



# Children's Services

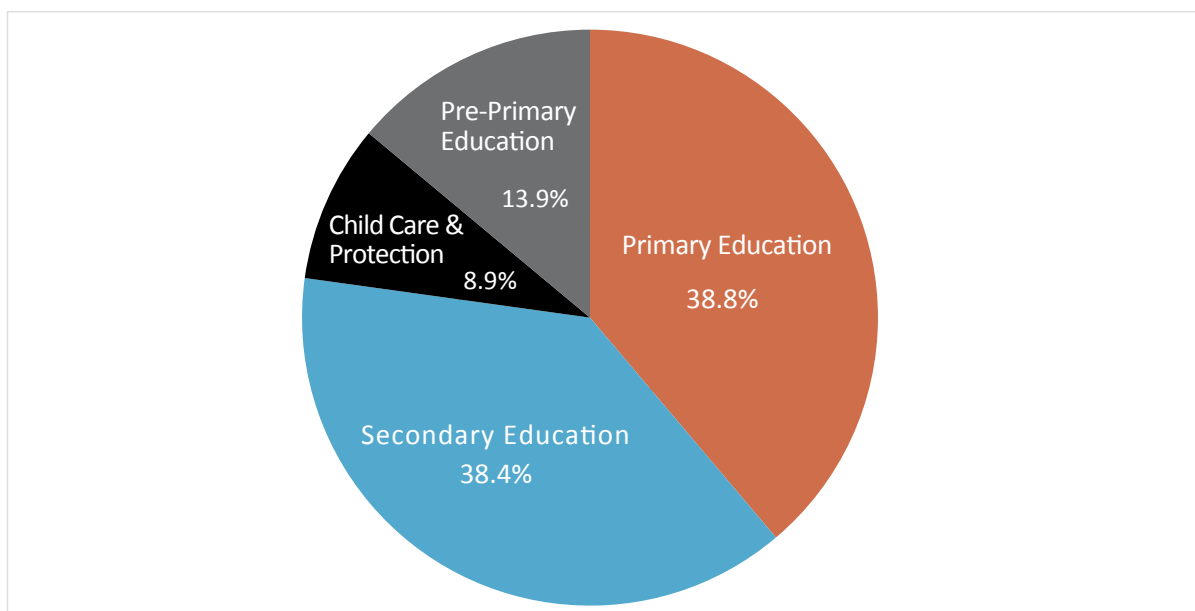


This section highlights both the long-term trends in children's services and the initial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic as evidenced by the 2020/21 dataset.

Expenditure on children's services has been sustained and expanded between 2010/11 and 2020/21. Over the long-term, real-term spending has increased by 9.5% on education (range: -16.9% to +30.4%), and by 14.5% on services for looked after children (range: -42% to +98%). In 2020/21, real spending on education continued to increase, by 0.6%, while expenditure on services for looked after children reduced by 5.2%.

The graph below shows the proportion of total spend on each of the major elements of children's services in 2020/21. As can be seen, primary and secondary school provision are the major spend areas, with pre-school education and childcare and protection<sup>14</sup> accounting for a very much lower percentage of total spending on children. The proportion spent on pre-primary has grown over recent years (by over 2% in 2020/21) in line with the policy agenda to expand early years provision.

**Fig 2: Proportion of gross revenue expenditure for children's services by element 2020-21**



Source: council supplied expenditure figures

During the longer-term, there has been significant improvement in performance and outcomes across key aspects of children's services, including for the most vulnerable. This includes progress in the proportion of younger children meeting developmental milestones; expansion in early years provision accompanied by an overall improvement in quality; higher levels of educational attainment, including for the most deprived; greater placement stability and significant success in reducing school exclusions for children who are looked after; and continued improvement in participation rates for 16-19 year olds.

The impact of COVID-19 on children and young people, particularly on the most vulnerable, is an area of significant concern. While the full impact of the pandemic on children will only become clear over a longer period of time, early evidence in this year's LGBF highlights concerns in relation to educational outcomes, positive destinations and participation rates particularly for the most deprived. 2020/21 LGBF data for some key areas is not yet available e.g. looked after children; developmental milestones and child poverty. Given the well documented concerns in relation to mental and emotional health and wellbeing for some of our most vulnerable children as a result of the pandemic, the above LGBF data will be a critical piece of the evidence necessary to understand the impact and inform recovery, and will be incorporated when it is published later in 2022.

<sup>14</sup> Expenditure on Looked After Children Placements (Community and Residential)



## Pre-school provision

For pre-school educational provision for children (“nursery school”), spending has been standardised as total spend per publicly funded early learning and childcare (ELC) registration.

In 2020/21, the Scottish average for the cost per ELC registration was £9,255. This represents an increase of 27.8% in the most recent year and an increase of 122% since 2010/11. This reflects the expansion of the ELC offer and a substantial increase in the number of hours offered for each place provided. All 32 authorities report increasing expenditure, although the scale of this varies significantly.

The increase in costs has been driven both by a significant growth in gross expenditure, alongside a decrease in the total number of ELC registrations across the period. Both the growth in expenditure and the reduction in placements has accelerated in recent years. In 2020/21, gross expenditure increased by 19.6% on average and the number of placements reduced by 6.5%. This pattern is true for the majority of councils, although is not universal.

**Table 5: Cost per pre-school registration**

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% Change 2019-20 to 2020-21	% Change 2010-11 to 2020-21
£4,175	£3,792	£3,734	£3,538	£3,849	£4,448	£4,758	£4,934	£5,481	£7,239	£9,255	27.8%	121.7%

From August 2014, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 required local authorities to increase the amount of early learning and childcare from 475 hours a year to 600 hours for each eligible child. By August 2021, the Act introduces a further commitment to the near doubling of entitlement to funded early learning and childcare to 1140 hours a year for all three and four-year olds and eligible two-year olds. This additional commitment is supported by additional funding from Scottish Government.

In the years leading up to the introduction of the 1140 duty, local authorities phased in expanded entitlement. The impact of the new entitlements has been to increase the unit cost per pre-school place due to the increased hours associated with each funded place. The additional staffing costs in delivering the new entitlements, and the commitment by councils to offer the extended hours in a way that allows parents some choice and flexibility over what pattern of hours they can get, will influence costs here. The establishment of an hourly sustainable rate paid to funded providers will also be a factor in understanding cost patterns.

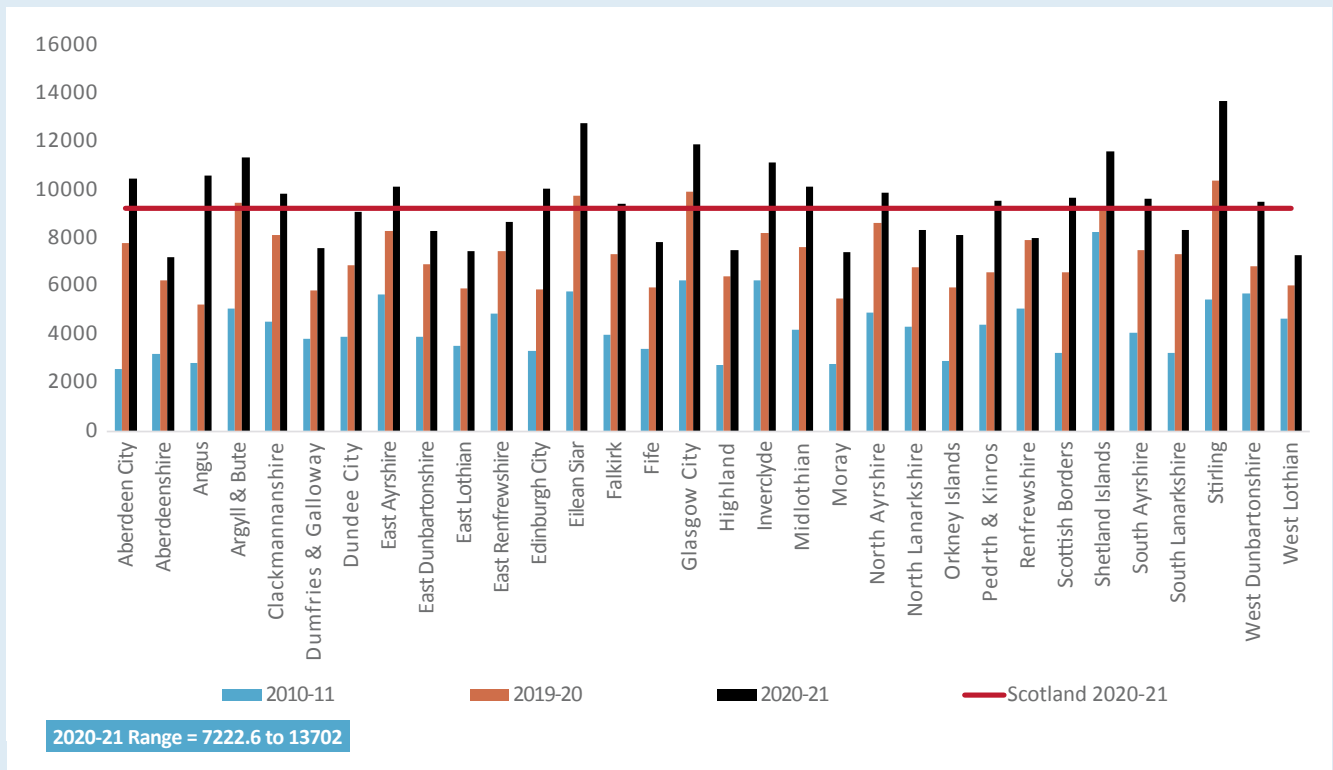
In 2020/21, the average cost per registration was £9,255 with substantial and widening variation between councils, ranging from £7,222 to £13,702 per registration. Average costs tend to be higher in the most deprived councils than in the least deprived councils (£10,015 compared to £9,100). However, there is no statistically significant relationship with deprivation due to variation within the family group.

### Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the local variation between authorities

- *Workforce composition – age, experience, grade and qualification level of staff*
- *Balance between council and partner provision*
- *Level of integration of pre-school and primary school provision*
- *Demographic variation and local capacity to respond*
- *Balance between LA and partner provision*



Fig 3: Cost per pre-school registration (£)



Source: Early Learning and Childcare Census, Scottish Government; council supplied expenditure figures



**Local Variation – Cost per pre-school registration**

2020/21 Value

Scotland: £9,255; council range: £7,222–£13,702. Widened variation in the most recent year. Higher costs in the most deprived councils compared to the least deprived councils (£10,015 compared to £9,100, not statistically significant).

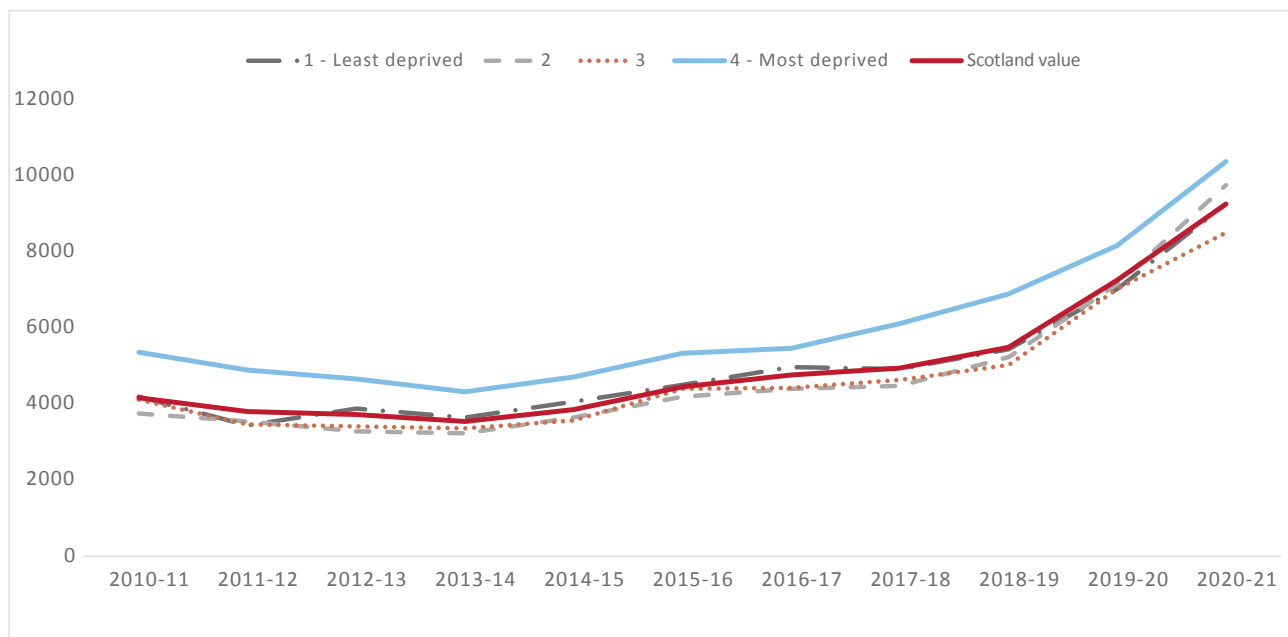
Change over Time

In 2020/21: Scotland: +27.8%. All 32 councils increased (range: +1.4% to +101%)

Since 2010/11: Scotland: +122%. All 32 councils increased (range: +40.5% to +307.4%)



Fig 4: Cost per pre-school education registration (£) by family group - deprivation



## Pre-school performance

Care Inspectorate quality evaluations for early years services and Health Visitor assessments at 27-30 months are used to provide consistent measures for assessing performance within the pre-school sector, and for understanding children’s development as they progress through the pre-school setting.

### Percentage of publicly funded early years provision which is graded good/better

Care Inspectorate quality evaluations reflect the number of publicly funded early years providers which were graded good or better for all quality themes. This is presented as a percentage of all publicly funded early years provision which was inspected. In the 2020/21 inspection year, the number of inspections was greatly reduced due to COVID-19. As a result, the majority of services retained their grades from previous inspection. This should be considered when interpreting data from this period.

Table 6: Percentage of publicly funded early years provision which is graded good/better<sup>15</sup>

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Value Change 2019-20 to 2020-21	Value Change 2010-11 to 2020-21
87.1	90.6	91.3	92.6	93.5	91.9	91.7	91.0	90.6	90.2	90.9	0.7	3.8

Over the 11-year period, the proportion of publicly funded services graded good or better for all quality themes has increased from 87.1% to 90.9%. Prior to COVID-19, quality gradings had shown small year on year reductions between 2015/16 and 2019/20. In 2020/21 however, quality gradings showed a small increase counter to recent trends, from 90.2% to 90.9%.

The increase in overall gradings observed in 2020/21 may also reflect the recent increase in registration

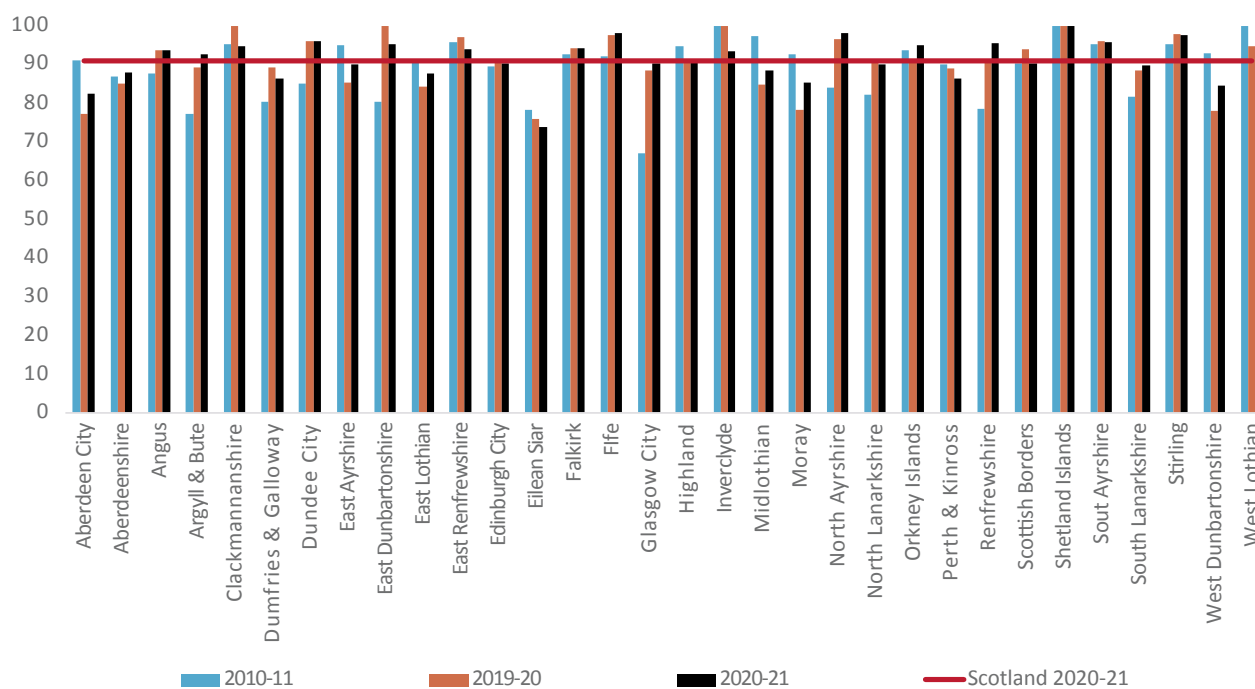
<sup>15</sup> Data is a snapshot as at 31 December each year.



cancellations in services with grades 'less than good'. This reflects guidance that requires existing funded providers to meet the National Standard from the full statutory roll-out of the entitlement to 1140 hours in August, and the removal of funded provider status for those providers who are unable to demonstrate that they meet the criteria.

There is considerable variation across councils in both current quality ratings and in movement across the period which can be observed in the graph below.

Fig 5: Percentage of publicly funded early years provision which is graded good/better



2020-21 Range = 73.9 to 100

Source: Figures supplied by the Care Inspectorate



**Local Variation – Percentage of publicly funded early years provision which is graded good/better**

2020/21 Value

Scotland: 90.9%; council range: 74% - 100%. Narrowed variation in most recent year and not systematically related to deprivation, rurality or authority size.

Change over Time

In 2020/21: Scotland: +0.7pp; councils: 16 increased and 15 decreased (range: -6.7pp to +6.9pp)

Since 2010/11: Scotland: +3.8pp; councils: 18 increased and 13 decreased (range: -8.8pp to +23.2pp)



The balance between Local Authority and partner provision may be an important factor for further exploration. The early years expansion has seen a rapid growth in the use of partner provision. In 2021, 30% of all children who will receive expanded hours will be in partner provision, up from 27% in 2020 and 20% in 2019.<sup>16</sup> Given Local Authority run services continue to receive higher quality ratings compared to other sectors, what impact this has on the overall trend may merit further exploration.

Improving the quality of early years provision is a cornerstone of the Early Years expansion programme and while the current focus of investment is to deliver on the expanded entitlement commitment, the ambition is that quality improvements will follow.

Further exploration is needed to fully understand the trends observed, including what role the following factors may play:

- The decreasing number of registered day-care of children services
- Variation in return rates of annual returns, inspection methodology and inspection frequency
- Variations in the question wording in the annual return in line with changes to government policy (the biggest change in the question was between 2014 and 2015).
- Number of cancellations and new registrations of services
- Workforce expansion associated with 1140 duty, lowering the average experience level of the workforce.

## Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones

Children's development as they progress through the pre-school setting is reflected as the percentage of children meeting developmental milestones, i.e. with no concerns across any domain, at their 27-30 month review. This includes those with no concerns recorded but some domains incomplete/missing. Latest data available for this measure covers children becoming eligible in 2019/20, of whom only a minority received their review during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore this does not yet reflect the full impact of COVID-19.

During 27-30 month reviews, the health professional (normally a health visitor) assesses children's developmental status and records the outcome (e.g. no concern, concern newly suspected as a result of the review, or concern or disorder already known prior to the review) against each of eight developmental domains (social, emotional/behavioural, speech language and communication, gross motor, fine motor, vision, hearing and problem solving). This is a key outcome measure adopted by the Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC), formerly the Early Years Collaborative (EYC).

The percentage of children with no concerns increased from 80.8% to 85.7% between 2013/14 and 2019/20 revealing improvement in this important outcome area. While the average trend indicates positive progress across the period, there is variation between councils, ranging from an improvement of 11 percentage points to a 3-percentage point decline. While almost all authorities have reported improvements since 2013/14, half have shown a decline in the most recent 12 months reported.

It is important to note that changes in methodology and assessment practice in 2016/17 may affect comparability with previous years. The introduction of a new domain in the 27-30 month review has led to an increase in the number of incomplete returns. In addition, across the same period, there has also been a change in practice with Health Visitor assessments moving from clinic-based assessments towards greater focus on home-based assessments.

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<sup>16</sup> Improvement Service Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Delivery Progress Reports - 2018-2021



Table 7: Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2013-14 to 2019-20
80.8	80.8	81.6	82.4	84.6	85.5	85.7	dna	0.2	4.9

There is significant variation across councils, with figures in 2019/20 ranging from 75.6% to 97.3%. The percentage of children meeting developmental milestones is significantly lower in councils with higher levels of deprivation, 80.9%, compared to 88.5% for councils with the lowest levels of deprivation.

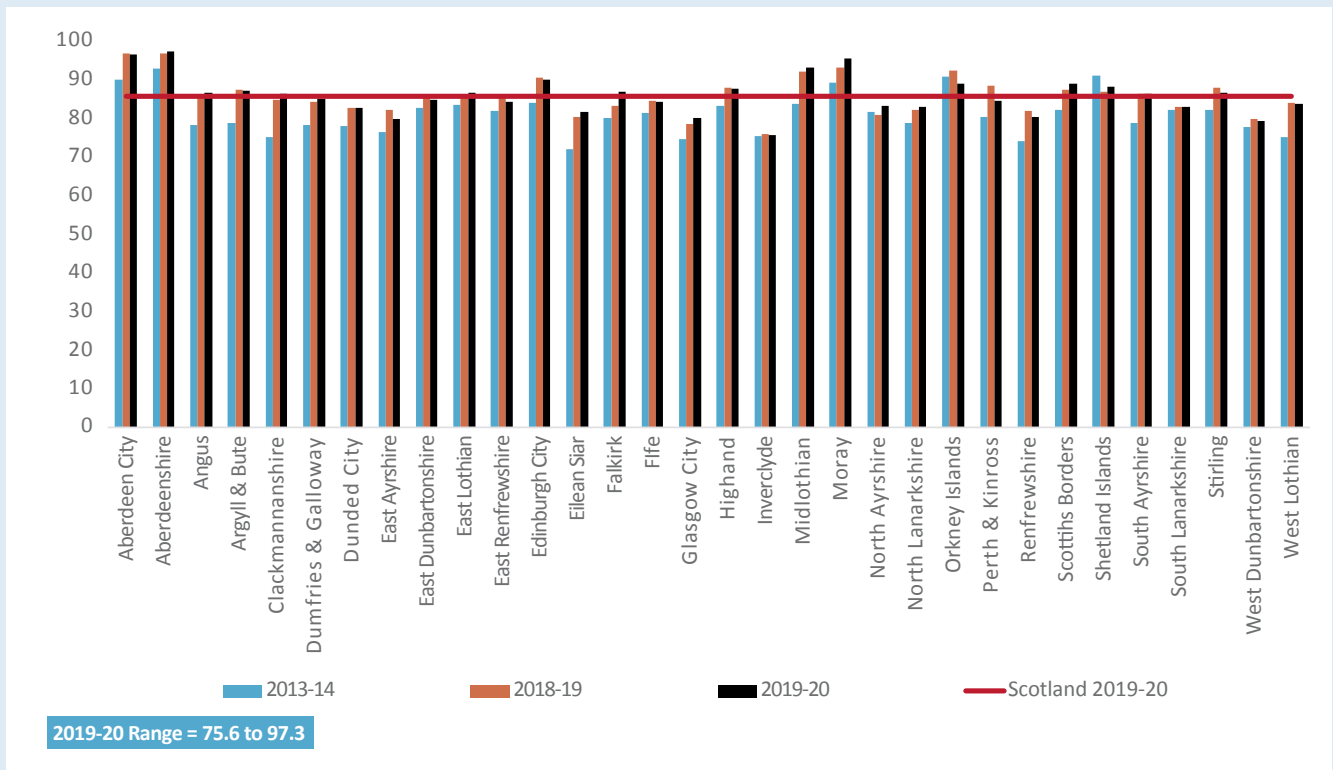
In 2019/20 more than one in five children (22%) from deprived areas had at least one developmental concern compared to one in eleven for the least deprived areas (8%). Looked after children are more than twice as likely to have at least one developmental concern (34%) compared to those not looked after (14%) reflecting the broader vulnerability, and generally poor health, of this group of children.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> <https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/child-health/27-30-month-review-statistics/>





Fig 6: Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones



Source: PHS, Child Health 27-30 Month Review Statistics



**Local Variation – Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones**

2019/20 Value

Scotland: 85.7%; council range: 75.6% - 97.3%. Values are significantly lower in councils with higher levels of deprivation, 80.9% compared to 88.5% for councils with lower levels of deprivation

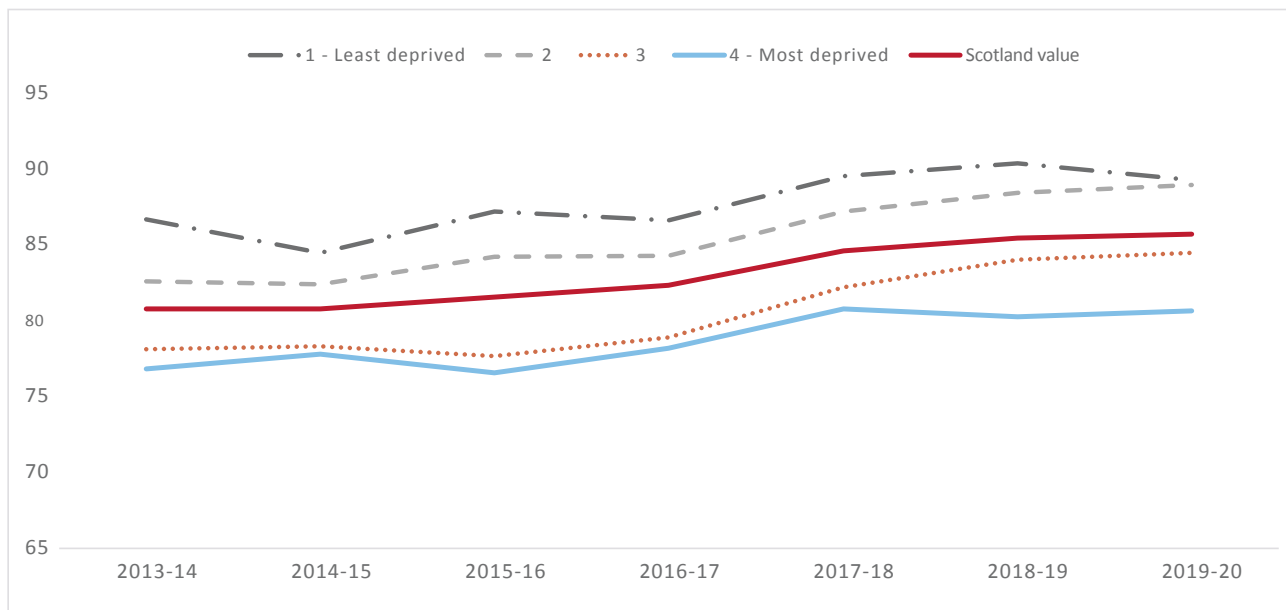
Change over Time

In 2019/20: Scotland: +0.2pp; councils: 16 increased and 16 decreased (range: -4.0pp to +3.6pp)

Since 2013/14: Scotland: +4.9pp; councils: 30 increased and 2 decreased (range: -2.7pp to +11.2pp)



Fig 7: Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones by family group - deprivation



## Primary and secondary school spending

In both primary and secondary education, real terms expenditure fell during 2020/21, by 2.3% and 2.0% respectively. Prior to this, expenditure for both primary and secondary education had shown an increasing trend in the years leading up to COVID-19, cancelling out significant reductions observed between 2010/11 and 2014/15.

The reduction in real terms expenditure observed in 2020/21 is driven by COVID-19 related inflation experienced during 2020/21, which was significantly higher than in previous years. Adjusting for this exceptional inflation rate, the previous trend of increased expenditure continues for both primary and secondary education (increasing by 1.5% and 1.9% respectively).

The growth in education spend in recent years largely reflects the teachers' pay award and additional monies received from central government via the Attainment Scotland Fund.

After a decade in which public sector pay has been frozen or rises capped at 1%, the 3% pay award for teachers in 2018/19, 7% in 2019/20 and 3% in 2020/21 following the relaxation of its public sector pay policy has a significant impact on costs. Around 60% of primary and secondary school spending is teaching staff costs. Given the current agreement between the Scottish Government and local authorities that teacher numbers will be maintained in line with pupil numbers, this represents a relatively fixed cost to councils.

The Attainment Scotland Fund has seen additional monies provided to Local Authorities and schools to support improvements in equity in education. In 2020/21, this reflected around £195 million in additional funding, including Pupil Equity Funding of £127 million, around £43 million for the Challenge Authorities and an additional £11.5 from the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund.<sup>18</sup>

Family Group analysis shows that pre-COVID-19, expenditure has increased fastest for those authorities with the highest levels of deprivation. In the two years prior to COVID-19, primary costs increased by 9% for the most deprived councils on average, compared to 6% for the least deprived councils. Similarly, secondary costs increased by 4% and 1% respectively. The distribution of additional monies will have played an important role here. The previous trend for the most deprived group is not evident in the current data due to the impact that the exceptional rate inflation has had on overall expenditure patterns.

18 <https://www.gov.scot/policies/schools/pupil-attainment/>



Figure 8: Cost per primary pupil by family group – deprivation

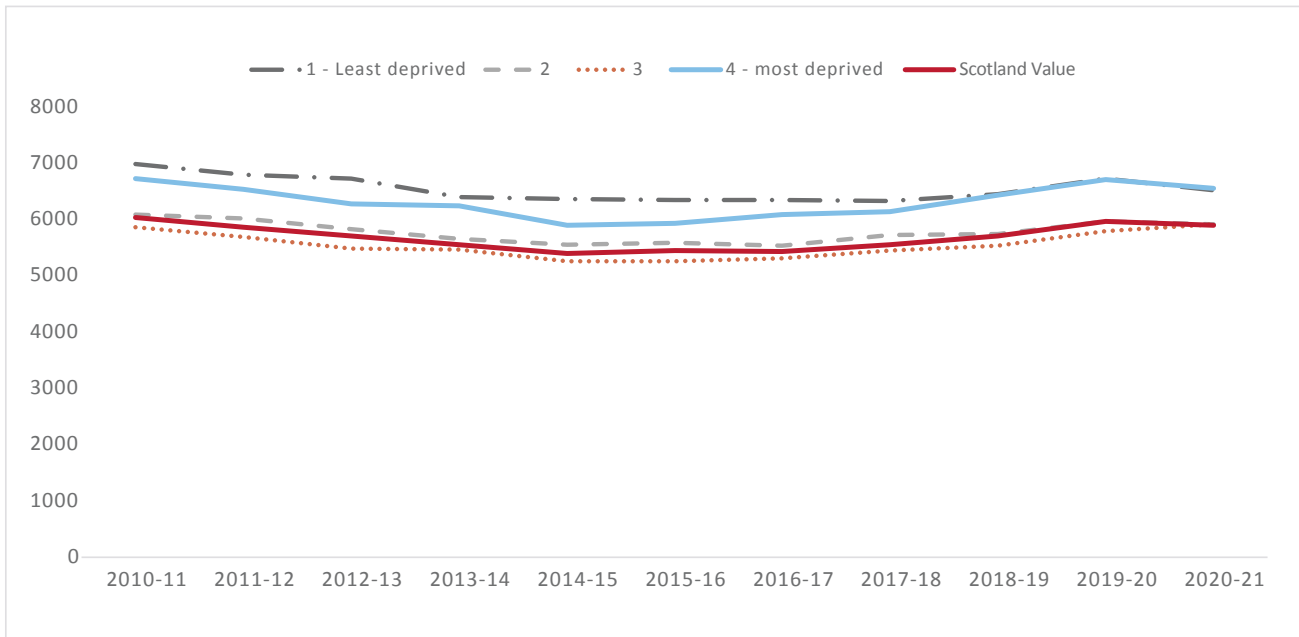
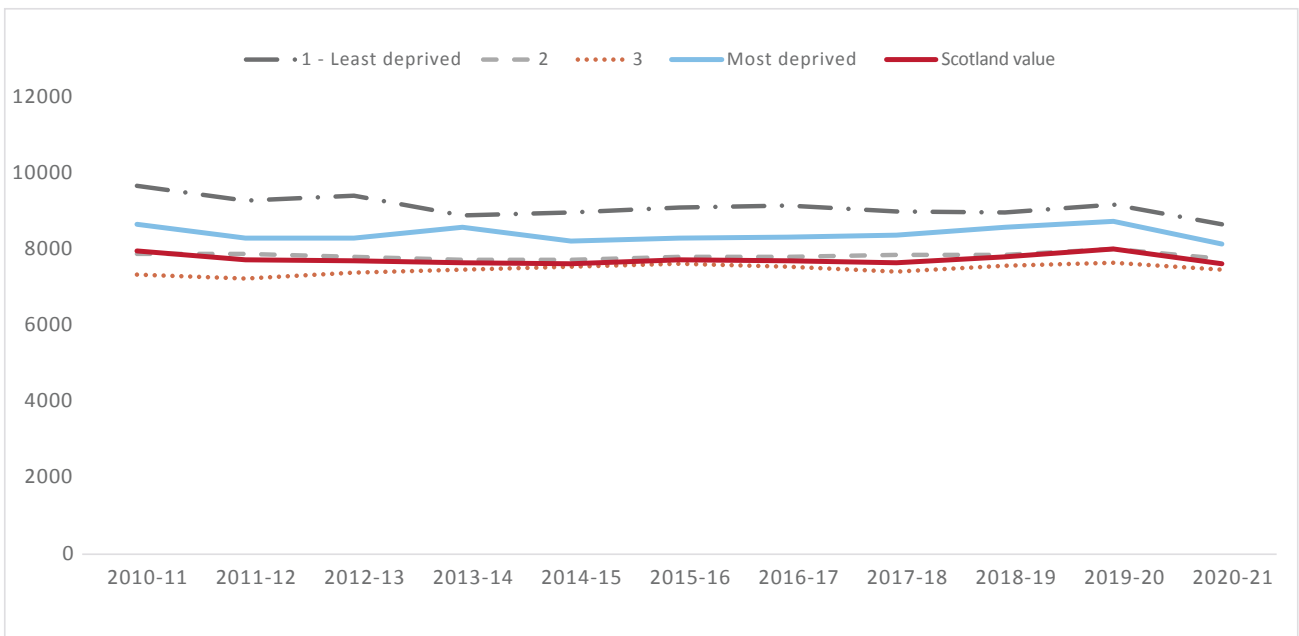


Figure 9: Cost per secondary pupil by family group - deprivation





## Cost per primary pupil

The pattern of spend on primary and secondary schooling is standardised as “total cost per pupil”. The real terms reduction in expenditure in the most recent year has seen real cost per primary pupil decrease between 2019/20 and 2020/21, counter to the increasing trend in recent years.

In 2020/21, the average cost per primary pupil fell by £75 in real terms from £5,972 to £5,897, a decrease of 1.3% from the previous year. This reflects a 2.3% decrease in real gross expenditure and a 1.1% reduction in pupil numbers.

Since 2010/11, there has been a real terms reduction of £140 per primary pupil, representing a 2.3% reduction. While real gross expenditure has increased by 5.5% across the period, there has been an 8.0% increase in pupil numbers during this time.

**Table 8: Cost per primary pupil**

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% Change 2019-20 to 2020-21	% Change 2010-11 to 2020-21
£6,036	£5,869	£5,708	£5,559	£5,411	£5,455	£5,444	£5,556	£5,720	£5,972	£5,897	-1.3%	-2.3%

## Cost per secondary pupil

The real terms reduction in expenditure in the most recent year has seen cost per secondary pupil decrease, counter to the increasing trend in recent years.

In 2020/21, the average cost per secondary school pupil fell by £411 from £8,040 to £7,629, a fall of 5.1% from the previous year. This reflects a 2.0% decrease in expenditure, and a 3.2% growth in pupil numbers.

Since 2010/11, there was a real terms cost decrease of £342 per secondary pupil, representing a 4.3% reduction in unit costs. There has been a 0.2% growth in pupil numbers across this period and a 4.1% reduction in gross expenditure.

**Table 9: Cost per secondary pupil**

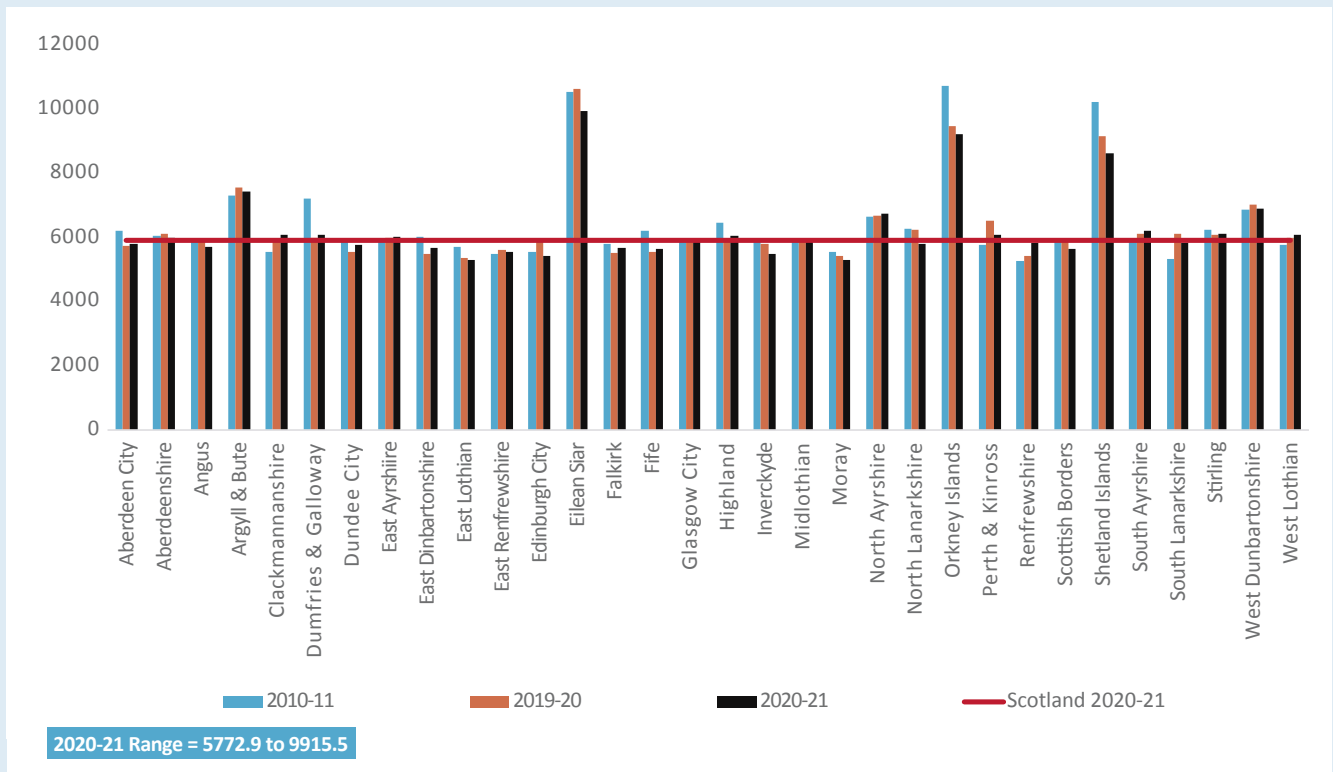
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% Change 2019-20 to 2020-21	% Change 2010-11 to 2020-21
£7,971	£7,737	£7,718	£7,673	£7,650	£7,753	£7,719	£7,671	£7,833	£8,040	£7,629	-5.1%	-4.3%

There is still considerable although narrowing variation across councils, particularly for secondary education. Cost data continues to show a very distinctive pattern across Scotland, with the island councils spending significantly more than others. In primary education, costs range from £5,273 to £9,915 (£5,273 to £7,423 excluding islands) while in secondary the range is £6,789 to £11,953 (£6,789 to £10,441 excluding islands).

While average costs reduced in the most recent year for both primary and secondary pupils, this trend is not universal. While almost all councils reported a reduction in secondary costs, only half of councils reported a reduction in primary. The long-term trends reveal even greater variability among councils.



Fig 10: Cost per primary school pupil (£)



Source: Pupil Census, Scottish Government; council supplied expenditure figures



**Local Variation – Cost per primary school pupil**

2020/21 Value

Scotland: £5,897; council range: £5,273 - £9,915 (£5,273 - £7,423 excluding islands). There is a distinctive pattern across Scotland, with the island councils spending significantly more than others

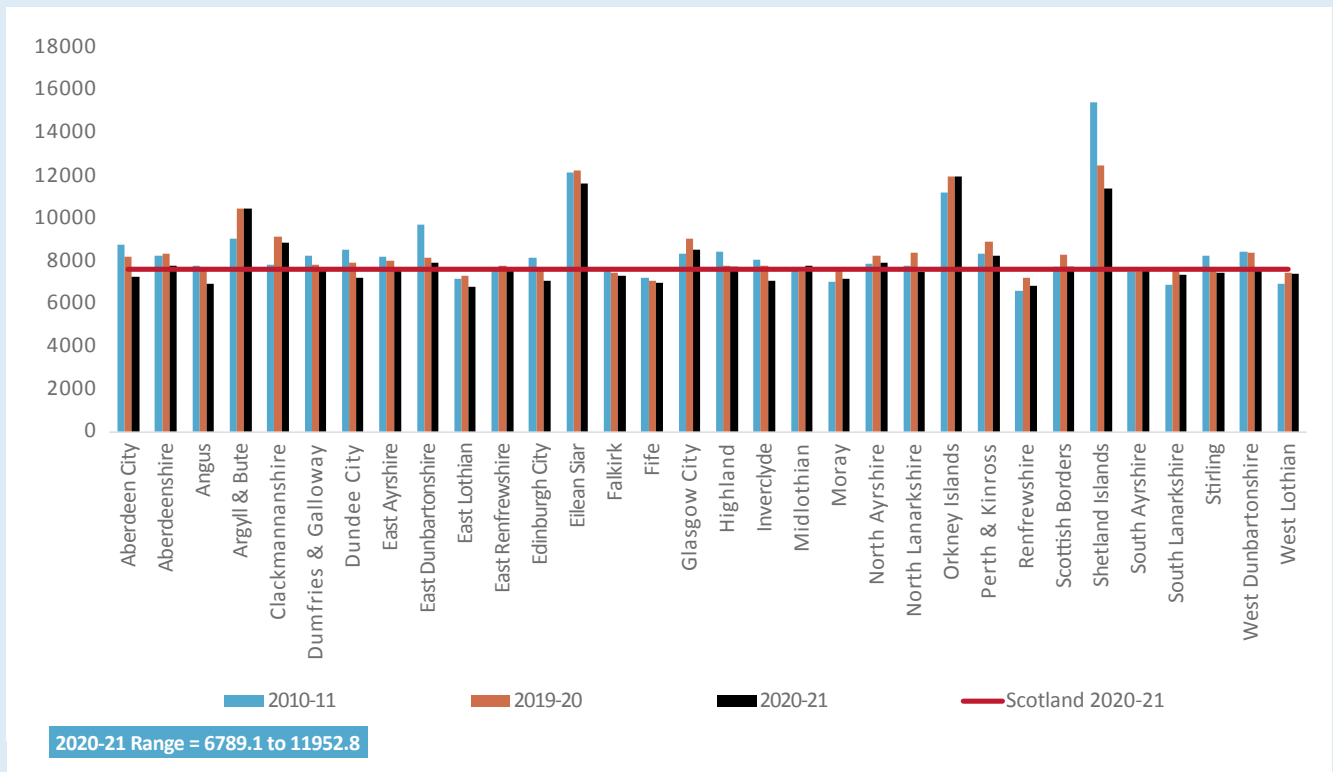
Change over Time

In 2020/21: Scotland: -1.3%; councils: 16 increased and 16 decreased (range: -8.4% to +7.5%)

Since 2010/11: Scotland: -2.3%; councils: 13 increased and 19 decreased (range: -15.5% to +10.3%).



Fig 11: Cost per secondary school pupil (£)



Source: Pupil Census, Scottish Government; council supplied expenditure figures



**Local Variation – Cost per secondary school pupil**

2020/21 Value

Scotland: £7,629; council range £6,789 - £11,952 (£6,789 - £10,441 excluding islands). There is a distinctive pattern across Scotland, with the island councils spending significantly more than others

Change over Time

In 2020/21: Scotland: -5.1%; councils: 2 increased and 30 decreased (range: -11.4% to +3.4%)

Since 2010/11: Scotland: -4.3%; councils: 11 increased and 21 decreased (range: -26.2% to +15.4%)



Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the local variation between authorities

- *Teacher demographics*
- *Local choices and priorities in relation to non-ringfenced elements of staffing budget such as support staff, teaching assistants, support for children with additional support needs, development teams*
- *PPP/PFI contract costs and arrangements*
- *Service design and growth of campus/hub school models*
- *Management structure and balance of senior roles*
- *Access to additional monies such as The Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity funding*
- *Demographic variability – depending on existing class sizes and teacher numbers locally, changes in pupil numbers will have a varying impact on expenditure patterns for councils.*

## Primary and secondary school performance

### Primary school performance

The National Improvement Framework<sup>19</sup> has introduced a consistent method for assessing children's development throughout the Broad General Education, P1-S3, in line with the Curriculum for Excellence which replaced the previous 5-14 Curriculum. In particular, the ability to focus on the impact of deprivation on attainment addresses an important gap in understanding the educational journey of children across all stages of the curriculum.

Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) data captures the proportion of children in stages P1, P4, P7 and S3 of school who have achieved the "expected" level of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) (i.e. those who have achieved the level expected for most children by the end of that stage of schooling). Since the introduction of CfE each local authority has worked with its schools to develop a framework for monitoring the progression of individual children through the curriculum. Each school reports annually on the proportion of children in stages P1, P4, P7 and S3 of school who have achieved the "expected" level of CfE.

In 2018/19, the LGBF introduced the following measures to help support local improvements in learning for pupils within the Broad General Education (stages P1 through to S3 of schooling):

- Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE level in literacy
- Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE level in numeracy
- Literacy attainment gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils (P1,4,7 combined)
- Numeracy attainment gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils (P1,4,7 combined)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of schools, the Scottish Government suspended the collection of the literacy and numeracy attainment data in 2020 to avoid adding further pressures on schools during this challenging period and citing potential comparability issues with previous years. Data for 2018/19 and 2020/21 is included below.

2020/21 data reveals a decline in literacy and numeracy achievement in the most recent year, and a widening of the attainment gap. COVID-19 and the resulting lockdowns have had a significant impact on learning for

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/2021-national-improvement-framework-improvement-plan/>



children and this is reflected in the current data. The closure of schools in March 2020 and January 2021 is likely to have had a negative effect on some pupils' progress and attainment with socio-economically deprived children amongst those who may have been most negatively affected.<sup>20</sup>

It is important to note that the COVID-19 pandemic has also had an impact on the data submitted this year, in relation to the opportunities to gather evidence on which to make judgements, and on the nature and quantity of the moderation exercises conducted. While there is overall confidence in the data quality provided, there remains commitment to prioritise further improvements in future data collections to strengthen consistency.

**Table 10: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils achieving expected CfE levels in literacy**

	2018 -19	2020 -21	Value Change
All Children %	72.3	66.9	-5.4
Most disadvantaged (bottom 20% SIMD) %	63.1	56.0	-7.1
Least disadvantaged (top 20% SIMD) %	83.7	80.7	-3.0
Gap (percentage points)	20.7	24.7	4.0

**Table 11: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils achieving expected CfE levels in numeracy**

	2018 -19	2020 -21	Value Change
All Children %	79.1	74.7	-4.4
Most disadvantaged (bottom 20% SIMD) %	71.7	65.0	-6.6
Least disadvantaged (top 20% SIMD) %	88.5	86.5	-2.0
Gap (percentage points)	16.8	21.4	4.6

Source: Scottish Government, *Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Levels*

The percentage of children achieving expected CFE levels in literacy and numeracy decreased between 2018/19 and 2020/21. The percentage of children achieving expected numeracy levels decreased from 79.1% in 2018/19 to 74.7% in 2020/21, while the percentage of children achieving expected literacy levels decreased from 72.3% to 66.9%. This decreasing pattern was true for almost all councils, although the scale of decrease differed.

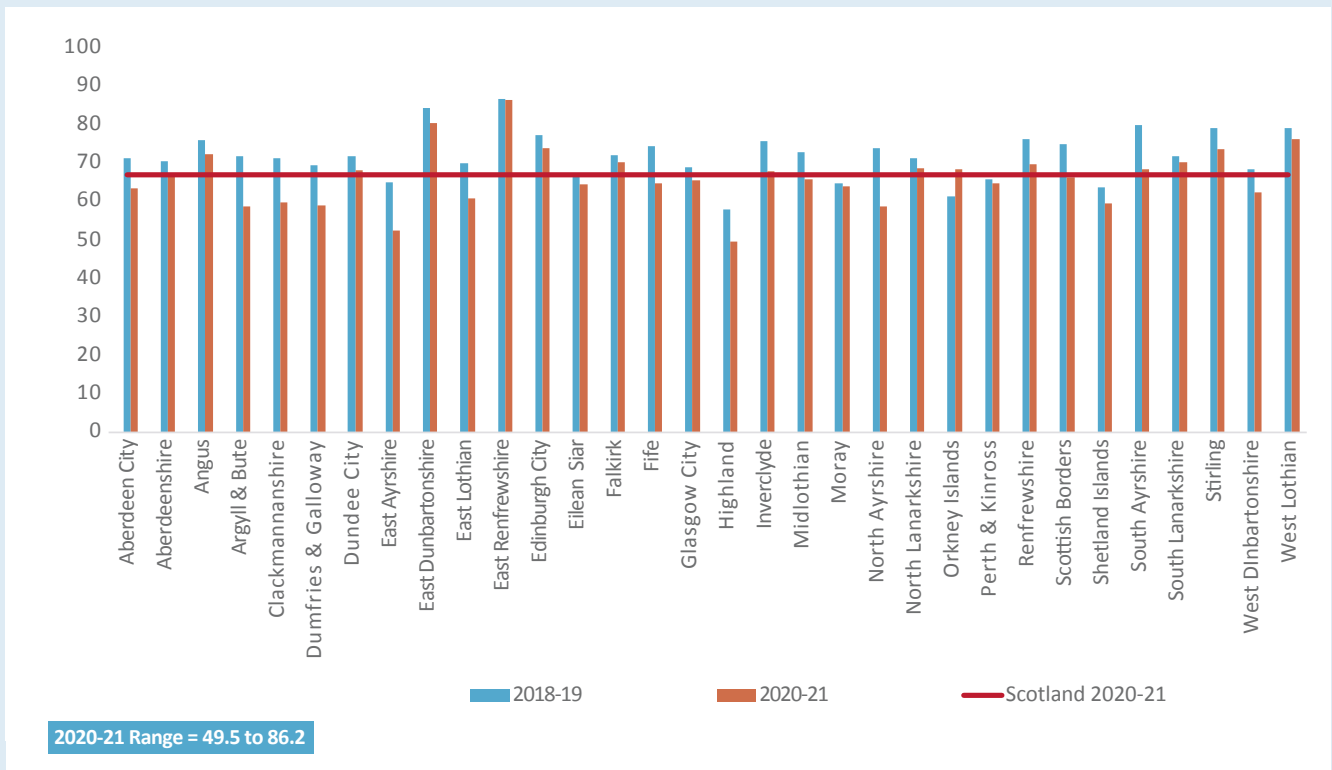
Numeracy and literacy levels decreased for pupils in both the most and the least deprived areas, with pupils in the most deprived areas experiencing a bigger drop in attainment. This had the effect of widening the attainment gap between the most and least deprived pupils during this time. In numeracy, the attainment gap grew from 16.8 percentage points to 21.4 percentage points, while in literacy it grew from 20.7 percentage points to 24.7 percentage points. While this widening gap is true for most authorities, a fifth of councils saw their attainment gap narrow during this period.

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/equity-audit-deepening-understanding-impact-covid-19-school-building-closures-children-socio-economically-disadvantaged-backgrounds-setting-clear-areas-focus-accelerating-recovery/pages/2/>





Fig 12: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE level in literacy



Source: Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), Scottish Government



### Local Variation – ACEL in literacy

#### 2020/21 Value

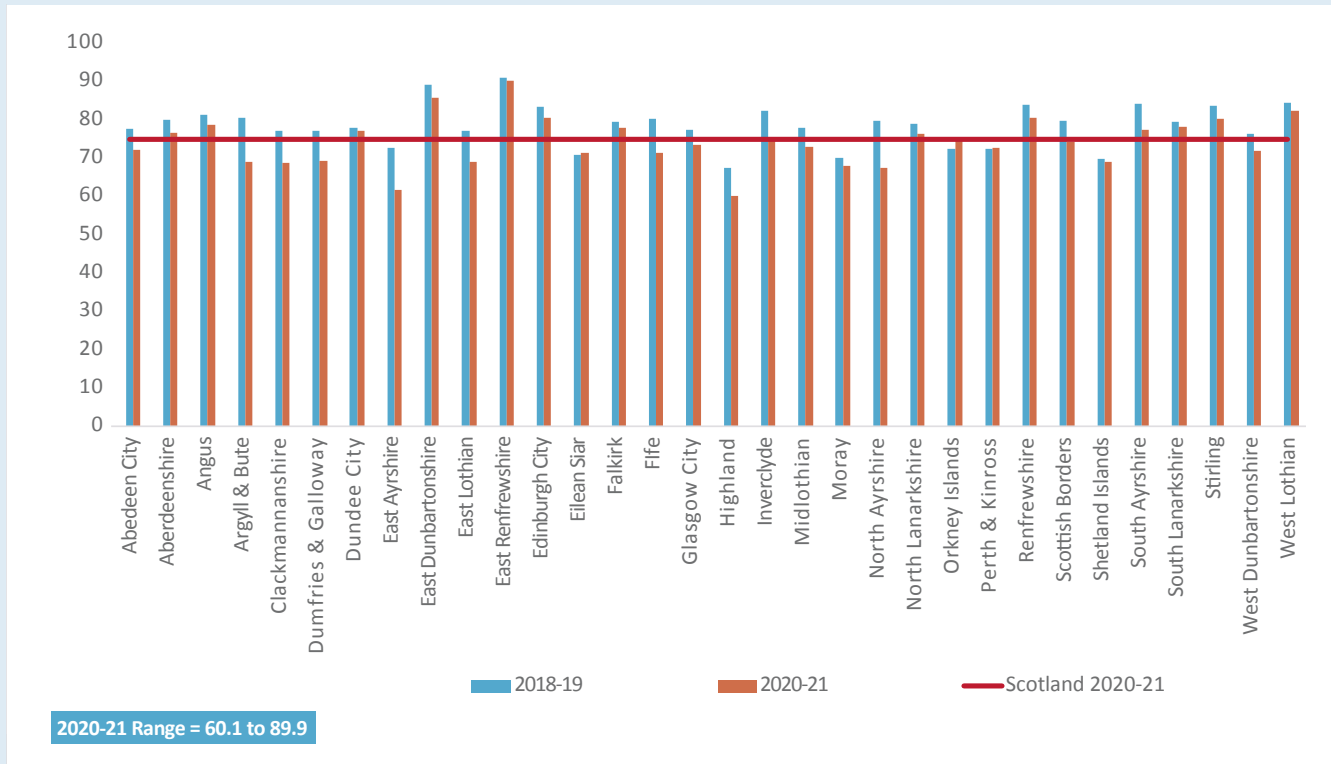
Scotland: 66.9%; council range: 49% - 86%, with variation widening in the recent year. Councils with lower levels of deprivation tend to achieve higher literacy levels (70% compared to 63% for the most deprived, not statistically significant)

#### Change over Time

In 2020/21: Scotland: -5.4pp; councils: 31 decreased and 1 increased. (range: -15.2pp to +7.1pp)



Fig 13: Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE level in numeracy



Source: Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), Scottish Government



**Local Variation – ACEL in numeracy**

2020/21 Value

Scotland: 74.7%; council range: 60% - 90%, with variation widening in the recent year. Councils with lower levels of deprivation tend to achieve higher numeracy levels (78% compared to 72% for the most deprived, not statistically significant).

Change over Time

In 2020/21: Scotland: -4.4pp; councils: 29 decreased and 3 increased. (range: -12.1pp to +2.9pp)



Fig 14: Literacy attainment gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils (P1,4,7 combined)

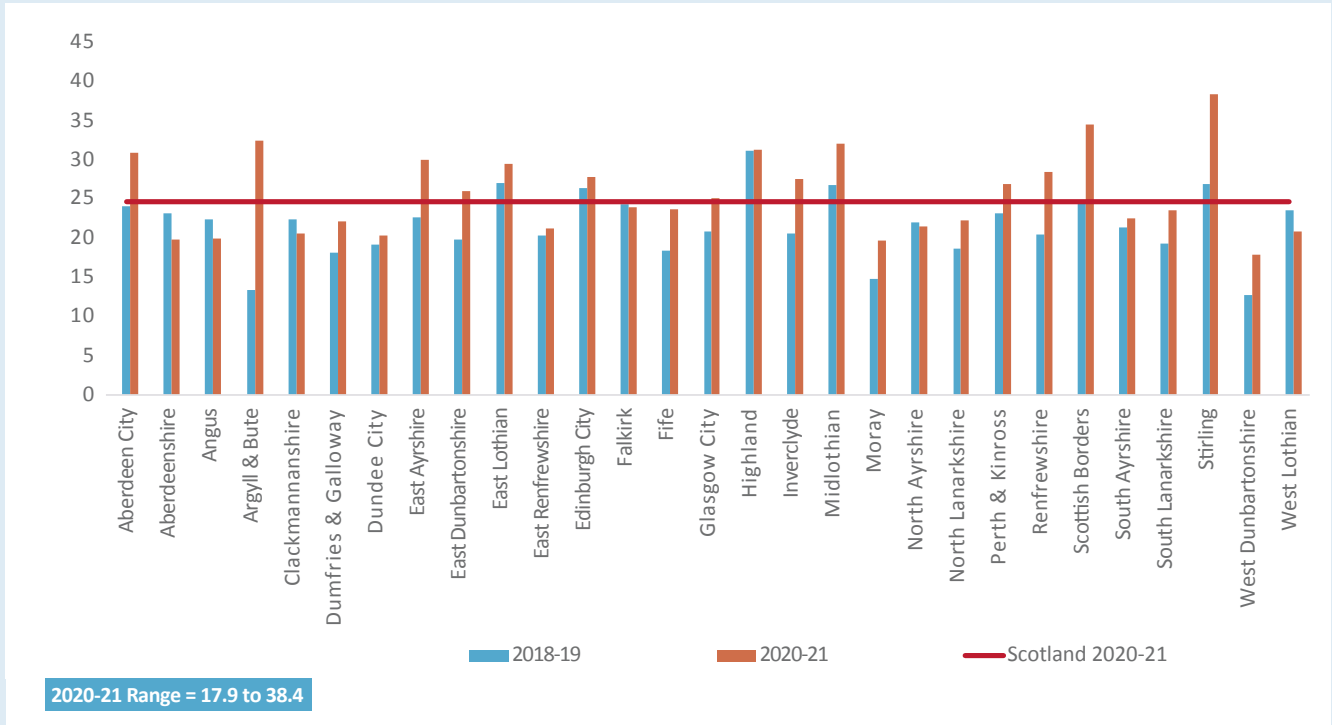
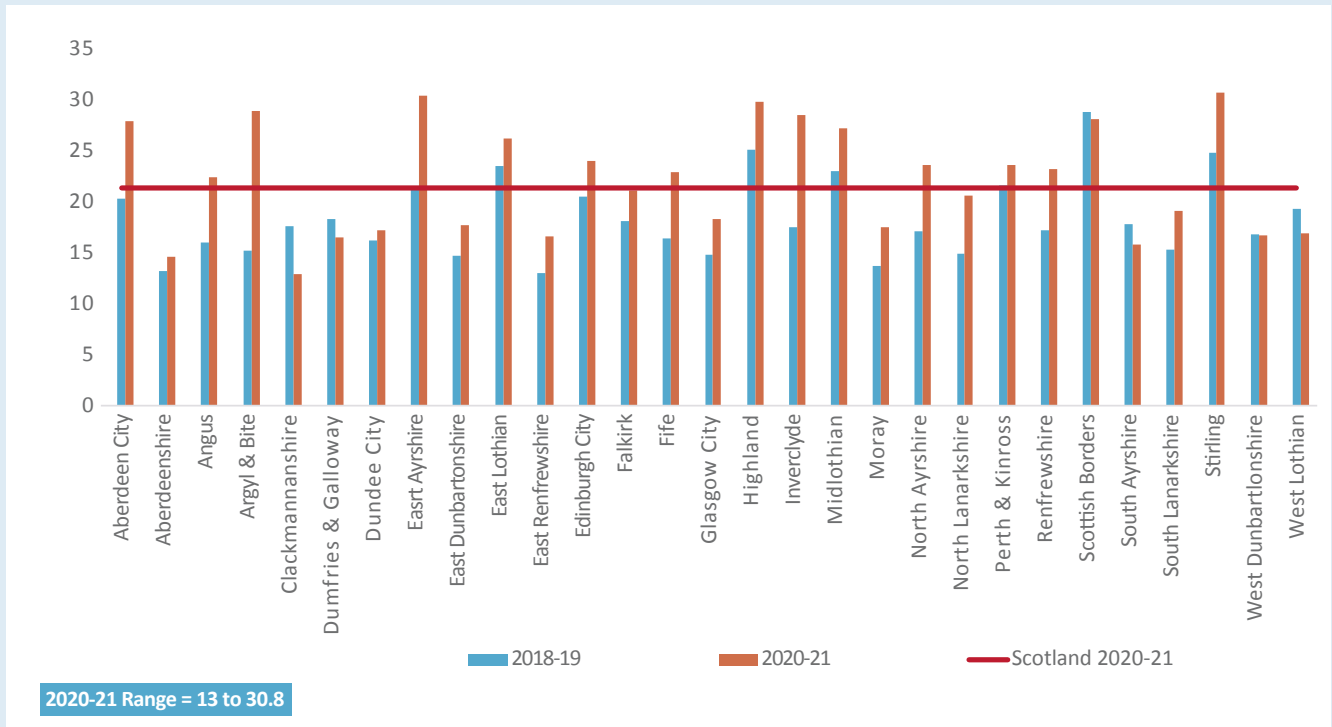


Fig 15: Numeracy attainment gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils (P1,4,7 Combined)



Source: Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), Scottish Government

Note: Eilean Siar, Orkney and Shetland are excluded as they have no pupils in the most deprived areas



### Local Variation – ACEL literacy and numeracy attainment gap

#### 2020/21 Value

Literacy: Scotland: 24.7pp; council range: 18pp - 38pp

Numeracy: Scotland: 21.4pp; council range; 13pp - 31pp.

Variation between councils has widened in the recent year, and there is no systematic relationship with deprivation, rurality or council size.

#### Change over Time

Literacy: Scotland: +4.0pp; councils: 23 increased and 6 decreased. (range: -3pp to +19pp)

Numeracy: Scotland: +4.6pp; councils: 23 increased and 6 decreased. (range: -5pp to +14pp).

## School attendance rates

Good school attendance is key to ensuring that every child gets off to the best start in life and has access to support and learning that responds to individual needs and potential. The role of school attendance in the protection of children is key. Local authorities record information on pupils' attendance and absence from school and the reasons for this. This information is used to monitor pupil engagement and to ensure pupils' safety and wellbeing by following up on pupils who do not attend school.

Attendance is standardised within this framework as "school attendance rates", the number of half- days attended for a local authority as a percentage of the total number of possible attendances.<sup>21</sup>

COVID-19 has had an impact on pupil attendance statistics. The attendance rate that these statistics focus on is the 'schools open' rate – i.e. it only looks at the attendance rate during the period that schools were open to all pupils. Home-learning when the school was open but an individual pupil could not attend due to their personal circumstances (including COVID-19 related reasons) is included in this measure. The rates reported in this measure is methodologically consistent to attendance rates from previous years as it is not affected by the known underreporting of absence from home-learning. Therefore this measure is comparable to previous years (bearing in mind the impact of COVID-19).

During 2020/21, attendance rates fell by 1pp from 93% to 92%. Prior to this, attendance rates had remained at or above 93% since 2010/11, although had been showing slight decline in recent years. In 2020/21, the level of variation in attendance rates between councils increased, with council values ranging from 90% to 96%. The variation between councils is systematically related to deprivation, with attendance rates higher in those councils with lower levels of deprivation (94% compared to 91%). During 2020/21, attendance rates reduced for the majority of councils, however four authorities reported an increase counter to the national trend. Those councils serving the most deprived communities experienced the largest reduction in attendance in this year.

Data is published only every two years

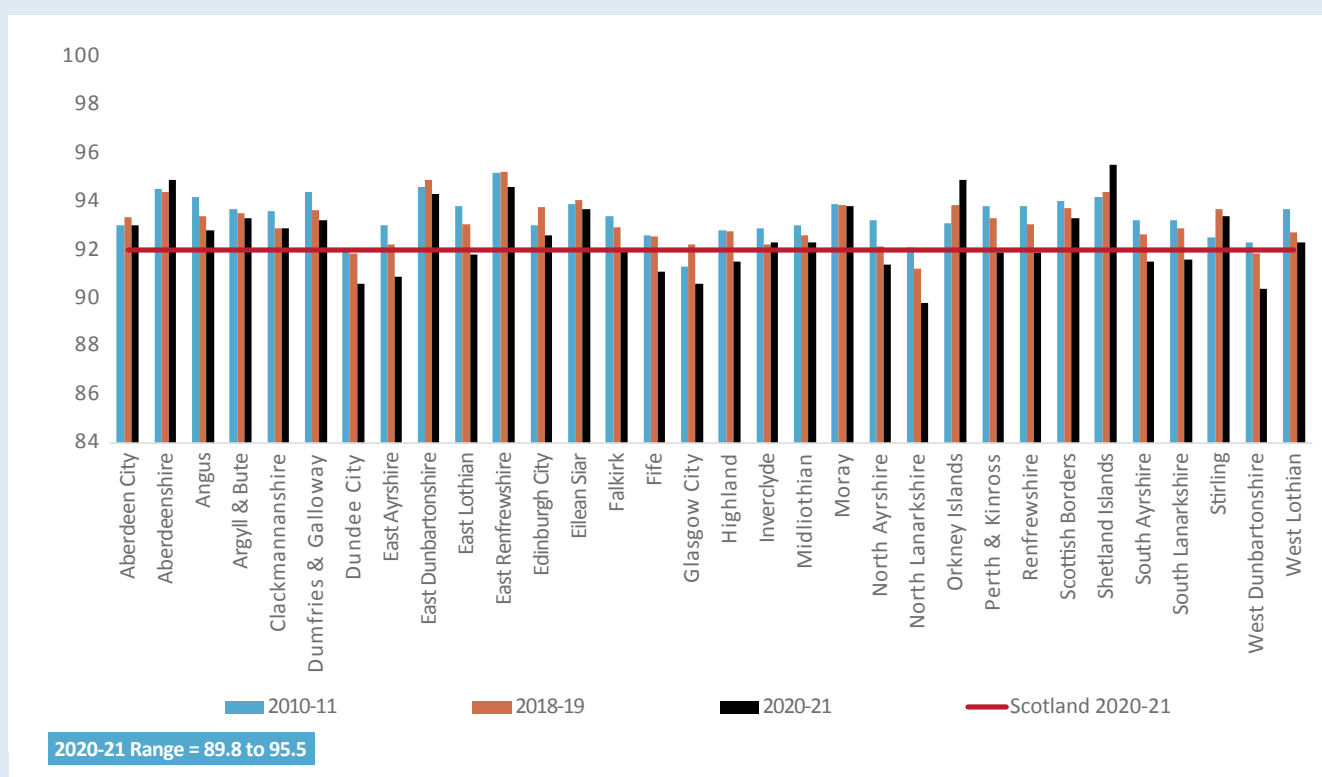
<sup>21</sup> The national average is the average number of half-days attended for local authority and mainstream grant-aided schools in Scotland.



Table 12: School attendance rates for all pupils and for children who are looked after

	2010-11	2012-13	2014-15	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Value Change 2018-19 to 2020-21	Value Change 2010-11 to 2020-21
School Attendance Rates	93.1	93.6	93.7	93.3	93.0	92.0	-1.0	-1.1
School Attendance Rates (LAC)	86.3	88.7	89.0	88.2	86.8	dna	-1.4	0.5

Fig 16: School attendance rates (%)



Source: Scottish Government attendance and absence figures



**Local Variation – School attendance rates**

2020/21 Value

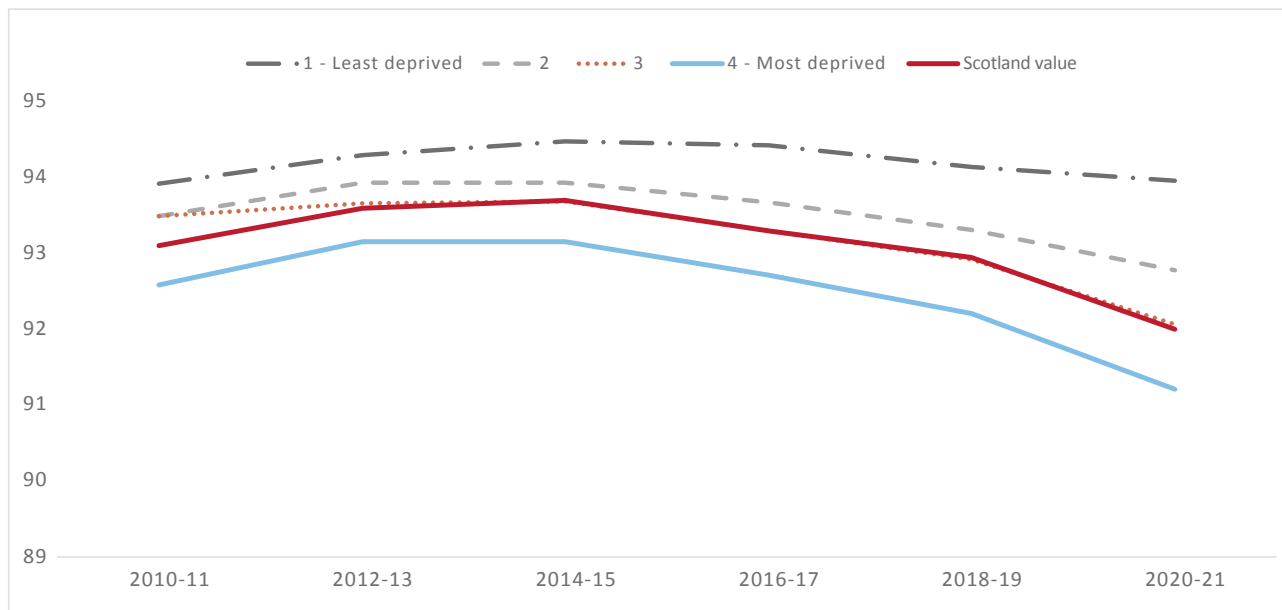
Scotland: 92%; council range: 90% - 96%, with variation widening in the most recent year. Attendance rates are significantly higher in councils with lower levels of deprivation (94% compared to 91% for the most deprived).

Change over Time

In 2020/21: Scotland: -1.0pp; councils: 28 decreased and 4 increased. (range: -1.6pp to +1.1pp). Councils serving the most deprived communities reported larger reductions (-1.1pp compared to -0.2pp)



Fig 17: School attendance rates (%) by family group - deprivation



2020/21 data for attendance rates of looked after children is not yet available and will be included when it is published later in 2022.

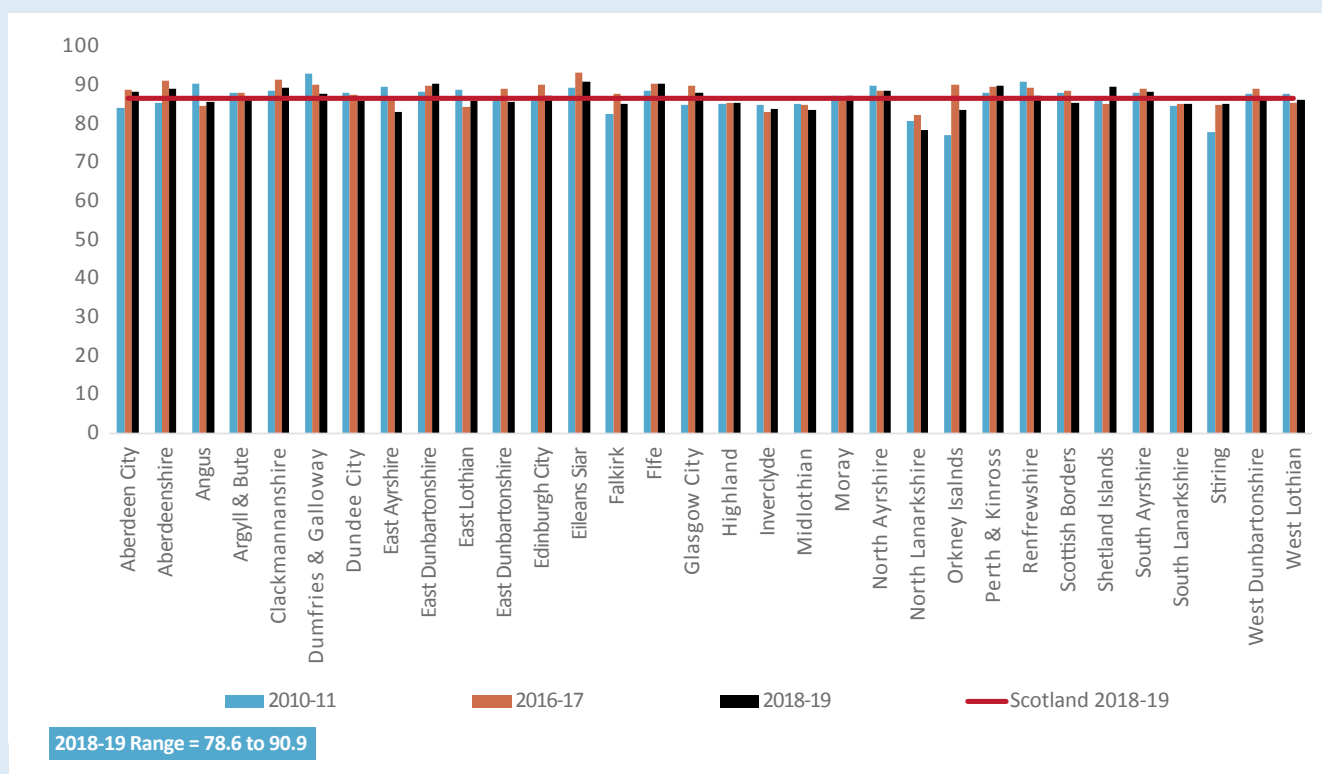
Historic data trends show that school attendance of looked after children is lower than attendance for all pupils and has remained between 86% and 88% between 2010/11 and 2018/19. Attendance is lowest for those looked after at home and with a greater number of placements. Looked after children have a lower attendance rate than all pupils in all school sectors but the differences are significant in secondary school (81.1% compared to 90.7% for all pupils in secondary school in 2018/19).

There is greater variation across councils in attendance rates for looked after children than for other pupils, ranging from 79% to 91% in 2018/19. Within this variation, there are no systematic effects of deprivation, rurality or size of council. The small number of looked after children in some authorities may introduce volatility in the data for this measure which may explain some of the variation.

As with overall attendance rates, data is published only every two years.



Fig 18: School attendance rates (looked after children) (%)



Source: Scottish Government attendance and absence figures

### School exclusion rates

Councils strive to keep all learners fully included, engaged and involved in their education, wherever this takes place, and to improve outcomes for those learners at risk of exclusion. While the power exists to exclude children and young people from school, there have been significant, concerted efforts by schools and local authorities to implement a range of approaches and solutions to positively engage young people in their education and improve relationships and behaviour. This is based upon a shared approach of agencies working together and responding to the needs of learners early and effectively, in line with the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). Exclusion is considered only when to allow the child or young person to continue attendance at school would be seriously detrimental to order and discipline in the school or the educational wellbeing of the learners there.

Exclusion is standardised within the framework as “school exclusion rates”, the number of cases of temporary exclusions and number of pupils removed from the register (previously known as ‘permanent’ exclusions) per 1000 pupils. 2020/21 data for exclusion rates is not yet available and will be included when it is published later in 2022.

Historic data trends show that between 2010/11 and 2018/19, exclusion rates have reduced year on year, falling from 40.0 to 21.6 across the period.



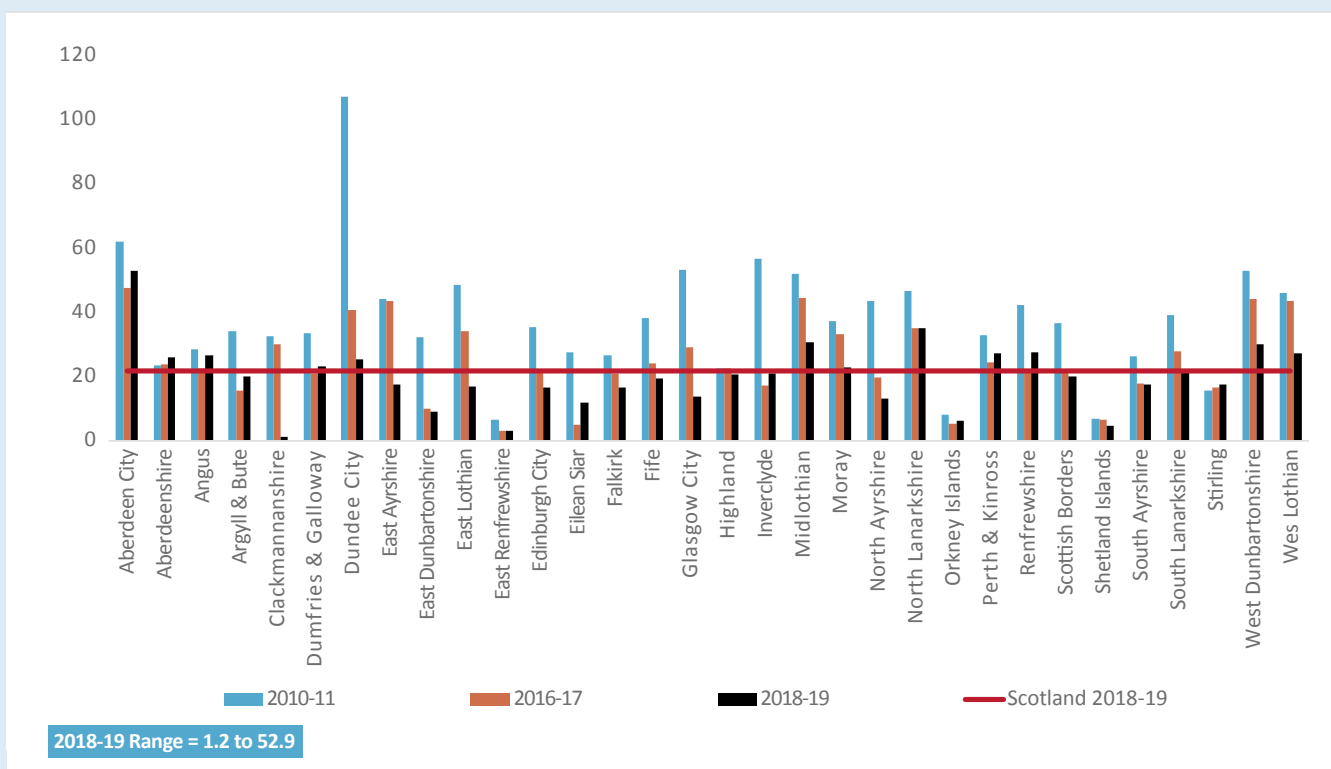
Table 13: School exclusion rates (per 1,000 pupils) for all pupils and for children who are looked after

	2010-11	2012-13	2014-15	2016-17	2018-19	% Change 2016-17 to 2018-19	% Change 2010-11 to 2018-19
School Exclusion Rates	40.0	32.8	27.2	26.8	21.6	-19.4%	-45.9%
School Exclusion Rates (LAC)	340.8	280.3	246.8	210.1	152.2	-27.6%	-55.3%

There was significant but narrowing variation across councils in 2018/19, with rates per 1000 pupils ranging from 1.2 to 52.9. Average exclusion rates tend to be higher in the most deprived councils compared to the least deprived councils (21.0 compared to 18.2). However, there is no statistically significant relationship with deprivation due to variation within the family group. Analysis demonstrates a significant narrowing of the gap between most and least deprived councils. Since 2010/11, the exclusion rate has decreased by 61% for the most deprived councils on average, compared to a 30% decrease for the least deprived councils.

As with attendance rates, figures for exclusion are published every two years.

Fig 19: School exclusion rates (per 1,000 pupils)

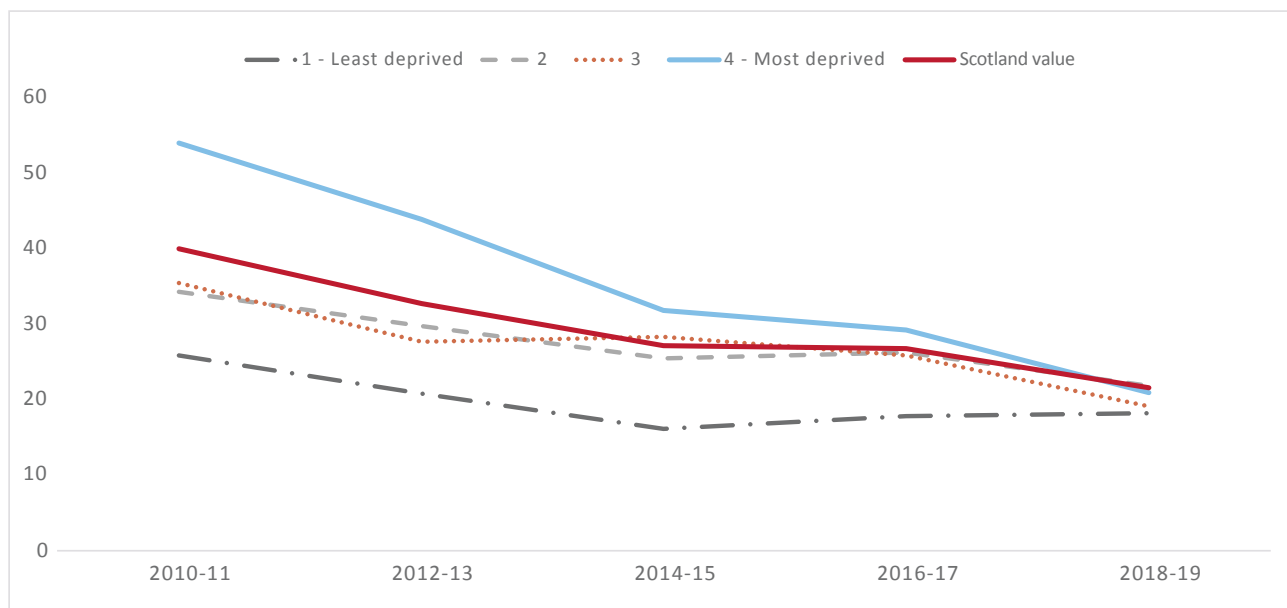


Source: Summary Statistics For Schools In Scotland, Scottish Government





Fig 20: School exclusion rates (per 1,000 pupils) by family group - deprivation



2020/21 data for exclusion rates for children who are looked after is not yet available and will be included when it is published later in 2022.

Historic data shows that exclusion rates for children who are looked after are significantly higher than for all pupils, although they are reducing at a faster rate, so the gap is narrowing steadily. The exclusion rate for children looked after has more than halved since 2010/11. Between 2010/11 and 2018/19, exclusion rates for children who are looked after reduced from 340.8 to 152.2. This represents an improvement rate of 55%, compared to an improvement rate of 46% for all pupils across the same period.

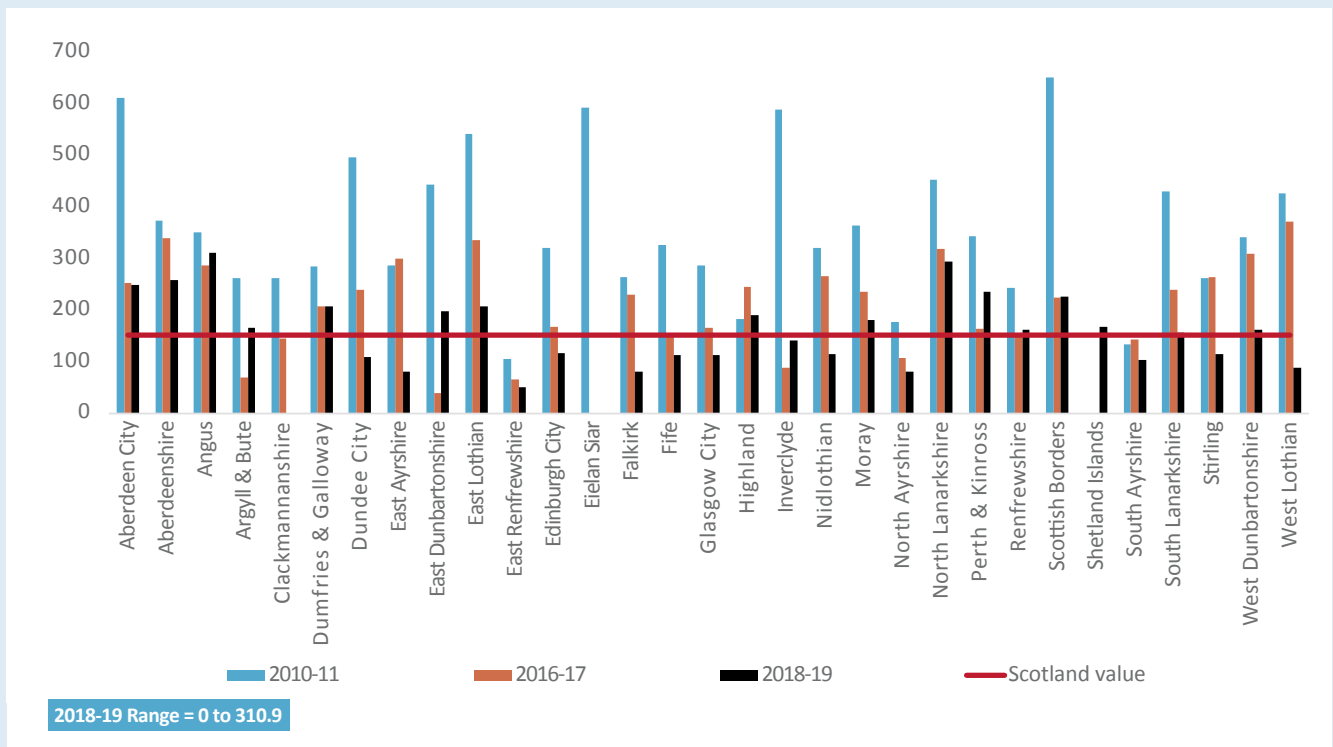
Those children in residential accommodation tend to have higher rates of exclusions than those looked after in the community. Children looked after at home have a noticeably higher exclusion rate than others looked after in the community, i.e. in foster care and with friends or relatives. There is a tendency for looked after children with a greater number of placements to have a higher rate of exclusions and children looked after for part of the year with more than one placement to have a notably high rate of exclusions.

There is greater variation across councils in exclusion rates for looked after children than for all pupils, ranging from 0 to 311 in 2018/19. This variation between councils has narrowed significantly over time. There are no systematic effects in relation to council level of deprivation, rurality or size on exclusion rates. The small number of looked after children in some authorities may introduce volatility in the data for this measure which may explain some of the variation.

As with overall exclusion rates, figures for exclusion are published every two years.



Fig 21: School exclusion rates (per 1,000 looked after pupils)



Source: Summary Statistics For Schools In Scotland, Scottish Government

## Secondary school performance

The introduction of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) has helped to ensure that all young people receive a curriculum that is better focussed on their individual needs. This is reflected in the long-term trends seen for the attainment of school leavers, with a sustained improvement in overall levels of attainment and a significant closing of the attainment gap over recent years.

The LGBF Board is committed to developing a suite of performance measures which accurately reflect the senior phase (S4-S6) landscape and reflect wider educational achievement. The transitional suite presented here marks an important step in this development, however further measures will be introduced as suitable data becomes available over future years, to improve the scope and balance of information available on children's services.

Performance at secondary level is currently measured within the LGBF by:

- Average tariff score (by SIMD quintile)
- Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ SCQF level 5 qualifications or higher (described as '5+ at Level 5' for the purpose of this report)
- Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ SCQF level 6 qualifications or higher (described as '5+ at Level 6' for the purpose of this report)
- Percentage of school leavers entering positive destinations



- Participation rate measuring participation in learning (including school), training or work for all 16-19 year olds in Scotland.

Attainment data for 2019/20 and 2020/21 reflects achievement during the COVID-19 period. The cancellation of exams and external assessment of coursework in 2020, and the use of the Alternative Certification Model in 2021, will have affected the attainment of many 2020/21 school leavers. It is also likely that the pandemic will have continued to affect the destination choices made by, and opportunities available to, some school leavers in 2020/21.

The impacts of these different approaches to certification upon school leaver attainment means that care should be taken when making comparisons over time. The attainment data provides an accurate reflection of the attainment with which school leavers in Scotland left school; for this reason attainment data for 2020/21, 2019/20 and previous years are presented together.

### Average tariff

Average tariff is a summative measure of educational attainment which offers a broad measure of achievement to consider alongside breadth and depth measures. The tariff score is a summary measure calculated from all academic achievement of pupils during the senior phase (S4- S6) across a range of awards included in the benchmarking tool Insight. The tariff reflects the number of awards that a pupil achieves, the SCQF level at which each award is assessed, and the grade of the award achieved (for any of these awards which are graded). The measure here reflects cumulative attainment either to the point of leaving or to the end of S6.

Under Curriculum for Excellence, different curricular structures exist across Scotland and therefore the type of attainment offered will differ, which impacts the average total tariff presented in this report. This includes variations in the number of subjects typically studied by pupils, reflecting differing approaches to developing employability skills and the core qualification sets needed to enable a range of post school destinations.

As the school leaver data is not yet available for 2020/21, the basis for the data included for these measures is different from published data available on the Learning Analysis School Summary Dashboard, which is based on school leavers. To allow 2021 data to be included, the Scottish Government has provided pupil's attainment by S6 based on the S4 cohort. All years included in the report are based on this calculated measure of pupil attainment by S6 based on the S4 cohort.<sup>22</sup>

As noted above, for 2019/20 and 2020/21 data, the absence of external assessment information led to grades awarded being based on teacher estimates. These results are therefore not directly comparable with previous and future years.

In 2020/21, the overall average tariff<sup>23</sup> obtained was 972, with scores ranging from 771 to 1482 across authorities. There remains significant variation in achievement between SIMD quintile groups, with higher average tariff scores for pupils from the least deprived quintiles. The average tariff for pupils from the least deprived SIMD Quintile 5 was 1320, compared to 688 for pupils from the most deprived SIMD Quintile 1.

Since 2011/12, average total tariff has increased by 26.3% from 770 to 972. While this increasing trend is evident for all SIMD groups, pupils from the most deprived groups have shown the largest increase across the period, although tariff scores remain significantly lower than those achieved by pupils from less deprived groups. Since 2011/12, average tariffs have increased by 43.9% and 32.2% for the two most deprived groups compared to 21.9% and 19.9% for the least deprived groups.

<sup>22</sup> The difference in percentages between the leaver cohort and the S6 based on S4 whole school cohort can be significant, especially for Local Authorities that have smaller cohort numbers.

<sup>23</sup> Overall average total tariff is calculated by the Improvement Service



Average tariffs in 2019/20 and 2020/21 have increased at a faster rate than observed in the years prior to COVID-19 when the rate of increase had slowed and had shown a small decline for all groups, except for the most deprived SIMD group. This faster rate of increase in 2019/20 and 2020/21 is observed for all SIMD groups, with no clear pattern of deprivation evident.

**Table 14: Average total tariff by SIMD quintile, 2011-12 to 2020/21**

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% Change 2019-20 to 2020-21	% Change 2011-12 to 2020-21	Range 2020-21
Overall Average Tariff	770	798	827	860	877	888	894	895	930	972	4.6%	26.3%	771-1482
Average Tariff SIMD Q1	478	510	551	581	603	625	620	628	649	688	6.0%	43.9%	435-1069
Average Tariff SIMD Q2	618	644	685	716	741	751	752	743	759	817	7.6%	32.2%	616-1355
Average Tariff SIMD Q3	759	788	816	851	864	882	899	875	906	975	7.6%	28.5%	758-1337
Average Tariff SIMD Q4	909	929	962	984	998	1002	1019	1015	1030	1108	7.6%	21.9%	452-1517
Average Tariff SIMD Q5	1101	1134	1149	1185	1197	1210	1224	1195	1241	1320	6.4%	19.9%	965-1626

*Note: A dashed line break has been placed between 2018/19 and 2019/20 to reflect the impact of the change to the assessment approach in 2020 and 2021 on 2019/20 and 2020/21 school leaver attainment.*

Since 2011/12, there has been significant and widening variation between authorities across all 5 tariff measures. This variation has widened further in 2019/20 and 2020/21, particularly for the least deprived SIMD groups. While almost all councils have seen average tariffs increase both since 2011/12 and in the most recent two years, a small minority have seen rates decrease. The differing curricular models between authorities will be an important factor in understanding some of this variation. Further detail of the variation within councils is presented in the graphs below.



Fig 22: Overall average total tariff

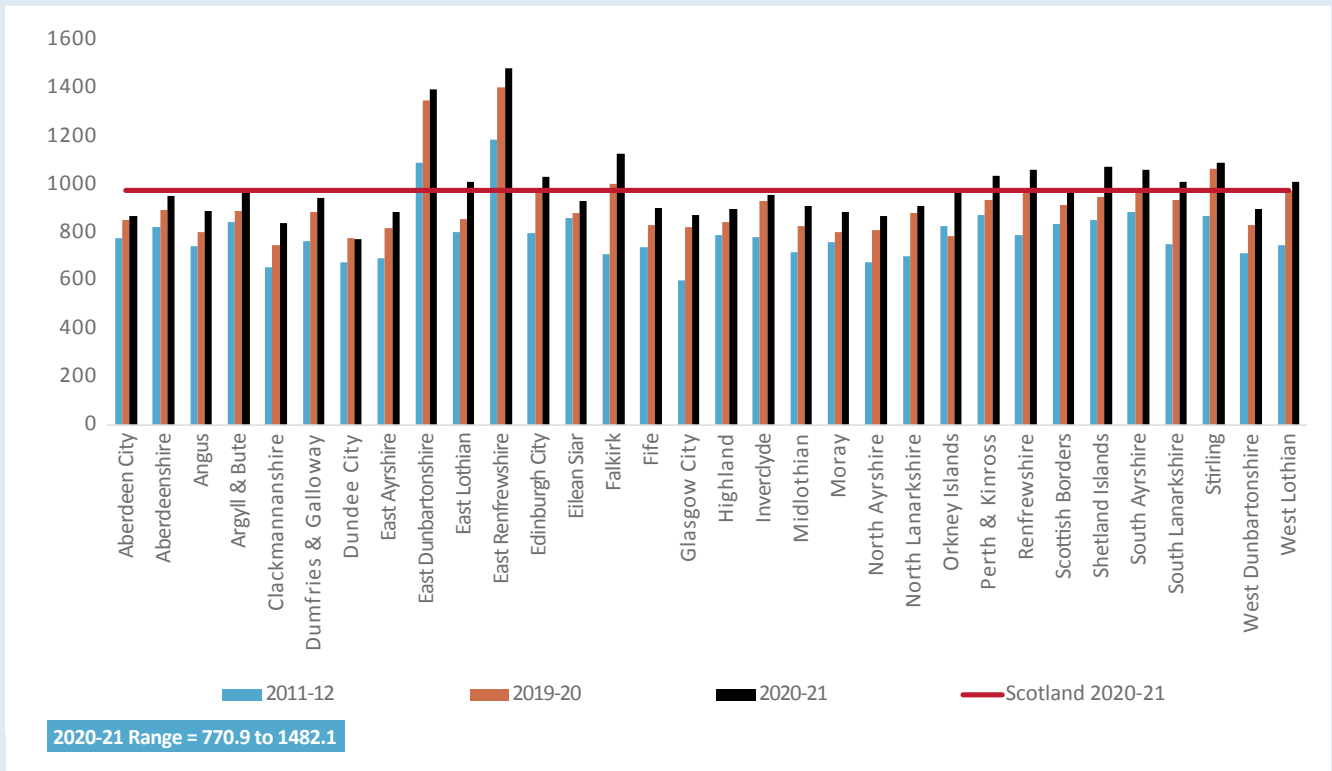


Fig 23: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 1

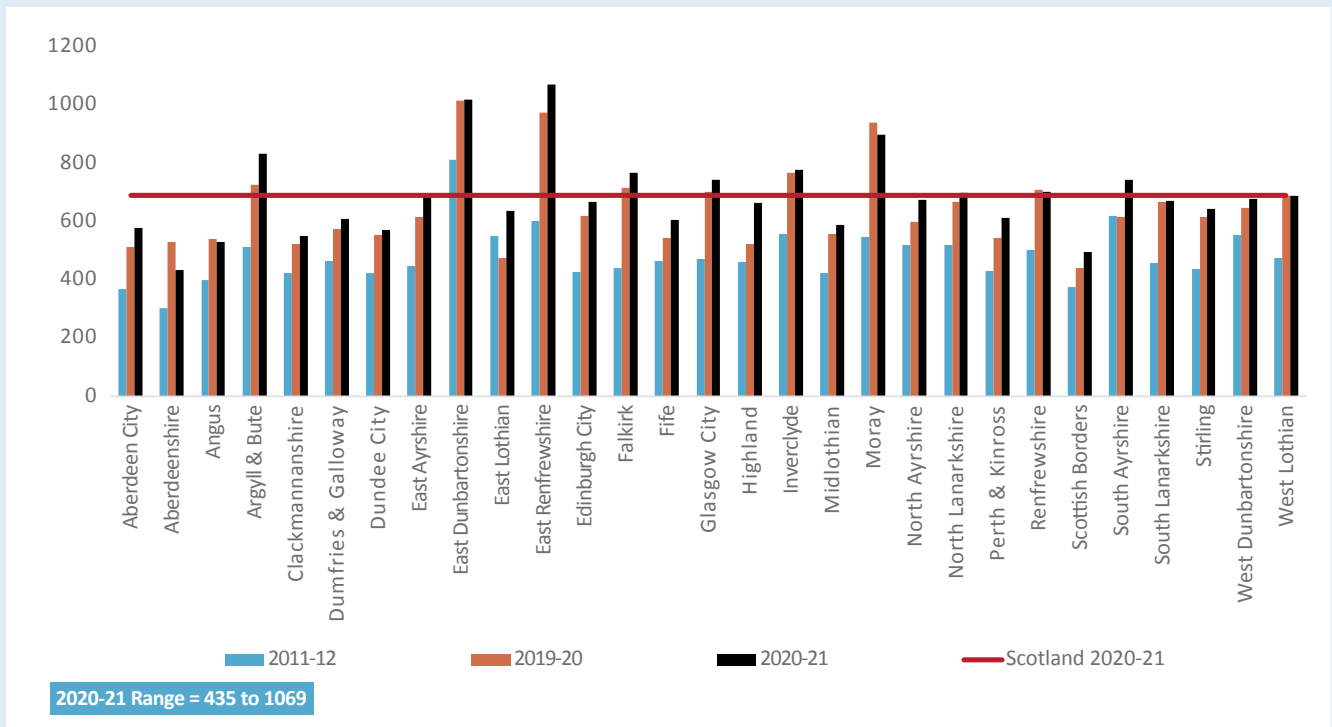




Fig 24: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 2

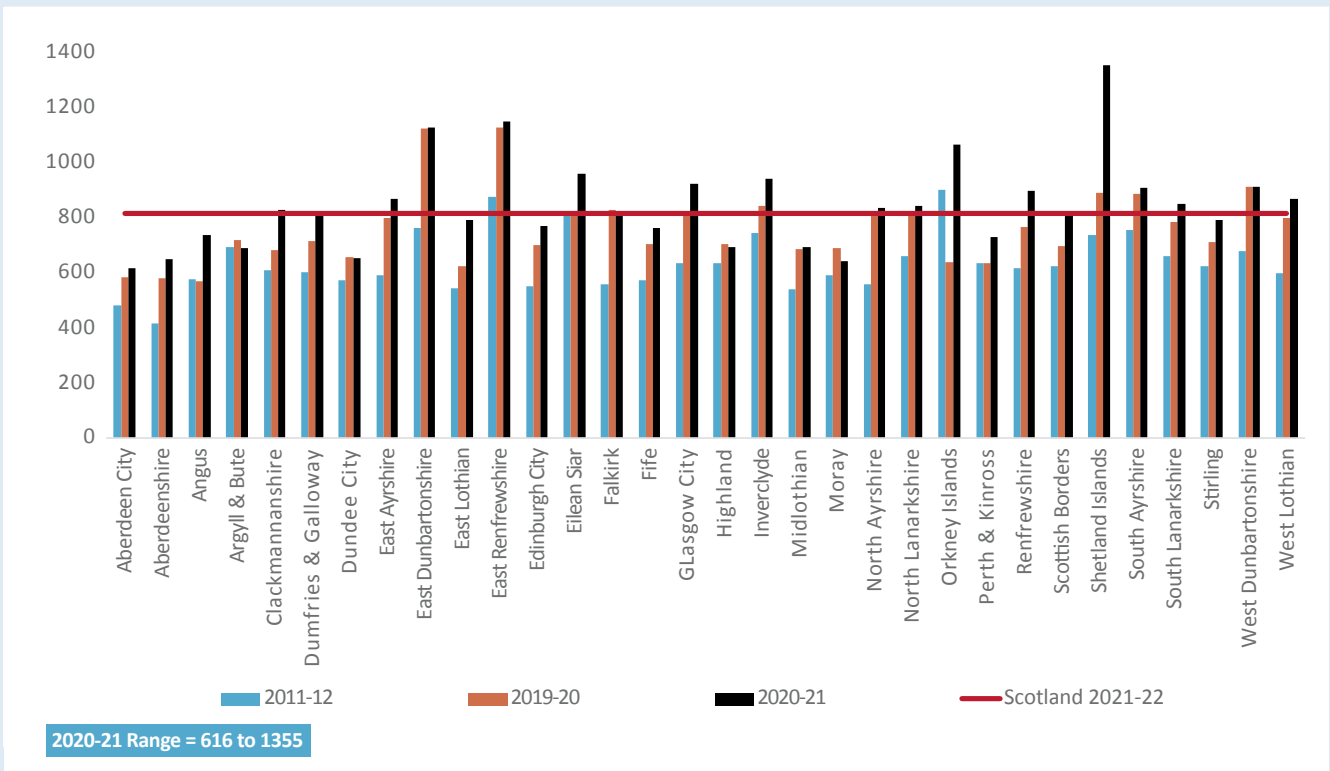


Fig 25: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 3

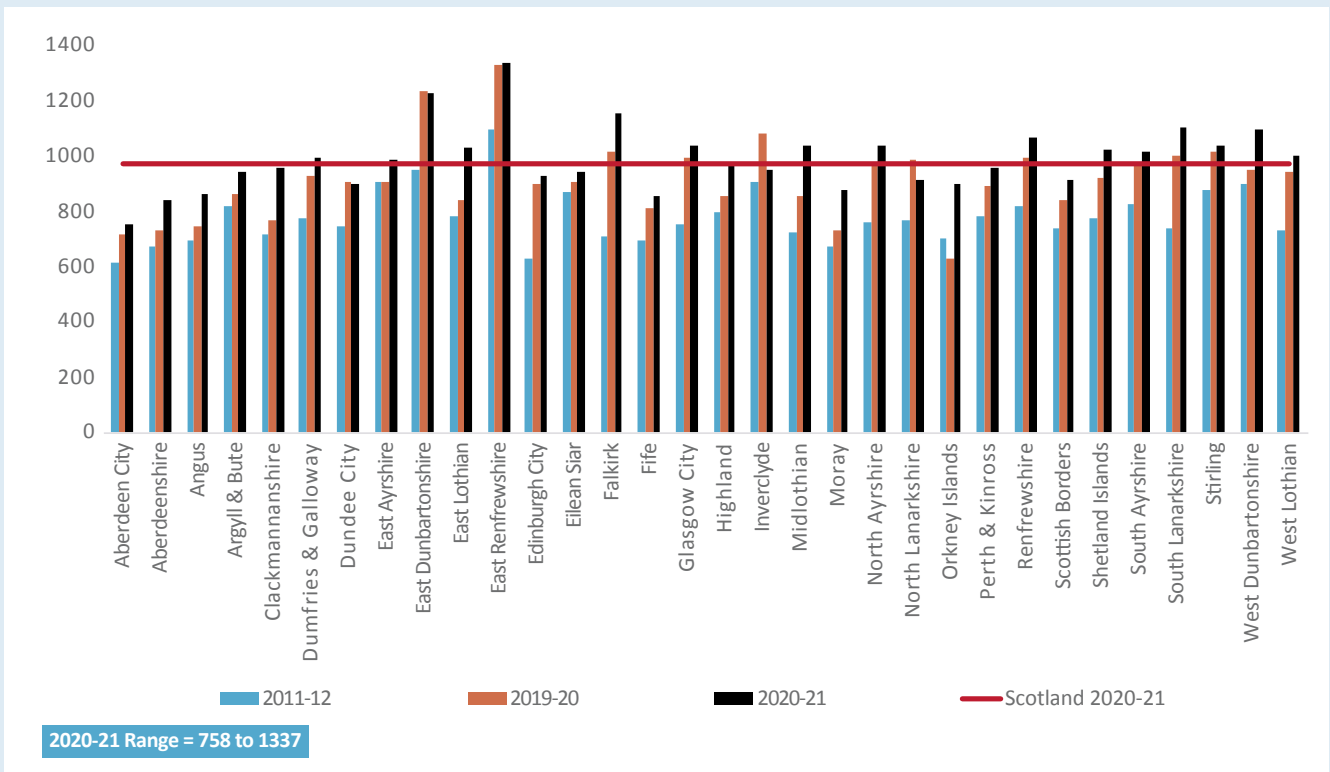




Fig 26: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 4

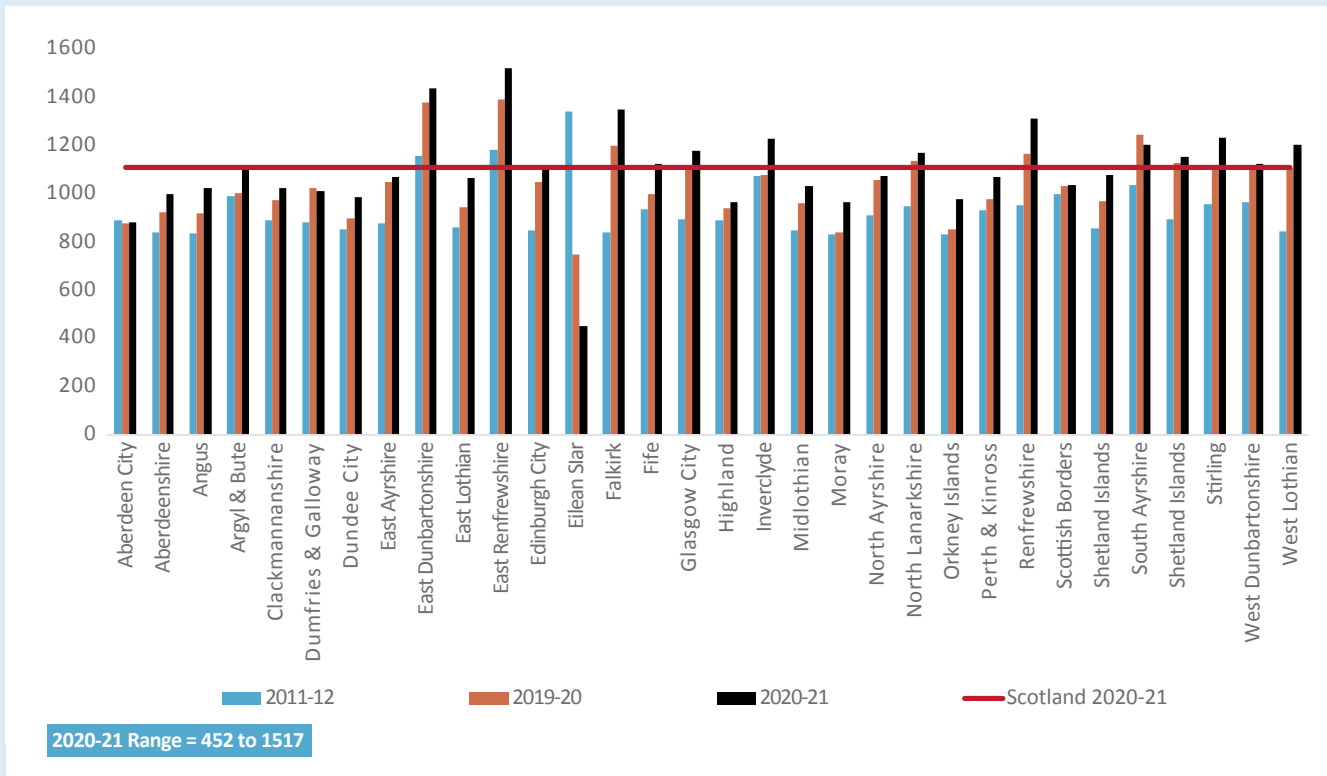
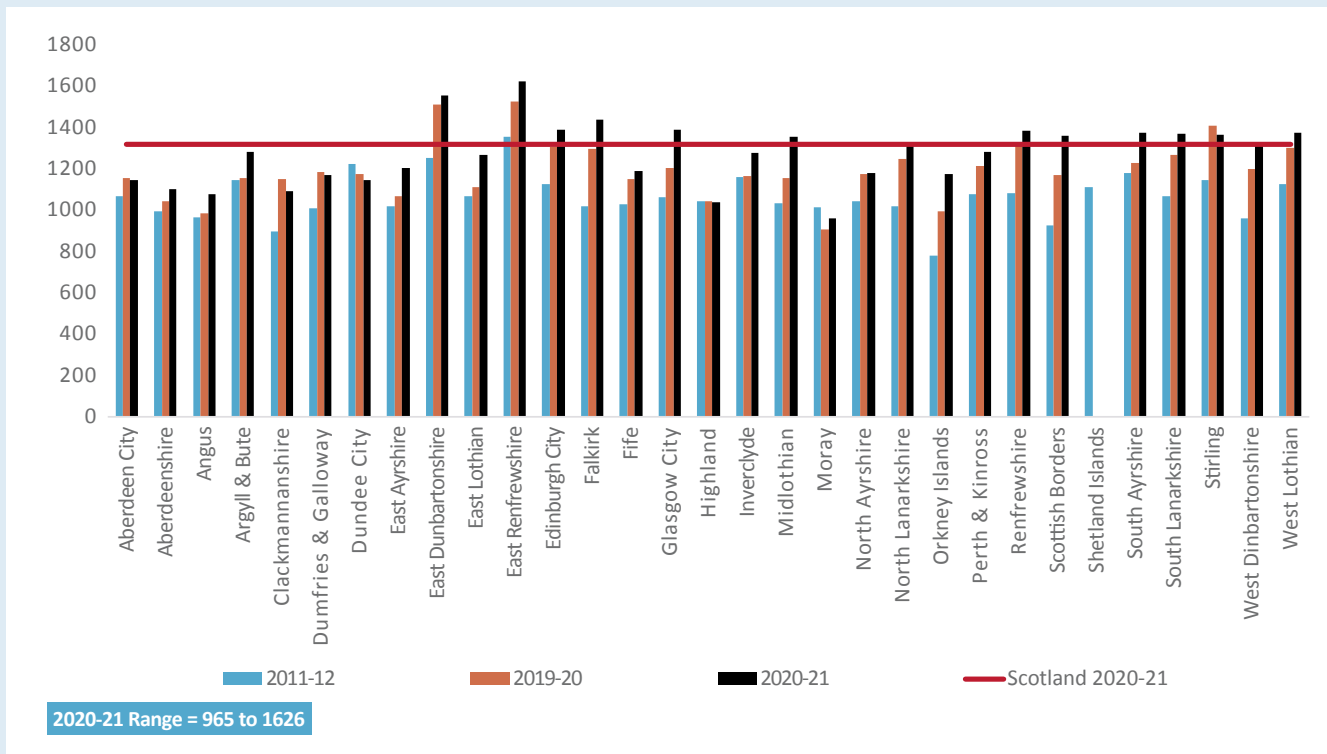


Fig 27: Average total tariff SIMD quintile 5



Source: Breakdown of average total tariff by SIMD quintile provided by the Scottish Government and overall average total tariff calculated from this by the Improvement service.

Note: Missing values represent councils which have no pupils in this SIMD quintile



### Local Variation – Average total tariff

#### 2020/21 Value

Scotland: 972; council range: 771 - 1482 with variation widening in the most recent year. Higher tariff rates are reported in councils with lower levels of deprivation (1033 compared to 890 for the most deprived).

#### Change over Time

In 2020/21: Scotland: +4.6%; councils: 31 increased and 1 decreased (range: -0.6% to +24.7%)

Since 2011/12: Scotland: +26.3%; councils: 32 increased (range: +8.1% to 59.1%)

### Local Variation – Average total tariff SIMD1

#### 2020/21 Value

Scotland: 688; council range: 435 – 1069 with variation widening in the most recent year. No systematic relationship with deprivation.

#### Change over Time

In 2020/21: Scotland: +6.0%; councils: 24 increased and 4 decreased (range: -18.1% to +33.6%)

Since 2011/12: Scotland: +43.9%; councils: 29 increased and 0 decreased range: +15.4% to +77.9%)

### Local Variaton – Average total tariff SIMD5

#### 2020/21 Value

Scotland: 1320; council range: 965 – 1626 with variation widening in the most recent year. No systematic relationship with deprivation.

#### Change over Time

In 2020/21: Scotland: +6.4%; councils: 24 increased and 6 decreased (range: -4.9% to +18.3)

Since 2011/12: Scotland: +19.9%; councils: 27 increased and 3 decreased (range: -6.3% to +51.2%)

## Performance at SCQF level 5 and level 6 or higher

Performance at level 5 and level 6 or higher provide a breadth and depth measure of achievement for pupils at higher levels of attainment, for all pupils and for those from more deprived areas. It should be noted that 5+ awards at SCQF level 5 and level 6 or higher are demanding academic criteria and on their own provide a rather narrow picture of attainment. They are concentrated heavily on high attainers – those who would typically progress to higher education – and do not adequately reflect the outcomes and life chances of all school pupils.

These measures reflect the cumulative attainment at SCQF level 5 and level 6 or higher, either to the point of leaving or to the end of S6. However, as with average tariff scores, as the school leaver data is not yet available for 2020/21, the basis for the data included for these measures is different from published data





available on the Learning Analysis School Summary Dashboard which is based on school leavers. To allow 2021 data to be included, the Scottish Government has provided pupils' attainment by S6 based on the S4 cohort. All years included in the report are based on this calculated measure of pupil attainment by S6 based on the S4 cohort.

As noted above, the different approaches to certification in 2020 and 2021 mean these results are therefore not directly comparable with previous and future years.

**Table 15: Percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 and level 6 or higher, 2011-12 to 2020-21**

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Value Change 2019-20 to 2020-21	Value Change 2011-12 to 2020-21	Range 2020-21
% Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5	51	53	55	57	59	60	62	63	65	67	2.0	16.0	58-90
% Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6	26	27	29	31	33	34	34	35	38	41	3.0	15.0	29-70
% Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 (SIMD)	29	32	34	37	40	41	42	45	47	49	2.0	20.0	36-79
% Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 6 (SIMD)	10	11	14	14	15	16	17	19	21	23	2.0	13.0	13-43

*Note: A dashed line break has been placed between 2018/19 and 2019/20 to reflect the impact of the change to the assessment approach in 2020 and 2021 on 2019/20 and 2020/21 school leaver attainment.*

In 2020/21, 67% of pupils achieved 5 or more awards at SCQF level 5, including 49% of pupils from deprived areas. 41% achieved 5 or more awards at SCQF level 6, including 23% of pupils from deprived areas.

Since 2011/12, there is a clear increasing trend in SCQF level 5 and level 6 attainment. The total percentage of young people gaining 5+ awards at level 5 and level 6 has increased, for all pupils, and for those in the most deprived communities. In 2019/20 and 2020/21, attainment rates continued to increase. Attainment at Level 6 increased at a slightly faster rate than observed prior to COVID.

In 2020/21, 67% of pupils achieved five or more awards at level 5 or higher, an increase of 16 percentage points from 2011/12. Similarly, there has been a 15-point increase in the percentage of pupils achieving five or more awards at level 6 or higher during this time, from 26% to 41%. Since 2011/12, all 32 councils have seen an increase in attainment at these levels, and all councils but one have seen levels continue to increase in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

While achievement levels remain lower for children from the most deprived areas, levels have increased at a



faster rate within these groups. The percentage of children from the most deprived communities achieving 5+ awards at level 5 and level 6 in 2020/21 was 49% and 23% respectively, an increase of 20 percentage points and 13 percentage points from 2011/12.

While all councils (except 1) have seen an increase in achievement levels for children from the most deprived communities since 2011/12, a small minority of councils have seen levels fall in 2019/20 and 2020/21

Achievement varied significantly between authorities. The council range for 5+ awards at level 5 was 58%-90%, and for pupils from deprived areas it was 36%-79%. At level 6, the range was 29%-70%, and 13%-43% respectively. Over time, the level of variation has widened at level 6 and within achievement levels for the most deprived. The differing curricular models between authorities will be an important factor in understanding some of this variation. Further detail of the variation within councils is presented in the graphs below.

Achievement varies systematically with the overall level of deprivation in the council area: this accounts for approximately 40% - 45% of the variation in outcome between councils. For example, if councils are grouped according to their levels of deprivation in 2020/21, the average at level 5 for the most deprived councils is 64% compared to 71% for the least deprived councils. However, there are some councils with very low levels of overall deprivation who are achieving exceptional results with pupils from deprived areas. There are also councils with relatively high levels of overall deprivation achieving higher than average results.

**Figure 28: Percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at Level 5 by family group - deprivation**

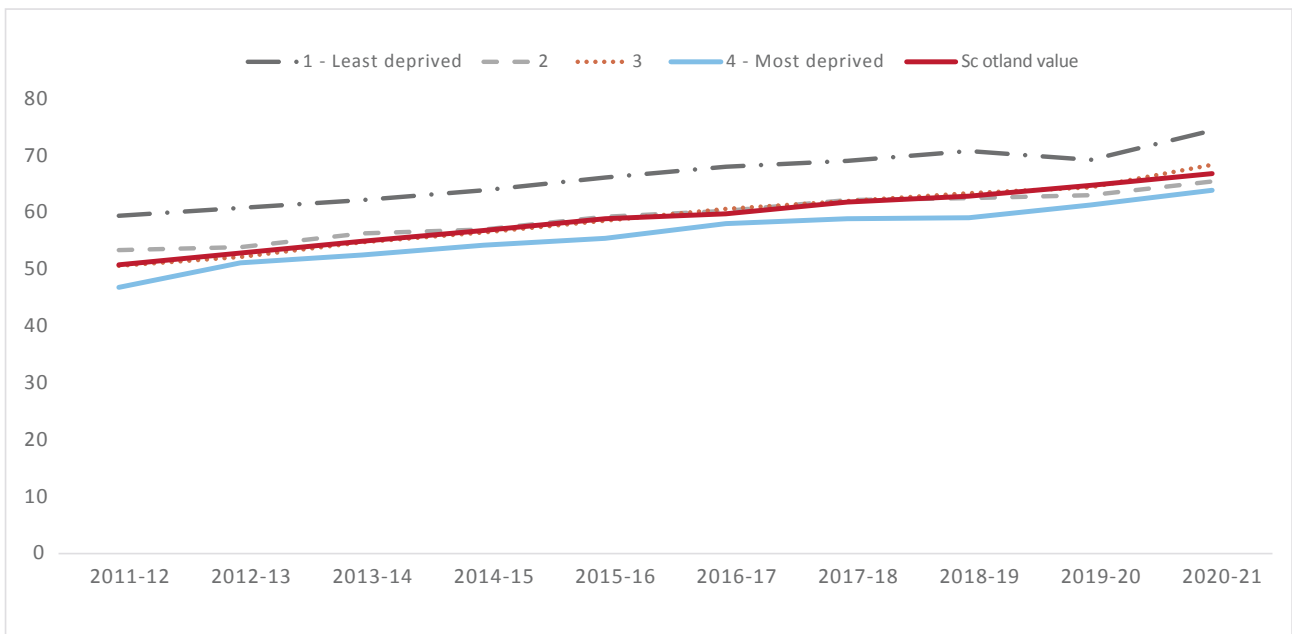




Figure 29: Percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at Level 6 by family group - deprivation

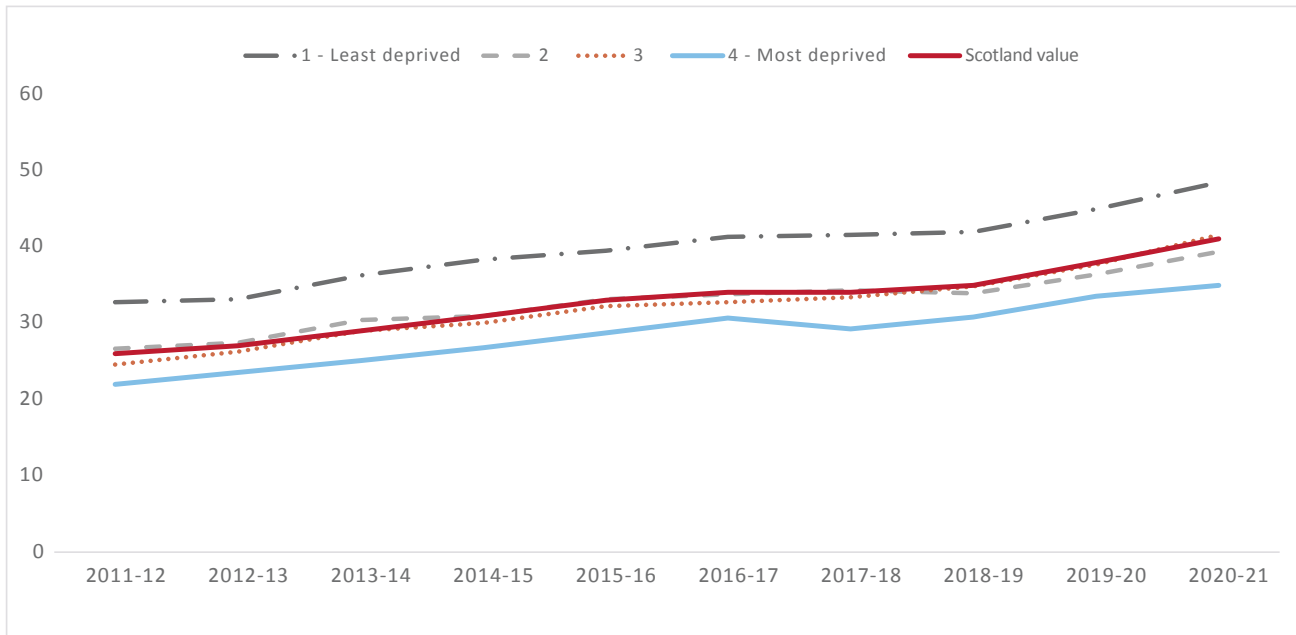


Fig 30: Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5

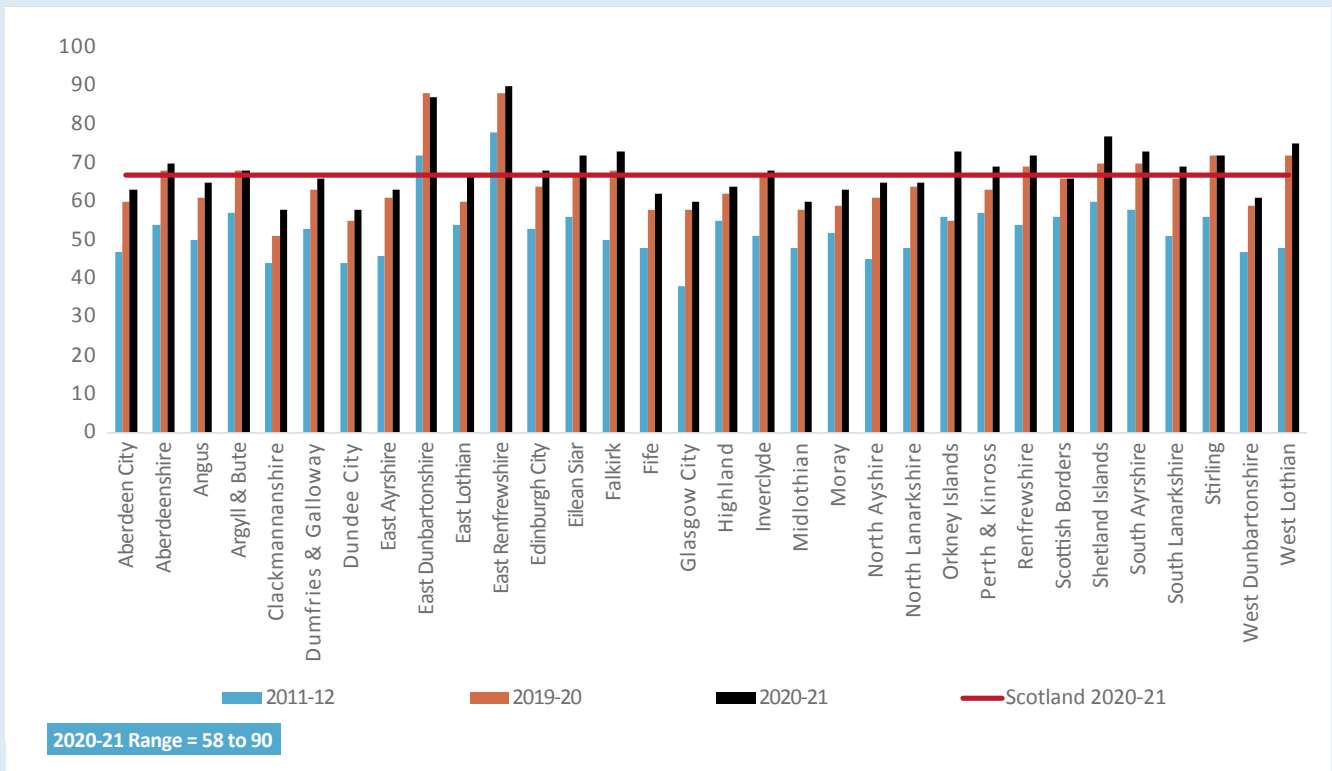




Fig 31: Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6

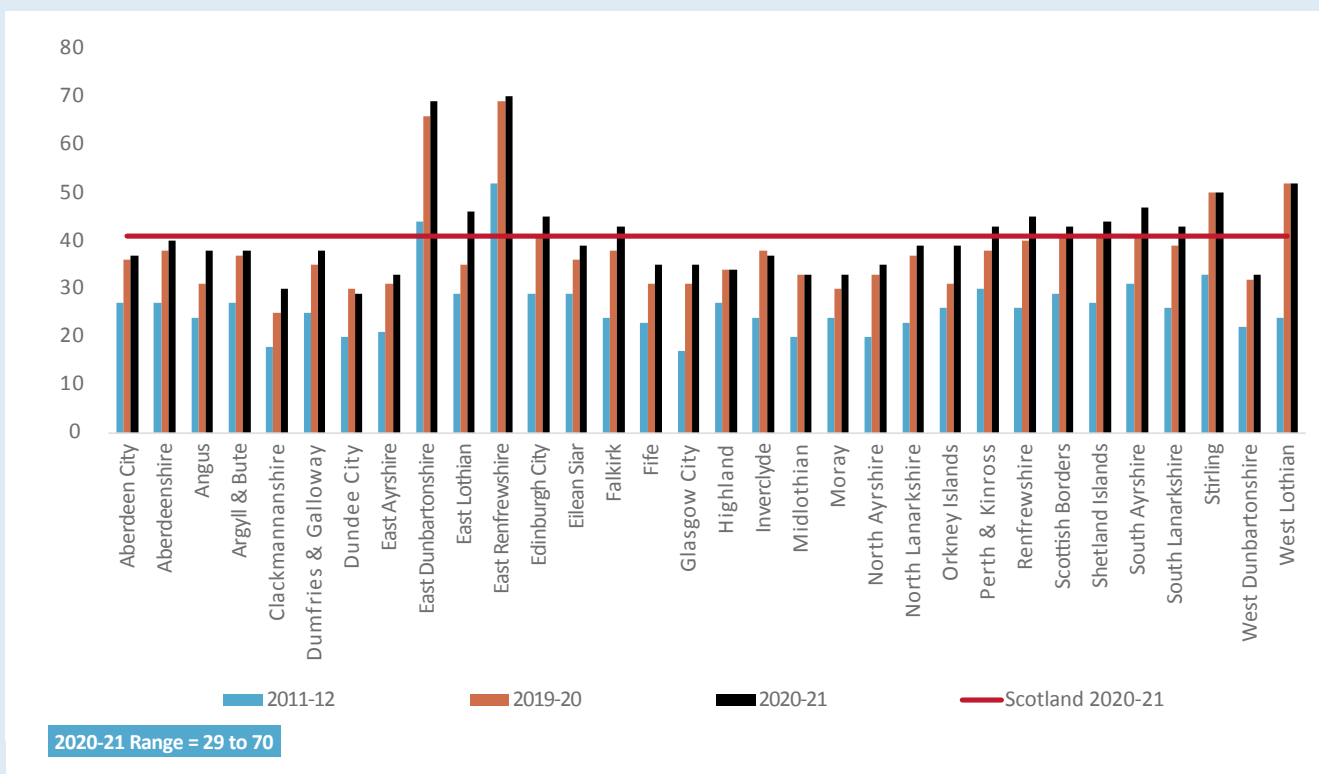


Fig 32: Percentage of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (SIMD)

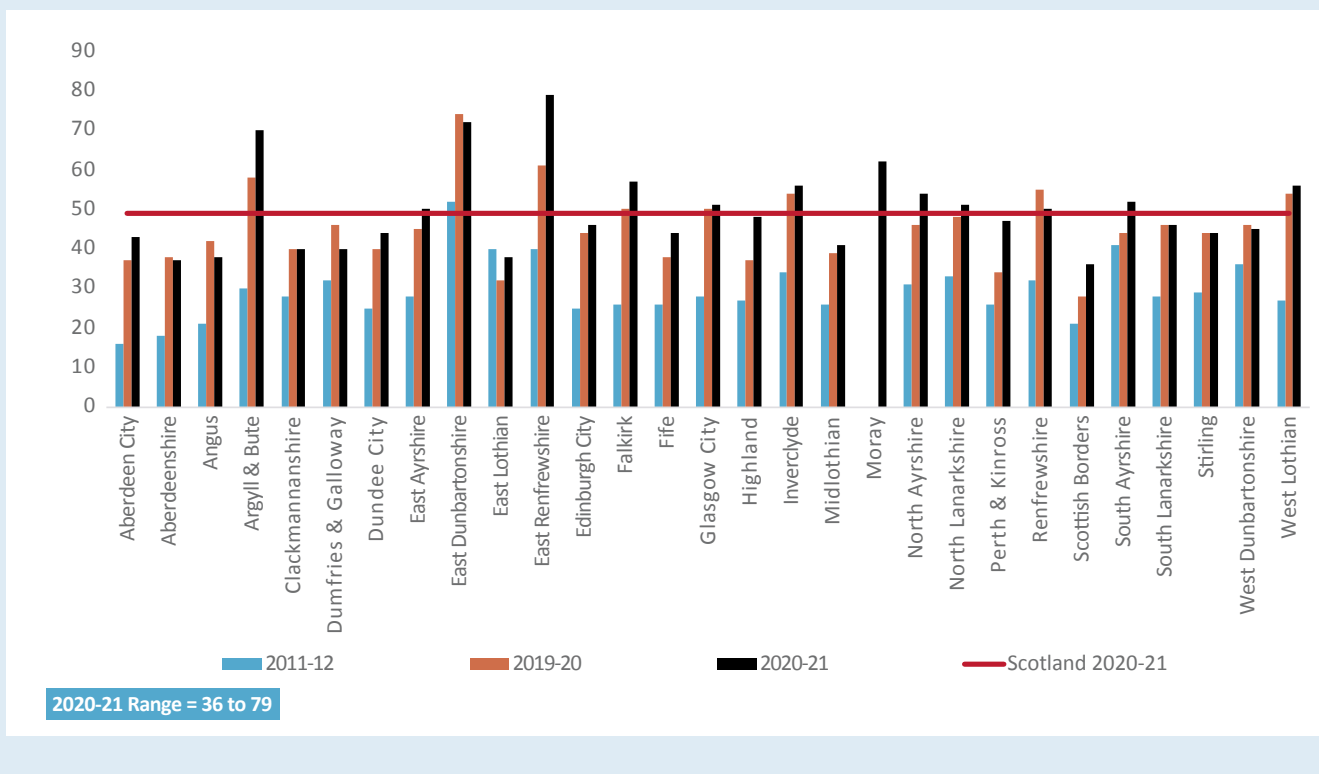
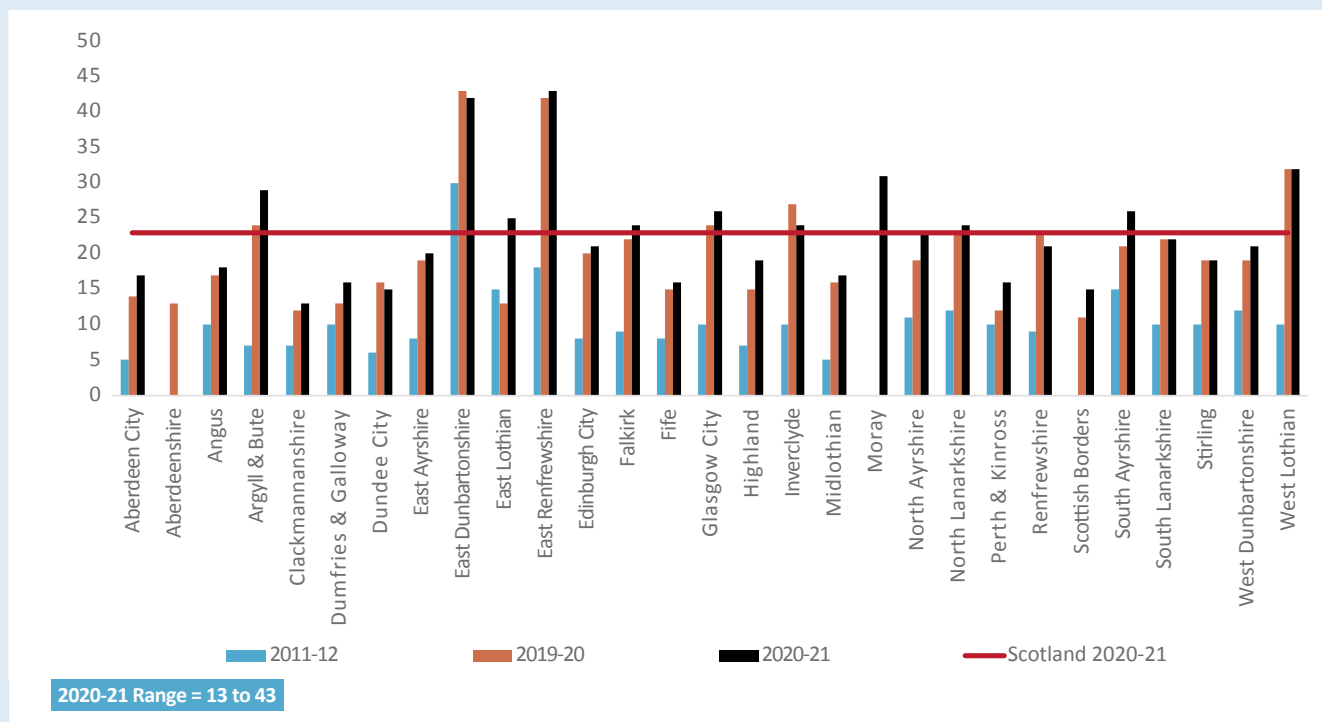




Fig 33: Percentage of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (SIMD)



Source: Figures supplied by Scottish Government.

Note: Missing values represent councils which have no pupils in the 20% most deprived communities



### Local Variation – Attainment at SCQF levels 5 & 6

#### 2020/21 Value

SCQF at Level 5; Scotland: 67%; council range: 58% - 90%

SCQF at Level 6; Scotland: 41%; council range: 29% - 70%

SCQF at Level 5 SIMD; Scotland: 49%; council range: 36% - 79%

SCQF at Level 6 SIMD; Scotland: 23%; council range: 13% - 43%

Achievement of Level 5 and Level 6 are significantly higher in the least deprived councils. 75% compared to 64% at Level 5, and 48% compared to 35% for Level 6.

#### Change over Time in 2020/21

SCQF at Level 5: Scotland: +2pp; councils: 28 increased, 1 decreased (range: -1pp to +18pp)

SCQF at Level 6: Scotland: +3pp; councils: 26 increased, 2 decreased (range: -1pp to +11pp)

SCQF at Level 5 SIMD: Scotland: +2pp; councils: 20 increased, 6 decreased (range: -6pp to +18pp)

SCQF at Level 6 SIMD: Scotland: +2pp; councils: 20 increased, 4 decreased (range: -3pp to +12pp)



### Local Variation – Attainment at SCQF levels 5 & 6

#### Change over Time since 2011/12

SCQF at Level 5: Scotland: +16pp; councils: 32 councils increased (range: +9pp to +27pp)

SCQF at Level 6: Scotland: +15pp; councils: 32 increased (range: +7pp to +29pp)

SCQF at Level 5 SIMD: Scotland: +20pp; councils: 28 increased, 1 decreased (range: -2pp to +40pp)

SCQF at Level 6 SIMD: Scotland: +13pp; councils: 28 increased, 0 decreased (+3pp to +31pp)

Note: Where totals do not add to 32, this reflects either no movement, or data not available.

Average total tariff points and attainment at levels 5 and 6 provide two summary measures of the overall attainment of a cohort of school leavers. A range of other measures are available of the key qualification sets that enable access to a wider range of post-school opportunities and life chances for school leavers. These have been the focus for improvement across local authorities in recent years and show a picture of sustained improvement in attainment across the period and significant progress in closing the attainment gap.

One example is the achievement of an award at SCQF level 6. This provides a route from school onwards to higher education, either through an HNC (in the case of 1 award at SCQF level 6), or directly on to a degree course (in the case of multiple awards at SCQF level 6). Between 2011/12 and 2019/20, an increasing proportion of school leavers have achieved this level of attainment, ensuring that they access to a wider range of post- school opportunities. It is particularly striking that overall improvement has in large part been due to a significant closing in the attainment gap, with a far greater improvement for those living in SIMD quintile 1, although attainment has improved across all social contexts.

Achievement increased more sharply in 2019/20 than in previous years and follows on from a slight decline in 2018/19. It is important to note that the absence of external assessment information led to grades awarded in 2020 being based on teacher estimates. These results are therefore not directly comparable with previous years and the change observed here should not be seen as an indication that performance has improved without further evidence. Data from 2020/21 is not yet available and will also be impacted by comparability issues.

**Table 16: Improvement in the proportion of school leavers achieving 1 or more awards at SCQF level 6**

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Rate of Improvement
Quintile 1	34.9	38.5	41.2	42.7	43.0	44.4	43.5	46.6	33.7%
Quintile 2	45.0	49.1	50.6	52.2	52.4	52.8	50.8	54.7	21.4%
Quintile 3	55.8	57.2	60.3	62.2	62.0	62.5	60.2	65.7	17.6%
Quintile 4	65.7	66.9	69.2	71.1	70.5	70.5	70.0	71.7	9.1%
Quintile 5	77.3	79.1	80.3	81.2	80.6	81.8	79.3	82.7	7.0%
Gap between Quintiles 1 and 5	42.4	40.6	39.1	38.5	37.6	37.4	35.8	36.1	
National - Overall	55.8	58.1	60.2	61.7	61.2	62.2	60.5	63.9	14.6%

Source: Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, Scottish Government

Note: A dashed line break has been placed between 2018/19 and 2019/20 to reflect the impact of the change to the assessment approach in 2020 and 2021 on 2019/20 and 2020/21 school leaver attainment.



There has also been an increasing focus over recent years in schools on offering a wider range of vocational awards, to better meet the needs of all learners. This change reflects the intention and ethos of CfE: to ensure that the needs of all learners are met through flexibility in the curriculum offered, and the use of a wider range of achievement to recognise learners' success. These changes are evident in the sustained increase in learners leaving school over recent years with vocational awards at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6. As above, the results for 2019/20 are not directly comparable with previous years due to change in assessment method in 2020 and should be interpreted with care. Data from 2020/21 is not yet available and will also be impacted by comparability issues.

**Table 17: Proportion of school leavers achieving vocational qualifications at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6**

	2013 -14	2014 -15	2015 -16	2016 -17	2017 -18	2018 -19	2019 -20
1+ SCQF Level 4 or better	16.1	16.8	17.7	19.6	21.3	23.3	28.8
1+ SCQF Level 5 or better	7.3	9.0	10.7	12.8	14.8	17.1	22.5
1+ SCQF Level 6 or better	1.0	1.3	1.9	2.5	3.8	4.6	8.4

Source: Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, Scottish Government

Note: A dashed line break has been placed between 2018/19 and 2019/20 to reflect the impact of the change to the assessment approach in 2020 and 2021 on 2019/20 and 2020/21 school leaver attainment.

Looking across the range of senior phase measures provided here, levels of attainment are at their highest levels since 2011/12. During the COVID-19 pandemic, levels of attainment have continued to increase in 2019/20 and 2020/21, and at a faster rate for some levels and some groups than observed previously. However, it is not possible to fully determine the extent to which the coronavirus pandemic and, more specifically, the certification methods used in 2020 and 2021 have affected the attainment levels of the 2019/20 and 2020/21 pupil cohorts.

It is likely the closure of schools in March 2020 and January 2021, and the ongoing self-isolation restrictions in the 2021 session will have had a negative effect on some pupils' progress and attainment, with socio-economically deprived children amongst those who may have been most negatively affected. This disruption is likely to continue to impact on attainment for some time to come and scrutiny of available data will be essential in determining the impact on the poverty-related attainment gap in particular, and in planning for recovery in the medium and long term. How we evolve the work being driven forward with local authorities and schools under the Scottish Attainment Challenge will be instrumental here.

## Positive destinations and participation rate

A key element in improving senior phase outcomes relates to increasing levels of positive destinations for pupils upon leaving school and delivering progress in participation rates for 16-19 year olds. While there has been improvement in both of these vital areas over the longer term, the impact of COVID-19 is evident in data emerging in the most recent year.



Table 19: Positive destinations and participation rate (%)

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Value Change 2019-20 to 2020-21	Value Change from Base Year
Proportion of Pupils Entering Positive Destinations	90.3	91.9	92.6	93.2	93.5	93.9	94.6	95.0	93.3	95.5	2.2	5.2
Participation Rates for 16-19 Year Olds	-	-	-	-	90.4	91.1	91.8	91.6	92.1	92.2	0.0	1.8

### Initial positive destinations

The two most recent years of positive destinations data covering both 2019/20 and 2020/21 will reflect the impact of COVID-19 on choices made by, and opportunities available to, pupils upon leaving school during the pandemic.<sup>24</sup>

Positive destinations include participation in further education (FE), higher education (HE), training/ apprenticeships, employment, volunteering or Activity Agreements.

2019/20 data covers the impact of the pandemic on leavers during 2020, the first year of the pandemic. During 2020, the proportion of young people entering initial "positive destinations" after school fell, particularly for young people in the most deprived SIMD. After increasing from 90.3 in 2011/12 to 95.0% in 2018/19, the proportion of young people entering positive destinations fell to 93.3 in 2019/20. The reduction was experienced in the majority of council areas, with only a small minority reporting increasing rates counter to trend.

While the rate of positive destinations fell for both the most and least deprived SIMD areas, it fell by more amongst leavers from the most deprived areas than amongst those from the least deprived areas. This has led to an increase in the deprivation gap, from 5.4 percentage points in 2018/19 to 6.3 percentage points in 2019/20.

The reduction in positive destinations during 2019/20 was largely driven by a fall in employment. The proportion of all school leavers entering Higher Education increased between 2018/19 and 2019/20, while the proportion entering employment decreased to a record low. The proportion entering Higher Education increased amongst all SIMD groups but by least among those from the most deprived areas. Leavers from each SIMD group saw a decrease in the proportion entering employment with there being no clear pattern by deprivation.

In 2021, destinations recovered to pre-pandemic levels, increasing from 93.3% to 95.5%. While this pattern is true for all SIMD groups, the rate has increased more for pupils from the most deprived areas. This has led to a narrowing of the deprivation gap from 6.3pp in 2019/20, to 4.8pp in 2020/21, the smallest gap since 2011/12.

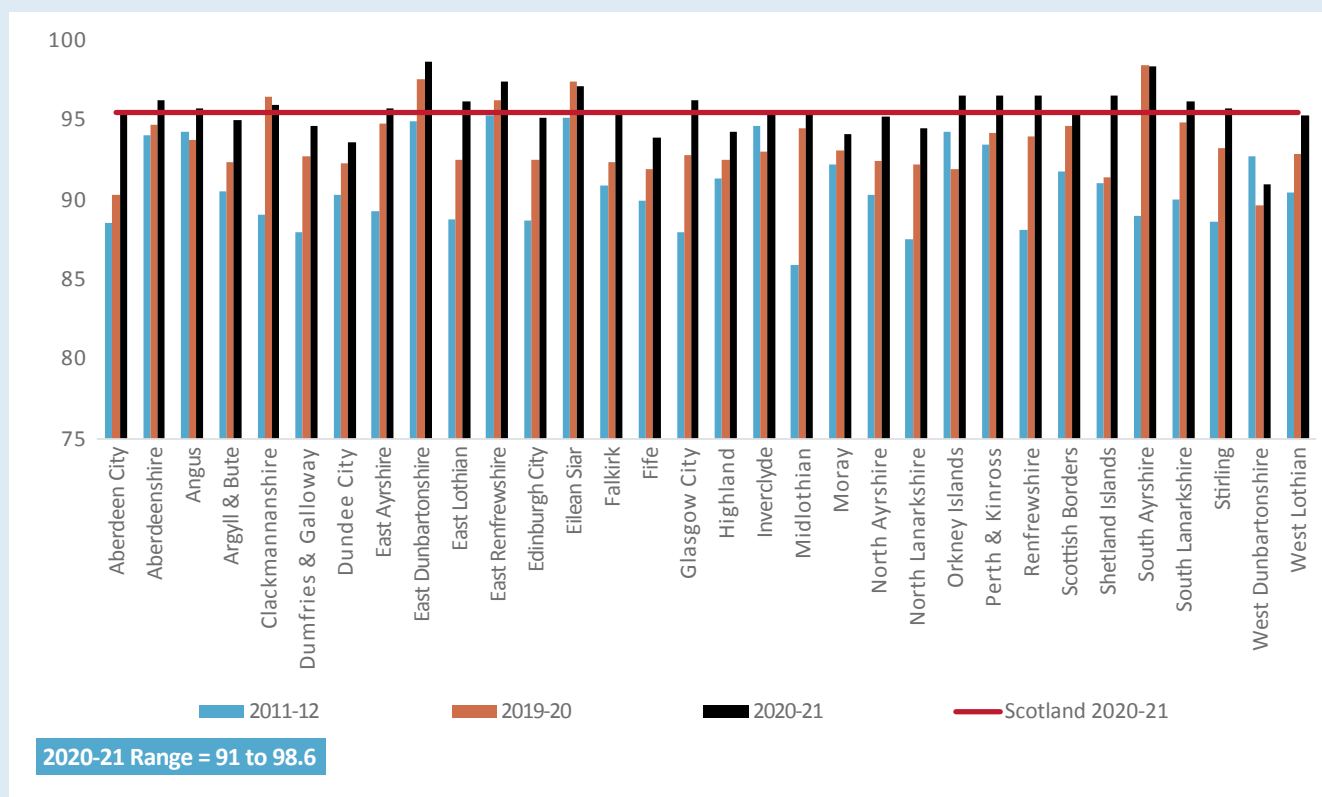
The increase in positive destinations in 2020/21 reflects an increase in the proportion of leavers entering employment, which returned to 22.6%, on par with pre-pandemic levels. While this pattern is true for all SIMD groups, the rate has increased more for pupils from the most deprived areas. The proportion of pupils entering Higher Education increased for all SIMD groups in 2020/21, reaching a record high of 45.1%, while the proportion entering further education fell in the most recent year to a record low of 23.3%.

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-attainment-initial-leaver-destinations-no-3-2021-edition/>





Fig 34: Proportion of pupils entering positive destinations



Source: Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, Scottish Government



**Local Variation – Positive destinations**

2019/20 Value

Scotland: 93.3%; council range: 89.7% - 98.4% with variation widening in this year. Historically, rates were higher for councils with lower levels of deprivation however the difference between most and least deprived councils markedly reduced in 2019/20.

2020/21 Value

Scotland: 95.5%; council range: 91% - 98.6% with variation narrowing in this year. Once again, rates are significantly higher for councils with the lowest levels of deprivation (96.5% compared to 94.8%).

Range in Movement

In 2019/20: Scotland: -1.7pp; councils: 5 increased and 27 decreased. (range: -4.7pp to +4.4pp).

In 2020/21: Scotland: +2.1pp; councils: 29 increased and 3 decreased (range: -0.6pp to +5.1pp).

Since 2011/12: Scotland; +5.2pp; councils: 31 increased and 1 decreased. (range: -1.76pp to +9.52pp)



## Participation rate for 16-19 year olds

The participation measure captures participation in learning (including school), training or work for all 16-19 year olds in Scotland. This measure provides a useful opportunity to track the progress of young people beyond the point at which they leave school. It also recognises that all participation is positive and should be regarded as transitional — education and training are important phases in a young person's life that can improve their job options but are not destinations in themselves.

This measure was first published in 2015 by Skills Development Scotland as experimental statistics and shows an improvement in the participation rate from 90.4 to 92.2 between 2015/16 and 2020/21. In the last 12 months, there has been a small 0.1 percentage point improvement in the participation rate, from 92.1 to 92.2. This improving trend in participation however is not universal, with 6 councils reporting a decline since 2015/16 and 15 councils reporting a decline in the past 12 months.

The small increase in the participation rate in 2020/21 was due to an increase in young adults remaining in or re-entering education (School Pupil, Higher Education and Further Education). The greatest increase was among school pupils (increasing by 1.8pp between 2020 and 2021). As with positive destinations, there was a marked reduction in the percentage of young people participating in employment, which fell from 18.3% in 2020 to 15.5% in 2021.

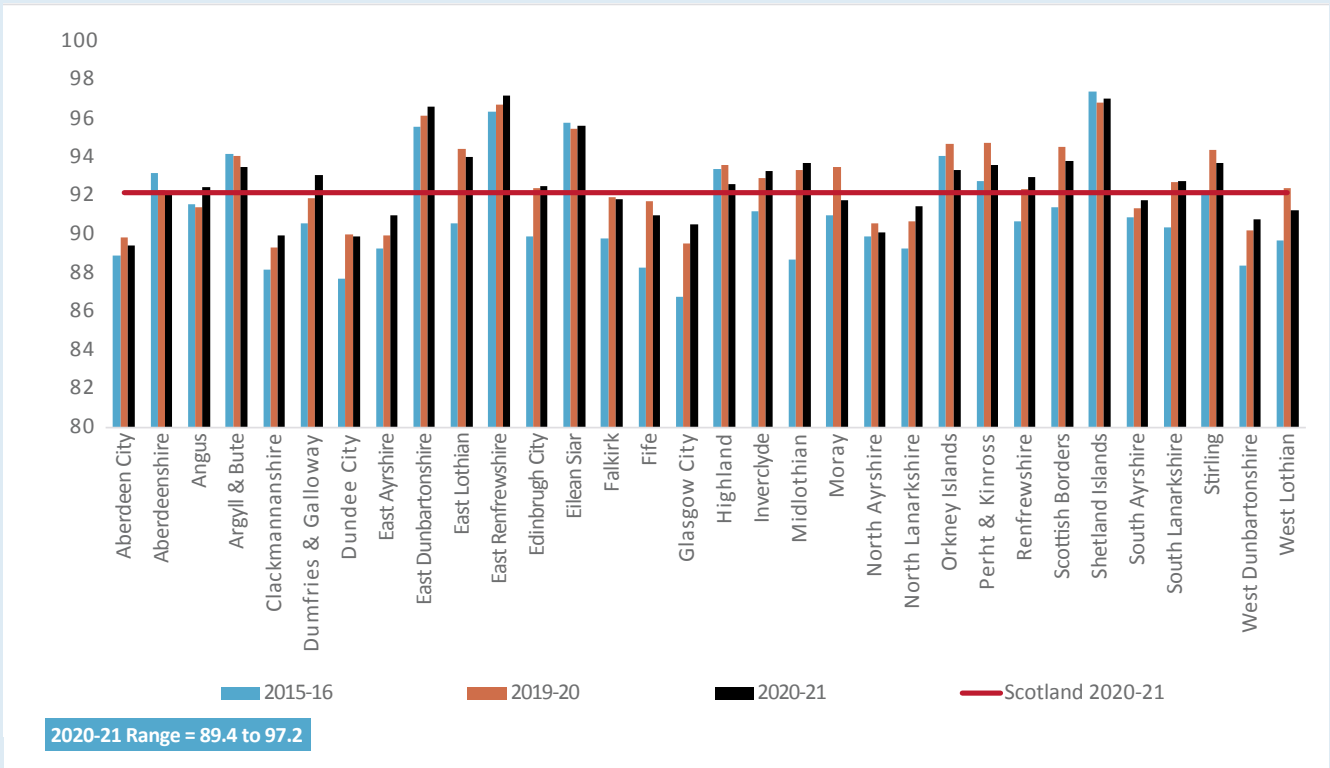
Substantial variation remains in the participation rate across local authorities. In 2020/21, the participation rates for 16-19 year olds ranged from 89.4% to 97.2% across councils, with variation narrowing slightly. There is a systematic relationship between participation rates and deprivation, with those councils with higher levels of deprivation reporting lower participation rates (e.g. 90.9% average for the most deprived councils versus 93.5% average for the least deprived councils). The gap between least deprived and most deprived councils has narrowed over time. This reflects findings by SDS that the participation gap between those who lived in the 20% most deprived areas and those in the 20% least deprived areas continued to narrow. In 2021, the gap was 9.3 pp, compared to 9.9 pp in 2020 and 10.5 pp in 2019).<sup>25</sup>

The variation in trend for the participation rate between authorities in the past 12 months ranged from an improvement of 1.2 percentage points, to a decline of 1.7 percentage points.

25 <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/48147/annual-participation-measure-2021-report.pdf>



Fig 35: Participation rates for 16-19 year olds (%)



Source: SDS Annual Participation Measure



**Local Variation – Participation rate**

2020/21 Value

Scotland: 92.2: council range: 89.4% - 97.2% with variation narrowing slightly across the period. Significantly lower participation rates are recorded in those council areas with higher levels of deprivation (e.g. 90.9% compared to 93.5% average for the least deprived councils). The gap between least deprived and most deprived councils has narrowed over time.

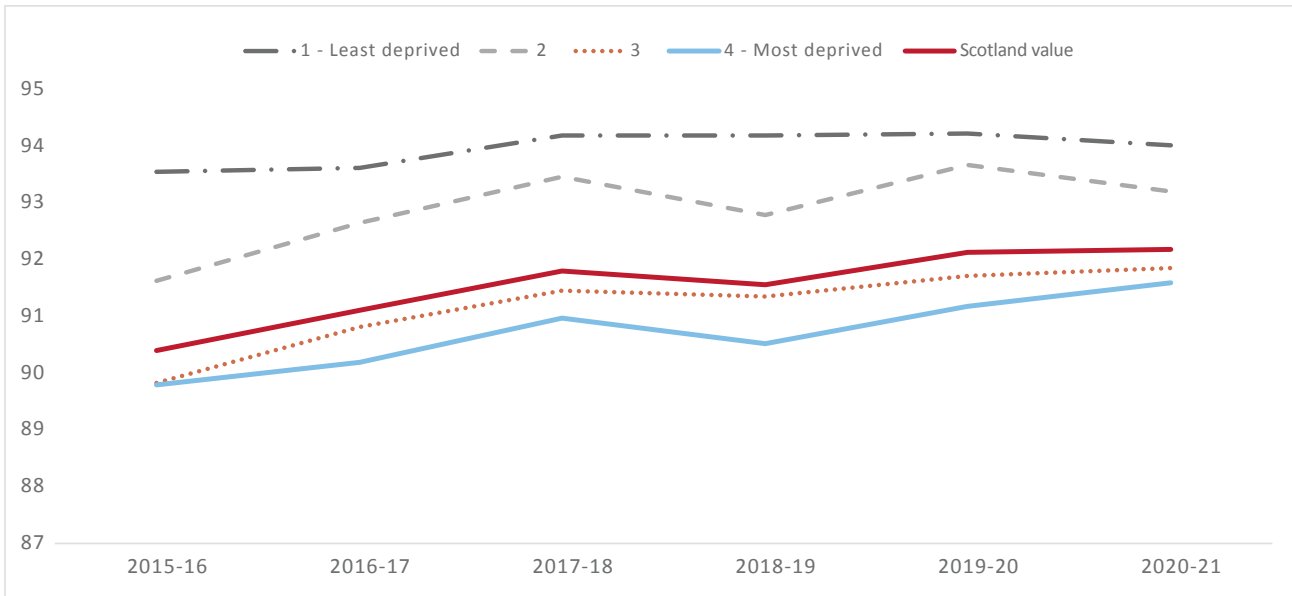
Range in Movement

In 2020/21: Scotland: +0.1pp; councils: 17 increased and 15 decreased. (range: -1.7pp to +1.2pp). Councils serving the most deprived communities reported a larger increase on average during 2020/21, (although not statistically significant).

Since 2015/16: Scotland: +1.8pp; councils: 26 increased and 6 decreased. (range: -1.0pp to +5.0pp).

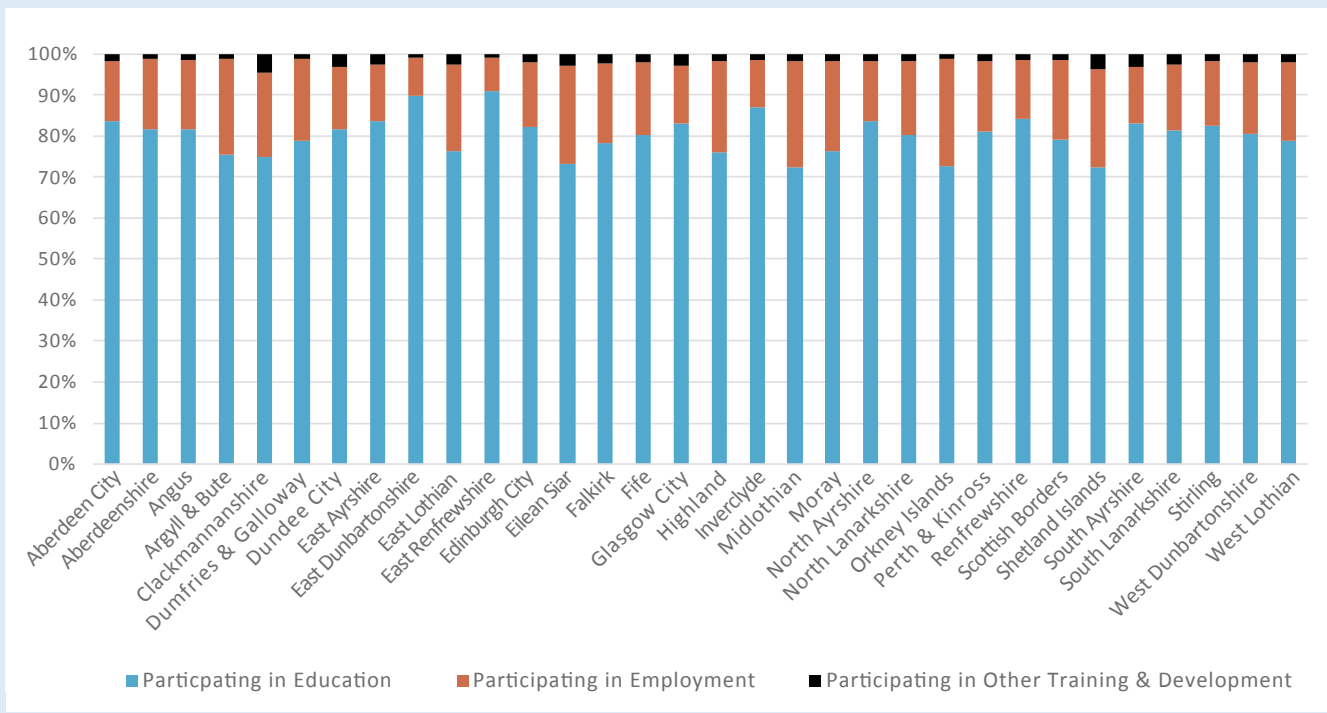


Fig 36: Participation rates for 16-19 year olds (%) by family group - deprivation



There is significant variation across councils in the breakdown of participation status by education, employment and training as can be seen in the graph below.

Fig 37: Participation rates - breakdown of participating status by council 2020-21 (%)



Source: SDS Annual Participation Measure

Education includes: school pupils, higher education & further education.

Employment includes: full time employment, part time employment, self-employment and modern apprenticeships.

Other training & development includes: employability fund, other formal training, personal skills development and voluntary work



The effects of COVID-19 and associated lockdown measures, which have been impacting Scotland and our economy since March 2020, will also have impacted on young adults' participation and destinations following school. The effective closure of the economy is likely to have affected the opportunities available to young adults and the choices they made e.g. a decline in employment opportunities or choosing to remain in education.

As we emerge from COVID-19, the Young Persons Guarantee<sup>26</sup> will be an important intervention in tackling the challenges facing young people. The Guarantee, backed by an additional £60 million investment, aims to give all young people in Scotland the chance to succeed despite the economic impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19). Organisations backing the Guarantee make five pledges to help young people at this critical time:

1. prepare young people for the world of work through work experience, volunteering and work-based learning opportunities
2. engage with and provide opportunities to young people who face barriers to work
3. create work-based learning, training and upskilling opportunities for young people
4. create jobs and opportunities for young people through apprenticeships, paid internships and work experience
5. create an inclusive workplace to support learning and enable young people to meet their potential.

## Looked after children

This is a critical policy priority for Local Authorities, as they work to transform the wellbeing of infants, children and young people and implement on 'The Promise'<sup>27</sup> to care experienced children and young people and respond to new and growing harms emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2020/21, social work practices adapted in response to the restrictions in place and in light of growing concerns around the potential risks to vulnerable children. This includes prioritisation of face-to-face contact for vulnerable families and families with new-born babies, and greater use of virtual engagement with other children and families. Such was the concern for some children and young people due to diminished networks of supports and services during lockdowns, there may have been increased inter-agency referral discussions (IRD) for reassurance and on the grounds of caution. As of yet, the increase in initial contact and IRD has not translated into child protection and looked after data reported here in the LGBF, however this will be an area to monitor closely over the coming period. With the exception of expenditure data, the most recent data available in relation to looked after children covers 2019/20. Data for 2020/21 will be included later in 2022 when this is published by Scottish Government.

### Expenditure on looked after children

Expenditure on looked after children has grown by 14.5% since 2010/11, but has fallen by 5.2% in 2020/21. The reduction in real terms expenditure observed in 2020/21 is influenced in part by the COVID-19 related inflation experienced during this period, which was significantly higher than in previous years. Adjusting for this exceptional inflation rate, expenditure on looked after children would have reduced by 1.2% in 2020/21. An important factor driving the recent reduction in expenditure is the recent shift away from the use of more expensive external placements by a number of authorities. It is important to note, that the recent reduction in expenditure is not universal, with over a third of councils reporting increased expenditure in 2020/21, counter to the national trend.

<sup>26</sup> <https://youngpersonsguarantee.scot/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Promise.pdf>



Over the longer term, the increased expenditure in this area has been driven by significant increases in expenditure on fostering/family placements (33%) and in residential schools (20%), which together account for 60% of social work expenditure on children and young people. Since 2010/11, there has been a significantly larger expenditure growth on children living in community settings (20.8%) than on residential settings (10%). In 2020/21, expenditure on both community and residential provision reduced, although this trend is not universal, with around a third of authorities reporting an increase counter to trend.

In parallel, there has been a reduction in the number of children and young people who are looked after, reducing by 10.9% between 2010/11 and 2019/20. The biggest reduction has been in those being looked after at home with parents (-34.9%), with a growth in the number of children looked after in kinship/foster care (+2.5%). Data for 2020/21 is not yet available.

The pattern of spend on looked after children is standardised in the LGBF as “gross cost per looked after child in the community” and “gross cost per looked after child in a residential setting”. The most recent data available is 2019/20.

**Table 20: Cost per child looked after in community and residential settings (£)**

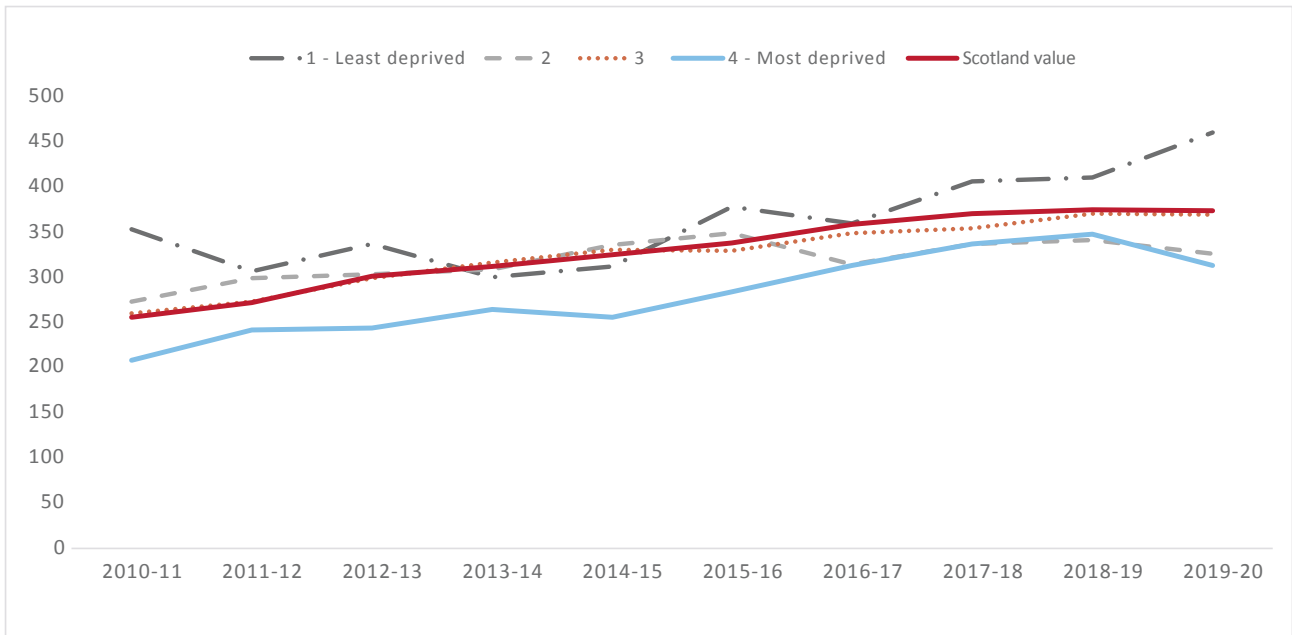
	2010 -11	2011 -12	2012 -13	2013 -14	2014 -15	2015 -16	2016 -17	2017 -18	2018 -19	2019 -20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
The Gross Cost of “Children Looked After” in Residential Based Services per Child per Week	£3,509	£3,708	£3,533	£3,660	£3,695	£3,944	£3,836	£3,899	£4,184	£4,110	-1.8%	17.1%
The Gross Cost of “Children Looked After” in a Community Setting per Child per Week	£256	£272	£301	£312	£324	£338	£358	£370	£375	£373	-0.5%	45.9%

For those children in a community setting, costs have increased by 45.9% since 2010/11, increasing from £256 in 2010/11 to £373 in 2019/20. This reflects a 21% increase in expenditure, and a 12% reduction in the number of children looked after. In 2019/20, costs decreased by 0.5% from £375 per child to £373. This reflects a 6% reduction in expenditure and a 2% reduction in the number of children. In 2019/20, costs ranged from £194 to £658 across councils, with variation systematically related to the level of deprivation. The least deprived councils spend more per child than more deprived councils (£468 compared to £296), with this gap widening in more recent years.

For those children in a residential setting, costs have increased by 17.1% since 2010/11, increasing from £3,509 in 2010/11 to £4,110 in 2019/20. This reflects a 10% increase in expenditure, and a 2% reduction in the number of children looked after. In 2019/20, costs decreased by 1.8% from £4,184 per child to £4,110. This reflects a 4% reduction in expenditure and a 1% reduction in the number of children. In 2019/20, costs ranged from £2,215 to £13,841 across councils. Although not statistically significant, as with community costs, the least deprived councils tend to spend more per child than less deprived councils (£4,630 compared to £3,908), with this gap widening in more recent years.



**Fig 38: The gross cost of “children looked after” in community services per child per week - deprivation**



**Fig 39: The gross cost of “children looked after” in residential based services per child per week - deprivation**

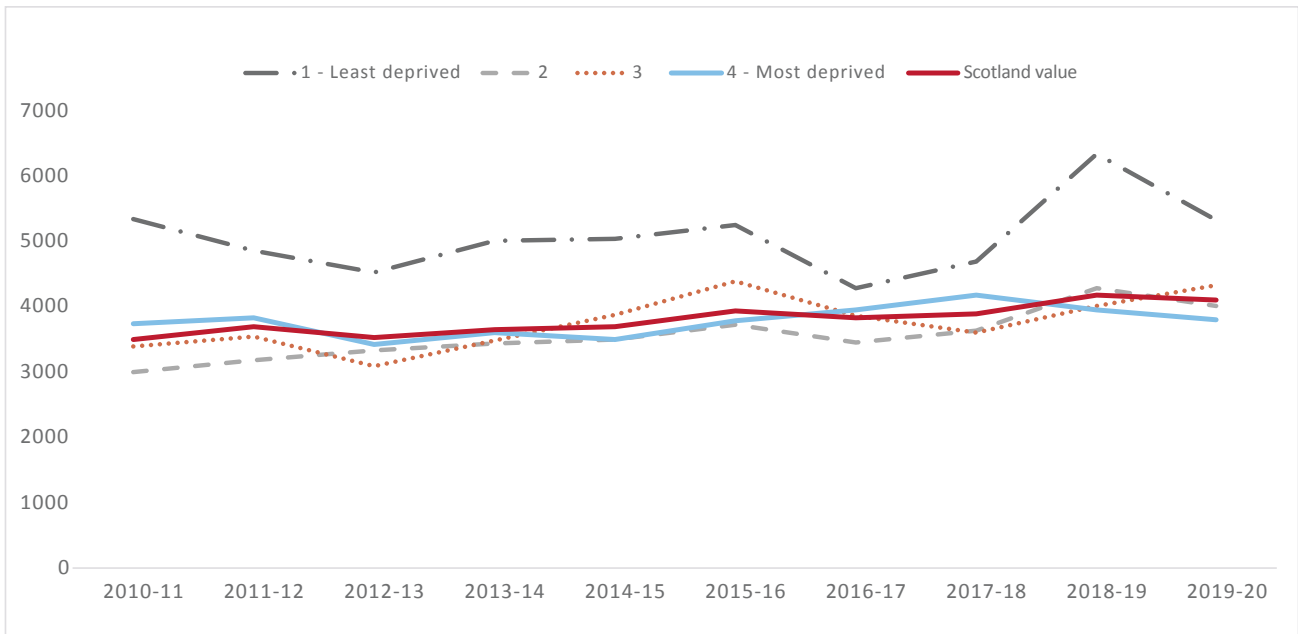




Fig 40: The gross cost of “children looked after” in residential based services per child per week (£)

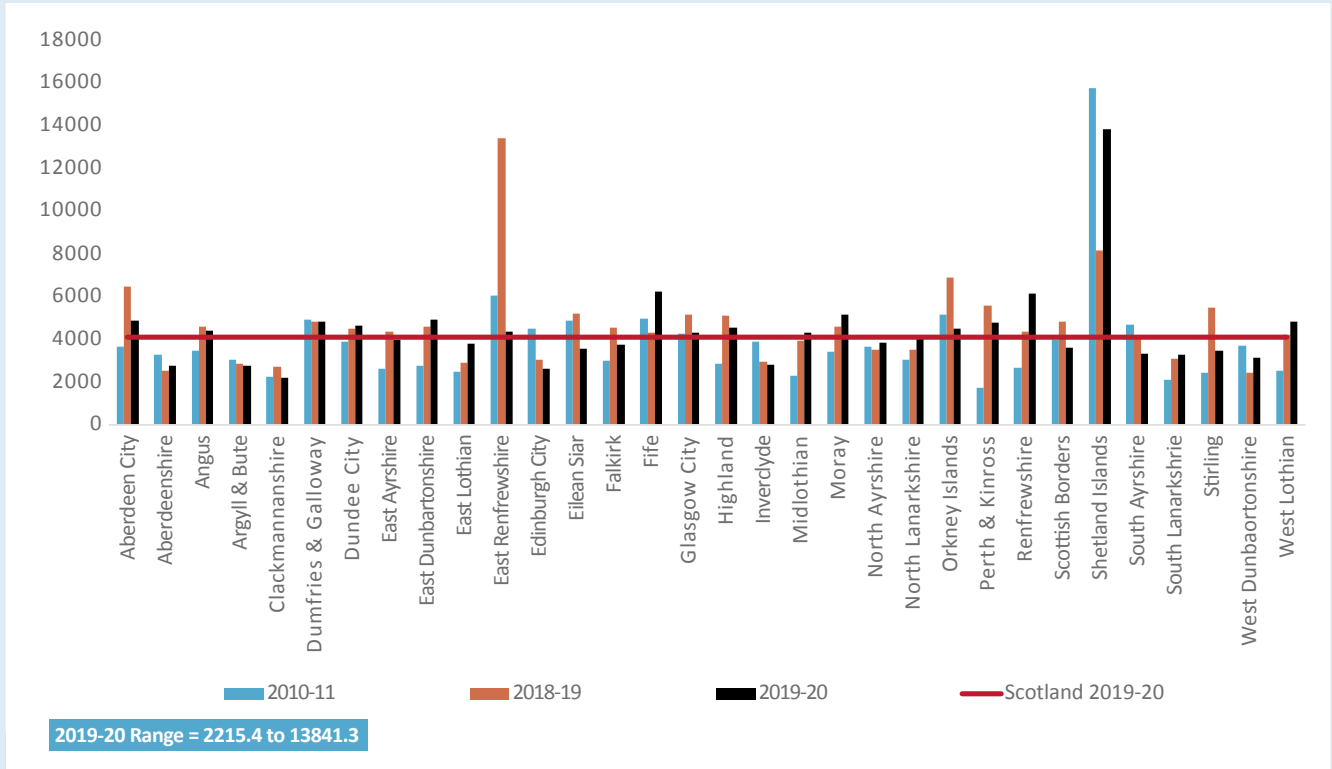
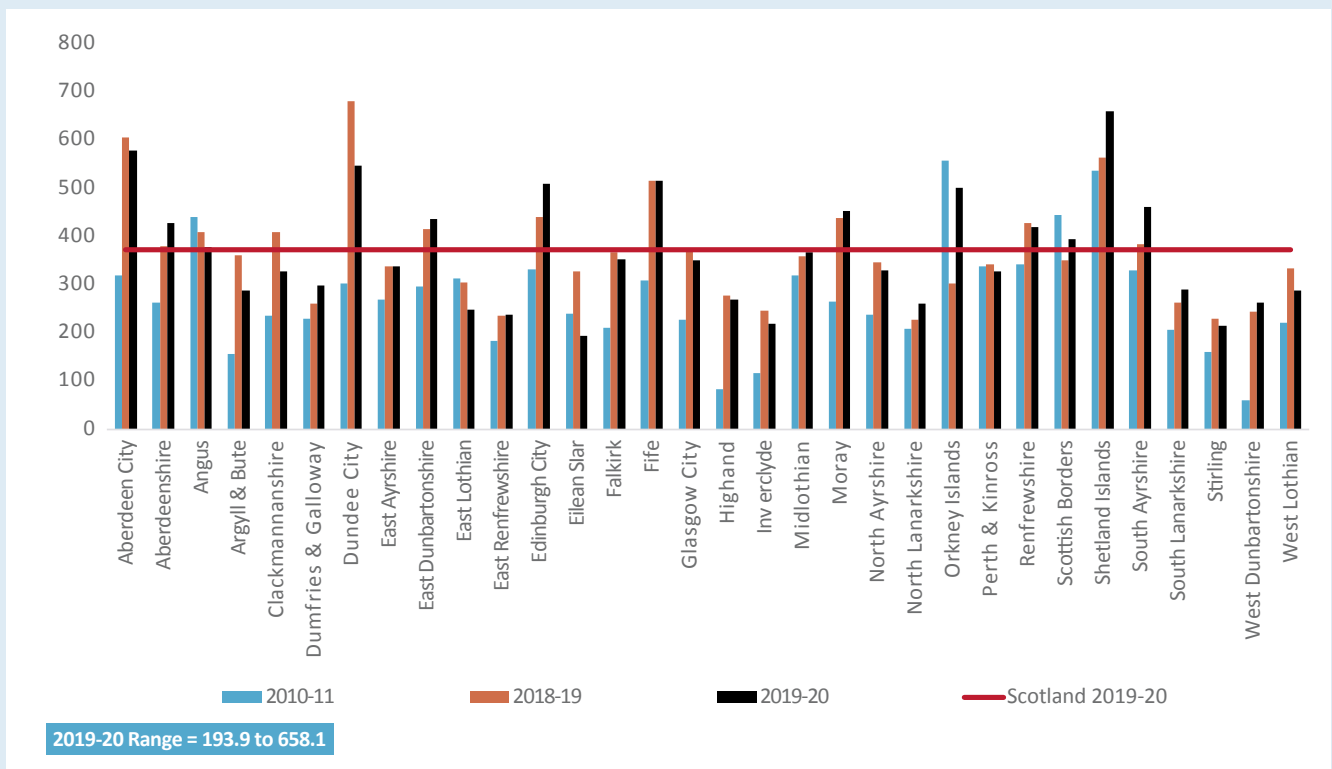


Fig 41: The gross cost of “children looked after” in community services per child per week (£)



Source: Scottish Government; council supplied expenditure figures





### Local Variation – Cost per child – looked after in the community

#### 2019/20 Value

Scotland: £373. council range: £194 - £658. The least deprived councils spend significantly more per child than more deprived councils (£468 compared to £296), with this gap widening in recent years

#### Change Over Time

In 2019/20: Scotland: -0.5%; councils: 17 increased and 15 decreased. (Range: -20% to +20% (excluding outliers)). Councils serving the most deprived communities report larger reductions (not statistically significant).

Since 2010/11: Scotland: +45.9%. councils: 26 increased and 6 decreased. (Range: -20% to +87.2% (excluding outliers)). Councils serving more deprived communities report larger increases on average over the period (not statistically significant).

### Local Variation – Cost per child – looked after in residential settings

#### 2019/20 Value

Scotland: £4,110. council range: £2,215 - £13,841 (£2,215 to £6,234 excluding outliers). Least deprived councils tend to spend more per child than more deprived councils (£4,630 compared to £3,908), with this gap widening in most recent years

#### Change Over Time

In 2019/20: Scotland: -1.8%. councils: 17 increased and 15 decreased. (Range: -37% to +45% (excluding outliers)). Councils serving the least deprived communities report larger reductions on average (although not statistically significant).

Since 2010/11: Scotland: +17.1%. councils: 19 increased and 13 decreased. (Range: -41% to +90% (excluding outliers)).

Work within Family Groups has identified the following factors as important in understanding the local variation between authorities in expenditure for looked after children.

- *Capacity in relation to local fostering provision*
- *Commissioning approaches and reliance on external placements*
- *Strategic priority and investment in early intervention programmes, such as Family Group Decision making, intensive wrap around and community support*
- *Voluntary/informal provision for children at the edges of care*



Looked after children - balance of care

Table 21: Balance of care for looked after children

	2010 -11	2011 -12	2012 -13	2013 -14	2014 -15	2015 -16	2016 -17	2017 -18	2018 -19	2019 -20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
Balance of Care for looked after children: % of children being looked after in the Community	91.0	91.2	90.9	90.6	90.1	90.4	89.9	89.6	89.8	90.1	0.2	-0.9

In 2019/20, children who are looked after in the community make up 90.1% of all looked after children, a slight increase from 89.8% in 2018/19. This balance has remained relatively stable at or around 90% since 2010/11.

The total number of children looked after in Scotland has reduced by 11% since 2010/11, from 16,231 to 14,458. This reflects a 12% reduction in the numbers of children looked after in a community setting (particularly those looked after at home with parents), and a 2% reduction in the numbers in a residential setting. For the first time in 8 years, in 2019/20 the overall number of children looked after rose slightly, by 1.4%. This reflects a 1.6% increase in the number looked after in the community, (particularly via Kinship care) and a 0.8% reduction in the number looked after in residential settings.

In 2019/20, the balance of care for looked after children ranged from 77% to 96%, with variation narrowing slightly in the most recent year. While the national average has remained around 90% since 2010/11, there have been significant changes at individual council level, with movement ranging from -8pp to +10pp. Performance in this area varies systematically with deprivation, with those councils with higher levels of deprivation reporting a higher balance of care in community settings (90% compared to 88%).

Fig 42: Balance of care for looked after children by family group - deprivation

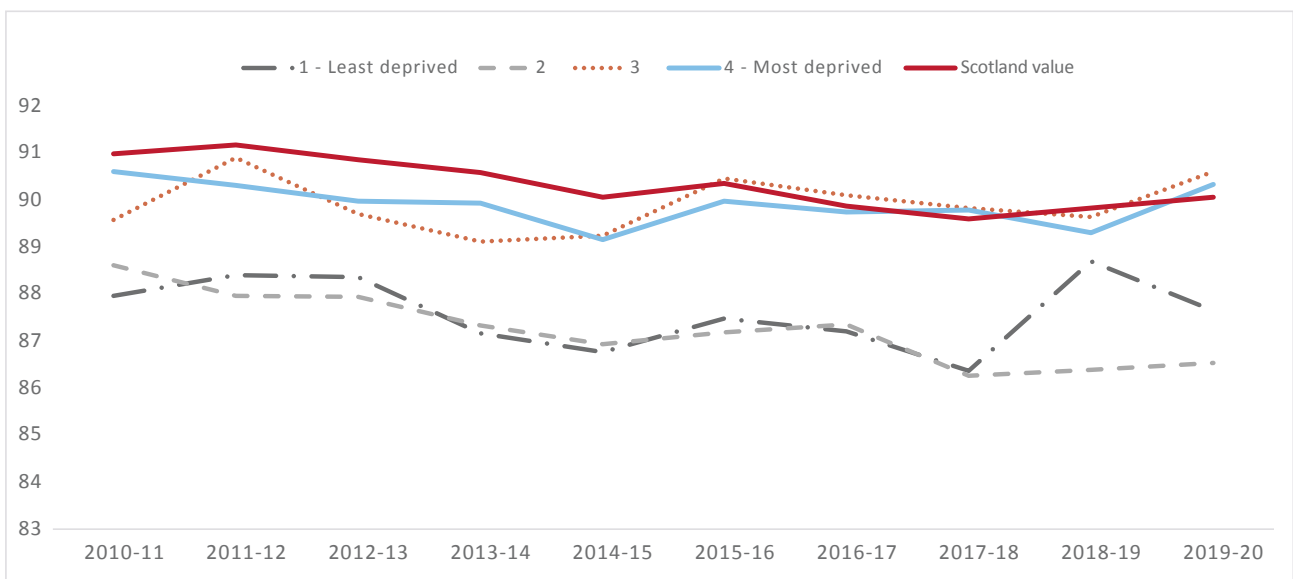
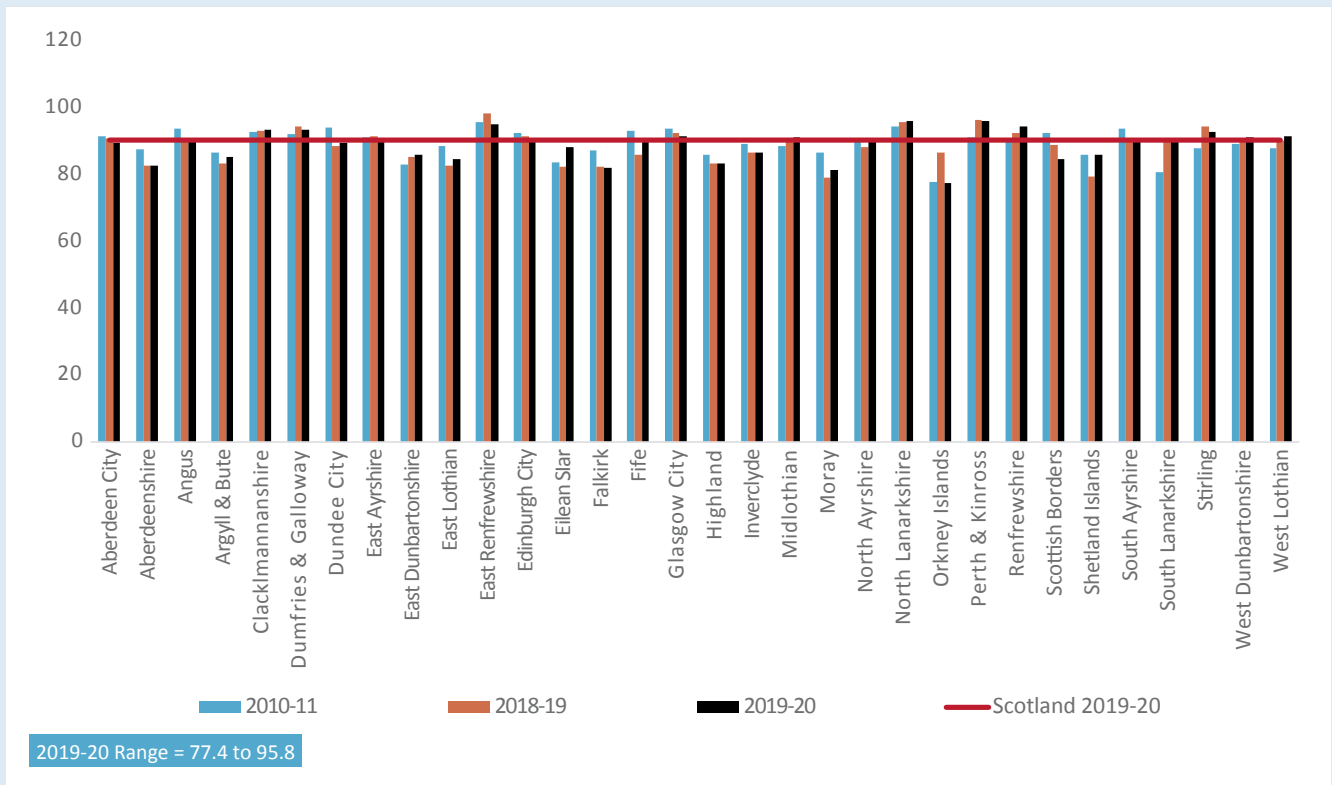




Fig 43: Balance of care for looked after children



Source: Scottish Government



**Local Variation – Balance of care looked after children**

2019/20 Value

Scotland: 90.1%; council range: 77% - 96%. Councils with higher levels of deprivation report significantly higher balance of care in community settings (90% compared to 88%).

Change Over Time

In 2019/20: Scotland: +0.3pp; councils: 20 increased and 12 decreased. (Range: -9pp to +6pp)

Since 2010/11: Scotland: -0.9pp. councils: 13 increased and 19 decreased. (Range: -8pp to +10pp)

**Placement stability for looked after children**

Placement stability for children who are looked after is central to promoting attachment and the development of secure relationships, and as such is a priority for corporate parents. Performance in this area is standardised as the number of children looked after away from home with more than one placement within a year, as a percentage of all looked after children.



Table 22: Percentage of LAC with more than 1 placement in the last year (Aug-July)

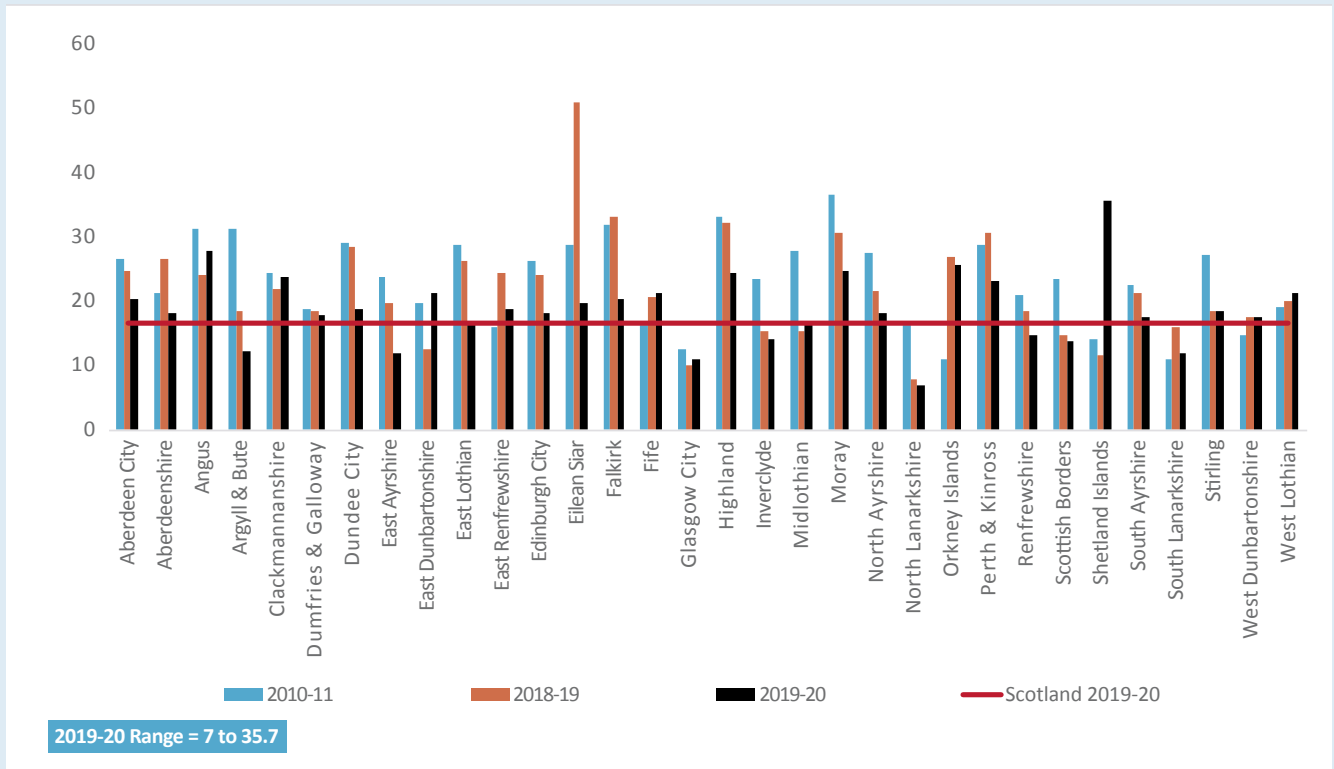
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
21.1	21.4	21.2	21.9	21.4	20.7	21.2	20.1	19.5	16.7	dna	-2.8	-4.4

In 2019/20, 16.7% of children looked after away from home had more than one placement within a year. This is a reduction of 4.4pp compared to 2010/11 and reflects a relatively sharp decrease in the most recent year. Data from 2019/20 covers the first 5 months of the COVID-10 period, and picks up the first impacts of the pandemic on children and families, and on social work practices. The extent to which the recent trend in placement stability was affected by COVID-19 is an important area for further examination, and will be a focus when data for 2020/21 becomes available.

There is significant variation between councils, ranging from 7% to 27% (excluding outliers), with a third of councils reporting an increase counter to the national trend. This variation is not systematically related to deprivation, rurality or size of council.



**Fig 44: Percentage of looked after children with more than 1 placement in the last year (Aug-July)**



**Local Variation – Placement stability**

2019/20 Value

Scotland: 16.7%; council range: 7% - 36% (7% - 28% excluding outliers). There is no systematic relationship with deprivation, geography or council size.

Change Over Time

In 2019/20: Scotland: -2.8pp; councils: 9 increased and 23 decreased. (Range: -13pp to +8pp, excluding outliers)

Since: 2010/11: Scotland: -4.4pp; councils: 8 increased and 24 decreased. (Range: -19pp to +5pp, excluding outliers)

**Child protection re-registrations within 18 months**

Child protection re-registration rates provide useful insight on local decision-making processes, the operation of risk thresholds, and the implementation of safeguarding processes. Of all child protection registrations in a year, this measure captures the percentage which have been registered previously within the past 18 months.



Table 23: Child protection re-registrations

2012 -13	2013 -14	2014 -15	2015 -16	2016 -17	2017 -18	2018 -19	2019 -20	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2012-13 to 2019-20
6.5	6.8	6.7	6.2	6.5	6.0	7.2	6.9	-0.3	0.4

Data for this measure is available only from 2012/13 onwards. Since then, the average reregistration rate for Scotland has remained relatively constant at around 6%-7%. In 2019/20, 6.9% of re-registrations were registered previously within the past 18 months, down 0.3pp from 7.2% in 2018/19. Data from 2019/20 covers the first 5 months of the COVID-19 period and picks up the first impacts of the pandemic on children and families, and on social work practices. The extent to which the recent trend was affected by the pandemic is an important area for further examination and will be a focus when data for 2020/21 becomes available.

There is significant variation between councils, with re-registration rates in 2019/20 ranging from 0% to 16% (excluding outliers). And while the Scotland average has remained around 6%-7% since 2012/13, this masks more significant movement at a council level during this time, with movements ranging from -15pp to +18pp (-8pp to +12pp excluding outliers). Variation between councils is not systematically related to deprivation, rurality or council size.

The small number of child protection re-registrations in some authorities may introduce volatility in the data for this measure which may explain some of the variation. A more robust measure going forward may be the average length of time on the Child Protection register given its focus on deregistrations rather than re-registrations and the larger sample this offers.

### Child poverty

Despite the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 setting ambitious targets to significantly reduce child poverty in Scotland by 2030 and placing a duty on local authorities and regional health boards in Scotland to produce annual Local Child Poverty Action Reports, rates of child poverty were rising in every local authority area in Scotland even before COVID-19. Projections suggest that the impact of the pandemic has the potential to exacerbate and entrench child poverty further.

A measure on child poverty has been incorporated within the LGBF to highlight Local Government's commitment to this critically important area and help raise awareness of the challenges facing local government and their partners, including in relation to strategic resourcing and prioritisation decisions.

The measure is the % of children living in households with below 60% median income after housing costs. This provides important alignment with the targets set out in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017. This measure is also the most commonly used measure across local Child Poverty Action Reports and therefore provides a significant degree of alignment and consistency.

Data for 2020/21 is not yet available, but latest data from 2019/20 shows that the % of children living in poverty (after housing costs) has increased from 21.6% to 24.3% since 2013/14, a 2.7pp increase. This includes a 1pp increase in the most recent year available. This increasing trend is replicated across all 32 authorities.

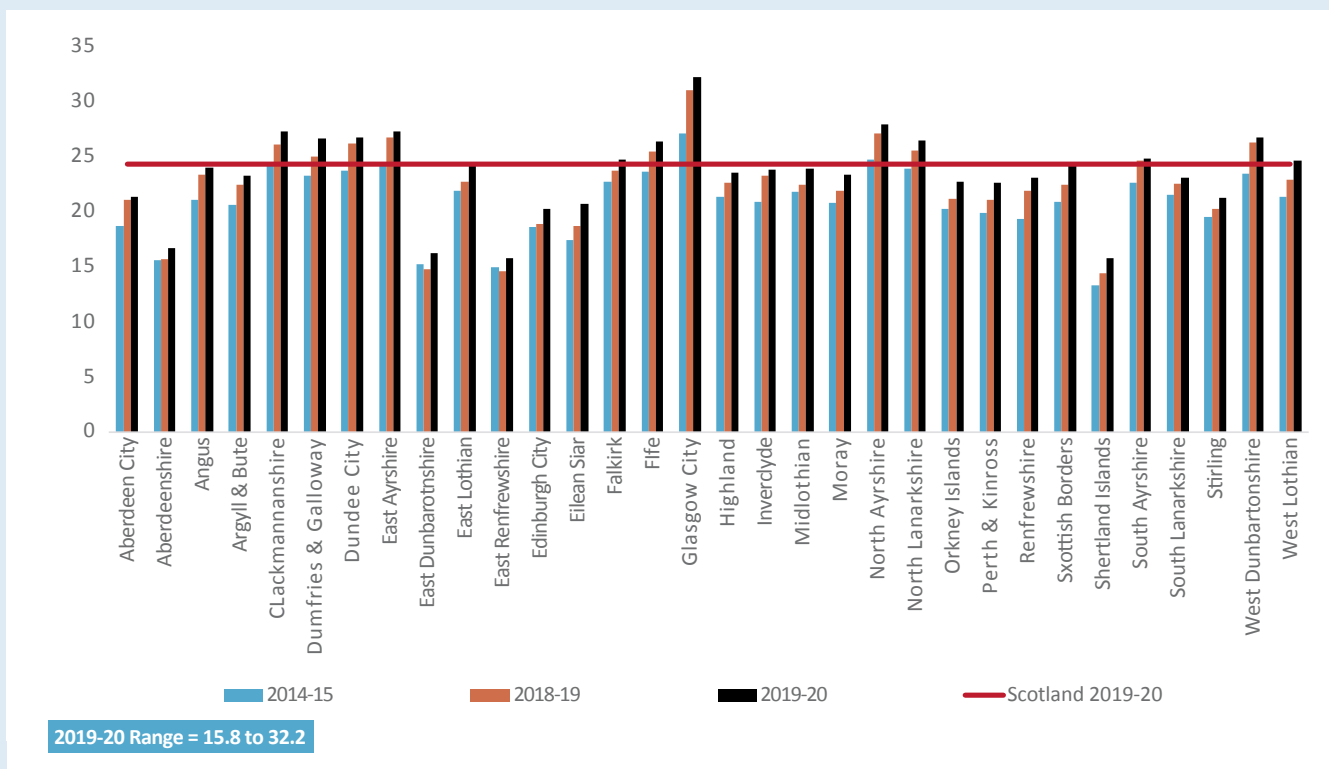


Table 24: % of Children living in households with below 60% median income after housing costs

2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2014-15 to 2019-20
21.6	22.8	23.4	24.2	23.2	24.3	dna	1.1	2.7

Although child poverty levels are growing in all council areas, there is significant and widening variation between authorities, with most recent values ranging from 15.8% to 32.2%. Levels vary systematically with deprivation, and those councils with highest levels of deprivation have significantly higher levels of Child poverty, 27% compared to 18%. In the most recent year however, poverty rates have increased at a faster rate in councils with lower levels of deprivation.

Fig 45: % of Children living in households with below 60% median income after housing costs



Source: End Child Poverty: Local indicators of child poverty after housing costs



### Local Variation – Child poverty

#### 2019/20 Value

Scotland: 24.3%; council range: 15.8% - 32.2%, with widening variation. Councils with highest levels of deprivation have significantly higher levels of Child poverty, 27% compared to 18%.

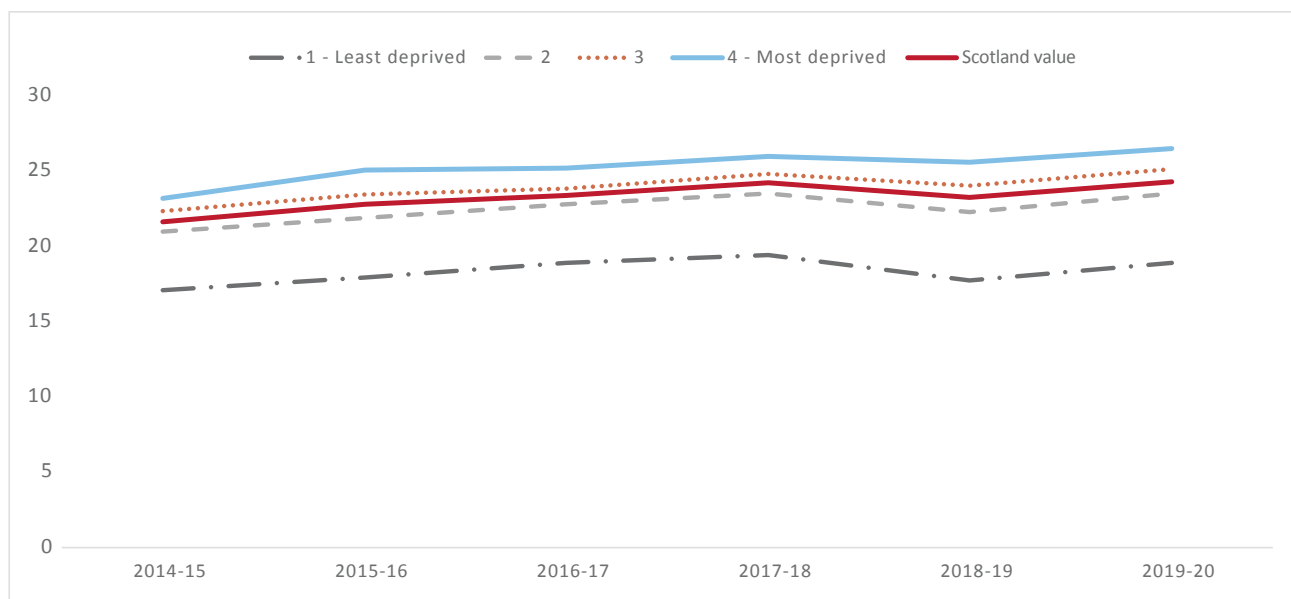
#### Change Over Time

In 2019/20: Scotland: +1.0pp. councils: 32 increased (range: +0.2pp to +2pp). Rates increased faster for least deprived authorities (statistically significant)

2010/11: Scotland: +2.7pp. councils: 32 increased. (Range: +0.8pp to +5.1pp).



**Figure 46: % of Children living in households with below 60% median income after housing costs by family group –deprivation**



This high-level measure of child poverty is helpful in evidencing the scale and nature of the problem and in informing priority local actions and resourcing. However, it will also be important to work with key sector stakeholders to identify and agree measures which focus on the drivers and levers which councils can more strongly influence at an earlier stage.

## Satisfaction with schools

The publication of Scottish Household Survey satisfaction data at council level has been delayed this year due to COVID-19 related changes which were required to be introduced to the standard survey methodology in 2020. This change in methodology has introduced comparability issues in relation to data from previous years which will need to be addressed in future publications. Satisfaction data for 2020/21 is therefore not currently available for inclusion in the LGBF.

Historic data shows a 10.1 percentage point reduction in adults satisfied with their local schools service between 2010/11 and 2019/20, with satisfaction levels falling from 83.1% to 73.0% during this time. After year on year reductions between 2010/11 and 2017/18, satisfaction rates improved between 2017/18 and 2019/20, from 70% to 73%.

While almost all councils experienced a decline in satisfaction levels since 2010/11, there is significant variation in the scale of this, from a decline of 24 percentage points to an improvement in one council area of 2.5 percentage points. Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, while there has been an improvement in average satisfaction levels, more than half of councils actually report a decline.

**Table 25: Percentage of adults satisfied with local schools**

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Value Change 2018-19 to 2019-20	Value Change 2010-11 to 2019-20
83.1	-	83.0	81.0	79.0	74.0	73.0	70.0	72.5	73.0	dna	0.5	-10.1

Source: Scottish Household Survey



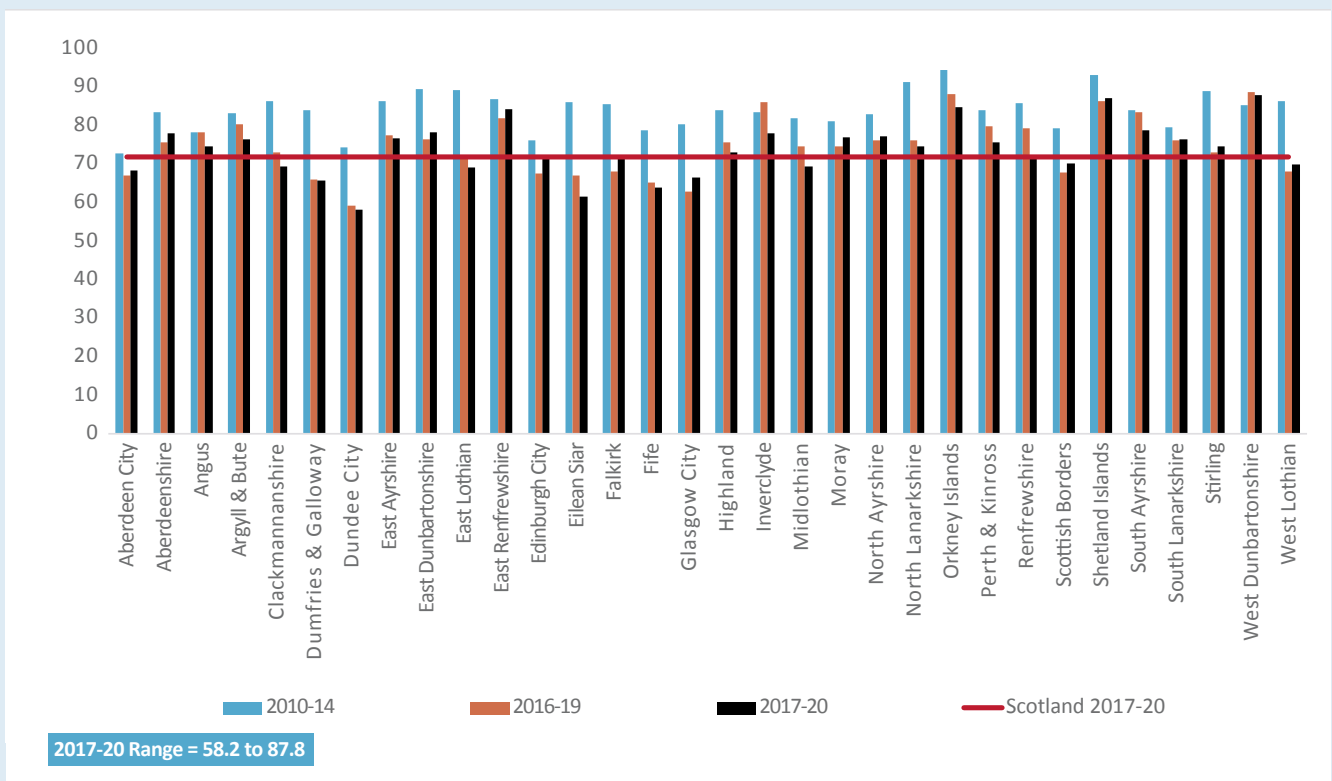


The customer satisfaction data that is included in the LGBF is derived from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). While this data is proportionate at Scotland level, it is acknowledged there are limitations at local authority level in relation to small sample sizes and low confidence levels. To boost sample sizes, 3-year rolled averages have been used in local authority breakdowns. This ensures the required level of precision at local levels within confidence intervals of 6%. From 2018/19, questions used in the LGBF have also been included in the Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ) which provides a boosted sample size.

The data used represents satisfaction for the public at large rather than for service users. Smaller sample sizes for service users mean it is not possible to present service user data at a local authority level with any level of confidence. It should be noted that satisfaction rates for service users are consistently higher than those reported by the general population.

There is significant and widening variation in satisfaction levels with local schools across Scotland, with levels ranging from 58% to 88% in 2019/20. In the most deprived councils, levels have fallen by 11 percentage points on average, compared to 6.5 percentage point reduction in the least deprived authorities. However, there is no statistically significant relationship with deprivation due to variation within the family groups.

Fig 47: Percentage of adults satisfied with local schools



Source: Scottish Household Survey



Fig 48: Percentage of adults satisfied with local schools by family group - deprivation

