

Summarised inspection findings

Calderhead High School

North Lanarkshire Council

17 March 2026

Key contextual information

School Name: Calderhead High School
Council: North Lanarkshire Council
SEED number: 8517231
Roll: 564

Attendance is generally below the national average. There has been a three-year pattern of improvement from 2023/24.

Exclusions are generally above the national average. This has been a significant reduction in exclusions in the last year.

In September 2024, 23.6% of pupils were registered for free school meals.

In September 2024, 31.6% of pupils live in 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.

In September 2024, the school reported that 34.2% of pupils had additional support needs.

The headteacher has been in post since January 2025. She is supported by four deputy headteachers, two of whom are substantive. One is currently on secondment, one is interim, funded by pupil equity funding (PEF). Three were appointed in 2025 and one in 2024.

Over the last year, challenges in recruiting staff, particularly in short-term positions has impacted on the pace of progress and improvement in a few subject areas.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

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 headteacher is well regarded across the school community. She provides strong direction, motivating leadership and is passionate about improving the school. She has provided consistent leadership and support to staff during a recent period of staff changes and instability. She is developing effectively the capacity of the newly established and enthusiastic senior leadership team (SLT). Together they have introduced a range of strategies, systems and processes intended to improve learners' experiences and outcomes. Although these changes are at an early stage, they are impacting positively on the culture within the school. There is a shared understanding of the direction of change developing well across the school community.
- Staff promote consistently the values of community, ambition, respect, equity and success (CARES). These are visible throughout the school, referred to in communications, assemblies and classes. As a result, the values are understood well and are evident in interactions in almost all classes and across the school. There is a very strong sense of community across the school with young people well known to staff. Staff use the values effectively to promote consistent standards and high expectations of young people's behaviour. Staff should continue to embed the values, with their planned next step of aligning these to the rewards system. Senior leaders should continue with their ongoing refresh of the vision, ensuring this is reflective of recent changes.
- When appointed, the headteacher carefully gathered a range of views from staff, young people and parents. This was used thoughtfully to create a more succinct and ambitious school improvement plan (SIP). Senior leaders have identified the overarching priorities of improving learning, teaching and assessment; attendance; and attainment as part of a clear and well-considered three-year SIP. The SIP contains well-defined and measurable targets. These reflect local and national priorities as well as the actions identified through a range of evidence to impact positively on improving learners' outcomes. Middle leaders have been supported well to align their faculty improvement plans to the SIP. Most of these plans should be developed further to be more succinct with clear and measurable targets. Senior leaders should continue with plans to streamline further both the school and faculty improvement planning process.
- Senior leaders are creating carefully the right conditions for change. They are connecting processes, remits, use of collegiate time and improvement actions to well-judged planned change. Most staff feel consulted about improvements and that there is a strengthened culture of collegiality. Senior leaders understand well the needs of staff and adjust appropriately the pace of change when required. This is leading to high levels of staff engagement and a

renewed energy to enact change. Senior leaders responded effectively to staff, young people and parental feedback that communication required improvement. They have strengthened communication systems and as a result, most of the school community agree that this is improving. Most staff have a strong understanding of improvement priorities and the rationale for change.

- Senior leaders introduced recently a whole school approach for staff to use self-evaluation evidence more consistently and systematically to inform change. Senior leaders recognise that this work is at the implementation phase and they have identified rightly the need to embed further recent changes. They should continue to support all staff to use consistently a range of robust self-evaluation evidence to evaluate school improvement. Senior leaders have clear plans to monitor the impact of school improvement actions. The robust annual review highlights the early impact of improvement actions. This includes, for example, improving successfully safeguarding processes.
- Staff are motivated and empowered to lead change through a carefully planned strategy of distributed leadership. All teaching staff are involved in improvement groups or leadership roles with their action plans aligned very well to achieving improvement priorities. This includes for example, staff gathering stakeholder feedback and a range of data to compile the current school improvement plan and self-evaluation processes. As a result, there are consistent and collaborative approaches to school improvement. Through a range of leadership opportunities, staff have a sense of ownership of the school improvement journey. Most staff feel valued and demonstrate a passion and willingness to move forward, motivated by their role in leading change.
- Senior leaders have supported middle leaders through professional learning and targeted meetings to enhance their understanding of their role in improving learning and teaching and raising attainment. This work is at an early stage with a few middle leaders demonstrating effective practice. Senior leaders should use processes such as the planned staff development sessions to share these examples of effective practice more widely across faculties.
- Most young people across the senior phase benefit from meaningful opportunities to lead change across the school. This includes roles such as captains, ambassadors and leading clubs. This is strengthening the strong community ethos across the school. Young people are also beginning to lead change through the recently introduced Learner Groups and an established pupil council. These representative groups inform senior leaders of young people's views on learning and teaching. This is then used well to inform improvements in learning, teaching and assessment such as priorities on the current SIP regarding improving formative assessment and differentiation. A few young people in S1-3 undertake leadership roles, developing their confidence. Senior leaders and staff should continue to increase opportunities for young people in S1-3 to lead change.
- Staff and young people are increasing the range of opportunities to capture young people's views. Staff ensure that young people's voice is at the heart of planned change. This is evident in the development of the school improvement plan and new policies such as the development of the anti-bullying policy. As a result, most young people agree that the school listens to their views. This session, the pupil council is refocusing their remit to provide feedback to peers about how young people's views are influencing improvement. This work is at an early stage and young people who are not involved in leadership roles are less clear about changes across

the school. A minority of young people are unsure how their views are taken into account or what impact their views have on school improvement and change. Staff should develop further how they inform young people more effectively of how offering their views led to change.

- Senior leaders refreshed recently the process to support staff's professional learning. All teaching staff now undertake professional review and development. Senior and middle leaders have supported them well to reflect against national standards. Almost all staff feel well supported to engage with professional learning and use this to improve their practice. Almost all staff attend in-house professional learning sessions beyond the school day aligned well to developing the necessary knowledge and skills to achieve improvement priorities.
- A staff-led group supports colleagues well to improve learning, teaching and assessment across the school. Involving young people and parents, they use a research-informed approach and are implementing thoughtfully a learning and teaching framework to clarify expectations to staff. They are developing a learning and teaching policy which contains clear guidance and support for improving teachers' practice. Senior and middle leaders review regularly the quality of learning and teaching as part of a planned programme. They are using this information well to inform future professional learning and improvement priorities.
- The headteacher identified the need to review the allocation of the PEF. Senior leaders are reviewing how they use data to assess the impact of the PEF spend. They should also consider how to involve more stakeholders in influencing the allocation of PEF.
- Staff work with a well-considered range of effective partnerships which provide a range of targeted active learning opportunities for young people, including those experiencing barriers to their learning. Partners contribute well to school improvement. Community partners identify with the school values and actively contribute to the life and work of the school. Partnership working is a strength and is improving successfully young people's attendance and engagement in learning. A next step is for staff to work collectively to plan and evaluate the input with partners.
- Senior leaders have developed a clear policy with a supporting action plan for taking forward Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) priorities. Senior leaders work well with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) staff to agree the broad strategic approach for the delivery of Career Information Advice and Guidance services to contribute to the SIP. These approaches are supporting staff through professional learning and are helping staff to develop a skills framework for the school. Senior leaders should ensure that DYW priorities are implemented consistently across all departments within the school. They should build on emerging examples in a few departments where they display a range of jobs with associated skills that can be accessed through their subject areas.

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

- Almost all young people learn well in calm and supportive learning environments. Relationships between staff and young people are positive and respectful. Young people are well known to staff who respond to their needs through nurturing and relational approaches. As a result, young people feel cared for in classes. Staff have focused successfully on developing positive relationships and behaviour across the school. As a result, almost all young people display positive behaviour and participate well in their learning.
- There is a pro-active and positive approach to promoting positive relationships across the school. This is resulting in staff having a greater awareness and understanding of inclusive practices and their role in supporting young people to succeed. This work is supporting improvements in the conditions for learning for almost all young people. A few young people who previously struggled with dysregulated behaviours now report they are supported very well in classes to develop their skills in managing their emotions and helping them make better choices.
- In almost all lessons, teachers share with young people the purpose of their learning and how to be successful. As planned, teachers should now review the quality of learning intentions and success criteria to allow young people to better understand the progress they are making.
- Staff are developing effectively their approaches to improving learning and teaching. They have developed collaboratively the Calderhead Lesson Framework, supported by targeted professional learning, to improve their practice. This is building a consistency of learner experiences and a structure for staff to plan learning, teaching and assessment. Almost all teachers are using this framework well; however, the implementation is at an early stage. Senior leaders recognise the need to further improve this area so that all young people benefit from consistently high-quality learning and teaching in all lessons.
- A majority of teachers plan lessons and activities effectively. A minority of lessons are overly directed by the teacher. Teachers allocate too much time to starter activities. As a result, at times young people are too passive in their learning and the pace of learning is too slow. All staff need to build on existing positive practice to offer young people a greater range of opportunities to learn actively and develop independence in their learning.
- Most teachers make effective use of questioning to check young people's understanding. In a few classes, teachers use highly skilled questioning strategies which promote deeper thinking and extend learning. Senior leaders should support teachers to improve the use of

higher -order questioning, ensuring all young people benefit from increased opportunities to think critically and engage more deeply in their learning.

- In most classes, teachers support young people well and intervene to help individuals and groups of young people directly during a lesson. A few teachers use information from support for learning staff well to ensure that tasks and activities are appropriate for identified learners. In most lessons, all young people complete the same task, regardless of their level of ability. As planned, an important next step for all teachers is to ensure that lessons are suitably differentiated to meet the needs of all learners.
- Across all curriculum areas, most staff use digital technology effectively to support young people with their learning. For example, they use the visualiser to demonstrate teaching points. In some subject areas, technology is an integral element of the course. There remains scope to develop further its use to promote stimulating learning activities.
- Staff are developing a skills framework so that young people recognise and develop important skills for learning, life and work. Currently, most young people do not yet have a clear understanding of skills, such as creativity and problem-solving, that they are developing across the curriculum. Senior leaders and staff should now continue with their plans to embed a metaskills programme so that young people can develop and apply these skills across all curricular areas.
- Most teachers make effective use of a range of assessment strategies across the broad general education (BGE). They use both summative and formative approaches. Most teachers provide regular, constructive feedback to young people in a variety of verbal, written and digital ways. This helps the majority of young people to identify their strengths in learning. The majority of young people in the senior phase benefit from well-designed peer- and self-assessment opportunities. This includes, for example, senior phase learners effectively applying Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) assessment criteria to evaluate peers' responses to model questions. Senior and middle leaders should continue to further develop teachers' understanding of analysing and using assessment information to inform the planning of learning, teaching and assessment.
- Across all departments, young people benefit from regular and purposeful learner conversations that help them recognise their strengths in learning. While most young people articulate the level at which they are working, they require greater clarity on the specific actions needed to progress further. Senior leaders should now promote further effective practice to ensure a more consistent and impactful whole school approach to learner conversations.
- All staff have engaged in BGE moderation activities with local authority colleagues through the small school collaborative, which is strengthening teachers' confidence in making reliable judgements about young people's attainment. Most staff are beginning to use the moderation cycle to inform planning for learning, teaching and assessment. Teachers would benefit from increased opportunities to moderate with colleagues from associated primary schools to support progression across curriculum areas.
- Most staff plan learning in the BGE and senior phase using national guidance. They plan courses and programmes of learning well in the BGE using national benchmarks. Senior leaders

recognise that teachers now need to plan greater levels of challenge for young people. In the senior phase, the majority of staff, across all faculties, undertake SQA roles. They use their learning from being SQA appointees or attending events to plan learning to prepare young people well for SQA examinations. Staff would benefit from more collaboration with colleagues in other schools to further strengthen confidence in assessment judgements in the senior phase.

- Senior leaders have strengthened processes to track and monitor young people's progress and attainment. Staff are using this information well to identify young people who are not on track and to inform targeted interventions. Teachers are becoming increasingly confident using information from tracking to inform classroom practice and next steps for learners.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The school's curriculum rationale informs the approaches to planning appropriate and flexible programmes of learning. This helps to reflect learners' needs, interests, aspirations and future career intentions. In the BGE, learning is planned across all curriculum areas. In the senior phase, young people engage in more focused areas of study. Young people's experiences are enhanced through planned opportunities for wider achievement and learning experiences beyond the school.
- In collaboration with associated cluster primary schools, teachers deliver a recently refreshed programme of induction. Enhanced transition arrangements successfully support identified young people likely to face challenges in transferring from primary to secondary. Departments should now look to develop stronger curriculum links to bring greater coherence and continuity to young people's learning as they move from primary to secondary.
- Most young people feel that they receive appropriate advice and support in making choices about subjects. Young people personalise their courses of study for the final year of the BGE with five elective options in addition to English and mathematics. Most S4 learners continue to follow seven courses of study, with five planned course options in S5 and S6. Senior leaders should continue to review the curriculum for S3 to ensure that all young people can receive their full entitlements to learning at the appropriate levels across all curriculum areas.
- Senior leaders are extending the range of curricular options to increase engagement and raise the attainment of targeted senior phase learners. A wide range of partners provide appropriate well-planned learning opportunities, which is creating more flexible learning pathways to support progression and improve attainment. This is leading to an increase in the range of courses available including National Progression Awards, Foundation Apprenticeships and other qualifications. Work placements, career focused events and increased leadership opportunities are empowering young people and broadening their horizons. This supports their personal development.
- Targeted young people benefit from individual support which helps address barriers to participation and develop resilience to help them engage more. This helps them to improve attendance and develop skills for learning, life and work. These interventions are improving resilience, wellbeing and supporting young people with their learning. An increasing number of young people are supported to gain accreditation at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 3-7. Joint planning, monitoring and self-evaluation between school staff and partners will emphasise the link between planned pathways and improved outcomes.
- Senior leaders and staff should keep under review progression pathways to enable all learners to build on earlier success and pursue appropriate advanced study within school or in partnership with other providers. The curriculum offer is enriched with opportunities for wider achievement, which include vocational qualifications; the Duke of Edinburgh's Award; sports leadership; first aid and community volunteering. Experiences beyond the classroom bring added breadth to young people's learning. Examples include the sport related Set for Success programme; participation in dance competitions, school visits and DYW related activities.

- The majority of staff display a good understanding of DYW priorities across the school. While there are some examples of DYW principles being introduced in curriculum planning, this is not consistent across all departments. Recently appointed senior phase DYW Ambassadors assisted in the organisation of the Careers Fayre; however, these appointments are at too early a stage to measure impact.
- Careers education features within personal, social and health education (PSHE) and is supported well by referral and specialist support. While the PSHE programme provides opportunities for developing an awareness of careers, career management skills or meta-skills are not integrated across subjects. The Career Education Standard (CES) is not routinely embedded within the curriculum. Most young people are not fully aware of their entitlements and cannot articulate the career management skills they are developing.
- Young people receive their entitlement to planned programmes of physical education and modern languages in line with national guidance. Senior leaders should review the delivery of Religious and Moral education to ensure that it complies fully with statutory guidance. Senior leaders recognise that strategies for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing as a responsibility of all require further development.
- The library has been reconfigured as a teaching and social resource. Two breakout areas, one with some leisure reading materials, are available to young people in the senior phase for private study.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Senior leaders identified the need to strengthen parental engagement. They have sought parental feedback and improved successfully the range of methods to communicate the work of the school to parents. These include emails, social media posts, an updated website, and a well-received monthly newsletter. As a result, parental engagement is increasing, and most parents report that communication is improving. They report being better informed about their child's experience, particularly in celebrating their success. A few parents would like more regular and detailed information about their child's progress in learning. Most parents report that they engage well with the school and feel that staff are approachable and helpful.
- Senior leaders have increased opportunities to gather the views of parents regarding school initiatives and developments. Staff should continue to develop their approaches to inform more effectively the majority of parents who are unclear how the school takes their views into account.
- The very active Parent Council (PC) is highly regarded by staff and parents. The PC supports the school well in the development of policies and by helping to identify school improvement priorities. They also organise well-considered events for the wider parent forum.

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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

satisfactory

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's wellbeing lies at the heart of the work of the school. Almost all staff and young people experience positive and trusting relationship. The school's values of community, ambition, respect, equity, and success (CARES) are supporting a strong sense of belonging to the school and the community. Most young people report that staff treat them fairly and with respect. They value having staff they can contact for support to address successfully their wellbeing concerns. As planned, senior leaders should continue to work with the school community and cluster schools to link the school values more directly to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) charter.
- Staff understand and are responsive to the context of the school and the health and wellbeing needs of the community. They make good use of local intelligence through partners such as the Campus Police Officer, School Nurse, Family Engagement Support Assistant and virtual school. This enables staff to adapt and shape the health and wellbeing provision to better support all young people in understanding their wellbeing needs. The effective work of school partners is securing better outcomes for identified groups of young people. Partners praise the school for its relentless approaches to supporting the wellbeing of all pupils.
- Almost all young people feel safe and most young people feel respected and included in school. This is helped by, for example, staff meeting and greeting classes and the visibility of staff around the school. The majority of young people and their parents express positive views about the support they receive to encourage and improve wellbeing.
- Staff are beginning to gather data about young people's wellbeing through pupil surveys. The surveys are providing a useful initial broad baseline in relation to young people's wellbeing. However, this is at an early stage, and it is too early to evaluate the full impact of this work. Young people have a limited understanding of wellbeing indicators and their progress against these. Senior leaders need to support young people better across the school to develop their use of the language of wellbeing. This will enable young people to understand better the relevance of wellbeing to their daily lives and how this supports their personal development.
- The PSHE does not include clear and progressive learning across the BGE and into the senior phase. As a result, there are gaps in their learning. Young people in the senior phase would welcome greater input to the review of PSHE to ensure topics are consistently relevant to their needs and offer them progression and depth in their learning. Pupil support staff should continue with plans to update and refresh the PSHE programme with young people.

- Most staff across the school have a clear knowledge and understanding of statutory duties relating to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. They demonstrate a strong and caring commitment to getting it right for every child. They use a variety of well-planned, universal, additional and intensive strategies to support young people well. These include wellbeing groups, literacy and numeracy groups, attendance recovery groups, real time music, and virtual school. Young people who access these supports experience learning that is targeted to their needs. This supports them well in developing important life skills. Senior leaders should continue to evaluate the impact of these supports alongside how they monitor the progress of these young people.
- All staff within the school are aware of and fulfil well their responsibilities in relation to child protection and their role in supporting the wellbeing and needs of young people. They attend appropriate training and have opportunities for regular updates about child protection and safeguarding.
- Almost all staff are aware of the needs of individual young people in their classes through the detailed and well-established database. Staff find this information helpful, accessible and comment that it supports them well to plan learning, teaching and assessment for individual young people. Staff use this information to understand learners' needs within their class. Senior leaders and support for learning staff have developed highly effective processes using the request for assistance function to better identify young people requiring assessment for an additional support need. This ensures that young people who require support are identified early, with their needs being met.
- Senior leaders, in collaboration with pupil support and support for learning staff have developed robust processes for the creation and review of support plans. However, this is at an early stage of development. As planned, pupil support and support for learning staff need to improve the quality of the information shared as there are currently inconsistencies in young people's targets. Young people would benefit from more specific, and relevant targets. Senior leaders need to develop, at pace, rigorous and robust processes to measure the impact of the plans to improve confidence that planning is supporting improvements for young people with additional support needs.
- Improving attendance is an area of focused attention for all staff. They are actively promoting positive attendance with all young people. Most young people have a clear understanding of the impact of attendance on their progress. Senior leaders and pupil support staff have developed rigorous systems to monitor and track young people's attendance. Staff are working very well with a range of external partners to support young people and their families in addressing this issue. Using a range of carefully planned strategies, the overall attendance is improving year-on-year. This is moving at pace towards local and national measures.
- A strength in the school's work is the well-planned and effective support for care-experienced young people (CEYP). All CEYP are appropriately considered for a coordinated support plan. Senior leaders and pupil support staff track rigorously the progress and attendance of these young people and use this information to inform successful interventions. These young people are supported very well by school staff and the virtual school provision. Young people speak positively about their relationships with key adults in the school. Senior leaders and pupil support staff discuss progress in learning for individual care experienced young people during

regular planned meetings. As a result, young people's attendance and attainment has improved. The Promise Award has strengthened the school's commitment to supporting CEYP.

- 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. Several areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.
- Senior leaders have focused successfully on reducing exclusions. As a result of a range of well-planned activities the number of exclusions in the most recent year, 2024/25, is low and shows a significant decline from previous years. Alternatives to exclusion have an inclusive orientation. Plans for individual young people include strong links and routes back into mainstream classes, and the necessary support to make this a success. The approaches adopted to support young people focus strongly on equipping them with the necessary skills and attainment. Senior leaders should continue to review and monitor the use of flexible timetables, particularly for those young people who have been previously excluded.
- Young people's understanding of diversity, prejudice and discrimination is not well developed. The school should ensure that all young people have a sound awareness and understanding of equality. All staff need to focus on developing a greater range of planned opportunities for young people to learn about the importance of recognising and celebrating diversity across the school.
- Senior leaders have developed systems to monitor bullying across the school. As a result, a majority of young people agree that the school responds well to the few incidents of bullying. Most young people report that discriminatory or bullying behaviour is addressed effectively by senior leaders and staff. Senior leaders should proceed with plans to consider carefully a shared understanding of bullying to support consistency and accuracy in recording incidents of bullying.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

weak

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

In September 2024 the school reported 34.2% of pupils had additional support needs. Senior leaders reviewed how they identified young people's additional support needs. They strengthened processes and now report a more accurate percentage as 46% of young people requiring additional support with their learning. This is likely to have affected the virtual comparator (VC).

Senior leaders have introduced a range of effective strategies to support raising attainment at all levels. These include rigorous tracking of all young people at whole school and department level, well-considered interventions, aspirational targets and coursing and increased presentations. There are indications of improvement, but these are at an early stage and yet to impact fully on attainment. This is already impacting on improving attainment for young people where staff have identified gaps.

Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

BGE

- In 2023/24, by the end of S3, most young people achieved Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) third level in literacy and numeracy. In 2023/24, a minority of young people achieved CfE fourth level in literacy and a majority of young people achieved CfE fourth level in numeracy.
- By the end of S3, a majority of young people who require additional support with their learning achieved CfE third level in literacy with a minority of young people achieving CfE third level in numeracy. Senior leaders have worked well with middle leaders and staff to ensure that young people requiring support with their learning have aspirational, measurable targets, support plans, tracking and interventions where appropriate. As a result, whole-school tracking shows that the attainment of young people with additional support needs is beginning to improve.
- Senior leaders have identified correctly that a few aspects of BGE literacy and numeracy have declined, and they have introduced a range of well-planned strategies. This includes targeted interventions and an additional period in S1 where literacy and numeracy skills are developed. They have introduced a robust new tracking system, regularly monitored by staff. This is identifying successfully young people at risk of not achieving so that early intervention is provided. This session's data shows that the attainment of this group of young people is improving.
- Staff, through increased moderation activities within and outwith the school, continue to strengthen their judgements about young people's achievement of a CfE level for literacy and

numeracy. As a result, the school's current tracking data shows positive signs of improvement in attainment in literacy and numeracy at CfE third and fourth level.

Senior Phase

Literacy – Leavers

- In 2022/23 and 2023/24, most young people who left school achieved SCQF level 5 or better in literacy, in line with the VC. In 2023/24, a minority of young people who left school achieved SCQF level 6 in literacy. This is in line with the VC and shows a three-year pattern of improvement.

Cohorts

- Staff identified a dip in young people's attainment previously at S4. As a result of very successful targeted improvements, in 2024/25, such as support with attendance, targeted study sessions and mentoring, most young people achieved SCQF level 5 or better in literacy, significantly higher than the VC. This has increased on a majority achieving this in 2023/24 and the percentage of young people achieving at this level is at its highest level in the five-year period between 2020/21 and 2024/25. By S5, based on the S5 roll, in 2023/24 and 2024/25, a majority of young people achieved SCQF level 6 in literacy. This is in line with the VC and had improved in the preceding years where a minority achieved at this level. By S6, based on S6, almost all young people achieved SCQF level 5 or better in literacy in four of the last five years, in line with the VC. Between 2022/23 and 2024/25, most young people achieved SCQF level 6 in literacy. This is in line with the VC and an improvement from a majority of young people achieving this previously in 2021/22. Young people are making progress in literacy as they move through the school from S4 to S5 and S6.

ASN

- From 2020/21 to 2023/24, a majority of young people with additional support needs left school with SCQF level 5 or better in literacy. In 2023/24, a minority of young people left school with SCQF level 6 in literacy, comparable with the VC.

Numeracy – Leavers

- From 2019/20 to 2023/24, a majority of young people who left school achieved SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy. In 2020/21 and 2023/24, a minority of young people who left school achieved SCQF level 6 numeracy. Staff have maintained stable levels of performance in line with the VC for SCQF level 5 and 6.

Cohorts

- In S4, between 2020/21 and 2024/25, a majority of young people achieved SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy, in line with the VC. By S5, based on S5, between 2020/21 and 2024/25, a few young people achieved SCQF level 6 in numeracy. By S6, based on S6, between 2020/21 and 2024/25, a minority of young people achieved SCQF level 6 in numeracy. Performance for SCQF level 6 by S5 and S6 was in line with the VC until 2024/25 when it decreased to being significantly lower, or significantly much lower, than the VC. Senior leaders and staff have introduced stronger monitoring systems which are already identifying young people who are being supported more effectively this session. Young people are making progress in numeracy as they move through the school, particularly from S5 and S6.

ASN

- From 2019/20 to 2023/24, in four of the five years, a minority of young people with additional support needs left school with SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy, having previously been most young people in 2022/23. In 2023/24, a few young people left school with SCQF level 6 in numeracy. Staff have introduced literacy and numeracy interventions and robust planning processes to monitor and support young people's progress in learning. As a result, this measure is improving.

National Qualifications

- In 2024/25, the percentage of young people presented for National 5 (N5) and Higher English reflects the national average. The percentage of young people who achieved a grade A to C was below the national average for N5 and in line with national levels for Higher.
- In 2024/25, the percentage of young people presented for N5 Applications of Mathematics was above the national average. A majority of young people achieved grade A to C. In 2024/25, the percentage of young people presented for N5 and Higher Mathematics was below the national average. The percentage of young people who achieved a grade A to C was below national levels at national 5 and broadly similar to the national average for Higher. A majority of young people presented for Higher Mathematics achieved grade A to C. The percentage of young people presented for both N4 and N5 mathematics in the same year was above the national average. Senior leaders should continue, as planned, to increase the number of presentations in mathematics.

Attainment over time

BGE

- Senior leaders provided data which showed most young people achieve CfE third level by the end of S3 in a minority of curricular areas. Staff acknowledged the need to improve their confidence in making judgements about young people's achievement of CfE fourth level. They are supporting staff well through targeted moderation work which is improving their confidence and the reliability of assessment judgments.

Senior Phase

Improving attainment for all

- Senior leaders have introduced successful strategies to raise attainment at all levels. They have introduced recently a range of strategies designed to support young people's attainment. This includes, for example, a robust tracking and monitoring system to improve attendance and attainment. Middle leaders are beginning to use this data to identify young people who are not making appropriate progress and are supporting them to attain appropriately. This includes, for example, how they are identifying and supporting carefully young people who are at risk of leaving school with no qualifications who are not sustaining regular attendance at school. Senior leaders provided evidence that these interventions are improving attainment for this identified group of young people.

Leavers

- Attainment for the lowest attaining 20% of young people in 2023/24 is in line with the VC. This is an increase on the last two years when attainment for this group was significantly lower or much lower than the VC. In 2022/23 and 2023/24, the attainment of the middle 60% attaining young people was in line the VC and demonstrating a three-year pattern of improvement. In

2022/23 and 2023/24, the attainment of the highest attaining 20% of young people was significantly lower than the VC, having been previously in line.

Cohorts

- In S4, in 2024/25, the attainment of the lowest attaining 20% and middle attaining 60% of young people is significantly lower than the VC, although this is showing an increase from 2023/24 levels. In 2024/25, the attainment of the highest attaining 20% of young people is significantly lower than the VC and is declining.
- In S5, based on S5, in 2024/25 the attainment of the lowest attaining 20% and middle attaining 60%, is significantly much lower than the VC. Performance at these levels is either significantly lower or much lower than the VC for four out of the five years between 2020/21 and 2024/25. The attainment of the highest attaining 20% is significantly lower than the VC in two out of the three years from 2022/23 to 2024/25 but shows an increase from 2023/24 levels. Senior leaders have correctly identified, as a priority, raising attainment at S5 and are providing appropriate, targeted interventions.
- By S6, based on S6, in 2023/24 and 2024/25 the attainment of the lowest attaining 20% of young people is in line with the VC. There is a pattern of improvement over the last four years. In 2023/24 and 2024/25, the attainment of the middle attaining 60% of young people is in line with the VC. In 2024/25, the attainment of the highest attaining 20% of young people is significantly lower than the VC.
- A minority of young people in S4 were presented at both National 4 and National 5 levels in the same year in one or two subject areas. This was above the VC.

ASN

- When compared using average complementary tariff scores, young people who required additional support with their learning leaving school between 2019/20 to 2023/24 attain broadly in line with the VC. Attainment for those attaining in the lowest 20%, middle 60%, and highest 20% is increasing, having been declining from 2020/21.

Breadth and depth

- Senior leaders correctly identified the need to improve presentation rates and the quality of passes across the curriculum. They have worked well with middle leaders and staff to increase pathways, improve coursing, set aspirational targets with young people and provide ongoing supports and interventions to improve course completions. Senior leaders provided recent tracking showing increased presentations and predicting improved attainment across all levels. They should, as planned, continue to work with staff to raise attainment at all levels. This includes improving the quality of passes at SCQF level 5 in most subject areas.
- In S4, between 2020/21 and 2024/25, the majority of young people attained three or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better, in line with the VC and an increase from 2023/24 levels. A minority of young people achieved five or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better, significantly lower than the VC and a decrease on previous years. In 2024/25, a minority of young people achieved one or more awards at SCQF level 5A, significantly lower than the VC. Awards at SCQF level 5A are generally significantly lower or much lower than the VC.

- By S5, based on S5, in 2024/25 a minority of young people achieved five or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better, in line with the VC. In 2024/25 a minority of young people achieved three or more to five or more awards at level 5A or better, in line with the VC. By S5, based on S5, in 2024/25 a minority of young people achieved one or more to three or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better, significantly lower than the VC. In 2024/25, a minority of young people achieved one or more awards at SCQF level 6A or better, in line with the VC.
- By S6, based on S6, in 2024/25, most young people achieved five or more awards at SCQF level 5C, in line with the VC and showing a three-year pattern of improvement. By S6, based on S6, a minority achieved five or more awards at SCQF level 5A, in line with the VC. By S6, based on S6, most young people achieved one or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better in four of the last five years, in line with the VC. This shows a pattern of improvement over the last four years. Performance of young people at SCQF level 6C or better for three or more and five or more awards has decreased in the latest year of data, 2024/25 and is significantly much lower than the VC. In 2024/25, a few young people achieved one or more awards at SCQF level 7C or better, significantly much lower than the VC.
- By S5 and S6, young people gain an increasing number of awards beyond NQs and Skills for Work courses. Senior leaders are developing a range of curricular pathways. For example, a few young people gain awards at SCQF level 7 Scottish Football Association refereeing, level 6 customer service, level 6 leadership and a range of Foundation Apprenticeships. These are adding value for young people whose needs are better met through this increased range of pathways.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- A majority of young people are engaging well in a wide range of achievement activities across the curriculum and with support from community partners. Young people display confidence, responsibility and actively contribute to the life and ethos of the school and wider community. They are building important life skills and progressing interests outwith the classroom and in the wider community. A few young people are achieving regional and national success in music and sport. Senior leaders and staff are increasing successfully the number of young people gaining accredited awards at SCQF levels 3 to 6, such as first aid, hobbies and interests, and Dynamic Youth Awards. Senior leaders and staff should continue to maximise opportunities for young people to gain further accreditation.
- Most young people in the senior phase are developing valuable leadership skills through their roles as house captains, prefects, sport leaders or mental health ambassadors. A few young people develop important skills for learning, life and work through the design and leadership of the Future Fridays sessions for their peers. A few young people in S1-3 enjoy taking on leadership roles including pupil council and dance leaders. Young people talk confidently about the benefits of volunteering and leadership, such as increased confidence and resilience. They are using their skills and knowledge well to contribute to whole school initiatives, including wellbeing boxes to support mental health. A few sports ambassadors led the recent Active Girls Day, which helped to break down barriers in sport and encourage girls to be more active more often.
- Senior leaders have recently established a robust system to track young people's achievement across the school and with partners. They make effective use of attainment data to track young people at risk of missing out or non-completion. For example, partnership work with

community learning and development practitioners has enabled young people to increase participation and make progress with Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Senior leaders and key staff should continue to embed their planned priorities for young people's achievement and link this to skills for learning, life and work.

- Staff celebrate young people's achievements and success in and out of school through house points, social media, monthly newsletters and pupil of the month displays for academic success. House assemblies include a spotlight on young people who have positively demonstrated school values. Young people and families value greatly the celebration events for sporting achievement and an annual awards ceremony for academic achievement across all year groups. This is motivating a greater number of young people to achieve further.

Equity for all learners

- A few young people live in SIMD 1. In 2023/24, young people leaving school and living in SIMD deciles 2, 3, 6 and 8 performed in line with the national figures. Staff are now working closely with young people who reside in the least affluent deciles, providing targeted support, to enable them to leave school with a range of awards, including in literacy and numeracy. This is improving the attainment of the few young people supported through these initiatives.
- Senior leaders have introduced robust new systems to track and improve attendance. As a result, attendance has increased since 2022/23 and by 4.5% in the latest session to 86.7%.
- Senior leaders have used PEF well to support young people's engagement and attainment. PEF is allocated mainly to a range of staffing posts including numeracy, support for learning, inclusion, nurture and engagement. Senior leaders work well with appointed middle leaders to effectively track and identify young people at risk of leaving school with no awards. They support them to access their learning in school, in the community or through home visits. As a result, an increasing number of young people are leaving school with a greater range of appropriate qualifications.
- Staff have well-considered approaches to reducing the cost of the school day for young people as almost all have a thorough awareness of the social and economic context of their community. Staff ensure that all learners have access to school activities including the optional Future Friday activities. Young people are provided with resources to participate well in all aspects of school life. This includes breakfast provision which ensures young people have a positive start to their day. Young people agree that these approaches enable them to be fully included in the life of the school.
- Young people have taken a lead as 'fundraising ambassadors' contributing to initiatives that support equity. These include 'the little shop of happiness', where young people access uniform items, new and pre-loved clothing and hygiene products. Senior leaders also remove financial barriers to school trips by providing funding for identified young people. This is impacting positively on the attainment of young people who face socio-economic disadvantage. The attainment and achievement outcomes of targeted groups of young people are improving.
- Senior leaders have identified correctly that aspects of the attainment of young people who face socio-economic disadvantage requires improvement. They provided data from this session's tracking information which shows increases in the attainment for a substantial

number of young people. Senior leaders should continue to use a range of data to evidence the closing of the poverty-related attainment gap in line with national expectations.

- Staff work very well with a range of partners through regular 16 -plus meetings to identify and support young people at risk of leaving school without a positive destination. This has improved the number of young people who progress to a positive destination on leaving school. In 2022/23 and 2023/24, almost all young people moved on to a positive destination, in line with the VC. This was an increase over the last three years. A majority of young people go to higher education or other positive destinations on leaving school, an increase on the previous session.

Practice worth sharing more widely

School staff are collaborating effectively with one of their partners to review and enhance the offering for young people. This is allowing young people to progress in their vocational area and to further develop their skills for employment.

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.