

Summarised inspection findings

Sanderson High School

South Lanarkshire Council

7 October 2025

Key contextual information

Sanderson High School is a non-denominational local authority special school in East Kilbride. The school is situated in a purpose-built campus with Calderglen High School. The school supports secondary aged young people with a range and complexity of additional support needs from across South Lanarkshire Council. At the time of inspection, the school roll was 122 young people across 15 classes ranging from S1 to S6. Several multi-composite classes meet the needs of young people who despite their additional support needs are able to move about the school accessing subject classes. A few classes known as 'supported base classes' are multi-composite classes to support young people with more complex additional support needs. A specialist provision support base called Anxiety Lowering Learning (ALL) has recently been created within the school to support young people with highly dysregulated behaviour.

The leadership team comprises a headteacher, a deputy headteacher and three principal teachers. The school also has three temporary Pupil Equity funded principal teachers supporting equity. Less than 10% of young people reside in the Scottish Index of Multi Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 1 and 2. Over the past year, the school has had a number of staff absences. The Headteachers has been working within a shared headship arrangement, which has slowed the pace of progress in school improvement priorities.

1.3 Leadership of change

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 headteacher and staff are committed to improving outcomes for all young people. The school's current vision and values of Respect, Equality and Inclusion take good account of the school community. The vision and values have recently been underpinned by the school's work on young people's rights. Staff have developed an engaging '#Sanderson Can' strapline that is displayed throughout the school. This helps young people to recognise and understand the school's vision and how it relates to them. As planned, the headteacher should ensure all stakeholders understand how the vision and values underpin the school's work and how young people can achieve in their own unique ways.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the depute headteacher, provides effective leadership across the school. Senior leaders have a clear sense of direction for the school. Across the school, principal teachers work very effectively with senior leaders to drive areas of improvement forward. Senior leaders are visible across the school, and all leadership team members have clear remits. Staff know who leads in taking forward areas of the school's work. Overall, senior leaders manage the pace of school improvement well. However, at times, this can be brisk, leading to some aspects of the school's work not being fully understood and consistently applied by all staff.
- Senior leaders and staff have developed a well-focused improvement plan and quality assurance processes that align with the school's priorities. Senior leaders and principal teachers evaluate the quality of provision through undertaking a range of planned activities. This includes closely monitoring attendance, attainment, and the wellbeing of young people. Senior leaders and staff's effective use of improvement planning processes shows clear evidence of a positive impact on outcomes for young people. To enhance these outcomes further, senior leaders should refine their strategic planning processes. Senior leaders should ensure that priorities for improvement are more clearly defined, measurable, and focused on the intended impact. Staff are developing their use of data well to evaluate improvement. Senior leaders and staff gather a small range of data to support their analysis of how effectively improvement activities have led to better outcomes for learners. This process could be strengthened through increased rigour and by broadening the range of data collected.
- Senior leaders undertake useful quality assurance activities such as classroom observations. They provide teachers with helpful feedback of their strengths and next steps with a focus on improving learning and teaching across the school. To enhance the impact of these activities further, senior leaders need to continue, as planned, to provide more strategic direction to improve learning, teaching and assessment. A clearly defined policy of what high-quality learning and teaching should look like at Sanderson High School would be useful for all staff.
- Senior leaders provide good opportunities for teachers and staff to take on leadership roles, participate in school improvement activities, and develop further their professional knowledge

and skills. Principal teachers carry out their leadership roles very effectively. They are visible and highly respected. They have well developed, positive relationships with staff and pupils and are well attuned to the needs of young people across the school. They work closely with all staff to bring about improvements in young people's wellbeing and ensure young people's pastoral and learning needs are met well. Senior leaders and staff use professional review and development discussions effectively to identify and agree on areas of professional learning and school improvement priorities. Senior leaders should continue to find ways for all staff to take on leadership roles to develop an ethos of collaboration. This will help a minority of staff to see more clearly the impact they have in taking forward improvement.

- Senior leaders provide regular and useful opportunities for young people, staff, parents, and partners to share their views on areas of school's work. A range of surveys and votes are used routinely and effectively to allow stakeholders to share their views of what works well and to suggest improvements. Senior leaders should continue to develop their approaches further to ensure that the views of young people, parents, and partners are more clearly evident in improvement planning and evaluating school initiatives. The school has an active Parent Council which works well with senior leaders and staff. Parent Council members value the regular meetings between themselves and senior leaders, which include helpful updates from the headteacher. Parent Council members organise appropriate events and help with school fundraising. There is scope for the Parent Council and wider parent body to be more involved in all aspects of the school's work.
- Across the school, most young people have beneficial opportunities to experience and take on leadership roles. Young people contribute well to the life of the school through participating in activities such as pupil forums, buddying and being selected as a prefect. Young people are proud to take on these leadership roles which help them to develop skills for learning and life. They are building skills in working together and helping others and improving their social communication and interaction skills. Young people are supported very well by staff to prepare and share information with the school community at assemblies, whole school events, and award ceremonies. Most young people can identify with pride a time they have contributed to the school, such as deciding on end of year trips, selecting new resources or working in the café during school events. Most young people feel the school listens to their views. They are now well placed to develop their leadership skills further. Senior leaders should continue to help all young people understand the 'pupil voice strategy'. They should develop further the 'pupil forum' to help young people see more clearly how their views are taken into account and the school's subsequent actions. This will support better young people's ability to see how they influence school improvement.
- The headteacher and staff understand the school's social, economic and cultural context well. Staff are aware of the potential barriers to learning which young people face. They know well the increased challenges around poverty caused by the cost-of-living crisis. Staff are beginning to identify effectively gaps in young people's learning. They increasingly understand their role in raising attainment and in helping young people overcome any barriers to learning.
- Senior leaders have a strategic plan for using pupil equity funding (PEF), which targets young people's identified needs in literacy, numeracy and wellbeing. The principal teachers of equity have successfully taken forward effective PEF initiatives in partnership with third-sector organisations. Senior leaders and staff have clear evidence of how these targeted interventions have closed gaps and improved young people's attainment and progress. Senior leaders should monitor the impact of PEF initiatives more rigorously on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

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

- Staff create a positive and caring ethos which effectively supports and nurtures young people. This is underpinned by the school values of 'Respect, Inclusion and Equality'. Most young people speak positively about their school experience, have a positive attitude towards their learning and participate well in learning activities across the curriculum. Across the school, most young people display positive behaviour. Most young people respect each other and work well in small groups and whole class activities co-operatively. A few young people not fully engaged with their learning show low-level disruptive behaviours at times. Staff, supported ably by principal teachers, are successfully using the newly implemented meeting pupil needs room (MPN) to provide targeted support for a few young people. They have also introduced and use well sensory needs strategies to support young people to regulate their emotions and return to their planned learning.
- Staff are undertaking helpful professional learning to understand better the importance of wellbeing and the use of movement breaks for a few learners. As a result, the number of times young people accessing support in the MPN room has decreased over time. A few young people, due to their complex additional support needs, can become distressed and display high levels of challenging behaviour at times. They may injure themselves, other young people and staff. Senior leaders and staff should continue their work on improving learning environments across the school and provide more targeted learning experiences bespoke to these young people's needs.
- Most young people participate in school-based programmes such as Barista training and Sports Leadership. Young people develop well their practical and communication skills in a real life context. They show proficiency in following instruction and using organisation skills. A minority of learners regularly engage enthusiastically in community-based learning experiences such as using leisure facilities and accessing shops and cafes. A few young people successfully participate in learning experiences within mainstream classes at the neighbouring secondary school. Where appropriate, senior phase learners access relevant and engaging opportunities at college and through work experience placements. Through participating in these experiences, young people are developing essential skills in communication and social interactions in unfamiliar settings. They are becoming more confident in trying new things beyond school. A minority of young people access very few learning experiences out with the classroom. This limits their opportunities to build social and collaborative skills. Staff should prioritise developing these young people's life skills by creating more regular opportunities for them to interact with the wider school community.
- In most lessons, teachers provide clear instructions and explain the purpose of learning well, using visuals to support understanding. They employ a range of effective strategies such as modelling, task chunking with visual supports, and the use of multi-sensory resources to

engage and motivate learners. Most teachers use well-timed praise effectively, and help young people make connections between prior and current learning. A few use skilled questioning to check understanding and promote deeper thinking. Most pupils have opportunities to personalise their learning through subject choices, Friday choosing, and lunchtime clubs. However, success criteria in most lessons tend to focus more on task completion than on demonstrating learning and progress. While a minority of lessons provide clear next steps, verbal feedback does not consistently help young people understand how to improve. Teachers should continue to develop their use of feedback to ensure all learners understand how well they are applying their learning and what they need to do to progress.

- Most teachers use a small but effective range of approaches that make subject content accessible and engaging for individuals. However, across the school, there can be an overreliance on whole-class instruction, at times. Senior leaders and teachers should work more closely to build on existing strengths and develop a shared understanding of what high-quality learning and teaching looks like at the school. This will help ensure consistency of approach and support all staff in meeting the needs of every learner.
- Support staff know young people very well and use their knowledge of young people effectively to support them to engage in their learning. Across classes, there is a variability in the number of staff available to support young people. Senior leaders should consider how best to deploy support staff to meet the learning and wellbeing needs of all young people. This should include involving support staff more regularly in discussions with teachers about young people's learning. This will help ensure staff are deployed as effectively as possible to meet the needs of all young people across the school.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers use digital resources and tools well to enhance effectively young people's learning experiences through a range of interactive activities. The school has purchased laptops for all learners to reduce digital barriers to learning. Teachers are successfully using the Sanderson High School Digital Strategy to consider and adopt creative teaching approaches for learners. Most young people use digital technologies independently to find information, and a few can utilise accessibility features confidently to support their learning. Teachers should now aim to make more effective use of accessibility features such as dictation and text to speech. This will support young people to gain more independence in their learning and develop digital skills for learning and life.
- Most teachers in the broad general education (BGE) use a small range of formative assessment approaches to measure young people's progress well. They use this information effectively to inform subsequent next steps in young people's learning. At the senior phase, most teachers use summative assessments well to measure young people's progress and attainment. Almost all teachers understand assessment standards for National Qualifications and plan learning based on these expectations effectively. A few teachers use well-considered peer assessment activities. Teachers meet regularly with senior leaders to review assessment data and plan next steps to support learners. Senior leaders should now develop the school's assessment strategy to clarify the expectations for assessment and how this will help teachers improve their professional judgements of learners' progress across the BGE.
- In most end of year reports, teachers' detailed comments are based mainly on summative assessments in curriculum areas, which indicate strengths and next steps for learning. This provides a helpful overview of young people's learning across the year. Teachers should now aim to capture and report better the skills young people are developing such as skills for life and independence.

- Senior leaders and teachers have a good understanding of the progress individual young people make across the curriculum. They are developing a shared understanding of standards, helping them make more accurate professional judgements about how well young people succeed in their learning at the BGE. Senior leaders should continue to support teachers to build their confidence in making robust professional judgements within and across levels of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).
- Teachers are gradually improving their approaches to assessment and moderation within the school. All teachers participate in useful moderation activities with stage and pathway partners. Teachers use these moderation conversations well to consider young people's next steps in learning. In the senior phase, teachers engage in planned moderation activity with colleagues from other settings. Most teachers track the progress of young people effectively to inform and support their judgements around the achievement of a level and to plan future learning. As a result, senior leaders are increasingly able to monitor the progress of learners effectively across a range of cohorts. Most staff are able to identify young people who are underachieving and put in place interventions to support them with their learning.
- Teachers use newly developed core planners and project plans well to structure lessons around CfE experiences and outcomes, ensuring learning is relevant to their current cohort. In most classes, teachers use their knowledge of individual learners to make appropriate adjustments to planning. However, current planning approaches are not yet sufficiently detailed to formally record individual learning needs or to show clearly how learning will be differentiated. Staff use additional support plans (ASPs) and behaviour support plans well to share responsibility for supporting young people's targets in literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing across the wider curriculum. Senior leaders should continue to review planning approaches to ensure they include clear, planned differentiation and detailed strategies for supporting individual needs. This should include improving the clarity of ASPs to identify better young people's barriers to learning and wellbeing, and the agreed strategies in place to overcome these. This would help ensure all staff understand and apply agreed strategies to help young people succeed.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Senior leaders and staff recently reviewed and updated the curriculum. Their revised approach aims to develop and implement a curriculum based on skills for life, learning and work. The overarching project-based framework considers pupil voice alongside developing skills and knowledge. Course content across all curricular areas aims to promote young people taking responsibility for their learning and understanding the skills they are developing. There is an appropriate emphasis on implementing a relevant and progressive curriculum for all young people. Partners such as the educational psychologist, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, occupation therapists and third sector organisations provide input from their areas of expertise. This helps ensure all areas of the curriculum are based on sound skills and progressions.
- In the BGE and senior phase curriculum, including Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) and Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) courses, each curricular area is organised into five project headings of transitions, global citizenship, enterprise, health and wellbeing and services. The BGE and senior phase curriculum bundles CfE experiences and outcomes to help ensure that there is a breadth of offer and coverage of curriculum areas. Attainment aspiration for young people is to achieve a minimum of five National Qualifications course awards at SCQF 3 with more able learners challenged to attain SCQF 4 level. In complex learning classes, young people undertake personal achievement and transition awards at SCQF 1. Class teachers have ownership of project delivery models. Staff use the five organisers to determine the learning for young people on a particular day. While there is breadth of coverage, progression and an emphasis on relevance, there is a need, as planned, to review the learning pathways taking better account of the CfE organisers. The organisation of the curriculum is based on the day of the week, promoting relevance and interdisciplinary approaches across subjects. However, structuring learning based on the organisers and the day of the week is narrowing learning opportunities and impacting on coherence within the delivery of a number of subjects. Senior leaders and staff need to review the curriculum further and ensure it widens access, is responsive and refined to help improve outcomes for all young people.
- Staff implement an effective transition programme supported well by partners, associated primary schools, and parents, this helps most young people moving from primary school into Sanderson High School to settle successfully. A few children who need additional support benefit from well-planned enhanced transition activities from P5 onwards, this helps them adjust to school routines when it's time to move to the new school. All staff make the most of opportunities to develop young people's independent living skills in preparation for life after school. Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) is embedded across the curriculum and includes a planned range of internal and external work placements during the senior phase. A few young people continue these placements and move successfully into permanent employment. Principal teachers work closely with partners to expand opportunities for young people such as volunteering, ensuring DYW experiences are relevant and meaningful.
- Senior leaders and staff have developed well meaningful and progressive individual pathways for young people to maximise their attainment. A few young people are successfully gaining wider and higher levels of award in subjects such as mathematics and science by attending, with the relevant level of support, classes in the adjoining mainstream school.
- Almost all young people across the school benefit from two hours high quality physical education (PE). Staff need to continue to monitor and continuously review approaches for high quality PE for young people in the Complex Learning Department.

- Almost all young people across the school engage in a relevant and meaningful curriculum in religious and moral education (RME), and modern languages. The school has developed a total communication environment which includes the use of sign language to help support the communication needs of all young people across the school.
- The school does not have a school library. Each classroom has a small range of texts covering a range of text that are used to support learning. Young people access the community library at times to extend their understanding of texts in a community context. The school should develop further a wider range of texts and sensory base storytelling to meet better the needs of learners operating at the Milestones levels of learning.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents of young people in the supported base classes receive a range of helpful information about their child's day. This is done through paper-based diaries, tailored to the complex learning needs of the young people. In most other classes, parents receive communication on a need's basis through contact from middle leaders. This is usually via emails or phone calls sharing both challenges and positive developments. Most parents report that the school has acted well on information they have shared, leading to improved learning experiences at school and greater independence for young people at home.
- Parents are invited to participate in classroom visits and attend whole-school events such as assemblies and awards services. Staff use initiatives such as The Crafty Café well to bring parents together and develop their understanding of important issues such as guardianship and wellbeing support. Most parents find these events beneficial. A few parents are aware of the school's overall improvement journey. Almost all parents supported the curriculum changes aimed at making learning more relevant for young people. A minority of parents have already noticed positive impacts on their child's independence and life skills.
- Senior leaders should continue with plans to enhance parental engagement, ensuring parents have a meaningful role in decisions about their child's education. Additionally, parents would like more information about school initiatives that could benefit their child. To support this, staff should introduce a consistent, formalised approach to communication across the school. This will help all parents stay informed about what their child is learning and how they can support them effectively.

2.1 Safeguarding

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

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- Young people enjoy and benefit from positive relationships with staff and each other. There is a strong sense of community in the school based on children's rights. Almost all young people feel included, and that staff treat them with respect. Almost all young people feel that the school is helping them to lead a healthy lifestyle. Most young people understand the whole school approaches to promoting positive behaviour.
- Young people are familiar with the language of wellbeing. They can describe ways teachers help them to understand and promote their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. Principal teachers provide young people with effective guidance on pastoral, academic and career paths. Young people discuss wellbeing with the principal teachers on an ongoing basis. They engage in meaningful conversations which make a positive difference to young people's wellbeing and helps them feel valued as an individual.
- Senior leaders and principal teachers have revised and improved universal and targeted approaches for developing young people's skills in managing their emotions. Staff now apply a more consistent range of effective wellbeing strategies which are making a positive difference to young people's mental health. As a result, most young people are developing well their understanding of their social and emotional wellbeing. A minority of young people with high levels of dysregulated behaviour receive targeted support to help regulate their emotions. They can independently access a range of resources in the classroom and in dedicated areas to help regulate their emotional responses. This includes the MPN room and rebound therapy. Young people also used personalised strategies to help regulate their emotions such as movement breaks. The number of young people requiring to access resources and strategies to regulate their behaviour out of the classroom is declining. Most young people, when they feel the need to manage their emotions, are now more able to regulate themselves within the classroom and reengage with learning quickly.
- Senior leaders, principal teachers and staff place a high priority on developing young people's wellbeing. Almost all young people show appropriate levels of respect for each other and feel that they are treated with respect. Principal teachers deliver a relevant personal and social education (PSE) programme. This programme is influenced by young people's views on an ongoing basis and through biannual health and wellbeing surveys. Staff adopt bespoke arrangements to help individual young people to make healthy choices and develop their independence. Most young people benefit from these bespoke arrangements and personalised approaches that meet their needs well.

- A few young people access the ALL base full-time to receive intensive, targeted support for their complex additional support needs. They benefit from a high staff-to-young person ratio and a wide range of well-documented strategies to help manage their emotions and reduce levels of arousal. As a result, young people are becoming more regulated, forming stronger relationships with trusted staff, and showing improved attendance and behaviour. No exclusions have occurred this session, and the number of violent and disruptive incidents across the school is declining. Young people across the wider school report feeling safer in their classrooms, and staff feel better equipped to meet the learning needs of all pupils.
- Young people in ALL are making better progress in their learning and are involved in discussions about their progress. A few benefit from meaningful inclusion in other departments, such as PE and hospitality. While they are supported by a variety of anxiety-lowering strategies, including sensory breaks and calming activities, young people would benefit from developing further their awareness of these supports to use them more independently. The positive impact of the ALL base is evident in the improved wellbeing and engagement of its learners and in the calmer learning environment across the school. To ensure continued success, senior leaders should strengthen the coherence of the overarching vision, aims, and strategy for ALL. This includes providing clear written policies and more rigorous approaches to monitoring and tracking young people's wellbeing, behaviour and progress. Senior leaders need to review staffing levels in ALL to ensure there is equitable support across all departments in the wider school.
- Senior leaders, principal teachers and staff fulfil their statutory duties well. Almost all staff understand how to apply the school's procedures relating to child protection and safeguarding. There are appropriate risk assessments in place and almost all young people feel that the school helps them to feel safe. Senior leaders carefully track all young people's learning and wellbeing needs, including young people who are care experienced. They use information from additional support plans (ASP), behaviour support plans, cause for concerns and pastoral updates to track needs thoroughly. Staff are able to access up to date information and respond promptly to any young person's concerns with learning or their wellbeing. Senior leaders are continuing to improve further approaches to capturing and disseminating key information from a wide range of sources.
- In the last few years, the school has recorded a small number of exclusions. Staff have made positive changes through developing the school's physical environment. They have designed a bespoke unit and break out spaces, and developed the outdoor spaces. They have also created pastoral support bases to meet better the needs of a minority of young people who struggle to regulate their emotions. Staff have improved their ability to respond timely to support young people's needs. This has led to a reduced number of exclusions and decreasing incidents of significant challenging behaviour this session. For almost all young people, these changes have required adaptations to classes and timetables. Whilst most young people have coped well with this change, senior leaders should continue to ensure that all young people are supported to manage the new demands placed on them.
- Young people are involved appropriately in developing and reviewing their individualised plans. They have a voice in decisions about their learning and review their targets with school staff, on an ongoing basis. Their needs are understood, and their views are shared appropriately at key points in their learning and at review meetings with partners. Young people's involvement in the decision-making process supports them very well to access specialist services when required, improve their wellbeing and make appropriate progress in their learning.
- Almost all young people access two hours of high quality PE each week. They access the outdoor area during intervals, and a few use the astroturf area located on the campus grounds.

Young people enjoy being outdoors and can describe how this supports their wellbeing and keeps them healthy. A few young people choose to access the outdoors as a strategy to help them regulate their behaviour.

- Most young people are positive about the school's approach to antibullying. They benefit from learning about different types of bullying such as homophobic language. Staff recently attended professional learning on gender identity which is helping them support all young people to feel more included in school. Senior leaders should continue to develop a planned and progressive approach to develop young people's understanding of protected characteristics.
- Young people are developing well their own values and beliefs about themselves and others, supported by staff. They feel valued and benefit from inclusive approaches in place across the school. They know about discrimination. Young people demonstrate an understanding of other faiths and cultures through engaging in a RME programme and learning about celebrations and festivals.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

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

- Overall, attainment in literacy and English is good and attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good. Young people in the BGE are working at Milestones and up to second level experiences and outcomes of CfE. Most young people attain expected targets set within their ASPs and learning plans. A few young people are capable of achieving more and should be provided with further challenge in their learning.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Most young people are making good progress in literacy and English. A few young people are capable of working at higher levels. Across the BGE, young people make the most progress in talking and listening.

Listening and talking

- Most young people are making good progress in developing their communication and listening and talking skills. A few young people should be provided with further challenge and are capable of achieving more in developing their expressive language skills. Young people working at Milestones use a range of gestures, vocalisation, words and phrases to respond to familiar routines and engage in communication exchanges using their preferred methods of communication. Young people at early level use symbols, words and phrases well to respond to simple questions and can follow and give simple instructions. Young people at first and second levels respond to a range of questions showing understanding. They can contribute their ideas to a discussion, recognise the differences between fact and opinion, and can take notes, plan and organise presentations. Across the school, young people need more consistent support from staff to develop their talking skills. Staff should provide more opportunities for young people to use their skills to contribute more meaningfully in their learning and develop their talking and listening skills in a wider range of real life contexts. Young people who use alternative and augmentative communications (AACs) should have greater opportunities to develop their communication skills across the school day.

Reading

- Most young people are making good progress in developing their pre-reading and reading skills. At Milestones, young people engage and interact with sensory stories and show preferences for props and objects in a familiar story. At early level, young people recognise familiar words in texts and answer simple questions about ideas and events in a text. Most young people at first and second levels can decode unknown words, identify the main ideas of text and read with expression. They can offer their own ideas about a writer's message linking it to their own life experiences. A few young people enjoy using the school library. Teachers should support more young people to use digital tools to extend the range of texts available in class and across the school.

Writing

- Most young people are progressing well in developing their writing skills. Young people at Milestones and into early level are developing fine motor control, early writing skills, and handwriting by experimenting with different tools to create patterns and shape letters. At early level, young people form letters and construct simple sentences. Young people at first level are producing longer pieces of writing, applying grammar and punctuation correctly, and are able to take detailed notes. Teachers should support learners at Milestones and early level by encouraging creative self-expression through digital and alternative writing methods. This will support young people in develop greater confidence when sharing their thoughts and ideas using the communication tools that suit them best.

Attainment in numeracy

- Most young people are making good progress in their numeracy and mathematics. A few young people are capable of achieving more. Across the BGE, most young people make the best progress in money and number processes.

Number, money and measure

- Young people working at Milestones use familiar songs and number rhymes to recognise and sequence number. At early level, young people identify and recognise numbers within 20. They can use plus, minus and equals symbols appropriately to perform calculations and can identify coins up to £2. At first and second level, young people use correct mathematical vocabulary and carry out more complex calculations. They use knowledge of fractions and percentages to solve problems and can calculate accurate amounts of money up to £20. They can tell the time and use timetables and calendars to plan events. Young people can record measurements of length using a range of instruments. Young people need more opportunities to develop further their number and measurement skills in real-life contexts.

Shape, position and movement

- Young people working at Milestones take part in activities and games to build their awareness of shape, position and movement. At early level, young people use positional language and can recognise and sort common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. At first level, young people can use compass points and directional language and can identify a range of angles. At second level, young people use appropriate mathematical language to describe and classify angles and can find the radius and diameter of shapes.

Information handling

- At early and first levels, young people sort items using simple charts. They use tally charts and bar charts to organise information. Teachers should further develop ways for young people to collect and display data in more meaningful and relevant ways. For example, to gather pupil votes on trips. Displaying data in this way will better ensure that young people's development of information handling skills is more varied and progressive as they move through the school.

Attainment over time

- Most young people achieve attendance levels above the national average for the special sector. A few young people have lower attendance rates due to more complex wellbeing and healthcare needs. Senior leaders track attendance effectively. They work closely with families and partners to support young people to attend school regularly. This helps to minimise any disruption to young people's learning. A few young people are on part-time timetables. Senior leaders review these regularly and put in place, where possible, targeted

interventions to reintegrate young people into full-time education. These interventions often lead to improved attendance.

- In the BGE, most young people attain well over time across most curriculum areas. Senior leaders use a robust digital whole school tracker system effectively and can evidence that most young people make good progress from prior levels of learning.
- Since 2022, almost all young people have successfully gained a good number of National Qualifications awards at National 1 to National 4 in a range of subjects, including literacy, numeracy, expressive arts, languages, and health and wellbeing. A few young people are on track to achieve National 5 and Highers in sciences and mathematics this session.
- Since 2022, almost all young people have successfully moved on into positive and sustained destinations in employment, supported further education or college. Principal teachers effectively support young people in the senior phase to engage purposefully in work placements and attend local colleges. This is developing well young people's confidence to try new things and for many this leads to a sustained positive destination at college or in the workplace.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Across the school, young people's achievements are acknowledged and celebrated using the four capacities of CfE in formal and informal ways. This includes assemblies, praise postcard displays, posts on the #SandersonCan social media, and through rewards café and award ceremonies. Young people are rightly proud of their achievements and are beginning to see how their skills support them to develop important capacities such as being effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- In the senior phase, staff use their knowledge of each young person to match them with the most relevant learning experiences to develop their personal development skills. As a result, young people build important life and communication skills, such as learning to travel independently and engage in unfamiliar social situations. Senior leaders should continue to develop a planning for skills framework. This will help to determine how well young people have achieved skills and developed their attributes positively through participating in personal development activities. Senior leaders do not yet track young people's wider achievements robustly across the BGE. Senior leaders and staff should embed the skills strategy across the BGE, as planned. This will provide a more detailed overview of young people's achievements. Staff will be able to more clearly track and show the capacities and attributes all young people develop as they progress through the school.

Equity for All

- Senior leaders and staff have a good understanding of the additional support needs and socio-economic context of all young people including care experienced learners.
- Overall, senior leaders use PEF well to provide identified young people with one to one, and small group targeted sessions. The principal teachers of equity deliver targeted sessions in literacy and numeracy to close gaps for identified young people. They also work in partnership with external partners to deliver wellbeing support. Senior leaders monitor the effectiveness of PEF well. They can demonstrate that all identified young people have improved their outcomes since starting targeted interventions. Young people have clearly improved their reading, phonics and numeracy levels. Senior leaders should continue to monitor the effectiveness of PEF interventions and the impact they are having on closing the poverty related attainment gap.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland 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.