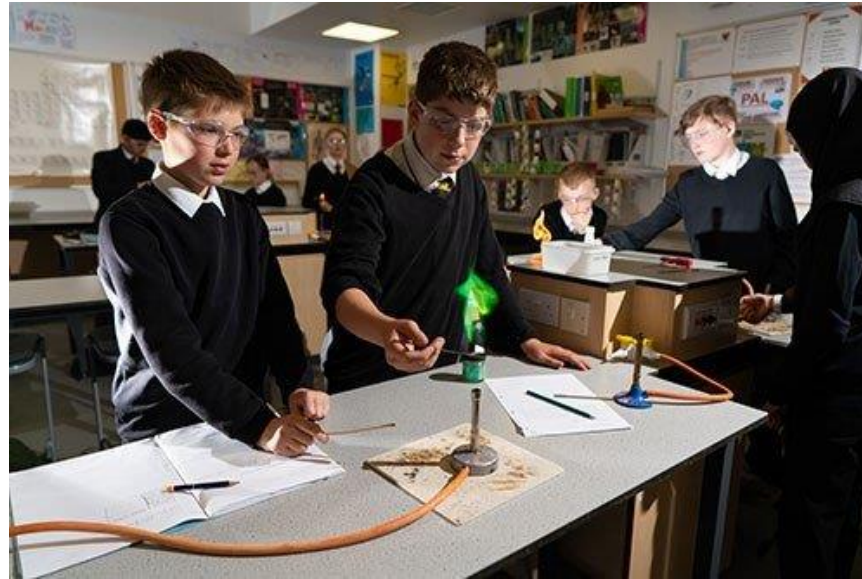


Education Service Improvement Plan 2025-2026

Improving Outcomes for Learners through an Empowered System



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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Our Directorate Vision is:

All children, young people, adults, and communities in Midlothian are supported to be the best they can be. This will be achieved through a nurturing, respectful and collaborative approach that promotes wellbeing, equity, inclusion, and lifelong learning.

1.2 Our priorities

The Education Service Improvement Plan is a forward planning document and details how the Education Service contributes to the delivery of Midlothian Council and National Improvement Framework priorities. These priorities are:

Midlothian Education Service outcome:

We will raise attainment and achievement to ensure that all children and young people in Midlothian achieve outcomes which lead to positive and sustained destinations.

The rationale for moving to a single improvement outcome includes clarifying our focus, sustaining our attention and simplifying our actions.

Midlothian Single Plan priorities:

Individuals and communities have improved health and skills for learning, life, and work.

No child or household living in poverty.

Significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

National Improvement Framework 2025 priorities:

Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education.

Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.

Closing the attainment gap.

Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.

Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Excellence through raising achievement and improving outcomes: ensuring that every child and young person achieves the highest standards they can.



Achieving equity: ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed.

The Scottish Government's wellbeing indicators: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included.

1.3 Our Four Key Workstreams

Our Service Improvement Plan had four main workstreams in session 2024-2025:

Learning, teaching, assessment & curriculum.

Attendance & engagement

Relationships, wellbeing & care and

Inclusion, equity & targeted support.

Integral to these workstreams are

Quality Assurance & Quality Improvement and





Professional Learning

1.4 Our Key Outcome Measures

These are given in section 3 below.

Section 2: Service Overview

2.1 Our Context

<p>8% of pupils are black or ethnic minority.</p> <p>8% of pupils speak a language other than English at home.</p>		<p>2678 pupils attend Early Learning and Childcare settings</p> <p>8348 attend Primary Schools</p> <p>6167 attend Secondary Schools</p> <p>107 (Saltersgate) attend Special Education</p>	<p>493 child protection investigations</p> <p>37 young people on the child protection register</p> <p>206 looked after children</p>
	<p>508 children with disabilities or long-term health conditions</p>		<p>16% of primary pupils are registered for free school meals</p> <p>15% of secondary pupils are registered for free school meals</p>
<p>46% of young people have a recognised additional support need.</p> <p>Sources: Scotland's Census; SEEMIS; Skills Development Scotland</p>	<p>There are 300+ Young Carers.</p>	<p>95% annual participation rate for 16-19 year olds.</p>	

2.2 Our Services and Teams

The Education Service central teams and partners have the following duties:

- Safeguarding and child protection, including in the digital world.
- 1140 hours per year of Early Learning & Childcare for eligible children.
- Primary education in 31 primary schools and in Saltersgate School.
- Secondary education in 6 secondary schools and in Saltersgate School.
- Strategic planning, leadership & quality improvement of Education. Preparing schools and ELCs for inspection.
- Membership of national education groups.
- Ensuring universal and targeted approaches to meeting the needs of all learners.
- Specialist ASN classes/ provisions within 8 mainstream primary schools, 6 secondary schools, Saltersgate all-through special school and a stand-alone secondary provision supporting young people with social, emotional and behavioural needs.
- Specialist outreach teachers and professionals supporting young people with specific additional needs. Supporting assistive technology solutions for learners with additional support needs.
- Supporting schools with data compliance.
- Ensuring young people develop digital skills for learning, life and work through a well-maintained digital estate and professional learning offer
- Providing Educational Psychology Service advice to the local authority, social work services and parents on the education of children and young people with Additional Support Needs.
- Facilitating, delivering and quality assuring national and local professional learning for all staff groups.
- Coordinating national professional learning programs locally (Student Teacher placements, Probationer Teacher support, Into Headship, Collaborative Enquiry, Children's Rights approaches etc)



The Education Business Support Team has particular responsibility for:

- Pupil placement including school & ELC admissions.
- Coordination of wrap around care provision
- Coordination of ELC partners' staff training
- Supporting work on statutory consultations
- Scheme of devolved school budget management (DSM).
- Authorising significant school expenditure and HT purchase cards.
- Supporting procurement of essential services.
- Staffing allocations and budget setting for schools and ELC settings.
- Supporting policy updates.
- Job sizing for teachers.
- School & ELC staff recruitment.
- Partnership funded provider ELC Payments (ELC settings and childminders).
- Performance & improvement reporting.
- Information management & data analysis.
- Subject access requests
- Freedom of Information administration
- Directorate Personal Assistant service
- Administrative support for ASN
- Child performance and work licencing

Section 3: Key Successes and Achievements (2024-2025)

Evidence for the Education Service Improvement Plan is gathered through:

- Education Scotland inspection reports.
- Care Inspectorate reports.
- Quality Improvement activities, including School improvement planning and reporting
- Analysis of data
- Direct observation
- Gathering staff, parent/carer and young people's views.



3.1 Inspections

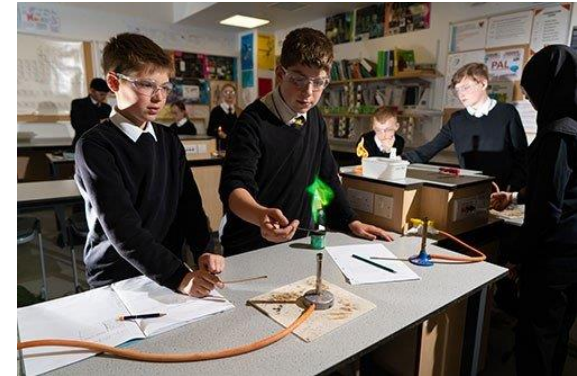
Education Scotland inspections 2024-2025

School	Leadership of change	Learning, teaching & assessment	Ensuring wellbeing, equality & inclusion	Raising attainment & achievement / securing children's progress
Strathesk Primary School		Good		Satisfactory
Strathesk PS Nursery Class		Good		Good
Newtongrange Primary School		Good		Very good
Newtongrange PS Nursery Class		Good		Good
Cuiken Primary School		Satisfactory		Satisfactory
Cuiken Primary School Nursery Class		Good		Good
Lawfield Primary School	Significant improvement in raising attainment, learning, teaching and assessment. No further visit planned by Education Scotland.			
Lawfield PS Nursery Class				
Polton Green Nursery		Satisfactory		Satisfactory

The following key strengths were indicated by the inspection teams.

Primary

- The positive, nurturing relationships between children and staff. A clear sense of community and belonging.
- Children who are polite, happy and enthusiastic and who show respect, care and kindness as they learn and play together.
- Children who are very proud of their school and nursery.
- Improvements in the consistency of effective learning and teaching, including creative approaches to digital literacy and
- outdoor learning. Children who are engaged, motivated and know how to be successful. Rich opportunities to learn and achieve in different contexts.
- Positive culture of learning where children respond positively to the support and encouragement they receive from their teachers and support staff.
- Staff working well together to plan learning which is relevant, enjoyable and has a clear focus on children's rights.
- Children make strong progress in literacy and numeracy. Children who require additional support making good progress towards achieving their personal targets.



Secondary

- There were no inspections of secondary schools.

National Thematic Inspection Visits from Education Scotland

Midlothian Council was inspected as part of a national thematic review of professional learning and quality improvement. Strengths included.

- Clear universal and targeted support and effective advice to support school improvement.
- Increasing involvement of parents/ carers and learners in school improvement.
- Increased focus on high quality and reliable data for school improvement.
- An accurate working knowledge of the strengths and next steps in each school and ELC.
- Empowered system where headteachers and central staff work well together.
- Regular and rigorous evaluation of school performance.
- Advice to schools which is acted on quickly.
- Notable improvement in school self-evaluation approaches.
- Wide range of professional learning opportunities for school staff which is building staff confidence. Innovative approaches to PL.
- School leader induction and professional development.
- Bespoke in-school support (e.g. Raising Attainment Team, Digital Inclusion and Learning Team)

Mauricewood Primary School was inspected as part of a national thematic review of English and Literacy. At the time of writing, the findings have not been published.

Care Inspectorate Inspections – August 2024 to June 2025

15 early years settings were inspected by the Care Inspectorate between August 2024 and June 2025. A range of funded providers were inspected including private nurseries and local authority settings. The settings that were inspected in this period were:

Total Local Authority and Funded Providers		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Weak
How good is our care, play and learning?	QI 1.1 Nurturing care and support	1	3	8	3	
	QI 1.3 Play and learning	1	1	11	2	
How good is our setting?	QI 2.2		2	11	2	
How good is our leadership?	QI 3.1		3	9	3	
How good are our staff team?	QI 4.3		8	4	3	

Local Authority School settings Evaluations		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Weak
How good is our care, play and learning?	QI 1.1 Nurturing care and support	1	2	2	1	
	QI 1.3 Play and learning	1	1	4		
How good is our setting?	QI 2.2		1	5		
How good is our leadership?	QI 3.1		1	4	1	
How good are our staff team?	QI 4.3		2	3	1	

Funded Provider Evaluations		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Weak
How good is our care, play and learning?	QI 1.1 Nurturing care and support		1	6	2	
	QI 1.3 Play and learning			7	2	
How good is our setting?	QI 2.2		1	6	2	
How good is our leadership?	QI 3.1		2	5	2	
How good are our staff team?	QI 4.3		6	1	2	

The following common key strengths were indicated by the inspection teams.

How good is our care and support?

Most of Midlothian Council settings were evaluated as excellent, very good and good for this key question with 12 out of 15 settings achieving these grades. Children experience warm, caring, and nurturing approaches from all staff to support their overall wellbeing. The inclusive and welcoming ethos establishes close relationships with families.

How good is our setting?

Most of Midlothian Council settings were evaluated as good for this key question with 13 out of 15 settings achieving these grades. This shows we offer a good learning environment for our children. The well-resourced and welcoming environments support children to feel important within the space and contributed to their overall wellbeing.

How good is our leadership?

Most of Midlothian Council settings were evaluated as very good and good for this key question with 12 out of 15 settings achieving these grades. A focus on strong leadership and the development of these skills is leading to quality self-evaluation and improved outcomes for children.

How good is our staff team?

Most of Midlothian Council settings were evaluated as very good and good for this key question with 12 out of 15 settings achieving these grades. Although staffing has proved challenging through the session, the deployment of staff is effective to meet the needs of the children.

In 2024 – 2025, 90.6% of our settings have at least good evaluations across the 4 inspection themes or the setting was still awaiting their first inspection.

3.2 Evaluation of Education Service Improvement Priorities 2024-2025

The Excellence and Equity Board has oversight and accountability for all outcomes relating to the Education Service priority above. The Board is chaired by the Education Chief Operating Officer.

3.2.1 We use the following outcome measures

	Last Published Data Dec 24 & Feb 25	National Average	Stretch aims June 2025	Stretch aims June 2026	Stretch aims June 2027
	Stretch aims currently being updated for this session.				
ACEL P1-S3 Combined Health and Wellbeing	Not available				
ACEL P1, P4, P7 Combined Literacy	72.34%	73.99%	73.00%	76.00%	77.50%
ACEL P1, P4, P7 Combined Numeracy	76.82%	80.29%	79.00%	82.00%	82.00%
S3 Literacy 3rd level or better	84.43%	88.31%	88.00%	91.00%	91.00%
S3 Literacy at 4th level	56.78%	58.17%	65%	71%	75%
S3 Numeracy 3rd level or better	91.59%	90.32%	93.00%	95.00%	95.00%
S3 Numeracy 4th level	63.20%	65.14%	66%	69%	70%
Leavers Literacy @ Level 5	77.49%	81.36%	79.50%	82.00%	83.00%
Leavers Numeracy @ Level 5	70.34%	71.86%	73.50%	75.00%	75.00%
Leavers 1+ @ Level 5	86.18%	87.39%	88.00%	90.00%	90.00%
Leavers (ASN over time) 1+ @ Level 5	76.69%	78.11%	78%	81%	82%
Leavers (Care Experienced) 1+ @ Level 5	50.00%	53.64%	79%	81%	81%
Leavers1 @ Level 6	62.61%	66.47%	64.00%	67.00%	67.00%
% Positive Destinations	95.27%	95.71%	96.50%	98.00%	98.00%
% Initial Destination in Higher Education	34.11%	40.80%	40.00%	43.00%	45.00%
Glasgow Wellbeing Survey	Rolled out 2025/26				
Attendance Rate Primary	93.2%	92.5%	93.50%	95.00%	95.50%
Attendance Rate Secondary	87.1%	90.4%	89.00%	91.50%	92.00%
Participation Measure 3 years post initial destination rate %	94.0%	92.7%	94.5%	96%	95%
Exclusion Rate per 1,000 Primary	11.18	4.5 (22/23 last pub)	2.00	1.50	1.00
Exclusion Rate per 1,000 Secondary	24.90	31.5 (22/23 last pub)	22.50	17.50	15.00
% of schools & ELCs with validated Good or better QI 1.1	77%		84%	89%	90%

% of schools & ELCs with validated Good or better QI 1.3	72%		84%	89%	90%
% of schools & ELCs with validated Good or better QI 2.3	77%		77%	85%	90%
% of schools & ELCs with validated Good or better QI 3.1	74%		79%	85%	90%
% of schools & ELCs with validated Good or better QI 3.2	56%		69%	79%	90%

Excellence

	Ave. (17-19)	2023/24	Target 24/25	Target 25/26	Target 26/27
Primary combined Literacy	68.86%	72.34%	73.00%	76.00%	77.50%
Primary combined Numeracy	75.34%	76.82%	79.00%	82.00%	82.00%
S3 Literacy	69.90%	84.43%	88.00%	91.00%	91.00%
S3 Numeracy	88.68%	91.59%	93.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Leavers Literacy & Numeracy @ Level 5	67.55%	65.41%	70.00%	72.00%	74.00%
Leavers 1+ @ Level 5	85.56%	86.18%	88.00%	89.00%	90.00%
Leavers 1+ @ Level 6	59.19%	62.61%	64.50%	66.00%	67.00%
% school leavers initial destination positive	94.55%	95.26%	96.50%	97.00%	98.00%

Equity* (the poverty related attainment gap)

	Ave. (17-19)	2023/24	Target 24/25	Target 25/26	Target 26/27
Primary combined Literacy	28.17%	29.94%	24.00%	22.50%	21.00%
Primary combined Numeracy	23.82%	29.89%	22.50%	21.00%	20.00%
S3 Literacy	22.94%	23.15%	23.00%	22.00%	20.50%
S3 Numeracy	16.35%	19.97%	16.50%	16.50%	15.50%
Leavers Literacy & Numeracy @ Level 5	26.21%	44.33%	35.50%	32.50%	30.00%
Leavers 1+ @ Level 5	27.45%	29.70%	29.00%	27.50%	25.00%
Leavers 1+ @ Level 6	30.25%	42.03%	38.00%	37.00%	35.00%
% school leavers initial destination positive	3.51%	3.46%	3.0%	2.5%	2.0%

* Equity measures show the attainment gap as the difference in attainment levels between pupils that are registered for free school meal registered and those learners not registered for free school meals.

3.3 Use of digital tools to enrich, enhance and improve learning, teaching and assessment



The fourth year of the [Equipped for Learning \(EFL\)](#) digital transformation project has brought continued progress in ensuring digital technology is used to positively impact learning, teaching and assessment. Year Three stakeholder surveys provided a data set to inform Year Four priorities, including an increased focus on artificial intelligence, digital safety and collaborative approaches to digital pedagogy. Learning Technologists delivered 584 in-class bespoke digital support sessions, with 98.9% of staff identifying this support as beneficial. Secondary schools led pilot work to use Chromebooks in exams and share learning with families. Asset management and software internal audits validated EFL approaches and highlights strengths in the quality and clarity of device management systems. EFL was selected as a case study for Audit Scotland and featured in an [Education Scotland digital equity case study](#). EFL was named 2024 Exemplary Council by SMART Technologies. 100% of Midlothian's last ten HMIE inspections highlighted strengths in pupil and staff digital skills. Midlothian pupils contributed to discussion at a national level through pupil panels at national events run by Google, CALL Scotland and Learning Places Scotland. The work of EFL has been showcased internationally at the Google Leaders Series event in Amsterdam and SMART Summit in Calgary, Canada.

Workstream 1: Learning, teaching, assessment & curriculum	How do we know we achieved the workstream outcomes?	Next Steps/ Outcomes to be achieved	NIF Outcome
<p><i>Midlothian schools and ELC settings offer a relevant, progressive and motivating strengths-based 3-18 curriculum, that enables all learners, including those with ASN, to move on to highly skilled, sustained positive destinations.</i></p>	<p>Midlothian Council engaged with a National Thematic Inspection: Local authority approaches to supporting school improvement. Findings included: <i>“It is working well with headteachers to continue to develop an empowered system that identifies accurately strengths across schools and areas that require improvement. As a result, headteachers and central staff are working together more closely to determine how self-evaluation and quality assurance activity is taken forward.”</i></p> <p>The Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) and Curriculum Strategies were co-constructed by a subgroup and combined to form the draft LTAC Strategy Paper. Almost all senior leadership teams across our schools have engaged with the strategy paper.</p> <p>The LTA Framework was co-constructed with a cross sector working group. This is now being used for collegiate sessions in schools and for professional learning sessions to improve the quality of QI 2.3.</p> <p>NQT Mentor- <i>“I have used the LTA Framework to support one of our NQTs who I am mentoring. She was keen to develop her knowledge and understanding of Formative Assessment and I directed her towards the relevant slides on the Framework. As a result I have observed her using a variety of peer and self assessment strategies in her observations as well as developing her confidence and ability in questioning. She shared that she found the framework easy to use and felt the concepts were explained clearly. She has referred other</i></p>	<p>Schools to agree time in WTAs for LTAC focus and enhanced through 3-18 networks. LTAC Strategy Paper clarifies system expectations.</p> <p>Strengthen Professional Learning offer related to LTA framework.</p>	<p>Empowered, responsive education system with clear accountability at every level.</p> <p>Development of knowledge, skills, values, and attributes.</p> <p>Partnership with children’s services, families, and others-GIRFEC approach.</p> <p>Inclusive, relevant, progressive curriculum.</p> <p>Sustainable future.</p> <p>Improve achievement across the curriculum for all learners. Close the poverty-related gap.</p> <p>Ambitious targets.</p> <p>Highly skilled teachers and school-</p>

	<p><i>NQTs to the Framework.”</i></p> <p>An LTA Lead in a Primary School- <i>“I have used the LTA Framework to support staff collegiate time in school and signposted the framework for use following PRD as part of their professional development.”</i></p> <p>A suite of CLPL Lets Talk About Sessions focussed on areas identified through local authority and school level self-evaluation. There was good representation from each ASG at initial sessions and all staff who attended left with actions to improve their practice. 5 schools have asked for follow up sessions on specific features to run the sessions for their own staff.</p> <p>QAMSO plan and moderation supports are in place and there has been focussed activity across ASGs/schools this session. The QAMSO network has strengthened over the session and the plan aligns with LTA framework.</p> <p>Cross sector Professional Learning Moderation in writing sessions were provided in response to tracking period uplift data, after which most teachers expressed greater confidence in making judgements. Materials were provided to all schools who attended (80% of settings) which were then used to further support moderation judgements. Primary teacher <i>“I found seeing the journey across S1-S3 useful, as well as being able to discuss with the High School teachers on how they mark, what they are looking for, what expected standards are etc. I would attend another moderation like this again - it was very useful”</i></p> <p>Learner Conferences held this session and were attended by reps from almost all schools. Information gathered informed further development of the LTA framework, to</p>	<p>Agreement that all schools have dedicated moderation time as agreed in WTA. Assessment & Moderation /LTA leads to intensively build confidence in consistently high standards of moderation and assessment. Asset based approach.</p> <p>Learner Voice developments linked to UNCRC plans and Pupil Parliament</p> <p>Targeted support with CLPL for identified schools. Focus on BGE tracking and monitoring, with a particular</p>	<p>leaders driving excellent learning, teaching and assessment for all, especially those with additional support needs.</p> <p>Improving relationships, behaviour, attendance, engagement and a culture of dignity and respect for all.</p> <p>Digital technology to enhance all aspects of learning and teaching, supported by a digitally skilled workforce and tackling digital inequality.</p>
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	<p>support self-evaluation of agreed Midlothian features and triangulation of learner views.</p> <p>Literacy and Numeracy Progression Frameworks have been implemented and CLPL is ongoing eg (Core Numeracy programme/Science of Sentences) which will support consistency of use.</p> <p>Senior phase MACO is in place. This is a pilot year for MACO being implemented (circa 700+ learners have been engaged. 109 FA L6)</p> <p>Global Infrastructure L6 and Future Skills EV/Mechanics L5 are SQA approved (national)</p> <p>Curriculum (QI 2.2) has been evaluated as part of most QI visits to schools. All schools have been supported to engage with the Digital Schools Award Scotland framework through targeted support. Now 83.3% of schools are registered and have completed the self-evaluation, with 30.9% of schools having achieved the award.</p> <p>Learning Technologists continue to work with class teachers to plan and co-deliver digital learning sessions for young people, based on a consistent core offer. 186 digital offers have been delivered, comprising of 584 individual in-class support sessions since August 2024. 141 teachers have submitted feedback, with 99% agreeing their knowledge had increased/improved and 92.1% reporting the learning will help pupils.</p>	<p>focus on Literacy and Numeracy.</p> <p>Literacy and Numeracy Progressions to be linked to assessment, especially for the lowest attaining 20%.</p> <p>Further expansion and strengthening of MACO, with the introduction of additional FA frameworks. New and nationally successful L4/L5 school-based qualifications to be explored.</p> <p>Specialist Lead Teachers will be recruited</p> <p>Refreshed curriculum rationale in every school which reflects the standards and principles outlined in the LTAC Strategy- validated through QI.</p> <p>Validated through the Digital Schools Award process and school inspections, the majority of pupils and staff use digital technology to enhance learning and teaching, supported by an effective PL offer</p>	
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<p><i>Quality improvement processes evidence improvement in QI 2.3 LTA.</i></p>	<p>Majority of schools good or better for QI 2.3 LTA evidenced through QI activity in enhanced and improvement schools and settings. QI visit activity was focused on identified improvement and enhanced schools with detailed evaluative reports shared to support improvement. Data visits in most primary schools ensured robust data focus through tracking periods and increase in percentage of schools showing improved outcomes.</p> <p>Midlothian Council engaged with a National Thematic Inspection: Local authority approaches to supporting school improvement. Findings included:</p> <p><i>“The local authority has increased the focus on high quality and reliable data about schools.</i></p> <p><i>“The local authority has a commitment to update and analyse data regularly for all schools. They are progressing well in improving the effectiveness of local authority quality assurance processes and how this is used to support schools.”</i></p> <p>The raising attainment team prioritised work in primary schools with the lowest attainment and/or schools who are in the improvement QI category. Numeracy attainment in P7 improved by 15% (average) in RA schools since June 24. A “Core Numeracy” programme has been established which is a universal offer open to all teachers in Midlothian centred around Midlothian core Numeracy principles. Recent Inspection reports have positively identified engagement with the RA team in improvements in pedagogy linked to improved attainment.</p>	<p>Reviewed QI focus to support raising attainment</p> <p>HT trio focus to support development of consistently high standards of learning, teaching, assessment and curriculum. Further develop the QA/QI and professional learning along with the raising attainment team approaches to support and challenge our Improvement schools. Professional learning and pedagogy team (RA team) revised model to meet need with very targeted support for LTA standards in priority schools.</p>	
<p><i>Robust data sets track and monitor</i></p>	<p>A comprehensive set of outcome measures included in the Service Improvement Plan are monitored quarterly and</p>		

<p><i>educational outcomes for all children and young people.</i></p>	<p>annually. This allows quality improvement officers to support schools with review of data early if off track. The LA National Thematic Inspection: Findings included: <i>“The local authority recognises the need to continue to develop and sustain data literacy among headteachers and school staff. “Central staff carry out regular and rigorous evaluation of the quality of school performance.”</i></p> <p>The six weekly Data and Performance group have monitored progress and ensured systematic sharing of data as per RA timeline. Primary data dashboards and robust tracking and monitoring process in place in all primary schools allows all primary HTs to make data informed decisions relating to attainment and interventions. Excellence and Equity workbooks were revised for August 24 and all schools reviewed PEF plans termly ensuring targeted interventions to support the equity gap are evaluated and continued/adapted for impact.</p> <p>Trio attainment meetings have been held with all secondary HTs/SLT and a summary of next steps shared to support improvement. Secondary attainment meetings information shared with elected members as part of the process to better inform their understanding. Development of support and challenge across trios and shared learning across secondary schools. HTs followed up meetings with sharing of good practice and learning for improvement.</p>	<p>Data and Performance Group to review and distribute key data to E&E Board, in line with the updated timeline contained within the Raising Attainment Strategy ELC data system to be developed Secondary data dashboard to be agreed and developed.</p> <p>Ambitious stretch aims to be agreed and monitored.</p> <p>Data informed system training to be organised at all levels</p> <p>Equity and Excellence workbooks to be updated for 25-26</p>	
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Workstream 2: Attendance and engagement	How do we know we achieved the workstream outcomes?	Next Steps/ Outcomes to be achieved	NIF Outcome
<p>Children and young people are active participants in the attendance research and influence strategic decisions and planning.</p>	<p>This year we have progressed the involvement of children, young people and parents/carers in strategic planning and decision making to improve attendance and engagement. Parent and young people have shared their experiences at the Attendance Partnership Network. Their stories have inspired the network and stimulated rich discussions and creative solutions across multi-agency partnerships. The Engagement in Education toolkit has been developed with children and young people and will be launched in April. This has been informed by learners from primary and secondary schools sharing insights into what helps them feel safe and that they belong in their school. Young people as co-researchers in attendance led to the development of a survey to support young people in exploring patterns within their attendance and engagement and identify solutions.</p>	<p>CYP toolkit and professional learning to be launched in March/April. Improved comms - newsletter for staff summarizing the learning from CYP Multi-agency research team - engagement with parents of young people at 0-20% attendance Back to school interview</p>	
<p>Attendance targets are tracked and monitored and the data is quality assured across schools and ASGs.</p> <p>The Attendance Partnership Network promotes collaborative action planning with pathways of assessment and intervention for children and young peoples at 0-25%, 25-75% and 75-90% attendance.</p>	<p>The data dashboards have provided schools with monthly data allowing analysis of trends.</p> <p>A focus on strengthening consistency in attendance coding has involved guidance being circulated on the new attendance codes, a coding workshop for school leaders in February to problem solve common coding issues and a review of attendance monitoring for children and young people on placements out with their mainstream school.</p>	<p>Tracking & Monitoring guidance with spreadsheets for August with PL in the summer term in SEEMIS reports and data analysis. Improved QA, analysis and reporting to ASGs in partnership with QIOs T&M of attendance and engagement relating to curricular transformation pathways Tracking and monitoring of part-time timetables to ensure learners are receiving their entitlement.</p>	

<p>School improvement plans for attendance are informed by self-evaluation against quality indicators at 4 levels: universal, preventative, early support and focused support.</p>	<p>The new Midlothian school self-evaluation toolkit for schools and settings was launched in August, leading to more targeted action plans in schools in strengthening practice to improve attendance. School leaders have reported the value of a common set of indicators across different levels of attendance to strengthen collaboration and guide service improvement.</p> <p>The Attendance Partnership Network has led to greater collaboration and clarity of roles across schools and partners. Improved clarity of role and partnership with Family Wellbeing Service to support attendance.</p>	<p>ASG check in on learning from self-evaluation toolkit. Integration into QI framework Attendance Partnership Network to be set up as locality network from April to focus on local data, resource, curriculum and support/intervention pathways.</p>	
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Workstream 3: Relationship, wellbeing and care	How do we know we achieved the workstream outcomes?	Next Steps/ Outcomes to be achieved	NIF Outcome
<p>Professional learning strengthens trauma-informed relational practice at universal, targeted and intensive levels of support.</p>	<p>Safe, Connected and Ready to Learn professional learning programme was created to strengthen the trauma-informed relationships that promote learning and wellbeing across educational settings.</p> <p>Over 1000 teachers, EYPs and Learning Assistants have completed Safe, Connected and Ready to Learn (equivalent to trauma level 2). The course workbook has been read over 2000 times and remixed over 1000 times, indicating engagement with the activities. Self-report measures of knowledge, skills and confidence in taking a trauma-informed approach increased from 39% up to 82%.</p> <p>All schools have created a plan for the implementation for next steps in ensuring children and young people feel safe, connected and ready to learn. Nurture Leads meet termly to review and strengthen these plans focusing on 3 key areas: Developing a shared understanding and approach with parents/community Strengthen specific areas of practice (PACE, 6Rs, emotion coaching, post-incident support) Strengthen structures of professional support and reflection that promote the wellbeing of staff</p> <p><i>“I’ve taught 11 years and with each behaviour reflected on what the trigger could have been but I never stopped to consider it was a trauma response from a young age that even the child didn’t relate to.”</i></p> <p><i>“The programme effectively deepened my understanding of how trauma impacts children in our school, which enables me to better support their emotional and educational needs.”</i></p>	<p>We are ensuring the professional learning programme is available to all support staff and new staff through a mix of anytime learning and face to face workshops for next session.</p>	

	<p><i>"I've learned to not take outbursts from children personally and while it's important to reflect it's also important to realise that I might not always understand and in that situation it could be a trauma response from before I knew them."</i></p> <p><i>"PACE, especially curiosity has helped me changed perspective."</i></p>		
<p>A Relationship Policy is co-produced with children and young people and sets out our commitment to a relational and restorative approach.</p>	<p>The new 'Relationships for Learning' policy has been co-produced with stakeholders over this year through a series of engagement activities. Learners from primary and secondary settings shared insights into what enables them to feel safe, connected and ready to learn within school. This has been followed up with further engagement with young people, parents, school staff and partners to draft the final version of the policy. There is strong support for scope and commitments set out in the new policy.</p> <p>Guidance tools and professional learning are being prepared to support the implementation of the policy from August. A self-evaluation tool and new PL framework will allow school staff and leaders to review progress and next steps.</p>	<p>The policy will launch in August with a range of guidance documents and activities shared to support implementation. There will be a series of check in activities next session to review and problem solve issues that arise through the new policy.</p>	
<p>Universal and targeted support is informed by monitoring of children's wellbeing and pathways for wellbeing and mental health support are mapped out with links to self-help resources.</p>	<p>The Universal SHINE survey was rolled out across all high schools in February. Analysis has identified clear priorities to inform ongoing planning and target intervention within each high school and across Midlothian.</p> <p>A whole-authority approach to tracking wellbeing concerns and interventions is being set up to be rolled out in session 25/26.</p>	<p>Each school will have access to the GWP to monitor wellbeing and inform universal and targeted support. Review of SPHERA guidance, analysis and reporting with professional learning for school leaders on reporting and analysis.</p>	

	<p>The DPIA has been agreed in principle for the Glasgow Wellbeing Profile with actions underway to complete this.</p>	<p>Strengthen T&M guidance of wellbeing data within overall T&M guidance</p>	
<p>Structures of professional support and supervision are piloted and established through plan informed by research and appreciative enquiry.</p>	<p>Over 100 staff from schools and settings participated in an Appreciative Enquiry into staff wellbeing. In creating a system from scratch that promoted and protected the wellbeing of school staff, 4 overarching themes were identified:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 15%;">Time and space to fulfil your role</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 15%;">Right support at right time to meet learners needs</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 15%;">Feel valued and part of a shared purpose</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 15%;">Time, space and systems for reflection and care</div> </div> <p>These themes have informed an action plan to be integrated into all aspects of service improvement planning, recognizing that the wellbeing of staff is a key priority. Staff wellbeing will be monitored with evaluation of effectiveness of support structures and through surveys as well as absence and leavers data.</p> <p>The Safe, Connected and Ready to Learn course has led to greater awareness of potential impact of cumulative stress and the need for effective systems that promote reflection and care. Peer-facilitated group supervision formats have been trialed through the Nurture Leads Community of Practice. All Nurture Leads have reported the positive value of participating in the groups and on the plans to set groups up in their schools.</p> <p><i>“I felt really listened to. It helped me see things a bit differently and I’ve come away with a whole set of things to try.”</i></p>	<p>Establish tracking and monitoring systems for the wellbeing of education staff.</p> <p>Tests of change set up with ASGs in relation to models of support and supervision in schools with clarity around roles and boundaries.</p>	

Workstream 4: Inclusion, equity and targeted support	How do we know we achieved the workstream outcomes?	Next Steps/ Outcomes to be achieved	NIF Outcome
<p>Policies, systems and processes are in place to advise and assist schools and settings around inclusive practice and the allocation of additional resource.</p>	<p>90% of planned policy, guidance development and processes have been completed this session, providing clear guidance for schools and settings on inclusive practice and how to access additional resource: <u>Policies & Guidelines completed</u> Midlothian Learners' Planning Guidance - Policy Guidance on Managing Exclusions - Transition of Pupils ASN in/out of Midlothian SEEMiS guidelines Build-up Timetable Guidance Medication Policy update Anti-bullying Policy</p> <p><u>Processes & Systems completed</u> Outreach Service Referrals – to date the Outreach Teams have supported 961 learners ASN website for staff – feedback has been very positive from school/ELC staff:</p> <p><i>“It is useful to locate and find information quickly, easy to navigate and up to date.”</i> <i>“It’s easy to find what you really need that is relevant to Midlothian.”</i> <i>“I think it is a good idea and easy to direct staff to when doing outreach.”</i></p> <p>Education Resource Group Referrals - The total number of pupils currently accessing a shared placement within Midlothian council amounts to 277. The total number of pupils presented to the ERG for a provision placement with effect from August 2025 amounted to 84.</p>	<p>Where appropriate, ensure whole directorate are aware of these policies, how they may affect and how they can support children and families.</p> <p>Plan specific engagement around each policy and guidance to monitor and evaluate efficacy and improved outcomes for all learners.</p> <p>Develop an ASN website specifically for parents, signposting ASN in Midlothian.</p> <p>Deliver an effective assistive technology offer, mapped to the Stages of Intervention, that tackles digital inequity and reduces barriers to accessing learning.</p>	<p>Empowered, responsive education system with clear accountability at every level.</p> <p>Development of knowledge, skills, values, and attributes.</p> <p>Highly skilled teachers and school-leaders driving excellent learning, teaching and assessment for all, especially those with additional support needs.</p>

<p>Develop a robust data set 0-18 to inform future learning estate planning to ensure that buildings and resources are available well in advance of need.</p>	<p>Our ASN resource allocation was reviewed to ensure that learners' additional support needs were met equitably across all schools. We now have a more accurate picture of additional support to make best use of the council's resource and ensure that schools are supported in an equitable, transparent way to meet learners' needs.</p> <p>Projected ASN - We are now working closely with our partners in Health to ascertain projections of possible ASN places in the future. This information is beginning to allow us to predict future numbers of learners with complex ASN needs and support longer term estate planning to meet the needs of children as they transition into P1.</p>	<p>Regular QA of ASN data will be completed bi-annually in June and October by ASN Central Team from session 25/26</p> <p>Meet regularly with Health colleagues and Learning Estates team to ensure timely planning for future ASN estate.</p>	<p>Partnership with children's services, families, and others- GIRFEC approach.</p> <p>Ambitious targets.</p>
<p>Through workforce reform we build a diverse and relevant workforce that is skilled and confident in meeting learners needs.</p>	<p>The ASN Outreach Service was redesigned to support schools at Staged Intervention Level 2. This service now consists of five teams – Neurodiversity, Wellbeing, Access and Inclusion, Deaf Education and Communication. To date, the teams have supported 961 learners.</p> <p>Inclusive education professional learning programmes were offered for support staff. 269 support staff attended these courses. These sessions were created based on feedback and requests from support staff and to support our improvement priorities.</p> <p>171 highly positive instances of feedback were gathered. Almost all staff said that the session was relevant for their role and provided practical next steps to improve outcomes for learners</p>	<p>Based on updated ASN data and through the WTA decisions, universal offers of CLPL will be in place for August 2025 to build confidence and capacity at Staged Intervention Levels 1 and 2.</p> <p>Impact will be measured through regular QA visits and tracking & monitoring data.</p>	<p>Highly skilled teachers and school-leaders driving excellent learning, teaching and assessment for all, especially those with additional support needs.</p>

Section 4: Education Service Improvement Plan 2025-2026

See Appendix 3 for detailed workstream plans. These are live documents and will change during the implementation period.

NIF Outcome	Midlothian Service-level Outcomes 2025/26	How will we know we have reached this outcome?
<p>Empowered, responsive education system with clear accountability at every level.</p> <p>Development of knowledge, skills, values, and attributes.</p> <p>Partnership with children’s services, families, and others- GIRFEC approach.</p> <p>Inclusive, relevant, progressive curriculum. Sustainable future.</p> <p>Improve achievement across the curriculum for all learners.</p> <p>Close the poverty-related gap. Ambitious targets.</p> <p>Highly skilled teachers and school-leaders driving excellent learning, teaching and assessment for all, especially those with additional support needs.</p> <p>Improving relationships, behaviour, attendance, engagement and a culture of dignity and respect for all.</p>	<p>All learners receive their entitlement to high-quality universal provision (staged intervention levels 0, 1 & 2) which promotes engagement and improved outcomes.</p> <p>A skilled and confident workforce promotes leadership at all levels to deliver excellent learning, teaching & assessment for all learners, making best use of digital technology and in line with professional standards.</p> <p>All schools set and meet ambitious stretch aims and evidence improved attainment.</p> <p>All schools set and meet ambitious stretch aims and evidence narrowing their attainment gaps.</p> <p>All school staff have received Cost of the School Day training.</p> <p>Culture, relationships and systems ensure that children, young people and staff feel valued and supported to succeed.</p> <p>Collaboration, partnerships and shared learning at ASG level leads to improved learner outcomes through a data-informed allocation of resources.</p>	<p>Robust quality improvement and quality assurance at school & local authority level show validated self-evaluation gradings for 2.3 and 3.2 are improving.</p> <p>Effective use of data at all levels shows attainment has improved and gaps have reduced (see Appendix 1)</p> <p>Evaluations indicate that professional learning is specific and relevant to job roles, builds confidence, deepens knowledge, develops skills and leads to improved outcomes for learners.</p> <p>Robust school tracking and monitoring systems that inform universal and targeted support offers.</p> <p>Quality assurance activity evidences excellent learning, teaching & assessment, as defined in the Midlothian Learning, Teaching & Assessment Framework .</p> <p>Planned and responsive use of learner voice in improvement is evidenced through school and local authority pupil groups.</p> <p>Pilot ASG BGE projects are established. All ELCs, schools and ASGs have a revised curriculum rationale.</p>

<p>Digital technology to enhance all aspects of learning and teaching, supported by a digitally skilled workforce and tackling digital inequality.</p>	<p>An effective assistive technology offer tackles digital inequity and reduces barriers to accessing learning.</p> <p>All ELCs, schools and ASGs produce an agreed 3-18 curriculum rationale that engages all learners in appropriate pathways that prepare them for learning, life and work.</p>	
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We will have two workstreams in 2025-26. Some of the previous workstreams have been combined.

2024-25			
Learning, Teaching, Assessment & Curriculum	Attendance	Relationships, Wellbeing & Care	Inclusion, Equity & Targeted Support
2025-26			
Inclusive Learning, Teaching, Assessment & Curriculum	Wellbeing, Targeted Support & Partnerships		

Our detailed workstream plans can be found in Education Service Microsoft Teams folders and will not be available externally.

This is a link to our Parent Friendly Service Plan https://read.bookcreator.com/Zv9dmRMUH1Wt8CwHD73O6oU3In32/D4tIF9uZSZiclxid_CFqoUw

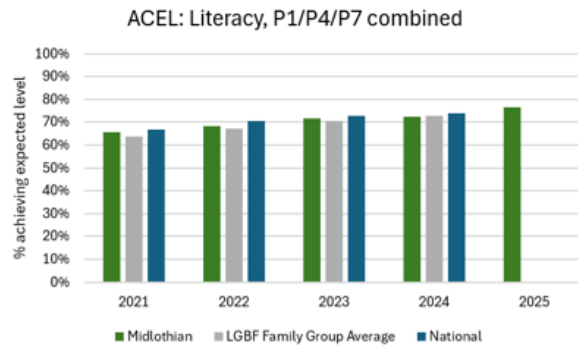
APPENDIX 1: Data we use to measure progress

Attendance data
 Analysis of VSE reports, school and ELC improvement plans
 Attainment data
 Exclusions data
 Part-time timetable data
 Gap and stretch aims data
 Complaints data
 Sphera reports
 Learner and staff wellbeing data
 Staff absence data
 PL evaluation data
 Workforce survey data
 Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland reports
 Stretch Aims analysis

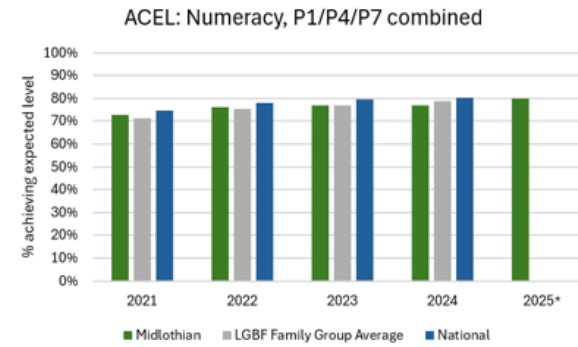
Improving attainment within the Broad General Education stages

MIDLOTHIAN DATA	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	Target
Primary Literacy		65.75%	68.20%	71.64%	72.34%	76.43%	73%
Primary Numeracy		72.80%	76.05%	76.83%	76.82%	80.09%	79%
S3 Literacy (Third Level or better)			80.70%	85.40%	84.43%	88.79%	88%
S3 Numeracy (Third Level or better)			88.50%	90.53%	91.59%	93.55%	93%

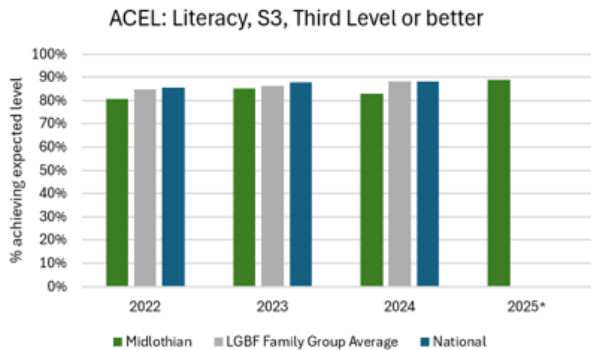
The Stretch Aims for these areas have been met for 2025.



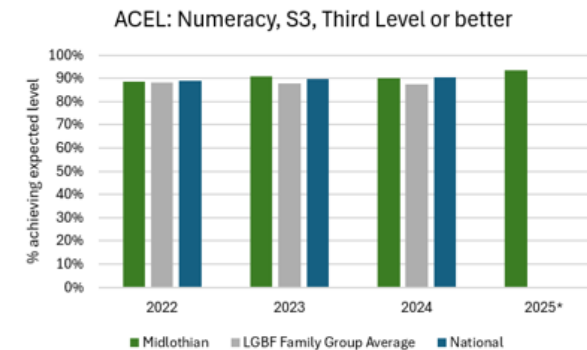
Literacy: P1/P4/P7 combined	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Midlothian	65.8%	68.2%	71.6%	72.3%	76.4%
LGBF Family Group Average	63.8%	67.3%	70.4%	72.8%	
National	66.9%	70.5%	72.7%	74.0%	



Numeracy: P1/P4/P7 combined	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*
Midlothian	72.8%	76.1%	76.8%	76.8%	80.1%
LGBF Family Group Average	71.4%	75.3%	77.0%	78.9%	
National	74.7%	77.9%	79.6%	80.3%	



Literacy: S3, Third Level or better	2022	2023	2024	2025*
Midlothian	80.7%	85.1%	83.0%	88.8%
LGBF Family Group Average	84.8%	86.5%	88.2%	
National	85.5%	87.8%	88.3%	



Numeracy: S3, Third Level or better	2022	2023	2024	2025*
Midlothian	88.5%	91.0%	90.3%	93.6%
LGBF Family Group Average	88.1%	87.8%	87.4%	
National	89.1%	89.6%	90.3%	

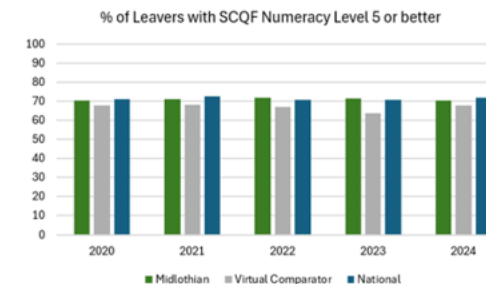
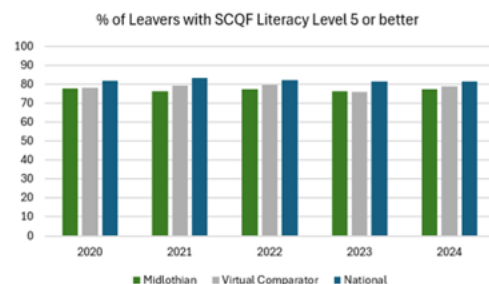
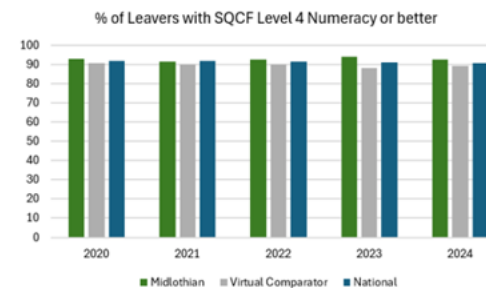
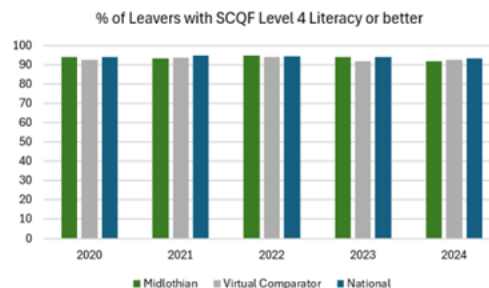
There have been significant increases across all areas since 2024 and the figures for 2025 are the highest on record, post-pandemic. The 2025 figures are also above the national and comparator figures for 2024, with the exception of Primary Numeracy, which is just below the national figure (by 0.2 percentage points).

Improving attainment within the Senior Phase

Literacy and Numeracy for school leavers

Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 5 Numeracy
Midlothian	2024	91.79	92.37	77.49	70.34
Virtual Comparator	2024	92.51	89.30	78.90	67.79
National	2024	93.16	90.53	81.36	71.86
Midlothian	2023	94.17	94.17	76.28	71.57
Virtual Comparator	2023	91.75	88.21	75.90	63.67
National	2023	93.85	90.89	81.48	70.87
Midlothian	2022	94.85	92.37	77.39	71.88
Virtual Comparator	2022	93.99	90.02	79.49	67.15
National	2022	94.40	91.28	82.03	70.76
Midlothian	2021	93.27	91.56	76.40	71.04
Virtual Comparator	2021	93.63	90.08	79.13	68.20
National	2021	94.62	91.73	83.43	72.73
Midlothian	2020	93.95	92.92	77.61	70.40
Virtual Comparator	2020	92.66	90.58	78.16	67.89
National	2020	93.95	91.62	81.82	71.27

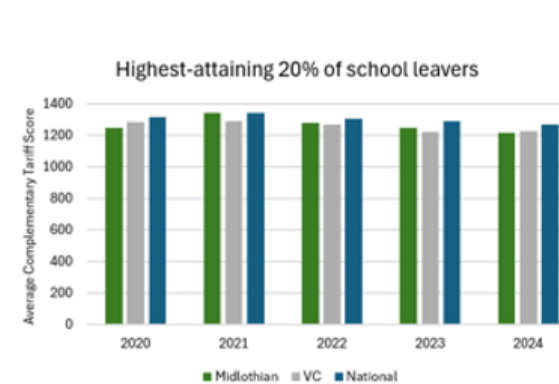
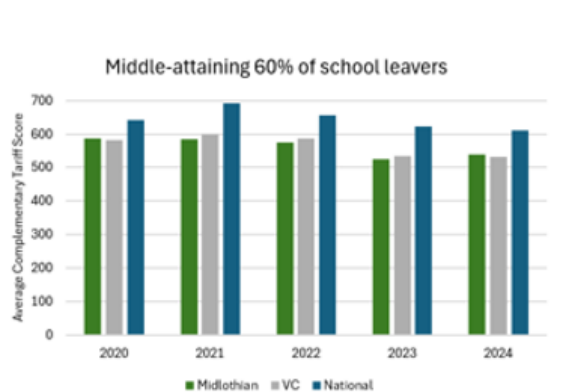
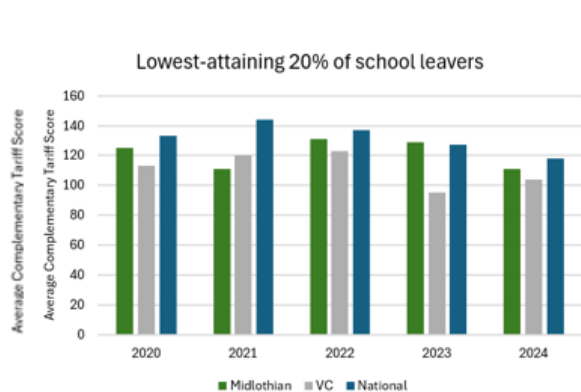
	Significantly much greater than VC
	Significantly greater than VC
	Significantly much lower than VC
	Significantly lower than VC



Leaver attainment in Numeracy at SCQF Level 4 has been significantly above the VC, and above the national level, for four out of the past five years; Level 5 Literacy is broadly in line with the VC. In both cases, the 2024 level is below the previous year's, a drop of around two percentage points.

At Level 5, Numeracy remains above the VC, though it has fallen by just over a percentage point compared to 2023. Literacy has increased by just over a percentage point; it has been in line with the VC for the past two years, having been significantly below for the previous two years.

Average complementary tariff scores for school leavers, grouped by attainment



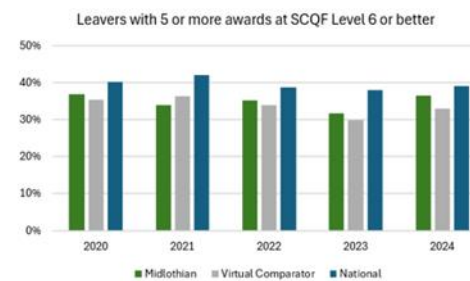
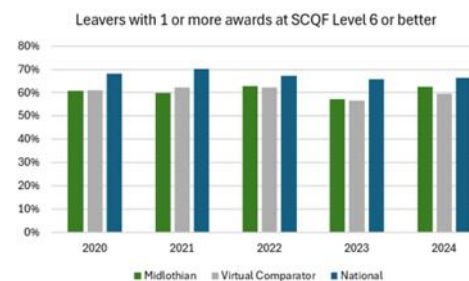
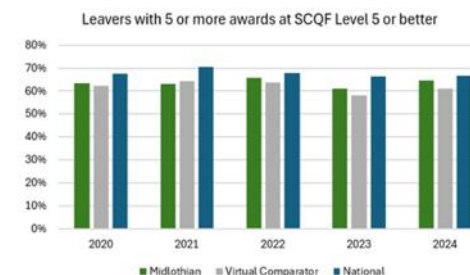
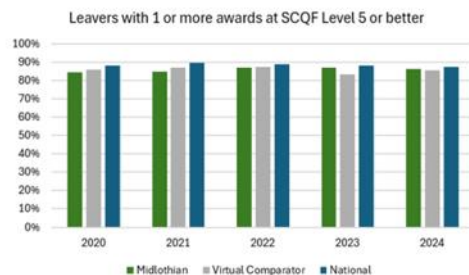
Year	Lowest-attaining 20%			Middle-attaining 60%			Highest-attaining 20%		
	Midlothian	VC	National	Midlothian	VC	National	Midlothian	VC	National
2024	111	104	118	540	532	610	1213	1225	1269
2023	129	95	127	520	501	612	1243	1217	1286
2022	131	123	137	588	582	643	1279	1265	1304
2021	111	120	144	584	600	691	1339	1289	1339
2020	125	113	133	575	586	657	1243	1282	1314

It is worth noting that nationally, leaver attainment has generally fallen year-on-year since 2022. The same pattern is evident in Midlothian for the middle-attaining 60% and highest-attaining 20%. In general, our figures are below the national ones.

The figures for the lowest-attaining 20% have been above our Virtual Comparator since 2022 (significantly so in 2023); the same pattern is evident for the middle-attaining 60%. The figure for our highest-attaining 20% was below the VC (but not significantly so) in 2024, for the first time since 2020.

Senior Phase Qualifications: percentage of leavers with 1 or more, or 5 or more awards at SCQF Levels 5 and 6 (or better)

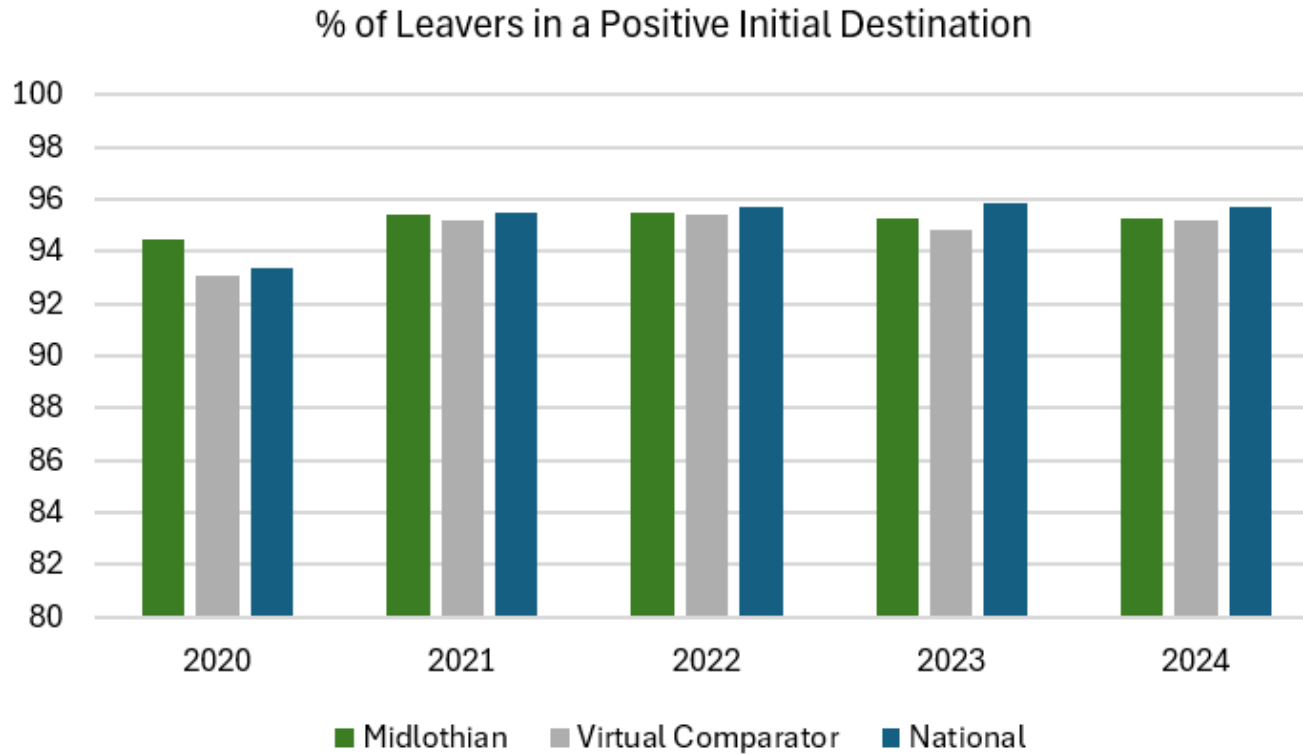
		SCQF Level 5 or better		SCQF Level 6 or better	
		1 or more	5 or more	1 or more	5 or more
2020	Midlothian	84.30%	63.45%	60.62%	36.94%
2020	Virtual Comparator	85.80%	62.10%	61.17%	35.32%
2020	National	88.00%	67.54%	68.23%	40.17%
2021	Midlothian	84.72%	63.17%	59.98%	33.98%
2021	Virtual Comparator	87.00%	64.17%	62.25%	36.21%
2021	National	89.52%	70.44%	70.22%	42.07%
2022	Midlothian	86.95%	65.81%	62.87%	35.11%
2022	Virtual Comparator	87.40%	63.67%	62.24%	33.97%
2022	National	88.95%	67.70%	67.11%	38.68%
2023	Midlothian	86.91%	60.94%	57.06%	31.70%
2023	Virtual Comparator	83.45%	57.98%	56.65%	29.83%
2023	National	87.93%	66.29%	65.61%	37.93%
2024	Midlothian	86.18%	64.64%	62.61%	36.52%
2024	Virtual Comparator	85.66%	61.06%	59.63%	32.98%
2024	National	87.39%	66.55%	66.47%	38.98%



The figures for Midlothian in all four measures have been above the VC for the past two years. Compared to 2023, there have been notable improvements at five or more at Level 5 or better (3.7 percentage points), one or more at Level 6 or better (3.86 percentage points), and five or more at Level 6 or better (2.46 percentage points).

It should be noted that the figures for Midlothian in the above table are all below the national ones.

Senior Phase: Leavers in Positive Initial Destinations



	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Midlothian	94.47	95.44	95.50	95.30	95.27
Virtual Comparator	93.08	95.20	95.38	94.82	95.17
National	93.36	95.48	95.74	95.87	95.71

The percentage of leavers in a positive destination has been above the VC for the past five years and has been within a percentage point of the national figure for the last four years.

Equity attainment gap: Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (pupils free school meal registered and not)

ACEL gap - FMR v Non FMR	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*
Literacy - P1/P4/P7 combined	32.24%	26.83%	26.53%	31.32%	22.65%
Numeracy - P1/P4/P7 combined	27.98%	24.29%	25.11%	30.60%	16.62%
S3 Literacy - Third Level or better		28.88%	28.57%	17.96%	16.66%
S3 Numeracy - Third Level or better		22.19%	16.51%	7.63%	8.65%

The gap between primary pupils registered for free school meals and those not, narrowed significantly in 2025 compared to 2024 for both Literacy and Numeracy, and the current gaps are the smallest on record, post-pandemic. For secondary pupils, the gap narrowed very slightly for Literacy at Third Level or better, and increased slightly for Numeracy, although the gap for Numeracy remains the smallest overall across primary and secondary. In both settings, the gaps for Literacy remain wider than for Numeracy.

Equity attainment gap: School leavers at SCQF Levels 4, 5 and 6 (pupils free school meal registered and not)

	1+ at SCQF4			1+ at SCQF5			1+ at SCQF6		
	FMR	Non-FMR	Gap	FMR	Non-FMR	Gap	FMR	Non-FMR	Gap
2020	95.40%	97.39%	1.99%	62.07%	87.10%	25.03%	32.18%	64.20%	32.02%
2021	92.55%	95.91%	3.36%	67.02%	86.85%	19.83%	28.72%	63.73%	35.01%
2022	96.97%	97.91%	0.94%	66.67%	89.75%	23.08%	26.52%	67.89%	41.37%
2023	96.90%	98.23%	1.33%	72.09%	89.16%	17.07%	31.78%	60.90%	29.12%
2024	86.72%	97.46%	10.74%	60.16%	89.86%	29.70%	25.78%	67.81%	42.03%

The gaps between FMR and non-FMR leavers increased in 2024, to their highest in five years for each measure above. At one or more awards at SCQF Level 4 or better, the increase is largely due to a large drop (just under 10 percentage points) in the figure for FMR pupils, compared to 2023. For the other measures, the increase is due to significant drops for FMR as well as increases for non-FMR.

Stretch Aims analysis submitted to SG as BR3 June 25

Progress of the annual trajectories for 2024-25

An overview of the progress being made by local authorities towards the stretch aim (SA) trajectories for 2024-25.

SAT: stretch aim trajectory; PRAG: poverty-related attainment gap

Broad General Education	Attainment for all		PRAG	
	On track to meet SAT Yes/No/U (unknown at this time)	Changes to annual trajectory Yes/No	On track to meet SAT Yes/No/U (unknown at this time)	Changes to annual trajectory Yes/No
P1/4/7 literacy combined	Yes	No	Yes	No FSM measure used
<p>Comments: Quality Improvement officers (QIO) have continued to have a rigorous approach to raising attainment in literacy. Attainment dialogues were held after the May tracking period to review all 'off track' learners. QIO input at a head teacher meeting reinforced expectations and then follow up data clinics were held to ensure data input was correct and as expected.</p> <p>The literacy attainment for all stretch aims (SA) is 3.4% which is above the SA set as of 20 June 2025. The literacy PRAG is 1.38% lower than the SA set as of 20 June 2025.</p>				
P1/4/7 numeracy combined	Yes	No	Yes	No FSM measure used
<p>Comments: QIOs have continued to have a rigorous approach to raising attainment in numeracy. Attainment dialogues were held after the May tracking period to review all 'off track' learners. QIO input at a head teacher meeting reinforced expectations and then follow up data clinics were held to ensure data input was correct and as expected.</p> <p>The numeracy attainment for all SA is 2.13% which is above the SA set as of 20 June 2025. The numeracy PRAG is 5.92% lower than the SA set as of 20 June 2025.</p>				

Senior Phase (All SCQF awards)				
1 or more award at SCQF Level 5	Yes (86.18%)	No	Yes	No
Comments: In line with the virtual comparator (VC) at level 5 and 6. The number of learners in quintile 1 is low. SCQF Level 5 SA is 87% and the authority is on track to meet this.				
1 or more award at SCQF Level 6	Yes (62.61%)	No	Yes	No
Comments: Current data indicates in line with VC at level 5 and statistically above VC at 6. The number of learners in quintile 1 is low. SCQF Level 6 SA is 64% and the authority is on track to meet this.				
Annual Participation Measure <i>The interim participation snapshots</i>				
APM	92.6%	No		SIMD not available
Comments: As of December 2024, the current APM is 92.6%. While the stretch target of 96% remains a challenging goal, it continues to drive improvement efforts. The secondary link officer receives regular updates on participation, ensuring ongoing oversight and responsiveness. The ambitious 2026 stretch targets reflect a strong commitment to excellence. Continuous monitoring and productive collaboration between the central support team and schools are supporting sustained progress and ongoing improvement.				
Health & wellbeing (complete where applicable)				
Attendance (All)	91.53	N/A	86.54	N/A
Attendance (Primary)	Yes	No	Yes	No
Attendance (Secondary)	Yes	No	No	No
Other				

Comments:

A positive trend is emerging as sustained efforts to improve attendance continue at both school and associated school group (ASG) level. All schools are actively engaging with targeted strategies to enhance attendance, and all ASGs have adopted a consistent and collaborative approach to monitoring attendance and maintaining regular communication with parents and carers. Collaboration with the attainment advisor is in place and there are plans to support school leaders to use improvement methodology to target at risk groups of children and young people.

In the primary sector, the stretch aim for attendance stands at 93.5%, with the current figure as of 20 June 2025 showing a slight increase to 93.6%. The attendance gap identified through PRAG is showing signs of narrowing within the primary phase. While this trend is not yet reflected in the secondary phase, there has been detailed analysis of at-risk groups, and follow-up planning is already underway, with further actions scheduled for the next session.

Secondary attendance shows a stretch aim of 89%, with a current figure of 88.32% recorded as of 20 June 2025. There is no combined attendance SA available for primary and secondary currently.

Plus stretch aims trajectories

How many are there?	4			
ACEL S3 Literacy	Yes	No	Yes	No
ACEL S3 Numeracy	Yes	No	Yes	No
Literacy and Numeracy @L5	Yes	No	No	No
Leaver % positive destinations	Yes	No	No	No

Comments:

Attainment in S3 literacy and numeracy has shown improvement compared to the previous session. Performance at SCQF Level 5 in both literacy and numeracy exceeds that of the virtual comparator. Notably, data for pupils in SIMD quintile one reflects a 2.11% increase in attainment from the previous session.

Positive destinations have remained consistently strong, exceeding the virtual comparator for the past five years and outperforming the national average by at least one percentage point over the last three years. Positive relationships are being forged with colleagues in community and lifelong learning.

We recognise that currently, a higher proportion of S4 pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) leave school at the end of S4 compared to the national trend. This trend has a direct impact on overall FSM leaver attainment in literacy and numeracy. In

response, we are actively enhancing our curriculum offer to increase retention into S5 and S6 for these pupils, with the aim of significantly raising their eventual attainment.

It is acknowledged that the relatively small numbers within the positive related attainment gap group can contribute to fluctuations in the data.

We are making robust use of the Insight analytical tool to monitor and support progress in literacy and numeracy across both school and local authority levels, with particular emphasis on transitions from S4 to S5 and S5 to S6.

Any further, overall comments:

There has been a continued focus on raising attainment and an attainment data timeline introduced ensures regular, robust data focused action at system level.

All schools complete an Equity and Excellence workbook which contains attainment data and PRAG data over time and PEF plans. Information is reviewed at data tracking periods and end of session and allows for analysis of impact of targeted interventions.

Revision of primary dashboards with inclusion of learner names has allowed drilling down to individual learners and ensured a focus on meeting targeted need to raise attainment at school level.

Review and reflection on BGE moderation has ensured opportunities for quality professional dialogue across sectors.

Upskilling of school leadership teams continues, and end of year data clinics have been introduced to quality check attainment at the final tracking period. Feedback from heads and deposes has been very positive and attainment data showed a small percentage increase as a result.

Secondary attainment trio meetings have been re-introduced to ensure support and challenge and development of collaborative practice.

APPENDIX 2: Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)

Requirement for a CRWIA

Article 4 of the UNCRC requires governments ‘to undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognised in the UNCRC’. CRWIAs are one of the general measures of implementation under the Convention. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommends that all levels of government - national, regional and local – should complete a CR[W]IA as part of their policy development.

Child Rights and Wellbeing Screening Sheet for Midlothian Council Education Service Improvement plan 2024-2025

Midlothian Council’s Education Service Improvement Plan 2024-2025 outlines the improvements we will make to learner outcomes. This contributes to the National improvement Framework in Scotland. The Education Service Improvement Plan 2024-2025 will affect the following

UNCRC Articles	GIRFEC wellbeing indicators:
<p>Article 2 (non-discrimination) Article 3 (best interests of the child) Article 6 (life, survival and development) Article 12 (respect for the views of the child) Article 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect) Article 20 (children unable to live with their family) Article 21 (adoption) Article 23 (children with a disability) Article 24 (health and health services) Article 28 (right to education) Article 29 (goals of education) Article 31 (leisure, play and culture) Article 39 (recovery from trauma and reintegration) Article 40 (juvenile justice) Article 41 (respect for higher national standards) Article 42 (knowledge of rights)</p>	<p>Safe Healthy Achieving Nurtured Active Respected Responsible Included</p>

The likely impact on children and young people of the Midlothian Education Service Improvement Plan includes:

The improvement of outcomes for all learners (eg attendance, exclusion, attainment)

The plan will impact all children and young people who attend Midlothian Council schools and ELCs.

A CRWIA will be carried out for the following reasons:

To check that children and young people have been consulted.

To check on the impact on children’s rights, of the Service Improvement Plan.

To assess the impact on different groups of children and how we will communicate this to children.

To check any negative impacts are necessary and proportionate and can be mitigated against.

To check how the plan will effect the UNCRC implementation in Scotland.

To check how we will monitor the impact of the plan.

Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) for Midlothian Council Education Service Improvement Plan

There are two key considerations when undertaking a CRWIA:

Participation: The United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child (UNCRC) sets out that children have the right to participate in decisions which affect them. When assessing the impacts of the policy/measure, we are recommended to consult with children and young people. We can do this directly, through organisations that represent children and young people or through using existing evidence on the views and experiences of children where relevant. Participation of children and young people should be meaningful and accessible.

Evidence: We are recommended to gather evidence when assessing the impact of the policy/measure on children’s rights and also for measuring and evaluating the policy/measure. If we identify any gaps in the evidence base, we are recommended to discuss how we will address these with analytical colleagues.

Which articles of the UNCRC does this policy/measure impact on?

UNCRC Articles	GIRFEC wellbeing indicators:
Article 2 non-discrimination	Safe
Article 3 best interests of the child	Healthy
Article 6 life, survival and development	Achieving
Article 12 respect for the views of the child	Nurtured
Article 19 protection from violence, abuse and neglect	Active
Article 23 children with a disability	Respected
Article 28 right to education	Responsible
Article 39 recovery from trauma and reintegration	Included

What impact will your policy/measure have on children’s rights?

Positive	Neutral	Negative
Key learner outcomes will improve (e.g. attendance, exclusions attainment) Support for children with additional support needs will improve. Children will have a voice in learner conferences, focus groups and other types of consultation. Staff will be able to promote positive relationships and nurturing approaches.		

3. Will there be different impacts on different groups of children and young people?

Not applicable

4. If a negative impact is assessed for any area of rights or any group of children and young people, can you explain why this is necessary and proportionate? What options have you considered to modify the proposal, or mitigate the impact?

Not applicable

If options to modify the policy/measure are included here, include associated resource implications where relevant.

Not applicable

5. How will the policy/measure give better or further effect to the implementation of the UNCRC in Scotland?

The Midlothian Education Service Improvement Plan 2024-2025 will further improve the outcomes for all learners and therefore underpin the highlighted Articles above.

6. How have you consulted with relevant stakeholders, including involving children and young people in the development of the policy/measure?

Children and young people were consulted during
 The National Conversation focus groups.
 Quality Improvement visits to schools (learner focus groups).
 Council-wide representative groups for children and young people (eg learner conferences).

7. What evidence have you used to inform your assessment?

See below.

8. How will the impact of the policy/measure be monitored?

The Midlothian Education Service Improvement Plan has outcome measures that we use to evaluate the impact of the plan. These are clearly laid out in Section 1.5. The Education Senior Leadership Team reports on progress towards our outcome measures every 3 months. The Excellence & Equity Board monitors our outcomes.

9. How will you communicate to children and young people the impact of the policy/measure on their rights?

At the start of the school year, the Education Senior Leadership Team provides a [child-friendly summary](#) of the Service Improvement Plan. This can be used by teachers to discuss our improvement plan, and its impact on children's rights, with children and young people. It can also be used to gather views from children and young people about what is going well and what could improve.

10. Sign & Date

Policy Lead Signature & Date of Sign Off:

Once signed off, please send to CRWIA@gov.scot

Photos courtesy of in-house photo library & Pexel