

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Education Officer

Educational Services Committee: 4 September 2019

Subject: Literacy and Numeracy - Benchmarking

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report advises Members on the performance of literacy and numeracy in West Dunbartonshire at Early Years, P1, P4, P7 and S3.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** The Educational Services Committee is recommended to:

- 1) note the contents of this report
- 2) note that improvements planned will be implemented as part of the Authority's strategy to raise attainment, improve learning and narrow the poverty related attainment gap

3. Background

- 3.1** As part of Educational Services' Raising Attainment Strategy pupils were tested from 2012 using standardised tests in literacy and numeracy at P3, P4, P5, P6, P7 and S2.
- 3.2** Since 2013 attainment data has been gathered using locally developed baseline assessments in literacy and numeracy in early years' establishments and in P1 at primary schools.
- 3.3** From 2013 literacy baseline assessment was carried out in all Early Years establishments. During 2014 and 2015 early reading skills (literacy baseline assessment) was used to assess progress for all P1 pupils. During 2015, baseline assessment in numeracy was carried out in all Early Years establishments and in literacy in a sample of establishments. In May 2016, baseline assessments in literacy and numeracy were undertaken in all early years' establishments, partner nurseries and primary schools for P1 pupils.
- 3.4** In 2016, as part of the National Improvement Framework, Scottish Government introduced data collection of children and young people's progress at the key stages of P1, P4, P7 and S3 using Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Levels. The achieved a CfE level (ACEL) data is draft until Scottish Government ratify it in December each year.

- 3.5** In August 2017, a Scottish National Standardised Assessment (SNSA) was introduced at P1, P4, P7 and S3. The use of a standardised assessment will support a consistent approach to assessment within the Broad General Education. The SNSA will form part of the evidence used when teachers make judgements about learner progress and achievement of a CfE level. In June 2019, an independent review for the Scottish Government of the SNSA at P1 re-affirmed the use of SNSA as one form of assessment for achievement of a CfE level. This review highlighted that this assessment cannot be used to compare schools or to set targets for individual schools. Members are reminded that standardised tests are one form of assessment used to gather data to build a picture of children and young people's progress.

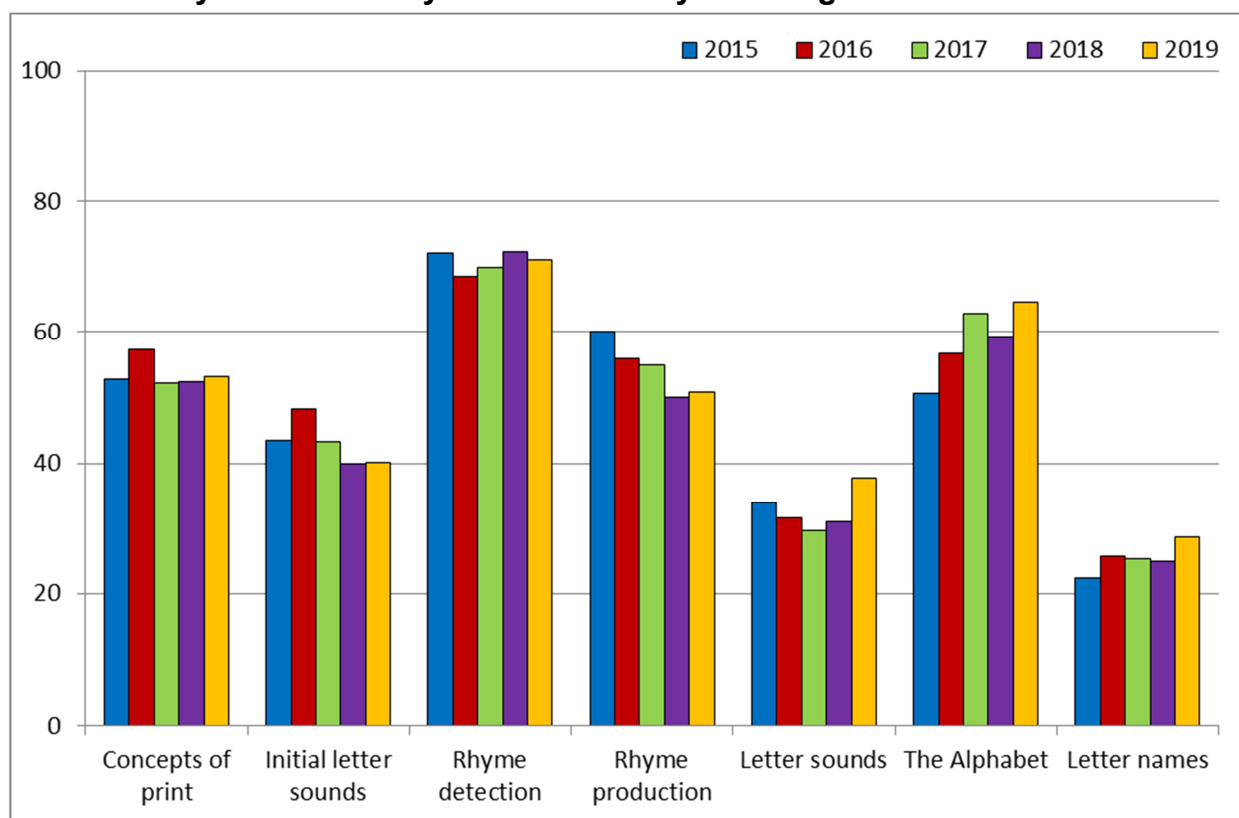
4. Main Issues

- 4.1** Children's progress within CfE is assessed using a range of evidence of what children learn and achieve and how well this prepares them for life beyond school.
- 4.2** In West Dunbartonshire we are committed to delivering excellence and equity for every child by having a clear focus on improvement. The National Improvement Framework sets out six key drivers for improvement: School leadership; Teacher professionalism; Parental engagement; Assessment of children's progress; School improvement; and Performance information.
- 4.3** The early level baseline assessment is benchmarked across the authority to highlight performance levels. Assessment results are used to track trends in attainment and to identify the attainment gap. This information provides a comprehensive picture of progress in key literacy and numeracy skills for children at early level in West Dunbartonshire.
- 4.4** The high level messages emerging from the early years' baseline assessments indicate the following:

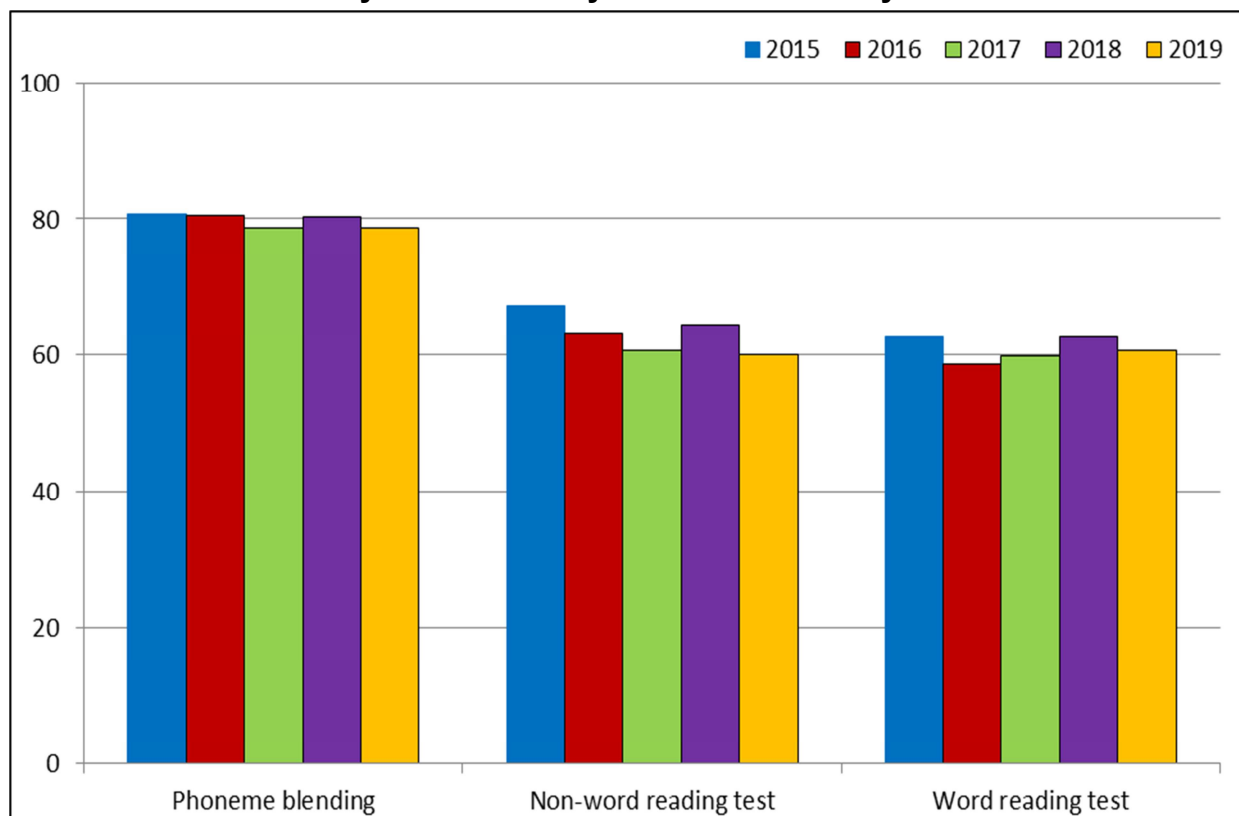
Literacy

The charts below show performance in the areas assessed in the Early Level Literacy Baseline Assessment as the percentage of children who achieved the relevant benchmark in the specific area. In our Early Learning and Childcare Centres (ELCCs) all areas showed higher results in 2018-19 than for 2017-18, except for Rhyme Detection which showed a slight decrease. Concepts of Print and Letter Sounds have improved in the last two years. Performance for P1 pupils in 2019 is slightly lower than in 2017-18, which is not significant.

Early Years Literacy Baseline – Early Learning and Childcare Centres



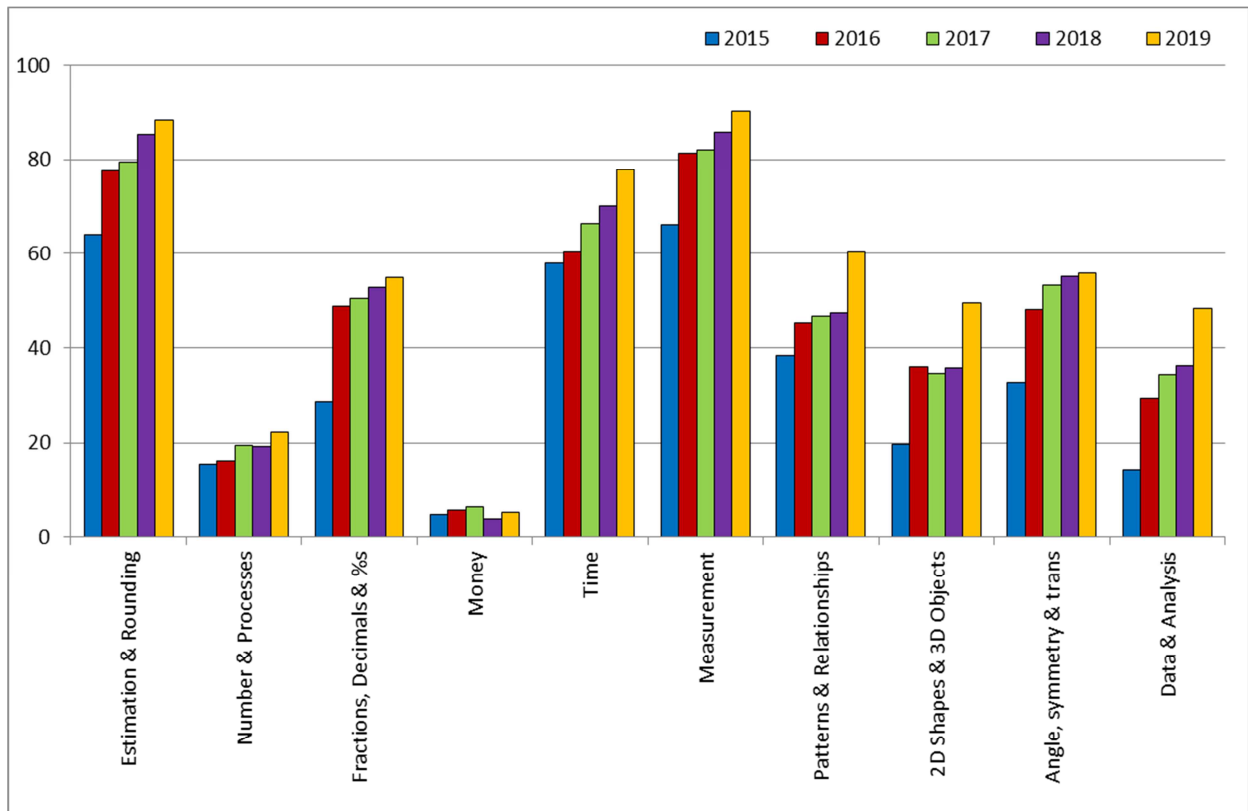
Early Years Literacy Baseline – Primary 1



Numeracy

The charts below show performance in the ten areas assessed in the Early Level Numeracy Baseline Assessment. Performance in ELCCs increased for all experiences and outcomes of numeracy areas in 2018-19, with large increases for Patterns and Relationships, 2D shapes and 3D objects and Data and Analysis. This means there has been a sustained improvement over the last four years in seven experiences and outcomes.

Early Years Numeracy Baseline – Early Learning and Childcare Centres

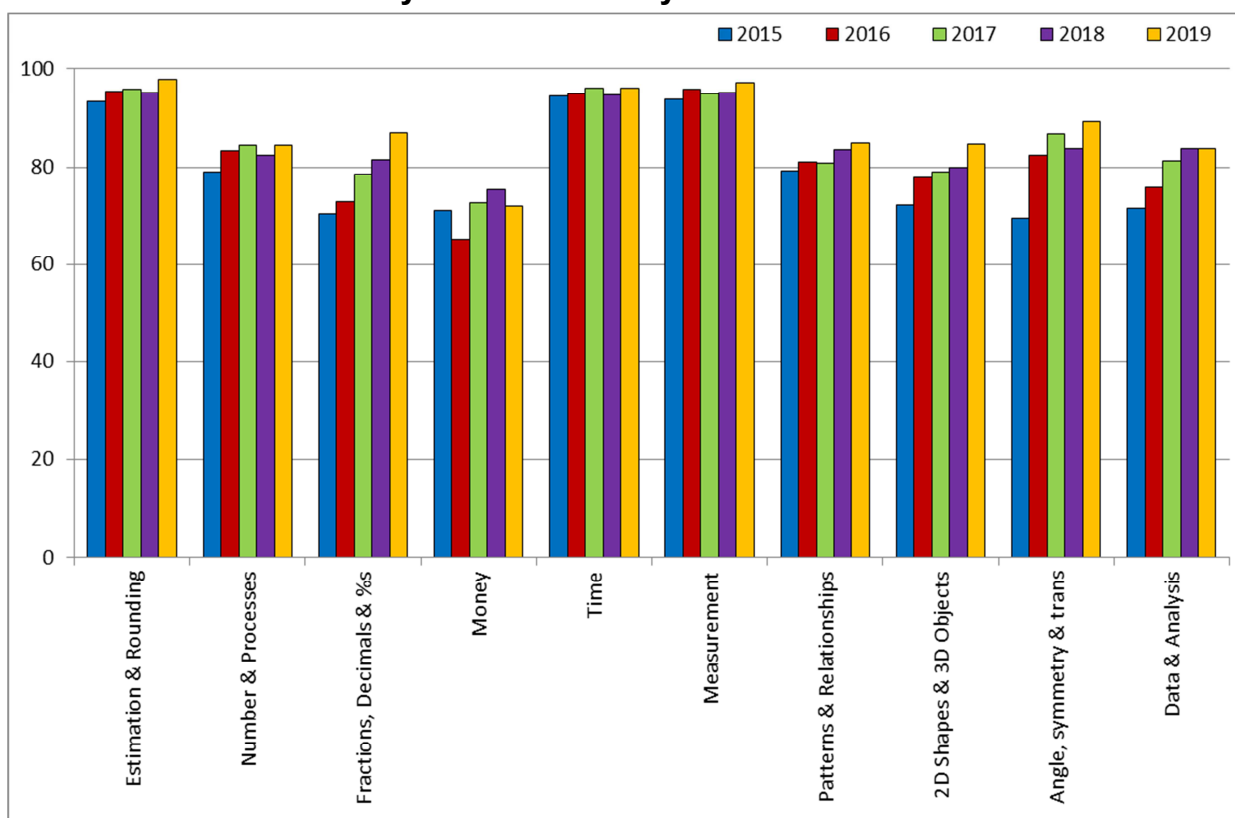


As expected, performance for P1 children was higher than for ELCCs for all areas, especially for Money, Number and Number Processes and Data and Analysis.

In 2018-19, there was an increase in P1 children who achieved the expected benchmark in eight out of the ten experiences and outcomes, performance for Data and Analysis remained the same, and there was a decrease of 3 % for Money. There is a sustained improvement over the last four years in Fractions, Decimals and percentages and 2D shapes and 3D objects.

Children who were in nursery in 2018 who are now in P1 have made progress with the biggest gains in Money and Number and number processes.

Early Years Numeracy Baseline – Schools



4.5 The SNSA has been designed to assess progress in experiences and outcomes of literacy and numeracy. They do not, cannot and should not assess all the standards outlined within the experiences and outcomes or the literacy and numeracy benchmarks. On their own, therefore, they cannot provide a summative assessment of whether a learner has achieved the Curriculum for Excellence level relevant to his or her stage. The information generated by the SNSA – whether at individual, school, local or national level – is not an end in itself, but is intended to be used for improvement purposes: identifying strengths and development needs and informing next steps in learning. That approach is wholly consistent with formative assessment. The assessments are not completed at one point in the year for all pupils but rather at a time throughout the course of the year appropriate to the needs of the learners. Children and young people may sit literacy and numeracy assessments at different points in the year.

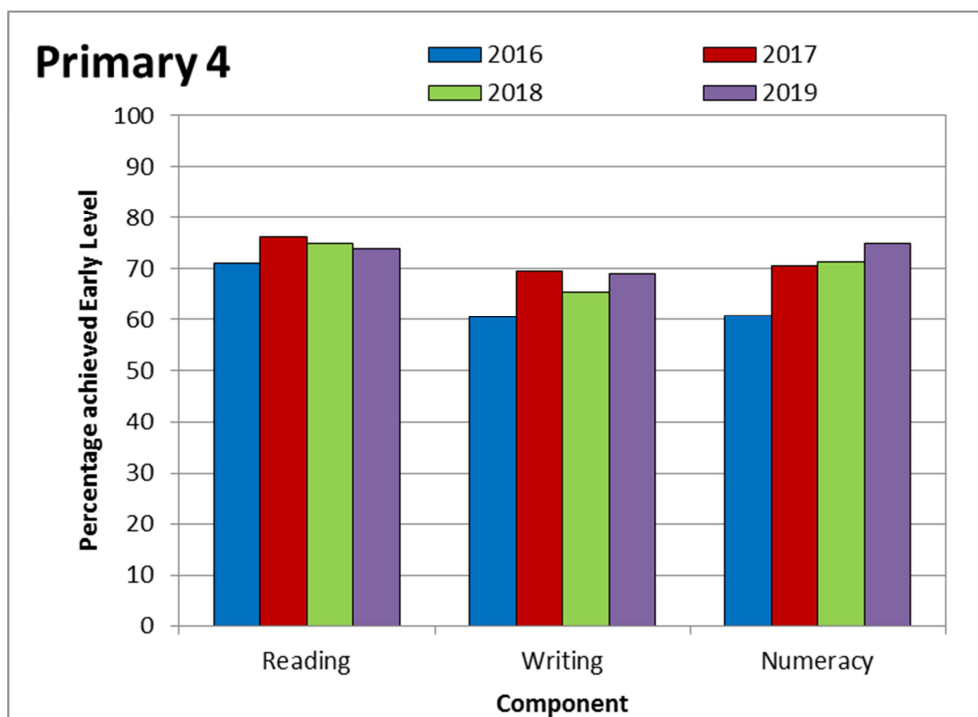
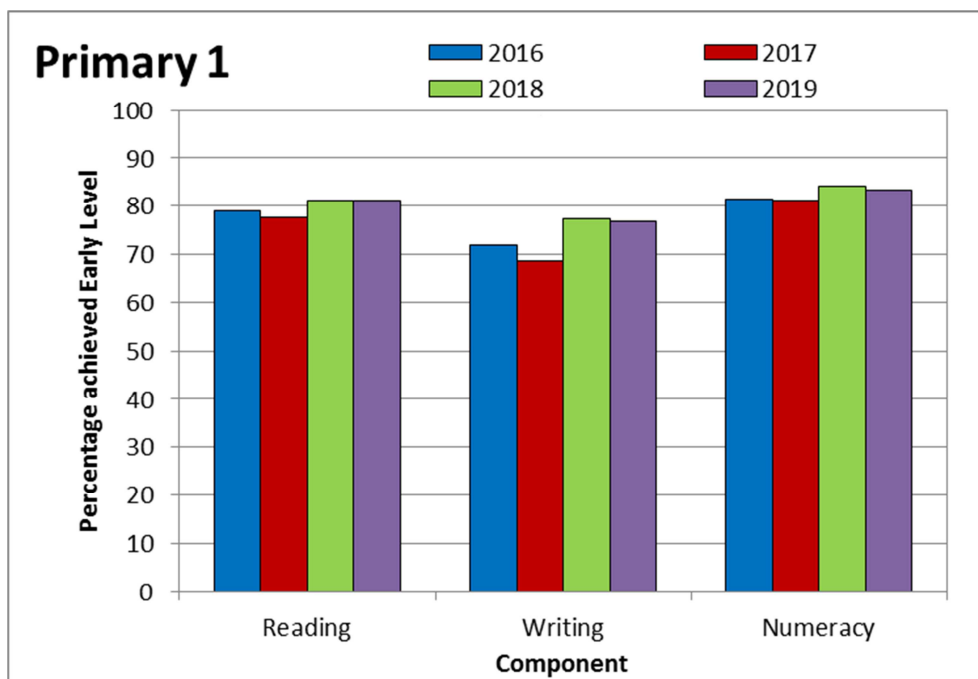
In the 2018-19 session, the SNSA shows:

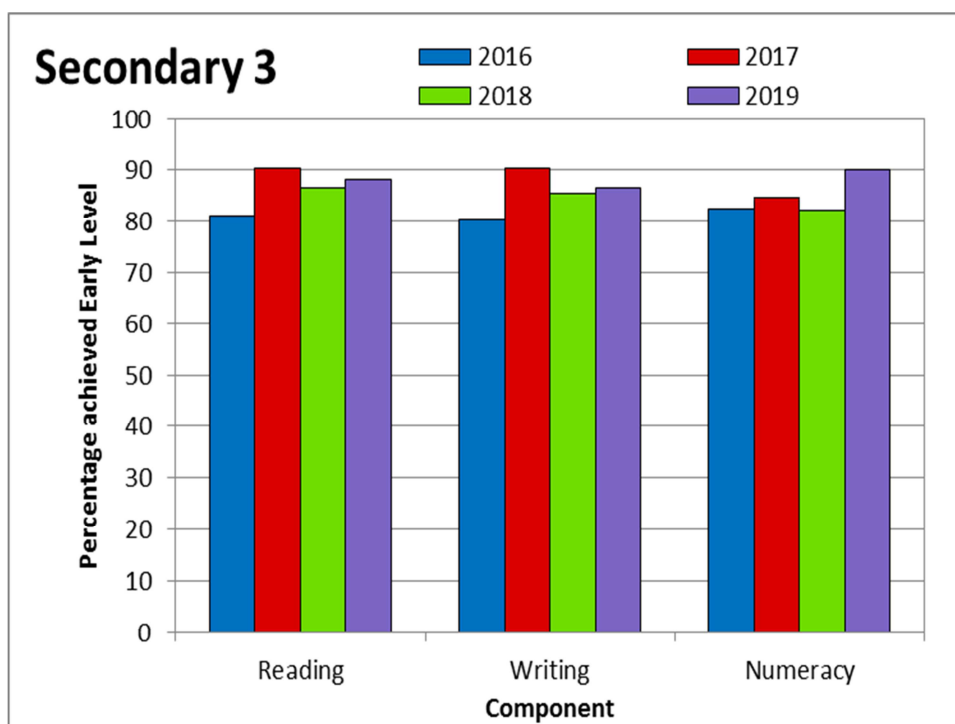
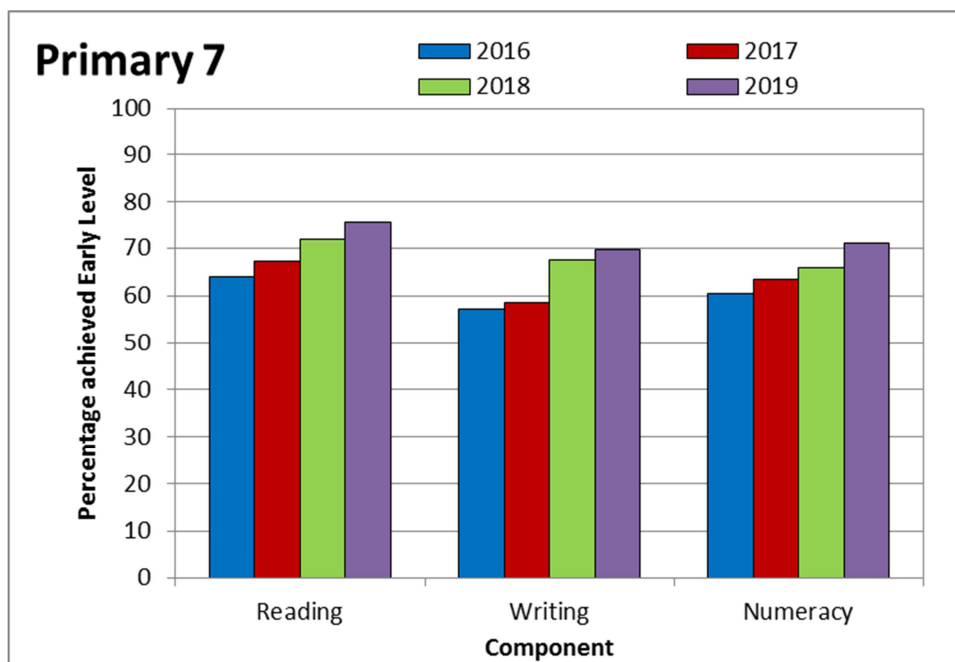
- Over 95% of primary aged children in P1, P4 and P7 completed a SNSA in reading and numeracy, while 94 % completed the writing SNSA
- For secondary aged young people in S3, 95 % completed a SNSA in numeracy, 89 % in reading and 84 % in writing
- All P1 pupils completed age appropriate SNSA

- For those who completed a SNSA, almost all pupils from P4 (>98 %), P7 (>88 %) and S3 (>93 %) completed the age appropriate SNSA for reading, writing and writing
- 4.6** Attainment in the SNSA is measured using 12 bands across P1, P4, P7 and S3, i.e. P1 SNSA covers bands 1-6, P4 SNSA covers bands 4 to 9, P7 SNSA covers bands 6 to 11 and S3 SNSA covers bands 7 to 12.
- 4.7** Attainment information for the 2018-19 SNSA shows the following:
- In P1, 91 % of children attain in bands 3-6 for literacy and numeracy
 - In P4, 69 % and 70 % of children attain in bands 6-9 for reading and writing, while 78 % attain for numeracy
 - In P7, 78 % attain in bands 8-11 for reading, writing and numeracy
 - In S3, 63 % and 64 % attained in bands 9-12 for reading and writing, while 76 % attain for numeracy
- 4.8** The National Improvement Framework measures pupil attainment using the Teacher Judgement Survey. From June 2016, teachers used their professional judgement to determine what Curriculum for Excellence level pupils had achieved at P1, P4, P7, S3 and all pupils in standalone special schools / units.
- 4.9** Curriculum for Excellence states that pupils are expected to have achieved Early level by end of P1, First Level by end of P4, Second Level by end of P7 and Third or Fourth Level by end of S3. Pupils may achieve each level earlier or later than expected, depending on individual needs and aptitude.
- 4.10** The following charts show the performance of West Dunbartonshire pupils in the most recent Achieved a Level Survey, which showed at this time that the majority of pupils in West Dunbartonshire achieved the level expected by the stage tested. The most recent data is provisional until completion of the Quality Assurance process, for submission to Scottish Government by end of August each year.
- 4.11** The initial high level messages emerging from the 2019 teacher judgement data are that:
- over 80% of pupils in P1 achieve the expected Early level in reading and numeracy
 - over 75% of pupils in P1 achieve the expected Early level in writing
 - over 70% of pupils in P4 achieve the expected First level in reading and numeracy
 - almost 70% of pupils in P4 achieve the expected First level in writing
 - over 75% of pupils in P7 achieve the expected Second Level in reading
 - over 70% of pupils in P7 achieve the expected Second Level in writing and numeracy

- over 85% of pupils in S3 achieve the expected Third or Fourth Level in reading, writing and numeracy
- achievement in Special Schools is mixed depending on each child's individual needs

Achieved a Level Survey Results for 2016 to 2019





4.12 The high level messages emerging across the four years of teacher judgement data are that:

- the percentage of children in P1 who achieved Early level has remained stable in 2018-19, compared to 2017-18, in reading, writing and numeracy
- the percentage of children in P4 who achieved First level has increased in 2018-19, compared to 2017-18, in writing and numeracy

- the percentage of young people in P7 who achieved Second level has increased in 2018-19, compared to 2017-18, in reading, writing and numeracy
- the percentage of young people in S3 who achieved Third or Fourth level has increased in 2018-19, compared to 2017-18, in reading, writing and numeracy
- trends over the four years in the percentage of children and young people who achieved the appropriate CfE level for their age and stage, show a stable, high performance for P1 and S3 and a generally increasing performance for P4 and P7
- for example, since 2016 achievement in numeracy has increased by 14 % for P4 and 11 % for P7, while achievement in writing has increased by 9 % for P4 and 13 % for P7

The percentage of children and young people who achieved the appropriate level for their age and stage is generally below the percentage attainment for Scotland at P1, P4 and P7 but is more positive at S3. The 2019 percentage achievement compared to Scotland percentage achievement in 2018 is 1-2 % below for P1, 3-4 % below for P4 and P7 but for S3 percentage achievement is better than the Scotland percentage achievement for numeracy.

- 4.13** At this point of the Scottish Attainment Challenge the initial high level messages emerging from the 2019 teacher judgement data about the poverty related attainment gap are that since 2016 for pupils residing in SIMD 1&2:

In literacy for SIMD 1+2 pupils there is a 4 % increase in the percentage of pupils attaining the appropriate level and the gap between SIMD 1+2 and SIMD 3-10 has reduced to 8 % from 11 % in the previous year

In numeracy for SIMD 1+2 pupils there is a 5 % increase in the percentage of pupils attaining the appropriate level and the gap between SIMD 1+2 and SIMD 3-10 has reduced to 9 % from 14 % in the previous year

For literacy

- For P1 SIMD 1+2 pupils there is a 1 % increase in the percentage of pupils attaining early level, which is a 3 year positive trend, and the gap between SIMD 1+2 and SIMD 3-10 has reduced to 8 % from 10 % in the previous year
- For P4 SIMD 1+2 pupils there is a 2 % increase in the percentage of pupils attaining first level and the gap between SIMD 1+2 and SIMD 3-10 has reduced to 8 % from 9 % in the previous year
- For P7 SIMD 1+2 pupils there is a 4 % increase in the percentage of pupils attaining second level, which is a 4 year positive trend, and the gap between SIMD 1+2 and SIMD 3-10 has reduced to 11 % from 15 % in the previous year
- For S3 SIMD 1+2 pupils there is a 5 % increase in the percentage of pupils attaining third or fourth level and the gap between SIMD 1+2 and SIMD 3-10 has reduced to 5 % from 10 % in the previous year

For numeracy

- For P1 SIMD 1+2 pupils there is a 1 % decrease in the percentage of pupils attaining early level and the gap between SIMD 1+2 and SIMD 3-10 has remained at 7 %
- For P4 SIMD 1+2 pupils there is a 6 % increase in the percentage of pupils attaining first level and the gap between SIMD 1+2 and SIMD 3-10 has reduced to 10 % from 16 % in the previous year
- For P7 SIMD 1+2 pupils there is a 8 % increase in the percentage of pupils attaining second level and the gap between SIMD 1+2 and SIMD 3-10 has reduced to 10 % from 17 % in the previous year
- For S3 SIMD 1+2 pupils there is a 10 % increase in the percentage of pupils attaining third or fourth level and the gap between SIMD 1+2 and SIMD 3-10 has reduced to 10 % from 14 % in the previous year

5. People Implications

- 5.1** The additional funding from Scottish Government has supported the secondment of officers and teachers to focus on specific areas of work to raise attainment and narrow the poverty related attainment gap. Exit strategies are being developed prior to potential changes to funding streams in 2021.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1** There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** Failure to implement an authority-wide strategy to raise attainment and secure improvement will disadvantage our children and young people and may become a reputational risk to the council.
- 7.2** The Committee will be provided with regular update reports advising of progress.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out on the processes of administering the assessments. No significant issues arose provided pupils with Additional Support Needs were in receipt of their usual levels of support when completing assessments.

9. Consultation

- 9.1** The introduction of a series of standard assessments as part of a range of approaches to assessment was discussed with Head Teachers, Education Officers and teacher unions.
- 9.2** Legal Services and the Section 95 Officer have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.
- 10. Strategic Assessment**
- 10.1** This report reflects the Council's 2017-2022 overarching priority to reduce inequalities for the people of West Dunbartonshire which supports improved outcomes for all learners in our community.

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Appendices: None.

Background Papers: Equalities Impact Assessment

Wards Affected: All

