

Summarised inspection findings

Alford Academy

Aberdeenshire Council

21 March 2023

Key contextual information

School name	Alford Academy
Council:	Aberdeenshire Council
SEED number:	5230934
Roll (2021):	711

Alford Academy is a six-year non-denominational secondary school located in the Donside village of Alford. The rural catchment area of approximately 600 square miles stretches from Echt in the east to Corgarff in the west. There are 13 associated primary schools.

The headteacher has been in post since August 2021. She is usually supported by three deputy headteachers (DHTs). Currently the headteacher is supported by the business manager, one substantive DHT and one acting DHT. The third substantive DHT is newly appointed but has not yet taken up the position.

Attendance is generally above the national average.

Exclusions are generally below the national average.

In February 2022 8 per cent of pupils were registered for free school meals.

In September 2021 no pupils live in the 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland.

In September 2021 the school reported that 41 per cent of pupils had additional support needs.

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 school's vision, values and aims are displayed across the school and are evident in the majority of actions and relationships across the school community. Senior leaders are reviewing the vision, values and aims to ensure that they are understood, fully embedded in school life and continue to reflect accurately the needs of all young people. Staff understand well the social, economic and cultural context of the school community.
- Despite the significant changes within the senior leadership team, including the recent appointment of the headteacher, almost all staff agree that the school is well led. Staff feel valued as part of the school community and find it rewarding to be a member of staff at the school. The headteacher is valued and respected by almost all members of the school community. She demonstrates strong, caring leadership in supporting staff, young people and partners, including parents, to work together to lead change.
- The headteacher has moved swiftly to identify strengths and areas requiring improvement. As a result, and in conjunction with senior leaders, she has developed an overview of the current school improvement priorities. This is based on self-evaluation information gathered from faculties and engagement with members of the school community. This succinct and well-focused overview of priorities has been shared with all members of the school community. Senior leaders are now focusing on ensuring a consistent implementation of these priorities across the school. Senior leaders should continue to seek the views of parents to inform planning.
- Senior leaders empower middle leaders effectively to lead their departments, curriculum areas and specific initiatives. Middle leaders recognise their key role in supporting improvement across the school. Staff have welcomed the creation of recent posts to lead delivery of whole school priorities. These posts prioritise raising attainment and include a focus on addressing the poverty-related attainment gap and mitigating the impact of rural poverty and social isolation. There are early signs of the positive impact of these roles in broadening learning pathways for young people. They support a few learners, including those who are affected by poverty, to access the curriculum through improved literacy skills. There remains scope for senior leaders to build on this positive practice to support middle leaders further in helping to drive forward school improvement. Prior to the pandemic, middle leaders benefitted from working in trios. This positive approach enabled them to share, develop and improve their practice across the school. Resumption of the trios would support increased consistency of approach and enhance leadership capacity within the school.

- Senior leaders support staff well to engage in a wide range of high-quality professional learning. This includes a few staff engaging regularly with the XP School in Doncaster. This is supporting a considerable improvement in the development of young people's employability skills. Staff are continuing to learn about project-based learning approaches. This is beginning to have a positive impact on learning and teaching approaches. A minority of staff also work in a variety of roles with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). This is enabling them to strengthen practice across departments and faculties and improve experiences and outcomes for young people. Senior leaders ensure these are clearly linked to professional review and development processes, with well-defined outcomes.
- A few young people lead and participate in the student council, which promotes ways for young people to contribute to school life. The next steps for this council will be to seek greater involvement by all young people, including gathering a wider range of views. In addition, any planned initiatives should link to the school's improvement priorities. Senior leaders and staff need to consider now how to take account of young people's views more formally and consistently. The majority of young people say that the school listens to their views, although only a minority of young people say that their views are taken into account.
- A minority of young people in the senior school undertake leadership roles, such as house captains, vice captains, senior prefects, or prefects. Most young people enjoy these roles, developing important skills in organisation, team-working, and communication amongst others. A few young people who are prefects would appreciate having enhanced roles, which allow them to lead aspects of the school's work as well as undertaking operational tasks. A few young people in S3 also lead and support their peers in important roles, such as Mental Health Ambassadors and peer educators.
- Senior leaders have a good understanding of the 'Next Generation Learning' agenda. They value the role of skills development and career management skills in ensuring young people progress effectively in their learning. Senior leaders are now developing a clear strategy to communicate the benefits of this agenda to staff and partners. This will help them to understand their role in embedding skills through the delivery of 'Clan' classes and the 'Horizons' programme.
- The school has very strong links with a few community partners and many business partners, who actively contribute to the life and work of the school and provide a range of active learning opportunities. The school is well represented on the Locality Learning Community Partnership (LLCP). LLCP partners share intelligence and develop proposals and activities to improve the learning offer for young people. As a result of the partnership, the school has been able to deliver mental health and peer education training for young people. The school has also received participatory budgeting funding to improve its outdoor areas. For example, upgrading the courtyard and installing a basketball court. Both areas are well used by young people and the community. Senior leaders and staff meet regularly with individual partners to plan and review their programmes. A helpful next step will be to work collectively in a more structured way to plan and evaluate the input of partners in line with the school's vision, values and aims.

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

- Positive relationships between teachers and young people are a feature of most lessons in Alford Academy. Most young people are respectful in class and participate well in their learning. A minority of learners are not yet fully engaged with their learning since the return to learning in school buildings. The approach of these young people is often passive and lacking enthusiasm. As a result, staff have now begun to consider how to increase motivation in young people. In a few classes, teachers use a range of creative teaching approaches. This is supporting young people effectively to participate more actively in learning. In a minority of lessons, young people lead aspects of their own learning.
- The majority of young people experience learning which is appropriately challenging, particularly in the senior phase. As a result, young people engage eagerly in tasks and activities in those classes. Senior and middle leaders should now work with all teachers to identify and share existing effective practice. This will support young people across the school to experience a suitable level of challenge in all lessons. In a minority of classes there is a need to ensure that the pace of learning is appropriate to engage and challenge all young people.
- In a few lessons, young people exercise choice and take increasing responsibility as they become more independent in their learning. In a few lessons, young people are very involved in planning how they will approach their learning and can choose how they wish to present what they have learnt. School staff in partnership with local businesses have begun to introduce live project-based learning opportunities. Through participation in these projects, young people are developing problem-solving and critical thinking skills. This project-based learning provides opportunities for learning in real-life contexts. Young people value this learning and engage fully. Staff involved in the delivery should share this innovative context for learning across the wider school community.
- In most classes, teachers share the purpose of the learning with young people and highlight what young people need to do to be successful within the lesson. Teachers do not regularly involve young people in the creation of criteria they can use to evaluate their success in learning. Doing so would help to make sure that young people are clear about what they are learning and why.
- In most classes explanations and instructions are clear and very often further explained and outlined on the digital board. To meet the needs of all learners, teachers should systematically

check in with young people to ensure they understand the task and how they are progressing with their work. In a minority of lessons, teachers used questioning skilfully to help young people develop their thinking skills.

- All young people have opportunities to access digital technology to enhance their learning. Young people use an online platform to produce work, request support from teachers and access resources. They also use this platform to receive feedback to inform the next steps in their learning. This resource is well used in most departments and faculties. As a next step, teachers should work on fully embedding the use of digital technology in their lessons.
- Young people's learning experiences are not yet of a consistently high quality across the school. There is not yet an agreed framework which supports teachers to explore the key features of what high-quality learning looks like and what is most effective for their learners. As a result, there is insufficient consistency and reliability in the way that teachers approach learning and teaching and how they use assessment to identify areas for young people to improve in their work. Currently, the main method of sharing progress with learners is through the young person's level of success in summative assessments. Faculty leaders should continue to work with senior leaders to develop consistent approaches to assessment which support young people to identify their own strengths and next steps in learning. Assessments should be both summative and formative. This will help young people understand more fully how well they are progressing both through and across curricular areas.
- Most teachers plan learning at an appropriate level for most learners in their classes. In the majority of classes, teachers offer appropriate support to young people. As planned, further attention should be given to improving the ways in which teachers plan learning which meets the specific needs of all learners.
- All faculties have developed their own approaches to tracking and monitoring learners' progress. In a minority of faculties tracking and monitoring has been used effectively to help teachers as they plan learning for young people who are not making the expected progress towards their expected levels of attainment. In these faculties, the tracking of pupil progress has also helped teachers to adjust course content and assessment approaches. This enables them to meet the needs of specific groups of learners more effectively. It is important that senior leaders work closely with middle leaders to develop more consistent approaches to tracking and monitoring at faculty level. This should build on the strongest practice already in place in the school. Staff should consider further how they monitor the progress of identified groups of young people in their curriculum area. For example, those young people who have specific learning difficulties or those affected by poverty.
- The school librarian offers voluntary library assistant roles to young people, and this helps those young people who participate to engage with the wider life of the school community. The librarian works closely with several departments in the school to provide additional learning opportunities for young people.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Young people experience their full entitlement to their broad general education in Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) with elements of specialisation at the end of S2. To enhance the curriculum, a few departments demonstrate creative approaches through project-based learning. Most staff are aware that they now need to increase aspects of digital learning in the broad general education.
- Prior levels of attainment should now be used consistently for curriculum planning to meet learners' needs, especially in areas such as literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Tracked literacy and numeracy data should be used across departments to inform planning. A whole school overview will ensure that skills are built appropriately over time. Lead teachers of attainment should now continue with plans to develop a shared understanding in relation to embedding skills across all classrooms. This will support all staff in understanding their responsibilities to develop literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across the curriculum. Young people in S4 receive relatively fewer periods per week of English and mathematics compared to their other subjects. Consideration should be given to the impact of this on literacy and numeracy outcomes.
- A sizeable minority of young people in the senior phase participate enthusiastically in the Foundation Apprenticeship programmes. The successful programme enhances opportunities for young people to progress to positive destinations. Learners speak highly of their experiences and recognise the benefits of developing their skills out with the school context. Young people also value participating in National Progression Awards and other accredited qualifications. These are helping them to develop important skills, especially key career management skills.
- Whilst young people experience study skills out of school, the next step for senior leaders is to consider reviewing the S5/6 curriculum offer in relation to breadth and progression.
- Young people enjoy participating in physical education to the end of S5, however, they are not receiving their entitlement to religious and moral education in S5 and S6. This could be making an important contribution to their learning around diversity, inclusion and critical thinking.
- There is a clear focus on skills development from S1-6 through the Excelerate, CLAN and Horizon programmes. Staff and partners have developed a Leavers Profile that underpins the school values and the skills for life learning and work. Further collegiate working will ensure a shared understanding and clear direction of skills progression for all learners.
- The CLAN programme encourages positive relationships between young people and builds community. The programme has a focus on team building, and skills development. Young people in S3 gain accreditation as part of their experience through the Personal Development Award. Staff and young people should work together to develop a rationale which is understood by all and links to wellbeing. This will ensure a consistent experience for all learners.

- Young people in S5/6 develop employability skills through the Horizon programme, including mock interviews and partner engagement. Senior leaders should ensure that all young people have the opportunity to engage in this programme. The school should further develop a shared understanding of the vision to ensure a more coherent approach involving My World of Work and Skills Development Scotland. This will ensure that skills are built appropriately over time.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The school's senior leadership team is well supported by the Parent Council (PC), especially with fundraising activities which have helped to provide opportunities for young people. For example, finance has been raised for sports teams, transport for various events and to college for young people. The PC has several sub-committees which support some of the educational initiatives that have recently been introduced. Examples of these sub-committees include working with the student council to provide leadership opportunities and supporting the school's work experience.
- There is an increasingly strong relationship between the school and the PC. School leaders should now work with the wider parent body to create opportunities for parents and carers to contribute more to self-evaluation. This will support the process of identifying school improvement priorities and developing action plans.
- The school's communication with the wider parent body around the opportunities for young people to engage in achievement opportunities could be improved. This will help to increase their understanding of the achievement offer and the value of young people's involvement, which includes recognition through accreditation.

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

Theme 1: Wellbeing

- Overall, most staff and young people experience positive and trusting relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community. Most young people report that staff treat them fairly and with respect. They value having a range of staff they can contact for support to address any wellbeing concerns. Most young people feel safe in school. However, the behaviour of a few young people in corridors and classroom causes concern to other members of the school community. Staff should continue with their plans to review the 'Relationships policy' so that all young people can experience a positive and calm environment, which maximises their learning.
- Young people receive support for their wellbeing from the pastoral care team and a range of partners. Young people and their parents speak positively about the timely and effective support they receive from them. Young people in S1-S4 also benefit from a progressive personal and social education (PSE) programme, which helps them, for example, to be healthy, nurtured, and active. They are developing an understanding about their wellbeing in PSE in S1-S4. This is supporting them to reflect on their wellbeing and discuss any concerns with key staff. Young people in S5 and S6 do not have the opportunity to experience PSE. This is an important consideration in relation to their wellbeing. All young people in the senior phase need support to help them develop essential life skills as preparation for their transition to the next stage. This includes access to high quality support in helping them to prepare for making choices about course and destinations.
- A next step for staff will be to develop a consistent language of wellbeing across the school so that all staff can effectively support all young people to address their wellbeing. Pastoral staff should continue with plans to update the PSE programme, involving young people, so that it remains relevant.
- A minority of young people have experienced bullying and a sizeable minority of young people feel that bullying is not always dealt with effectively. Senior leaders should continue with their plans to review the anti-bullying policy and the school's recording and monitoring procedures. This will help to ensure that all young people feel safe and well supported. Young people speak positively about the school's new praise system which celebrates their achievements and makes them feel valued.

- All young people experience opportunities in the curriculum to understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Most young people feel that the school helps them to be physically active and this is enhanced through participation in a significant range of clubs and interhouse events. This helps young people to understand the link between physical exercise and the positive impact on their mental wellbeing. Staff have responded to the increase in mental health concerns with well-considered interventions with partners. This has helped most young people involved in these interventions to reduce their anxiety and improve attendance. Staff should continue with plans to upskill more staff to increase their confidence in responding to young people's mental health issues.
- The school library supports learners' health and wellbeing by offering a safe space for young people to spend time during breaks and lunchtime. This space is well resourced with books and leaflets that young people can use to support their own wellbeing.

Theme 2: Fulfilment of statutory duties

- Staff display an appropriate understanding of statutory duties and complying with legislation and guidance. Young people who require additional support for their learning receive targeted support from key staff. The wellbeing of young people who are entitled to be considered for a coordinated support plan is regularly reviewed. Teaching staff should be more regularly involved in planning and reviewing strategies to support these young people. This will help ensure they experience learning activities well-matched to their needs in all curriculum areas.
- Staff use clear procedures to track and monitor young people's attendance. Senior leaders are exploring reasons for young people coming late or not maintaining presence in class. Senior leaders should review part-time timetables and ensure that these comply with national guidance so that young people access their full entitlements. Staff should continue to explore alternatives to exclusions to make sure that all young people feel included and valued in the school community. Senior leaders should continue to ensure all their processes reflect national guidance.
- The local authority submitted self-evaluation information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties, as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff. The HNI also examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole school health promotion duties as far as they relate to food and nutrition. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and school meals provider.

Theme 3: Inclusion and equality

- Almost all young people with additional support needs are achieving and progressing well in most curricular areas. They and their parents are included and feel listened to in planning and when making decisions about their learning. They feel their privacy and views are respected.
- Most young people feel that the school helps them to understand and respect themselves and others. Commendably, they are beginning to lead initiatives which are increasing staff and young people's understanding of diversity to celebrate difference and challenge discrimination. Young people experience learning about the protected characteristics within PSE and RME,

although not consistently across the senior phase. All young people need opportunities across the curriculum to understand and celebrate equality and diversity and eliminate discrimination.

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

Literacy and numeracy

Broad General Education (BGE)

- The school states that data for 2019/20 and 2020/21 shows that attainment was lower than in previous years as a consequence of COVID-19. In 2021/22 most young people achieved third level or better in literacy and numeracy and the majority achieved fourth level in literacy. A minority achieved fourth level in numeracy. The most recent data from Scottish National Standardised Assessments for Scotland supports the school's assessment that literacy and numeracy in the BGE are showing a pattern of improvement.

Senior phase

- Senior leaders, along with faculty heads in English and mathematics and lead post-holders in numeracy and literacy, have a clear focus on improving attainment in literacy and numeracy. For example, they have developed a wider range of learning pathways in mathematics in S4. This has increased both attainment and uptake in applications of mathematics. Consideration of additional progression pathways which build on this successful development will support further raising attainment.
- The school library is used effectively by the English faculty to support young people's attainment in literacy, especially in reading. In particular, the school librarian supports young people's understanding of literary genres.

Literacy (leavers)

- Most young people left school with literacy at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 5 or better between 2016/17 and 2020/21. This was lower than the Virtual Comparator (VC) in 2018/19, but otherwise in line. The majority of young people left with literacy at SCQF level 6, which is significantly much lower than the VC in 2020/21 and significantly lower than the VC in 2018/19 and 2019/20.

Numeracy (leavers)

- The majority of young people left school with numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better between 2016/17 and 2020/21. Attainment at this level is mostly in line with the VC. A minority of young people left school with numeracy at SCQF level 6. Attainment at this level between 2016/17 and 2019/20 has been in line with the VC. In 2020/ 21 it was significantly much lower than the VC.

Literacy (cohorts)

- In S4, the majority of young people attained literacy at SCQF level 5 or better in 2017/18 and 2018/19. In 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 most young people attained literacy at SCQF level 5 or better. This has improved to be in line with the VC in these years. By S5, based on the S4 roll, most young people attain literacy at SCQF level 5 or better. Attainment in literacy at this level has improved to be in line with the VC between 2019/20 to 2021/22. By S5, as a percentage of the S4 roll, a minority of young people attained literacy at SCQF level 6 between 2017/18 to 2021/22. This is significantly lower than the VC in 2018/19 and 2021/22 and significantly much lower than the VC in 2017/18, 2019/20 and 2020/21. By S6, as a percentage of the S4 roll, a minority of young people attain literacy SCQF level 6 in 2020/21 and 2021/22. This is significantly much lower than the VC in these years.

Numeracy (cohorts)

- In S4, a majority of young people attained numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better between 2018/19 and 2020/21. In 2021/22, most young people attained numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better. Attainment has improved to be in line with the VC between 2019/20 to 2021/22. By S5, based on the S4 roll, the majority of young people attain numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better. Attainment in numeracy at this level has improved to be in line with the VC in 2020/21 and 2021/22. By S5, based on the S4 roll, a minority of young people attain numeracy at SCQF level 6 or better from 2017/18 to 2021/22. This is in line with the VC in 2020/21 and significantly much lower than the VC in 2019/20 and 2021/22. By S6, based on the S4 roll, the majority of young people attain numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better. This improves to be in line with the VC in 2021/22, when most young people attain numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better . A minority of young people attain numeracy at SCQF level 6 by S6. This is significantly lower than the VC in 2019/20 and significantly much lower in 2021/22. In 2021/22, this improves to be in line with the VC.

Attainment over time

BGE

- At present, senior leaders and staff do not yet have a sufficient understanding of young people's attainment outcomes across the curriculum. They should therefore continue with plans to ensure there is more rigorous monitoring and tracking of young people's attainment and progress through the BGE and across the senior phase. This will support them to ensure appropriate progress is being made across all curricular areas in the BGE.

Senior phase

- Attainment of leavers has remained largely consistent and in line with the VC between 2016/17 and 2020/21 when compared using complementary tariff points. The attainment of the lowest attaining 20% of leavers is in line with the VC between 2016/17 and 2020/21. Attainment for the middle attaining 60% is in line with the VC between 2017/18 and 2020/21. Attainment of the highest attaining 20% of leavers is in line with the VC between 2018/19 and 2020/21.

- At S4, attainment for the lowest attaining 20%, middle attaining 60%, highest attaining 20% is largely in line with the VC when compared using complementary tariff points. The exception is the highest 20% in 2021/22, which is significantly higher than the VC. For young people in S5 and S6, based on the S4 roll, attainment is broadly in line with the VC.
- Staff have had a particular focus on increasing the range of courses and qualifications on offer. This is providing young people with a broad and appropriate range of learning pathways which support the achievement of their aspirations. This includes Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs) and National Progression Awards. Strong partnership working to broaden learning pathways is supporting increased attainment. Young people who have experienced success through these learning pathways are positive role models for others. In addition, a strong focus on sharing the benefits of a wide range of pathways with parents and carers and young people is supporting increasing numbers of young people to choose these qualifications. The wider range of accreditation available at S4 enables the majority of young people to achieve five or more awards at SCQF Level 5 or better.
- By S5 the majority of young people attain one or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better, largely in line with the VC.
- By S6 the majority of young people attain three or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better. A minority attain five or more awards. Both measures are mostly in line with the VC. A minority of young people achieve an award at SCQF level 7C or better. Attainment at this level is in line with the VC.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Young people are increasing their interpersonal, communication, public speaking and organisational skills through participation in activities such as lunch, music and art clubs. A few use these transferrable skills in other contexts such as those involved in the student council who organised a fresher's fayre to encourage participation in wider opportunities.
- Young people also develop leadership skills through involvement in the Eco-Schools, sport leaders, mental health and Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) peer educator training and STEM ambassador programmes. An increasing number of young people use these volunteering opportunities to contribute to the SCQF Level 6 Leadership or other awards. MVP ambassadors are raising awareness of bullying and how to tackle discrimination across the school. Young people receive valuable training which develops their team building and communication skills, as well as providing valuable support to their classmates and members of the wider community. Many programmes and activities are formally recognised through accreditation. A next step for the school and its partners is to explore more programmes and activities that can be accredited. This will help to increase formal recognition of young people's volunteering and achievements across the school.
- The school records young people's involvement in the wide range of achievement opportunities available. However, the tracking and monitoring of individual or collective achievements across the school is not routinely captured or analysed. Adopting this model of tracking would support

staff efforts to target those young people who would benefit most from engaging in achievement opportunities.

Equity for all learners

- Teachers in lead roles related to raising attainment work together to provide a range of interventions in areas such as numeracy and literacy to meet the needs of a few young people. This includes young people affected by poverty and those with lower levels of attendance. There is early evidence of an improvement in attendance.
- Targeted interventions are showing very early signs of having a positive impact on specific groups, including those affected by the poverty-related attainment gap. Literacy programmes designed to improve the reading ages of a number of young people through paired reading approaches are showing very early signs of positive impact. In the senior phase, mentoring approaches focus on closing an identified gap between the predicted grades and the prelim results for a few young people. These resulted in raised attainment for them in the National Qualifications.

Destinations

- Commendably, initial positive destinations for the school are 99.1%.

Practice worth sharing more widely

Project based learning in the broad general education provides opportunities for learning in innovative real-life contexts. Business partners are fully involved in the planning and assessing of the pupil work. Young people lead their learning and develop skills throughout the projects.

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.