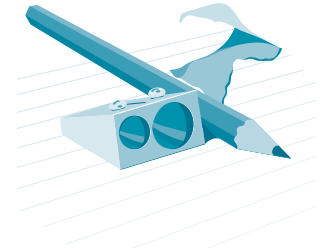


# School education

## Audit methodology



We used a range of approaches to address the main aim and objectives of the audit, including document reviews, data analysis and interviews. The audit had four main components:

- **Desk research:** we reviewed a range of relevant information on school education, including council education strategies, council committee minutes, agendas and reports, and Education Scotland reports. We also reviewed academic literature on the factors known to influence attainment.
- **Interviews and focus groups:** we carried out in-depth interviews in four councils, Aberdeenshire, East Renfrewshire, Fife, and Glasgow City, with:
  - Directors of Education
  - Heads of Service
  - Central education department staff
  - Head teachers
  - Elected members
  - Partner organisations.

We held focus groups with teachers and pupils in Glasgow City, Fife, and East Renfrewshire Councils.

We also interviewed a range of staff from other organisations including Duke of Edinburgh, Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership and the Scottish Government.

- **Data analysis and surveys:** we analysed a range of published attainment data from the Scottish Government, Scottish Schools Online and the OECD. This included annual attainment statistics, leaver destinations, school estate statistics, and international education surveys (PISA). We surveyed all 32 councils to collect detailed information on:
  - school expenditure
  - staffing
  - performance management arrangements
  - pupil's wider achievement
  - parental engagement
  - good practice.
- **Survey of parents:** we conducted an online survey with parents between 17 February and 28 February 2014 and received 400 responses. This was a self-completion questionnaire and as such may not be representative of all parents.