

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE – 13 JUNE 2017**

**ANGUS SECONDARY SCHOOL ATTAINMENT 2015-16**

**REPORT BY MARK ARMSTRONG, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR – PEOPLE**

**ABSTRACT**

The report provides a summary of the attainment outcomes in Angus Council Secondary Schools in the Senior Phase for academic session 2015-16. The summary is based on the February 2016 update to the national Senior Phase benchmarking tool, Insight.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Children and Learning Committee:

- (i) Scrutinise the attainment results as detailed in this report;
- (ii) Acknowledge the achievements of our young people and the support provided by staff, parents and partners;
- (iii) Agree to receive further updates on Insight data.

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

This report contributes to the following local outcome 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 our young people in secondary schools are presented for Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) certificated National Courses and Units. The 2015-16 session saw the introduction of the revised Advanced Highers following the implementation of new National Qualifications in 2013-14 and new Highers in 2014-15.
- 3.2 The initial attainment outcomes for the 2015-16 exam diet were reported to the Children and Learning Committee on 20 September 2016 (Report 345/16 – Curriculum for Excellence Attainment Report).
- 3.3 In session 2014-15, Insight replaced Standard Tables and Charts (STACS) as the national benchmarking tool for the Senior Phase. The tool focuses upon performance across four key national benchmarking measures.
- 3.4 The four national benchmarking measures are:
  - 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 The move to Insight from STACS has significant implications for how attainment and achievement is analysed in schools and reported to others. This report still refers to a number of STACS measures to enable comparisons to be made with past performance. However, the report gives increased emphasis to reporting on the Insight national benchmarking measures.
- 3.6 In this report the data is based on SQA A-C passes in each of the National Qualifications from the most recent Insight update.

#### 4. CURRENT POSITION

##### 4.1 Existing STACS Measures

- 4.1.1 The tables below present data over the last five years using STACS based measures. It should be noted that there are differences between the assessment arrangements for the National Qualifications compared with previous Standard Grade and Intermediate Qualifications. This 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 2012 - 2016

Measure	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
5+ @ Level 3 or better	95%	96%	90%	88%	90%
5+ @ Level 4 or better	79%	79%	84%	83%	85%
5+ @ Level 5 or better	34%	35%	34%	37%	38%

###### By end S5 2012 – 2016

Measure	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
1+ @ Level 6 or better ie Higher	45%	47%	49%	56%	52%
3+ @ Level 6 better	24%	25%	26%	33%	33%
5+ @ Level 6 or better	11%	11%	11%	14%	16%

###### By end of S6 2012 – 2016

Measure	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
1+ @ Level 6 or better	49%	51%	54%	57%	59%
3+ @ Level 6 or better	36%	36%	35%	39%	41%
5+ @ Level 6 or better	24%	25%	23%	25%	27%
1+ @ Level 7 or better ie Advanced Higher	17%	16%	16%	18%	20%

- 4.1.2 The data above provides evidence that attainment has been maintained or improved across almost all indicators. Attainment in S6 is the highest on record.
- 4.1.3 Secondary schools have set challenging targets for the 2016-17 exam diet. Staff working with our schools will continue to track and monitor schools' progress towards achieving or improving upon these targets.

##### 4.2 Insight Benchmarking Measures

- 4.2.1 Data is presented below for each of the four Insight Benchmarking measures. The data is based on the 2016 leavers' cohort (1225 young people) with the exception of Measure 2 which is based on discrete year stages. Our data is compared against data for Virtual Comparator (VC) and national results. The VC group is made up of school leavers who are similar to the authority's own school leavers in terms of factors known to influence educational outcomes (such as social context and additional support needs).

#### 4.3 Measure 1: Improving Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

##### % Literacy and Numeracy at Level 4

Year	Angus	VC	National
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%
2016	90.6%	88.0%	88.0%

##### % Literacy and Numeracy at Level 5

Year	Angus	VC	National
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%
2016	65.7%	61.4%	64.2%

4.3.1 Our performance in literacy and numeracy continues to be better than VC and National. This is in part due to the greater flexibility that the National Qualifications offer to achieve awards 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.

4.3.2 The data for Literacy and Numeracy can be reviewed by measure. When this is done it reveals that there is an established improving trend for both literacy and numeracy. However, there are differences in attainment between literacy and numeracy. The gap is closing at Level 4 but persists at Level 5. Our schools will continue to have a focus on actions to raise numeracy attainment such as providing opportunities for young people studying National 4 Mathematics to undertake the stand alone National 5 Numeracy qualification.

##### % Literacy at Levels 4 and 5

Year	Angus Level 4	VC Level 4	Angus Level 5	VC Level 5
2012	92.6%	91%	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%
2016	95%	94%	79.3%	76.4%

##### % Numeracy at Levels 4 and 5

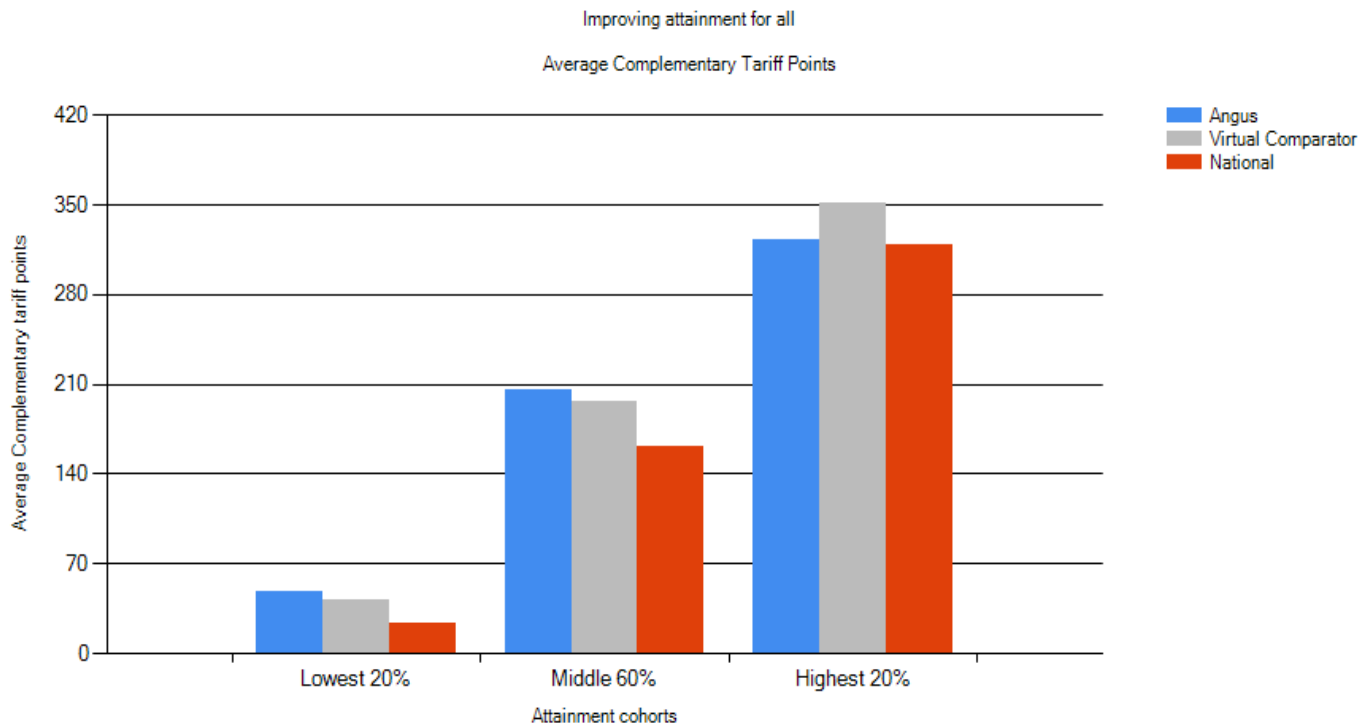
Year	Angus Level 4	VC Level 4	Angus Level 5	VC Level 5
2012	81.6%	78.9%	52.9%	55.6%
2013	84.6%	83.4%	60.4%	61.0%
2014	86.3%	84.5%	62.0%	61.2%
2015	89.9%	87.6%	63.5%	61.5%
2016	91.8%	89.8%	68.2%	64.6%

#### 4.4 Measure 2: Improving Attainment for All

4.4.1 This measure allows us to compare how our lowest, middle and highest attaining groups are achieving in relation to VC and National. Three ability cohorts are identified: those in the lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% of tariff points scored. Attainment is measured using the tariff scale developed for Insight. Each qualification is awarded a specific number of tariff points. More demanding qualifications gain more points than less demanding ones. The complimentary tariff point scale is a refined version of the tariff scale. The complimentary tariff point scale uses the tariff points for each learner's latest and best achievements. This allows comparisons to be made across schools and local authorities where learners are presented for different numbers of qualifications in the senior phase.

#### 4.4.2 Average Complementary Tariff Points of Ability Cohorts at the end of S4

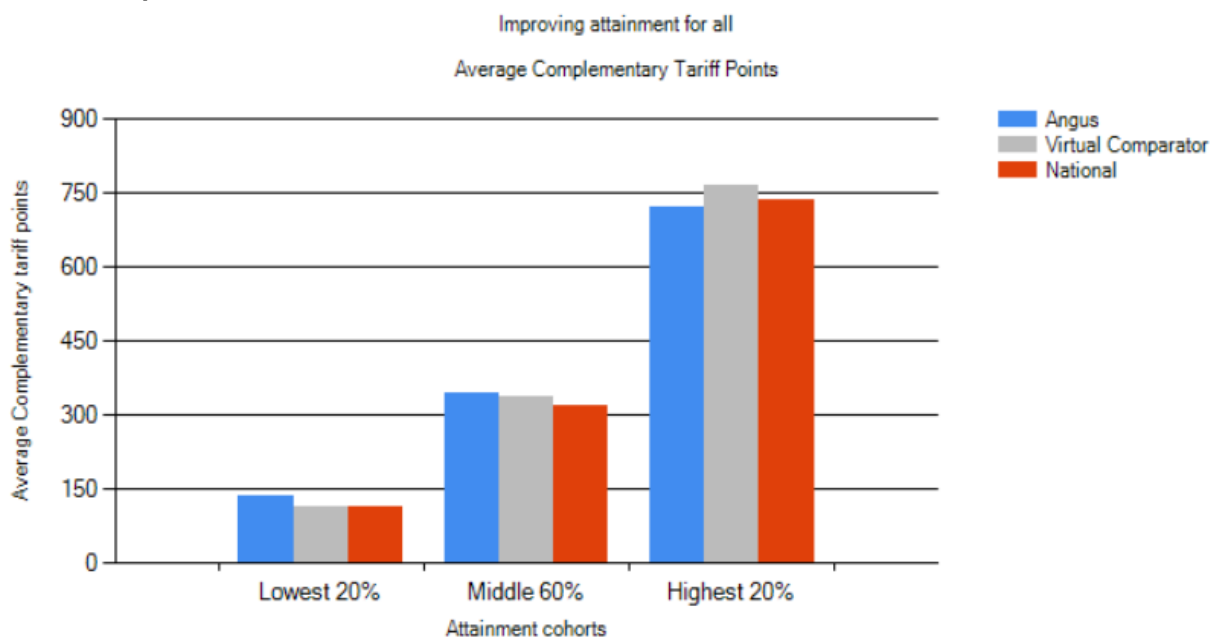
**Graph 1**



Graph 1 shows that our lowest and middle attaining groups are achieving better than their virtual and national comparators. This indicates that our schools are working in an inclusive way to reduce the attainment gap for the young people in these groups. Our highest attaining 20% are achieving less well than our virtual comparator. We will continue to work with our schools to review the quality of passes young people are achieving in National Qualifications and provide further data analysis on subject performance to our Curriculum Advisory Groups to support collaborative working for improvement. Our schools are also reviewing the degree of pace and challenge provided in the Broad General Education to prepare our young people for the demands of the Senior Phase.

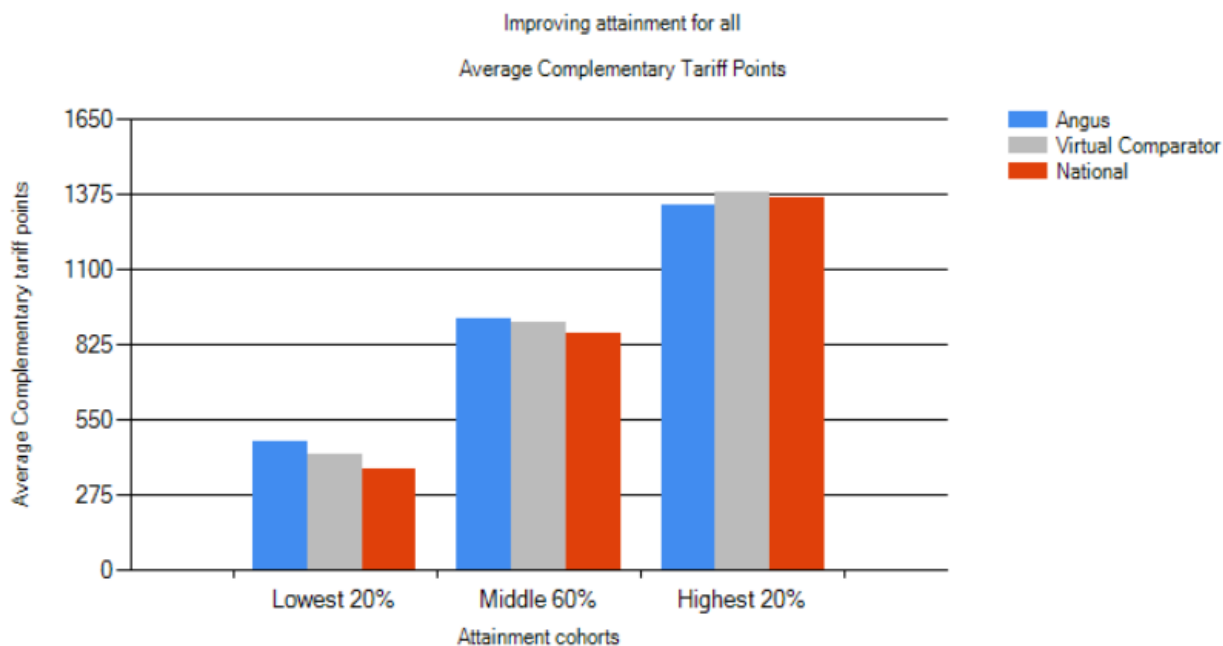
#### 4.4.3 Average Complementary Tariff Points of Ability Cohorts at the end of S5

**Graph 2**



#### 4.4.4 Average Complementary Tariff Points of Ability Cohorts at the end of S6

**Graph 3**



Graphs 2 and 3 for S5 and S6 show the same pattern as S4. Our lowest and middle attaining cohorts are attaining better than their virtual and national comparators. For the highest attaining cohort we are doing slightly less well than the virtual comparator and national data. Our schools will continue to give attention to how they are challenging and stretching the most able pupils in order to achieve an increased proportion of passes at higher grades.

#### 4.5 Measure 3: Increasing post-school participation

##### % of leavers achieving an initial positive destination

Year	Angus	VC	National
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%
2016	95.1%	93.5%	93.3%

4.5.1 There has been a further improvement in the percentage of our leavers achieving an initial positive destination. This year's percentage is our highest on record. Schools are working closely with partner organisations to identify those at risk of missing out to ensure that personalised transition plans are in place. Staying on in school education beyond S4 can support improved destinations. In Angus most young people stay on in school education from S4 to S5 and the majority stay on from S5 to S6.

##### % of leavers going on to each destination type 2015-16

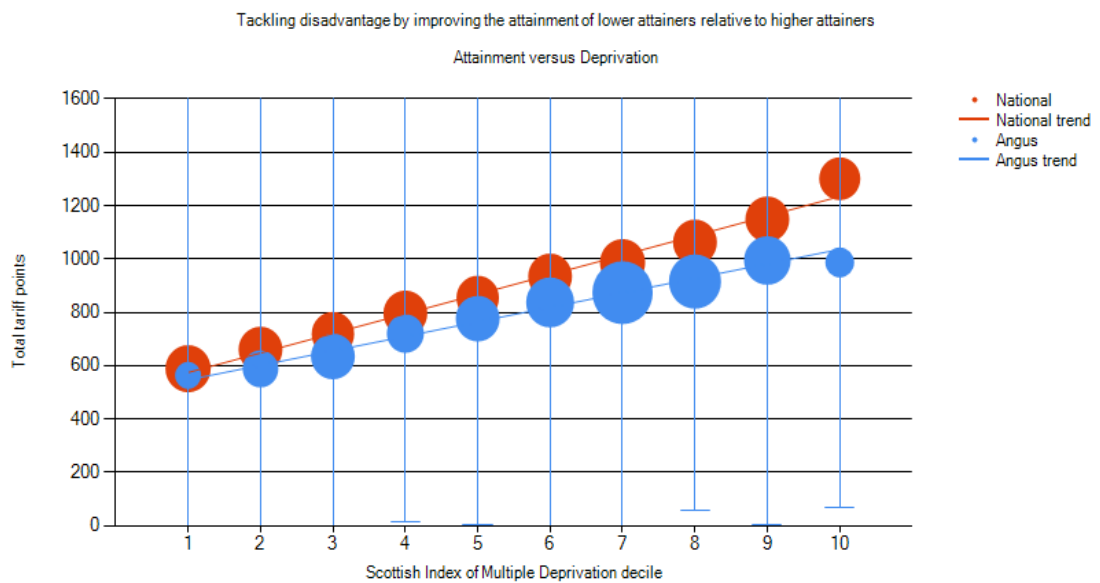
Destination Type	Angus	VC	National
% Activity Agreement	0.5%	1.1%	1%
% Employed	19.4%	26.1%	22.3%
% Further Education	34.8%	25.7%	26.6%
% Higher Education	38.2%	37.4%	40.3%
% Not known	0	0.3%	0.2%
% Training	1.5%	2.3%	2.6%
% Unemployed not seeking	0.6%	1.2%	1.3%
% Unemployed seeking	4.3%	5%	5.1%
% Voluntary work	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%

4.5.2 Most of our young people move in to Further or Higher Education on leaving school. A greater proportion of our young people move on to Further Education than is the case for VC or National. Our schools are working closely with Dundee and Angus College to support our young people to progress in to college courses which build upon their school achievements.

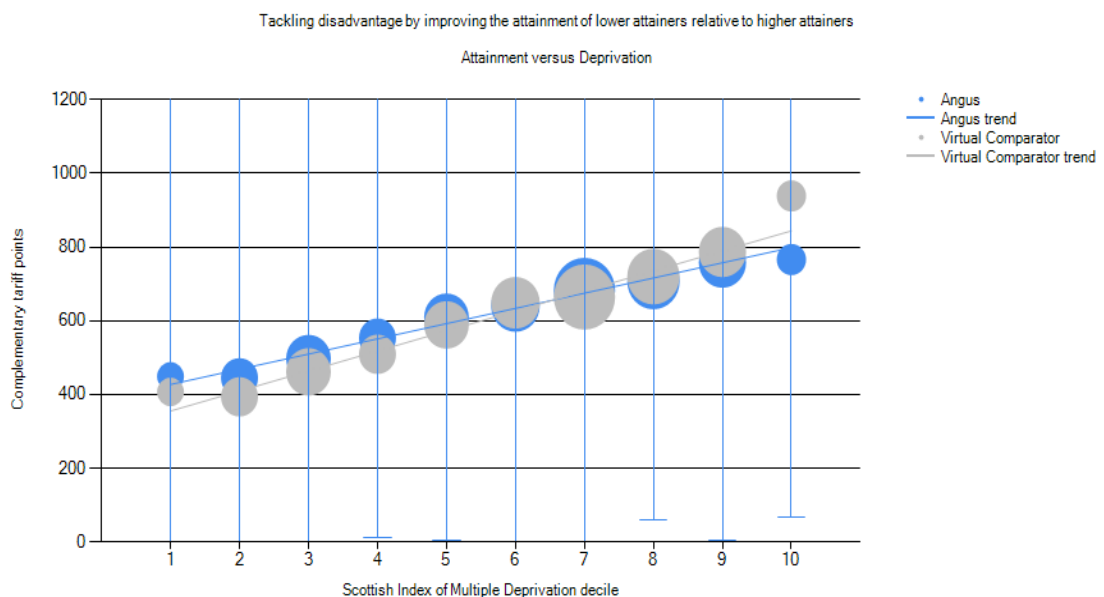
**4.6 Measure 4: Tackling Disadvantage by Improving the Attainment of Lower Attainers Relative to Higher Attainers**

4.6.1 The following graph displays attainment for Angus compared to our virtual comparator and nationally. The data is broken down into ten deciles according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). Decile 1 refers to the attainment of young people identified as being in the 10% most deprived datazones in Scotland. Decile 10 refers to those in the 10% most affluent datazones. The size of the circle is an indicator of the number of young people in each decile.

**Graph 4**



**Graph 5**



Graph 4 indicates that our schools are supporting our young people to achieve in line with national for decile 1. However, our performance is below national across other deciles particularly for the higher deciles. Graph 5 indicates our schools are supporting our young people to achieve better than VC across the lower deciles. However, as with the comparison with national, our performance is below VC at the highest deciles. Our schools are giving increased attention to developing more diverse learning pathways in the senior phase. These will provide improved opportunities for all our young people to achieve as highly as possible and to further develop skills for learning, life and work.

## **5. PROPOSALS**

- 5.1 It is important that the improvements in attainment demonstrated across many of the measures in this report are acknowledged. The improvements in raising attainment in Angus can be attributed to the leadership in our schools; improvements in learning and teaching; the systems used for monitoring and tracking young people's progress; the considerable support from staff, parents and partners and the hard work of our young people.
- 5.2 Senior Leadership Teams in schools, supported by Quality Improvement Officers, will continue to give close attention to leading improvement actions to raise attainment and achievement. This will include reviewing the pace and challenge of learning both in the BGE and Senior Phase; continuing to focus on improving the learning experience for our young people and developing more diverse learning pathways within the curriculum offered in Senior Phase. Schools will continue to set attainment targets and these will be monitored and review through regular attainment update meetings.
- 5.3 The Children and Learning Service will provide further annual attainment reports using data from Insight.

**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.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Colin Nicol, Service Manager, Quality and Performance  
**EMAIL DETAILS:** childrenandlearning@angus.gov.uk