

28 April 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2025, HM Inspectors published a letter on Montrose Academy. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Angus Council. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We heard from the headteacher and other staff about the steps the school has taken to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection. As a result, we were able to find out about the progress the school has made and how well this is supporting young people's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

Staff across the school need to develop a shared understanding of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment. Young people should experience more engaging, motivating and active learning with a greater understanding of their next steps in learning.

Staff have made good progress in this area for improvement.

Most teachers are making effective use of a more consistent lesson structure. This is supporting improvements in the consistency of routines for learning across the school. Most young people are now using a common language of learning. Most feel the consistent lesson structure is being used and this is positively impacting their learning experience. In the majority of lessons, teachers are planning paired and group activities. These are providing increased pace, challenge, and enjoyment in lessons.

Senior leaders have worked with teachers to develop a more targeted approach to professional learning. This is supporting a better understanding of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment. Teachers speak confidently about how these opportunities are supporting them to share effective practice within departments and across the school.

Most teachers are using a variety of approaches to check young people's understanding in their learning. A few teachers are skilled at adapting lesson plans in response to assessment outcomes. Teachers plan more regular discussions with young people to talk about their progress. Most young people feel that these discussions are helping to improve their learning.

Staff need to have a clearer understanding of national assessment standards in order to plan and deliver tasks and activities set at the right level of difficulty.

Staff have made good progress in this area for improvement.



Almost all staff have worked with department colleagues to plan learning. A majority of staff have worked with colleagues in other schools across the local authority to share understanding of national standards. As a result, teachers have a stronger understanding of national standards and expectations. Teachers are becoming more responsive in their planning to meet the needs of all learners.

A significant minority of teachers participate in marking activities for Qualifications Scotland. They share their learning from these activities with colleagues. This is leading to teachers having a greater understanding of national standards for learners in S4 to S6. Senior leaders have reported that there is early evidence of this sharing of good practice positively impacting prelim marks.

Senior leaders should work with staff to raise attainment for all young people in all subject areas. All staff need to ensure more effective approaches to identifying young people at risk of under-achievement. There needs to be a particular focus on improving numeracy across the school.

There has been limited progress in this area for improvement.

Staff with responsibility for numeracy and mathematics are using monitoring processes more effectively to identify young people at risk of leaving school without an appropriate numeracy qualification. They have clear processes in place to support all learners, and senior leaders are confident that this will lead to an improvement in numeracy attainment. HM Inspectors are still concerned about attainment of young people in numeracy.

Attainment in the senior phase continues to be a key priority for improvement. Senior leaders reported that the focus on targeted groups of young people has improved the number of awards they achieved. They are aware, however, that these figures remain well below the attainment of other young people in similar schools.

Whilst an improved focus on monitoring young people's progress should lead to improved attainment for young people, this is still an area for improvement. It is too early to state with confidence that this area for improvement has been overtaken.

What happens next?

The school has made progress since the original inspection. We will ask for a report on progress within 18 months of the inspection. This report will inform any decision made by HMIE regarding further engagement. This may include another inspection visit. When such a decision is made, we will write to you again detailing the improvements the school has made and outlining any further action, agreed with Angus Council that we intend to take.

Susan McDade
HM Inspector

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