

## Closing the attainment gap and achieving potential in South Ayrshire

### Introduction

South Ayrshire Council believes that each person in our community, whether young or old, should be able to receive the necessary help and support to allow them to achieve their potential. This means promoting social justice and ensuring all policy development is considered through the prism of tackling deprivation<sup>1</sup>. The Council's vision statement is *working with our partners and communities to make life better in South Ayrshire*<sup>2</sup> and promoting social justice means that those who need most help to improve their quality of life will receive most.

Within Educational Services, our vision and ambition is to achieve excellence and equity. We have the highest expectations for all learners so that they can achieve their potential regardless of their circumstances. It is our ambition to close the attainment gap while constantly stretching and challenging children and young people who are achieving at the highest levels. Closing the gap while challenging every learner guides and defines the work of educational services.

South Ayrshire Council has a broadly improving trend in young people's attainment over the past 8 years. Success in national qualifications has been improving year on year in most measures. At primary, children are progressing well in literacy while there is scope for improvement in mathematics. Overall, the headline figures are good across a range of indicators. However, since our Validated Self-Evaluation carried out jointly with Education Scotland in April 2014, we have been asking ourselves more challenging questions about the attainment figures. Mainly, is it everyone who is achieving equally or are more disadvantaged children and young people achieving less well? Overall, less advantaged children and young people in South Ayrshire are achieving less well than their more advantaged peers.

This document aims to set out the extent to which some children and young people do not achieve in line with expectations and what we are doing about it. Much of what is contained in this paper collects in one place information that exists already in the *Children's Services Plan 2017-20* and the current *Service and Improvement Plan for Educational Services* in South Ayrshire. The vision set out in the Children's Services Plan articulates what we hope to achieve for our children and young people through working closely with partners:

**All children and young people in South Ayrshire deserve the chance to reach their full potential. We will support those who start at a disadvantage and remove barriers for those who are struggling, we will stretch the most able and protect and nurture all children, especially the most vulnerable. Our aim is to reduce inequalities in outcomes for children and young people, in particular to close the gap in outcomes related to deprivation so that all can achieve their potential.**

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<sup>1</sup> *A Programme for Effective Governance. Joint statement by SNP, Labour and Independent Councilors, South Ayrshire, June 2017.*

<sup>2</sup> South Ayrshire Council Plan, April 2016-March 2018.

**Educational progress of children and young people in South Ayrshire**

The attainment gap appears early and is obvious when looking at developmental milestones and attendance figures for children in early years centres and classes living in areas of higher deprivation:

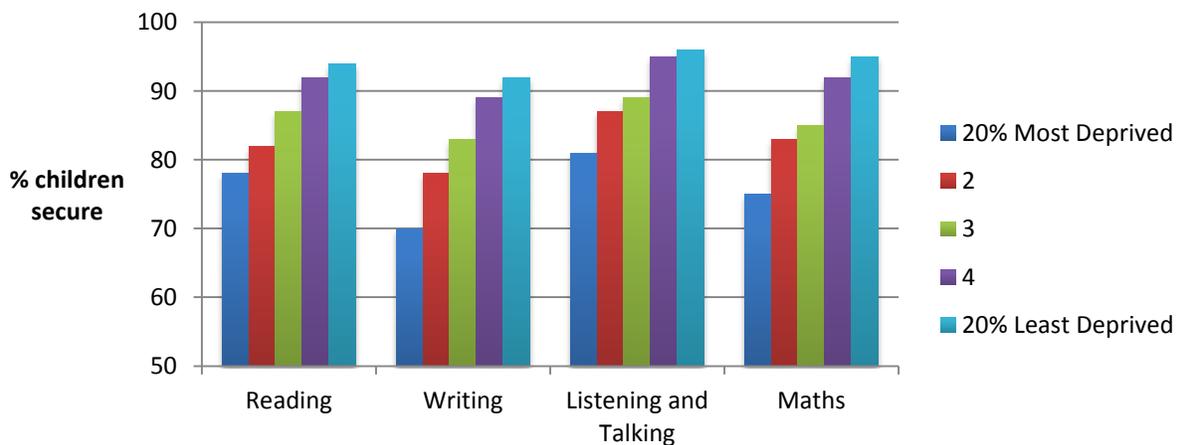
Health and Wellbeing					Communication and Language					Mathematics and Numeracy				
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
60%	72%	71%	71%	80%	35%	52%	54%	59%	56%	39%	49%	59%	59%	57%

Attendance at early years centres or classes by quintile:

	20% Most Deprived	2	3	4	20% Least Deprived
South Ayrshire (EYC)	84.1	89.9	91.6	92.0	90.3

Teachers’ professional judgement of when children have achieved a Curriculum for Excellence level shows a clear gap between children and young people in the most deprived data zones and those in the least deprived data zones using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

**% Children CfE Secure at Expected Level: P1, P4, P7 and S3**



In addition to Curriculum for Excellence teacher judgement data, South Ayrshire Council has used standardised assessments for a number of years. The results also show a consistent gap

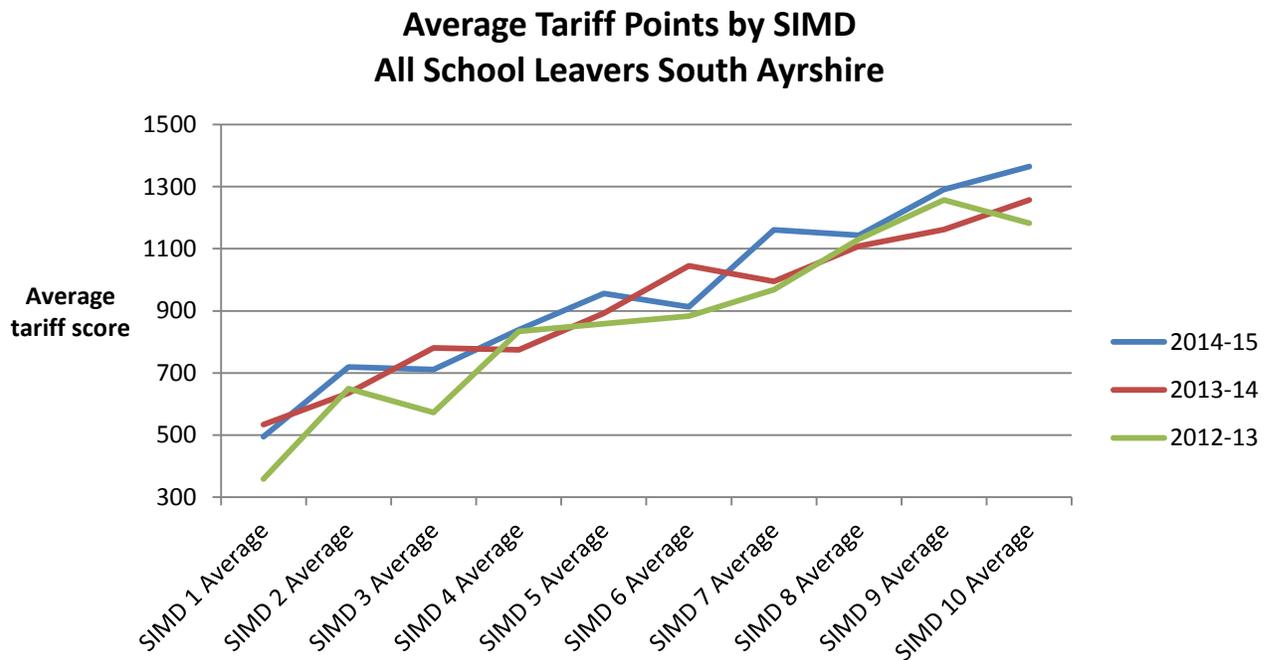
in attainment between the most and least deprived. Developed ability scores are claimed by those who develop the assessment to be a general measure of ability.

**P3, P5 and P7 Average Gap in Standardised Assessment Score:  
20% most and 20% least deprived**

Session	Dev. Ab. Gap	Reading Gap	Mental Arith. Gap	Gen. Maths Gap
2011-12	12.0	8.4	7.0	9.6
2012-13	10.5	10.2	7.8	9.3
2013-14	11.6	9.2	8.8	9.9
2014-15	9.7	8.9	7.9	8.9
2015-16	10.5	10.1	9.6	9.9

The gap remains fairly consistent as measured by the overall number of tariff points young people have gained by the time they leave school. Tariff points are a calculation based upon the level of qualification, for example National 3, 4 or 5 and Higher, and the grade passed, i.e. A to D.

*Average total points by school leavers*



From the data available it is clear that attainment overall is broadly increasing over time. However, in order to address the gap which is associated with relative deprivation, the pace of

attainment for our children and young people living in the greatest levels of deprivation needs to increase more quickly.

In addition to the snapshots above, data relating to attainment of looked after children and those with additional support needs lags behind the overall average. In addition to attainment data, there is a consistent pattern in relation to attendance and exclusions which shows a gap between more deprived and less deprived learners.

The reasons behind the gap are complex and the solutions do not lie solely with education. Our schools alone are not sufficiently strong to be able to mitigate fully the impact of relative deprivation. However, they can make a difference and can make more of a difference when able to work collaboratively with a range of partners, first amongst whom are parents and carers. Key partners also include NHS Ayrshire and Arran, the Health and Social Care Partnership, Police Scotland, the Scottish Children's Reporter, Community Learning and Development, voluntary agencies and community groups. The list is not exhaustive and does not include the many other Council services that are important in addressing the impact of deprivation in our communities.

### What have we been doing to address the impact of deprivation?

Since the Validated Self Evaluation visit in 2014, educational services have focused consistently on closing the gap while challenging every learner. *Lessons from London Schools* showed that in addition to a clear moral purpose in education, staff need the tools to be able to deliver on their purpose. The clear purpose is to close the gap but one of the key tools is effective use of data.

- **Columba 1400 Leadership Development:** Between 2013 and 2016, almost all head teachers and a few depute head teachers took part in a Columba 1400 residential which focused on values. The cost of these sessions was met by a benefactor and the main outcome was a focus on our defining mission as an educational service to close the attainment gap. In addition, head teachers identified that their responsibilities were not only to their own learners, but they had a shared responsibility across the authority. Columba 1400's focus on values also helped to establish a more collegiate and collaborative approach amongst head teachers which allowed for the sharing of data, for example, without fear of criticism.
- **Families of schools:** Head teachers have been sharing data among their family of schools to identify and share good practice as well as identifying areas for improvement. The families of schools are based on levels of deprivation rather than clusters. Head teacher meetings have become a focus for working in Families of Schools and discussing and analysing data to determine the most effective ways of raising attainment for those affected most by deprivation. The intention is to become more consistently data literate and use data to drive improvement across the system.
- **Early years:** Early learning and childcare in South Ayrshire aims to break the cycle of poverty and inequality by improving children's early experiences, identifying those at risk of

low achievement, and supporting families and communities to develop their own solutions to meet children's needs. Early learning and childcare for eligible children aged 2 years is largely located in areas of highest deprivation in South Ayrshire. Similarly full day provision has been developed building on the early Sure Start model. There is a range of early intervention strategies in place to promote early language, maths and health and wellbeing outcomes. These include Health Start vitamins, Number Talks, Learning Language and Loving it, Kodaly Music and Nurture. Parents in early years are supported through a range of universal and targeted interventions. Early years workers are providing parenting programmes such as PEEP, Bookbug, Make and Taste and baby massage. Since 2016 we have been gathering information on achievement of milestones. The milestones are an extension of the early phonological awareness programme and screening. Between 2016 and 2017 there has been an improvement in the percentage of children achieving each of the milestones. In line with national statistics there is a gap in attainment of children living in quintile one and other children, particularly those in quintile 4 and 5.

- **Learning and teaching:** In the past two years in particular there has been a significant investment in improving the quality of learning and teaching through professional learning. All secondary schools and almost all primary schools have been involved in *Making Thinking Visible*, a collaboration with Tapestry. In addition there has been a significant amount of professional learning for teachers and School Assistants focused specifically on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Out of the professional learning community focused on numeracy came *Number Talks* which is already making a difference to attainment in mathematics. In addition, professional learning on a range of literacy interventions such as *Three Read*, *Word Aware*, and *Readingwise*, is beginning to pay dividends. Psychological service have led on nurture training across the authority, focusing first on our children's houses and foster carers and widening out across the authority.
- **Tracking and monitoring:** All schools now receive regular reports on attainment, attendance and exclusions which allow them to see what progress they are making and compare their progress to the national and local averages. In addition, more effective tracking of looked after children's progress is helping to identify where the greatest gaps are and where we need to intervene earlier and with greater effect. Quality Improvement Officers engage with schools on their data to ensure appropriate support and challenge. Tracking of progress through the senior phase has been well established and is now improving across the broad general education. In particular, tracking using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation to determine progress of different groups of learners. Insight is well used at senior management level across secondary schools and increasingly by staff more widely.
- **Senior phase structure:** A collaborative approach to S5 and S6 has been in place across South Ayrshire for a number of years which allows young people to move between schools if a subject or qualification is not on offer in their school. However, with the introduction of new national qualifications, secondary head teachers introduced a 6-6-6 model of senior phase following lengthy discussions and consultation. The model allows schools to timetable a single cohort across S4 to S6 and means that there is a greater range of options available for young people who are less likely to undertake 5 Highers. The model is more inclusive and meets the needs of a wider range of young people.

- **Attainment Challenge Schools:** South Ayrshire has three primary schools and one secondary school who benefit from the additional funding available through Attainment Challenge Scotland. The strategic approach taken by the department means that, in addition to the three primary schools, with additional funding from the Council, the next 11 most deprived schools benefit from additional resources and professional learning. A further three satellite schools form the final part of the programme and between them include 87% of the children living in Decile 1 and 2 using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. An overall strategic group and steering group for the Attainment Challenge ensure that the resources are focused on the right children and young people while there are benefits across the authority by sharing the learning.
- **Pupil Equity Fund:** South Ayrshire educational services took a strategic approach to the Pupil Equity Fund and worked with head teachers to agree targets that all schools would be working towards. Although all schools are free to use the funding as they see fit, by agreeing a collaborative approach and a common set of goals, we are maximizing the benefits to our children and young people and increasing the effect of closing the attainment gap.

### Why is there an attainment gap?

The central message of the OECD research into Scottish education published in 2007<sup>3</sup> was that “Who you are in Scotland is far more important than the school you attend” (p.15). The main differences in attainment are not due to differences between schools, but are due to differences within schools. The view taken was that social inequality is due to “the impact of common features of schools’ organisation, curriculum, culture and pedagogy” (Raffe, 2008). In summary:

***The academic ethos of Scottish schools...privileges middle class students at the expense of working class students and especially those from backgrounds of poverty or social disadvantage (Raffe, p.26).***

Ten years on from the original OECD report, the language may have changed but the attainment gap remains stubbornly unchanged. The Social Mobility Foundation’s research confirms that “Differences in pupils’ backgrounds do more to determine their achievement and progress than the school they attend.”<sup>4</sup>

Schools however, can make a difference. Schools that achieve most for children and young people from lower income backgrounds maintain high expectations regardless of a child’s background. The Social Mobility Foundation identified a number of characteristics of schools that achieve well for all learners. These include:

- **Schools that placed a strong emphasis on learning**
- **A positive behavior climate**
- **Student teacher relationships founded on trust, respect and fairness**
- **Teachers monitor pupils’ work regularly and provide high quality feedback**

<sup>3</sup> OECD (2012), *Equity and Quality in Education. Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools*, OECD Publishing.

<sup>4</sup> Social Mobility Commission (2017) *Low Income Pupils’ Progress at Secondary School*, London, Social Mobility Commission.

- **Schools use data effectively to direct resources to particular pupils**
- **Hold high expectations of success for every pupil regardless of background**
- **Are focused on recruiting and developing high quality teachers**
- **Actively attempted to engage parents**
- **Worked to support pupils' social and economic development.**

Having the highest expectations of all learners is central to closing the gap. It is also key to ensuring that we stretch and challenge every learner. An analysis of more able learners published in 2017<sup>5</sup> summarises Scottish education as follows:

“Scotland has few stand out strengths when it comes to the performance of its most able pupils. ...The major weaknesses include a pronounced and sustained decline in able pupils' performance in science, equivalent to around a year of schooling over the last decade. It is also below the median OECD country in reading and mathematics while trailing behind the performance of able pupils in England in most subject areas” (p.31).

Recent focus and investment in education therefore is timely and welcome. The interventions to raise the attainment of children and young people living in relative deprivation are likely to raise the attainment of all. While the pace of change needs to be quicker for children from lower income households, the mission remains to close the gap while stretching and challenging every learner.

### **What we plan to do to close the gap while stretching every learner.**

The Children's Services Plan 2017-20 published by the Community Planning Partnership for the South Ayrshire area has 5 priorities which involve early and effective intervention to:

1. Ensure South Ayrshire's children get the best start in life, it is the best place to grow up, and all children and young people are successful learner, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.
2. Reduce the gap in outcomes between the most deprived and least deprived children and young people in South Ayrshire.
3. Ensure children and young people who are looked after or are care leavers are cared for and supported to improve their life experiences and life chances.
4. Ensure children and young people are supported to achieve and maintain good emotional and physical wellbeing.
5. Ensure children and young people have a voice in influencing service delivery that affects their lives.

All partners in the Community Planning Partnership are focused on contributing to these priorities and making them a reality. The following section sets out the targets and actions from the Children's Services Plan and the Service Improvement Plan for Educational Services which are aimed at progressing the four strategic priorities of the National Improvement Framework:

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<sup>5</sup> Jerrim, J. (2017) *Global Gaps. Comparing socio-economic gaps in the performance of highly able UK pupils internationally*. Education Endowment Foundation.

## **1. Improve Attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy**

### **Literacy**

CSP1.1: 85% of children reach developmental milestones at the time of their 27-30 month health review by April 2020.

CSP1.3: 90% of children and young people will achieve expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy at P1, P4, P7 & S3 by November 2019.

CSP1.4: School leavers continue to achieve above the national average in literacy and numeracy.

SO1.3.07: Increase percentage of school leavers attaining literacy at level 4.

SO1.3.08: Increase percentage of school leavers attaining literacy at level 5.

ED2.3: Implement improvement methodologies and improve tracking systems to ensure children achieve appropriate developmental milestones in the early years.

SO2.2.02: Increase literacy level as measured by standardised assessment at P7.

SO2.2.04: Increase literacy level as measured by standardised assessment at S2.

ED6.3: Continue to expand flexible early learning and childcare services in line with legislation and Scottish Government policy to provide high quality early learning and childcare.

### **Numeracy<sup>6</sup>**

ED7.2: Improve attainment in numeracy.

SO1.3.09: Increase the percentage of school leavers attaining numeracy at level 4.

SO1.3.10: Increase the percentage of school leavers attaining numeracy at level 5.

SO2.2.03: Increase numeracy level as measured by standardised assessment at P7.

SO2.2.05: Increase numeracy level as measured by standardised assessment at S2.

ED4.4: Improve progression, pace and challenge in learning by embedding curricular frameworks in classroom practice and aligning frameworks with benchmarks.

## **2. Close the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.**

CSP2.1: Increase the percentage of children from low income households in South Ayrshire that achieve expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy at P1, P4, P7 and S3 (Target 80%).

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<sup>6</sup> Many of the targets related to closing the gap under literacy apply also to numeracy and so are not repeated.

CSP2.2: Increase the average tariff points of school leavers from low income households.

CSP2.4: Increase the percentage of children from low income households who achieve appropriate developmental milestones at the start of P1 by October 2019 (85%).

CSP3.4: Increase the percentage of looked after children and young people in South Ayrshire that achieve expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy at P1, P4, P7 and S3.

CSP3.5: Increase the average tariff points of looked after school leavers and ensure a minimum set of qualifications as defined by the LAC strategy group.

SO2.3.01: Narrow the gap between the most and least deprived pupils (tariff points at S4)

SO2.3.02: Reduce the gap between the average tariff score of looked after pupils and all pupils.

SO2.3.03: Increase the percentage of looked after children achieving 5 plus awards at SCQF level 3 or above by the end of S4.

SO2.3.04: Increase the percentage of looked after pupils achieving appropriate National Qualifications.

SO2.3.05: Increase the percentage of pupils in the 20% most deprived areas getting 5 plus awards at level 5.

SO2.3.06: Increase the percentage of pupils in the 20% most deprived areas getting 5 plus awards at level 6.

SO2.3.07: Increase the LGBF average tariff score for pupils in the senior phase (S6 based on S4 cohort) in SIMD Quintile 1.

### **3. Improve children's and young people's health and wellbeing**

CSP1.2: Increase the availability of evidence based parenting programmes by 2020.

CSP1.11: Improve positive mental and emotional wellbeing through targeted improvement in health and wellbeing curriculum.

CSP2.3: Increase the percentage of children from low income households with no obvious signs of dental decay at P1 and P7 by December 2019.

CSP3.10: Increase the number of looked after children who receive a health assessment within four weeks by 2018.

CSP3.11: Increase the percentage of looked after children and young people who have a mental health and wellbeing assessment by 2018.

CSP4.6: Improve support for young people's emotional wellbeing and reduce concerns raised by young people (Say it out LOUD survey).

CSP4.7: Increase number of youthwork programmes and initiatives encouraging healthy lifestyle choices.

SO2.2.06/7: Reduce primary / secondary school pupil exclusion levels (per 1000 pupil population).

SO2.2.08/9: Increase primary / secondary school pupil attendance levels.

ED4.8: Provide more and higher quality opportunities to participate in sport in schools and the wider community ensuring the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people are supported to participate.

ED7.4: Continue to increase participation of target groups in Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and Award of Ambition.

SO2.4.18/19: Increase the percentage of children in primary / secondary schools who report that they feel safe and cared for in school.

ED8.1: Develop and implement the mental health and wellbeing action plan.

ED8.3: Develop and implement a nurture strategy across early years, primary and secondary school establishment, carers and children's houses.

ED8.5: Develop strategic approaches to monitoring and improving health and wellbeing.

#### **4. Improve employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.**

CSP3.2: Increase the percentage of looked after young people who stay on at school and achieve a positive destination by 2020 to be in line with their peers.

SO1.3.04a/b: Increase LGBF percentage of school leavers going into sustained positive destinations (Initial & follow up survey).

SO1.3.05: Increase the percentage of looked after school leavers going into positive and sustained destinations.

ED1.2: Improve employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.

The actions and targets set out above aim to address the difference in outcomes for children in low income households compared to their peers in higher income households. In addition to these actions and targets, a number of specific targets were agreed as the focus for spending the Pupil Equity Funding. The targets above were already in place at the point when the Pupil

Equity Funding was announced and it was agreed that further detailed targets were required for the purposes of Pupil Equity Fund planning, spending and measuring outcomes. These are attached as Appendix 1.

### Actions being taken to ensure we are able to achieve our targets

**NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 1&2: Improve attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy and close the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.**

#### LITERACY

- **Staffing:** Attainment challenge schools have appointed four additional speech and language therapists to work directly with children and parents and to train staff in early intervention approaches. Three additional nursery nurses are now in post to support development of Three Read and other approaches.
- **Professional learning:** Staff have been trained in appropriate pedagogy to deliver programmes detailed below:

##### Literacy programmes:

- Word aware and early years word aware
- Reading Wise – decoding
- Reading Wise – comprehension
- Three Read
- Five minute literacy box
- POLAAR
- Big books
- Literature circles
- Blooms
- Lego education story starter
- Rapid writers
- Catch up literacy
- Talk to write

#### NUMERACY

- **Staffing:** We have appointed a numeracy development team to develop and deliver training.
- **Professional learning:**
  - Number talks
  - Growth mindsets
  - Five minute numeracy box
  - Numicon
  - Blooms
- **Numeracy programmes:**
  - Number talks: South Ayrshire Council provided a class set of rekenreks and ten frame trains to assist in the development of the conceptual understanding of

number. A number talks resource kit was provided to every P6/7 class teacher and all maths teachers. Resources and good practice regarding number talks (dot images, tenframe images, suggested questions) are shared on our bespoke numeracy strategy Glow site. All primary schools are implementing number talks. Secondary schools are implementing number talks as an intervention strategy for pupils. The numeracy team will now develop implementation plans for the fractions, decimals and percentages number talks resources and support schools to implement the strategies. The team is developing plans to incorporate *numicon* into number talks strategies within P1 to P3.

### **NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: IMPROVE CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

- **Staffing:** Attainment challenge schools have appointed family support workers to work with families and groups of children identified as our target groups and to train school staff in strategies to develop and strengthen positive mental health and wellbeing. Three active schools assistants now work alongside active schools co-ordinators to increase the range of physical activities within the target schools and to increase participation in local clubs and the use of local facilities.
- **Interventions** employed to improve health and well-being involve a multi-disciplinary approach including practitioners from schools, Active Schools, Barnardo's and Speech and Language therapists. Interventions are delivered both at a whole-school or classroom level, as well as more targeted forms of support.
- **School-based interventions:**
  - Circle time (whole-school)
  - Happiness Project (P7 – S1)
  - Nurture groups
  - Ice Box
- **Active schools:**
  - Increasing footfall to after school and local clubs
  - Fitness testing
  - 20 minutes physical activity
- **Barnardo's:**
  - Parent drop-ins (x 1 school)
  - Five to thrive
  - Easter/Summer activities (x 3 schools)
  - Children's groups
  - One-to-one support for individual pupils
- **Speech and Language:**
  - Stay and Play
  - Staff training programmes and nurture groups
  - Buddy training
  - Communication skills programme

In addition to the interventions outlined above, the CfE health and wellbeing curricular framework is currently being updated to match the new benchmarks. A secondary guidance/PSE working group have been working together to produce up to date resources and assessments for use in the BGE in all eight secondary schools. This work will continue with a focus on mental health and improving attendance. It will also be working with the MSYPs to improve PSE in the senior phase.

Several schools are already piloting methods to monitor and track the health and wellbeing of all children. A working group is continuing to progress this, supported by Education Scotland.

SAC are Stonewall Champions. In liaison with Stonewall and LGBT youth a new management guideline is now available to schools to help them support Transgender children and Young People. An action plan will also be followed this session to gain the LGBT charter for Educational Services and also to meet the criteria within the Stonewall Index.

In liaison with *Respectme* updated Anti-bullying guidelines will be launched during anti-bullying week in November 2017. A series of training sessions for both staff and parents will be available.

SAC continue to have a service level agreement with Rights Respecting Schools. A new strategy group has been set up to support and challenge all schools to participate and progress with this programme. We are working in partnership with East and North Ayrshire council to be able to offer more training and to assess schools more quickly.

We are currently working with the sexual health team from NHS to produce guidance for schools regarding teenage pregnancy.

There is a multi agency mental health strategy group working to address several issue highlighted by children and young people in a recent survey. Part of the response to the survey and our own self-evaluation is that A big lottery bid is being submitted to employ a counselor for both the Carrick & Girvan area.

**NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: Improve employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.**

- **MCMC Partnerships:** All 8 secondary schools have an MCMC partnership involving SDS; school; CLD; college and employability & skills. The partnership currently focuses on ensuring school leavers progress to a positive destination. A pilot will be established to focus on those who have already left school and are at risk.
- **Employability and skills team:** Track and monitor young people post school who are furthest from the labour market (16-19 year olds).

- Employability and skills team carry out enhanced tracking of 15-19 year old looked after young people and care leavers. Enhanced tracking is done jointly with social work and SDS.
- Joint tracking with Ayrshire College for young people at access level provision in college.
- **Senior phase review:** The review will determine the effectiveness of the current model at S4-S6 and ensure it is meeting the needs of young people at risk of not achieving an appropriate level of success in national qualifications, especially those in Decile 1 and 2 or who are looked after.

## Consultation process

The preparation of the actions and targets set out in this document involved self-evaluation carried out as a single educational service and jointly with partners, particularly as the Children's Services Plan was prepared. Consultation took place with parents, young people, elected members and key stakeholders during the preparation of the vision, priorities, actions and targets. The actions and targets are reflected in the school improvement planning process and will be monitored and reported on at the end of the planning year.

Family learning forms a significant part of the work being undertaken to close the attainment gap. Individual schools are engaging very effectively with their parents and there are many creative and imaginative approaches to engaging parents in learning. At authority level, a Parent Forum for parents of children and young people with additional support needs meets termly as do the Chairs of Parent Councils. There is still scope to engage parents and young people more meaningfully in developing and implementing policy, which is why it is set out as one of the key priorities in the Children's Services Plan.

## Conclusion

What is clear from the research around closing the attainment gap is that there is no single solution. Set out in this document is a range of targets, actions, activities and approaches that together will have an impact and improve attainment for children and young people from lower income households. It is important to recognise that change takes time. In a 2012 report entitled *Equity and Quality in Education*<sup>7</sup>, the OECD state that:

*"It takes time to implement change, for national and regional education policies to reach schools. Not only is the policy making process long, but schools are complex organisations with specific cultures and composed of many different people; "turning them around" is not easy. It implies designing appropriate strategies and then changing expectations, beliefs and practices of many diverse individuals as well as changing collective systems, structures and cultures. It needs to start with setting clear goal focusing on quality and equity" (p.111).*

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<sup>7</sup> OECD (2012) *ibid.*

South Ayrshire Council is committed to achieving both quality and equity and have set out in this document how we plan to achieve it. We acknowledge it will take time. Research from London shows around 5 years between the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategy and improvement in attainment at GCSEs. The OECD document in Quality and Equity states that “studies on school improvement suggest that three to five years is typically the time necessary to see student achievement improve” (p.111). Together, we will continue working to offer our children and young people an education system that is strong enough to mitigate the impact of deprivation.

## Appendix 1

### South Ayrshire Pupil Equity Funding Outcomes

#### PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING: OUTCOMES

NB The term 'most deprived', used in this paper, refers in general to children and young people in Quintile 1, SIMD 1 and 2. However, many in rural areas will not be included therefore schools use their professional judgment to determine who their most deprived children and young people are.

#### 1. By the end of Early Years

- 1.1 90% of the most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve expected developmental milestones in communication and language
- 1.2 90% of the most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve expected developmental milestones in Mathematics and numeracy
- 1.3 90% of the most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve expected developmental milestones in Health and wellbeing
- 1.4 The attendance rate of the most deprived children in Early Years Centres will be 90% or above

#### 2. By the end of Primary 1

- 2.1 90% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Early Level in Reading by the end of P1
- 2.2 85% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Early Level in Writing by the end of P1
- 2.3 90% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Early Level in Listening and Talking by the end of P1
- 2.4 90% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Early Level in Mathematics by the end of P1
- 2.5 The average standardised test score (PIPS) will be at least 51 for the most deprived children in South Ayrshire by the end of P1 in Phonics, Reading and Mathematics

#### 3. By the end of Primary 3

- 3.1 The average standardised test score (Incas) for the most deprived children in Reading will be 105 or above by the end of P3.
- 3.2 The average standardised test score (Incas) for the most deprived children in Mental Arithmetic will be 100 or above by the end of P3.
- 3.3 The average standardised test score (Incas) for the most deprived children in Mathematics will be 100 or above by the end of P3.

#### 4. By the end of Primary 4

- 4.1 90% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve First Level in Reading by the end of P4

- 4.2 85% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve First Level in Reading in Writing by the end of P4
- 4.3 90% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve First Level in Listening and Talking by the end of P4
- 4.4 90% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve First Level in Mathematics by the end of P4

### **5. By the end of Primary 5**

- 5.1 The average standardised test score (Incas) for the most deprived children in Reading will be 105 or above by the end of P5.
- 5.2 The average standardised test score (Incas) for the most deprived children in Mental Arithmetic will be 100 or above by the end of P5.
- 5.3 The average standardised test score (Incas) for the most deprived children in Mathematics will be 100 or above by the end of P5.

### **6. By the end of Primary 7**

- 6.1 90% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Second Level in Reading by the end of P7
- 6.2 85% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Second Level in Writing by the end of P7
- 6.3 90% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Second Level in Listening and Talking by the end of P7
- 6.4 90% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Second Level in Mathematics by the end of P7
- 6.5 The average standardised test score (Incas) for the most deprived children in Reading will be 100 or above.
- 6.6 The average standardised test score (Incas) for the most deprived children in Mental Arithmetic will be 100 or above.
- 6.7 The average standardised test score (Incas) for the most deprived children in Mathematics will be 100 or above.

### **7. Primary – all stages**

- 7.1 The average attendance rate for the most deprived children will improve to 95%
- 7.2 The number of exclusion incidents for the most deprived children will reduce to 4 per 1000

**8. By the end of S2**

- 8.1 The average standardised test score (SOSCA) for the most deprived children in Reading will be 100 or above.
- 8.2 The average standardised test score (SOSCA) for the most deprived children in Mathematics will be 100 or above.

**9. By the end of S3**

- 9.1 95% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Third Level in Reading by the end of S3
- 9.2 95% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Third Level in Writing by the end of S3
- 9.3 95% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Third Level in Listening and Talking by the end of S3
- 9.4 95% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Third Level levels in Mathematics by the end of S3
- 9.5 35% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Fourth Level in Reading by the end of S3
- 9.6 35% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Fourth Level in Writing by the end of S3
- 9.7 35% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Fourth Level in Listening and Talking by the end of S3
- 9.8 35% of most deprived children in South Ayrshire will achieve Fourth Level in Mathematics by the end of S3

**1. Secondary – all stages**

- 1.1 The average attendance rate for the most deprived young people will improve to 91%
- 1.2 The number of exclusion incidents for the most deprived young people will reduce to 20 per 1000