

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by the Chief Education Officer****Educational Services: 14th December 2022**

Subject: Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Examination Results 2022**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To update Members on the performance of West Dunbartonshire schools in the national Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations of 2022.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are requested to:

- a) Note the contents of this report and the attached appendices;
- b) Congratulate the pupils, parents and carers, staff in our establishments and our partner providers for achievements in this year's examinations.

3. Background

- 3.1** With the introduction of Insight, the National Senior Phase Benchmarking tool in 2014, emphasis shifted in how a school is judged to be performing. Instead of the previous measures of how many pupils gained a number of passes at specific levels, a school is now measured according to its performance in key benchmarks. There are both national and local benchmarks. A complete picture of local authority and school performance requires benchmarks to be considered together.
- 3.2** Insight is updated twice a year, in September with SQA exam results and in March when it updates leaver destinations and the four National Measures. For this reason it is not possible to provide a complete picture of performance through the four national measures until after the March update. A further report will be brought to committee once this update is available. At this time, we are able to update on our performance in local measures.
- 3.3** Insight presents information on the achievements of school leavers at their point of exit from school, be that in S4, S5 or S6. Previously, we focussed on the attainment of an individual cohort taken as a whole (S4, S5 or S6). This change is in line with the CfE approach which sees the Senior Phase as a single coherent experience leading to a positive destination. Each young person's experience will be different depending on their needs.

- 3.4** Instead of comparing schools with each other or comparing one year group against another, benchmark comparisons are made against 'virtual comparators'. Insight makes these virtual comparisons by selecting real young people from across Scotland that match the characteristics of students in West Dunbartonshire schools or in the local authority as a whole. In the case of school leavers, ten comparable virtual leavers are made for every one of our school leavers from West Dunbartonshire.
- 3.5** Individually, schools will consider their performance in local benchmarks in their work to raise attainment. Themes identified will form the basis whole school and departmental improvement. This is quality assured through our Local Authority Improvement Framework and through the publication and analysis of school Standards and Quality reports.
- 3.6** In 2018, 'courses' and 'units' were de-coupled, making it possible for candidates to be presented for 'units' only at a level, instead of being presented for the whole course award.

4. Main Issues

In this section, comparison has been made with 2019 since this was the last time that formal SQA examinations were held. During 2020 and 2021, alternative assessment arrangements were put in place by SQA.

- 4.1** In 2022 we presented 2,212 number of candidates for 10,244 number of qualifications across National 2 – Advanced Higher. 75% of those presentations resulted in a passing grade. This compares with 2,117 candidates for 9,601 qualifications in 2019, 82% resulting in a passing grade.
- 4.1.1** At National 4, the West Dunbartonshire data shows a decrease in attainment of 22% points when compared with 2019 (66% pass rate in 2022 compared with 88% in 2019). Between 2019 and 2022 the number of presentations increased from 2,056 to 2,387 respectively. The difference in attainment can largely be attributed to incomplete coursework from a number of young people at the time of presentation. This situation has been exacerbated over recent years due to the impact that COVID-19 has had on attendance.
- 4.1.2** At National 5, the West Dunbartonshire data shows a reduction in attainment of 2% points when compared with 2019 (80% pass rate in 2022 compared with 82% in 2019). We saw a substantial increase in the number of presentations (4,639 in 2022, compared with 4,317 in 2019).
- 4.1.3** At Higher, the West Dunbartonshire data shows the same level of attainment when compared with 2019 (77% pass rate in 2022 and in 2019). Between 2019 and 2022 the number of presentations reduced slightly from 2,562 to 2,539 respectively.
- 4.1.4** At Advanced Higher, the West Dunbartonshire data shows an reduction in attainment of 5% points when compared with 2019 (72% pass rate in 2022

compared with 77% in 2019). We saw an increase in the number of presentations (313 in 2022, compared with 225 in 2019).

4.1.5 The performance of each school in relation to the West Dunbartonshire and national average is shown in **Figure 1** below. It should be noted however that percentage pass rates do not convey the number of young people in the cohort being presented for the qualification.

	CHS	DA	OLSP	SPTA	VOLA	WDC	National
N3	89.80%	93.02%	38.81%	60.42%	100.00%	67.69%	84.87%
N4	57.59%	80.43%	23.13%	69.40%	100.00%	65.61%	86.08%
N5	77.95%	78.71%	87.81%	80.76%	72.52%	79.61%	80.84%
H	76.51%	72.76%	85.29%	74.61%	73.15%	76.60%	78.92%
AH	72.88%	52.63%	76.60%	76.62%	62.50%	71.57%	81.29%

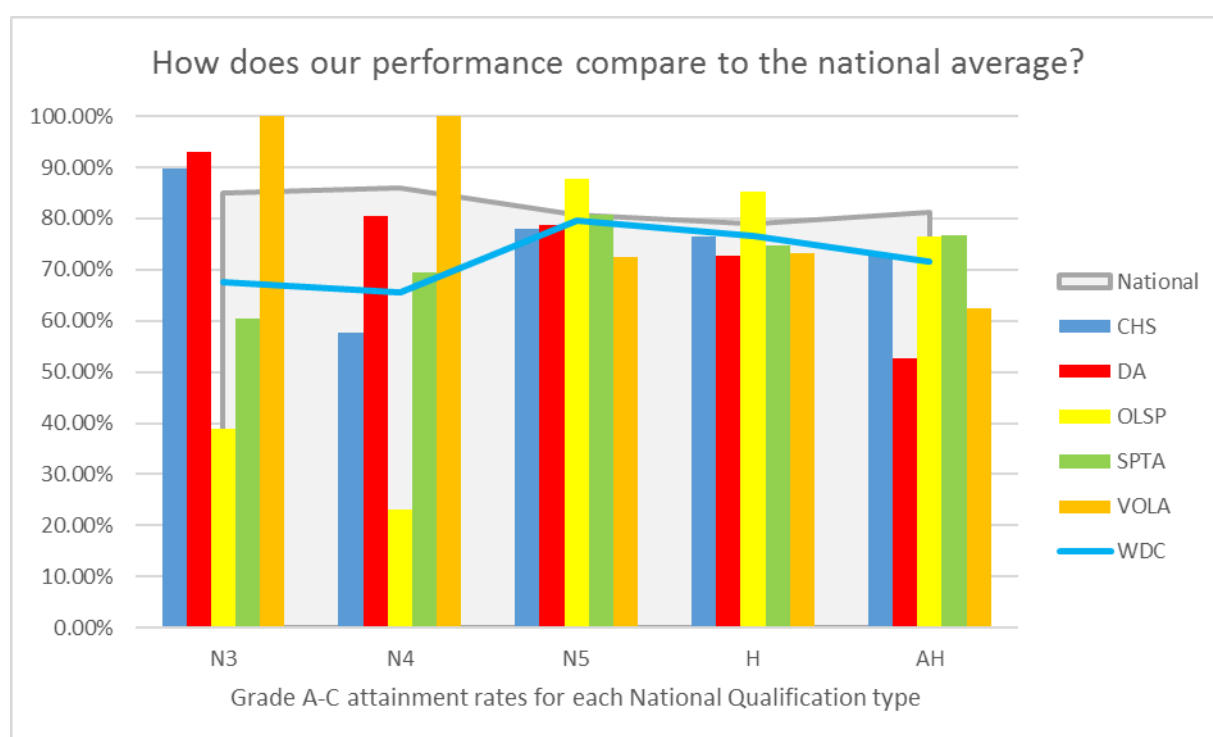


Figure 1 – establishment performance compared with the national average

4.2 Trend by Curricular Area

Figure 2 below shows the trend by curriculum area for 2017 – 2022:

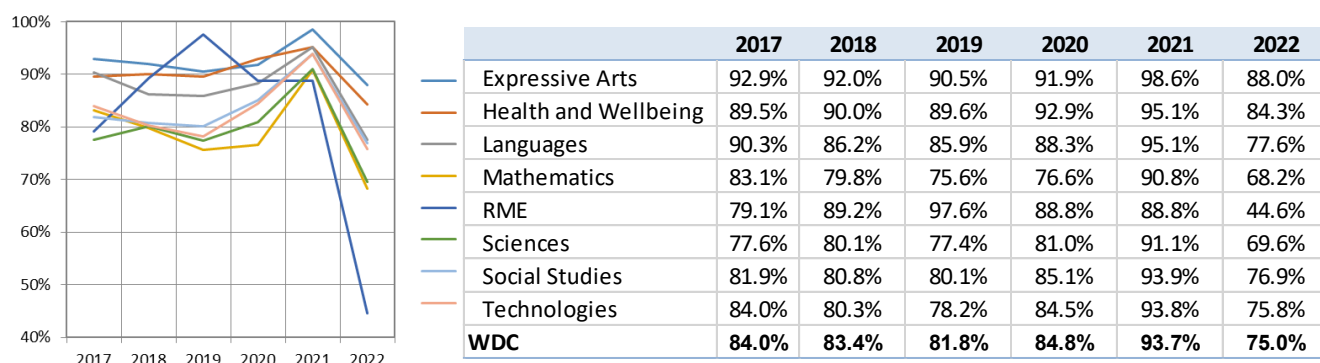


Figure 2: Trend by curriculum area

4.3 Insight data

As noted in 3.2 above the data for the four national benchmarks for session 2021-22 is not finalised and published in Insight until March 2023. Therefore data shown below will not include leaver destination data or indeed changes reflected by the Post Results Service offered by the SQA.

In the sections that follow, we have presented data relating to our performance at local authority level. A more detailed analysis of performance of each of our secondary schools is presented in **Appendix 1**.

4.3.1 Local Benchmark 1: Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

Figure 3 below shows the Percentage of S6 Candidates Attaining Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF levels 4 and 5 (Literacy and Numeracy qualifications now include awards for Literacy, English, English as a Second Language, Numeracy and Mathematics). It shows that at both levels young people in WDC are achieving higher levels of attainment than those in our virtual comparator local authority.

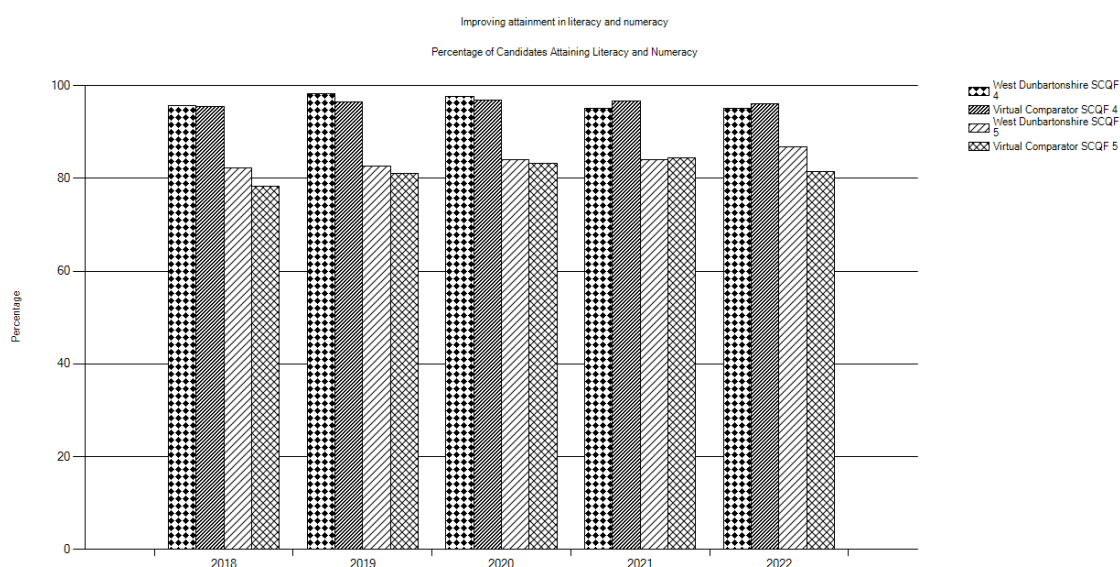


Figure 3 – Performance in Literacy and Numeracy

Local Benchmark 1: Improving attainment in Literacy.

Figure 4 below shows our performance in literacy in isolation from numeracy.

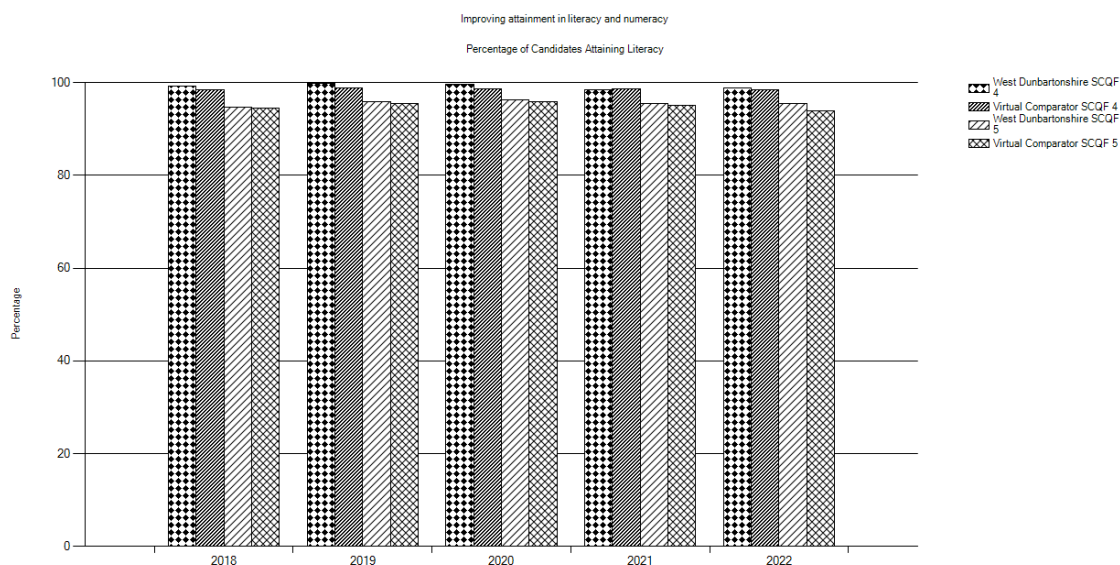


Figure 4 – Performance in Literacy

This shows that we have broadly maintained our performance over time in literacy at both SCQF Level 4 and 5. Compared to our virtual comparator, we are above at both SCQF Level 4 and 5.

Local Benchmark 1: Improving attainment in Numeracy.

Figure 5 below shows our performance in numeracy in isolation from literacy.

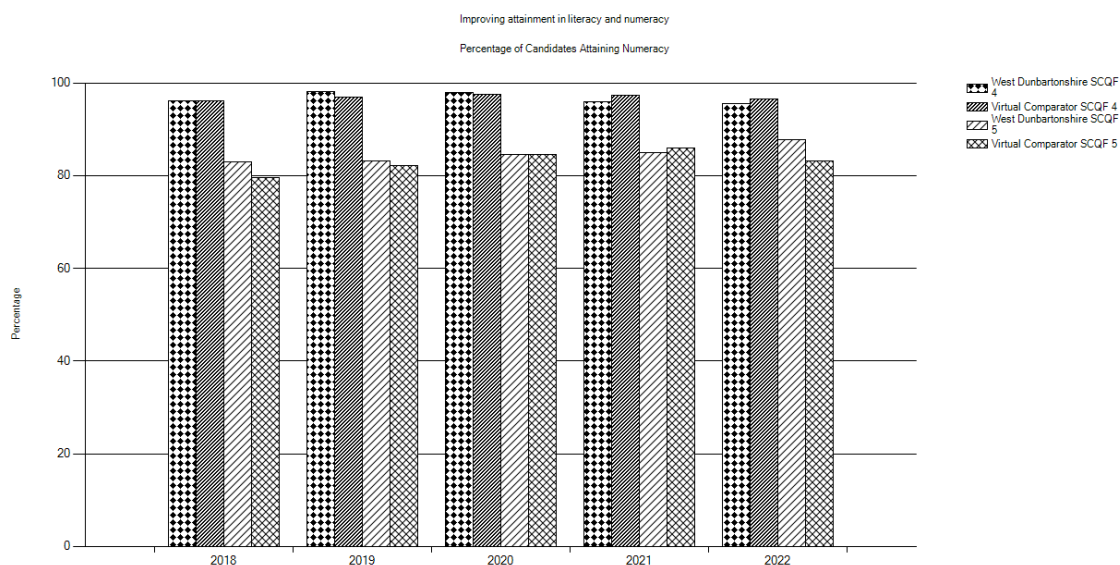


Figure 5 – Performance in Numeracy

This shows that our performance in numeracy at SCQF Level 4 has dipped slightly in the last two years and is now slightly below our virtual comparator. We have seen a 3 percentage point increase at SCQF Level 5 from the 2021 figure to our highest figure in 5 years in 2022 (87.8%). This is also almost 4 percentage points higher than our virtual comparator. When viewed separately, it is clear that attainment in literacy is higher than numeracy, with a higher percentage of our young people leaving with a level 5 award in literacy than numeracy.

4.3.2 Local Benchmark 2: Improving attainment for all

This measure allows us to examine how different ability cohorts are attaining in relation to our virtual cohort and the national cohort. Attainment is measured using a tariff scale developed for Insight. This scale allocates points to each qualification (courses and units which make up courses are all allocated points). The number of points awarded is dependent on the level of the course, with more demanding qualifications being awarded more points than less demanding ones. Three cohorts are identified, those in the bottom 20% of tariff points scored, those in the middle 60% of tariff points scored and those in the top 20% of tariff points scored.

Figure 6 below shows the average total tariff points gained by our cohorts of young people.

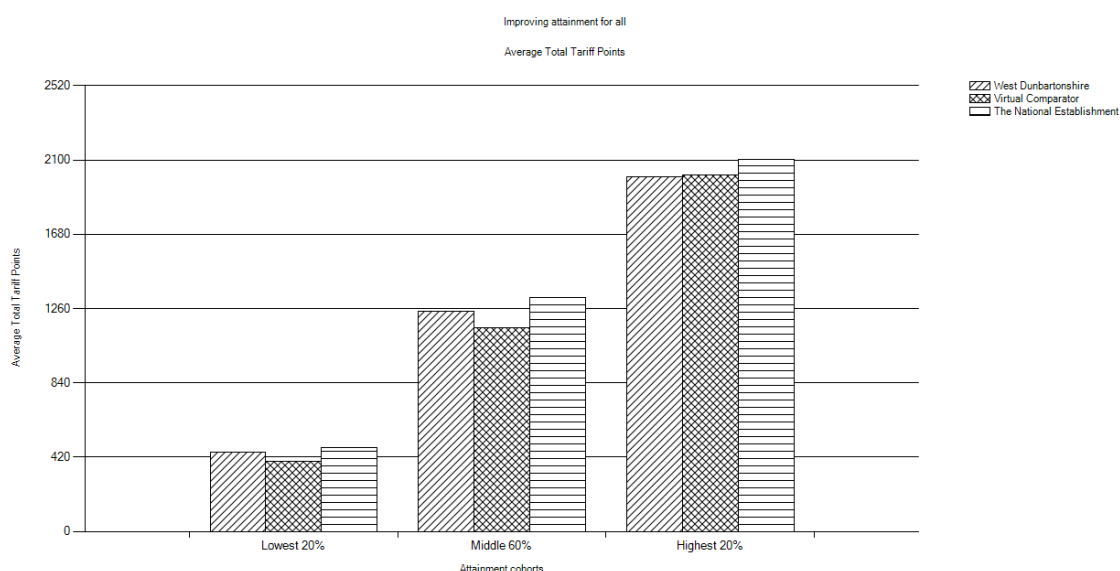


Figure 6 – Average Total Tariff points

This shows that the least attaining young people in WDC are attaining above our virtual comparator, but below the national cohort. The pattern for the middle 60% is the same. The highest attaining cohort's tariff score is slightly below those in the virtual comparator and below the national cohort.

When viewed through the lens of deprivation, our performance changes.

Figure 7 below shows the attainment of our young people who reside in the 2 most deprived Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles (Decile 1 refers to the attainment of young people with postcodes within data zones identified as being in the 10% most deprived in Scotland according to SIMD. Those young people in decile 10 have postcodes in the 10% least deprived data zones according to SIMD).

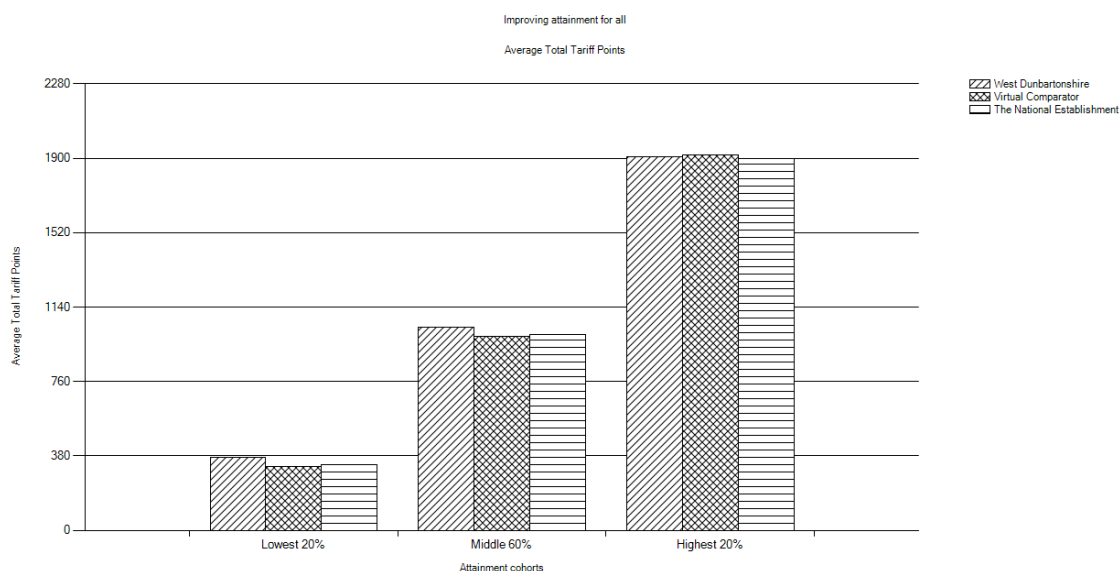


Figure 7 – Average Total Tariff Points for SIMD Deciles 1-2

This shows that for SIMD deciles 1 and 2, our lowest 20% attaining young people attainment is above both our virtual comparator and national average. Again the pattern is the same for the middle 60%. The Highest 20% attaining young people from deciles 1 and 2 are very slightly below virtual comparator, but very slightly above the national average.

4.3.3 Local Benchmark 4: Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers

This measure shows attainment measured using the same tariff scale as referred to in the **Improving attainment for all** measure above. Young people are presented in a decile according to their Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data. Decile 1 refers to the attainment of young people with postcodes within data zones identified as being in the 10% most deprived in Scotland according to SIMD. Those young people in decile 10 have postcodes in the 10% least deprived data zones according to SIMD. The area of each the 'circle' represents the number of young people in each decile. Ideally the attainment line for Scotland would be level through each decile showing that SIMD had no effect on a student's attainment. Unfortunately this is not the case nationally or locally.

Figure 8 – Attainment versus Deprivation

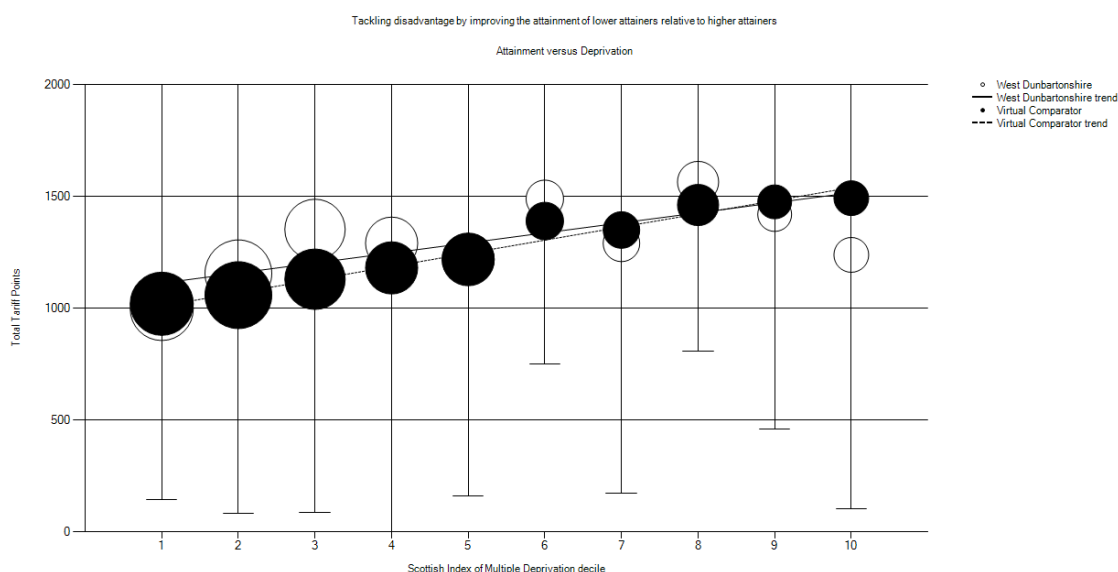


Figure 8 above shows that the majority of the school pupils in WDC have postcodes in the lower SIMD deciles (larger ‘circles’ in deciles 1-5) and consequently that few of our pupils reside in upper deciles. The data shows that the young people of WDC in deciles 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 have attainment either equal to or better than our virtual comparator, whilst the attainment of young people that reside in SIMD deciles 1, 7, 9 and 10 is lower than our virtual comparator.

4.4 The relationship between qualifications and destinations.

With the establishment of Curriculum for Excellence, young people were entitled to a Senior Phase that continued to develop the four capacities and gain qualifications, and entitled to support into making a transition into a sustained positive destination. With Insight, these two entitlements have been brought much closer together.

Figure 9 on the following page shows the performance over the past 5 years’ worth of our school pupils, and the relationship between the levels of qualifications they attain and what destinations this could lead to. Presented as a trend analysis, this helps us view the success of our young people over time, as there are fluctuations in attainment for each cohort of young people.

Figure 9 on the following page shows this for the young people of West Dunbartonshire as a whole. **Appendix 2** then shows this for each establishment.

Figure 9 - Relationship between qualifications and destinations

ALL WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

99.6% of pupils achieved units at SCQF Level 1 or above

89.5% of pupils achieved Literacy at SCQF Level 4 or above

78.5% of pupils achieved Numeracy at SCQF Level 4 or above

88.4% of pupils achieved 3 or more National 4s or better

72.0% of pupils achieved 3 or more National 5s or better

60.7% of pupils achieved 1 or more Higher

43.5% of pupils achieved 3 or more Highers

25.1% of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at Grades A or B

16.5% of pupils achieved 1 or more Advanced Higher

14.7% of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at Grade A

Access to:

- Employment
- Entry level Modern Apprenticeships

- College Courses
- More Selective Modern Apprenticeships
- HNCs and HNDs

- University Courses
- Selective University Courses
- Most selective University Courses

4.5 Although this report focuses on SQA attainment, young people in WDC have demonstrated success in a wide variety of other qualifications which contribute to wider achievement. Following the updating of Insight in March 2020, a further report will be brought back to committee showing the wider achievements of our young people, and their progress to destinations beyond school.

4.6 The Council will ensure that schools are given every challenge and support to raise attainment in the areas outlined in this report through both local engagement and by encouraging involvement with national bodies.

5. People Implications

5.1 There are no personnel issues related to this report.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications related to this report.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 As members are only being asked to note the contents of this report and the attached appendix a risk assessment is not required.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 Educational Services has carried out a screening in equality for this report. The report was found not to be relevant to the specified equality duty because the content provides an update on service delivery rather than stating a change of policy.

9. Consultation

9.1 Legal Services, the Section 95 Officer and Head Teachers have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 This report reflects the Council's aspiration to 'increase skills for life and learning' which is a supporting priority to the strategic priority of having 'a strong local economy and improved job opportunities' for 2017 - 2022.

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Date: 14 November 2022

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Insight data for West Dunbartonshire schools.

Appendix 2 The relationship between Qualifications and Destinations
in West Dunbartonshire Schools.

Background Papers: None.

Wards Affected: All Council Wards.

