



Item: 8

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee: 5 June 2024.

Orkney Schools Attainment.

Report by Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.

1. Overview

- 1.1. The National Improvement Framework for Scottish education vision is to raise attainment and improve outcomes for all children and young people. These priorities are reflected in the Orkney Education Service Plan and Raising Attainment Strategy.
- 1.2. The Orkney Schools Attainment Report 2022/23, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, presents attainment for the academic year 2022/23, following national publication of Broad General Education, secondary and school leaver data in December 2023 and February 2024.
- 1.3. The following data is presented:
 - i. Early Learning.
 - ii. Curriculum for Excellence Levels achieved by pupils in P1, P4, P7 and S3.
 - iii. Attainment of Senior Phase pupils and School Leavers.
 - iv. Young people's participation in education, employment or training.
 - v. Young people's wider achievements through the Community Learning and Development Service.
 - vi. Destinations of school leavers.
- 1.4. The key measures presented reflect those monitored by the Scottish Government in the Scottish Attainment Challenge, including core measures on which all local authorities report, and measures chosen by the service to reflect local priorities.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
 - i. Scrutinise the Orkney Schools Attainment report for academic session 2022/23, attached as Appendix 1, in order to obtain assurance with regard to the levels of success and achievement of children and young people.

For Further Information please contact:

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Implications of Report

- 1. Financial** n/a.
- 2. Legal** n/a.
- 3. Corporate Governance** n/a.
- 4. Human Resources** n/a.
- 5. Equalities** n/a.
- 6. Island Communities Impact** n/a.
- 7. Links to Council Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:
 - Growing our economy.
 - Strengthening our Communities.
 - Developing our Infrastructure.
 - Transforming our Council.
- 8. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
 - Cost of Living.
 - Sustainable Development.
 - Local Equality.
- 9. Environmental and Climate Risk** None
- 10. Risk** n/a
- 11. Procurement** n/a
- 12. Health and Safety** n/a
- 13. Property and Assets** n/a
- 14. Information Technology** n/a
- 15. Cost of Living** n/a

List of Background Papers

Orkney Education Service Plan

Raising Attainment Strategy 2023-2026

Appendix

Appendix 1: Orkney Schools Attainment Report 2022-23

Orkney Schools Attainment Report Session 2022-23

This report summarises the key measures of attainment and achievement in Orkney schools in session 2022-23:

- **Section 1** Early Learning.
- **Section 2** Curriculum for Excellence levels achieved by pupils in their Broad General Education in Orkney schools at stages P1, P4, P7 and S3.
- **Section 3** Senior Phase and School Leavers' attainment and participation of 16-19 year olds in Education, Employment and Training
- **Section 4** Wider Achievements of young people reported by the Community Learning and Development Service.
- **Section 5** School Leaver Destinations of young people, in Orkney, in session 2022 to 2023.

Section 1: Early Learning

- 1.1 Nursery practitioners continuously gather information about the children in their care. This helps practitioners to ensure that they plan experiences to follow children’s interests and extend their learning. Several times each year, nursery managers meet with practitioners to talk about the children in the practitioner’s key group. They note whether children are meeting developmental milestones typical for children of their age however, they are particularly interested in whether children are making good progress.
- 1.2 Some children will not be meeting typical developmental milestones, but will be making good progress along their own developmental pathway. Practitioners carefully consider if they are meeting children’s learning needs in every way so that they can build on their learning, including providing additional support in specific areas, or providing more challenging experiences.
- 1.3 In 2021, practitioners gathered information about children’s language and literacy development, mathematical development and wellbeing. From 2022 onwards, the language and literacy domain was split into listening and talking, early reading and early writing to better co-ordinate with the tracking undertaken from P1 onwards.
- 1.4 The tables below summarise that information for children moving on to Primary 1.

| 1.5 Is the child making good progress? Child’s needs are well met through universal provision and they are making very good progress. | | | |
|--|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 2020-21 | 22-23 | 23-24 |
| Listening and talking | 87% | 91% | 92% |
| Early reading | | 90% | 92% |
| Early writing | | 91% | 91% |
| Mathematical development | 90% | 93% | 88% |
| Wellbeing | 80% | 86% | 87% |

| 1.6 Is the child meeting the expected developmental milestones for their age? | | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 22-23 |
| Listening and talking | 81% | 84% | 85% |
| Early reading | | 86% | 89% |
| Early writing | | 87% | 83% |
| Mathematical development | 88% | 87% | 85% |
| Wellbeing | 74% | 79% | 76% |

1.7 Post Covid, significant concerns remain about both children's development and wellbeing on entry to nursery, and this would match with national research which highlights the impact of lockdown on babies and very young children. For children leaving nursery, there has been a slight dip in meeting wellbeing developmental milestones, especially when compared with other aspects of children's development.

Section 2: Curriculum for Excellence Levels

- 2.1 Scottish Government produces an annual report on the [Achievement of Curriculum of Excellence Levels](#) (ACEL). This data is published annually in December reporting on the previous school session. The data supports one of the drivers for improvement within the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education by providing a measure of progress in learning linked to the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).
- 2.2 Data gathered in the ACEL survey relates to achievement of a level in Broad General Education (BGE), at Primary 1 (P1), Primary 4 (P4), Primary 7 (P7) and Secondary 3 (S3). The data is based on teacher professional judgements of the CfE Levels achieved by each pupil in areas of literacy and numeracy.
- 2.3 The areas of Literacy reported on are Reading, Writing and Listening & Talking, and the combined number of pupils who achieve three out of three meaning achievement of a level in all 3 of the areas in literacy. (Reading, writing, listening and talking). Numeracy is reported as one area.
- 2.4 Teacher judgements underpin the data reported in ACEL. Teachers make these judgements based on the evidence collected during on-going assessment (formative assessment) of children and young people's learning. Formative assessment involves the daily evaluation of children and young people's learning by the teacher and will include discussion with children and young people about their learning. Teachers create high quality assessment opportunities at regular intervals to help them understand pupils' ability to apply their skills in different contexts. Diagnostic assessments such as the [National Standardised Assessments for Scotland](#) (NSA) and [Scottish Online Formative Assessment](#) (SOFA) provide further information.
- 2.5 Moderation procedures support staff to have a shared understanding of progress within and completion of a level.
- 2.6 Most children and young people are expected to achieve the CfE levels within these timescales:
 - Early level by the end of P1.
 - First level by the end of P4.
 - Second level by the end of P7.
 - Third / Fourth level by the end of S3.

As each child's learning journey is unique, there will be children and young people who achieve the levels earlier or later than would be expected.

- 2.7** The Broad General Education (BGE) tracking toolkit used by all primary schools provides a comprehensive data tracking and analysis tool. The toolkit helps to identify overall data trends, measures progress against improvement targets, and tracks the attainment of all children along with specific cohorts i.e., those eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and Care Experienced Children and Young People. (CECYP)
- 2.8** S3 pupils are tracked three times a year and progress recorded either in SEEMIS Progress and Achievement or by individual school tracking processes.
- 2.9** Data in the ACEL survey is reported in terms of the percentage of the year group stage who are recorded as having achieved the “expected” Level by that stage. For S3, the data is reported as the percentage achieving S3 achieving Level 3 and S3 achieving Level 4.
- 2.10** The following table shows the overall summary of the ACEL data for 2023. Figures show percentages of pupils achieving appropriate level by stage.

| | P1 | P4 | P7 | P1/4/7 Literacy Combined | S3/ Level 3 | S3/ Level 4 |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| Reading | 88 | 82 | 90 | 87 | 88 | 61 |
| Writing | 85 | 73 | 80 | 79 | 86 | 60 |
| Listening & Talking | 92 | 89 | 92 | 91 | 88 | 60 |
| Literacy combined | 84 | 71 | 78 | 78 | 84 | 55 |
| Numeracy | 88 | 84 | 84 | 85 | 94 | 66 |

2.11 Summary over time

The following tables show the levels achieved by pupils in P1, P4, P7 and S3 compared against the national average.

No data was collected in 2019/2020 in all year groups. In 2020/2021 only primary schools' data was collected as schools recovered from the pandemic.

| P1 Early Level | | Reading | Writing | Listening and talking | Literacy Combined | Numeracy |
|----------------|------------------------------|---------|---------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 2017/2018 | Orkney | 76% | 68% | 79% | 67% | 82% |
| | National | 81% | 78% | 87% | 75% | 85% |
| 2018/2019 | Orkney | 77% | 69% | 80% | 66% | 78% |
| | National | 82% | 79% | 87% | 76% | 85% |
| 2019/2020 | No data collected - pandemic | | | | | |
| 2020/2021 | Orkney | 78% | 74% | 85% | 72% | 84% |
| | National | 77% | 74% | 84% | 71% | 81% |
| 2021/2022 | Orkney | 81% | 80% | 87% | 78% | 82% |
| | National | 79% | 77% | 86% | 74% | 84% |
| 2022/2023 | Orkney | 88% | 85% | 92% | 84% | 88% |
| | National | 81% | 78% | 87% | 76% | 85% |

| P4 First Level | | Reading | Writing | Listening and talking | Literacy Combined | Numeracy |
|----------------|------------------------------|---------|---------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 2017/2018 | Orkney | 76% | 70% | 81% | 64% | 77% |
| | National | 77% | 72% | 85% | 69% | 76% |
| 2018/2019 | Orkney | 66% | 61% | 72% | 56% | 68% |
| | National | 78% | 73% | 85% | 70% | 77% |
| 2019/2020 | No data collected – pandemic | | | | | |
| 2020/2021 | Orkney | 71% | 63% | 81% | 62% | 70% |
| | National | 73% | 67% | 82% | 64% | 72% |
| 2021/2022 | Orkney | 75% | 68% | 84% | 67% | 74% |
| | National | 76% | 70% | 85% | 67% | 75% |
| 2022/2023 | Orkney | 82% | 73% | 89% | 71% | 84% |
| | National | 78% | 72% | 87% | 70% | 77% |

| P7 Second Level | | Reading | Writing | Listening and talking | Literacy Combined | Numeracy |
|-----------------|------------------------------|---------|---------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 2017/2018 | Orkney | 75% | 69% | 75% | 65% | 72% |
| | National | 79% | 73% | 84% | 70% | 75% |
| 2018/2019 | Orkney | 75% | 67% | 80% | 61% | 72% |
| | National | 80% | 74% | 86% | 71% | 76% |
| 2019/2020 | No data collected – pandemic | | | | | |
| 2020/2021 | Orkney | 82% | 74% | 87% | 71% | 72% |
| | National | 76% | 69% | 82% | 66% | 72% |
| 2021/2022 | Orkney | 85% | 76% | 86% | 72% | 81% |
| | National | 79% | 73% | 86% | 71% | 76% |
| 2022/2023 | Orkney | 90% | 80% | 92% | 78% | 78% |
| | National | 81% | 75% | 87% | 73% | 84% |

| P1, P4 and P7 combined | | Reading | Writing | Listening and talking | Literacy Combined | Numeracy |
|------------------------|------------------------------|---------|---------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 2017/2018 | Orkney | 76% | 69% | 78% | 65% | 77% |
| | National | 79% | 74% | 85% | 71% | 78% |
| 2018/2019 | Orkney | 73% | 66% | 78% | 61% | 72% |
| | National | 80% | 75% | 86% | 72% | 79% |
| 2019/2020 | No data collected - pandemic | | | | | |
| 2020/2021 | Orkney | 77% | 70% | 84% | 68% | 75% |
| | National | 75% | 70% | 83% | 67% | 75% |
| 2021/2022 | Orkney | 80% | 74% | 86% | 79% | 94% |
| | National | 78% | 73% | 85% | 78% | 89% |
| 2022/2023 | Orkney | 83% | 79% | 91% | 78% | 85% |
| | National | 80% | 75% | 87% | 73% | 80% |

Commentary on primary 1, 4 and 7 attainment

- Attainment this year exceeds national average in all areas.
- Attainment has increased across all organisers since 2022.

| S3 Third Level | | Reading | Writing | Listening and talking | Literacy Combined | Numeracy |
|----------------|------------------------------|---------|---------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 2017/2018 | Orkney | 92% | 89% | 94% | 88% | 93% |
| | National | 90% | 89% | 91% | 87% | 89% |
| 2018/2019 | Orkney | 88% | 83% | 88% | 82% | 94% |
| | National | 91% | 90% | 91% | 88% | 90% |
| 2019/2020 | No data collected - pandemic | | | | | |
| 2020/2021 | No data collected - pandemic | | | | | |
| 2021/2022 | Orkney | 89% | 90% | 86% | 85% | 94% |
| | National | 88% | 87% | 89% | 86% | 89% |
| 2022/2023 | Orkney | 88% | 86% | 88% | 84% | 94% |
| | National | 90% | 89% | 91% | 88% | 90% |

| S3 Fourth Level | | Reading | Writing | Listening and talking | Literacy Combined | Numeracy |
|-----------------|------------------------------|---------|---------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 2017/2018 | Orkney | 48% | 42% | 52% | 37% | 77% |
| | National | 53% | 51% | 55% | 46% | 56% |
| 2018/2019 | Orkney | 19% | 19% | 19% | 11% | 74% |
| | National | 55% | 52% | 57% | 48% | 59% |
| 2019/2020 | No data collected - pandemic | | | | | |
| 2020/2021 | No data collected - pandemic | | | | | |
| 2021/2022 | Orkney | 73% | 69% | 73% | 64% | 71% |
| | National | 54% | 52% | 55% | 48% | 59% |
| 2022/2023 | Orkney | 61% | 60% | 60% | 55% | 66% |
| | National | 62% | 60% | 63% | 56% | 63% |

Commentary on S3 third level attainment

- S3 third level is below the national average in reading, writing, listening and talking and literacy.
- S3 third level in numeracy is above the national average.
- S3 third level in reading, writing and literacy are below the data in 2023.
- Attainment in S3 third level is above last year's data in listening and talking and is the same as last year in numeracy.

Commentary on S3 fourth level attainment

- S3 fourth level is below the national average in reading, listening and talking and literacy. In writing, the S3 fourth level matches the national average.
- S3 fourth level in all organisers: reading, writing, listening and talking, literacy and numeracy are below the data in 2022.

2.12. Comparative data ACEL data 2023

The following graphs show Orkney (green) compared to the highest attaining (orange) and lowest attaining (grey) authorities in Scotland. You are also able to see the Scottish national average (blue). The literacy percentage is where the children and young people achieve all three of the literacy organisers. All data is expressed as percentages.

P1 - Early Level

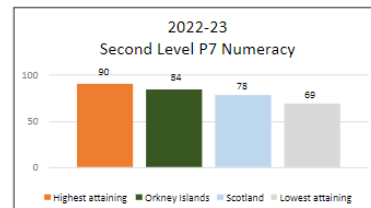
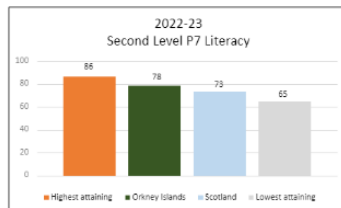
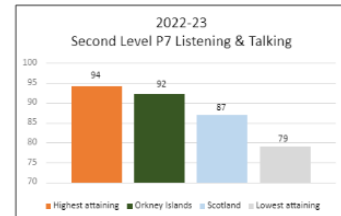
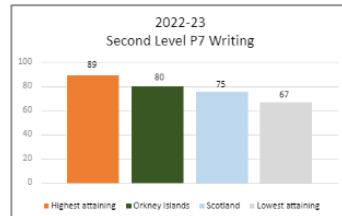
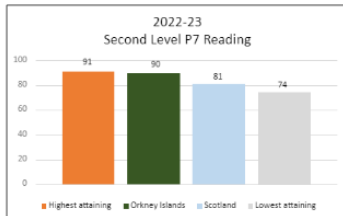


P4 - First Level



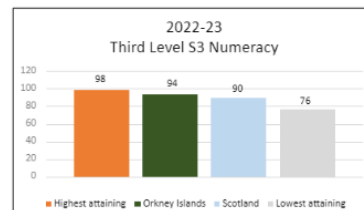
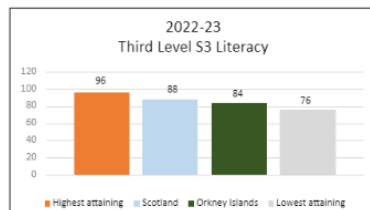
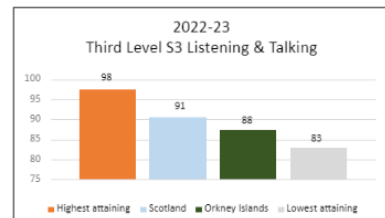
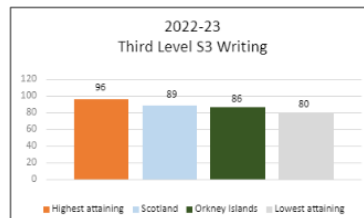
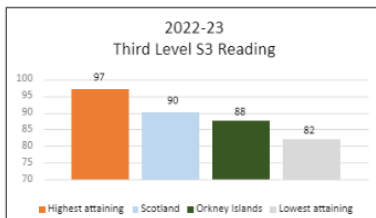
P7 - Second Level

P7: Second Level



S3 - Third Level

S3 Third Level



S3 - Fourth Level



Next steps

- Work within the OIC Education Service Plan – Learning and Achievement to improve attainment.
- All schools to have teaching and learning as a key part of school improvement plans for session 2023/2024.
- In line with the Scottish Attainment Challenge, local authority core and core plus stretch aims have been created for primary schools and will be tracked and monitored as part of the data analysis approaches already in place.
- Primary schools to set their own school targets for reading, writing, listening and talking and numeracy.
- Analysis of attainment of pupils against FSM and CECYP.
- Work with secondary schools to standardise the way in which BGE S3 data is tracked and monitored.

Section 3: Levels of Achievement in National Examinations.

3.1 Senior Phase Tracking and monitoring process

Each year young people in secondary schools in Orkney are presented for National Courses, Awards and Units certificated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), as well as a smaller number presented for a range of qualifications and awards accredited by bodies other than SQA.

3.2 The Education Service monitors the following measures for Senior Phase pupils' attainment:

- Percentage of entered pupils passing National 5, Higher, Advanced Higher.
- Percentage of pupils in S4 achieving 5 or more level 5 qualifications.
- Percentage of pupils in S4 achieving level 4 and level 5 Literacy and Numeracy.

These measures are calculated three times a year using data from school reports, giving figures for young people's current and predicted performance based on teacher judgements. Schools use this data to plan interventions to raise attainment.

At the end of the school session the same measures are calculated using the actual SQA attainment data. An initial version of this data is calculated in early August when young people receive their results and finalised in late September, when it is published in Education Scotland's Insight data tool.

Whilst SQA attainment for pupils in Junior High Schools is not published in this report, due to the confidentiality risk of small cohort sizes, their data is tracked and interventions to raise attainment are agreed using the same process as the secondary schools.

3.3 In addition to the measures in 3.2 above, the following measures are reported annually with regards to pupils who left school at the end of the school session.

The following measures are reported annually for school leavers:

- Percentage of young people aged 16-19 who are in education, employment or training (known as the Annual Participation Measure).
- Percentage of school leavers achieving 1 or more level 5 qualification.
- Percentage of school leavers achieving 1 or more level 6 qualification.
- Percentage of school leavers attaining 5 or more level 5 qualifications.
- Percentage of school leavers achieving 5 or more level 6 qualifications (equivalent to 5 Highers, but may include other qualification types such as Foundation Apprenticeship).
- Percentage of school leavers achieving level 4 and level 5 Literacy and Numeracy.

The Annual Participation Measure is published in August for the preceding financial year, whilst data on school leavers' attainment is published in February of the year after examinations were taken.

- 3.4** Some of the annual measures are reported to Education Scotland as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. For 2022-23 "Stretch aims" were set for these measures for Orkney as follows:

| Measure | 2022-23 Stretch Aim |
|--|---------------------|
| Annual Participation measure | 95% |
| Percentage of school leavers achieving 1 or more level 5 qualification | 95% |
| Percentage of school leavers achieving 1 or more level 6 qualification | 68% |

[Scottish Attainment Challenge Stretch Aims](#) are published nationally by the Scottish Government.

3.5 Impact of COVID-19 on SQA examinations

Historic data is presented in each of the measures below. It should however be noted that due to the covid pandemic there were alterations to the examination process making it inappropriate to compare results across years:

- In session 2019-20 there was no SQA examination diet; grades were awarded based on teacher judgement, with courses modified to reduce content.
- In session 2020-21 there was no SQA examination diet; grades were awarded based on an alternative certification model involving teacher judgement of evidence and moderation across schools; courses continued with the same modifications to content as in 2019-20.
- Examinations were held in session 2021-22 and some modifications to content continued; there was an enhanced appeals procedure allowing teachers to present evidence to support an appeal where a pupil's awarded grade was lower than expected.
- Increased pass rates in the covid years when examinations were not held are evident, particularly in 2019-20 when cross-school moderation was not required.

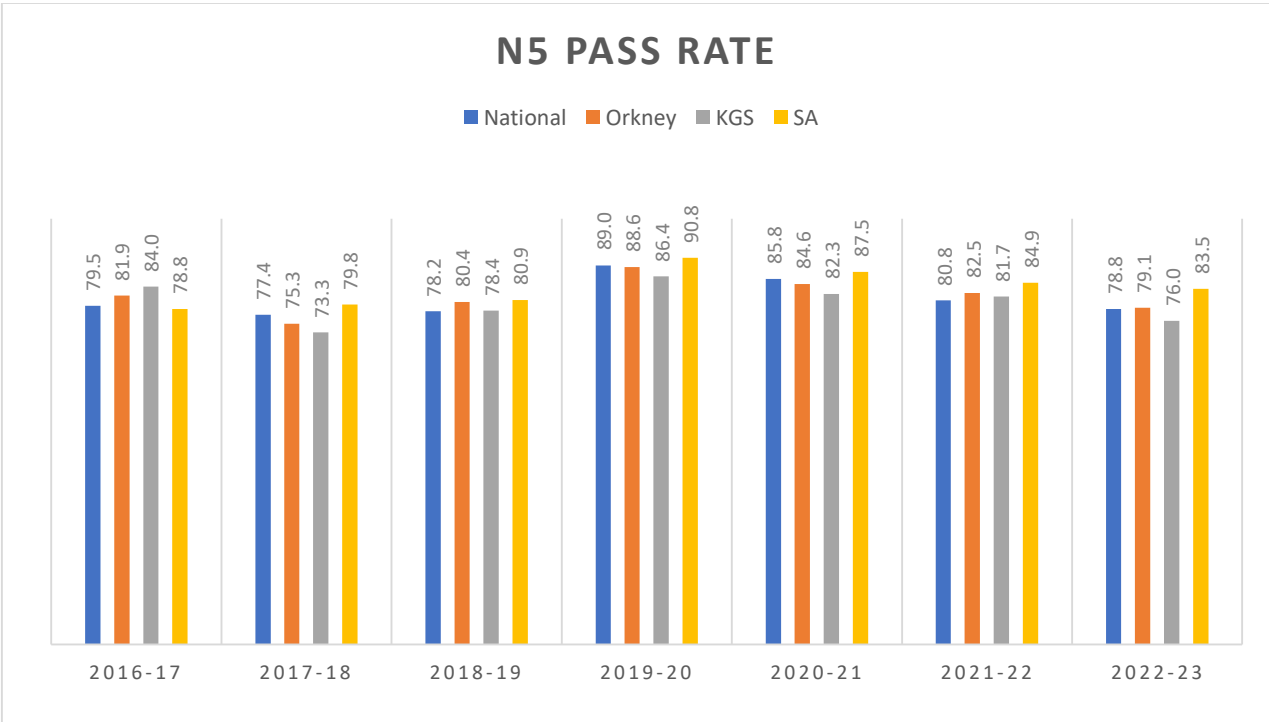
3.6 Extenuating circumstances

In reviewing the attainment of Senior Phase pupils in 2022-23, we are mindful of the significant impact on our secondary pupils of the deaths of two of our young people at the beginning of the examination period.

3.7 Pass Rates (grades A-C)

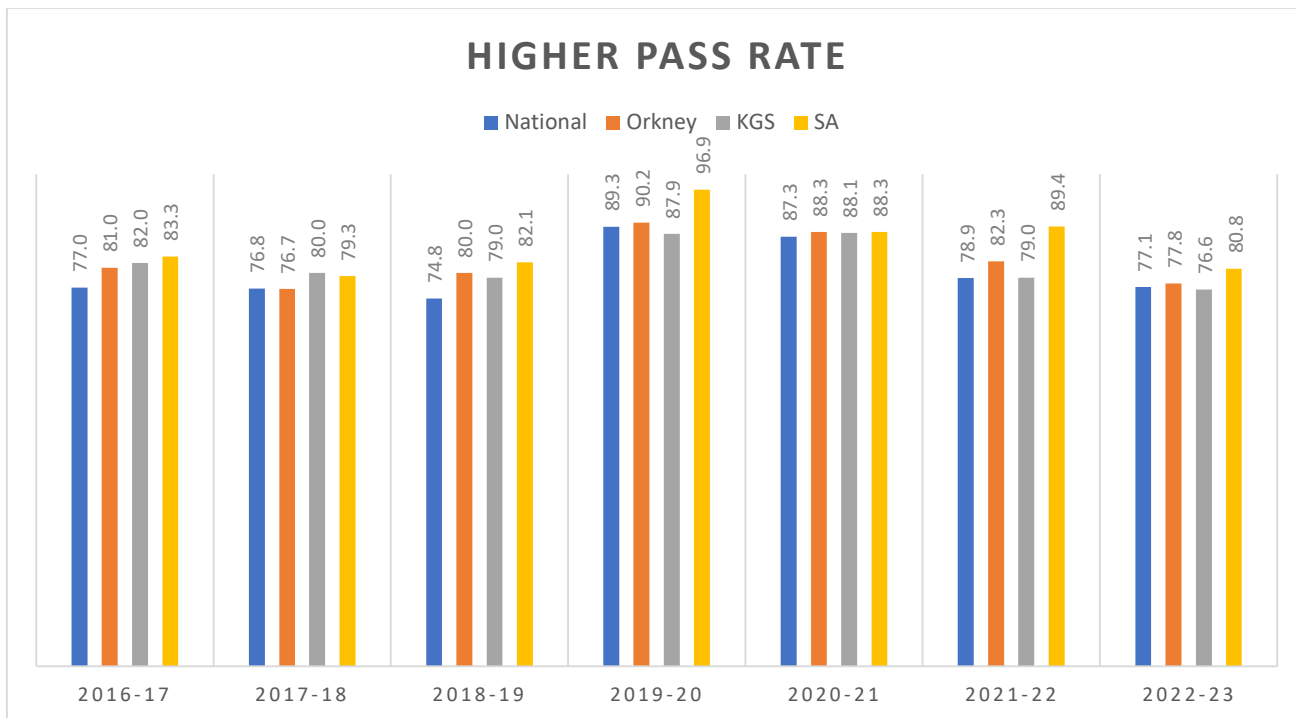
In the pass rate charts for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher presented below:

- The national % pass rate is shown in blue, with the Orkney rate shown in orange, Kirkwall Grammar School (KGS) in grey and Stromness Academy in yellow.
- Direct comparisons between KGS and Stromness Academy should not be drawn given the significant differences in their cohort sizes and demographic characteristics, as well as KGS’s status as the resourced school for pupils with complex additional support needs.
- Caution should also be exercised when comparing a school’s data across years, given that each year represents a different cohort of young people.
- Attainment of pupils in the Junior High Schools is included in the Orkney rate but separate rates for each school are not given as to do so would risk identifying individual pupils in these small cohorts.
- These rates include the outcome of appeals and for that reason may differ from any data seen in August 2023.



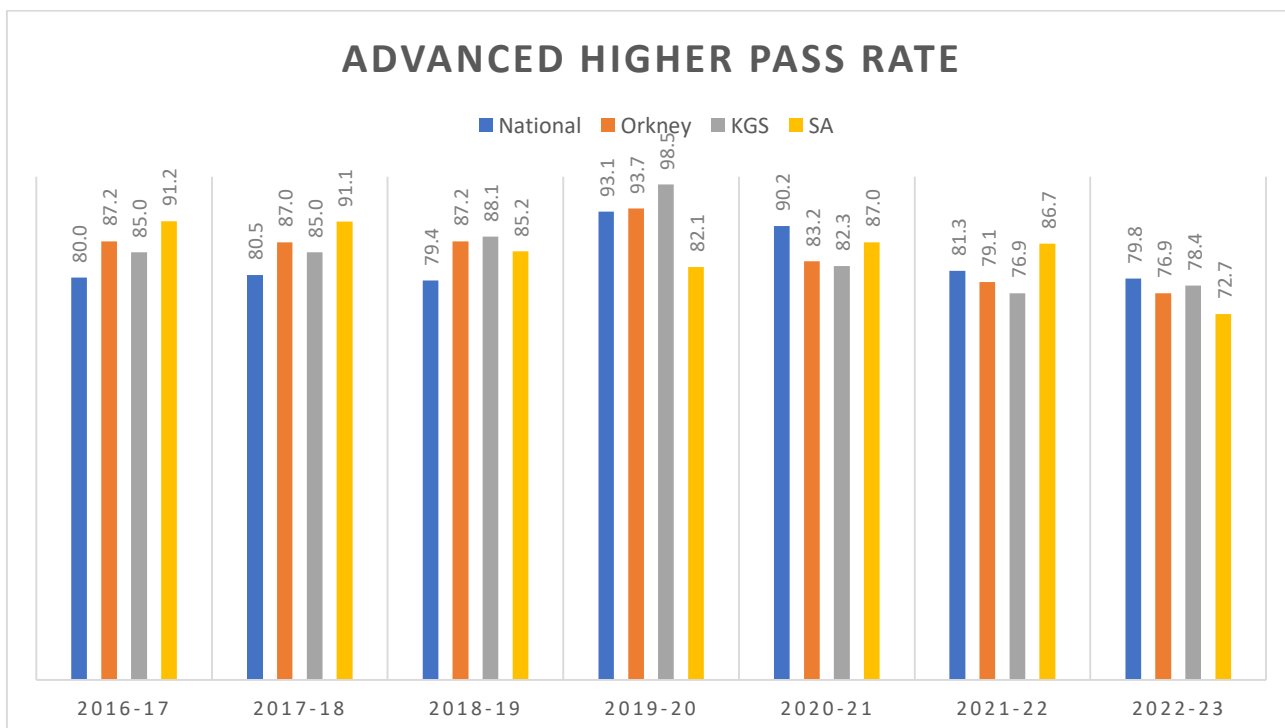
Analysis – National 5

National 5 pass rates in Orkney in 2022-23 were slightly higher than the national rate; both were a decrease on the previous year. This was expected, as SQA recognised the reducing legacy of disruption to teaching and learning caused by the pandemic and largely removed modifications, restoring most qualifications to their pre-covid content and assessment methods.



Analysis – Higher

As for National 5, Higher pass rates both nationally and for Orkney show an expected decrease on the previous year.



Analysis – Advanced Higher

- The decreasing trend nationally in the Advanced Higher pass rate over the past 4 years is reflected in the Orkney pass rate.

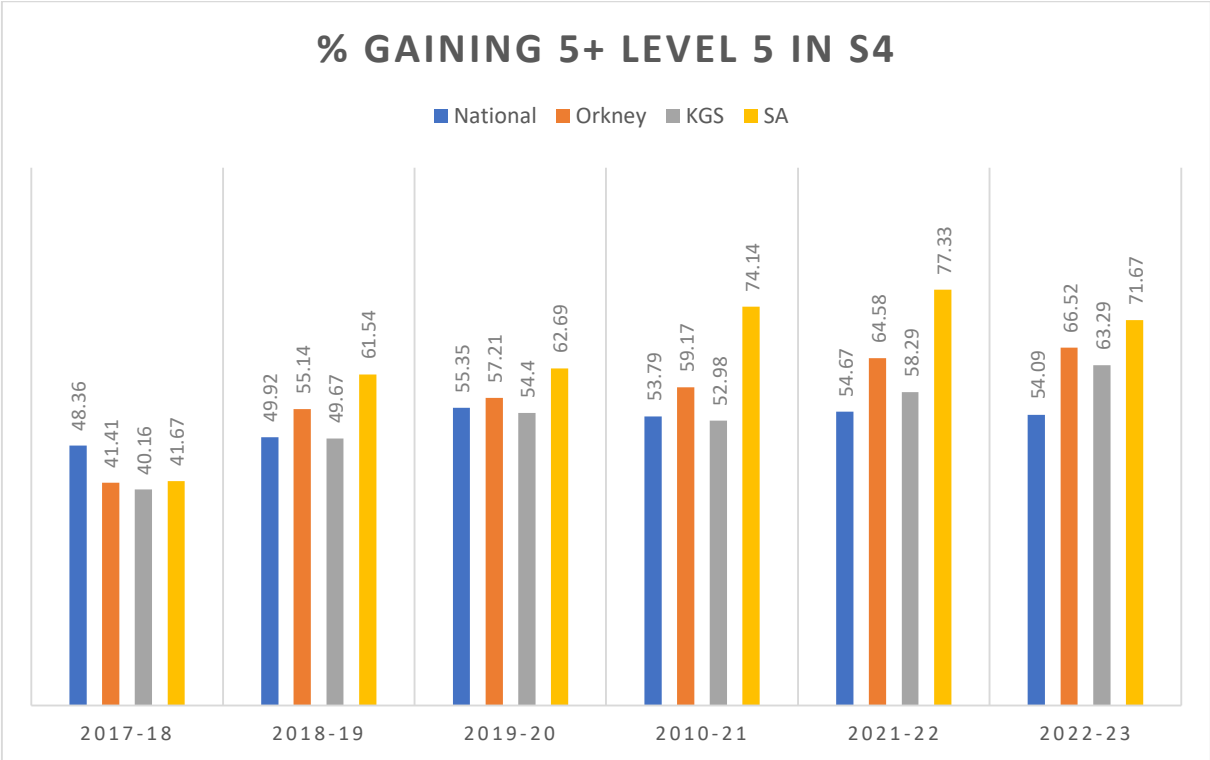
Next Steps

Pass rates, whether at N5, Higher or Advanced Higher, are a percentage of entries. A local authority which sought to increase its pass rate could easily achieve this by withdrawing from the examination all pupils where there is any doubt over their ability to pass. This is not the approach taken by Orkney schools; our aim is to find a balance between giving young people opportunities to achieve and concentrating their and their teachers' efforts on those areas most likely to yield success.

As we continue to refine the tracking, monitoring and intervention process across the secondary and Junior High Schools we are gaining clear oversight of whether pass rates both at school and local authority level are on track to be at the level we would like and identify areas for intervention.

3.8 5 or more level 5 passes in S4

This measure is important because it demonstrates that pupils are successful across a broad range of subjects and supports progression to further study. It is not an area we have particularly focused on in Orkney in the past but is one we are targeting from 2022-23 onwards. Achieving this breadth in S4 is important for pupils who intend to leave school at 16 and go into employment, as they may not have opportunities to continue to enhance their qualification portfolio. We are aware that employment is a more usual destination at 16 in Orkney than nationally, particularly for Stromness Academy. Achieving this solid foundation is also key for those aiming to progress to Higher Education as it facilitates pupils taking 5 Highers in S5 to support university applications.



Analysis:

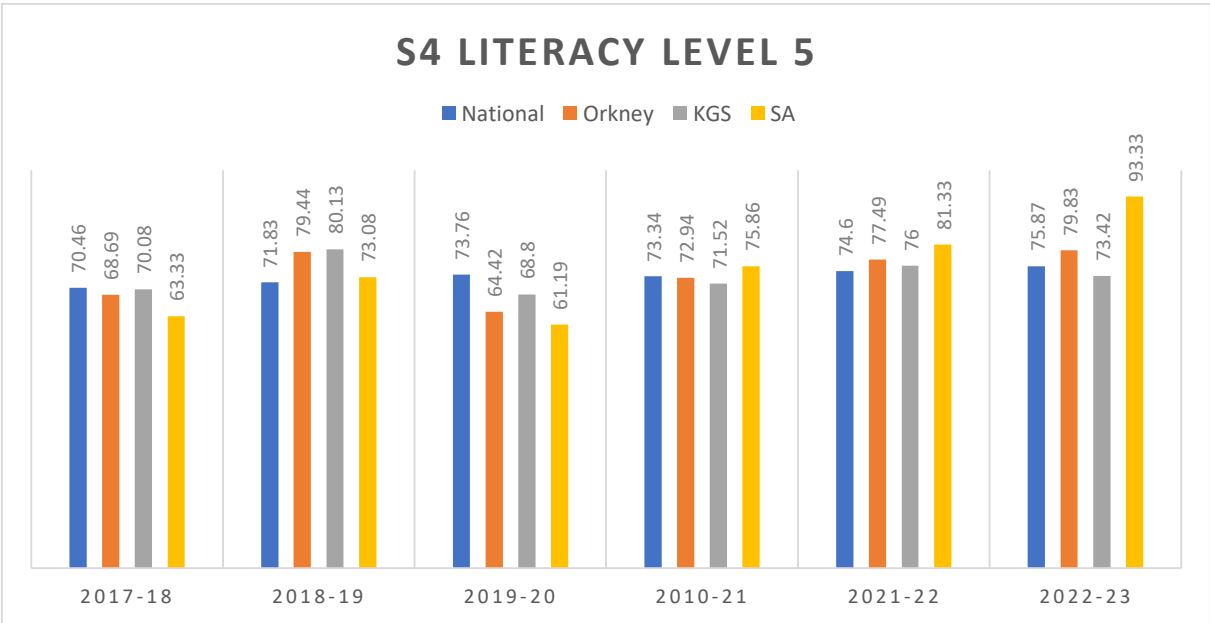
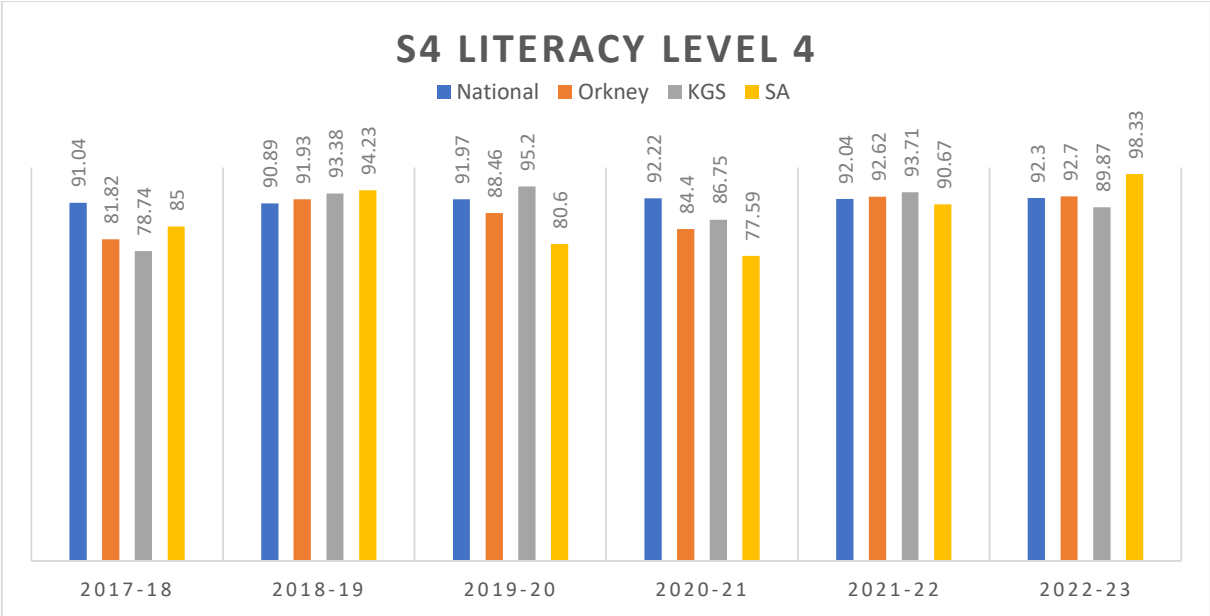
Since 2018-19 Orkney attainment in this measure is consistently above national levels. The upward trend in the Orkney rate has been maintained over 6 years. The 2022-23 Orkney rate is a substantial 12 percentage points above the national rate, reflecting the significant focus we have chosen to place on this measure.

Next steps:

We have chosen to include this measure in our Stretch Aims for the Scottish Attainment Challenge going forward and have set an ambitious stretch aim of 70% by 2025/26. Achieving this will require significant focus on ensuring the Senior Phase Curriculum meets the needs and interests of young people; a review of the curriculum is included in the Education Service Improvement Plan. The contribution of UHI Orkney is crucial in this. Demand for courses at the college within Senior Phase is rising; continuing to meet this demand is a significant challenge within a climate of flat funding for colleges.

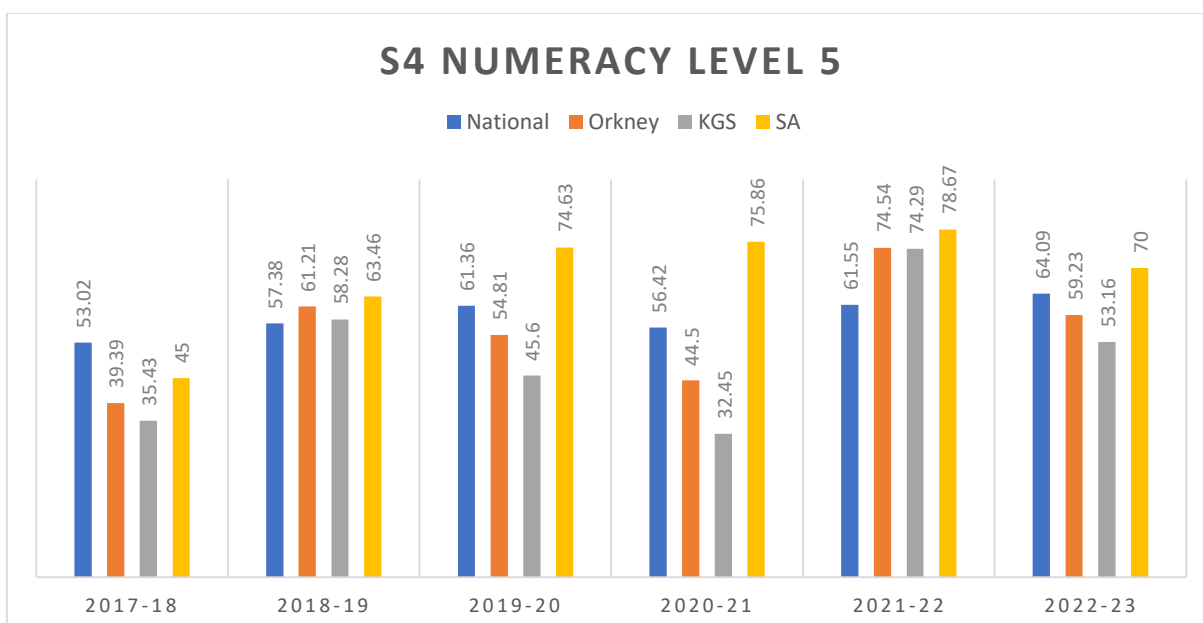
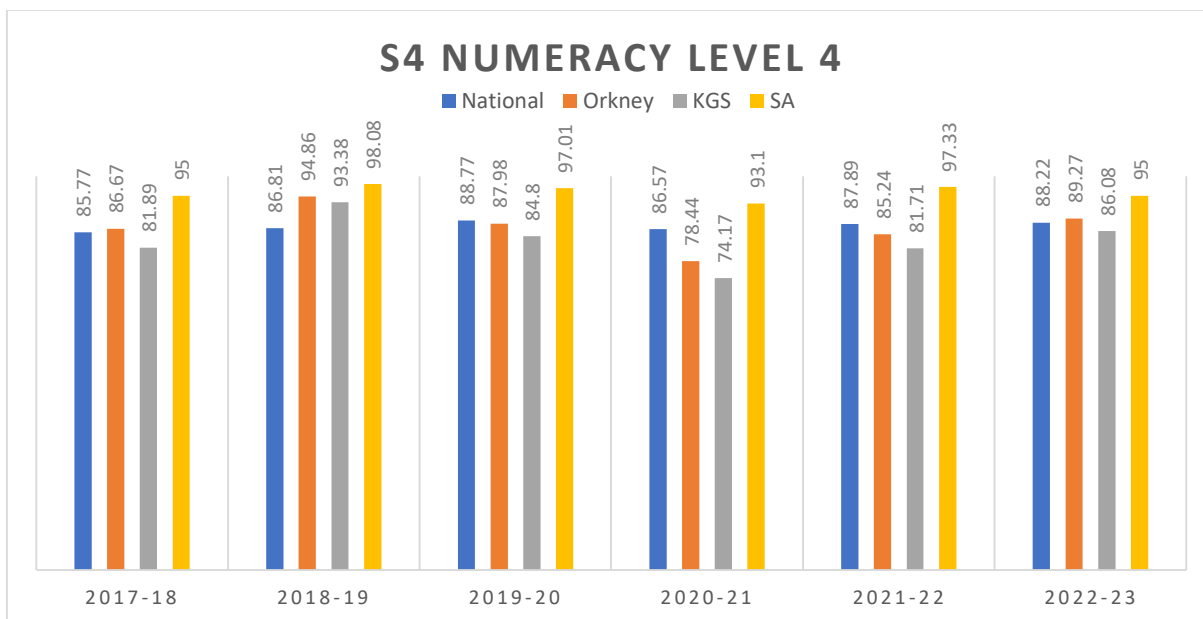
3.9 Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy in S4

Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy can be achieved through a national qualification in English/Maths/Applications of Maths, or through standalone Literacy/Numeracy units.



Analysis - Literacy:

Level 4 literacy attainment of Orkney pupils in S4 has just edged above the national rate in the last two years, having been lower during the two preceding years. At level 5, attainment in Orkney shows a rising trend over the past four years, and has been above the national rate for the past two years.



Analysis - Numeracy:

Attainment in Numeracy by S4 pupils at level 4 shows an upward trend for the past three years, with the Orkney rate edging above national for the first time post-covid. At level 5 there was a significant drop in the covid years; in particular in 2020-21. KGS did not use the Numeracy unit to gain accreditation for those at risk of not achieving a full National 5 in Mathematics. The significant rise in 2021-22 is due to the implementation of both the Numeracy unit and/or the Applications of Maths qualification. Unfortunately, an administrative error meant that not all young people at Kirkwall Grammar School who gained level 5 Numeracy were accredited in the Summer of 2023. After investigation with SQA this has been rectified for the young people concerned, but their attainment is not reflected in the published 2022-23 attainment data.

Next Steps

Stretch aims for 2025-26 attainment have been set at follows:

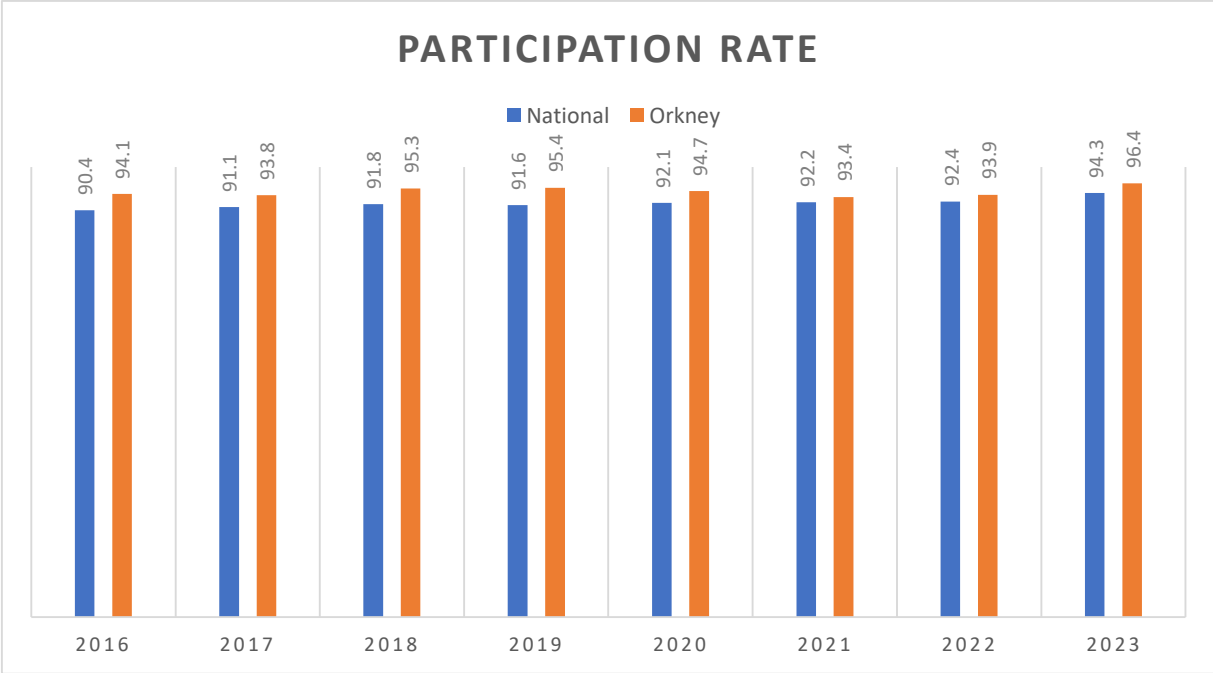
| | 2022-23 attainment | 2025-26 stretch aim |
|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Level 4 Literacy in S4 | 92.70% | 95% |
| Level 5 Literacy in S4 | 79.83% | 82% |
| Level 4 Numeracy in S4 | 89.27% | 94% |
| Level 5 Numeracy in S4 | 59.23% | 70% |

To achieve these aims, the following actions will be undertaken:

- Literacy units will be more consistently used to support attainment by pupils not likely to attain a full English National 4.
- Checks will be implemented to ensure all Numeracy units are accredited in the relevant academic year.
- The Pupil Equity Team at KGS will continue their work to support the attendance of pupils whose engagement with school is at risk.
- Both secondary schools will focus part of their Pupil Equity Fund spending on supporting attainment in Literacy and Numeracy.
- Tracking and Monitoring meetings to analyse pupil attainment data in November and February will be used to target interventions with pupils at risk of not attaining an appropriate level in these key skills.
- Efforts will continue to ensure the Mathematics Department at KGS is fully staffed.

3.10 Annual Participation Measure

The participation measure gives the percentage of young people aged 16-19 who are participating in education, employment or training. It is published by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) in the [Annual Participation Measure](#) in August each year.



Analysis:

Orkney is consistently achieving above the national average in this measure. The 2022-23 rate of 96.4% was a 2.5 percentage point increase on 2021-22 and the highest rate in the last 8 years, exceeding the 2023 stretch aim of 95%.

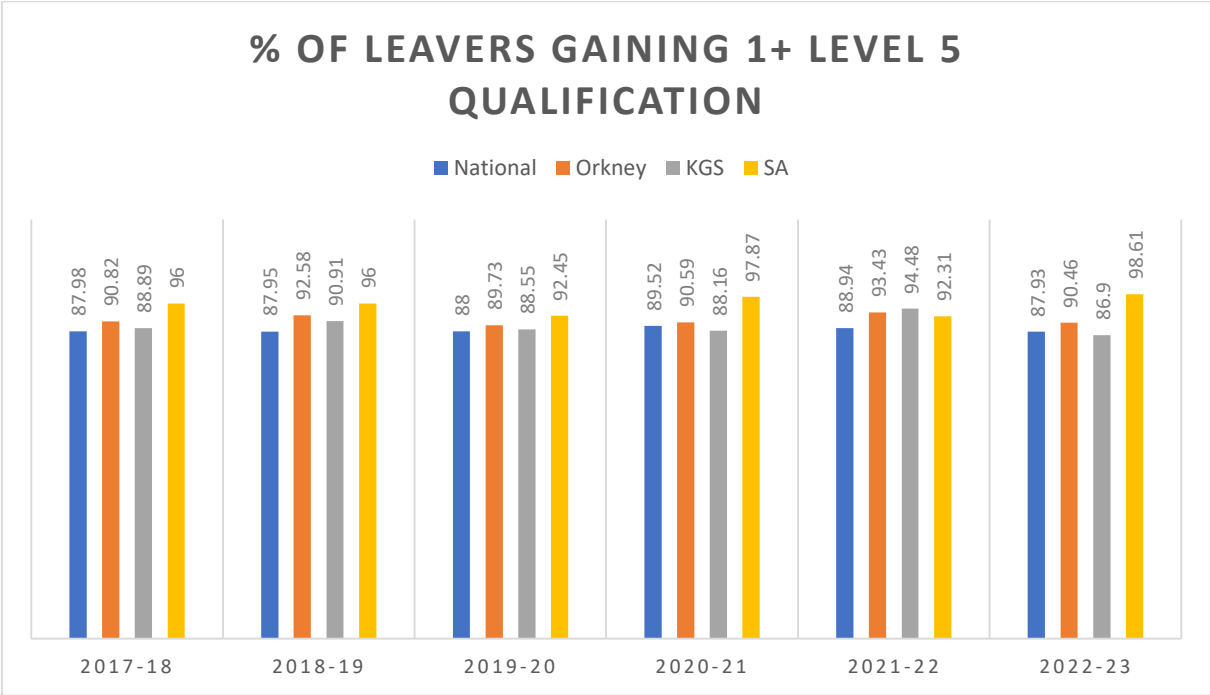
Next Steps:

In 2023 Orkney was the 6th ranked Local Authority for this measure, with a gap of only 1.6% between Orkney and the highest performing Local Authority.

A stretch aim of 97% has been set for 2025-26; this would put Orkney into the top 4 Local Authorities on current rankings.

3.11 Percentage of school leavers achieving 1 or more level 5 qualification

This is one of the core measures tracked by the Scottish Government as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge, with the intention of reducing the number of young people leaving school with few qualifications.



Analysis:

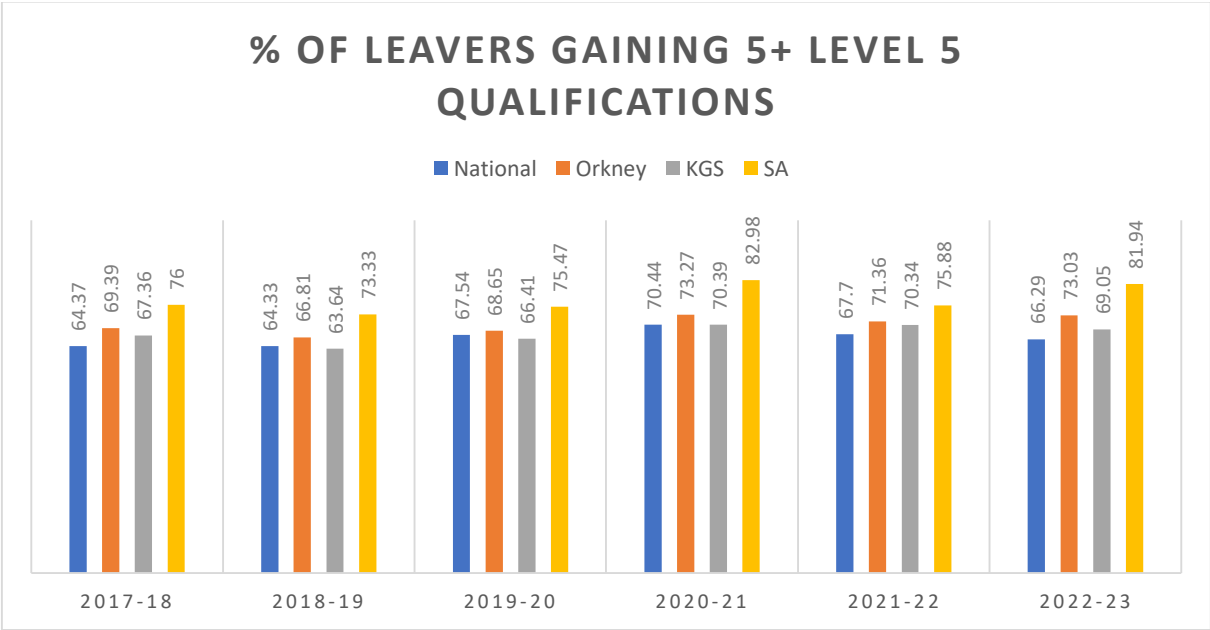
- Orkney is consistently above the national average in this measure.

Next steps:

Orkney did not meet the stretch aim of 95% set for this measure for the 2022-23 cohort. The current focus on attaining 5+ level 5 qualifications in S4 gives an increased probability of pupils attaining at least one level 5 before they leave school in the future, as does the high percentage of young people staying on into at least S5 at Kirkwall Grammar School. A review of the Senior Phase curriculum is included in the Education Service Improvement Plan and this will need to include the provision of alternative routes to attainment for those pupils for whom traditional National 5s are not appropriate. The provision of vocational courses at level 5 by UHI Orkney for school pupils makes a significant contribution to this and we must seek ways to maintain these pathways despite funding challenges. Alongside the work of the Pupil Equity Team to support school attendance, routes to attainment must also be developed for those who struggle to attend school, for instance the provision of online learning.

3.12 Percentage of school leavers achieving 5 or more level 5 qualifications

The Scottish Government tracking of School Leavers gaining at least one qualification at level 5 as a core measure focuses on reducing the number of young people leaving school with few formal qualifications. Local Authorities are asked to nominate additional “core plus” measures they wish to track as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. For Orkney the percentage of school leavers gaining 5 or more level 5 qualifications has been made a key focus, as a measure of success in providing a breadth of education for the majority of young people. This measure works in tandem with the “core plus” measure of the percentage of S4 pupils gaining 5 or more level 5 qualifications reported above.



Analysis:

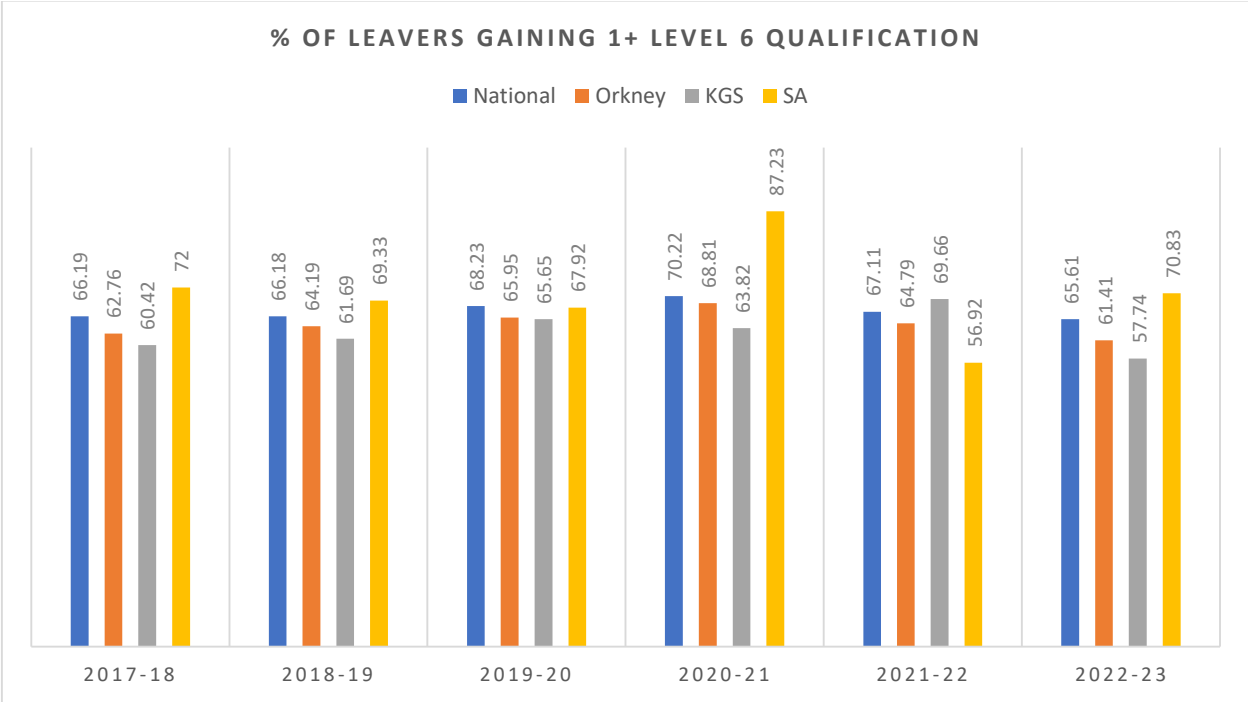
- Orkney is consistently above the national average in this measure and currently performing above pre-covid levels.

Next steps:

The current focus on attaining 5+ level 5 qualifications in S4 gives an increased probability of pupils having attained this measure before they leave school. Attainment of this measure is a particular focus in Stromness Academy, reflecting the higher rate of young people leaving at the end of S4.

As with the 5+ level 5 in S4 measure above, key steps in supporting attainment of this measure are maintaining the provision of vocational courses at level 5 at UHI Orkney despite funding challenges, supporting young people who find school attendance challenging and reviewing the Senior Phase Curriculum to ensure pathways are available which facilitate this breadth of attainment, including formal accreditation of young people’s wider achievements.

3.13 Percentage of school leavers achieving 1 or more level 6 qualification



Analysis:

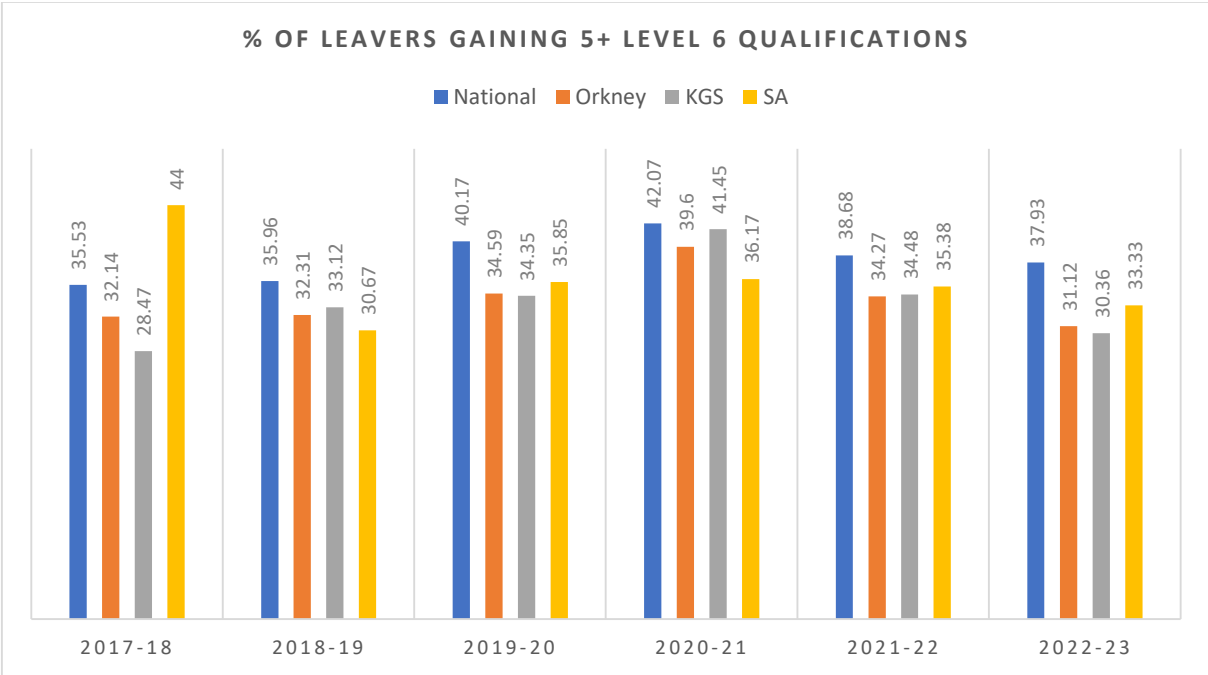
- Orkney is consistently below the national average in this measure.

Next steps:

This is not a measure which had been focused upon in Orkney until the Scottish Attainment Challenge raised its profile in 2022; the 2022-23 rate is the first to be reported to the Scottish Government, after its publication in February 2024. A stretch aim of 68% has been set for this measure for 2025/26. The focus on attaining 5+ level 5 qualifications in S4 brings increased probability of pupils attaining a level 6 if they stay on into S5. The Orkney curriculum model which allows S4 pupils to take level 6 courses alongside older pupils might also be expected to contribute, but in reality pupils taking level 6 early do not tend to be S4 leavers. As with Leavers’ Attainment of at least one level 5 qualification, this measure is more concerned with those who don’t achieve it, than those who do. A review of the Senior Phase curriculum is included in the Education Service Improvement Plan and this will need to include the provision of alternative routes to attainment for those pupils for whom traditional Highers are not appropriate. The provision of vocational courses at level 6 by UHI Orkney for school pupils is one of these; to increase achievement of this measure we must ensure these pathways are maintained despite funding challenges in the colleges sector. Alongside the work of the Pupil Equity Team to support school attendance, routes to attainment must also be developed for those who struggle to attend school, for instance the provision of online learning.

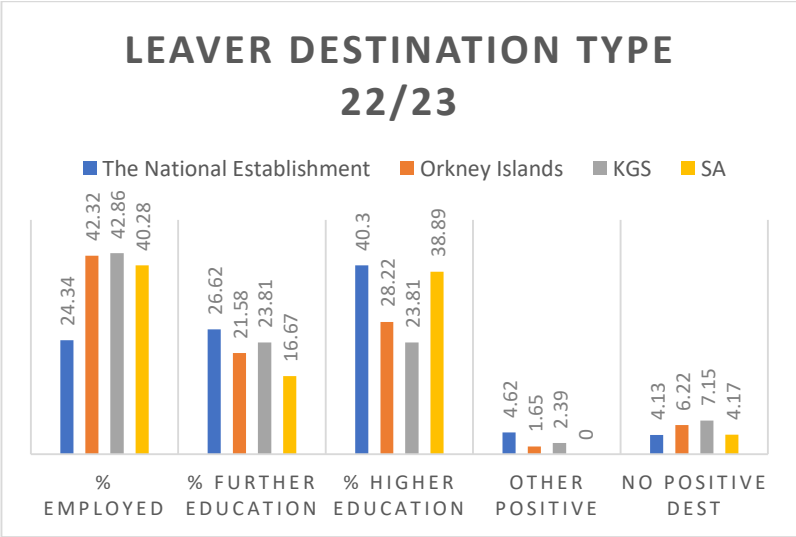
3.14 Percentage of school leavers achieving 5 or more level 6 qualifications

This measure is not reported to Scottish Government but has been included here because it is frequently the subject of media attention.

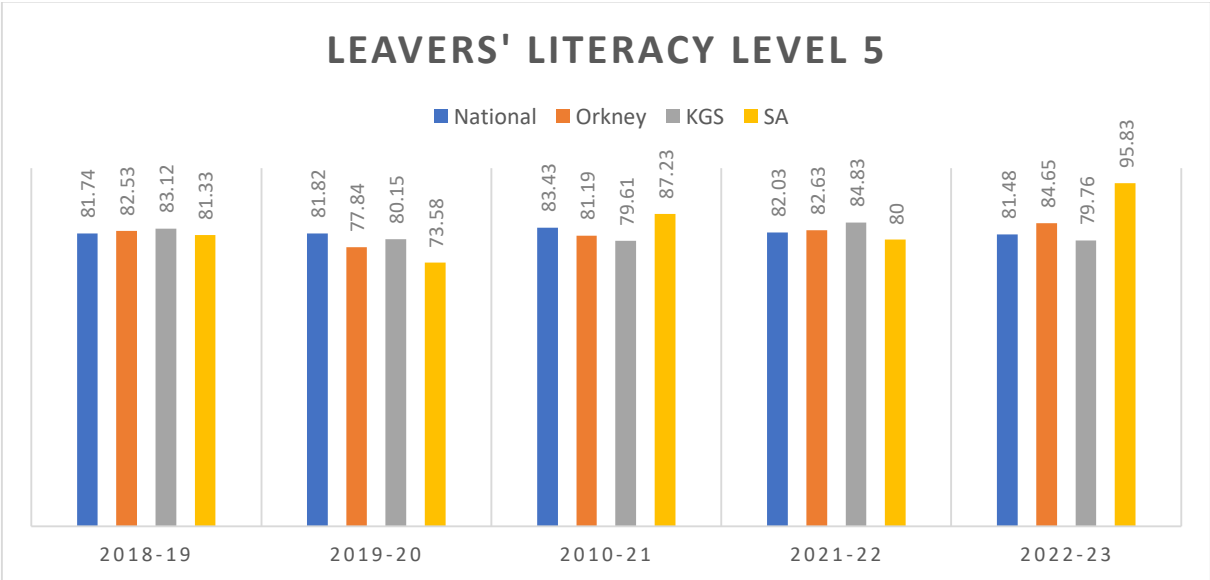
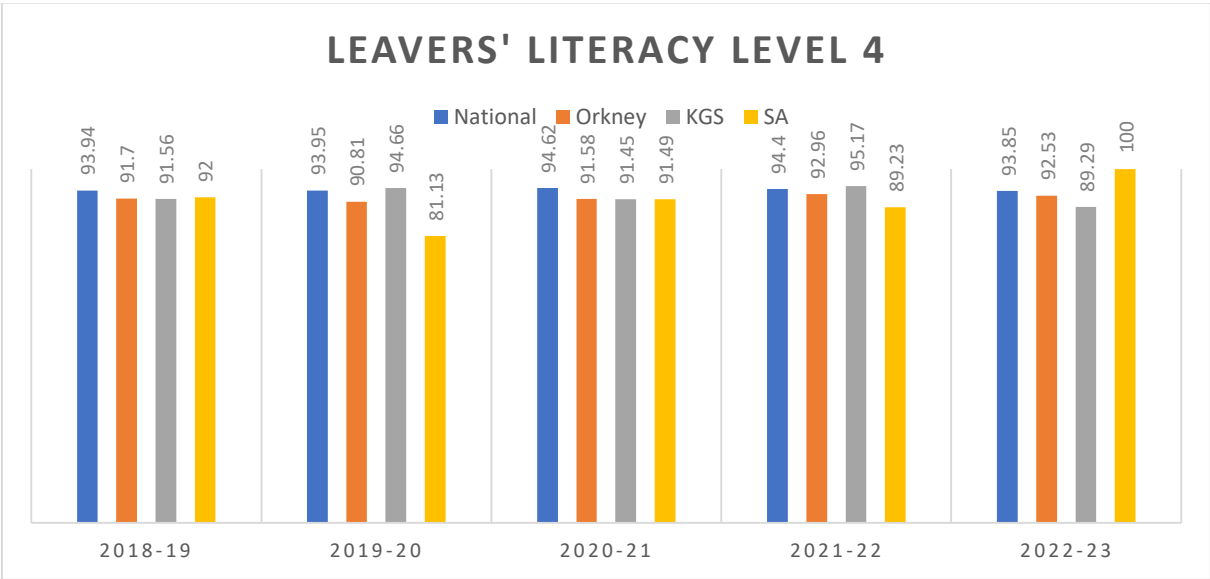


Analysis:

Orkney is consistently below the national average in this measure. 2017-18 was an anomalous year group for Stromness Academy with a particularly high performing cohort. Gaining 5 or more level 6 qualifications (Highers is generally understood to be the requirement for university entry, though in reality offers are frequently made on 4 Highers. As can be seen in the chart below of the major destinations for 2023 school leavers, in Orkney we have a much higher percentage of school leavers entering employment than nationally, and correspondingly few entering Higher Education; this is consistently the picture every year, meaning that 5+ level 6 is not a goal for many young people. Similar patterns are seen in the other island local authorities.



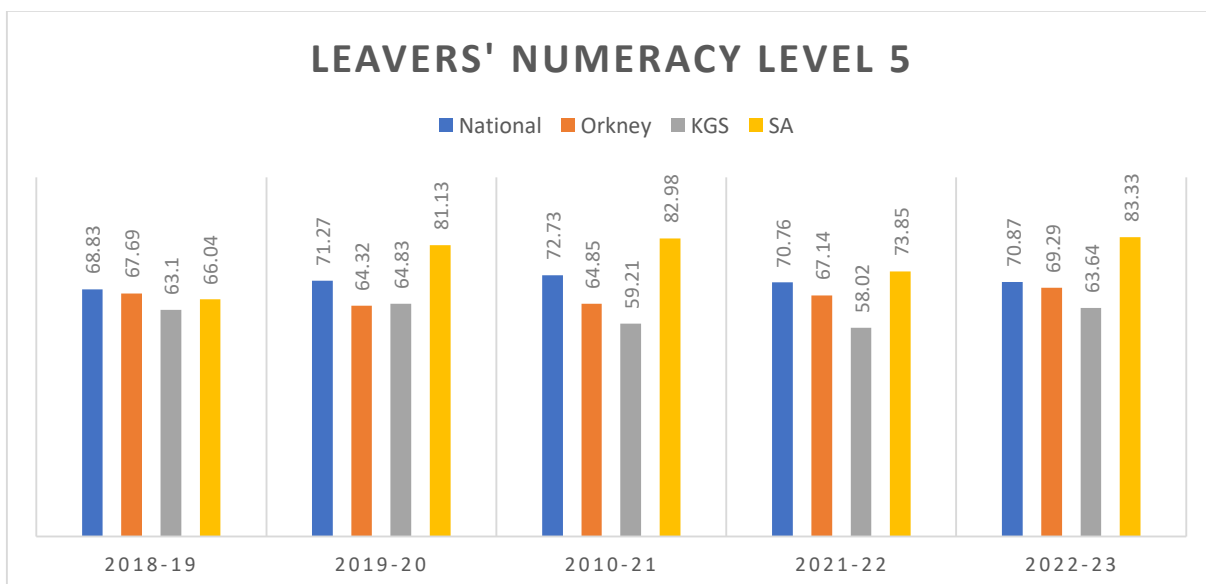
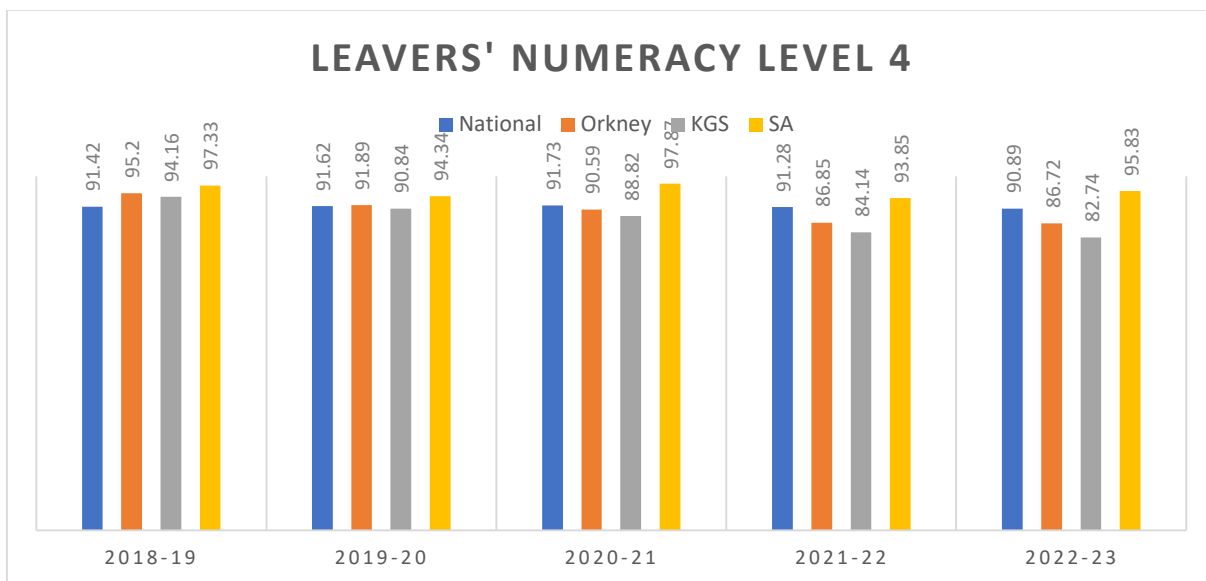
3.15 Leavers' Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy



Analysis – Literacy:

Level 4 literacy attainment of Orkney school leavers, whilst high, has been consistently slightly behind the national level. Other than in the covid years, there is little difference between the leavers' attainment and that of the S4 cohort reported in section 3.9.

At level 5, attainment for the past 2 years has edged above the national level. Leavers' attainment in 2022-23 is higher than that for the S4 reported in section 3.9, demonstrating that young people who stay on in school beyond S4 are improving their literacy attainment.



Analysis – Numeracy:

At level 4 numeracy attainment of Orkney school leavers has been consistently slightly behind the national level since 2019-20. Attainment tends to be behind that of the S4 cohort reported in section 3.9, other than in 2020-21 when leavers' numeracy was significantly better than that of the S4 cohort, reflecting the fact that young people who had not yet attained core qualifications during the pandemic tended to choose to remain in school for S5 to complete them.

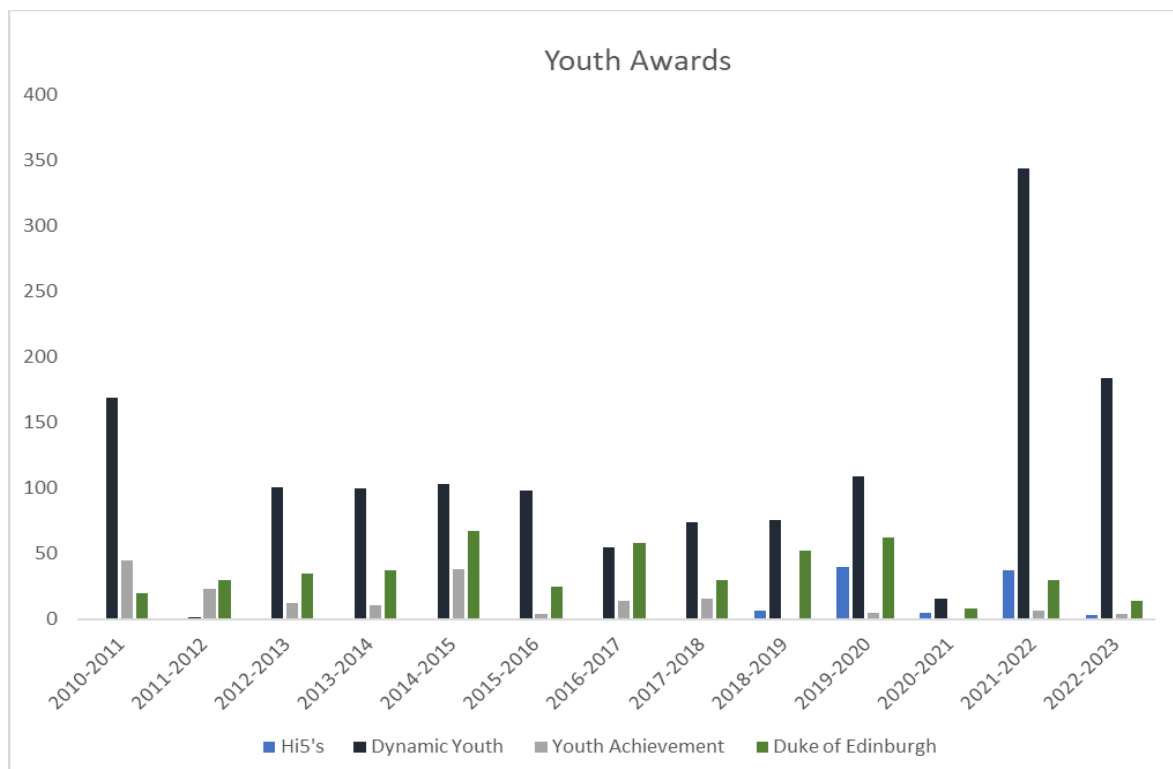
At level 5 numeracy attainment of Orkney school leavers is consistently below national levels for leavers, while for the S4 cohort as reported in section 3.9 a focus on this measure had caused improvement in 2021-22. As with the S4 cohort measure, an administrative error meant that not all young people who gained level 5 Numeracy were accredited in the Summer of 2023. After investigation with SQA this has now been rectified for the young people concerned, but their attainment is not reflected in the 2022-23 attainment data.

Next Steps:

Raising attainment in Literacy and Numeracy in S4 remains a focus going forwards, with Pupil Equity Funding directed towards interventions for young people at risk of not attaining these measures.

Section 4: Wider Achievement

- 4.1** There is an increasing realisation amongst those involved in the education of young people that passing exams is not the only way that young people can get accreditation for their endeavours. The wider achievements of young people, which take place in a variety of settings, are increasingly recognised, and their benefits appreciated.
- 4.2** This is evidenced through the more targeted youth work support taking place in two schools in Orkney with the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to ensure youth and family work is embedded to help to close the poverty related attainment gap. Known as the Pupil Engagement Team (PET), the team provides targeted support for children, young people, and families from P1 – S3 who are at risk of disengagement or non-school attendance, in line with the criteria for the PEF.
- 4.3** Further to this, CLDE have developed a Youth Work in Schools offer which is sent to all schools; mainly aimed at pupils P7+ offering a range of programmes that can be delivered including Confidence to Cook, iLead money, cyber resilience and UNCRC training, all with the aim of increasing confidence, Attainment and engagement within the school community whilst providing vital life skills for young people.
- 4.4** Below, is an extract from the *Community Learning, Development & Employability Service (CLDE) Annual Report 2022-23*, which provides an excellent example of some of the accredited awards and opportunities taking place through CLDE, in line with curriculum for excellence.
- 4.5** In 2022-23 young people in Orkney achieved the following:

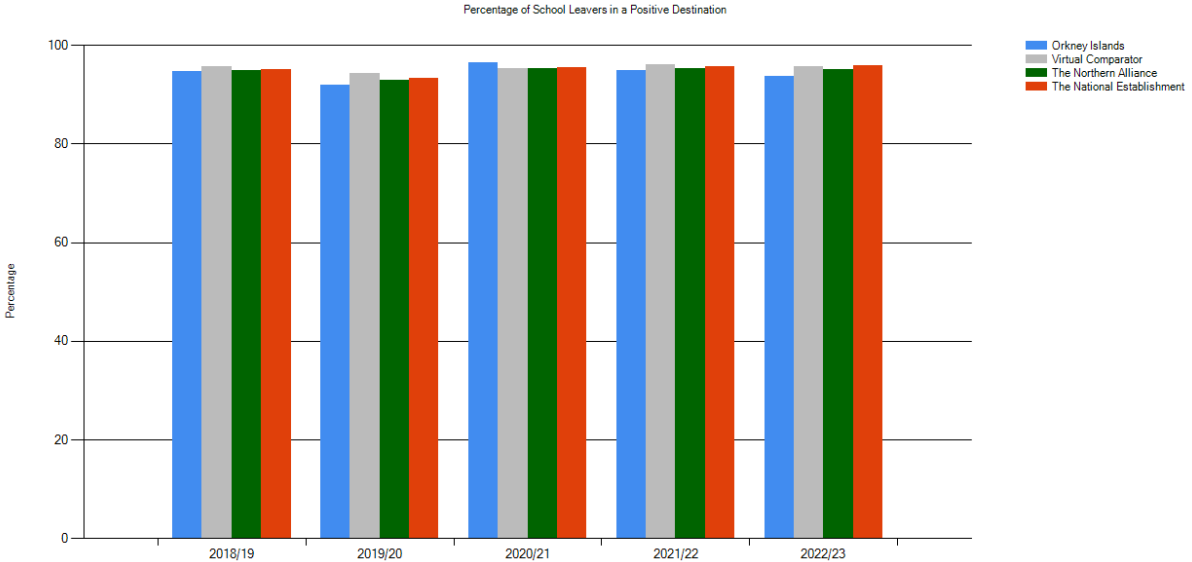


| CLDE intervention | No. of Recipients | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
| <p>Hi5 Award Introduced in 2018, the Hi5 accredited award is a nationally recognised award for young people age 5+ that records and recognises wider achievement. The Hi5 Award is credit rated on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) where it sits at Level 2. The awards can be incorporated into existing or planned activities, are inclusive and suitable for young people with a range of interests and abilities and assist in the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence. Due to a focus on work with older young people CLDE are doing less of these awards.</p> | 5 | 37 | 3 |
| <p>Dynamic Youth Awards Dynamic Youth Awards (DYA) are peer assessed awards for young people aged 10 and over. DYA give young people the opportunity to be recognised and accredited for the activities they take part in either within or outwith the school setting. A Dynamic Youth Award is equivalent to a SCQF Level 3. As a result of additional external Covid recovery funding in 2020-21 there was a significant increase in the number of DYA's achieved. Despite the drop in funding in 2022-23, CLDE saw the number of DYA remain at its second highest and recorded the highest number of hours completed by young people working on their Dynamic Youth Awards, rising from 4818 in 2021-22 to 5679 this year, a rise of 18%.</p> | 16 395 hours of activity | 344 4818 hours of activity | 184 5679 hours of activity |
| <p>Youth Achievement Awards These awards are Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) customised and feature on pupils Scottish Qualifications certificates alongside those formal national qualifications gained in schools and colleges. The awards are gained both within and outwith the school setting and often provide significant benefits for the local community. CLDE are currently working with a number of young people on different award levels and are also providing support to other organisations working on Youth Achievement Awards.</p> | <p>Bronze 0</p> <p>Silver 0</p> <p>Gold 0</p> | <p>Bronze 7</p> <p>Silver 0</p> <p>Gold 0</p> | <p>Bronze 3</p> <p>Silver 0</p> <p>Gold 1</p> <p>Platinum</p> |

| CLDE intervention | No. of Recipients | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
| <p>It is worth mentioning that in 2022-23 we saw our first gold award achieved for 5 years and Lucy Leech who has come right through CLD youth service since the age of 8, received the first Platinum Youth Achievement Award achieved in Orkney.</p> | | | 1 |
| <p>Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Awards</p> <p>Young people achieve an award by completing a personal programme of activities in four sections (five if they're going for Gold).</p> <p>Due to the lifting of Covid restrictions, participation and completion of DofE awards are starting to recover. The numbers completing Duke of Edinburgh Awards in 2022-23 remained lower than pre-pandemic levels, with DofE awards being progressed in Sanday and Kirkwall Gramar School.</p> | <p>Bronze 3</p> <p>Silver 5</p> <p>Gold 0</p> | <p>Bronze 19</p> <p>Silver 8</p> <p>Gold 3</p> | <p>Bronze 8</p> <p>Silver 4</p> <p>Gold 2</p> |
| <p>Young Persons Guarantee</p> <p>The Young Person's Guarantee is a commitment to bring together employers, partners and young people. It aims to connect every 16-to 24-year-old in Scotland to an opportunity. This could be a job, apprenticeship, further or higher education, training, volunteering or enterprise opportunity. 2020-21 was the first year of offering this support with the employability team delivering a variety of interventions for young people who were identified as requiring additional support to engage with training, learning and or employment.</p> <p>During 2022-23 the amount of funding coming in through Noone Left Behind to work specifically with young people under Young Persons Guarantee reduced by 66%, from £173,00 to £58,000.</p> | 8 | 50 | 34 |

Section 5: School Leaver Destinations

5.1 The Leaver Initial Destinations measure published in the Insight data tool gives the percentage of all school leavers (S4/5/6) who have progressed to a positive destination. Orkney figures are compared with a “Virtual Comparator” – a group of pupils with similar demographic characteristics – and the rate for the Northern Alliance group of local authorities (Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Argyll & Bute, Highland, Moray, Shetland, Orkney and the Western Isles), as well as the national rate. Figures are published in February for the previous academic year.

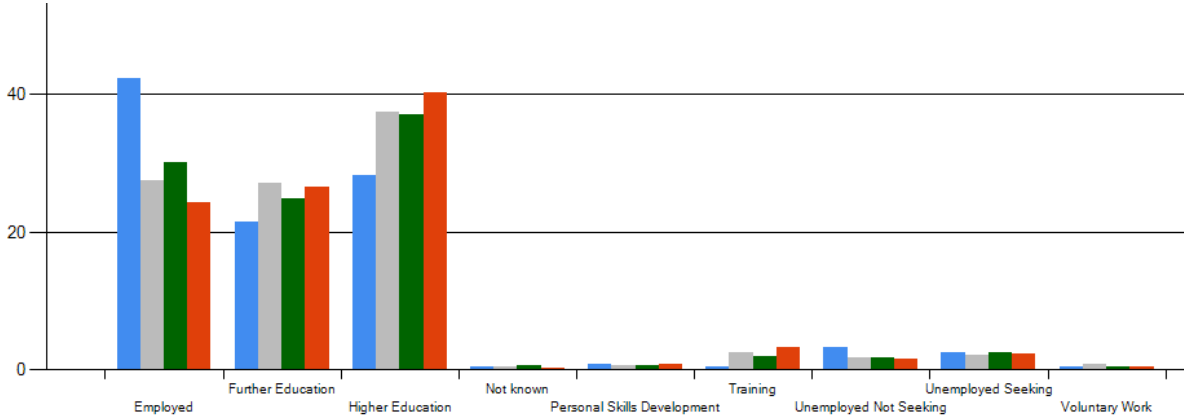


| | Orkney | Virtual Comparator | Northern Alliance | National |
|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 2018-19 | 94.76 | 95.72 | 94.98 | 95.05 |
| 2019-20 | 91.89 | 94.32 | 92.99 | 93.36 |
| 2020-21 | 96.53 | 95.40 | 95.32 | 95.48 |
| 2021-22 | 94.84 | 96.10 | 95.41 | 95.74 |
| 2022-23 | 93.78 | 95.73 | 95.09 | 95.87 |

Analysis

The percentage of Orkney school leavers in a positive destination has consistently tended to be within 2 percentage points of all comparator measures. There has been a small decrease in Orkney’s rate compared to 2021-22.

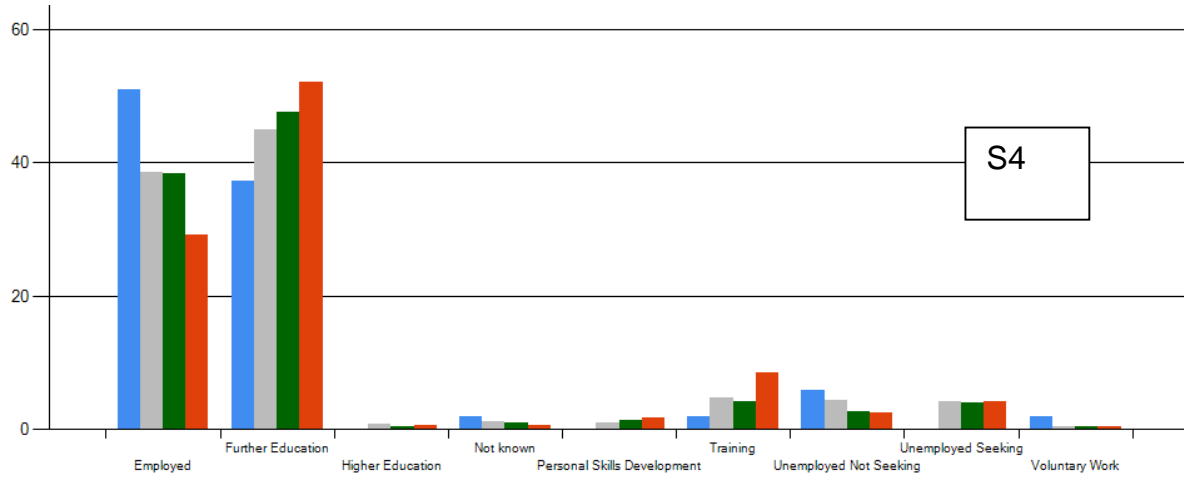
5.2 Taking a closer look at the underlying data reveals our school leavers' destinations.



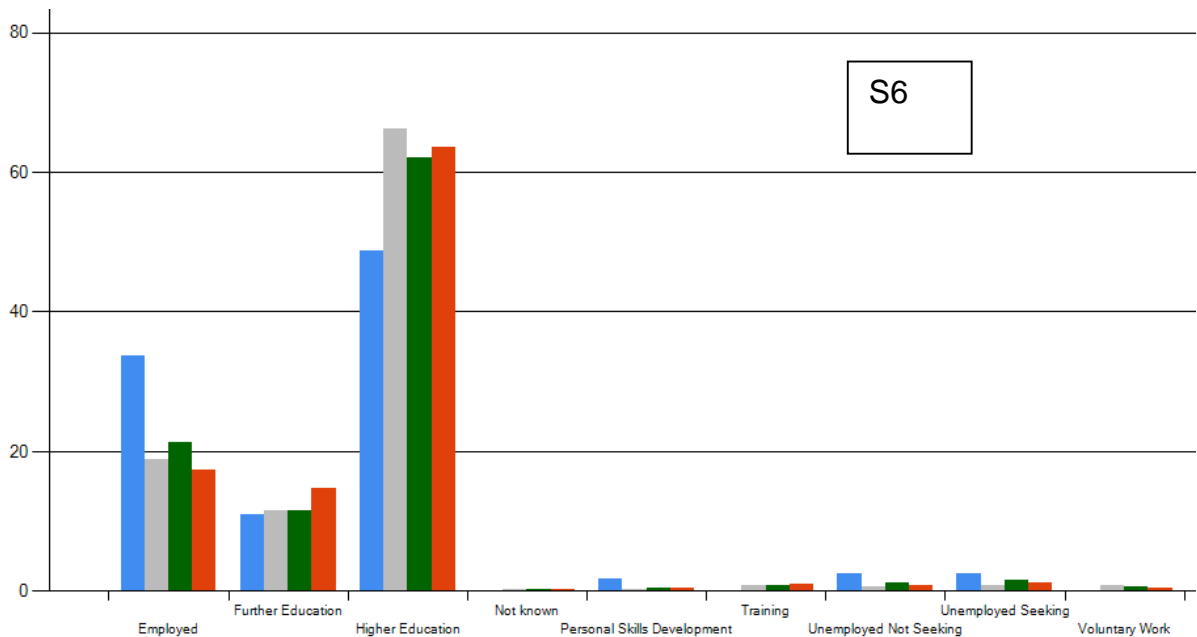
Analysis:

- The initial leaver destination profile does not follow our comparator trends, with many more leavers going directly into employment and fewer moving into further or higher education. This is a consistent picture for Orkney.

The percentage of 2022-23 school leavers who move into employment is even more marked in S4. For this cohort of 51 pupils, 50.98% are in employment:



The majority of Orkney pupils who stayed on to S6 moved on to Higher Education (48.74%), though the rate is still lower than comparators. The percentage moving into employment, 33.61%, though less marked than for S4 pupils, is still higher than comparators.



Orkney Education Service staff in schools, Community Learning, Development & Employability and UHI Orkney work together with our partners in Skills Development Scotland and Developing the Young Workforce to support all school leavers into a positive destination which is appropriate for their abilities and aspirations.