

REPORT TO: Education & Children's Services Committee

MEETING DATE: 10 June 2025

BY: Executive Director – Education & Children's Services

SUBJECT: Raising Attainment Update

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update the Committee on progress towards raising attainment for all learners and closing the gap for the most disadvantaged children and young people.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the progress and next steps identified towards raising attainment for all learners and closing the poverty related attainment gap and the data summary of key measures provided in Appendix 1.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Consistent with the National Improvement Framework (NIF), East Lothian Council prioritises improving attainment for all, particularly in literacy and numeracy and closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.
- 3.2 To provide strategic direction and measurable outcomes and in line with Scottish Government expectations, stretch aims have been set as detailed in Excellence & Equity: Raising Attainment for All – Strategy 2023/24 – 2025-26.
- 3.3 The posts of Principal Teachers of Equity were created in session 2023-2024 and are now in year two across secondaries, with the appointment of a Principal Teacher of Equity at Rosehill High School planned for June 2025 to support the increasing senior phase. Through a data-informed approach, these postholders track, monitor and identify interventions for young people impacted by poverty who are at risk of under-attaining.

- 3.4 Our approaches to tracking and monitoring learners are rigorous. Across primary and secondary sectors progress in literacy and numeracy data is captured within two tracking periods and central team officers work with schools individually and as Associated School Groups to monitor cohort progress.
- 3.5 Schools are also provided with monthly Equity Tracker data sets which focus on core and core plus measures. These data sets are used by schools, led by the Principal Teachers of Equity, to direct time and resource to supporting identified learners in the senior phase.
- 3.6 Data support has been extended with all schools now provided with a comprehensive in-year BGE and Senior Phase Attainment tracking tool. This tool has been designed for use by middle leaders and senior leadership teams to monitor learner progress and identify where interventions are required to improve learner outcomes. The support and challenge of officers in the central team also underpins this work.

3.7 MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 3.7.1 Data provided in relation to stretch aim measures in Appendix 1 highlight progress in overall attainment and closing the poverty-related attainment gap (Q1 – Q5) in the following measures:
- 3.7.2 Curriculum for Excellence literacy and numeracy attainment measure P1- P4- P7 (combined) in quintile 1 has increased by 4.4 percentage points and 7.4 percentage points respectively. The poverty-related attainment gap between quintile 1 and quintile 5 in literacy and numeracy has closed further and now stands at 14.7 percentage points in both measures, whilst attainment in quintile 5 has continued to increase also.
- 3.7.3 At Level 5 or above, school leaver overall literacy levels decreased by 1.5 percentage points with a decrease across quintiles 1 to 4 and an increase in quintile 5 only. The poverty-related attainment gap also widened by 9.2 percentage points representing a return to slightly above that of 2021/2022.
- 3.7.4 At Level 5 or above, school leaver numeracy levels in quintile 1 increased by 7.4 percentage points. The poverty-related attainment gap also narrowed by 1.3 percentage points.
- 3.7.5 The overall percentage of school leavers with 5 or more awards at level 1 or above remained unchanged. The percentage of learners in quintile 1 leaving with 5 qualifications decreased by 1.7 percentage points representing a slight decline and the poverty-related gap closed by 0.1 percentage points.
- 3.7.6 For learners leaving school with 1 or more awards at level 6 (A-C) or above, there was a slight increase in the overall figures. For learners in quintile 1 there was an increase of 9.9 percentage points. This has led to a further narrowing of the poverty-related attainment gap by 8.6 percentage points.

- 3.7.7 There are specific measures for leavers with care experience. The percentage of care-experienced school leavers to obtain 5 or more awards at level 1 or above fell back by 30.2 percentage points on the previous year and the gap for learners with care experience increased by 31 percentage points. This percentage rate change represents a cohort of 25 care experienced learners in 2023-2024 with 14 learners obtaining 5 or more awards at level 1 or above, against a cohort of 29 care-experienced learners in 2022-2023 of whom 25 achieved the measure.
- 3.7.8 It should be noted that due to the comparatively small number of care experienced leavers, this measure is prone to year-on-year fluctuations. However, the tracking and monitoring of care experienced learners is a key measure within East Lothian's Equity Trackers and PT Equities are working closely with staff in schools to ensure care experienced learners receive support. This work is also supported by the Depute Head Teacher of Equity and Inclusion. Within the Raising Attainment Strategy East Lothian has set the target of reducing the care experienced attainment gap to 21% in session 2024-2025.
- 3.7.9 East Lothian Council reports on its progress towards stretch aims through the Education Progress and Improvement Plan. This is published annually and submitted to the Scottish Government, Education Scotland and for approval at East Lothian Council Education & Children's Services Committee.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no policy implications in this report.

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial - none
- 6.2 Personnel - none
- 6.3 Other - none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Raising Attainment Data (Appendix 1).

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Appendix 1

P1, 4 & 7 Literacy (Combined)			
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22	% Achieving in 2022-23	% Achieving in 2023-24
All	62.8	66.3	69.8
Q1	42.6	50.3	54.7
Q2	50.9	56	62.5
Q3	67.7	68.5	68.6
Q4	68.9	74.2	76.8
Q5	72.7	73.5	77.2
Q1-Q5 Gap	30.1	23.2	22.5
Q2-Q5 Gap	21.8	17.5	14.7

P1, 4 & 7 Numeracy (Combined)			
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22	% Achieving in 2022-23	% Achieving in 2023-24
All	72.4	73.8	75.3
Q1	56.1	56.3	63.7
Q2	65.4	64.8	68.8
Q3	75.3	77	75.9
Q4	76.8	80.6	79.2
Q5	78.3	79.9	83.5
Q1-Q5 Gap	22.1	23.6	19.8
Q2-Q5 Gap	12.9	15.1	14.7

School Leavers, Level 5 Literacy (Or Above)			
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22	% Achieving in 2022-23	% Achieving in 2023-24
All	78.3	78.5	77
Q1	53.6	60.3	52.7
Q2	65.1	68.2	66.8
Q3	81.7	77.3	72.7
Q4	85	87.8	84.9
Q5	90	87.9	89.6
Q1-Q5 Gap	36.4	27.7	36.9
Q2-Q5 Gap	24.9	19.7	22.8

School Leavers, Level 5 Numeracy (Or Above)			
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22	% Achieving in 2022-23	% Achieving in 2023-24
All	66	65.8	67.3
Q1	41.1	39.7	41.82
Q2	52.7	54.3	52.6
Q3	66.8	65.7	67.7
Q4	71.0	72.9	75.4
Q5	83.1	81	81.7
Q1-Q5 Gap	42	41.3	40
Q2-Q5 Gap	30.4	26.7	29.26

School Leavers, 5 or more Awards at Level 1 (Or Above)			
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22	% Achieving in 2022-23	% Achieving in 2023-24
All	89.4	87	87
Q1	67.9	78.1	76.4
Q2	86.6	82.7	82.4
Q3	89.9	83.3	85.1
Q4	91.5	91.6	90.8
Q5	95.4	94	92.2
Q1-Q5 Gap	27.6	15.9	15.8
Q2-Q5 Gap	8.9	11.2	9.8

School Leavers, 1 or more Awards at Level 6 (A-C)			
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22	% Achieving in 2022-23	% Achieving in 2023-24
All	58.8	60.7	61.4
Q1	21.4	24.7	34.6
Q2	39.6	45.1	43.4
Q3	62.1	59.8	55.7
Q4	69	74	75.4
Q5	77.2	78	79.3
Q1-Q5 Gap	55.8	53.3	44.7
Q2-Q5 Gap	37.6	32.9	35.9

Care Experienced School Leavers, 5 or more Awards at Level 1 (Or Above)			
Cohort	% Achieving in 2021-22	% Achieving in 2022-23	% Achieving in 2023-24
Care Experienced	65.2	86.2	56
No Care Experience	89.4	87	87
Gap	24.7	0.8	31