

# Summarised inspection findings

**Park Mains High School**

Renfrewshire Council

24 January 2023

## Key contextual information

School Name      Park Mains High School  
Council:          Renfrewshire  
SEED number:    8627932  
Roll:              1426

Attendance is general in line with the national average but has been impacted negatively by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Exclusions are generally in line with the national average but shows an increasing trend.

In February 2022 7.4 per cent of pupils were registered for free school meals.  
In September 2021 1.5 per cent of pupils live in 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.  
In September 2021 the school reported that 32.8 per cent of pupils had additional support needs.

Park Mains High School is situated in Erskine, Renfrewshire. The school roll is currently 1426 young people. The headteacher has been in post since August 2021 and is supported by five deputy headteachers. There has been recent restructuring across leadership teams and a few departments, including the pastoral team. Learning was disrupted significantly during the pandemic because of learner and staff absences.

### 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

- Almost all staff work well together to create a positive and respectful learning environment for young people. This is underpinned by the school's Promoting Positive Relationships policy and the Learning and Teaching policy. Staff and young people are proud of the quality of relationships across the school. Almost all stakeholders report a positive change in the school culture over the past year. There is a small minority of young people who display behaviours across the school that affect the learning and wellbeing of others. Most staff feel that the school culture is successfully motivating almost all young people to participate well in their learning.
- Across the school there are examples of strong practice in learning and teaching. Where these are most effective, young people engage in learning that is creative, active, challenging, and well-paced. Senior leaders have correctly identified learning and teaching as a key priority in the school improvement plan. Maintaining this focus on high-quality learning and teaching will help to ensure that all learners can experience learning and teaching that is set at an appropriate pace and level of challenge in all lessons.
- A minority of lessons are overly teacher led. This reduces opportunities for children to lead their own learning and to progress at a level that is most appropriate for them. It also leads to a

minority of young people being too passive in their learning. In most lessons, teachers provide clear instructions and explanations and they check young people's understanding through questioning. They now need to use questioning more effectively to develop young people's higher order thinking skills. Most young people recognise that the feedback they receive on their learning helps them to make progress.

- Most teachers use lesson planning sheets to share with young people the purpose of their learning and how young people can demonstrate success. Increasingly, this practice is helping young people to reflect on their learning more consistently. A next step for teachers will be to apply greater consistency to the detail and quality of their lesson planning to enable all young people to influence what and how they learn. The 'Leaders of Learning' should continue to build on the very positive start made across the school in developing a consistent language of learning. Along with senior leaders and staff, they should also continue, as planned, to develop and share high-quality practice in learning and teaching throughout the school.
- Teachers use appropriate plans to meet the needs of most learners by providing suitable tasks. They should now place increased focus on improving the quality of young people's learning experiences through developing young people's skills as well as their knowledge and understanding. This will help to meet all learners' needs more effectively across the curriculum.
- Young people undertake a range of assessments. Teachers should continue to develop opportunities for young people to take part more regularly in peer and self-assessment using agreed criteria to evaluate success. This will help them to identify more easily their strengths and next steps. Most teachers use learning conversations to allow young people to discuss their learning. Learning conversations should now be extended across all curriculum areas more consistently.
- All departments are developing approaches to track young people's progress in the Broad General Education (BGE). In line with practice across the senior phase, senior and middle leaders should now collate and analyse tracking and monitoring data more effectively. This will support them to plan timely interventions for young people across the BGE. Teachers use tracking and monitoring well in the senior phase to set aspirational attainment targets for young people to help ensure improved outcomes. The majority of parents say they receive helpful, regular feedback across the school about how their child is learning and developing.
- Senior leaders should continue to prioritise the moderation of young people's work with teachers in the associated primary schools. Over time, this will help more young people to experience improved progression in their learning at times of transition.

## 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

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

## 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

### Attainment in literacy and numeracy

#### BGE

- In 2021, almost all young people achieved curriculum for excellence third level or better in literacy and numeracy by the end of S3. Most young people achieved fourth curriculum for excellence level in literacy and most achieved this in numeracy in 2021. Teachers across the school have recently focused on moderation and assessment of learners' progression through Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. As a result, they are confident in their professional judgements.

#### Senior Phase

##### Leavers

##### Literacy

- In 2021 and the previous four years, almost all young people left school with Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 5 or better in literacy. Attainment at this level is significantly higher than the Virtual Comparator (VC) in 2020 and 2021. In 2022, most young people in S4 and S5 attained SCQF level 5 or better. In S5, this was higher than the VC.

##### Numeracy

- Most young people left school with SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy in 2020 and 2021. While this was significantly lower than the VC, in 2022 most young people attained SCQF level 5 at S4 and S5. This is higher than the VC. A minority of young people left school with numeracy at SCQF level 6 in 2021, in line with the VC.
- Senior leaders acknowledge the need to build on recent improvements in mathematics to support sustained improvement in young people's attainment in numeracy. Staff in the mathematics department are developing pathways to meet the needs of all learners better. There is early evidence of the positive impact of these pathways in improved performance at SCQF level 5.

#### Cohorts

##### Literacy

- At S4, most young people attained SCQF level 5 or better in literacy in 2022. This is in line with the VC. By S5, as a percentage of the S4 roll, the majority of young people attained SCQF level 6 in literacy in 2022, in line with the VC. By S6, as a percentage of the S4 roll, the majority of young people attain SCQF level 6, which is in line with the VC in 2022.

##### Numeracy

- At S4, most young people attained SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy in 2022, which is significantly higher than the VC. By S5, based on the S4 roll, most young people attained SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy in 2022, which is in line with the VC. A minority of young people attained SCQF level 6 in the past five years, which is in line with the VC. By S6, based on the S4 roll, a minority of young people attain SCQF level 6 in numeracy.

### **Attainment over time**

- By the end of S3, most young people are achieving third CfE level or better in most curriculum areas other than literacy and English, and numeracy and Mathematics. These standards have been maintained over time.
- Most staff are becoming increasingly confident in using assessment evidence to make professional judgements about learners' progress. There are different approaches to tracking progress in the BGE across different curriculum areas. Senior and middle leaders should consider the benefits of having a more consistent approach across the school.

### **Senior phase**

- The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is aware of the need to review the curriculum model to ensure the needs and aspirations of all learners continue to be met. This is resulting in the development of a range curriculum pathways to ensure that all young people make appropriate progress in their learning. As the range of pathways develops, the SLT will need to ensure that all options remain well focused on a clear assessment of the needs and capacities learners. This will support the development of progressive pathways to maximise the potential of all learners.
- Average complementary tariff score (leavers) in middle 60% in 2020/21 is much lower than the VC. Performance in the highest 20% in 2020/21 is lower than the VC. Staff are aware of the need to improve performance and have targeted the least performing 10% of learners among the middle 60%. There is early evidence of a positive impact from this. Senior leaders also regularly discuss with middle leaders how learners can be best supported to gain a higher percentage of A and B passes in national qualifications. Middle leaders should now increase their efforts in this area.
- Teachers have increased the number of tracking periods to five in the session. This is welcomed by young people who feel better supported to meet targets through more regular learning conversations. Young people also report that year heads know them and motivate them well. Senior leaders should ensure that the recent re-structuring of the pastoral team results in increasingly co-ordinated support for young people to achieve to their potential.

### **Breadth and depth**

- In S4, the majority of young people attained five or more courses at SCQF level 5 or better from 2018 to 2022. The percentages of young people attaining at these levels are broadly in line with the VC. At SCQF level 5A or better the percentages of young people attaining five or more courses are broadly in line with the VC from 2019 to 2022.
- By S5, the majority of young people attained five or more courses at SCQF level 5C or better from 2018 to 2022. The percentages of young people attaining at this level is line with the VC. A minority of young people attained five or more courses at SCQF level 5A or better from 2018 to 2022. The percentages of young people attaining five or more courses at this level are broadly in line with the VC but was lower than the VC in 2022. A minority of young people attained five or more courses at SCQF level 6C or better from 2018 to 2022. This is in line with the VC over the last three years. A minority of young people attained three or more

courses at SCQF level 6A or better. The percentages of young people attaining at this level have improved to being in line with the VC in 2022.

- By S6, the majority of young people attained three or more qualifications at SCQF level 6C or better from 2020 to 2022. The percentages of young people attaining at this level is in line with the VC. A minority of young people attained three or more qualifications at SCQF level 6A or better. The percentages of young people attaining at this level show signs of improvement from 2018 to 2022. The percentage is in line with the VC in the last year. The percentages of young people attaining one or more to three or more qualifications at SCQF level 7C are broadly in line with the VC in most years.

### **Overall quality of learners' achievement**

- Young people are developing a wide range of skills and attributes through achievements in many areas across arts, sports, volunteering, charity work, leadership, business and employability. A number of young people are also benefiting from formal accreditation in these areas through national awards. Staff across the school contribute to the Aspire programme to support young people in S1 and S2 develop skills in leadership and learning. This enables young people to undertake Duke of Edinburgh qualifications from S3. Achievements are celebrated well through the school website, social media channels, newsletters and formal awards ceremonies. Staff and young people also produce a review video of the school year for parents and pupils.
- Young people demonstrate strong leadership and citizenship skills through participation in volunteering and through leading a variety of charity initiatives. This enables them to raise money and develop empathy and understanding in relation to a range of social issues. Learners across the school demonstrate their confidence in presenting and performing at events or competing in sport at various levels. They increase their employability skills through their work with a wide range of business partners. Most young people contribute positively to the school community and work to support its aspirational culture.
- Senior leaders track the achievements of young people in and out of school. They use this information to identify opportunities to meet the aspirations of young people. They also target particular young people to ensure that they benefit from the range of achievements. Senior leaders are aware of the need to develop a strategic overview of achievement linked to a more detailed tracking of skills development. To do this, they have developed an achievement recognition system and skills framework which is ready to be implemented.

### **Equity for all learners**

- The school is effective in identifying the most disadvantaged young people or those who are experiencing other barriers to learning. These learners are targeted for extra support from all staff wherever possible. Support for Learning staff have worked well with learners identified as vulnerable to deliver bespoke units focusing on literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, employability, enterprise and citizenship and thinking skills. Teachers have identified gaps in learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic and have worked with P7 transition teachers to create a bespoke 'Pathways' class. This supports S1 pupils at early level in literacy and numeracy to build their skills in a small group setting. As a result, young people are making good progress in literacy across the school with emerging improvements in numeracy.
- The majority of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) supports the staffing of Project Leader posts in literacy, numeracy, attendance, inclusion, promoting positive behaviour, employability and health and wellbeing. There is provision of a study café for all young people which provides hot food and drinks, school uniform and packs of essential resources for learning. This is

effective in motivating greater numbers of targeted young people to engage with additional support in their learning. Teachers use this time to focus on dialogue around clear targets for learning. Consequently, young people across the senior phase demonstrate a good understanding of their individual learning targets and how they can achieve these.

- Young people perform in line with the VC across all Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles except in deciles 4 and 6, where performance is higher than the national average and in decile 10 where it is lower.
- Almost all young people leaving school from 2017 to 2021 moved to a positive destination, in line with the VC.



## 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.