

Summarised inspection findings

Loudoun Academy

East Ayrshire Council

9 June 2026

Key contextual information

School Name: Loudoun Academy
Council: East Ayrshire Council
SEED number: 8223831
Roll (Feb 2026): 814

Loudoun Academy is a non-denominational, comprehensive secondary school serving the communities of the Irvine Valley, Priestland, Darvel, Newmilns, Galston and the wider geographical area.

Loudoun Academy also has a communication centre. This secondary provision supports young people with language and communication needs from across the local authority.

The headteacher has been in post since August 2025 and is supported by three deputy headteachers.

Attendance is generally below the national average. Exclusions are generally above the national average. In September 2024, 17.2 % of young people were registered for free school meals. In September 2024, 26.1 % of young people lived in the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland. In September 2024, the school reported that 36 % of young people had additional support needs.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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

- There are positive and mutually respectful relationships between almost all staff and young people. This is supporting young people's readiness to learn in calm and purposeful learning environments. As a result, young people have a positive attitude to their learning. Almost all young people behave well across the school.
- Staff worked well to create and launch the 'Loudoun Academy Excellent Learning Standard'. This is helping staff to adopt a shared, consistent structure to lessons. Senior leaders and staff now need to focus on improving the quality of learning and teaching across the school. Senior and middle leaders should develop a strategic approach, supported by appropriate professional learning, to ensure that all teachers can provide engaging learning experiences for young people.
- In almost all lessons, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. These support young people well to complete planned activities. Almost all teachers share the purpose of the lesson. In most lessons, teachers share how young people can be successful in their learning. However, too often these focus on the completion of tasks rather than how young people demonstrate progress in their learning. As a result, not all young people understand the progress they are making during the lesson. Senior leaders should support teachers further to continue to develop the quality of learning intentions and success criteria.
- Most lessons are overly teacher-led. Teachers should plan more opportunities for young people to lead and influence their learning. In almost all lessons, young people complete the same task at the same pace and, as a result, not all young people experience appropriate challenge in their learning. In a few lessons, teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of all learners. Senior leaders should share this effective practice more widely across the school to ensure all learners are appropriately challenged and engaged in their learning.
- Most teachers use questioning appropriately to elicit knowledge, revisit prior learning and check for understanding. A few teachers use questioning well to promote curiosity and stretch learners' thinking. Senior leaders should continue to support teachers further to develop approaches to questioning that will extend and deepen young people's understanding.
- In a minority of lessons, teachers use digital resources well to enhance learning and teaching. Young people are more engaged when digital resources are used to model learning or check for understanding. Almost all teachers use digital platforms very well to enable young people to access learning from home. This enables young people to take increased ownership of their

learning. They use technology to catch up on any work they have missed, to access resources and to revisit their previous learning tasks for revision. A few young people use digital technology successfully to access additional resources to help them overcome barriers to learning. Senior leaders and teachers are now well placed to build on these examples of digital technology to support the development of a wider variety of learning experiences.

- All teachers use a range of assessment strategies appropriately to check for understanding. In a minority of departments, teachers use a variety of formative assessment strategies effectively, including questioning, peer- and self-assessment. This supports young people to understand better how they can improve in their learning. Teachers should continue to extend their use of formative assessment to support young people in developing a deeper understanding of their progress. In a few departments, teachers link assessment closely to the planning of learning and teaching. However, assessment is not yet being used consistently across the school to inform next steps in learning. There needs to be a clearer, shared understanding about the principles, purpose and aims of assessment across the school. Senior and middle leaders need to ensure all teachers develop their understanding of the relationship between checking for understanding and how they use assessment information to inform the planning of future learning.
- In the broad general education (BGE), all teachers engage in moderation activities with colleagues within their subject areas. This is increasing their confidence in using national Benchmarks to judge young people's progress through Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in the BGE. Staff in the majority of departments have arrangements in place to support their judgements of achievement of a level, and a minority have clear arrangements in place to moderate planning. Senior leaders should now support teachers to engage in effective moderation activities across and beyond the school. Teachers within the English and mathematics departments have engaged with moderation activities in literacy and numeracy recently with associated primary schools. Senior leaders should ensure that effective approaches to moderation with staff from associated primaries are developed further. This should support improved progression in learning at the point of transition.
- In the senior phase, teachers who are Qualification Scotland appointees are used well to support a shared understanding of national standards. This is resulting in staff who have a strong, shared understanding of assessment standards relating to National Qualifications. In the senior phase moderation and verification arrangements are robust within the school. This is resulting in teachers' judgements being increasingly more reliable.
- Teachers use effective learner conversations in almost all subjects in the senior phase and the majority of subjects in the BGE. These conversations with young people in the senior phase provide well considered and effective verbal and written feedback to young people. The majority of young people in the senior phase speak confidently about their knowledge of their aspirational grade, working grade and target grade and how this motivates them to learn and stay focused. These approaches are supporting young people to understand better the progress they are making in their learning and what they need to do to progress. Senior leaders should consider how best to share highly effective practice in learner conversations in the senior phase with all staff. They should extend best practice and focus on developing greater consistency in learning conversations for young people in the BGE. The majority of young people in the BGE are aware of the level they are working at but as yet they are not able to fully articulate what they need to do to improve. Teachers should now improve the quality of

feedback to support better all young people to understand their strengths and next steps in learning.

- Within the BGE and senior phase, departments use a variety of effective bespoke tracking approaches to record, monitor and track young people's progress. This is supporting teachers to assess the progress being made by all young people. In the most effective examples, class teachers and middle leaders use this data to plan and support improvements in learning. Teachers would benefit from a greater consistency of expectation with regard to the use of data. Teachers should now develop further how they use tracking information to inform better their planning for next steps in learning. This will support teachers to plan more responsive and challenging learning experiences for young people. Senior and middle leaders need to develop their quality assurance of the data gathered to ensure the data collected is valid, reliable and robust. This should offer them a clearer overview of the progress made by young people over time and support senior and middle leaders to plan appropriate and effective interventions for individuals and groups of learners.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, young people. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

BGE

- From 2021/22 to 2024/25, almost all young people achieved CfE third level in literacy by the end of S3. This is with the exception of 2023/24, when most young people achieved at this level. Over the same period, almost all young people achieved CfE third level in numeracy by the end of S3.
- In 2024/25, most young people achieved CfE fourth level in literacy. This was an increase from 2023/24 where the majority achieved at this level. From 2021/22 to 2024/25, the majority of young people achieved CfE fourth level in numeracy by the end of S3. There is no identifiable pattern of improvement to young people's attainment in literacy and numeracy at CfE fourth level.
- In 2024/25, most young people who require additional support with their learning achieved CfE third level in literacy and numeracy. From 2021/22 to 2024/25, a minority of young people who require additional support with their learning achieved CfE fourth level in literacy and numeracy.
- A few young people have benefitted from a targeted literacy intervention. As a result, they have made appropriate progress in their learning.
- Teachers within the English and mathematics departments engage in moderation activities around literacy and numeracy. As a result, their professional judgements are becoming increasingly reliable. Senior leaders should continue to support teachers to engage in moderation activities. This should develop further teachers understanding of achievement of a level.

Senior phase

Literacy

Leavers

- Between 2019/20 and 2023/24, most young people achieved Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 5 or better in literacy. This is in line with the virtual comparator (VC), apart from 2019/20 where this was significantly higher than the VC. Around half of young people achieved SCQF level 6 from 2021/22 to 2023/24. Attainment at this level was significantly higher than the VC in 2023/24.

- From 2019/20 to 2023/24 the majority of young people with additional support needs (ASN) achieved SCQF level 5 or better, above the VC. A minority achieved SCQF level 6, in literacy.

Numeracy

- From 2019/20 to 2023/24, the majority of young people leaving school achieved SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy, in line with the VC. Between 2019/20 and 2023/24, a minority of young people leaving school achieved SCQF level 6 in numeracy, in line with the VC. This is with the exception of 2022/23, when it was significantly higher than the VC.
- From 2019/20 to 2023/24, a minority of young people with ASN achieved SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy, with the exception of 2019/20 and 2021/22 where the majority achieved. This is above the VC, with the exception of 2022/23. From 2019/20 to 2023/24 a few young people with ASN achieved SCQF level 6, in numeracy.

Cohorts

Literacy

- At S4, most young people achieved SCQF level 5 or better in literacy in three of the five-year period from 2020/21 to 2024/25. This is generally in line with the VC.
- By S5, as a percentage of the S5 roll, between 2020/21 and 2024/25, the majority of young people achieved SCQF level 6 in literacy. This is in line with the VC, apart from 2021/22 and 2023/24 when it was significantly higher.
- By S6, as a percentage of the S6 roll, from 2020/21 to 2024/25 most young people achieved SCQF level 6 in literacy. This is in line with the VC but moved to being significantly much higher in 2024/25.

Numeracy

- At S4, the majority of young people achieved SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy from 2020/21 to 2024/25, with the exception of 2022/23, when a minority of young people achieved this level. This is in line with the VC, apart from 2022/23 and 2024/25 when it was significantly lower than the VC.
- By S5, as a percentage of the S5 roll, a minority of young people achieved SCQF level 6 in numeracy from 2020/21 to 2024/25. This is in line with the VC.
- By S6, as a percentage of the S6 roll, between 2020/21 and 2024/25, in three of the five-year period, a minority of young people achieved SCQF level 6 in numeracy. This improved to the majority of young people in 2022/23 and 2024/25. This is in line with the VC, apart from 2021/22 and 2022/23 when it was significantly higher.

National qualifications

- Staff should continue to support young people in order to improve their attainment in National 5 (N5) and Higher Mathematics and English.
- In 2024/25, the percentage of young people presented for N5 English is above the national average. The percentage of young people who achieve an award at A-C and A grade is below the national average and the percentage of No Awards is above the national average. The percentage of young people presented for Higher English is below the national average. The percentage of young people who achieve awards at A-C and A grades is below the national average. The percentage of young people who do not achieve an award is below the national average.
- In 2024/25 the percentage of young people presented for N5 Application of Mathematics is below the national average. The percentage of young people presented for N5 Mathematics is above the national average. The percentage of young people presented for Higher Mathematics is similar to national levels. Across all qualifications and levels in Mathematics, pass rates are below the national average.

Attainment over time

- Senior leaders have recently put in place a well-considered long-term raising attainment strategy. They should consider now the short- and medium-term strategies that will improve immediately young people's attainment. They must ensure that the raising attainment strategy is clearly understood and implemented by all staff in order to raise the attainment of young people.
- Senior leaders should also ensure that staff at all levels have a clear understanding of their role in using data more effectively to support raising the attainment of all young people.
- Senior leaders provided information on the attainment of young people within the BGE in subject areas outwith English and literacy and mathematics and numeracy. In 2024/25, in the majority of subject areas, almost all young people achieved CfE third level. In most subject areas, the majority of young people achieve CfE fourth level. Senior leaders should continue to work with teachers to engage in effective moderation activities to increase the reliability of teacher professional judgements. They should ensure that attainment information from the BGE is used to support better young people's attainment as they progress into and through the senior phase.

Senior phase

Improving attainment for all Leavers

- When using complementary tariff points, the attainment of the lowest attaining 20%, middle attaining 60% and highest attaining 20% of young people from 2019/20 to 2023/24 is in line with the VC. However, there has been an overall decline in attainment from 2019/20 with 2023/24 being the lowest in the five-year period. Young people who require additional support in 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2022/23 attained below the VC. In 2021/22 and 2023/24 they attained above the VC.

Cohorts

- At S4, the attainment of the lowest attaining 20% of young people was significantly higher than the VC in 2021/22. In 2023/24 and 2024/25 this declined to significantly lower than the VC. The attainment of the middle attaining 60% has generally been in line with the VC, with the exception of 2023/24, when it was significantly lower than the VC. The attainment of the highest attaining 20% was in line with the VC from 2020/21 to 2023/24, falling to being significantly lower than the VC in 2024/25.
- By S5, as a percentage of the S5 roll, the attainment of the lowest attaining 20% and highest attaining 20% of young people has been in line with the VC from 2020/21 to 2024/25. From 2020/21 to 2023/24, the middle attaining 60% have performed in line with the VC, in 2024/25 this declined to being significantly lower than the VC.
- By S6, as a percentage of the S6 roll, the attainment of the lowest attaining 20% of young people has improved from being in line with the VC from 2020/21 to 2022/23 to being significantly much higher in 2023/24 and significantly higher in 2024/25. The attainment of the middle attaining 60% of young people has improved from being in line with the VC from 2020/21 to 2022/23 to being significantly higher in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The attainment of the highest attaining 20% of young people has been in line with the VC from 2020/21 to 2024/25.

Breadth and depth

- At S4, from 2020/21 to 2024/25, the majority of young people achieved three or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better, with the exception of 2023/24 where this dipped to a minority. This is in line with the VC in 2024/25, having been significantly lower than the VC in 2023/24. Performance for one or more to three or more awards has fluctuated over time with no consistent pattern of improvement at this level. A minority of young people achieved five or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better between 2020/21 and 2024/25. This was in line with the VC but has followed a three-year pattern of decline from 2022/23 and is now significantly lower than the VC in 2024/25. Attainment at SCQF level 5A or better at three or more to five or more awards has moved to significantly lower than the VC in 2024/25 from being in line with the VC.
- By S5, as a percentage of the S5 roll, from 2021/22 to 2024/25 the majority of young people achieve one or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better. In 2024/25, this was significantly lower than the VC from previously being in line with the VC. Between 2020/21 and 2024/25, a minority of young people achieved five or more awards, in line with the VC. The percentages of young people who gain top quality passes is in line with the VC over this time period.
- At S6, as a percentage of the S6 roll, from 2021/22 to 2024/25 most young people achieved one or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better, with the exception of 2023/24 where almost all young people achieved. In 2023/24, this moved to being significantly much higher than the VC from being in line with the VC and in 2024/25 this was significantly higher than the VC. The majority of young people achieve three or more awards. In 2023/24 and 2024/25 this moved from being in line with the VC to significantly higher than the VC. A significant minority of young people achieved five or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better in 2021/22, this improved to the majority of young people achieving from 2022/23 to 2024/25. In 2024/25 this moved from being in line with the VC to significantly higher than the VC. From 2020/21 to

2024/25 the attainment of young people at SCQF level 6A or better is generally in line with the VC.

- At S6, as a percentage of the S6 roll, a minority of young people achieved one or more award at SCQF level 7C or better, and a few young people achieved SCQF level 7A from 2022/23 to 2024/25. This is in line with the VC.
- A few young people benefit from accessing a wider range of SCQF courses delivered within school, as part of the school college partnership or with partner agencies. Senior leaders, as part of the current review of the curriculum should consider clearly the additional courses that are offered and ensure that they are sufficiently challenging.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Most young people access a range of well-considered clubs, activities and programmes that supports well their achievement. Young people develop leadership skills, build confidence and self-esteem as a result of activities. A significant minority of young people develop fitness and teamwork through sport and team games. This includes through the School of Basketball, where a few young people represent their school at local competitions. A few young people gain coaching, refereeing and lifeguard qualifications, providing them with part-time employment opportunities and developing their responsibility. Groups of young people showcase advanced performing skills by being part of a musical, band or dance group. A few young people and staff work well together to organise events for the local community, including a popular fashion show, litter-picking campaigns and the well-attended annual Christmas fayre. Those young people use their organisational and planning skills to ensure events are planned, implemented and evaluated effectively.
- The majority of young people in S6 undertake a leadership award, gaining accreditation for their volunteering, classroom support and event organisation. These young people value giving back to their school community whilst acting as a positive role-model and exercising decision-making skills. Young people in S3 gain skills for life and work through the Youth Philanthropy Initiative. They increase their knowledge of social issues by researching charities and their impact on the local community. A few young people successfully complete the Duke of Edinburgh's Award each year, with numbers increasing over time. Young people value the problem-solving and resilience skills they gain through the programme. Staff should continue to extend leadership opportunities to more young people, specifically within the BGE, as well as seek further accreditation for their achievements.
- Young people feel valued by the range of well-considered ways staff celebrate their achievements. This includes bulletins, regular newsletters, prizegiving and reward events, department display boards and on social media. Young people are proud of their achievements and the recognition they receive.
- Staff are at the early stages of tracking all young people's achievements, both within and outwith school. They should continue to develop this approach and use information to identify young people who need more support or encouragement to access achievement opportunities. Most young people in the senior phase speak confidently about the skills that they develop through their achievements. The majority of young people in the BGE require further support to explain the skills they are developing over time. Staff should develop a skills framework that will help young people communicate better and evidence their skills progression.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders recognise increasing school attendance data as an important area for improvement. The school's attendance rates are below the national average and have been decreasing from 2020/21 to 2024/25. Senior and middle leaders have adopted appropriate daily attendance monitoring procedures. There has been an improvement in the approaches to tracking and monitoring the attendance of groups of young people. Universal strategies to promote the importance of regular attendance to young people and parents have also been developed. This work is at an early stage and is not yet supporting improvements to the school's overall attendance data. Senior leaders need to develop clearer strategies and interventions to support targeted young people to improve their attendance. A few young people attend school on a part-time basis. Senior and middle leaders need to work with young people and families to identify and address the barriers to regular attendance and maintain the aspiration of young people returning to full-time learning as soon as possible.
- Senior leaders use pupil equity funding (PEF) well to appoint staff to lead on equity and to purchase helpful resources, including digital technology. Staff appointed to these roles focus on specific areas of school improvement. Some improvement activity is at an early stage and the impact of this work is not yet evident. However, there are improvements in a few areas which are improving outcomes for those young people impacted by poverty. Staff also use PEF to address costs associated with the school day, by providing young people with resources, breakfast and uniform free of charge. As a result, young people are ready to learn at the start of the school day.
- Senior leaders now need to make significant improvements to their strategic approach to PEF. They must extend the involvement of all stakeholders, including young people and parents, in the planning for PEF spend. Staff should use PEF for well-planned interventions, designed to reduce the poverty-related attainment gap. Senior leaders need to make improvements to their PEF plan. This plan should outline the responsibilities of key staff, the time scale for interventions, and performance indicators to measure outcomes more clearly.
- The attainment of school leavers who live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) decile one decreased from 2021/22 and was significantly lower than national levels in 2023/24. The attainment of school leavers who live in SIMD deciles two and three was in line with national data from 2021/22 to 2023/24, apart from 2021/22 when it was significantly higher. Staff should continue to identify barriers to young people achieving positive outcomes and address them proactively.
- Most young people stayed on at school from S4 to S5 but only a minority of those young people remained at the end of S6, in 2022/23 and 2023/24. Senior leaders recognise correctly the need to improve young people's stay on rate from S4 to the end of S6. Almost all young people move on to an initial positive post school destination. This is in line with the VC. Staff leading on Developing the Young Workforce work effectively with a range of partners to offer young people learning, work experience, talks and activities that helps them to plan for future choices and changes. Staff work well with Skills Development Scotland, local colleges and employers to support young people into positive destinations.

Context

The communication centre supports 65 young people from across East Ayrshire in S1 to S6. The centre comprises nine classrooms, a communal space and family meeting room. Classes are taught by both primary and secondary trained teachers. The centre is currently led by a principal teacher and acting principal teacher. A minority of young people access learning in mainstream classes in the school.

QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

- All staff develop positive and caring relationships with young people. They understand each young person's additional support needs appropriately. Teachers reviewed the classroom environments throughout the centre considering how they could improve these to meet more effectively young people's needs. This resulted in teachers changing how classrooms are lit and decorated. As a result, young people enjoy learning in vibrant and pleasant classroom environments.
- Almost all young people behave well at all times. They are keen and eager to learn. Young people are respectful of each other and interact well in lessons. In the few instances where young people become dysregulated, staff are skilled in reengaging them quickly in their learning.
- Teachers take appropriate account of young people's interests to plan lessons. This supports almost all young people to engage well in their learning. Teachers should consider how young people could take greater ownership of their learning. For example, by increasing their opportunities to choose what they learn or to lead their own learning.
- The school values of kindness, determination and equality inform young people's experiences appropriately. Teachers show kindness regularly when interacting with young people. All young people experience equality through access to the wider school campus and through school trips. A minority of young people access mainstream classes on a regular basis. This supports these young people to learn alongside their peers in mainstream.
- In most lessons, teachers use learning intentions and success criteria appropriately to explain what young people will be learning and how to be successful. In a minority of lessons, learning intentions and success criteria are overly long and do not focus effectively on the skills young people are developing. Teachers should improve the quality of learning intentions and success criteria to help young people understand better what they are learning and how they can improve. In too many lessons, teachers spend significant periods of time explaining the task that young people will do. This leads to young people becoming passive and waiting to begin their learning tasks. Teachers need to consider how they plan lessons which support young people to increase the time they spend actively involved in their learning. This should include developing their use of a greater range of teaching approaches. Staff could, for example, encourage young people to conduct research or work in pairs or groups. Most lessons are not set at the appropriate level for each young person. Teachers should consider how they can plan lessons which provide each young person with appropriate levels of challenge.

- In a few lessons, teachers use digital resources such as interactive whiteboards to enhance young people's learning. Teachers should consider how they can increase young people's use of digital technologies to support them better to access and progress in their learning. Teachers use questions mostly to check for understanding. In a few classes, they use questions to promote young people's thinking. Teachers should build on this practice to develop a more consistent approach to how they use questions to support young people to develop their thinking skills. Teachers use praise regularly to support young people to know when they have done well. They should now improve the quality of their verbal and written feedback to support young people to know their next steps in their learning.
- All young people attend the communication centre following local authority multi-agency assessment. Senior leaders, with the support of the local authority, should seek to ensure high-quality information is available to the school prior to each young person's attendance. This should help teachers plan learning which supports young people better to progress in their learning. Teachers use a range of local authority assessments to measure how well young people are attaining. These help teachers to plan lessons which build appropriately on what young people can already do.
- Teachers in the BGE plan learning appropriately following the school curriculum and local authority progression pathways. This supports them to plan across a range of curricular areas. Young people's ability to learn in a few curricular areas such as physical education and technical subjects is limited by their ability to access appropriate resources. Senior leaders should explore how teachers can plan young people's learning across all curricular areas.
- Teachers track and monitor young people's progress using CfE experiences and outcomes. This approach does not provide valid and reliable information on young people's progress. Teachers are beginning to use the mainstream school's new tracking and monitoring tool to check young people's progress. This tool does not provide valid and reliable information on the progress of those young people whose learning is only measurable in small steps. Teachers should consider how they can track and monitor the progress for those young people who learn incrementally in smaller steps.

QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

- Young people in the BGE make satisfactory progress in their learning. Most young people are capable of attaining more. A few young people are making good progress.
- Young people's attendance, at the time of inspection, within the Communication Centre was 76.7%. Key staff within the centre are supporting young people and their families in a range of ways in order to maximise attendance, including making environmental changes and introducing the flexi group.
- Young people working at CfE first level are steadily developing their numeracy skills. Most young people count forward and backward within 100 and understand place value. Most young people use everyday language to compare capacity of a range of containers, describing which holds more or less. Young people, with support, gather and record information on what they have been exploring when learning outdoors. A few young people tell the time by reading both analogue and digital clocks. A few young people working at second level are building their confidence in applying their knowledge of simple fractions to

real-life contexts. Young people should now develop their skills further in naming and identifying the properties of three-dimensional objects.

- Young people are developing their literacy skills steadily at all levels within CfE. At first level, young people read a range of stories within their class and are supported individually with reading using a range of graded readers. At first level, young people write about key parts of stories using short sentences within story snapshots. They respond well to tasks related to the books they are studying. Staff have created a communication centre library of books available for young people to read. A few young people working at second level contribute clearly during group discussions, discuss topics confidently and build on others' ideas. Most young people should now develop their spelling skills further.
- Most young people's attainment has been raised over the past three years. Senior leaders provided data and information to show that young people have achieved awards from National 3 to Advanced Higher levels from 2022/23 to 2024/25 across curricular areas. Most young people in the senior phase access mainstream for most of their classes. Senior leaders and staff should continue to maximise inclusion within mainstream for all young people, where this is appropriate, to ensure all young people are supported well to maximise their attainment.
- Young people build their confidence by participating in a range of outdoor learning activities including litter-picking and plant care. This supports them to learn and communicate in groups. Young people develop their creative and enterprise skills through activities such as soap making. Young people's achievements are celebrated within the school newsletters and during celebrating success events. Young people receive recognition of their achievements through a range of communication centre-based awards, which they value. Staff are not yet systematically tracking young people's achievement, and as a next step they should implement a system to monitor the achievements of all young people.
- Most young people in the senior phase take part in supported work experience placements and supported college courses. A few young people are participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Senior leaders and staff should work to increase their range of partners to develop a greater range of participation pathways for young people.
- Young people are beginning to engage with the language of meta-skills, and a few can identify these in familiar contexts. However, most young people are not yet able to confidently talk about the skills they are using. Staff in the communication centre should continue to support young people to further explore, reflect on and apply their skills.
- All young people within the centre are registered as attending the mainstream school. This ensures they access learning alongside their peers, where appropriate.
- Young people have access to a range of educational visits such as theatre performances and theme park excursions. Young people really value these trips and are involved in the planning of these.
- The communication centre submits a bid to access PEF, for example to purchase chrome books. Staff cannot yet evidence the impact interventions are having on the attainment of young people.

- Senior leaders, with the support of the local authority, should ensure that young people currently not attending school receive their entitlement to education.
- In 2024/2025, most young people leaving the communication centre moved onto a positive destination at college, with a minority moving into employment.

Other relevant evidence

- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the 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 young people through food in school. Minor areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.
- The library is open four days a week and used well by learners. In S1, as part of school induction, young people develop their understanding of how to use a library and how its resources can support them in their learning. In S1 and S2, learners have an allocated library period to encourage reading for enjoyment. The current librarian has been resourceful in ensuring the library is a welcoming place for young people to learn and study. She has been creative in sourcing funding and resources for learners through social media appeals and partnerships with church groups and charities.
- Young people benefit from a well-planned programme of religious and moral education from S1-S6. Young people within mainstream provision receive their full entitlement to high-quality physical education. Almost all young people study a modern language and are introduced to an additional language through projects and activities. Senior leaders should, as planned, ensure all young people receive their full entitlement to language learning, in line with the national 1 + 2 languages policy.

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.