

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE – 17 MAY 2016**

**ANGUS SECONDARY SCHOOL ATTAINMENT 2014-15**

**REPORT BY MARGO WILLIAMSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR – CHILDREN & LEARNING**

**ABSTRACT**

This report provides the Children and Learning Committee with a summary of the attainment outcomes in Angus Council Secondary Schools in the Senior Phase for academic session 2014-15, following the February 2016 release of final Insight data for 2014-15. There is a key focus on improving attainment and accountability across the authority and head teachers are fully engaged in improving performance at school level.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Scrutinise the attainment results as detailed in this report, following the February Insight update. Acknowledge the continued hard work of our young people, staff and parents to support the ongoing implementation of the new qualifications.
- (ii) Request further attainment reports annually in this format, following confirmation of the data in the February Insight update.
- (iii) Agree to attend further Insight briefing sessions.

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/COPORATE PLAN**

This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

Our children and young people are confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Each year young people in secondary schools in Angus are presented for Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) certificated National Courses and Units. The 2014-15 session saw the second year of implementation of the new National Qualifications and the first run of the new Highers in the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Senior Phase (S4-6).
- 3.2 The initial attainment outcomes were reported to the Children and Learning Committee on 10 November 2015. (Report No 432/15 - People Directorate Improvement Plan Mid-Term Report 30 September 2015).
- 3.3 In session 2014-15, Insight replaced Standard Tables And Charts (STACs). Insight focuses on looking at performance in the Senior Phase across four key national benchmarking measures. It encourages a holistic approach to evaluating attainment and achievement that takes into account performance across all four main measures.
- 3.4 The four national benchmarking measures focus on:
  - Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy
  - Improving attainment for all
  - Increasing post-school participation

- Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers

- 3.5 Insight is updated twice a year, in September and February. The September update immediately follows the publication on the examination results and is based on year cohorts. The February 2016 provides updates to the 2014-15 attainment data, including data from the SQA Post-Results Service and the most recent School Leaver Destination Return (SLDR) data. Full leaver data which includes comparison with a Virtual Comparator and the National results is also published in the February update.
- 3.6 The shift to Insight from STACs has significant implications for how attainment and achievement is analysed in schools and reported to others. As described in Report No 203/15 – Angus Secondary School Attainment, this report will refer to a number of STACs measures, whilst clearly moving the emphasis on reporting on attainment and achievement across Angus towards the Insight national benchmarking measures. This process will continue to allow us to fully move from STACs to Insight for reporting purposes.
- 3.7 In this report, the data is based on SQA A-C passes in each of the National Qualifications from the most recent Insight update.
- 3.8 Effective performance in education is complex and therefore impossible to characterise completely using figures alone. However, it is important to acknowledge there has been an improvement in attainment across the board in line with Angus Council's aspiration - to improve outcomes for our young people.

#### 4. CURRENT POSITION

##### 4.1 Existing STACs Measures

- 4.1.1 The tables below present the data over the last five years using STACs based measures. It should be noted that differences between the assessment arrangements for the National Qualifications, at National 3, 4 and 5 Levels, compared with the previous Standard Grade and Intermediate qualifications means that from 2014 the earlier years' data is not directly comparable. The data is presented as a percentage of the S4 cohort.

##### By end S4 2011-2013

| Measure                                     | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|---|------|------|------|
| English @ Level 3 or better i.e. National 3 | 96   | 98   | 99   |
| Maths @ Level 3 or better                   | 96   | 96   | 97   |
| 5 + @ Level 3 or better                     | 93   | 95   | 96   |
| 5 + @ Level 4 or better i.e. National 4     | 78   | 79   | 79   |
| 5 + @ Level 5 or better i.e. National 5     | 33   | 34   | 35   |

##### By end S4 2014-2015

| Measure                                     | 2014 | 2015 |
|---|------|------|
| English @ Level 3 or better i.e. National 3 | 93   | 95   |
| Maths @ Level 3 or better                   | 88   | 91   |
| 5 + @ Level 3 or better                     | 90   | 88   |
| 5 + @ Level 4 or better i.e. National 4     | 84   | 83   |
| 5 + @ Level 5 or better i.e. National 5     | 34   | 37   |

#### By end S5

| Measure                             | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 + @ Level 6 or better i.e. Higher | 44   | 45   | 47   | 49   | 56   |
| 3 + @ Level 6 or better             | 25   | 24   | 25   | 26   | 33   |
| 5 + @ Level 6 or better             | 10   | 11   | 11   | 11   | 14   |

#### By end S6

| Measure                                      | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 + @ Level 6 or better                      | 47   | 49   | 51   | 54   | 57   |
| 3 + @ Level 6 or better                      | 33   | 36   | 36   | 35   | 39   |
| 5 + @ Level 6 or better                      | 22   | 24   | 25   | 23   | 25   |
| 1 + @ Level 7 or better i.e. Advanced Higher | 16   | 17   | 16   | 16   | 18   |

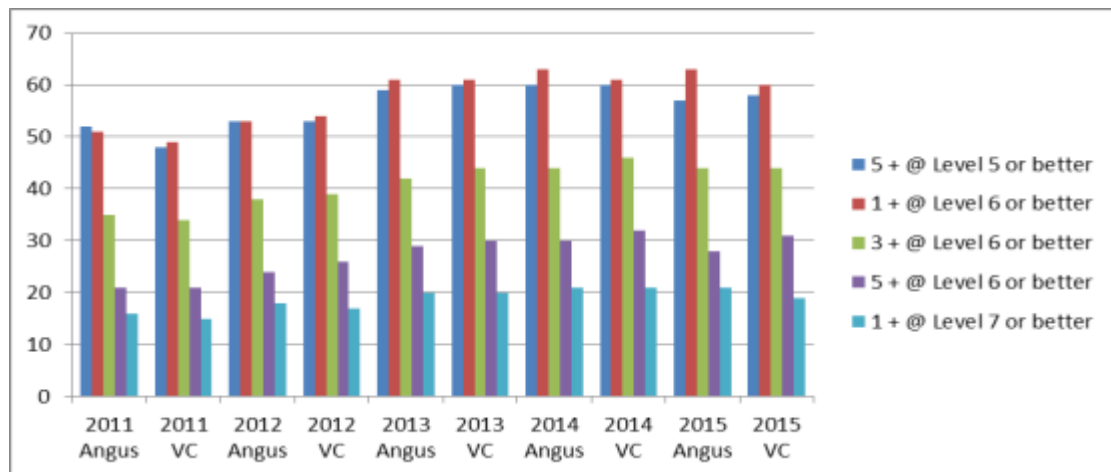
- 4.1.2 The data indicates that there was a significant improvement in many of the key indicators. The number of young people achieving 5 National 5s (5+@Level 5) improved by 3% from 2014 figures, whilst the number achieving 3 Highers (3+@Level 6) improved by 7% from 2014 figures.
- 4.1.3 Secondary schools, working with the Children and Learning Directorate, have been set challenging targets for 2015-16. Staff working with our schools will continue to track and monitor schools' progress towards achieving or improving these targets. There is in place a regular, rigorous monitoring process combined with proportionate support for all schools in Angus.

#### 4.2 Leavers' Data

- 4.2.1 On 22 March 2016, the Scottish Government published leavers' data on the Parentzone website ([www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/)), which gives parents access to this data for their school.
- 4.2.2 The table below includes data for the Virtual Comparator (VC). The virtual comparator group is made up of school leavers who are similar to the authority's own school leavers, in terms of factors that are known to influence educational outcomes (such as social context and additional support needs). For every individual leaver in Angus, ten young people chosen from national data are used for comparison. The data is presented as a percentage of the S4 cohort.

## All Leavers

Graph 1



| Measure                 | 2011 Angus | 2011 VC | 2012 Angus | 2012 VC | 2013 Angus | 2013 VC | 2014 Angus | 2014 VC | 2015 Angus | 2015 VC |
|-------------------------|------------|---------|------------|---------|------------|---------|------------|---------|------------|---------|
| 5 + @ Level 5 or better | 52         | 48      | 53         | 53      | 59         | 60      | 60         | 60      | 57         | 58      |
| 1 + @ Level 6 or better | 51         | 49      | 53         | 54      | 61         | 61      | 63         | 61      | 63         | 60      |
| 3 + @ Level 6 or better | 35         | 34      | 38         | 39      | 42         | 44      | 44         | 46      | 44         | 44      |
| 5 + @ Level 6 or better | 21         | 21      | 24         | 26      | 29         | 30      | 30         | 32      | 28         | 31      |
| 1 + @ Level 7 or better | 16         | 15      | 18         | 17      | 20         | 20      | 21         | 21      | 21         | 19      |

4.2.3 Angus is performing about the same as our comparators in the key benchmarks. 57% of our leavers leave with 5 National 5 Qualifications or equivalent. 44% of our leavers leave with 3 Highers. The benchmark for 5 Highers is 3% lower than our virtual comparator and this will remain a focus for all our schools.

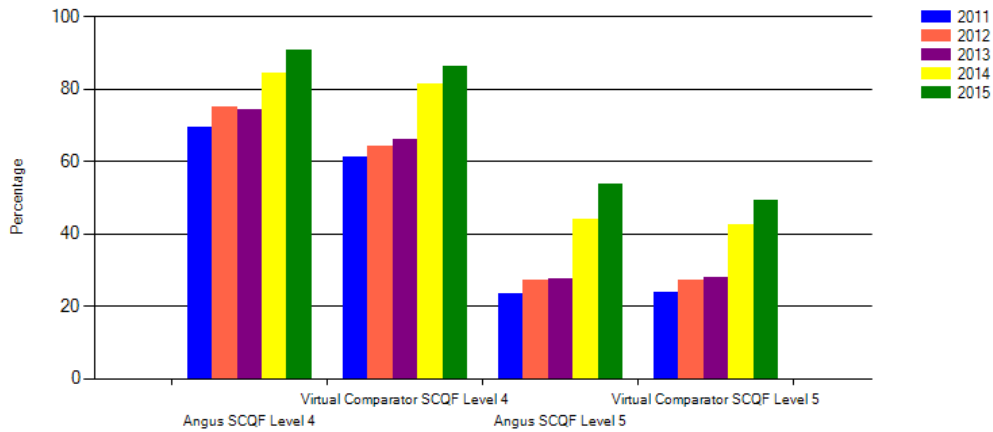
### 4.3 Insight Benchmarking Measures

4.3.1 Data is presented below for each of the four Insight Benchmarking measures. The data for Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy and Increasing post-school participation is based on the 2015 leavers cohort (1290 young people). The data for Improving attainment for all and Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers is based on discrete year stages or cohorts.

### 4.4 Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

Graph 2

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy  
Percentage of Candidates Attaining Literacy and Numeracy



% Literacy and Numeracy at **Level 4** by the end of S4

| Year | Angus | VC   | National |
|------|-------|------|----------|
| 2011 | 78.6  | 72.7 | 74.9     |
| 2012 | 80.8  | 77.0 | 76.7     |
| 2013 | 84.2  | 81.8 | 77.9     |
| 2014 | 85.6  | 83.3 | 81.2     |
| 2015 | 89.0  | 86.0 | 85.8     |

% Literacy and Numeracy at **Level 5** by the end of S4

| Year | Angus | VC   | National |
|------|-------|------|----------|
| 2011 | 46.0  | 46.0 | 49.3     |
| 2012 | 50.3  | 51.4 | 52.2     |
| 2013 | 57.8  | 57.5 | 52.5     |
| 2014 | 60.2  | 57.2 | 55.3     |
| 2015 | 59.8  | 57.4 | 58.6     |

4.4.1 There continues to be improvement in our performance in literacy and numeracy. This is in part due to the greater flexibility that the national qualifications offer in terms of achieving an award in Literacy and Numeracy. It is also due to a greater understanding of the standards and expectations required for these qualifications by teaching staff and young people.

4.4.2 Splitting the Literacy and Numeracy data displays some interesting detail. In both areas, there has been improvement over the last five years. However, there is still a difference in attainment between the two areas, with numeracy performing less well. We will continue to have a focus on numeracy attainment.

**Literacy**

| Year | Angus Level 4 | VC Level 4 | Angus Level 5 | VC Level 5 |
|------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| 2011 | 91.3          | 88.7       | 61.8          | 59.2       |
| 2012 | 92.6          | 91.0       | 66.7          | 64.5       |
| 2013 | 94.3          | 93.1       | 72.8          | 71.7       |
| 2014 | 94.6          | 93.2       | 73.4          | 71.4       |
| 2015 | 95.3          | 93.6       | 74.5          | 73.1       |

**Numeracy**

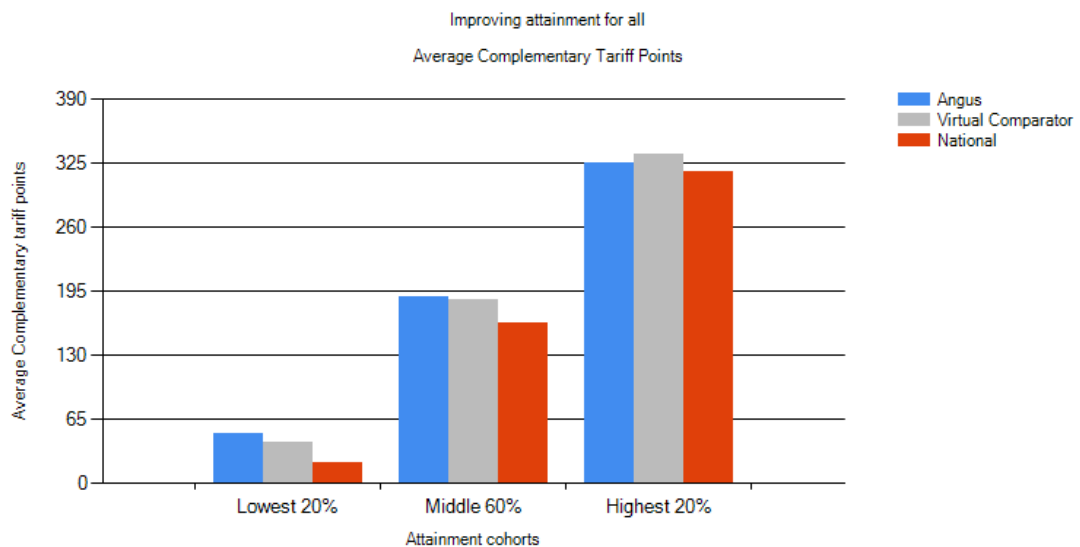
| Year | Angus Level 4 | VC Level 4 | Angus Level 5 | VC Level 5 |
|------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| 2011 | 79.8          | 74.8       | 50.2          | 50.4       |
| 2012 | 81.6          | 78.9       | 52.9          | 55.6       |
| 2013 | 84.6          | 83.4       | 60.4          | 61.0       |
| 2014 | 86.3          | 84.5       | 62.0          | 61.2       |
| 2015 | 89.9          | 87.6       | 63.5          | 61.5       |

#### 4.5 Improving attainment for all

4.5.1 This measure allows us to examine how different cohorts are attaining in relation to the appropriate Virtual and National cohorts. Attainment is measured using the tariff scale, developed for Insight, which allocates a specified number of points to each qualification (including units), with more demanding qualifications gaining more points than less demanding ones. Three ability cohorts are identified for the authority, its virtual equivalent and Scotland as a whole: those in the lowest 20% of tariff points scored, those in the top 20% of tariff points scored, and those that fall within the middle 60% of tariff points scored.

#### 4.5.2 Average Complementary Tariff Points of ability cohorts at the end of S4

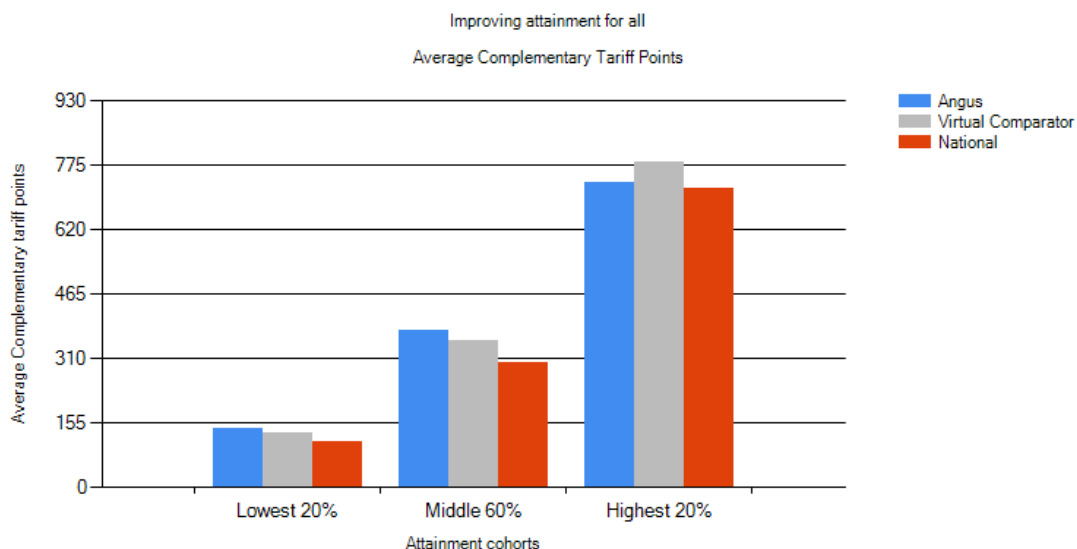
Graph 3



The graph shows that our lower performers and the middle group of performers are attaining better than their virtual and national comparators. Schools are clearly working in an inclusive way with our young people to ensure we reduce the attainment gap and all young people leave with a good range of qualifications. For the highest 20% we are doing better than the national data but slightly less well than our virtual comparator. With improving attainment data, we now need to look at the quality of the passes that the young people are achieving and ensure our highest attainers are sufficiently challenged to succeed.

### 4.5.3 Average Complementary Tariff Points of ability cohorts at the end of S5

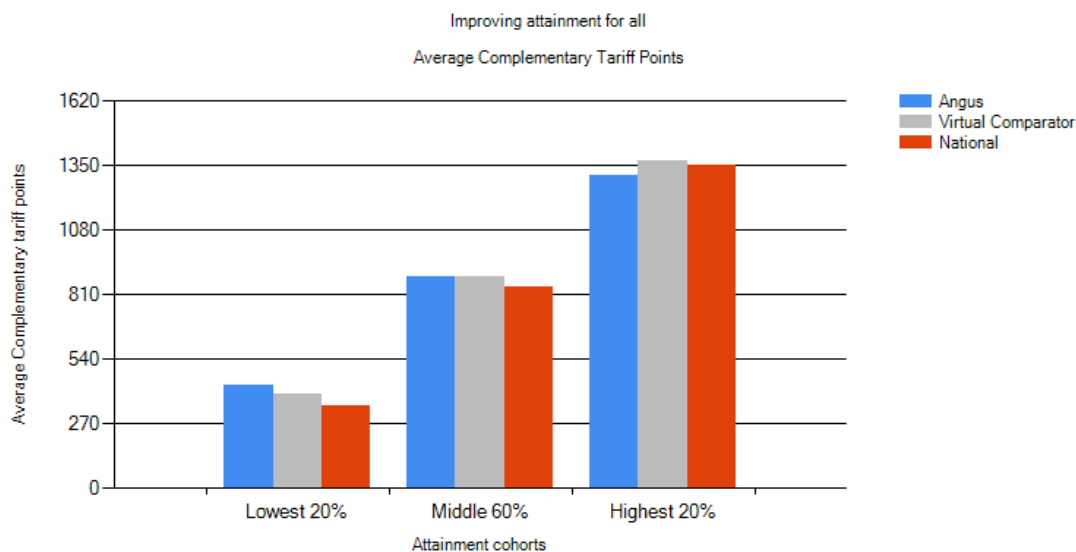
Graph 4



This is an improvement on the 2014 data. The graph shows that our lower performers and the middle group of performers are attaining better than their virtual and national comparators. For the highest 20% we are doing better than the national data but slightly less well than our virtual comparator. With improving attainment data, we now need to look at the quality of the passes that the young people are achieving.

### 4.5.4 Average Complementary Tariff Points of ability cohorts at the end of S6

Graph 5

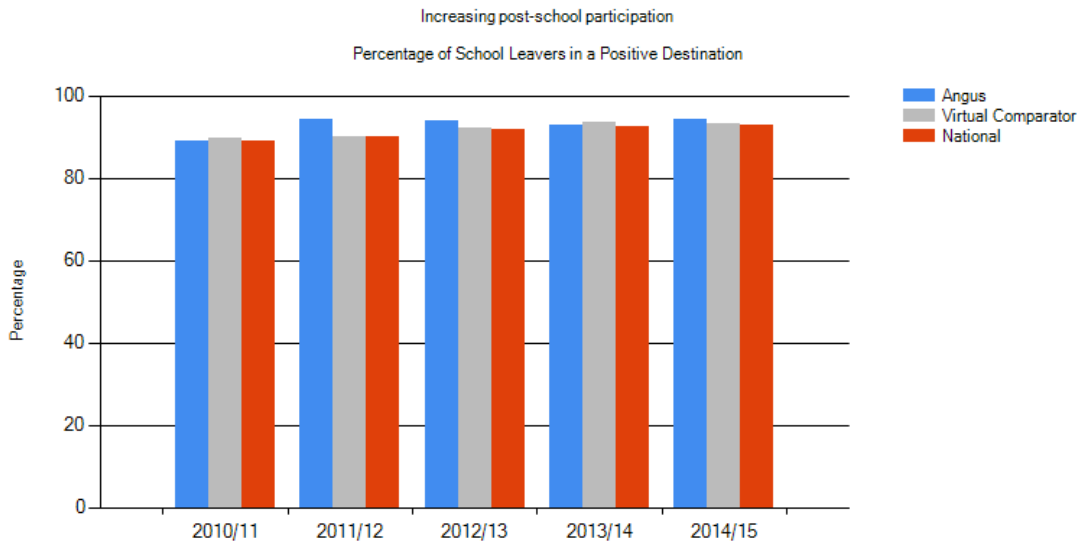


This graph tells a similar story to the S4 and S5 cohorts. All schools will now need to look at how they are stretching and challenging the most able in their schools including a clear focus on the quality of the passes that are achieved.

4.5.5 These graphs have proved to be very useful in helping schools and the Directorate to identify trends and plan appropriate improvement strategies for different ability groups.

### 4.6 Increasing post-school participation

Graph 6



| Year | Angus | VC   | National |
|------|-------|------|----------|
| 2011 | 89.0  | 89.6 | 89.1     |
| 2012 | 94.2  | 90.2 | 90.1     |
| 2013 | 93.9  | 92.3 | 91.7     |
| 2014 | 92.7  | 93.4 | 92.5     |
| 2015 | 94.1  | 93.2 | 93.0     |

4.6.1 There is a welcome improvement in the percentage of our leavers achieving an initial positive destination. Schools work closely with partner organisations to identify those at risk of missing out and appropriate transition plans are put in place.

4.6.2 School leaver destinations vary across schools in Angus. Destinations include higher education, further education and employment. Pupils can leave school in fourth, fifth or sixth year. With the continuing implementation of the Developing our Young Workforce (DYW) initiative over the next five years, there is a sharp focus on reducing youth unemployment.

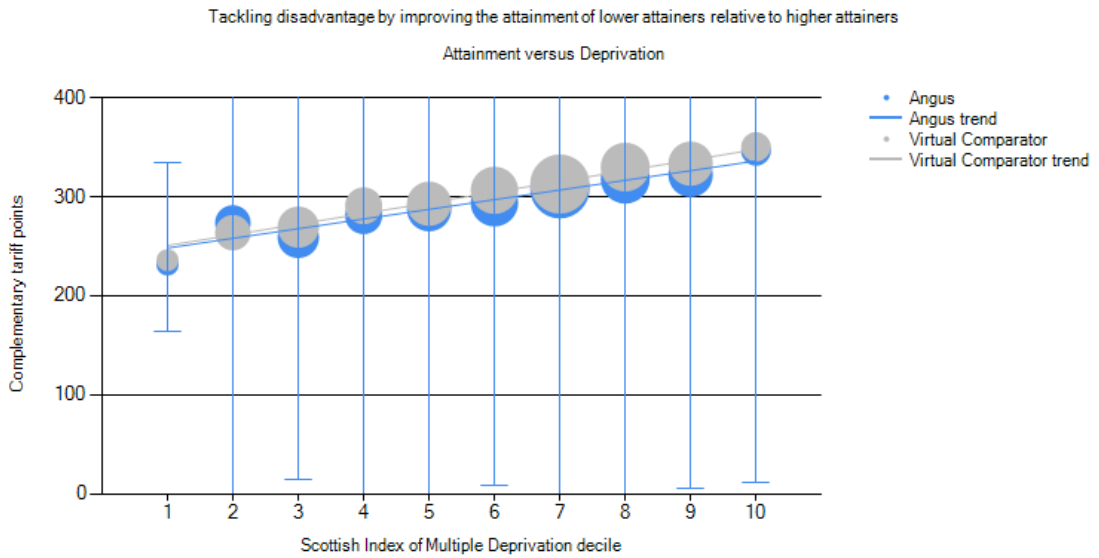
#### 4.7 Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers

4.7.1 The following graphs display attainment (measured using the same tariff point scale as referred to in 4.5.2) for Angus (blue shaded circles), its virtual comparator and nationally, broken down into ten deciles according to Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data. Thus decile 1 refers to the attainment of young people with post codes within data zones identified as being the 10% most deprived in Scotland according to SIMD, whilst decile 10 refers to those young people with post codes in the top 10% of the most affluent datazones according to SIMD. The size of the circle is an indicator of the group size in each decile.

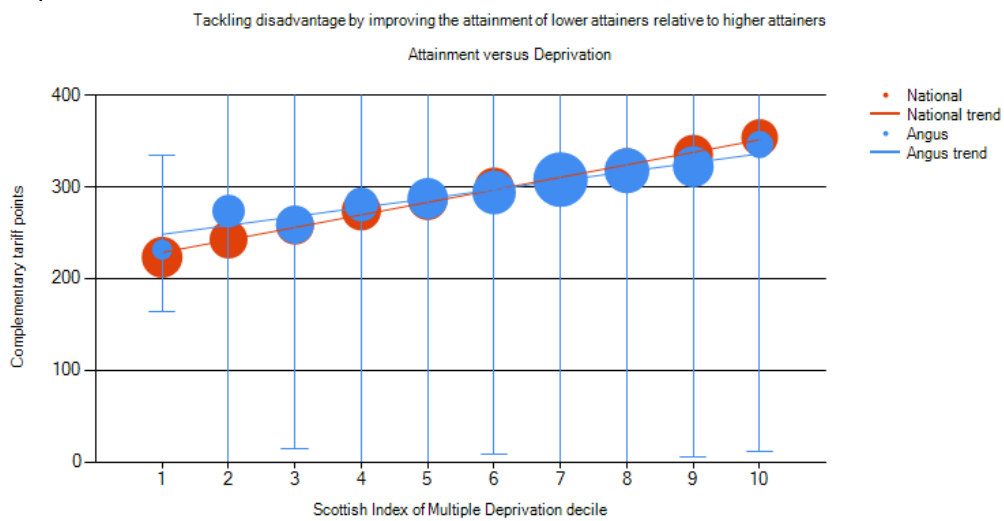
#### 4.7.2 Average Complementary Tariff Points score by the end of S4

Graph 7





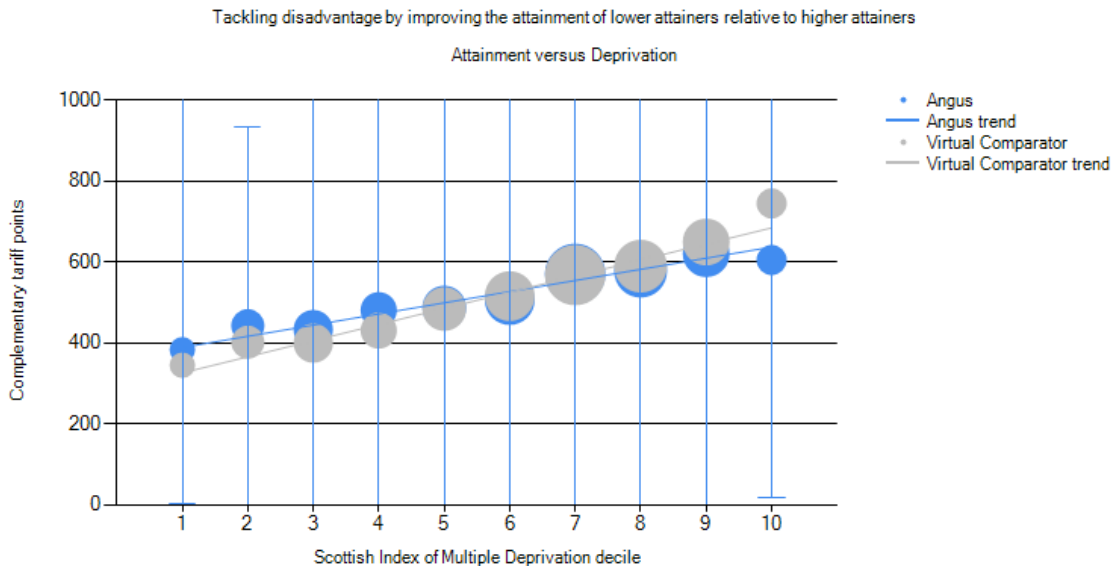
Graph 8



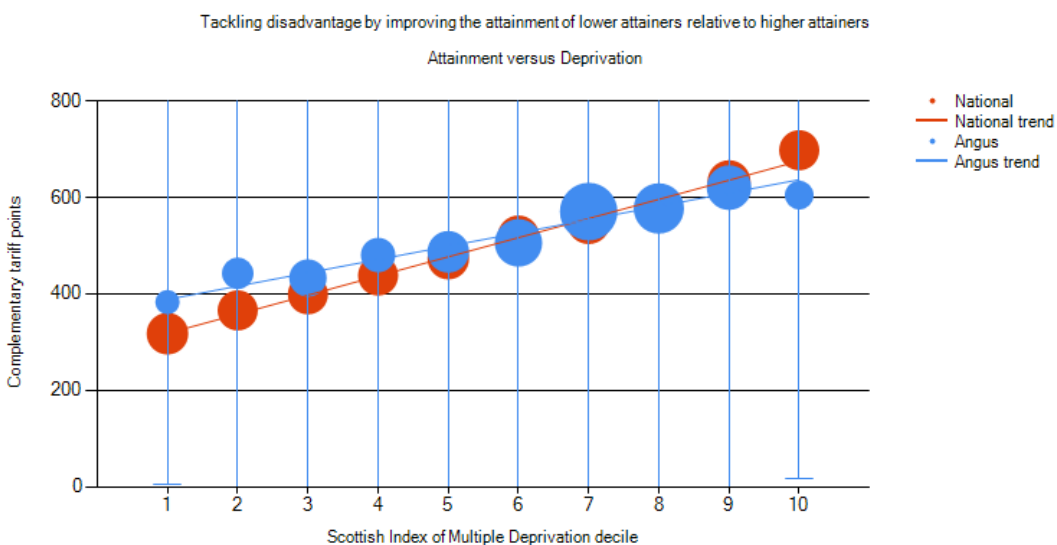
By the end of S4, against both our virtual comparator and nationally, young people from the lower deciles, the areas with more deprivation, are outperforming their peers in a virtual comparator authority. Young people from the higher deciles are underperforming when compared to their peers. We expect that as schools become more familiar with the courses and assessment criteria, these results will improve. However this is linked to the previous comment regarding the need for schools to improve the quality of the passes achieved, particularly for the more able. We need to maintain and indeed improve the pace, challenge and support across our schools.

#### 4.7.3 Average Complementary Tariff Points score by the end of S5

Graph 9



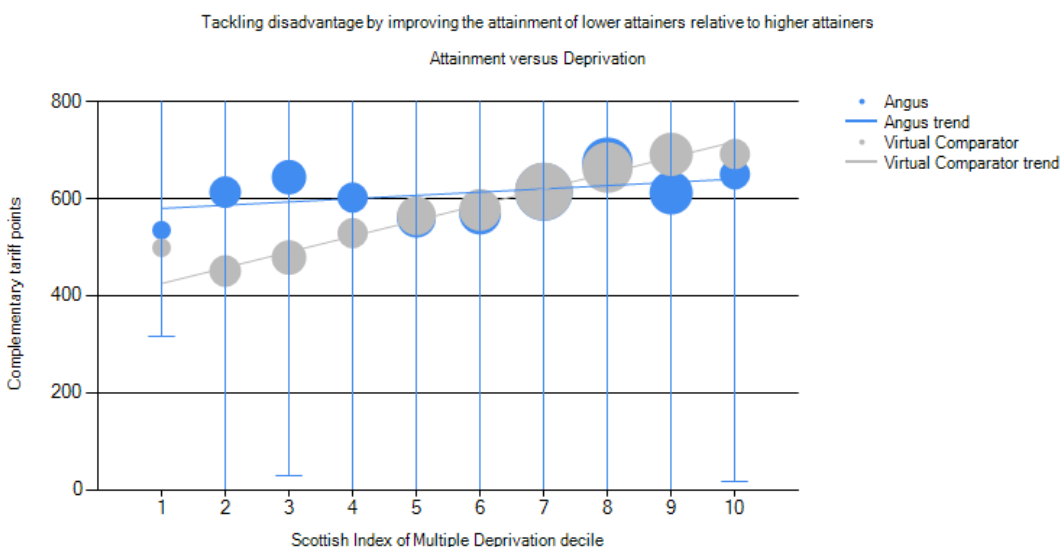
Graph 10



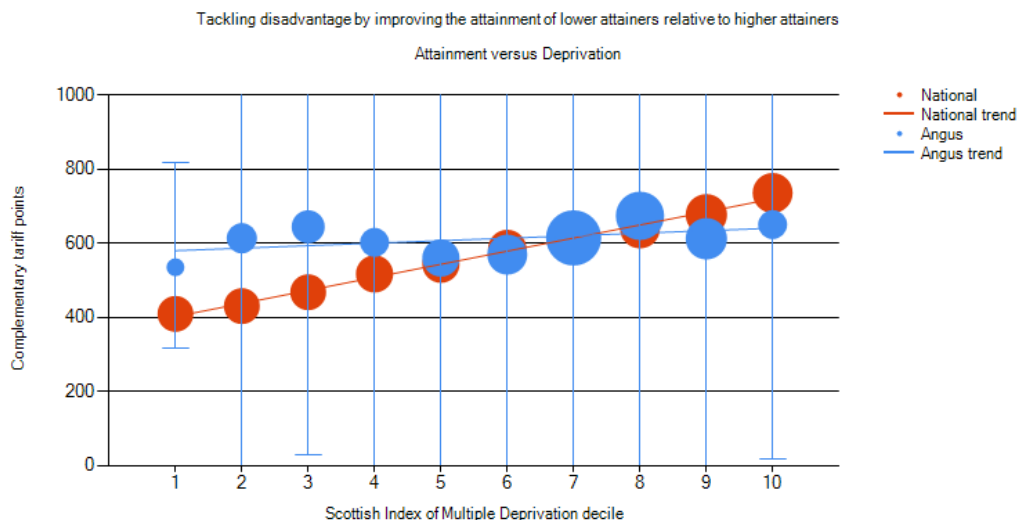
By the end of S5, our schools do well for those pupils from the lowest deciles. However, pupils in the highest two deciles (9-10) underperformed compared to their comparators. Schools will continue to address aspiration and ambition with all pupils.

#### 4.7.4 Average Complementary Tariff Points score by the end of S6

Graph 11



Graph 12



By the end of S6, there is a similar picture to S4 and S5. By the end of S6, our schools do well for those pupils from the lowest deciles. However, pupils in the highest two deciles (9-10) underperformed compared to their comparators. By this stage in their school career, young people are making positive choices for their future and are fully engaged in their learning. Schools need to ensure that young people are engaged right to the end of their school career.

## 5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1 It is important we recognise and acknowledge the success of our schools in raising attainment to date. This is attributed to our schools' leadership, our staff, our supportive parents and our hard working young people. Staff have become more familiar with new courses and expected outcomes.
- 5.2 Senior Leadership Teams in schools, supported by our Quality Improvement Officers, will continue to maintain a close focus and scrutiny of attainment throughout the session. This will involve target setting based upon the set of Insight measures and some of the traditional STACs measures described above along with regular attainment update meetings. The Children and Learning Directorate will ask schools to take a close look at the quality of passes achieved in the Senior Phase in future years and adjust accordingly.
- 5.3 It is proposed that the Children and Learning Directorate provide further annual attainment reports based on the measures contained in this report.
- 5.3 It is proposed that elected members have a further opportunity to attend an Insight briefing session on the data available to schools and the local authority through this toolkit.

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from the consideration of this report.

**NOTE:** No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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