

# Summarised inspection findings

**Perth High School**

Perth and Kinross Council

22 January 2019

## Key contextual information

**School Name:** Perth High School  
**Council:** Perth and Kinross Council  
**SEED number:** 5351030  
**Roll (Sep 2015):** 1424

The senior leadership team (SLT) consists of the headteacher and four deputy headteachers. The headteacher has been in post for just over two years.

The school has experienced a period of considerable staffing changes over recent years.

The school is associated with twelve primary schools.

Attendance is generally in line with the national average in 2016/17.

The number of cases of exclusion was above the national figure in 2016/17.

In February 2017 4.9 per cent of pupils are registered for free school meals which is significantly below the national average.

In September 2017 4.1 per cent of pupils live in the 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland.

In September 2017 the school reported that 26 per cent of pupils have additional support needs.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

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

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
  - strategic planning for continuous improvement
  - implementing improvement and change
- 
- Staff continue to work to promote and establish a supportive, respectful environment and ethos in which all young people can flourish. They are raising the profile of the vision, values and aims through the creation of a 'Perth High School' tagline of #WeAREphs and ongoing school dialogue. The vision, values and aims have been developed recently with key stakeholders from across the school community. There is scope for staff and pupils to demonstrate the values more consistently through their interactions in and out with the classroom. This will help to ensure these are truly 'lived' across the school community. There is also scope for the vision, values and aims to be instrumental in driving continuous improvement at all levels.
  - The headteacher and depute headteachers provide supportive and consultative leadership, which is valued by middle leaders. They encourage and enable staff to lead aspects of the school's work, taking responsibility for specific aspects of improvement. This motivates staff well. Moving forward, senior leaders should ensure that all staff have a clearer sense of the school's key areas for improvement.
  - Senior leaders and middle leaders should prioritise working together to ensure that improvement priorities and initiatives are planned well, and informed by well-judged decision making and rigorous self-evaluation. Currently, the majority of departmental improvement plans align partly with the school improvement plan. However, they do not always reflect whole-school, local or national priorities, such as the development of employability skills for learners or the entitlements of the Career Education Standard (3-18). There is scope for senior leaders to ensure that planning across the school takes account of these priorities more coherently. Planning should also outline clear timelines for the achievement of targets. A recent example of successful improvement planning is in relation to the development of a Better Relationships Policy, which is beginning to result in improved relationships and experiences for young people across the school. Staff are continuing to develop their understanding of the school's context, and they are using data well to inform improvements. Their plans for the use of Pupil Equity Funding highlight appropriate interventions. These are beginning to lead to improved outcomes for young people.
  - The leadership team should seek the views of young people, parents and partners more regularly to inform change. Whilst a few departments are using young people's views well, this is not yet consistent across the school. Currently, less than half of young people agree or strongly agree that the school listens to their views and takes them into account.

- A number of staff across the school show commitment to enhancing their leadership skills. Staff across various departments provide a range of school activities, trips, and supported study opportunities for young people which leads to them developing a range of skills. Young people value the commitment of staff to do their best for them. There is headroom for young people's leadership skills to be developed and recognised more fully.
- To support staff in implementing improvement and change, there is a need for additional planned time to be allocated to professional learning. Staff in departments and across the school would benefit from engaging more often in reflection and self-evaluation activities to develop their understanding of current issues. The school should ensure that time allocated to whole-school professional learning is used appropriately to inform improvement. Staff speak positively about their involvement in a range of working groups, many of which are in the early stages of their work. These groups seek to improve experiences for young people.

## 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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

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

- The recently confirmed school values of ambition, respect and equity are beginning to have a positive influence on the experiences of young people. Relationships between young people and teachers are good overall and underpin an improved ethos in classrooms. This is being supported by the recently implemented Better Relationships Policy. The majority of young people enjoy their classroom experience and are keen to be involved in the learning process. In a few lessons learning is compromised by low-level disruption. To increase young people's motivation and extend their engagement in learning, teachers should ensure increased pace and challenge in lessons. In particular, activities and tasks should be tailored to match the needs and abilities of all learners appropriately. Senior leaders recognise that further focus is required to support staff in working collaboratively to develop effective approaches to differentiation and higher-order thinking skills.
- On a few occasions, young people are given the chance to take responsibility for aspects of their learning. They respond positively to this. They would welcome opportunities to work independently and in groups more regularly. In a few lessons, skilful questioning encourages deep learning and creative thinking. The majority of lessons are overly teacher-led and the learning is too passive. A significant number of learners say they do not have opportunities to influence what and how they learn. There is a need for the school to adopt a planned approach to allowing young people to engage further in discussions that focus on how learning and teaching can be improved. When opportunities are given to young people they respond maturely. For example, the Pupil Voice Curriculum Group successfully provoked the establishment of a politics course.
- The majority of young people think staff help them to understand and make progress with their work. Staff show commitment to helping young people secure positive outcomes. For example, in many curricular areas staff support young people beyond the classroom. However, overall, the quality of teaching across the school is too variable. In a few lessons assessment information is used effectively to plan and enhance learning for young people. Providing opportunities for collaborative learning and peer-assessment in more classes would enhance young people's learning considerably. In a few classes the purpose of learning is highlighted clearly and teachers ensure that young people understand the success criteria. This helps them to develop a better understanding of their learning. Staff should continue to develop strategies to ensure all young people are clear about their next steps in learning. In a few curricular areas personal learning plans are used effectively to support this.
- Teachers plan a range of tasks for young people. They need to extend the range of these tasks to motivate more young people to engage positively in their learning. In a few curriculum

areas, teachers make imaginative use of digital technologies to stimulate and support young people's learning, which is well-received. The planned appointment of Digital Leaders will assist teachers to develop their practice in this area. There is a need to extend the use of digital technologies to enable young people to benefit from more frequent interactive contexts for learning. They would also benefit from teachers placing increased focus on the development of skills for learning, life and work.

- The school is aware of the need to improve consistency in the learning experience of young people. Positive steps towards the realisation of this are being supported through the work of a staff working group. Currently, they are reviewing the school's learning, teaching and assessment policy. This will help to outline clearly the school's expectations in relation to what constitutes high-quality practice. It will also provide a reference point for the planning of appropriate professional learning for staff and ongoing self-evaluation activities.
- Within the broad general education (BGE), teachers use a range of assessment approaches to confirm and support young people's learning. The school is in the early stages of ensuring the reliability and validity of staff's judgment of young people's progress. Through their engagement in moderation activities staff's confidence in understanding assessment standards is increasing. Further professional learning focused on ensuring consistency in understanding Curriculum for Excellence levels and National Benchmarks will enhance this.
- Within the BGE, various approaches to the tracking and monitoring of young people's progress have been implemented in curricular areas. In a few cases these are leading to teachers having productive dialogue with young people about their progress and relevant targets for the future. Senior leaders should now work with staff to ensure a more consistent approach to tracking and monitoring across the BGE. A more consistent system is in place in the senior phase. This is helping teachers to support young people well through regular interventions.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The curriculum is reviewed regularly and aims to promote equity and achievement for young people in Perth High School. Senior leaders are engaging with staff, young people, and more recently parents, to discuss possible improvements to the curriculum.
- In S1 and S2 the curriculum is designed as a common course for almost all learners. Young people experience a broad general education with learning across all curriculum areas. There are currently no interdisciplinary learning opportunities to support young people to make connections in their learning in new and challenging contexts. Young people make choices at the end of S2 for specialisation, taking forward courses which will lead to qualifications in S4. S3 does not provide all young people with their entitlement to breadth of learning across all curriculum areas. The work in Enterprise and Innovation attempts to provide young people in S3 with project-based learning in curriculum areas where they have not chosen a subject. However, this does not always provide a progressive learning experience and is not designed using experiences and outcomes. In reviewing the curriculum, account should be taken of all the design principles. The project-based learning could provide a useful context for further exploring some of the principles such as depth and coherence.
- During S3, the focus shifts to National Qualifications. Where young people continue to learn at fourth level there are opportunities to provide depth and challenge to the learning pathways. The school needs to continue to review the S3 learning experience to ensure that all young people continue to experience a broad general education until the end of S3. Learning pathways need to meet the needs of all young people. This includes those requiring more challenge and depth in aspects of their learning to enable them progress to courses leading to SCQF level 5 and 6 qualifications in the senior phase. Others require opportunities to consolidate areas of their learning before moving into the senior phase and qualifications.
- Young people make choices at several points in their learning pathways. Support for making the best choices is provided through individual meetings with guidance teachers. Before making choices for S3, learners would benefit from having more information about their progress, including whether they have achieved third level or fourth level. Staff need to ensure there is reliable assessment evidence across a young person's learning before they make choices for courses and qualifications. A better understanding at an earlier stage of the possible pathways through and beyond school would also help inform decisions.
- Senior leaders have a good overview of the curriculum with particular emphasis on Developing the Young Workforce (DYW). Work is underway to place more emphasis on skills development in lessons across the curriculum. Staff need a better shared understanding of the Career Education Standard and its role in helping all young people understand and articulate their skills.
- From S4 to S6, the school provides, along with partners, a commendable variety of learning pathways for young people. There is a wide range of courses leading to National Qualifications and other accreditation. This includes National Progression Awards at different SCQF levels, Foundation Apprenticeships and Skills for Work Courses. The school is responsive to young people's requests and makes good efforts to meet as many as possible.
- The range of opportunities in the senior phase includes courses provided in partnership with Perth College, community learning and development and the City Campus of neighbouring schools. The school works well with the local college to offer an increasing variety of learning

pathways in the senior phase. These include SCQF level 6 courses, apprenticeships and vocationally relevant courses. Also included are an increasing range of infill opportunities for young people to access a wider range of college courses. This is reducing the disruption to their school attendance and enhancing learning pathways. As yet, the opportunity to engage young people in wider choices which are available is not promoted well through course choice booklets. Staff, pupils and parents are not always knowledgeable about the SCQF level for each course.

- The school has a clear focus on securing positive destinations for all young people and has engaged with a variety of partners to deliver programmes to meet the needs of young people. Young people who are not sitting examinations have the opportunity to undertake two weeks work experience. In 2016/17, 25 S6 pupils participated in a flexible work experience programme. In 2018 a few senior pupils were partnered with a business mentor for 18 months. They undertake Master Classes over the period and are given a paid internship. They develop a wide range of skills and an understanding of the business environment.
- My World of Work (WoW) registrations for the school are above the Scottish average but below the Perth and Kinross average. However, some young people report that they are not using the platform to identify local career opportunities, develop CVs or analyse and profile their skills. The school has recently reviewed its plans to work with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) on the rejuvenation of the MyWoW Ambassador programme.
- Careers Advisors from SDS engage with young people in a number of settings including group work, and individual coaching sessions. Young people have good access to advice and guidance to assist them in making informed choices about their next steps in learning or employment. However, young people do not have sufficient awareness of their career management skills (CMS) and how these will help them to enter and sustain a positive destination. This is contributing to an over-reliance on staff when making decisions about next steps.
- Perth High School is engaged with a wide range of employer partners with identified connections at departmental level. These arrangements work well to widen young people's understanding of the relevance of their learning and to support informed choices about their future pathways.
- The school offers a wide range of opportunities for young people to gain wider achievement awards, such as Duke of Edinburgh, John Muir, Sports Leaders and Saltire Awards. The school is also involved in a number of projects to support wider achievement. Many of the projects engage with the wider community and provide opportunities for intergenerational links.

## Literacy

- Assessment of literacy in the BGE takes place in the English department. The work of the recently formed literacy group is at an early stage. A clear strategy needs to be devised to develop a coherent and consistent approach to the teaching and assessment of literacy skills across learning. Developments from previous sessions will provide a useful foundation to create a strategic approach to assessing, tracking and monitoring attainment in literacy across the curriculum. Plans need to be put in place to ensure that staff have a shared understanding of their responsibility in developing these skills, and of the expected standards set out in the National Benchmarks.

## Numeracy

---



- Regular assessment of numeracy in the BGE takes place in the maths department. Staff recognise the importance of developing a strategic approach to teaching and assessing numeracy across the curriculum. The numeracy group needs to develop work from previous sessions to promote consistent approaches to teaching and assessing aspects of numeracy across the school. The school needs to use the National Benchmarks to create a progressive skills framework for the development of numeracy in consultation with appropriate curricular areas.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- See Choice QI

## 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

satisfactory

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

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- The school's approach to wellbeing is rooted in promoting positive relationships. There is a clear plan for taking this forward through the work on the Better Relationships Policy and PHS behaviour blueprint. This is beginning to improve clarity, communication and consistency of approach in understanding the importance of developing positive relationships with young people. There is emerging evidence that the revised approach is resulting in fewer behavioural incidents with more young people being included in classes. In classes, most young people experience positive relationships with most of their teachers which is supporting them to achieve. For a minority of young people, interactions with staff and peers are not always based on the school's core value of respect. This is particularly evident outwith the classroom. Senior leaders and the new working group are well placed to improve practice in this area through the wider context of creating a more inclusive ethos and culture.
- The school is in the early stages of developing a shared understanding of wellbeing amongst young people and staff. Extending the use of the wellbeing indicators will support all young people to reflect on their progress in being safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included. In addition, it will allow senior leaders and pupil support staff to consider and demonstrate improved outcomes for young people more easily. Adaptations to pupil support documentation such as the 'SHANARRI sweep' and PSE programmes and courses are beginning to help staff to have a more consistent focus on wellbeing. The wellbeing indicators are used effectively for young people who have support plans.
- Young people would benefit from regular opportunities to discuss their wellbeing, learning, achievements and set appropriate targets through a whole-school approach to the delivery of universal support entitlements. The use of personal support time, as part of the provision of universal support, should be reviewed and improved. There is a need to further develop the understanding of all staff in promoting health and wellbeing. This is a responsibility of all. This will support young people to develop their confidence about themselves and feel listened to.
- Young people requiring additional support have their needs identified well. The school is skilled at gathering information and identifying needs with associated primary schools and specialist services and staff. Support for learning staff share relevant information to support the planning for, and progress of, learners with additional support needs. The attainment of young people identified as requiring additional support is lower than young people with similar characteristics across Scotland. Across the school, staff need to develop skills in using the identified strategies and approaches to differentiation to better meet the needs of young people. Increased pace and challenge in learning should improve the progress and

achievement of all learners. The new principal teacher of support for learning is well-placed to play a strategic role in building the capacity of all staff in meeting the range of needs of young people. For those young people who have support plans, targets could be more focused on measurable outcomes. There is evidence of targets being monitored and evaluated over time. This needs to be a more consistent feature for all young people. Consideration needs to be given as to whether care-experienced young people meet the requirements for having a co-ordinated support plan.

- A staged intervention process has been established to facilitate more effective information sharing for young people who require a co-ordinated and coherent package of support. The School Support Team (SST) regularly discuss young people's barriers to learning and they seek to put measures in place to meet their needs. A number of targeted interventions have been introduced that are resulting in young people re-engaging more successfully in their learning. For example, young people are benefiting from accessing appropriate curricular support through provision in the Hub.
- Senior leaders recognise the need to put more robust arrangements in place to improve attendance and reduce late-coming and truancy. A whole school systematic approach is required with clear expectations on the importance of punctuality and attendance leading to successful learning and wellbeing. All staff should be clear on their roles and responsibilities in taking forward this important area for improvement.
- Action has been taken to reduce the number of exclusions which remain higher than the national average. The introduction of electronic messaging has improved communication with parents and this has been positively received. The newly established resource, The Link, provides young people with social and emotional support. Young people are encouraged to reflect, restore and re-engage as a means of supporting them to make better choices and act more responsibly. It is important that senior leaders keep the legal entitlement to 27.5 hours of full time education under review for those young people who are on part-time timetables.
- A minority of young people who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire say that the school are good at deal with bullying. The school needs to work with young people who have concerns to gain a better understanding of the perceived bullying issues and how they are impacting on their learning and wellbeing. Young people should be fully involved in the further development of the draft anti-bullying policy. Anti-bullying interventions should be viewed within the wider context of a positive ethos and culture.
- Pupil support staff are working to strengthen house identity so that young people feel valued, have a sense of belonging and have a sense of pride in their school. In taking forward, "#weAREphs", opportunities should be provided for all young people to explore issues related to equalities and diversity. This will support them to respect and value differences which reflect society.

### 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

satisfactory

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

#### Broad general education

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy has been collated by the school over the past three years. Evidence from the school for 2016/17 shows the majority of young people attaining third curriculum level in reading, writing, and numeracy by the end of S3 and most young people attaining third curriculum level in listening and talking. The school is not yet in a position to determine the percentage of young people attaining fourth curriculum level by the end of S3.
- The school is in the early stages of engaging in moderation activities. There is scope for school leaders and teachers to participate more widely in these activities, in the school, cluster and local authority. This will help them to understand more clearly what it means to 'achieve a level'. It will also develop their confidence in assessing young people's progress and lead to greater reliability in the school's attainment data.

#### Senior phase: Leavers

- **Literacy:** By the time of leaving school, young people's attainment in literacy has been broadly in line with the virtual comparator (VC) for the last five years. Almost all young people leave school with SCQF level 4 or better in literacy. The percentage of young people leaving school achieving SCQF levels 5 or better, including as part of a course, and level 6 increased steadily from 2012/13 to 2015/16. There has been a dip in the percentage achieving SCQF level 3 or better to SCQF level 6 in the most recent year.
- **Numeracy:** By the time of leaving school, attainment in numeracy has been broadly in line with the VC at SCQF levels 3 or better for the last five years. Most young people leave school with SCQF level 4 or better in numeracy. The percentage of leavers attaining SCQF level 4 or better was significantly much lower than the VC in the latest year. The percentage of young people attaining SCQF level 5 or better has been significantly lower than the VC in three of the last five years. There is some variation in the attainment of literacy and numeracy for different cohorts.
- The number of young people leaving school at the end of S4 has increased considerably, from 17 leavers in 2015/16 to 42 leavers in 2016/17. The number of young people leaving school at the end of S5 has also increased considerably in the latest year, from 57 to 87. The school reports that many of these leavers go on to attend college.

## As young people move through the senior phase

- **Literacy:** In **S4**, there has been variation in the percentage of young people attaining literacy at SCQF level 4 or better. This has been in line with the VC for four of the last five years, and was significantly higher than the VC in 2015/16. The percentage attaining this level as part of a course award has remained steady. The percentage of young people attaining SCQF level 5 or better, including as part of a course, is in line with the VC. In **S5**, there is an improving trend in the percentage of young people (of the S5 roll) attaining SCQF level 5 or better over the five-year period, including at course level. In **S6**, the percentage of young people (of the S6 roll) attaining SCQF level 5 or better and SCQF level 6 is in line with the VC.
- **Numeracy:** In **S4**, most young people attain numeracy at SCQF level 4 or better and the school is broadly in line with the VC. In four of the past five years, including the most recent year, most young people have attained SCQF level 4 or better as part of a course. The majority of young people attain SCQF level 5 or better. This is not reflected at course level. In **S5**, the percentage of young people (of the S5 roll) attaining SCQF level 5 or better has improved over the past five years and the school performs in line with the VC. In **S6**, the percentage of young people (of the S6 roll) attaining SCQF level 5 or better has improved over the last five years. There is also an improving trend at SCQF level 6.

## Attainment over time

### ■ BGE

Senior leaders are aware of the need to develop a consistent whole-school approach to tracking and monitoring children's progress in the BGE. This will enable them to gain a better overview of progress, as well as how assessment is used to support progress, across all curriculum areas. Currently, a variety of 'tracking and monitoring approaches' are used across the school. These vary considerably in terms of their use and effectiveness.

### ■ Senior phase

The school has a comprehensive tracking and monitoring system for the senior phase. This enables teachers to collate a range of information related to young people's attainment and progress, including interventions which are used to support them. It is used by staff to ensure that the needs of all young people are reviewed, addressed and met regularly to help them achieve success in their learning.

- The average total tariff scores for the lowest attaining 20% of leavers are in line with the VC for three of the last five years. It is significantly lower than the VC in the latest year. The average total tariff scores for the middle attaining 60% and the highest attaining 20% of leavers are in line with the VC in four of the last five years. They were significantly higher and significantly much higher than the VC in 2012/13. Overall, there has been a decline in the total tariff scores for all leavers in the latest year.

## Breadth and depth

- There is an increasing range of pathways in the senior phase. This is helping all young people to engage in learning which is of interest to them.
- Senior leaders highlight that the school has undergone a challenging period over recent years. This has been as a result of considerable staffing changes, poor attendance-tracking procedures and a number of incidents of poor pupil behaviour. This, along with increased

numbers of young people leaving school at the end of S4 and S5, will have had some impact on the school's breadth and depth data.

- **In S4**, the percentage of young people attaining one or more to five or more courses at SCQF level 4 or better shows some variability over the past five years. There has been a downwards trend in young people attaining seven or more courses over the five-year period. In 2016/17, the percentage of young people attaining five or more courses at SCQF level 4 or better is significantly lower than the VC. The percentage of young people attaining one or more to seven or more courses at SCQF level 5C or better is in line with the VC. There has been a decline in the percentage of young people attaining three or more to seven or more courses in the latest year.
- **By S5**, the percentage of young people attaining one or more to five or more courses at SCQF level 5C or better is broadly in line with the VC for the five-year period. In the latest year, the percentage of young people attaining one or more to three or more courses at this level has fallen to significantly lower than the VC. The percentage of young people attaining one or more to five or more courses at SCQF level 6C or better is broadly in line with the VC. The percentage of young people attaining one or more to three or more courses at this level in 2016/17 is significantly lower than the VC.
- **By S6**, the percentage of young people attaining one or more to five or more courses at SCQF level 5C or better is broadly in line with the VC with no improving trends. The percentage of young people achieving one or more to five or more courses at SCQF level 5A or better has declined in the last year. The percentage of young people attaining one or more to five or more courses at SCQF level 6C or better is in line with the VC, with the exception of two or more and three or more courses in 2017/18. This is significantly lower than the VC. In the latest year, there has been a decline in the percentage of young people attaining one or more to five or more courses at SCQF level 6C or better.
- **In S4**, for 2017/18, the percentages of passes for those presented at N4 are significantly lower than the national figures in applications of maths, and history. They are significantly higher than the national figures in biology and design and manufacture. At N5, the percentages of passes are significantly lower than the national figures in biology, business management, history, and hospitality: practical cookery.
- **In S5/6**, for 2017/18, the percentage of A – C passes for those presented at N5 is significantly lower than the national figure in English. The percentages of A – C passes for those presented at Higher are significantly lower than the national figures in media, history, drama and mathematics. They are significantly higher than the national figures in computing science, graphic communication and sociology.

### Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Young people across the school have a variety of opportunities to achieve and develop a range of skills. These include after-school and lunch-time clubs in music and sports, and a very proactive and successful chaplaincy group. Sports Ambassadors have a key role now in involving more young people in sports clubs and groups. Young people's achievements are recognised through various awards, including Duke of Edinburgh, John Muir and Saltire. Skills developed include team building, better communication, leadership, collaboration and



confidence. The school celebrates achievements regularly through articles in the newsletter and displays across the school. This helps young people feel valued. There is scope for the school to help young people to develop a better understanding of the skills they are acquiring and to ensure that skills are taken into account effectively when young people are considering their learning pathways. More effective tracking of those not participating would help to ensure the achievement offer is consistent across the school.

- Increasing numbers of young people volunteer in school and the local community. The Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) engages young people successfully in charity work and volunteering. Some innovative projects such as Cycling Without Age is contributing to reducing social isolation in older people. As a result of YPI, a few young people are increasing awareness about wider societal issues such as mental health and dementia. Young people are also involved in a range of charity work, raising considerable sums of money for deserving national and international causes. This demonstrates their compassion, and awareness of the needs of others, as well as the development of their creativity and entrepreneurship skills. This also helps the school to develop its links with the wider community. Young people in the senior school gain leadership awards as part of Women of the World and Challenge to Change initiatives. They feel well supported by the school to organise new groups such as the Rock Challenge which involves over 60 young people.
- Young people are given some responsibility for aspects of their learning as they move up the school. They add value to their achievements as house captains and sports captains. There is good engagement with the Chaplaincy team and 23 young people are now leading assemblies. This is helping to ensure that assemblies are more relevant and reflective of societal issues. The school has some knowledge of young people's out-of-school learning although this could be better linked to the development of skills.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Attainment vs deprivation: 4.1% of pupils on the school roll in September 2017 live in SIMD deciles 1 and 2 with a further 3.0% living in SIMD decile 3. In the latest year, average total tariff scores for leavers living in deciles 1 and 2 were significantly lower than those living in similar deciles elsewhere nationally.
- Destinations: In the five-year period from 2012/13 to 2016/17, almost all young people move to a positive destination on leaving school. The school has been in line with its VC for this measure for four of the last five years, including the latest year. There has been an increase in the latest year in the percentage of young people going to further education.

## Choice of QI: 2.7 Partnerships

This indicator aims to capture the school's success in developing and maintaining strong partnership approaches which improve outcomes for learners and continued self-improvement for the school and community. All partnerships are based on mutual trust and respect for the particular contribution each partner brings. Partnerships are integral to the way a highly-effective school works.

- The development and promotion of partnerships
- Collaborative learning and improvement
- Impact on learners

- A growing number of partnerships with local, national and international organisations and businesses have increased the range of learning experiences from which young people can benefit. Community links are becoming a recognised aspect of the life and work of the school whilst the school's positive profile within the business and third sector sectors continues to grow. The school is supported effectively by a small number of Business Ambassadors, who meet with staff and young people at Business Breakfasts. They provide a useful sounding board in strategic discussions related to school planning.
- Young people's understanding about the world of work is developing through a range of activities, including mentoring and business links with curricular areas. These learning experiences demonstrate senior leaders' understanding of the importance of using partners in curriculum delivery to enhance young people's experiences. For example, working with the National Theatre, the drama department provides opportunities for young people to visit theatres and put on productions. This motivates them considerably in their learning. Partnerships are also developed well with other local schools. These include the Women of The World and Challenge to Change programmes, the latter presenting nationally at the Scottish Learning Festival.
- Senior leaders work well with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) staff to negotiate and agree the School Partnership Agreement annually. Two review periods are identified to ensure the provision meets young people's needs effectively on an ongoing basis. SDS delivers the service offer to the school and undertakes one-to-one coaching sessions to support the development of Career Management Skills (CMS). In addition, a considerable number of young people benefit from the strong relationship that the school enjoys with Perth College. The college supports senior phase pathways and broadening course choice at SCQF levels 4-6.
- Health and Wellbeing partners, working well with the School Support Team (SST), provide effective interventions for individual young people. Local Community Learning Development staff respond to issues identified by the school such as Child Sexual Exploitation, delivering group and individual programmes as appropriate. Both parents and associated primary school partners confirm the value of both universal and targeted pastoral support offered through the formal transition programme.
- The school should now focus on ensuring that all partners understand their roles and responsibilities clearly. This will help them to develop a shared understanding about the purpose of partnership working and the importance of achieving agreed planned outcomes.

- The school is working effectively to involve parents as key stakeholders in its processes for planning for improvement. In response to parental feedback from consultation, a number of changes have been introduced including the format and content of parents' evenings. Senior leaders are keen to support greater parental engagement. Recently, the school hosted a successful S1 curricular evening, 'Meet the Parents', and a study-skills workshop for S4. It has also introduced new reporting procedures. A few parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire confirm the success of these events in increasing their confidence in supporting their children's learning effectively. However, improving communication more widely is an important area for development across the whole school, between all stakeholders. The school is at an early stage in developing its approaches to family learning.
- Staff work closely with partners to provide opportunities for young people. Recently, a project offered by the Modern Studies department enabled young people who require additional support in their learning to fundraise for two local charities, Perth Foodbank and the Alzheimer's Society. Through this work they gained a SCQF Level 3 People and Society Award. Moving forward, the school should consider how best to incorporate these projects into the curriculum in a more structured and planned way to support young people's development of skills for life, learning and work progressively.
- Formal accreditation is gained through opportunities provided by a range of strong partnerships including with the Active Schools team. Through this work, a wide range of clubs and activities are led well by school staff, parents and young people themselves.
- Working closely with members of the guidance team, the DYW co-ordinator's specific focus on securing opportunities in the work place for individual young people at risk of disengaging has led to successful employment in some cases. This has matched young people's aspirations. The school now needs to secure a wider offer for increased numbers of young people.
- A coherent whole school approach to partnership working now needs to be developed, with the impact of partnership working on pupil wellbeing, attainment and achievement being fully evaluated to inform future planning.

## 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.

## **Education Scotland**

Denholm House  
Almondvale Business Park  
Almondvale Way  
Livingston  
EH54 6GA

T: 44(0)131 244 4330  
E: [enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk)  
W: [www.educationscotland.gov.uk](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk)

© Crown Copyright, 2018

You may re-use this information (excluding images and logos) free of charge in any format or medium under the terms of the Open Government Licence providing that it is reproduced accurately and not in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Education Scotland copyright and the document title specified.

To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence> or email [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

Where we have identified any third party copyright information, you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.