

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL'S



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING

Play     #yourpart

STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2020-21





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ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2020-21

1. INTRODUCTION

We are delighted to present our annual Standards and Quality Report on achieving equity and excellence in Scottish Borders. This report outlines the successes and achievements of all our children and young people, our schools and wider services. Such as the sector-leading approaches to digital learning, our strong partnership working to ensure children have the best start, our progress with family learning and supporting parents as partners in learning, as well as our improving attainment and post-school destination levels.

Academic session 2020-21 was unique with further school closures across Scotland as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As well as a second period of extended home learning, all SQA examinations were cancelled and replaced with an Alternative Certification Model. Despite the interruptions to the school year, staff across the education family worked incredibly hard to provide high quality learning for children and support for families, whilst up-skilling themselves at pace. The pandemic strengthened our relationship with families, increased collaboration of staff and improved partnership working across services to support children.

We maintain a commitment to reducing inequities and tackling poverty with enhanced supports provided as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge fund. Throughout the report there are examples of the difference we are making to children, young people and families across the Scottish Borders. The Virtual School is developing well and beginning to make a positive difference to care-experienced children.

Looking to the future, we will continue our drive for excellence and equity in all that we do. We will continue to embrace innovative approaches to ensure the highest quality of experience for our learners and are confident that the 'Inspire Learning' project will continue to transform learning and teaching. Our priorities for 2021/22 will reflect core strategies and priorities of UNCRC (children's Rights), The Promise (Care experienced) and Sustainability (Net-Zero).



After a very difficult year, we are very proud of what our children, young people and staff have achieved. It is important to recognise that our success has only been possible due to the resilience of our children, the hard work and commitment of our staff and the support of our families and carers.

Lesley Munro

Director, Education and Lifelong Learning

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2020-21

2. OUR PRIORITIES

At the end of each academic session, the education service evaluates the priorities and commitments set for the year and produces an evidence report. This report describes the progress made in taking forward our strategic priorities below, and the positive impact of this work on our children and young people in the Scottish Borders. It also outlines our steps for the following year to ensure continuous improvement.

OUR PRIORITIES

- **Develop high quality learning and teaching through Inspire Learning that leads to improved levels of attainment and achievement in all our schools and settings**
- **Developing inclusive practice**
- **Partnership and family learning**
- **Develop high quality leadership at all levels**

These priorities align to those set out in the National Improvement Framework (NIF) and our evaluative statements, contained with this report, illustrate improvements made under each of the NIF drivers. The six drivers are: School improvement, school leadership, teacher professionalism, assessing children's progress, parental engagement and performance information. These are all key factors that contribute to the quality of our education system.

As well as aligning to national expectations, the SBC Education Priorities link to the Scottish Borders Council's Strategic Plan (2018-2023), the Integrated Children & Young People's Plan (2019-2023) and the South East Improvement Collaborative Plan (2021-22).



LOCAL CONTEXT

Scottish Borders is a rural local authority covering a large area – 1,827 square miles – taking approximately 2 hours by car to travel from East to West. There are 16,838 children and young people in our early years, primary and secondary schools and centres.

For catchment purposes, Scottish Borders is divided into 9 clusters each with a secondary school and varying numbers of associated primary schools. In total there are 9 secondary schools and 59 primary schools. 48 Primary schools have Early Learning & Childcare provision and there are 4 Early Years Centres. Early Learning and Childcare places are also procured from 36 Funded Providers. There are 3 Roman Catholic primary schools, situated in Peebles, Galashiels and Selkirk. There is a primary and secondary Inclusion and Wellbeing Service and 1 special primary school which is designed to support children with autism. In addition, we have 4 primary and 5 secondary enhanced provisions which meet the needs of our children and young people with severe and complex additional support needs. These provisions cover all areas of Scottish Borders.

24% of children in the Scottish Borders live in families with limited resources with 10.4% of P1-S3 children in receipt of free school meals. The new SBC Child Poverty Indicator (CPI) takes into account a range of measures to provide a CPI score for each school. This CPI was used to plan the phased implementation of 1140 hours for Early Learning & Childcare.

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2020-21

3. SUCCESSSES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

CHILDCARE HUBS DURING LOCKDOWN (COVID 19)

During the summer holiday period of 2020, the Scottish Government required all local authorities to provide summer childcare hubs to support both the children of key workers and vulnerable families in response to the global pandemic.

Scottish Borders Council opened 16 summer hubs across the local authority for the duration of the school summer holiday period. Our partner providers supported this response and 8 of the early year's hubs were provided by them. Scottish Borders Council Educational Psychology Service deployed staff to the hubs throughout the summer to provide specialist advice and support. All the hubs were open 7 days a week from 7.30am to 6pm. On average 250 – 300 children attended these hubs each day.



INSPIRE LEARNING

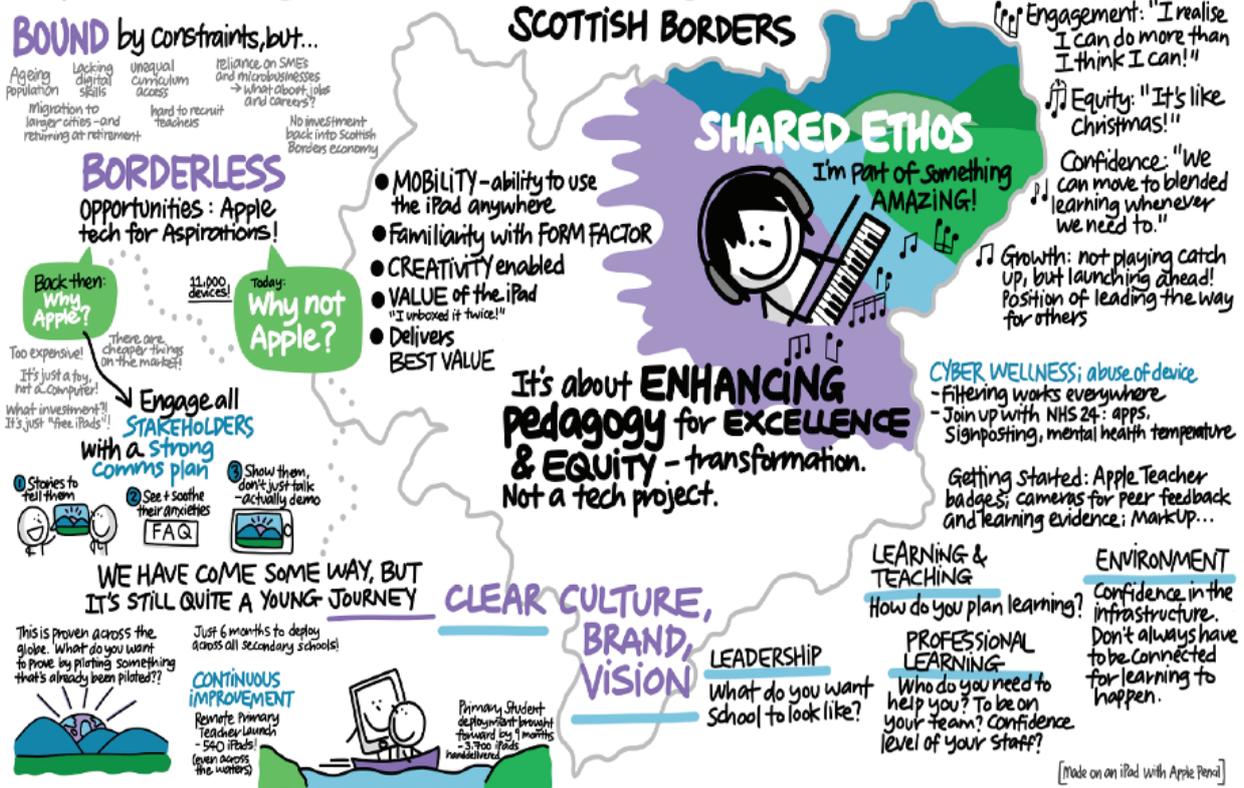
'Inspire Learning' Project is transforming the way learners learn and teachers teach.

Our vision for Inspire Learning is to be the best place in the world to learn, live and work and in a year like no other, our education transformation programme has certainly proved to be business critical for our families and learners.

Inspire Learning's partnership approach is ensuring that learning focuses on digital skills, employability and lifelong opportunity.



Implementing a 1 to 1 iPad Programme 22 July 2020



LGC AWARDS

Inspire Learning won two national awards from the Local Government Council; Public/Private partnership for our collaboration with CGI and Future places.

In response to COVID and to support home learning, Scottish Borders brought forward the iPad deployment for P6/7 children to June 2020 and also re-aligned the programme to now include all P4/5 children too for 1:1 devices. Early in the new term, Aug 2020, the Inspire Team supported primary school staff to deploy these devices to children in order to upskill and prepare them for the further impact of COVID.

The Inspire Board also took the decision to extend the project scope to include **Early Year Practitioners** and these staff will receive their iPads ready to start in August 2021. This will allow practitioners to improve their digital skills, collaborate in and across settings more easily and develop creative ways to capture and share learning in the early years setting.

We look forward to developing the Inspire Learning programme with our Newly Qualified Teachers in Session 2021-22



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - SCHOOLHOUSE

Almost all our staff professional learning, especially on digital pedagogy, was delivered through our Schoolhouse Teams page through Glow. Throughout the year our Inspire Trainers, staff and visitors have delivered short, bit-size webinars and drop-in clinics every day so as to support the professional skills of our staff and improve their confidence. This collaboration space is where staff asked questions and got instant support, including technical help from CGI, got ideas from the team and colleagues and the confidence to try new things. Attendance at sessions on average was 30 teachers with a few webinars having over 100 attendees, making our staff much more upskilled in using digital technology at the heart of learning. The Masterclass series of webinars is a collaboration with staff at Edinburgh Academy where teachers who are already very confident in their practice, can share their learning together.

The Early Years Team made great use of Schoolhouse to collaborate, support and share with the staff across Borders. This also included staff from our Private and Voluntary providers, making it the core space to delivery professional learning webinars and resources to everyone in order to maintain a high-quality delivery of service during a difficult time.

APPLE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SPECIALISTS

Four of our secondary teachers in Scottish Borders, have gained this qualification from Apple and others from Microsoft. The Apple Professional Learning Specialist course is an intensive professional learning accreditation specifically for teachers. Apple worked with these teachers throughout the journey—from acquiring foundational knowledge to developing instructional innovation that creates more a-ha moments with students.

Apple Professional Learning Specialists provide:

- Visionary conversations
- Consultative relationships
- Flexible curriculum integration practices
- Hands-on and immersive learning experiences
- Research-based instructional technology strategies
- Personal experience with innovative teaching and learning.

These key staff delivered regular professional learning every week to our teachers and were instrumental in supporting their colleagues in their own schools and clusters.

We look forward to adding to our experts next year working with our primary teachers



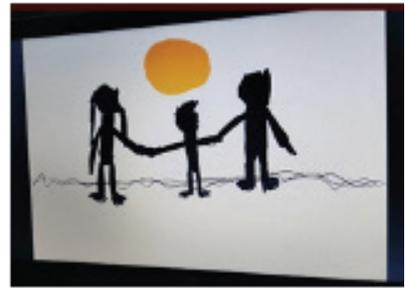
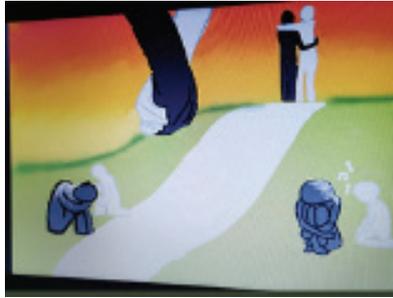
STAFF SUCCESS AT SELKIRK HS

Selkirk High School teacher Richard Willan is now an Apple Certified Trainer in App Development with Swift after completing the two week course with the Apple Education team. Richard will now develop and deliver a range of courses for learners in Selkirk High School for coding and App development.



OUT OF THE DARK

In collaboration with DYW Borders, 200 young people submitted their designs for our virtual exhibition of what hope looks like coming out of the pandemic. The entries are being exhibited in three locations across the Borders.



FEEDBACK ON INSPIRE

The lesson was easy to follow and it was delivered the same as if we were in the classroom.

The fact that the iPad is mobile and you can take them anywhere. Especially good for filming learning and getting instant feedback!

Having the iPads has significantly improved my English classes

It has really helped me with my essay writing and spelling.

With Inspire Learning I am now able to get clear next steps and my ideas are now legible. I can also access resources anyway and anytime.

I have noticed how much easier it is to revise with my iPad

They are a wonderful tool in the classroom.

I'm now able to keep all my files organised for my Highers this year

Young People...

They have let me learn at my own pace outside class too.

The iPads have really made the lessons interactive and this has made it much more enjoyable.

Inspire Learning even helps the environment because you are not always using paper

I love the fact that I don't need to take out my laptop every time I need to do some research or create a document

So encouraged by the variety of work my students are handing in!

The fact that the iPad is mobile and you can take them anywhere. Especially good for filming learning and getting instant feedback!

Great for keeping in touch with pupils.

Staff are using screen recording on the iPads to video learning and popping this into Teams

It has been great for collecting in work and marking it on the screen with my Apple Pencil.

Thank goodness for impactful collaboration using Teams!

The school has transitioned easily to working in a new way with the full support of the Inspire team if we've needed anything.

Teachers...

Staff still working on Apple Teacher and Microsoft MIE badges

Knowing they have an iPad means I can set a variety of different types of learning

It gives pupils feedback quickly

It's fantastic for continuing education at home.

It's making learning at home so much easier and straight forward

Thank God for the iPads!

Inspire Learning opens up more opportunities and ways of thinking, great for encouragement.

Parents...

Both parent and child finding it beneficial

No challenges getting connected

Hard to imagine what learning would look like without it

She has loved how she can just speak to her teacher right away and then she can talk to her friends

Been fantastic for continuing education at home.

It's making learning at home so much easier and straight forward

VIRTUAL WORK PLACEMENT

Our first ever Virtual Work placement took place with 33 S3 pupils from across the Borders.

In collaboration with DYW Borders and CSY Architects in Galashiels, the group were given a project design brief to develop over the week with a presentation to Gavin Yuill and his team.

Gavin said he was 'blown away' with the work and creativity the young people presented.



The graphic features a central illustration of a person in a red shirt working at a desk with a lamp. To the left is a drawing of a ruler and set square. To the right is a drawing of two people in business attire. Below the central illustration is the text 'VIRTUAL WORK PLACEMENT' in large, bold, green letters. Below that is the text 'The week involves pupils designing their ideal classroom for the post COVID learning an environment.' At the bottom are logos for Camerons Strachan Yuill Architects, Inspire Learning, DYW Borders, and Scottish Borders Council. A text box in the top right of the central illustration reads: 'WORK EXPERIENCE RUNNING: W/C 31ST MAY FOR ONE WEEK!'.

WORK EXPERIENCE
RUNNING:
W/C 31ST MAY
FOR ONE WEEK!

VIRTUAL WORK PLACEMENT

The week involves pupils designing their ideal classroom for the post COVID learning an environment.

CAMERONS STRACHAN YUILL ARCHITECTS

Inspire LEARNING

DYW BORDERS Developing the Young Workforce

Scottish Borders COUNCIL

YOUTH MUSIC INITIATIVE (YMI)

Delivering professional learning to primary class teacher in Ukulele and keyboard over Teams and delivering live music classes remotely to pupils, including using Garageband on the iPad. This approach made sure that continuity of learning in the expressive arts continued in a unique way for learners and only because SBC had the technology to support this.

YMI, in collaboration with the Early Years team, created guidance which has supported practitioners to plan and use music to a greater level to improve early level experiences and outcomes across the curriculum in particular within the areas of literacy and numeracy.

YMI led a virtual training session to Early Years practitioners which was attended by 70 delegates who reported the session had had increased confidence in planning for music within the Early Learning and Childcare to support the curriculum.

CONNECTING SCOTLAND

As part of the Scottish Government's Connecting Scotland programme, Scottish Borders was awarded grant funding to support children and families who were digitally excluded by providing devices and connectivity. We were able to support over 300 families with children in P1-3 with iPads to use at home and over 100 families with a 4G enabled dongle to improve connectivity to a network. The impact of this additional resource meant young learners were able to access and complete learning and staff were able to communicate with families more easily thus removing potential barriers.

DEVELOPING YOUNG WORKFORCE (DYW) CO-ORDINATORS

In January, 4 of our 5 new Developing Young Workforce Co-ordinators started in their new role of supporting schools by bridging the gap to industry by increasing employer engagement in the classroom and supporting work based learning, especially for those young people most at risk. Each co-ordinator works with two secondary schools each week and we are excited by the opportunity having these new staff in schools will bring moving forward.

Despite the constraints of COVID, the co-ordinators led on the organisation and delivery of the virtual work placement and in the new STEPS to work programme designed for school leavers.



PEEBLES HIGH DEBATERS

Pupils at Peebles High were crowned the best young debaters in Scotland for the second consecutive year by the Law Society of Scotland. They were awarded the Donald Dewar Memorial Award.





ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2020-21

4. SCOTTISH BORDERS ATTAINMENT

OVERALL ATTAINMENT STATEMENT

Given the pandemic and the subsequent school closure, home-learning, and alternative arrangements for SQA examinations, direct comparisons should not be made with previous years' attainment data.

BGE P1-P7

The Achievement of a Level Data (ACEL) is collected annually, on behalf of the Scottish Government, for P1, P4, P7 and S3. It is based on teacher judgement and moderation. As a consequence of the Pandemic the data was not collected in Session 2019-20. For Session 2020-21 the data was not to be collected for S3.

SESSION 2020-21

STAGE	ACHIEVED LEVEL			
	LISTENING	READING	WRITING	NUMERACY
P1	84.2%	76.4%	76.6%	80.5%
P4	80.5%	74.5%	66.8%	71.2%
P7	85.1%	77.6%	71.3%	74.0%

SENIOR PHASE - SCHOOL LEAVERS S4-6

For 2020 the absence of external assessment information, and the Ministerial direction to award estimated grades, have led to a different pattern of attainment than we have seen in previous years. The results for 2020 **should not be** directly compared to those in previous years or future years. The 2020 data cannot therefore be used to directly demonstrate subject, school or authority improvement compared with previous years.

Care should also be taken when comparing attainment to the virtual comparator.

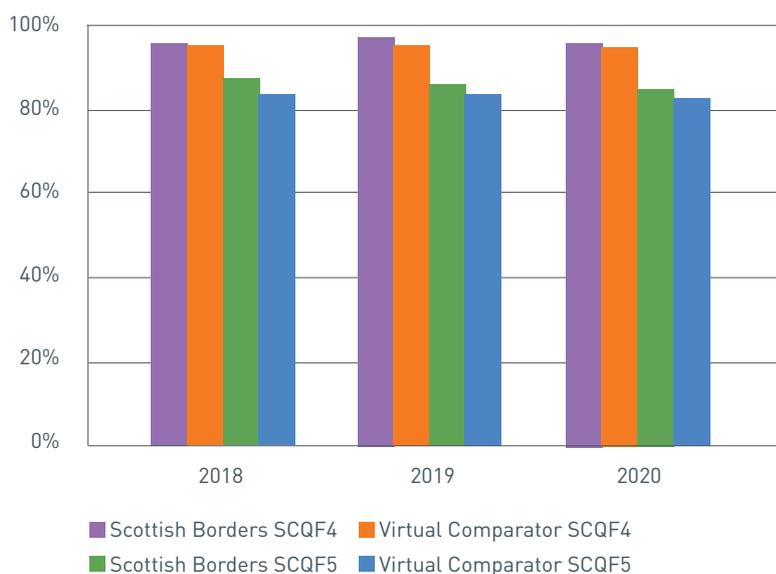
LITERACY & NUMERACY: ALL LEAVERS

Performance in Literacy at SCQF levels 4 and 5 is greater than our virtual comparator and has been over the past three years.

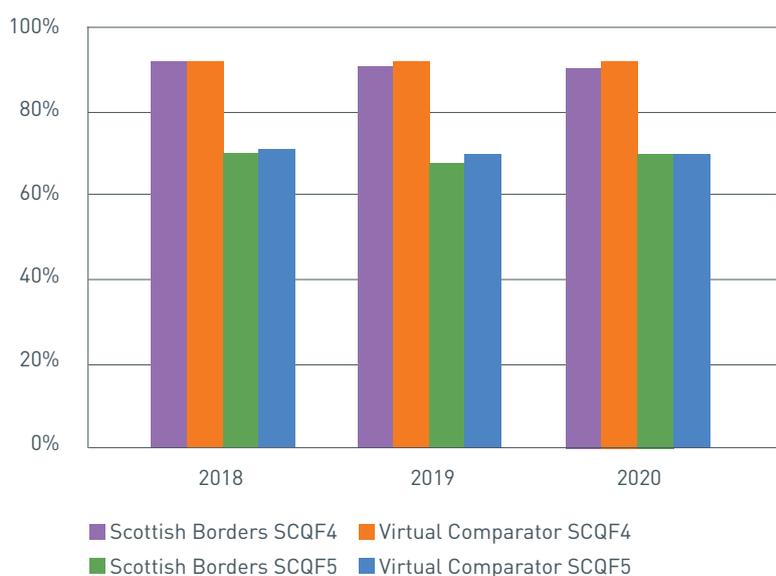
Performance in Numeracy remains consistently in line with our virtual comparator

IMPROVING ATTAINMENT IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY

PERCENTAGE OF LEAVERS ATTAINING LITERACY



PERCENTAGE OF LEAVERS ATTAINING NUMERACY



LITERACY & NUMERACY: QUINTILE 1 (MOST DEPRIVED 20%)

ATTAINMENT FOR ALL

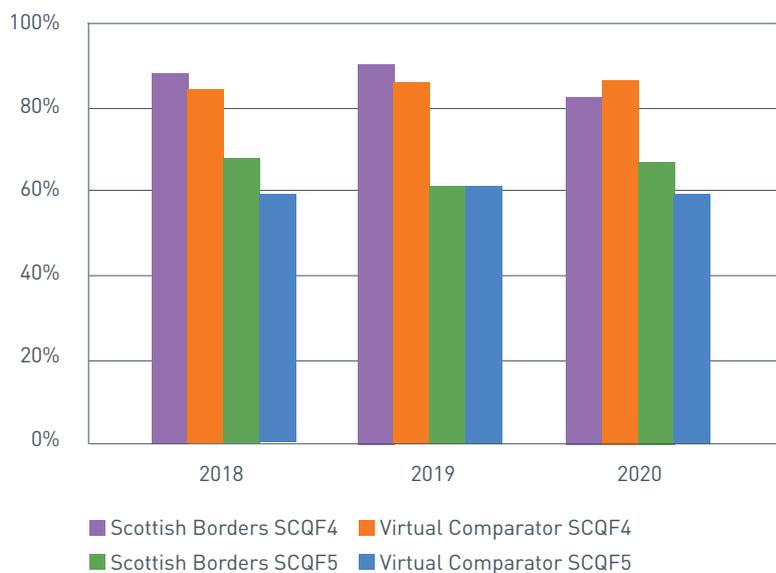
POSITIVE DESTINATIONS: ALL LEAVERS 2020

Performance in Literacy for the most deprived learners at SCQF level 5 is greater than our virtual comparator and has improved from 2019 though performance at SCQF level 4 is lower than our virtual comparator for the first time in three years.

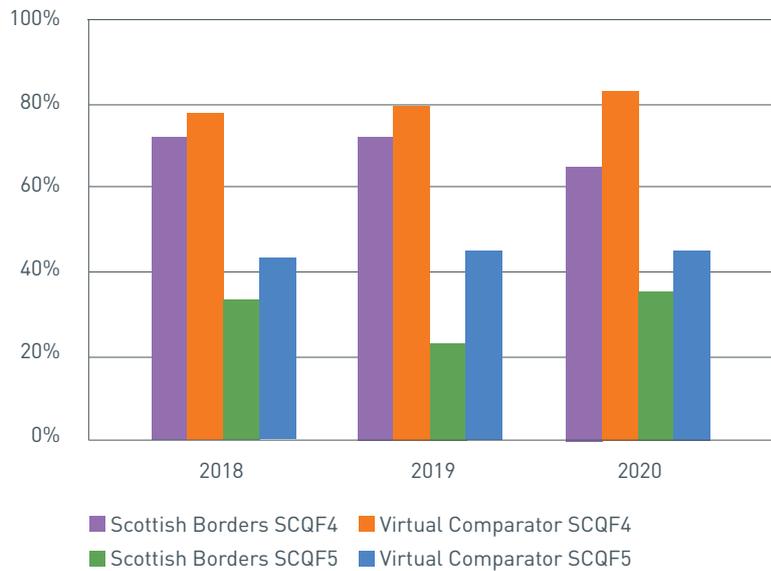
Performance in Numeracy for the most deprived learners at SCQF levels 4 and 5 is lower than our virtual comparator.

IMPROVING ATTAINMENT IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY

PERCENTAGE OF LEAVERS ATTAINING LITERACY



PERCENTAGE OF LEAVERS ATTAINING NUMERACY

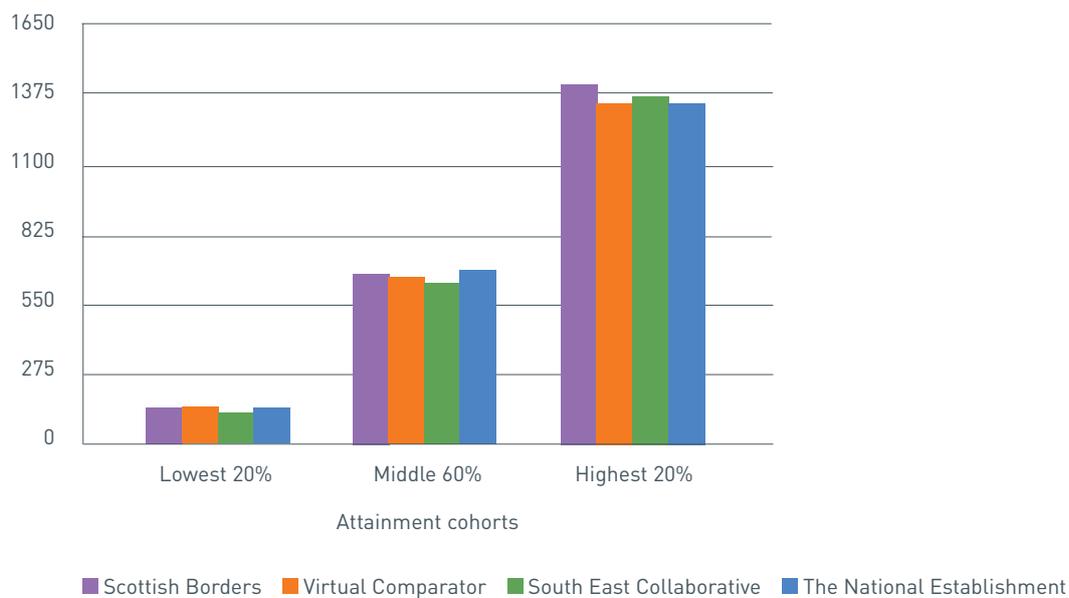


ATTAINMENT FOR ALL

The selected year is 2020

IMPROVING ATTAINMENT FOR ALL

AVERAGE COMPLEMENTARY TARIFF POINTS

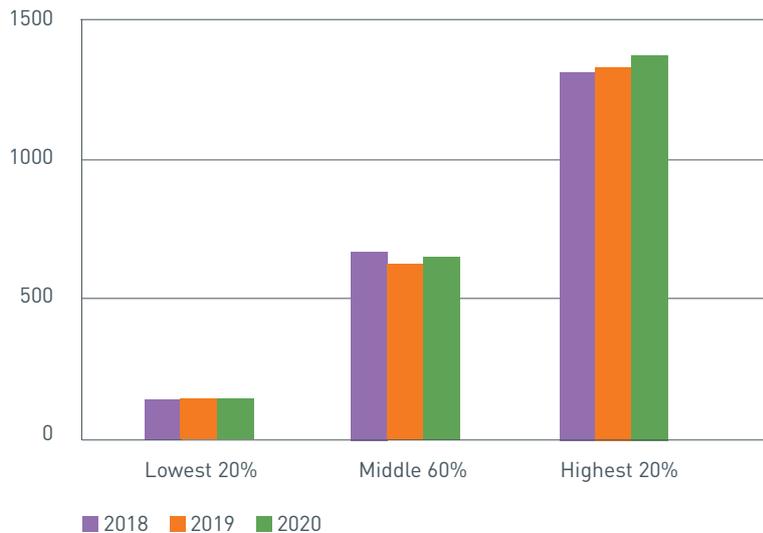


Performance of the Highest 20% of attainers is greater than both the virtual comparator and the national. Over a three year trend, there is a slight improvement in 2020

Performance of the lowest 20% of attainment is above the virtual comparator for 2020 and remains consistent over a three year trend

Performance of the Middle 60% of attainers remains consistently in line with the virtual comparator over a three year period

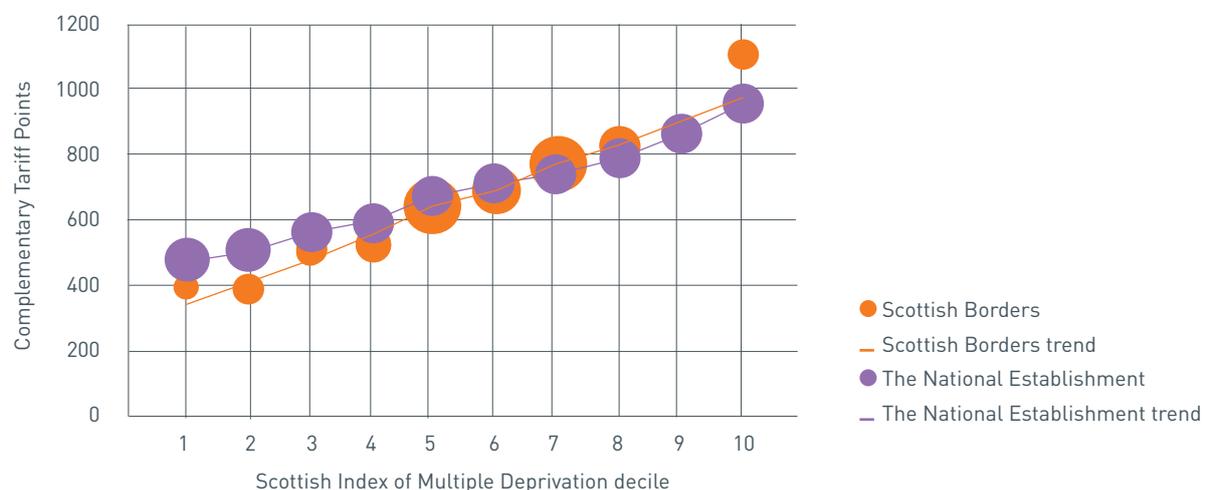
ALL LEAVERS TARIFF POINTS : 3 YR TREND



The selected year is 2019/20

TACKLING DISADVANTAGED BY IMPROVING THE ATTAINMENT OF LOWER ATTAINERS RELATIVE TO HIGHER ATTAINERS

ATTAINMENT VERSUS DEPRIVATION

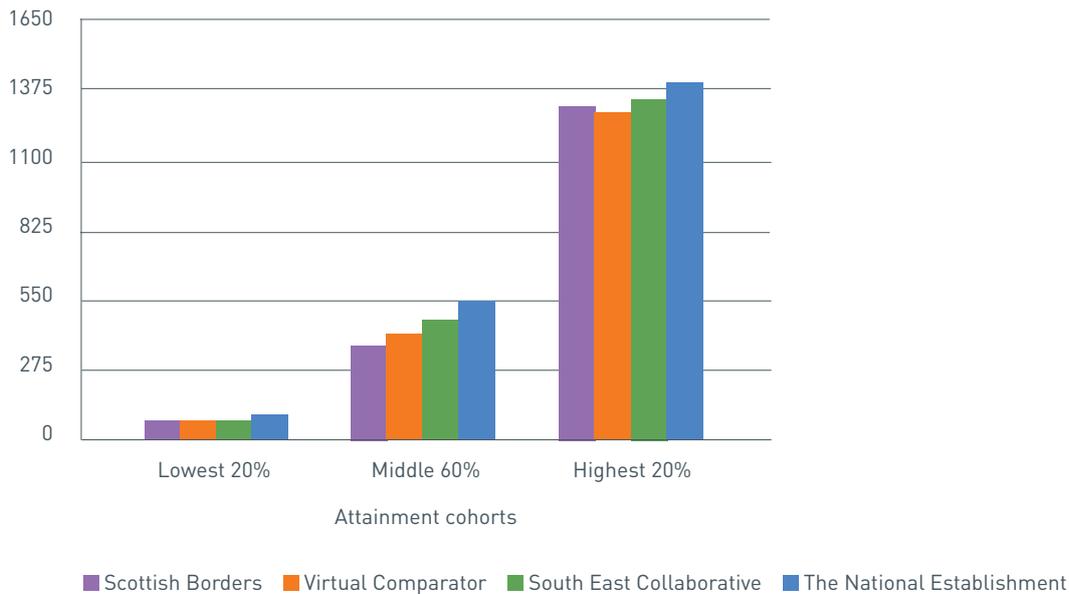


ATTAINMENT FOR ALL: QUINTILE 1 (MOST DEPRIVED 20%)

The selected year is 2020

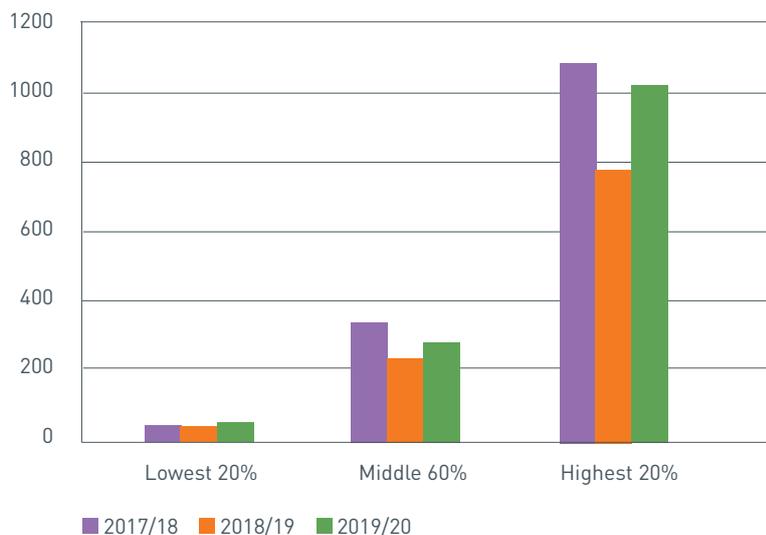
IMPROVING ATTAINMENT FOR ALL

AVERAGE COMPLEMENTARY TARIFF POINTS



Performance in all cohorts is lower than the national level though is broadly in line with the virtual comparator

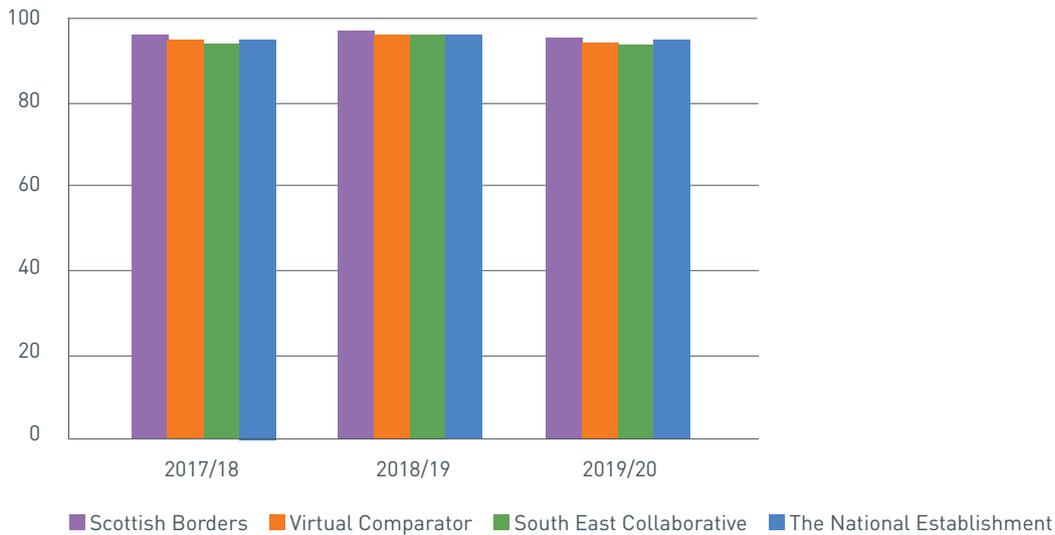
QUINTILE 1 LEAVERS : TARIFF POINT TREND



POSITIVE DESTINATIONS: ALL LEAVERS

INCREASING POST-SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL LEAVERS IN A POSITIVE DESTINATION



- SBC percentage of leavers in a positive destination at **94.64%** is higher than the virtual comparator, SEIC and national levels.
- Three year trend remains consistent for all leavers.
- Improvement of 3.8 % of all leavers moving into Higher Education from previous year.
- Lowest % of leavers over three years who had an Unknown destination or Unemployed Not Seeking Employment.
- Though the % of leavers moving into employed is lower than 2018/19 it remains above the virtual comparator, SEIC and National levels at 20%.
- Highest % of leavers going into Further Education over three year trend.

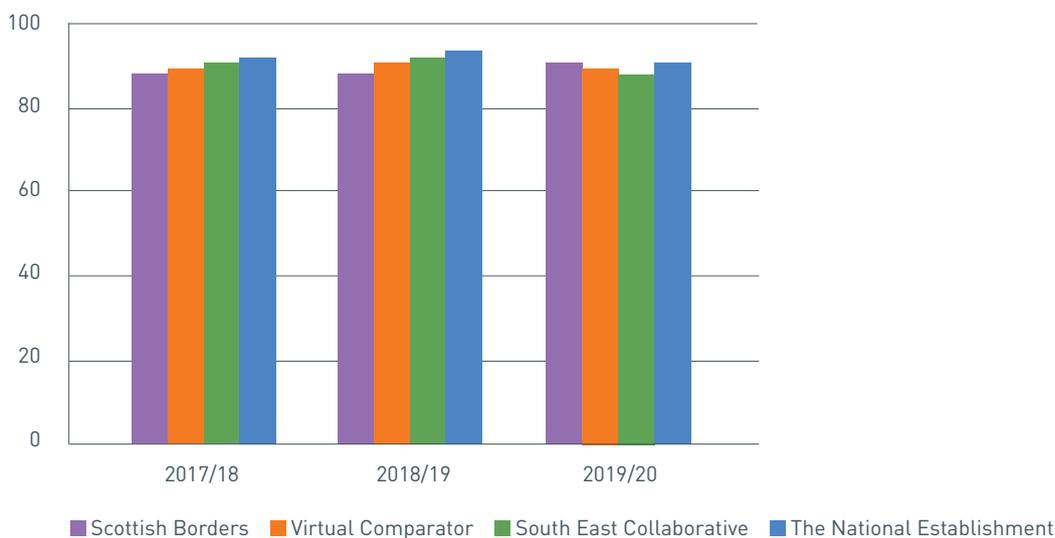
DESTINATIONS : ALL LEAVERS



POSITIVE DESTINATIONS: QUINTILE 1 (MOST DEPRIVED 20%)

INCREASING POST-SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL LEAVERS IN A POSITIVE DESTINATION



AWARDS		LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
5+	2020	90.58%	90.30%	90.03%	85.60%	65.00%	42.11%

- 5+ at all levels is broadly in line with the Virtual Comparator for 2020
- 5+ at SCQF Level 6 is higher than the VC and 4.76% higher than 2018-19 performance
- 5+ awards at SCQF Levels 4 and 5 remain broadly in line with the virtual Comparator
- 28% of leavers achieve 1 or more SCQF Level 7 awards. This is an increase of 3.5% from 2018-19
- 55% of all leavers achieved 3 or more SCQF Level 6 awards. This is an increase of 3% from 2018-19
- 28.72% of all leavers achieve 6 or more awards at SCQF Level 6. This is an increase of 3% from 2018-19
- 13.58% of the 20% most deprived leavers achieved 5 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 6. This is a 3% increase from 2018-19
- 27.16% of the 20% most deprived learners achieve 3 or more SCQF Level 6 awards. This is a 16% increase from 2018-19

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2020-21

5. STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1 - DEVELOP HIGH QUALITY LEARNING AND TEACHING

Develop high quality learning and teaching through Inspire Learning that leads to improvement levels of attainment and achievement in all our schools and settings.

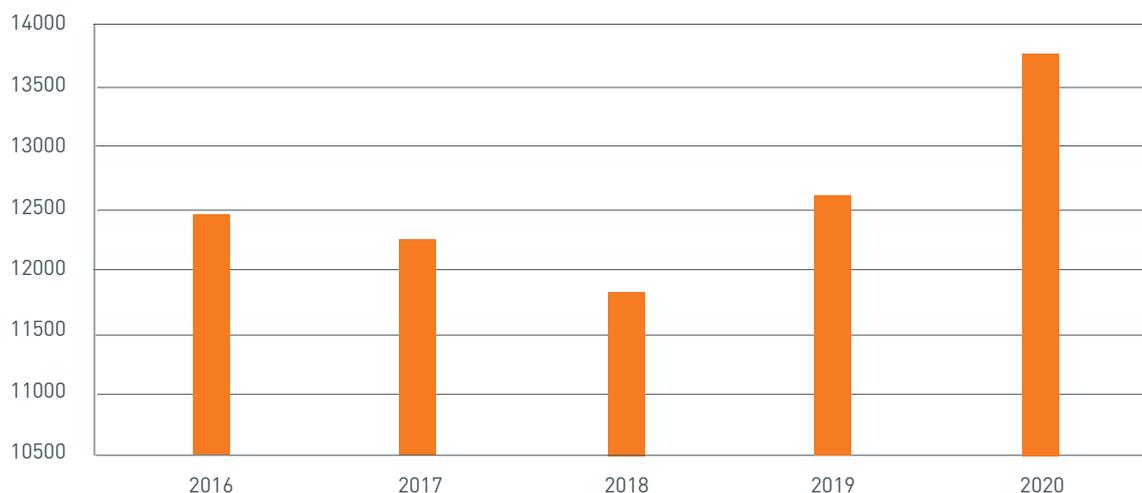
- 1.1 Ensure the senior phase curriculum has breadth, depth and challenge for all our young adults through the variety of qualifications in the Senior Phase. Those opportunities will lead to an increase in levels of attainment and Achievement that supports individual aspirations and economic activity in Scotland.
- 1.2 Increase attainment in literacy and numeracy across the BGE to a stage average of 85% by June 2023. We aim to close the poverty related attainment gap by 10% by June 2023
- 1.3 Ensure high quality education throughout BGE and Senior Phase



The number of entries for qualifications in 2020 was 13751. This is an increase of over 1000 and the highest number of a three-year trend.

The following chart shows the total number of entries

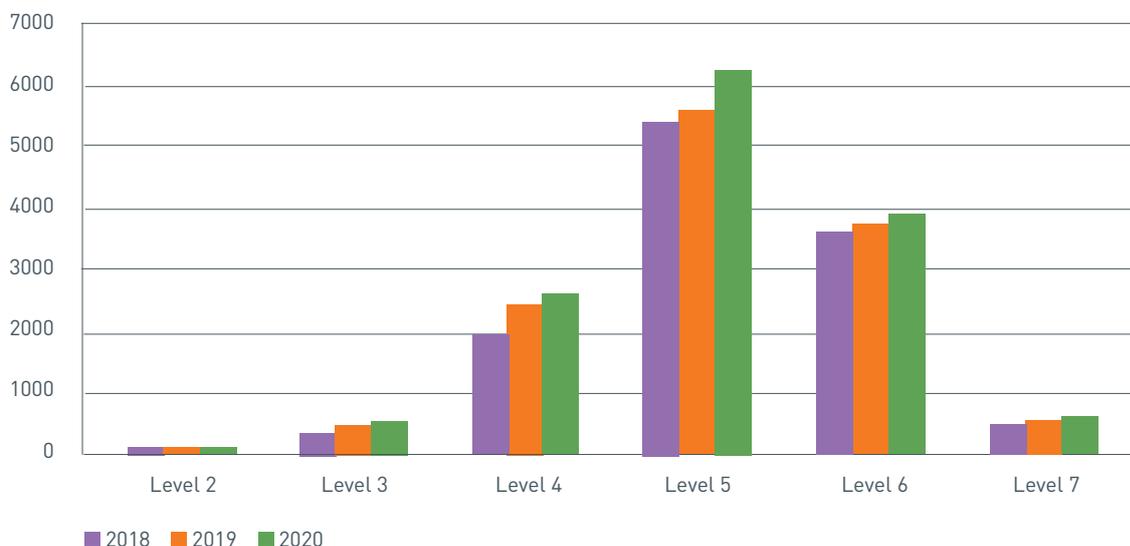
ENTRIES



Overall, Scottish Borders secondary schools and partners delivered 122 different subject qualifications. This is an increase of 18 from 2019 and the highest over the last 3 years. 23 new courses were delivered in session 2019-20. These included Data Science, Exercise & Fitness leadership, Young Enterprise, Rural Skills, STEM leadership and Engineering Skills.

There are many awards young people can achieve in apart from National Qualifications. These awards are benchmarked on the Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework (SCQF) from level 1 to 7. The following chart shows the improvement in entries over three years for SCQF Level 2-7 qualifications

SCQF LEVEL ENTRIES TREND



SCQF FRAMEWORK LEVEL							
ENTRIES	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6	LEVEL 7	TOTAL
2018	36	308	2022	5390	3587	486	11829
2019	37	409	2425	5550	3693	506	12620
2020	68	508	2554	6217	3844	558	13751

SCHOOL ACADEMY

Session 2020-21 saw a completely new approach to delivering learning in partnership with Borders College for pupils who participate in the Schools Academy programme. Due to COVID19, almost all the courses were by online delivery through Glow Teams using the Inspire Learning iPads. This proved very challenging given that most courses were of a practical nature but strong partnership working meant that pupils were able to achieve.

Foundation Apprenticeships : in 2020-21 in partnership with Borders College, seven Foundation Apprenticeship frameworks were on offer with 59 entries across all secondary schools. This is an increase from the previous 3 years and shows an upwards trend for uptake of these qualifications. Three of the frameworks, Civil Engineering, Creative and Digital Media and Software Development were new for session 2020-21.

In total, Borders College delivered 23 different qualifications for 448 pupils in the senior phase. This is in line with previous years entries and range from SCQF level 3-7.

SBC LEARNS, LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

was launched in September 2020. The framework outlines key principles recognised to be essential for high quality learning. It aims to support schools and settings across the Scottish Borders to develop learning, teaching and assessment guidance aligned to these principles whilst retaining local flexibility, reflecting the unique context of each of our schools and their local communities. This incorporates the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies which continue to support schools in identifying strategic priorities for improvement. All literacy and numeracy professional learning offered this session was aligned with the pedagogical approaches outlined in the strategies. The literacy and numeracy network has continued to grow providing a range of support at local level.

APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION have been supported by South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) to ensure improved practitioner skills in planning and assessment. A growing network of Quality Assurance and Moderations Officers (QAMSOs) across the authority have led professional learning sessions at school and cluster level. This will be expanded next session to include moderation work across local authorities within our SEIC network.

The exam diet of 2021 was suspended due to COVID 19 and an alternative model was put in place by SQA across all schools in Scotland. An alternative certification model (ACM) required a bespoke approach by secondary schools to validate their evidence gathered to confirm levels of attainment in the senior phase. A seconded secondary DHT led this work for Scottish Borders and was supported by 28 subject leads who led moderation sessions from January to May 2021. Scottish Borders approach to moderation was externally validated as robust and reliable by Education Scotland and led to high quality professional learning for staff.



EARLY LITERACY AND NUMERACY FRAMEWORKS have been successfully piloted and following concluding evaluations with practitioners and managers will be finalised and launched early in session 2021/22 in all schools and settings. High quality professional learning opportunities have supported pedagogical approaches to Literacy and Numeracy and the implementation of the strategies. This has supported consistency in approach and improved outcomes for children. The strategies and resources have been made available to all practitioners through the School House Channel. Initial feedback from settings has been very positive and practitioners report improved knowledge and understanding of pedagogy and practice.

In addition to creating a shared standard through more robust moderation, the Frameworks and supporting strategies will enable stronger transitions between settings and develop stronger partnership between Early learning and Childcare settings and schools.

ENSURING HIGH QUALITY LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT AND COVID 19 RESTRICTIONS.

In April 2020 learning, teaching and assessment guidance was produced for schools to support the delivery of remote learning, the aim was to ensure equity of experience for all children and young people in ELC, primary and secondary schools. An analysis of what had been delivered and with the roll out of iPads to Primary 4 and 5, through Inspire Learning identified the requirement for more detailed guidance for 3 different scenarios:

PLAN A:

All children and young people learning in school full time, but with a range of restrictions in place including social distancing and Bubbles.

PLAN B:

Blended Learning, children and young people learning part of the week in school and part of the week at home.

PLAN C:

Home Learning, all children and young people learning at home.

Learners returned to school in August 2020 under Plan A restrictions. In January 2021 all schools were closed, and Plan C was implemented. Questionnaires were completed by schools, learners and parents to evaluate the quality of this second period of remote learning. The questionnaire was completed by all schools, 1381 learners P4-S6 and 1163 parents.

SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

EARLY YEARS SCHOOLHOUSE – SUPPORTING QUALITY PRACTICE

INTRODUCTION AND KEY AIMS

Fundamental to the Scottish Borders delivery of Early Learning and Childcare during the pandemic, has been to ensure the well-being and ongoing progress and achievement of our youngest learners.

The SchoolHouse Early Years Channel was established in January 2021 to support practitioners plan and implement high quality home-learning opportunities during lockdown and beyond whilst supporting ongoing professional learning, identified improvement priorities and high quality practice.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The SchoolHouse Early Years Channel hosted a wide variety of resources fully accessible to users, including newly developed Home-Learning Grids to support practitioners plan Early Level Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing experiences and outcomes.

High quality learning, teaching and assessment was supported through access to a wide range of resources including: Literacy and Numeracy progressions and trackers; Emergent Literacy developmental overviews; Music in the Curriculum resources/newsletters; and information to support the Care Inspectorate Key Question 5 Evaluation, a requirement during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Professional learning and home-working was supported through access to Scottish Borders Council Early Years training. Recorded Early Years training packages were available to practitioners to access independently and links to live webinars were posted to provide access through the channel.

These same resources were shared with our Partner Provider Early Learning and Childcare settings and Funded Childminders through a Microsoft Teams Channel – Early Years Reflects. This allowed practitioners across all sectors to be supported. 86 users from the private and voluntary sector regularly accessed this channel between January and March 2021.

IMPACT

SchoolHouse Early Years had regular engagement by 1556 users by the return to Early Learning and Childcare on February 22nd, reaching a wide range of people involved in Early Years including: Early Years Practitioners and Officers; Teachers; ELC managers; Head teachers and Quality Improvement Officers.

“Massive thank you to the Early Years Team for setting this up. What a great resource for supporting practitioners! Haven’t been through all the files yet but a big (yes) so far”.

The channel not only provided a platform for the Early Years Team, Inspire Learning and Local Authority Officers to share information directly with a wide audience but allowed the opportunity for a wider group of people to access virtual training sessions, often hosting 3-4 times the number of participants expected at face to face training.

“Ability to access relevant training linked to SIP, supporting ELC staff with CLPL and guidance re Key question 5 ensured that the completion of this key document was effective and relevant.”

Just a small sample of the positive Feedback from SchoolHouse Early Years users.

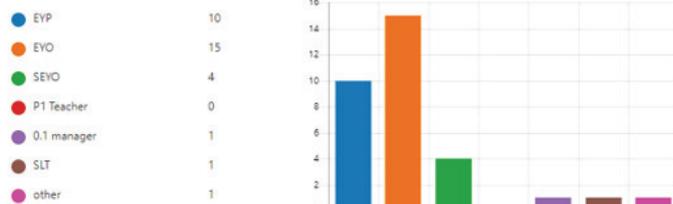
“The recorded sessions are great as fit around various staff hours and everyone can access at own pace.”

“Able to share info with EYPs and direct them to training. Also my own awareness of all the documents out there for Early Years. “

A short life survey asked users to identify how the channel had been used. 32 users responded in the time frame which allowed the Early Years Teacher Team to gain some insight into the most commonly accessed resources. The survey also gave an indication of the different people accessing the channel and provided helpful feedback allowing the team to continue to develop the platform in line with its user’s needs.

1. Please select your role

[More Details](#)

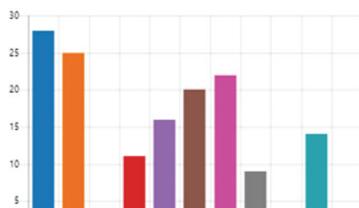


“It gave us the opportunity to do our team training, within a manageable time frame that suited each staff member’s busy home lives so we are all in agreement and understanding what our expectations are. It also means that new staff can access the same learning. This saves EYO’s and EYT’s time sharing the Team’s previous learning”

2. Please select all the content you have accessed through School House for Early Years

[More Details](#)

● live virtual training	28
● recorded training packages	25
● Home learning grids - for fami...	4
● Personal Home working for pe...	11
● Key Question 5 evaluation	16
● Literacy Trackers	20
● Numeracy progression and tra...	22
● Music in the Curriculum	9



Having the resources there when I need them, not having to go through different people to get what I'm looking for. Enjoyed being able to have training opportunities from home as it fits in much better with my family

NEXT STEPS

- To continue to develop the SchoolHouse Early Years channel and develop Yammer, linking the two channels to reach our users more immediately.
- Continue to develop and add to our resources supporting learning, teaching and assessment.
- Look at organisation of files and accessibility of resources.
- Use the information of how the channel is being used to plan the development of resources and training.

I have been able to reflect on how I interact with children and evaluate this against my assumptions of how I perceive my interactions to have been. This has made me contentious in my interactions.....waiting, watching, and wondering more.

While the almost all of the feedback was very positive it was recognised that due to IT capabilities, some practitioners had found it hard to access the channel and particular resources. Next exciting steps are Inspire iPads for all Early Years practitioners.

More! Bravo! Just to have it there with resources and support that is accessible is fantastic!

"I feel my practice has benefited from access to the channel".

All schools reported they delivered literacy, numeracy and health and well-being with most also delivering some other areas of the curriculum. Most delivered a live learning opportunity every day. All learning episodes included the sharing of learning intentions and almost all included success criteria, delivering new learning and providing feedback to move learning forward. This was a significantly improved offer from the previous period of remote learning.

LEARNER VOICE

1381 learners from P4-S6 responded to the survey. When asked about their experience the majority said the work set was at the right level, with most indicating that learning intentions and success criteria had been shared, new learning delivered and feedback to move learning forward had been given.

The most popular method of delivering learning was live video meetings on Teams with the least popular being videos made by someone else.

When learners were asked about what they had most enjoyed about learning at home the two most popular answers were 'being able to choose where I work' and 'being able to work on my own.'

1163 parents of learners from Nursery to S6 responded to the survey. Almost all thought their children had received the right number of activities and most thought the activities were appropriate. Most responded that the feedback given to learners was helpful and the majority were satisfied overall with the Home Learning Experience.

All schools tracked the engagement of learners and had procedures in place to intervene where learners were not engaging. Almost all had regular quality assurance activity in place to ensure high quality home learning.

Although there is some disparity between what schools indicated they delivered, and learners experienced overall the messages from the second period of lockdown are very positive. Schools reflected on what had been delivered and the method of deliver in Lockdown 1. The availability of iPads for all learners from P4-S6 and additional devices for children in P1-3 through Connected Scotland had a significant positive impact on the approach taken to continue learning when buildings were closed.

Feedback from learners and parents was also gathered at school level and that along with this Local Authority information will shape future delivery of Home Learning if required.

THE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK was adapted to comply with Covid 19 restrictions and used by Quality Improvement Officers, Senior Leadership Teams and Managers to empower schools and settings to take responsibility and be accountable for their own improvement journey.

Guidance was provided to give clarity of expectations for Remote Learning. This set clear expectations of practitioners, teachers, senior leaders, support staff and officers to support and improve outcomes for learners.

A Remote Learning questionnaire was completed by staff, parents and learners and analysis of this will identify effective practice to be shared and next steps for improvement if Remote or Blended Learning is required in the future.

Due to Covid 19 restrictions all school and setting reviews were paused for the duration of session 2020-21. The annual cycle of activity was delivered virtually. In discussion with the Head Teacher and Managers during Visit 1, schools and settings were identified as requiring either high, medium or low levels of support and as a result, bespoke packages were developed.

This mainly took the form of regular 'critical friend' meetings ensuring a rigorous and ongoing focus on improvement both in school/settings and remote learning. In addition, weekly briefings were held for headteachers and officers to provide updates and support a constant approach to delivery and provide the opportunity to share effective practice.

EXPANSION OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE

Scottish Borders has fully and successfully implemented the expansion of early learning and childcare from 600 to 1140 hours. This is delivered by a blend of provision: local authority settings, private and voluntary settings and childminders. A wide range of officers and partners from across Borders collaborated successfully to ensure implementation prior to it becoming a statutory requirement in August 2021, in line with the Council's Delivery Plan.

At the heart of the expansion is quality. The Quality Improvement Framework continues to support and challenge settings to meet the National Standard required to deliver funded early learning and childcare. It ensures provision is a high-quality experience for the child, recognising the significant contribution that universally accessible ELC can make to a child's development and to closing the attainment gap.

The expanded hours support parents with childcare, employment, training and learning opportunities. It offers further choice and flexibility through a cluster model of delivery. Within each of the nine high school cluster areas there is a range of options for parents. From this, parents can choose the type of provision that best meets the needs of their families.

All Local Authority settings offer asymmetrical, term time, places which reflect timings of the school day. Nine settings, one in each cluster, offer full day and full year provision. In these settings parents who require additional childcare (wraparound) beyond the 1140 hours can pay for this as needed.

With children accessing almost double the number of hours they previously had, capacity across Local Authority settings was increased by 901 spaces, a 73% increase, to meet this expanded demand. In addition to this staff: child ratios moved from 1:10 to 1:8 for 3 and 4 year olds. The number of 2 year old places, with a staff: child ratio of 1:5, increased significantly from 28 to 131. This resulted in a total increase of 201 full time equivalent staff, a 139% increase.

One asymmetric setting has been developed as an Outdoor Satellite Provision to provide enhanced outdoor experiences for children and provide a blueprint for future provision in Scottish Borders.

NEXT STEPS

- Support schools and settings with shared understanding of expectations of LTA Framework
- Develop high quality LTA that leads to improved levels of attainment and achievement for all in our schools and settings
- Enhance EY provision by increasing the number of settings with an outdoor satellite provision

SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

MELROSE NURSERY DEVELOPING AN OUTDOOR SATELLITE PROVISION



KEY AIMS

- Melrose nursery will have a safe space which meets Care Inspectorate requirements to allow children to play and learn outside in all weather.
- The outdoor play and learning environment will provide enhanced provision and develop new skills for all children in Melrose nursery.
- Children will develop resilience by being out in all weathers
- Provide a blueprint for future provision in Scottish Borders



OVERVIEW

Melrose Primary School recognises the value of children being outdoors and staff have worked hard to incorporate outdoor experiences throughout the school. There is a high level of demand for places in the nursery and the indoor space was not able to expand further. A suitable space was identified within the school grounds for a satellite provision. The school management team and nursery staff were supported to develop this area which opened in August 2020.

The outdoor area is a secure outdoor learning environment that encourages the children to explore and investigate their natural surroundings, adapting their play to all seasons.

The children have quickly adapted to using the environment in all weathers, dressing appropriately with layers, keeping active and using the shelter and welcome shed when needed. The children help to risk assess their environment, learning how to keep themselves and each other safe. Staff observed the children challenging their own boundaries, building resilience.

Children like to sit in the welcome shed to read/ listen to a story. Puddle suits have been well used!



Wooden covered area and the welcome shed provide shelter in all weathers. New gates and fences at top and bottom of the setting.



Children **work co-operatively** and **problem solve**



Gross motor skills are being developed



Lots of
mud to help
investigations

Investigating using their senses

IMPACT

Staff have noted that the children play differently in the outdoor learning environment than they do inside. They play and move more as a group outdoors engaging in each other's play and sharing with each other their interests and ideas. During these interactions there is an increased use of language and vocabulary. The children have adapted their interests to further explore in the outside environment working together as a team and problem solving. Staff have observed lots of skills being developed in different ways.

The ELC team provide provocations and experiences to continue to engage the children in exploring their interests and enquiries further whilst developing a variety of cross curricular skills.

Involvement in the Virtual Nature School Training has supported the ELC team to further develop their understanding and knowledge in providing high quality outdoor learning.

Staff have observed that children are showing an increased understanding in what happens in different seasons due to them being surrounded by the signs of the changing seasons and the ever-changing Scottish weather.

Both children's (and adults) resilience has increased by being out in all weathers.

Parents have commented that their children are engaging with the outdoors differently out with the ELC; playing outdoors for longer periods of time and readily finding more things to do.



"I like roly poly down the slippy hill and splashing in muddy puddles."

"I like planting and digging the big holes to put the seeds in" and planting the vegetables.

"I like catching rain in pots and pans."

"Risk Assess: Make it safe, no litter, sharp bits, broken wood."

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2020-21

6. STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2 - DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

- 2.1 Promote and develop Inclusive Practices across all our schools and settings
- 2.2 Achieve equity for every child and young person, ensuring their unique talents are valued and nurtured, each having the same opportunity to succeed
- 2.3 Deliver improved Health and Wellbeing outcomes for children and young people





SBC's **Inclusion Framework and Inclusion Policy** were developed to provide guidance and clarity for all educational settings in March 2020. SBC's **Nurturing Approaches Guidelines** were developed and produced in March 2021. These set clear expectations of practitioners, teachers, senior leaders, support staff and officers to support and improve inclusive practice for all learners.

All schools now have Inclusion as a priority and detail in School Improvement Plans highlight and ensure ongoing developments. In discussion with the Head Teacher and Senior Leaders during Quality Improvement visits, schools and settings were identified as requiring either high, medium or minimal levels of support and as a result, bespoke packages of training or support were developed.

This session, we provided significant professional learning opportunities for all educational staff. These included:

CORE REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL SCHOOLS AND SETTINGS

- Introduction to Nurturing Approaches (SBC training)
- Restorative Approaches (SBC training)
- Introduction to Inclusive Education (Education Scotland – online training)
- Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice (Education Scotland - online training)
- The Autism Toolbox (Education Scotland - online training)
- The Autism Toolbox (Education Scotland - online training)

In addition, we provided over 40 professional learning opportunities around inclusive practice to staff in all schools and settings, dependent on individual needs, within in our Career Long Professional Learning offer.

SBC NURTURING APPROACHES

As detailed in our Inclusion Framework, Nurturing Approaches will be our key approach to supporting behaviour, wellbeing, attainment and wider achievement in Scottish schools. Informed by significant data and research, the potential benefits of adopting a nurturing approach will help tackle the attainment challenge and reduce the poverty related attainment gap.

In order to ensure that inclusive practice is embedded in all our schools and in collaboration with Educational Psychologists from SBC, Glasgow City Council and Scottish Government, we have developed a 4 year training plan. As an authority, Scottish Borders Council is planning a twin track approach. Firstly, we will provide universal training on nurture principles to all adults working in schools or settings so that all our learning establishments can embed nurturing approaches as an everyday part of whole school life. The aim is to enhance our understanding of, and relationships with, pupils and to thereby support inclusive practice across all our schools.

Secondly, trained teachers and support staff will receive specialised training to provide a targeted intervention in the form of nurture groups in primary, secondary and Early Years settings. This will be available for children and young people identified as having significant social-emotional needs.

SESSION 2020-21

- We developed a recorded training presentation; “**SBC INCLUDES: Introduction to Nurturing Approaches**”. This was delivered to all staff in schools and settings, not just educational staff, to ensure there was a consistent, universal understanding and shared language. The presentation was uploaded onto YouTube for ease of access. To date, there has been over 4,800 views. Feedback received from a survey to Headteachers was 100% positive around the content.
- **Targeted Nurture bases** were identified in all 9 Secondary schools. Each school was allocated funding to resource. 24 secondary staff were trained in accredited Nurture training (delivered by Glasgow EPS). Training was completed Feb 2021. These staff will lead and managed Nurture bases in each of our secondary schools by June 2021 and work in partnership with classroom teachers.
- **Nurturing Approaches Guidelines** were developed and finalised in March 2021. This practical guidance was designed to highlight the actions required by all learning establishments to ensure that a nurturing approach is used to support behaviour, wellbeing, attainment and achievement within Scottish Borders Council.
- A **Secondary Nurture Network** has been developed for staff who will be leading targeted nurture groups to support sharing of resources and practice.

ATTENDANCE AND EXCLUSIONS

An initial lockdown of schools from March 2020 to June 2020 and a second lockdown during the period from January to March 2021 has impacted on the statistical information recorded in these areas. However data shows a significant reduction in exclusions across both primary and secondary sectors for this session, reducing from an overall 118 incidents of exclusion in session 2019/20 to 61 incidents in session 2020/21.

Similarly, there has been a slight increase in attendance during the session with an increase from 90.89% to 92.72% in secondary schools and from 94.09% to 95.925 in primary schools.

A joint test of change initiative between SEIC and Hawick High School was introduced to seek to improve the attendance of some of our most disengaged young people. This project resulted in a number of change ideas being adopted to support attendance at school ensuring a range of appropriate strategies were in place for targeted young people. These included daily check-ins to support young people to plan for the day ahead and identifying designated places for break and lunch times where young people felt safe and supported.

SBC VIRTUAL SCHOOL

The Scottish Borders Virtual School acts as a local authority champion to promote the educational achievement, attainment and experience of all of our looked after and care experienced children and young people. As a member of the corporate parenting group, the Virtual School works alongside colleagues in Social Work, Health and other agencies to advocate for learners and provide educational support and direction.



The Virtual School is not a physical school but rather a strategic entity, set up to provide additional oversight and support for children and young people who are care experienced. The Virtual School Headteacher (VSHT) role is carried out by the local authority Equity & Inclusion Lead Officer. The VSHT works in partnership with the designated manager in each school to identify needs and support multi-agency partnership working to ensure that we are meeting the needs of all of our care experienced and looked after children and young people, addressing any additional support required and securing positive destinations for all when they leave school.

Current key priorities of the Virtual School include:

- Enabling learner voice of looked after and care experienced learners, to give agency and opportunity to have a say over what support they need.
- Supporting transition meetings for looked after children and young people.
- Targeted support for young people to rapidly increase progress and secure positive destinations.
- Identify opportunities to further develop partnership work with multiple agencies and third-sector organisations.

CARE EXPERIENCED AND LAC MENTORING PROGRAMME

A pilot programme has been started covering the Berwickshire area, the impact of this will be reviewed next session and the programme will be extended to cover other areas in Scottish Borders.

SBC ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE PLAN

Data gathered on closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantage in Scottish Borders shows 3 key focus areas for improvement, Hawick, Selkirk and Galashiels. This close analysis of this data has supported the establishment of a targeted plan for these areas and has allowed the additional teacher monies which were distributed by Scottish Government post COVID to be allocated in areas of most need to ensure children and young people living in these areas have the best possible outcomes. This work will continue to be supported by our regional Attainment Adviser.

EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS

A number of Scottish Borders schools took part in the SHINE Mental Survey in 2021. Early results indicate that whilst the general health of the school population of boys is in line with or above that of the national average across Scotland, the general health of girls, particularly in P6 to S3 is well below the national average. This is in relation to respondents who classed their general health as 'excellent'.

Work continues to improve Emotional and Mental Health services across Scottish Borders with the recent introduction of both Kooth and Togetherall on-line mental health support services for young people and their families.

Quarriers Resilience for Wellbeing Service continues to operate within our secondary schools. During the pandemic the service delivery changed from a face-to-face support service into a virtual one in the space of 72 hours, along with an overhaul of processes and procedures to align with virtual support. The service has re-developed their resource toolkit for virtual use as well as increasing the caseload capacity as a result of demand. The virtual support allowed them to open the offer of support to young people who have previously accessed the service, to revisit and remind them of their identified coping strategies.

During the reporting period; **614** referrals were opened across the authority.

Data analysis of service provision for the reporting period of 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

TABLE A	REFERRALS OPENED (I)	REFERRALS CLOSED	SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED INTERVENTIONS	NON-COMPLETE INTERVENTIONS (II)
Berwickshire	57	41	30	11
Earlston	84	52	38	14
Eyemouth	59	38	24	14
Galashiels	94	59	50	9
Hawick	70	47	35	12
Jedburgh	32	15	14	1
Kelso	42	27	21	6
Peebles	112	77	61	16
Selkirk	60	36	27	9
Borders College	1	0	0	0
Out of Authority Education	3	4	1	3
Overall	614	396	301	95

- i. Referrals opened during the previous reporting period will not be included in the opened referral figures however will be included in the closed figures as appropriate.
- ii. Further breakdown and definitions of non-complete intervention – see Table C.

TABLE B	VIRTUAL CONTACTS (I)	FACE TO FACE CONTACTS (II)	TOTAL CONTACTS
Berwickshire	662	184	846
Earlston	725	287	1012
Eyemouth	735	195	930
Galashiels	768	257	1025
Hawick	747	263	1010
Jedburgh	692	171	863
Kelso	532	221	753
Peebles	1039	296	1335
Selkirk	554	275	829
Borders College	49	0	49
Out of Authority Education	87	1	88
Overall	6590	2150	8740

- i. Virtual contacts make up 75.4% of total contacts made in the reporting period.
- ii. Face-to-face contacts make up 24.6% of total contacts in the reporting period. Face-to-Face contact includes in school sessions and socially distant visits to young people. Resilience Practitioners were present in school offering a blended approach of face-to-face sessions and virtual support as required from 21.09.2020 until 18.12.2020.

FEEDBACK ON VIRTUAL DELIVERY

"Many of our pupils required targeted support for their wellbeing during lockdown. Quarriers moved quickly to help our young people through virtual methods. The support has been invaluable and our young people have been incredibly well supported through these methods. Resilience practitioners worked closely with guidance teachers to share appropriate information and ensure all young people at High School received an appropriate level of support". **Teacher**

"The virtual Quarriers service provided over the last 6 months has been crucial to support my son with his health and wellbeing and this could be observed after every session. A big positive in using the Teams video call, was having and keeping a strong connection with my son, which helped put his trust in you. My son feels that these sessions are very helpful and continuing to be, despite being virtual. All positives really". **Parent**

"I've had a session most weeks during lockdown. It's been great knowing someone is there to speak to when I haven't been able to get out". **Young person**

BUILDING RESILIENCE – YEAR 3

In 2020/21 year 3 of the Building Resilience resource was introduced to all primary school pupils in the Scottish Borders.

Within the 3 year programme there are 12 units which bring together current best practice to reflect the advances in research and developments in health and wellbeing, through a combination of teaching, reflection, multimedia and interactive activities.



Each unit contains assemblies, classroom materials, staff information and family tasks and link to Curriculum for Excellence, Health and Wellbeing Experiences and Outcomes, Rights Respecting Schools (RRS) and the 8 wellbeing indicators, as detailed in Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC).

- Aims to help children to function well, both at school and in life
- Provides practical strategies and tools to help children cope with the ups and downs of life
- Contains all the materials required to deliver a 3 year whole school programme
- Is embedded in the curriculum and in the general life of the school
- Promotes partnerships with families and the wider school community
- Provides skills for life.

School evaluations show that this course continues to have a very positive impact on our pupils, including:

- Children have become more open and know they can talk about emotions.
- Children have an awareness of various strategies they can use when in difficult situations.
- Good strategies for calming down.
- In difficulties, children can reflect on tools “ask what Skipper would do”.
- Children are now familiar with the language and are more aware of their emotions.
- This has helped contribute to fostering a calm and nurturing ethos within the school and goes hand in hand with restorative practices.
- Children have a consistent vocabulary to discuss their feelings with each other and staff.

FEEDBACK FROM TEACHERS

“Fantastic to have a coherent framework to take forward mental and emotional wellbeing”.

“Brilliant resource with the key bonus that we are doing this as an authority”.

“Excited to lead both this and Growing Confidence with our whole school community”.

“A great toolkit to enable me to move forward on resilience within the whole community”.

“Great to have a tried and tested resource which we can use as an authority – everyone talking the same language”.

SCOTTISH BORDERS CHILD HEALTHY WEIGHT PATHWAY – EARLY INTERVENTION TRAINING FOR EARLY YEARS PRACTITIONERS

With the release of the Scottish Government Child Healthy Weight (CHW) Minimum Standards in 2019 a new Child Healthy Weight pathway has been established in the Scottish Borders, which facilitates children (from 27 months), young people and their families to get the support they need to develop healthy eating and physical activity habits for life.

Lead by NHS Borders, a CHW toolkit and training provides information and resources for health professionals. This has also established an essential multi-agency approach where early intervention and consistency are recognised as key to achieving positive outcomes for families. As a result, Early Years staff from all Education Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings and all ELC Partner Providers were offered MAP Healthy Beginnings training, to give each setting the tools to discuss healthy weight with parents and facilitate families to access support.

IMPACT

In the first round of MAP Healthy Beginnings multi-agency training over 50% of the successful participants (50+ participants) came from Early Learning and Childcare settings.

As part of the CHW universal pathway these staff are now:

- Aware of the new Child Healthy Weight Service in the Borders – Fit4Fun Families
- Aware of how parents/carers can access CHW services, including self-referral
- Aware of and can use strategies and approaches to raising issues of healthy weight with families.

STAFF HEALTH & WELLBEING

Claire Lavelle from the Hive of Wellbeing provided 2 twilight sessions for 44 teachers this year covering “A new relationship with work” and “Being a teacher in a new world”.



These sessions aimed to:

- To hold a “safe space” for staff to contain their emotions and to reflect on their impact.
- To support staff in alleviating ongoing feelings of anxiety or overwhelm
- To provoke thought and promote reflection on changes and how they might impact on wellbeing, positively as well as addressing any challenges.
- To offer practical suggestions in supporting staff transition to the new ways of working and their wellbeing.
- To support staff in reflecting on where they are with their own emotional wellbeing.
- To provide practical approaches and strategies to explore the theme of uncertainty, safely and with empathy.
- To enable staff to create their own coherence in facing uncertainty and safely explore own emotional load

100% of those who attended Claire’s twilight believed it would develop or improve skills / knowledge that will enable them to carry out their remit more effectively.

“Realising that my feelings about work and how tired I am are happening with other teachers too. Hopefully this will help me to feel connected to other staff and continue to work well”.

“Insightful, helpful and full of common sense and practical approaches that you can actually use”.

“It was so nice to feel that I am not alone with the struggles that teaching brings at the best of time, but especially during COVID. A really well ran and inclusive course”.

“Absolutely spot on! This was just what I needed at this time. The course was very much focused on reality and how to preserve well-being, with many suggestions and chances to participate in discussion”.

MINDFULNESS

This year Peer to Peer Mindfulness offered Educational staff a place on a 16-week Mindfulness Based

Living Course. The ultimate goal of the Peer 2 Peer Mindfulness Based Living Course for Educational staff (MBLC) is to enhance personal well-being, so that participants are better able to cope with the demands of the role they have.

We had 39 staff who attended the initial introductory sessions. All staff who have completed all 4 modules believed the course had been highly beneficial to them.

"The course has impacted already on my own wellbeing and I have been able to share the positives of mindfulness with the families that I support".

"This course has really helped me to navigate a great deal of change and challenge in our school. I think that being able to keep coming back to a sense of peace really benefits all aspects of my teaching".

"It really has changed my life!"

"This has taught me to live in the moment and not in the past, we can't change what has happened but we can improve what we are doing".

"It has taught me to take a step back and make time for myself which in turn impacts positively on my work".

"It will help me be more focused and mindful of what I can achieve in the time I have and therefore be more efficient with my time".

NEXT STEPS

- Mental Health & wellbeing - Develop the 'whole systems approach' to mental health and wellbeing across Scottish Borders by developing a pathway and specific training programme for staff.
- Inclusion - Embed Inclusive practice across all Scottish Borders schools and settings through improving systems and processes for accessing and delivering consistent additional support (including professional advice, policies, guidance, challenge & support).
- Equity - Ensure, through using relevant data and targeted interventions, we continue to reduce the attainment gap in all our schools and settings.
- Nurture - Support Scottish Borders schools and settings to continue to improve nurturing approaches, through delivering a programme of universal professional learning around two of the Nurture Principles and implementing targeted programmes for identified young people in secondaries



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2020-21

7. STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 - PARTNERSHIPS AND FAMILY LEARNING

- 3.1 Improve access to family learning opportunities and support parents to assist in their child's learning
- 3.2 Deliver improved levels of parents' and other partners involvement in school improvement processes
- 3.3 To further develop parental representation and involvement in the life of the school





The National Framework Learning Together: a National Action Plan on Parental Involvement, Engagement, Family Learning and Learning at Home sets out a vision for Parental Involvement and engagement from pre-birth to age 18 and takes account of national and international evidence base and Scottish Education System expertise.

This vision is outlined within three central themes:

- Family learning and supporting learning at home
- Parental representation and involvement in improvement processes
- Links between home and school communications reporting and volunteering

In June 2019 we completed our first Parental Involvement and Engagement Census (PIEC) coupled with a survey on Home Learning. The data from the PIEC was completed and reported on in the November that year. With 1,892 responses from parents the PIEC was our first statistically robust regional consultation, and it provided a strong baseline of current practice on the three themes outlined above. Feedback from parents revealed a strong picture of parental knowledge of what their children are learning, their progress in learning and that the frequency of communication from their school was appropriate. However, it revealed a requirement to improve the level of information that can help parents to support their children's learning at home coupled with a need to improve the availability and accessibility of family learning opportunities. These key themes and survey findings have continued to inform our work over the past year and formed the basis of our Improvement Priorities within our Partnership with Parents Framework. Progress has been hampered due to the pandemic.

Empowerment is critical to transformation and improvement sustainability. To ensure SBC Partnership Framework is embedded in the work of all schools a strategic group has been established which is representative of all sectors; Early learning, primary, secondary, additional support needs and Community learning and Development (CLD). Regular monthly meetings have taken place throughout the year establishing prioritised actions which informed an action plan.

Three sub groups have been established to ensure:

- Relevant, effective and appropriate delivery of CLPL around partnerships for all practitioners
- Creation of a platform to signpost and share good practice across sectors locally, regionally and nationally
- Parental and Practitioner voice leads and informs practical approaches to effective parent and school partnerships leading to improved outcomes for children and young people

Having been informed by the results of the PIEC 2 survey the Strategic Group engaged with Learning Community Boards and setting networks to audit understanding and offers of Parental Engagement and Family Learning. This work informed the second Partnership with Parents Headteacher Engagement day in January 2021. The main aim of the day was to create a shared understanding of national expectations as well as specific SBC definition of Family Learning. The session also covered how to create a specific learning offer for specific school. The day was delivered virtually in partnership with colleagues from education Scotland and The University of Edinburgh.

Engagement Day evaluation forms, and group discussion feedback, evidenced achievement of aims and goals of the day with Headteachers agreeing their knowledge of Family Learning and how to create offers had been developed.

Following on from feedback at this session in relation to relevant CLPL, a SBC partnership delivery with University of Edinburgh and The National Book Trust delivered a sessions demonstrating to practitioners how the Read, Write, Count resource could be used to create and deliver a family learning opportunity. This event was offered to, and well attended by, colleagues within South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC).

The strategic group have signposted colleague practitioners to relevant external CLPL opportunities e.g. Janet Goodall webinar around Partnerships with Parents and the Education Scotland feedback session on the findings and next steps from the Family Learning thematic inspection 2019/2020.

Opportunities to share The Partnership with Parents Framework as well as good practice in relation to Parental Engagement and Family Learning are now built into the SBC Probationer programme.

Parent Council Chairs have been made aware of the work of these groups and expectations around improving communications and reporting mechanisms to develop a greater emphasis on further supporting learning. The Inspire Programme and the roll out of iPads from P4 upwards has supported staff and parent communications around how best to support children's learning. This has resulted in some innovative and creative practice to include parents in their children's learning.

Information gathered from the Parental Survey on Home Learning and the learning from practice during COVID 19 response around further developing approaches and consistency to develop parents' capacity to support learning at home have informed this year's parental engagement questionnaires

A Parental Employability support programme has begun with Parental Employability workers posts being established and staff successfully recruited. Referrals are now beginning to come in, initial milestones are beginning to be achieved with the Identification of eligible families. Support being given to Increase parental income, employment and capacity to engage in learning

During the pandemic, the CLD service provided telephone and online support to parents and families, with occasional face to face outdoor meetings when required. Most parents who engaged were seeking information, advice and support to manage day to day living. 94 parents took part in learning programmes (70% decrease in participation from 2019/20). Of these 35% reported that they were better able to support their children's learning, 39% said their confidence in their parenting role was improved and 35% reported improved family relationships.

To reduce barriers to participation, the Parent Council Chairs continue to meet virtually and more frequently. The main focus has been the Covid response and recovery. Parent Council Chairs proposed that some meetings be sector specific and that agendas created jointly. Feedback from those involved has been very positive with meetings being focused and relevant. The National Parent Forum for Scotland (NPFs) SBC representative recognised high quality of support and dialogue from SBC.





The purpose and remit of a Parents and Practitioners Operational group has been drafted and will be used as a starter activity with the new group next session.

Introduce and implement volunteering policy/standards to school leadership teams to ensure effective recruitment and development of volunteers professional learning offer and resource pack

NEXT STEPS

- Improve access to family learning opportunities for all
- Develop a tracking system to identify impact of engagement in family learning
- Support and challenge all schools to implement the Parents as Partners Framework and toolkits

SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

EARLY YEARS CENTRES SUPPORTING FAMILIES DURING THE PANDEMIC

Early Years Centres worked in partnership to deliver support, advice and learning opportunities for all families, while identifying and targeting support to those most at risk of missing out. Regular successful contact with families was established during the lockdown period and has been maintained through phone calls and text messaging. A number of new ways of working were identified with each centre adapting and changing their offers to the needs found in their immediate communities. Centres supported families with access to food to feed their family, information and advice on a range of topics relating to health and wellbeing and managing their children, and practical support outdoors for their own mental wellbeing.

PSYCHOLOGY OF PARENTING PROJECT (POPP)

PoPP normally delivers two evidence based parenting programmes, Incredible Years (IY) and Triple P with a focus on parents of children, 3 – 6 years where the children are showing significant distress and elevated levels of challenging behaviour. Typically, these children have much more difficulty than their peers regulating their emotions and forming positive social relationships.

The parenting programmes aim to:

1. Strengthen parent-child interactions and attachment
2. Provide strategies for improving and managing behaviour
3. Foster parents' ability to promote children's social, emotional and language development, and support their children's learning

PLANNED POPP GROUP ACTIVITY:

Due to the Covid pandemic planned PoPP activity and expected outcomes were considerably affected. Five PoPP parenting groups being delivered in early 2020 were required to stop, affecting the 43 families participating in these groups.

The PoPP practitioners who were leading the groups continued to support these families through a variety of methods including phone calls, emails, social media, online one-to-ones, small groups using Teams and outdoor activity when weather and Covid regulations allowed.

Evaluation was through verbal feedback from parents, who described positive impacts for them and their children, including the importance of ongoing contact and support.

TRIPLE P ONLINE (TPOL)

A new development for PoPP programme delivery is access to Triple P Online (TPOL).

With PoPP Practitioner support, individual families accessed and worked through the online parenting programme. This delivery method has been a valuable addition and suits some families, although others have found their circumstances and IT capacity too challenging to participate.

Starting in early June 2020:

- 8 families signed up representing 12 children
- 3 families have successfully completed TPOL with evidence of improved behaviour and very positive evaluations
- 2 families withdrew due to ill health and family circumstances
- 3 families continue to work through the programme
(Numbers less than 10, could families be identified)

FAMILY EVALUATIONS HAVING COMPLETED TPOL:

Improved relationship with child

- Lots of praise has really helped and we have a better routine and better behaviour.
- It's a chain reaction, we give praise, and she is more willing to do positive things.
- I understand his difficult behaviour more and we can now enjoy the good times.

Benefits for family life

- We are much less stressed about everything. The routines and praise really work.
- My husband can see the difference and is now working his way through the modules to support me.
- We enjoy family days out more, our son is less clingy and more willing to participate and play together as a family.

Benefits for parents

- I feel I can cope now and don't feel anxious because I have the tools to deal with situations as they arise.
- I feel like we are doing a good job and am no longer on medication for anxiety. I'm enjoying being with my child so much more.
- When we met with the HV we felt lost, but now we've done TPOL we are not – we know we are on the right track and have the right tools.

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2020-21

8. STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4 - DEVELOP HIGH QUALITY LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS

- 4.1 Continue to provide high quality Professional Learning for all staff including current and aspiring leaders.
- 4.2 Provide high quality Professional Learning for early phase teachers.



HEAD TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAMME

2020/21 saw the introduction of year 2 of the revised Head Teacher Induction Programme. 10 Head Teachers joined the new cohort for year 1 and 6 Head Teachers moved into the year 2 programme.

A partnership has been established with Fife Council for new Head Teachers to join their Coaching for Leadership cohort, establishing a wider network of new leaders.

All delegates who completed the feedback agreed that the induction programme enhanced their ability to do their job as a Head Teachers and were very satisfied with the programme.

FEEDBACK ON INDUCTION YEAR 1:

Most useful sessions highlighted were HR Support, Financial Management and LEXI.

"As a new HT to Scottish Borders, all topics were relevant, although the operational ones were probably more pertinent than the educational topics. Our core business is education so topics like 'Self-evaluation for school improvement' is something I have knowledge about from Education Scotland, whereas LEXI - Health and Safety is a system I am not familiar with and different to my previous Authority. Early delivery would enhance my knowledge and understanding of SBC systems."

"Finance- particularly completing your forecasting, I wished I'd had that session as soon (or prior) to starting the role as you get it through very quickly and often rely on business manager to support without knowing what you were looking at. Also HR input."

FIRST STEPS INTO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

First Steps into Leadership and Management Course amended the delivery method to an on-line course for the first time. All delegates have submitted or are currently working through their assignment for professional recognition.

IMPACT / FEEDBACK:

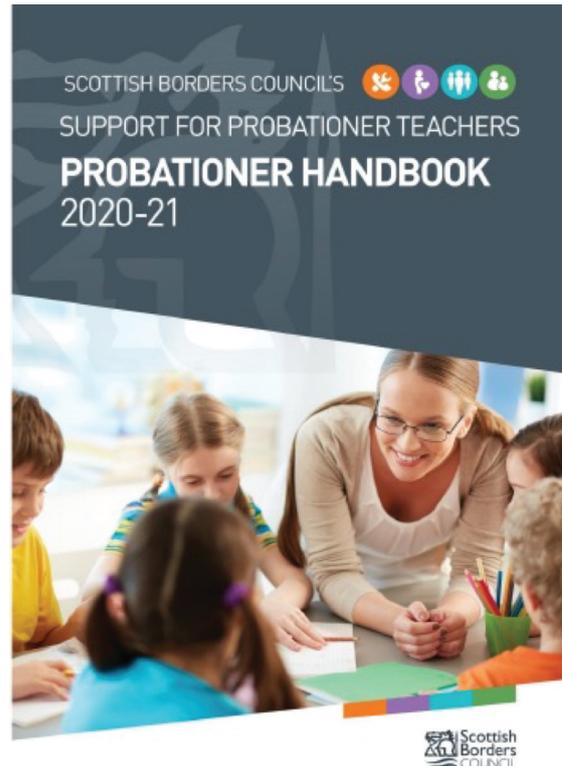
- The "First Steps into Leadership" programme (FSIL) has been an illuminating introduction to leadership strategies and theories.
- my improved leadership knowledge has helped me identify opportunities within my daily work where my FSIL learning could be applied
- I feel much more confident in my ability to lead and manage others and will not hesitate to offer myself to lead change throughout my career and look forward to applying the skills and abilities introduced to my on the course with even greater success in future.

NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS (NQTs)

46 NQTs joined the Teacher Induction Scheme in the Scottish Borders, 14 Primary and 32 Secondary NQTs. 43 NQTs successfully achieved the Standard for Full Registration.

The NQTs Induction programme had to change and develop into an online model and our Practitioner Enquiry input was completely revamped, providing leadership opportunities to 8 of our teachers and/supported by one EP with previous knowledge and experience of Practitioner Enquiry.

Evaluation showed all probationers agreed the training programme enhanced their ability to carry out their job more effectively and improved their understanding of current practice.



RECENTLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS (RQTs)

Following consultation with RQTs an initial programme was launched for session 2020/21.

This consisted of a series of twilights covering the following topics:

- Mental Wellbeing and Developing Resilience
- Literacy Difficulties and Dyslexia
- ADHD
- Scripting – Confidence & Positive Responses

Three sessions were supported by our Educational Psychology Service.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

'The lady who spoke about Mental Health and Resilience was supportive and encouraging - her presentation was extremely apt considering the situation at the time as we were in lockdown and working from home. I would encourage you to continue to run this.'

'The training on additional support needs should be considered one of the highest priorities for new teachers, the ASD and dyslexia training were particularly valuable to me. So much so that I would have liked more time or another session.'

'The RQT Dyslexia and Autism event gave us a greater understanding of how a young person may find the typical classroom and issues they may face. It also gave us a variety of tools to support students, both emotionally and practically, to give them the best learning experience possible. The resources received are useful for future reference and having the opportunity to pose questions to experts was invaluable.'

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

To further develop leadership skills within our Early Years settings, Early Years Officers and Senior Early Years Officers were invited to take part in Communities of Practice. These networking events were facilitated between April and June enabling early learning and childcare leaders to come together to develop shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities within their post and evaluate their knowledge, understanding and skill set. Feedback was very positive and numbers attending increased significantly over the course of the sessions. The evaluations and identified areas for development from the sessions and from those attending has informed the planning of a bespoke Pedagogical Leadership training programme for Early Years officers and senior officers which will commence early in session 21/22 to continue to support professional development.

EARLY YEARS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

A programme of professional learning was developed to support and upskill home working of practitioners during lock down. This featured a series of webinars, professional updates and network sessions which focused on Early Years pedagogy and practice. These were held virtually to maximise the number of practitioners who could engage. In addition to live webinars, training was also provided with audio and full scripts on SchoolHouse to support practitioners independently accessing at preferred times. A wide range of additional resources were created to support the planning and delivery of home learning. These were also available on SchoolHouse. Almost all practitioners reported these 'resources' enable them to adapt their practice to deliver a higher quality of home learning.

A Microsoft Form survey was created to evaluate how well the rolling programme model met the CLPL needs of EY practitioners. Almost all practitioners reported that the rolling programme of webinars ensured that training could be accessed at suitable times allowing a wider number of staff to engage. The model of delivery was continued from March to June 2021 with the addition of a twilight session which had been suggested by practitioners.

Due to the high numbers of delegates continuing to attend virtual training the impact of this has been that key messages of current pedagogical approaches and practice have been received by a wider audience and some practitioners have reported that this has enabled a more consistent approach across the authority. The success of the training has given more visibility to SBC EY CLPL and as a result a wider audience, involved at different levels within Early Years, are now attending.

PARTNERSHIP WITH UNIVERSITY OF HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS

2020-21 saw the first of our primary PGDE students moving to the Teacher Induction Scheme and undertake their probationer year within Scottish Borders primary schools. All 5 probationers successfully completed this and are now employed within Scottish Borders.

FEEDBACK FOR PARTICIPANTS

"this has been the most rewarding experience of my life."

"I am so thankful for my fellow NQTs, the NQT Support Team, the colleagues in my school who have been amazing and my wonderful supporter. They have really helped me through this year and I have just had the best time I possibly could have. I am so thankful for this experience in the Scottish Borders."

COACHING FOR SUCCESS

Scottish Borders have invested in 3 teachers who have worked through the GTCS coaching for success train the trainer accreditation programme. This will enable a core team to continue to take forward Coaching for Success delivery in the Scottish Borders.

COACHING FOR SUCCESS PARTNERSHIP- GTCS RE-ACCREDITATION



The five authorities (East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian Councils) in this partnership have responded to the national coaching initiative by developing a coaching culture in their organisations. This programme was developed with that purpose in mind and we have now trained hundreds of teaching staff across the authorities. Evidence from evaluations and assignments indicate that the programme has significant impact on participants' learning, skills and effectiveness.

A key principle of this programme is a non-directive approach, which encourages individuals to find their own solutions, stretching and prompting others to take responsibility for their development, to set goals, take action and grow. Coaching is an essential part of the ongoing supportive PRD professional relationship and professional dialogue a teacher had throughout the year. This has become increasingly important with the embedding of Professional Update and the revised GTCS Professional Standards which encourage individuals to find their own solutions, stretching and prompting others to take responsibility for their development, to set goals, take action and grow.

Programme aims:

- To develop essential skills for non-directive coaching: questioning, listening, summarising, feedback.
- The application of non-directive coaching as a valuable tool for enhancing the development of staff and colleagues and one's own professional development.
- To assess and understand the impact of mental state upon performance.
- To identify strengths and development areas of one's current leadership style.

The GTCS Panel highlighted a number of strengths including:

- This resubmission is exemplary in an impressive range of the key aspects required for the award of Professional Recognition.
- A well-designed programme informed by strong, collaborative partnership working with its rationale clearly embedded in the Scottish Education Coaching context, it is well aimed at creating coaching cultures which underpin professional learning and enable professional dialogue.
- A key strength was seen in the united response to moving to an online delivery format while still building the deep trusting relationships the work is grounded on. A key focus on self-care and wellbeing is at the heart of this coaching programme, offering participants the time and space needed to focus meaningfully on themselves personally and professionally.
- This is an impressive partnership which builds capacity round coaching.

GROW YOUR OWN EARLY YEARS PRACTITIONER

KEY AIM:

Working in partnership with Borders College and school Early Learning and Childcare settings develop the Modern Apprentice programme in the Early Years. Successful candidates would increase the workforce capacity and support the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare

OVERVIEW

The expansion of early learning and childcare across Scottish Borders required a substantial increase in workforce to meet the demands of provision. The aim was to ensure the increased workforce were highly skilled and well qualified practitioners.

As part of the Local Authority's Grow Your Own Programme, a third Cohort of twenty Modern Apprentices (MAs) commenced their careers in Early Learning and Childcare in June 2020. With 50% of their time was in the playroom working directly with children and 50% in reflection on learning, in house training and further study to meet the requirements of their SVQ qualification (SCQF level 7 in Social Services Children and Young People). MAs are supported in their setting by an experienced mentor.

Despite Covid-19 restrictions, 60% of this cohort have already completed their SCQF 7 in Social Services Children and Young People. Of these 75% have already gained employment within the sector. The remaining 40% are on track and aiming to complete their qualification by December 2021.

The **Grow Your Own Programme** has been such a positive successful experience for everyone involved, and SBC have now recruited for **Cohort 4**, with a further 20 MA who will begin their learning journey in August 2021.

QUOTES FROM MODERN APPRENTICES

"I found it an incredibly useful stepping stone into gaining a recognised qualification in my chosen career."

"Lots of great input at our Tuesday training sessions which have been great to put into practice."

"It was a great experience and I feel lucky to have taken part in it."

"It was a fantastic opportunity for me to work and retrain at the same time."



FEEDBACK FROM MENTORS

"MA is doing well and asks us any questions. She is gaining in confidence and has come up with good activity ideas."

"Tuesday training sessions were a fantastic networking opportunity for the MA, Our MA would come back and tell us about the best practice and innovative ideas happening in other settings."

" MA has joined the planning meetings and TEAMS meetings."



IMPACT

The expansion of 600 to 1140 funded hours has created 201 full time equivalent additional posts within Local Authority settings. 31 of these posts have been filled by MAs. Working in partnership with Borders College has allowed each of these cohorts to not only achieve their qualification but to experience high quality in-house training in addition. This has enabled the council to 'grow our own' practitioners.



On the floor experience during the programme has ensured MA have a good understanding of the practical nature of the roles and responsibilities of an Early Years practitioner can apply underlying pedagogy to practice. Settings mentoring MA have reported that the addition of MA to current staff teams have improved experiences and outcomes for children due to enhanced levels of staffing and increased one-to-one interaction between adult and child.

NEXT STEPS

- Ensure professional learning supports key strategic priorities
- Develop a Leadership Academy providing high quality professional learning



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2020-21

9. NEXT STEPS

Our priorities for 2021/22 have been identified through evaluations contained in this report and are detailed in the Improvement Plan. The summary of these priorities is listed below.

PRIORITY 1

- Support schools and settings with shared understanding of expectations of LTA Framework
- Develop high quality LTA that leads to improved levels of attainment and achievement for all in our schools and settings
- Enhance EY provision by increasing the number of settings with an outdoor satellite provision

PRIORITY 2

- Mental Health & wellbeing - Develop the 'whole systems approach' to mental health and wellbeing across Scottish Borders by developing a pathway and specific training programme for staff.
- Inclusion - Embed Inclusive practice across all Scottish Borders schools and settings through improving systems and processes for accessing and delivering consistent additional support (including professional advice, policies, guidance, challenge & support).
- Equity - Ensure, through using relevant data and targeted interventions, we continue to reduce the attainment gap in all our schools and settings.
- Nurture - Support Scottish Borders schools and settings to continue to improve nurturing approaches, through delivering a programme of universal professional learning around two of the Nurture Principles and implementing targeted programmes for identified young people in secondaries



PRIORITY 3

- Improve access to family learning opportunities for all
- Develop a tracking system to identify impact of engagement in family learning
- Support and challenge all schools to implement the Parents as Partners Framework and toolkits

PRIORITY 4

- Ensure professional learning supports key strategic priorities.
- Develop a leadership academy providing high quality professional learning.

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CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Scottish Borders Council | Headquarters | Newtown St Boswells

MELROSE | TD6 0SA

email: xxx@scotborders.gov.uk

