
EXAM RESULTS 2018/19

Report by Service Director, Children and Young People

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

8 October 2019

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to inform the Executive Committee of the progress schools are making in the Broad General Education for P1 to S3 and Senior Phase S4–6 Scottish Qualifications Examinations for session 2018/19.**
- 1.2 In 2018/19 all areas of Literacy and Numeracy in the Broad General Education in P1, P4, P7 and S3, apart from Second Level Numeracy, were above **76%** and in particular Listening and Reading were above **86%**. Most staff in schools are gaining in confidence in teacher judgement levels due to increased moderation activities in and across schools. For session 2019/20, all schools will be set new targets in Literacy and Numeracy to ensure that Scottish Borders meets the Scottish Government's stretch aim of 85% for 2020.
- 1.3 The Senior Phase SQA exam results are part of the attainment journey in the Scottish Borders for young people in S4–6. These results do not include the wider achievement awards, which are on the SCQF qualifications framework (Appendix 1) at the same level and were attained by young people last session. We are committed to looking at both attainment and achievement and exam results tables are only a small part of the work carried out in schools. The Education Service will give a further update to the Executive Committee on attainment and achievement in March 2020 when all the data is available.
- 1.4 Our ambition is that young people in the Senior Phase have the greatest opportunity to attain the highest level of qualification and, as a consequence, we encourage a positive presentation policy rather than a narrowing of opportunity. The number of presentations across the Scottish Borders was consistent with 2018 with approximately 6,000 at National 5, approximately 4,000 at Higher, a small increase at Advanced Higher and an increased at National 2,3, and 4. It should be noted that this is the first year of the new assessment arrangements for Advanced Higher.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Education Committee note the trends and progress that schools are making, in the Broad General Education and Senior Phase in terms of attainment and the identified areas for improvement.**

3 ATTAINMENT

3.1 Attainment in the Broad General Education

- (a) The Broad General Education is from 3–15 years of age. There are National Benchmark levels that most pupils in this phase of their education have to meet in Literacy and Numeracy. The achievement of these levels is based on teacher judgements, which are quality assured through moderation activities around teacher planning and pupil work. The National Stretch Aim is that by 2020 85% of all pupils will attain their relevant benchmarks.
- (b) The National Benchmark Levels are set out below:

Level	Achieved by most pupils by the end of
Early Level	Primary 1
First Level	Primary 4
Second Level	Primary 7
Third Level	Secondary 3
Fourth Level	some pupils by end of S3

3.2 Primary

The tables below show the percentage of children who have achieved the national benchmark in Literacy and Numeracy for a particular level. The evidence is based on the judgement of the class teacher and the standard is moderated by other staff in the school and with other schools within the cluster. Through these procedures, staff in schools are more confident in applying the national standard. National Standardised Assessments were implemented in session 2017/18 for P1, P4 and P7 children, though data from these assessments are used for diagnostic purposes only so that schools are able to identify areas for improvement.

P1 Achieved Early Level				
Year	Listening	Reading	Writing	Numeracy
2017/18	88.25%	82.14%	80.02%	82.72%
2018/19	88.43%	83.97%	80.87%	86.07%
Difference	0.18%	1.83%	0.86%	3.35%

P4 Achieved First Level				
Year	Listening	Reading	Writing	Numeracy
2017/18	88.00%	80.64%	76.39%	81.08%
2018/19	86.02%	80.72%	76.09%	77.09%
Difference	-1.98%	0.08%	-0.30%	-3.98%

P7 Achieved Second Level				
Year	Listening	Reading	Writing	Numeracy
2017/18	87.22%	81.29%	76.53%	75.17%
2018/19	89.87%	83.17%	80.39%	78.48%
Difference	2.65%	1.88%	3.86%	3.30%

3.3 Secondary Broad General Education

In 2018/19 the percentage of young people who have achieved Level 3 in Literacy and Numeracy by the end of S3 is above 93%. All secondary schools are above the Scottish Government's Stretch Aim for 2020 for Third Level of 85%, though there is still room for improvement in moderation of Third Level.

S3 Achieved Third Level or Better				
Year	Listening	Reading	Writing	Numeracy
2017/18	96.11%	95.51%	94.30%	94.73%
2018/19	96.68%	95.74%	95.14%	93.70%
Difference	0.57%	0.23%	0.84%	-1.03%

3.4 Achievement in Senior Phase S4–6 Qualifications

(a) Overall National Qualification Attainment

The tables below show the SQA National Qualification attainment in the senior phase at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher in 2019 compared to 2018. The overall pass awards show a consistency in trend or a small improvement at each award.

All pupils	2018		2019		Variance	
	A-C%	A-D%	A-C%	A-D%	A-C %	A-D %
N5	76.6	88.6	77.9	89.4	1.3	0.8
Higher	74.8	85.1	76.5	90.8	1.7	5.7
Adv. Higher	80.3	89.4	82.3	92.1	2	2.7

(b) Literacy and Numeracy

There has been a particularly positive trend in Literacy and Numeracy, with more young people in S4 than ever attaining success:

- (i) 93.4% of S4 achieved a Literacy award, an increase of 2.3% from 2018;
- (ii) 96.1% of S4 achieved a National 5 English award and this remains in line with 2018;
- (iii) 90% of S4 achieved a Numeracy award and this remains in line with 2018;

- (iv) 83.3% of S4 achieved a SCQF Level 5/National 5 award in Maths, an decrease of 4% from 2018 though 5% higher than 2017

There was notable progress at SCQF Level 5/National 5 for Biology, Chemistry, Practical Metalwork and P.E compared to National data and there is room for improvement Religious & Moral Education an, media and Health & Food Technology

(c) **SCQF Level 6/Higher**

- (i) This year's SQCF Level6/Higher results demonstrate an extremely positive trend with the percentage of young people gaining an award at Higher increasing to 91%.
- (ii) There was positive progress evidenced in English, Chemistry, Graphic Communication, Maths and Physic though there is room for improvement in Sociology and RMPS.
- (iii) In addition, there has been an increase of 6% in the number of S5 pupils gaining five Level 6 awards or more and increases overall in SCQF Level 6 as follows:

Awards	Year	SCQF Level 5	SCQF Level 6	Level 7 % Improvement
1 +	2019	91.29%	72.64%	4.79%
	2018	92.61%	67.85%	
2 +	2019	85.61%	63.42%	8.24%
	2018	88.10%	55.18%	
3 +	2019	80.95%	54.41%	8.54%
	2018	81.67%	45.87%	
4 +	2019	76.49%	42.76%	9.07%
	2018	75.14%	33.69%	
5 +	2019	70.21%	27.46%	5.58%
	2018	64.97%	21.88%	

(d) **SCQF Level 7/Advanced Higher**

The percentage of young people gaining. Attainment in over 70% of subjects at Advanced Higher level is above the National %.

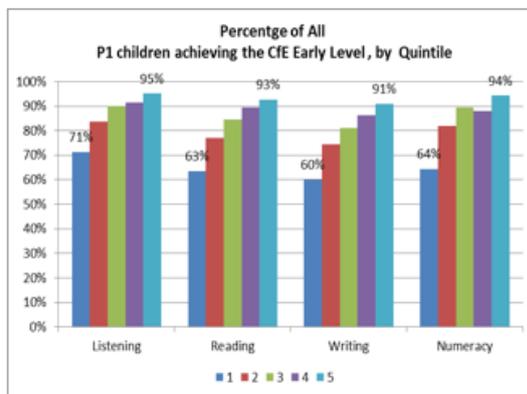
(e) **Closing the Poverty Related Attainment Gap – Broad General Education**

- (i) The data tables below show the Poverty related attainment gap has been narrowed in the last year in the following areas:
- 1) P4 Listening and Talking, by 6% points
 - 2) P4 Reading, by 3% points
 - 3) P4 Writing, by 4% points
 - 4) P7 Listening and Talking, by 15% points

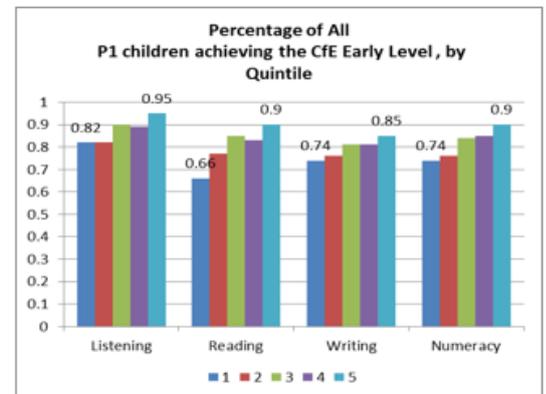
- 5) P7 Reading, 8% points
- 6) P7 Writing, by 15% points
- 7) P7 Numeracy, by 10% points

- (ii) The Pupil Equity Fund has been effectively used in all allocated schools to support targeted interventions in Literacy and Numeracy for identified groups of children and young people
- (iii) SIMD is the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, which is used as a measure in closing the attainment gap. SIMD Quintile 1 is the most deprived areas and SIMD Quintile 5 is the least deprived areas. In rural areas SIMD is calculated using postcodes so there may be small variations in accuracy.

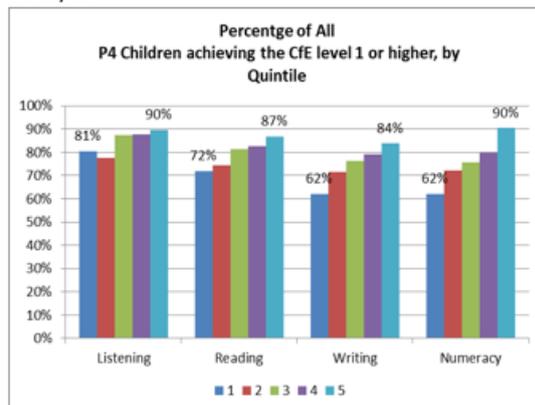
2018/19



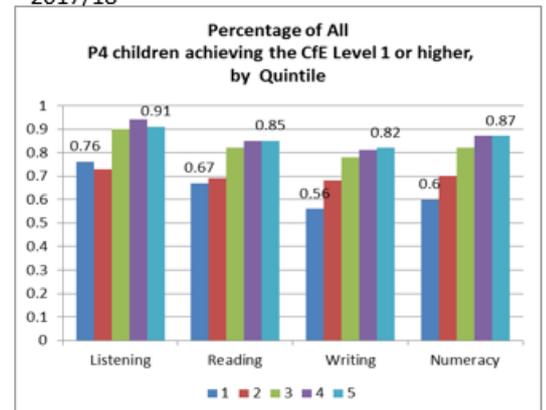
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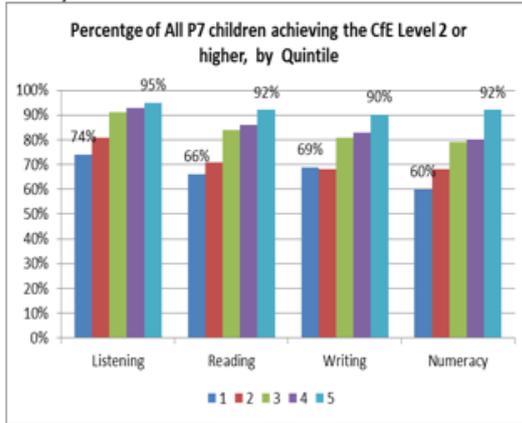
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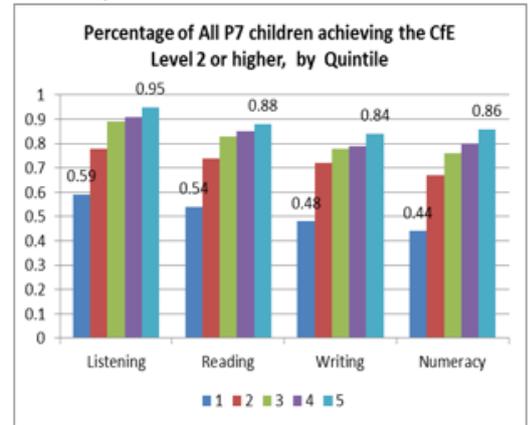
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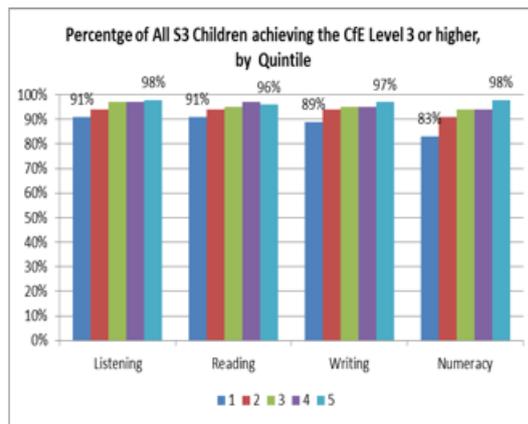
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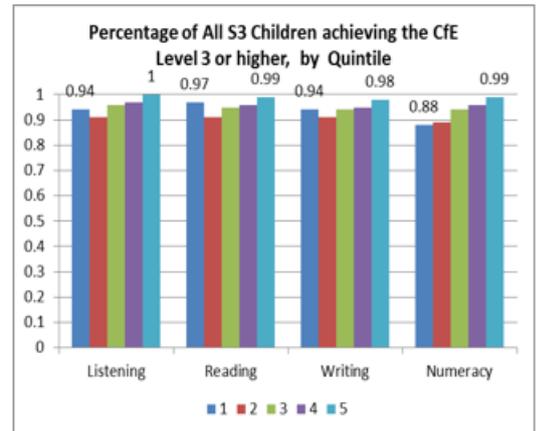
2017/18



2018/19



2017/18



	LISTENING & TALKING % GAP			READING % GAP			WRITING % GAP			NUMERACY % GAP		
	18-19	17-18	Gap decrease	18-19	17-18	Gap decrease	18-19	17-18	Gap decrease	18-19	17-18	Gap decrease
P1	24	13	-11	30	24	-6	31	11	-20	30	16	-14
P4	9	15	6	15	18	3	22	26	4	28	27	-1
P7	21	36	15	26	34	8	21	36	15	32	42	10
S3	7	6	-1	7	3	-4	8	4	-4	15	11	-4

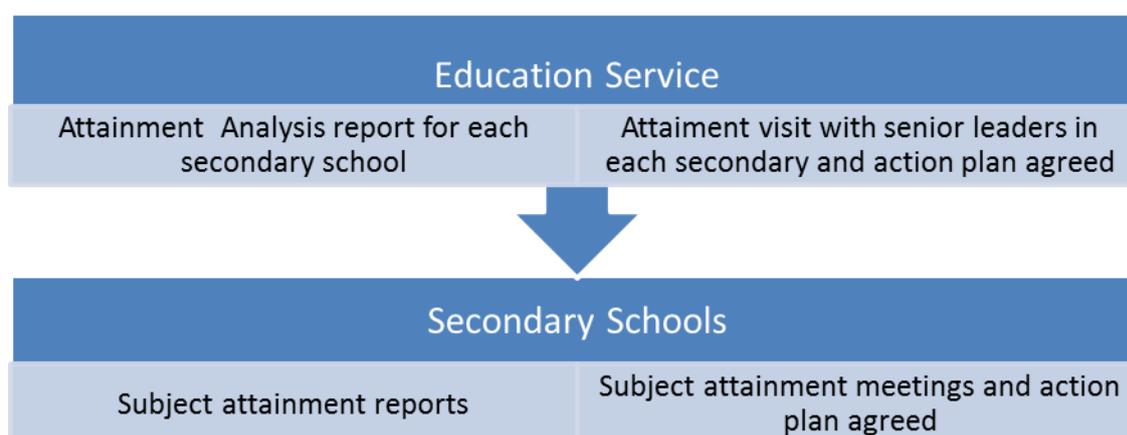
Senior Phase Closing the Gap Performance

- (f) The table below shows that overall attainment for young people living in SIMD Quintile 1 compared to 2018. The trends below reflect the overall trend for all young people in Scottish Borders where there is progress being made in broadly in line with the previous year and there is a drop in presentation at Advanced Higher

Award	Year	Presentations	A-C%	A-D%
Higher	2019	106	68.9	86.8
	2018	123	69.9	81.3
N5	2019	215	61.4	80.5
	2018	270	62.2	79.6
AH	2019	5	60.0	80.0
	2018	15	73.3	73.3

(g) **Next Steps**

- (i) A thorough data analysis of SQA exam results is now underway in preparation for the release of the Scottish Government Insight benchmarking tool in the month of September. This tool will be used by senior officers to analyse each secondary school's attainment data and to identify success and areas for improvement. Schools will then do their own detailed analysis.



- (ii) The same process will happen again in March with the updated release of Insight data. This meeting will focus on the attainment of school leavers and wider achievement and vocational attainment.
- (iii) For primary schools, senior education staff will meet with Headteachers on a termly basis to monitor attainment levels in literacy and numeracy. Primary Headteachers also hold attainment meetings with class teachers at each stage.
- (iv) The local authority will be monitoring the tracking data across the BGE three times a year. This will allow the central team to have an overview of attainment in SBC and allocate targeted support to ensure the optimum outcomes for all young people.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

4.2 Risk and Mitigations

There are no risks associated with this Report.

4.3 Equalities

It is anticipated that there are no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals in this report.

4.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no significant impacts on the economy, community or environment arising from the proposals contained in this report.

4.5 Carbon Management

There are no significant effects on carbon emissions arising from the proposals contained in this report.

4.6 Rural Proofing

This report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

4.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals contained in this report.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR, Communications and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Stuart Easingwood

Signature

Interim Service Director, Children & Young People

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Catherine Thomson	Quality Improvement Officer

Background Papers: SCQF Framework

Previous Minute Reference: N/A

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Catherine Thomson can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA.

Appendix 1

SCQF Framework

The Scottish Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is the national qualifications framework for Scotland which helps everyone understand and compare the various Scottish qualifications such as National Qualifications at National 5 and Higher to National Progression Awards, Youth Achievement , Higher National Certificates etc.

All secondary schools are beginning to look at different courses and awards to accredit learning in the widest sense, not just for the traditional examinations. This gives young people a wide range of learning but which is benchmarked within a standardised level in the framework and should also have equal parity of esteem. Education in Scotland use the terminology of SQCF levels for all accredited awards so as to recognise the relevant level of learning no matter the award.

It should be noted that not all awards are benchmarked within this framework. A example would be Dike of Edinburgh Awards who, as an organisation, are not keen for their award to sit within this framework. This does not diminish the learning for our young people though.

THE SCOTTISH CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

This Framework diagram has been produced to show the mainstream Scottish qualifications already credit rated by SQA and HEIs. However, there are a diverse number of learning programmes on the Framework, which, due to the limitations of this format, cannot be represented here. For more information, please visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk to view the interactive version of the Framework or search the Database.



SCQF Levels	SQA Qualifications		Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	Apprenticeships & SVQs
12			Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship
11			Masters Degree, Integrated Masters Degree, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship SVQ
10			Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship
9		Professional Development Award	Bachelors / Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
8		Higher National Diploma	Diploma Of Higher Education	Higher Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
7	Advanced Higher, Awards, Scottish Baccalaureate	Higher National Certificate	Certificate Of Higher Education	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ
6	Higher, Awards, Skills for Work Higher			Modern Apprenticeship Foundation Apprenticeship SVQ
5	National 5, Awards, Skills for Work National 5			Modern Apprenticeship SVQ
4	National 4, Awards, Skills for Work National 4	National Certificate	National Progression Award	SVQ
3	National 3, Awards, Skills for Work National 3			
2	National 2, Awards			
1	National 1, Awards			

The framework aims to:

- Help learners plan their learner journey through school and beyond;

- Help learners understand qualifications they are not familiar with;
- Help employers understand different types of qualifications and also supports effective recruitment and workforce development;
- education and training providers of all kinds to identify the level that has been studied in a particular subject and make it easier to transfer credit points between different learning programmes; and
- Provides recognition of a very wide range of learning programmes including wider achievement or vocational awards

SCQF Levels

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework has 12 levels. Secondary school generally work between Level 1 and Level 7 on the framework. Level 1 is National 1 level awards which can be accessed by young people with complex learning needs, to level 7 which is equivalent to Advanced Higher and HNC's.

The different levels indicate the level of difficulty of a particular qualification. The Level Descriptors outline the general outcomes of learning at SCQF levels under five broad headings:

- knowledge and understanding;
- practice (applied knowledge and understanding);
- generic cognitive skills (e.g. evaluation, critical analysis);
- communication, numeracy and IT skills; and
- autonomy, accountability and working with others.

The Descriptors allow broad comparisons to be made between qualifications and learning and allow learners, employers and the public in general to understand the range of skills and learning that should be achieved at each level.

Equality of qualifications

The SCQF promotes equality of qualifications. For instance, an Outward Bound Adventure and Challenge Award sits at level 5 on the SCQF which is the same level as a National 5. They might be very different types of learning but learners still have to use the same level of skills to achieve them. This is why it's really important to include all the learning young people achieve on a profile or CV with the SCQF level.

The SCQF School Ambassador Programme?

The SCQF School Ambassador programme offers schools the opportunity to learn more about the benefits of the SCQF and the wider ways in which it supports learners such as recognising wider achievement, developing Senior Phase learning pathways in line with the Developing the Young Workforce strategy and giving equality between vocational and academic qualifications.

A few of our schools are currently involved in the SCQF Ambassador programme.