

# Summarised inspection findings

**St John Ogilvie High School**

**South Lanarkshire Council**

**9 June 2026**

## Key contextual information

School Name: St John Ogilvie High School  
Council: South Lanarkshire Council  
SEED number: 8524939  
Roll: 1209

St John Ogilvie High School is a six-year denominational comprehensive school in Hamilton. The school has six associated primary schools.

The headteacher has been in post for eight years. She is supported by five deputy headteachers (DHTs).

Attendance has been steadily improving since 2020/21 and is in line with the national average. Exclusions are in line with the national average.

In September 2024, 22.1% of pupils were registered for free school meals.

In September 2024, 36.5% of pupils lived in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles one and two.

In September 2024, the school reported that 46.9% of pupils had additional support needs (ASN).

### 1.3 Leadership of change

excellent

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 highly respected headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She inspires the school community through her authenticity, high ambitions, strategic ability and relentless drive to improve outcomes for all young people. Her strong values underpin her commitment to improving the life chances of every young person and her compassionate and encouraging approach to leading staff. She is very well supported by the team of effective deputy headteachers. She has empowered staff, developed a culture of collaboration and is leading improvement very effectively.
- The senior leadership team demonstrate personal and collective integrity and lead very effectively to achieve improved outcomes for young people. All staff have a clear, common purpose and work very well together to deliver the well-established school charter of commitment, ambition, resilience, equality/equity (CARE). This is underpinned by staff's strong commitment to core Gospel values and leads to very positive relationships across the school. Staff and young people exemplify the school values in their daily interactions. They have high expectations of, and a strong respect for, each other. As a result, young people and staff, as well as parents and partners, are very proud of their school. They feel a strong sense of belonging to the school community.
- All staff understand very well the socio-economic context of the school community and work relentlessly to improve outcomes for young people. Senior leaders have developed a clear set of objectives to promote equity by closing the poverty related attainment gap and raising attainment for all. This drives all school improvement planning. They make very effective use of high-quality performance data to plan the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). The headteacher's strategic appointment of senior and middle leaders is leading to very successful approaches to reducing the impact of socio-economic challenges for families. This is significantly improving the attainment, achievement and wellbeing of young people, including those in a range of targeted equity groups. Staff have contributed to national system wide improvement by sharing their approaches to closing the poverty related attainment gap through the Children in Scotland conference and directly with the Scottish Government.
- Collaborative, distributed leadership is sector leading. Senior leaders empower staff at all levels to lead improvement, capitalising on their individual skills and areas of professional interest. They have created conditions where staff are highly motivated to generate ideas and lead improvement, linked to school aims and priorities. Senior leaders very skilfully balance support and accountability by ensuring that staff feel trusted with autonomy to lead, while

maintaining a strategic overview of progress. This supports leaders at all levels to be creative, innovative and enquiry led as they deliver improvement. All teachers are involved in collaborative groups whose aims and actions are aligned directly to the school improvement plan (SIP). Middle leaders and individual staff who lead any aspect of improvement develop targets and plans to achieve these. They evaluate work and share the impact of their work with all staff. This systematic approach is developing sustainable leadership of change at all levels and leading to accelerated progress in improving outcomes for young people.

- Senior leaders ensure that the SIP is aligned with local and national priorities, while reflecting the local context and needs of the school community accurately. They identify and implement very well-considered and highly developed self-evaluation activities. These activities help senior leaders measure, monitor and evaluate the outcomes of school improvement actions. Senior and middle leaders maintain a relentless focus on securing positive outcomes for young people, adapting plans dynamically in order drive change. They manage the pace of change skilfully. This results in significant positive impact on outcomes for young people. Middle leaders with responsibility for curricular areas ensure that departmental plans identify relevant priorities, directly aligned to the SIP. As a result, staff are motivated, engaged and fully understand their role in leading and supporting change across the school.
- Senior and middle leaders have developed robust approaches to self-evaluation and quality assurance. This includes highly detailed analysis of attainment which helps staff to identify strengths and areas for improvement in all subjects. This supports improvements in attainment over time in most subjects. All teachers are involved in a well-developed approach to evaluating learning and teaching through observation and feedback, including with senior leaders and staff in partner schools. This is improving the quality of experiences for young people.
- Most young people, from S1 to S6, appreciate that their views are regularly sought on a wide range of aspects of their school experience. The majority of young people and parents recognise how staff take their views into account when making changes. Staff work very well with a wide range of partners to improve young people's learning experiences and wellbeing. Almost all partners review effectively the impact of their work. Most are involved in the self-evaluation of school improvement. Senior leaders could review further their approaches to including all stakeholders as fully as possible in self-evaluation and consultation to shape and deliver strategic improvement.
- Senior leaders have developed a wide range of successful professional learning to support leadership development at all levels. A few teachers are working nationally in areas such as climate change, children's rights and areas related to specific subjects. For example, a few young people and staff were invited to the Scottish Parliament to discuss climate change and how the school successfully engages with the local community through their beekeeping work. This resulted in national recognition of the 'Meet the Bees' events. Young people in S1 contributed to the 'Rights Detective' national mission for the Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights and teachers have led research projects in pupil wellbeing. Together, these and other opportunities inspire young people and staff to develop further their national reach, supporting system-wide improvements.
- Almost all teachers use the General Teaching Council for Scotland standards very well to support their professional reflection and to review and improve their practice. All staff are

supported very well through effective and well received programmes of professional learning. Most professional learning is provided through the work of collaborative groups or individual members of staff. Senior leaders recognise the positivity, and sustainability, that this approach brings. Staff regularly share effective practice, research outcomes and professional enquiry projects. For example, the recent showcase of approaches to learning and teaching, delivered by the Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) collaborative group involved 15 teachers sharing their developing practice. Staff appreciate approaches such as LTA Tuesday where they receive helpful resources to reflect on. Staff regularly video record their practice to share in an online space. This supports teachers to be reflective and consider adapting their own practice to improve the learning experiences for young people. The systematic leadership and sustainable delivery of effective professional learning by staff within the school exemplifies best practice. A few staff regularly lead professional learning for staff across the local authority, demonstrating further their impact on system wide improvements.

- Approximately a third of young people contribute very effectively to improving the school through a developing range of formal leadership roles. Through these and other informal roles, young people make significant contributions to the positive ethos and culture of high aspiration. These include the junior and senior leadership teams, and the sustainability group who helped the school achieve the 'Eco Flag'. Young people also contribute positively through their ambassador roles in, for example; promoting children's rights; digital skills; and eliminating the cost of the school day. A significant number of these groups act not only as agents of change within the school but also outwith the school. This includes through national and global partnerships and contributing to national policy. For example, young people have engaged with members of the Scottish Parliament on issues including equity, sustainability and health and wellbeing. Young people in these roles, supported well by staff, improve the experience of others in the school and community. For example, the junior leaders and rights ambassadors lead fundraising for the local foodbank and, as Young Leaders of Learning, are at the early stages of leading work to review approaches to differentiation. These leadership experiences support young people to develop skills such as communication, critical thinking and creativity, to a high level.
- Senior leaders ensure that Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) priorities feature prominently across the school. Teachers' use of data to help young people develop their employability skills reflect well young people's aspirations and strengths. This supports the development of meaningful pathways and enables young people to identify and build career-related skills as they progress through their learning.

## 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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

- Senior leaders work very effectively with staff, young people, and the school community to foster a calm, supportive and aspirational learning environment for all young people. Young people thrive in the highly nurturing environment and a culture based on Gospel values. They recognise and value the 'CARE' charter which promotes well high expectations across all aspects of school life. Almost all young people feel that they are encouraged by staff to be the best they can. In all classes, young people are courteous, caring and behave responsibly. They arrive at classes ready and motivated to learn. Across the school, young people demonstrate a high respect for learning.
- In most lessons, young people benefit from appropriately challenging learning and are encouraged to take decisions, ask questions and lead aspects of their own learning. Teachers offer well-considered opportunities for project-based learning. Young people are highly motivated by these rich contexts for learning and relish taking responsibility for their learning. A few lessons are overly teacher-led and the learning experience is too passive. Young people are encouraged to provide feedback on their learning experiences. They recognise that their views influence how teachers are improving learning which boosts their motivation and helps them feel valued.
- Almost all teachers use starter activities well to engage young people quickly and create opportunities to revisit prior learning. In most lessons, staff use questioning well to help young people reflect on their learning and to check for understanding. Teachers should continue to ensure that questioning supports consistently the development of deep learning and higher-order thinking.
- Teachers are provided with high-quality, regularly updated information about young people's needs and suggested strategies to support them. In most classes, teachers use this information to design tasks and activities matched well to the needs of learners. In a few lessons, teachers use Artificial Intelligence effectively to create resources adapted to meet young people's needs.
- All teachers understand what constitutes high-quality learning and teaching. They are supported effectively by the LTA collaborative group and by the clear learning and teaching policy. In all lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning and how success will be measured. When young people develop success criteria with each other their level of engagement is heightened. Almost all teachers provide clear and effective explanations and instructions to

young people when introducing tasks and activities. They also regularly model and demonstrate to young people how they can be successful in their learning. The majority of teachers use plenaries well to recap learning. Staff should now consider how to encourage young people, from S1 to S6 to reflect and evaluate what they have learned more consistently across all curricular areas.

- Almost all young people show strong digital literacy skills. They use digital resources confidently to support their learning. For example, they access resources, share their work and receive feedback from teachers via digital platforms. A few young people who require support with their learning use digital devices well to access support discreetly. A few young people not attending school continue their learning with the support through digital contexts. Teachers have worked well to support the school gain a Digital School's Award. Young people enjoy the creative learning experiences that are developing as a result.
- Almost all young people receive helpful, detailed ongoing feedback that helps them to improve. As a result of impactful, well-focused professional learning for teachers, feedback on learning is now a major strength across the school. Almost all teachers engage in regular, planned conversations with young people. This enhances effectively how young people talk about their strengths and what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers have a shared understanding of the principles and purposes of assessment. They benefit strongly from a clear rationale for assessment and within all departments an appropriate range of formative and summative approaches are used. Young people participate regularly in self- and peer-assessment. Almost all teachers frequently use quizzes, exit passes and 'show-me' boards to engage young people to reflect on their progress. This helps teachers understand better the progress young people are making.
- Teachers use national Benchmarks effectively when planning assessment activities within the broad general education (BGE). In the senior phase, almost all teachers show a clear awareness of assessment standards in National Qualifications (NQs). Almost half of teachers are Qualification Scotland appointees. These teachers use their expertise well to support their colleagues in the planning of summative assessment activities. All teachers should now continue to plan consistently, assessment activities that are suitably aspirational and challenging. Senior leaders have created a whole-school schedule for key assessment activities. This ensures effectively that young people do not face assessment overload at certain times of the year.
- There are major strengths in the whole-school approaches to moderation of planning learning and assessments within and beyond the school. All faculty leaders and most teachers work collaboratively with colleagues in other schools as part of 'Moderation: The Hamilton Way'. As a result, teachers now make informed and reliable assessment judgments from S1 to S6. Across the school, predicted grades for NQs increasingly correlate with final outcomes.
- Senior leaders have developed effective and innovative systems that provide all teachers with high-quality information about young people's progress across all curricular areas. All teachers value this greatly and know clearly their roles and responsibilities in using data to support young people make progress. Teachers monitor robustly the progress of young people to ensure both appropriate support and challenge in learning. Teachers' subsequent actions, such as more regularly adapting learning to meet the needs of individual learners, is having a significantly positive impact on experiences and outcomes for almost all young people.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Staff work with primary colleagues very effectively to support young people as they move to secondary school. They share information appropriately and use data effectively to plan appropriate learner pathways through a well-planned transition programme.
- Young people receive their full entitlement to a BGE curriculum from S1 to S3. Personalisation and choice are evident at the end of S1 when young people reduce from 17 to 14 subjects, and at the end of S3 when they choose up to seven NQs. Young people receive their entitlement to physical education, religious and moral education (RME) and language learning. The spiritual life of the school is celebrated through liturgical services and the application of Christian principles in a range of contexts. Arrangements are in place that enable all members of the school community to fulfil the rituals of their personal religious obligations.
- Teachers share a clear commitment to developing young people's literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing as a responsibility of all. Staff across the school promote the continued improvement in literacy and numeracy for all young people. Teachers use tutor time in S1 and S2 responsively to addressing identified skills gaps. These interventions are resulting in continuous improvements in literacy and numeracy. In addition, senior leaders use effectively planned broad banded classes, support sets and intervention groups. The school library is a valued and well-used resource. It supports effectively a focus on reading for pleasure. During interval and lunchtime, the library is open as a social area and offers a welcoming and nurturing environment.
- Young people in S2 and S3 benefit from carefully considered and enriching project-based learning experiences. Focusing on skills for learning, life and work awareness, the highly popular programme includes experiences of film production, beekeeping and refereeing. Young people develop a variety of skills well, which provides a strong foundation to learning in the senior phase.
- Young people in S4 select up to seven courses and those in S5 and S6 select up to five courses. A few learners undertake appropriately learning and qualifications in the Support Base. The senior phase curriculum offers a wide range of NQs, National Progression Awards, Gradu8 courses, Foundation Apprenticeships and Access Pathways. A wide range of Advanced Higher qualifications are offered with some accessed digitally. This provides a wide range of awards and qualifications that reflect well young people's needs and aspirations.
- All young people have access to a wide range of accredited learning opportunities outwith the classroom which recognise not only young people's positive impact on the school community, but also their enhanced skills development. For example, training in Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) and Mental Health First Aid is widely accessed by young people from different year groups. The Caritas Award provides the majority of senior pupils with meaningful opportunities for personal reflection and service to the school and their parish community.
- Teachers use data applications effectively to analyse learner performance and consider predictive analytics of future attainment. This supports informed professional dialogue around progress and enables staff to provide well-judged guidance on appropriate learning pathways.

As a result, young people are supported better to make decisions that align with their strengths and aspirations, increasing the likelihood of positive and sustained outcomes.

- Senior leaders ensure that the entitlements outlined in the Career Education Standards (CES) are well embedded across the school. Young people benefit from the strong partnerships of staff with local employers which are consistently integrated across most departments. Young people in the senior phase value their work experience days, supported mock interview sessions and employer visits for example. These help young people make informed decisions and achieve positive destinations. This coherent and well-structured approach is ensuring that career education is relevant and closely aligned with labour-market expectations.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents value the hugely welcoming and inclusive ethos across the school community. They feel a connection to the school community and describe it as a family. Teachers have developed a highly effective strategy, 'Parents in Partnership', to help parents support their child's wellbeing, engagement with school and academic achievement. This approach reflects the context of the school community and aligns with the school's core vision, values and aims. The well-established and highly engaging family learning events provide information and foster positive partnerships to support young people's growth. These events have included the S4 family learning programme, the 'You and Me' numeracy project, and the Barista Breakfast. They serve as valuable opportunities to share guidance with parents and young people. These events also promote meaningful conversations between parents, young people and staff about young people's progress. These strong partnership arrangements ensure that families are well-informed about the opportunities for young people. This includes help to develop their knowledge and skills, reflect on their progress, raise attainment and make aspirational and well-considered career choices.
- Parents appreciate the ways in which staff communicate with them. They are happy with the regularity and quality of the communication. The extensive newsletter provides parents with a comprehensive overview of the day-to-day life of the school community. Parents feel valued and involved in the life of the school and that their views are sought regularly. This includes providing feedback on matters relating to participatory budgets and policies such as mobile phones and promoting positive relationships.
- Parents are very happy with how the school is led. They are complimentary of the headteacher and staff. They know that staff are supportive and nurturing and know their child well. Parents also know that when issues are raised with the school they are dealt with quickly and effectively.
- The Parent Council has a strong partnership with the school and supports events, provides feedback on school policy and assists with grant applications to benefit the school community. The Parent Council works collaboratively with staff and the parent forum to promote their work. They continue to look for innovative ways to make links with new and existing parents.

## 2.1 Safeguarding

- 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

very 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

- Young people flourish in a caring, nurturing and supportive environment. They are motivated to give of their best, behave responsibly and respect the wellbeing of others. Almost all young people feel a sense of belonging and are proud to be a member of their school community. They know that staff take a personal interest in them, are keen for them to succeed, and are there to offer assistance. This gives young people the confidence to be ambitious.
- Respect is at the heart of the school and is evident in the positive relationships both in lessons and less structured settings. Almost all young people feel safe. Young people develop successfully as individuals, are building confidence and social skills through a wide range of in-class and outwith school activities. For example, the showcase event after a block of project-based learning provides a very effective platform for young people in S3 to demonstrate their increasing confidence in public speaking.
- Staff and young people's approach to supporting young people's wellbeing is very effective. Wellbeing for all is highly valued across the school. Staff across the school are aware of and contribute very well to supporting young people's positive wellbeing through for example, regular 'check-ins', supportive conversations and planned learning programmes. Senior leaders and pupil support staff track wellbeing of young people very effectively. As a result, key staff have a very helpful overview from which to plan programmes of support and to target emerging issues. Pupil support staff also reflect on young people's personal responses to check-ins and surveys. This helps identify whether individuals would benefit from a more focused conversation with staff and, where necessary, additional supports. Young people appreciate these conversations and the supports to improve their own wellbeing. Young people also make very good use of the wide range of innovative activities designed to raise awareness of mental health. These activities include the 'Ogilvie\_ how are you really?' social media page which provides a safe space for talking and listening, and the 'School State of Mind' podcast. This nationally available podcast, endorsed by a Member of the Scottish Parliament, created and edited by young people, discusses key issues and supports around wellbeing. This whole school approach is helping young people be proactive in looking after their own wellbeing.
- Young people benefit from the well-planned, relevant and progressive programmes in personal and social education (PSE) from S1 to S6. Young people influence and shape the content effectively to ensure that it reflects their needs and priorities. The programmes help young people recognise the pressures and challenges they may face now or in the future. A wide range of supportive external partners highlight key health-related issues as part of PSE.

Most young people are confident that this provides them with the information and insights to make healthy and safe decisions. Young people demonstrate their support for and willingness to help others in a wide range of ways across the school and beyond. For example, the schools work on Mentors in Violence Prevention has been shared recently by Education Scotland as a model of good practice.

- Staff across the school have a very clear knowledge and demonstrate well their understanding of their responsibilities relating to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. This is supported very well by staff working with national organisations on health and wellbeing, autism and inclusive education. This supports all staff, through professional learning and resources, to reflect on their own practice and take forward improvements for young people across the school. Staff use a variety of carefully considered bespoke strategies effectively to support young people well. These include, creating sensory friendly classrooms, regulation areas, and regular health and wellbeing check-ins. Effective professional learning has built staff confidence in recognising the signs of trauma or adverse childhood experiences. As a result, young people feel that staff know them as individuals and support them very well to be ready for learning.
- Most staff use the detailed, helpful information in the school ASN datahub very well to plan effectively to meet the needs of young people who require additional support with their learning. These include readily available resources to limit visual stress, one-to-one support for literacy and numeracy, and study sessions. Pupil support staff are proactive in identifying, effectively responding to and meeting the needs of these young people. They create helpful support plans which are reviewed regularly with young people and their parents. Pupil support staff track and monitor very well progress within these plans to support young people to achieve their personal targets and actively participate in their learning. As a result, almost all young people who require additional support with their learning feel cared for, included and that their needs are being met.
- Identified groups and individuals benefit from a range of targeted support and interventions. Young people who face potential challenges in relation to caring responsibilities and their domestic circumstances are very well supported. This helps to improve their attendance and engagement in learning. Pupil support staff track closely the progress and support for identified groups of young people. They have established strong relationships with partner agencies such as social work, the National Health Service, Police Scotland, counselling and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. This support is leading to improved outcomes for identified young people, such as increased confidence, reduced anxiety and improved positive destinations.
- Staff use thorough, robust procedures to track and monitor young people's attendance. A range of in-house interventions and partnership work is improving attendance for young people whose engagement with school is of concern. Informative daily reports are shared with staff and parents, resulting in improved parental engagement and a reduction of unexplained absences. Staff use this information effectively to ensure continuity in learning for young people. They provide a warm welcome for young people returning from absence and ensure that gaps in learning are appropriately addressed.
- Very few young people access learning through part-time timetables. Senior leaders and staff work effectively with parents and partners to support these young people. As a result, young

people benefit from carefully considered, individual packages of support, tailored to their needs. This results in improvements in engagement with school. Senior leaders should continue to ensure that all part-time timetables are reviewed regularly. Staff in the highly effective, nurturing support base work with young people from S3 to S6 whose attendance is of concern and those returning to school following anxiety related absence. This supports young people's wellbeing and enables them to build confidence and resilience whilst integrating back into mainstream education. School tracking shows that these young people are achieving well.

- 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 young people through food in school. A few areas for improvement have been agreed with education and the catering service.
- Young people feel very well supported at points of transition. Enhanced arrangements target the needs of identified young people moving from primary to secondary. This provides young people with the reassurance and support to address any aspects of the transition to secondary school. The personal information gathered provides staff with detailed information about individual needs and circumstances. Teachers use this information well to plan appropriately. At the different points of course transition, young people receive helpful advice to support their decision making and in planning for the future. This supports well continuity in young people's learning, as well as giving them confidence in making appropriate choices.
- Ensuring equality is a prominent feature of school life and a significant strength of staff's inclusive approach. A range of free-standing events, for example culture days, often led by young people and involving parents and families, celebrate diversity. These events are positively welcomed and viewed as powerful expressions of cultural appreciation. Together with ongoing references across the curriculum, these events help young people understand well the importance of recognising people as individuals. Young people demonstrate a clear understanding of equality, are responsible, respectful and value the diversity of their school community. They are confident in their understanding of prejudice and discrimination. While instances of bullying are rare, they are dealt with promptly and effectively. Young people are confident and well equipped to highlight concerns and, where appropriate, speak out. As a result, relationships across the school community are strong and young people feel included.
- The school's core values and the Charter for Catholic Education underpins a rights-based approach that permeates all aspects of school life. Within curricular areas, subject charters identify and publicise articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Young people demonstrate well their understanding of Children's Rights by for example, ensuring that they treat each other with care and compassion. They are keen that all young people's rights are upheld. This is bringing further cohesion and a shared purpose to the life and work of the school.

### 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very good

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

- Staff, young people and members of the school community have high aspirations and demonstrate a relentless focus on improving outcomes for all young people. They do this within a culture of ambition, respect, nurture and equity, encouraging young people to always be the best version of themselves. Primarily, the interconnectedness of high-quality learning and teaching, effective use of data, an appropriate curriculum, learning pathways and working together very effectively is raising attainment for young people. This thorough, collaborative approach exemplifies very strong practice in this area. As a result, young people, including those who may face barriers to their learning, are attaining and achieving very successfully.
- Senior leaders have recently developed and implemented a sophisticated, bespoke tracking tool. This provides teachers with easy to interpret, current tracking information about young people in their classes and across the school. This enables staff at all levels to monitor progress, identify individuals and groups of young people who may require additional help, support or challenge, and to signpost interventions for targeted groups of young people very effectively. This is a significant contributing factor to the improving attainment and enhancing achievement.

#### Attainment in literacy and numeracy

##### Broad general education

- Almost all young people achieve Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) third level in literacy by the end of S3 between 2021/22 and 2024/25 and numeracy in 2022/23 and 2023/24. Most achieved numeracy at this level in 2024/25. At CfE fourth level, there has been continued improvements in literacy from 2021/22. Most young people attained at this level in 2023/24 and 2024/25. Most young people achieved numeracy at CfE fourth level, from 2023/24 to 2024/25. Senior leaders believe that the slight declines at CfE third level literacy in 2024/25 are in part due to ongoing improving moderation activities.
- Senior leaders report this strong attainment particularly in literacy at CfE third level is as a result of a range of continuing improvements to practice. This includes improved use of data, improved understanding and application of moderation processes, and the impact of focused work on literacy in S1 and S2 through, for example, regular tutor time. Staff offer very well-planned programmes of targeted interventions for young people who require additional support to work towards achieving expected national levels of attainment. These help to ensure that almost all young people achieve expected national levels of attainment. There is a strong correlation with success at CfE fourth level in S3 and continued success throughout S4 and S5.

- As a result of the wide range of moderation activities, teachers' professional judgements of achievement of CfE levels are reliable and robust.

## Senior Phase

### Leavers

- Most young people who left school from 2020/21 to 2023/24 achieved Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 5 or better in literacy, and the majority achieved literacy at SCQF level 6, consistently in line with the virtual comparator (VC).
- The percentage of young people attaining SCQF level 5 or better, or level 6 in numeracy improved overall between 2019/20 and 2023/24. This improved at SCQF level 6 or better to being significantly higher than the VC in 2022/23 and in 2023/24.
- The majority of young people who require additional support and who left school between 2020/21 and 2022/23 achieved literacy at SCQF level 5 or better. This improved to most achieving at this level in 2023/24. A minority of young people who require additional support and who left school between 2019/20 and 2022/23 achieved numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better. This improved to a majority in 2023/24. These improvements are as a result of the variety of ways in which staff focus on improving outcomes for young people. These include individualised supports, a whole school focus on literacy and numeracy as a responsibility of all and well-attended supported study sessions on Saturdays and at Easter time.

## Cohorts

### Literacy and numeracy

- In S4, by S5 and by S6 young people consistently attain well in literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better and SCQF level 6. For literacy by S5 at SCQF level 5 and by S5 and S6 at SCQF level 6 this is now significantly higher than the VC. For numeracy, for the same cohorts and measures, this is now significantly much higher than the VC.
- Young people attain very well in literacy as they move through the school from S1 to S5. Strong tracking processes, used well, enable teachers to reliably predict levels of success or to put appropriate interventions in place.
- Staff in the mathematics department have reviewed data very effectively to ensure any gaps in young people's knowledge of specific mathematical concepts are recognised and re-visited before moving on through other aspects of the course. Staff in a few departments have worked together to develop common and consistent approaches to teaching aspects of numeracy.

## National Qualifications

- The percentage of young people presented for N5 English in S4 and the percentage passing at grades A to C is generally in line with the national average from 2020/21 to 2024/25.
- The percentage of young people presented for Higher English in S5 improved to above the national average in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The percentage passing at grades A to C is lower than the national average for the same years.
- The percentage of young people presented for N5 Applications of Mathematics in S4 is generally in line with the national average. The percentage passing at grades A to C is above

than the national average in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The percentage of young people presented for N5 Mathematics in S4 is above the national average. The percentage passing at grades A to C is above the national average from 2020/21 to 2024/25. These successes are in part due to a range of mathematical specific activities, including a targeted intervention to help young people understand better algebra.

- The percentage of young people presented for Higher Mathematics in S5 and S6 is broadly in line with the national average from 2020/21 to 2024/25. The percentage passing at grades A to C is generally in line with the national average.
- As a result of detailed analysis, and subsequent review and moderation activities of predicted and actual grades attained in NQs, teachers are making more informed and accurate predictions of success. This helps improve young people's confidence and subsequently attainment. Overall, the number of 'no awards' or passes at D are relatively small. A fifth of the cohort in S4 are presented for two qualifications in mathematics in 2024/25. Teachers continue to reflect and amend the curriculum to best meet the needs of young people. This has resulted in a wider range of courses at SCQF level 6 being introduced, for example, SCQF level 6 Journalism and Statistics.

## **Attainment over time**

### **BGE**

- Senior leaders and faculty heads track and monitor rigorously young people's progress and attainment through the BGE over time. Young people are attaining very well in all curriculum areas and sustaining these high standards over time. Almost all young people achieved CfE third level, and the majority achieved CfE fourth level, in most curricular areas outwith English and mathematics in 2023/24 and in 2024/25. This helps also to identify early those who may require additional support and for staff to intervene effectively.

### **Leavers**

- Average complementary tariff scores for the lowest attaining 20%, the middle attaining 60% and the highest attaining 20% of leavers is in line with the VC from 2020/21 to 2023/24. The gap between the lowest attaining 20% of leavers and the middle attaining 60% of leavers is reducing slightly from 2020/21 to 2023/24 .
- Overall, young people who require additional support attained lower than the ASN VC in four of the last five years from 2019/20 to 2023/24 when compared using average complementary tariff scores. Attainment improved from 2022/23 to 2023/24 but remains lower than the ASN VC.

### **Cohorts**

- In S4, over the last five years, the attainment of the lowest attaining 20% was significantly higher than the VC in 2022/23 and in 2023/24. In 2024/25 this declined to being in line with the VC. Attainment for the middle attaining 60% of young people was significantly much higher than the VC in 2022/23 and in 2023/24 before declining to being significantly higher than the VC in 2024/25. For the highest attaining 20% of young people in S4 attainment has been steady, and in line with the VC.
- By S5, based on S4, attainment of the lowest attaining 20% and middle attaining 60% of young people has shown steady improvements from 2020/21 to 2024/25. For both groups attainment

was significantly higher than the VC in 2024/25. In three of the preceding five years attainment for the highest attaining 20% of young people is significantly higher than the VC. This declined slightly from 2023/24 to 2024/25 and is now in line with the VC.

- By S6 based on S4, attainment of the lowest attaining 20% and highest attaining 20% of young people is consistently in line with the VC from 2020/21 to 2024/25. The middle attaining 60% of young people attained in line with the VC from 2020/21 to 2023/24 before improving in 2024/25 to being significantly higher than the VC.
- Senior leaders have made considerable changes to both the qualifications and subjects offered to young people. This is leading to improvements in some areas of attainment. The assertive coursing programme, supported by better performance information helps staff have more informed conversations with young people and their parents about which options are most suited to them. This in turn is leading to more young people being presented for courses which are more suited to their needs and individual talents.

### **Breadth and depth**

- At S4, between 2019/20 and 2024/25, the majority of young people attained four or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better. This is significantly higher than the VC from 2022/23 to 2024/25. A minority of young people achieve five or more awards at SCQF level 5A or better, in line with the VC from 2021/22 to 2024/25.
- By S5, overall there have been year on year improvements in the percentages of young people attaining one or more and five or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better from 2021/22 to 2024/25. By S5, a minority of young people achieve four or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better between 2019/20 to 2023/24. This improved to being significantly higher than the VC in 2023/24 and in 2024/25. The percentage of young people attaining five or more courses at SCQF level 6A or better is in line with the VC from 2020/21 to 2024/25.
- By S6, the majority of young people achieve one or more to two or more awards at SCQF 6C or better. This was in line with the VC from 2020/21 to 2023/24 but moved to significantly higher than the VC in 2024/25. There have been improvements from 2022/23 to 2024/25 for five or more courses at SCQF 6C or better. This is now significantly higher than the VC in 2024/25. At SCQF level 6A or better there are improvements for five or more to six or more courses. Attainment at this level is now significantly higher than the VC.
- Over recent years senior leaders have introduced a wide range of courses beyond NQs. These include, for example, awards in Barista skills, the modern languages for life and work award and SCQF level 6 award in science, technologies, engineering and mathematics leadership. Most young people who choose these pathways are successful.

### **Overall quality of learners' achievements**

- Most young people benefit from and achieve success through their participation in a rich and inclusive variety of learning and experiential activities in and out of school. They develop well a broad range of skills, which increases their overall confidence, motivation and determination to succeed. Young people in the BGE and senior phase use and demonstrate their leadership skills very well as school captains, prefects, ambassadors and other roles. Almost all young people at S2 and S3 acquire, develop and showcase transferrable skills across a wide range of well-planned project-based learning courses.

- Young people appreciate the very strong success culture, which recognises and celebrates their achievements well in a variety of ways. Highly effective partnerships enhance the quality and range of achievement activities available to young people. Staff use the St John Ogilvie High School achievement awards, aligned to the school values, very effectively to recognise young people's dedication and success. Young people wear their well-earned achievement and leadership badges with pride. Staff use very well an increasing range of qualifications and accredited awards to formally recognise young people's achievements. For example, young people in S3 who choose a specific project-based learning course achieve the SCQF level 5 award in Mental Health First Aid. Young people in S6 receive a Diploma of wider achievement, which recognises their commitment to community involvement and citizenship.
- Senior leaders track very effectively young people who participate in activities leading to achievements in and out of school. As a result, they identify those who may be missing out from these valuable activities and proactively encourage participation. Increasing numbers of young people take part in these activities each year. This reflects young people's increasing engagement with the school and recognition of their role in the community. Activities are tailored well to young people's individual needs, interests and aspirations. Senior leaders have a clear vision of how they could develop further the tracking of achievement to include for example, routinely recognising and recording the wide variety of skills young people are developing.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Approaches to ensuring equity for all young people are very strong. The school campaign 'School Shouldn't Cost' has been used to influence and shape the work of the national charity, Child Poverty Action Group'. Staff plan very carefully all work undertaken to close the poverty related attainment gap and increase equity. They use data, research and partnerships very effectively to identify targets, deliver specific interventions and projects, and measure very well the impact of these. Staff carefully select a significant minority of young people for a range of interventions including mentoring, tutoring and wellbeing supports. Staff measure the impact of all interventions on individual and collective outcomes. This helps staff be responsive to the needs of young people. All targeted interventions successfully improve outcomes for at least the majority of young people involved. This ensures that most young people who experience socio-economic challenges attain similarly or better when compared to their peers locally and nationally.
- Young people and staff work very well together to reduce the cost of the school day (COSD). All school related activities are free of charge for young people. This is increasing learning and participation in school life for young people. As a result, young people entitled to free school meals who left school in 2022/23 and reside in SIMD 1 and those who left school in 2023/24 and reside in SIMD 2 attained more than their peers across Scotland. The COSD ambassadors have taken part in national conversations and shared their views to shape policy and national guidance. Staff and young people support other schools and organisations locally and nationally by sharing their highly effective practice in this area.
- Staff approaches to engaging with and supporting families are reducing the impact of poverty and perceived stigma in accessing support. For example, families are encouraged to request support through easily accessible online tools. This has significantly increased levels of distribution of educational resources, clothing, food and other essential items which supports young people to attend and attain. Young people led the development of 'hot spots' across the

school to ensure that anyone could access discretely resources including health and period products. A minority of young people access freely available breakfast and food provisions throughout the day which impact positively on their concentration, engagement in learning and on their wellbeing. Senior leaders, supported effectively by all staff, ensure that the consistent wearing of school uniform supports an inclusive and purposeful environment in which no young person is singled out due to socio-economic disadvantage. Together, this very joined up approach is leading to a strong sense of equity, belonging and improving attainment for young people.

- The attainment of young people residing in SIMD deciles 1 and 2 is, in a range of measures, consistently above that of young people in similar circumstances across Scotland. For example, at S4 and by S5, when compared using average complementary tariff points, young people who reside in SIMD deciles 1 to 5 attained above the VC from 2022/23 to 2024/25. At S4, in 2022/23 those who reside in SIMD decile 1, and in 2023/24 those who reside in SIMD decile 2 attained significantly higher than the VC. In 2024/25 young people at S4 living in SIMD decile 2 attained significantly much higher than the VC.
- Almost all young people who left the school between 2019/20 and 2023/24 moved to an initial positive destination. This is in line with the VC. Almost half leave school to higher education, around a quarter to further education and a minority to employment. A few young people leave school to further training opportunities. Of those who move onto higher education, for the last three years, the majority reside in SIMD deciles 1 and 2. This is more than double the national figure. A third of the young people involved in the 'Cambridge Homerton programme for aspirational access to university' are pupils at St John Ogilvie High School. This represents further senior leaders drive to improve life chances for young people.

## Practice worth sharing more widely

### ■ Collaborative, distributed leadership is sector leading.

Senior leaders empower staff at all levels to lead improvement, capitalising on their individual skills and areas of professional interest. They have created conditions where staff are highly motivated to generate ideas and lead improvement, linked to school aims and priorities. This systematic approach is developing sustainable leadership of change at all levels and leading to improved outcomes for young people.

### ■ Staff and young people's approach to supporting young people's wellbeing is very effective.

Senior leaders track wellbeing of young people very effectively. Pupil support staff also reflect on young people's personal responses to check-ins and surveys. This helps identify whether individuals would benefit from a more focused conversation with staff and, where necessary, additional supports. Young people also make very good use of the wide range of innovative activities designed to raise awareness of mental health. These activities include the 'Ogilvie, how well are you?' social media page, and the nationally available 'School State of Mind' podcast. This whole school approach is helping young people be proactive in looking after their own wellbeing.

### ■ Bespoke tracking tool.

Senior leaders have recently developed and implemented a sophisticated, bespoke tracking tool which provides teachers with easy to interpret, current tracking information about young people in their classes and across the school. This enables staff at all levels to monitor progress, provide appropriate support or challenge, and to signpost interventions for targeted groups of young people very effectively. Teachers also compare young people's current performance to previous cohorts which helps support realistic, achievable target grades and projections. Senior leaders also track young people's achievements very effectively to encourage and support increased participation.

### ■ Parents in Partnership.

Teachers have developed a highly effective strategy, 'Parents in Partnership', to help parents support their child's wellbeing, engagement with school and academic achievement. This approach reflects the context of the school community and aligns with the school's core vision, values and aims. The well-established and highly engaging family learning events provide information and foster positive partnerships to support young people's growth.

### ■ Approaches to promoting equity.

All staff understand very well the socio-economic context of the school community. Senior leaders have developed a clear set of objectives to promote equity. Staff make very effective use of high-quality performance data to plan the use of PEF. This is leading to very successful approaches to reducing the impact of socio-economic challenges for families. This is improving the attainment, achievement and wellbeing of young people, including those in a range of targeted 'equity' groups.

## 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.