

Summarised inspection findings

Loretto School

Independent

23 June 2026

Key contextual information

School name: Loretto School

Independent

SEED number: 5582334

Roll: 385

Loretto School is an independent, co-educational school for children and young people aged three to 18. At the time of inspection, there were 385 pupils. The nursery was not part of the inspection.

Loretto Junior School has 89 pupils in Years 1 to 7 (Y1 to Y7). Almost all junior school children are day pupils. Loretto Senior School has 296 pupils in Form 2 to Upper 6th. A majority of young people in the senior school are boarders.

At the time of the inspection, the Head of Loretto School had been in post for 18 months. An experienced Board of Governors works with the Head to develop the strategic direction for the school.

1.3 Leadership of change

very good

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

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

- Loretto School is a welcoming and nurturing school where children and young people are encouraged and supported to achieve and thrive. The Head is highly respected across the community. He is a compassionate and highly effective leader who provides clear strategic direction to staff. His ambition is for all children and young people to reach their full potential. He is well supported by the senior leadership team in the junior and senior schools.
- The Head led stakeholders through a review of the school's values and aims. The school community identified the values of kindness, integrity, loyalty and tenacity (KILT) as those that best represent it. Children and young people demonstrate these values very well in their day-to-day interactions with each other and with staff. The language of the values is used well by staff to support children and young people to give of their best. As a result, learning takes place in calm and nurturing environments.
- The Head is a highly visible member of the community. He introduced regular 'drop in Fridays' and 'Head Talks' to encourage parents to meet with him in an informal way. His open-door approach is valued by parents and staff. Most parents and staff feel that they are listened to and their ideas are valued. Parents trust that he has a clear focus on finding solutions for any potential issues. Most staff feel empowered to discuss their ideas for improving outcomes for children and young people.
- The senior deputy head and head of junior school provide very strong strategic leadership. They support colleagues well to carry out remits and responsibilities. The head of operations provides strong support and leadership in all aspects of her role. When he took up post, the Head introduced a five-year overview plan for school improvement. From this, there is an annual Whole School Development Plan (WSDP) to ensure priorities are addressed at a manageable pace. The five-year overview also provides clear guidance on steps needed for each of the five years. Senior leaders in the junior school mirror the whole school development priorities in the Junior School Plan. In the senior school, middle leaders work with department colleagues to create Department Development Plans (DDPs). Whilst these also mirror the WSDP, there is some variability in the quality of DDPs. Senior leaders should consider how to share best practice across all subject areas. This should lead to improvements in key areas such as learning and teaching across the school.
- The Board of Governors works closely with senior leaders in all aspects of running the school. They provide clear and valuable support to senior leaders as well as providing challenge to all staff to be ambitious for all children and young people. Board members have roles that reflect

their own areas of expertise and knowledge. Their clear focus on safeguarding, education, developing the school's links with the community and financial management are reflected in the whole school improvement strategy. All members of the Board undertake regular safeguarding training. The Chair of the Board of Governors has been closely linked with the school over a significant period of time. He is passionate for Loretto School and maintains a clear focus on striving for the very best for all children and young people.

- The leadership team has a clear strategic approach to whole school improvement. They skilfully identify key areas of strength and priorities for development. In most departments improvement priorities are closely aligned with whole school priorities. Middle leaders work with colleagues to identify key priorities and who is best placed to lead on aspects of department improvement. Well planned discussions with staff, as part of regular professional review, identify those best placed to lead on areas for improvement. Senior leaders have introduced several important and well-chosen changes in recent years. These include reconfiguring the pastoral house system and carrying out an audit of the curriculum. Whilst this has been challenging for staff, the pace of change has been very well managed. Staff are fully supportive of the changes that have been made in recent years and trust the judgement of senior leaders. Senior leaders include progress updates on school improvements at Board meetings. This strengthens the oversight the Board of Governors have on school improvement as it provides another level of quality assurance on progress for key development priorities.
- Senior leaders skilfully identify staff best suited to a wide range of leadership activities. Staff feel they are encouraged and well supported to take on additional responsibilities. Through the professional review and development process, staff are also encouraged to look beyond Loretto School for development and training opportunities. Senior leaders model well a very strong collegiate ethos to leading change. Children and young people benefit from staff working collaboratively to improve experiences and outcomes for them. Staff demonstrate clear commitment to providing children and young people with knowledge and skills for learning, life and work.
- Children and young people across older year groups develop their leadership skills in a wide variety of roles. Children in the junior school have opportunities such as reading leaders, pupil council members and captaincy leads as head and depute head nippers. Through these roles children are developing their strong leadership and communication skills. Young people in the senior school have a wide variety of leadership opportunities in committees and organisations such as the pupil council and the food and uniform committees. Through these organisations they confidently reflect the views and ideas of their peers. Young people in the upper stages can be elected to roles of responsibility such as prefects, head boy and head girl and depute head boy and depute head girl of the school. An integral part of these roles is to welcome visitors to the school. They do this with skill and warmth, speaking about the school and the benefits of being part of the Loretto family. Senior leaders meet regularly with school captains to share ideas and plans for ways to improve young people's experiences in school. These meetings are robust and young people value the high level of discourse they have with senior leaders. As planned, it will be helpful to include regular feedback to children and young people to understand the impact of their suggestions. This will also support the development of a more strategic approach to wellbeing.
- Both junior and senior schools have a Parent Forum. Senior leaders work well and productively with both organisations to support the work of the school. Members of the Forum welcome the

sharing of school improvement priorities and helpful information regarding the strategic direction of the school. Senior leaders should consider how they could develop these positive relationships and consult with parents at an earlier stage of school improvement planning. Senior leaders have very strong and productive partnerships with former pupils through the Lorettonian Society. These links support current pupils through activities such as keynote speakers and their support of fundraising projects. Former pupils are also supported through projects like the Loretto Legacy Lab. By maintaining links with former pupils, senior leaders are strengthening their belief that children and young people will always be part of the Loretto community.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

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

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

Junior and Senior School

- The school ethos of mind, body, spirit underpins the classroom environment across the whole school. Children and young people benefit from a calm, purposeful and nurturing ethos that supports their learning very well. Staff have developed strong caring relationships with children and young people. They value the support with their learning, both within and outside the classroom. Teachers set consistently high expectations for learning and for behaviour, based on the KILT values, which almost all children and young people respond to very well. Where necessary, staff sensitively and effectively support children and young people to manage their emotions and to reengage with their learning quickly. Children and young people are proud Lorettonians who enjoy their school and the opportunities it brings.

Junior School

- All teachers create highly inclusive learning environments that are designed to meet the needs of learners. Senior leaders and staff have a very good understanding of children's individual needs and use this knowledge effectively to plan learning and teaching. Support for learning teachers and school assistants provide well-timed and bespoke support for children who require help with their learning and development. This helps to ensure that teachers meet children's needs very well and that resources and learning spaces are used thoughtfully and effectively. For example, the 'calm corridors' encourage adults and children alike to respect the quiet learning spaces for children who prefer a low-stimulus environment.
- Across the junior school, almost all children respond very well to varied contexts for learning. They work very well on individual tasks and enjoy regular opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups. At all stages, children benefit from the input of a range of subject specialist teachers, and this increases for children in Y7. Overall, children cope very well with the various transitions in learning across the school week. Staff make the most of the local area and the extensive school grounds to enhance children's learning experiences. All children in the junior school benefit from high-quality outdoor learning, including using the nearby forest for such activities. These well-planned experiences support children's wellbeing and creativity very well.
- Senior leaders and staff have worked together to create helpful guidance on effective learning and teaching approaches and expected standards in the junior school. This supports staff to provide consistently high-quality learning experiences for children. This school session, children in the pupil council have worked with staff to share their views on topics such as what successful

learning and teaching looks like. Teachers are benefiting from observing each other's lessons and sharing good practice.

- Recently, all staff have had a focus on implementing effective teaching strategies to meet the varied needs of children requiring additional support. As a result, in almost all lessons, teachers match interesting and relevant learning tasks very well to the needs and abilities of children. Almost all children show high levels of motivation and all children try their best in lessons and out of class activities. Across the stages, teachers devise creative learning activities, including home learning challenges, where children can exercise personalisation and choice. Teachers regularly ask children what they would like to learn, and how they would like to go about it. Almost all children respond very well to the varied opportunities for taking increasing responsibility for their own learning.
- All teachers use interactive whiteboards and digital technology to support and enhance learning. Across the junior school, all children use digital technologies very confidently as a natural part of learning. From Y5, children have their own digital devices. They access a wide range of digital tools and applications to support and extend their learning. This includes coding, word processing, making presentations and creating animations and videos.
- Staff share the purpose of learning consistently very well in almost all lessons. They support children skilfully to make connections with their prior learning and real-life contexts. Staff have agreed approaches to supporting children to understand how and when they have been successful in learning. Across the junior school, teachers develop these ideas in each lesson, and increasingly, they work collaboratively with children to co-create these steps to success. Children set targets for aspects of their work. They regularly assess their own work using agreed criteria and increasingly give critical feedback on the work of their peers. Children, at all levels, talk confidently about their learning and what they can do to achieve success and improve further.
- Almost all teachers provide clear explanations and instructions, using high quality questioning to extend children's learning and promote higher-order thinking. In almost all lessons, teachers give high quality verbal feedback during lessons, and written comments in children's work. This helps to support and accelerate children's progress and their understanding of their next steps across the curriculum.
- Teachers use a wide range of formative and summative assessment approaches very effectively to check on children's progress. They use a range of diagnostic, summative and standardised assessments well to gather information about children's learning and development. Senior leaders and staff analyse data from these assessments very well to support teachers' professional judgements about children's attainment and progress. Teachers use assessments well to understand children's levels of attainment. This supports them to plan appropriately for each child's next steps in learning.
- Senior leaders have developed robust tracking and monitoring systems. They meet with teachers each term to discuss each child's progress across all curricular areas, and in particular, for literacy and numeracy. Together, they analyse assessment data very well to identify any potential gaps and barriers to individual children's learning, or where more challenge may be required. They plan a range of appropriate interventions for children who require additional support. This includes individual learning plans with short term, measurable targets which are reviewed regularly with parents and children. This allows teachers and senior

leaders to track children's progress towards their targets effectively. Teachers and support for learning staff work collaboratively throughout the year to review interventions and supports in place. They are responsive to ensure interventions are adapted and flexible to effectively meet children's needs.

Senior School

- In most classes, young people are engaged and focus well on their learning. In most lessons, teachers build appropriately on prior learning. This supports continuity and progression for most young people. In most classes, teachers create a variety of activities, where young people work well as individuals and collaboratively in groups. Young people encourage and support each other well during such learning activities. In almost all lessons, teachers' instructions and explanations are clear. Staff should continue to explore opportunities for learners to benefit from more personalisation and choice within lessons.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers design tasks and activities to meet the needs of young people. Staff should continue to develop their work in this area to ensure that young people can always access learning at the correct level, providing individual tasks and activities to match their needs. There is an opportunity to share best practice with junior school colleagues in this area. In a few lessons, the pace of learning is too slow. Teachers should consider how to increase the pace of learning to ensure it matches the needs of all young people. Teachers should look to adapt and develop their teaching methods to support the needs of the learner. This should help young people to be as successful as possible in all aspects of their learning.
- Teachers are encouraged by middle and senior leaders to develop links that support young people to understand how learning links with the world beyond school. They arrange educational visits and speakers from industry into the classroom. Teachers also engaged young people well in learning for sustainability. These activities enrich learning experiences for young people.
- Staff are at an early stage of implementing the Loretto Senior School Academic Plan. This has been created to support teachers to have a shared understanding of high-quality learning and teaching. Teachers have engaged positively in whole-school professional learning focused on learning and teaching. Senior and middle leaders should consider how the outcomes of lesson observation programmes can be shared with teachers. This should further support their plans to develop a strategic approach to ensure high-quality learning and teaching across the curriculum.
- Across the school, almost all teachers make effective use of questioning for understanding and to check for prior learning. The majority of the teachers are skilled in using questioning to deepen young people's thinking about topics. There is scope for teachers to consider how best to develop collaborative learning approaches.
- In almost all lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning and how young people can be successful in their learning. In the best examples, teachers distinguish how success looks for individual learners and so provide appropriate challenge.
- Almost all young people participate in one of the many co-curricular activities on offer, where they benefit from high quality instruction. Young people welcome the opportunities to develop skills in sports, music and working with the junior school pupils. From these activities, young

people develop a range of skills in confidence, leadership, respect and teamwork, preparing them for the world after school.

- Almost all teachers use digital technologies effectively to support and enhance learning experiences. They integrate technologies into classroom routines and lessons which effectively support learning. Most teachers use a range of online learning tools, including appropriate use of artificial intelligence, to engage young people in their learning beyond the classroom.
- Almost all teachers provide young people with supportive and constructive verbal feedback during learning activities. This feedback supports young people to reflect on their own learning. In 5th and 6th form, young people have started to develop academic action plans to allow them to reflect on mock exams and to support them to create study plans. Young people highly value their academic tutor time to look at their individual attainment and relevant skills development. Staff should develop a consistent approach to written feedback. This should then support young people to better understand their next steps in learning.
- In the senior school, staff use a range of effective summative and standardised assessments to inform progress in each subject. In senior classes this information is used well by senior leaders and tutors to work with young people to create academic plans to support the learning prior to exams. As planned, senior leaders should work to embed this across the senior school for all year groups. Across most departments, teachers collaborate with each other to ensure that there is a shared understanding of assessment levels. A few teachers participate in external exam sharing of good practice events. This is supporting teachers to have a shared understanding of national assessment levels.
- Most teachers make effective use of monitoring and tracking approaches. This supports them to understand where each young person is as regards progress in learning and attainment. In the best examples, teachers use this information well to plan and amend courses to meet the needs of all learners. As planned, senior leaders should continue to embed the new tracking system to provide a consistent overview of young people's progress across the school.

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, children and 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

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

- Staff, children and young people have worked together effectively to develop a very strong sense of community. The KILT values are very visible around the school and are especially evident in the interactions between members of the school community. Young people and children articulate these values confidently and relate them well to their daily experiences in school. Children and young people are very proud of their school traditions and have a strong sense of school identity. Almost all children and young people display very positive and highly respectful behaviour in class and around the school.
- In the junior school, almost all children say that they feel safe and well cared for by adults. Children who are new to the school feel that it is easy to make friends and that the school is very welcoming. At all stages of the junior school, children learn about aspects of health and wellbeing, such as healthy eating, internet safety and basic first aid, through lessons and at weekly assemblies. Children have a very good understanding of the national wellbeing indicators and can talk about a variety of ways to keep themselves safe and healthy.
- Most young people in the senior school say that they feel safe in school and that the school helps them to feel safe. In life skills classes, young people look at helpful strategies to support mental health and reframe negative thinking. A minority of young people feel school staff do not deal well with bullying. Senior leaders should continue to work with learners, staff and families to keep promoting a clear, shared understanding of the school's approaches to addressing bullying behaviours. Senior leaders have recently developed a very helpful behaviour policy which provides a strong and positive foundation for this work.
- Senior leaders restructured successfully the House system in the senior school to provide greater cohesion of experience for young people who are day pupils and those who board. This is fostering a stronger connection for young people with their peers. Young people are loyal to their Houses and benefit from the trusting relationships they build with staff and peers. Every young person in the senior school has a tutor whom they meet daily. This provides consistent support and guidance, which young people value. Most young people recognise they have a trusted adult to whom they can speak with when worried or upset.
- Children and young people benefit from the support of a wide range of staff with whom they work and interact. This includes teachers, House and medical staff and other staff across the school. Individual staff often work with learners in a range of different contexts, such as activities, workshops, games and tutor time. This engagement beyond the classroom

reinforces the development of strong relationships across the school community. Pastoral and support for learning staff meet weekly to consider the needs of individual children and young people who may need further support. Senior leaders participate in these meetings to review details of these learner meetings and staff communications and to discuss how best to support the wellbeing of individuals. As a result, this is helping to meet the needs of those young people well.

- Senior leaders promote clear referral procedures through a review of, and introduction of, a new digital management system. This provides effective routes for staff to raise any concerns regarding young people. As staff continue to develop their use of these systems to support learners, senior leaders should ensure that these systems support a clear overview of all aspects of young people's wellbeing. This should help senior leaders and staff to further understand trends and patterns in learners' wellbeing over time. Regular surveys of the views of young people would also help identify what issues most directly affect young people's wellbeing.
- Children and young people benefit from a very wide range of activities across the life of the school which support their wellbeing. They learn to be healthy and active through high quality physical education activities and outdoor experiences. Almost all children and young people agree that they have regular opportunities to exercise. There are events such as lunchtime musical performances which help young people develop their skills in a safe and supportive environment. The extensive range of sports and activities on offer supports children and young people to find areas where they experience success, building their confidence and helping them to lead healthy and active lives.
- Senior leaders understand their responsibilities in relation to statutory guidance. They should continue to engage with national guidance as they review and develop their policies and planning in relation to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. Staff in the senior school support for learning department are making effective use of the recently introduced planning documents to support young people who require additional support to make sound progress in their learning. This detailed and rigorous approach should be shared across the senior school.
- Staff in the junior school have very effective arrangements which have a very positive impact for children's wellbeing, equality and inclusion. They use these very well to address and support children who need additional support. Staff plan and deliver high-quality learning and teaching for all children, including those who need additional support. Those staff who have key responsibilities for leading support for learning work very well with staff to ensure that children receive tailored and bespoke support at the time they need this. As a junior staff team, they use monitoring and tracking systems and the information gathered very well to inform interventions. They have informative overviews of children's learning which they use very effectively to plan and deliver suitable lessons and activities which in turn meet individual and at times group needs. Support for learning staff provide helpful advice for others in terms of working alongside teachers and assistants in class but also when delivering any professional learning needs for staff.
- Children and young people across the school appreciate opportunities to learn about and celebrate equality and diversity. They have frequent opportunities to celebrate the school's multinational community. For example, high-profile events include national celebrations, religious festivals and international meals. Visiting speakers share important and diverse

experiences of life at assemblies and at Chapel. Senior leaders have worked well with staff and young people to improve the school community's understanding of neurodiversity and attention deficit hyperactivity disorders. As a result, young people learn more about each other and have the opportunity to have their own lives and backgrounds celebrated. School staff should continue to work with young people to ensure that an increasing range of diversity and difference is understood and forms part of practice in and beyond the classroom. Senior leaders should now ensure there is a strategic approach to support staff to develop further their own understanding of issues that impact on young people's experience of school life, for example gender equality.

- Staff have developed very well their approaches to supporting children, including those who require additional support, as they move into the junior school, as well as from the junior to the senior school. Learners who join the school during the school year at a range of stages feel warmly welcomed and very effectively supported to be part of school life. This includes a number of international students, who value how quickly they become an integral part of the life of Loretto 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

Attendance

- Overall, children and young people's attendance in the school is above national averages. The attendance of a few children and young people is less than 90%. Staff work constructively with families to help address this. School staff promote the importance and impact of high levels of attendance for children and young people's attainment and achievement. A few children and young people attend school on a part-time basis. Staff work well with parents and carers to create support plans including the use of online learning tools. These plans are helping children and young people engage more fully in their education.

Junior School

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is very good. Almost all attain very well in relation to expected national standards or individual targets. At early, first and second levels, most achieve expected national standards. A few children exceed these. Almost all children who need additional support attain individual targets very well.

Attainment in literacy and English

- In literacy and English, almost all children, including those with additional support needs, attain very well in listening, talking, reading and writing at early, first, and second national levels or individual targets.

Listening and talking

- Almost all children listen very well. At early, first and second levels almost all children discuss various topics with confidence and enthusiasm. Almost all are reflective and ask relevant questions during conversations. At the upper stages, almost all children are highly skilled in making speeches and delivering presentations to others. They put forward well thought out points of views, including when debating. They respond very well to challenges from others who have differing viewpoints.

Reading

- At all levels, almost all children are enthusiastic, articulate and fluent readers. They use their skills confidently for various purposes. At the early stages, most know letters and words. They read books and use different strategies very effectively when they come across new words. They enjoy predicting what might happen next in stories. At first and second levels, most

children use expression and grammar very well to engage and sustain the listeners' attention. They describe and set the scene ably for listeners. They state clearly why they have favourite authors and chosen particular books for personal reading and enjoyment. They respond well to different questions asked about different texts. A few children need to continue developing confidence when reading aloud in front of others.

Writing

- At all levels, almost all children are developing very effective skills in writing. They use grammar and punctuation very well when writing. At the early level, children write interesting sentences and short stories which they illustrate frequently with attractive drawings. At first and second levels, almost all children write very well for various purposes. By second level, almost all organise and present their pieces of writing with due care and attention. They use imagery appropriately, including when writing about different characters in stories. They set the scene and use engaging openings and conclusions. By P7, children write informative speeches and presentations. At first and second levels, a few children should continue to use more paragraphs to help improve the structure of extended pieces of work.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Across all levels, almost all children have very good attainment in numeracy and mathematics. They attain very well in number, money and measure, shape position and movement and information handling.

Number, money and measure

- Almost all children are developing or have very good skills in number, money and measure. At early, first and second levels, almost all add, subtract, multiply and divide with accuracy and confidence. They use these very well, for example when solving problems involving money and calculating change. At early level, children know different coin values. By the upper stages, most children know key aspects of financial management, including managing budgets. At early level, almost all children understand time, including when daily routines occur. At first level, almost all are clear about time from both analogue and digital devices. At all levels, most children understand and express fractions very well. At the upper stages, almost all multiply and divide decimal fractions with accuracy and confidence. At first and second levels, almost all clearly understand percentages. By second level, almost all children know key information about imperial and metric measurements. At this level, almost all work out with calculations related to capacity, area and volume accurately and with confidence.

Shape, position and movement

- Almost all children are developing very effective skills in shape, position and movement. At the early level, almost all name various shapes with accuracy. They recognise two-dimensional shapes (2D) and three-dimensional (3D) objects. At first level, almost all children understand the properties of 2D shapes and 3D objects. At all levels, most children know symmetry in patterns and pictures. At first and second levels, almost all have clear knowledge and understanding of different angles. At the upper stages, almost all children respond with accuracy to questions about these. At first and second levels, almost all know key facts about position and direction, including various compass points. They understand keys on maps and coordinates and use these very well in different aspects of their learning.

Information handling

- Almost all children are developing very good skills in handling information. At early level, almost all use tally charts and other simple graphs appropriately to display information from surveys. At first and second levels, almost all children analyse, interpret and extract key information with accuracy from various data sets including charts, bar and line graphs and various tables. They draw conclusions and respond very well to questions about these with confidence. At second level, almost all children interpret increasingly complex data with accuracy. Across the school, almost all children use their skills in information handling very well in various contexts and curricular areas. They display data accurately in numerous ways, including digital technology. At the upper stages, almost all apply their skills very effectively in digital technology to provide a wider range of data sets and presentations in different aspects of their learning.

Attainment over time

- Over the past three years, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy has been very good and has continued to improve. Over the last year, almost all children have achieved or exceeded expected national standards or made very good progress from prior levels of attainment and personal targets. Children's progress over time in other curricular areas, for example in art and French, has been of a very high standard consistently in recent years.
- Senior leaders use information from monitoring and tracking systems effectively to ensure children progress and attain in literacy and numeracy. They use this data appropriately. There is clear evidence that staff are making a difference and adding value to children's outcomes, particularly for those who need extra help. They also track children's progress thoroughly in other curricular areas.

Senior School

Literacy and numeracy

- By the end of 5th form, between 2022/23 and 2024/25, almost all young people achieved at least a grade four to nine General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in English Language or English Literature. As young people progress into 6th form, fewer young people opt to continue to study qualifications in English. Between 2022/23 and 2024/25, a few young people were presented for A-Level English Literature, all of whom achieved at least a grade A* to E. This very positive level of attainment reflects similarly positive outcomes in pre-pandemic attainment.
- By the end of 5th form, between 2022/23 and 2024/25, almost all young people achieved at least a grade four to nine GCSE in mathematics. As young people progress into 6th form, fewer young people opt to continue to study qualifications in mathematics. Between 2022/23 and 2024/25, a minority of young people were presented for A-Level mathematics, almost all of whom achieved at least a grade E to grade A*. A few young people also achieve success in GCSE or A-Level Further mathematics. Teachers' provision of the Further mathematics course supports successfully these few young people to enhance their mathematical understanding.
- Teachers in the English and mathematics departments engage currently in a variety of activities relating to numeracy and literacy of young people after their GCSE qualifications. Staff should look to strategically plan further such activities to ensure all young people continue to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy in the remainder of their time in school.

Attainment over time

- Most young people in 5th form in 2022/23 were presented for eight or more GCSE courses. Senior leaders have considered the balance of exam presentations alongside other commitments and pressures for young people and allowed greater flexibility in the number of courses for which young people are presented. As a result, the majority of young people in 2023/24 and 2024/25 were presented for eight or more GCSE courses. A minority remain presented for nine or more GCSE courses and a few for 10 or more. This greater flexibility in exam presentations has been welcomed by young people and parents. Almost all young people are presented for A-Levels by the end of the upper sixth.
- At 5th form, most young people achieve a grade four to nine at GCSE in eight or more subjects. This has been maintained between 2022/23 and 2024/25, and a few young people continue to attain a grade four to nine at GCSE in ten or more subjects. Between 2022/23 and 2024/25, most young people attained grade seven to nine in one or more GCSE courses. This demonstrates sustained high levels of attainment. Between 2022/23 and 2024/25, a minority of young people attained grade seven to nine in four or more GCSE courses. The proportion of young people attaining multiple awards at this level is decreasing over time. All teachers should ensure that they focus on improving the quality of young people's attainment in all subjects.
- At upper 6th, almost all young people achieved a grade A* to D at A-Level in one or more subjects between 2022/23 and 2024/25. Between 2022/23 and 2024/25, most young people achieved grade A* to D at A-Level in three or more subjects or equivalent through Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) awards. A few young people benefit greatly from successful attainment in BTECs. Although a minority of young people continued to attain one or more award at grade A* to A between 2022/23 and 2024/25, this proportion decreased in 2024/25. Senior leaders should work with teachers to ensure that attainment that they are clearly focused on adding value to support young people attaining as highly as possible as they move to more challenging qualifications such as A-Levels.
- Almost all young people who require additional support with their learning achieve a grade four to nine in eight or more subjects at GCSE and a grade A* to D at A-Level in one or more subjects. Staff should continue to support young people to progress positively in their attainment, particularly to increase their quality of passes.
- For both GCSEs and A-Level qualifications, young people's progress is notably higher than national averages. Senior leaders acknowledge that comparisons against national averages do not provide sufficient accuracy to use as a robust measure of value added to young people's attainment. A minority of subject departments are able to compare their examination performance with independent school figures. Senior leaders should explore further whole-school methods to more accurately compare and evaluate the attainment of young people.
- Staff track currently young people's progress and attainment through the school. There is scope to strengthen the quality, consistency and use by all teachers of the information used to track the progress of young people, particularly in the second and third forms. This should support better and earlier planning of learning and interventions to support young people to make the best progress in their learning throughout each year in the senior school.
- Senior leaders recognise the importance of evaluating and understanding better the progress that young people make in their learning. As a result, they have begun to use baseline

assessments to help assess and measure young people's attainment. There are early signs that staff will be able to use this information for additional interventions to support now-wider groups of identified young people. This practice should support all teachers to understand better the progress young people are making in their learning and plan to support and intervene as appropriate.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

Junior and Senior School

- Children and young people's engagement in activities and wider achievement throughout their time in the junior and the senior school is a major strength.
- In the junior school, children's achievements and successes, including those gained beyond school, are highly valued and celebrated in numerous ways and which link clearly to the KILT values. They acquire an impressive range of skills for learning, life and work, including in debating and when undertaking research in real-life contexts. They are highly effective ambassadors for their school. They persevere, negotiate, solve problems and deal constructively with challenges. All children are developing important skills, as individuals or as team members. Their ability to understand what makes an effective leader or team member is promoted successfully through their engagement in numerous and extensive activities and when undertaking different roles. These include house captains, tour guides and members of sporting teams, groups and clubs. Children know features of responsibility. They understand what it is to perform at school shows or when playing musical instruments. They are caring children who contribute effectively to their school community, including through charitable events.
- Senior leaders track children's achievements and participation in activities to ensure inclusion. Children know the different skills they acquire through their wider achievements. A next step would be for children to be involved more with senior leaders in developing arrangements to summarise their successes, talents and achievements in one place, for example personal profiles.
- Children's wide-ranging and rich experiences in wider achievement in the junior school is developed very well when they move to the senior school. Almost all young people are involved in multiple activities and events as part of the senior school's extensive co-curricular programme on a very frequent basis. The co-curricular programme offers over 140 activities, with young people participating in activities such as chess, art, debating, dramatic and musical productions and writing and editing the school magazine, 'The Red Wall'. The majority of young people are members of the combined cadet force (CCF). They value highly the well-planned and enriching activities and achievement afforded by the CCF. Staff support young people who start and run their own clubs and activities, for example, the medical society. Day and boarding pupils appreciate how these activities support their individual development and that of the wider school community.
- Young people's participation in sport is supported and encouraged. For example, through extensive and successful engagement in sports such as lacrosse, netball, cricket and rugby. Individual young people engage well and extensively with individualised programmes for golf. These activities are supporting young people effectively to develop their skills in teamwork and

resilience. As planned, senior leaders should continue to explore further options for girls to play sports competitively against a wider number of other schools.

- Young people engage successfully in a range of activities involving work with other schools or partners. For example, working with local businesses on entrepreneurial projects, or competitions relating to international relations.
- Young people's achievements and successes are recognised and celebrated very extensively. For example, through assemblies, colours awards, awards for academic endeavour and a very wide range of specific recognition such as sportsperson or a musician selected to play in assembly and subject or activity-specific certificates. Young people who engage in activities involving external accreditation enjoy a very high rate of success, for example, in music or performing arts awards or in the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards.
- A few young people are awarded scholarships or 'exhibitions' in a range of areas including music, drama and sport. Young people with scholarships or 'exhibitions' demonstrate strong academic achievement and wider success in their chosen specialist areas.
- Young people highly value their relationships with tutors, which supports tutors well to build a clear understanding of individual young people's interests and abilities. Tutors use this knowledge well if required to support and encourage identified young people to get more involved in co-curricular activities. Sports staff also track young people's sporting achievements beyond school. Staff would benefit from regular access to overviews of a young person's involvement in activities, achievement and accreditation over time as young people move, year-by-year, through the school. This would support further understanding of how a young person develops their skills and abilities in and beyond the school.
- Across the extensive range of activities, co-curricular programmes and wider achievements, young people are developing a range of skills, for example, in confidence and communication. Young people's understanding of their skills and how they interrelate with their learning in classes would be supported by the development and use of a shared and consistent language of skills. This should help young people to understand and articulate better the wide range of skills they are developing.

Equity for all learners

Junior and Senior School

- Children and young people who need additional support with their learning benefit strongly from interventions by support for learning staff. This includes one-to-one support for literacy and numeracy and resources adapted to meet their individual needs.
- Senior leaders have a clear understanding of children and families who attend the junior school. They effectively identify and support significant numbers of children to attain and achieve in line with their own potential. A minority of children overcome significant barriers to their learning through sensitive and appropriate interventions which result in them attaining very well. Others who are capable of further attainment are enabled to do this through staff's interactions and bespoke arrangements.
- Staff run a range of helpful initiatives to support young people in the senior school. This includes workshops from all subjects focused on revision of knowledge and skills to raise

attainment. Young people who may be struggling with their learning for a range of reasons are supported well by tutors working very constructively with class teachers to encourage young people to attend.

- A few young people are supported well by a bursary scheme which provides full or partial financial assistance with fees. This supports young people well to participate in learning, activities and excursions. Almost all young people who receive financial support attain well in the school.
- All young people move on to a positive destination on leaving school. Almost all leavers go to university in Scotland or elsewhere. A few young people enter employment, go to college or pursue a gap year before attending university. School staff survey their leavers who go to university and have established that most achieve their first choice for university.

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 the Office of His Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland