

Item: 6

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee: 29 March 2023.

Orkney Schools Attainment.

Report by Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.

1. Purpose of Report

To present Orkney Schools Attainment Report for academic session 2021/22.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to scrutinise:

2.1.

The Orkney Schools Attainment Report for academic session 2021/22, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, which outlines the level of success and achievement of children and young people, in order to obtain assurance.

3. Background

3.1.

An attainment seminar is held annually to brief members on the attainment of children and young people across Orkney's Schools. The Attainment Seminar for 2021/22 is scheduled to take place on 27 March 2023.

3.2.

In addition to the members' seminar, the Education, Leisure and Housing service reports annually to Council on achievement and attainment. Appendix 1, attached to this report, summarises the key measures of attainment and achievement for learners in Orkney in session 2021/22. The Attainment Report also reports on wider achievements of young people in Orkney and the leaver destinations of Orkney's young people as they leave school and prepare to enter into the world of work and tertiary education.

4. Orkney Schools Attainment Report Session 2021/22

The Orkney Schools Attainment Report Session 2021/22, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, brings together data collated from:

- Practitioners in the Early Years.
- Curriculum for Excellence levels achieved by pupils in their Broad General Education in Orkney schools at stages Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3.

- Levels of achievement by Senior Phase pupils in Orkney schools in national examinations.
- Wider Achievements of young people reported by the Community Learning and Development Service.
- Leaver Destinations of young people.

5. Corporate Governance

This report relates to the Council complying with governance and scrutiny and therefore does not directly support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan and Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

6. Financial Implications

There are no significant financial implications arising from this noting report.

7. Legal Aspects

There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

8. Contact Officers

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9. Appendix

Appendix 1: Orkney Schools Attainment Report Session 2021/22.

Orkney Schools Attainment Report Session 2021-22

This report summarises the key measures of attainment and achievement in Orkney schools in session 2021-22:

- **Section 1** of the report presents data collected on Early Learning.
- **Section 2** of the report presents the Curriculum for Excellence levels achieved by pupils in their Broad General Education in Orkney schools at stages P1, P4, P7 and S3.
- **Section 3** of the report presents the levels of achievement by Senior Phase leavers in Orkney schools in national examinations.
- **Section 4** of the report gives details on the Wider Achievements of young people reported by the Community Learning and Development Service.
- **Section 5** of the report presents the School Leaver Destinations of young people, in Orkney, in session 2021 to 2022.

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 keygroup. 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. In 2022, 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. Slightly more children this year are meeting typical developmental milestones for language and literacy and wellbeing. This is heartening, as national data would indicate that these two areas of development have been particularly impacted on by pandemic restrictions. Children have continued to make good progress, even if they are not meeting typical milestones for their age.

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	2021-22
Listening and talking	87%	91%
Early reading		90%
Early writing		91%
Mathematical development	90%	93%
Wellbeing	80%	86%

1.6 Is the child meeting the expected developmental milestones for their age?

	2020-21	2021-22
Listening and talking	81%	84%
Early reading		86%
Early writing		87%
Mathematical development	88%	87%
Wellbeing	74%	79%

Section 2: Curriculum for Excellence Levels

- 2.1 Scottish Government conducts 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. Targeted annual local authority led moderation events and schools' own moderation procedures are ensuring that increasingly the data submitted is more robust and reliable.
- 2.6 Most children and young people will 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 2022. 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	81	75	85	80	89	73
Writing	80	68	76	74	90	69
Listening & Talking	87	84	86	86	86	73
Literacy combined	78	67	72	72	85	64
Numeracy	82	74	81	79	94	71

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%

Commentary

- Attainment in literacy has increased year on year.
- Children in P1 have exceeded the national average for the past 2 years.
- There is a slight dip in numeracy this year.

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%

Commentary

- Attainment in P4 has increased in all areas since 2020/2021.
- Attainment in P4 is slightly below the national average in all areas.

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%

Commentary

- Attainment in reading and writing has increased year on year.
- Attainment has exceeded the national average for the past 2 years in reading and writing.
- Attainment in listening and talking equals the national average in 2021/2022

- Combined literacy attainment continues to rise and exceeds the national average.
- Attainment in numeracy has increased and exceeds the national average by 5%.

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%

Commentary

- Attainment this year exceeds national average in all areas.
- Attainment has increased since last year in all areas.
- Attainment has increased since the before the pandemic.

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						
2021/2022	Orkney	89%	90%	86%	85%	94%
	National	88%	87%	89%	86%	89%

Commentary

- Attainment exceeds national levels in all areas expect for Listening and talking.

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%

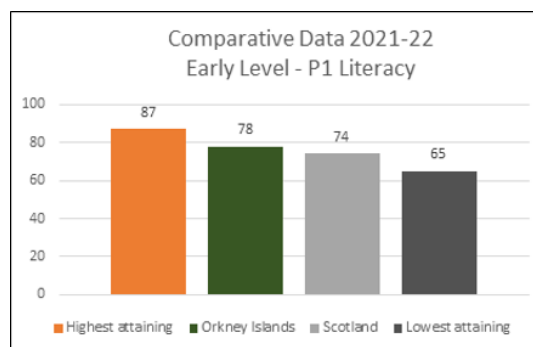
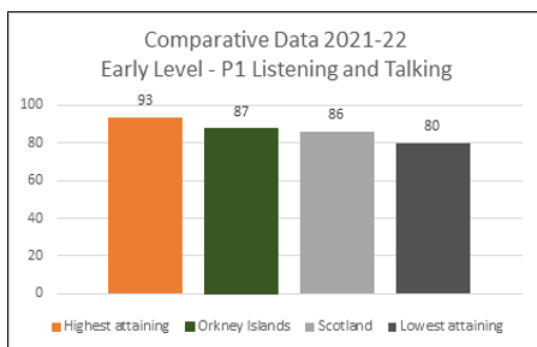
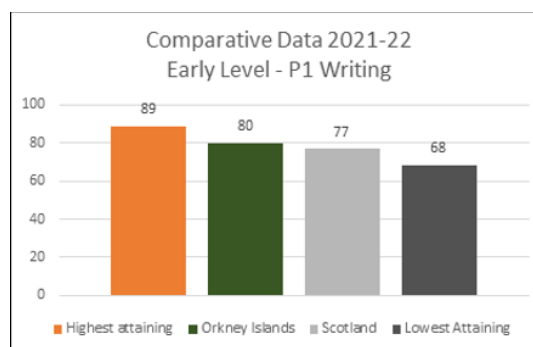
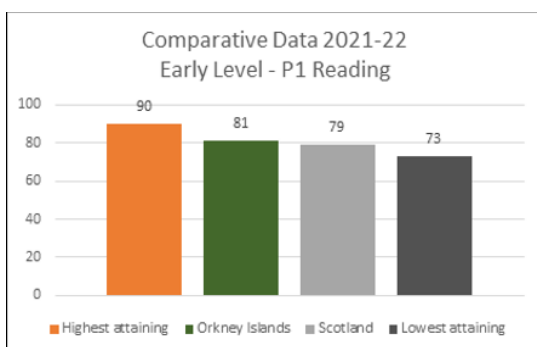
Commentary

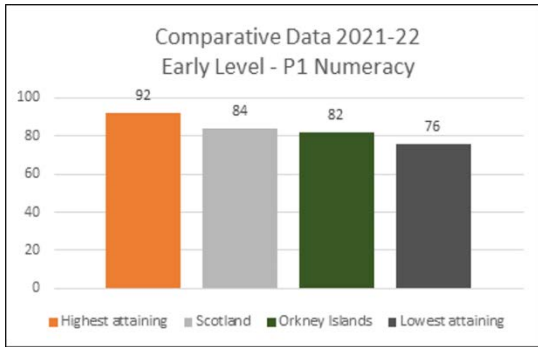
- Attainment exceeds national levels in all areas.

2.12 Comparative data ACEL data 2022

The following graphs show Orkney (green) compared to the highest attaining (orange) and lowest attaining (black) authorities in Scotland. You are also able to see the Scottish national average (grey). 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

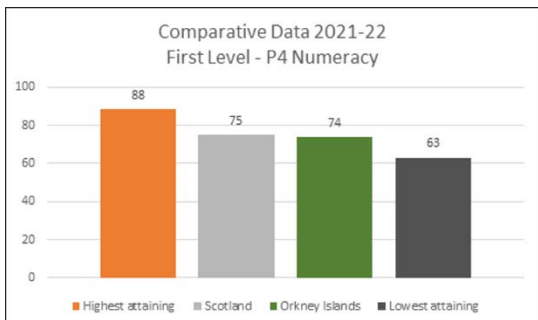
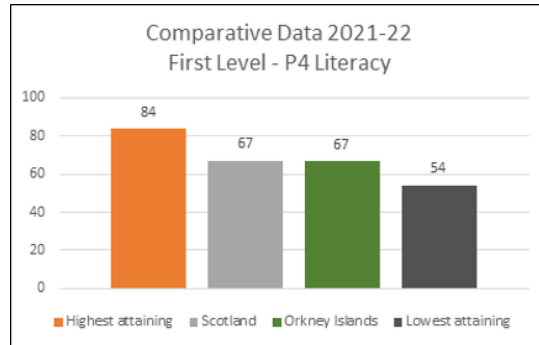
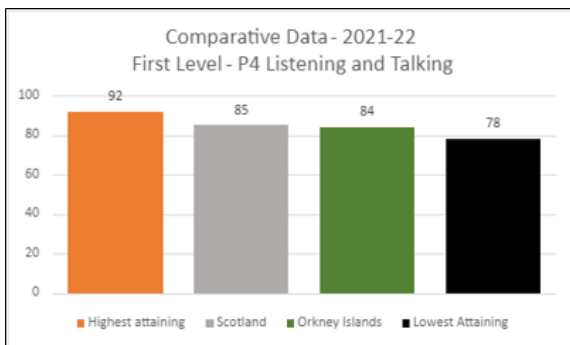
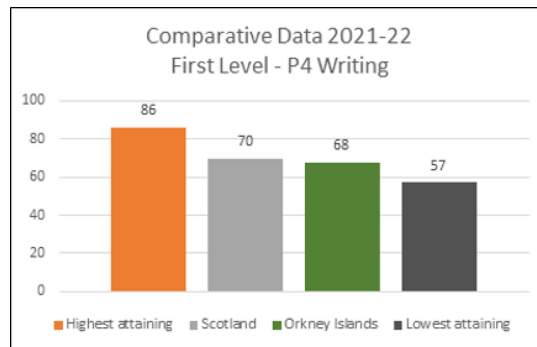
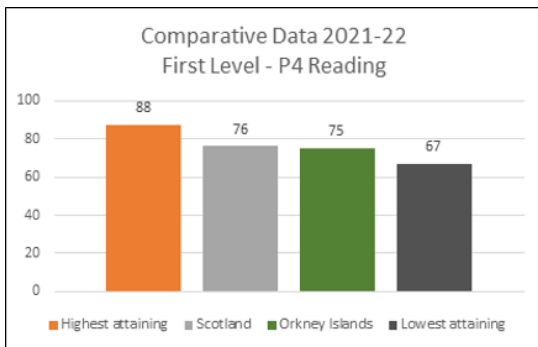




Key messages

- P1 is exceeding the national average in all areas of literacy.
- P1 is below the national average in numeracy and we should continue to monitor this area.
- Writing continues to be the weakest area. Schools need to continue to focus on writing in the early level.
- Continue to link with nurseries to build on learning.

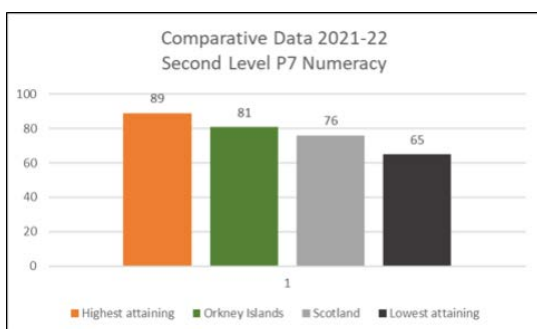
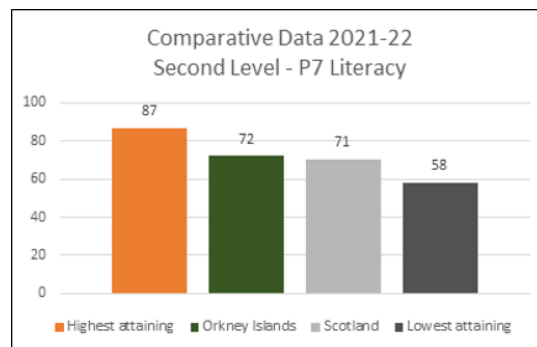
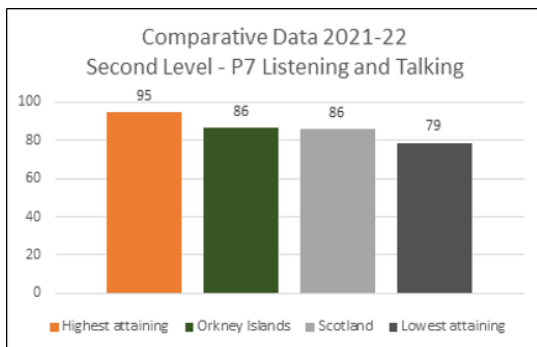
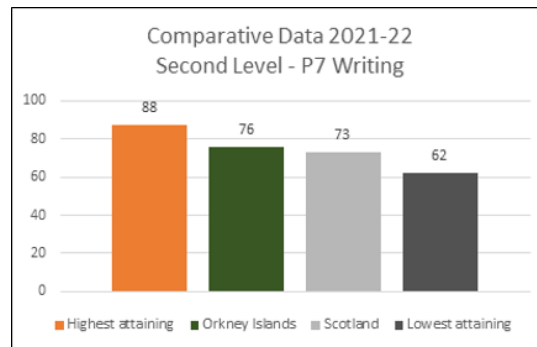
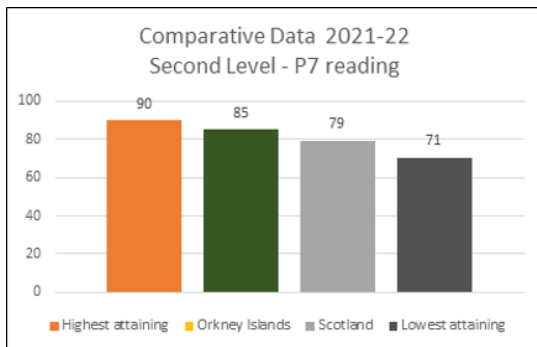
P4 - First Level



Key messages

- 1% below the national average in reading, listening and talking and numeracy.
- Combined literacy equalled the national average.
- 2% below the national average in writing.
- The cohort may have been significantly impacted by the effect of COVID-19 where key foundations of learning may have been missed.
- Schools to continue to support this cohort and identify any targeted interventions required.

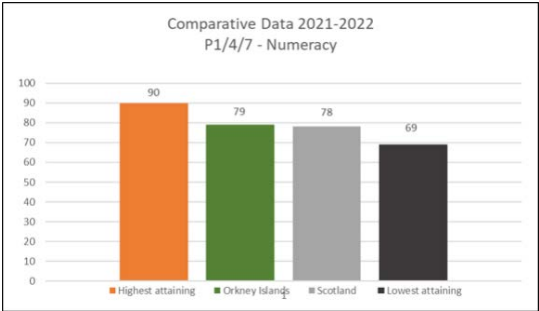
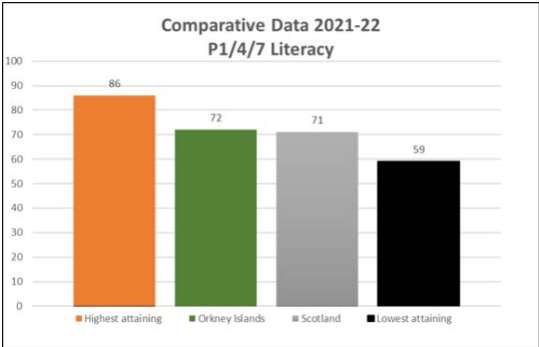
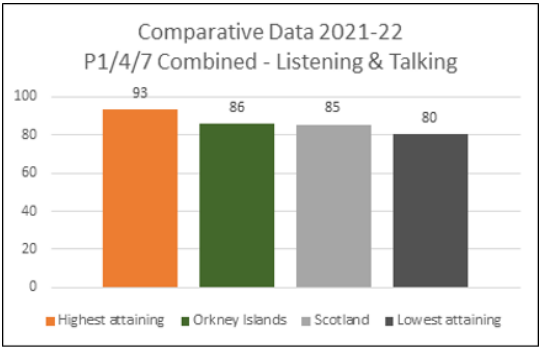
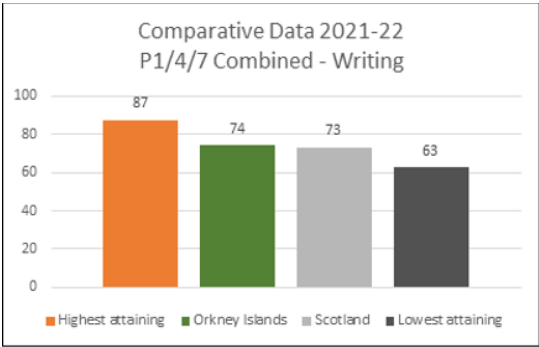
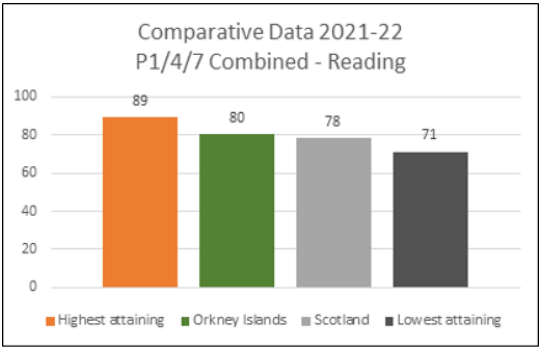
P7 - Second Level



Key messages

- Above or equal to the national average in all areas.
- Writing attainment is the weakest area, but still above the national average.

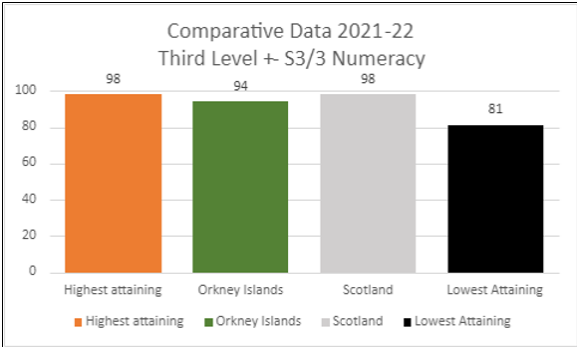
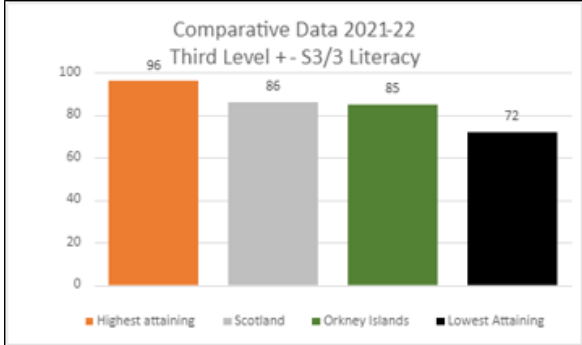
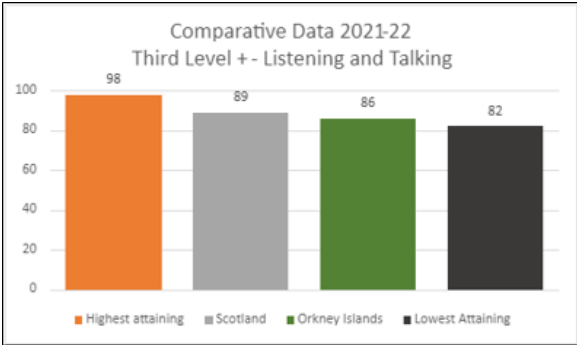
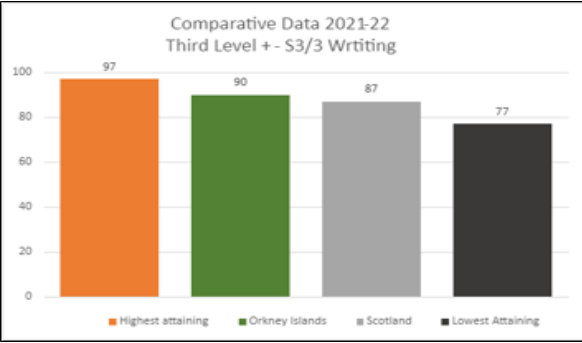
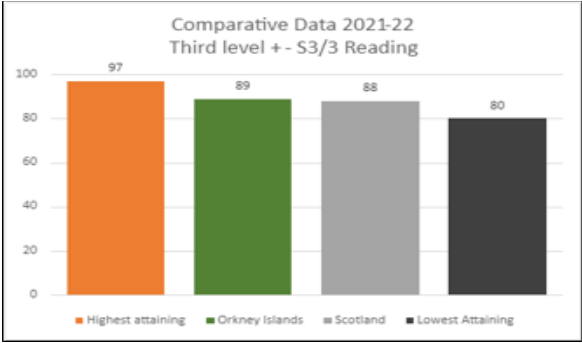
P1/P4/P7 Combined Literacy / Numeracy



Key messages

- Exceeding the national levels in all areas.
- Orkney is 9% below the highest attaining authority in reading.
- There is a gap of 13% between the highest attaining authority and Orkney in writing.

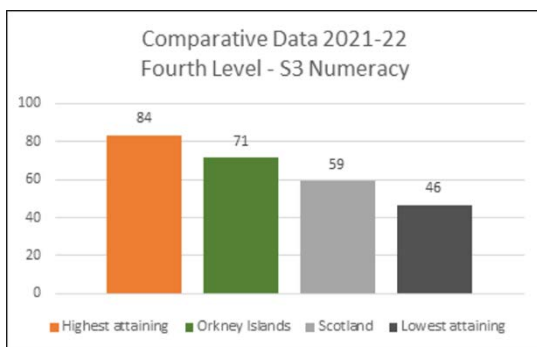
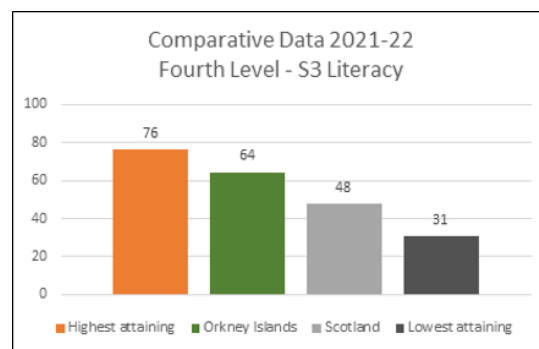
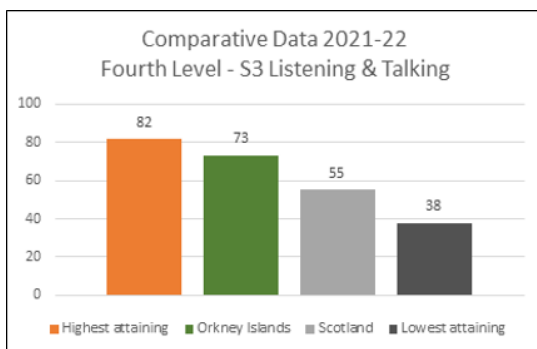
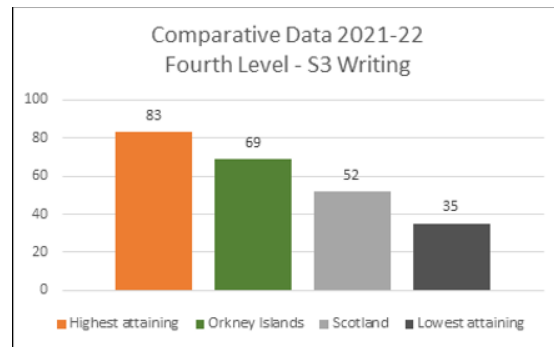
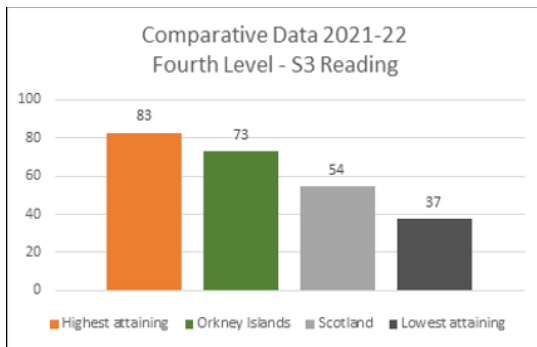
S3 Third Level Literacy and Numeracy



Key messages

- The national average is being exceeded in reading, writing and numeracy.
- Listening and talking is 3% below the national average.

S3 Fourth Level Literacy



Key messages

- Exceeding the national average in all areas.
- Writing is the area our attainment is less strong.

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 Each year young people in secondary schools in Orkney are presented for National Courses 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 [OIC Education Service Report](#) established that tracking, monitoring and intervention processes would be developed in 2022-23 to maximise achievement for all learners. The process which has been developed for Senior Phase pupils monitors the following measures:

- 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 per year using data from school reports, giving figures for young people's current and predicted performance based on teacher judgements.

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, this data is tracked and monitored 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 have left school at the end of the school session. Since young people's destinations are often not finalised until the Autumn, data on school leavers' attainment is published in February of the year after examinations were taken.

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.

3.4 Three of the annual measures will be reported to Education Scotland from 2023 onwards as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. “Stretch aims” have been set for these measures for Orkney as follows:

Measure	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.

3.9 Impact of COVID-19 on SQA examinations

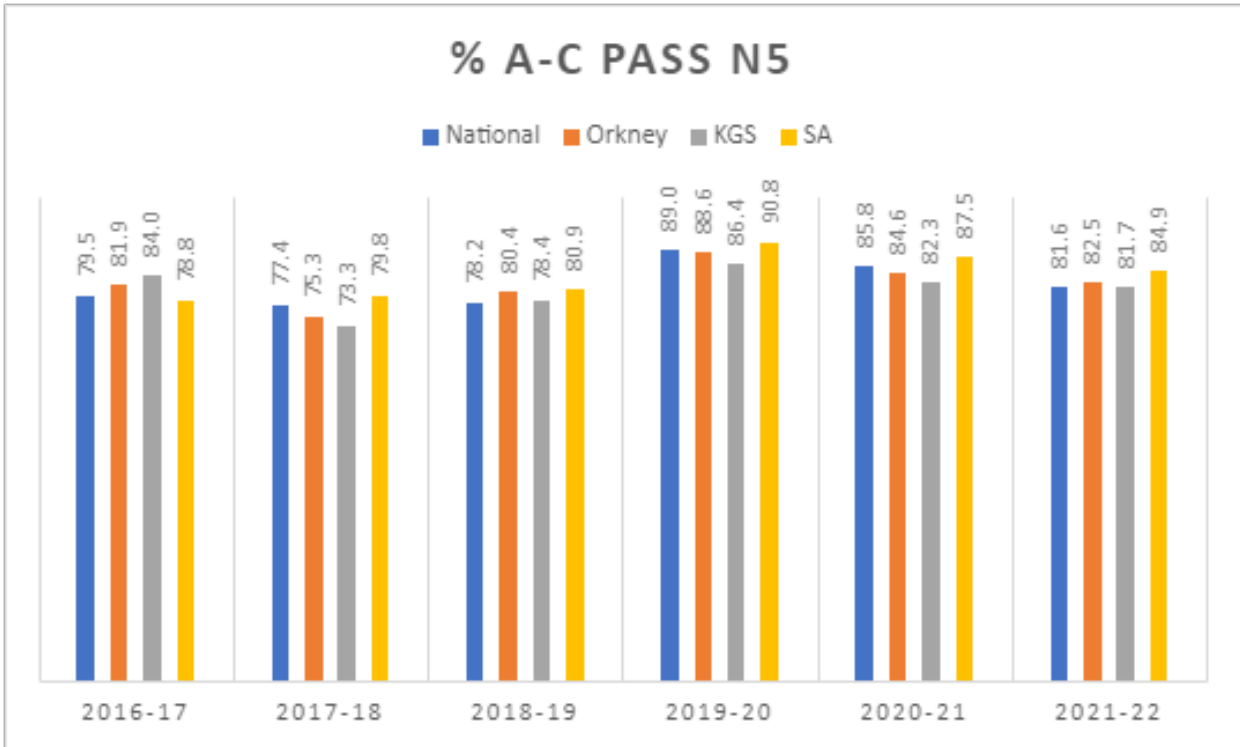
Historic data is presented in each of the measures below. It should however be noted that due to the covid pandemic there were alterations to the examination process making it inappropriate to compare results across years:

- 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.

3.10 Pass Rates

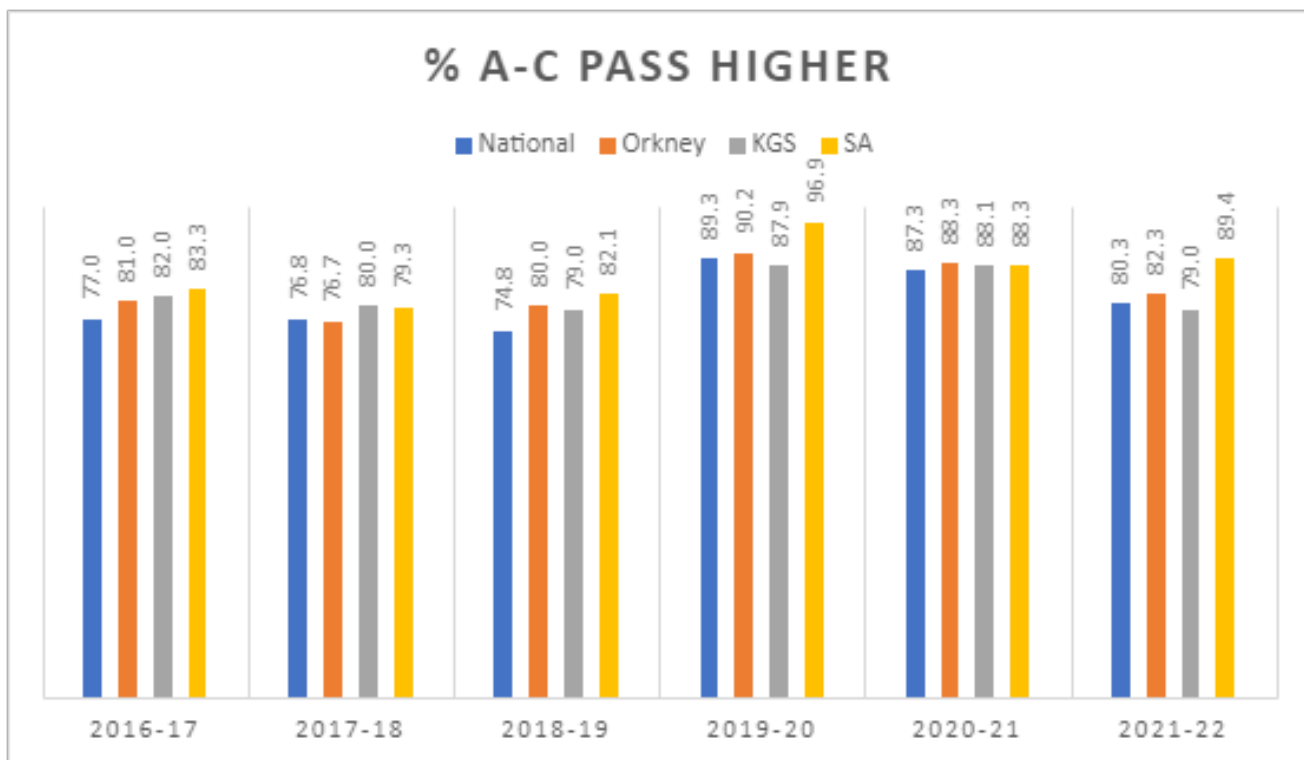
In the pass rate charts for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher presented below:

- 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. Each school is able to compare their attainment data to that of a “Virtual Comparator” in the Scottish Government “Insight” data tool. This “VC” is made up of pupils with matching demographic characteristics.
- 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 2022.



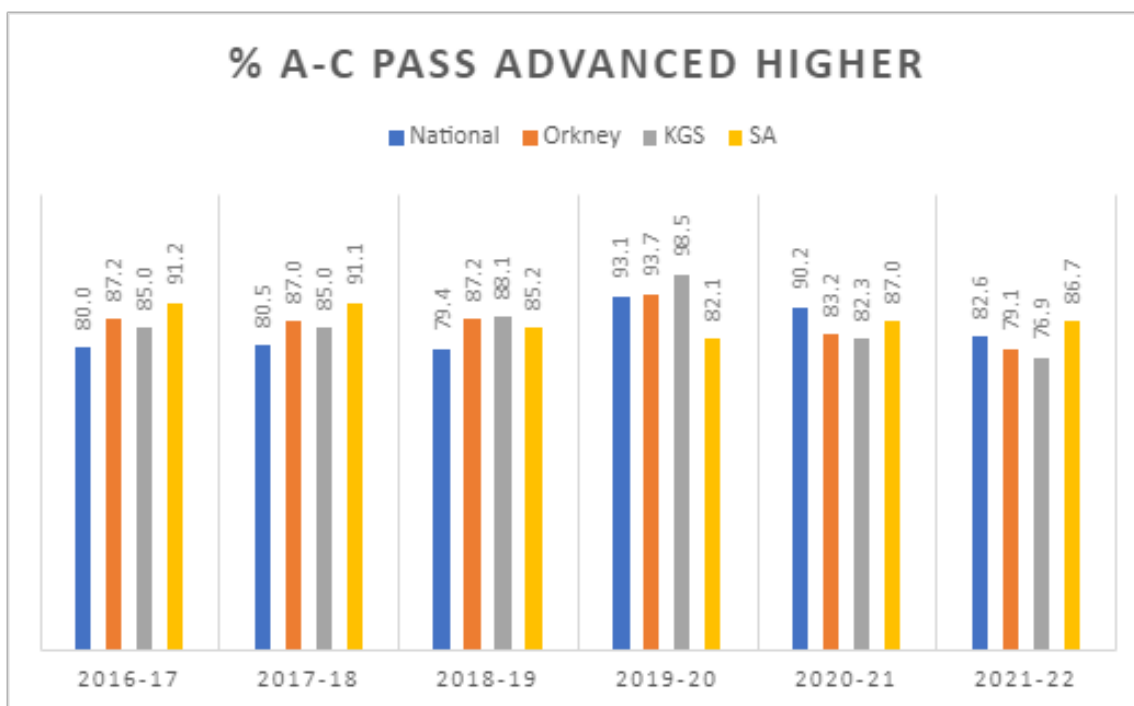
Analysis – National 5

National 5 pass rates in Orkney in 2021-22 were slightly higher than the national rate. The 2021-22 pass rate of 82.5% is an increase over the three pre-covid years. Stromness Academy shows a rising trend since 2016-17 and KGS since 2017-18, ignoring the covid years.



Analysis – Higher

- Higher pass rates in Orkney in 2021-22 were 2% higher than the national rate, with Stromness Academy performing significantly higher.
- The 2021 pass rate of 82.3% is an increase over the three pre-covid years.
- Stromness Academy shows a rising trend since 2017-18, ignoring the covid years.
- KGS pass rate is the same as it was in 2018-19, the last time there was a normal exam diet.



Analysis – Advanced Higher

- Advanced Higher pass rates in Orkney in 2021-22 were lower than the national rate, although Stromness Academy performed significantly higher.
- In the pre-covid years both schools, and therefore also the Orkney rate, performed higher than the national rate.
- At Advanced Higher, Orkney made 139 entries, compared to 1398 made at National 5 and 656 at Higher. With this small cohort, an individual student makes a significant impact on the overall success rate at Advanced Higher.

Next Steps – refresh of presentation policy

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 currently taken by Orkney schools, who do not tend to withdraw pupils even where there is very little prospect of a pass.

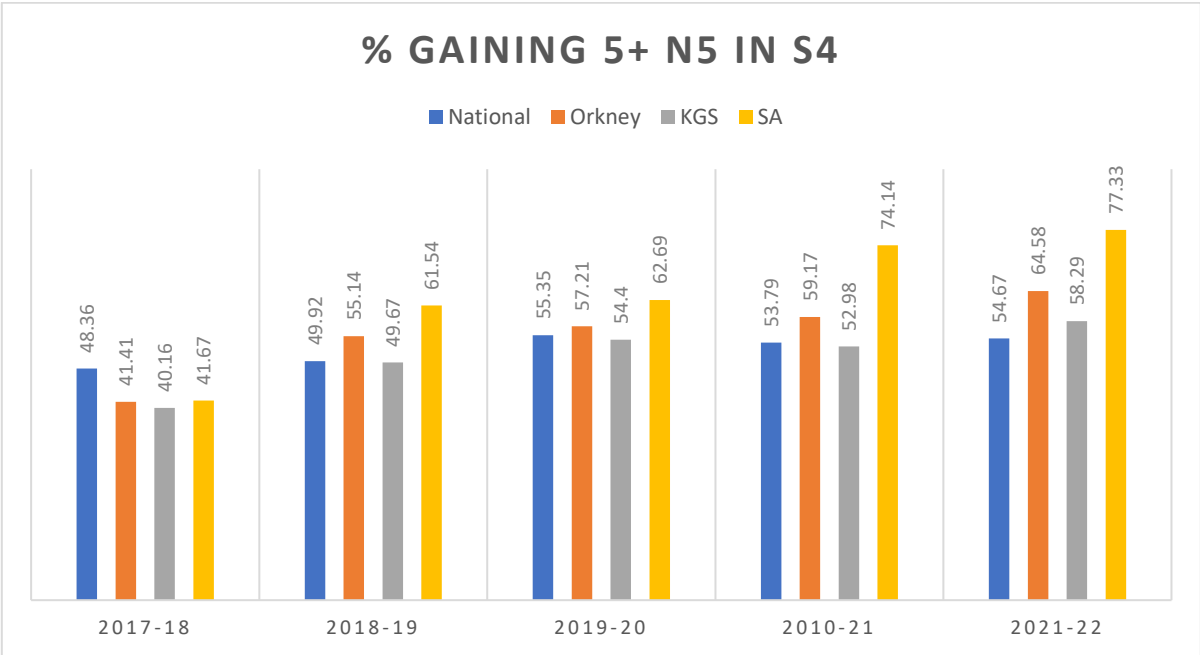
A common tracking, monitoring and intervention process is now being used by both secondary schools and the three Junior High Schools. This is giving clear oversight of whether pass rates are on track to be at the level we would like and allowing analysis of reasons for this not being the case.

It is proposed that a more pro-active approach to presentation of pupils for examination be taken as we move forwards. Pupils who, according to tracking reports throughout the year, are “on the cusp” of passing will be identified and interventions made to support them to pass. These might include meetings with pupils, parents and staff, closer supervision and study support. In cases where a pupil is not attaining across a range of subjects, interventions may include entering for alternative qualifications, units rather than a full qualification or withdrawing from some subjects to focus on others.

These decisions will be made in consultation with pupils and parents, taking into account the entry requirements for the pupil’s intended aims for post-school progression, whether they intend to stay on at school and the desirability of gaining core qualifications in literacy and numeracy. Whilst whole-school performance measures will be used to help identify pupils of concern, for instance those who are close to attaining five level 5 qualifications, decisions for any individual pupil will be made on the basis of what is right for them; pupils will not be denied access to a qualification on the basis that a failure would affect whole-school attainment measures. In all cases, schools will seek to balance the desire to achieve favourable results for the school and local authority as a whole with the desire for each pupil to be given opportunities to achieve as much as possible.

3.11 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 move to further study as it facilitates pupils taking 5 Highers in S5 to support university applications.



Analysis:

Since 2018-19 Orkney percentages of young people gaining 5 or more level 5 qualifications in S4 have consistently been above national levels. Stromness Academy figures are significantly above national levels. Two factors have influenced this: firstly, pupils who have the most complex additional support needs usually attend Kirkwall Grammar School, meaning that the Stromness Academy cohort includes fewer of the pupils least likely to be able to attain this measure and secondly it has been recognised that a high proportion of Stromness Academy pupils leave school after S4, leading to a focus on pupils attaining as much as possible in that year.

Next steps:

As part of the analysis of level 5 data, schools are identifying the small number of pupils who are currently at risk of gaining few or no qualifications, the majority due to mental health issues which mean they are unable to attend school. In some cases, there has been some progress made in supporting them to engage with the i-sgoil, Education Scotland’s online learning offer.

3.12 Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy in S4

The charts in this section are taken from Education Scotland’s “Insight” tool. In Insight, rates of attainment in Orkney are compared with those of a “Virtual Comparator”. This is not a real school, but a cohort of pupils who share demographic characteristics with our pupils.



Analysis:

At both level 4 and level 5 literacy attainment of Orkney pupils in S4 has tended to lag behind the virtual comparator. This has been a focus for 2021-22 and considerable progress has been made in closing this gap.



Analysis:

After a downwards trend for 3 years in attainment in Numeracy at level 5, substantial progress has been made with a jump from 44.50% of pupils attaining the measure in 2020-21 to 74.54% in 2021-22. This is largely due to improvement at Kirkwall Grammar School, moving from 32.45% in 2020-21 to 74.29% in 2021-22; Stromness Academy was already achieving 75.86% in 2020-21 and maintained this with 78.67% in 2021-22.

Next Steps

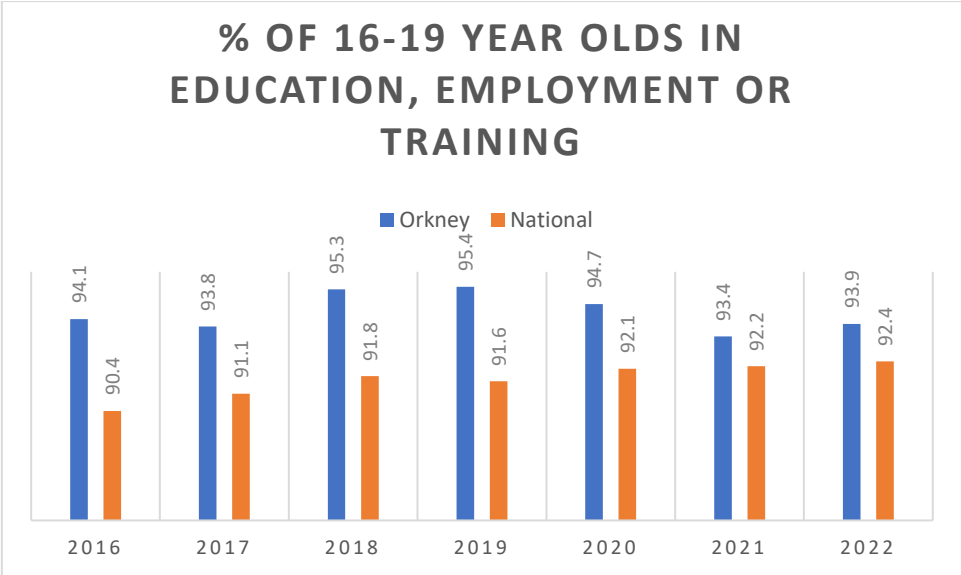
Orkney attainment lagged behind Virtual Comparator at level 4 in Numeracy in 2021-22; it is also lower in Numeracy than Literacy. This is now being addressed in several ways for the 2022-23 cohort:

Analysis is carried out to ensure that pupils who stayed on into S5 and had not yet attained either level 4 or level 5 Literacy or Numeracy are taking courses in either these specific skills or in English/Maths this year.

Performance of pupils in the current S4 in English and Maths is being monitored as part of the agreed tracking process and pupils showing signs of not attaining an appropriate level are identified and actions taken as outlined in the presentation policy in section 3.10 above. Where pupils may not achieve the full English or Maths qualification at National 5, there is an initial focus on attaining the Literacy or Numeracy unit. Where appropriate to the pupil's future aims and interests, they may move from Maths to the Applications of Maths course at level 4 or 5. This alternative course has a focus on using Maths in "real-life" contexts with modules on personal finance, statistics and measurement. It has been a key to success for many pupils at Stromness Academy in the past and is now being delivered in Kirkwall Grammar School.

3.13 Annual Participation Measure

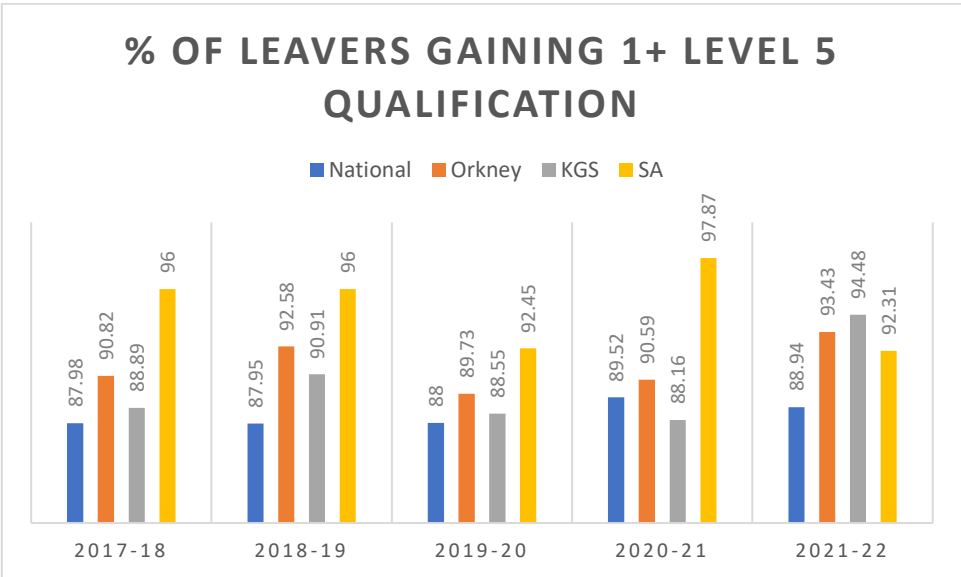
The participation measure gives the percentage of young people aged 16-19 who are participating in education, employment or training. It is published by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) in the [Annual Participation Measure](#) in August each year.



Analysis:

Orkney is consistently achieving above the national average in this measure. Orkney has set a stretch aim for this measure for 2023 of 95%.

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



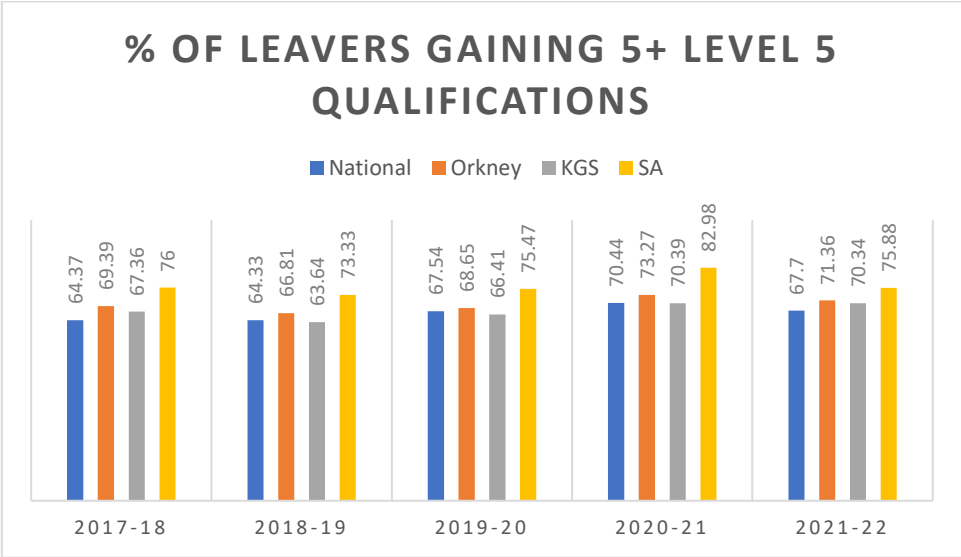
Analysis:

Orkney is consistently above 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 this year. It will be reported upon for the first time to Scottish Government in Summer 2023. A stretch aim of 95% has been 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. The provision of vocational courses at level 5 by Orkney College UHI for pupils still at school makes a significant contribution to this and we must ensure these pathways are maintained.

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



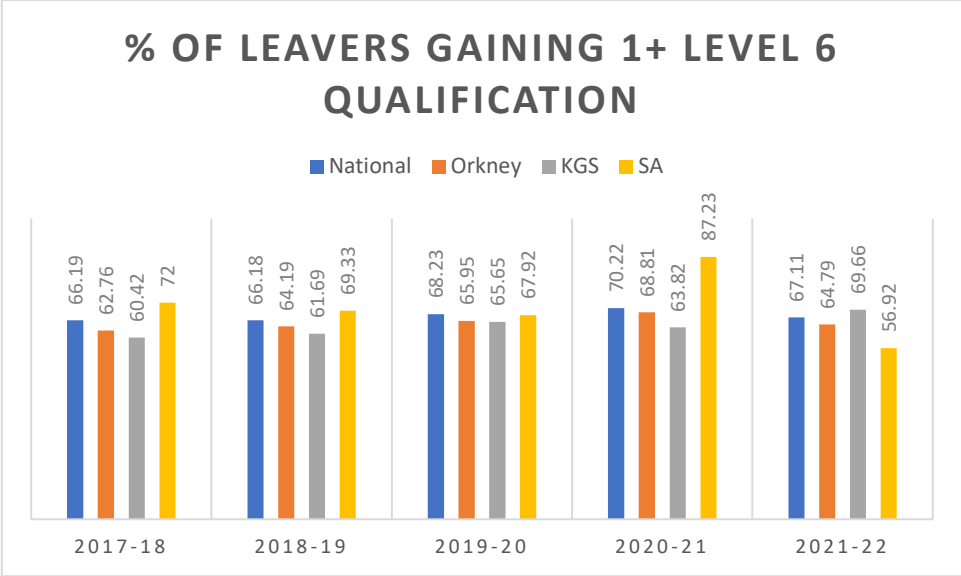
Analysis:

Orkney is consistently above the national average in this measure.

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. The provision of vocational courses at level 5 by Orkney College UHI for pupils still at school makes a significant contribution to this and we must ensure these pathways are maintained.

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



Analysis:

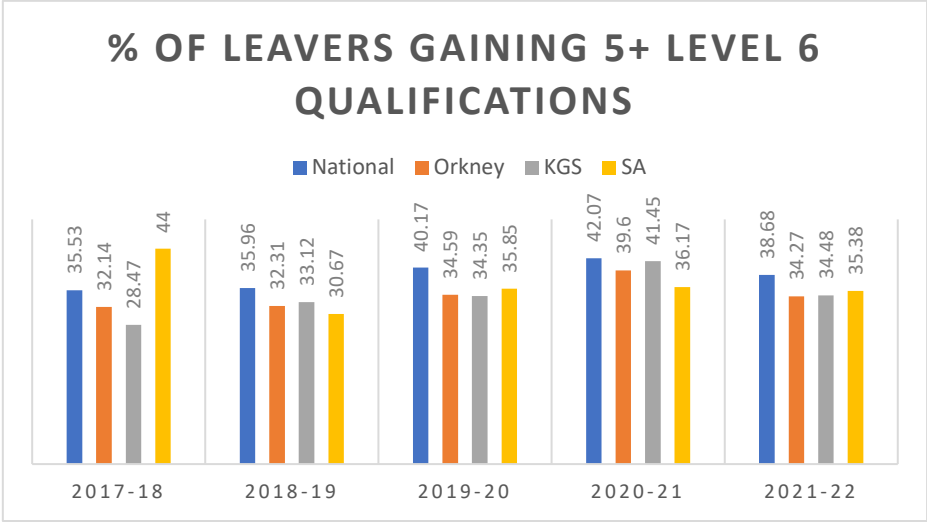
Orkney is consistently below the national average in this measure.

Next steps:

This is not a measure which had been focused upon in Orkney until the Scottish Attainment Challenge raised its profile this year. It will be reported upon for the first time to Scottish Government in Summer 2023. A stretch aim of 68% has been set for this measure for the 2022-23 cohort. The increasingly high rates of pupils staying on into S5 at KGS will help contribute to attaining this aim but it is definitely a stretch for this cohort. Now that there is a focus on attaining 5+ level 5 qualifications in S4, there is an increased probability of pupils attaining a level 6 if they stay on into S5, so we may be more likely to attain it in 2023-24. 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.

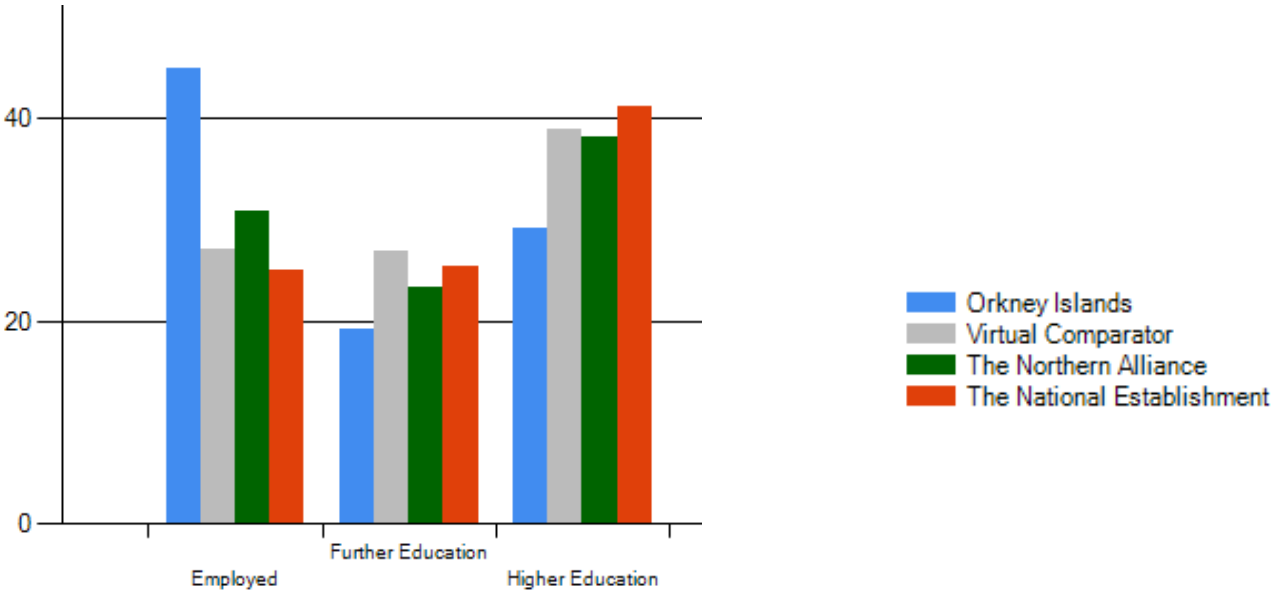
3.17 Percentage of school leavers achieving 5 or more level 6 qualifications (equivalent to 5 Highers, but may include other qualification types such as Foundation Apprenticeship).

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. Gaining 5 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 2022 school leavers, in Orkney (blue) we have a much higher percentage of school leavers entering employment than nationally (red), and correspondingly few entering Higher Education; this is consistently the picture every year. 2017-18 was an anomalous year group for Stromness Academy with a particularly high performing cohort.

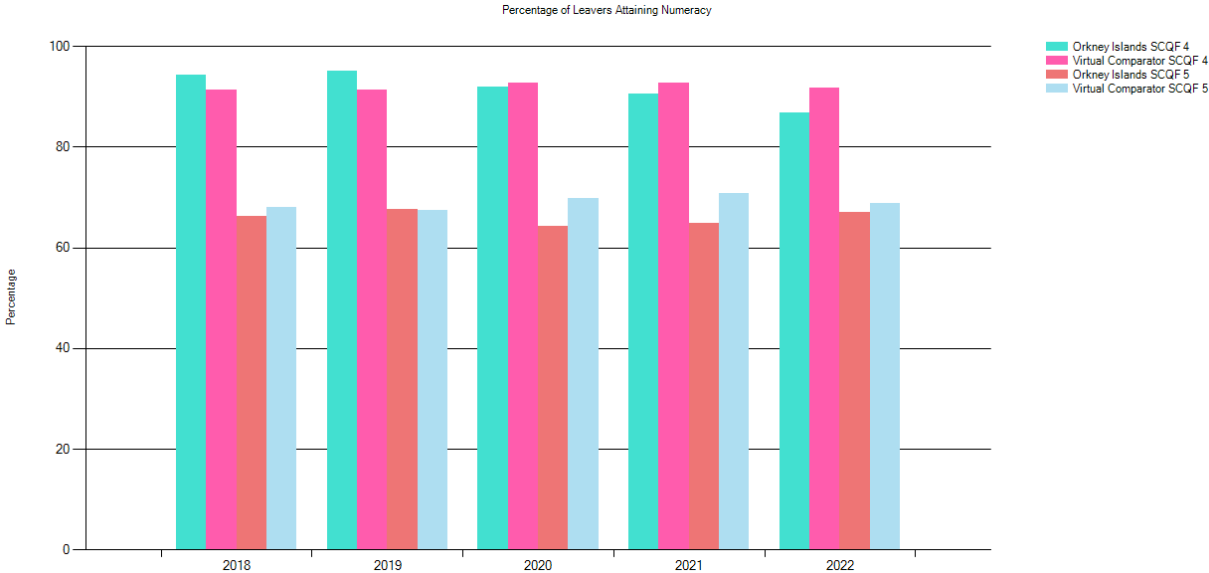


3.18 Percentage of school leavers achieving level 4 and level 5 Literacy and Numeracy



Analysis:

At level 4 literacy attainment of Orkney school leavers has been consistently behind Virtual Comparator, while level 5 attainment is at around the same level as Virtual Comparator.



Analysis:

At level 4 and level 5 numeracy attainment of Orkney school leavers was lower than Virtual Comparator in 2021-22.

Next Steps:

As discussed in 3.12 above, raising attainment in Literacy and Numeracy in S4 has been a focus for 2021-22, as well as ensuring those pupils who stay on into S5/6 and have not attained level 4 or level 5 in S4 continue to work towards these qualifications. Many of the young people affected by these efforts have not yet left school; we would expect to see improved results for school leavers over the next 2 years.

3.18 Appeals

In recognition of the ongoing effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on education, in 2022 there was an enhanced SQA appeals process.

The grade awarded by SQA can be appealed by the school if the school's estimate of the grade the learner would achieve was higher. The school is able to submit evidence of higher attainment in, for example, prelim exams. In normal years there is a charge for appeals; this was waived in 2022.

11% of grades were appealed nationally (data from [SQA Appeals Summary 2022](#)). The tables below give the percentage of appeals by qualification level and the percentage which were upgraded:

% of grades appealed	National	Orkney
National 5	8.8	5.1
Higher	14	12.3
Advanced Higher	15.6	13.8

% of awards upgraded	National	Orkney
National 5	27.5	15.8
Higher	33.1	14.8
Advanced Higher	24.5	10.0

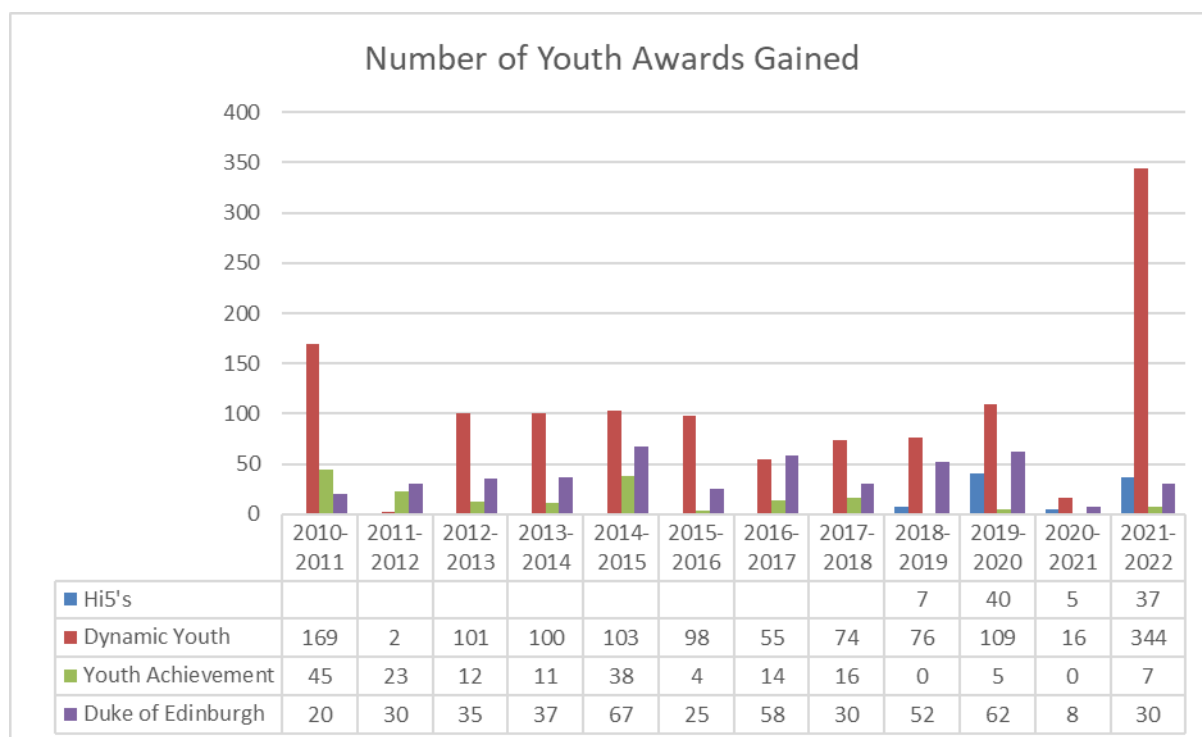
Orkney schools took a very pro-active approach to the submission of appeals, submitting many more than would be expected in a "normal" year to give our pupils every opportunity of gaining grades. A successful appeal depended on the school being able to produce evidence of performance at the higher grade, ideally from a formal assessment such as a prelim exam.

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 are increasingly recognised, and their benefits appreciated.

4.2 This section, which is an extract from the *Community Learning, Development & Employability Service (CLDE) Annual Report 2021-22*, is an excellent example of how curriculum for excellence is taking place within youth work settings around Orkney.

4.3 In 2021-22 young people in Orkney achieved the following:

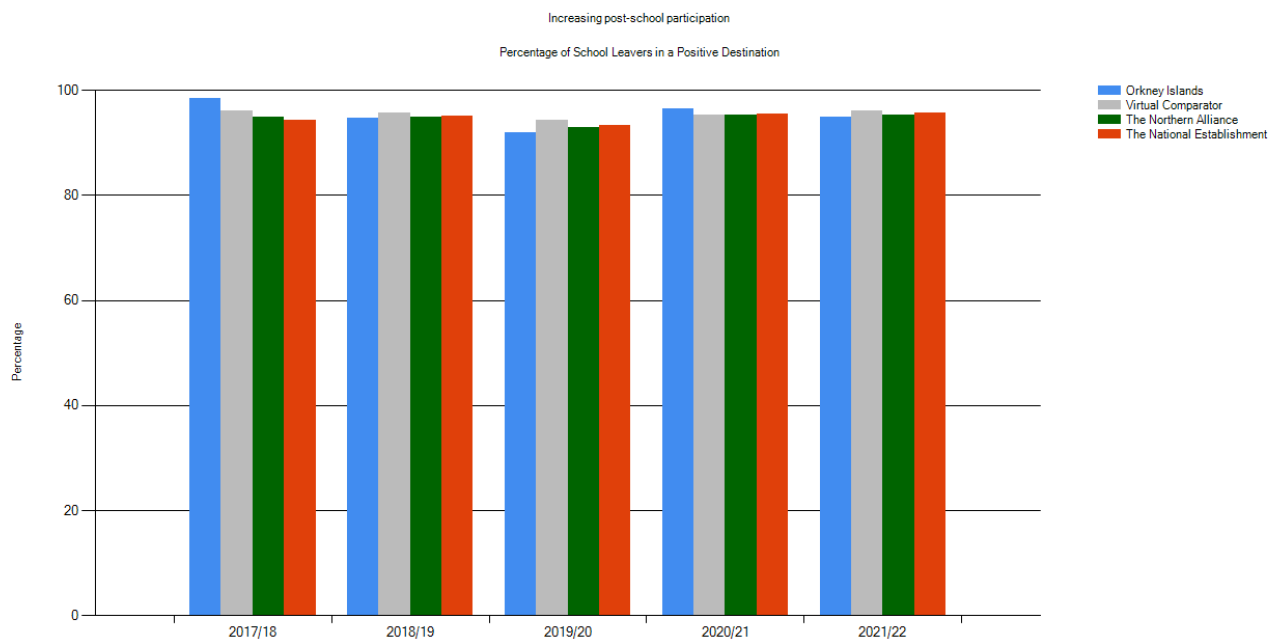


CLDE intervention	No. of Recipients	
	2020-21	2021-22
<p>Hi5 Award Introduced in 2018, the Hi5 accredited award is a nationally recognised award for young people age 5+ that records and recognises wider achievement. The Hi5 Award is credit rated on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) 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.</p>	5	37

<p>Dynamic Youth Awards</p> <p>The 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 CLDE collaborated with Outdoor Education and a number of schools and third sector organisations to support pupils to complete the award.</p>	<p>16</p> <p>395 hours</p> <p>of activity</p>	<p>344</p> <p>4818 hours</p> <p>of activity</p>
<p>Youth Achievement Awards</p> <p>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.</p> <p>CLDE are currently working with young people on different award levels and are providing support to other organisations working on the award.</p>	<p>Bronze</p> <p>0</p> <p>Silver</p> <p>0</p> <p>Gold</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Bronze</p> <p>7</p> <p>Silver</p> <p>0</p> <p>Gold</p> <p>0</p>
<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). They'll find themselves helping people or the community, getting fitter, developing skills, going on an expedition, and taking part in a residential activity (Gold only). Due to the lifting of Covid restrictions, completed DofE awards are starting to recover.</p>	<p>Bronze</p> <p>3</p> <p>Silver</p> <p>5</p> <p>Gold</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Bronze</p> <p>19</p> <p>Silver</p> <p>8</p> <p>Gold</p> <p>3</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 and with increased staffing and resource during 2021-22, the employability team delivered a variety of interventions for young people who were identified as requiring additional support to engage with training, learning and or employment.</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>50</p>

Section 5: National Benchmarking Measure: School Leavers 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.

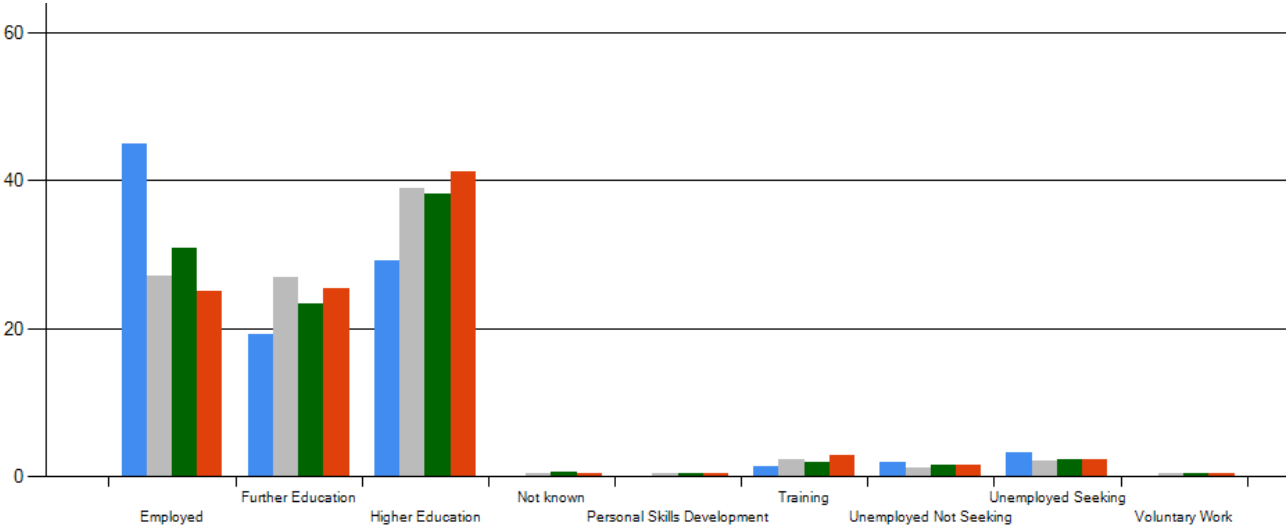


	Orkney	Virtual Comparator	Northern Alliance	National
2017/18	98.47	96.17	94.99	94.40
2018/19	94.76	95.72	94.98	95.05
2019/20	91.89	94.32	92.99	93.36
2020-21	96.53	95.40	95.32	95.48
2021-22	94.84	96.10	95.41	95.74

Analysis

The percentage of Orkney school leavers in a positive destination has consistently tended to be very close to all comparator measures. Whilst it dipped somewhat in 2019-20, it has recovered since.

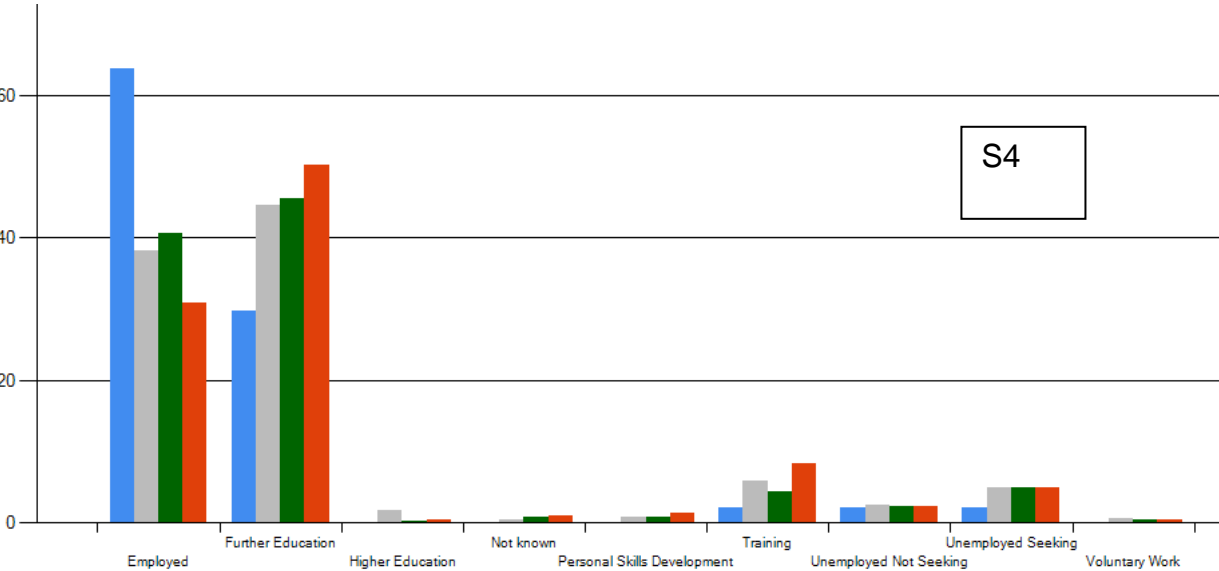
5.2 Taking a closer look at the underlying data reveals our school leavers' destinations. Follow-up of Orkney school leavers by Skills Development Scotland has ensured that there are no young people with unknown destinations in 2021-22.



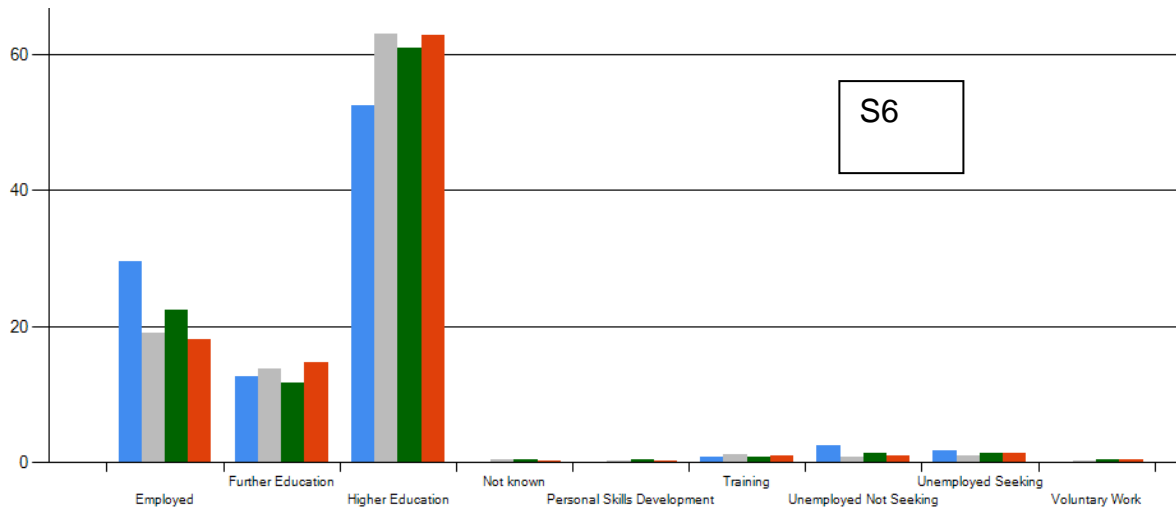
Analysis:

- 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.

The percentage of 2021-22 school leavers who move into employment is even more marked in S4. For this cohort of 47 pupils, 63.83% are in employment:



The majority of Orkney pupils who stayed on to S6 moved on to Higher Education (52.54%), though the rate is still lower than comparators. The percentage moving into employment, 29.66%, though less marked than for S4 pupils, is still higher than comparators.



The Orkney Education Service and our partners in Skills Development Scotland and Developing the Young Workforce work together to support all school leavers into a positive destination which is appropriate for their abilities and aspirations.