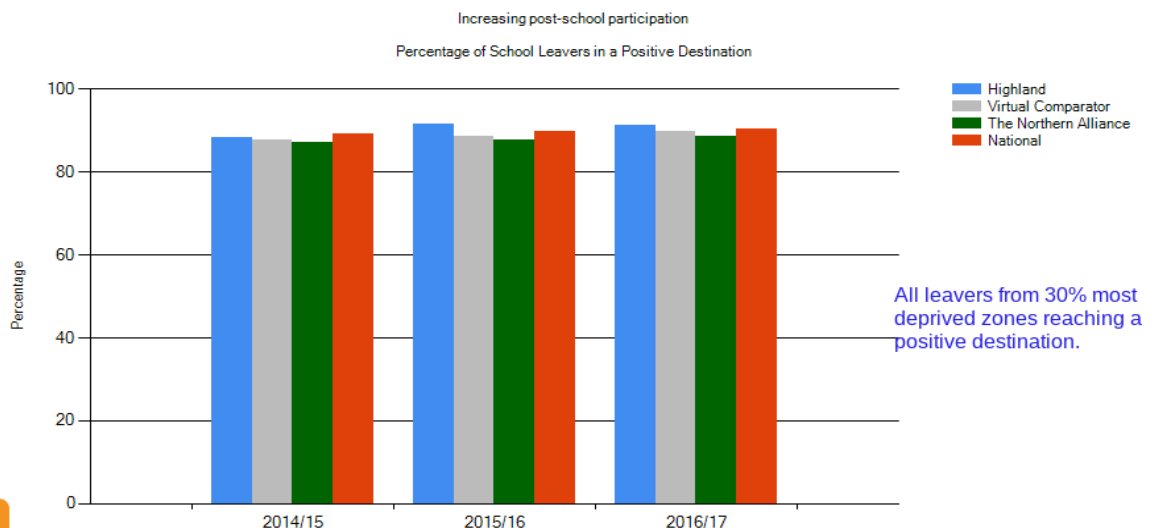
A continuing positive picture for overall 2018 attainment for S4 showing comparable attainment for pupils in our most deprived zones with the VC.



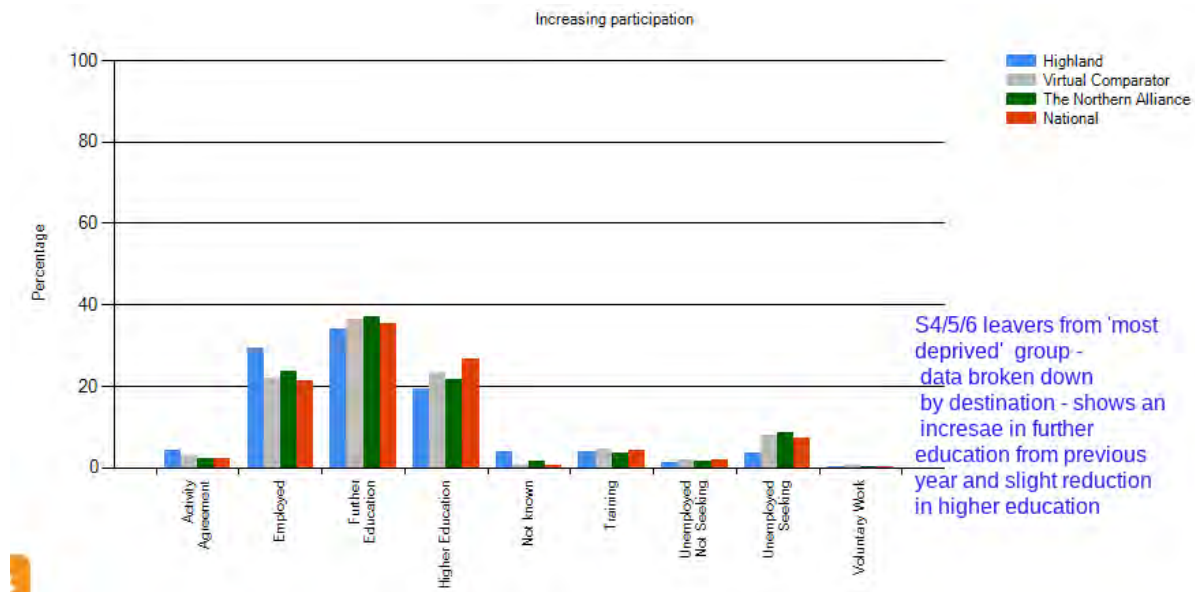
Identifying and Reducing Our Poverty Related Attainment Gap

Data analysis shows that targeting and improving attainment in our lowest attaining cohorts will help reduce our attainment gap. When analysing attainment for all data averages across all three attainment cohorts we can see that our largest gap between our most and least deprived is in our lowest attainers where we are lower than our VC. The gap narrows and is in line with VC for our mid attaining cohort and narrows still and is above our VC for our highest attaining. We continue to work with schools on effective use of data to understand their attainment gaps and reflect on the appropriateness of their curriculum as well as effective use of Pupil Equity Funding.

Percentage of pupils achieving a positive destination from 'most deprived' group



Broken down by destination, this shows that the percentage of this group going to further education has increased by 2% on the previous year.



The graph below was calculated from insight data for our leavers attainment in literacy and numeracy. This shows a gradual narrowing of the attainment gap between the least and most deprived in literacy across all levels. While the gap in level 5 attainment in both literacy and numeracy seems large, it is almost in line with the VC gap in both cases. The numeracy gap remains consistent in level 3 and 5 - careful attention will be made to level 4 numeracy presentations to monitor this with schools.

PERFORMANCE DATA	History			Current		Future	
	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	
PI Code and short Name (link to Corporate Plan)	Value	Value	Value	Value (updated Feb 18)	Target	Target	Target
Percentage of Leavers attaining level 3 literacy - gap between most and least deprived	5.5%	8%	4.4% (VC 3.8%)		3.8%	3.5%	3%
Percentage of Leavers attaining level 4 literacy - gap between most and least deprived	12.6%	13%	8.4% (VC gap 7.2%)		7.8%	7%	6%

Percentage of Leavers attaining level 5 literacy - gap between most and least deprived	25%	27%	22.8% (VC gap - 23%)		22%	20%	18%
Percentage of Leavers attaining level 3 numeracy - gap between most and least deprived	6.2%	8.5%	6.2% (VC 4.5%)		5%	4.5%	4%
Percentage of Leavers attaining level 4 numeracy - gap between most and least deprived	15.9%	14%	17.3% (VC gap 12.2%)		14%	12%	11%
Percentage of Leavers attaining level 5 numeracy - gap between most and least deprived	26.6%	28%	28.6% (VC gap 29.1%)		27.8%	27%	26%

Identifying and addressing our Highland attainment gap in the BGE is more challenging with limited historic data available. However a new National BGE toolkit has been launched for schools and the local authority to use for self-evaluation in the BGE to analyse professional judgement data. The introduction of Scottish National Standardised Assessments have also been rolled out this year with pupils in P1,4,7 and S3. In a recent HT survey, schools, in the main, reported that they found assessments helpful and used them diagnostically to inform next steps in planning to meet learners needs. All assessments help in evidence gathering to inform teacher judgement and, while we still feel Highland data is still in experimental stages, we have had a major focus over the last 3 years in terms of supporting schools with knowledge and understanding of effective planning and moderation of judgements and this will continue over the next few years.

The chart below takes the average of the combined percentage level achieved across P1,4,7 and S3 (level3 only) and shows the attainment gap between the most and least deprived. We only have 2 years of data on this but the chart below shows the gap to be narrowing in both reading and numeracy.

CfE Level Achievement P1,4,7,S3) - Highland Attainment Gap

PERFORMANCE DATA	History Gap reduced Gap unchanged/ similar to VC Gap widening/ far from VC			Current	Future		
PI Code and short Name (link to Corporate Plan)	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18		18/19	19/20
	Value	Value	Value	Value (updated Feb 18)		Target	Target

CfE BGE Judgement Attainment gap for percentage of pupils attaining expected level in reading P1; P4; P7; S3			22% gap	17% gap		16%	15%
CfE BGE Judgement Attainment gap for percentage of pupils attaining expected level in numeracy in P1; P4; P7; S3			29% gap	20% gap		18%	17%

Central support around the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) has taken the form of clear guidelines and paperwork, a data toolkit resource, PEF curriculum development officers in literacy and Health & Wellbeing as well as a dedicated PEF officer to monitor and track equity funding, interventions and measures.

From school plans and PEF spend we can see that schools are focusing on improving one or more of the areas of literacy, numeracy and health and Wellbeing. With attainment being only of the five key areas involved in improving outcomes, schools are also focusing on improving attendance for target groups, inclusion and home support as well as improving engagement and participation.

We are starting to identify areas of good practice across Highland with a few of these case studies / strategies being shared as workshops at the next set of Headteacher conferences in November.

A more detailed report of progress, actions and impact can be viewed in the Highland Education Standards, Quality and Review report.