

Summarised inspection findings

The Edinburgh Academy

Independent

17 March 2026

Key contextual information

School name: The Edinburgh Academy
Independent
SEED number: 5580633

The Edinburgh Academy is a co-educational independent day school situated in the centre of the City of Edinburgh, founded in 1824. The school has a nursery, junior school and senior school. At the time of the inspection, the nursery was not in parentship with the City of Edinburgh Council and was not part of the inspection. In January 2026, there were 360 children in the junior school (P1-P6) and 686 young people in the senior school (P7-S6). The P7 stage is known as Geits and forms part of the senior school. The other stages in the senior school are known as 2nds (S1), 3rds (S2), 4ths (S3), 5ths (S4), 6ths (S5) and 7ths (S6).

The Rector has been in post since August 2017. He is supported by junior and senior school leadership teams and the chief operating officer. The junior school leadership team comprises the headteacher and deputy head of junior school. The senior school leadership team comprises the Rector and two depute headteachers.

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

- The ambitious vision of preparing children and young people to be ‘Grounded in Scotland, Ready for the World’ is a central focus at Edinburgh Academy. The key importance of the ‘ACCIE’ values is reflected in all aspects of school life; in day-to-day interactions, as well as informing school improvement at a strategic level. Supporting the development of children and young people as rounded individuals, as well as developing their academic progress, is integral. Widely shared across the school are highly effective illustrations at whole school and departmental levels. These show how behaviours fully reflect the school values in concrete ways. They provide a common language in all aspects of school life such as a basis for conversations with children and young people about positive behaviour. Members of the school community demonstrate these values consistently well in the ways they work with each other. They are polite, respectful and clearly very proud of their school.
- The Rector provides highly effective leadership and direction for the school community. His leadership is informed by his deep understanding of the academic, pastoral, and business needs of Edinburgh Academy aligned to a clear vision of future direction. He is highly respected across the school community. The Rector is well supported by a recently established senior leadership team in the senior school whose members have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. As a next step, senior leaders in the senior school should have a clear strategy on improving the consistency of high-quality learning and teaching. This should include a focus on ensuring that the teaching approaches within the school’s learning and teaching framework are more consistently applied by staff.
- Senior leadership is strengthened by the strong and highly effective leadership provided by the headteacher of the junior school. The senior leadership team in the junior school are driving improvement through a model of distributed leadership. This is across all levels in roles such as heads of department and facilitating pupil voice. There is a very well-developed-understanding of high-quality learning and teaching across the junior school.
- The Court of Directors provides strong support and challenge for senior leaders in all aspects of the running of the school. Directors are appointed to key strategic roles linked to their own knowledge and skill set. The Court committees are aligned with the ‘pillars of improvement’ and the Directors and meet regularly with staff, children and young people. They provide clear oversight in areas such as learning and teaching and financial management.

- The clear, comprehensive and well-structured five-year strategic development plan was developed after widespread consultation with stakeholders. This was led by the Rector and Chair of the Court to guide decision-making and focus strategic development in key areas. The plan sets out very relevant and well-judged priorities under the six 'pillars of improvement'. Together, the Rector and headteacher have a clear focus on supporting staff, children, and young people to engage in high-quality self-evaluation activities to identify areas of school improvement. There has been extensive consultation with stakeholders about, for example, the 'pillar of innovation'. This provides stakeholders with the opportunity to be involved in evaluating and shaping progress. The wellbeing of children and young people has been a strong focus through the 'pillar of the Edinburgh Academy experience'. The impact of this is clearly evident in the trusting, warm and respectful relationships between children, young people and staff. Commendably, this is also leading to deeper reflection and active exploration of even more avenues to engage and inform stakeholders further through self-evaluation processes.
- Senior leaders evaluate progress against the 'pillars of improvement' yearly and consider the evidence of impact increasingly effectively. This process is particularly well established in the junior school. In the senior school, senior leaders have established improved quality assurance and self-evaluation processes which link departmental improvement planning to whole school priorities. As planned, staff should continue to develop their approaches to departmental measures of success by continuing to use an increasing range of qualitative and quantitative evidence to inform and reflect on decision making.
- Senior leaders encourage and promote staff empowerment very well. They have established teacher working groups in the senior school and curricular leaders in the junior school, building leadership capacity across the school. These groups are evaluating the school's current work and future direction in areas such as character education, digital learning and skills development. As a next step, senior leaders should continue to work with staff to ensure they can identify more fully the impact and success of planned improvements under the 'pillars of improvement'.
- The work of senior and middle leaders is supporting the ongoing drive to continue to develop consistency across the senior school in delivering high-quality learning and teaching. The well attended and effective professional learning group plays an important part in highlighting and sharing strong practice across the school. An increasing number of staff are developing their pedagogical practice further through individual professional enquiry. Most departments in the senior school have staff who are markers and/or team leaders with Qualifications Scotland. The professional review and development process is fully aligned to the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS) standards. It is very helpfully also fully aligned with the school improvement process and all staff have identified in what ways they are contributing to the delivery of school priorities.
- Pupil voice plays a key role in school improvement in the junior school. Children have worked effectively with staff and directors to take forward improvements such as the 'pillar of campus improvement'. They make highly valued contributions to groups such as the learning empowerment group, suggesting how the support they receive could be made better. Young people in the senior school act as very supportive and inspiring role models for younger members of the school community. Across the school, groups of children and young people

demonstrate strong leadership skills with responsibilities relating to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. They have led change through their participation in rights respecting and food committees. Ephors (prefects) meet weekly to discuss their individual and collective leadership responsibilities and priorities. Ephor groups have led change successfully in academic mentoring, mentoring for transition years, activities and clubs. Young people in the early stages of the senior school describe the positive impact these initiatives are having on their wellbeing and confidence levels.

- Senior leaders have shared the priorities in the five-year strategic development plan through the Edinburgh Academy Parents Association and regularly share details of specific initiatives with parents in weekly 'News Sheets'. As planned, senior leaders should consider how to expand the ways they report progress towards achieving the priorities to parents.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very good

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

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

- Children and young people clearly demonstrate the 'ACCIE' values in all aspects of their learning and school life. Senior leaders and staff work highly effectively with children and young people to share and sustain high standards of behaviour and learning. All members of the school community promote a strong ethos of high expectations within calm and purposeful learning environments. All children in the junior school collaborate effectively with their peers in pairs, groups and as a class. They offer support and encouragement to one another in lessons and across the day. In the senior school, young people are eager to learn and motivated to do their best. Overall, almost all children and young people display exemplary behaviour, have very high levels of engagement and demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility and independence.

Junior School

- Staff create high-quality, creative and supportive learning environments in classrooms, shared spaces and outdoors. Children have regular opportunities to make decisions about their classroom and play zones and how they would like to learn. Teachers should continue to develop ways to empower children to lead and personalise their learning.
- Teachers provide stimulating, relevant contexts for learning that capture children's interests and promote enjoyment. All children are keen to learn across the curriculum. They sustain high levels of interest and engagement in their learning in all lessons and activities. Outdoor and real-life experiences are integral to the approach to learning and teaching in the junior school. All staff make highly effective use of the school grounds and facilities, the local community and beyond to enhance children's learning. This supports children very well to practise and apply their curricular knowledge and transferable skills in a wide range of contexts and settings.
- Teachers provide engaging tasks and activities that are very well matched to children's needs and abilities. Senior leaders and curriculum leads have developed detailed learning and teaching guidance materials. Staff use these effectively to ensure agreed high-quality approaches are being used consistently with all classes.
- Support staff are highly skilled. They assist children very well in class and are highly effective when working with individuals and groups. They help children successfully consolidate their learning and practise core skills, such as reading, writing and numeracy. Their supportive interactions help build children's self-esteem and confidence and support children to progress well in their learning.

- Senior leaders and staff have developed an intentional and well considered approach to digital technologies. Teachers use digital tools very well to enhance children's learning across the curriculum. They use interactive boards and tablets to support children to work independently and to extend or support their learning. All children are highly proficient at using software and digital tools to collaborate, research and to explore their creativity. They are highly motivated when using interactive, digital class challenges to revisit and apply prior learning.
- Senior staff, teachers and support staff at the early primary stages have developed highly effective approaches to promote and extend children's learning. This includes through direct teaching, play and open-ended challenges. As a result, children's creativity and problem-solving-skills develop very well alongside their curricular learning. Staff have a deep professional knowledge of research and early child development. They have developed skilful approaches to observe and evaluate children's learning and play.
- Teachers support children very well to understand the purpose of learning and how to be successful in their learning. Staff could now involve children in helping to identify measures of success more regularly. Children regularly self and peer-assess their work and set personal targets. They find this very helpful. Teachers provide high-quality feedback and have supportive learner conversations with each child. This helps children to understand clearly their strengths and next steps in learning.
- Senior leaders and teachers have strong approaches in place for assessment. Staff evaluate children's skills and competencies across a wide range of curricular areas and contexts. Teachers make well-considered use of strategies during lessons to check for understanding. They use this to provide the right support and challenge for each child. Senior leaders and teachers use information gained from assessment very well to inform and plan next steps for individuals, sets and classes.
- Staff meet regularly to discuss children's learning progress and attainment. They use national Benchmarks, school curriculum pathways and assessment information effectively to develop school-wide shared expected standards of children's progress and attainment. As a result, teachers make robust reliable professional judgements about children's progress.
- Across the junior school, teachers plan very well in all curricular areas. Senior leaders and curriculum leaders support teachers very effectively and provide comprehensive helpful guidance. Staff involve children regularly in planning learning and take account of their views and interests.
- Senior leaders and staff continue to refine processes to track and record children's progress in key areas of learning. This is ensuring staff have a clear coherent overview of each child's progress. There are rigorous approaches in place to monitor each child's attainment and learning. All staff work together to plan and provide highly effective interventions and targeted support. This ensures ensure all children make strong progress and experience success.

Senior school

- In most lessons, teachers build appropriately on prior learning and make helpful references to future learning. To support recall of prior learning, in almost all lessons, teachers give clear

explanations and use strategies effectively. This supports continuity and progression in learners' experiences. In a majority of lessons, teachers use a variety of teaching approaches such as group work, independent learning and active learning. There is scope for teachers to provide young people with more opportunities to be creative and to have more ownership and choice within lessons.

- In most lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning and outline what success looks like for young people. Staff should continue to involve young people in helping to identify measures of success more regularly in a way that is tailored to their individual learning needs. In most lessons, the purpose of learning aligns closely with the learning activity. Teachers generally provide the same tasks and activities for all young people. In most lessons, the pace of learning is appropriate. In Geits to 3rds, in a few lessons, a few young people would benefit from greater challenge. Teachers use questioning well in most lessons to check young people's understanding and support recall of prior learning. In Geits to 3rds, a few teachers use higher order- questioning effectively to challenge and encourage learners to think more deeply and to extend their responses. This practice is more widespread in 4ths to 7ths. Young people benefit from and value the high levels of individualised support teachers provide at lunchtime, afterschool and through online platforms.
- Young people experience an extensive range of rich learning through the Geits–3rds activities curriculum programme. These experiences enhance learners' personal and skills development. Young people speak very positively about the programme and value opportunities such as participation in the pipe band, strength and conditioning, a range of sports and junior charities. As a result, young people develop confidence, skills for life and work, and positive attitudes to learning beyond the classroom.
- Almost all teachers use digital learning well to support young people's learning. Teachers make appropriate use of presentations, videos, sketchbooks and online collaborative spaces to enhance learning experiences. Young people benefit from accessing class materials and resources through digital platforms both in school and at home. This supports them to revisit learning, revise effectively and learn when absent from school. Young people use digital technology well for research, accessing information, creating presentations and recording their learning.
- Young people in 4ths to 7ths benefit from helpful learning conversations with staff and receive high-quality feedback about their learning. As a result, young people understand where they are in their learning and what they need to do to improve. In Geits to 3rds, teachers provide verbal feedback in most lessons, which supports young people's progress. The quality of written feedback is less consistent. As a next step, senior leaders should develop greater consistency in feedback approaches, ensuring that feedback is specific and clearly linked to young people's learning. This should support all young people to understand more clearly how to improve and achieve.
- Senior leaders have implemented a whole school assessment calendar. This provides a clear overview of class assessments, coursework deadlines and prelim examinations for all young people. This approach reduces the likelihood of learners experiencing multiple assessments at the same time to limit the pressure on young people. In 4ths to 7ths, most teachers use summative assessment very effectively to monitor young people's progress. Heads of

departments use assessment data well to inform interventions, such as individual support for learners. Senior leaders should continue to monitor carefully the overall volume of assessment for young people.

- All staff are involved in moderation activities within departments to ensure reliability of judgements of senior phase learners' progress and attainment. This supports staff confidence in making professional judgements. Young people in 4ths to 7ths are very well supported to be successful in examinations. In Geits to 3rds, staff have a very sound understanding of what steps young people need to take to be successful in their subject.
- Teachers use helpful information regarding individual young people's progress in 4ths to 7ths to support planning for learning. These plans are often based on learning linked with summative assessments. In Geits to 3rds, there is scope for teachers to make more effective use of formative assessment strategies. This should support them to plan more responsively to meet the needs of young people.
- Across all subject areas, teachers have effective systems in place to track and monitor young people's progress in 4ths to 7ths. They use this information effectively to support young people's progress in learning. Individual departments track the progress young people are making effectively in Geits to 3rds within their own subjects. Senior leaders have identified a need to refresh the approaches to tracking levels of young people from Geits-3rds. As planned, they should streamline the language used to describe achievement of levels across all departments.

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 Court of Directors.

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 foster very strong relationships with children and young people. They know children and young people very well as individuals and use this knowledge to provide well considered support. Staff demonstrate high levels of care for children and young people. This supports a strong sense of community and mutual respect across the school. Most children and young people model care, compassion and empathy purposefully in their daily interactions.
- Senior leaders in the junior and senior school have developed highly effective approaches to supporting and improving children and young people's wellbeing. Their approach is strongly underpinned by the well embedded 'ACCIE' values. All staff demonstrate a strong understanding of the importance of wellbeing and its impact on learning and achievement. Staff engage in meaningful professional learning to strengthen further their understanding of wellbeing and inclusion. As a result, children and young people learn in calm and inclusive learning environments that support high levels of engagement.
- Children and young people complete helpful wellbeing surveys twice per year. This supports learners to reflect on their wellbeing and to identify areas where they may require help and support. Staff make use of this information effectively to identify children and young people who require support with their wellbeing. Staff work collaboratively to put in place appropriate wellbeing supports. Children and young people benefit from these supports which improve their wellbeing. Staff in the senior school should continue to develop how they use data strategically to plan, measure and evaluate universal and targeted support.
- Staff use a range of wellbeing check-ins to respond quickly to children and young people's worries and concerns. Young people in the senior school use matrix barcodes to request support from the extended pastoral team who respond promptly to these requests. This is helping almost all children and young people to feel safe in school. Most identify a trusted adult that they can speak to if feeling worried or upset.
- Staff in the junior school place a strong focus on the wellbeing indicators through their well-planned assembly programme and whole class 'Monday Meetings'. As a result, children across the junior school are developing a deep understanding of their own wellbeing. They articulate clearly how their experiences at school help them to improve their wellbeing.
- Staff in a few departments in the senior school have developed and are piloting programmes of activities focusing on character education for young people in the upper stages. These

activities help those young people to identify and reflect on the character virtues that they demonstrate. The activities consolidate the ways young people's decision making is underpinned by strong morals and values. Staff should continue to embed character development work into all young people's regular learning experiences across all stages of school life.

- Children and young people access an extensive range of sport and team games activities which improve their physical fitness and health. They engage very well during high-quality physical education. This is enhanced by the extensive games programme. Many learners demonstrate a lifelong love of sport. Children in the junior school articulate clearly how their choices in the lunch hall contributes to their energy levels and longer-term physical health. Children and young people feel included in the wider life of the school through their participation in a range of school performances and events. They benefit greatly from well-planned cross-curricular learning with a strong focus on wellbeing. Children and young people make clear links between their outdoor learning, learning for sustainability, science and their physical and mental health.
- Children across the junior school experience a high-quality, progressive health and wellbeing curriculum. They talk positively about the impact of this on their understanding of their physical and mental health. Children in P5 confidently share their knowledge of the risks of vaping and smoking. Children in P6 have a strong understanding of allergies and know how to respond to severe allergic reactions. Young people in the senior phase particularly value inputs to the personal and social education (PSE) curriculum and assembly programme. Guest speakers share their expertise and knowledge on a range of health and wellbeing topics. Young people in 4ths to 7ths appreciate staff adapting PSE to include a greater focus on developing independent living skills and planning for post-school destinations. Staff should now consider how young people from across the school play a greater role in the planning and evaluation of PSE courses. This should help to ensure that their learning is consistently progressive and relevant.
- Staff in the junior school have established very strong approaches to universal and targeted support with a strong focus on early intervention. This is a significant strength of the junior school. Children experience support that is tailored to their individual needs. Staff work with children to create robust learning profiles. These focus on the steps adults need to take to help children to successfully overcome potential barriers to their learning. Children access a wide range of small group and one-to-one support and targeted interventions. This includes in-house counselling, therapeutic interventions and literacy support. Staff have developed very strong partnerships with a range of allied health professionals to support children who require a greater level of support. Children's progress is monitored and evaluated through regular reviews of learning profiles, child's plans and weekly pastoral meetings. This ensures all children get the right support at the right time. Children articulate clearly the impact of the bespoke support they receive. They believe their anxiety levels are reduced and feel more confident to attend school and lessons. They have a wider circle of friends and ask for help when they need it.
- Pastoral staff in the senior school provide young people with high levels of support, working collaboratively to address any barriers to young people's wellbeing. They work effectively with allied health partners and careers advice services, to respond to individual needs appropriately. Support for learning staff share detailed information with teachers about young people's additional support needs. They meet with staff regularly to review support

being provided by teachers across the senior school. As a result, staff share effective strategies to meet individual learners' needs well. Pastoral and support for learning staff should continue to develop their approaches to setting meaningful targets with young people. This will support them to evaluate their progress more fully. They should extend their use of Child's Plans to record young people's targets and progress. These plans should capture the views of young people and parents as part of regular reviews. Staff should share highly effective practice from the junior school in order to improve whole school approaches to support for learning. This should focus on improving staff approaches to measuring the impact of their work to support young people's progress in learning.

- Staff have developed very well their approaches to supporting children as they move from the junior school to Geits. Children build positive relationships with staff and identify adults who they can trust and ask for help when they move to Geits. Staff support effectively children who require additional support with their wellbeing and learning as they move on from the junior school. Children and families feel very well supported as they move from the junior to senior school.
- Senior leaders and staff understand that they have responsibilities in relation to statutory guidance. They are proactive in making connections with other agencies including social work and local authority staff to support them in meeting their responsibilities. Senior leaders should continue to engage with national guidance as they review and develop their policies and practices in relation to wellbeing, inclusion and equality.
- Staff across the school provide well considered support to children and young people who experience barriers to regular attendance at school. They liaise positively with parents to support improvement. As a result, almost all children and young people maintain high levels of attendance at school. A few young people access learning on a part-time timetable. These are reviewed regularly with a focus on young people returning to full-time learning as soon as possible. As planned, senior leaders should improve their approaches to maintaining a strategic overview of children and young people's attendance at school. This should help them to demonstrate more clearly how attendance is improving over time.
- Staff in the senior school provide positive support for a few young people identified as young carers. All young carers are offered the opportunity to complete a young carer's statement and staff are working well to extend the number of young people who take up this offer. Staff foster a strong partnership with Edinburgh Young Carers to educate all young people about being a young carer. This partnership helps staff to identify and address barriers to young people's positive outcomes effectively. As a result, young carers achieve very positive outcomes in line with their peers. A newly established young carer's action group ensures a strong forum for peer support and advocacy for these young people.
- Children and young people are developing a clear understanding of children's rights and their relevance to their daily lives. Staff in the junior school have successfully aligned their work on rights with the 'ACCIE' values. Staff across a majority of departments in the senior school reference children's rights regularly as part of learning across the curriculum. A few young people lead helpful assemblies to educate and develop meaningful projects to support their peers to consider their rights in relation to local, national and international issues. These include exploring artificial intelligence and advocating for local issues to political leaders. These young

people worked with peers from neighbouring schools to organise a successful children's rights conference in the junior school for local primary schools. Staff and young people should continue to develop this work. They should consider how it informs and aligns with other work on inclusion and equality being undertaken across the school.

- Children and young people are very proud of their diverse school community. They celebrate the languages, cultures and traditions of their school community through assemblies and school events. Children and young people deepen their learning about diversity and inclusion across the curriculum. Children across the junior school read class novels and access high-quality resources. These support them to understand a range of protected characteristics and to recognise and celebrate ethnic and cultural diversity. Teachers ensure different characteristics are represented well in children and young people's learning. This includes gender, disability, sexual orientation and race. Children in the junior school are developing a strong awareness of prejudicial language and discrimination. Staff should continue to help children to recognise and challenge prejudice and discrimination confidently.
- A few young people in the senior school benefit from participating in pupil groups focusing on equality and inclusion. This allows young people to meet in groups to discuss and explore issues relating to their identities. This includes the Minority Union, Edinburgh Academy Society of Equality, LGBT group and Period Patrol. Through events organised by these groups, young people also support their peers proactively to understand the issues experienced by different groups of people. They help their peers recognise their responsibility for promoting respect and equality. As a next step, staff and young people should consider further opportunities for these groups to work together to take forward a strategic approach to promoting equality and inclusion. This should support young people to plan, implement and evaluate their work and demonstrate how pupil groups are supporting improvement across their school community and beyond.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

excellent

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

Primary stages

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy, English, numeracy and mathematics is excellent. Almost all children across the junior school achieve or exceed expected standards in literacy and numeracy. Across the school, a significant minority of children are working beyond expected levels. Children who require any additional help with their learning make very good progress relative to individual targets.

Literacy and English

- Almost all children across the junior school make very good progress in literacy and English. A significant minority are exceeding national expectations.
- Children's listening and talking skills are outstanding. They are supported very well by a range of highly effective opportunities to develop skills across the curriculum. These include occasions such as Burns Suppers, poetry recitals and participation in drama productions. All children are highly attentive when listening to peers and adults. They confidently share their ideas and opinions in class discussions, demonstrating an extensive vocabulary. Older children build respectfully on each other's ideas and contributions exceptionally well.
- Children across the junior school demonstrate a love of reading. This is supported very well by a wide range of high-quality texts available in the school and class library. Librarians support children very well to explore different genres, helping to extend children's reading skills. Children enthusiastically share reasons for their preferences of authors and types of books and enjoy recommending books to others through book reviews. Almost all children read fluently relative to their age and stage. They demonstrate a strong understanding of features of language, such as simile and metaphor, and why authors use these. As children progress through the school, they ask and answer increasingly complex questions, summarise the main ideas from a text and confidently make predictions. Older children demonstrate very well skills such as inference and retrieval of information.
- The presentation of children's written work is of a consistently high standard. This is supported well by an explicit focus on handwriting. Children are encouraged to, and take, considerable pride in their writing. As they progress through the school, children write for a range of purposes and across genres. They write imaginative stories using a range of ambitious

vocabulary and devices to engage the reader. Older children use paragraphs well to organise their writing and have a very good understanding of techniques to engage the reader.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Almost all children make very good progress in numeracy and mathematics. A significant minority of children are exceeding national expectations.
- Children demonstrate a sound understanding of place value. They use a range of strategies to complete addition and subtraction problems with confidence. They apply their knowledge and skills very well in meaningful contexts, such as sustainability and enterprise projects and in different curricular areas. Most children demonstrate quick and accurate recall of multiplication and division facts. Almost all children tackle word and multi-step problems confidently. They share their thinking and record their solutions clearly. Older children demonstrate an increasing understanding of links between fractions, decimals and percentages. Across the junior school, children should continue to extend their understanding and use of mathematical terminology.
- In mathematics lessons, outdoor learning and games, children demonstrate a sound understanding of positional language and direction relative to their stage of development. Almost all children identify a range of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They discuss their properties confidently. Older children name and classify a range of angles and triangles accurately.
- As children progress through the school, they show a confident understanding of how data can be represented physically and visually. Almost all children understand simple charts, pictograms and graphs well and interpret key information. Children apply these skills successfully in other curricular areas. For example, in science, children display their findings using a pie chart. Almost all children are confident using digital technologies and software to collect, organise and display different types of data.

Senior school

- Departmental staff have very well-developed processes in place to monitor and track young people's progress through English and mathematics from Geits to 7ths. These clearly demonstrate the very high levels of attainment staff have maintained and young people have achieved over time. When required, staff both within and beyond the English and mathematics departments provided carefully targeted support to any young people not on track.
- Young people's experiences are enhanced further in English and mathematics through a wide range of activities beyond the core curriculum. For example, debating, public speaking and mathematics competitions and challenges are supporting young people to broaden and deepen their skills and knowledge. In turn, this is supporting their progress and achievement.
- Commendably, almost all young people are making expected progress or are exceeding expectations in line with national expectations.

National Qualifications (NQs)

- In 5ths, young people attain exceedingly well in NQs in both National 5 (N5) English and Mathematics. In 2023/24, all young people achieved N5 English and most achieved N5

Mathematics. In 2024/25, almost all young people achieved N5 English and most achieved N5 Mathematics.

- In 6ths, young people have great success in Higher English and Mathematics. In 2023/24, most young people achieved Higher English, and the majority achieved Higher Mathematics. In 2024/25, almost all young people achieved Higher English with the majority of young people achieving Higher Mathematics.
- Over the last three years, all young people have left school with at least N5 English, and almost all have left with at least N5 Mathematics.
- A few young people also achieve success in General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) Further Mathematics with all achieving at least a grade 9 to 5. Teachers use this course as an opportunity to broaden their most able young people's mathematical experiences.

Attainment over time

Junior school

- In the junior school, children attain very strongly and consistently over time. Children's attainment is enhanced by the inclusive and nurturing ethos across the school, which is underpinned by high aspirations and expectations. Staff provide strong pastoral support and work in partnership with children and families to unlock and realise each child's potential. Children are enthusiastic about learning and keen to achieve their personal best. They talk confidently about how the 'ACCIE' values, including that of ambition, help them to be resilient and confident that they will achieve success in learning.
- Senior leaders and staff have a very strong understanding of individual children's attainment over time. They gather a range of helpful data which shows children progress very well in reading, writing and numeracy over time. Across the junior school, the progress of each child as an individual is considered in combination with information about their wellbeing. Senior leaders and staff use this information very well. They identify and implement approaches and interventions which would best support children to make the best possible progress. Staff monitor children's progress closely and adaptations made to approaches and interventions providing support and challenge if required.

Senior school

- Staff use a well-considered range of data to track and monitor individual children and young people's progress over time. This includes the use of standardised assessment data at key points in the learner journey. Almost all children and young people make very positive progress as they move through the school from their prior levels of attainment. This includes children and young people who require additional support.
- Senior leaders should continue as planned to develop how they use the wide range of data captured at a whole school and departmental level more effectively, particularly in Geits to 3rds. This should help ensure they have full oversight of the overall attainment, not just for individuals but also for cohorts of children and young people as they progress through the school. This has the potential to support their efforts to maximise the attainment of all young people.

National Qualifications

- Young people attending Edinburgh Academy have strong and sustained success in NQs. Their attainment is outstanding and well-above national averages. Staff have ensured sustained high levels of achievement across a broad range of subjects. For example, the percentage of young people attaining a grade A in N5 Mathematics has notably improved over the last five years.
- At 5ths, most young people achieved at least seven or more N5 awards at grade A to C in 2023/24 and 2024/25. Around half of young people achieved seven or more grade A awards at N5 in 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- A few young people gain additional success by attaining GCSE awards with all gaining a grade 9 to 4 in recent years.
- At 6ths, in 2023/24, around half of young people achieved five or more Highers at grade A to C. In 2024/25, this improved to most young people achieving five or more awards. Around a third of young people achieved five or more grade A awards in 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- At 7ths, in 20223/24 and 2024/25 almost all young people achieved one or more Advanced Higher awards at grade A to C. Around half of young people achieved three or more awards at grade A to C, and the majority of young people achieved at least one grade A.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Almost all children and young people are developing a range of skills in collaboration, leadership, creativity and communication through an extensive range of co-curricular activities. All children and young people benefit from the expertise of specialist coaches, instructors and staff. They develop their skillsets in numerous sports, choirs, ensembles, pipe bands and school shows. Staff plan the co-curricular programme and activities very well to maximise opportunities for children and young people to develop their inquisitiveness in multiple activities. These achievements are recognised and celebrated in a wide range of ways including assemblies, positive recognition cards, wall displays, social media, Colours, and end of year exhibitions (annual prize giving). The achievements of children and young people are outstanding. In senior school, all young people hone their teamwork and collaboration skills, through regular Division competitions. There they demonstrate their ACCIE value of ambition, supporting each other to achieve, participate and develop their skills in areas including reels, puzzle cube challenge, debating, shows and poetry. In 4ths to 7ths, all young people develop their leadership skills through Combined Cadet Force (CCF) or school service. Senior leaders and teaching staff should continue to explore ways in which more young people can gain accreditation for their wide range of achievements.
- Almost all children and young people achieve very well through participation in a wide range of high-quality musical experiences. Through regular involvement in performances and ensembles, children and young people develop confidence, stage presence and resilience while strengthening their ability to collaborate effectively with others. Children and young people demonstrate a strong sense of pride in their achievements and value the shared success that comes from performing together. Children confidently showcase their musical talents in school concerts and in prestigious external venues. These experiences contribute significantly to children and young people's development of important skills for learning, life and work.

- All children and young people develop dexterity, perseverance, and cooperation when working to reach team goals in numerous sports. Staff and specialised coaches, deliver a progressive programme through the junior school into the senior school. Through this programme, children and young people grow their talents in sport both for enjoyment and competitively. This leads to success both at individual and school level. A few young people undertake the 'Sports Leadership Award' facilitating the coaching and umpiring of rugby and netball. Former Edinburgh Academy pupils return as volunteers to be role models for the young people, demonstrating the caring and nurturing ethos of the school.
- Almost all children and young people develop resilience, reflection, teamwork, communication and collaboration skills through well planned outdoor education activities. They develop their awareness of the world, through camps, residential visits both in the United Kingdom and further afield and in the senior school through participation in the CCF and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award schemes. In 2nds and 3rds, young people demonstrate their value of compassion through supporting a charity each academic session. Senior leaders should explore ways to develop further leadership opportunities in Geits to 3rds.
- In the junior school, almost all children benefit from a wide range of valuable learning experiences in sustainability. This is through their involvement with the school orchard, keeping chickens, and in science lessons. These activities are supporting the development of important skills, including responsibility and practical problem-solving. All classes take responsibility for aspects of sustainability, such as recycling, and food waste collection. This ensures that all learners are actively contributing to the life of the junior school. The 'apple juice project' provides a particularly strong example of learning for life skills in action. Children harvest the apples and produce and sell juice within the school community, developing enterprise skills alongside practical knowledge. These experiences enhance children's confidence, pride, and understanding of the relevance of sustainability in their everyday lives. In the senior school, a team of young people led successfully the achievement of the Eco Schools Green Flag award for the whole school.

Equity for all learners

- Staff across the school are very aware of the academic needs of children and young people. They monitor and track learners' progress at an individual level very well. They are quick to identify any gaps in learning or learners who are off track with their expectations. Any additional support, such as help from staff, is implemented swiftly. Staff are able to identify clearly the impact this is having on improving outcomes for individual children, particularly in the junior school.
- The Rector and key leaders have a very strong understanding of the needs of the school community. They provide sensitive and thoughtful support to children and young people who experience barriers to their learning or participation, including for those who require financial assistance. They strive to ensure that all children and young people who attend the school receive an equitable experience.
- In the junior school, all children benefit from access to a wide range of activities, clubs and teams, most of which take place at little or no cost to families. The extensive co-curricular programme helps ensure equitable experiences for all children, for example in accessing high-quality- musical experiences.

- Young people are very well supported to move on to a positive destination on leaving school. The pastoral and career team provide helpful and supportive advice to young people through the PSE programme and one-to-one meetings. Edinburgh Academy former pupils play an important role in providing ongoing support to learners as they progress through university and employment.
- All young people move on to a positive destination on leaving school. Most young people go to university in Scotland, England or beyond. A few young people enter employment, go to college or pursue a gap year before attending 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