

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**FAMILY, EDUCATION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE – 10 JUNE 2025**

**INTERIM PERFORMANCE UPDATE – EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

**NEIL LOWDEN, ACTING DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

**1. ABSTRACT**

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of Angus Council performance in 2023-24 against the “core stretch measures” identified for the senior phase in the national [Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress](#), and our locally identified ‘core plus’ indicators.

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES**

- 2.1 The proposals in this report align to:

**Council Plan 2023-28**

- Support children, young people and adults to access appropriate opportunities which allow them to progress in their learning.
- Deliver our statutory obligation and core functions, tailored to suit our available resources and making best use of our data and performance information.

**3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Family, Education and Justice Committee:

- (i) considers the information detailed in this report and appendices;
- (ii) acknowledges the achievements of our children and young people and the support provided by parents, staff and partners; and
- (iii) requests that an attainment report is provided for 2024-25 once the relevant data has been published.

**4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The updated [Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress](#) was published in May 2023. This document confirms the Scottish Government’s commitment to achieving equity in education and mitigating the impact of poverty on children’s outcomes. The Framework defines a set of national “core stretch measures,” for which each local authority must identify stretch aims and set annual targets. Local authorities may also identify core plus indicators relevant to their context and planned improvement activity.
- 4.2 Core stretch measures performance data for attendance and achievement of literacy and numeracy was considered by Family, Education and Justice Committee in September 2024 (Report 281/24, [Appendix 3](#) refers). Due to the timing of Insight update publication, data for the senior phase measures included in the September 2024 report was not available.

**5. CURRENT POSITION**

- 5.1 Appendix 1 summarises Angus Council performance compared to the core stretch aims for 2023-24.
- 5.2 Appendix 2 details Angus Council performance in relation to the achievement of literacy and numeracy by children in P1, 4 and 7 combined. The data previously presented to Family, Education and Justice Committee (Report 281/24, Appendix 3) has been updated to include achievement for children with care experience and those who are in receipt of School Clothing

Grant. These measures align with our commitments to keeping the Promise and reducing the impact of poverty. Data for literacy is on page 2 and numeracy is on page 3 of Appendix 2.

- 5.3 The data is presented as percentage achievement. For context the number of children in each cohort is as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>P1,4 and 7</b>	<b>Quintile Only 1</b>	<b>Quintile Only 5</b>	<b>SCG Entitled</b>	<b>Care-experienced</b>
2018-19	3783	286	704	740	98
2019-20	Data not collected				
2020-21	3671	303	448	771	89
2021-22	3607	292	505	721	75
2022-23	3604	325	449	788	78
2023-24	3509	311	429	708	86

- 5.4 In 2023-24, there was an increase in the percentage of children in Primary 1, 4 and 7 (combined) achieving the expected level of literacy, based on professional judgements. There was an increase for children living in SIMD Quintile (Q) 1 (most deprived) and Q5 (least deprived), although the attainment gap increased slightly for this measure. There was a decrease in the percentage of children in receipt of school clothing grant, and children with care experience who achieved the expected level for literacy.
- 5.5 In 2023-24, there was an increase in the percentage of children in P1, 4 and 7 (combined) achieving the expected level of numeracy, based on professional judgements. There was an increase for children in SIMD Q5 and a decrease for children in SIMD Q1. As a result, the attainment gap increased. There was an increase in the achievement of numeracy for children in receipt of school clothing grant, and a decrease for children with care experience.
- 5.6 Appendix 3 provides details of senior phase attainment for school leavers in 2023-24. The following measures are included:
- 1+ Award at SCQF Level 5 (Core measure) (Page 2)
  - 1+ Award at SCQF Level 6 (Core measure) (Page 3)
  - Annual Participation Measure (Core measure) (Page 4)
  - 5+ Awards at SCQF Level 3 (Core plus indicator) (Page 5)
  - 5+ Awards at SCQF Level 5 (Core plus indicator) (Page 6)
  - 3+ Awards at SCQF Level 6 (Core plus indicator) (Page 7)
  - Initial School Leaver Positive Destinations (Core plus indicator) (Page 8)

This data, with the exception of the Annual Participation Measure (APM) was published in Insight in February 2025. Data for the Insight measures is provided for all leavers; those living in SIMD Quintiles (Q) 1 (most deprived) and 5 (least deprived); leavers entitled to Free School Meals (FSM); and those with care-experience. Insight allows the performance of Angus young people to be compared to a virtual comparator (VC) of young people taken from around Scotland, who have similar characteristics to those in Angus. The VC specifically includes sex, stage, ASN and SIMD as comparison points. The intention is to highlight where performance is strong and where it might be considered in need of improvement. Data within Insight is to support councils and schools for the purposes of self-evaluation, professional reflection and benchmarking. The data should be used alongside other evidence to build an understanding of the achievements of young people in Angus schools.

The APM data is a partnership measure, collated by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) for all 16-19 year olds. The APM is a partnership measure and is calculated using information from SDS, local authorities, the Department of Work and Pensions, HMRC, colleges and SAAS. The latest data was published at the end of August 2024. A breakdown is available for all Angus 16-19 year olds, and those living in SIMD Quintiles 1 and 5.

- 5.7 The data is presented as percentage achievement. For context the base number for each cohort calculation is as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>All leavers</b>	<b>Quintile 1</b>	<b>Quintile 5</b>	<b>FSM Entitled</b>	<b>Care experienced</b>
2018-19	1109	110	239	123	25
2019-20	1067	75	226	130	28
2020-21	1197	103	164	139	26

2021-22	1309	99	180	157	31
2022-23	1189	96	169	150	20
2023-24	1282	118	156	204	24

The profile of our 2023-24 school leavers is as follows:

Stage	Total Leavers	Number in Q1	Number in Q5	FSM Entitled	Care Experienced
S4	264 (19.6% of S4 cohort)	34	19	77	8
S5	444 (42.5% of S5 cohort)	55	42	91	10
S6	574	29	95	36	6
All leavers	1282	118	156	204	24

For the 2023-24 data set, the majority of our young people left school before S6. Leavers in Q1, those in receipt of free school meals and those with care experience were all more likely to leave school at the end of S4 or the end of S5. A higher proportion of leavers living in Q5 completed S6. SCQF level 6 qualifications are typically achieved in S5 and S6. The profile of our leavers means it may be more challenging to increase attainment at SCQF Level 6 as some young people are no longer in school to achieve more qualifications. Over the past three years, an average of 80.6% of young people stayed on from S4 to S5, as at the census in September each year. In the same period, an average of 59.5% of young people stayed on at school from S5 into S6. Staying on rates vary across all schools. In 2023-24, 33.6% of school leavers were attending Further Education (FE), 31.4% were attending Higher Education (HE) and 22.0% were in employment. The remaining cohort were either noted as participating in Personal Skills Development (0.6%), Training (3.5%), Voluntary Work (0.7%), Unemployed seeking work (2.7%) and Unemployed Not Seeking Work (4.8%). The remaining 0.7% refers to young people whose destination was unknown. Angus has a higher proportion of leavers attending FE than either the VC (29.6%) or the National Average (26.4%). This data, in part, reflects the pathway established to Dundee & Angus College for both FE and HE courses.

### Core Measures

- 5.8 In line with the requirements of the Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress, stretch aims have been set to be achieved by 2025-26, with annual 'trajectory' targets identified for each year to illustrate how the stretch aims will be reached. All stretch aims have been set with reference to attainment for the core measures in 2020-21, which was chosen as the national baseline year for all local authorities. In accordance with national expectations, stretch aims for 2025-26 must exceed the level of achievement in 2020-21. It should be noted that for the Senior Phase measures, an alternative certification model was in place for awarding qualifications, due to the impact of Covid-19. Stretch aims and annual targets are detailed in Appendix 1.
- 5.9 In 2023-24, attainment of 1+ Award at SCQF Level 5 decreased for all cohorts compared to the previous year. Attainment was below the VC for all cohorts with the exception of school leavers in SIMD Q1. The attainment of 1+ Award at SCQF Level 6 decreased for all cohorts except school leavers with care experience. Attainment for this measure was below the VC for all cohorts. For both indicators, the attainment gap between school leavers living in SIMD Q1 and Q5 decreased. At Level 5, this was caused by the decrease in Q1 attainment being greater than the decrease in Q5. At Level 6, the reduction in the attainment gap was caused by the decrease in Q5 being greater than in Q1.
- 5.10 In 2023-24, the percentage of young people aged 16-19 participating in education, training or employment increased for all cohorts. The participation gap for young people in Q1 and Q5 reduced, driven by improvement for those living in Q1.

### Core Plus Measures

- 5.11 In 2023-24, attainment of 5+ Awards at SCQF Level 3 decreased for all cohorts compared to the previous year. Attainment was below the VC for all cohorts. The attainment gap increased due to the greater rate of decrease in Q1.

- 5.12 Attainment of 5+ Awards at SCQF Level 5 decreased for all cohorts except school leavers with care experience, compared to the previous year. Attainment was below the VC for all cohorts with the exception of leavers in Q1. The attainment gap increased due to the greater rate of decrease in Q1.
- 5.13 Attainment of 3+ Awards at Level 6 decreased for all cohorts with the exception of leavers in Q5, compared to the previous year. Attainment was below the VC for all cohorts. The attainment gap increased due to the greater rate of decrease in Q1.
- 5.14 In 2023-24 the percentage of school leavers in an initial positive destination three months after leaving school decreased for all cohorts compared to the previous year. Achievement of this indicator was below the VC for all cohorts. The attainment gap increased due to the greater rate of decrease in Q1.
- 5.15 Further details of performance compared to the VC can be found in Appendix 4.

## **6. PROPOSALS**

- 6.1 It is proposed that the Family, Education and Justice Committee:
- 6.2 Considers the information detailed in this report and appendices.
- 6.3 Acknowledges the achievements of our children and young people and the support provided by parents, staff and partners.
- 6.4 Requests that the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning provides a further attainment report for 2024-25, once relevant data has been published.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1 This report contributes towards CORRR0003 – Performance Management.

## **9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## **10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY**

- 10.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment accompanies this report.

## **11. CHILDRENS RIGHTS AND WELLBEING IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 11.1 A Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is available within the EIA.

## **12. CONSULTATION**

- 12.1 The Director of Finance and the Acting Director of Legal, Governance and Change have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

**NOTE:** The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are: (list them below)

[Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress](#)  
Report 281/24, [Appendix 3](#)

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List of Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Stretch Aims 2023-24
- Appendix 2 – Performance Dashboard – Literacy and Numeracy
- Appendix 3 – Performance Dashboard – Senior Phase Data
- Appendix 4 – Performance against the VC
- Appendix 5 – Equality Impact Assessment