

Summarised inspection findings

Lanark Grammar School

South Lanarkshire Council

17 March 2026

Key contextual information

School Name:	Lanark Grammar School
Council:	South Lanarkshire Council
SEED number:	8550034
Roll (December 2025):	1110

Lanark Grammar School is a non-denominational, comprehensive secondary school. The school serves the town of Lanark and the surrounding area within South Lanarkshire.

One-hundred and six young people with a range of additional support needs (ASN) from across South Lanarkshire attend the school's ASN provision. This includes young people with severe and complex needs.

The headteacher has been in post for four years. He is supported by five substantive deputy headteachers.

In September 2024, 14.4% of pupils lived in the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland. In September 2024, 19.6% of pupils were registered for free school meals.

In September 2024, the school recorded 41.8% of young people as having an additional support need. However, the school now report that a few young people, with the most severe needs who are not accessing mainstream classes, may have been coded incorrectly. This recording error has now been corrected by the school and local authority.

Attendance has shown improvement in recent sessions and was in line with the national average in 2023/24. Exclusions are generally in line with the national average.

1.3 Leadership of change

good

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- The school leadership team and staff have worked together effectively to promote and embed the values of achievement, endeavour, respect, enthusiasm, community, and equality across the school community. Young people and staff demonstrate these values well in lessons and in their everyday interactions across the school. Young people, staff, partners and parents have been involved in agreeing and promoting the values of the school. Staff use creative ways to praise and reward young people who demonstrate the values of the school well. They use social media and other online platforms to share young people's success with parents.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and demonstrates a clear commitment to improving the attainment wellbeing and learning experiences of all young people. He is well-respected across the school, by partners and across the local community. Staff value his open and approachable demeanour. There have been several, recent changes to the senior leadership team. Permanent roles have now been appointed and strategic remits agreed. Supported very well by the strong team of depute headteachers, the headteacher is empowering all staff to be more involved in shaping and leading whole-school improvement priorities at set points throughout the year. A minority of staff lead on focused areas of school improvement. The headteacher and senior leaders should continue with plans to extend whole-school leadership opportunities to staff at all levels. This should help to drive school improvement priorities and initiatives, whilst building staff confidence and awareness of national expectations, across the school.
- Senior leaders work closely with all teaching staff to develop the school's well-balanced areas for improvement as set out in the school improvement plan (SIP). Teachers work collaboratively in teams several times per session during the planned 'whole-school improvement activities' sessions. The headteacher is correctly using this as an approach to build and forge leadership opportunities and responsibilities amongst staff at all levels.
- Most curriculum middle leaders work well with their colleagues to design faculty improvement plans (FIPs), which align to the SIP. There is further scope for FIPs to outline more clearly how individual subject departments will contribute strategically to improving attainment across the whole school. Senior leaders should continue as planned to develop middle leaders' and teachers' confidence in self-evaluation to raise attainment further. Positively, there are individuals and groups of staff across the school at all levels who are providing support to develop all staff's awareness and confidence reflecting national standards. Moving forward, senior leaders should ensure increased rigour in supporting and challenging middle leaders to evaluate FIPs. This will help to ensure the aims and actions within these plans are resulting in

whole-school improvement at pace. Senior leaders should also support middle leaders who lead pupil support across the school, to develop bespoke improvement plans for their lead area of responsibility.

- Across the school, a majority of young people contribute confidently and enthusiastically to leading meaningful opportunities in a variety of roles and school improvement groups. This promotes leadership activities for young people through, for example, regular classroom support volunteering for younger peers and involvement in leading assemblies and organising and leading other whole-school events. A few young people have recently led whole-school assemblies for anti-bullying and autism awareness. This is helping develop the confidence of these young people and reinforce the strong inclusive vision for the school. Young people in the senior phase are very proud of their work in promoting the national 'Mentors in Violence Prevention' (MVP) initiative. Young people are developing their skills well in this area to become school MVP ambassadors to develop and sustain this initiative across the school community. A minority of young people are involved in a number of activities and initiatives, leading to their Duke of Edinburgh's (DoE) Award. This is a high-profile area of the school's success in providing young people with leadership and confidence-building opportunities as they move through the school. Senior leaders and teachers recognise the need now to develop further leadership opportunities for young people in the broad general education (BGE), to develop important life and leadership skills.
- Senior leaders and almost all staff know very well the social and cultural context of the school. They have developed a well-considered Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) plan which has been shared with parents. This plan allocates carefully the PEF funds for the school. Senior leaders have also deployed well recent staffing resources geared towards supporting young people who can benefit from PEF funding. For example, this is helping to ensure that any costs associated with the school day and other activities are mitigated. The leadership of this area of the school's work is a strength.
- Teachers across the school are becoming more confident in contributing to and leading key areas of the school's improvement work. Senior leaders are supporting this area of teachers' professional development well. A minority of staff have created or assumed whole-school lead responsibilities. For example, senior leaders have funded or part funded a few staff to undertake post-graduate level study. This is benefitting the school's strategic development work to improve learning experiences, build teacher capacity and improve outcomes for young people. Recently, a few teachers have benefitted from the school's career-long professional development (CLPL) programme. For example, they have successfully worked towards national recognition of readiness to seek middle leadership positions in guidance. A group of teachers is also leading the school's work on continuing to improve learning, teaching and assessment across the school. This work is beginning to show more consistent routines and structure in lessons.
- All teachers engage with professional review and development (PRD) processes annually. These are linked clearly to the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) professional standards. Teachers identify areas that will support improving learning experiences and support for young people to improve. The majority of these identified priorities link well to department improvements and reflect clearly the SIP priorities. Senior leaders and teachers work well with external organisations to provide effective and useful whole staff training opportunities. Moving forward, senior leaders should continue to support all teachers to

identify more explicitly how their PRD priorities can link directly to achieving key school improvement priorities.

- Staff responsible for Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) have a clear vision for developing the curriculum in line with DYW priorities. This is communicated effectively with staff and has increased the range of learning pathways and opportunities for young people. Senior leaders work closely with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to identify, plan and review partnership priorities. Senior staff should continue, as planned, to work with all staff and young people to embed a clear understanding of how developing skills for life, learning and work supports raised attainment and achievement.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Across the school, staff and young people enjoy warm, supportive and productive relationships. The school's values of achievement, endeavour, respect, enthusiasm, community and equality are well embedded, as is the school motto of learning, growing and succeeding. Teachers create calm, purposeful learning environments for young people to learn across almost all areas of the school. This supports very well a positive climate for learning. During the current academic year, staff have increased their focus on classroom routines, such as staff greeting young people at the door and beginning lessons promptly. As a result, young people settle quickly to their work.
- In almost all lessons, almost all young people focus well on their learning and remain motivated as they complete their work. In a few classes, a few young people show low-level off-task behaviour, such as talking to classmates when the teacher is giving instructions or by losing concentration on their tasks. Where this occurs, it is almost always handled effectively and sensitively by the teacher and young people's learning is not adversely affected.
- Senior leaders consulted with young people and teachers during 2025 to produce the new Lanark Grammar School Lesson (LGSL) framework. Young people appreciate the clarity provided by the LGSL, which has led to greater consistency in their classroom experiences. As planned, senior leaders should now work closely with staff and young people to identify the most impactful elements of high-quality teaching that can be implemented more widely across the school. For example, teachers should continue to provide more activities where all young people can be fully engaged in planning and leading their learning. The planned teacher learning trios will provide a suitable context for professional discussion about further development of the LGSL. This should include consideration of the pace during lessons. At present, in a minority of lessons, young people could be making quicker progress in their learning.
- In almost all lessons, teachers use starter activities to help young people to begin working promptly and to connect with their previous learning. In a few cases, these activities support learners to think deeply about aspects of their subject learning. At the beginning of almost all lessons, teachers share with learners the purpose of learning and what successful learning looks like. Almost all young people feel that it helps them to understand how to make progress in their learning. In a few cases the purpose shared with young people describes the tasks they will undertake. Teachers should consider how to ensure that each lesson's purpose clearly

identifies specific skills and knowledge, and that success criteria are revisited so that young people can assess their own progress.

- In almost all classes, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear and teachers use questioning well to check young people's understanding, knowledge and recall. Teachers should now capitalise on the strongest examples of practice in this area, where a few colleagues use highly effective questioning to challenge young people to develop higher-order thinking skills. Almost all teachers provide young people in S4 to S6 with feedback about their work that helps them to be very clear about their next steps in learning and how to improve. Young people particularly value these learning conversations about their work. Teachers should consider how to expand the use of such learning conversations in S1 to S3. Young people speak confidently about working and target grades and next steps in learning, especially in the senior phase.
- In a minority of lessons, teachers access appropriate resources and make creative use of digital technology to enhance young people's work. For example, teachers support young people well to use digital software to support their project work in music technology courses. In a minority of classes, young people use their own digital devices such as mobile phones to access online quizzes, to conduct research or to explore visual images in art. This is very well managed by class teachers. Most teachers use a digital platform to share resources with learners. Young people also use this platform to submit work, and a few teachers provide online feedback. This use of the digital platform helps support young people who have missed learning through absence. Senior leaders should work with the local authority to explore how digital resources could be used further to support young people who find it challenging to attend school, to enhance young people's classroom experiences and to increase personalisation and choice for learners.
- In the majority of lessons, learners enjoy opportunities to work collaboratively. They would benefit from more regular and explicit conversations about the skills they are developing during collaborative work. In a minority of lessons, teachers make explicit reference to real-life contexts. This helps young people develop skills for learning, life and work. Staff should consider how to embed the school's skills framework to support young people to track their skills development during their time at Lanark Grammar School.
- Support for learning staff share information with all teachers about young people's learning needs. The majority of teachers use this information to adapt and augment lesson resources to help young people overcome barriers to their learning. For example, teachers provide coloured overlays for young people facing specific barriers to reading and put in place assistive technology for young people where appropriate. Specialist staff work effectively with small groups of young people who require additional support, especially with literacy and numeracy. Teachers should now consider how best to plan differentiated learning experiences that take full account of all young people's needs, including more able young people who would benefit from greater challenge in their learning.
- Senior leaders and staff have drawn up a clear policy on moderation and assessment that outlines a range of approaches staff can use to monitor young people's progress. In the majority of lessons, teachers assess young people's knowledge and understanding during lessons through one-to-one conversations. In a minority of lessons, they make effective use of formative assessment approaches such as show-me boards and exit passes. In a minority of lessons, young people benefit from engaging in high quality peer- and self-assessment and

staff should consider how to provide more of these opportunities. Teachers are increasingly confident in their assessment judgements in the BGE. They have worked effectively with colleagues within and beyond the school to verify their judgements. In particular, teachers have benefited from engagement with local primary and secondary schools about the learning, teaching and assessment cycle.

- In the senior phase, teachers across the school use a robust approach to verifying assessment judgements. Teachers across almost all faculties undertake additional responsibilities with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). As a result, teachers across the school have a strong understanding of national standards in senior phase courses. All faculties have in place quality assurance calendars that include moderation and verification processes. There is scope for senior leaders to work more closely with middle leaders to explore how the strongest practice in quality assurance across faculties can support positive outcomes for young people.
- Teachers across all faculties effectively plan learning in the BGE using Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes and use the national Benchmarks to measure young people's progress. In the senior phase, almost all teachers plan courses with a focus on ensuring young people can overtake assessment standards in National Qualifications (NQs) and other certificated courses.
- Middle leaders use a range of approaches to track and monitor young people's attainment. They use this information effectively to implement interventions for young people who are not on track in their learning. Senior leaders have provided professional learning for teachers on the use of data. As a result, teachers are becoming increasingly skilled in using data to identify those who require supportive interventions. At present, faculty tracking systems are stronger in the senior phase and are too variable in the BGE. Senior and middle leaders should continue to work together to develop further consistent subject and faculty approaches to tracking young people's progress. This will help all staff to ensure that tracking information is used in the most effective ways possible to support young people's progress.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Staff work with primary colleagues effectively to support children in their transition to secondary school. Enhanced transition opportunities successfully support identified young people. Teachers should now look to develop stronger curriculum links to bring greater coherence and continuity to young people's learning as they move from primary to secondary. Senior leaders are developing literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing as a responsibility of all. Building on Clydesdale Collaborative work, senior leaders should now focus on embedding these areas, as a responsibility of all, across the school in order to raise attainment.
- Senior leaders should review the BGE curriculum to ensure that all young people receive their full entitlement to their learning. At present not all young people in S2 and S3 receive their entitlement to learn to appropriate levels across all curriculum areas. Senior leaders should also ensure that mitigations are in place to address missed learning resulting from choices made in S2 where learners elect to modify their course of study for the senior phase.
- Senior leaders have recently made changes to the curriculum, following consultation with young people, staff and parents. Staff and young people have particularly welcomed a recent change enabling young people to study seven subjects rather than six subjects in S4. Senior leaders should continue to monitor the impact of these changes on the attainment of young people.
- Flexible programmes of learning have been developed to reflect learners' needs, interests, aspirations and future career intentions. A wide range of stakeholders support young people with career, further education and higher education information through career events. However, there is further scope for staff to work with external stakeholders such as employers and industry to inform curriculum design and use local market intelligence to plan progression opportunities.
- Young people receive their entitlement to planned programmes of physical education in line with national guidance. Senior leaders should review the delivery of religious and moral education in the senior phase to ensure that it complies fully with national guidance. Currently, more than half of young people in S3 are not studying a modern language and therefore are not meeting their entitlement to the national 1+2 language learning policy.
- Senior leaders should ensure that the curriculum continues to have breadth as well as depth. Young people are supported to personalise their curriculum in the senior phase through timetabled options which include a wide range of qualifications and awards. Senior leaders should continue to review these options to ensure young people have the opportunity to prepare for employment and to develop skills for life, learning and work.
- The school library is a valued and well-used resource. Young people also read, study and socialise in the library at break and lunchtimes. They also appreciate the range of clubs and activities that take place in the library for them. The school's involvement in the local authority's Virtual Academy enables a few young people to study courses that would not otherwise be possible at Advanced Higher level, in conjunction with other schools.

- Almost all young people feel they receive appropriate advice and support to assist them in decision making in selecting courses of study within the BGE and senior phase. There are further opportunities to work with key partners such as Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) to fully embed employability and career management skills across all personal and social education (PSE) activities to raise awareness of progression pathways.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents are positive about the sense of community which senior leaders and staff have established. Parents welcome the opportunity for their child to be involved in extra-curricular clubs including supported study, creative and sporting activities. Most parents feel the school is well led and managed.
- Most parents welcome the regular communication from the headteacher, which allows them to keep up to date with school news. A few parents would welcome teachers using the online learning platform more consistently. This would help parents to more effectively support their child to make progress.
- Senior leaders work well in partnership with the Parent Council and involve them in consultations and in school improvement planning. The parent council is an active group, and they should continue to work with senior leaders to ensure the membership is fully representative of the context of the school.
- Parents welcome the opportunity to be involved in activities where they can learn with their child and support their home learning. Senior leaders should consider how this could be delivered more effectively.

2.1 Safeguarding

- Following the inspection the education authority, working with the school, have taken forward areas for improvement in safeguarding which required urgent action. HM Inspectors have reviewed information relating to these areas for improvement. HM Inspectors are satisfied with the response taken by the education authority and do not require any further information.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- Positive and trusting relationships between staff and young people are evident. Staff care about young people and young people talk confidently about having a variety of staff who know them well and with whom they can speak. This supports almost all young people to feel safe within the school.
- Principal teachers of pupil support (PTPS) have designed a progressive and coherent PSE programme for young people in S1 to S4. Young people play an active part in shaping the PSE curriculum. They identify issues impacting on the school and local community, such as vaping and anti-social behaviour, and discuss these regularly with their pupil support teacher. Most young people value their learning in PSE and recognise how it helps them to be safe and respect others. Young people would benefit from developing further a stronger understanding of their wellbeing through PSHE. Senior leaders should also consider extending the PSHE programme beyond the current inserts for young people in S5 and S6. This would give them the opportunity to engage in structured dialogue regularly in topics that are relevant to them.
- Senior leaders have created a helpful 'Embedding GIRFEC in the Classroom' document which they are continuing to implement across the school. Staff and young people would benefit from this approach being understood and embedded in all areas of the school. This should also help all staff be clearer on their roles and responsibilities regarding the health and wellbeing of young people.
- Almost all young people in S1 to S4 complete a wellbeing tracker. Senior leaders review this information regularly and use it to inform improvements in wellbeing supports. For example, young people access mental health first aiders across the school, a Wellbeing Buddy Team led by young people in S6 and a Chaplaincy Team Listening Ear service. These have supported a few young people well to feel safer and more included in school. As planned, PTPS should continue to develop the use of the wellbeing tracker with all young people.
- Staff follow the local authority's staged intervention model to identify and plan support for young people. In order to support staff to understand better the needs of young people, key staff developed a helpful whole school overview which indicates the types of supports which young people may benefit from. Most staff, therefore, have an increased awareness of the needs of young people. The majority of staff use this information to effectively meet the needs of all young people in lessons. Senior leaders should continue to develop this overview to ensure that it helps staff support young people more effectively.

- The majority of young people who have an identified additional support need are well supported through recently developed pupil support plans. Staff work closely with a range of partners to offer appropriate, planned wellbeing supports for a few young people. When developing these plans, teachers should continue to ensure that they are informed by the views of the young person and that they include specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timebound targets to enable young people to better measure their progress.
- School support assistants (SSAs) provide effective support for most young people with whom they have contact. Senior leaders should consider ways teachers could work more effectively with SSAs when planning learning activities so that SSAs could provide more effective support.
- Almost all teachers recognise the benefits of the professional learning activities planned around developing inclusive practice. For example, inputs on autism and mental health are inspiring more staff to lead on specific aspects of meeting young people's needs. This is supporting the majority of staff to more effectively meet the needs of all young people in lessons. A minority of staff were enthused by recent inputs to encourage more effective collaboration between staff, parents, partners and others. This whole school approach has the potential to make a real difference, particularly around strengthening universal support.
- Identified young people are supported well to work in smaller classes focusing on literacy and numeracy. A few young people are supported through the Wellbeing and Attainment Hubs. Staff in the Wellbeing Hub offer a person-centred approach to educational experiences largely to young people who find the mainstream school environment challenging. The Hubs provide safe spaces for young people to focus on their wellbeing, literacy and numeracy. Activities support emotional regulation, the development of social skills and help to build positive relationships with others. This support is helping the majority of identified young people to reengage with learning. The majority of these young people in the senior phase attain appropriate National Qualifications as a result of this additional support. Senior leaders should continue to monitor the impact of interventions to ensure all approaches are contributing to improvements in outcomes for these young people.
- A wide range of partners work well with school staff to enhance bespoke supports for young people. For example, the Youth, Family and Community Learning Services (YFCL) support a few young people to re-engage with school. Young people in the senior phase who require additional employability support follow a local authority programme focused on work experience, employability skills, volunteering and a range of health and wellbeing interventions. This helps them to develop skills for life, learning and work.
- All care-experienced young people are known to staff and are supported well. They are considered for a co-ordinated support plan. Key staff provide effective mentoring support. As a result, these young people are more confident, achieve more and feel that others understand them more. Approximately half of young people who are care-experienced improved their attendance at school last term.
- Senior leaders have a very clear focus on improving the attendance of young people across the school. Attendance of young people is tracked at monthly House meetings, analysed and discussed with young people either individually or for example, at house assemblies. Most young people whose attendance was between 85% and 90%, and who took part in a specific programme based on nurturing approaches, improved their attendance at school. Overall,

from 2021/22 to 2024/25 there has been a steady increase in attendance rates. A few young people access a part-time timetable. Senior leaders and PTPS staff should continue to ensure these arrangements are reviewed regularly and maintain the aspiration of returning young people back to full-time education as soon as possible. The quality of support provided to young people has resulted in a few learners re-engaging with learning. Exclusion rates have fallen from 2022/23 to 2024/25, partly as a result of the improvement in relationships and more appropriate learning experiences.

- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and young people. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of people through food in school. Minor areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.
- Young people benefit from a strong pastoral transition programme from P7 into S1 and, for those who require it, a robust enhanced transition programme. This means that most young people settle well into their new school environment. A few young people are supported effectively with the transition from school into the world of work by engaging in a programme delivered well by partners.
- As a result of evidence gathered across the school, a few young people worked with staff and the local authority to develop an Anti-Bullying policy which reflects the school values. A pupil taskforce is driving this initiative to encourage their peers to be active bystanders and model consistently the school values of respect, community, and equality. This work is at the early stage of implementation. Staff should continue with their plans to share this approach more widely across the school.
- Over recent years, young people in S5 and S6 have been trained as Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP). They have delivered workshops to younger pupils on topics such as violence against girls and women. This is increasing awareness of issues that impact on relationships, for example. Young people report that learning helps them to develop self-respect and respect for others. Senior leaders should continue with their plans to embed further this programme across the school.
- Most staff have attended professional learning in 'Time for Inclusive Education' (TIE) to raise awareness of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and other (LGBTQ+) people. Young people have benefited from TIE assemblies. This has led to the creation of specific support groups for young people. Staff from the ASN Provision have developed a successful 'Road to Inclusion' event for young people in S1. This is leading to more young people developing empathy for others. Young people would benefit from a greater understanding of all protected characteristics to develop further their understanding of inclusion and equality.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

A significant proportion of the school population, 106 young people, attend the ASN Provision. This proportion varies between a few to a minority of young people within different year groups. Senior leaders provided supplementary attainment data based on amended ASN coding for a few young people in the ASN Provision.

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

Broad General Education

- In 2024/25, almost all young people achieved CfE third level or better in literacy by the end of S3. This has increased from most in 2022/23 and 2023/24. Most young people achieved CfE fourth level in 2024/25, an increase from the majority in the previous 3 years. In 2024/25, almost all young people achieved CfE third level or better in numeracy by the end of S3, an increase from most in the previous three years. The number of young people achieving fourth level increased, from the majority in 2021/22 to 2023/24, to most in 2024/25.
- Staff responsible for literacy and numeracy have developed robust tracking approaches. They can identify clearly young people's attainment and progress in the BGE. Using this data, staff have developed a range of interventions to effectively support young people progress towards achieving expected levels. Staff should continue to work with primary colleagues to further develop moderation activities and embed the shared understanding of benchmarks and achievement of level and support and strengthen transition.

Senior Phase

Leavers

- From 2019/20 to 2023/24, most young people left school with SCQF level 5 or better in literacy, in line with the virtual comparator (VC). Less than half of young people achieved SCQF level 6 or better in literacy in 2022/23 and 2023/24, in line with the VC. This is a decline on previous years where the majority of young people achieved at this level.
- The majority of young people left school with SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy over the past three years. This is significantly lower than the VC in 2022/23 and 2023/24. Senior leaders and staff who lead on this area have identified the reasons for this gap in attainment and have put in place a number of strategies to improve this measure. This has included improved, more focused tracking and monitoring and clarification of key staff responsibilities. They provided data from their whole school and faculty tracking systems which predicts improvements for current learners. A minority of leavers achieved SCQF level 6 in numeracy from 2019/20 to

2023/24. There is an improvement in this measure over time and it has remained in line with the VC.

- From 2019/20 to 2023/24, young people who require additional support with their learning left school with levels of literacy qualifications at SCQF level 4, level 5 and level 6 generally in line with their comparators. In numeracy, the percentage of young people leaving school with level 4, level 5 and level 6 has increased in 2023/24 and is again broadly in line with the VC.

Cohorts

- In literacy, at S4, most young people attained SCQF level 5 or better in 2024/25, this is an improvement from the majority of young people in the previous three years. This is in line with the VC from 2019/20 to 2023/24. By S5, a minority of young people attained SCQF level 6, from 2022/23 to 2024/25. This is in line with the VC but down from a majority in 2020/21 and 2021/22. By S6, based on the S4 roll, around half of young people attained SCQF level 6 in 2024/25. This is in line with the VC since 2021/22. but does show a decrease from 2020/21.
- The majority of young people in S4 achieved SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy from 2020/21 to 2024/25. While this is significantly lower than the VC in 2021/22, 2023/24 and 2024/25 it has increased in each of the past four years. Staff with responsibility for numeracy have put in place a clear plan for increasing attainment at SCQF level 5 for young people in S4, including revising course delivery, improved tracking and appropriate planned interventions. At S5, based on S5 roll, a minority of young people achieved SCQF level 6 from 2020/21 to 2024/25. This is generally in line with the VC. At S6, based on the S4 roll, a minority of young people attained SCQF level 6 in numeracy from 2020/21 to 2024/25. This is generally in line with the VC.

National Qualifications (NQ)

- In 2024/25, the proportion of young people presented for National 5 (N5) English was in line with the national average. Most young people presented were successful in achieving the course at grades A-C. For Higher English, of those presented, the majority achieved a grade A-C, in line with the national average.
- A minority of young people in S4 were presented for N5 mathematics in 2024/25 and a minority were presented for N5 applications of mathematics. Both course presentation rates are below the national average. Of those presented for N5 mathematics, most achieved the course at grades A-C. This was above the national average. Of those young people presented for applications of mathematics in 2024/25, a minority achieved a grade A-C. A majority of young people presented for N5 applications of mathematics in S5/6 in 2024/25, achieved a grade A-C. In S5/6 a minority of young people were presented for Higher mathematics. Of those presented, most achieved the course award at grades A-C. A few young people were presented for Higher applications of mathematics in S5/6 in 2024/25. Of those presented, a majority achieved the course award at grades A-C. Staff should continue with plans to develop a more structured pathway for applications of maths through BGE and course choice. This should support young people to achieve more high quality passes at N5 and Higher.

Attainment over time

BGE

- In 2024/25, senior staff introduced a more robust system to monitor young people's attainment over time in the BGE. This data shows that in 2024/25, most young people achieved

CfE third level and a minority achieved CfE fourth level in their chosen subjects by the end of S3. Staff should, as planned, use this data more rigorously to ensure young people are supported better to make appropriate and aspirational subject choices to achieve well across their learning in the senior phase. They should also use this data to measure more regularly the attainment of individuals and groups, in the BGE, who face additional barriers to their learning. This analysis will help support ongoing improvements to course delivery and content, as well as identifying young people earlier for well-considered targeted interventions.

Leavers

- Attainment for the lowest attaining 20% of young people, when using average complementary tariff scores, has been declining since 2020/21. Performance of the middle attaining 60% and the highest attaining 20% of young people has been in line with the VC between 2019/20 and 2023/24. Performance for the middle attaining 60% of young people leaving school has generally been following a pattern of decline from 2020/21 levels.
- The attainment of leavers who require additional support with their learning is generally in line with the VC over the five-year period, with an increased average complementary tariff since 2019/20.
- Senior leaders acknowledge that the attainment of the lowest attaining 20% and middle attaining 60% of young people leaving school requires improvement. They are now using information from recently strengthened tracking systems to identify and support young people more effectively to make appropriate progress.

Cohorts

- At S4, the attainment of the lowest attaining 20%, is in line with the VC in 2024/25 having been significantly lower in 2022/23 and 2023/24. This is the highest average complementary tariff, for this group, in the past five years. The middle attaining 60% young people is significantly lower than the VC in 2024/25. The average complementary tariff of this group has increased from 2022/23 to 2024/25. The highest attaining 20% is in line with the VC from 2020/21 to 2024/25.
- At S5 and S6, the attainment of the lowest attaining 20% is significantly lower or much lower than the VC in 2024/25 and the performance of this group of young people does follow a pattern of decline from 2021/22. The attainment of the middle 60% and highest 20% young people in S5 and S6 is generally in line with the VC since 2021/22.
- Senior staff are aware of the need to improve the performance of the lowest attaining 20% at all stages. They should continue to use the wide range of targeted interventions, tracking and monitoring systems and consider the developing range of learner pathways to support improved attainment for this group of young people.

Breadth and depth

- A minority of young people in S4 attained five or more courses at SCQF level 5C or better, from 2020/21 to 2024/25. This dropped from being in line with VC from 2020/21 to 2023/24 to significantly lower in 2024/25. A minority of young people attained five or more level 5A or better from 2020/21 to 2024/25, in line with VC. The recently introduced curricular change, moving to seven presentations in S4, has allowed a minority of young people to achieve seven

or more courses at SCQF level 5C or better in 2024/25, bringing this measure in line with the VC.

- By S5, a minority of young people achieved five or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better from 2020/21 to 2024/25. This is in line with the VC. A few young people achieved three or more award at SCQF level 6A or better from 2022/23 to 2024/25. This is in line with the VC. In general, young people's attainment by S5 at SCQF level 6 is stable over the past three years.
- By S6, a minority of young people achieved five or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better from 2020/21 to 2024/25. This is in line with the VC. A minority of young people achieved one of more awards at SCQF level 7C from 2020/21 to 2024/25, in line with the VC but significantly above in 2022/23. A few young people achieved three or more awards at SCQF level 7C from 2020/21 to 2024/25. This is in line with the VC.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- The majority of young people participate in the wide variety of clubs and groups during lunch times and after school. 'Lanark Grammar Achieves' – the school's agreed strategy, uses data well to target and support young people less likely to achieve. As a result, young people across the school are becoming more confident and successful, increasingly taking responsibility for their learning and achievement. Senior leaders should continue to embed the school skills framework to help young people understand and reflect on the skills they are developing through this work.
- Senior and middle leaders are increasing the range of qualifications that young people can achieve. Almost all young people in S1 to S3 are gaining meaningful awards to improve confidence and develop life important skills. These include the Junior Award Scheme for Schools (JASS), Outward Bound, John Muir Award and the Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI). Increasing numbers of young people are now volunteering in their community as a result. For a few young people these activities are leading to formal recognition of achievement through Saltire Awards.
- The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DoE), is well-embedded across the school. A minority of young people from S3-S6 are participating in bronze, silver and, the newly introduced, gold awards. This includes a few young people with additional support needs, from the ASN Provision, working towards the bronze award. Young people are enthusiastic about participating in this challenge and are learning important skills including team working, communication and problem-solving.
- Young people's achievements are recognised and celebrated well through a range of approaches. This includes, for example, notice boards, social media, newsletters, assemblies and annual prizegiving events. Young people feel valued and motivated by this regular and high-profile celebration of effort, progress and achievement. They feel confident to regularly share with school staff their achievements outside of school.
- The school's strong partnership with Youth Family, and Community Learning Services (YFCL) and other local youth providers is helping young people become more successful and confident. A mentoring provider effectively supports a few identified young people to gain qualifications and move to a positive destination beyond school. For a few of these young people, attendance in school is also improving. Strong working relationships with Lanark Universal Connections is

leading to a wide range of supports built around the needs of targeted young people. As a result, most of these young people are re-engaging with their learning at school.

- A targeted group of young people and their families are supported well through the Pathfinders Programme (through YFCL). Participants are improving life skills through working towards individual goals. A few young people are now better engaged with their learning in school as a result.
- Faculties have introduced a Subject Ambassador programme to create leadership opportunities for a few learners to contribute positively to the culture of learning across the school. This helps young people to develop their skills in leadership, communication and self-confidence.

Equity for all learners

- Pupil Equity Funding has been used well to support strategic planning to improve attainment and achievement outcomes for young people with additional barriers to learning, such as poverty, ASN and attendance. Senior leaders and staff have a clear focus on reducing the financial burden on families and raising awareness of supports available within the school community.
- There are several, PEF funded, well-planned intervention strategies, such as Accelerated Attainment programme and Lanark Grammar Achieves, which are beginning to have a positive impact on attendance, attainment and engagement in school. The Accelerated Attainment programme is helping to improve attendance and attainment for a targeted group of senior phase learners. The school has also introduced a helpful digital curriculum as part of its strategy to promote equity. This ensures that learners with low attendance can participate more fully in learning in a context which best suits their needs, both in and beyond the classroom. Tracking and monitoring is used effectively to create and adapt bespoke programmes of support for identified learners. Feedback from young people and families indicates a high level of satisfaction with the programme. The enhanced communication around progress and achievement is supporting improved attendance and attainment for most young people in this group. Senior leaders should continue with plans to enhance support packages, such as widening access to the programmes, and develop approaches to monitoring the impact of all interventions.
- The percentage of young people who stay on beyond S4 and S5 is broadly in line with the national average. In 2023/24, the attainment of school leavers in decile 5 and was significantly higher than that of young people in similar deciles across Scotland. The attainment of school leavers who live in SIMD deciles 1 and 2 has been significantly much lower or lower than the VC in recent years.
- Staff use a risk register based on data hub information shared by SDS and DYW staff to target young people at risk of a negative destination. Pupil support staff and senior staff meet regularly with SDS and DYW partners to provide prompt interventions to support these young people into positive destinations. For example, introductory programmes in vocational areas such as creative and digital media and engineering are raising awareness of progression pathways for pupils and raising aspirations for future careers. Young people achieve consistently strong positive destinations, in line with VC and national average. Almost all pupils move on to a positive destination in further or higher education, training or employment.

Context

The ASN Provision at Lanark Grammar School meets the needs of 106 young people with a wide range of additional support needs from across South Lanarkshire. The provision is managed on a day-to-day basis by a deputy headteacher, who is supported by three full-time equivalent principal teachers. Class sizes are small, ranging from two to eight young people. There are 21 teachers within the ASN provision. These teachers work either full-time within the provision or support young people in the wider school. There have been significant staffing challenges in the provision in recent months due to staff absence.

Leadership of change

- The deputy headteacher leads a highly supportive staff team that creates a caring, calm and nurturing environment. The provision reflects strongly the vision of 'learning, growing and succeeding', which permeates the work of all staff across the base. Learners have a diverse range of needs, therefore staff ensure that each young person experiences or understands these values in ways that support their personal goals.
- The deputy headteacher and principal teachers are very effective leaders. They support staff and young people well by taking a caring, responsive and proactive approach. They lead a motivated team who take a balanced approach that promotes wellbeing, achievement and attainment.
- Staff work well across the provision to support each other and to offer collegiate support. Staff that work within the same department, within the provision, plan well together, agreeing approaches and refining ideas as a team. They discuss areas for improvement and feel supported by senior leaders to agree and take forward next steps. This leads to a smooth experience for young people within classrooms and reflects a culture of trust where staff reflect and value the contribution of young people and their colleagues.
- Senior leaders create opportunities for staff and young people to develop leadership skills. Examples of staff leadership include teachers in the provision devising and delivering professional learning to staff across the school. This helps staff to better meet the needs of learners with additional support needs from the wider school. These leadership activities align well with school improvement plans. As a next step, senior leaders should encourage all teachers to articulate leadership roles beyond the classroom in line with GTCS standards and evaluate their impact with senior leaders.
- Staff listen to young people's views and act on their ideas and suggestions. This includes their ideas about learning, subject choices and future plans. Senior leaders should continue to increase young people's participation in whole-school pupil voice activities such as the pupil council and improvement groups. The 'you said, we did' exercise, used with staff, would also be worthwhile replicating with young people's suggestions.
- Senior leaders review and revise policies with staff to meet young people's changing needs. They consult staff, young people and parents to agree priorities based on robust self-evaluation. They also align these priorities with wider school and authority policies. This

session, the focus is on raising attainment, promoting inclusion, improving learning experiences and increasing rights-based education.

- The deputy headteacher monitors improvement priorities closely, with tracking focused on skills, attainment, achievement and attendance. Senior leaders plan this work systematically through the provision's quality assurance calendar.
- Over the last two years, attainment has risen, including fewer 'no awards' at the Senior Phase. Young people's attendance has also increased and there has been strengthened positive feedback on rights and accessibility. Staff should continue to work with the wider school to ensure the strong rights-based practice in the provision is embedded in the wider school, where a minority of learners spend significant time.
- Staff undertake their own professional learning, including authority-wide training which is directly related to their work. Staff's professional learning includes specialised training in areas such as the use of assistive technology, learning about dyslexia and learning about specific medical conditions. This helps staff meet learners' needs well. Senior leaders should now work with the local authority to prioritise professional learning which reflects the spectrum of needs of all young people in the current cohort. This should include de-escalation training and planning which is designed to maximise the health, safety and wellbeing of all young people and staff.

Learning, teaching and assessment

- Staff have established a positive and inclusive learning environment where dignity and respect are central. Relationships between staff and young people are nurturing and promote wellbeing. Most learners engage well with their peers and cooperate effectively, supported by predictable routines that help them understand expectations. Staff model respectful behaviour consistently, and most young people can talk about their learning and make connections with prior experiences.
- The majority of learners access mainstream lessons or work with subject specialists, which supports breadth and depth of learning. Staff undertake professional learning to understand wellbeing and learning needs. They know pupils well and use effective strategies for self-regulation and resilience. As a result, most young people feel safe, understood, and confident in expressing their views.
- Individual support plans and learner profiles inform planning and ensure needs are met. Senior leaders should continue to promote equitable access to mainstream learning and specialist teachers. While most learning is based in small groups, a few young people access community-based experiences. Expanding these opportunities would further develop social communication and independence. For a minority of young people, a more creative approach to planning learning would ensure experiences are more relevant and better matched to individual interests and needs.
- Most learners are appropriately challenged and teaching reflects their interests. A few learners would benefit from further differentiation of tasks to ensure engagement and increase understanding. Digital technology is used effectively to enhance engagement. Faculty planning frameworks support consistency across curriculum areas. Assessment in the BGE

relies mainly on observation and professional judgement. Senior leaders should continue strengthening moderation and collaboration with similar schools.

- Transitions are planned effectively, ensuring continuity and progression for learners. Partnership working is enhancing the learning offered, providing additional opportunities and experiences that enrich the curriculum and support wider achievement.
- A range of tracking approaches help teachers evidence attainment and support needs. This helps ensure learners can be successful. These systems also enable teachers and senior leaders to consider the appropriateness of learner pathways within the school and provision.
- Progress and achievements are shared with families through diaries, calls, consultations, and reviews.

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

- Staff across the provision have wellbeing, equality and inclusion at the centre of their work. Young people understand that the staff care for them and feel safe and included in the school community. Most young people who transition into the provision adapt well and feel comfortable and welcome. Most young people receive strong support to feel safe, healthy, included and nurtured.
- Strong relationships are evident across the provision between all staff and young people. Interactions are warm and affectionate while offering appropriate support and challenge. Young people receive the right support at the right time, and staff work well with partners to improve outcomes. Partners include social work, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and family support workers, alongside other key health and social care providers.
- Joint planning considers parents' and young people's views, and regular reviews shape pupil plans. Plans also include effective entry and leaver transitions. These plans reflect the local context and available partners. As a result, almost all young people sustain their placement, thrive in school and move on to positive college destinations.
- Staff and partners create an environment where young people feel listened to and able to discuss sensitive issues because they feel cared for. Support includes intimate personal care for a minority of young people, targeted individual sessions and family support from partners. Families speak positively about the support they receive and credit staff for improvements in their child's wellbeing.
- Staff use varied planning approaches to reflect young people's needs and work with allied health professionals to support wellbeing very well. All young people have additional support plans, which may include behaviour support elements. Where needed, young people have detailed hygiene, feeding, physiotherapy or speech and language plans. Staff monitor changes in each young person's health, wellbeing or mood with close attention. This ensures that young people's needs are catered for responsively as well as in a planned way. Families value the thoughtful and detailed planning for their child's wellbeing.

- Young people receive their entitlement to high-quality physical education and religious and moral education. Subject specialists provide learning in a range of areas, supporting young people's interests. This increases young people's achievement and sense of and wellbeing.
- Young people's behaviour is generally very settled because they enjoy school, feel safe and receive appropriate support. They feel included well in the life of the school, and their presence strengthens diversity and inclusion across the wider school community.

Raising attainment and achievement

- Overall, progress in literacy and numeracy is good, and for a minority it is very good.
- Almost all young people in the senior phase attain a range of qualifications at SQCF level 1 or 2. A majority of young people attain one or more NQs at National 3, 4 or 5. A few young people have continued to attain up to and including Higher level.
- Young people are developing their communication and literacy skills well at all levels. For example, young people with complex needs working at CfE milestones and early levels are making good progress. A minority of young people in the BGE and senior phase can read and analyse texts of a complex nature and articulate their responses appropriately. Most young people listen well to staff and can act on instructions to complete learning activities. Almost all young people use communication aids, including signing, effectively.
- Young people with complex needs working at the CfE milestone and early level are developing their numeracy skills well. A few young people can identify coins and use money for simple calculations. A few can add and subtract three-figure numbers and perform simple calculations. Teachers should continue to ensure young people experience numeracy in real-life contexts.

Attainment over time

- Young people's attainment over time is good. Over the last three years, staff have increased the breadth of young people's awards and achievements. Young people have increased the number or range of subjects and qualifications in which they are successful at the BGE and senior phase. For example, young people now attain qualifications in barista skills and customer service skills, music technology and travel and tourism. Personalisation and choice are a key driver for improvement within the faculty.
- Attendance to November 2025 was 89%, which is in line with the national average. This includes young people with significant health related absence. Staff have measures in place to address absence and can evidence improvements in attendance when they make supportive contact with families.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Young people build confidence and responsibility as they move through the school. They participate well in activities such as podcast production to increase their skills for life and communication. The All-Stars club gives young people confidence to perform on stage and express themselves artistically. The signing choir helps children improve their signing and singing abilities and increases their contribution to the life of the school. Young people enjoy

these opportunities to build their skills, which staff track and monitor to increase their understanding of next steps in learning.

- Staff celebrate young people's achievements regularly. This includes whole-school awards and the faculty's ASN Star Students awards. The school community recognises young people's achievements well, and staff ensure they receive accreditation for their skills and participation. Staff identify a wide range of award opportunities, including the King's Trust, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and Award Scheme Development Accreditation Network (ASDAN).

Equity for all learners

- Almost all young people leave the senior phase of education for a positive destination. This is often further study at college.
- The school uses PEF to provide resources that benefit the faculty, such as the barista bar and the outdoor learning space. Staff track the gap between cohorts of young people well. This includes monitoring achievement and attainment in young people who are care-experienced, young carers and those affected by adverse economic circumstances. This is working well to address any gaps.
- Young people are included very well in the life of the school. They access small class sizes in an environment which takes account of their needs. This helps to overcome barriers to learning for all young people at the provision. Senior leaders regularly review mainstream opportunities to help young people build resilience and develop skills for busy environments. They should continue to prioritise this where practicable.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard HMIE terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

On behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland.