

South Ayrshire Council

**Report by Director of Education
to Cabinet
of 25 November 2025**

Subject: Update on Pupil Equity Fund and Strategic Equity Fund

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request Cabinet confirm they are content with the current approach to the use of the Pupil Equity Fund and Strategic Equity Fund, and to inform Cabinet of the progress made by schools during 2024-25 in improving equity in educational outcomes.

2. Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1.1 **Confirms the current approach taken in the use of Pupil Equity Fund;**
- 2.1.2 **Confirms the current approach taken in the use of Strategic Equity Funding; and**
- 2.1.3 **Notes the progress made in achieving equity in educational outcomes during session 2024-25 in relation to South Ayrshire's stretch aims and plans for the future.**

3. Background

- 3.1 As part of the Attainment Scotland Fund, the Scottish Government has allocated additional funding directly to schools, targeted at closing the poverty-related attainment gap. The Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) was initially made available from April 2017. PEF has been confirmed until the end of session 2025-26. In 2024-25, for each P1 – S3 child in a publicly funded primary, secondary or special school who is eligible and registered for free school meals, schools were allocated £1,225.
- 3.2 South Ayrshire schools were allocated £2.615 million in PEF ranging from £2,450 to £232,750. The allocation for South Ayrshire was set in 2022 and remains fixed for the remainder of the Scottish parliamentary term until 2025/26. [Appendix 1](#) provides a summary of the allocation per school.
- 3.3 Scottish Government confirmed, following the introduction of the refreshed Attainment Challenge programme, that all school level PEF allocations will be fixed for each year until 2025/26. This provides Head Teachers with greater flexibility to plan over a longer-term period. It should be noted that whilst the fixed allocations have supported longer term planning on the use of PEF, a number of financial pressures arise because of this model. The fixed allocations do not account for increased staffing or resource costs during the 3-year fixed allocation. This is

leading to schools altering plans to ensure that they can maximise the time and support within the budget available.

4. Detail

- 4.1 [National guidance](#) has been provided by the Scottish Government to help schools plan how they utilise their PEF allocation. This was published in 2023.
- 4.2 South Ayrshire Council Educational Services have provided additional guidance to support schools in their use and reporting of PEF which is specific to our local circumstances. The advice is set in the context of the existing approaches to self-evaluation, highlighting in this case the poverty-related attainment gap and which interventions may be used to address the gap.
- 4.3 Head Teachers were asked to develop PEF plans detailing how resources would be used to provide targeted interventions in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing to close the poverty-related attainment gap. In developing these plans, Head Teachers were asked to set out their rationale for the use of the funding based on a clear contextual analysis which identifies the poverty-related attainment gap in their context. Head Teachers also need to take account of evidence of what is known to be effective at raising attainment for children affected by poverty. In addition, Head Teachers were asked to ensure collaboration with pupils, parents/carers, community partners and their cluster as they developed their PEF plans.
- 4.4 The Director of Education, Quality Improvement Managers/Officers and the Education Scotland Attainment Advisor have worked alongside schools to provide support and challenge as Head Teachers formulated their PEF plans. These plans sit alongside school improvement plans and evaluation of their impact can be found in school [Standards and Quality Reports](#) (Appendix 3).
- 4.5 A significant change introduced following the Attainment Challenge refresh was the removal of the Attainment Challenge School's Programme and Challenge Authority funding. Instead, the Scottish Government have decided to introduce the Strategic Equity Fund (SEF) that seeks to provide funding directly to all local authorities to support strategic work to deliver improved outcomes. This funding sees South Ayrshire gradually increase in funding over a four-year period.
- 4.6 South Ayrshire received a SEF allocation of £299,642 in 2022/23, £435,211 in 2023/24 and £651,500 in 2024/25. The allocation increases to £867,790 in 2025/26. Strategic planning for the SEF will be focused on literacy with the development of an Authority approach to reading through the South Ayrshire Reads initiative. In addition to this work, since 2023/24, funding is also being utilised to support the South Ayrshire Every Learner, Every Day campaign to promote school attendance.
- 4.7 Additional information on the South Ayrshire Reads initiative can be accessed [here](#).
- 4.8 Additional information on the Every Learner, Every Day campaign can be accessed [here](#).
- 4.9 Alongside the funding provided to South Ayrshire in the form of Strategic Equity Funding the Council is required to set stretch aims (Appendix 4). These aims will be reported on through the Educational Services Standards and Quality Report each year.

- 4.10 As part of the conditions associated with the grant for the Pupil Equity Fund and the Strategic Equity Fund, the Education Authority is required to produce a report summarising the outcomes and performance at an authority level. To reduce duplication and bureaucracy this is linked to existing reporting requirements as set in the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000. Further detail can be found in [South Ayrshire Educational Services Standards and Quality Report 2024-25](#).
- 4.11 This report sets out a high-level summary of the progress of South Ayrshire schools in improving outcomes through the use of their PEF during 2024-25. Summary performance results are attached in [Appendix 2](#).
- 4.12 Furthermore, Education Scotland published a [5 Year Impact Report](#) on the work undertaken through the Attainment Challenge across Scotland to close the poverty related attainment gap in 2021 and further publications by [Audit Scotland](#) on educational outcomes, the [OECD Review](#) and [Equity Audit](#) have led to the changes introduced through the refresh programme.
- 4.13 It is recommended that elected members confirm the current approaches to achieving equity using PEF and SEF, and note the progress made by schools in improving outcomes through the use of this additional funding during 2024-25.

5. Legal and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 This report provides evidence of the progress made as a consequence of additional funding from the Scottish Government, to support schools in closing the poverty-related attainment gap. South Ayrshire schools received £3.266 million in 2024-25 from PEF and Strategic Equity funding. Robust monitoring arrangements have been put in place for PEF and Attainment Challenge, which ensure that Educational Services and Head Teachers have regular oversight of school level expenditure. PEF expenditure is separated from core school budgets, ensuring that spending is not subsumed within overall school budgets, and can be easily tracked and monitored.
- 6.2 The 2024-25 PEF actual expenditure, including any carry forward from 2023-24, was £2.498 million. Financial records confirm that 97% of the 2024-25 allocation had been spent by the start of the new school year in August 2025.
- 6.3 School PEF allocations have been confirmed for the years 2022-23 until 2025-26 based on the 2021-22 ([Appendix 1](#)) allocations outlined.
- 6.4 South Ayrshire schools were allocated £2.614 million for 2024-25. £0.651 million was allocated as Strategic Equity Funding in 2024/25.
- 6.5 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

7. Human Resources Implications

- 7.1 Not applicable.

8. Risk

8.1 *Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations*

8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.

8.2 *Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations*

8.2.1 There are no risks associated with rejecting the recommendations.

9. Equalities

9.1 The proposals in this report have been assessed through the Equality Impact Assessment Scoping process. There are no significant potential positive or negative equality impacts of agreeing the recommendations and therefore an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. A copy of the Equalities Scoping Assessment is attached as [Appendix 5](#).

10. Sustainable Development Implications

10.1 ***Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*** - This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

11. Options Appraisal

11.1 An options appraisal has not been conducted in relation to the subject matter of this report.

12. Link to Council Plan

12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to Priority Two of the Council Plan: Live, Work, Learn and Outcome One: To provide quality education and lifelong learning.

13. Link to Shaping Our Future Council Yes No

13.1 Not applicable

14. Results of Consultation

14.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this report.

14.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor William Grant, Policy Lead for Education and Lifelong Learning, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

15. Next Steps for Decision Tracking Purposes

15.1 If the recommendations above are approved by Members, the Director of Education and designated officers from Educational Services will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure full implementation of the decision within the following timescales, with the completion status reported to the Cabinet in the 'Council and Cabinet Decision Log' at each of its meetings until such time as the decision is fully implemented:

<i>Implementation</i>	<i>Due date</i>	<i>Managed by</i>
Annual update on progress to Cabinet	November 2026	Director of Education

Background Papers: [National PEF Operating Guidance 2023](#)
[Strategic Equity Fund National Guidance 2022](#)

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Date: **27 October 2025**

Pupil Equity Fund Allocations 2022-23 -2025-26

School Name	Stage	Allocation before top-up	Top-up	Allocation including top-up
Culzean Primary School and Early Years Centre	Primary	£86,975	£0	£86,975
Annbank Primary School	Primary	£88,200	£0	£88,200
Alloway Primary School	Primary	£18,375	£0	£18,375
Braehead Primary School	Primary	£124,950	£0	£124,950
Dalmilling Primary School	Primary	£232,750	£0	£232,750
Forehill Primary School	Primary	£80,850	£0	£80,850
Grammar Primary School	Primary	£47,775	£0	£47,775
Heathfield Primary School	Primary	£93,100	£0	£93,100
Holmston Primary School	Primary	£52,675	£0	£52,675
St John's Primary School - Ayr	Primary	£101,675	£0	£101,675
Ballantrae Primary School	Primary	£13,475	£1,645	£15,120
Barr Primary School	Primary	£6,125	£355	£6,480
Barrhill Primary School	Primary	£1,225	£935	£2,160
Colmonell Primary School	Primary	£3,675	£0	£3,675
Coylton Primary School	Primary	£24,500	£0	£24,500
Crosshill Primary School	Primary	£6,125	£0	£6,125
Dailly Primary School	Primary	£30,625	£0	£30,625
Doonfoot Primary School	Primary	£31,850	£0	£31,850
Dundonald Primary School	Primary	£37,975	£0	£37,975
Fisherton Primary School	Primary	£14,700	£0	£14,700
Girvan Primary School	Primary	£111,475	£0	£111,475
Kirkmichael Primary School	Primary	£8,575	£1,145	£9,720
Maidens Primary School	Primary	£12,250	£0	£12,250
St Cuthbert's Primary School - Maybole	Primary	£2,450	£0	£2,450
Minishant Primary School	Primary	£8,575	£0	£8,575
Monkton Primary School	Primary	£19,600	£0	£19,600
Glenburn Primary School	Primary	£62,475	£0	£62,475
Kingcase Primary School	Primary	£62,475	£0	£62,475
St Ninian's Primary School - Prestwick	Primary	£18,375	£0	£18,375
Straiton Primary School	Primary	£2,450	£0	£2,450
Symington Primary School	Primary	£15,925	£0	£15,925
Tarbolton Primary School	Primary	£68,600	£0	£68,600
Troon Primary School	Primary	£34,300	£260	£34,560
Barassie Primary School	Primary	£50,225	£0	£50,225
Muirhead Primary School	Primary	£29,400	£0	£29,400
St Patrick's Primary School - Troon	Primary	£18,375	£0	£18,375
Kincaidston Primary School	Primary	£91,875	£0	£91,875
Newton Primary School	Primary	£106,575	£0	£106,575
Struthers Primary School	Primary	£26,950	£3,290	£30,240
Sacred Heart Primary School	Primary	£44,100	£0	£44,100
South Ayrshire Council Virtual School	Secondary	£0	£0	£0
Ayr Academy	Secondary	£121,275	£0	£121,275
Belmont Academy	Secondary	£102,900	£0	£102,900

Queen Margaret Academy	Secondary	£68,600	£0	£68,600
Girvan Academy	Secondary	£67,375	£0	£67,375
Carrick Academy	Secondary	£34,300	£0	£34,300
Prestwick Academy	Secondary	£85,750	£0	£85,750
Marr College	Secondary	£74,725	£0	£74,725
Kyle Academy	Secondary	£49,000	£0	£49,000
Invergarven School	Special	£20,825	£0	£20,825
Southcraig School	Special	£89,425	£0	£89,425
Total		£2,606,800	£7,630	£2,614,430

South Ayrshire Council Additional Analysis – Outcomes and Impact

1. Outcomes and Impact

- 1.1 Where 2024-25 attainment data is not yet published nationally, 2023-24 data will be shared in this report.
- 1.2 The Attainment Challenge guidance issued to schools indicated that Head Teachers should plan to secure improvements for children and young people over a number of years. Current guidance ensures that Head Teachers consider data trends and the use of improvement frameworks to support decision making and continuity of interventions or strategies.
- 1.3 There is a range of evidence from session 2024-25 which outlines that we are continuing to improve the experiences and outcomes of those children and young people most impacted by poverty. In addition to the quantitative data outlined below, qualitative information gathered through PEF impact visits is also used to measure the impact of this additional funding on those children most impacted by poverty.

1.4

Attendance - Primary

	2023-24	2024-25
All pupils	92.7%	93.5%
Q1	90.2%	91.4%

Attendance - Secondary

	2023-24	2024-25
All pupils	86.8%	88.3%
Q1	82%	84.4%

Secondary – Exclusion incidence per one thousand pupils

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
All pupils	32.7	26.0	17.3
Q1	59.0	43.2	20.7
All Care experienced	91.2	70.6	50.0

% of pre-school Early Years children achieving 8 or more developmental milestones in Health & Wellbeing, Language & Communication, and Mathematics & Numeracy domains: 2020-21 to 2024-25

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Health & Wellbeing	92.5	95.5	96.0
Language and Communication	76.7	82.7	83.1
Maths & Numeracy	88.0	88.7	91.7

1.5 At this stage schools have identified improvements and areas for development in a range of outcomes for individuals and groups of children and young people.

- Overall attendance of pupils in both primary and secondary sectors has increased by 0.8pp and 1.5pp respectively. There is a similar positive trend for

those young people living in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) quintile one where improvements have been 1.2pp and 2.4pp respectively.

- Secondary exclusions continue to reduce and are now at the lowest level for five years. Similarly, overall exclusion figures have decreased in primary schools when compared to 2024.
- Nationally published data from 2024 outlines that P1, 4 and 7 combined Curriculum for Excellence attainment in all aspects of literacy is now at the highest level for the past 4 years. Furthermore, there is a positive three-year trend in the attainment of quintile one learners in all literacy organisers and numeracy.
- Latest developmental milestones data shows a positive three-year trend in relation to health and wellbeing, language and communication, and maths and numeracy developmental milestones in early years. In addition, the data illustrated that the gap between the most and least deprived children has narrowed in all three developmental milestones when compared to data from 2023-24.
- The gap between the percentage of leavers in quintile one compared to quintile five achieving Level 4 Literacy and Numeracy has decreased steadily over the last three years by 1.8pp. However, it is noted that there has been an increase in the gap in the same measure at Level 5.
- Initial school leaver destinations for all leavers remain significantly above the national average whilst an improvement of 0.6pp on last year's performance is noted.

2. Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) – Stretch Aims

- 2.1 SEF, introduced in 2022-23, has provided the local authority with greater flexibility in reducing the poverty-related attainment gap. This additional funding was initially focussed on improvements in learning, teaching and assessment with a particular focus on reading skills. Funding has also been used to support improvements in school attendance.
- 2.2 Each local authority is required to submit a number of stretch aims associated with accelerating progress in reducing the poverty-related attainment gap. These aims are focussed on the progress of children and young people in literacy, numeracy and outcomes in the senior phase. In addition, health and wellbeing measures have focussed on attendance, care experienced children's outcomes and exclusions.
- 2.3 South Ayrshire's stretch aims and progress to date can be found in Appendix 4.

3. Reporting

- 3.1 As part of the conditions associated with the grant for SEF, the Education Authority is required to produce a report summarising the outcomes and performance at an authority level. To reduce duplication and bureaucracy, this is linked to existing reporting requirements as set in the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000. This report sets out a high-level summary of the progress of South Ayrshire schools in improving outcomes through the use of their PEF during 2024-25.
- 3.2 In line with the National Improvement Framework (NIF) priorities, the Educational Services Plan includes a number of activities which are intended to bring about improvement in the attainment and experiences for all children and young people. For example, improving reading, writing and mathematics throughout the years of the broad general education and improved attainment at the senior phase. The

improvements that establishments have made have realised benefits for all children and young people, including those experiencing deprivation.

4. Interventions

4.1 A range of measures were used to provide evidence of success in terms of improving attainment including standardised assessments, Curriculum for Excellence attainment, class and school assessments and data from Scottish National Assessments (SNA). Effective use of data plays a significant role in selecting, monitoring and targeting interventions.

4.2 Looking ahead, from analysing the PEF proposals for the new academic session, the bullet points below highlight some of the key messages in relation to how PEF is being used by schools across South Ayrshire in 2025-26.

- Almost all establishments (92%) are using their PEF allocation in part to implement strategies and supports that aim to raise attainment of targeted groups of young people. This is an increase of eight percentage points (pp) when compared to last session. Where this is the case, a range of strategies are being used which suit the needs, and PEF allocations, of each establishment. Examples include dedicated temporary promoted posts with a focus on tracking and monitoring the progress and supports for targeted cohorts, additional pupil support assistant (PSA) hours to provide targeted support in literacy and numeracy and Early Years Practitioners (EYPs) being used at Early Level for early intervention and support in improving literacy and numeracy outcomes.
- Almost all establishments (92%) are using part of their PEF allocation to improve the engagement of young people in their learning experiences. A wide range of strategies are being implemented in relation to this key indicator. These include EYPs to further develop play-based learning approaches in P1-P3, to fund a library assistant to further develop a positive reading culture across the school and purchasing new resources to enhance engagement in literacy and numeracy activities.
- Less than half of our establishments (38%) are using part of their PEF allocation to focus on improving attendance. This is line with session 2024-25. Where the additional funding is being used to improve attendance, strategies being utilised include the use of an Education Welfare Officer to provide targeted support to children and their families to improve attendance, additional PSA hours to support the use of a walking bus and the appointment of attendance leads in some secondary schools to track and monitor the attendance of specific targeted cohorts.
- A minority (19%) of schools have plans to use part of their PEF allocation to further develop inclusive practices. This is the most significant drop as 32% of schools used this funding to support this key theme last session. The reduction in funding being used for this key theme, could in part be due to a significant focus being placed on this theme during local authority twilight sessions and in-service days for all schools.

4.3 Head Teachers continue to engage with local authority and Education Scotland colleagues to support quality assurance arrangements in the use of Pupil Equity Funding and compliance with the national operational guidance. This includes PEF impact visits

carried out by a Quality Improvement Officer in collaboration with our link attainment advisor from Education Scotland.

5. Identification of Good Practice and Areas of Challenge

5.1 The highlights and areas of challenge were noted from the plans submitted and evaluated by Head Teachers:

- A greater number of schools and senior leaders are using a wider range of data to conduct a robust contextual analysis. This is helping schools to identify specific gaps and to support the identification of needs within their own context. This is supporting improvement planning and the appropriate use of additional funding.
- In almost all cases, clear outcomes and measures are being used to support the implementation and evaluation of plans.
- There is scope to better evidence how staff, learners and parents/carers have been involved in the consultation of how this additional funding is being used to improve the experiences and outcomes of those most impacted by poverty.
- Progress in achieving South Ayrshire's stretch aims continues to be a significant focus for schools and the local authority. Work to support this is regularly shared at Head Teacher meetings.
- Continue to share the most effective strategies to address challenges in attendance of young people across all schools.

Table 1. Attendance

Primary			Secondary		
Year	South Ayrshire	National	Year	South Ayrshire	National
2020-21	95%	94%	2020-21	91%	89%
2021-22	92%	*	2021-22	86%	*
2022-23	92%	92%	2022-23	85%	88%
2023-24	93%	93%	2023-24	87%	88%
2024-25	94%	*	2024-25	88%	*

* Published biennially until 2022-23 – denotes non-data year or not yet published

Table 2. Exclusions – Primary and Secondary exclusion incidents per 1,000 pupils by deprivation (SIMD 2020v2 quintile), 2020-21 – 2024-25

Sector	Year	20% Most Deprived	2	3	4	20% Least Deprived
Primary	2020-21	1	3	2	3	0
	2021-22	5	1	1	3	0
	2022-23	1	2	0	2	0
	2023-24	9	2	2	3	1
	2024-25	7	2	1	0	1
Secondary	2020-21	53	37	34	14	8
	2021-22	45	39	30	14	8
	2022-23	58	30	37	17	16
	2023-24	42	26	31	12	14
	2024-25	21	16	24	14	7

Table 3. Percentage of children with no developmental concerns in any domain at the 27-30 month review (by deprivation)

	Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
South Ayrshire	2019/20	76.8	84.8	80.2	82.9	89.7
	2020/21	65.9	73.5	77.8	82.0	76.4
	2021/22	69.2	76.6	78.0	88.0	80.6
	2022/23	73.7	77.6	75.9	79.0	86.9
	2024/25	65.4	74.3	73.7	89.2	86.5
Scotland	2019/20	68.3	75.0	78.9	81.1	82.6
	2020/21	67.2	73.4	77.1	80.2	80.8
	2021/22	64.5	71.1	75.7	78.5	78.4
	2022/23	66.4	73.0	75.9	79.7	82.4
	2024/25	69.7	75.0	79.0	81.3	84.1

Source: <https://www.opendata.nhs.scot/dataset/27-30-month-review-statistics>

Table 4. Primary P1, P4 and P7: Percentage Achievement of Expected Levels by Deprivation (SIMD 2020v2 Quintile)

Deprivation	Session	Organiser				
		Reading	Writing	Listening and Talking	Literacy	Numeracy
Q1	21-22	68	59	78	57	72
	22-23	75	69	84	68	76
	23-24	77	71	86	69	75
Q2	21-22	78	71	83	69	77
	22-23	80	74	87	73	79
	23-24	83	79	90	78	84
Q3	21-22	79	72	86	71	80
	22-23	81	77	89	76	82
	23-24	84	79	92	78	85
Q4	21-22	85	79	93	78	85
	22-23	87	85	92	84	89
	23-24	90	87	95	86	93
Q5	21-22	88	85	92	83	90
	22-23	89	89	94	87	92
	23-24	91	89	95	88	92

Table 5. S3 (Level 3 or better): Percentage Achievement of Expected Levels by Deprivation (SIMD 2020v2 Quintile)

Deprivation	Session	Organiser				
		Reading	Writing	Listening and Talking	Literacy	Numeracy
Q1	21-22	78	76	78	75	71
	22-23	77	76	77	75	83
	23-24	88	88	88	87	92
Q2	21-22	88	86	88	85	84
	22-23	86	85	88	84	88
	23-24	89	89	90	89	91
Q3	21-22	88	87	89	86	85
	22-23	92	92	93	91	92
	23-24	93	92	92	92	94
Q4	21-22	90	89	90	88	90
	22-23	93	92	91	91	92
	23-24	94	94	93	93	98
Q5	21-22	94	93	94	93	92
	22-23	93	93	94	93	95
	23-24	94	94	95	94	97

Table 6. Percentage Gap in Achievement of Expected Levels: SIMD 2020v2 Q1 and Q5

Year Stage	Session	Reading	Writing	Listening and Talking	Literacy	Numeracy
P1,4&7	2021-22	20	25	15	27	18
	2022-23	14	20	11	19	15
	2023-24	14	18	9	19	17
S3 Level 3 or better	2021-22	16	17	16	18	21
	2022-23	16	17	17	18	12
	2023-24	6	7	7	7	5
S3 Level 4	2021-22	38	39	41	38	33
	2022-23	34	33	34	34	40
	2023-24	24	23	23	26	35

Table 7. Percentage Achievement of Level 4 Literacy and Numeracy and Gap in Achievement

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
20% Most Deprived Leavers	86.9	85.6	83.1	82.0	83.1
20% Least Deprived Leavers	97.5	97.2	97.9	96.5	96.1
Attainment Gap	10.6pp	11.7pp	14.8pp	14.5pp	12.9pp

2024-25 data will be available following Insight update in February 2026.

Table 8. Percentage Achievement of Level 5 Literacy and Numeracy and Gap in Achievement

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
20% Most Deprived Leavers	51.4	61.0	42.0	54.1	53.1
20% Least Deprived Leavers	89.0	88.9	82.1	83.5	89.9
Attainment Gap	37.6pp	28pp	40pp	29.5pp	36.8pp

2024-25 data will be available following Insight update in February 2026.

Table 9. Percentage Achievement of Level 6 Literacy and Numeracy and Gap in Achievement

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
20% Most Deprived Leavers	14.8	12.8	7.3	5.9	8.2
20% Least Deprived Leavers	51.5	47.0	41.0	39.5	42.1
Attainment Gap	36.8pp	34.2pp	33.7pp	33.6pp	33.9pp

2024-25 data will be available following Insight update in February 2026.

Table 10. Percentage Achievement of Literacy and Numeracy Qualifications: 20% Most Deprived Leavers

Qualification	Establishment	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Level 4 Literacy	South Ayrshire	92.9	90.9	88.6	89.2	87.2
	SAC VC	84.6	88.7	86.5	89.2	84.7
Level 5 Literacy	South Ayrshire	70.0	74.3	62.6	69.8	59.7
	SAC VC	63.4	70.0	64.4	65.3	63.5
Level 6 Literacy	South Ayrshire	38.3	47.6	28.8	30.6	32.9
	SAC VC	36.6	40.8	32.5	34.2	33.5
Level 4 Numeracy	South Ayrshire	88.0	87.7	85.4	83.3	87.2
	SAC VC	82.7	84.7	82.0	84.1	80.3
Level 5 Numeracy	South Ayrshire	56.8	64.2	52.5	60.4	59.3
	SAC VC	52.0	58.3	51.1	53.4	52.3
Level 6 Numeracy	South Ayrshire	15.3	13.9	7.3	7.2	8.2
	SAC VC	15.0	14.5	11.7	12.3	13.4
No. Leavers	South Ayrshire	183	187	219	222	243
	SAC VC	1,830	1,870	2,190	2,220	2,430

2024-25 data will be available following Insight update in February 2026.

Table 11. Leaver Initial Destinations - % leavers moving into a positive destination

Quintile	Establishment	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Q1	South Ayrshire	98.4	97.3	99.1	96.4	99.6
	Virtual Comparator	90.1	92.7	93.2	93.2	92.8
	National	90.0	92.8	93.4	94.0	93.6
Q2	South Ayrshire	98.8	98.3	98.7	96.5	97.7
	Virtual Comparator	90.9	95.0	96.4	95.4	95.6
	National	91.7	94.5	94.9	94.7	94.4
Q3	South Ayrshire	97.4	98.6	98.0	99.3	98.4
	Virtual Comparator	93.5	95.0	96.4	95.7	95.2
	National	94.1	95.9	95.9	96.3	95.8
Q4	South Ayrshire	99.3	99.4	98.4	98.5	99.4
	Virtual Comparator	96.2	97.6	97.5	96.8	97.5
	National	95.2	96.8	97.0	97.0	97.1
Q5	South Ayrshire	98.5	98.0	98.7	100.0	98.7
	Virtual Comparator	97.4	97.9	97.8	97.6	97.5
	National	96.3	97.6	97.8	97.7	97.9
All Leavers	South Ayrshire	98.4	98.3	98.6	98.1	98.7
	Virtual Comparator	93.5	95.7	96.3	95.6	95.6
	National	93.4	95.5	95.7	95.9	95.7
Nº leavers	South Ayrshire	999	1,123	1,180	1,200	1,201

Table 12. Leaver Initial Destinations – % Gap between Quintile 1 and All Leavers

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
20% Most Deprived Leavers	98.4	97.3	99.1	96.4	99.6
All Leavers	98.4	98.3	98.6	98.1	98.7
Leavers Destination Gap	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
South Ayrshire	0.1	0.7	-0.4	3.6	-0.9
Virtual Comparator	7.2	5.2	4.7	4.4	4.7
National	6.3	4.8	4.4	3.7	4.3

Appendix 3

STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORTS

School	Link to Standards and Quality Report
Alloway Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Annbank Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Ayr Academy	Standards and Quality Report - 2023-2024
Ayr Grammar Primary	Standards and Quality Report - June 2024
Ballantrae Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2022-2023
Barassie Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Barr Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Barrhill Primary	Standards and Quality Report - June 2025
Belmont Academy	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Braehead Primary	Standards and Quality Report - June 2025
Carrick Academy	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Colmonell Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2023-2024
Coylton Primary	Standards and Quality Report - June 2025
Crosshill Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2022-2023
Culzean Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2023-2024
Dailly Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2021-2022
Dalmilling Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Doonfoot Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Dundonald Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Fisherton Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Forehill Primary	Standards and Quality Report - June 2024
Girvan Academy	Standards and Quality Report - 2023-2024
Girvan Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Glenburn Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Heathfield Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Holmston Primary	Standards and Quality Report - June 2024
Invergarven School	Standards and Quality Report - 2022-2023
Kincaidston Primary	Standards and Quality Report - Parent Zone
Kingcase Primary	Standards and Quality Report - June 2025
Kirkmichael Primary	Standards and Quality Report - Improvement Priorities (Link on page)
Kyle Academy	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Maidens Primary	Standards and Quality Report - School Homepage (Access via Information tab)
Marr College	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Minishant Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Monkton Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Muirhead Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Newton Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2023-2024
Prestwick Academy	Standards and Quality Report - 2023-2024
Queen Margaret Academy	Standards and Quality Report - 2023-2024
Sacred Heart Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2023
Southcraig School	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
St Cuthbert's Primary	Standards and Quality Report - School Policies/Documents Homepage
St John's Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2025
St Ninian's Primary	Standards and Quality - School Improvement Homepage (Link on page)
St Patrick's Primary	Standards and Quality Report - Homepage
Straiton Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025

Struthers Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Symington Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025
Tarbolton Primary	Standards and Quality Report - June 2025
Troon Primary	Standards and Quality Report - 2024-2025



**South Ayrshire Council
Stretch Aims 2022-23 through 2025-26**

ACEL P1,4,7 Literacy					
	Overall levels	FME	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 5	Gap (Q1-5)
SAC pre-covid (2016-17 – 2018-19) average / max	76% / 80%	62% / 66%	65% / 69%	88% / 91%	23pp / 26pp
National pre-covid average / max	71% / 72%	Not published	61% / 63%	83% / 84%	22pp / 22pp
SAC 2022-23 target (result)	79% (77%)	59% (62%)	67% (68%)	89% (87%)	22pp (19pp)
SAC 2023-24 target range (result)	78-80% (79%)	59-65% (64%)	69-72% (69%)	88-90% (88%)	16-21pp (19pp)
SAC 2024-25 target range	80-82%	64-68%	72-75%	90-91%	16-19pp
SAC 2025-26 target range	80-82%	61-65%	66-69%	89-92%	16-19pp

ACEL P1,4,7 Numeracy

	Overall levels	FME	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 5	Gap (Q1-5)
SAC pre-covid (2016-17 – 2018-19) average / max	85% / 85%	73% / 73%	78% / 80%	93% / 93%	15pp / 18pp
National pre-covid average / max	78% / 79%	Not published	70% / 72%	88% / 88%	17pp / 18pp
SAC 2022-23 target (result)	84% (83%)	68% (69%)	77% (76%)	92% (92%)	15pp (15pp)
SAC 2023-24 target range (result)	84-86% (85%)	68-70% (72%)	77-80% (75%)	92-93% (92%)	12-16pp (17pp)
SAC 2024-25 target range (result)	85-87%	70-72%	80-82%	92-94%	11-14pp
SAC 2025-26 target range	86-89%	72-75%	75-78%	93-95%	14-17pp

1 @5 leavers

	Overall levels	FME	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 5	Gap (Q1-5)
SAC pre-covid (2017-18 / 2018-19)	91% / 90%	67% / 70%	81% / 80%	98% / 94%	17pp / 14pp
National pre-covid	88% / 88%	70% / 70%	78% / 79%	96% / 96%	18pp / 17pp
SAC 2021-22 result	92%	71%	82%	97%	15pp
SAC 2022-23 result	89%	68%	78%	98%	20pp
SAC 2023-24 target range (result)	92-94% (86%)	72-74% (65%)	82-85% (73%)	94-97% (97%)	12-15pp (24pp)
SAC 2024-25 target range	93-94%	74-77%	84-86%	95-98%	11-14pp
SAC 2025-26 target range	88-91%	67-71%	77-81%	97-98%	16-20pp

1 @6 leavers					
	Overall levels	FME	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 5	Gap (Q1-5)
SAC pre-covid (2017-18 / 2018-19)	68% / 66%	33% / 32%	46% / 45%	82% / 79%	36pp / 34pp
National pre-covid	66% / 66%	38% / 38%	49% / 51%	85% / 83%	35pp / 33pp
SAC 2021-22 result	67%	38%	39%	86%	47pp
SAC 2022-23 result	63%	31%	45%	86%	40pp
SAC 2023-24 target range (result)	68-70% (64%)	38-40% (35%)	40-44% (46%)	86-88% (86%)	42-48pp (41pp)
SAC 2024-25 target range	70-72%	40-42%	45-48%	88-90%	40-45pp
SAC 2025-26 target range	66-68%	36-39%	46-48%	88-90%	40-42pp

Participation 16-19				
	Overall Levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 5	Gap (Q1-5)
SAC 2022-23 target (result)	94% (95.6%)	90% (91.9%)	96.3% (97.9%)	6.3pp (6.0pp)
SAC 2023-24 target (result)	95-96% (95.3%)	92-93% (91.5%)	97-98% (97.8%)	8pp (6.2pp)
SAC 2024-25 target (result)	96-97% (95.6%)	93-95% (91.3%)	98-99% (97.9%)	7-8pp (6.6pp)
SAC 2025-26 target range	95-97%	91-93%	97-98%	4-7pp

Primary attendance				
Annual trajectory	Overall levels	SIMD Q1	SIMD Q5	Gap (Q1 – Q5)
SAC 2023-24 target (result)	92-94% (92.7%)	90-92% (90.2%)	94-95% (94.7%)	2-5pp (4.5pp)
SAC 2024-25 target (result)	93-95% (93.5%)	91-93% (91.4%)	94-96% (95.3%)	1-5pp (3.9pp)
SAC 2025-26 target range	94-95%	91-93%	95-96%	2-5pp

Secondary attendance				
Annual trajectory	Overall levels	SIMD Q1	SIMD Q5	Gap (Q1 – Q5)
SAC 2023-24 target (result)	86-88% (86.8%)	81-84% (82.0%)	90-92% (90.7%)	6-9pp (8.7pp)
SAC 2024-25 target (result)	88-90% (88.3%)	83-86% (84.4%)	91-93% (91.9%)	5-10pp (7.5pp)
SAC 2025-26 target range	89-90%	85-87%	92-93%	5-8pp

Exclusion incidence per 1,000 pupils								
Primary	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	S. Aim (result) 22-23	S. Aim (result) 23-24	S. Aim (result) 24-25	S. Aim 25-26
Incidents per 1,000 pupils	3.4	1.4	1.9	1.8	1.5 (0.8)	0.7 (3.3)	0.7 (2.4)	0.6
Rate re Q1 - most deprived	7.9	3.9	1.3	4.7	2.0 (0.7)	0.7 (8.6)	0.6 (7.5)	0.6
Rate - all looked after	14.5	-	-	-	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (23.3)	0
Rate – previously LA	9.4	-	23.3	31.5	15 (0)	0 (0)	0 (9.7)	0

Exclusion incidence per 1,000 pupils

Secondary	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	S. Aim (result) 22-23	S. Aim (result) 23-24	S. Aim (result) 24-25	S. Aim 25-26
Incidents per 1,000 pupils	34.7	19.3	30.2	28.2	25 (32.7)	25 (26.0)	23 (17.3)	22
Rate re Q1 - most deprived	92.1	45.0	54.3	44.5	43 (59.0)	43 (43.2)	42 (20.7)	41
Rate - all looked after	164.6	29.0	115.0	19.2	30 (34.2)	26 (42.7)	24 (29.4)	22
Rate – previously LA	116.7	104.9	113.9	118.8	100 (133.8)	100 (92.1)	90 (63.3)	85

Breadth & Depth: leavers looked after at or away from home

	1@3	1@4	5@3	5@4	№ pupils
SAC 2021-22 result	95%	90%	90%	57%	21
SAC 2022-23 target range (result)	100% (95%)	90% (82%)	90% (73%)	60% (41%)	22
SAC 2023-24 target range (result)	100% (82%)	91-92% (79%)	90-91% (82%)	60-62% (64%)	28
SAC 2024-25 target range	100%	92-93%	91-92%	62-64%	Published Feb '26
SAC 2025-26 target	100%	94%	92%	65%	Published Feb '27

Literacy & Numeracy: all care experienced leavers					
	Level 4 Literacy	Level 4 Numeracy	Level 5 Literacy	Level 5 Numeracy	No pupils
SAC 2021-22	77.2%	77.2%	45.6%	28.1%	57
SAC 2022-23 target range (result)	80% (69.0%)	75% (63.8%)	40% (37.9%)	40% (37.9%)	59
SAC 2023-24 target range (result)	80-82% (74.2%)	75-79% (72.6%)	40-44% (32.3%)	40-44% (38.7%)	62
SAC 2024-25 target range	82-84%	79-82%	44-49%	44-49%	Published Feb '26
SAC 2025-26 target	85%	84%	50%	50%	Published Feb '27

ACEL P1,4,7 Literacy: all care experienced								
	17-18	18-19	20-21	21-22	S. Aim (result) 22-23	S. Aim (result) 23-24	S. Aim (result) 24-25	S. Aim 25-26
Care Experienced	44%	47%	35%	33%	45% (56%)	56-58% (59%)	58-60%	63%
All pupils	78%	80%	69%	72%	79% (77%)	78-80% (80%)	80-82%	80-82%
Gap	34pp	33pp	34pp	39pp	34pp (21pp)	(20pp)	-	20pp

ACEL P1,4,7 Numeracy: all care experienced								
	17-18	18-19	20-21	21-22	S. Aim (result) 22-23	S. Aim (result) 23-24	S. Aim (result) 24-25	S. Aim 25-26
Care Experienced	56%	53%	42%	49%	56% (64%)	64-66% (59%)	66-69%	70%
All pupils	85%	84%	78%	81%	84% (83%)	84-86% (86%)	85-87%	86-89%
Gap	29pp	31pp	36pp	32pp	28pp (19pp)	(26pp)		18pp

1. Proposal details

Proposal Title Update on Pupil Equity Fund and Strategic Equity Fund	Lead Officer Scott Mulholland
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2. Which communities, groups of people, employees or thematic groups do you think will be, or potentially could be, impacted upon by the implementation of this proposal? Please indicate whether these would be positive or negative impacts

Community, Groups of People or Themes	Negative Impacts	Positive impacts
The whole community of South Ayrshire	-	-
People from different racial groups, ethnic or national origin.	-	-
Women and/or men (boys and girls)	-	X
People with disabilities	-	-
People from particular age groups for example older people, children and young people	-	X
Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people	-	-
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process to change sex	-	-
Pregnant women and new mothers	-	-
People who are married or in a civil partnership	-	-
People who share a particular religion or belief	-	-
Thematic Groups: Health, Human Rights, Rurality and Deprivation	-	-

3. Do you have evidence or reason to believe that the proposal will support the Council to:

General Duty and other Equality Themes	Level of Negative and/or Positive Impact (high, medium or low)
Eliminate discrimination and harassment faced by particular communities or groups	Low impact
Promote equality of opportunity between particular communities or groups	Low impact
Foster good relations between particular communities or groups	Low impact
Promote positive attitudes towards different communities or groups	Low impact
Increase participation of particular communities or groups in public life	Low Impact
Improve the health and wellbeing of particular communities or groups	Low impact
Promote the human rights of particular communities or groups	Low impact
Tackle deprivation faced by particular communities or groups	Low Impact

4. Summary Assessment

Is a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) required? (A full EQIA must be carried out on all high and medium impact proposals)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rationale for decision: The proposals in this report allow scrutiny of performance. The report does not involve proposals for policies, strategies, procedures, processes, financial decisions and activities (including service delivery), both new and at review, that affect the Council's communities and employees, therefore an equality impact assessment is not required.	
Signed: Scott Mulholland	Director of Education
Date: 27/10/2025	Copy to equalities@south-ayrshire.gov.uk