

Scottish Attainment Challenge Challenge Programme Summary of Progress 2015-20

Renfrewshire Council

FINAL DRAFT

Summary of Progress – Renfrewshire Council

The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) was launched in 2015 to help the Scottish Government achieve its vision of delivering equity and excellence in education. Renfrewshire Council joined the Challenge programme in year 2 (2016-17).

The education service in Renfrewshire Council is led by the Director of Children's Services. The service is responsible for the education of over 27,000 children and young people between 3-18. There are 35 early learning and childcare establishments, 49 primary schools, 11 secondary schools and 2 special schools. 25% of children and young people live in areas of the highest deprivation, as categorised by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 1 and 2.

The authority has received Attainment Scotland funding through the Challenge Authority Programme (£17,797,657), the Pupil Equity Fund (£17,228,108), the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund (£1,426,000) and the Innovation Fund (£275,000) a total of £36,726,765 over the period 2015 to 2020.

Since 2015, the authority has been committed to delivering the recommendations from its Tackling Poverty Commission. Renfrewshire Council joined the programme in 2015 as a School's Programme Authority with five Challenge Schools. When the authority became a SAC Challenge Authority in June 2016, it was able to build on this foundation to develop its vision, values, and aims for SAC. The authority's SAC improvement plan was developed in partnership with headteachers and other relevant stakeholders and is closely aligned with the Children's Services Improvement Plan.

The Education Scotland inspection of local authorities (February 2019) *How well is Renfrewshire Council improving learning, raising attainment and closing the poverty-related attainment gap?* reported that the authority was making excellent progress with improving learning, raising attainment and narrowing the poverty-related attainment gap. The report stated that Education Scotland were confident that the evidence and evaluation at that time indicated the following strengths:

- Very strong self-evaluation, informed by high-quality data resulting in very successful, evidenced-based universal and targeted interventions, which are securing improvement.
- Highly effective leadership, shared vision and an ethos of empowerment of staff at all levels to improve outcomes for children and young people, their families and communities.
- The outstanding impact of very high quality professional learning approaches, developed and delivered in collaboration with partners.
- Renfrewshire Council's excellent approach to Scottish Attainment Challenge governance, which is set within a well-defined accountability framework.
- Significant year-on-year improvements in closing the poverty-related attainment gap across all key indicators in the broad general education across curricular areas.

Aspects for development were noted as:

- As planned, continue to build on successes achieved to date in addressing the poverty-related attainment gap and continue with plans to develop the sustainability of initiatives beyond the life of the SAC programme.

In December 2020, the Education Scotland attainment advisor worked alongside local authority project leads to analyse data and evidence of impact which identified the following key strengths:

- Well-structured programme management ensuring clearly defined approaches.
- Partnership working to enhance impact including co-ordinated approaches in the sharing of data.
- A sector leading approach to professional learning including a highly effective leadership programme and a programme for classroom assistants.
- Evidence-based approaches to the teaching of literacy have led to delivery of a high-quality literacy curriculum.
- Very good moderation activities provided across the authority.
- Staff are skilled at recognising and addressing the impact of poverty on families.
- Attainment in literacy and numeracy in the broad general education has improved over time and the authority continues to perform above national averages with decreasing poverty-related attainment gaps across stages.
- Schools have been supported to deliver a Senior Phase which ensures appropriate pathways for young people and provides them with the opportunity to achieve a range of qualifications.
- There has been an increase in positive destinations for leavers from areas of highest deprivation.
- The views and voices of children and young people are shaping improvements across the authority.
- The roles of inclusion support assistants and transition teachers have supported improved attendance, reduction in exclusions and transitions among targeted groups.
- Almost all establishments in all sectors are fully engaged in Renfrewshire's Nurturing Relationships Approach and there is a wide range of high-quality services and resources available to support the health and wellbeing of all children, young people and families.
- The work of the Support to Promote Attendance/Attainment for the Care Experienced (SPACE) team is effectively improving attendance and health and wellbeing for care experienced children and young people.
- The development of a parental engagement strategy has been a key focus to support establishments with their planning around parental engagement.
- The authority's approach to the use of data to inform all aspects of its work has led to the development of a positive data culture.
- Increased opportunities to work in partnership within, across and outwith the workstreams including with a range of academic partners have been impactful.

Next steps include:

- Establishing a 'Virtual School' approach towards supporting care experienced children and young people.
- Continuing to develop collective impact approaches.
- Continuing work to align systems and processes to ensure data accuracy through the ongoing data matching work.

March 2021

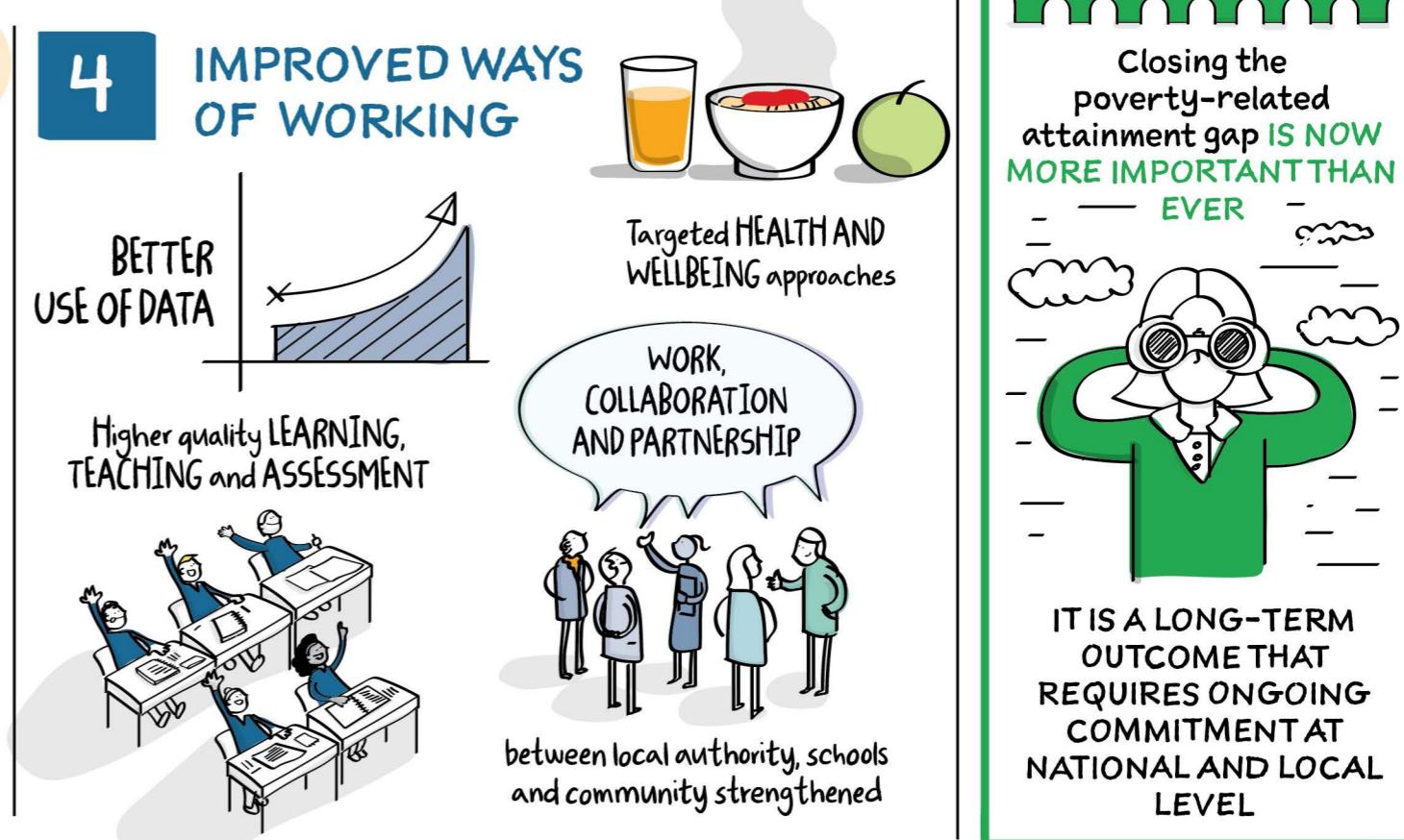
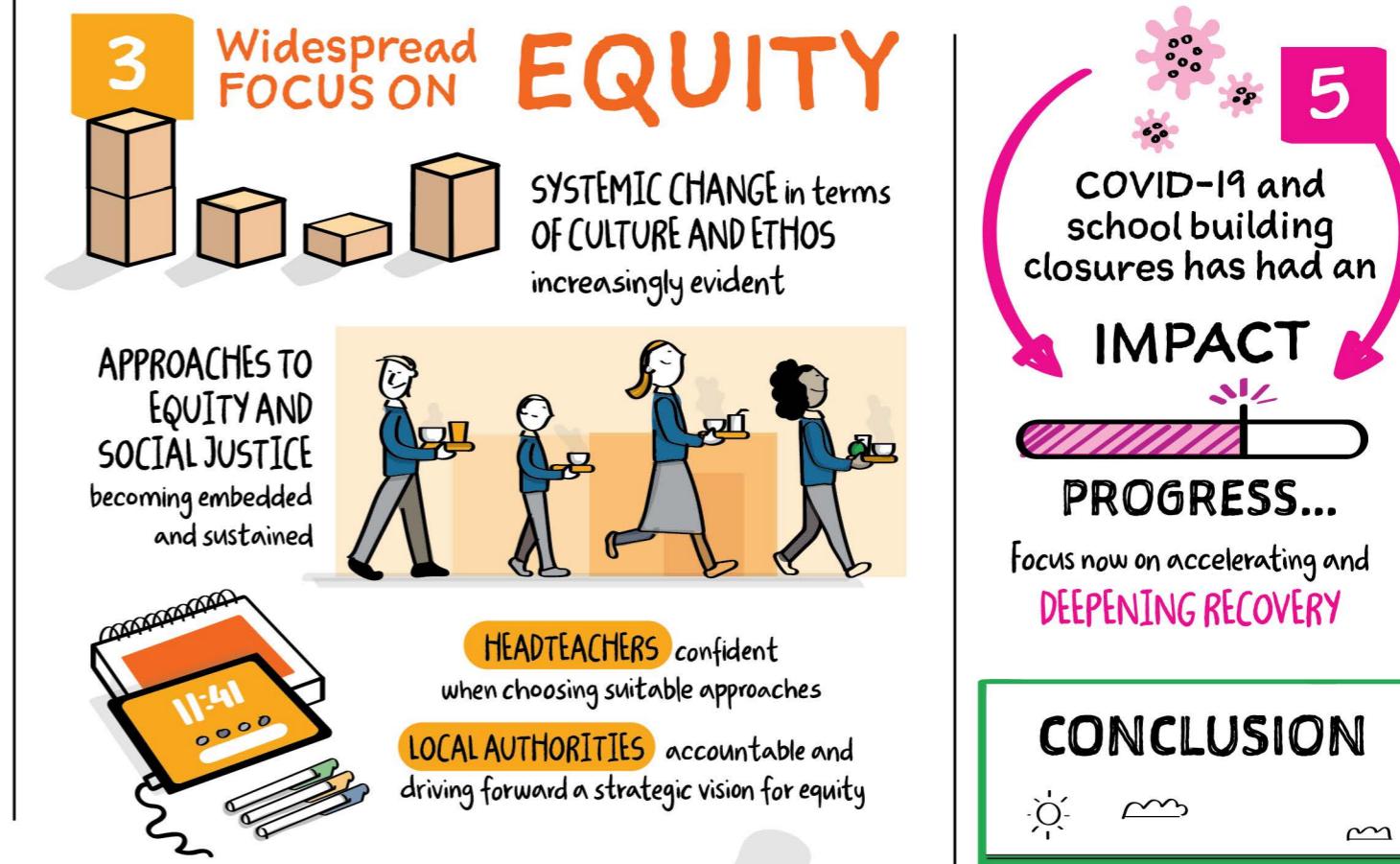
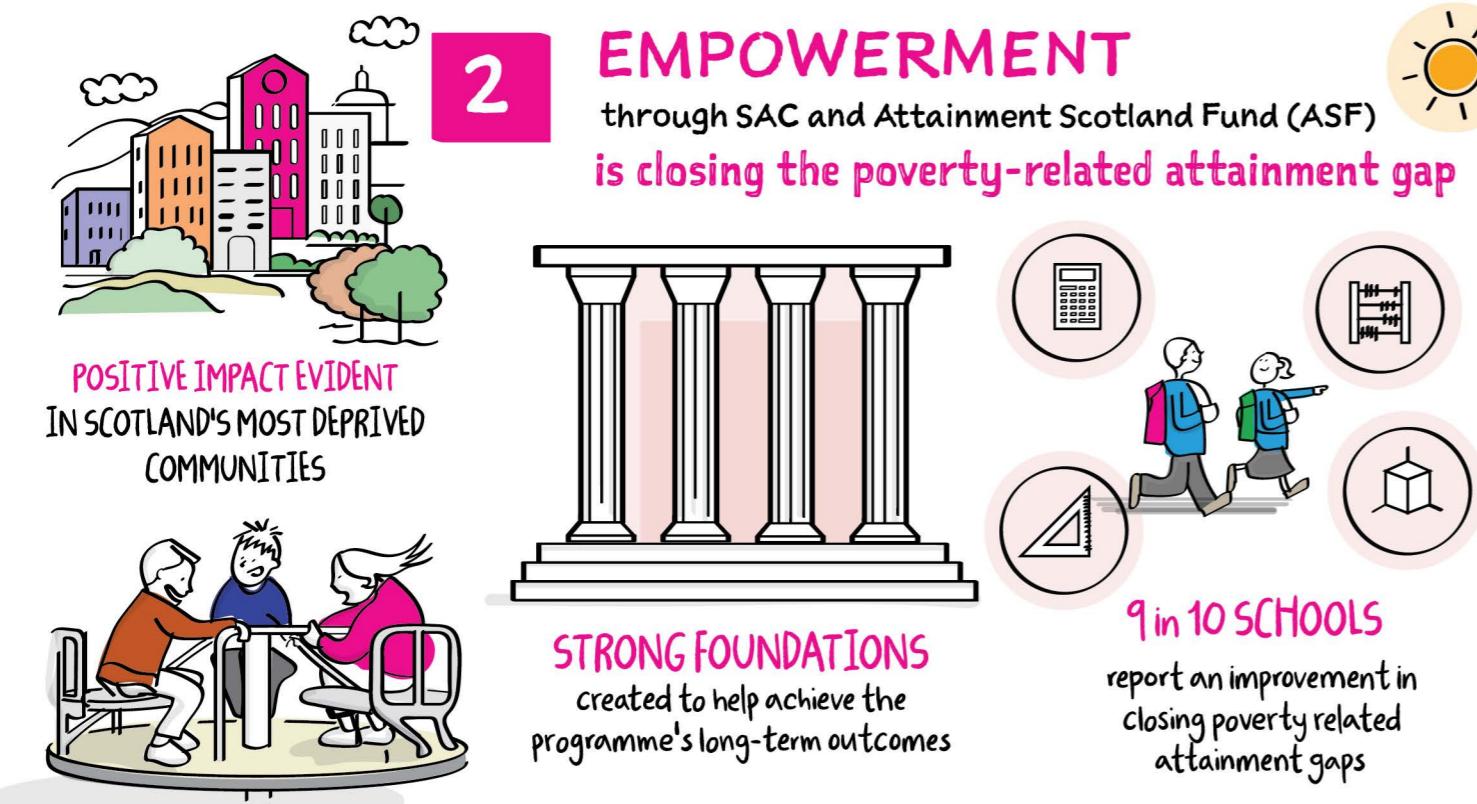
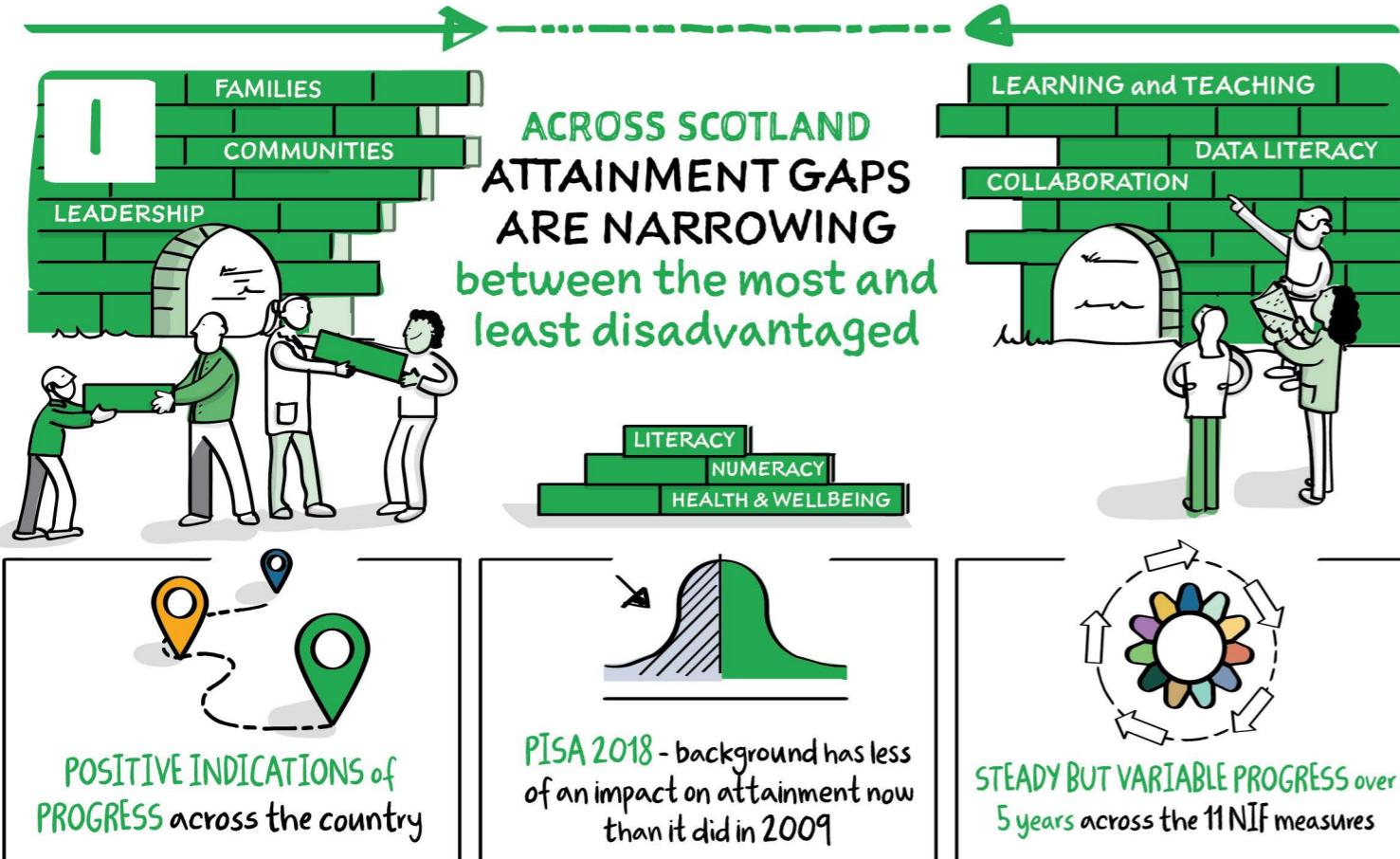
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THE PROGRESS TOWARDS CLOSING the poverty-related attainment gap



CONCLUSION

Closing the poverty-related attainment gap **IS NOW MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER**



Scottish Attainment Challenge Challenge Programme Summary of Progress 2015-20

West Dunbartonshire Council

FINAL DRAFT

Summary of Progress - West Dunbartonshire Council

The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) was launched in 2015 to help the Scottish Government achieve its vision of delivering equity and excellence in education. West Dunbartonshire Council joined the Challenge programme in year 1 (2015-16).

The education service in West Dunbartonshire Council is responsible for the education of around 12,000 school-aged children and young people in mainstream education establishments and 187 who are engaged in alternatives to mainstream education. There are 21 council managed early learning and childcare centres, 10 partner providers of early learning and childcare, 2 special schools, 33 primary schools, 1 programme for young people whose needs are not being met by mainstream secondary schools and 5 secondary schools. Just under half of all children and young people live in the areas of the highest deprivation categorised as Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 1 and 2, which is well above the national average.

West Dunbartonshire Council has received Attainment Scotland funding through the Challenge Authority Programme (£10,597,759), the Pupil Equity Fund (£13,326,356), the Innovation Fund (£34,000) and the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund (£869,360), a total of £24,827,475 over the period 2015 to 2020.

The Education Scotland inspection *How well is West Dunbartonshire Council improving learning, raising attainment and closing the poverty-related attainment gap?* dated 1 May 2018 evaluated the authority as making very good progress with improving learning, raising attainment and narrowing the poverty-related attainment gap. Particular strengths noted were:

- Highly-effective leadership of the education service resulting in a clear shared understanding of the local authority context and vision for improving the life chances for all children and young people.
- Staff and partners working effectively together to provide a wide range of support for children, young people and families which is leading to improvements in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.
- Many children, young people and families demonstrate a strong desire to positively engage in new projects and different ways of learning leading to increased achievements and skills for learning, life and work.
- Well thought-out strategic approaches to career long professional learning supporting practitioners to improve their practice through collaboration, engagement in research, critical reflection and skills development.
- Self-evaluation, underpinned by a robust governance framework, as an integral approach to continuous improvement.

Aspects for development were noted as:

- Continue to ensure self-evaluation provides clarity about which interventions add the most value to children's and young people's attainment and achievements and take steps to formalise exit or continuation strategies as appropriate.
- Further strengthen the information provided to the Educational Services Committee to enhance scrutiny by elected members through, for example, an increased focus on actual progress against planned activity.

- Building on the current good practice, improve planning with parents, carers and children and young people to ensure they are fully involved in discussions and decisions which affect their learning.
- Monitor the workload and impact on headteachers and central staff, including in human resources, procurement and finance, of their work related to the SAC and Pupil Equity Fund to ensure there is capacity to continue providing the required levels of administrative and other support.

In December 2020, the Education Scotland link attainment advisor worked alongside local authority project leads to analyse data and evidence of impact which identified the following key strengths:

- The authority strategy to deliver a system wide model of change and improvement, focussing on building capacity at all levels and in all sectors. This has improved the range of approaches being used to raise attainment and narrow poverty-related attainment gaps.
- An empowered system of school improvement at all levels has generated a self-sustaining model of school improvement with education leaders supporting and challenging peers and colleagues to raise attainment and improve learning.
- The conditions for effective collaboration and embedded use of data to improve outcomes have been created as a result of the foundations laid by the SAC work streams and projects.
- Since the 2018 Education Scotland inspection initiatives continue to maximise progress and embed sustainable change.
- A wider curriculum offering across establishments is in place with a focus on skills for learning and life enabling more young people to gain personal success and achievement.
- The scale and reach of nurture has been increased across all establishments and sectors, which has impacted on positive reductions in exclusion rates.
- Attainment of children and young people is showing trends of improvement with evidence of the narrowing of attainment gaps.
- Provision of SAC projects has increased the range and scope of accessible activities and services to support improvement in outcomes for families.
- The positive contribution played by the third sector family support and outreach workers is supporting children, young people and families with engagement, attendance, wellbeing and readiness to learn.

Next steps include:

- Continuing to prioritise quality of teaching and learning to raise attainment and continue to narrow the poverty-related attainment gaps.
- Advancing initiatives and projects to maximise attendance.
- Continuous development of personalisation and choice in the curriculum matched to future workforce demands.
- Continue to work with a range of multi-agency partners to identify interventions which focus on addressing identified needs of care experienced children and young people.
- Build on local community approach to providing integrated services for children, young people and families.

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