

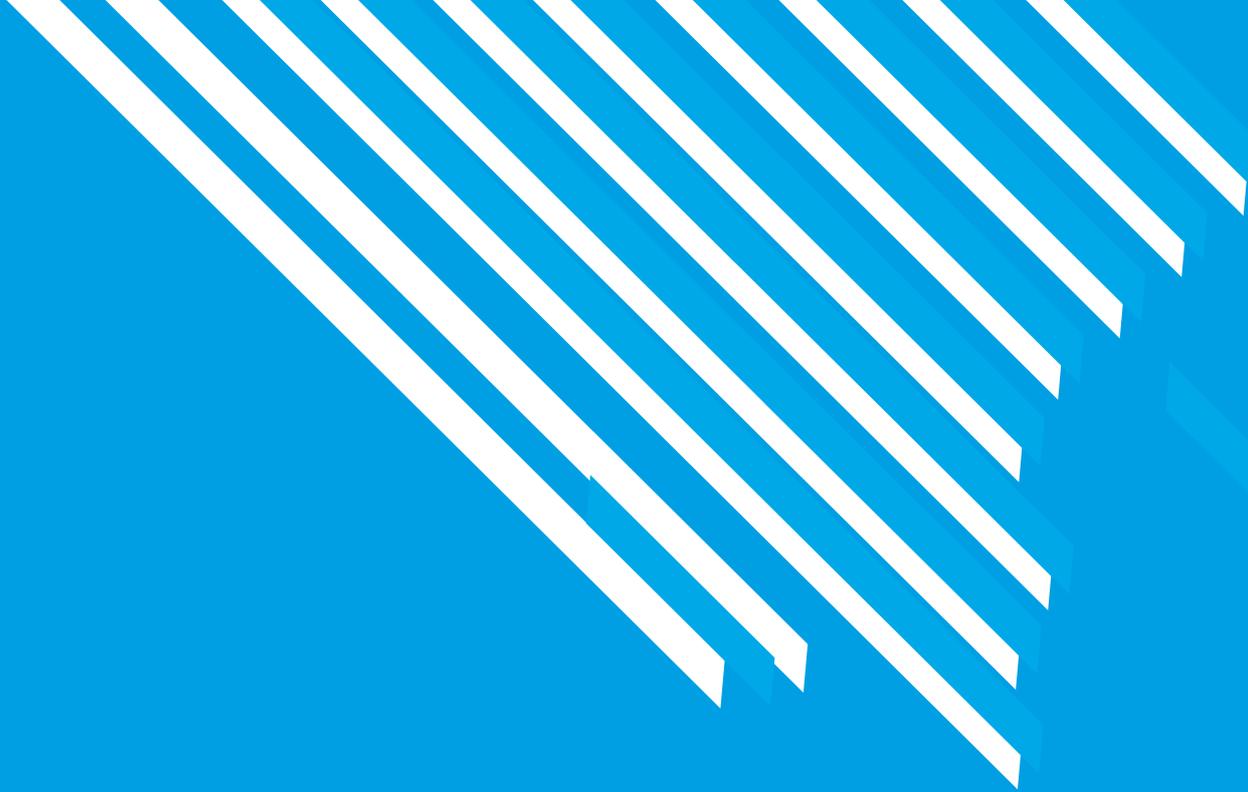
North Ayrshire Council

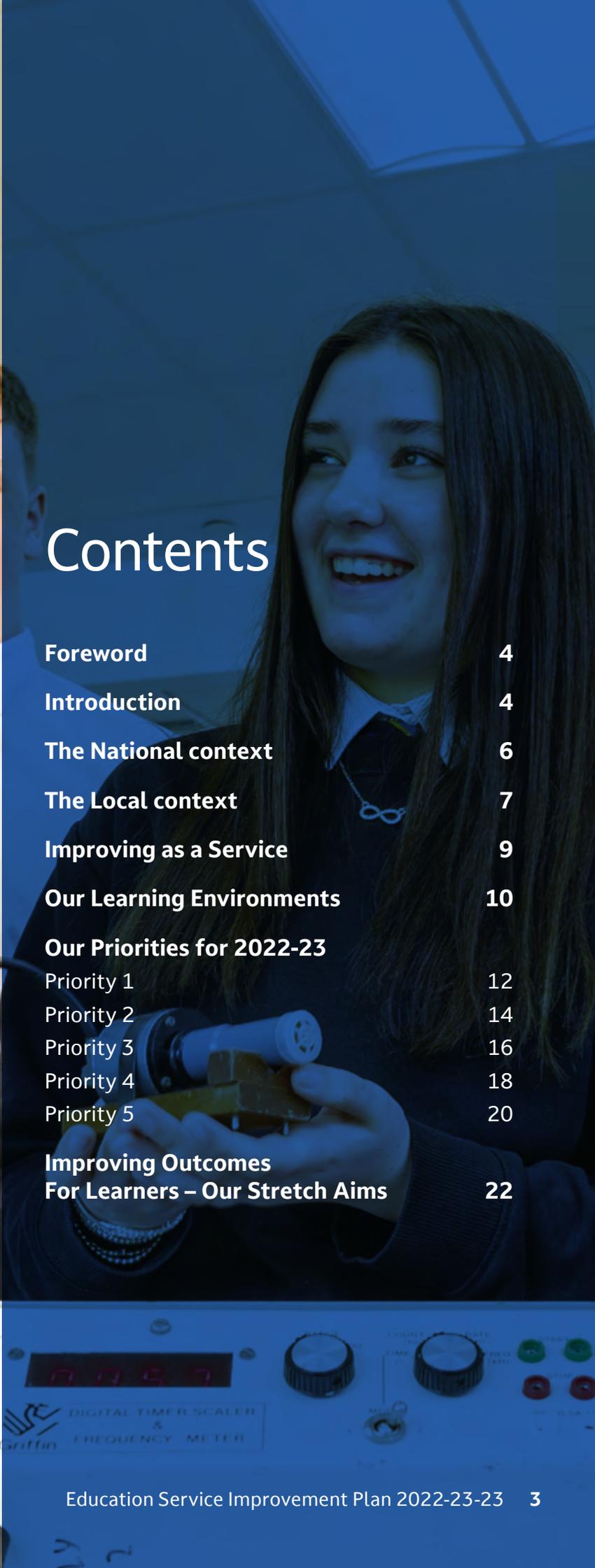
Education
Service
Improvement
Plan

2022-23



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Air a Tuath





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Foreword

As we hopefully begin to emerge from the challenges of the last two and a half years with Covid-19, I am pleased to be able to present the Education Service Improvement Plan for session 2022-23. I have been incredibly impressed with the determination of our school communities to improve outcomes for our learners throughout this challenging period and this plan represents the next steps in an ambitious programme of recovery and renewal, innovation and improvement.

The service is very clear about where improvements have been made and what still needs to be done. You can read more about our progress over the last year in our recently published Standards and Quality Report.

I am confident that everyone throughout the education service will be very focused on delivering the twin aims of excellence and equity in terms of educational outcomes and will take forward the high level priorities contained in this plan. I look forward to being able to report on the impact of this plan in a year from now.



Councillor Shaun Macaulay
Depute Leader of North Ayrshire Council
and Portfolio Holder for Education

Introduction

In almost all aspects of learning there has been a consistent improving trend of achievement across the last decade. Throughout, our schools and early learning and childcare settings have had a clear focus on raising attainment and reducing the poverty-related attainment gap, in line with local and national priorities. Nevertheless, the arrival of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 brought with it significant challenges for our families and communities. National lockdowns, interrupted learning and significant changes in personal circumstances have impacted on the outcomes achieved by our children and young people.

To mitigate this, we diverted significant resources. We invested in supporting our children and young people and maintaining a determination to make further progress in achievement for all learners. We are pleased to report that we are beginning to see the recovery take effect, with improvements in a range of areas last session.

As part of our ongoing process of self-evaluation, we have scrutinised how well we are doing as a service in supporting recovery and further improvement and we have used this evidence to shape the content of this Education Service Improvement Plan for 2022-23. You will read in the forthcoming pages our priorities for the year ahead,



which are aligned to North Ayrshire's Council Plan and the National Improvement Framework for Education. This document summarises what we will do, what we aim to improve and how we will measure success.

This plan is ambitious yet achievable for our children and young people. We are confident that recovery from the pandemic will continue throughout 2022-23 and beyond. For the first time, we have included stretch aims for improvement over the next five years to show our sustained aspirations for and commitment to the children and young people we serve.

We have no poverty of expectation, opportunity or aspiration for our children, young people and their families. As a result, our overriding aim is to improve the educational outcomes for all learners, particularly those most disadvantaged learners.

All educational establishments have created their own improvement plans, aligned to the broad priorities and themes within this plan, and tailored to the individual contexts and needs of learners in each school community. These plans are available from individual establishments and are accessible electronically on their websites.

This plan builds on the excellent teamwork across our directorate. It reaffirms our commitment to continuous improvement and to delivering for the children and young people of North Ayrshire.



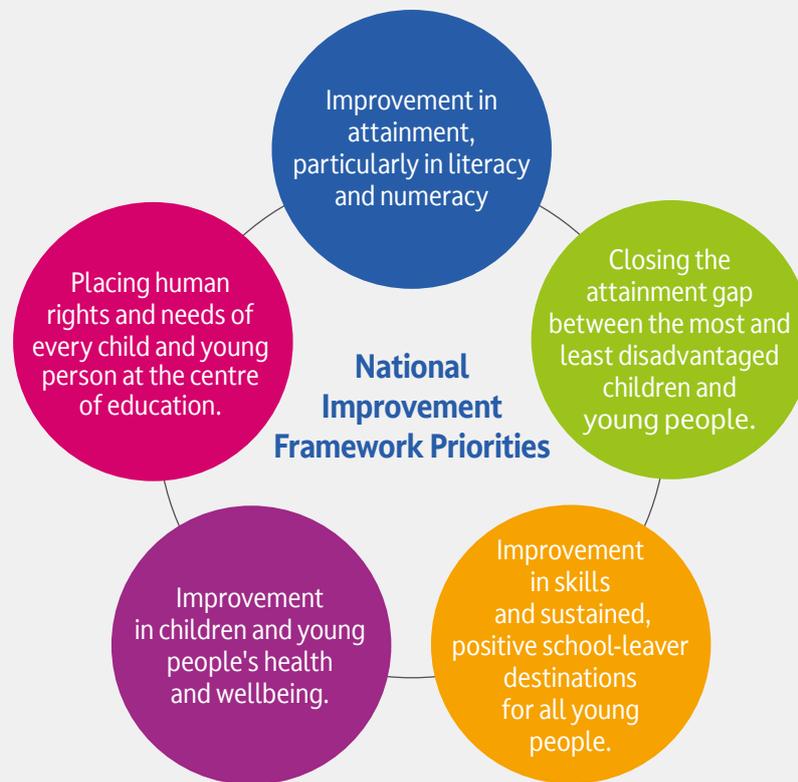
Caroline Amos
Head of Service (Education)



Andrew McClelland
Head of Service (Education)

The National Context

This plan is aligned to the priorities of the National Improvement Framework (NIF) and is designed to deliver the dual aims of excellence and equity in education for North Ayrshire’s children and young people. Our five priorities for session 2022-23 are as follows:

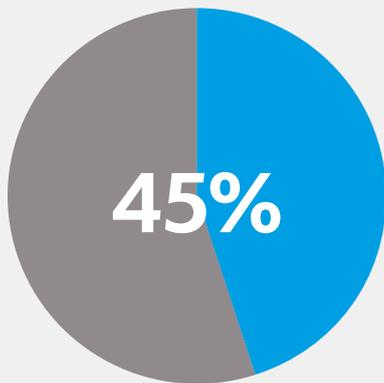


In the creation of this plan, we have built on a robust evaluation of our local context and the progress we have made to date in the improvement of educational outcomes for young people. We have taken account of a range of key national drivers of change which will affect education provision in North Ayrshire, including:

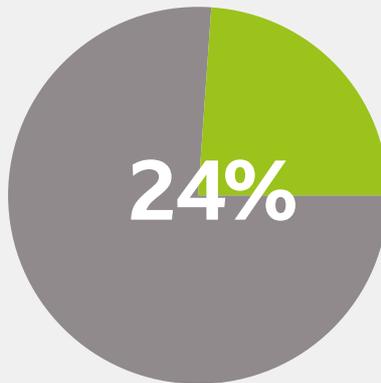
● The current national programme of educational reform	● The national Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy
● The ongoing national review of the curriculum	● The national Child Poverty Delivery Plan
● The ongoing national review of supporting needs	● The ongoing work to embed the articles of the UNCRC
● The priorities and drivers of the National Improvement Framework	● The Promise and its associated delivery plan
● The refreshed Attainment Scotland Fund	● Revised Child Protection Guidelines

The Local Context

The Education Service in North Ayrshire Council is responsible for the education of 18,061 pupils across the authority’s primary, secondary and additional support needs schools. A further 2,064 children attend early learning and childcare settings in North Ayrshire.



Of our Children and young people live in postcodes in the most deprived areas of Scotland according to SIMD.



Of our Children and young people are living in relative poverty, according to UK government statistics.



Of our Children and young people are registered for school footwear and clothing grants.

Council Priorities

The Council strategic priorities for 2019-24 are detailed below:

Aspiring Communities 	Inspiring Place 
● Active and strong communities	● Effective infrastructure and digital connectivity
● Children and young people experience the best start in life	● Affordable, modern housing that meets residents’ needs
● Inclusive, growing and enterprising	● Vibrant, welcoming and attractive places
● People enjoy good life-long health and wellbeing	● A sustainable environment
● People and communities are safe	

The education service is part of North Ayrshire Council's Communities and Education Directorate, which works towards developing a society where everyone has the same life chances to grow, prosper and have fulfilling and healthy lives. The education service has a central role in removing barriers and supporting delivery of the priority outcome to ensure North Ayrshire's children and young people have the best start in life.

Education in North Ayrshire is delivered through:

48

Primary Schools



Partnership early learning and childcare settings

16

8

Secondary Schools



Pupils

18,061



1

Through School



Teachers

1,411

1

Specialist ASN Campus



372

Early learning and childcare staff



Council-managed early learning and childcare settings

41

639 support staff



This plan should be read in the context of these associated local plans:



North Ayrshire Council Plan 2019-24
north-ayrshire.gov.uk



North Ayrshire Children Services Plan 2020/2023
nahscp.org



North Ayrshire Child Poverty Report 2021-22 and Action Plan 2022-23
north-ayrshire.gov.uk



SWEIC – Regional Improvement Plan 2022-23
north-ayrshire.gov.uk

Improving as a Service

Our commitment to continuous improvement permeates the work of the service. Our establishments work very closely together with each other and our central team in a culture of positive support and challenge. Our overarching approach can be summarised as follows:

We strive to be a learning organisation.

We support the principles of subsidiarity and empowerment of our head teachers and school communities.

We evaluate the impact of the central education team in supporting consistency of improvement across our educational establishments.

We work closely in partnership with colleagues across our Regional Improvement Collaborative and nationally.

We are investing in the quality of our teachers, practitioners and support staff.

We are investing in our learning environments to ensure they maximise opportunities for engagement and achievement for all.

We are developing the leaders of tomorrow through our innovative leadership and facilitation programmes.

Our Learning Environments

A key priority of the North Ayrshire Council Plan is ensuring children and young people have the best start in life and that we have active and strong communities. This drives our place-based approach and informs how we provide safe, welcoming, nurturing, and inspiring environments. We believe our learning environments promote achievement, wellbeing and enhance life chances.



We want North Ayrshire's children and young people to understand, feel part of and contribute to their community as this supports them to be the best they can be. We help this to happen through a locality-based approach to service delivery.

This means providing the right services in the right areas to address the needs of the communities we serve. The learning estate is the Council's most extensive asset and is a key pillar in supporting communities.

Scottish Government's 10 learning estate principles are key drivers in how we manage North Ayrshire Council's Learning Estate. By delivering on these principles, we can be confident in providing a sufficient, safe estate that is flexible, functional and future-proof. We continue to learn from the COVID-19 pandemic and the change it has caused in how we use our learning estate.

A strategic approach is taken to the assessment of the learning estate, which ultimately leads to investment that improves our learning environments in areas of greatest need. We strive for excellence as we understand the difference this can have in helping our children and young people to thrive.

The tables on the next few pages outline the key elements of our ambitious plans for 2022-23 to improve educational outcomes for North Ayrshire's children and young people.



Priority 1: Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

Theme 1: High quality learning, teaching and assessment		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Support establishments to implement a revised learning, teaching and assessment policy and review existing literacy and numeracy frameworks to maximise the quality of learning, teaching and assessment.	Improve consistency and quality of learning, teaching and assessment across all establishments.	Quality of learning, teaching and assessment will be evaluated as good or better in all establishments.
Extend play pedagogy from early years into primary 1 and 2, through a pilot programme in identified schools.	Improve progression and transition through and beyond the early level curriculum.	The proportion of children achieving developmental milestones by the end of ELC and early level by the end of P1 will increase.
Promote progressive and interdisciplinary outdoor learning experiences with a focus on sustainable development goals, directly related to the NAC Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy.	Improve the range, quality and frequency of outdoor learning experiences and the emphasis on learning for sustainability across all establishments.	The number of establishments engaging with Global/Sustainable Development Goals will increase.
Develop an Education Digital Skills Strategy and support establishments to achieve Digital Schools status, ensuring that digital technologies are a central component of our approaches to quality learning and teaching.	Improve the effective use of digital technologies to enhance learning in all establishments.	The number of schools achieving Digital Schools status will increase.
Deliver a range of facilitated programmes and bespoke sessions, to support leadership development and enhance skills in context of colleagues across all sectors.	Improve professional engagement and collegiate working with a focus on improving learner outcomes.	Leadership of learning will be evaluated as good or better in all establishments.
Theme 2: Raising attainment and achievement		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Develop a 3-year Raising Attainment Strategy to improve outcomes for all learners and reduce inequity of outcomes, including a focus on accelerating progress in early primary and ELC following implementation of 1140.	Improve learner attainment and achievement at all levels.	Raising attainment and achievement will be evaluated as good or better in all establishments. The percentage of children and young people achieving the expected Curriculum for Excellence levels will increase.
Implement a review of tracking and monitoring procedures in all sectors from early learning to senior phase and improve the use of progress information to target interventions.	Improve the quality of monitoring progress in learning and the effective use of targeted interventions.	The percentage of school leavers achieving literacy and numeracy qualifications will increase. The overall levels of achievement of school leavers will increase.
Develop universal professional learning supports on effective moderation and planning for learning, teaching and assessment.	Improve confidence in the consistency and accuracy of assessment judgements across all establishments.	

Priority 2: Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people

Theme 1: Interventions to reduce gaps		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Reprioritise our targeted interventions to reduce the poverty-related attainment gap in North Ayrshire, maximising the coherence and impact of our work.	Improve the effectiveness of targeted interventions in reducing the attainment gap.	The gap between the achievement levels of the most and least disadvantaged learners will reduce.
Continue to work collaboratively in partnership across the local authority, SWEIC and national networks to support sharing of highly effective practice that reduces the poverty related attainment gap.		
Work closely across North Ayrshire services and third sector partners to reduce the cost of the school day and mitigate the impact of child poverty.	Improve the extent to which our schools and Early Years centres can mitigate the impact of child poverty.	The number of schools demonstrating a poverty aware approach to mitigating the impact of child poverty will increase.
Theme 2: Specific focus on identified target groups, including care experienced learners		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Develop an improving outcomes strategy (and action plan) for care experienced learners.	Improve the attendance, engagement and achievement of care experienced learners.	Attendance levels will improve and exclusion levels will reduce for care experienced learners. Achievement levels will improve for care experienced learners. The gap between the achievement levels of care experienced learners and all other learners will reduce.
Theme 3: Data literacy skills		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Further develop data literacy skills in our staff to strengthen self-evaluation and planning for improvement and maximise the effectiveness of targeted interventions.	Improve the depth of understanding of performance data and its use to improve learner outcomes.	The quality of measuring impact of interventions will increase.

Priority 3: Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

Theme 1: Improved skills		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Promote the further embedding of appropriate wider achievement options in the senior phase.	Improve the breadth of the curriculum offer in the senior phase to meet the needs of learners.	Attainment data will show an increase in breadth of senior phase qualifications across all establishments.
Theme 2: Improved transitions		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Review the use of tracking and transition information to plan learning experiences around key transition points.	Improve the quality of transitions to and from early learning, primary, secondary.	The quality of transitions will be evaluated as good or better in all establishments.
Through DYW co-ordinators and other partners, embed approaches to planning, supporting and tracking post-school destinations for all school leavers.	Improve outcomes for school leavers.	The percentage of school leavers in a sustained destination will increase. The percentage of young people between 16-19 years old who are participating in learning, training or work will increase.
Review approaches to implementing the Career Education Standard through strengthened partnership working with Skills Development Scotland.	Improve young people's understanding of their learner journey and ability to make informed choices.	
Theme 3: Partnerships to improve learner outcomes post-school		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Refresh and strengthen the focus of the school-college partnership and to provide enhanced opportunities for achievement, e.g. through the Regional Improvement Collaborative, in the senior phase.	Improve the breadth of senior phase qualifications accessible through schools and partners.	The range of qualifications successfully delivered through partners will increase. Learner satisfaction with senior phase options will increase.
Design tailored programmes with partners to provide enhanced support for specific groups of school leavers, including those with identified needs.	Improve opportunities for targeted learners to achieve and maintain an appropriate positive post-school destination.	The percentage of school leavers with identified needs, including the care experienced, who enter and sustain a positive destination will increase.

Priority 4: Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

Theme 1: Supporting mental health and wellbeing		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Review the impact of school counselling services and external counselling/community wellbeing supports and refresh provision, strengthening the relationship between school counselling and other available supports.	<p>Improve targeting of counselling resource to support the mental health & wellbeing needs of learners.</p> <p>Improve early access for children and families to activities that will support positive mental health and wellbeing.</p>	Engagement with mental health and wellbeing supports will be improved. Children/young people will report increased satisfaction and improved wellbeing following counselling and access to other wellbeing supports.
Assist education establishments to implement the national mental health and wellbeing Whole School Approach, including curricular, professional learning and parental supports.	Improve the range and quality of universal and targeted supports for mental health and wellbeing available in establishments.	An increased number of children/young people will report having their mental health and wellbeing needs met. Staff confidence and skill levels in supporting these needs will increase.
Promote staff mental health and wellbeing in a range of ways, including through the development of a programme of supported reflective practice sessions.	Improve the range of supports available to staff to support their mental health and wellbeing.	The proportion of staff reporting concerns about their mental health and wellbeing will decrease.
Theme 2: Supporting social and emotional wellbeing		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Review approaches to promoting positive relationships and whole school nurture and continue to adapt our approaches based on an analysis of need.	Improve staff knowledge and application of whole school nurturing approaches in practice.	Staff knowledge and confidence in applying whole school nurture and relationship based approaches will improve.
Support a range of targeted nurturing approaches, including nurture groups that will continue to develop the social and emotional skills of identified children and young people so that they are able to be included and nurtured within their local community.	Improve children's ability to regulate their behaviour, interact positively with their peers and engage in their learning.	Children and young people will show significant improvements in their developmental profile and overall prosocial behaviours, improved attendance, reduced exclusions and a reduction in numbers of external placements.
Use our analysis of health & wellbeing data from a range of sources (including the national census) to develop targeted improvement priorities including curricular delivery, universal approaches and wider community supports.	Improve our knowledge about the health and wellbeing of our children and young people in order to help us to refine our approaches and delivery to meet need more effectively.	Increases in children and young people's mental health and wellbeing overall.

Priority 5: Placing human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education

Theme 1: Supporting needs		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Review and redesign processes and policies which apply to all learners (2-18) to ensure they are equitable, consistent, lean, coordinated, co-designed with relevant partners, and learner centred.	Improve systems and processes governing the provision of support to learners.	The number of referrals to the inclusion group seeking alternative provision will reduce. Establishment evaluations about various aspects of the new processes/policies will be positive.
Establish an enhanced range of flexible and child centred learning provisions, curriculum and delivery methods to meet a wide variety of support needs.	Improve the range, quality and scope of support provisions at establishment and service-wide level.	All secondary schools will be better equipped to successfully support and meet the needs of almost all learners within their local community.
Provide tailored professional learning opportunities for all staff groups within establishments to support the needs of children and young people.	Improve the professional capacity of staff to support the evolving profile of needs of learners.	The percentage of staff who have engaged in context-specific professional learning to support a wider range of needs will increase.
Theme 2: Maximising learner participation and voice		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Co-create with children and young people new, systematic mechanisms for maximising learner participation and voice and create a new Learner Participation Policy.	Improve learner participation and voice in the four arenas of participation.	Learners will participate more meaningfully in all areas of school life.
Undertake a review of Service wide policies to ensure UNCRC principles are considered.	Improve children's right to be heard and take an active role in their own lives and communities.	Equalities impact assessments will ensure policies align to UNCRC principles.
Theme 3: Maximising parent/carer involvement and engagement		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Implement locally the revised 'Learning Together' Scottish Government parental involvement and engagement action plan.	Improve the range and quality of opportunities for parental engagement and involvement.	Parent/carer evaluations of their opportunities for involvement in decision making at school level will increase.
Provide enhanced guidance for schools and Parent Councils to support and guide enhanced involvement in the operational activities of the school.	Improve support and guidance for Parent Councils in their role to support schools.	Evaluation and feedback from families and schools on a range of aspects of family learning will improve.
Through the Family Learning Team and establishments, offer a wide range of opportunities that enhance family learning in establishments.	Improve families' capacity to support their children's learning and wellbeing at home.	



Improving Outcomes For Learners – Our Stretch Aims

This plan is our principal strategic planning framework which draws together the key strands of our improvement work as a service for session 2022-23. Earlier in the plan, we have set out what we intend to improve, what actions are going to contribute to the improvement and how we will measure success. In this section, we will outline the key outcomes for learners that we are working to improve by 2027, based on the most recently available cohort information.

By 2027...

450

More learners in our primary schools will achieve the expected levels of attainment in literacy.



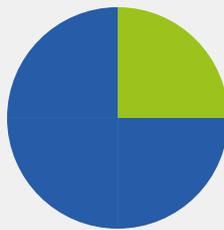
250

More learners in our primary schools will achieve the expected levels of attainment in numeracy.



Over 90%

Of our school leavers will achieve at least one qualification at SCQF level 5/National 5 or better.



Over three Quarters

Of our school leavers will achieve at least one qualification at SCQF level 6/Higher or better.

165



At least 165 more 16-19 year-olds will be participating in education, training or employment.



More than two thirds

More than two thirds of our pupils will have over 90% attendance in our schools.



10 per 1000 pupils

We will reduce our exclusion rate to no more than 10 per 1000 pupils.



5 percentage points

We will reduce the overall gaps in attainment between the most and least disadvantaged learners by an average of 5 percentage points.

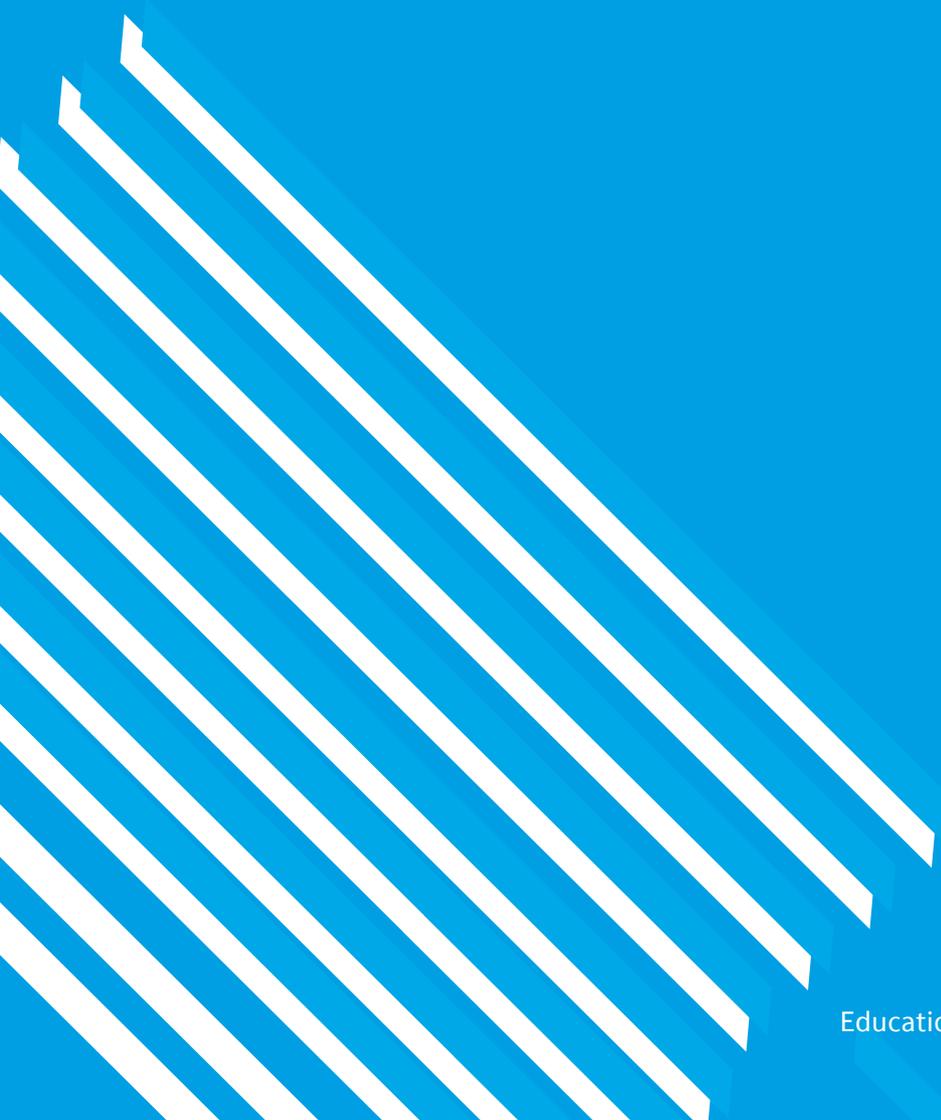
To read more about the specific improvements we aim to make for session 2022-23, please see our annual stretch aims on the North Ayrshire Council website through the link below:

[Annual stretch aims document for 2022-23](#)











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