

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL'S



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING

Play     #yourpart

STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2021-22





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ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2021-22

1. FOREWORD

Scottish Borders Council continues to provide high quality education services for children, young people and their families. This Standards and Quality Report details the progress made in achieving our expected outcomes as set out in our Service Plan. Evidence of impact and evaluations of progress are gathered from our Quality Improvement Team who support schools and services in carrying out self-evaluation. External validation comes from the Care Inspectorate (for Early Learning and Childcare) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMIE) who commented very favourably on the practices they observed in our schools and services.

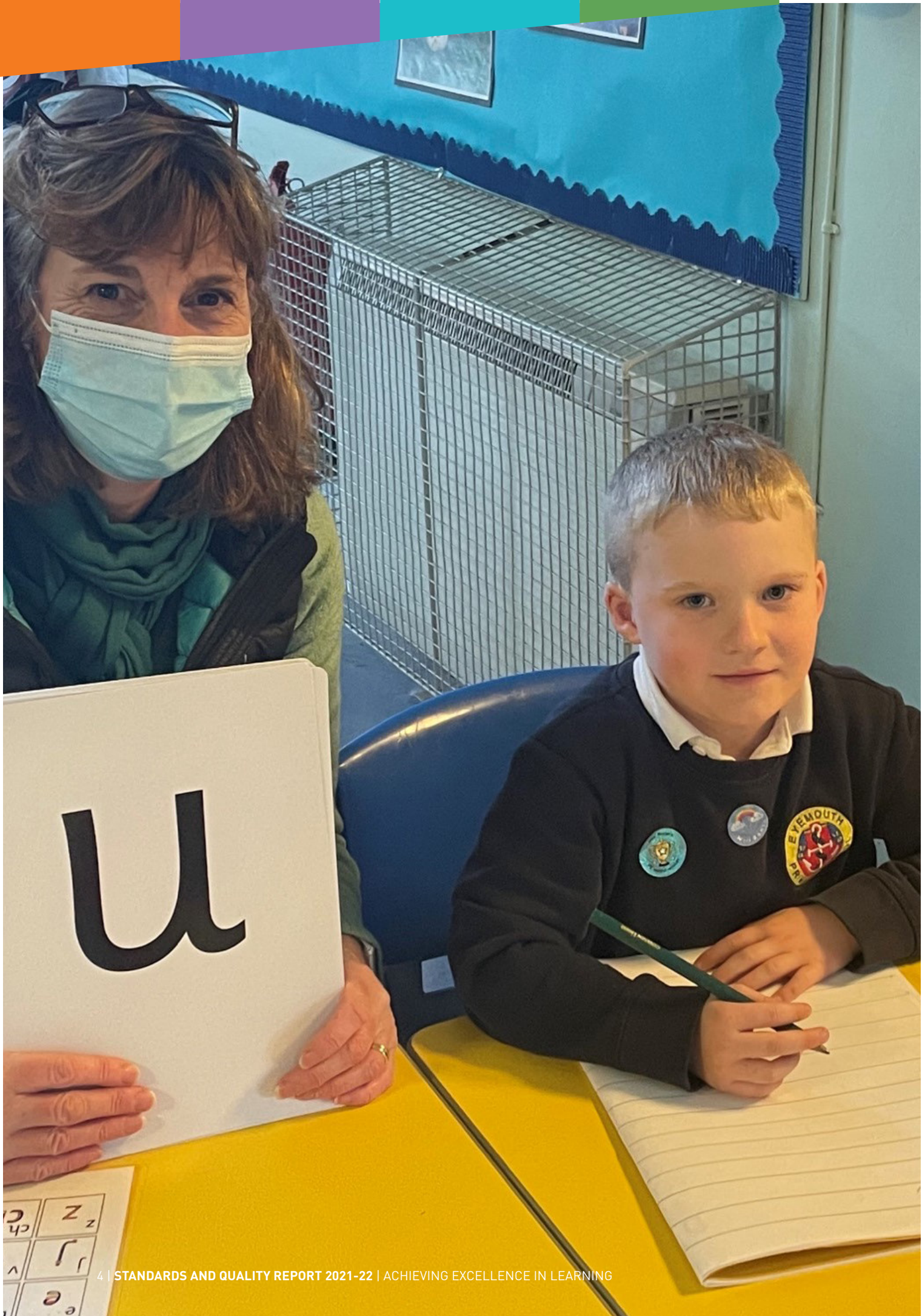
As we continue to recover from the COVID 19 pandemic, team working and our capacity to adapt, collaborate and support each other has come to the fore and enabled our services to continue on their journey of improvement.

The education department remains fully committed to delivering our obligation to close the poverty related attainment gap and ensure excellence and equity for every learner so we can maximise the potential of all.

This Standards and Quality report is a testament to the many outstanding achievements of Scottish Borders Council's schools and services and to the progress made across the academic year.

Councillor Leigh Douglas

Executive Member for Education and Lifelong Learning



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2021-22

2. 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. The report recognises 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.

“Everyone attaining, everyone achieving and excellent experiences” lies at the heart of the education service’s vision for improvement as we seek to provide the highest quality learning and teaching for our children and young people.

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 ‘Inspire Learning’ will continue to transform learning and teaching. Our priorities for 2022/23 reflect these core strategies and adopt the priorities of UNCRC (children’s Rights), Delivering The Promise (for our Care experienced young people) and Learning for Sustainability

Lesley Munro

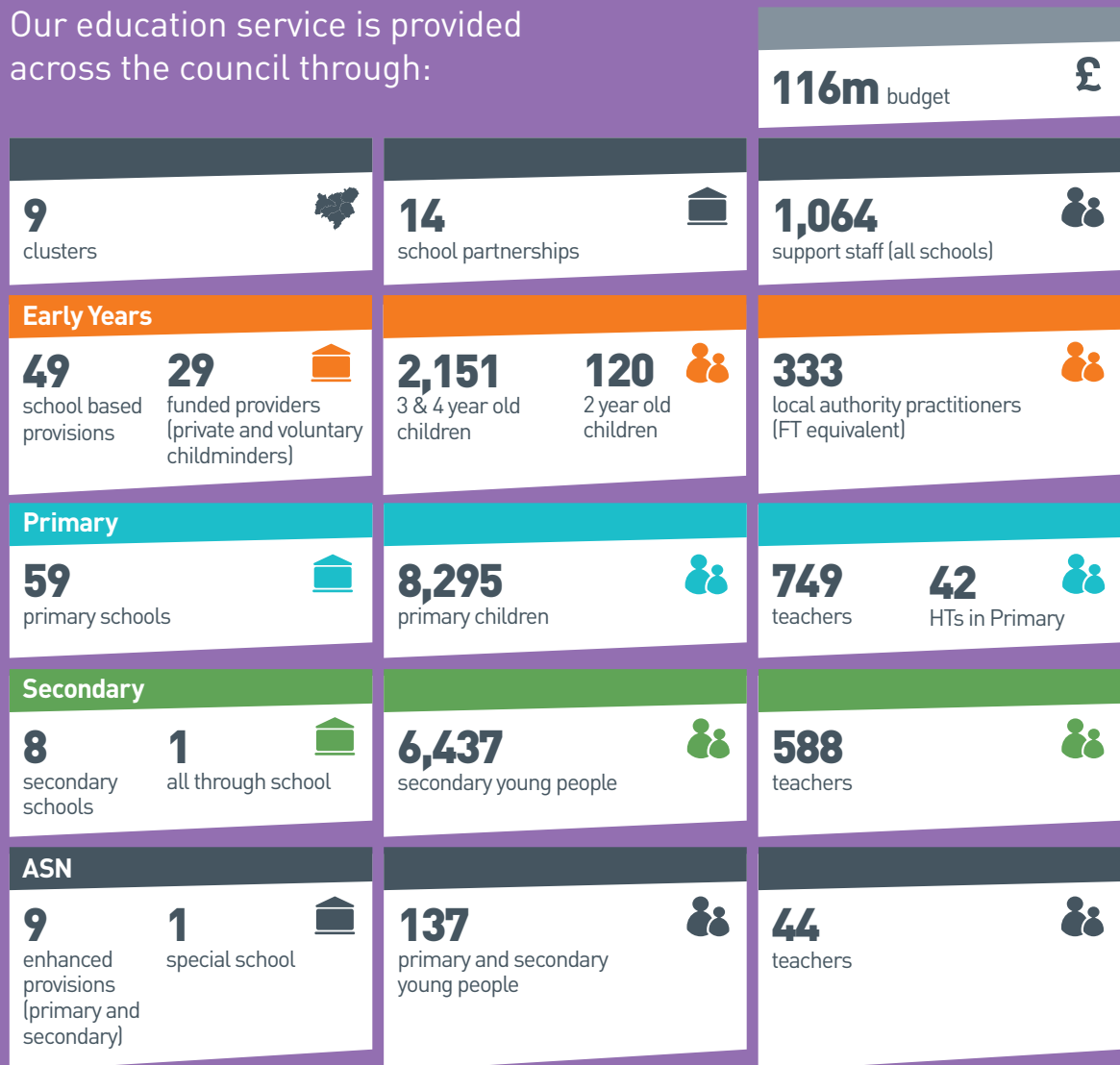
Director, Education and Lifelong Learning



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2021-22

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Our education service is provided across the council through:



ABOUT THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY

The standards and Quality Report details the progress made towards achieving the outcomes and impacts set out in the Education Service Plan 2021/22.

The report is set out under the following heading:

- Everyone Achieving
- Everyone Attaining
- Excellent Experiences

The report has a clear focus on outcomes and impact for learners, parents and carers, staff and the wider community.

This report is also informed by:

- Scottish Borders Council's Council Plan 2021/22
- Scottish Government's Wellbeing Indicators and National Improvement Framework (NIF)
- The four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence

The results of this self-evaluation will be used to inform the Education Service Plan for 2022/23.



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2021-22

4. SCHOOLS & SERVICES INSPECTED IN 2021-22

During session 2021-22, a series of inspections took place to evaluate and report on standards and quality.

CARE INSPECTORATE

The focus on maintaining quality as our services expand builds on the strong foundations of our high-quality services. Ten early years settings were inspected by the Care Inspectorate in session 2021-22. Across Scottish Borders almost all settings received grades of good or better for all quality themes in their latest inspection with Yetholm Primary School achieving grades of Very Good for all four themes.

The following early learning and childcare centres underwent an inspection by the Care Inspectorate

- **Cherry Trees Melrose**
- **Stirches PS**
- **St Margaret's PS (Galashiels)**
- **Stow PS**
- **Newlands Kids**
- **Melrose Grammar School**
- **Jedburgh Grammar Campus**
- **Yetholm PS**
- **Rosetta Early Learners (Peebles)**

"Children were cared for in a warm and homely environment which was clean, bright and well maintained. There were cosy places for children to relax in and space for collaborative play. Children benefitted from the free flow access to the garden. This meant they had the freedom to choose where and when they wanted to play and engage in periods of sustained and uninterrupted play." **(Care Inspectorate Report, Yetholm Primary School)**

EDUCATION SCOTLAND

The following schools underwent an inspection by Education Scotland:

FOLLOW THROUGH INSPECTION

- **Berwickshire High School:** Education Scotland's follow up inspection report on Berwickshire High School acknowledged significant progress from the original inspection. Working together, local authority officers, senior leaders and HM Inspectors identified strengths, progress and areas for further consideration during the visit.

A key highlight was that quality and consistency of learning, teaching and assessment has improved considerably across the school, with teachers demonstrating increased confidence in classrooms. Teachers now have a much improved shared understanding of what high quality learning and teaching looks like. They also demonstrate deeper understanding of how they can enhance their teaching, for example, using a daily review, sharing the aim of the lesson, and sharing how young people can be successful in their learning. Senior leaders and staff have clear plans to continue to improve learning, teaching and assessment, to meet the needs of all young people and to continue to raise attainment.

Inspectors have asked the local authority to provide Education Scotland with further information about the schools continued progress within one year.

- **Hawick High School:** Education Scotland's follow up inspection report on Hawick High School acknowledged the significant progress made. The initial inspection took place shortly before the start of the COVID 19 pandemic and the inspection team recognised that although this has had an impact on progress there was evidence that the Head Teacher and her team had implemented approaches which were leading to improvement and had the potential to lead to sustained improvement.

Significantly, Scottish Borders Council were commended for their approach to providing all young people with a digital device prior to lockdown. This meant most young people were confident using digital platforms to support their home learning.

Inspectors have asked the local authority to provide Education Scotland with further information about the schools continued progress within one year.

- **Eyemouth Primary School:** Education Scotland's follow up inspection report on Eyemouth Primary School and Nursery has acknowledged the significant progress and improvement being made across both settings which is working well in terms of supporting children's health and wellbeing, learning and achievement.

Among the range of achievements highlighted in the report is the progress that has been made in developing clearer leadership across the two settings with the new headteacher (appointed in May 2021) being supported well by two depute headteachers and two principal teachers. Collectively, they were found to be providing good strategic direction which is resulting in improved outcomes for all children.

Inspectors will make no further visits to the school in connection with the original inspection in 2018.

THEMATIC INSPECTIONS

Education Scotland identified two key themes which they explored in schools and settings across Scotland. The learning from these were then shared as key messages of effective practice and case studies.

- Trinity PS (Health and Wellbeing)
- Stow PS (Outdoor Learning)

RECOVERY VISITS

Three schools in Scottish Borders Council hosted Education Scotland as part of their programme for recovery visits post COVID 19 pandemic.

- Jedburgh Grammar Campus
- Clovenfords Primary School
- Kelso High School

HM Inspectors invited schools and settings to talk about their current priorities as they respond to the impact of the pandemic.

We focused on the following three areas:

- continuity of learning;
- wellbeing of children, young people and staff; and
- safeguarding and Child Protection

All school reported positive engagement with the Inspection team and benefited from the process leading to continuous improvement.

NATIONAL REVIEW

- Foundation Apprenticeships

STANDARDS & QUALITY AND THEMATIC REVIEWS

The authority's Capital QIT Quality Improvement Team also carries out reviews which focus on aspects of provision:

- **Coldstream Primary School:** An improvement visit to support the newly appointed Head Teacher was carried out focussing on quality indicators 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment and 3.1 (Ensuring Equality, Inclusion and Wellbeing)
- **Stirches Primary School:** An improvement visit to support the newly appointed Head Teacher was carried out focussing on quality indicators 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment and 3.1 (Ensuring Equality, Inclusion and Wellbeing)



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2021-22

5. EVERYONE ATTAINING



STRATEGIC PRIORITY

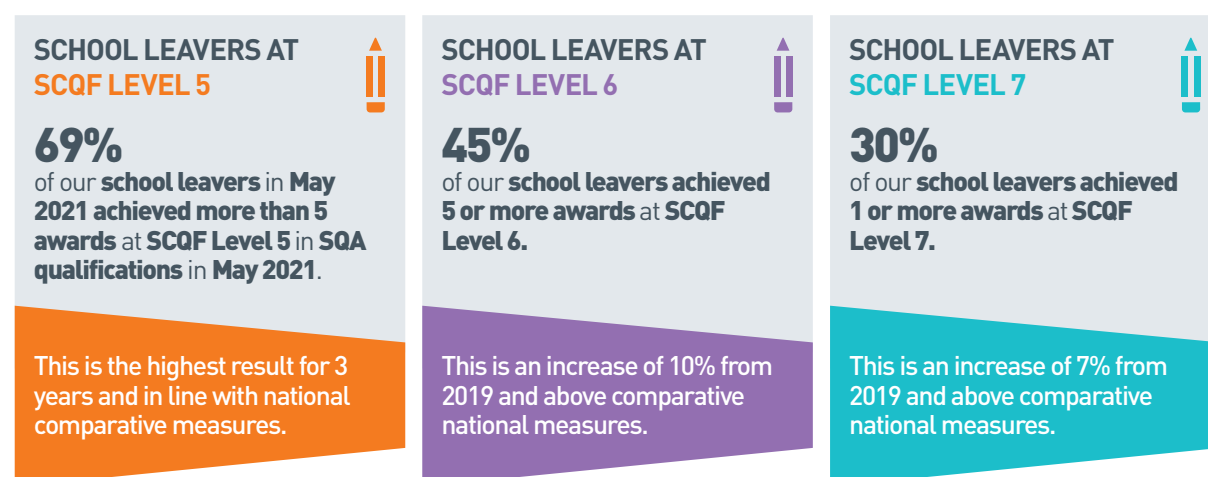
To drive high quality learning, teaching and assessment in all schools and settings, (NIF Priority 1,2,4)

Scottish Borders continues to advance equity and excellence throughout a wide range of local and national attainment measures. Our children and young people achieve high standards of attainment throughout the broad general education and senior phase. The attainment of Scottish Borders school leavers continues to be positive across the key benchmarks at SCQF levels 5, 6 and 7.

SENIOR PHASE ATTAINMENT

Pupils across Scottish Borders excelled in SQA qualifications with another year of positive results. These achievements are a tribute to the hard work of our young people during another difficult year, who have also been very well supported by staff and parents.

In particular:



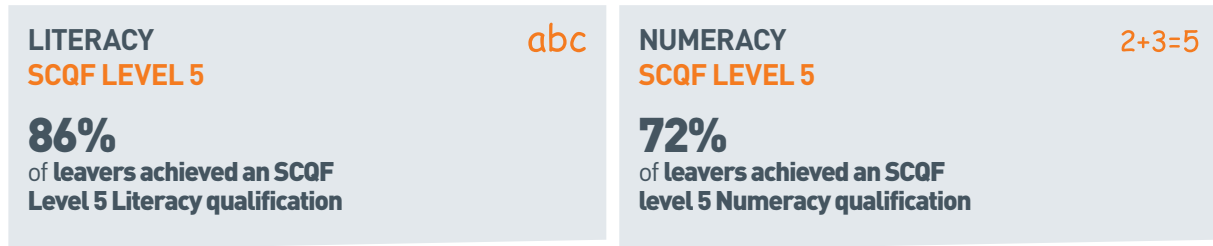
Eyemouth, Galashiels Academy, Hawick, Jedburgh, Kelso and Selkirk High Schools achieved their best ever performance in 5 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 5 since 2019.

The Council recorded best ever performances in the proportion of leavers achieving 1+, 3+ and 5+ at SCQF Level 6 with 67%, 57% and 45% respectively.

Eyemouth, Hawick and Kelso High Schools recorded best ever performances since 2019 at 1+, 3+ and 5+ at SCQF Level 6.

At SCQF Level in S6, the authority achieved its best ever performance with 30% of leavers achieving 1 or more awards.

LITERACY & NUMERACY



BASELINE PERFORMANCE

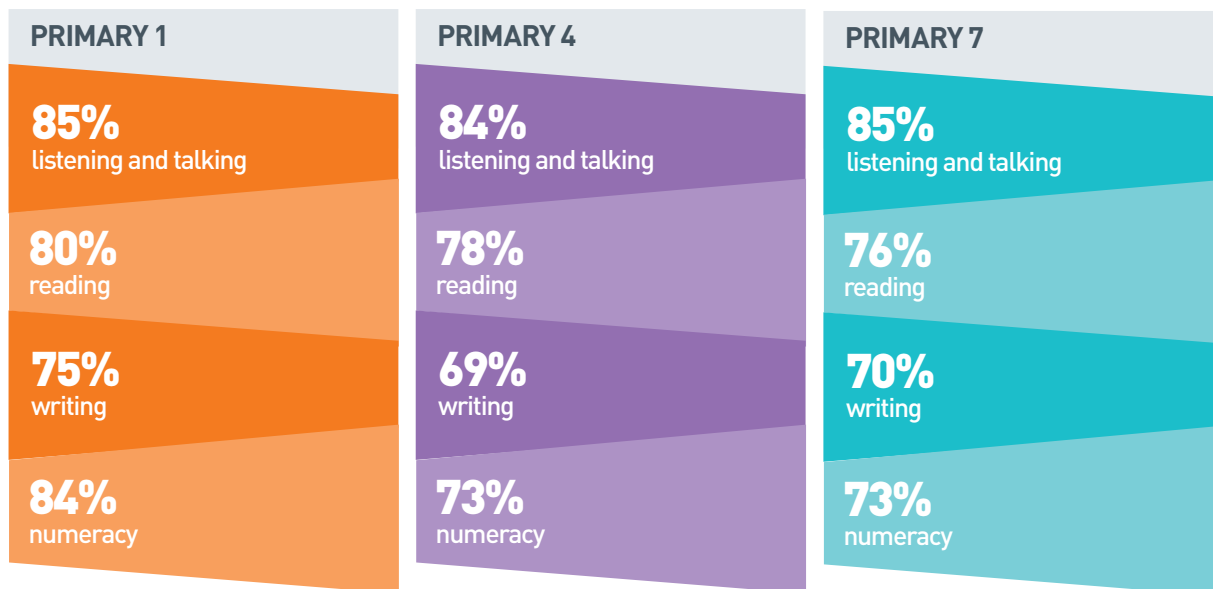
Primary schools assess the literacy and numeracy skills of all pupils following entry to P1 so that children's progress over time can be closely monitored to support their learning.

The benchmarks are:



ATTAINMENT SESSION 21-22

The following table gives the percentage of pupils attaining the relevant benchmark.





RAISING ATTAINMENT

The Quality Improvement Team regularly support and challenge schools to raise attainment through the strategic use of analytical tools both locally and nationally. Sessions to facilitate the analysis and reporting of attainment data was introduced this year for Primary Head Teachers. This supported Head Teachers to improve their data literacy; analyse excellence and equity outcomes of individuals, groups and cohorts; and record a self-evaluative summary for their school.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all schools across Scotland returned to a full year of in school learning. Teacher professional judgements of pupils' progress in learning in literacy and numeracy in the Broad General Education are normally recorded in the second week of June each year and are submitted to the Scottish Government to support analysis of progress towards the ambitions of the National Improvement Framework. As a result of school closures, teacher professional judgements of pupil progress were not collected locally or nationally therefore S3 were not recorded since 2019-20.

ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION

Scottish Borders Council formed an extensive Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officer (QAMSO) network with representations across clusters and sectors leading moderation activity across the Broad General Education (BGE). This work was interrupted by the impact of Covid but moving forward will continue to be refreshed and strengthened through working with Education Scotland and the SEIC South East Improvement Collaborative.

As part of the Education Department's annual improvement planning and reporting cycle, all schools evaluate their performance against key quality indicators from How Good Is Our School HGIOS4?.

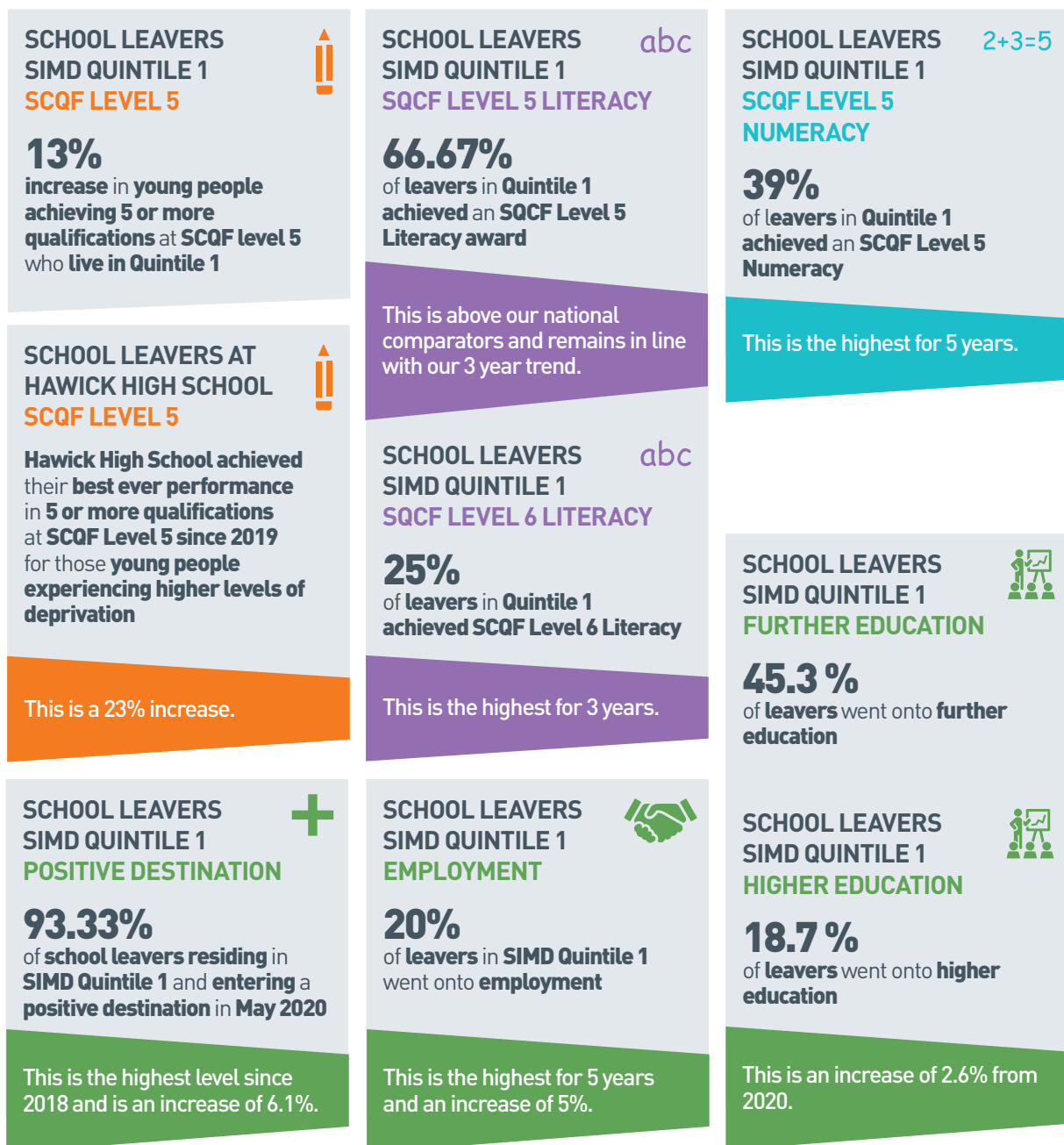
The Quality Improvement Team work together with Head Teachers to ensure that each school's self-evaluation is rigorous and takes account of a wide range of evidence gathered from diverse sources and involving all stakeholders. In 2021-22, 63% of schools continued to be evaluated as 'good' or better for raising attainment and achievement.

CLOSING THE POVERTY RELATED ATTAINMENT GAP

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is used to identify children and young people who live in the most deprived areas of Scotland. Nationally, we compare the performance of key equity groups against overall performance to measure and monitor the poverty related attainment gap. Attainment evidence demonstrated that Scottish Borders continues to address the attainment gap while improving attainment for all.

In particular :

Milestone data in 2020-21 demonstrates that the proportion of children residing in SIMD Deciles 1-3 achieving their milestones:



CARE EXPERIENCED

Outcomes for looked after children and care leavers is a key focus of the Councils Corporate Parenting Strategy. Part 9 of The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 specifies Corporate Parenting duties and responsibilities which apply to all looked after children and care leavers in Scottish Borders Council. We are committed to working with statutory and non-statutory partners to assist them in identifying creative and innovative ideas to enable them to address their Corporate Parenting duties.

The Virtual School Head Teacher, funded through the Attainment Scotland Fund, offers support and challenge to school leaders, monitors and tracks attainment, attendance and destinations data and works closely with partners to ensure improved outcomes for children and young people with care experience. New monitoring and tracking procedures with secondary schools, Skills Development Scotland and Borders College have been established to ensure learners have a positive and sustained destination on leaving school. As a result of this and other work, 88% of care experienced school leavers in 2020-21 are in a positive destination, an increase from 71% at the start of the academic year and is within the top 5 local authorities in Scotland.

Other improved outcomes for care experienced learners include an increase in attendance and reduction in exclusion rates, increasing attainment in literacy for school leavers and a higher proportion of learners achieving qualifications in the Senior Phase than the national average. Our care experienced funding has been used to support children and young people who are in crisis and require extra support to stay on track with their learning. Funding is used for Additional Needs Assistants to deliver 1 to 1 or small group interventions focussed on literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and readiness to learn. Berwickshire High School used care experienced funds to deliver a peer mentoring transition programme with learners moving into S1 from primary 7. Outcomes were extremely positive with improved relationships and confidence for all learners in their transition to high school.

PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING

As part of the Attainment Scotland Fund schools in Scottish Borders received £2.1 million in 2021/22 to support interventions intended to reduce the poverty related attainment gap. Interventions varied but mainly focussed on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. In some schools, a partnership approach with youth work, community learning and development and members of the community helped contribute to targeted support for learners impacted by poverty.

In March 2021, Scottish Government launched the refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) with its mission to use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap. In order to intensify our work to reduce the poverty related attainment gap, new guidance, support and planning was issued to schools. This included a Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) sharing effective practice event, supported by our Attainment Advisor and PEF support clinics for head teachers.

SCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

Scottish Government announced in March 2021 that funding for the SAC schools programme would cease in year 2021-22 and replaced with a Strategic Equity Fund. Hawick High School and Burnfoot Community School have been supported through this programme for several years. In the final year of the fund, £173,000 was granted to these schools to support their work in raising attainment for all and closing the poverty related attainment gap. Burnfoot Community School employed an ANA and Early Years Practitioner to support the embedding of nurture principles in the school and running the targeted nurture support. Hawick High School employed 2.45 FTE youth work staff and an Inclusion Officer to support education recovery and accelerated progress in numeracy and literacy. The school established a targeted nurture provision for S1 and S2 young people. Eleven learners accessed the nurture support aimed at improving their social and emotional skills, self-confidence and engagement with learning.

EQUITY STRATEGY

Our Equity Strategy was developed in 2021-22 with the vision of increasing excellence, accelerating progress and embedding equity in our schools to reduce the poverty related attainment gap. The strategy sets out the short, medium and long term outcomes and roles and responsibilities of education staff to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty. All of the outcomes for 2021-22 were exceeded, including delivering professional learning on data literacy and excellence and equity with primary and secondary schools staff in the Galashiels, Hawick and Selkirk clusters; implementing new guidance and governance procedures for schools with regard to Pupil Equity Funding; establishing an Equity Strategic Board and enhancing monitoring and tracking procedures with schools and partners working with care experienced children and young people. This work has helped to increase the sustained follow up positive destinations for care experienced school leavers, from 71% in August 2021 to 88% in April 2022. The 16-19 year old participation gap between SIMD Quintile 1 (most deprived) and Quintile 5 (least deprived) has decreased to 11.7%, a significant improvement from 15.1% last year. We also ensured that every Scottish Borders child living in Quintile 1 and 2 received the gift of a book for Christmas, thanks to our partnership with the Scottish Book Trust.



Every Scottish Borders child living in Quintile 1 and 2 received the gift of a book for Christmas, thanks to our partnership with the Scottish Book Trust.



Staff gathered together to share good practice with regard best use of Pupil Equity Funds in schools.

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

The Scottish Borders Council Learning and Teaching Framework has supported 88% of our schools to develop their own context specific guidance to ensure high quality learning, teaching and assessment. This guidance should ensure a positive impact on playroom/classroom practice.

Alongside this we have provided high quality professional learning to support the framework. The Learning, Teaching and Assessment online resource has been developed to provide all schools and settings with a suite of professional learning resources, designed and created to align with the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework principles. The resource, hosted on the Inspire Schoolhouse Teams space, is compiled of 45 individual courses.

This online resource can be accessed here (GLOW log in required).

The Early Level Portal aims to develop a shared language, knowledge and understanding of high-quality Early Years Pedagogy and Practice in line with that of Learning, Teaching and Assessment within broad general education. All Scottish Borders Council Early Level educators, and leaders from all sectors can access the GLOW Blog.

Survey results:

EARLY LEVEL PORTAL



72%

of **respondents** said the **information** they **accessed** on the **portal helped develop their own knowledge and understanding of learning, teaching and assessment in the early years**

EARLY LEVEL PORTAL



73%

of **respondents** said it **helped them to lead improvement work in their ELC setting with practitioners**

This online resource can be [accessed here](#) (GLOW log in required).

In addition, following the return to school learning post COVID 19, 88% of schools have adapted and refreshed their curriculum rationales to reflect the renewed focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

PEDAGOGY PIONEERS

Our Regional Improvement Collaborative (South East of Scotland – SEIC) have created a platform to empower practitioners to improve pedagogy, through peer to peer support at teacher and practitioner level, sharing innovative and effective practice.

4 Scottish Borders Council were endorsed as SEIC Pedagogy Pioneers in session 21-22. Practitioners from every sector delivered a webinar. (1 ELC, 2 primary and 1 secondary.)

All Pedagogy Pioneers reported that the programme had supported the improvement of teacher efficacy and that they felt empowered as a result of engaging in this work.

Over 172 Scottish Borders Council practitioners attended the SEIC webinars in the course of the session. 92% of attendees reported that the Pedagogy Pioneer sessions were useful.

This work also involved a bespoke element based on success of previous Pedagogy Pioneers who shared practice relating to play based pedagogy.

Scottish Borders Council had 6 practitioners taking part. At the end of every bespoke session, almost all respondents reported that their knowledge and understanding of play pedagogy had improved, the professional reading and support tasks set between sessions had supported their learning, and they would try something different in their setting as a result of their learning to improve play pedagogy. Final comparator audits evidence showed there had been an increase of 22% in confidence in delivering child-initiated learning and 27% increase in confidence in assessing and observing. There has been an 80% increase in practitioners implementing teacher-initiated learning through play pedagogy in their classroom. 40% increase in implementing child-initiated learning and 33% increase in the use of appropriate assessment and observations methods in play pedagogy.

EARLY LEARNING CHILDCARE

The expansion of ELC included a requirement for all providers to comply with the National Standard for Early Learning and Childcare. The National Standard sets out what children and families should expect from their early learning experience regardless of where they access their child's funded hours.

All ELC providers are required to demonstrate that they meet the National Standard before they can access funding to deliver the funded hours, whether they are in the public, private or third sectors or childminders.

In 2021, Scottish Borders Council opened a new Framework of Funded Providers and carried out a Tender process through Public Contracts Scotland. Support was provided to both existing and potential new providers both in terms of the application process and understanding and evidencing to meet the National Standard and asked each provider to submit a "Statement of Intent" of what they were able to offer parents. This resulted in 20 group setting providers from the private and third sector and 9 childminders, being accepted onto the Framework. This provision complements the 49 local authority settings and provides enhanced flexibility and choice for parents.

DELIVERING 1140 HOURS

"I feel very lucky that we are able to send our daughter to such a lovely nursery where she has had a lovely nursery experience". (Care Inspectorate Report, St Margaret's, Galashiels)

TWO YEAR OLDS

43%

of eligible two year olds taking up the full 1140 hours of ELC across LA, private, voluntary and childminders

57% taking up less than 1140 hours

THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS

62%

of three and four year olds taking up the full 1140 hours of ELC across LA, private, voluntary and childminders

38% taking up less than 1140 hours

DEFERRING ENTRY TO PRIMARY 1

71%

of children deferring entry to P1 taking up the full 1140 hours across LA, private, voluntary and childminders

29% taking up less than 1140 hours

DEFERRED ENTRY TO PRIMARY SCHOOL

Children in Scotland usually start school between the ages of four years six months and five years six months old. All children who are four years old at the start of the school year can defer and start primary one the following year. Applications for children with a January or February birthday have automatically been approved. Applications for children with a birthday between August and December have not been funded by the Scottish Government and approval by the Council has been discretionary.

From August 2023, all families will be able to access a further year of funded quality Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) if they want their child to defer entry to primary school. This will ensure that all children who defer have an equal right to funded ELC if their parent or carer feels it is in their best interests.

The Scottish Government has been piloting the implementation of the changes to deferral entitlement to better understand the likely uptake of the extra year of funded childcare and help local authorities plan. Scottish Borders Council was successful in applying to pilot the delivery of the new guidance before August 2023 and now agrees to fully fund all requests from August 2022 for children born between 18 August and 31 December. This makes the process easier for parents/carers and allows them more control in choices for their children. Scottish Government is currently evaluating the pilot.

PARENTING SUPPORT

The Partnership with Parents Framework has been updated. All schools have continued to work closely with parents and have built on new ways of engaging with parents that were established during lockdown.

The Psychology of Parenting Programme (PoPP) continued to be successful with almost all parents reporting an improvement in their child's behaviour at the end of the programme. During periods of restriction (due to Covid 19) PoPP groups were held online ensuring that parents were able to access vital support during this stressful time at home with their children.

EARLY YEARS CENTRES

EARLY YEARS CENTRE (EYC) – GALASHIELS

This year the EYC offered food on an accessible Fareshare table for families who require food support. The Greenhouse fresh vegetables and herbs were able to supplement products acquired through the Fair Share Scheme. Hard copies of recipes provided by NHS Borders were also available. Approximately 12-18 families have been supported weekly with an average of 30-40 children.

The Centre also delivered 5 Online Cook Along sessions and used some of the produce to demonstrate the use in recipes. The Cook Along has an average 6 families participating each week, with around 10-15 children benefiting.

QUOTES BY STAFF:

"Our plants grew and they grew, the children enjoyed watching them grow bigger and change!"

"The Greenhouse Project provide Langlee EYC with a fantastic service. There is always a variety of food provided by the Greenhouse and corresponding recipes given from the NHS Borders Team. Mos organises the collection/delivery of produce seamlessly, and with her in depth knowledge is able to give us an indication to what crops will be ready when so we can plan for our Cook-Along sessions. The recipes provided by the NHS Borders Team are easy to follow and incorporate the food we have received."

"Without the Greenhouse Project we would not be able to provide our families with the range of fresh produce we can with your support. Our other sources of food for families are Fareshare and Neighbourly, both of which provide mainly ambient food, therefore it is essential for us to work with the Greenhouse Project and receive donations to ensure our families have access to a nutritious diet."

"We would like to take this opportunity to thank The Greenhouse Project and NHS Borders for their invaluable contribution to Food Security in Langlee, for their continued support to this inter-agency work."

QUOTES FROM FAMILIES:

"(Child) is weaning and loves rhubarb; I'll stew it up and use it as a wee pudding for him!"

"Peapods remind me of being a child, I could eat them all day!"

"(Child) loves cucumber; I will take a handful for her to snack on!"

"(Child) snacks on tomatoes, I've taken some of the bigger ones, and the teacher says he has the healthiest snack in class!"

EARLY YEARS WELFARE BENEFITS

Referrals to the service for the year 21-22 exceeded 500 which represented a 35% increase over the previous year's figure. The total gains for families in the Borders as a result of these referrals in 21-22 was £1.25m.

Work has been carried out to link better with schools and Citizen's Advice Bureau in extending communication about benefits and referral processes to parents/carers with primary age children as they don't have the same opportunities to get information from and be referred by NHS staff as families with children under school age. Information is now being added to the recently developed NHS Money Worries App where it can be easily accessed.

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW?

- Support and challenge schools to raise attainment through analysis of data, improved professional judgements and target setting for all cohorts of learners
- Continue to build capability and capacity for senior leaders and staff in schools in the use of tracking and monitoring tools, including Insight and BGE Benchmarking and the ability to interpret data to identify areas of need
- Support all schools and settings to engage in further curriculum innovation, ensuring programmes and pathways align with rationales and the 4 contexts of Curriculum for Excellence
- Continue to develop our literacy and numeracy strategies across the BGE
- Ensure effective use of assessment to support robust tracking and monitoring of progress in learning in Early Level as we track attainment for all 2-18 year olds

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2021-22

6. EVERYONE ACHIEVING



STRATEGIC PRIORITY

To support inclusion, equity and wellbeing for all children and young people, (NIF Priority 2&3)

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Four key areas were identified during the 2022 Health and Wellbeing census:

- Bullying
- Caring responsibilities
- Body image
- Loneliness, stress and worry

A training matrix is being developed to upskill and develop staff in a wide variety of roles who support our children and young people. This will be launched in session 2022/23. In addition, each of the 4 key areas identified will form part of our improvement priorities for next session.

KOOTH AND TOGETHERALL

Kooth, an online resource to support all secondary aged young people has been launched across all 9 secondary schools.

Togetherall, another digital platform to support Health and Wellbeing for S5 and S6 and above young people and all adults across Scottish Borders Council has also been launched this session.

SEE ME SEE CHANGE

We celebrated 41 staff and 78 pupils becoming Mental Health Ambassadors through the See Me See Change programme. This has led to our ambassadors leading a range of initiatives across schools contributing to positive mental health action planning.



YOUNG MINDS MATTER

YMM is a whole school community approach to support positive mental health and wellbeing in young people. The programme is delivered from S1 to S4 and builds on work completed in primary schools in 'Building Resilience' and the story of Skipper. The 10 key themes remain the same but the content is progressed to ensure relevance to secondary aged pupils. In session 2021-22, 4876 young people were involved in the programme.

Young Minds Matter aims to allow young people to explore what influences their mental health and wellbeing through a range of teaching and learning strategies. It focusses on increasing knowledge and understanding and practical strategies for young people to aid their own mental health and wellbeing and developing skills to support others in difficult times.

QUOTES FROM PUPILS:

"The course was good, I learned some new things, it was better than most of the mental health lessons we have done in the past."

"It was easy to understand and makes sense."

SEASON FOR GROWTH

Seasons for Growth is a programme which supports children and young people who have experienced loss and change such as bereavement and parental separation. In session 2021/22 we have delivered programmes in 9 locations and helped 48 children and young people come to terms with their loss.

"I learned that my feelings can change at different minutes – and that's ok!"

Quotes from parents/carers whose children have been through the programme this year:

"My daughter has really come out of her shell, the change in her confidence has been amazing. She can talk about her feelings and understand her feelings."

"It's great for children to learn how to deal with emotions and feelings."

"The best aspects of the program for my child were being able to express herself through conversation as opposed to anger."

"My daughter has had a fantastic time in the group and has been trying to understand herself better."

"I am super pleased that this type of programme is available to children, hopefully I can build on things with my son now."

"The most important learning for my son has been how to cope with grief over losing his grandad."

LEADERSHIP

To support quality leadership in Early Years, Communities of Practice support ELC leaders to network, share good practice, receive training and explore and develop leadership skills and roles and responsibilities. The initial cohorts consisted of 10 New Early Years Officers (EYO), 26 experienced EYOs and 6 Senior Early Years Officers. The sessions are now attended by 57 EYO and 10 SEYO with an additional 15 EY practitioners attending Aspiring to Lead sessions, developing knowledge, understanding and key skills required for leadership positions. Almost all ELC leaders have now regularly attended these courses.

"I have really enjoyed all of the sessions I have been able to attend. I was very new to this role and the first SEYO in my setting so other staff were not completely 100% sure on what my actual role was. I feel that these meetings have given me a great understanding of what I should be doing and the sessions have given me great confidence in myself."

HEAD TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAMME

This year we have continued to develop the 2 year Head Teacher Induction Programme. Our partnership continues 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 Head Teachers and were very satisfied with the programme.

FIRST STEPS INTO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

First Steps into Leadership and Management Course continued delivery method to an on-line course. All 5 delegates have submitted or are currently working through their assignment for professional recognition.

"As a new teacher to the authority, participating in the FSiL course, working with a mentor, and leading the departmental team provided the opportunity to develop positive relationships across my new school setting. Although a modest project, leading the intervention involved a steep learning curve that provided the opportunity to amalgamate theory with practice."

COACHING

We continued to develop our Coaching Framework, offering the following coaching opportunities:

- Coaching for Success
- Coaching Masterclass – Coaching Refresher
- Coaching Skills for PRD

This year we looked at a new model for our Coaching for Success programme and this was facilitated online by a Secondary Teacher and a Primary Depute Head Teacher. 10 delegates successfully implemented the programme.

"I wanted to thank you for such enjoyable, supportive sessions. It has certainly been one of the best courses. I am still in contact with my co-coach. I'm sure that I will continue to use the coaching techniques even without thinking about it."

SELF EVALUATION LEADERSHIP OF CHANGE



91%

of **schools** evaluated themselves
as **good** or **better**

SELF EVALUATION CAPACITY FOR IMPROVEMENT



100%

of **schools** evaluated themselves
as **good** or **better**

NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

A total of 33 Primary and 18 Secondary probationer teachers successfully completed their one year Teacher Induction Scheme placement in June 2022 and have achieved the GTCS Standard for Full Registration. They were well supported in their schools and through a comprehensive authority wide training programme facilitated by the Education Department. Most probationer teachers successfully completed a professional inquiry during the course of the session, with support from the Quality Improvement Team and school staff, and their findings were shared.

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

We were delighted to be able to welcome the NQTs to a Celebration Event at the end of term.



"Clear advice and guidance on how to create LI and SC. I think we have all found this hard as all teachers do it differently. I have taken note of key wording to have in them that I can use going forward."

"Each child is different and as such resources should be altered specifically to them."

"Great advice from first-hand experience from interviews. I did not think to contact school to request a visit beforehand but see the advantages!"

PARTNERSHIP WITH UNIVERSITY OF HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS – PGDE COURSE

4 Primary students and 1 Secondary student successfully completed the PDGE Programme which is run in partnership with UHI. This programme continued to be delivered online.

all students will be joining Scottish Borders after the summer to complete their probationer Teacher Induction Scheme year.

RECENTLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS (RQTS)

Following feedback from NQTs and RQTs, a programme was developed to support Early Phase Teachers.

We had attend the Network sessions. Inputs included:

- Mental Wellbeing and Developing Resilience
- Supporting Learners with Literacy Difficulties & Dyslexia
- Effective Parents Meetings
- Scripting – Confidence & Positive Responses
- A Closer Look at Autism
- Differentiation and Effective Use of Support

CAREER LONG PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

We offered more than 80 Professional Learning opportunities over the course of the year. These opportunities had a particular focus on Inclusion and Wellbeing and Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

We had a hugely popular Guest Speaker input from Daisy Christodoulou, who wrote 7 Myths About Education. Over 100 teachers came along to this online input and feedback showed that all delegates developed or improved skills/knowledge that will enable them to carry out their remit more effectively.

A number of focussed service evaluations were carried out in June 2022.

An evaluation of Professional Learning was led by Robin Chapman (HT) the group were tasked with exploring the key question:

‘How are we collectively bringing about improvement in our schools and settings?’

Two clear recommendations were made including developing an Scottish Borders Council Professional Learning Taskforce to further explore how we deliver professional learning in Scottish Borders and developing clear professional learning pathways for all staff at different stages and settings.

An evaluation of Inclusion, was led by Justin Sinclair (HT) the group focussed on 2 areas:

1. What is working well in your school or setting?
2. What are the challenges within your school or setting?

Three clear recommendations were made in this evaluation which included consideration of augmented provision, expansion of existing services and an increase in support staff. These recommendations will form the basis of a more in depth Collaborative Improvement facilitated by Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES).

INSPIRE LEARNING

Good progress has been made with the continuation of the Inspire Learning Programme.

We now have :

- All education staff have an ipad : teachers, Early Years and additional support
- All P4-S6 have a 1:1 ipad for learning at schools and at home
- ELC-P3 have access to class sets of shared ipads

INSPIRE CLUSTER LEADS

A group of seconded teachers have been supporting their schools and cluster areas this session to improve the confidence and skills of staff in using technology for learning, teaching and assessment.

This support has included:

- Coaching and mentoring
- Team teaching
- Collaboration with senior staff
- Delivery of professional learning

IMPACT ON LEARNERS:

Learners have benefitted from encouragement, knowledge and support in trying out new technology in various ways to enhance their learning experiences. Learners have been able to use apps and technology to suit their own likes and needs, bringing more personalisation and choice in lessons and the lessons of the teachers and schools the team have supported.

'I have particularly seen a growing confidence in the learners and their abilities to problem solve, think more creatively around how to solve issues with the technology and also perform more creatively using technology to meet learning outcomes. I have certainly seen a marked increase in pupil engagement in areas where teachers have engaged with coaching and training'

DIGITAL SCHOOLS AWARD

Hawick, Kelso and Selkirk High Schools successfully achieved the national Digital Schools Award. Digital Schools Awards Scotland is a national awards programme accredited by Education Scotland which aims to promote, recognise and encourage a whole-school approach to the use of digital technology in primary and secondary schools.

APPLE DISTINGUISHED SCHOOLS

Kelso and Selkirk High Schools have been recognised as 'Centres of innovation, leadership, and educational excellence' This internationally acclaimed accreditation has been awarded to both schools in recognition of the way they are using technology to deliver learning to young people through our Inspire Learning Programme.

APPLE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SPECIALIST

Roddy Graham, Helen Orde and Catherine Little are teachers who have gained their Apple Professional Learning Specialists accreditation this session. These staff are lifelong educators uniquely qualified to demonstrate how to best use Apple tools for learning and teaching. They coach, mentor, and support teachers in advancing their technology skills to engage students in deeper learning. We now have 8 teachers with this award working in Scottish Borders, the highest per ratio in Scotland.

Borders staff participated in a pilot of the new Apple Coaching Programme this session. 27 members of staff achieved this accreditation. This will enable them to support digital pedagogy in their own schools and clusters, further enhancing learning, teaching and assessment.

'the course has shaped my coaching activities and provided inspiration for next steps. It has inspired me to engage differently with professional learning, taking a more focussed approach to improvement.'

SCHOOL LEAVER DESTINATION

School leaver destinations remain consistently high at 95.49% and remain in the top quartile nationally. This in line with the national comparators. Destinations include employment, Further Education, Higher Education, training and voluntary work. The school leavers follow-up survey by Skills Development Scotland, which is undertaken 6 months after the initial survey, indicated that 95.2% of leavers were in a positive destination. In addition, the latest participation data (2020) indicated that 96.7% of ERC 16-19 year olds were participating in education or training, well above the national figure of 91.6% and the highest result for mainland local authorities.

Scottish Borders had the highest proportion of school leavers entering higher education for 5 years. 43% of young people went on to higher education in 2021, an increase of 2.2 % in comparison to 2017-18.



A snapshot of 17 looked after young people showed that:



INCLUSION

We improved our systems and supports for accessing additional support including resource and professional advice

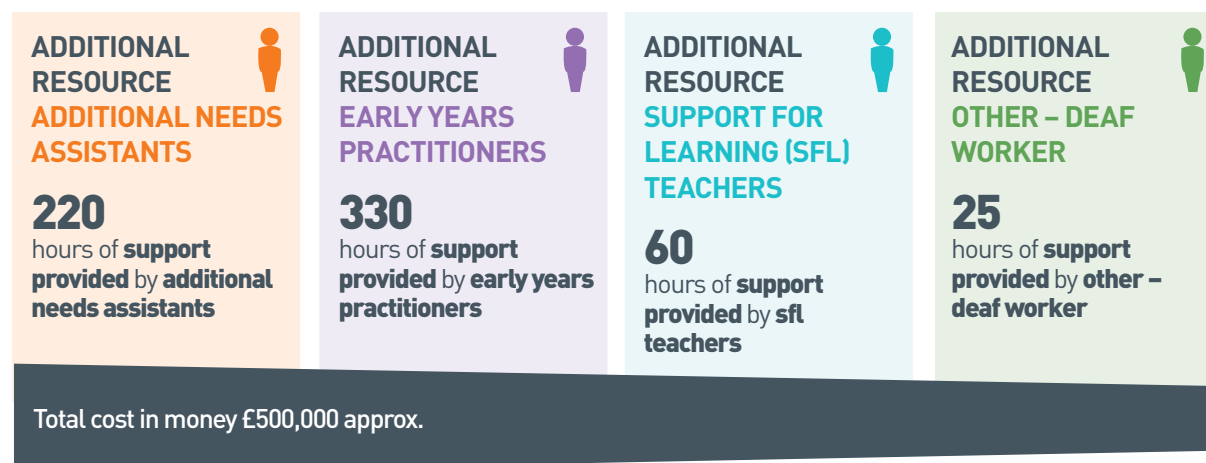
Due to an increase in needs, the Inclusion and Wellbeing Service adapted the service to a school-based model to support consistent approaches for learners in their local community. The development summary document “Accessing Additional Support: A Guide for Schools” document – was shared with Head Teachers on the January Head Teacher day.

The newly formed Equity, Moderation and Advisory Group met five times this session.

The aims and purpose of this group are to:

1. Ensure equity and tracking of centrally funded ASN resources across our Local Authority (Stage 2/3)
2. Provide advice and recommendations for individual complex cases – including current young people in an Scottish Borders Council establishment or new complex buffering cases
3. Allocate exceptional Additional Support Needs funding where required

This session, the group allocated additional support to schools and settings as detailed below.



We offered professional learning to support inclusive practice

The Inclusion & Wellbeing Service expanded the professional learning offer to support schools and adapted the offer to a school-based model. This supported consistent approaches for learners in schools and to increase the reach of the offer with sessions being delivered live, online to larger cohorts. Demand has increased and feedback remains strongly positive. The average evaluation of practitioners who attended these sessions were 8.5 out of 10.

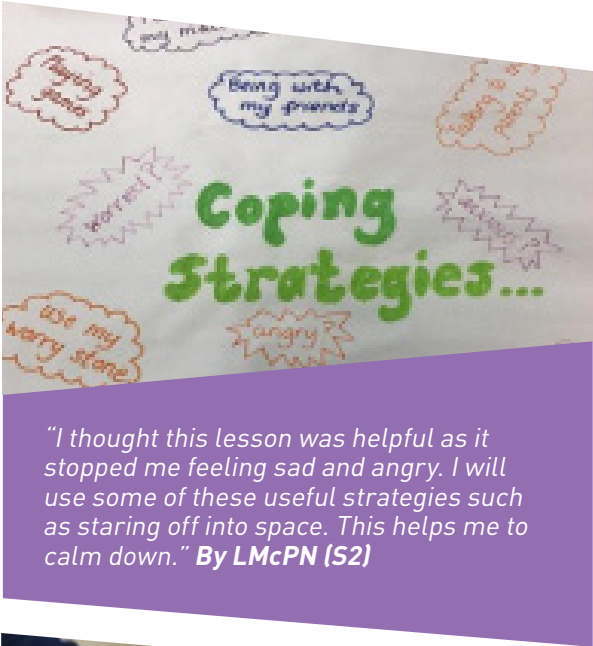


The Educational Psychology Service developed two recorded presentations on Nurture Principle 2: The learning environment is a safe space and Nurture Principle 5: All behaviour is communication. This is part of a three-year programme of professional learning based on the 6 Nurture Principles. All schools engaged in this training and self-evaluated their own practice to determine next steps.

We will continue to offer a robust programme of professional learning around inclusive practice based on the self-evaluation of schools and identification of needs.

We implemented Nurture bases in all 9 secondary schools.

Identified groups of young people in S1 and S2 have had access to targeted Nurture Groups or classes in our secondary schools. These have been led by trained practitioners. Schools have reported that nurture groups have been effective in supporting emotionally vulnerable young people to engage more in their mainstream classes.



"I thought this lesson was helpful as it stopped me feeling sad and angry. I will use some of these useful strategies such as staring off into space. This helps me to calm down." By LMcPN (S2)



QUOTES FROM SECONDARY PUPILS AT JEDBURGH GRAMMAR CAMPUS

"I come to The Hive to learn about how our brain works."

"We have targets that we work on."

"The staff in The Hive are kind, caring and safe."

"We come together in a small group to learn to communicate with others and make friends."

"We used the outdoors to learn, play and communicate as a team."



We had a lesson where Mrs Ireland gave us all a worry stone that she had collected from the beach. The stones were helpful because when you are worried you can rub the stone or keep it in your hand. This makes me feel calm and I still use my stone today. By C-MF (S2)

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW?

- Focus on ensuring policies and practices are grounded in current legislation and well understood and schools are supported to ensure success of all learners
- Support and challenge schools to improve outcomes for identified groups of children and young people with a particular focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap
- Support schools to make best use of Scottish Attainment Challenge funding to close the poverty related attainment gap
- Continue to ensure a commitment to nurture and progress rollout of targeted nurture bases
- Ensure the wellbeing indicators are being considered for all children and young people using the Glasgow Motivation Wellbeing Tool or similar profile
- An increased focus around the mental health of our children and young people using the SHINE survey across all our schools (P6-S6)
- Create positive action to address the following key areas highlighted in the Health and Wellbeing census 2022: Bullying, Loneliness, stress and worry, Caring Responsibility, Body Image.
- Host a National Collaborative Improvement with a focus on Inclusion



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2021-22

7. EXCELLENT EXPERIENCES



SCQF GOLD AMBASSADORS



Galashiels Academy recognised as a SCQF Gold Ambassador School.

Galashiels Academy is one of only three schools in Scotland to be recognised as Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Gold Ambassadors for their inspiring work on the curriculum.

Managed by the SCQF Partnership, the overall aim of the framework is to support the development of a wider range of courses and pathways in Scottish schools.

EDINBURGH PRIDE MARCH



Galashiels Academy celebrated diversity at the Edinburgh Pride March.

FOREST SCHOOLS



Outdoor learning is an important part of our education in Scottish Borders. Many of our children use Forest Schools activities to develop a range of skills including emotional literacy, problem solving and creativity.

PLATINUM JUBILEE



In June 2022 we celebrated the Platinum Jubilee of HRH Queen Elizabeth II, commemorating 70 years as our Queen. Our schools and communities recognised this amazing achievement by holding street parties, community events and special assemblies.



CULTURE AND TRADITION



The Scottish Borders has strong traditions and connections. Summer Festivals and Common Ridings play a large part in the ethos and life of our schools. This year St Peter's Primary School in Galashiels welcomed back two former pupils who had been declared as Braw Lad and Braw Lass 2022 and who would lead the town through the celebrations of the Braw Lad's Gathering as well as representing their town at many other local events.

COUNTRYSIDE DAY



After a 2-year absence all primary 5 children from every school took part in the Countryside Day at Springwood Park in Kelso. This event celebrates the industries and workplace of the countryside, through engaging and interactive activities our children are introduced to rural job and career opportunities across our region.

INSPIRING LEARNING FESTIVAL



Our first Inspiring Learning Festival took place at Springwood Park in Kelso, with over 1,200 Primary 6 pupils from across the Borders coming together to take part in a series of STEM activities on day 1. They developed meta-skills including critical thinking, curiosity, creativity and collaboration through activities such as robotics, coding, design, engineering, ethical hacking and animation, all using their Inspire iPad.



HISTORIC BORDERS



Our beautiful Scottish Borders have many amazing castles and abbeys. Schools across our local authority make best use of these historic sites to support inter-disciplinary learning and to promote a passion for our heritage.



Day 2 showcased the best of technology in education and featured schools/settings from the Borders as well as inspiring presentations and demonstrations from innovative, industry leading partners. This was an opportunity to meet and discuss digital skills in education and business with representatives from across the UK, including Apple, Showbie, Heriot Watt University, Skills Development Scotland, Jamf, G Hold and Education Scotland.

COP 26



The children of Stow Primary School travelled to Glasgow where the '100 Disrupters' represented their school, community and Scottish Borders Council at an event for COP26. This event was hosted by Daydream Believers, Lego and Pechakucha, all of whom the children have had the privilege to work with previously. Their enthusiasm, engagement and ability to articulate what needs to be done was outstanding. They were all a credit to their school.

ATTENDANCE

Overall attendance rate for all primary schools in 2021-22 was 92.94%, down 3.45 % from 96.4 % in 2020-21. The latest three year average for primary attendance (2019-2022) was 94.13 %. Both primary and secondary school attendance have been impacted by the effects of COVID-19. In secondary, the overall attendance rate for all secondary schools across S1-S5 was 88.54 %; 4.41 % below that recorded in 2020-21. The latest three year average secondary attendance (2019-2022) was 90.88%.

EXCLUSIONS

Our schools continue to use strategies to promote positive, nurturing and supportive relationships with our children in order to manage behaviour in a proactive and person-centred manner.

Since the return to school post covid there has been a slight increase in the number of exclusion incidents, increasing from 5 incidents in 2020-21 to 8 incidents in 2021-22 in primary and increasing from 58 incidents in 2020-21 to 87 incidents in 2021-22.

INVESTMENT

We continue to invest in the fabric of our schools to ensure high quality learning environments for our children and young people. We have recently created a bespoke learning area in Peebles High School for our young people attending the enhanced provision there. Their provision was destroyed in the recent school fire.

The current capital plan also includes the following projects which will be progressed over the next few years:

- Eyemouth Primary School
- Galashiels Academy
- Peebles High School
- Hawick High School
- Earlston Primary School

ACTIVE SCHOOLS

The Active Schools Network made a welcome return in the 2021/22 school session (albeit still under some restrictions enforced due to Covid). The network exists to provide more opportunities for children and young people to become physically active through increasing capacity in schools and communities. The decrease in mental and physical health of children and young people during Covid has been well documented and the Active Schools network continues to have an important place in allowing children and young people the opportunity to engage (sometimes for the first time) in safe and fun activity.

ACTIVE SCHOOLS VISITS



126,031

visits were made in **Scottish Borders Schools** to **Active Schools** led/supported activity

ACTIVE SCHOOLS DELIVERERS



whilst the **return of coaches and volunteers post covid** has been problematic across the nation, **Scottish Borders Active Schools** still engaged with

647
deliverers

97% of whom are volunteers, ensuring that activity is offered free of charge to participants.

ACTIVE SCHOOLS SCHOOL SPORT COMPETITION



school sport competition made a **welcome return** in the **final part of 21/22** with

828
visits made to **festivals/competitions/events** providing an **additional platform** for **Scottish Borders pupils** to **progress and achieve in sport**

ACTIVE SCHOOLS PUPILS



6,251

pupils (43% of the school role) **re-engaged with sport and physical activity opportunities** following Covid

51%
of participants were **female**

49%
male

To provide some context, the national average is 31%.

ACTIVE SCHOOLS SECONDARY PUPILS



102
secondary pupils were **actively engaged** in **sports leadership opportunities**, providing **valuable workforce and development of lifelong learning skills**



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