

Progress & Impact Report – 2022-2023



Northern
Alliance



Contents

Foreword	2
Northern Alliance Phase 4 Plan - Priority Overview	3
Evaluating Progress: Year 1.....	6
Data Processes	6
Universal Measures.....	6
Communicating	6
Collaborating.....	6
Learning / Improving.....	7
Universal Measures – Data Over Time.....	7
Northern Alliance Global Data	8
Communicating and Collaborating with our Local Authorities and Partners	9
Local Authority Link Officers	9
Education Scotland North Team	9
e-Sgoil.....	10
Cross RIC Collaboration.....	10
Shared Headship Research Project	10
Northern Alliance Podcast	11
World Education Summit.....	11
Northern (high) Lights.....	11
Youth Advisory Group Residential	12
Increased Focus on Learning Teaching and Assessment	12
Phase Four Priorities – Progress and Impact	14
Wellbeing and Learning Workstream Progress and Impact	15

Social Intelligence Workstream Progress and Impact.....	19
Equality Investments Workstream Progress and Impact.....	22
Systemness Workstream Progress and Impact.....	28
Learning from Year One and Next Steps.....	31
Early Signs of Improvement	31
Lessons Learned	31
Looking Ahead to Year Two of our Plan.....	31
APPENDIX A.....	33
APPENDIX B	38

Foreword

As the current Regional Improvement Lead for the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Collaborative, I am pleased to share an overview of progress and activity for 2022-2023 as we continue our journey to collaborative improvement.

This year we have embarked on the first year of the Phase 4 Plan which our local authority teams, school leaders, practitioners, staff and young people helped develop through the extensive 'What Matters to You?' engagement process. Priorities and activity are shaped around four key areas:

- **Wellbeing and Learning – feeling well and learning well**
Making learning more meaningful through our pedagogy, practice and curriculum, deepening the connections and motivation to learn.
- **Social Intelligence – how we work and learn together**
Building a shared understanding of meaningful collaboration with increased opportunities to collaborate locally, and across the Northern Alliance.
- **Equality Investments – breaking down the barriers to wellbeing and learning**
Working with our learners and families, capturing learner voice; making the best use of our data, measures and money to improve outcomes for **all** learners.
- **Systemness – working together to improve our system**
Building collective responsibility to improve our system and shared understanding of what makes a good leader at all levels

We continue to capture data on how we're collaborating and as always, we continue to see increasing numbers of practitioners and colleagues connecting across our eight local authorities.

Throughout 2022-2023 we have engaged in **715 collaborative engagements** with **5,918 practitioners**: from one or two-way information/resource sharing and informal discussion, to more formal planning and joint work, and development of practice through collaborative enquiry.

We are also seeing a continued desire to engage in the one-off and series of professional learning offered, with **2,019 practitioner registrations** throughout the year and **1,010 registered attendees**.

The number of practitioner networks continues to increase, broadening the reach of our collaboration whilst also responding to request and need. Networks such as Shared Headship Schools, Nurture, Pastoral Care and Child Protection, Head Teacher, and Armed Forces Families are all new features from this year. The success of the Secondary Subject Support Groups (SSGs) also continues to grow. **27 SSGs** and **1,089 members** regularly meet and are adding value to existing local authority groups.

A wealth of activity has been undertaken this year, and as we move into year 2 of the phase 4 plan, an agreed overarching focus on QIs 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment, and 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion, will shape the way forward as we continue to overcome ongoing and new challenges within our Scottish education system.



James Wylie
Regional Improvement Lead
July 2023



Northern Alliance Phase 4 Plan- Priority Overview

Northern Alliance Vision:

‘Developing a culture of collaboration and sharing of expertise and creating local and regional networks to improve the educational and life chances of all our learners’

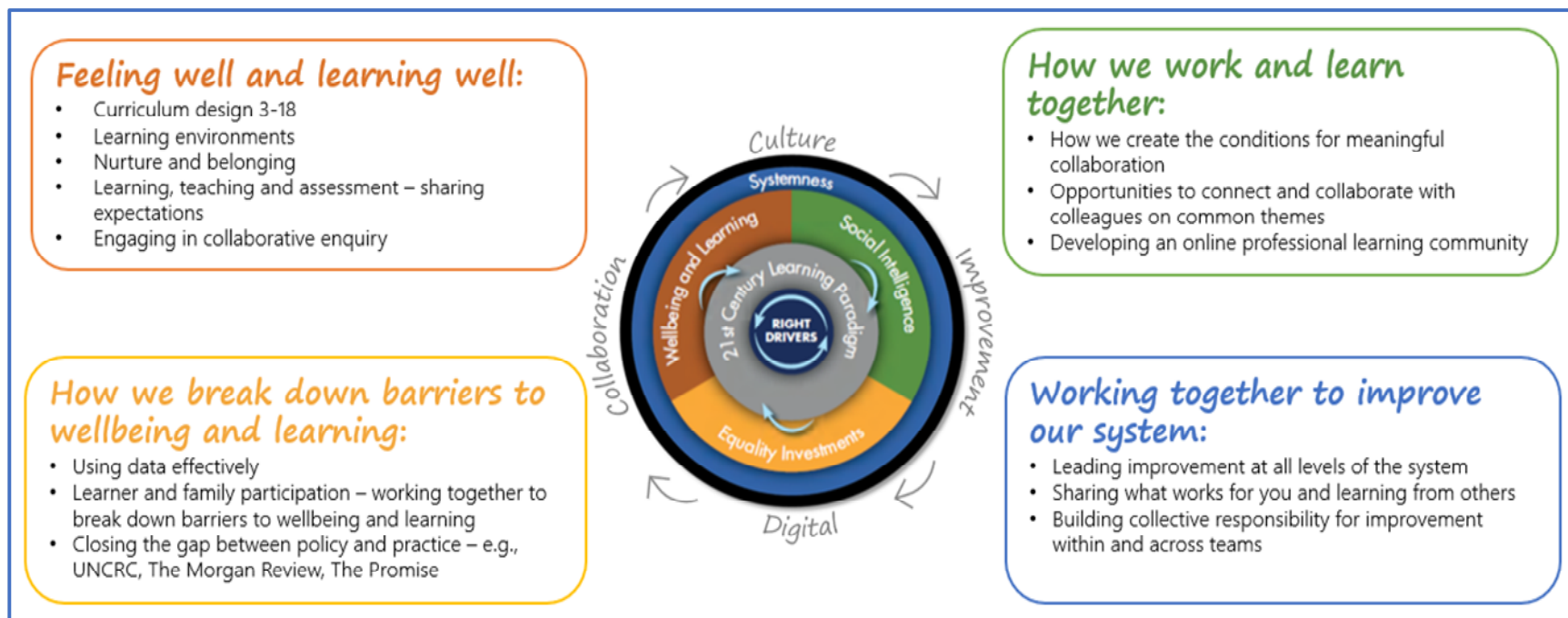
Within the ‘Review of the Regional Improvement Collaboratives’ (2021) the Scottish Government sets out the role of the RICs as intended to:

- provide educational improvement support to practitioners through dedicated teams of professionals - drawing on local authority staff, Education Scotland staff and others
- provide focus across all partners through a regional plan and work programme - aligned to the National Improvement Framework (NIF)
- facilitate and create the conditions to support collaborative working across the region.

In ‘Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education’ (2021), Professor Ken Muir also highlights the unique role that Regional Improvement Collaboratives play within the Scottish education system - ‘From the outset it was made clear that the establishment of RICs was not about creating new formal bodies, but *was about developing different ways of working, bringing together capacity from across an area and beyond, to add value through collective efforts.*’

For the Northern Alliance to achieve its vision, as well as the criteria set out by the Scottish Government, we have made use of Michael Fullan’s ‘Right Drivers for Whole System Success’ to frame improvement activity within the Phase 4 plan. The Drivers are research based and ensure **wellbeing and learning, equality investments, collaboration** and **collective responsibility for improvement** are at the heart of our plan. The Drivers help the Northern Alliance to fulfil its unique role within the region, enabling us to take a focused and collaborative response to our contexts, whilst using local and national policy, process and language.

In preparation for the development of the next phase of improvement activity across the Northern Alliance, it was important to ensure that stakeholders had the opportunity to influence the Phase 4 Plan. Between January and June 2022, we carried out a series of engagements with learners, practitioners, central team members, Heads of Service, Directors, National Partners and Elected Members. We worked together to identify common themes which connected with local, regional and national priorities. In addition, we looked outwards and forwards to understand what challenges and opportunities could be harnessed as part of future Scottish Education reform, as well as societal challenges and opportunities, such as economic, environmental and digital developments. This resulted in the creation of 12 areas for improvement, organised under four themes, as outlined in the diagram below.



As a regional improvement collaborative, it is part of our role to ensure all improvement activity adds value to our National Improvement Framework. During the planning process for each theme and priority, we identified:

- Our theory of change and associated aims and measures
- What success would look like
- Links to National Improvement Framework Drivers
- Links to regional medium-term outcomes as outlined within the SAC logic model

An overview of how our priorities link to national priorities is provided at **Appendix A**.

Northern Alliance Collaborative Improvement Strategy: *working towards coherence*

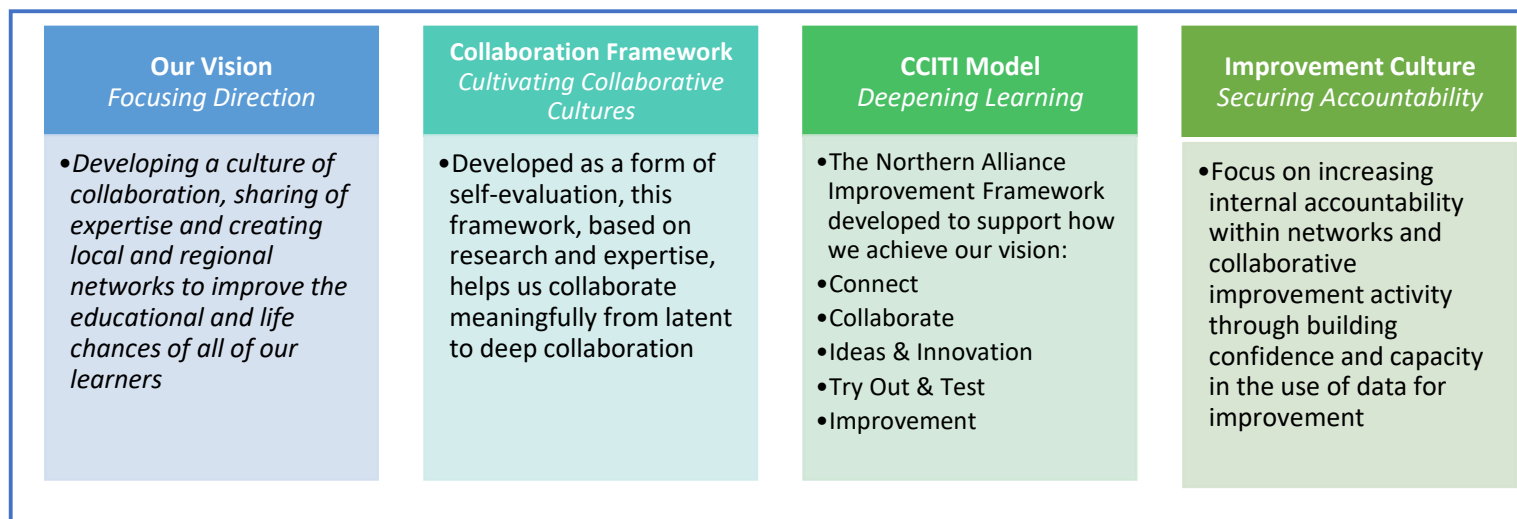
Throughout our phase 3 period of improvement activity, we developed, tested and refined processes to support collaborative improvement activity. These processes have been brought together and now form our Northern Alliance Collaborative Improvement Strategy. This strategy is shaped around 4 areas:

Focusing Direction starts with our vision – this ensures we remain focused on our core purpose as a Regional Improvement Collaborative, which is ultimately to improve outcomes for all our learners through collaboration. Our improvement plan has been developed to capture what matters to our schools, settings and teams, as well as making clear the golden threads which run through local, regional and national priorities

Cultivating Collaborative Cultures requires us to have a shared understanding of what it means to meaningfully collaborate - and how it leads to impact. This means that we will work on developing a collaborative culture, as well as systems and processes to support meaningful collaboration. Our Northern Alliance Collaboration Framework helps us to understand what effective collaboration looks and feels like, taking us from 'latent collaboration' to 'deep collaboration'. This part of the strategy highlights the importance of taking the time to build trust and relationships, develop a theory of change and then move forward into the action phase.

Deepening Learning is based on building a sense of connectedness across the Northern Alliance which helps us to share what is working well within and across our settings and teams, as well as working together to deepen our knowledge and understanding of pedagogy and breaking down the barriers to wellbeing and learning, which ultimately will lead to improved outcomes for all our learners. The five steps of the Northern Alliance CCITI Model provide the road map for our journey towards improvement. This strategy also includes the use of an improvement methodology which helps us understand whether the changes we are making do lead to improvement

Securing Accountability - We are developing a culture which creates psychologically safe places for practitioners to collaborate, try, test and learn. Alongside building a culture for collaborative improvement, our systems and processes help to build confidence and capacity in data for improvement. Through focusing on building strong internal accountability within teams, schools and settings, we are in a stronger place to make best use of external accountability to help us improve. Our own data processes enable us to analyse to what extent we are collaborating across the Northern Alliance and where activity is leading to improvement.



Evaluating Progress: Year 1

Data Processes

Each workstream monitors progress within measures which help them to understand to what extent they are working towards priorities within the phase 4 plan. Workstream progress and impact overviews are outlined later in this report.

Universal Measures

As a regional improvement collaborative, it is important that we don't just focus on core workstream activity, but also pay attention to how we are *communicating*, *collaborating* and *improving* as a system. We make use of a universal measures to help us understand to what extent we are connecting and collaborating and how collaborative improvement activity is leading to improvement over time—see table on page 6.

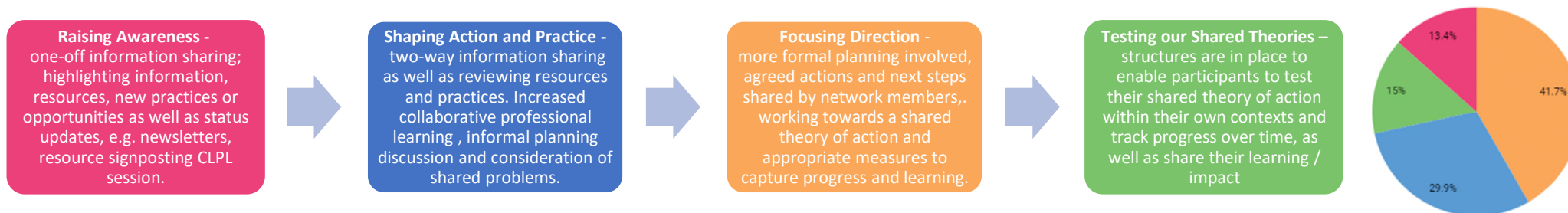


Communicating

- The Northern Alliance email newsletter, *#Collaboration*, helps us to share updates, news and event information with subscribing practitioners. Currently **4,483 subscribers** receive the email updates with relatively consistent levels of content engagement. The format continues to evolve with current editions including short summaries of information with the option for practitioners to '*Find out more*' about content of interest and relevance to them in their contexts.
- We make use of 'Eventbrite' to house professional learning offers. We analyse this data to monitor number of registrations alongside the number attending each session. From September 2022 – beginning July 2023, **2,019** registrations have been recorded achieving a **50% attendance rate**. This helps us to understand whether we have effectively communicated the professional learning offer, as well as timing and format to accommodate practitioners in busy schools/settings/teams.

Collaborating

- To capture the extent and depth of collaborative improvement activity, we have developed a tracking system for us to capture the number of collaborative engagements per workstream and the extent to which teams are collaborating. Within year one of the phase 4 plan, recruitment to the workstreams took longer due to backfill challenges at local authority level, and as a result most of the improvement activity has taken place between January and June 2023. Nevertheless, a total of **715 collaborative engagements** with **5,918 practitioners and other professionals** have been recorded, and data over time shows that whilst '*Raising Awareness*' engagements continue, there has been a significant increase in the number of engagements moving towards '*Focusing Direction*' and '*Building Capacity Collaboratively*'.
- Microsoft Teams continues to provide the space to facilitate ongoing collaboration through professional learning, networks and collaborative enquiry. We currently have **3,496 members** within **47 active Teams** in Glow - an increase of **416 members** since August 2022.



Learning / Improving

- In March 2023, the financial commitment was made once again to continue the access for practitioners and central teams to the World Education Summit (WES) live event and suite of legacy professional learning resources. There are now **6,313 registrants** registered to access hundreds of online sessions at the time of their choosing. A set of Northern Alliance WES Toolkits have also been designed to support engagement in schools and settings. A series of CLPL sessions will be facilitated through session 23-24 to continue engagement with the resources, with practitioners encouraged to share how they have used the resources in their context along with associated impact.
- As part of phase 3 developments, we created a subsidiary website called 'Our Journey' to host evidence of progress within our collaborative improvement activity. Over the past two years, we have been adding case studies outlining evidence of improvement at team/class/ school level.

Universal Measures – Data Over Time

Universal Measures Data Over Time		Phase 3 - Year 2 2020-2021	Phase 3 – Year 3 2021-2022	Phase 4 – year 1 2022-2023
Communicate	Newsletter Subscriptions	4158	4215	4482
	Registration / Attendance at Professional Learning Sessions	3,911 / 2,403 (61.45% attendance*)	2,410 / 1,060 (44% attendance)	2,019 / 1,010 (50% attendance)
Collaborate	Number of Active Teams Memberships	1,285 (21 Active Teams)	2,901 (59 Active Teams)	3,496 (47 Active Teams)

Universal Measures Data Over Time		Phase 3 - Year 2 2020-2021	Phase 3 – Year 3 2021-2022	Phase 4 – year 1 2022-2023	
	Number of Practitioners Engaging in Collaborative Engagements – from ‘Raising Awareness’ to ‘Testing our Shared Theories’	New Measure	New Measure	Aug-Dec 22 623	Jan- June 23 5,295
Learn / Improve	Registration and Engagement with World Education Summit Resources*	6,096	4,231	6,236	
	% of practitioners who agree/strongly agree that professional learning has increased their understanding	84.89%	90.6%	93.8%	
	% of practitioners who agree/strongly agree that will be able to apply professional learning to their own context	86.75%	86.5%	91.3%	
	Number of Case Studies shared online	50			

***Read more about the activity around WES in the workstream progress and impact reports.**

The Northern Alliance vision focuses our direction on building networks, collaborating and sharing expertise to improve outcomes for our learners. Our collaborative improvement framework helps us to put this vision into action. Moving forward, there is an appetite within the RIF to update our vision and make clear the whole system approach towards improving learning, teaching and assessment. In line with our refreshed vision will be the opportunity to evaluate the use of CCITI as a framework for collaborative improvement and move to be more intently focussed on impact on learner. These actions will further enable us to evidence progress and impact within focused improvement activity.

Northern Alliance Global Data

In addition to our Phase 4 associated measures, we also monitor regional progress towards core National Improvement Framework measures, with data tracked over time. This helps us to understand common areas of need across the Northern Alliance, as well as opportunities to share effective practice when there is improvement. An overview of data tracked, and key messages can be found at **Appendix B**.



Communicating and Collaborating with our Local Authorities and Partners

Effective communication is vital to creating a collaborative culture across our Regional Improvement Collaborative. Throughout 2022-23 we have continued to develop new and deepen existing connections in our Northern Alliance system. We also want to ensure equitable access to collaborative opportunities, and to connect through professional enquiry activity and professional learning. Listed below are examples of how we are trying and testing theories to extend and grow our system.

Local Authority Link Officers

A new role was created this year to improve communication and engagement with our phase 4 plan. Northern Alliance Workstream Leads have each been linked up with one of our eight Local Authorities in order to:

- share information on Northern Alliance activity,
- gather feedback from a local perspective on how activity is adding value; and to
- facilitate making connections and sharing practice that will support both regional and Local Authority activity.

Using a standard approach across all eight local authorities, the Link Officers have, where possible, engaged with their Link Local Authority at monthly Central Team meetings, at Head Teacher group, and with other practitioner/officer groups as agreed with the local authority. All with the aim of building a more consistent approach to information sharing and gathering. The effectiveness of the role is reviewed over time to provide opportunity for improvement to support the needs of the local authority.

In addition to local authority links, we also have officers who engage with regional and national partners and our Youth Advisory Group on a monthly basis.

Education Scotland North Team

The Education Scotland North team continue to collaborate with the Northern Alliance to work towards the priorities set out in the Phase 4 Plan. The North team played an integral role in shaping the plan in 2022 and this year there are Education Scotland members playing an active role within each workstream. In particular, the North Team have collaborated on projects such as the 'Curriculum Making' and 'Assessment and Moderation' projects – bringing networks together and planning joint programmes of work with local authority curriculum and assessment leads. Members of the North Team are also collaborating as part of the Northern Alliance and SEIC 'Data for Improvement' project, supporting improvement projects around the use of PEF, working with Attainment Advisers and SAC Leads.

As part of the Scottish Learning Festival 2022, in collaboration with the Education Scotland North Team, a TeachMeet style event formed part of the satellite event in Aberdeen. The Right Drivers for Whole System Success provided the theme for the event with practitioner sharing how they had been using the drivers in their contexts. Presentation topics included curriculum rationale, retrieval practice, IDL, play pedagogy and Gaelic medium education.



This event led to the development of the Northern Alliance TeachMeet series run throughout the year in our different local authorities. This series of TeachMeets share and mobilise effective practice within core areas of the Wellbeing and Learning plan. **Read more about the TeachMeets as part of the Wellbeing and Learning Progress and Impact Report.** You can also access legacy resources [here](#).

e-Sgoil

The Northern Alliance continues to work closely with [e-Sgoil](#), sharing a team of 4 Digital Depute Head Teachers. Sharing the resource in this way brings mutual benefits to both organisations, maximising opportunities for collaboration, cross-pollination of ideas and sharing of good practice in all things digital. e-Sgoil continues to deliver the live element of the National e-Learning Offer which has resulted in a significant increase in the number of learners and practitioners engaging with digital technology to enhance learning and teaching.

Strong relationships and networks across e-Sgoil and Northern Alliance teams allow for key messages and opportunities to be channelled directly to the right people across the collaborative, resulting in increased uptake of online offers by learners and schools.

e-Sgoil's 2023 Evidence of Impact Report can be [accessed here](#).

Cross RIC Collaboration

The Northern Alliance continues to connect and collaborate with the other 5 RICs across the Scottish education system. As relatively new bodies, it is important that we share what works – focusing on change ideas which are leading to improvement regionally. To support this activity, the six RIC Managers continue to connect regularly as a group.

- Building on activity from Phase 3, the Northern Alliance has continued to collaborate with the Southeast Education Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) in the Data for Improvement Project with the aim of practitioners having access to the right data, presented at the right level and in the right way, so they can apply the most appropriate interventions to get it right for every child. The project began with Northern Alliance collaboration with the 'Data for Children's Collaborative' and has now led to collaboration with teams supporting 'The Promise'. **Read more about this activity in the Equality Investments Workstream Progress and Impact Report**
- Forth Valley West Lothian (FVWL) RIC has been developing a suite of resources to support improving attendance. This Attendance [ThingLink](#) has been shared with practitioners across Scotland and the FVWL team presented to practitioners across the other RICs, including the Northern Alliance. Leading on from this activity, the other RICs have committed to sharing key tools and resources more widely.
- More recently, the RIC managers have collaborated to develop a RIC self-evaluation framework to build a shared understanding and expectations around the role of RICs regionally and associated impact.

Shared Headship Research Project

As part of the Phase 3 plan, Aberdeen University carried out a research project into Shared Headships in the Northern Alliance which was published during Autumn 2022. The project explored stakeholder perceptions of the benefits and challenges of current models of shared headship, with suggestions for improvement. [The project report](#)

makes several recommendations for local authorities, Head Teachers in Shared Headship arrangements, which led to the creation of the Shared Headship Schools Network, which is being further developed as part of the Phase 4 Plan. **Read more about this network in the Social Intelligence Progress and Impact Report.**

Northern Alliance Podcast

Launched in February 2023, the [Northern Alliance Podcast](#) was developed as another way to connect colleagues and practitioners to key messages and information related to the RIC and Phase 4 Plan. Sarah Philp from the well-known 'Changing Conversations' podcast hosted our conversations, along with Northern Alliance QIM, Kathleen Johnston. Through a series of seven episodes, the Podcast explores Fullan's Right Drivers for Whole System Success and how these are guiding learning, leadership, relationships and improvement as part of our plan. Episodes feature guest speakers including Northern Alliance workstream members, Pauline Stephen- Chief Executive of the GTCS, Gayle Gorman -former Chief Inspector of Education, Head Teachers and Principal Teachers who also shared their experiences of engaging with the Phase 4 plan. There has been an average of **41 plays per episode with a total of 412 all-time plays** to date.

World Education Summit

Northern Alliance engagement with the World Education Summit continues to grow and deepen, as evident in the universal data shared earlier within this report. This year, local authority professional learning leads worked hard to raise awareness of this fantastic resource with their schools and to highlight certain sessions that support local authority priorities. In addition, a toolkit was developed to support professional learning around sessions at school / setting/team level. This tool can be found within the wider WES [padlet](#), which also provides guidance around how to register and engage with the online sessions.

During WES week in March, Northern Alliance central team members once again presented on the world stage as part of the 2023 World Education Summit. This year the team outlined the systems and processes we have tried and tested to build collective responsibility for improvement, as well as the learning we have gained (and continue to learn) in developing our approaches.

Northern (high) Lights

The annual end of year sharing effective practice activity in December took on a new form for 2022 and the *Northern (high) Lights* calendar shared information, resources and improvement activity from across the region. Practitioners were signposted to resources on topics such as play pedagogy, retrieval practice, staff wellbeing, the World Education Summit, a selection of recommended podcasts, and information from CLD Youth Workers who support the Northern Alliance Youth Advisory Group (YAG). The *Northern (high) Lights* has been **viewed 963 times**.

As we approached the summer holidays, June 2023 brought the [Northern \(high\) Lights Simmer Dim](#); a week long edition which shared resources and activity linked with each of the four workstreams, e.g. information on the Northern Alliance Youth Advisory Group residential trip and an overview of learner participation across the local authorities; details of the Shared Headship network and an overview of the Buidling collective responsibility for improvement activity from a recent Highland Leadership event; Head Teacehr Leadership of Change Network activity informationl; and resources linked to the Let's Talk ELC and TeachMeet series.

The first Northern Alliance Youth Advisory Group (YAG) Residential was held in March 2023 at Highland Council HQ, Inverness, and Fairburn Activity Centre, Muir of Ord, focusing on key points arising from the highly successful ["Changing Tides and Making Waves"](#) virtual youth conference held in November 2020:

- Facilitated by CLD colleagues as part of the Northern Alliance Youth Participation Network, alongside members of the Equality Investments workstream, the group discussed what the barriers were to meaningful participation, as well as what good participation looked like. They also identified the impact of effective participation:

- “What might good participation look like?”***

"As the focus of the weekend was youth participation, Kaydence and I ran a 'Fake Focus Group' session, as an example that young people could use as a method of participation, as well as how to run it successfully. The group was split in two, with each team planning and running a session, and the other team acting as participants attempting to disrupt it. Overall, the session was hugely successful, with everyone giving their all to disrupting the other team as much as possible, all while learning transferrable skills for running future participation opportunities."



As part of our self-evaluation processes, we analysed our local authority HMIE inspection data across the Northern Alliance, with data ranging from August 2018 to December 2022. We were particularly interested in changes to inspection grades post pandemic. Working with regional HMIE lead officers and the Regional Improvement Forum, we considered key messages arising from the data. Whilst there were early signs of improvement post pandemic across all four inspection Quality Indicators, there was agreement around the need to focus whole system direction on Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

Between February and June 2023, local authorities in the Northern Alliance co-created an [improvement framework](#) designed to build shared understanding and expectations around school improvement – with an initial focus on learning, teaching and assessment. The framework includes policy and guidance from our local authorities to exemplify core content. As well as building shared expectations across the region, local authorities can use the framework flexibly, depending on local opportunity and need. The framework will be reviewed annually and as such, will evolve over time.

In June 2023, the RIF met to evaluate progress and impact over year one of the Phase 4 plan. There was recognition that networks, professional learning and collaborative opportunities have all been developed and offered in response to what mattered to practitioners and learners but that there wasn't clear evidence that the standard being shared through these structures is aligned to How Good is Our School expectations. Although there is clear evidence that engagement in improvement activity is increasing and collaboration is happening at a deeper level in keeping with the initial vision, the impact of this collaboration is not yet showing sufficient impact on inspection outcomes.

Moving forward, the RIF has agreed to narrow our focus to learning, teaching and assessment. In doing so, there is now a focused system in place to capture progress and impact on learners, using a logic model and 3 core outcome measures. These developments evidence the growing maturity of the RIC as a system and increased ownership of the RIF in robustly challenging progress and impact in order to add value to all 8 of our local authorities.

Our RIC website has also been refreshed and resources, collaborative activity and professional learning are now organised under the core inspection quality indicators of HGIOS4.

As part of our commitment to collectively improve learning teaching and assessment across our system, the Regional Improvement Forum hosted an online session attended by 70 local authority central team members with a responsibility for school improvement. The focus of the session was around building shared understanding of the key features of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment and effective processes to support quality assurance. The session was led by Guch Dhillon, HMIE and Elizabeth Montgomery, our HMIE Regional Lead Officer. Feedback from participants was positive, with one participant stating, 'inspiring and challenging input from Guch Dhillon this morning as we discuss our common focus on learning, teaching and assessment.' Next steps will be to host another online learning, teaching and assessment session for head teachers in the new session.

Phase Four Priorities – Progress and Impact

Each of the phase 4 workstreams have been working towards their core set of priorities throughout year 1 of the plan. Outlined below is an overview of progress towards each of the priorities. Whilst the plan sets out outcome measures to capture impact at learner and school level by the end of years 2 and 3, the focus for year 1 has been to connect the right people and create the conditions for meaningful collaboration, with the aim of developing a shared theory of action to take forward. In order to capture this vital step as part of the collaborative improvement process, the following measures have been used by each workstream:

Year One: 2022-23				
All Workstreams will gather and analyse this data over the life of the Phase 4 plan	Number of Collaborative Engagements	% of Collaborative Engagements	Professional Learning Sessions- % strongly agree/ agree	Qualitative Data
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Raising Awareness</i> <i>Shaping Action and Practice</i> <i>Focusing Direction</i> <i>Testing our Shared Theories</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>This professional learning has increased understanding</i> <i>Able to apply today's professional learning to own context</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>How professional learning will impact on practice</i> <i>Practitioner Feedback</i> <i>Case Studies</i>

To date, the agreed method for capturing impact has been to gather and analyse feedback from learners and practitioners who have engaged in collaborative improvement activity, as well as evidencing progress and impact through case studies. This process has supported us to make very effective progress in building networks and creating meaningful opportunities for collaboration, which has supported teams in schools across the pandemic and in the recovery period. As part of the phase 4 plan, there was a commitment to being more explicit in capturing impact on outcomes for learners through more focused outcome related measures. Moving forward into year 2 of the phase 4 plan, we have developed a system to capture progress and impact at classroom and school level using the quality indicators from How Good is Our School 4. This process brings consistency in approach and builds upon a shared language and shared understanding through the use of HGIOS4. This process will be tested across the system throughout session 2023-24, as part of the region's whole system focus on learning, teaching and assessment.

Wellbeing and Learning Workstream Progress and Impact

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Success / Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
<p>Deepen connections to wellbeing and learning through curriculum design</p> <p><i>95% of schools/ settings engaging with Wellbeing and Learning workstream curriculum design activity will report improved outcomes for their learners* by Feb 2025</i></p>	<p>On Track: Established networks at all levels of our system that support curriculum design</p> <p>100% of networks progressing from raising awareness to either shaping action and practices or focusing direction</p> <p>Regular representation across networks from all 8 LAs as well as the national curriculum innovation team and north team at Education Scotland</p> <p>Shared theory of action has been co-created to support curriculum making, bringing together local authority leads, Education Scotland and Lucy Crehan, curriculum design expert from Wales.</p>	<p><i>"There is a developing shared language of skills across the school, and we are making skills visible. Learners are becoming more able to articulate their skills".</i></p> <p><i>"Staff are becoming more familiar with the language of skills. The Meta-Skills framework has supported this. We are looking to focus on a skill of the month moving forward and carry out some self-evaluation around progress".</i></p>	<p>Taking the time to develop relationships and trust builds the foundation for high quality collaboration and co-design of key pieces of work. This ensures ownership, sustainability and collective responsibility and will provide strong foundations for the narrowing of focus on learning, teaching and assessment</p>	<p>Link to Curriculum Proposal</p> <p>IDL case study padlet</p>
<p>Putting the learner at the centre – how we meet individual learner needs (in collaboration with Equality</p>	<p>On Track: Professional Learning offer- an aggregate total of 90% of participants report that they agree or strongly agree that they can apply the professional learning in their own context to meet the needs of learners.</p>	<p><i>"Engaging with colleagues to share ideas for progressing See Me (See Change). Lots of valuable ideas to take forward".</i></p> <p><i>"The opportunity to be in person with the leads allowing for staff to collaborate with other schools. A great</i></p>	<p>Through professional learning, practitioners are reporting that they are learning with and from one another to meet the needs of learners– sharing and mobilising effective practice across the RIC.</p> <p>TeachMeet resource - live and recorded sessions by teachers, for</p>	<p>Link to TeachMeet resource</p>

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Success / Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
Investments Workstream) <i>95% of schools/ settings engaging with the Wellbeing and Learning Workstream will report improved learner wellbeing* by Feb 2025.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 LA Wellbeing and Learning TeachMeets - 278 educators attended with 32 educators having presented 4/7 local authorities trained – See Me See Change programme Nurture network established GME primary network established 	<i>place to share ideas and hear from others and what they are planning.”</i> <i>“Fantastic materials and resources to pick up and run with”</i> <i>“(TeachMeets) For me and my colleagues the time is the important bit, in just an hour after school we become aware of 6 new ways of working and get an insight into, not only what other people are doing, but their philosophy and beliefs about learning.”</i>	<p>teachers. They can access both the live events in person or online and access the recorded sessions online to support improvement priorities and/ or professional learning – building shared expectations and standards</p> <p>The See Me See Change programme - reducing stigma and discrimination in relation to mental health, which is foundational to the effectiveness of all other mental health programmes</p>	<p>See Me See Change Info</p> <p>Link to information on Languages and GME work</p>
Collaborate to achieve shared expectations within learning, teaching and assessment at class, school/setting, team, local authority and regional level <i>95% of schools/settings engaging with the Wellbeing and Learning Workstream learning, teaching, assessment</i>	<p>On Track: Increased collaboration across networks to support developing a shared understanding of standards within learning, teaching, assessment and moderation.</p> <p>100% networks have progressed from Raising Awareness level to either Shaping Action and Practices or Focusing Direction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Strategic Assessment and Moderation Leads Network – co-created inter authority moderation plan Digital Leads Network – NA Digital Needs Analysis in partnership with Education Scotland 	<p><i>"There was something about the way this training was presented and the way you spoke, which has helped me move forward in my practice."</i></p> <p><i>"We have better quality observations and evaluations and (are) using the Leuven scale"</i></p> <p><i>"How to maximise our data and the impact it has on attainment."</i></p> <p><i>"Staff are now able to adjust their interactions and learning spaces to provide appropriate challenge."</i></p> <p><i>"I work in a school miles away from anywhere and I have no colleagues in my subject. The Northern Alliance is all</i></p>	<p>Developing a consistent approach to the role of QAMSOs for session 2023-24. The group has a clear sense of Focusing Direction through joint plan.</p> <p>The results of the Digital Needs Analysis will set out the systematic/strategic support required across the RIC and create a minimum shared standard informed by the Scottish Governments National Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy.</p> <p>Let's Talk ELC enabled participants to collectively explore key messages around learning, teaching and</p>	<p>Link to proposal</p> <p>Link to draft version of the Case Study</p>

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Success / Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
<p><i>and moderation activity will report improved learner outcomes* by Feb 2025</i></p> <p><i>95% of practitioners engaging with the Wellbeing and Learning Workstream report increased confidence in their professional judgements by Feb 2025.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years Network- Across two, four-part series, the Let's Talk ELC sessions have engaged 193 practitioners from all 8 LAs. • NA Literacy network merged with the Education Scotland North Network in January 2023, increasing opportunities for collaboration and reducing duplication • Secondary Subject Support Groups – increased to 27 networks and increased membership from 845 to 1089 	<p><i>I have; it is like you are my department."</i></p>	<p>assessment. Themes were identified by ELC Leads in response to common issues experienced in light of increase to 1140 hours</p> <p>NA Literacy Network- agreed focus for the year ahead around 4 areas: Oral Language Development, Words Up follow up training, High Quality Storytelling, Rhyme (phonological awareness)</p> <p>SSGs focusing on moderation across the BGE and developing consistency in moderation in the BGE in Secondary Schools in line with the Northern Alliance Assessment and Moderation proposal. The SSGs build capacity in the system through collaboration and for some staff who are in single subject departments, the SSGs form their only departmental meetings</p>	<p>Secondary Subject Support Groups</p>
<p>Increase opportunities for collaborative enquiry to explore existing and new pedagogies and practices</p>	<p>On Track: The total number of participants engaging in collaborative engagements rose from 142 in November 2022 to 3,497 in May 2023.</p> <p>90.9% practitioners reported professional learning increased their understanding</p>	<p><i>"Staff more knowledgeable about the benefits of play and this is evident in classes now. The children are benefiting from Protected Play sessions where they know there will be no interruptions to their play so deeper engagement in what they are doing."</i></p>	<p>Through an application process, 10 mentors from 4 Local Authorities were selected to support 50 participants, representing all 8 Local Authorities within the NA. Cohort 2 will add to the growing shared understanding of high-quality play</p>	<p>Link to Play Pedagogy materials and information – participant handbook - mentor handbook</p>

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Success / Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
95% of practitioners who complete a Wellbeing and Learning collaborative enquiry project report improved outcomes* for their learners by Feb 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play Pedagogy Collaborative Enquiry has received endorsement from the Education Scotland professional leadership and learning team. Faculty advisors and 10 mentors from 4 local authorities, with 50 practitioners signed up. World Education Summit (WES) number of educators registered for WES increased from 4231 in 2022 to 6,313 so far this year. Embedding Skills Collaborative Enquiry - 29 participants from 5 LAs. Small Schools IDL Pilot and IDL Network - sharing of practice between 91 members. Small Schools IDL pilot involves practitioners from 7 Local Authorities with 35 participants attending. Languages Network continue to meet and have developed a resource to support schools with their languages learning journey. 	<p><i>"Access to the summit has been invaluable to our school over the past two years and all practitioners, from PSAs to headteacher, have engaged with sessions."</i></p> <p><i>"Signing up for the World Education Summit has allowed me to find a vast array of professional learning that supports my practice and development. Being able to access digital seminars from leading global experts in education at the click of a button at a convenient time for me is invaluable."</i></p>	<p>pedagogy across ELC, primary and secondary.</p> <p>Growing number of practitioners using WES to support school improvement activity and professional learning.</p> <p>Embedding Skills Collaborative Enquiry - developing a consistent language of skills across schools and using local contexts to support this.</p> <p>Small Schools IDL Pilot - supporting the deepened understanding of curriculum design and process of planning IDL, starting with the learners and local context</p> <p>Languages Network – as funding for 1+2 Languages is no longer available to LAs, this network offers peer support and pooling of resources and expertise to ensure continued support to practitioners and learners across the NA</p>	<p>Impact Stories – Northern Alliance – World Education Summit video</p> <p>Northern Alliance WES Toolkit</p> <p>Skills case study Padlet</p> <p>Link to Languages video.</p>
Full Wellbeing and Learning report				

Social Intelligence Workstream Progress and Impact

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Success / Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
<p>Work together to build a shared understanding of meaningful collaboration at school/setting, team, local authority and regional level.</p> <p><i>By June 2025, 95% of colleagues engaging with Social Intelligence Workstream will report a shared understanding of meaningful collaboration*</i></p>	<p>Limited Progress: Cluster Collaboration Leads – Two local authorities engaged in this improvement project to test whether key contacts within each school cluster can support meaningful collaboration at school level. Following an initial sign up of 16 clusters, only 5 completed the 4 sessions.</p> <p>Feedback was positive -100% of practitioners agreed or strongly agreed that professional learning increased their understanding and that they could apply learning to their own contexts. Practitioners also suggested a resource to facilitate collaboration would be more helpful, as conflicting pressures meant that the cluster collaboration model was not sustainable.</p> <p>As a result, a collaboration padlet has been developed to support meaningful collaboration, which includes links to HGIOS 4 quality indicators and feedback from</p>	<p><i>"I loved the theory aspect, and the links to reading - it really underlined the fact that these aren't just someone's thoughts; they are backed up by evidence."</i></p> <p><i>"It was great to have a lot of resources and information distilled into a manageable size for each session."</i></p> <p><i>"It was great to have the opportunity to share our thoughts and experiences. It felt like there was a good balance between content and discussion."</i></p>	<p>A key learning point from the collaboration project has been the assumption within settings that collaboration already occurs- for example through a staff meeting or cluster/ASG working. Whilst these are of value, the necessary protocols and building the will and trust of staff that underpin meaningful collaboration can be overlooked – particularly when under pressure to evidence improvement. The need to engage in frequent feedback and reflection as well as measuring and capturing impact are key areas to target with colleagues. Participants fed back that the cluster collaboration project was theory 'heavy' and used theory-based language. It also required a considerable time commitment. Moving forward, the online padlet, in addition to case studies exemplifying effective practice will be a more accessible resource to support school-based collaboration.</p>	<p>Collaboration Padlet</p>

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Success / Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
	practitioners has been positive. This will be added to an online 'Collaboration Hub' to ensure accessibility to professional learning and resources at any time			
<p>Increase opportunities for meaningful collaboration which leads to impact at school/setting, team, local authority and regional level</p> <p>By Feb 2025, 90% of schools participating in "Active Collaboration" projects will report improved wellbeing and learning experiences* for learners</p>	<p>On Track: 465 practitioners have participated in 79 collaborative engagements from September 2022 to June 2023. 83% of engagements have shifted to focusing direction and shaping action and practice.</p> <p>The Workstream has been agile in developing the following collaborative networks in response to need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Shared Headship Network – following recommendations from NA Shared Headship Research Project. Representation from all 8 LAs • Small Schools Network • Armed Forces Educators network in partnership with AFFLO officers <p>Partnership working with Systemness workstream to develop a model for building collective responsibility for improvement.</p>	<p><i>"Having access to research and intelligence of where we are in rural/shared headship in 21st century Scotland is really very important."</i></p> <p><i>"The collaborative approach gives strength to our voice in what is sometimes quite an isolating context."</i></p> <p><i>"The benefit of this network is really having a voice heard and recorded."</i></p>	<p>Collaborative networks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate peer support partnerships for those in shared headship roles. • Increase sharing of knowledge, practice resources & information • Increase opportunities for naturally occurring and deliberate collaboration to occur. • Supports innovation to further improve outcomes for CYP. • Identifies and meets CLPL needs for those both in and aspiring to shared headship in partnership with Education Scotland. <p>Building collective responsibility model has enabled a clear understanding of the roles of Leadership and Collaboration in improvement activity and will be used across our networks as it provides a relatable means for schools to develop both systemness and social intelligence, whilst demystifying the terms and relating</p>	<p>Malcolm McGregor Shared Headships video.mp4 (sharepoint.com)</p> <p>Building Collective Responsibility model</p>

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Success / Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
			them to actual activity within our settings.	
<p>Work together at local, regional and national level to make a cohesive and accessible professional learning offer for and with practitioners across the Northern Alliance</p> <p><i>By Feb 2025, an online professional learning community platform will be created and developed in collaboration with our 8 Local Authorities and national partners</i></p> <p><i>By Feb 2025, 80% of practitioners engaging in the professional learning community platform will share practice, learning and impact* with other members of the platform</i></p>	<p>On Track: Development of professional learning community platform: PEOPLE Connect within our new website –to support and promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> professional learning offers across the RIC- including offers within and across local authorities, to house resources linked to pedagogy and educational research and a space to share and mobilise effective practice <p>This online space is being developed in partnership with the local authority Professional Learning Leads Network. 100% agreed or strongly agreed that they would welcome a central online space which provides links to a range of CLPL providers and would be highly likely to access CLPL opportunities on offer. Plans are to test a prototype in Aug 2023 and scale up across the year</p>	<p>What would benefit you most from an online PL Platform?</p> <p><i>“Sharing good practice.”</i></p> <p><i>“Engaging in new research.”</i></p> <p><i>“Being able to easily access CLPL events without needing time out of school.”</i></p>	<p>PEOPLE Connect will facilitate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater cohesion across the RIC in terms of professional learning offers – reducing duplication and making more effective use of resources Accessibility to National, Regional and Local professional learning offers, Access research-based practice evidence linked to pedagogy, (WES) A space to source and share expertise from across system, Space to build informal collaboration linked to shared interest. Access to NA wide opportunities for collaborative enquiry projects linked to shared improvement priorities. Space to share and mobilise successful collaborative projects from across Northern Alliance (“Our Treasure”) 	<p>PEOPLE Connect Overview – Working, Learning and Improving Together</p>

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Success / Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
Full Social Intelligence report				

Equality Investments Workstream Progress and Impact

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
<p><i>Between January and June 2023 there were 152 collaborative engagements across all three Equality Investments priorities, with 1,383 practitioner engagements. This workstream very quickly moved into focusing direction and shaping action and practice (79%) and towards the end of the session, 18% of engagements were engaged in building capacity collaboratively</i></p>				
<p>Work together to build confidence and capacity in the use of data to improve outcomes for our learners across the Northern Alliance</p> <p><i>Completion of a Regional Data for Improvement Framework in partnership with SEIC RIC by 2025</i></p> <p><i>By Feb 2025, 95% of practitioners engaging with the Equality Investments workstream report improved outcomes for learners* as</i></p>	<p>On Track: In partnership with SEIC RIC we are working with local authorities on two key areas for improvement –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a shared data system to enable us to plan effective interventions that meet the needs of individual children and young people Improving the culture and implementation of data for improvement in our schools, settings and teams <p>As part of this project, we are also collaborating with 'The Promise Scotland' to explore how we can make best use of their data mapping</p>	<p><i>I would like help to measure impact.</i></p> <p><i>How do other people track their interventions and know what they are doing actually works?</i></p> <p><i>This will improve the evidence I gather with a greater focus on impact. This will ensure I can evaluate very specifically at a deeper level element of our 3.1 provision.</i></p> <p><i>Provided me with more in depth understanding of QI 3.1 and the 'so what' statements related to highlighted best practice. Provided me with tools I can share with the wider Early Years team to use with ELC</i></p>	<p>Through our partnership with SEIC, we have been building a shared language and understanding of data for improvement across 16 local authorities. Ensuring practitioners are able to access the right data at the right time in the right way will significantly improve our ability to plan effective interventions for individual learners.</p>	<p>Project Overview</p>

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
<i>a result of increased confidence and capacity in their use of data for improvement</i>	<p>tool. To date, we have an early prototype for a data system to test small scale. In addition, we are working with SAC leads and local authority AAs to offer workshops to practitioners around how to use data to measure impact.</p> <p>Poverty/Equity Network - across the 8 LAs there are practitioners who have been recently appointed to track data and interventions within a setting. Their titles are often different, and remits are unique to their setting. Members are keen to tackle common issues which they are individually trying to overcome at present.</p> <p>CLD Leads Network - active engagement with all 8 LA leads, who share the same data processes and systems across the NA. Monthly meetings facilitate mobilising of effective practice and sharing resources.</p>	<p><i>settings where applicable to support with self-evaluation in relation to HGIOELC.</i></p> <p><i>Will help to develop understanding around the intersect of poverty with other forms of inequality and to support discussions around this.</i></p>		
Work together to ensure our learners have a strong voice in how we break down barriers to wellbeing and	<p>NA Youth Advisory Group (YAG) Membership: Young people who represent their peers in their local authority area. Supported by: CLD Youth work staff from all 8 authority areas – securing participation and a</p>	<p><i>Youth Members:</i></p> <p><i>“We can’t do this alone.”</i></p>	<p>ASN Local Authority Leads, and The Northern Promise Collaborative have spoken about the need for clearer structures to hear all voices within school. We have made links with Children in Scotland Inclusion</p>	<p>Northern Alliance Youth Advisory Group Residential</p>

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
<p>learning at class, school /setting, team, local authority, regional and national level</p> <p><i>By Feb 2025, 90% of participants* engaging in improvement activity within the EI workstream will report their experience of participation as good or better.</i></p>	<p>strong voice from young people in localities.</p> <p>All councils now have structures in place to support youth participation in the NA regions.</p> <p>Mapping of Voices - young people have begun consulting with their networks and are currently identifying voices which are not heard though existing structures or who find it hard to access a platform to express their views</p> <p>We have been collaborating with Education Scotland to create an Equalities Policy Guide and are currently working with eight settings within the NA. The purpose of this collaboration is to create a national cross-sector equalities policy guide, to support the development and/or review of equalities related policies in settings.</p> <p>Building on the work carried out last year which contributed to the <i>SPIRU Breakfast Cart Report, by Prof. John McKendrick</i>, we have scaled up Breakfast Provision / Youth CCITI Model. The fundamental idea behind this project is that learners</p>	<p><i>"All councils should adopt a youth charter – some areas have these, and others don't."</i></p> <p><i>"I learned that change isn't always bad and it's good to make change."</i></p> <p><i>"I've learned about problems in other communities and schools, the support we're actually given and that people do listen to us young people."</i></p> <p><i>School Leader:</i></p> <p><i>"We want our policies to be developed by our children for our children. This session we have been working with the Equality Investments Workstream and Education Scotland, to develop our policy. Derek has supported our young people through a range of</i></p>	<p>Ambassador programme and one NA council has expressed a strong desire to be part of strengthening that initiative in the North.</p> <p>We have had 36 requests from Eventbrite feedback for learner voice and agency collaboration opportunities from practitioners who have attended NA PL events between Jan and May 2023 which supports the data we have from the YAG and from central teams. The NA UNCRC Network which consists of Strategic Leads from across all 8 LAs are also supporting work around this project.</p> <p>Partners such as Together Scotland, Education Scotland and Respect Me are interested to support and be part of any discussions with this project</p> <p>Baseline data from 1 setting showed that when children and young people were asked: Do you ever come to school hungry? 42% of learners said yes and 12% of learners said sometimes. Children and young people from this setting are taking</p>	<p>NA Youth Participation Overview May 2023</p> <p>CLD workstream infographic</p> <p>SPIRU Breakfast Cart Report, by Prof. John McKendrick</p> <p>CLD Winter Festival 22-23 Information</p> <p>Draft Equalities Policy Guide</p>

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
	<p>lead the breakfast provision for their peers.</p> <p>Adult and Family Learning: Professional learning session to improve: Delivery of CLD practice understanding, CLD approaches, and Family learning linked to CLD SC – linked to CLD Standards Council – Winter Festival.</p>	<p><i>virtual and face-to-face engagements to share their views, analyse our data and create a draft policy, Our School: Our Rights. In our recent HM inspection, our young people highlighted their pride in their learner participation, one example being the driving force for Our School: Our Rights."</i></p>	<p>the lead in testing and trying out theories for change to bring about improvement in their setting.</p> <p>Improvement to CLD delivery of family learning, improvement in understanding of terminology and focused delivery linked to poverty related impacts.</p>	
<p>Putting the learner at the centre – how we meet individual learner needs (in collaboration with Wellbeing and Learning Workstream)</p> <p><i>By Feb 2025 95% of establishments engaging across the Equality Investments workstream will provide clear evidence* of putting learners at the centre with a particular focus on Policy and Practice.</i></p>	<p>On Track: Developed a Northern Alliance 'Policy into Practice' model and built networks and professional learning around this model. 97% of practitioners engaging in professional learning strongly agreed/agreed that their understanding had increased and that they were able to apply learning to their own contexts.</p> <p>Closing the Poverty Related Attainment Gap:</p> <p>Poverty Book Group – Leading to Equity Network. Ten Professional Learning sessions based on Morag Treanor's book "Child Poverty, Aspiring to Survive". Weekly meetings attended by (on average 18) practitioners. Attendees from a</p>	<p><i>"I want to create greater opportunities for pupil led initiatives as well as planned opportunities for the views of our young people to be expressed and considered when planning interventions. There will also be a focus on raising staff awareness of which of our young people are experiencing poverty and how they can support them. To do this we will have to prioritise staff training in this area."</i></p> <p><i>"I will be looking to source funding to create a universal breakfast provision, I teach in a Highland school with high deprivation."</i></p> <p><i>"It is about helping other teachers understand the effect of trauma."</i></p>	<p>This book group led to the formation of an Equity Network from this core group. This network will feed into the Data for improvement work around PEF detailed in Priority 1 and evidence the changes made within settings from a clear understanding of the effects of poverty and the impact that being confident in the use of data can have on outcomes for our young people.</p>	<p>Policy into Practice Model</p> <p>Book Group Blog</p>

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
	<p>range of professional backgrounds: HT, DHT, Central Team staff, Educational Psychologist, Education Scotland, PSA, PTG, 3rd Sector and class teacher.</p> <p>The Promise Scotland Network and Activity: The Northern Promise Collaborative is a network of The Promise Leads from Aberdeenshire, Moray, Highland, Shetland, Orkney, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Argyll and Bute councils. We are currently focused on The Calls to Action around Education. The Northern Promise Collaborative have identified reducing the exclusions (formal and informal) of Care Experienced Children and Young People as their priority</p> <p>Network of School Leaders with responsibility for Child Protection and ASN – Professional learning around ‘The Morgan Review’ and QI 3.1- Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion was well attended, with very positive feedback</p> <p>Meeting with LA ASN leads from the Education Scotland bimonthly. An initial scoping exercise which consisted of 71 respondents from</p>	<p><i>“We are not aware of all the support that is out there.”</i></p> <p><i>“Specific groups for Care Experienced youngsters don’t really work as they are not all friends with each other and don’t identify as a group. Support needs to be bespoke”.</i></p> <p><i>“What I feel is beneficial from Northern Alliance meetings is the opportunity to share ideas and discuss very openly across different authorities. Up to date information to explore with others. Looking at scenarios and talking through procedures, etc.”</i></p> <p><i>“Developing inclusive classrooms, good practice in meeting the needs of</i></p>	<p>At a recent Northern Alliance network meeting of school senior leaders with responsibility for ASN 100% of attendees (37 in total) identified an urgent need to build confidence in their knowledge of ‘The Promise’. This network will facilitate increased confidence and understanding of The Promise, sharing of practice and working together on common issues</p> <p>The Policy into Practice model is supporting practitioners to engage with several national policies which</p>	

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
	<p>school leaders and central teams across the 8 local Authorities illustrated the following areas for collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning from recent inspections around how to demonstrate that the interventions we are putting in place are effective (93%) strongly agreed that this was important for them. • Latest Child Protection Guidance: respondents from the PTG subject support group and school leaders network have identified a real need to build confidence and consistency in this area • Inclusion – how we practically make this work effectively in settings within the context of limited resources 	<p><i>learners with protected characteristics How to best meet needs of increasing amounts of learners with autism or displaying autistic tendencies - especially in terms of managing incidences of violence.”</i></p> <p><i>“Sharing how to ensure MHWB needs are met, with shrinking budgets and monies available, versus increased need.”</i></p> <p><i>“I am now going to use a digital format that was shared with me in this group to collect evidence.”</i></p>	<p>in the past have felt inaccessible to them. Responses from 51 school leaders identified the following barriers to UNCRC within their setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Staff absence</i> • <i>Range of needs</i> • <i>This is a lonely job</i> • <i>Lack of support</i> • <i>Absence of protocols or too many protocols.</i> • <i>Paperwork – takes time and focus away from the CYP</i> <p>Through sharing effective practice and working together on common issues, practitioners are beginning to close the gap between policy and practice within their settings</p>	
Full Equality Investments report				

Systemness Workstream Progress and Impact

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
<p>All stakeholders within our system are motivated and supported to engage in improvement activity within and across our schools/ settings and teams</p> <p><i>By Feb 2025 95% of participants who engage with the Systemness Workstream will report increased engagement in improvement activity* within their school/setting</i></p>	<p>On Track: NA School Improvement Project – continued engagement with 6 of the original 16 schools within the project. 100% of schools continued to engage with the improvement model to improve outcomes for their learners</p> <p>Supporting head teachers to ‘build collective responsibility for whole system success’ – cohort of 57 head teachers. 100% agreed or strongly agreed that professional learning had increased their understanding and 80% stated that they could apply learning to their own contexts</p>	<p><i>“Good practical advice on how to build collective responsibility.”</i></p> <p><i>“Very informative with practical takeaways.”</i></p>	<p>One school reported that they had progressed with their approach to collective improvement planning by engaging all staff in reflecting on the Right Drivers such as WBL and EI to evaluate their provision within these areas and identify areas for improvement.</p> <p>Another school had had used Viviane Robinson’s engage model to develop how they approached improvement evaluation and planning to include their whole staff which resulted in a SIP that was collectively constructed. This ensured all stakeholders were engaged and included to create a more collaborative culture around school improvement and planning.</p>	<p>Building Collective Responsibility presentation</p>
<p>Build a shared understanding of the key principles of effective leadership at all levels – class, school/setting, team, local</p>	<p>On Track: Head Teacher ‘Leadership of Change’ network established May 2023 -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 146 members, with representation across 8 LAs 75 HTs participated in initial scoping sessions to shape the direction of the network 	<p><i>‘Implementing and then sustaining change is challenging. So much we could do but don’t want to spread too thin. Quality over quantity.’</i></p> <p><i>“Effective ways to measure change, self-evaluation processes in small and big schools to measure impact...the ‘how?’”</i></p>	<p>The network has explored what matters to HT in leadership; being a leader; key elements of leading change and what they want to focus from and gain from the network. This was intended to establish a benchmark for the current context of leadership and ensure we identified and focused on the needs</p>	<p>HT Network- ‘What Matters to You?’</p>

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
<p>authority, regional and national level</p> <p><i>By Feb 2025, develop a Northern Alliance agreed set of leadership of change principles</i></p> <p><i>By Feb 2025, 95% of participants engaging with the 'NA Leadership of Change Principles' report increased leadership confidence and capacity*</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 58 HTs attended a 'Making Sense of Our Priorities' session with Ollie Bray – Strategic Director, Education Scotland. Across all sessions, 75% of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that professional learning had increased their understanding and that they could apply learning to their own contexts <p>NA Evolving Systems Thinking Alumni – 30 alumni in total across the NA and 13 have joined this network. Agreed focus moving forward on current research and practice around leadership of a connected and collaborative system.</p>	<p><i>"Practical focus on national reform and share practice."</i></p> <p><i>"Explore and share research and approaches to leading change and improvement planning."</i></p> <p><i>"The regular communication is helpful, even just to remember to check the GLOW Teams page and so on for any updates."</i></p>	<p>and priorities of the HTs to impact on leadership of change. The first session has started to build a shared understanding of effective leadership and for this to be taken forward and built on with the network</p>	
<p>Practitioners and learners at all levels work together to influence system wide improvement from within and across our schools/ settings and teams across the Northern Alliance</p>	<p>Limited Progress: It is important to ensure activity is not tokenistic. Therefore, time has been spent connecting with stakeholders to build a shared understanding of effective partnership working and getting the culture right at all levels of the system. - building a picture and examples of children and young people engaging meaningfully in and leading learning across a range of settings. Working in partnership with</p>		<p>Minimal impact at present, however, we are building relationships and trust in order to build firm foundations for sharing and mobilising effective practice and future improvement activity</p>	

Priority and Aim	Progress - Including Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data- Feedback from Practitioners and Learners	Impact	Associated Resources & Case Studies
By Feb 2025 95% of practitioners engaging with the Systemness Workstream will report increased collective efficacy* in their schools/ settings / teams, leading to improved outcomes for learners	the Equality Investments workstream, we have begun to connect with practitioners and children and young people who are leading their own learning and engaged in improvement activity to explore in more depth. The aim is to take practitioners' learning and experience and work alongside others who are at the early stages of supporting leadership by children and young people			
Full Systemness report				

Learning from Year One and Next Steps

Early Signs of Improvement

One year on from the development of the phase 4 plan we are seeing:

- **Deepening engagement and collaboration**, with focused improvement activity which is being led by and engaging a greater number of practitioners from all local authorities in the Northern Alliance, as well as local and national partners
- **Range of networks is expanding** to include wider groups of practitioners such as, Shared Headship, Pastoral Care, ASN and Inclusion, Supporting Armed Forces Families, Head Teachers
- **Building Collective Responsibility for improvement** through peer learning and teaching via events such as TeachMeets and co-creating improvement activity to support overcoming common issues
- **World Education Summit** - greatest number of practitioners signed up (6,311) and examples of how this high quality CLPL resource is being used in schools and teams across NA. (CPD series of events planned for next session.)
- **Collaboration across all 6 RICs** being strengthened, and practice shared - e.g. FVWL Attendance tool.



Lessons Learned

As with all improvement activity, there are lessons learned which can influence our next steps:

- In striving to meet everyone's needs when shaping the phase 4 plan, there is a sense that the range of activity can be overwhelming for our stakeholders. Given the current pressures within the education system, there is a desire to **focus on an area for improvement which is a shared priority** across the Northern Alliance
- Feedback from practitioners indicates that the **language of the plan** should link more closely to language used in schools and classrooms so that practitioners can connect with improvement activity and understand how it can add value to their contexts - e.g. HGIOS 4
- The CCITI framework has effectively supported the RIC to realise its vision around building networks, sharing expertise and collaborating to improve outcomes for learners. Consideration is now being given around the need to refresh our vision to focus our direction on learning, teaching and assessment
- A wide range of data is being collected and analysed to evidence the extent to which practitioners are having their learning needs met and how they are collaborating in order to improve outcomes. The RIF now require more explicit evidence around how learner outcomes are being improved
- Whilst it is heartening to see the number of people engaging with the Northern Alliance, for some there is still a sense that the **RIC is a separate body**.

Looking Ahead to Year Two of our Plan

As we consider the learning from year 1, we plan to **focus our direction** on core areas for improvement, whilst continuing to **cultivate a collaborative culture**:

- Data tells us that we need to **strengthen our focus on Learning, Teaching and Assessment**. Working together at a local and regional level, as well as with HMIe and Education Scotland will increase shared expectations and understanding of Learning, Teaching and Assessment in our classrooms, schools and settings across the

Northern Alliance. We will refine our phase 4 plan and use of resource to focus on common areas of need within learning, teaching and assessment as identified through a system wide needs analysis

- Refresh of vision and CCITI model to focus on learning, teaching and assessment to better reflect vulnerabilities currently being identified by Local Authorities, HMIE and schools.
- As part of our role as a regional improvement collaborative, we will continue to **build collective responsibility for improvement**- both within our schools and across the Northern Alliance. Our head teacher network will play an important role in influencing improvement activity around learning, teaching and assessment
- Our Youth Advisory Group helps us to focus on what matters to our young people within our plan. We will continue to **strengthen the voice of our young people in** helping us to increase learner participation and agency, as well as break down barriers to wellbeing and learning for all our children and young people.

APPENDIX A

Wellbeing and Learning				
Priority	NA Context- <i>what does success look like?</i>	Aim /s	NIF Driver/s	SAC Regional Medium-Term Outcomes
Deepen connections to wellbeing and learning through curriculum design	Outcomes for learners are improved through a relevant and meaningful curriculum as well as high quality pedagogy and practice. Learners feel well and are more involved in their learning, developing skills to be good at learning and good at life.	<i>95% of schools/ settings engaging with Wellbeing and Learning workstream curriculum design activity will report improved outcomes for their learners* by Feb 2025</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum and Assessment School and ELC Improvement 	<p>Improvements in engagement, attendance, confidence and wellbeing of children and young people</p> <p>An embedded culture and ethos based on educational equity exists in the education system that promotes high aspirations and recognises broader achievement for all children and young people and their families</p>
Putting the learner at the centre –meeting individual needs (in collaboration with Equality Investments Workstream)	Mental and emotional wellbeing, children’s rights and learner voice are central to all we do. Learning environments put learners at the centre. Learners feel safe, included, valued and heard.	<i>95% of schools/ settings engaging with the Wellbeing and Learning Workstream will report improved learner wellbeing* by Feb 2025.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum and Assessment 	Embedded engagement and participation of children and young people, families and communities in the learner journey
Collaborate to achieve shared expectations within learning, teaching and assessment at class, school/setting, team, local authority and regional level	Through meaningful collaboration, we are committed to sharing and mobilising effective practice. There is a shared understanding of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment, evidenced through greater consistency in	<i>95% of schools/settings engaging with the Wellbeing and Learning Workstream learning, teaching, assessment and moderation activity will report improved learner outcomes* by Feb 2025</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School and ELC Improvement Curriculum and Assessment 	<p>High quality learning, teaching and assessment, focussing on achieving equity for learners, across Health and Wellbeing, literacy and numeracy</p> <p>Evidence based approaches embedded in the system with continuous refinement/</p>

	expectations and standards. This is leading to improved outcomes for learners.			adaptation based on effective interventions in the local context
Increase opportunities for collaborative professional enquiry to explore existing and new pedagogies and practices	We are more engaged in collaborative professional enquiry to improve pedagogical practice and model a strong commitment to lifelong learning. This culture supports learners and practitioners to be 'good at learning, good at life.'	<i>95% of practitioners who complete a Wellbeing and Learning collaborative enquiry report improved outcomes* for their learners by Feb 2025</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism 	Strong leadership in the education system, using skills developed through continuous professional learning focused on equity and closing the poverty-related attainment gap
Social Intelligence				
Priority	NA Context- what does success look like?	Aim /s	NIF Driver/s	SAC Regional Medium-Term Outcomes
Work together to build a shared understanding of meaningful collaboration at school/setting, team, local authority and regional level.	There is system wide commitment to meaningful collaboration. RIC members have a shared understanding of collaboration theory, policy and practice to improve learner outcomes	<i>By June 2025, 95% of colleagues engaging with Social Intelligence Workstream will report a shared understanding of meaningful collaboration*</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School and ELC Leadership Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism School and ELC Improvement Parent/ Carer Involvement and Engagement 	Strategic collaboration across the education system results in innovative, impactful and sustainable approaches to closing the poverty-related attainment gap.
Increase opportunities for meaningful collaboration which leads to impact at school/setting, team, local authority and regional level	Increased numbers of practitioners are collaborating across the Northern Alliance to bring about improvement. Collaborative activity is always focused on improving outcomes for learners	By Feb 2025, 90% of schools participating in "Active Collaboration" projects will report improved wellbeing and learning experiences* for learners		High quality learning, teaching and assessment, focussing on achieving equity for learners, across Health and Wellbeing, literacy and numeracy

Work together at local, regional and national level to make a cohesive and accessible professional learning offer for and with practitioners across the Northern Alliance	Practitioners from across the Northern Alliance are accessing a high-quality professional learning offer in collaboration with our 8 Local Authorities and national partners.	<p>By Feb 2025, an online professional learning community platform will be created and developed in collaboration with our 8 Local Authorities and national partners</p> <p>By Feb 2025, 80% of practitioners engaging in the professional learning community platform will share practice, learning and impact* with other members of the platform</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School and ELC Leadership Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism 	Strategic collaboration across the education system results in innovative, impactful and sustainable approaches to closing the poverty-related attainment gap
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Equality Investments

Priority	NA Context- <i>what does success look like?</i>	Aim /s	NIF Driver/s	SAC Regional Medium-Term Outcomes
Work together to build confidence and capacity in the use of data to improve outcomes for learners across the Northern Alliance	Teams of practitioners make more effective use of data to improve outcomes from within our own settings. As a result of professional learning and sharing practice, confidence and competence in data for improvement increases and leads to improved outcomes for learners.	<p>Completion of a Regional Data for Improvement Framework in partnership with SEIC RIC by 2025</p> <p>By Feb 2025, 95% of practitioners engaging with the Equality Investments workstream report improved outcomes for learners* as a result of increased confidence and capacity in their use of data for improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School and ELC Leadership Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism 	An embedded use of data and evidence is used to build and share an understanding of effective interventions in closing the poverty-related attainment gap

Work together to ensure learners have a strong voice in how we break down barriers to wellbeing and learning at class, school /setting, team, local authority, regional and national level	Schools and settings work in genuine partnership with children, young people and parents, as well as wider partners. Each partner's voice is heard, respected and is used to inform next steps. There is stronger collaboration in order to break down barriers to wellbeing and learning	By Feb 2025, 90% of participants* engaging in improvement activity within the EI workstream will report their experience of participation as good or better.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/ Carer Involvement & Engagement • Curriculum and Assessment • Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young people at the centre of education 	<p>Embedded engagement and participation of children and young people, families and communities in the learner journey.</p> <p>An embedded culture and ethos based on educational equity exists in the education system that promotes high aspirations and recognises broader achievement for all children and young people and their families</p>
Putting the learner at the centre – meeting individual needs (in collaboration with Wellbeing and Learning Workstream)	All practitioners are clear about learners' rights in relation to policy – e.g. UNCRC, The Promise, Morgan Review. Policy and practice work together to break down barriers to wellbeing and learning and meet individual needs.	By Feb 2025 95% of establishments engaging across the Equality Investments workstream will provide clear evidence* of putting learners at the centre with a particular focus on Policy and Practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/ Carer Involvement and Engagement • Curriculum and Assessment 	Evidence based approaches embedded in the system with continuous refinement/ adaptation based on effective interventions in the local context.

Systemness

Priority	NA Context- <i>what does success look like?</i>	Aim /s	NIF Driver/s	SAC Regional Medium-Term Outcomes
Work together to ensure stakeholders are motivated and supported to engage in improvement activity within and across schools/ settings and teams	There is an increased level of agency and engagement in improvement activity across our schools and settings. Culture, systems and processes also support wider stakeholder	<i>By Feb 2025 95% of participants who engage with the Systemness Workstream will report increased agency and engagement in improvement activity*</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and ELC Improvement • Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism 	Embedded engagement and participation of children and young people, families and communities in the learner journey.

	engagement in improvement activity	<i>within their school/setting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/carer involvement and engagement 	
Build a shared understanding of the key principles of effective leadership at all levels	There is a shared understanding of effective leadership of change across the RIC. Leaders at all levels promote a culture of learning and improvement and as a result, there is deeper engagement in improvement activity within and across teams	<p><i>By Feb 2025, develop an agreed set of Northern Alliance 'Leadership of Change' principles and practice</i></p> <p><i>By Feb 2025, 95% of participants engaging with the NA 'Leadership of Change Principles' report increased leadership confidence and capacity*</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and ELC Improvement • Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism • Parent/carer involvement and engagement 	Strong leadership in the education system, using skills developed through continuous professional learning focused on equity and closing the poverty-related attainment gap.
Practitioners and learners at all levels work together to influence system wide improvement from within and across schools/ settings and teams in the Northern Alliance	Evidence of increased collective efficacy within teams across the RIC, resulting in shared high expectations for and with learners and improved outcomes. Collective responsibility for improvement is growing.	<i>By Feb 2025 95% of practitioners engaging with the Systemness Workstream will report increased collective efficacy* in their schools/ settings / teams, leading to improved outcomes for learners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and ELC Leadership • Curriculum and Assessment • Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism 	Strategic collaboration across the education system results in innovative, impactful and sustainable approaches to closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

APPENDIX B

Evidencing Impact - Northern Alliance Global Data

Northern Alliance Inspection Data

Northern Alliance	Full	Short	Mean 1.3	Mean 2.3	Mean 3.2	Mean 3.1	SD 1.3	SD 2.3	SD 3.2	SD 3.1
Pre-pandemic	96	70	3.22	3.26	3.35	3.56	0.84	0.80	0.80	0.86
Post-pandemic	42	39	3.43	3.52	3.54	3.55	0.99	0.95	0.85	0.92
Change			0.21	0.26	0.19	-0.01	0.16	0.15	0.05	0.06



This section gives the average STANDARD DEVIATION.
Larger numbers indicate that the grades are more spread out for those particular measures.

- Pre pandemic 3.1 was the strongest QI on average, with QI 1.3 and 2.3 evidencing lower grades
- QI 3.1 has decreased post pandemic – this could be as a result of the effects of the pandemic
- The remaining three QIs have all increased post pandemic
- There is increased variation in the grades across our local authorities for QI 1.3 and 2.3 than before the pandemic

Comparison by Sector

Sector	Post-pandemic				Pre-pandemic				Change			
	Mean 1.3	Mean 2.3	Mean 3.2	Mean 3.1	Mean 1.3	Mean 2.3	Mean 3.2	Mean 3.1	QI 1.3	QI 2.3	QI 3.2	QI 3.1
Nursery	3.67	3.69	3.72	3.80	3.07	3.13	3.37	3.58	0.60	0.56	0.35	0.22
Primary	3.45	3.54	3.59	3.60	3.45	3.37	3.32	3.60	0.00	0.17	0.27	0.00
Secondary	2.80	3.00	3.00	2.60	3.33	3.70	3.60	3.67	-0.53	-0.70	-0.60	-1.07
All sectors	3.43	3.52	3.54	3.55	3.22	3.26	3.35	3.56	0.21	0.26	0.19	-0.01

- The pattern looks very different pre and post pandemic according to inspections carried out to date.

- Comparison of post pandemic inspection data evidences greater improvements within nursery settings, with secondary/special schools evidencing lower grades than pre pandemic.
- In nursery/primary we are seeing mainly improvements
- In secondary settings, we are seeing an averaged drop of at least half a grade compared to before.
- QI 3.1 evidences a particular reduction in grading within secondaries (and also QI 1.3).
- Note that the small number of secondary and special inspections means their averages are affected much more by particularly weak/unsatisfactory inspection grades

Global Measure	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
% of primary pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in literacy (based on reading, writing and talking and listening)	66	*	62	67	
% of primary pupils (p1, p4 and p7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in numeracy	73	*	70	75	
% of S3 pupils achieving third level or better in literacy (based on reading, writing and talking and listening)	85	*	*	82	
% of S3 pupils achieving third level or better in numeracy	90	*	*	89	
% of S3 pupils achieving fourth level or better in literacy (based	37	*	*	46	
% of S3 pupils achieving fourth level or better in numeracy	59	*	*	58	
National 5 A-C passes	79.5	89.3	86.2	81.4	78.0
Higher – A-C Passes	76.9	89.6	86.9	79.7	76.5
Initial School Leaver Destinations (Positive) Lowest attaining 20%	133	142	143	143	
Initial School Leaver Destinations (Positive) Middle attaining 60%	591	654	669	628	

Initial School Leaver Destinations (Positive) Highest attaining 20%	1252	1321	1328	1289	
All schools attendance	94	*	94		
All schools exclusion per 1000	21	*	13		
Average grading evaluated as good or better for leadership of change		3.22	*	*	3.41
Average grading evaluated as good or better for learning, teaching and assessment		3.26	*	*	3.52
Average grading evaluated as good or better for ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion		3.56	*	*	3.55
Average grading evaluated as good or better for raising attainment and achievement		3.35	*	*	3.54

