

Key principles of the marvellous mealtimes approach are:

- Free flow routines where children can choose which foods to eat
- Big Chef, Little Chef experiences involving families
- Children involved in making meals
- developing positive associations with food
- Real-life experiences with positive role models

This approach in developing children's ability to choose, prepare and serve their own food helps them to explore new textures and develop their senses. Making mealtimes relaxed and comfortable has helped children spending longer times in nursery to develop positive relationships and friendships with others. We expect our practitioners to provide children with real equipment for cooking, baking and preparation. In using these, children are learning to share with their peers and work well together. They are developing risk awareness and trying new things.

We have encouraged our ELC settings create nurturing and homelike environments for children to enjoy their snacks and meals. An increasing number of settings have family lunches and this joined up experience has helped to promote and support health eating habits in nursery and at home.



Learning to Achieve Outdoors

Positive relationships are at the heart of all that we do. Learning to Achieve sets out our aim to:

- Ensure that pupils are actively involved in their learning and progression
- Maximising opportunities to involve parents, families, partners and the wider community
- Work collaboratively with peers and partners to share best practice and support improvement for all of Falkirk's children and young people.

As a result of the change to the delivery system, 4 schools have accessed outdoor support via Falkirk Community Trust – engaging 28 children in outdoor/adventure activity. Previously this would have been only 1 school and a very low number of students. Outdoor learning has been especially effective in developing positive relationships, particularly where children and young people have been experiencing difficulties in school and in their family lives. In addition, targeted small group work and individual learning sessions have been designed and led by our Outdoor Learning officer with positive impact in the following areas:



- Increased awareness and skills of school staff about the use of OL as a means to engage pupils
- All pupils engaging positively when taking part in outdoor sessions
- Improved attendance
- Improved relationships between school staff/pupils



Family engagement through the outdoors: Several projects have successfully engaged families through outdoor learning experiences.

These include a residential experience to a youth hostel with five families from deprived areas – three of the families had never been away as a family before this trip. This allowed staff to develop relationships and build trust, as well as model bedtime routines and family meal times.

A residential experience for a P4-6 nurture group was rounded off with a visit from their families. Families were sent a personal invitation written by their child and were collected and taken to the campsite by minibus. The pupils cooked them lunch on open fires, proudly showed them the tents that they had slept in and demonstrated some of the activities they had been taking part in. This was the first time for two of the pupils that anyone from home had attended a school event.

Skills and attributes Development

2018 -2019 Service Priority:

Improve attainment and positive destinations for Falkirk's Young people

What did we aim to achieve in session 2018 -2019?

Develop Falkirk Council Framework for skills and attributes development 3-18.

Increase opportunities for learners to develop knowledge and skills in STEM Subjects.

Increase the number of and access to mentoring programmes and experiences which enable children and young people to develop skills for learning, life and work.

Further develop the use of consortia arrangements and virtual learning to help learners build a portfolio of relevant and appropriate qualifications and experiences in the senior phase

Increase the number of young people engaging in Foundation Apprenticeships



Developing Falkirk Council Framework for skills and attributes development 3-18.

We have promoted the importance of skills development from 3 -18yrs, skills and attributes development remains a Service Priority for session 2019 -2020.

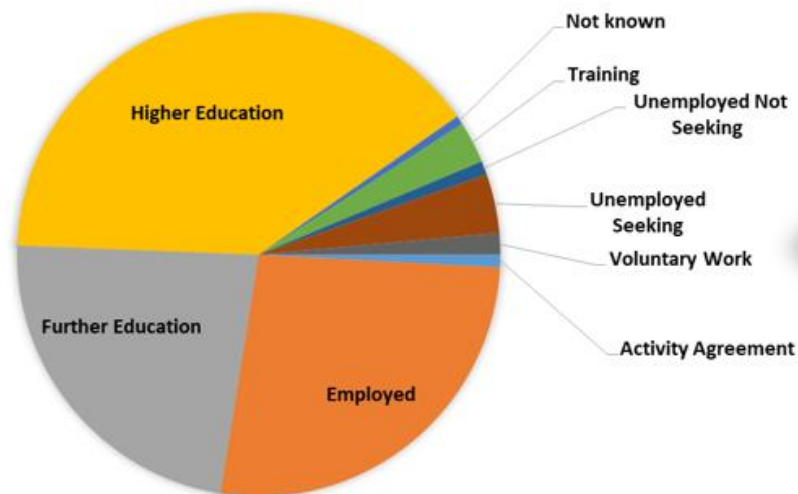
In the early years, one setting has contributed to the development of online training for the ELC sector in STEM through a partnership with the University of the West of Scotland. The local campaign 'Falkirk Wonderisers' has been highly successful in bringing to the fore the importance of STEM approaches in ELC. The focus on open-ended materials to support young children's creative thinking has been highly successful with this now being a feature in all Falkirk settings.

Across our primary schools, pupils are experiencing a broader range of experiences that are developing their skills and attributes as young leaders. We have seen and positive increase in children participating in shaping and evaluating their learning. We have used Education Scotland's "How Good is OUR School?" as part of our school engagement visits, using the 5 themes of participation as a standard for evaluation.

We have looked closely at the destinations of our young people. We are now working with schools to look more closely at sustaining destinations. Our position in Falkirk is positive and continues to improve.

The information below summarises leaver destinations for the last session and overall improvement since 2015.

DESTINATIONS OF SCHOOL LEAVERS (2018/19)



Destinations
Since 2015 we have improved Literacy and Numeracy, increased attainment in amongst learners from deprived areas and closed the attainment gap.

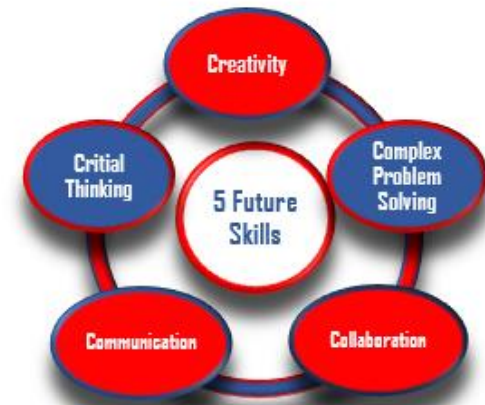
- Those going onto positive destinations has increased by 5%
- Those going onto Higher Education increased by 28%
- Leavers unemployed and seeking work has halved since 2012/13
- The difference between leavers in the least and most deprived areas has halved since 2014/15

| | |
|----------|--|
| Theme 1: | Our relationships This includes friendships, relationships with teachers and other adults who support us, opportunities to influence things, equality and fairness, ethos and culture, feeling supported and cared for. |
| Theme 2: | Our learning & teaching This includes the curriculum, the quality of learning experiences, the range of teaching approaches and access to high-quality resources for learning. |
| Theme 3: | Our school & community This includes the facilities and environment for learning, availability of digital technology, the range of equipment for play and physical activity and ensuring everyone has good access to what's available. It also includes having positive links between our school and our families and with partner organisations in our community. |
| Theme 4: | Our health & wellbeing This includes access to good quality nutritious food as well as support for our emotional wellbeing, mental health and physical wellbeing. |
| Theme 5: | Our successes & achievements This includes opportunities for achievement in our school and in the community, being able to achieve the best possible progress, awards and qualifications, skills for employment and lifelong learning. |

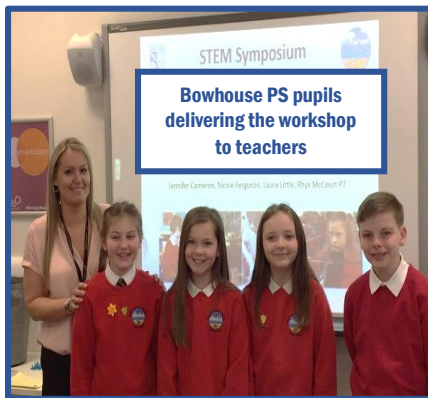
Across the authority a number of our schools have created and are currently embedding their own skills frameworks based on their individual needs. To ensure the work of the service was complementary to the work of the schools it was important to recognise how world, national and local influences would impact on the young people of Falkirk Council. Throughout session 2018-19 a partner group was established to bring together the most relevant and specific skills young people within the Forth Valley area will need for a successful future. The group included representatives from the Service and School Improvement team, Skills Development Scotland and DYW Forth Valley. The following influences were taken into account:

- 4th industrial revolution and related international policy
- Local and Regional labour market intelligence
- Skills Development Scotland publication Skills 4.0
- National STEM Strategy
- Forth Valley STEM Strategy

This work led to the soft launch of the *Falkirk 5 Future Skills*



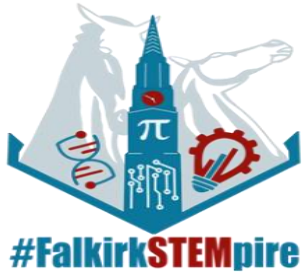
Increasing opportunities for learners to develop knowledge and skills in STEM Subjects.



Due to the increasing demand for STEM skills in the local and national context the future-proof *Falkirk 5 Future Skills* were launched within the context of our *Skills through STEM Symposium in March 2019*.

Excellent practice from Falkirk Council and national schools was celebrated and shared throughout the Symposium. The quality of the event was further enhanced with contributions from Education Scotland, Skills Development Scotland and other leading contributors to the skills and STEM agenda.

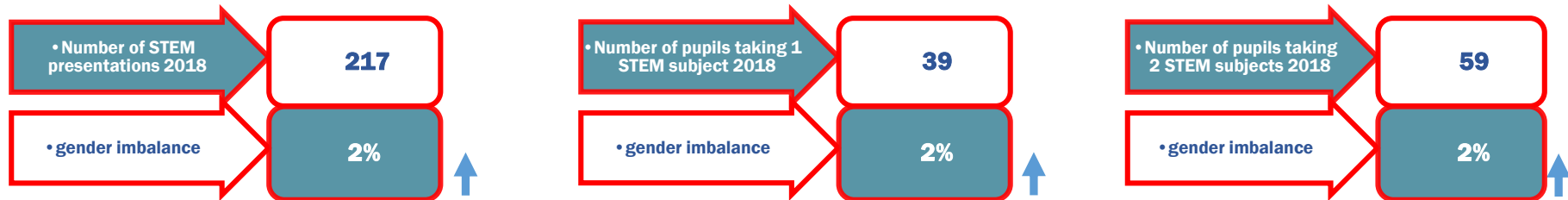
The event was attended by a representative from almost all schools within Falkirk, with the majority of those in attendance recognising there was further work to be done in their own establishments.



Schools are now beginning to consider these skills in learning and teaching and all newly qualified teachers attend a professional learning session focussing on the application of these skills across the learning experience. Schools have embraced this work and this is evidenced in the significant rise in schools who have Skills and STEM on their improvement plans.



There has been a significant increase in the number of SQA presentations for STEM related qualifications. The gender imbalance between boys and girls electing STEM subjects is also improving.



Increasing the number of, and access to, programmes and experiences which enable children and young people to develop skills for learning, life and work

We have connected skills for learning, life and work from early years through to senior phase and beyond. The early years “Play is the Way” philosophy is clearly recognising the importance of building on the rich learning experiences children encounter during play. Primary schools are also embracing “Play is the Way” and using this as a context to build learning around the *Falkirk 5 Future Skills*.



Through existing relationships and partnership with DYW Forth Valley we have increased employer engagement in our primary and secondary schools. These experiences have a positive impact on learners as they report they have a better understanding of the world of work.

Forth Valley College have also contributed to professional learning opportunities for teachers/practitioners from all sectors to give access to rich industry insight. Those who attended have taken this learning back to their setting to influence the learning which takes place in the classroom.

Increase in vocational qualifications

Developing the use of consortia arrangements and virtual learning to help learners build a portfolio of relevant and appropriate qualifications and experiences in the senior phase



Falkirk Council schools have embraced the widening of opportunities for young people in the senior phase. We continue to grow the range of qualifications and pathways for young people through partnership arrangements with Forth Valley College and other education providers.

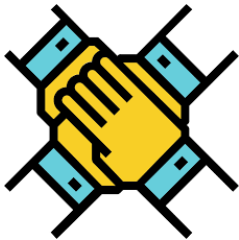
In 2017, 98 qualifications were offered through consortia or on a partnership arrangement. 45 of those qualifications were either work based or vocation specific qualifications. In the 2019 qualification profile, 122 qualifications were offered through consortia or on a partnership arrangement. 66 of those were either work based or vocation specific qualifications.



Increasing the number of Foundation Apprenticeships available to young people

Falkirk Council continue to extend the Foundation Apprenticeship offer across our school estate. With Forth Valley College as our partner provider we have now established 10 frameworks, 8 of which are on a one or two year programme basis. We are expanding the opportunities across Falkirk Council services for our young people to complete their work placement. This has been specifically around the following frameworks :

- Children and Young People
- Healthcare
- Creative and Digital Media
- Business Skills



Due to the successful partnership and implementation of Foundation Apprenticeships we have presented our practice at Scottish Government Policy Conferences, ADES and Skills Development Scotland National Conference, Developing Young Workforce National Network and to the Scottish Government Developing Young Workforce Programme Board.



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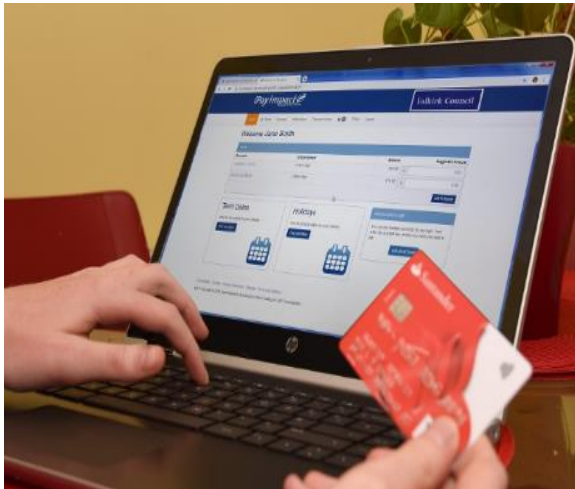
Responsive

We have supported the development implementation of online payments in primary and secondary schools. Moving to payments online not only makes it more convenient for parents and carers it reduces cash handling in schools. Early adopters reported back that this new

approach reduced cash handling by between 90%.

Of paramount importance for Children's Services and schools is the help for families. Having the same system for both primary and secondary allows parents and carers with children at both stages to link their profiles to a single account, giving them a single place to see all school payments related to their children.

As well as making the Council more responsive to the needs of its citizens, the system offers more equitable and sensitive meal selection removing the need to make a distinction between those entitled to free meals and those who are not. By moving to online selection of meals, either from home or in class, each child is treated equally. Having online payments available 52 weeks a year also allows parents to spread the cost over the summer months, which was something we couldn't previously offer.



All Falkirk Council schools have signed up to undertake the [Digital Schools Awards](#) process, a nationally recognised programme developed in collaboration with Education Scotland and industry titans HP and Microsoft.

To achieve Digital Schools Awards accreditation, schools were required to self-assess their developments in digital technology under common practice areas of Leadership and Vision, Digital Technology for Learning and Teaching, School Culture, Professional Development and Resources and Infrastructure. The self-assessment is then externally moderated by an independent Digital Expert visiting each school and meeting with pupils, staff and parents.

The programme promotes skills such as digital innovation and creativity; computational thinking; advances in STEM; the use of digital technology to promote higher order thinking skills; support for digital equity and access and the need for cyber resilience

Ambitious



make it happen

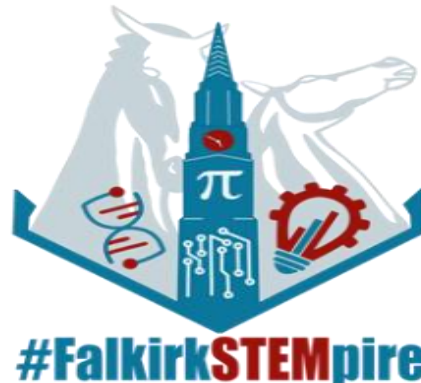
council of the future

Innovative

Our effective partnership with Forth Valley College has delivered Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) workshops to hundreds of school pupils from Falkirk's primary schools and members of youth organisations over the past year due to a £10,000 funding boost from Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Forth Valley.

The DYW grant has supported the college in delivering the 'Famous Four' outreach programme to a number of our schools in the Forth Valley area. The 'Famous Four' is an engaging, exciting and inter-active programme, based on four STEM based environmental cartoon heroes, that our primary school pupils would otherwise not have the opportunity to experience.

FVC used the funds to promote STEM learning directly – which also includes the STEM Summer School, Teacher Take-Over Days and STEM Club to larger-scale events including the Bloodhound Challenge and STEM at the Helix making a valuable contribution to the priorities set out by the Scottish Government in their STEM Education and Training Strategy. This also aligned with our own Service priority and the Forth Valley STEM strategy to increase learner engagement from 3- 18 in STEM activities and studies



In session 2018 -2019 we have worked in close partnership with our schools to be informed prepared and ready for the opportunities and challenges of moving "Towards an Empowered System."

Before the Scottish Government published the latest series of documents in June 19, the Service and School Improvement team had been working with ELCs, primary, secondary and specialist settings to develop a collaborative approach to school improvement.

We have built a School Improvement Framework where headteachers and their teams work in partnership with the Service as part of our collective endeavour to achieve the expectations we set ourselves as well as the national Improvement framework priorities.

Senior leaders are an integral part of our validated self-evaluation process. They have embraced our drive to be open, transparent and professionally critical to improve the quality of provision for all our learners, to raise aspirations and ambition for the Service as a whole.

Falkirk leaders and practitioners have the highest participation levels for professional learning across our FVWLRIC. Nationally we exceed our allocated places for leadership development, we are the largest group of participants with Stirling University Masters Education and coaching modules and the professional reading programme. Almost all schools and ELCs in Falkirk have contributed, designed, led and facilitated professional learning.

Trusted



For session 2019 – 2020 we are retaining the priority areas of:

- Raising Attainment and Achievement
- Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion: and
- Skills and Attributes Development

The three priority areas are connected and interlinked. As such elements from all have contributed to our successes and achievements and be elements from all that are the focus for improvement. There are some common performance themes that we will focus on:

Improved

Attainment and Achievement

Core NIF Quality Indicators:

- 1.3 Leadership of Change 31% are very good or excellent, 52% good
 2.3 Learning teaching and Assessment 11% are very good or excellent, 69% good
 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement 11% are very good, 66% good

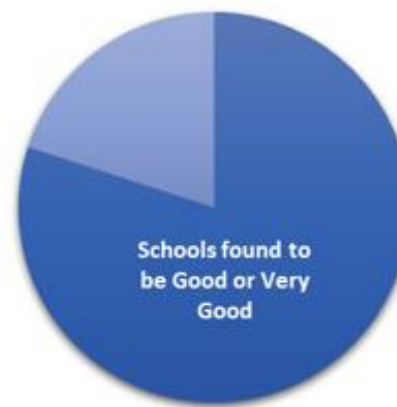
Even better if.....

- 45% are very good or excellent, 55% are good
 40% are very good or excellent, 60% are good
 30% are very good or excellent, 70% are good

Leadership of Change



Learning, Teaching & Assessment



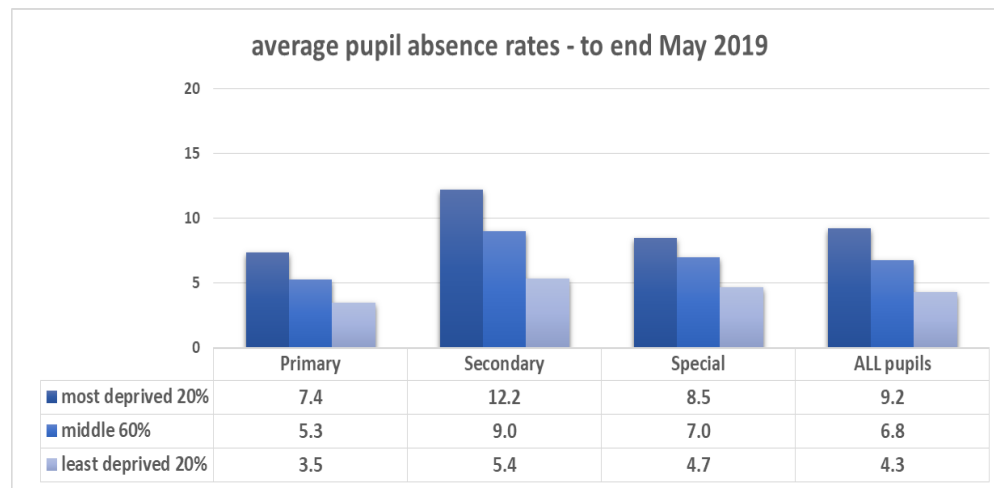
Raising Attainment & Achievement



Improved

Absence /Attendance

From May 2018 in an effort to highlight the slight fall attendance rates in Falkirk schools, monthly summary data provided for all schools data has been presented in terms of absence. For example, analysis of the attendance and attainment of S4 pupils in Falkirk schools last session showed that pupils with an average absence rate between 0% and 5% had a 66% chance of achieving 5 or more National 5 awards. Where absence was between 6% and 10% the chance of achieving 5 or more National 5 awards fell to less than 50%. Those S4 pupils whose absence was 20% or higher had 49% chance of achieving only 1 National 5 award.



Even better if.....

- Primary 94% by 2020 97%
- Secondary 91% by 2020 95%
- Special 93% by 2020 95%
- All sectors 93 by 2020 98%

Focusing on absence is more effective in improving understanding of the impact on attainment, engagement, participation and achievement.

We reduce the numbers of pupils with:

- 10% absence are missing, on average, **one day of school per fortnight.**
- 20% absence are missing, on average, **one day of school per week.**
- 50% absence are missing, on average, **one whole week of school every fortnight.**

We see particular progress and improvement in reducing absence for those pupils in the most deprived 20% and the middle 60% and for those pupils who are care experienced.

Improved

Inclusion/ Exclusion

In last 5 years exclusions have reduced by 23%

Up to the end of May 2019, there were 339 exclusions from Falkirk schools, shown by sector in table 6, below. This compares with 330 exclusions for the same period in session 2017 -2018.

A total of 814 school days have been lost so far this session through exclusion, with exclusions lasting, on average, 2.4 days.

| Sector | Number of exclusion incidents | Exclusions per 1,000 pupils | Number of Days lost through exclusion | Number of Days lost per 1,000 pupils |
|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Primary | 115 | 9 | 239 | 19 |
| Secondary | 213 | 24 | 553 | 62 |
| Special | 11 | 52 | 22 | 104 |
| TOTAL | 339 | 15 | 814 | 37 |

Even better if.....

Exclusions are reduced by 40%

Our revised policy and guidance focuses on Inclusion.

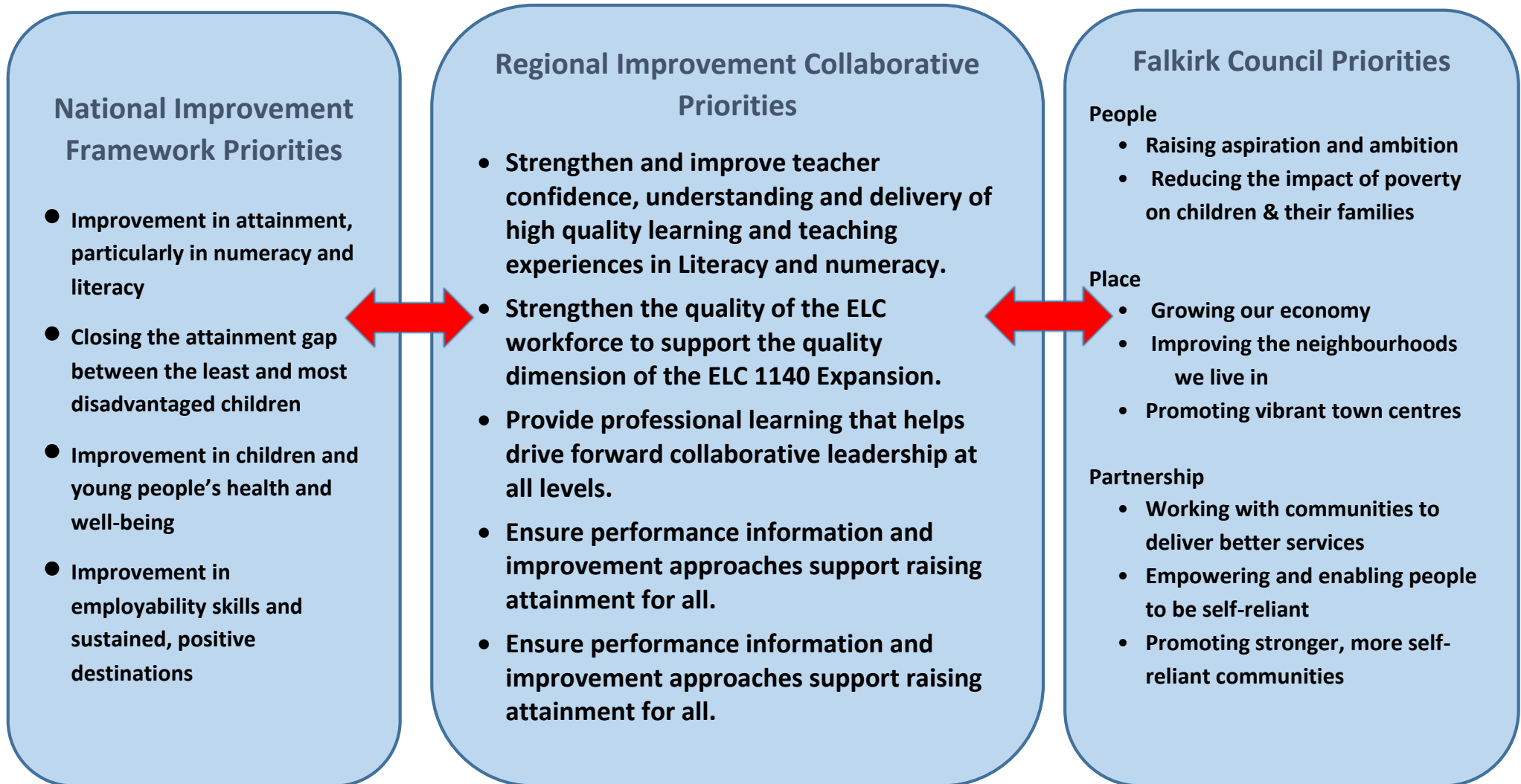
We are able to include those pupils who are most vulnerable and most need our help.

Our policy and guidance helps schools to pursue strategies inclusion engagement and involvement.

We can reduce exclusion across all sectors by 50 %

Our Service Improvement plan for session 2019 -2020 sets out our ambitions and aspirations. It details our improvement activities for the year ahead as summarised below

Priorities for session 2019 -2020



Improvement Activities

Raising Attainment & Achievement

Raise attainment for every child and young person and enable them to make excellent progress through their learning journey 3–18yrs.

- Major focus on tracking, monitoring and moderation of professional judgements of CFE, BGE
- BGE and Senior Phase 2023 Development work
- Develop strategic action plan for Parental Involvement & Engagement Strategy including review of current processes for reporting to parents
- Focus on improving attendance, reducing absence; refine data and identify high level messages

Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion

Improve processes to support attainment and positive destinations for Falkirk's vulnerable children and young people.

- Major Focus on staff training and development to improve support for children and young people with SEBN
- Consistent use of the ASN & Staged intervention process & support for schools to embed this
- Unify HWB policy and practice
- Create a toolkit for self-evaluation based on HGIOURS
- Develop and embed digital skills that support inclusion

Skills & Attributes Development

Improve attainment and positive destinations for Falkirk's young people.

- Major focus on skills development and increasing opportunities for learners to develop knowledge and skills in STEM subjects 3 -18
- Continue to develop the alignment and blending of the DYW & STEM strategies (KPIs: Teacher confidence & Competence, Inspiration, Excellence, Equity, Connectedness)
- Create a collection of professional development tools/experiences to support practitioners with STEM

