Education Standards and Quality Report

September 2025



Achieving Equity and Excellence in Renfrewshire

Renfrewshire Council













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Introduction

On behalf of Children's Services, we are proud to present our annual Standards and Quality Report. This report celebrates the many and varied achievements of Renfrewshire's children, young people, staff, and partners over the academic session 2024-25.

Our unwavering commitment to delivering the highest quality of service for children, young people, and families continues to drive our work. This year's report highlights progress and impact across our key themes: Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment; Inclusion; and Families and Communities. These priorities are underpinned by our shared commitment to equity and excellence, and our determination to close the poverty-related attainment gap whilst raising attainment for all.

The ambition, creativity, and resilience shown by our learners and staff have been exceptional. Their efforts have ensured continued improvement and innovation across our services. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has contributed to these successes.

We hope this report provides a clear and inspiring insight into how we work collaboratively, set high expectations, and strive to deliver the best possible outcomes for all in Renfrewshire.



Councillor Emma Rodden

Convener Education
and Children's Services



Janie O'Neill

Director of Children's Services

About this report

Standards and Quality report

This report outlines the progress made in delivering the priorities identified in our 2024/25 Education Improvement Plan, with a particular focus on the impact of our actions and interventions.

How have we gathered evidence for the Standards and Quality report?

A range of evidence and consultation with stakeholders including external partners, was used to measure our progress. This included:

- Analysis of attainment and achievement data
- School and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Standards and Quality reports and annual improvement plans
- School and ELC self-evaluation returns on HGIOS/HGIOELC Quality Indicators 1.3, 2.3, 3.1 and 3.2
- Quality Improvement Visits to establishments and Education Manager reports
- Development Officers' impact reports
- Attainment Adviser bi-annual reports
- Academic partner impact reports
- Survey information
- Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland inspection reports
- Professional learning evaluations
- Consultation on a variety of topics with Heads of establishment, staff, children and young people and partners
- Participation statistics related to aspiring leaders at all levels of the programme and analysis of their career progression
- Accredited and internal award statistics

Through robust and systematic self-evaluation, we identify both areas of strength and aspects requiring further development. This evidence-based approach enables us to strategically prioritise our improvement actions for the year ahead.



Renfrewshire Council Plan Strategic Outcomes

Cross cutting theme: Improving outcomes for children and families

We will encourage kind and connected communities—where our citizens take pride in their place, attracting others to move here and share in the opportunities Renfrewshire has to offer.

We will support a strong and flexible local **economy**—with Renfrewshire able to adapt after the pandemic, building up resilience to support good green jobs and skills for all local people to enjoy the benefits of both living and working here.

We want Renfrewshire to be a **fair** place—where all our people have the best chances to live happy, healthy and fulfilled lives, to feel safe, supported and empowered to unlock the strength of our collective potential.

We are working towards a **greener** future—taking responsibility for our impact on the planet and taking brave, bold steps to protect the natural environment that supports and benefits us all.

We want our employees to feel proud to work for Renfrewshire Council because we are a **values** driven organisation, where we all understand and value our contributions, and we are passionate about making a difference for Renfrewshire.

Our Values

We are fair. We treat each other and everyone we deal with respectfully and work hard to build trust in Renfrewshire Council.

We are helpful. We care about getting things right and are always approachable.

We are great collaborators. We work as one team and with people who care about this place.

We value learning to help us innovate, improve and deliver better services.

Renfrewshire Children's Services Vision

Working together to get it right for children, families and communities—protecting, learning, achieving and nurturing.

Children's Services Improvement Plan Priorities

Reduce child poverty in Renfrewshire and improve outcomes for children and families currently living in poverty

Place children and young people's human rights at the heart of the planning and delivery of services that affect them

Protect the most vulnerable members of our communities, including children and young people who are at risk

Support and nurture our children, families and communities

Create the best possible learning estate to allow children and young people to thrive

Raise attainment and enhance learning and teaching in an inclusive environment

This report outlines the progress made in advancing our strategic priorities and highlights the positive impact of this work on our children and young people. Our improvement priorities are closely aligned with the key outcomes and objectives set out in the National Improvement Framework (NIF), ensuring coherence with national policy and direction.

5 National Improvement Framework (NIF) Priorities

- Place the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

Local Context

27,593 children and young people in early years, primary, secondary and additional

11 secondary schools

50 primary schools

23 early learning and childcare classes 9 of which are extended day and year provision and 1 class for children with additional support needs

15 early learning and childcare centres

47 early learning and childcare funded providers; 36 nurseries and 9 childminders

4 children's houses and supported accommodation for young people leaving care

2 schools for children and young people with additional support needs

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)

Across Renfrewshire, of the 225 data zones, one quarter are in the 20% most deprived areas.

66 datazones are within the **20%** most deprived areas in the health domain.

56 datazones are within the **20%** most deprived areas in the income domain.

58 datazones are within the **20%** most deprived areas in the employment domain.

Successes and Achievements

We are delighted and proud to recognise and celebrate the outstanding successes and wide-ranging achievements across Renfrewshire's schools and early learning and childcare settings. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) articles are used to establish and protect the fundamental human rights of all children worldwide. These articles serve as a framework for ensuring that children are safe, healthy, educated, and have the opportunity to thrive, both as individuals and as members of their communities and are reflected in the successes and achievements of our children and young people.

SEL Worldwide Model School Status (PATHS awards) 2024/25

in recognition of their outstanding commitment to social and emotional learning in their establishment.

- Dargavel Early learning and Childcare Centre

13 primary schools and 5 early learning and childcare classes/centres have now achieved this status.

Renfrewshire's Nurturing Relationships Approach (RNRA)

Schools' and ELCCs' Accreditation Awards (as of June 2025):

Jade (Level1)	67
Ruby (Level 2)	35
Amethyst (Level 3)	15
Gold (Level 4)	10

Scottish Book Trust 'Reading Schools' Awards

Schools across Renfrewshire continued to achieve Reading Schools accreditation at core level or upgraded their existing awards to silver or gold.

Core Level

23 Primary and 7 Secondary Schools

Silver Level

10 Primary Schools

Gold Level

17 Primary and 4 Secondary Schools

Scottish Book Trust Book Donation

The Scottish Book Trust donated nearly 8000 books to Renfrewshire which were gifted to children and young people from 30 establishments across early years to secondary.

Successes and Achievements

Paisley Book Festival 2025

- 45 schools engaged with this year's Paisley Book Festival schools programme. 2376 pupils and 119 staff participated with a choice of 18 different events involving well-known authors.
- Over 40 pupils from 7 secondary schools took part in this year's Janet Coats Memorial Prize poetry competition. Isla Thomson from Gryffe High School was the overall winner with her poem 'Now It's a Memory'.

Education Scotland Inspections

1 secondary school and 4 primary schools were inspected in session 24/25 and all inspections were positive. Gradings for all Quality Indicators inspected were either 'Good', 'Very Good' or 'Excellent'.

4 Early Learning and Childcare settings were visited by Education Scotland and all inspections were positive

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Renfrewshire Council agreed permanent funding for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in March 2025 ensuring a sustainable programme for children across Renfrewshire. Over 3100 children receive a free book each month from the Imagination Library with more than 150,000 books gifted to date. Over 20 early years settings achieved 100% registration of pupils to the Imagination Library in session 24/25.

The work of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in Renfrewshire was shared with a presentation at the 30th anniversary 'Homecoming' conference to delegates from the UK, Ireland, America, Canada and Australia in June 2025.

> " We love receiving our book every month. It's so exciting to see which book it will be. I love that all the books help to teach my daughter something— kindness, compassion, friendships etc. The book choices are fantastic and great that they aren't all really popular authors so we don't already have the books gifted. An amazing initiative!"
>
> **Parent**

More information is provided in a Case Study at Appendix B.

The Promise— National Awards

Two Renfrewshire schools received national Corporate Parenting Awards in 2024 for inclusive practice and positive partnerships.

Kirklandneuk Primary School
Winners of the 'Positive Partnership' award for their work on physical exercise for Care Experienced pupils.

St Peter's Primary School
winners of the 'Changing the Narrative' award for using positive language about Care Experiences.

PE, Physical Activity and Sport

Sports Scotland School—Gold Awards

- Arkleston Primary School
- Barsail Primary School
- Bishopton Primary School
- Dargavel Primary School
- Fordbank Primary School
- Heriot Primary School
- Newmains Primary School
- Rashielea Primary School
- St. Fillan's Primary School
- Wallace Primary School
- Renfrew High School

Sports Scotland School—Silver Awards

- Paisley Grammar School
- Lochfield Primary School
- Bargarran Primary School
- Arkleston Primary School

Scottish Finest Woods Early Years Award

In recognition of the work of early years settings in connecting children with nature through trees, woodlands, and forests.

Winner—West Johnstone Early Learning and Childcare Centre

Young Enterprise Scotland's Company Programme—Regional Final Winners and National Final Runners Up

Johnstone High School's Food for Thought enterprise team impressed the judges to win in three categories: Social Impact, Best Business Report and People's Choice.

Eco Schools Scotland Green Flag Awards

- 5 Early Learning and Childcare establishments
- 17 Primary schools
- 1 Secondary school

Climate Action Schools

Young Reporters for the Environment Competition

Renfrewshire's Climate Change Champions won first place in the 15-18 video report category

Pocket Garden design Competition Winner

Houston Primary school

Successes and Achievements

Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland Early Learning Scheme

5 local authority centres and 4 funded providers are now fully accredited in this scheme that promotes a breastfeeding-friendly environment and supports families who breastfeed.

- Moorpark Early Learning and Childcare Centre
- St Margaret's Early Learning and Childcare Class
- Hugh Smiley Early Learning and Childcare Centre
- St Mary's Early Learning and Childcare Class
- West Early Learning and Childcare Class
- Carole's Kiddies
- Elaine Parkhill Childminding
- Sharon's Tiny Tots
- Abbey Nursery

Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)

STEM Nation Award Winners

- Brediland Primary School
- St. Margaret's Primary School
- Our Lady of Peace Primary School

Our Lady of Peace hosted an Education Scotland STEM Nation Award Open Day to showcase their excellent work for practitioners across Scotland.

Winner of Primary Science Teacher Award 2025 for innovative practice and exceptional dedication to primary science teaching - John McGoldrick, Our Lady of Peace Primary School.

Royal Society Partnership Grants primary showcase—Glasgow Science Centre

3 Renfrewshire schools were invited to showcase their work on building 'Goblin' electric cars.

- Fordbank Primary School
- Wallace Primary School
- Our Lady of Peace Primary School

Glasgow Science Festival Young Engineer Competition—West of Scotland champions

Howwood Primary School—two Primary 6 pupils—Lucy and Abbie Davis

GLEE choir—Regional winners

Bridge of Weir Primary school – winners of the Regional Finals at Glasgow Concert Hall and then performed in the National Finals at the Usher Hall in Edinburgh. A remarkable achievement in their first year of participation.

Digital Schools Award Scotland

29 primary schools, 3 secondary schools and 1 ASN school

Digital Wellbeing Award

6 primary schools, 1 secondary school and 1 ASN school

Digital Endorsement Award

- Barsail Primary School
- Rashielea Primary School

Equitable Creative Coding Award

- St. Catherine's Primary School
- Lochfield Primary School

Get Safe Online Ambassadors

A further 8 Primary staff achieved this status.

12 DigiLearnRen Days at Christmas

Over 280 views of our videos on using Digital Tools for learning and teaching, with our overall YouTube Channel views reaching more than 2750 this session!

Diversity

2025 Champions for Change prize by leading charity Nil by Mouth

Glencoats and St Fergus primaries—in recognition of work aimed at raising awareness of different faiths and cultures and developing children's awareness of equality, including anti-sectarianism, through joint community projects.

Anti-racist education

St James Primary School in Paisley—commended by the Scottish Parliament for their commitment to anti-racist education.

UNICEF Rights Respecting School Awards 2024/25

Gold Awards

- Arkleston Primary School—reaccreditation for 3rd time.
- Rashielea Primary School

Silver Awards

- Barsail Primary School
- Glencoats Primary School
- Heriot Primary School
- Kirklandneuk Primary School
- Langcraigs Primary School
- St. Anthony's Primary School
- St. Peter's Primary School

Renfrewshire's Music Service

The music service has delivered a vibrant and enriching programme throughout the session, showcasing pupils' talents through a wide range of concerts, performances, and competitions that have celebrated musical excellence and fostered creativity across our learning communities.

Renfrewshire Schools' Senior Pipe Band achieved success at various competitions including:

1st place—Cowal Games (Novice A), Gourock Games and Renfrew Pipe Band Competition (Juvenile and Grade 2)

In April 2025, 38 members of the Renfrewshire Schools' Pipe Band proudly represented Renfrewshire and Scotland at Tartan Day 2025 in New York.

Renfrewshire Schools' Christmas Evening of Music and Spring concert series

Four sell out concerts at Paisley Abbey involving over 340 young performers. Renfrewshire Schools Ensembles included: Junior and Senior String Ensembles; Concert and Symphonic Wind Bands; Jazz Band; Senior Ceilidh Group; Guitar Ensemble; Percussion Ensemble; Pipe Bands and the school choirs of Bishopton, Williamsburgh, East Fulton and Riverbrae.

Scottish Young Musician National Final 2025

Ash Paton S5 (Trumpet player) from Park Mains High School—winner of Renfrewshire Schools' Young Musician and represented Renfrewshire at the national final.

Scottish Concert Band Festival National Finals (Perth)

Gold Award

Renfrewshire Schools Symphonic Wind Band



National Thematic Inspection—Education Scotland

In October 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Renfrewshire Council. During the visit, they talked to senior leaders, local authority officers, parents/carers, Head Teachers, teachers, representatives from professional associations and elected members.

The purpose of the visit was to gather evidence about how Renfrewshire Council supports school improvement, with a focus on how we support schools to improve the quality of education through:

- the implementation of effective improvement planning and standards and quality reporting;
- self-evaluation and quality assurance;
- professional learning; and
- universal and targeted support and challenge.

Feedback from the inspection was overwhelmingly positive. Selected quotations from the report are highlighted below, and throughout this document, to illustrate key themes. For a comprehensive overview, the full Thematic Inspection Report is available at Appendix A.

" The local authority's advice and support for schools on approaches to self-evaluation and quality assurance is very clear and highly effective.

Renfrewshire Council sets out its embedded and highly effective approaches to school improvement in the Quality Improvement Framework (QIF). As part of the QIF, council officers provide comprehensive guidance that supports headteachers to improve the quality of education through robust school improvement planning (SIP) and standards and quality reporting (SQR). The guidance provides school leaders with clear expectations and a useful structure for creating these plans and reports."

National Thematic Inspection—Local Authority Approaches to supporting school improvement—Summarised Findings—March 2025

" Local authority officers collate information from individual school improvement plans and standards and quality reports to identify common areas of good practice, priority and need. They use this information very effectively to direct strategic decisions about local authority priorities, requirements for professional learning, advice or more targeted support for schools. This is helping local authority officers to maintain existing high standards, and to secure further improvement in the quality of school education for children and young people in Renfrewshire."

National Thematic Inspection—Local Authority Approaches to supporting school improvement—Summarised Findings—March 2025

" In Renfrewshire, the professional learning offer is highly effective and is enhancing the quality of education in schools. It is tailored to meet universal, targeted and bespoke needs of schools, identified through rigorous data analysis. Professional learning is aligned closely to the local authority's improvement priorities."

National Thematic Inspection—Local Authority Approaches to supporting school improvement—Summarised Findings—March 2025

“ Education Managers undertake a programme of school reviews each year to evaluate the quality and consistency of learning and teaching across the local authority. Headteachers and school staff welcome opportunities to participate in these collaborative review visits to other schools. School leaders find the school review model very helpful in supporting their ongoing improvement agenda.

They acknowledge the strong collaborative working approaches to improve outcomes for all children and young people across Renfrewshire. Through these engagement visits, headteachers receive very helpful support and rigorous challenge, which improves and strengthens their self-evaluation and quality assurance processes.”

National Thematic Inspection—Local Authority Approaches to supporting school improvement—Summarised Findings—March 2025



Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)

Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is allocated directly to schools to support efforts in closing the poverty-related attainment gap and promoting equity in education. Renfrewshire has fostered a strong culture of school empowerment, enabling school leaders to make informed and innovative decisions about the use of PEF, grounded in robust self-evaluation.

The local authority provides comprehensive guidance to schools, including a PEF planning template and clear expectations for reporting on impact. The introduction of a standalone PEF plan has enhanced the clarity of spending rationales, intended outcomes, and associated measures, whilst maintaining alignment with overall school improvement planning. Planning processes have also been streamlined to ensure more effective collaboration with procurement and finance teams.

Annual guidance emphasises the importance of stakeholder engagement in the planning process. Schools are encouraged to adopt participatory budgeting (PB) approaches to meaningfully involve children and young people in decision-making around PEF spending.

Schools are supported by the Data Analysis Team, the Attainment Advisor, and Education Managers to ensure PEF is fully invested in evidence-based, targeted interventions that improve outcomes for children and young people affected by poverty.

A robust process is in place to review PEF planning and reporting across Renfrewshire schools. The Attainment Advisor plays a key role in this process, working collaboratively with Head Teachers, link Education Managers and Heads of Service. School plans and reports are evaluated against a range of quality criteria, including the clarity of intended outcomes, the robustness of associated measures and the use of data-informed rationales. This approach has contributed to an improvement in the quality of PEF planning.

PEF planning and impact visits, involving the Attainment Advisor, are now embedded within the revised Quality Improvement Framework. These visits have strengthened the authority's ability to identify both areas of effective practice and aspects requiring further development. There is a growing body of evidence highlighting the positive impact of targeted interventions on the attainment, achievement, and wellbeing of identified groups of learners. Many of these approaches have been shared through Head Teacher meetings and national platforms, including Education Scotland's online professional learning events.

In April 2025, Renfrewshire hosted an Equity Conference, themed "No Poverty of Ambition." The event provided senior leaders with an opportunity to deepen their understanding of equity and explore sustainable approaches to PEF. Workshops, led by central officers and school leaders, showcased effective practice and explored key themes such as sustainability and transition. A key focus of the conference was also to promote the embedding of equity-driven approaches beyond discrete PEF-funded projects, supporting a more holistic

and sustainable culture of equity across the system. Evidence from a sample of PEF impact visits indicates that most Head Teachers are now actively considering sustainable models, such as the 'grow your own' approach, to build long-term capacity.

Since the introduction of Pupil Equity Funding, Renfrewshire has maintained robust financial governance arrangements to ensure transparency, accountability, and effective use of resources. Head Teachers receive clear and comprehensive guidance from central teams, including Human Resources and Procurement, covering financial management, procurement processes and staff deployment. These arrangements are further strengthened by the dedicated support of the PEF Coordinator, who provides strategic oversight of all PEF activity and supports the central coordination of funds across the authority.

A PEF Governance Board meets regularly to oversee key aspects of the fund, including planning, reporting, staffing, and the procurement of services and goods. The Board also plays a critical role in identifying and mitigating risks associated with the use of PEF, ensuring that funding continues to be deployed effectively to support improved outcomes for children and young people affected by poverty.



Strategic Planning and Portfolio Management

A portfolio management approach is used to strengthen service improvement planning across Children's Services. This model supports effective prioritisation, integration and joint planning, whilst reducing duplication and over-reporting.

Three distinct portfolios are established, each led by a Head of Service:

Inclusion

Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Families and Communities

Each portfolio is responsible for developing and delivering a tailored portfolio plan aligned with our overarching service priorities. Whilst each plan addresses specific contextual needs, they are also interconnected through shared, cross-cutting actions that promote coherence and collaboration across the service.

Dedicated planning teams were formed to support the development, implementation, and ongoing evaluation of each portfolio plan. These teams are also responsible for monitoring progress and reporting on impact at regular intervals throughout the year.

Features of highly effective practice that underpin all portfolios include

- **Leadership**
  Strong strategic leadership in Renfrewshire Council ensures that all decision-making and improvement planning is underpinned by the principles of empowerment. Current leaders and aspiring leaders are very well supported through high quality professional learning programmes.
- **Data Analysis**
  Decision making and planning is centred around high-quality data and evidence. A data for improvement culture is embedded at all levels.
- **Career Long Professional Learning**
  Creating a collaborative culture where all staff are empowered to fully participate in career long professional learning.
- **Quality Improvement Framework**
  Supporting and challenging establishments to improve standards and quality; collaborate, empower, improve.
- **Workforce Planning**
  Maximising the potential of new and existing staff to build capacity and improve outcomes for children and young people.
- **School Estate Management Planning**
  Providing innovative and creative learning environments which are welcoming to all; learner focused; supportive and inclusive; sustainable; and agile enough to support the needs and aspirations of all users.
- **Partnership working**
  Capitalising on partnership working to achieve collective impact and added value.

How well did we do?

The following sections summarise how well we are doing in achieving the outcomes set out in each Portfolio Plan. The Appendices contain additional case studies/reports which have been developed to provide further evidence of progress and impact.

Inclusion

The Promise

Renfrewshire's education services have demonstrated a strong and sustained commitment to The Promise, with a clear strategic focus on improving outcomes for Care Experienced children and young people. The work undertaken across schools aligns closely with the Education Improvement Plan 2024/25, particularly in relation to inclusion, wellbeing, and equity. The approach is underpinned by the principles of Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), the UNCRC, and the Whole Family Wellbeing framework.

A key strength has been the effective delivery of projects funded by the Scottish Government's 'Keep The Promise' Fund (administered by Corra), specifically at St Andrew's Academy and Johnstone High School. At both schools, teams of Principal Teachers and Key Workers have led targeted interventions to support Care Experienced pupils, focusing on enhanced transitions, one-to-one wellbeing support, advocacy services and contextual safeguarding. At St Andrew's Academy, a tailored transition programme has led to marked improvements in pupil engagement and wellbeing. Meanwhile, Johnstone High School has introduced a Wellbeing Tracker—based on SHANARRI indicators and shaped by pupil feedback—which enables staff to provide more responsive, data-informed support.

Centralised data dashboards have been developed to systematically monitor the attendance, attainment, and wellbeing of Care-Experienced children and young people, enabling more targeted and responsive support. A range of evaluative tools—including surveys, feedback mechanisms, and focus groups—are utilised to inform ongoing self-evaluation and drive continuous improvement.

A diverse range of innovative programmes and initiatives have been implemented to enrich the experiences of Care-Experienced children and young people. These include residential experiences through the Promise Champs initiative, youth clubs, creative arts projects, and the Paws for Progress pilot, which uses animal interaction to support emotional wellbeing and personal development.

Strategic partnerships with the University of Glasgow, West College Scotland, and Ocean Youth Trust have enhanced post-school pathways and broadened opportunities for young people. These collaborations support progression into further and higher education, vocational training and personal development through experiential learning.

There is strong evidence of impact across Renfrewshire, where 327 individuals currently serve as Promise Keepers—116 of whom are based in the Education sector. Promise Keepers work to raise awareness and improve services for Care Experienced children and young people. Their role is essential in ensuring that The Promise remains at the heart of how services are designed and delivered.
All Promise Keepers receive tailored training to deepen their understanding of The Promise and are supported to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

Care Experienced children and young people have been actively involved in co-designing roles, policies, and activities, including Promise Charters, youth-led clubs and transition programmes. The creation of dedicated spaces such as “The Cove” at Johnstone High School and the use of creative projects like Lego animation at Fordbank Primary have fostered a sense of belonging and visibility. Staff have reported increased confidence in supporting Care Experienced children and young people and family engagement has improved through alternative meeting formats and the involvement of Parent/Carer Ambassador Groups.

The Communities That Care programme, delivered in partnership with Who Cares? Scotland, has been instrumental in embedding Care Experience into the curriculum and wider school culture. The programme’s reach across all schools, including training for over 500 sector partners, has ensured a consistent and trauma-informed approach.

All 63 schools in Renfrewshire have received Stage 1 “Care Aware” training through the Communities That Care programme, with 85% actively delivering care experience lessons by June 2025. Evaluation data from 783 secondary pupils across seven schools showed a significant increase in empathy, understanding, and readiness to support Care Experienced peers. Teacher feedback highlighted the accessibility and impact of the curriculum, with many noting increased classroom discussion, pupil engagement and a reduction in stigma.

Two Renfrewshire schools received national Corporate Parenting Awards in 2024 for inclusive practice and positive partnerships. Kirklandneuk Primary School in Renfrew won the Positive Partnership award for their work with OneRen and Active Schools on physical exercise for Care Experienced children and young people. St Peter’s Primary in Paisley won the Changing the Narrative award for using positive language about Care Experiences.

Strategic leadership has been a key enabler of progress. The integration of Promise-related actions into School Improvement Plans and the Education Quality Improvement Framework reflects a system-wide commitment. Regular reporting to the Promise Strategic Oversight Group and the use of the Promise Mapping Tool have ensured accountability and alignment with national priorities.

> “ Important to love yourself and to be your number one person, The Promise has allowed us to be heard and have the opportunity to speak up”
>
> **Care-Experienced Pupil on Renfrewshire’s Champs Board**

> “ I enjoyed this lesson learning about care experienced people and what they can be going through.”
>
> **Pupil**

#Keep The Promise



GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child)

Renfrewshire's Children's Services planning partners remain firmly committed to improving outcomes for all children and young people, with a particular focus on those who are most vulnerable. The Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership promotes the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach, fostering a shared vision and collaborative action to support the wellbeing and development of every child.

We are ambitious for all our children and young people. In line with this ambition, we are working to ensure that those with Additional Support Needs (ASN) have equitable access to the full range of experiences and opportunities available to their peers in mainstream settings.

Staged Intervention

Renfrewshire's staged intervention approach is well-embedded across all sectors. Almost all educational establishments, including privately funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELCC) providers, consistently utilise Renfrewshire's staged intervention documentation. This standardised approach ensures coherence across settings and contributes to the effectiveness of the Staged Intervention Support Panel (SISP) and the Education Support Resource Group (ESRG), both of which play a key role in coordinating and reviewing targeted support for children and young people.

All Child's plans and Team around the Child (TAC) minutes have captured the views of the child/young person and parents. Through the offer of universal and targeted training support, Child's Plans are becoming more solution focussed; increasingly targets are based on robust assessment of need and interventions and supports are evaluated. Quality assurance processes allow for targeted support to be provided to the appropriate establishments.

Analysis of the quality of plans as well as data from the ESRG 'Requests for Assistance' demonstrates that, through effective early intervention, the majority of children and young people are successfully supported in their own establishments within their locality. Robust triage processes ensure that referrals to the SISP and ESRG are reserved for the most vulnerable learners. All pupils referred through these

panels receive enhanced, tailored support via the Flexible Learning Resource, ensuring that interventions are proportionate, needs-led, and impactful.

Flexible Learning Resource

As part of the ongoing review of Renfrewshire's Flexible Learning Resource, we are further developing our tracking systems to capture the breadth of support delivered across localities and to robustly monitor its impact. This work will be strengthened by the introduction of a new Virtual Head Teacher role. Through detailed data analysis, this role will support the proportionate and strategic allocation of resources, with a focus on improving attainment and achievement for pupils with Additional Support Needs (ASN).

The role of coaching and modelling continues to evolve in response to the needs of children and young people. Triage and referrals to the SISP ensure that requests for coaching and modelling are consistently appropriate and targeted. Where implemented effectively, coaching and modelling strategies are clearly reflected in planning around the child, with almost all children supported being able to remain within their mainstream school setting. While stakeholder feedback acknowledges the positive impact of coaching and modelling in many cases, it also highlights some inconsistencies in delivery and outcomes. These findings will inform the ongoing review of the Flexible Learning Resource to ensure greater consistency and effectiveness.

Data from coaching and modelling requests, alongside feedback from Head Teachers and support staff regarding training needs, has directly informed the development of the proposed central training programme for session 2025/26. A comprehensive training catalogue has been created, enabling support staff to access professional learning tailored to their individual development needs.

Transition Policy

The updated Transition Policy for children and young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN) was launched in April 2024 and has since been embedded across all educational establishments. This implementation was supported by centrally delivered training, co-facilitated by practitioners from both primary and secondary sectors.

Targeted support for children transitioning from Early Years to Primary 1 was provided by the Inclusion Team through the Getting Ready for School programme, in collaboration with the Early Years Team. A transparent and robust process is in place for children referred to the ESRG for placement in ASN provision. This session, earlier identification of children requiring such placements enabled more effective planning and smoother transitions. Stakeholder feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the process as clear, robust, and child-centred.

In partnership with our Parent Ambassador Group, a parent-friendly version of the Transition Policy has also been developed. A detailed timeline and process for children allocated placements in an ASN provision will be added to this document following final review and approval.

Parent Ambassador Group

During our Education Scotland local authority inspection in October 2024, the work of the Parent Ambassador group was identified as effective practice worth sharing.

> " As part of the local authority's target to build on inclusive approaches, parents of children with additional support needs (ASN) are invited to volunteer as Parent Ambassadors. These parents play a key role in advising education officers on the creation or review of local authority policy and practices in relation to inclusion and ASN. They meet four times per year to discuss emerging issues and to consider local authority initiatives. A recent example of this consultation and collaboration is the development of the local authority's policy for transitions. Parent Ambassadors feel that they have a genuine voice in representing the families of children with ASN, and the bespoke arrangements and approaches that are required."
>
> **National Thematic Inspection—Local Authority Approaches to supporting school improvement—Summarised Findings—March 2025**

Additional Support Needs Assistants

The allocation of Additional Support Needs Assistant (ASNA) resource has become increasingly equitable, reflecting a more accurate understanding of the needs across establishments. We continue to refine our model to ensure it best supports both learners and schools.

Establishments now record staged intervention levels on SEEMiS and this data—alongside other relevant indicators more closely aligned with current levels of need—is used to inform the fair distribution of core ASNA hours. A review of children and young people receiving complex support hours has further ensured that resources are directed to those with the highest levels of need.

Clear criteria have now been developed for assessing requests for exceptional support hours. This will enable more consistent and needs-led decision-making moving forward. Additionally, the ongoing review of children and young people currently receiving complex hours will support the reallocation of resources, allowing for a more equitable distribution of core hours across all establishments.

Violence and Aggression Policy

Through centrally delivered training, senior leaders, teaching staff, and support staff have developed a shared understanding of Renfrewshire's updated Violence and Aggression (V&A) Policy, as well as the universal and targeted supports available to establishments in responding to distressed behaviour.

An increase in V&A incident recording, via Renfrewshire's Business World system, indicates improved adherence to the recording process. Improved weekly monitoring of incidents by the Health and Safety team, Heads of Education and Education Managers ensures that patterns are recognised and addressed. This data has enabled the allocation of enhanced support in response to identified learner and staff needs. In addition, individualised planning and risk assessment support has been provided to establishments as required, ensuring a proactive and child-centred approach.

Renfrewshire Skills Academy

The Renfrewshire Skills Academy pilot has successfully increased SQA accreditation opportunities for young people whilst also supporting the development of essential life skills through pathways such as hairdressing, art, and outdoor education. These tailored experiences have contributed to improved attendance among individual young people and have positively influenced their confidence, motivation and aspirations. As a result, several learners have progressed to applying for college placements and work experience opportunities. Increased self-esteem and confidence have also led to greater social interaction with peers, which in turn has strengthened their overall engagement and investment in their educational placements.

Education Officer—Child and Adult Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

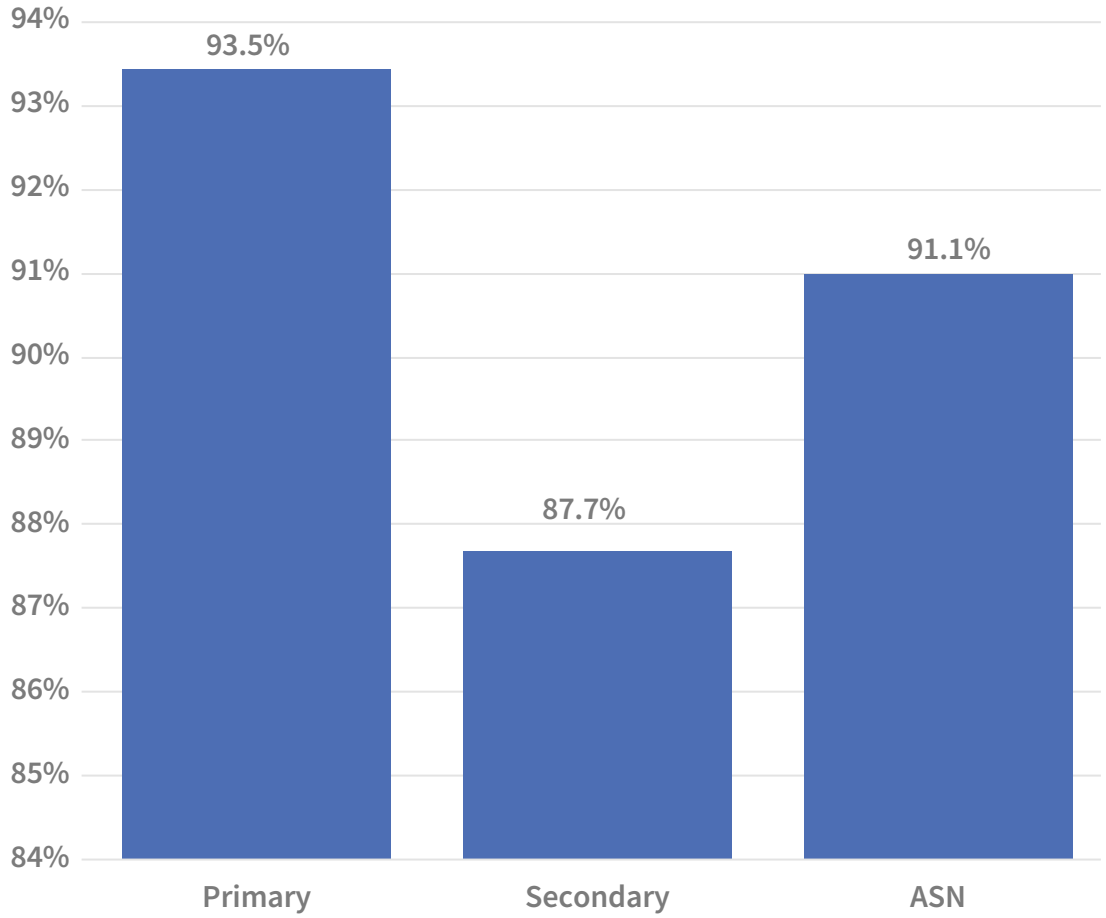
The Education Officer (CAMHS) role continues to develop successfully, with over 1,000 referrals received since its inception. As the only role of its kind in Scotland, it remains a key innovation in strengthening communication and processes between Education and CAMHS. The Officer continues to provide bespoke advice and support to schools, families and clinicians. Stakeholder feedback indicates that the role has had a 'high impact' on learners, patients and their families, with almost all education and health professionals reporting that it has positively influenced their professional practice. In recognition of its effectiveness, the role has now been made permanent and is fully funded by Children's Services. The remit of the Education Officer has expanded to include support for children and young people who are either open to, or on a waiting list for, the Neurodevelopmental (ND) Pathway.

> ' I found it hard to understand what schools could do [to help the young person]… to make school understand where he [the young person] was coming from and the help he needed. The CAMHS Education person made it easy and spoke to the school for us… things are much better now, at the moment.'
>
> **P6 Parent**

Looking ahead, further collaboration between CAMHS/ND Pathways and Education will be explored. This includes aligning Renfrewshire's Staged Intervention model with referral processes for both pathways, progressing work on targeted neurodevelopmental assessments at Primary 4, and improving the referral process from Education to the ND Pathway.

Renfrewshire Attendance—2024/25

The chart opposite shows that attendance across all sectors has shown modest but consistent improvement, which is encouraging against the national backdrop of stubbornly low post-pandemic attendance. Primary attendance rose by 0.6 percentage points to 93.5%, secondary by 0.8 to 87.7%, and ASN schools by 0.8 to 91.1%. These figures mark the second year of recovery.



Educational Psychology Service

Renfrewshire Educational Psychology Service (REPS) annually reports back on the 5 Whole Service Initiatives (WSI) and the Service Improvement Plan (SIP). The 5 WSIs are as follows: Non-Violent Resistance (NVR); Renfrewshire's Nurturing Relationships Approach (RNRA); The Promise; Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) and Renfrewshire's Inclusive Communication Environment.

In addition to the report on the WSIs, the SIP is a focus of improvement within the service. The strands identified are Equalities; Self-Evaluation and Learning and Teaching. There is also an ongoing evaluation of the Locality Inclusion Support Network (LISN) and the Educational Psychology input into this forum as a major element to our service delivery.

The standards and quality report which can be accessed here **Standards and Quality Reports —Renfrewshire Educational Psychology Service** outlines the work of the service in academic year 2024/25 and has identified next steps for the coming year 2025/26.

Next Steps

- Refresh Renfrewshire's Vision for Inclusion to ensure a clear and shared understanding within Education services, and partners in Social Work and Health, of the presumption of mainstream; the profile of need of those who are most vulnerable and needs are most complex; the expanding ASN estate and the importance of multi-agency working.
- Enhance resources to support children with additional support needs at Early Years as a key priority to ensure early intervention.
- Improve speech, language and communication in the Early Years through collaborative pilot project involving Educational Psychology, Early Years Education staff, Speech and Language Therapy, Health Visiting and Health Improvement.
- Appoint a Virtual Head Teacher to transform the operating model of our Secondary Flexible Learning Resources and to support Renfrewshire's most vulnerable children and young people.
- Improve attendance across Renfrewshire establishments with a focus on children and young people with ASN.
- Improve the arrangements for children with ASN at the point of transition from primary to secondary schools.
- Revise policies and processes in relation to Home Education.
- Collaborate with key stakeholders, including the Parent Ambassador Group, to review and update Challenging Behaviour Risk Assessment processes, ensuring alignment with the language and principles of The Promise.
- Develop a communication strategy to ensure parents are well informed about Renfrewshire's Inclusion agenda, supports, and processes.

Families and Communities

Family Wellbeing Support Service

Since its introduction in January 2024, the Family Wellbeing Service has made very good progress in delivering against key strategic priorities within the Education Improvement Plan.

A Framework for Family Wellbeing Support (FFWS) that aligns with the GIRFEC staged intervention framework was developed and implemented. The framework clearly outlines which family wellbeing team supports each level of need, ensuring that requests for assistance are directed to the appropriate part of the service based on assessed family need. Regular locality referral meetings between the communities and schools' family wellbeing leads ensure that an assessment of need is carried out before allocating support to a family. This collaborative approach enabled flexible, creative responses tailored to family needs, including joint working across teams and signposting to wider services where appropriate.

The Fast Online Referral and Tracking (FORT) system is the information management system for the family wellbeing service. A successful pilot was undertaken of the FORT system and an evaluation showed that this tool was well embedded across the community family wellbeing teams and funded third sector organisations, providing an effective platform for agencies to share information about families with whom they were working.

FORT data shows that from July 2024–June 2025 the community family wellbeing team, including funded third sector partners, have worked with 1030 families across Renfrewshire and provided early intervention and support. Data shows that the key reasons that families were either referred to, or sought help themselves, from the community family wellbeing team were due to issues with supporting their child's behaviour, or issues with the mental health of either the child/young person or the parent.

Interventions for families have included: 1-1 family support, NVR (Non-violent resistance), LIAM (Let's Introduce Anxiety Management), EPEC (Empowering Parents Empowering Communities), Nurture input and support from third sector organisations. The Family Wellbeing service now organises the central referral list for the delivery of NVR to parents which has cut the central waiting list in half and is providing NVR support to 100 parents per term including the delivery of the first very successful NVR Dad's group. There has been a notable increase in the number of EPEC groups delivered, including the successful facilitation of sessions by the first trained parent group leader.

The Family Wellbeing service (FWS) has been widely promoted to key stakeholders through attendance at a wide range of single and multi-agency meetings; via Ren10 website; Council website; social media and headteacher newsletters. This has been effective, and partners have reported that the family wellbeing service has been responsive to Requests for Assistance and that the input that families have received has made a difference. Our Requests for Assistance have increased throughout the year and hit a peak in November/December 2024 just after the Family Wellbeing launches and engagement events. Four highly successful family wellbeing community engagement events attracted 559 parents/carers and children.

> " NVR has made a significant and positive impact on our family life, so thanks for steering me in the right direction and also supporting my wife and I too. Your advice and direction is always well received."
>
> **Parent from Dad's group**

> " Thank you very much for the course , I found it really useful to better understand my little ones and to find better strategies in dealing with difficult situations."
>
> **Parent from Dad's group**

Our partnership with 15 third sector organisations (TSOs), funded through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund, was developed and enhanced through a series of joint training events. As well as the successful 3 TSO forum meetings where good practice was shared and networking undertaken, we had a whole service development day in March 2025 where family wellbeing teams, funded third sector organisations and other partners including parents, came together to review the work of the service over the previous year and to discuss priorities going forward.

In addition, third sector partners have attended training in NVR, LIAM and EPEC, building capacity to deliver these evidence-based interventions to more parents in future.

> " To meet others having the same family experience makes you feel much less isolated."
>
> **Parent from EPEC group**

Care-Experienced Children and Young People

Education Psychology/ Social Work Project

As part of our response to The Promise, a one-year project was taken forward by Renfrewshire's Educational Psychology Service (REPS) which allowed time from the Depute Principal, and many of the team, to align at a granular level with the needs identified by Social Work teams of Care Experienced young people in relation to barriers to learning.

In collaboration with the team supporting young people in Children's Houses, a psycho-education training pathway was developed, covering topics such as loss, bereavement, neurodiversity, trauma and attachment. Thirty-two staff members completed 12 hours of small-group training, supported by linked visits to develop tailored support plans. All participants reported increased confidence, with 100% agreeing the training was relevant and applicable to their practice. Notably, 60% observed a reduction in the duration of distressed behaviour among children and young people.

The group of people highlighted by the Kinship SW team as needing support, were the carers themselves. At a carer event, there was moving discussion about the ways families tried to integrate and respond to the losses they and their children experienced. A fantastic piece of joint work between REPs, social workers and schools resulted in the 'Brew and Blether' events where Kinship Carer attendees were supported to reflect on the impact of loss and then invited to a 'Seasons For Growth' event.

For the Adoption and Fostering team, helping carers understand neurodiversity and the approach of schools was a highlighted area. A version of Renfrewshire's Inclusive Communication Environments provided to schools was created by REPs, consulting with Speech, Language and Occupational Therapies. An in-person event was held with an online session provided and recorded with a plan to use it for both SW staff and Carers in an ongoing way. All participants rated the sessions between 7 and 10 for relevance with comments on helpfulness and increased clarity in their understanding and strategies they now had available.

Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) remained our compassionate approach to supporting distressed behaviour, with a focus on Care Experienced children. Training uptake grew, particularly among social work staff, and Level 2 Practitioner Enquiry highlighted powerful stories of positive change. Case studies showed improved attendance and wellbeing among young people with long-term social work involvement. The team is committed to NVR, aiming for all staff to complete Level 2 training within the year.

Hearts and Minds

In April 2024, Aberlour's Attain Mentoring Project became Hearts and Minds; a service that supports Care Experienced children and young people with Neurodivergent needs. The programme works with individuals who are awaiting assessment by CAMHS, are currently undergoing assessment, or have received a formal diagnosis. The work of Hearts and Minds focusses on reducing the significant variables in relation to exclusion, reducing isolation and improving the health and wellbeing at home, in the community and at school. Through tailored, person-centred support, the programme not only enhances outcomes for children and families but also contributes to reducing demand on wider health and social care services.

Targeted support has led to demonstrable improvements in family relationships, enabling children and young people to remain safely at home. A total of 23 children and young people, along with their families, received support resulting in two young people successfully returning home from care. Notably, all children and young people supported, sustained their placements at home, with none entering the care system.

The mentoring programme has had a measurable impact on re-engaging children and young people with education by fostering trusted relationships with adult mentors. This approach has contributed to improved attitudes towards school, raised aspirations and increased attendance and attainment. Notably, 72% (8 out of 11) of young people who were previously not attending school, or were on a reduced timetable, are now attending school full-time.

> " Having a mentor has given me confidence to learn to trust in another adult again".
>
> **Young person**

> " I wasn't sure about having a mentor, but it has been great. I've had opportunities I wouldn't have had and also built confidence I didn't know I had, and also learnt how to cope in situations."
>
> **Young person**

The programme has demonstrated a positive impact on young people's emotional wellbeing, with measurable improvements in self-confidence and problem-solving abilities. Among the eight young people who exited the service, there was an overall 29% increase in wellbeing scores. The most significant areas of improvement included a 40% increase in feeling confident and a 49% improvement in the ability to deal with problems well.

Health and Wellbeing in Education Establishments

Throughout this session we have continued to embed, develop and evaluate our curricular Health and Wellbeing programmes. Renfrewshire's Alcohol and Substance Awareness Education Resource is being used across all sectors. An external evaluation of the resource was carried out in December 2024. Teachers agreed that the resource has successfully increased pupils' knowledge and understanding of the potential risks and harms of using alcohol and substances. In September 2024, the Health and Wellbeing Development Officer was asked to share the success of the resource as part of a Scottish Government event, "Holyrood's Health Inequalities in Scotland: The State of the Nation".

> " I really like the resources because we get to do groupwork. I've learned about how cigarettes can affect your body and how that can then affect your mental health."
>
> **P7 pupil**

The Education Manager (HWB) is an active member of a Tackling Vaping in Young People strategy group comprising members from across HSCP (Renfrewshire and NHSGGC) to develop board-wide strategies to tackle Vaping including education, policy development and support to quit. She has contributed to development of the NHSGGC's new curricular vaping resource which will be promoted in schools next session.

All of our schools successfully deliver Renfrewshire's "It's A Mental Health Thing", our online programme which explores the impact of transition, relationships, social media and peer relationships on our wellbeing. 10 secondary schools are also working towards certification with our newly developed approach to the SQA Mental Health Award. Next session, this will be used across all secondary settings.

> " Everyone has mental health but not everyone's mental health is good which is why we should be aware of what we say to people."
>
> **S1 pupil**

The MVP (Mentors in Violence Prevention) Programme involves over 400 trained senior pupils as peer educators and is now being successfully implemented across all of our secondary schools. Feedback from the programme demonstrates increased awareness from both staff and pupils around the issues which affect relationships and how we can influence positive change in our schools and communities as active bystanders. 94% of pupils reported that, following training, they would be more likely to intervene in a situation which they felt was wrong.

Families and Communities

This session, we were delighted to pilot new gender-based violence training in partnership with Education Scotland, reaching staff across 14 early years and primary establishments. MVP training was also delivered to a wide range of partners, including Police Scotland, Barnardo's, Women and Children First, residential care staff, Social Work and the Health and Social Care Partnership.
Our strong collaboration with Youth Services continued through the Young and Equally Safe in Renfrewshire project, extending school-based work into the wider community.

> " I am better informed to help victims of gender-based violence and prevent further violence."
>
> **S6 pupil**

> " I now feel more confident to be able to challenge the behaviours I am witnessing within my school."
>
> **MVP secondary teacher**

In June 2025, Renfrewshire proudly hosted the national Action for Change Youth Assembly in partnership with Education Scotland.
Held at Paisley Town Hall, the event welcomed over 200 young people from schools across Scotland. A highlight of the day was the keynote address by Jackson Katz, co-creator of the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) programme.

We continue to prioritise the development of staff skills and knowledge across educational settings through our comprehensive Health and Wellbeing (HWB) training offer. This session, the CEOP (Child Exploitation Online Protection) training team delivered highly-evaluated training to staff working with children and young people across Renfrewshire Council.
Our ongoing focus on suicide prevention and self-harm awareness includes regular training and targeted support for school staff, informed by referral trends to The Exchange counselling service. This work has been nationally recognised, featuring as a "Pockets of Practice" case study by Suicide Prevention Scotland and in Public Health Scotland's Creating Hope podcast series.

> " As a Pastoral Care Teacher, the training I've attended over the last two years has been beneficial to my day-to-day practice. It has given me confidence in dealing with difficult concerns with pupil wellbeing and it has enhanced my communication skills."
>
> **Principal Teacher**

Last session, we introduced our Approaches to Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) training for education staff. Feedback from nearly 200 staff from early years, primary and secondary sectors, indicates increased confidence and competence in using therapeutic approaches and language, with pupils reporting improved emotional regulation.

> " The CBT training has had massive impact on how I have conversations with children in school and my own at home also. Focussing on thoughts is a useful way to help focus the children on what the issue actually is."
>
> **Depute Headteacher**

> " In our assemblies we learned how to calm ourselves down using finger breathing, box breathing and bubble breathing. It really helps you if you're feeling stressed."
>
> **P7 pupil**

All primary schools and most early learning and childcare centres use an evidence-based programme to deliver emotional literacy.

To date, 38 Renfrewshire establishments have successfully engaged in the PATHs (Promoting Alternative Thinking Skills) programme. Information sessions for parents as part of the schools' P1 induction programmes have ensured families have knowledge of the PATHs approaches to use at home. Pupil PATHS pre and post surveys highlight increased levels of social and emotional competence, in particular: reduced aggression/disruptive behaviour; increased concentration and attention; improved social and emotional competence; and improved empathy.
Almost all teachers agree that children can use calming strategies, and almost all agree that children are demonstrating an improved ability to recognise and label their emotions. Commendably, there are now 13 primary schools and 5 early learning and childcare classes/centres that have achieved the PATHS award Worldwide Model School Status in recognition of their outstanding commitment to social and emotional learning in their establishment.

As part of the Children's Services Partnership Plan, a comprehensive audit of Physical Education (PE) curriculum planners and current practice was undertaken across Renfrewshire schools. The audit involved engagement with children and young people, teaching staff, and key strategic partners, including OneRen and Education Scotland. The findings highlighted gaps in the explicit teaching of PE skills and in the progression of these skills from Early to Third Level. In response, specialist PE teachers are leading the development of a structured skills framework, a targeted training programme and the identification of key resources to support consistent and progressive delivery of PE across all stages.

Counselling services

Both The Exchange and Place2Be continue to provide very good school-based counselling services to support children and young people across our primary, secondary and ASN schools. Evidence from quarterly reports shows that the counselling services are supporting improvements in the emotional wellbeing of children, young people, staff and families. In addition, the services have been flexible and responsive in providing emotional support to groups of children, young people and staff to cope with critical incidents in school communities. The top referral theme each quarter continues to be anxiety across secondary schools and emotional regulation in primary schools.

In the April 2024—end March 2025 period, The Exchange supported over 1770 children and young people through 1-1 therapeutic counselling. Young People Clinical Outcome scores for the last quarter show that 83% of young people are less distressed post-counselling with all feeling better following support. 93% of parents of children accessing the primary service reported an improvement using the Child and Youth Resilience Measure.

> " It's been helpful to talk about it and offload (bereavement). It's like I am putting the pieces together."
>
> **Secondary Pupil**

> " I have realised there are no benefits to worrying! I need to rest before something nerve-racking happens, instead of panicking."
>
> **Secondary Pupil**

> " I feel that my daughter has really benefitted from her sessions and her worrying behaviours have almost completely stopped."
>
> **Parent**

Between April 2024 and March 2025, Place2Be provided targeted mental health and wellbeing support to over 350 children and young people across four partner schools. This included: 96 children and young people who engaged in one-to-one therapeutic counselling and 254 children and young people who accessed support through Place2Talk drop-in sessions. Post-intervention analysis using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) indicated that 85% of children and young people who received counselling demonstrated improved outcomes. In addition to direct pupil support: 81 parents and carers benefitted from Place2Be's Parent Partnership services; and school staff were supported through over 100 Place2Think consultation sessions, promoting reflective practice and enhancing staff capacity to support pupil wellbeing.

Supervision Support for Head Teachers

During the 2024–25 academic session, 12 Heads of establishment from across all educational sectors engaged in monthly online supervision sessions designed to support personal wellbeing and professional learning. These sessions provided a structured space for reflection, peer dialogue and leadership development. Prior to participation, Heads completed questionnaires outlining their aspirations for the programme. Common themes included a desire to enhance reflective practice, improve work-life balance, share the often-unspoken challenges of headship, and strengthen leadership capacity while managing the pressures associated with the role. The supervision model contributed to a supportive professional environment, fostering resilience and promoting wellbeing among senior leaders.

> "I am able to speak honestly and openly about work-related concerns. My supervisor helps me to unpick the issues and find solutions. She empowers me to find my own solutions and scaffolds this process."
>
> **Head Teacher**

Each participant was coached through 11 individual supervision sessions. Results from pre and post-supervision questionnaires indicated that all participants reported an increase in their understanding of what professional, external supervision is and the benefits of this space to their practice. Furthermore, all participants reported an increase in their confidence in participating in this approach. More than half of participants reported an increase in the importance they place on their own wellbeing in the workplace.

> " Supervision is a key part to reminding myself of the capacity I have as a leader and how I am maximising this through prioritising my own wellbeing to ensure I am in the best place professionally and personally to lead the school."
>
> **Head Teacher**

Participants were asked to detail the impact of the supervision sessions at the end of the programme. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive with all participants stating that they would recommend supervision to their colleagues.

Health and Wellbeing Data

Throughout the 2024–2025 session, Health and Wellbeing (HWB) data—including themes emerging from counselling referrals—has been used effectively to inform strategic improvement planning and to shape the professional learning and support offered to educational establishments.

Capturing the views and experiences of children and young people remains a key priority in Renfrewshire. To ensure an up-to-date understanding of how young people are feeling, all young people from S1 to S6 were invited to complete the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) in March 2025—marking the fourth consecutive year of implementation.

Analysis of the 2025 data indicates a positive trend in overall wellbeing. The average wellbeing score increased from 45.7% in 2022 to 48.6% in 2025, whilst the proportion of young people reporting low wellbeing scores decreased from 31% to 23.8% over the same period.

School-level data has been analysed and individual reports are available to establishments via the Data Dashboard. This enables schools to identify specific wellbeing trends and use the information to inform improvement planning and targeted interventions

Education Scotland Inspections

All Renfrewshire schools inspected by Education Scotland over the last 3 academic sessions, have received positive gradings for Quality Indicator (QI) 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Inclusion and Equality with 71% receiving a 'Very Good' grading and 29% receiving a 'Good'. This far exceeds national averages.

Schools' self-evaluation gradings for QI 3.1 (April 2025)	
Very Good	48 schools
Good	14 schools
Satisfactory	1 school

98% of schools evaluate themselves as 'Good' or better with 76% grading themselves as 'Very Good'



Next Steps

Family Wellbeing Service

- Develop the NVR approach across communities that will be delivered by family wellbeing staff (including third sector) on a locality basis.
- Promote the good practice of the Family Wellbeing Service through the development of a video, case studies and newsletters which will be widely shared with local and national partners.
- Increase the voice of families in service development through a programme of self-evaluation family friendly events.
- Increase the number of EPEC groups and number of parent group leaders.
- Introduce a Pay to Play option for parents as part of the Easter and Summer ASN playscheme, to increase respite opportunities for families of children with complex needs.
- Extend the use of the FORT (Fast Online Referral and Tracking) system to the interrupted learners team and the family wellbeing schools team, and provide guidance for whole service data reporting.
- Following the review of the Family Wellbeing scale, through partnership with the data officer, implement improvements to its use across the community wellbeing team and third sector partners.
- Develop stronger links with housing and homeless services to improve family support.

Educational Psychology/ Social Work Collaboration

- Extend Educational Psychology Service input within Social Work Services for an additional year to sustain and build on work with staff and carers, with a continued focus on inclusion and the wellbeing of Care Experienced children and young people.
- Develop understanding and training of Life Story Narratives across Children's Services to compassionately support children's rights, identity and sense of hope in partnership with corporate parents.
- Deliver tailored, intensive family support to improve school attendance for care-experienced young people with neurodivergent needs, in close collaboration with education and social services.

Hearts and Minds Service

- Strengthen family relationships to prevent crisis and rebuild relationships so that children and young people remain in their family unit.
- Provide mentoring to reduce isolation by fostering positive, trusting relationships with adult role models.

Health and Wellbeing in Education Establishments

- Deliver a comprehensive programme of HWB professional learning including targeted and bespoke interventions.
- Develop National 4 and National 6 SQA Mental Health Awards.
- Develop Mental Health Ambassador training to be delivered by senior phase pupils.
- Implement a rigorous and consistent approach to pupil participation in Health and Wellbeing curricular planning and delivery.
- In partnership with Iamme Scotland, NSPCC, Police Scotland, Health and Social Care Partnership, deliver an awareness-raising campaign on child sexual exploitation (CSE).
- Through the NHSGGC board-wide Vaping strategy group, explore early intervention and prevention measures as well as board-wide policy development on Vaping for use in schools.
- In line with the ADES commitments related to gender-based violence (GBV), provide support to secondary schools to implement Equally Safe at School (ESAS).
- Involve all Renfrewshire secondary schools in 16 Days of Action with “Action for Change” projects supported by MVP school staff and Youth Services.
- Provide training from YouthLink Scotland for Young and Equally Safe in Renfrewshire peer researchers to address issues raised at our youth assemblies.
- Work in partnership with Women and Children First focussing on use of MVP to engage boys affected by domestic abuse.
- Deliver online HWB sessions for parents on topics such as anxiety, internet safety, de-escalation/restorative approaches and self-harm.
- Further develop our Approaches to CBT training offer to new cohorts and existing trained staff.
- Provide bespoke/targeted support for schools in response to HWB data and quarterly reports from counselling services.
- In partnership with Barnardo’s, extend the reach of evidence-based emotional literacy programme PATHs (Promoting Alternative Thinking Skills).
- Continue to coordinate implementation of counselling services across all establishments to ensure that children and young people receive timeous wellbeing support.
- Finalise Primary Physical Education skills framework and pilot in sample schools.

Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment

We are dedicated to delivering high-quality professional learning opportunities that cater to all levels of the education system from senior leaders to classroom practitioners and support staff. This strategic focus has contributed to measurable improvements in outcomes for children and young people, particularly those living in the most socioeconomically disadvantaged communities.

All schools inspected by Education Scotland in the last 2 academic sessions have achieved a grading of either 'Very Good' or 'Good' for QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

Schools' self-evaluation gradings for QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment (April 2025)	
Excellent	1 school
Very Good	24 schools
Good	36 schools
Satisfactory	2 schools

97% of schools evaluate themselves as 'Good' or better with 38% grading themselves as 'Very Good'

Our Numeracy and Literacy Development Officers continue to play a pivotal role in supporting educational establishments by leading professional learning initiatives, driving curriculum development and providing tailored, bespoke support to target schools.

> " Local authority Development Officers for numeracy, literacy, health and wellbeing, and the Digital Learning Manager, contribute to school improvement planning processes. They provide written guidance on aspects of their specialism. Where required, they also provide in-person support for identified schools. They use coaching and modelling approaches to help staff to plan in detail how they will raise attainment, and how they will measure success. This is building the confidence of school leaders and teachers and leading to better planning for improvement in these schools."
>
> **National Thematic Inspection: Local authority approaches to supporting school improvement – Renfrewshire Council**

Numeracy

A comprehensive professional learning programme was implemented, combining both universal and bespoke training, to enhance learning and teaching in numeracy across all sectors. Universal training sessions were open to all practitioners and covered a variety of topics such as Playful SEAL, Maths Recovery, Maths and Data Talks, CPA (Concrete, Pictorial, Abstract) methods for teaching the four operations, and fractions, decimals, and percentages. Additionally, 30 bespoke training sessions were delivered across 18 establishments in response to specific school priorities. Training also supported newly qualified teachers and was featured in the Secondary Maths Learning Festival. Evaluation data indicates a highly positive response across all training, with over 98% of participants strongly agreeing/agreeing that the training improved their knowledge, skills, and confidence in teaching numeracy. 98% also strongly agreed/agreed it would have a positive impact on their learners. Most participants rated the training 10 out of 10.

> “ Find the games and practical ideas for the classroom incredibly helpful.”
>
> **Class Teacher**

> “ This has made me excited to try out some new engaging tasks!”
>
> **Class Teacher**

Further signs of impact are evident in attainment data. Renfrewshire’s June 2025 ACEL figures show a 1% increase in overall numeracy attainment across P1, P4, and P7 combined, with 85% of pupils now achieving the expected levels. The most prominent improvement occurred in P4, where attainment rose from 81% to 84% over the academic year.

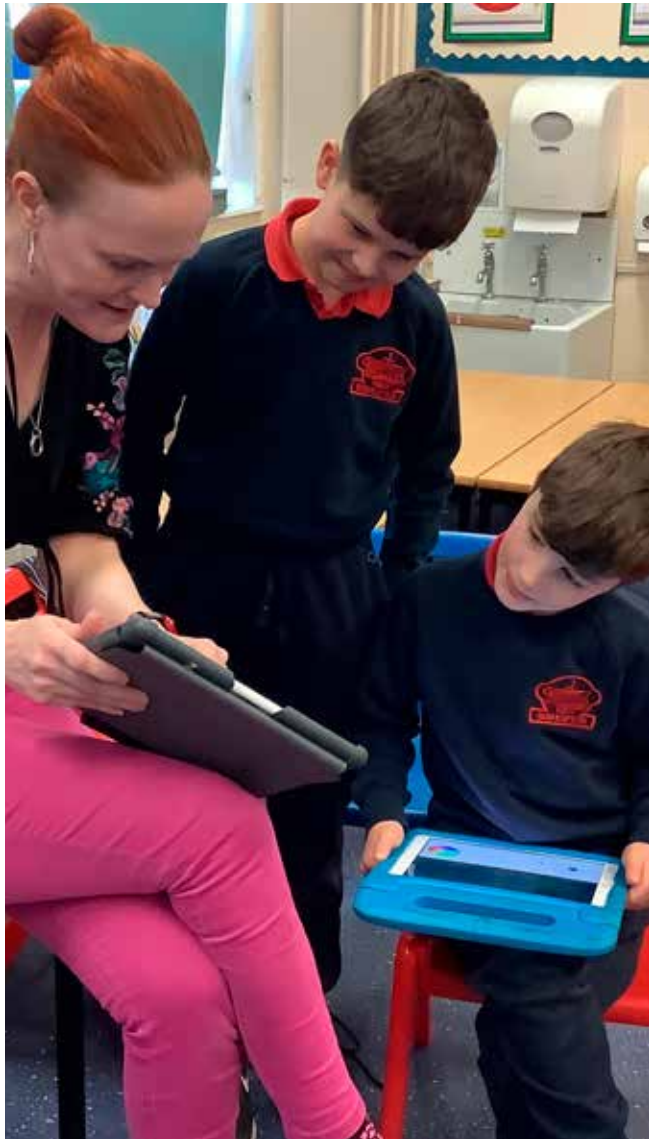
Notably, 11 of the bespoke training sessions focused on Number Talks, along with Engaging Maths and Data Talks, addressing requests to improve consistency, mental agility, and pupil engagement. Senior leaders from schools that participated in the Number/Maths and Data Talks training reported that adopting a consistent, whole school approach, including protected weekly time slots outside core lessons, has significantly enhanced both implementation and impact.

A six month follow up survey confirmed sustained positive effects: almost all (95%) respondents felt extremely or somewhat confident in planning, delivering, and assessing pupil understanding through Number/Maths and Data Talks. Almost all (92%) teachers reported using this routine at least twice weekly, with 66 % running them 3-5 times per week—a significant increase from the 14 % rate noted immediately post training.

> “ Walking through the school, the level of engagement from the pupils and the buzz in the school is amazing to see.”
>
> **Head Teacher**

> “ Children are much more confident at using visual models … to describe their strategy in Number Talk sessions.”
>
> **Class Teacher**

> “ NumberTalks gave us better strategies we can use and understand better.”
>
> **Pupil**



Combined P1/4/7 ACEL data from schools that participated in the refreshed Number/ Maths Talks training this year was also very encouraging: a 4-percentage point increase from 77 % to 81 %. Where a school reported daily number/maths talks, the overall improvement reached 8%.

Ten schools also benefited from the Targeted Schools Programme (TSP), which provided guidance on effective interventions, assessment strategies and targeted training for whole-school teams, specific year groups and support staff. Focus groups with pupils, teachers, and Head Teachers from TSP reported positive effects on attainment, wellbeing, and confidence.

In the targeted schools that focused on numeracy support for Primary 1, 4 and 7, combined ACEL data rose by 4% this year. Overall, targeted schools that received numeracy training saw a 5% increase in their combined data.

A "Grow Your Own" Maths Modelling and Coaching Officer (MCO) initiative was introduced this year to upskill four practitioners from three establishments. Through monthly coaching sessions with the Maths Development Officer, these practitioners were supported to become MCOs, with the aim of promoting and sustaining best-practice pedagogy within their own schools. Survey and focus group insights reveal that teachers serving as MCOs strongly agreed/ agreed that the programme deepened their understanding of effective numeracy pedagogy and boosted their confidence in disseminating best practices to colleagues. All were able to provide examples of maths pedagogical approaches they implemented with either pupils or staff this session that were positively received.

Completed evaluations and qualitative feedback from teachers working with an in-house MCO demonstrate the positive impact of the initiative in improving teacher knowledge, skills, confidence and engagement, as well as the achievement of children in numeracy and mathematics. In a pupil focus group with children working with an MCO, 81% reported feeling more confident about maths now compared to the previous year.

Numeracy Champion sessions continued to be well attended, with most schools sending at least one staff member. These sessions included training, collaboration, feedback and updates. Additionally, two primary schools received inspection support. Another school received support with a Family Games session, and a separate school received input on P1 Transition for parents. All sessions were well received. Modelling sessions were also delivered to several schools upon request, with positive anecdotal feedback.

> " Games are fun, and we don't notice we are learning."
>
> **Pupil**

> " I like finding out how to use Bar Models as I found it easier to work out calculations."
>
> **Pupil**

The MathsBURST project, delivered in partnership with Glasgow University, was a particular success. It provided spatial skills training to 24 Primary 4 and 5 classes across 13 Renfrewshire primary schools. Pupils in the experimental group made substantial gains in pre and post-assessments of mathematics, spatial reasoning, and computational thinking compared to control groups.

Literacy

A comprehensive programme of high quality, evidence-based professional learning has been delivered across all sectors linked to the GTCS Standards and informed by local and national priorities. In addition, effective targeted support has been provided to 10 schools as part of the Targeted Schools Programme. In focus groups, Head Teachers identified dedicated Development Officer support as a key benefit of being part of this programme.

37 bespoke career-long professional learning (CLPL) sessions have been delivered to 24 establishments during session 24/25 (3 early years settings, 19 primaries and 2 secondaries). These covered a wide range of areas including Talk for Writing, Jolly Phonics, Wraparound Spelling, using the Planning, Progression & Assessment Overviews, reading comprehension, the Primary Literacy Coaching Programme, Dive into Reading and more. CLPL continues to be provided to NQTs as part of their professional learning programme. In 98% of evaluations, practitioners agreed or strongly agreed that their knowledge and skill in teaching these aspects of literacy had increased.

Talk for Writing

In session 24/25, additional establishments joined the authority's programme of Talk for Writing training for leaders and practitioners. Across Renfrewshire, most establishments now have staff trained in and actively using the approach including:

- early years: 22 early years classes, 15 early years centres and 21 partner providers
- primary: 43 schools
- secondary: 2 schools
- ASN: 2 schools

A practice audit of the Talk for Writing 'non-negotiables' undertaken with primary Project Leads showed that participating schools had already embedded most key elements of the approach in their schools and had plans to implement the remainder during session 25/26.

> "I used to hate writing and thought it was boring and hard. Now I get to write every day and we box up our writing so we're doing a bit at a time. That means I don't get as stressed out about it and actually enjoy it. My writing has definitely got better this year and I'm a lot more confident."
>
> **Pupil**

> "I'm a young leader of learning at school. Reading can open up the world and take you to a world of imagination where anything is possible."
>
> **Pupil**

Dedicated training for support staff was very positively received and evaluated with 100% of participants indicating that this had provided a good introduction to the Talk for Writing approach.

> "I now understand the concept of Talk for Writing and feel more confident that I can actively help children to write creative and interesting stories."
>
> **Support Staff**

Data analysis demonstrates that Talk for Writing is continuing to have a significant impact on pupil attainment:

- attainment in writing has consistently improved since the introduction of Talk for Writing in session 21/22
- attainment of pupils living in 30% most deprived areas has increased in both Talk for Writing cohorts, with an 11-percentage point increase in those that started in session 21/22.



Renfrewshire Libraries (One Ren)

School Library Service

OneRen provides a professionally qualified librarian to 11 secondary schools in Renfrewshire. Pupils are signed up as joint school and public library members automatically as recommended in Vibrant Libraries, Thriving Schools, the national strategy for school libraries. This academic year, there were 190 visits to all 11 locations with 3,323 class visits, information literacy sessions and clubs taking place, 201 pupil hours were spent volunteering in libraries, 29,100 physical books were borrowed and 38 author events were held in school libraries with an additional 10 held as part of Paisley Book Festival and Will Eisner week.

A Scottish Book Trust funded author residency was undertaken with poet, Simon Lamb, at St Andrew's Academy Library which included publication of a poetry book. Johnstone High Library has been awarded an author residency for the 25/26 academic year being only one of 8 schools in Scotland awarded this. Future Paisley

and Live Literature funding allowed craft clubs, writing workshops, author events and comic book creation across many schools. Reading schools accreditation this year was awarded to Gryffe High, Johnstone High, Park Mains High–5 secondary schools are now at Gold level and 1 at core.

Bookbug Bag Gifting

Bookbug bags support families to read, sing and play with their little ones to give them the best start in life. Every child in Renfrewshire receives a bag at 4 key stages: 3-5 weeks (Baby Bag); 13-15 months (Toddler Bag); age 3 (Bookbug Explorer Bag); Primary 1 (Bookbug Primary 1 Family Bag). The library service distributed 1986 Explorer Bags to pre-5 establishments, and 1854 Primary 1 Bags.

Summer Reading Challenge 2024

Marvellous Makers! Summer Reading Challenge 2024 was delivered by public libraries and the Skoobmobile in partnership with the Reading Agency and promoted to all primary schools. 1534 children signed up with 733 (48%) completing the Challenge reading 6 books or more or achieving their personal reading goal. St Fillan's Primary won the overall trophy, and the best improver award went to Barsail Primary School who increased their participation and completion rates from 2023. 138 children signed up digitally with 69 completers which is well above the national average for digital participation and the highest digital participation in Scotland.

Skoobmobile

The Skoobmobile provides a programme of book borrowing, story times, online learning and creative activity to primary schools and pre-5 establishments. Regular after-school community stops provide access to good quality books and activities free of charge on the school doorstep or grounds. Nine primary schools were supported over the last twelve months and 2 bedtime reading sessions were delivered at Williamsburgh and St Charles primaries which were well received.

Young Leaders of Learning

The Young Leaders of Learning (YLL) programme, developed by Education Scotland, empowers children and young people to actively participate in improving their schools by engaging in reciprocal visits, sharing effective practices and promoting learner involvement in school improvement activities.

Following staff training sessions in May/June 2024 and pupil training in August 2024, 34 primary schools and 6 secondaries signed up to participate in this programme. Throughout the session, identified young leaders took part in preparatory activities, including teambuilding with their partner school's young leaders on how to use evaluative language and planning and preparing for the school visits. Ultimately, this led to an evaluative visit to a partner school to assess an identified area of focus. Almost all schools chose to focus on an aspect of Relationships from the How Good is Our School (HGIOURS) pupil evaluation document and a few focussed on an aspect of Learning and Teaching.

A wide range of improvements were identified by the young leaders across all participating schools. These included enhancements to both relationships and learning and teaching. To support the implementation of these identified improvements, young leaders in each school have developed their own action plans. Many of these have been written by pupils and formally incorporated as priorities within the 2025–26 school improvement plans.

A Case Study on Young Leaders of Learning can be found at Appendix C.

Development of the Renfrewshire Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy—The Renfrewshire Way

In collaboration with a cross-sectoral working group, alongside engagement with staff and pupils, Renfrewshire Council has developed and launched The Renfrewshire Way—our strategic approach to learning, teaching, and assessment. This framework was introduced to establishment leaders at the Equity Conference in April 2025, where it received 100% positive feedback.

> "A truly excellent resource. The importance of shared definition and understanding of key concepts, and tracking cannot be understated."
>
> **Head Teacher**

> "Very impressed with the resource. This is a great tool to support school improvement and to be more efficient in any form of change."
>
> **Head Teacher**

The Renfrewshire Way is a supportive and practical toolkit structured around four key areas:

- The Learning Environment
- High-Quality Learning and Teaching
- Effective Use of Assessment
- Planning, Tracking and Monitoring

Each area outlines clear expectations for all establishments and staff, supported by quality-assured guidance, sector-specific resources, and research for early years, primary and secondary education.

To ensure accessibility, the Renfrewshire Way is available via desktop links across all council devices. A formal launch for all staff took place on the August 2025 in-service day, accompanied by a recorded presentation and materials developed by the working group. Following this, a programme of professional learning will be rolled out to support implementation and continuous improvement across all sectors.

Assessment and Moderation

A comprehensive audit was undertaken during this session to inform the next phase of Renfrewshire's assessment and moderation strategy. This process involved meaningful engagement with senior leaders through surveys and focus groups, ensuring a broad and representative understanding of current practice and priorities. In addition, targeted consultation took place with secondary Curricular Network groups, focusing on ongoing assessment activity within subject areas and departments. This collaborative approach has provided valuable insights to guide future developments, strengthen consistency and enhance the validity of assessment across the authority.

Key messages from the audit:

Early Years and Primary

- 96% of establishments engage in in-house moderation. Activities included moderation of Achievement of a Level and collaborative planning.
- 72% of establishments engage in cluster moderation – there is a strong focus on Writing.
- Additional training is required in Assessment for Learning (Formative Assessment), creating and using high-quality assessments, data literacy and standardised assessments.
- Progression and consistency across the authority and cross-cluster working are areas for development.

Secondary

- Moderation is valued and impactful. Staff see tangible benefits, especially when working collaboratively.
- Time is key. Dedicated space for moderation and reflection is essential to sustain this work.
- Assessment is shaping curriculum. Departments are adapting their approaches based on moderation findings.
- Broad General Education (BGE) needs more consistency. There is enthusiasm, but staff would welcome clearer authority-wide standards and expectations.
- Support must be practical. Teachers are seeking shared tools and resources to support consistent practice.
- Momentum exists. Staff are taking action based on moderation—this is a prime opportunity to build on that progress.

RAMG (Renfrewshire's Assessment and Moderation Group) will continue next session and will be involved in taking forward the next steps based on the feedback received through the audit.

Early Years

Over the past four years, Renfrewshire's Early Level Progression Tool has been embedded across all Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings to provide a summative overview of children's progress within the early level of Curriculum for Excellence. Designed to identify key developmental milestones, the tool supports consistent assessment of progress without altering individual settings' approaches to tracking, observing, and documenting learning.

Recent consultation with ELC leaders and practitioners indicates strong endorsement of the revised guidance, with 100% of respondents reporting that staff found the tool beneficial. Practitioners have demonstrated increased confidence in making professional judgements about children's learning and development and are using data more effectively to identify barriers and gaps and plan for children's next steps. Furthermore, data shows a rise in moderation activity across settings, contributing positively to the reliability and validity of assessment data.



This reflects a growing culture of collaborative professional dialogue and shared standards in early years education.

The progression tool data on children's progress in Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing is providing us with robust information which is being used effectively to shape our workforce development programme enabling us to address areas where staff are lacking in confidence, knowledge and skill. ELC Heads and Managers are making increasing use of this data to inform improvement plans and ensure positive outcomes for children.

Progression data collected in May 2025 indicates a positive trend in literacy attainment over the past three years. However, there has been a slight decline in attainment in both numeracy and health and wellbeing (HWB). When analysed by gender, these trends are largely consistent, with the notable exception of HWB among girls, which has shown an improvement of 4 percentage points over the same period.

Analysis by deprivation levels reveals that for children residing in the 30% most deprived areas, attainment has declined across all three areas: literacy, numeracy, and HWB. For those in the 70% least deprived areas, literacy attainment has remained stable, whilst numeracy and HWB have both experienced decreases. These findings align with our Primary 1 data, where improvements in attainment have not mirrored those observed in other stages. This will be a key focus for targeted intervention and support in the upcoming academic session.

Furthermore, analysis conducted by the data team has revealed a strong and consistent correlation between the Early Level Progression Tool data and Achievement of a Level (ACEL) judgements. The evidence clearly demonstrates that literacy and numeracy milestone scores are reliable predictors of attainment outcomes in Primary 1. This alignment reinforces the value of the progression tool in supporting early identification of learning needs and informing targeted interventions.

Improved coordination of support across the early level has led to a significant increase in the implementation of evidence-based programmes and initiatives within the core curriculum areas of Literacy, Numeracy, and Health and Wellbeing. ELC settings are now benefitting from targeted support through high-impact approaches such as Talk for Writing, SEAL Maths, and the Jenny and the Bear programme.

Training for middle leaders has been successful with Deputes, seniors, graduates and early years teachers participating in the CLPL offered. 100% of course participants have agreed or strongly agreed that they now have a deeper understanding of well-planned transitions and are more confident about leading transition approaches in practice. All staff who attended training on self-evaluation and improvement planning agreed or strongly agreed that their knowledge and understanding of self-evaluation for continuous improvement has increased and they are now confident about applying this learning to their practice.

84% of respondents stated that their knowledge of Realising the Ambition had increased by attending the series of bite size sessions offered between October 2024 and May 2025. These virtual twilight sessions enabled some staff teams to attend collectively, resulting in rich professional dialogue and shared understanding within individual settings. Primary colleagues also attended these sessions resulting in valuable conversations about effective pedagogy and practice across the early level.

Two-part training sessions and the Forest Kindergarten Leader Course have been effective in ensuring that ELC staff are applying theory to practice to provide positive outcomes for children. In follow up sessions, all course participants have provided evidence of action taken to improve the quality of the learning environment and the documentation of children's learning and development.

A total of 11 early years practitioners have successfully achieved the SQA Forest Kindergarten Award at SCQF Level 7, demonstrating commendable commitment to professional learning and the promotion of high-quality outdoor experiences for young children.

An initial scoping exercise has been undertaken on establishing a foundation for developing a Birth to 3 framework to support early years practitioners to adopt best practice for planning, assessment, recording and reporting. This included an outward research approach adopted in other councils, including Glasgow City, Highland and Falkirk councils.

Through effective collaboration with Education Scotland, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and Educational Psychology services—and following a comprehensive consultation with a wide range of leaders including headteachers, heads of centres and managers from funded provider settings—a coordinated and strategic plan has been developed to strengthen language and communication across Renfrewshire, including the early years sector. This plan is closely aligned with the national Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) Change Theory and reflects a strong local commitment to early intervention, inclusion and equity. It represents a shared vision and collective responsibility for improving outcomes in speech, language and communication development for all children.



Digital Learning

Our digital plan is bringing about improvements in digital pedagogy and resources. Good progress has been made in finalising our Assess, Build, Innovate plan as we move towards a new digital strategy that underpins The Renfrewshire Way and high-quality learning experiences for all.

As part of the central refresh to improve infrastructure, our Flexible Learning Resource establishments were upgraded with both pupil and staff devices. In addition, establishments were given replacement devices as requested, additional Secondary labs for certification were purchased and 15 establishments received funding towards the cost of new Promethean Panels.

A working party collaborated to develop Mobile Phone Guidance for schools, aimed at promoting consistent, respectful, and responsible use of mobile technology across educational settings. The guidance was formally approved by the Education Board, marking a significant step in supporting schools to positively embrace mobile technology to enhance learning now and, in the future,

whilst protecting staff, children and young people from the possible disruptive and harmful consequences of misuse.

Digital Strategy

There was a refresh of the Digital Learning Champions (DLC) with a minimum of 3 posts shared weekly on the DLC Team. This has resulted in over 2340 unique users visiting DigiLearnRen where all the information is stored.

As part of the review process for the refreshed digital strategy, education staff were invited to complete a survey. In response to survey findings, a cross-sectoral Digital Strategy Working Party was established. The group analysed the survey results and developed a series of short, medium, and long-term actions to inform the refreshed strategy.
This collaborative approach ensures the refreshed strategy Transform to Innovate Renfrewshire is shaped by practitioner insight and aligned with the evolving digital needs of learners and educators across Renfrewshire.

Parents Portal is now live across all Renfrewshire schools, with 14,369 parents registered and 20,433 pupils linked, representing approximately 75% of the pupil population. The digital platform has significantly streamlined administrative processes, with over 5,000 Annual Data Checks completed electronically. Additionally, 48 schools have adopted the Parents Evening booking system, offering families greater flexibility and choice in scheduling appointments.

Groupcall Messenger has now been successfully rolled out across all Renfrewshire educational establishments, replacing SEEMiS for text messaging. The platform enables schools and centres to send emails, text messages, and push notifications directly to both parents and staff, streamlining communication and improving efficiency. In Term 1 alone, a total of 201,441 emails were sent via the platform, resulting in a n estimated cost saving of approximately £7,000.

Digital Schools Awards

In October 2024, an information session was delivered to schools to introduce the new suite of digital awards and to showcase best practice from establishments that had recently achieved recognition. Presentations were shared by Rashielea Primary School (Digital Endorsement Award), Bargarran Primary School (Digital Wellbeing Award), and Langcraigs Primary School (Digital School Award), providing valuable insights and inspiration for other schools on their digital learning journeys.

This session we ran a Professional Learning network in conjunction with Education Scotland, focusing on the new Digital ELC Award. All establishments who attended have registered for the Award and have indicated that they will apply this year.

Glow Blogs

Following a survey of establishments, 18 schools and centres requested support to enhance digital practice. To date, 10 have received tailored one-to-one support, while the remaining establishments have benefited from universal support, including access to training resources aimed at building staff confidence. In parallel, background work has been undertaken to improve the accessibility of digital platforms for parents and carers, ensuring more inclusive and effective engagement.

Professional Learning

A series of webinars and face-to-face sessions were held, along with individual support provided to a number of establishments, including advice on using tools to support learning and teaching and 'how to' guides.

Just2Easy, a free digital tool available through Glow for Early Years and Primary settings, has gained positive traction following a series of professional learning webinars. The sessions have been viewed over 200 times, with participants rating them an average of 4.4 out of 5.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive: 99% of attendees found the course materials to be very or extremely useful and 100% indicated they would begin using Just2Easy within their establishment.

The webinars on Adobe Express for Primary and Secondary staff focussed on how to use Adobe Express with learners. The recordings have been viewed over 130 times. Attendees rated the session overall 4.9 out of 5, with all agreeing their confidence had increased as a result of the session and they would implement the learning in class as well as sharing with colleagues. Some of our PL Wakelets were updated this session and a new one created for using Adobe Express, with over 100 views.

We offered a series of Promethean drop-in sessions throughout 24/25, which were supported by our Promethean Trainers. We had around 20 staff benefitting from these hints and tips sessions.

Two sessions were held in collaboration with Education Scotland on planning your digital strategy, with 20 schools and ELCs attending. Participants were offered the opportunity for a follow-up digital visit and 8 were visited to discuss their next steps, changes to practice and impact on learners. Two went on to achieve their Digital School Award. Attendees rated the usefulness of the materials provided at 4.75 out of 5 with a final rating of 4.44 out of 5 for impact on their confidence, knowledge and skills. All participants said they would share the information from the session with colleagues and implement the learning.

Our Apple Regional Training Centre (RTC) held 9 face-to-face sessions focusing on accessibility tools, writing stimuli, coding, creativity and assessment with 72 attendees from 32 different schools. The feedback from attendees, both at the time and in the follow-up evaluation, demonstrated that 100% said that they could put into practice the learning gained and that they had made changes to their practice following the sessions. There has been an increased number of Apple Teacher certifications across Renfrewshire and the feedback has been used to identify next year's professional learning sessions. In addition, the Winter Wonderland activities created by our very own RTC Facilitator, Ruth Burnett, were viewed over 1090 times. Renfrewshire's Lending Library funded by Heritage Interactive was launched in March, with 3 schools benefitting so far from the kit, alongside the support provided by Ruth Burnett.



Developing the Young Workforce

Multi-agency Future Pathways Meetings are now in place across all secondary schools to ensure robust planning processes for young people to access and sustain positive destinations. In 2023/24, the number of young people entering a positive destination after leaving school was 97.1%. This is a rise of 0.6% from the 2022/23 capture point. Of our care experienced leavers, 90% entered a positive destination which remains in line with previous sessions.
The number of leavers from quintile 1 entering a positive destination was 95.2% an increase of 1% from 2022/23.

Launched in September 2024, Renfrewshire's Pathfinders Programme provides enhanced transition support for school leavers, offering direct pathways into West College Scotland courses, integrated work placements and access to a range of bespoke qualifications tailored to individual needs and aspirations. Through the school leaver follow-up process, 18 young people participated in the programme and have been successfully supported into positive destinations, including further education, training, and employment.

All 13 Renfrewshire secondary schools have a Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) coordinator. DYW Coordinators play a crucial role in connecting education and the world of work, helping young people prepare for their future careers. A total of 16,226 DYW engagements have been recorded across our schools during session 2024/25. These included work placements, employer engagements and career events.

A range of social values programmes have been developed to enhance young people's readiness for future pathways, including a project-based learning initiative delivered in partnership with Canon and a group of 20 S3 pupils at Johnstone High School. This innovative collaboration provided young people with opportunities to develop key meta-skills such as creativity, problem-solving, communication, and collaboration. These programmes continue to play a vital role in supporting all young people, including those most vulnerable, to build the transferable skills needed to access and sustain positive post-school destinations

The My Future Pathways programme continues to provide meaningful and targeted opportunities for young people aspiring to careers in the construction industry.
As a result of their participation, six young people successfully achieved the industry-recognised CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) qualification, enhancing their employability and readiness for site-based work. In addition, a further five young people gained a Health & Safety qualification, equipping them with essential knowledge to work safely and confidently in construction environments.

The first Renfrewshire Employability week successfully took place from 2nd – 7th September. The Local Employability Partnership supported the delivery of 200 engagements for Renfrewshire pupils from all sectors with a key focus on our most vulnerable young people.

In March 2025, the first cohort of six Career Ready students graduated from the programme at Park Mains High School, marking a significant milestone in Renfrewshire's commitment to developing employability skills in young people. Building on this success, the programme has now been upscaled to include 4 secondary schools, with 27 young people currently participating in the two-year coaching and mentoring programme. Career Ready offers young people the opportunity to work with a dedicated mentor from the world of work, access to a series of skills-focused masterclasses, and a four-week paid internship during the summer holiday period. In July 2025, 12 students successfully completed internships with Renfrewshire Council, gaining valuable workplace experience and confidence.

Feedback from both mentors and participants has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the programme's impact on career readiness and aspiration. Plans are now in place to extend Career Ready to additional secondary schools in session 2025/26, further strengthening pathways to positive post-school destinations.



Young People from Castlehead High School and Renfrew High School are now in year 2 of the DXC Digital Futures Academy. Twelve S3 pupils are working alongside industry experts and gain exposure to cutting edge technologies. The programme includes personal career planning, goal setting, action planning and decision making. Fifty-five girls from across all Renfrewshire secondary schools took part in the Barclays BTech DYW event in February 2025, an opportunity to visit the Barclay's workspace and be inspired to become the next generation of technologists.

225 young people from Renfrewshire secondary schools accessed the Future Paisley Pathways Programme during February and March 2025. The programme was developed to inform young people about both further education routes and professional development opportunities in Renfrewshire's cultural sector. Young people attended taster workshops with experienced professionals in technical theatre, events management, podcasting, tourism and performing arts. They were also given the opportunity to visit the newly refurbished Paisley Arts Centre to see performances from Paisley Opera, Right2Dance and West College Scotland's performing arts students. Each performer talked about their experiences and journey into their creative field. Feedback from young people indicates the programme was successful in increasing awareness of opportunities in local creative industries and pathways available at both University of the West of Scotland (UWS) and West College Scotland (WCS) with a 92% satisfaction rating in the exit survey.

Colleagues at Soft FM have developed a traineeship programme for Renfrewshire school leavers. Six trainees were recruited in December 2024 and are now on a pathway to secure permanent employment with Renfrewshire Council.

Renfrewshire young people were among the first to replace a school day with a work shadowing experience as a Modern Apprentice. Try Something Different - Apprentice for a Day was delivered during Scottish Apprenticeship Week 3rd – 7th March 2025. 12 young people had the opportunity to explore industries that interest them but also to learn about the many benefits of work-based learning from real apprentices. Feedback from young people was very positive 'Being an apprentice today has made me think about my future, it's motivated me now. I've always wanted to be an engineer but I've never had any experience of it, so I wanted to come along today and have a try at it to see if I like it, and I have, so I think I'll be applying soon'.

Seventeen primary schools participated in the WCS school science programme with approximately 753 pupils having the opportunity to participate in STEM workshops delivered by key staff and ambassadors in this curricular area. Pupils had the opportunity to access experiments in fingerprint analysis, lung capacity and rockets.

A Primary Poster Competition 'When I Grow Up' invited all primary age pupils to showcase their dream careers and the steps required to achieve it, winning posters were displayed in Invest Renfrewshire.

Renfrewshire schools continue to demonstrate a strong commitment to environmental sustainability through active participation in national climate action initiatives. Both the Eco-Schools and Climate Action Schools programmes are empowering learners and educators to take meaningful action on climate change, biodiversity loss, litter and pollution—fostering a culture of environmental responsibility across the authority.

Currently, 24 Renfrewshire establishments are engaged in the Eco-Schools programme and have successfully achieved the prestigious Green Flag Award, recognising their sustained efforts in promoting sustainability at a whole-school level.

In addition:

- 149 pupils from 6 classes have taken part in the Climate Ready Classrooms programme, building their knowledge and confidence to act on climate issues.
- 8 teachers have completed Climate Ready Classrooms training, enhancing their capacity to lead climate education in their settings.
- Renfrewshire's Climate Change Champions represented the authority at the Keep Scotland Beautiful Youth Forum Networking Event, contributing to national dialogue and sharing local successes.

Anti-Racist Education

In collaboration with the West of Scotland Development Education Centre (WOSDEC), a comprehensive programme of CLPL was successfully designed and delivered during this session to support leaders at all levels in developing whole-school approaches to anti-racism. This included workshop-based training for senior leaders, facilitated by WOSDEC, which received highly positive feedback. Several Head Teachers have since initiated school-based activities to extend the learning across their staff teams. To support ongoing engagement, WOSDEC's anti-racism resources have now been made available to all educational establishments for future use.

Additionally, the Educational Psychology Service contributed to the development of a self-evaluation toolkit aimed at supporting practitioners in reflecting on their personal values and beliefs in relation to anti-racism. This toolkit is currently being piloted in two primary schools and one secondary school, with a view to informing wider implementation.

Next Steps

- Provide ongoing universal Literacy and Numeracy support across all sectors in line with individual establishment improvement plans through delivery of high quality, evidence-based CLPL.
- Provide bespoke Literacy and Numeracy support to an increasing number of target schools as part of the Targeted Schools Programme (Phase 3) to raise attainment and close the poverty-related attainment gap.
- Deliver the Maths Recovery course and develop a Secondary Maths Learning Festival in partnership with an external provider.
- Establish a network of ELCC Numeracy Champions to share best practice and stay updated with research, developments, and trends. Continue to promote the Primary Numeracy Champions network.
- Provide numeracy family engagement initiatives as part of the transition programmes from ELCC/P1.
- Rollout Maths BURST Spatial Skills Programme from Primary 4 to Primary 7.
- Continue to embed Talk for Writing in schools and early years settings currently using the approach and extend the programme to an increased number of establishments in session 25/26 with the provision of CLPL, resources and support.
- Work in partnership with Talk for Writing to update the 'Planning, Progression & Assessment' overviews to include 3rd level and updated guidance in relation to non-fiction writing.
- Continue to develop the use of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to support learning in early years settings and extend the programme to a greater number of children under 2.
- Provide YLL pupil training in August 2025 for new cohorts supported by the Young Leaders trained in 2024-25.
- Continue to quality assure the YLL process to maximise impact.
- Provide a training programme to support implementation of the Renfrewshire Way.
- Incorporate the work of the Assessment and Moderation working group into the Renfrewshire Way.
- Create a new working group to support with quality assurance and further development of the Renfrewshire Way toolkit.
- Provide authority guidelines and a pack of support materials for assessment.
- Carry out Quality Improvement visits to primary schools and ELC establishments with a focus on assessment and moderation.

- Devise and implement a cross-sector moderation project across 2 clusters with a specific focus on reading.
- Provide a varied programme of CLPL for ELC settings to support effective curriculum delivery and the provision of a high-quality learning environment.
- Promote the health and wellbeing of ELC leaders and staff through a targeted programme of support.
- Launch the Early Years Position Statement to ensure key messages are effectively communicated and embedded across all ELC settings.
- Collaborate with Education Scotland, NHS and Educational Psychology to implement the plan to improve language and communication across Renfrewshire, including in our Early Years establishments.
- Continue the work to develop a new framework for Renfrewshire's children aged 0-3 which will maximise their development and support staff in adopting best practice in planning, assessment, recording and reporting.
- Implement a refreshed DYW Work Placement model across all secondary schools to support an enhanced curriculum offer.
- Promote Foundation Apprenticeships in key employability areas.
- Implement Renfrewshire Future Pathways as the authority employability strategy to deliver 100% positive destinations by 2028.
- Continue to enhance the senior phase curricular offer to include a wide range of opportunities for achievement through the SCQF.
- In partnership with WOSDEC, provide cross sector online anti-racism training for all staff.
- Provide bespoke support and training to a cluster of establishments to support the development of an anti-racist curriculum.

Performance Information

The Data Team provides highly effective analytical and evaluative support to both the central team and school leadership. Throughout the academic year, the team produces timely and insightful data summaries aligned with key milestones. These reports encompass a range of thematic areas, including Senior Phase (initial and leavers' data), Broad General Education (BGE), attendance, exclusions, and comprehensive analyses of large-scale datasets such as Health and Wellbeing surveys. Their work plays a critical role in informing strategic planning, monitoring progress, and supporting evidence-based decision-making across the organisation.

Data is utilised highly effectively to inform the strategic deployment of Scottish Equity Fund (SEF) resources and targeted interventions. Through a robust process of data-informed self-evaluation, specific areas of need were identified, leading to the implementation of tailored interventions. These were supported by centrally deployed expertise from Literacy, Numeracy, and Health and Wellbeing (HWB) Development Officers, ensuring a coordinated and evidence-based approach to closing the attainment gap.

During our Education Scotland local authority inspection in October 2025, our Data Strategy was identified as effective practice worth sharing.

" The local authority has a clear and highly effective 'Data Strategy' that underpins the work of all. The strategy is successful in ensuring that robust data is accessible for practitioners, teachers, school leaders and education officers alike. A data 'dashboard' for each school provides a wealth of data that can be interrogated in different ways. The Data Strategy provides a comprehensive programme of skills development for practitioners, teachers, school leaders and education officers. As a result, the use of data is firmly embedded in the work of all. Decisions, refinement to practice and interventions at school and local authority levels are based on robust data evidence. This is leading to strong educational outcomes for children and young people."

National Thematic Inspection—Local Authority Approaches to supporting school improvement—Summarised Findings—March 2025

Target Schools Programme

Phase 2 of the Target Schools Programme was implemented with the strategic aim of raising attainment and closing the poverty-related attainment gap in literacy and numeracy for children living in SIMD 1 and 2 areas. Target schools within the primary sector were identified through detailed data analysis. The programme involved the deployment of additional staffing in these schools, alongside bespoke support and targeted CLPL opportunities. The primary evaluative measure for the programme was improvement in Curriculum for Excellence attainment. Supplementary data sources included GL assessment results and qualitative feedback gathered through focus groups with Head Teachers, class teachers, and pupils.

Teachers working with targeted pupils had varying levels of pedagogical knowledge. Regular check-ins were implemented to provide tailored, responsive support, enabling more effective professional development and improved classroom practice. This engagement supported both the Development Officer (DO) and individual teachers to understand the specific needs of targeted pupils and supported moderation. Teachers valued the sessions for providing focused time to reflect on and discuss best-practice interventions. Although some staff were initially hesitant, most responded positively to the support and engaged openly with the DO. They also appreciated the opportunities to discuss pupil progress and intervention strategies with their peers. All pupils involved in the programme agreed that they felt more confident after receiving additional support.

Of the 161 targeted pupils remaining in June 2025:

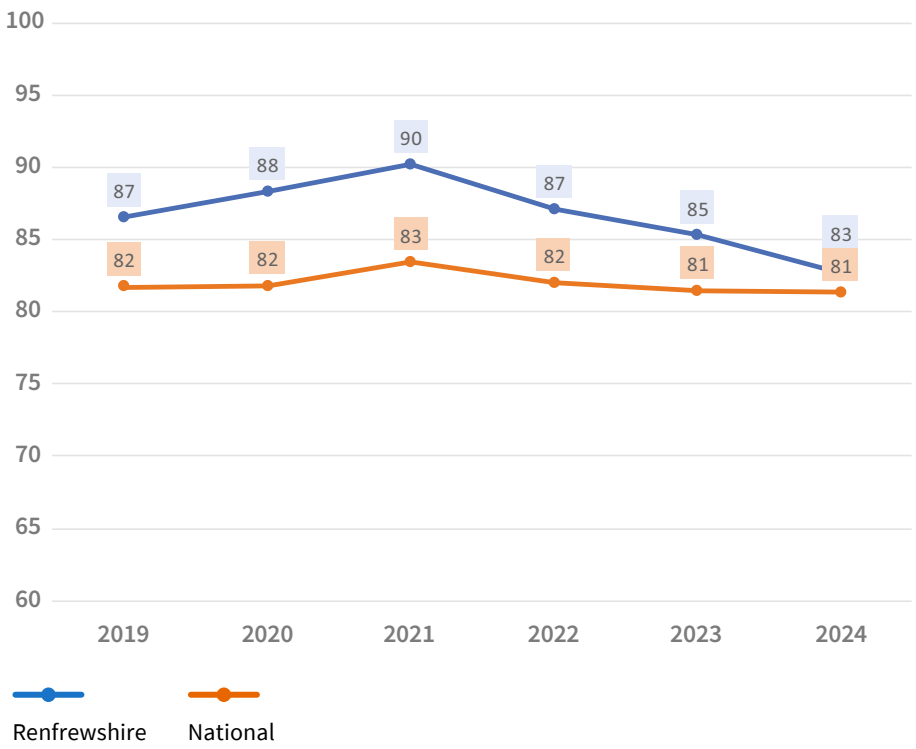
- 93% achieved the expected level in listening & talking
- 75% achieved the expected level in reading
- 60% achieved the expected level in writing
- 76% achieved the expected level in numeracy

Across all curricular areas, the majority of P4 and P7 pupils who achieved the expected level had maintained attainment since the previous year. Further analysis of Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) data indicates clear progression in pupil attainment from Primary 3 to Primary 4 and from Primary 6 to Primary 7. Notable improvements have been observed across all measures, reflecting the positive impact of targeted interventions.

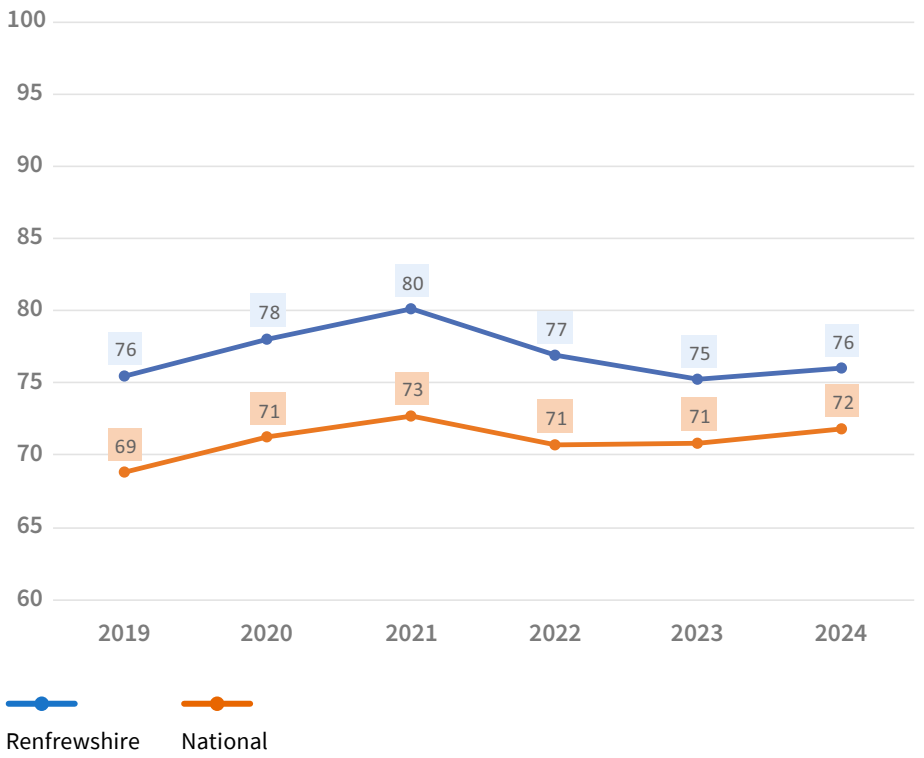
More information on the Target Schools Programme can be found at Appendix D.

Attainment in Literacy & Numeracy—SCQF Level 5

Percentage of Leavers Achieving SCQF 5 Literacy



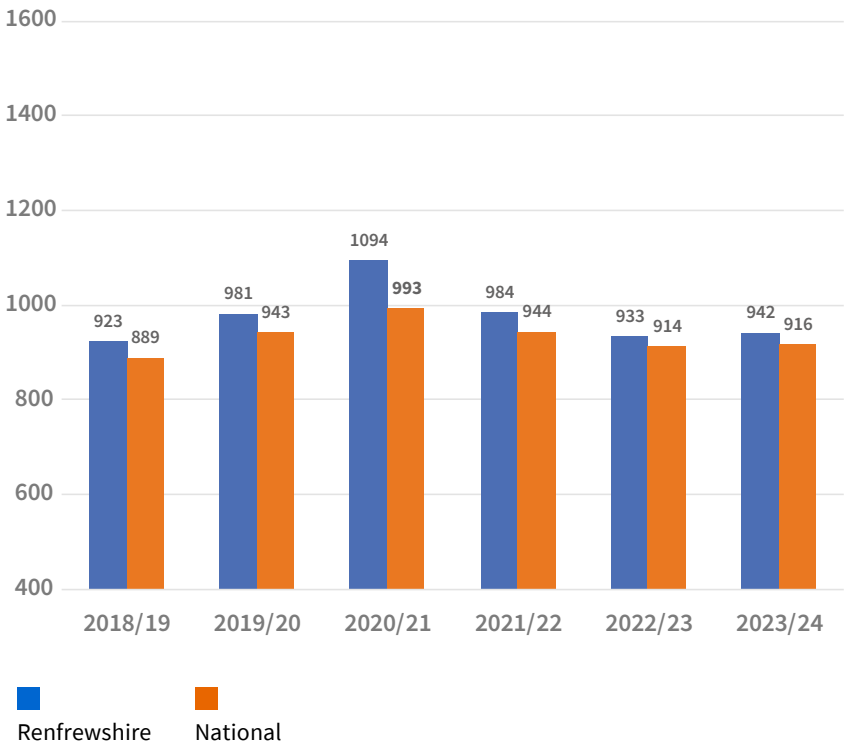
Percentage of Leavers Achieving SCQF 5 Numeracy



Renfrewshire leavers consistently perform above national figures in literacy and numeracy

Average Total Tariff

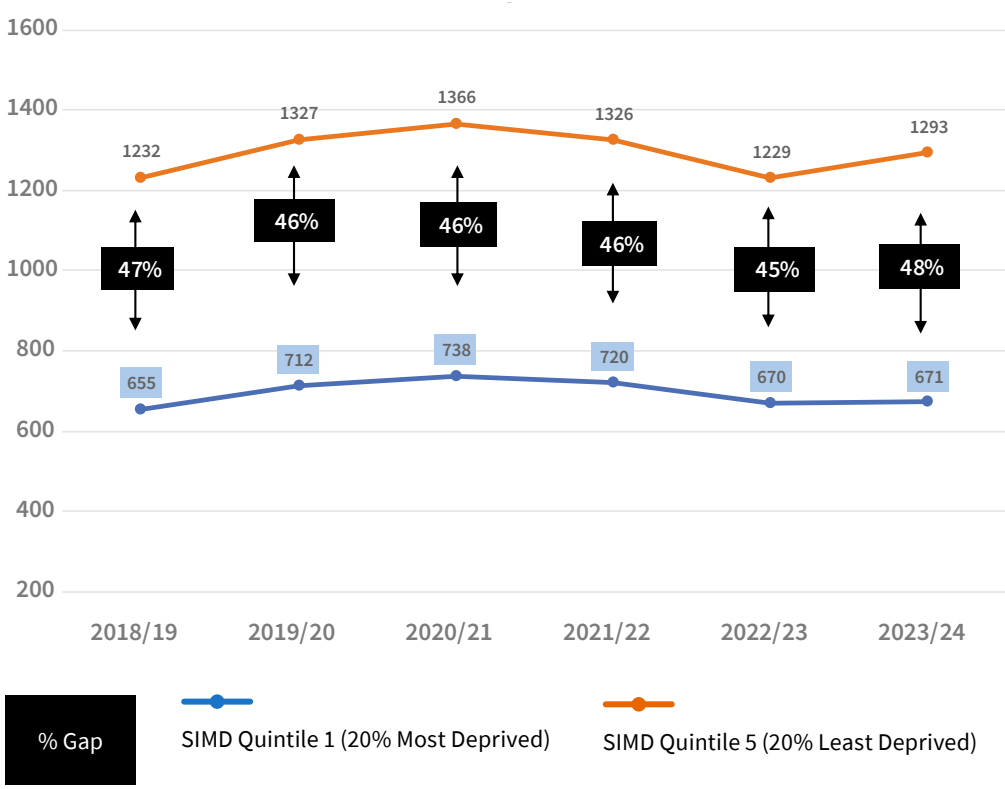
Average Total Tariff Points—All Leavers



The average total tariff measures school leaver's attainment across all subjects and qualifications.

Renfrewshire leavers consistently have a higher average tariff than national, indicating that our pupils achieve more qualifications and at higher grades than their counterparts across the country.

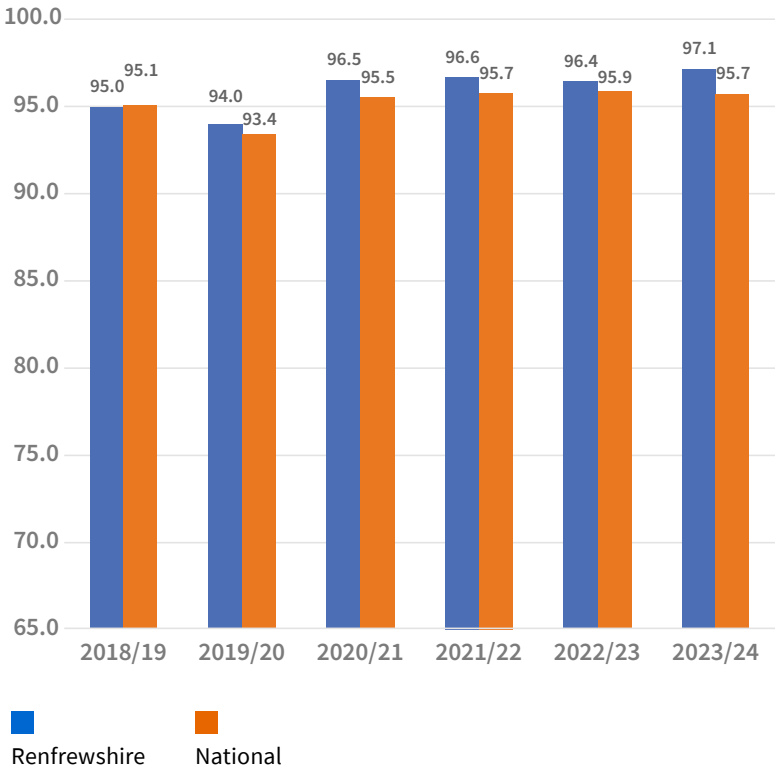
Renfrewshire Leavers—Average Total Tariff by SIMD Quintile



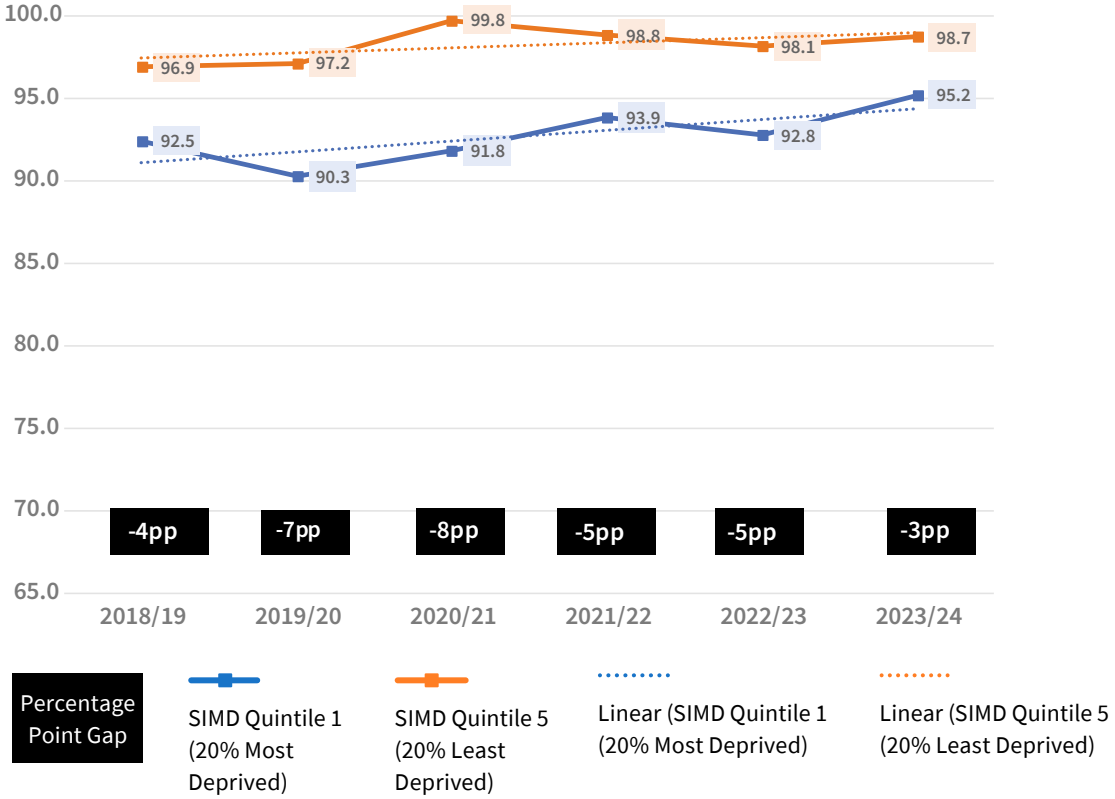
Attainment gaps between pupils living in most and least deprived areas have remained consistent over the previous 6 years. The latest data shows improvement in attainment of those living in SIMD 20% most deprived areas.

School Leaver Destinations

Percentage of School Leavers in Positive Initial Destination



Percentage of Renfrewshire School Leavers in Positive Initial Destination—SIMD Quintile 1 & 5

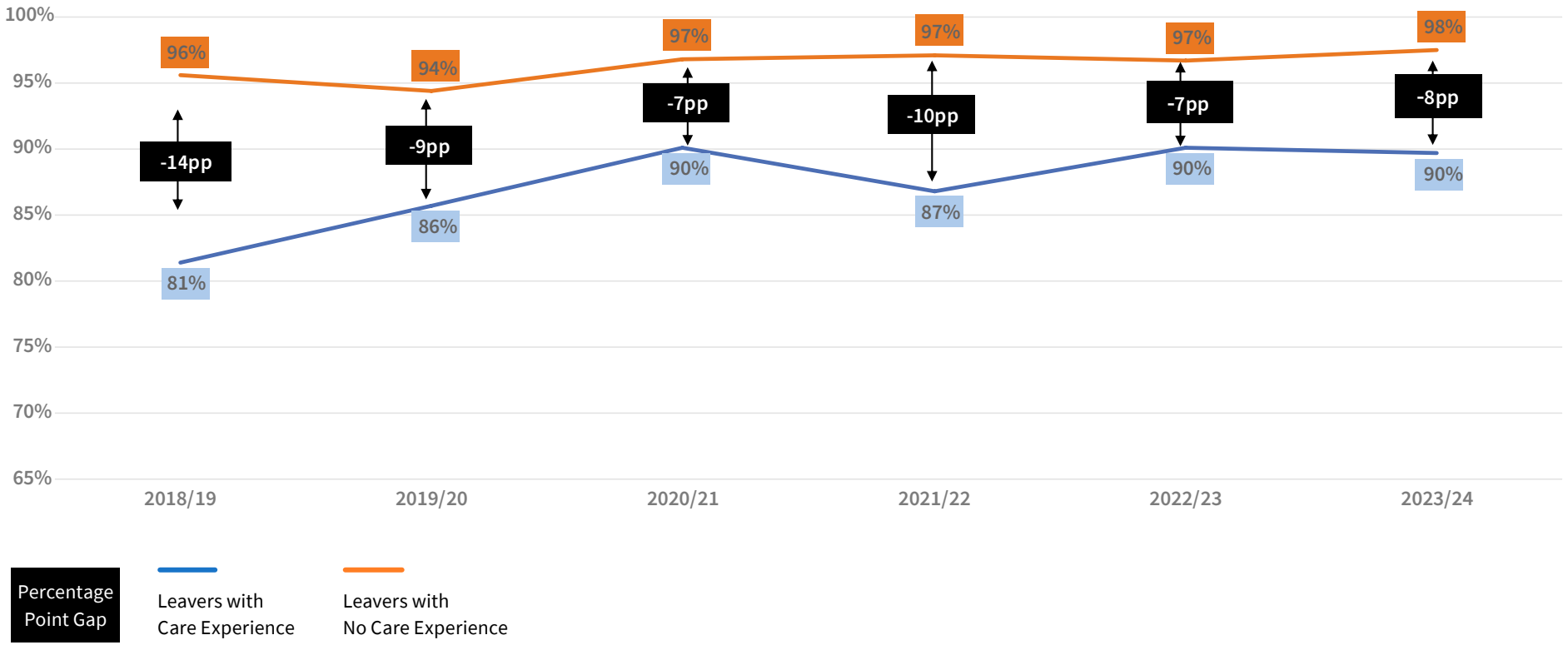


The percentage of Renfrewshire school leavers in a positive initial destination has increased on previous years and remains ahead of national figures.

The gap between leavers from most and least deprived areas has decreased and is now at the lowest point in the previous 6 years.

Destinations by Care Experience

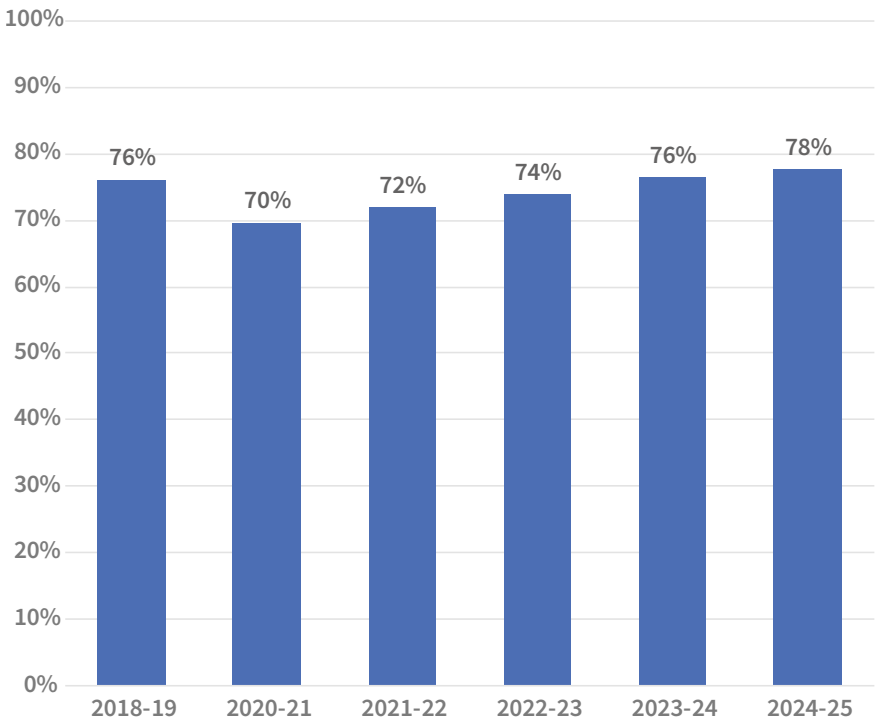
Percentage of Renfrewshire School Leavers in Positive Initial Destination—Care Experience



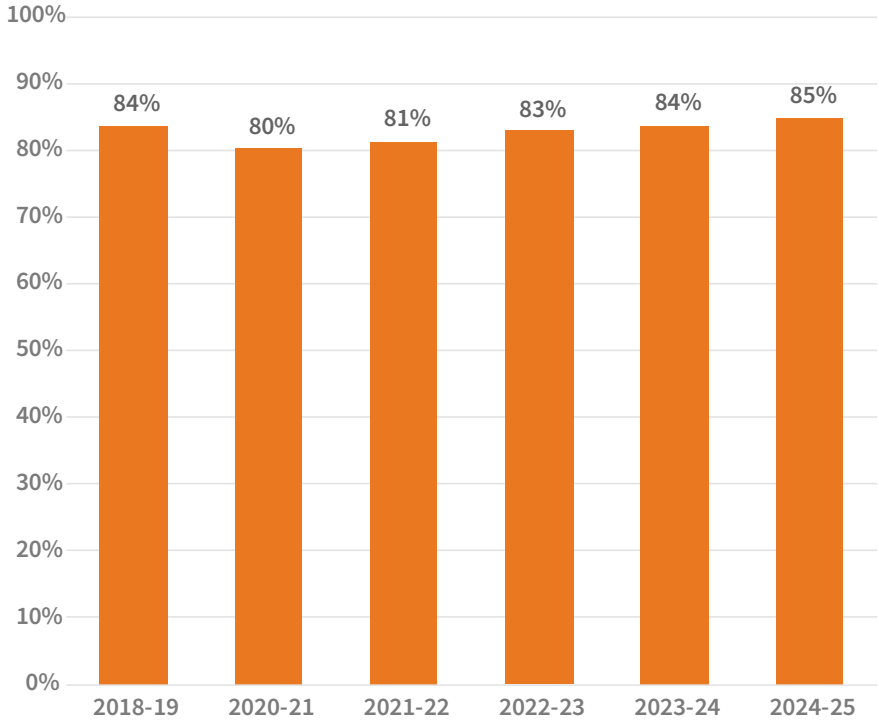
The percentage of care-experienced leavers entering a positive destination has increased over 5 years and the size of the gap is lower than in 2018/19.

Primary Attainment in Literacy & Numeracy

Primary Literacy- Percentage Achieved Expected Level



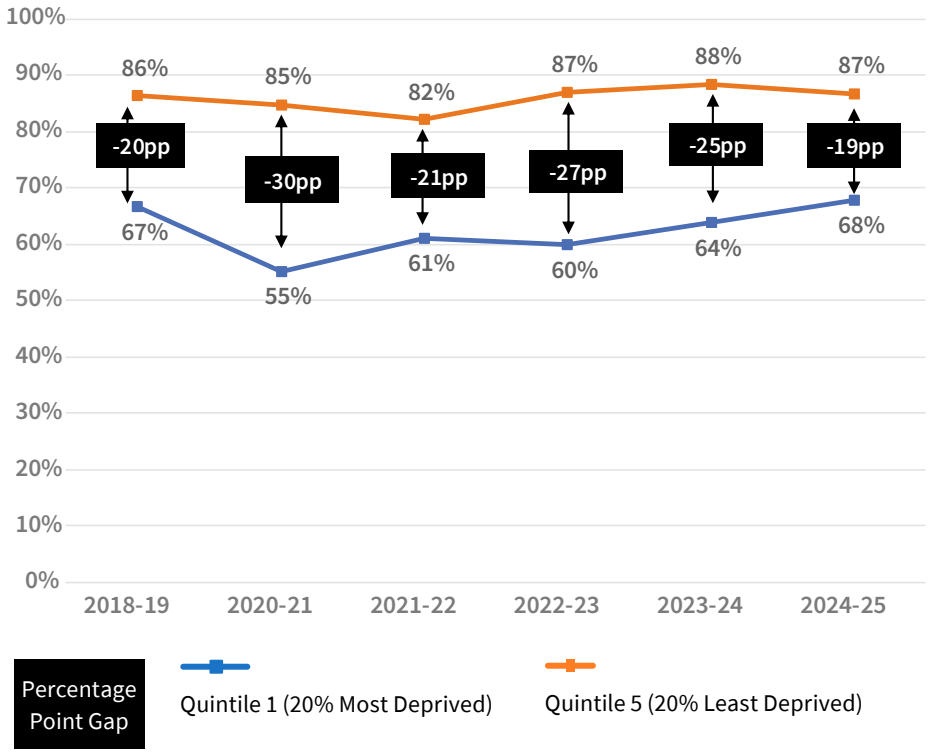
Primary Numeracy- Percentage Achieved Expected Level



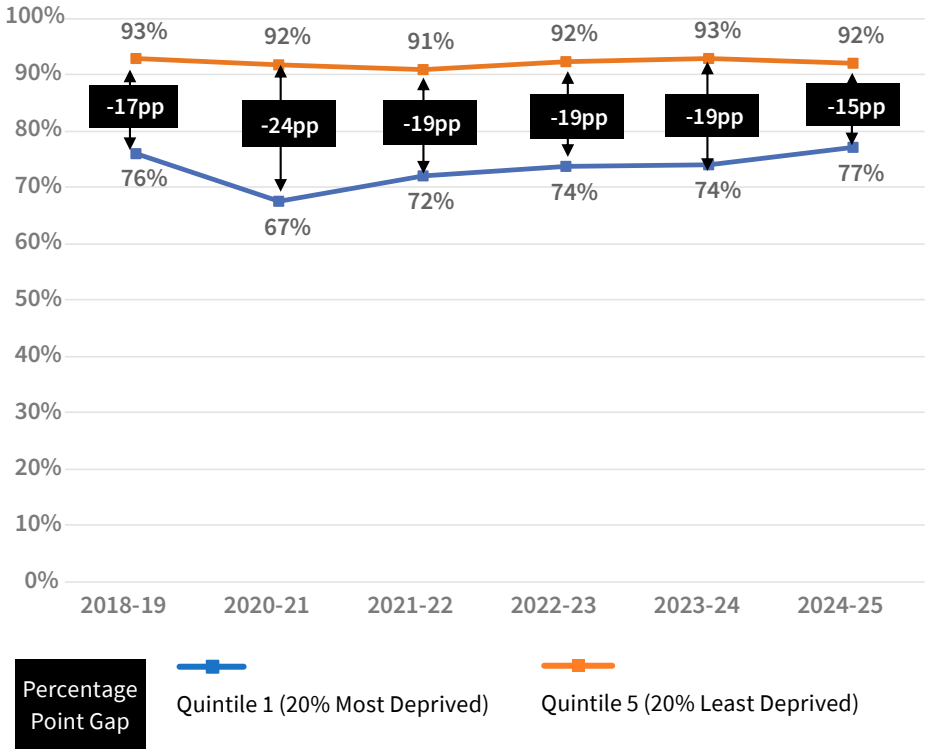
Primary attainment in literacy and numeracy continues to increase and is now beyond pre-pandemic levels.

SIMD Attainment Gaps

Primary Literacy—Percentage Achieved Expected CfE Level by SIMD Quintile



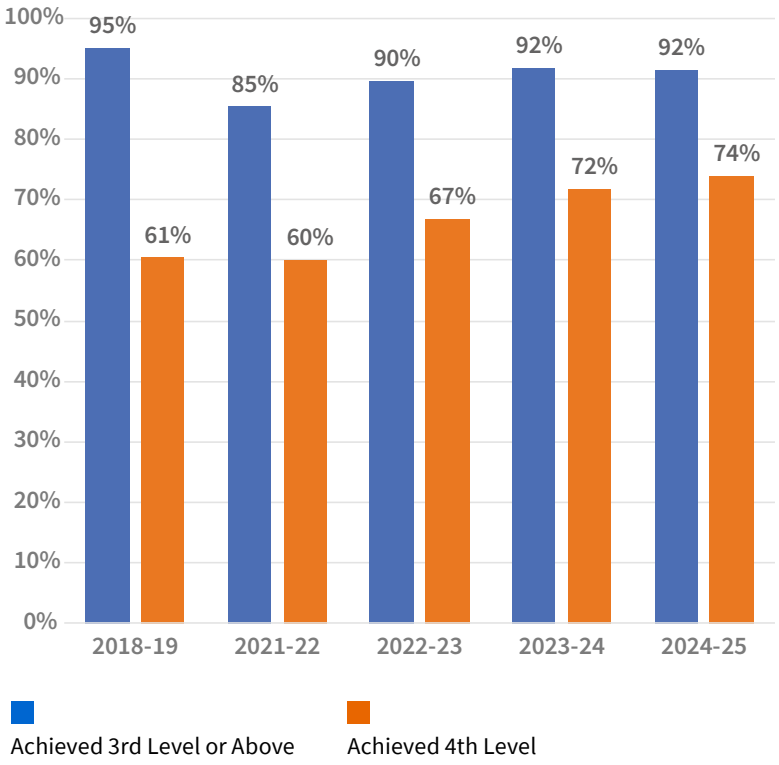
Primary Numeracy—Percentage Achieved Expected CfE Level by SIMD Quintile



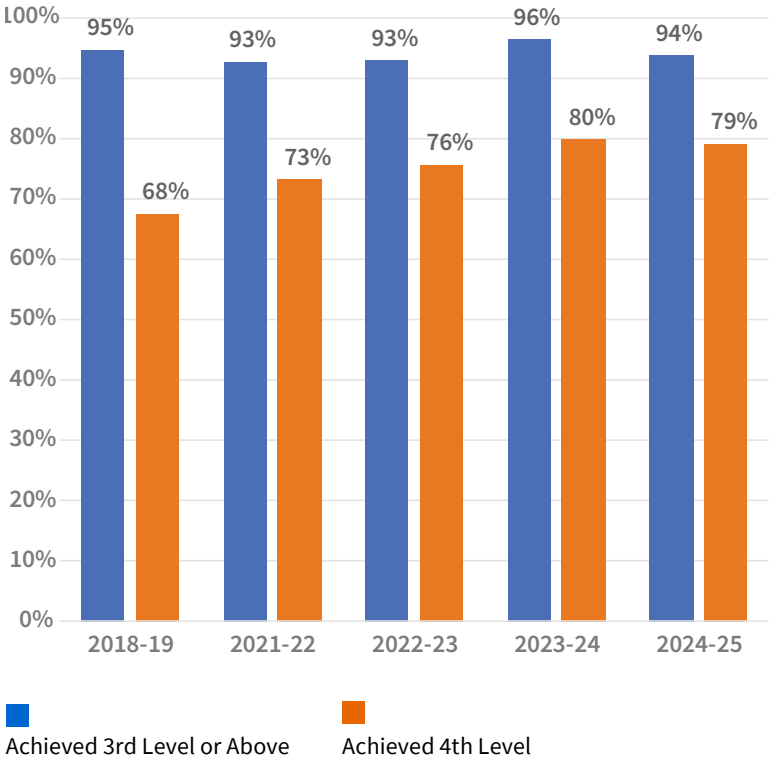
Pupils in most deprived areas were most significantly affected by the pandemic causing gaps to widen. These have now begun to reduce and in both literacy and numeracy are lower than pre-pandemic levels.

S3 Attainment

S3 Literacy Attainment



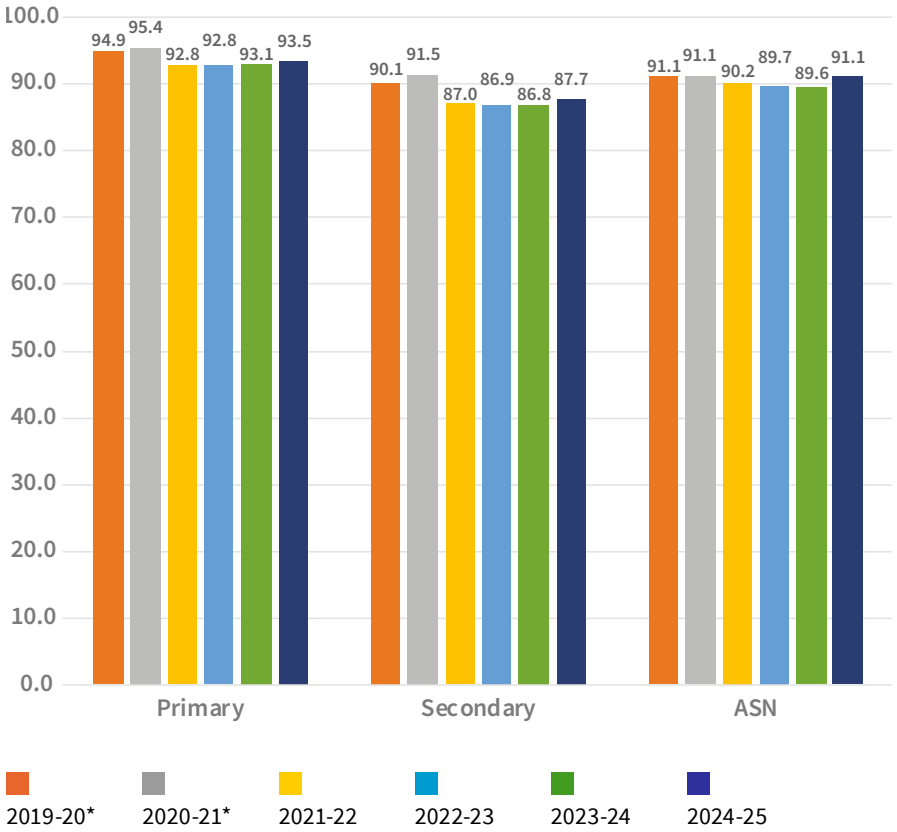
S3 Numeracy Attainment



Attainment in S3 has been on an increasing trend over the previous 4 years. The largest increases have been in attainment at Fourth Level.

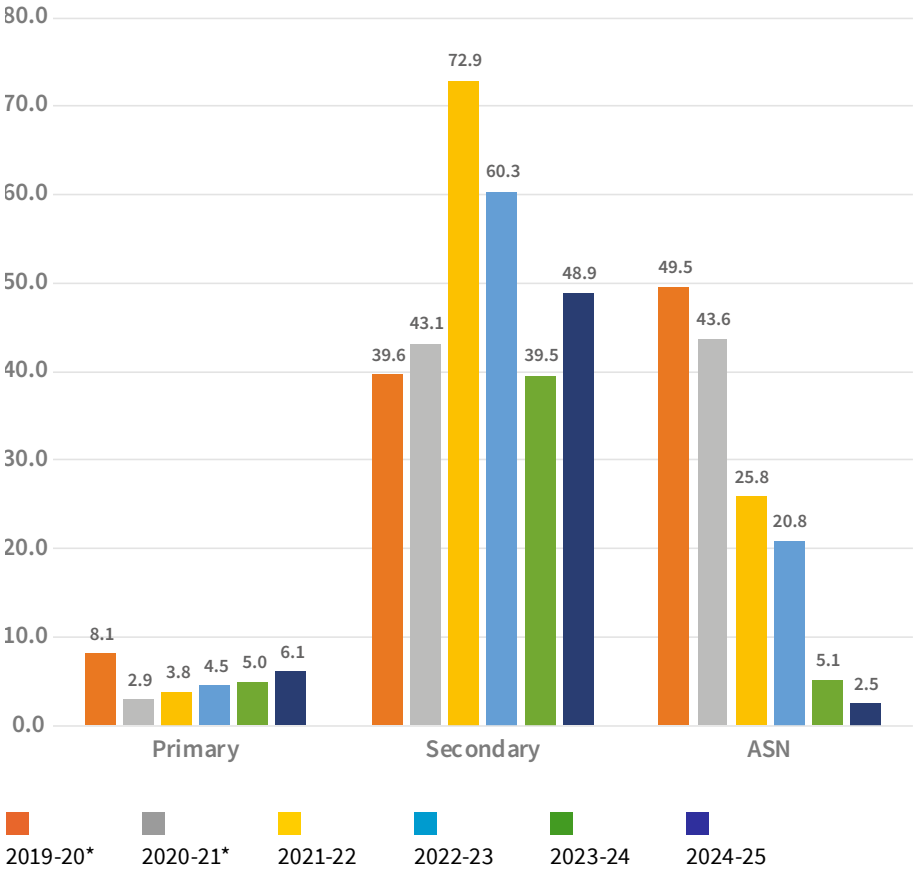
Attainment & Exclusions

Attendance Rates by Sector



Attendance across all sectors has increased on the previous year following a decrease since the pandemic.

Exclusion Rate per 1000 Pupils by Sector



Exclusion rates in secondary are lower than the pandemic peak but remain high. Rates in ASN schools have decreased consistently since 2019-20.

Stretch Aims

The local authority's approach to setting stretch aims is strategically focused on both recovery and acceleration. Initially, the emphasis was placed on restoring attainment levels to those observed prior to the pandemic, followed by a sustained effort to exceed those benchmarks. Schools were guided to set attainment targets aligned with this rationale. These annual school targets are intended to ensure that the approach is pupil-centred and should lead to more effective tracking of progress across the broad general education.

Core plus aims are centred on Writing across the broad general education (BGE). This is a key improvement area for the authority and was selected based on performance at each stage. Evidence-based interventions are being used to support schools with improving Writing. Additional aims are included which focus on attainment of pupils living in SIMD most deprived and least deprived areas. This provides a rich set of data to inform future planning.

Within the Quality Improvement Framework, bi-annual secondary school attainment visits have been renamed as 'Improving outcomes for young people' meetings. This change reflects the focus of the meetings moving beyond a discussion of SQA attainment to include all SCQF awards as well as work around improving outcomes. The revised agenda for these meetings, created in partnership with secondary Head Teachers, includes discussion of the local authority stretch aims and individual schools' performance alongside them.

Stretch Aims—2024/25 Update

Whilst we have not yet met all our targets, attainment has improved across every measure since the baseline year.

Measure	Type	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022 (Baseline)	2022/ 2023	2023/ 2024	2023/ 2024	Target- 2024/ 2025	Difference to Target	Difference to Baseline
% primary pupils achieving expected level in literacy	Core	76%	76%	-	70%	72%	74%	76%	78%	79%	-1.4%	6%
% primary pupils achieving expected level in numeracy	Core	83%	84%	-	80%	81%	83%	84%	85%	87%	-2.1%	4%
% P1 pupils achieving expected level in writing	Core +	83%	83%	-	78%	81%	81%	83%	82%	85%	-2.9%	1%
% P4 pupils achieving expected level in writing	Core +	77%	76%	-	70%	69%	74%	76%	77%	79%	-1.6%	8%
% P7 pupils achieving expected level in writing	Core +	76%	76%	-	70%	73%	74%	77%	79%	78%	0.7%	5%
% 16-19 olds participating in education, employment or training	Core	91.6%	91.7%	92.4%	93.0%	93.3%	92.8%	-	-	95.2%	-	-
% leavers achieving 1 or more pass at SCQF level 5 (All SCQF)	Core	90.0%	91.4%	92.6%	93.4%	91.5%	90.9%	-	-	93.3%	-	-
% leavers achieving 1 or more pass at SCQF level 6 (All SCQF)	Core	69.1%	69.7%	71.4%	77.1%	72.9%	70.5%	-	-	75.0%	-	-

Appendix A

National Thematic Inspection: Local authority approaches to supporting school improvement—Summarised Findings

In October 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Renfrewshire Council. During our visit, we talked to senior leaders, local authority officers, parents/carers, headteachers, teachers, representatives from professional associations and elected members.

Purpose and themes

The purpose of the visit was to gather evidence about how Renfrewshire Council supports school improvement, with a focus on how they support schools to improve the quality of education through:

- the implementation of effective improvement planning and standards and quality reporting
- self- evaluation and quality assurance
- professional learning
- universal and targeted support and challenge

Context of the local authority

Renfrewshire Council is an urban local authority in the west of Scotland. It is the tenth largest council in Scotland in terms of population. Renfrewshire Council covers a relatively small geographical area (261 km^2), including the towns of Paisley, Renfrew, Erskine and Bishopton.

Twenty-six percent of children and young people in primary and secondary schools live within deciles 1-2 of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

Approximately 26% of children in primary schools and 39% of young people in secondary schools have been assessed as requiring additional support with their learning.

The average attendance in 2022/2023 was 90.2%. The national average is 90.2%.

In 2023/2024 in Renfrewshire Council, children and young people are educated across 50 primary schools, 11 secondary schools, two specialist schools and 14 supported learning centres within mainstream schools. One school provides Gàidhlig (Gaelic) Medium Education.

The service leadership structure is the Director of Children's Services; two Heads of Education; a Service Improvement Manager; nine Education Managers; a team of five Development Officers and Education Officers. The Director was appointed in December 2023. One Head of Education was appointed in July 2024. The second Head of Education is in an acting post, and a permanent Head of Education is due to take up post in November 2024.

Appendix A

Theme 1

How do local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through implementing effective improvement planning and standards and quality reporting?

- How clear and effective is the local authority's arrangements and advice to schools on self-evaluation, improvement planning and standards and quality reporting?
- How does the local authority ensure that schools' self-evaluation is accurate, rigorous and robust, based on reliable and comprehensive data and information?
- In what ways does the local authority promote collaboration with all stakeholders, especially learners, as essential to effective self-evaluation and identification of priorities?
- What is the role of central teams in providing critical feedback to school leaders on the quality/robustness of their self-evaluation and school improvement planning processes?
- To what extent does the local authority use the data from individual school or cluster improvement plans and standards and quality reports, to direct their officers' work?

Renfrewshire Council sets out its embedded and highly effective approaches to school improvement in the Quality Improvement Framework (QIF). As part of the QIF, council officers provide comprehensive guidance that supports headteachers to improve the quality of education through robust school improvement planning (SIP) and standards and quality reporting (SQR). The guidance provides school leaders with clear expectations and a useful structure for creating these plans and reports. Headteachers appreciate the degree of flexibility to reflect their school community and context within the format of standards and quality reports. For example, a few headteachers use an interactive, digital format for standards and quality reporting. They use a multimedia approach to illustrate their school's improvement journey and outcomes in a dynamic and user-friendly way.

The Education Scotland Attainment Advisor provides bespoke advice and support for individual schools on the quality of their annual Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) plans. This helps to ensure that the targets that school leaders set are specific and measurable.

Each school cluster has a link Education Manager who works directly with the schools within that area. This enables Education Managers to develop strong relationships with individual schools. Education Managers provide headteachers with evaluative written feedback on draft school improvement plans and standards and quality reports. Education Managers and Heads of Education moderate the quality of this feedback to ensure there is consistency in approach. As a result, school leaders feel that there is a sense of equity, as well as rigour, across the authority.

Local authority Development Officers for numeracy, literacy, health and wellbeing, and the Digital Learning Manager, contribute to school improvement planning processes. They provide written guidance on aspects of their specialism. Where required, they also provide in-person support for identified schools. They use coaching and modelling approaches to help staff to plan in detail how they will raise attainment, and how they will measure success. This is building the confidence of school leaders and teachers and leading to better planning for improvement in these schools.

As part of the local authority's target to build on inclusive approaches, parents of children with additional support needs (ASN) are invited to volunteer as Parent Ambassadors. These parents play a key role in advising education managers on the creation or review of local authority policy and practices in relation to inclusion and ASN. They meet four times per year to discuss emerging issues and to consider local authority initiatives. A recent example of this consultation and collaboration is the development of the local authority's policy for transitions.

Parent Ambassadors feel that they have a genuine voice in representing the families of children with ASN, and the bespoke arrangements and approaches that are required.

The local authority's guidance is clear that headteachers are expected to collaborate with and involve parents and learners as part of their approaches to self-evaluation and school improvement planning. Parents who met with HM Inspectors felt they had a good understanding of the priorities for improvement in their child's school. They receive regular updates from headteachers at Parent Council meetings, and more widely through school newsletters. Parents were less aware of the local authority's priorities for improvement. During COVID 19, Parent Council forum meetings were held online. Authority-wide Parent Council forum meetings have recently been re-instated, and the Director plans to build on this approach. Parents appreciate workshops and information sessions that are organised by schools. They suggested that more sessions on topics such as mental health and wellbeing and coping with children's anxiety would be beneficial.

In the 2024/2025 education plan, the local authority outlines a clear commitment to continue to roll-out and embed the national 'Young Leaders of Learning' programme. This has the potential to increase the voice of learners in authority-wide improvements, such as in the creation of the new Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.

Local authority officers collate information from individual school improvement plans and standards and quality reports to identify common areas of good practice, priority and need. They use this information very effectively to direct strategic decisions about local authority priorities, requirements for professional learning, advice or more targeted support for schools. This is helping local authority officers to maintain existing high standards, and to secure further improvement in the quality of school education for children and young people in Renfrewshire.

Appendix A

Theme 2

How do local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through self-evaluation and quality assurance?

- What methods does the local authority use to evaluate school performance (review the quality of education) for example, gathering evidence from stakeholders, review/ validated self-evaluation visits, attainment analysis)? How effective are these methods? How often does this take place?
- To what extent do officers carry out regular and rigorous evaluation of the quality of school provision? How is this work quality assured?
- How does the local authority evaluate the quality of learning, teaching and assessment?
- How clear and effective is the advice and support for schools on approaches to self-evaluation and their quality assurance? How effectively does the local authority moderate this at strategic and school levels?
- How does the local authority identify and share effective practice through quality assurance? Is this making a difference across the authority?

The local authority has a range of effective strategies to evaluate school performance. Education Managers co-design these strategies with headteachers and other stakeholders. Collaboration is a strong feature of the local authority's approaches to self-evaluation for self-improvement. This is ensuring staff have confidence that they are playing a full part in the local authority's aspirations and delivery of improved outcomes for all learners.

The local authority's advice and support for schools on approaches to self-evaluation and quality assurance is very clear and highly effective. Managers have produced a suite of documents to provide templates, guidance and helpful exemplars to support self-evaluation. Overall, headteachers indicate that the approaches and documents are streamlined, coherent and support high quality self-evaluation using robust evidence and triangulation. The Education Scotland Attainment Advisor has supported headteachers to measure impact more accurately and develop evaluative writing through self-evaluation for continuous improvement sessions.

There is strength across the authority in individual headteachers' capacity, confidence and experience to lead self-evaluation effectively and accurately. This is reflected in the concordance of individual school's self-evaluation and evaluative gradings from HM Inspectors in school inspections over recent years.

All headteachers engage in regular, high-quality dialogue about attainment with Heads of Education, Education Managers and peer headteachers. They welcome the level of challenge and interrogation they receive.

Senior leaders have developed a strong culture of data literacy at all levels of the education system. Education Managers, headteachers and, increasingly, class teachers are skilled in their understanding and use of data. The Management Information Officer provides a comprehensive data dashboard for all schools. The Attainment Advisor supports staff very effectively to use data for improvement. This has successfully developed headteachers' confidence and capability to measure and evidence improvements in outcomes for learners. In turn, this has been developed well across schools to support teachers' use of data to plan and evaluate improvements and outcomes for children and young people. As a result, staff analysis and use of data across the local authority is strong, as is the overall reliability and validity of attainment data. This strong focus on data, and its clear use to inform improvement, has led to sustained, positive improvement trends in attainment across the broad general education and senior phase.

Education Managers undertake a programme of school reviews each year to evaluate the quality and consistency of learning and teaching across the local authority. Headteachers and school staff welcome opportunities to participate in these collaborative review visits to other schools. School leaders find the school review model very helpful in supporting their ongoing improvement agenda. They acknowledge the strong collaborative working approaches to improve outcomes for all children and young people across Renfrewshire. Through these engagement visits, headteachers receive very helpful support and rigorous challenge, which improves and strengthens their self-evaluation and quality assurance processes.

School leaders have a strategic approach to support focused evaluation to inform continuous improvement which includes capturing the views of stakeholders. This includes, importantly, learners voice through pupil focus groups, parents' views through parent forum meetings and teachers' professional associations. Overall, the local authority is proactive and responsive in its approach to securing improvement. This is driven by high quality and reliable data and intelligence about school performance.

Education Managers and other central staff engage with schools very positively. Headteachers report there is consistency in the approach taken by members of the central team. Teachers' professional association representatives who met with inspectors report positive and open relationships with senior education officers, who they feel are responsive to feedback.

There is a strong culture of trust and openness among central staff and headteachers. Education Managers work together to moderate the quality of feedback they provide to schools on their SIP and SQR. In addition, they liaise with each other and engage in peer visits to moderate their work in schools. Peer headteachers accompany Heads of Education and Education Managers to all attainment visits, school reviews and learning observations. This helps to moderate and strengthen capacity for improvement by sharing agreed standards across schools and the wider local authority.

Appendix A

Headteachers engage in rigorous self-evaluation with Education Managers around PEF plans, interventions and impact. The Attainment Advisor also supports this work very well. Staff in schools and clusters are working more closely together to use PEF resources more collaboratively. This approach is helping to maximise the impact of interventions and help to plan for sustainability of approaches.

The local authority has many networks where school staff can share, and hear about, effective practice and the impact on children and young people. Headteacher meetings are held four times throughout the year. Central staff use their well-informed knowledge of individual schools to identify headteachers to present emerging or effective practice with their peers. Headteachers value these opportunities to hear about the implementation and impact of new initiatives and effective and embedded practice. Headteachers work across locality clusters and quartile groups of schools with similar contexts and profiles of deprivation.

These networks provide further opportunities to share more specific approaches to school improvement and learn about effective practice from peers. This is encouraging cross-cluster collaboration and is strengthening subject networks very well across the secondary sector.

Theme 3

How do local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through professional learning?

- What professional learning does the local authority currently provide to support school improvement?
- What is the impact of this on developing the skills and knowledge of school leaders and staff on school improvement?
- What support systems (e.g., mentoring, networks of practice, peer support groups, cluster support) are available for school leaders and staff? How are these approaches improving school performance and outcomes for learners?
- To what extent do senior leaders have opportunities to support improvement beyond their own establishment? What difference is this making?
- How effectively does the local authority utilise Associate Assessors (if applicable) to support school improvement across establishments.
- Does the local authority's professional learning strategy draw on support from national organisations?

The local authority's provision of professional learning for staff at all levels is embedded within the QIF. In Renfrewshire, the professional learning offer is highly effective and is enhancing the quality of education in schools. Development officers play a key role in designing and delivering a broad range of learning opportunities, which contribute significantly to improved educational outcomes. Managers and headteachers state that the support from Education Managers and the Attainment Advisor has been particularly valuable in addressing poverty-related attainment gaps, through universal and tailored professional learning.

Overall, education staff are very well supported and strongly encouraged to engage in career-long professional development, promoting continual improvement in practice.

The professional learning offer provided by the local authority is both proactive and responsive to the needs of staff. It is tailored to meet universal, targeted and bespoke needs of schools, identified through rigorous data analysis. Professional learning is aligned closely to the local authority's improvement priorities. There are examples of bespoke professional learning for literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and inclusion that have resulted in improved outcomes in various schools.

As part of the local authority's Data Strategy, specific training is offered for staff at all levels on using data to drive improvement. This training has focused on skills development to build confidence in staff with the interpretation and evaluation of data. This has been developed and embedded over several years, beginning with leaders, and now for class teachers and support staff.

Appendix A

The local authority is currently developing a professional learning offer to align with the development of the new Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy.

This professional learning offer is being planned by a short-life working group of staff from schools and central officers.

Senior leaders have benefitted from a worthwhile programme of professional learning focussing on self-evaluation for continuous improvement. This was delivered in collaboration with Education Scotland staff and HM Inspectors. All senior leaders evaluated this positively in terms of impact on improvements within school improvement planning.

An online directory of professional learning for staff at every level, including support staff, is shared annually and updated throughout the session. Education Managers and Development Officers know their schools very well and deliver bespoke professional learning that is relevant to individual schools' identified areas for improvement. In addition to this, staff identify their own areas for development through the Professional Review and Development process at school level. This approach ensures that school leaders and staff are developing the appropriate skills and knowledge for self-evaluation and driving improvement within their schools.

Engagement and feedback from staff on professional learning is tracked and evaluated centrally by Education Managers and Development Officers. Schools who have received targeted support are revisited by officers to evaluate impact in more depth. The well-planned offer of professional learning, that is shared annually with all staff, is informed by feedback from the previous year. This allows staff to access professional learning which directly supports their school improvement priorities and individual professional learning needs. This wide range of impactful professional learning is improving the quality of experiences for children and young people and enhancing the capacity of all staff to lead and promote continuous improvement.

Development officers work directly in schools with senior leadership teams and school champions for literacy, numeracy, digital learning, Developing the Young Workforce, and health and wellbeing. Within secondary schools, subject forums support staff within curricular areas. Staff involved in these networks are effectively supported by local authority officers through high-quality professional learning which is building capacity for improvement within school teams. The regular network meetings create valuable opportunities for collaboration, knowledge and skills development, as well as the sharing of best practice. This nurtures a culture of continuous improvement.

A "train the trainer" model is actively supporting professional learning within schools and across clusters. This promotes an ethos of strong collaboration and is helping to build capacity for leading improvement at authority level beyond the central team. Development officers provide practical support to class teachers through coaching and modelling of practice. This is a very successful way to deliver targeted support. The local authority is now developing the role of 'modelling and coaching' officers within school staff teams in a more consistent and universal way. This has the potential to further drive improvements at classroom level. This approach also supports the local authority's aim to embed a practitioner inquiry into professional learning.

Headteachers attend regular meetings where central officers provide input on local and national education priorities. They benefit from the peer support opportunities that are a key feature of the QIF. Additionally, middle leaders benefit from a variety of well-structured aspiring programmes, which are facilitated by experienced senior leaders from both schools and the central team. The range of aspiring leadership programmes, from principal teacher to headteacher, are very successful in encouraging participants to apply for promoted posts and to undertake the 'Into Headship' qualification. This is building leadership capacity within the council's own workforce.

A tailored professional learning programme for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) offers core and optional elements to support professional development. Led by an Education Manager and Development Officer, it aligns with the Standard for Full Registration, ensuring it is relevance and robust. This programme is responsive to the needs of schools through engagement with senior leaders and annual evaluations from NQTs themselves. Additionally, the local authority's collaboration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland on a pilot programme for Early Career Teachers reflects a proactive approach to supporting new staff, promoting an environment where they feel valued, heard, and equipped to deliver high-quality education to children and young people. This comprehensive support system demonstrates a strong commitment to professional learning.

The local authority draws on the skills and experience of the senior leaders within schools to support professional learning. This happens within clusters, quartiles and wider within the West Partnership. Professional learning programmes that were delivered through collaboration with the West Partnership, 'Improving our School' and 'Improving our Classroom' were spoken very highly of by staff who had participated within the programmes. Guidance and support from Associate Assessors from within the local authority supports wider moderation and a shared understanding of national standards. Collaboration with external organisations within healthcare and further/higher education further enhances the comprehensive professional learning package provided by the local authority.

Appendix A

Theme 4

How do local authorities deliver universal support and challenge for all schools, and/or targeted support for specific schools to improve the quality of education?

- What is the universal offer of support and challenge for all schools?
- How does the local authority use the data from individual school or cluster improvement plans and standards and quality reports, to provide targeted support?
- What measures are used to identify the need for targeted support?
- Is there targeted support for specific schools? What might that look like? (examples?) What action is taken if a review of a school concludes that a school is not performing satisfactorily and requires targeted support?
- What support systems (for example: mentoring, networks of practice, peer support groups) are available for school leaders and staff?
- What is the role of central staff in facilitating/contributing to collaborative approaches, which improve school performance and outcomes for learners?

Renfrewshire Council's QIF sets out clearly the local authority's approach to supporting schools, including arrangements for universal and targeted support. Its highly effective programme for universal and targeted support for schools is embedded and understood well across the system. Over the last three years, managers have reviewed and further refined the established systems and approaches to support and challenge to ensure they are further responsive to need.

The local authority offers three levels of support and challenge to schools: universal, bespoke and targeted. The universal level applies to all schools and comprises pastoral support, scrutiny of improvement plans and self-evaluation returns, analysis of attainment/achievement data, school reviews and a comprehensive professional learning offer. The bespoke offer is a nuanced and responsive approach to support and challenge, in addition to the universal offer. It provides headteachers with autonomy to request support on particular aspects of provision to meet the needs of the school. The targeted programme is an intensive improvement model for schools that require additional help to secure improvement in attainment. Schools on this programme are identified through quality reports; attainment data being lower than anticipated; local contextual information; or following external inspections. Renfrewshire Council have very few schools that require this level of support.

Managers have recently revised the format of headteacher meetings as part of the universal offer to all schools. These termly meetings

include school leaders from all sectors. Managers have considered the purpose of these meeting in collaboration with headteachers. There is now a strong emphasis on strategic improvement and supporting collaboration among headteachers to support and challenge each other. This is helping to build capacity for improvement very well across the education service. Headteacher meetings also provide a valuable opportunity for officers and headteachers to share effective practice. Headteachers find this opportunity to learn from each other particularly beneficial to inform and influence change and improvement. In addition, there are sectoral headteacher meetings and cluster meetings planned throughout the year. Education Managers facilitate and support these meetings well.

The local authority uses a wide range of high-quality data and information to monitor the performance of schools. This includes, for example, attainment, attendance and exclusions data and outcomes of, or proximity to, national inspection activity. Education Managers also gather a range of information relating to schools' improvement planning and evaluation by reviewing school documentation and through a blend of planned and responsive visits to schools. They collate this information into a data dashboard of all schools. They update this regularly and use this information to plan their engagement with and monitor the progress of individual schools. As a result, the local authority has a broad and reliable range of information about the performance of schools and identify which schools are included in the targeted support programme. The data dashboard helpfully informs the work of officers. It also supports officers to have rigorous and robust discussions with headteachers about outcomes for children and young people.

Managers identify the level of support required by schools using the data dashboard and intelligence collected by engaging regularly with the system. Headteachers provide evaluations of performance to managers, using triangulation of evidence to justify their identified priorities for improvement. Headteachers feel that the quality of support for schools is strong. Local authority managers and officers know their schools very well and provide well-considered and responsive levels challenge and support.

Schools in the targeted programme are not on track in two or more ACEL measures across P1, P4 or P7, because of the proportion of children in SIMD 1 and 2 and school rolls. Where a school requires targeted support due to concerns around performance or outcomes, local authority managers and officers implement a range of different actions. This is responsive and proportionate to individual need and can include, for example, temporary additional staffing, coaching for senior leaders, and increased frequency of education manager engagement with schools. Schools requiring targeted support are required to have an action plan with baseline measures which is monitored regularly. These targeted actions have led to specific improvements in areas such as attainment in literacy and numeracy and leadership capacity.

The local authority also provides individual schools with a bespoke programme of support. Education Managers and headteachers draw on a skilled and knowledgeable team of development officers, modelling and coaching officers and peer headteachers to provide specific support. Such examples of support can include modelling and coaching, working directly with pupils, supporting teachers to develop resources and materials and delivering professional learning. This bespoke approach is effective in bringing about improvements

in school performance in specific ways, which are responsive to individual school needs. Headteachers value this approach and speak highly of the impact colleagues with specific remits have. For example, primary headteachers identify the role played by development officers in writing and numeracy. This is leading to improved attainment for specific groups of children.

Headteachers benefit from networks of support at local authority, cluster, and school levels. Local authority officers work together very effectively to promote a culture of ongoing improvement in the quality of education. Officers are linked to key groups and networks to provide universal support and challenge to schools. All newly appointed headteachers are given a mentor to support them in their understanding of operational deliverance and strategic school improvement. Headteachers speak highly of this approach and the high-quality coaching conversations on which the mentoring is based.

5. Any other relevant information

Elected members who met with HM Inspectors felt that they had positive relationships with the Director and senior officers and had confidence in their leadership of education provision in Renfrewshire. They identified that education staff's use of data to inform improvement, and the comprehensive professional

learning offer as key strengths. They feel they are supported well by senior officers. They receive comprehensive briefings and reports in advance of committee meetings. These tend to focus on schools that have been recently inspected. A few elected members suggested that they would like more frequent updates on how well all individual schools were performing, in addition to inspection information. They suggest this could be achieved by way of briefing papers or having a few schools as a 'spotlight' feature during committee meetings. This is worthy of consideration by senior education officers.

6. Effective practice worth sharing

- The local authority has a clear and highly effective 'Data Strategy' that underpins the work of all. The strategy is successful in ensuring that robust data is accessible for practitioners, teachers, school leaders and education officers alike. A data 'dashboard' for each school provides a wealth of data that can be interrogated in different ways. The Data Strategy provides a comprehensive programme of skills development for practitioners, teachers, school leaders and education officers. As a result, the use of data is firmly embedded in the work of all. Decisions, refinement to practice and interventions at school and local authority levels are based on robust data evidence. This is leading to strong educational outcomes for children and young people.

- As part of the local authority's target to build on inclusive approaches, parents of children with additional support needs (ASN) are invited to volunteer as Parent Ambassadors. These parents play a key role in advising education officers on the creation or review of local authority policy and practices in relation to inclusion and ASN. They meet four times per year to discuss emerging issues and to consider local authority initiatives. A recent example of this consultation and collaboration is the development of the local authority's policy for transitions. Parent Ambassadors feel that they have a genuine voice in representing the families of children with ASN, and the bespoke arrangements and approaches that are required.

Appendix B

Case Study: “Don’t judge me by the cover, ‘cause I’m a real good book.”, Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library in Renfrewshire

Programme Overview

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library (DPIL) is a universal book gifting programme that aims to foster a love of reading in children by providing them with high-quality, age-appropriate books through the post each month. In March 2021, Renfrewshire Council became the first local authority in Scotland to offer the programme universally to all children aged 2–5, extending an initiative which had already been in place for care-experienced children since 2011. Books are selected by a panel of literacy experts and delivered directly to each child, addressed in their own name. which an approach that makes the experience of reading feel personal, special, and consistent.

The rationale for investing in DPIL is rooted in the strong body of evidence linking early reading to improved language development, emotional wellbeing, and long-term educational attainment. Local implementation of the programme is not simply about distributing books, it is integrated into early years pedagogy, community events, and intergenerational learning activities, and has become a valued part of Renfrewshire’s literacy and equity offer.

What Has Been Done

Since 2020, Renfrewshire has scaled DPIL into a core part of its early years and family learning offer. The programme operates through a network of over 100 ambassadors across council, partnership, and private nurseries, who champion its benefits and embed books into everyday practice. Children hear the books read aloud in nurseries, enabling even those who are not read to at home to engage with them.

Staff use DPIL books as contexts for learning, supporting early literacy through “stay and play” sessions, outdoor reading events, and family engagement activities. The programme has also expanded to include senior secondary pupils who volunteer as ‘reading role models’ in nurseries, and some intergenerational events where older adults read to young children (and vice versa!) in social care settings. Registration has been promoted through libraries, health visitors, and community partners, with particular focus on ensuring equitable access regardless of socio-economic background.

Appendix B

Impact

To date, over 162,000 books have been gifted to children in Renfrewshire. As of early 2025, 3,300 children are currently registered - representing 64% of the eligible 2–5 population. Parents, carers, and educators consistently report wide-ranging benefits:

- 96% of parents say they read more often with their child as a result of receiving the books
- 83% report that their child is more excited about books and reading
- 71% feel the programme is helping prepare their child for school
- 99% say their child is reading a wider variety of books
- 100% of surveyed early years settings read the monthly book aloud and use it to support wider learning
- 95% of settings say the programme has increased interest in reading for pleasure

Beyond these figures, parents speak powerfully about the emotional impact including the excitement of receiving post in a child's name, the value of shared routines at bedtime, and the confidence DPIL has given them to engage in reading, even among those who themselves had previously struggled with literacy.

Next Steps

DPIL in Renfrewshire is now a core part of the Children's Services offer, with funding secured and integration embedded across early years

The Council will continue to monitor and evaluate the programme's impact, strengthen outreach to under-represented groups (such as families of two-year-olds not yet accessing services), and promote universal equity in early literacy, one book, one child, one month at a time.

Appendix B



Appendix C

Case Study: Young Leaders of Learning—Pupil Voice in Action

There is now considerable evidence from research that supports the view that addressing learner participation in all aspects of a school makes for effective policy making, enhances school life and improves a range of outcomes for learners. The Young Leaders of Learning (YLL) Programme was developed by Education Scotland to further support learner participation in Scotland's schools and give children and young people a bigger say in their education and their schools.

Programme Overview

The YLL programme empowers children and young people to take an active role in school improvement by participating in reciprocal visits between partner schools, identifying strengths and areas for development within an agreed shared theme, and providing constructive feedback to their school to inspire change. The programme is built on the principles of learner participation, collaboration, and children's rights (UNCRC Articles 12 and 13). It promotes meaningful pupil voice and helps schools better understand the learner experience from the perspective of young people themselves.

Renfrewshire's engagement with the YLL programme began with two pilot projects (2023-24), one in primary and one in secondary, before launching a full programme that is now entering its second full year. It has grown quickly, with high levels of voluntary participation across schools. Each participating establishment identifies a team of pupils, ideally a mix of confidence levels and diverse academic strengths, who are then trained in giving feedback, exploring themes from How Good is Our School? (pupil version) and planning school visits.

What Has Been Done

In 2024/25, 34 primary and 6 secondary schools from across Renfrewshire worked in pairs to explore a shared theme. Each school received staff training, followed by a pupil training day led by the local authority. The heart of the programme lies in reciprocal visits, where young leaders tour each other's schools, conduct interviews, observe practice (without visiting live lessons), and then present their reflections and action points to senior leaders.

The collaboration at the heart of the YLL programme is one of its greatest strengths for staff, school leaders, and pupils alike. YLL fosters a culture of reflection, self-evaluation and improvement that goes beyond individual classrooms.

Impact

Across both primary and secondary, the programme has had clear benefits for young people, staff, and schools. Pupils consistently reported feeling that their voice was heard and valued, and described increased confidence, leadership, and interpersonal skills. Feedback from primary pupils included reflections on the excitement of having "an important job," getting to "interview staff" and "writing our improvement plan". For pupils with a quieter disposition, the programme offered structured ways to contribute, such as note-taking or observation, with many building confidence over time. The experience of seeing another school and recognising both similarities and differences helped to build pride in the pupils'

own schools while developing critical thinking and the ability to makes links and connections in the ideas that they had for their own school.

Staff also reflected positively, describing strong professional learning opportunities, deeper insight into pupil perspectives, and strengthened links across schools. The most meaningful change occurred when young people were given genuine ownership of the programme. The young leaders from session 2024-25 will now go on to support the training of the next cohort, building sustainability and developing peer leadership.

While the overall model was successful, there was some variability in impact across school partnerships. Where schools invested significant time in preparation and planning, pupils were able to move beyond surface-level improvement suggestions to more strategic improvement ideas. Examples include:

- Improving the consistency of learning language used across all classrooms
- Introduction of whole-school, skills-based learning days that encourage collaboration across different stages
- Clarifying procedures for addressing incidents of bullying to ensure they are more easily understood by pupils.

Pupils and staff also reported wanting more opportunities to meet their partner schools, making the sharing events more interactive, and have felt the benefit of having the space and time for collaboration with another school.

> " I built my confidence by having to mingle with others and stepping out of my comfort zone."
> **Secondary young leader**

> " It was good to see behind the scenes of the school and make suggestions for how they could improve it."
> **Secondary young leader**

> " Being a YLL means we can change our school in a positive way."
> **Primary young leader**

> " We made friends, became more confident and got our voices heard."
> **Primary young leader**

Next Steps

The YLL programme is now embedded as a core participation offer in Renfrewshire and will expand further in 2025/26. Eight additional schools have joined the programme, and partnerships for the new year will be based on shared improvement themes from How Good is Our School? (pupil version). This expansion means that almost all of our schools are now engaged in the programme, which empowers pupils to drive positive change within their school communities. In addition, the sharing events will be restructured into more interactive formats, and schools are being encouraged to make use of their existing young leaders to support peer training.

To see how two schools have collaborated to bring the Young Leaders of Learning programme to life, watch this short and inspiring video:

https://youtu.be/aeFYu9sv2FE?si=4pTS_m9rNRCwREQZ

Appendix C

Appendix D

Case Study: Target Schools Programme

Programme Overview

The Target Schools Programme (TSP) was developed in response to persistent and uneven patterns in attainment, particularly stemming from recovery following the pandemic. School data revealed that, while some schools were returning to pre-pandemic performance levels, others, particularly those serving more deprived communities, were experiencing slower progress or continued stagnation in primary school attainment. These trends mirrored national concerns but prompted a local response in Renfrewshire that moved beyond generic deprivation measures. Rather than targeting the schools with the highest levels of deprivation alone, the approach focused on identifying those individual pupils where comparative data showed they could and should be experiencing better attainment with the correct support in place to meet their needs. The programme's design was deliberately strategic, combining historic attainment data, pupil numbers, and SIMD analysis to identify schools where resources could have the greatest impact on children.

This more refined targeting aimed not only to close the poverty-related attainment gap but also to raise attainment across the authority.

What Has Been Done

In 2024/25, ten primary schools took part in Phase 2 of the programme. Each school was supported to identify pupils in P1, P4, and P7 who were not meeting expected Curriculum for Excellence levels, or were at risk of not doing so, but who did not have a formal additional support needs. The premise was to support those who might otherwise have less access to additional support.

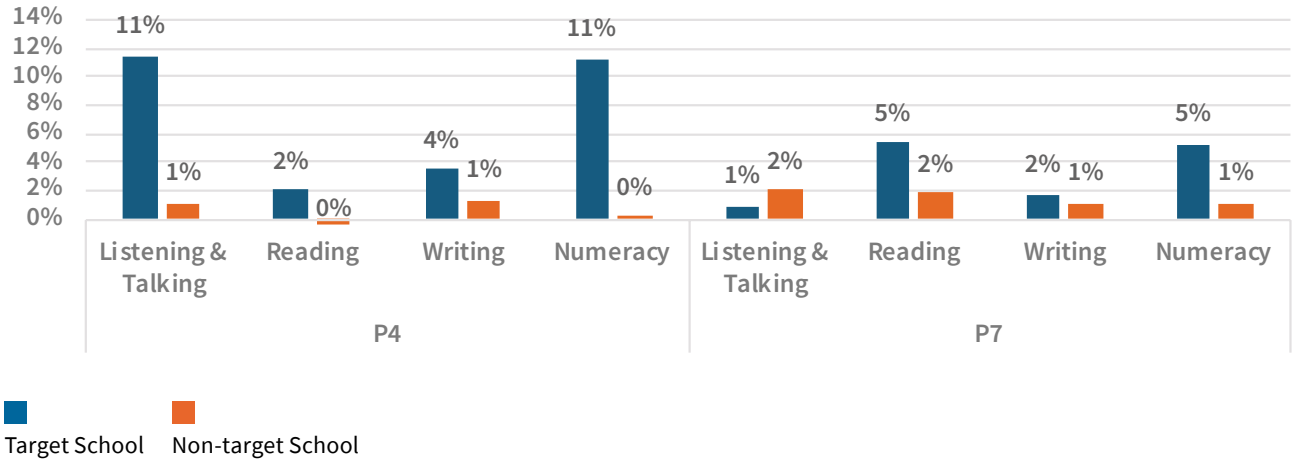
To enable this, each school received additional staffing, most commonly in the form of supply cover, which allotted time for class teachers or principal teachers to work intensively with target groups. Small-group teaching formed the core of the intervention model, creating space for individualised support. Schools employed slightly different models to match their context and best meet the needs of their pupils. For example. in some schools, this was led by the class teacher and in others, experienced staff such as PTs or NQTs were leading the programme. Development Officers provided bespoke support to each school, offering literacy-focused CLPL, moderation opportunities, and access to assessment tools. These professionals played a key role in embedding consistent practice, building staff confidence, and responding to and supporting with challenges. In many cases, support staff were also included in professional learning, helping to embed consistency of approach and making the interventions more sustainable.

Impact

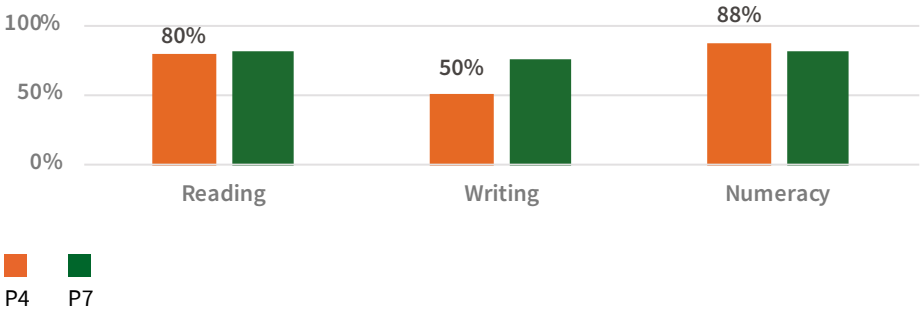
Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation data point to a strong and positive impact. Teachers discussed greater clarity of progress, and increased engagement. The use of small groups enabled deeper diagnostic assessment and targeted instruction, particularly benefiting those who were unlikely to raise concerns in a full class setting. Pupils reported improved confidence, engagement with learning, and an enjoyment of the small-group settings.

Appendix D

Percentage Increase in ACEL Stage Attainment—2023–24 to 2024–25



Percentage of Pupils Achieving Expected Level in Target Area by Stage



Headteachers noted that the biggest difference was often in pupil confidence and teacher judgement. Focus groups also highlighted the relational nature of the work: pupils benefitted not only from the academic input but from being supported by adults who already knew them and understood their needs, and getting to work closely with their classmates.

Next Steps

Building on the success of Phase 2, the programme is now expanding significantly. In 2025/26, it will support 30 primary schools. The next phase will retain the core elements of staffing, development officer support, and targeted small-group teaching but will introduce several refinements.

Appendix D

For further information, please contact

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Renfrewshire
Council