Summarised inspection findings

Wick High School

The Highland Council

21 March 2023

Key contextual information

School name:	Wick High School
Council:	Highland Council
SEED number:	5102138
Roll 2022:	726

Wick High School is a non-denominational secondary school serving the community of the east side of Caithness. There are seven associated primary schools.

The senior leadership team consists of the acting rector, two depute rectors and two acting depute rectors. The leadership team has undergone significant changes over the last two years.

Levels of staffing are a concern. It is challenging to recruit and retain staff in this geographical location. As a result, all teachers, including senior leaders, are frequently called upon to cover classes to ensure continuity of learning for young people.

During the inspection week, a few young people were engaging in remote learning as a consequence of the bad weather. Adverse weather conditions can mean school buses are delayed, or do not run during the winter.

Attendance is generally in line with the national average. Since the pandemic, senior leaders have identified increased patterns of absence as a consequence of COVID-19 and are putting in place strategies to address intermittent and long-term absence.

Exclusions are generally below the national average and have reduced over recent years. In February 2022, 21 per cent of pupils were registered for free school meals. This is significantly above the national average of 18 per cent. In September 2021, 22 per cent of pupils lived in 20% of the most deprived datazones in Scotland. In September 2021 the school reported that 40 per cent of pupils had additional support needs.

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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

- Well supported by senior leaders, the acting rector has successfully fostered positive and aspirational conditions for change. There is confidence across the school community in how improvements are led. Staff understand the need for change. Following the pandemic, when operational issues dominated planning, a more strategic approach to improvement is now becoming evident across the school. Almost all staff have a clear understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the school.

- The school has an established vision and set of values. Almost all teachers feel that the school's vision and values underpin their work. The acting rector has developed plans for a refresh of the school's vision to ensure it reflects his determination that all young people experience success in their learning. Senior leaders are aware of the need to engage more fully young people, parents, staff and partners in this process and in wider aspects of school improvement.

- The acting rector has established effectively more collaborative approaches to the leadership of change, although the implementation of planned improvements is still at very early stages. This is leading to increasingly collegiate processes in planning school improvement. Senior leaders have introduced greater robustness in approaches to self-evaluation to ensure appropriate improvement priorities are identified. They have implemented recently a quality assurance calendar to involve staff more effectively in self-evaluation activities. There is a need for the successes of the school to be better defined and articulated to staff, young people and parents.

- The school's identified improvement priorities articulate well with the needs of the school. These are supported by clear actions, are manageable and illustrate how their impact will be measured in the short, medium and long term. Strategies to raise attainment have been enhanced significantly by improved approaches to data analysis and the recent appointment of a senior leader with a specific attainment-related remit.

- Senior leaders have directed Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) towards improving outcomes in literacy and numeracy and to support engagement with families. This funding has been used to employ teachers, youth workers and family support workers. Effective analysis of data has identified which young people receive support. To date, the use of PEF has helped to accelerate progress for individual young people and improved levels of engagement amongst a few young people. Senior leaders should now consider how to reduce attainment gaps faced by groups of young people who are disadvantaged by the complex impacts of poverty.

- Senior and middle leaders work collaboratively to ensure cohesion between school and faculty improvement plans. This is beginning to lead to a more consistent focus on key areas across the school. The quality of faculty improvement plans is improving but remains insufficiently

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consistent. These plans would benefit from greater precision in defining measurable outcomes for young people and how progress will be evaluated.

- Middle leaders welcome how they are empowered to lead change in their faculties and the way senior leaders provide clear and consistent guidance through their role as faculty links. Middle leaders are leading change successfully in their faculties, although much of the work is at early stages. Senior leaders should continue to develop the collective leadership capacity of all faculty heads, so that they play a greater role in driving change across the school.

- In all faculties, teachers have engaged in research projects. They have led successfully local improvement activities on topics such as effective questioning and retrieval approaches. Importantly, teachers in their role as learning ambassadors have then led dialogue and reflection on identified areas for further improvement.

- The acting rector has implemented more distributed approaches to leadership of change. A few staff across all levels have benefitted through engagement in formal leadership training. A next step would be a plan for the development of leadership at all levels. This would assist in extending understanding of how all staff can assume leadership roles, supported by consideration of the General Teaching Council for Scotland Professional Standards.

- Currently there are limited leadership opportunities available to young people. In a few curricular areas, they lead aspects of their own learning and provide feedback that supports improvements in their learning in class. Young people value being pupil council representatives, learning mentors and sports leaders. There is scope for planning how young people can pursue leadership roles that shape and support the school's improvement priorities.

- Staff led effectively a wide range of operational changes during the pandemic. This included implementing necessary amendments to how young people learned. As a result, young people were able to continue their learning in a virtual, digital context. Following the pandemic, leaders at all levels have led successfully a range of improvements in learning and teaching. Focused professional learning and sharing of high-quality practice have effectively supported this.

- Staff are positive about how their wellbeing was supported by senior leaders during and since the pandemic. This helps maintain positive and trustful relationships that underpin a cohesive approach to leadership of change.

- Senior leaders and staff are welcoming to their many partners and value their contribution to the curriculum and supporting young people. There is now a need for partners and school leaders to improve how well they network, co-ordinate opportunities and jointly plan and evaluate progress. Senior leaders are aware of aspects of the school's improvement agenda that have been compromised by the pandemic and continuing staffing challenges. For example, they recognise that Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) has not yet been embedded fully across the school.

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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

- There is a calm and orderly learning environment in the school. In almost all lessons, relationships between young people and staff are positive. Young people treat each other with respect.

- Young people who learn in the support department benefit from stimulating learning environments. Teachers plan programmes of learning effectively, which are well matched to young people's needs. Young people are enthusiastic, encouraged to work with others, take pride in their work and relate well to teachers and support staff.

- Almost all young people at Wick High School participate attentively during lessons. Learners respond well when set individual and group tasks and are supportive of each other in pair and group work. The majority of lessons are well structured and the purpose of learning is clear and shared with learners in a variety of ways. Young people respond positively to clear explanations and instructions. Almost all teachers regularly check for understanding and provide verbal feedback to learners on their progress during lessons. There is a need for more consistent practice across the school to ensure that all young people understand the purpose of and next steps in their learning, as well as how to be successful. This includes the opportunity to co-create success criteria with young people.

- Staff have been involved in creating an agreed 'Learning Standard' and a set of 'Classroom Routines'. These provide a shared expectation of practice across all faculties and clarity for all teaching staff in planning by providing a framework for lessons. Senior leaders and faculty heads should look to build greater consistency in the application of these.

- In the majority of lessons, teachers make sure tasks are stimulating and well matched to learners' needs. There is scope to improve further the motivation, enthusiasm and enjoyment of all learners by giving them more opportunities to lead their own learning.

- Almost all teachers use questioning well to promote recall and check for understanding. In a few classes, questioning is beginning to build curiosity and confidence in young people and supports the development of higher order thinking skills. All learners would benefit from further challenge and consistently high expectations from all teachers.

- All young people have access to digital technology, which is used effectively to enhance learning in a few classes. Young people with additional support needs benefit from using digital technology. They are developing successfully their independent enquiry and research skills. Most teachers support continuity of learning for young people who are absent, by encouraging them to access their learning online. Senior leaders should now develop a whole school strategy for digital technology.

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- In most lessons, teachers use a range of assessment approaches to monitor the progress of young people in the classroom. This includes questioning, retrieval quizzes, self and peer assessment. When used effectively, this is helping learners understand their progress, level and identify next steps. In a minority of curriculum areas, young people give feedback on their learning experience. In these faculties, their views are beginning to shape improvements. Young people would benefit from further opportunities across the school to share their views on their learning experiences. Staff should share feedback with learners on improvements made. Faculty leaders should look to consolidate this practice to support young people in developing the skills of independent learning.

- In most subjects, teachers use feedback related to the National Benchmarks to set targets for individual learners. In the broad general education (BGE), teachers are developing their confidence in determining levels of progress and understanding of national expectations. To ensure consistency and reliability of data, teachers should share insights and judgements with partner schools. Teachers are increasingly using assessment data to plan learning.

- Teachers link assessment planning and moderation activities to Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) standards to ensure they are reliable and valid. Almost all young people are clear about their progress in the senior phase. However, all teachers would benefit from moderation and collaboration with other schools. This would consolidate teachers' judgement in assessing levels and ensure that young people are appropriately challenged. There are plans to focus on methods of assessment to be achieved at key milestones. When applied to learning, this will lead to more confident judgements and robust discussions with young people about their progress and next steps for learning across the school.

- Teachers use assessment data well to level to inform planning at class and faculty level. Faculty leaders recognise that approaches to tracking are developing. Target setting and learning conversations are key in promoting aspirational goals and identifying next steps and faculty leaders should continue to implement these.

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2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The S1 and S2 curriculum provides experiences for young people across all curricular areas. The S3 curriculum has recently been reviewed by senior leaders, teachers and young people and subsequently reorganised. The revised S3 curriculum has been designed to foster aspiration in young people in the BGE, increase the number of young people undertaking qualifications, and improve attainment in the senior phase. As they evaluate the effectiveness of the new S3 model, senior leaders and staff should ensure that the requirements of National Qualifications are not exclusively prioritised. This will support young people to experience deeper learning and progression within the BGE framework. Staff should also plan and allow for changes to a young person's pathway as required, especially as they move into the senior phase.

- Across the BGE, learners are not receiving their entitlement to modern language learning under the 1+2 policy.

- S4, S5 and S6 are timetabled as a single cohort, undertaking different qualifications depending on their age and ability. This is currently being reviewed. Staff are considering further expansion of course options in order to meet the needs and aspiration of young people. Senior leaders should ensure there is a clear rationale for this review and work with all teachers to consider which courses and opportunities would support the most effective progression pathways. The new courses and options which have recently been introduced in senior phase within school have helped a few identified young people improve their attainment and assist their progression to further education.

- Partners offer a range of subjects and levels which are appropriate and link well with intended careers. However, the range of Foundation Apprenticeships is lower than would be expected given the nature of the local employment market. Increased confidence in and use of attainment data in the BGE will support the provision of appropriate pathways for a few young people. A few young people also access learning in a consortium arrangement online using Highland Virtual Academy.

- Young people are able to access the library in the East Caithness Community facility attached to the school. Learners are introduced to the library in S1 and by senior phase use it independently as a venue and resource for independent study. The network librarian works with the English department to plan research and learning opportunities for young people.

- In considering future changes to the curriculum, senior leaders should continue to consult staff and young people, in addition to engaging in consultation with all parents/carers. Delivery partners should also be consulted as they have been largely unaware of previous proposals or changes and there has been an impact on the planning of college-delivered programmes as a result. Senior leaders are aware that further changes should include consideration of the most effective pathways for different groups of learners, valuing all levels of qualification and promoting a relevant and engaging curriculum offer. This should all be within the context of a clear rationale for the school's curriculum.

- Young people enjoy participating in physical education and personal and social education (PSE) until the end of S5, but do not have the opportunity to continue these in S6. In addition, learners do not receive their entitlement to religious and moral education (RME) after S4 and opportunities to study a modern language after S3 are very limited. Senior leaders should continue to consider ways to address this.

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- There is a level of career education and guidance support in place which covers many of the career management skills needed. However, teachers have limited awareness of the full range of priorities and support materials for DYW. Staff are mostly unaware of national guidance such as the Career Education Standards, Work Placement Standards, or the support materials on Career Management Skills. As a result, there is limited career discussion within mainstream subject delivery. Young people would receive more effective support if staff accessed more frequently materials and support available through My World of Work and via Skills Development Scotland colleagues.

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2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Senior leaders and staff are well supported by an active Parent Council (PC). This group enables parental views to be heard and a range of topics which are relevant to the life and work of the school to be explored and discussed. This includes, for example, recent presentations on raising attainment and subject choices. The PC has a social media presence which allows the sharing of key messages to the wider parent body. PC minutes are available to the whole school community through the Wick High School website.

- The majority of parents agree that they have regular valuable feedback about their child's learning. Parents report that communications between home and school could be strengthened further. This includes more regular updates on the progress and achievements of young people. This would enable parents to be clear about the strengths and abilities of their young people and support them with their learning and their choices. Parents appreciate the re-established face-to-face parents meetings. Senior leaders should consider how to involve parents more fully in events, celebrations and activities in the life and work of the school.

- While the majority of parents report that they receive information from the school to support their children's learning at home, a few parents would appreciate the provision of a wider range of activities to enable them to learn together with their young people. This would enable young people and their parents to have a better shared understanding about the curriculum in Wick High School.

- A minority of parents feel that their views are considered when changes are being made in the school. Senior leaders should work proactively to ensure that all parents have opportunities to be consulted on school matters which impact on the lives of young people. Senior leaders should build on existing channels of communication to ensure that the views of all parents are effectively and robustly captured.

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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.

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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

- Relationships between young people and staff are positive. This contributes to a constructive and supportive learning environment. Staff know learners well and work collaboratively to improve outcomes for young people. They appreciate the challenges facing young people because of the pandemic. Senior leaders highlight emotional wellbeing and irregular attendance as factors negatively influencing young people's ability to achieve. Promoting health and wellbeing is an ongoing school priority. Senior leaders should develop a more strategic approach to build on existing practices and promote further health and wellbeing as a whole school responsibility.

- Young people's understanding of their own wellbeing and how this relates to their personal development is not always clear. Learners would benefit from a better understanding of the wellbeing indicators and how these relate to everyday life. This will help young people identify their personal strengths more clearly. As learners develop their understanding of the language of wellbeing, they will be better equipped to reflect on and identify the support they require. Senior leaders and staff should provide young people with opportunities to evaluate their personal sense of wellbeing. This will provide robust valuable information on which to plan universal and targeted support. As staff take forward the 'Respect for All' agenda, there is scope to link the wellbeing indicators closely to the planned steps to secure 'Rights Respecting School' status.

- The majority of young people enjoy attending Wick High School. Most feel safe and the majority confirm that they have someone to talk to should they have a concern. Most indicate that they are treated with respect by staff and the majority by their peers. However, a minority of young people highlight bullying as an issue. A few young people feel that their concerns are not being fully addressed. Senior leaders must ensure that actions taken to address concerns are communicated clearly and reinforce the school's commitment to respect for all. Senior leaders should maintain an overview of complaints and instances of bullying, racism or discriminatory incidents. This will help staff analyse patterns and evaluate the impact of actions taken.

- Senior leaders and staff are at an early stage in taking forward their plans to reinstate a pupil council after the pandemic. Increasing opportunities for young people to be more involved in school decision-making will help build young people's confidence levels and promote engagement. Less than half of young people currently feel that their views are being listened to and acted upon.

- A planned PSE programme for young people in S1-S5 is in place. It explores health-related issues and planning for the future. Young people would welcome the opportunity to be more involved in shaping the programme. This will help to ensure that it reflects their priorities and

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concerns and is appropriate to their stage of development. Staff should remain alert to ensuring the programme takes account of the needs of individual learners. Senior students identified correctly that extending the option of PSE to include S6 through offering a series of electives will help them to prepare for life beyond school.

- Staff know which young people face barriers to their learning. Information which supports young people is shared effectively and appropriately and used to inform learning. Enhanced arrangements support particular young people who have been identified as needing support at points of transition. Information on young people's prior learning is shared effectively with staff. Support for learning teachers provide advice and support to classroom teachers within curriculum areas. Pupil support assistants provide valuable in class support. Senior leaders should explore the deployment of support for learning teachers in class. Support for learning teachers should work more collaboratively with subject teachers. This will help to share expertise and build capacity in supporting young people's learning and evaluating the strategies in use.

- Young people with significant complex needs are being supported well through enhanced provision to meet short-term and long-term needs. They engage well with staff who are providing a very warm and supportive context for learning. Three tiers of support are in place. This ranges from short-term targeted support for young people to specialised provision for the most vulnerable. Young people access a broad curriculum to reflect their needs.

- Almost all partners describe positive working relationships with senior staff and feel listened to. Additional help for young people who are at risk of not gaining a positive destination is provided and supported effectively by a number of organisations. Partners would welcome the opportunity to meet as a group to offer evaluation, advice or contribute to overall school planning.

- Out-of-class activities including social events are supporting the school's drive to be an inclusive community. A few senior students volunteer as mentors to support younger people in their learning, providing further evidence of the school as a community. The school's RME programme provides meaningful opportunities for learners to reflect on equality and diversity, and the dangers of discrimination and prejudice. A recently formed pupil group is reinforcing these key messages. It is important that staff offer wider opportunities to celebrate the diversity of the school community.

- Most young people feel that they are being encouraged by school staff to do their best. However, a few young people express the view that young people following different learning pathways are not being valued equally. This is an important issue to address at a time when the school is raising expectations.

- There is a clear focus on improving the engagement and attainment of young people who face socio-economic disadvantage. They are well supported by intervention programmes financed through PEF. The relationships young people form with, for example, youth project leaders and children's service workers, play an important role in promoting inclusion. MCR pathways and access to counselling contribute further to the wellbeing of young people most affected by poverty and with barriers to learning. This is having a positive impact on the attendance, confidence and resilience of the individual young people involved.

- For those young people engaging with support programmes there are early signs of improving attendance and engagement with the school. Staff are alert to personal circumstance and provide valuable support to young people and their families. Leaders recognise the need to evaluate the impact of current initiatives to inform future priorities. Attendance and levels of

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engagement with school for a minority of young people remain a particular concern. Senior leaders should continue to monitor the impact of current arrangements in handling non-attendance.

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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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

BGE

- Most young people achieved third Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) level or better in literacy by the end of S3 in 2021/22. The majority of young people achieved fourth level in literacy. Most young people achieved third level or better in numeracy by the end of S3 in 2021/22. The majority of young people achieved fourth level in numeracy.

Senior phase

Leavers

- Most young people leaving school between 2018/19 and 2020/21 achieved Scottish Credit Qualification Framework (SCQF) level 5 or better in literacy. This is in in line with the virtual comparator (VC) for 2019/20 and 2020/21. The majority of young people leaving school in 2019/20 and 2020/21 achieved SCQF level 6 or better in literacy. This was significantly much higher than the VC in 2019/20 and significantly higher in 2020/21.

- Most young people leaving school between 2016/17 and 2020/21 achieved SCQF level 4 or better in numeracy. This is in line with the VC. The majority of young people leaving school between 2016/17 and 2020/21 achieved SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy. This is in line with the VC, except in 2018/19 and 2019/20 when it was significantly higher than the VC. A minority of young people achieved SCQF level 6 in numeracy in 2018/19 and 2020/21. This is in line with the VC, except in 2019/20 where it was significantly higher.

- In 2020/21, most young people leaving school who required additional support with their learning achieved SCQF level 4 or better, with the majority achieving SCQF level 5 or better in literacy. The majority achieved SCQF level 4 or better in numeracy and a minority achieved this at SCQF level 5 or better.

Cohorts

- At S4, most young people achieve SCQF level 4 or better in literacy. This is broadly in line with the VC. The majority achieve SCQF level 5 or better, in line with the VC. By S5, based on the S4 roll, most largely achieve SCQF level 5 or better in literacy. This is in line with the VC. In 2020/21, a minority of young people achieved SCQF level 6, significantly lower than the VC. In 2021/22, the majority achieved at this level, significantly higher than the VC. By S6, based on the S6 roll, attainment in literacy at SCQF level 5 or better is in line with the VC in the four most recent years. At SCQF level 6, the percentage of young people achieving literacy is in line with the VC.

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- At S4, by S5 (based on the S4 roll) and by S6 (based on the S4 roll), the attainment of young people in numeracy is broadly in line with the VC.

Attainment over time

- Staff use tracking information successfully to identify underachievement in the BGE and senior phase. This informs conversations with senior leaders about the support young people require with their learning. Information gathered at faculty level is supporting a whole school view of progress across stages. A more systematic analysis of progress within and across faculties is providing senior leaders with increasingly robust data. This is being used to support approaches to raise attainment.

- Senior leaders and faculty heads have a focus on raising attainment by using data to identify stretch aims. These support aspirational levels in both the BGE and the senior phase. Working closely with faculty heads, senior leaders have identified correctly the need to improve the quality of passes and increase the numbers of young people entering for aspirational and attainable levels in National Qualifications. This work began last year and early success can be seen in improvements in attainment at S4.

BGE

- In the BGE, the school collates data for all subjects showing the percentages of young people achieving first to fourth CfE levels. Senior leaders have identified correctly the need to make the most effective use of transition and assessment information to ensure that all young people in the BGE are working at an appropriate and aspirational level. Senior leaders are working closely with faculty heads and teachers to share best practice in using data to support learners' progress. Teachers' increasing confidence is enabling them to begin to identify more ambitious and achievable targets within levels for, and with, young people more accurately. This is beginning to have a positive impact on the attainment of young people in the BGE.

Senior phase

Improving attainment for all

Leavers

- Attainment of young people leaving school, when compared using average complementary tariff points, has shown signs of improvement from 2017/18 to 2020/21. Attainment for the lowest attaining 20% of young people leaving school is in line with the VC between 2018/19 and 2020/21. For the middle attaining 60%, attainment was significantly much lower in 2017/18 and significantly lower in 2018/19. It has increased to be in line with the VC for 2019/20 and 2020/21. Attainment of the highest attaining 20% of young people was significantly much lower in 2017/18 and was significantly lower than the VC for 2018/19 and 2020/21.

Cohorts

- In S4, the attainment of the lowest attaining 20% was in line with the VC from 2017/18 to 2020/21. In 2021/22, it was significantly lower than the VC. The attainment of the middle 60% of young people has been significantly lower than the VC in four out of the last five latest years. The attainment of the highest 20% of young people has been broadly in line with the VC.

- By S5, based on the S4 roll, attainment of the lowest attaining 20% is in line with the VC for 2020/21 and 2021/22, having been significantly lower in the previous three years. Attainment for the middle 60% of young people was significantly lower in 2018/19 and 2019/20, and significantly much lower in 2021/22. It was in line for 2021/22. Attainment of the highest

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attaining 20% was significantly lower than the VC in 2019/20 and 2020/21. It is in line for 2021/22.

- By S6, based on the S4 roll, attainment for the lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% of young people has been significantly lower or much lower than the VC for most years.

Breadth and Depth

- At S4, the majority of young people achieve five or more awards at SCQF level 4 or better. This is significantly lower than the VC in 2020/21 and 2021/22. The majority of young people achieve two or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better. A minority achieved five or more awards. This is in line with the VC, having been significantly lower in the two previous years. A minority of young people achieve one or more to three or more awards at SCQF level 5A or better. This is significantly lower than the VC in 2021/22.

- By S5, based on the S5 roll, the majority of young people achieved three or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better in 2020/21 and 2021/22. This is significantly lower than the VC. The majority of young people achieved one or more to five or more awards at SCQF level 5A or better in 2021/22. This is in line with the VC, having been previously significantly much lower. In 2021/22, a minority of young people achieved one or more award at SCQF level 6C or better. This is in line with the VC.

- By S6, a minority of young people achieved five or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better in 2020/21 and 2021/22, significantly lower than the VC. A minority of young people attained one or more awards at SCQF level 6C in 2021/22. This is significantly lower than the VC. A minority of young people attained one or more awards at SCQF level 6A or better. This is significantly much lower than the VC. A few young people achieve one or more awards at SCQF level 7C or better. This is significantly much lower than the VC in 2021/22.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Young people gain skills and confidence through participation in a wide range of groups and activities both within school and in their local communities. Young people recognise they are developing their capacity to communicate and work with others through these activities which they then apply in other settings to support their learning.

- Senior leaders are aware of the need to develop tracking and monitoring of achievements and skills. Currently there is a risk of young people not gaining the support they need to participate as it is not clear who is not taking part in activities in the community. In addition, young people's progress in developing key skills such as leadership and working with others is not being fully recognised and built on.

- A few young people are successfully completing national and regional awards. Currently a number of young people who participate in 'Step Forward Wick' activities run by practitioners based in the school are working towards one or more nationally recognised awards. Young people who participate in 'Step Forward Wick' activities are supported very well. As a result, almost all are more confident in managing their emotions and behaviour and are successfully sustaining their engagement in learning. To support the inclusion of all young people, 'Step Forward Wick' activities, including trips, are free of charge.

Equity for all learners

- The attainment of young people living in SIMD deciles one and two, when compared using complementary tariff points, has improved from 2016/17 to 2020/21. It is now in line with the VC in 2020/21, having been significantly much lower than the VC in 2016/17.

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- Senior leaders are aware of challenges around the poverty-related attainment gap, including rural poverty. Individual young people who suffer from socio-economic disadvantage have been identified to all teaching staff to raise awareness of the importance of constructive intervention and support to engage young people in their learning. There is early evidence of an improvement in attendance and a longer-term reduction in exclusions.

- There are interventions with learners in the BGE who face challenges, including the poverty-related attainment gap. Teaching staff work with these learners to close gaps in their literacy and numeracy skills, including during transition from primary school into S1. There are early signs of success, including a greater ability to engage with work in the classroom.

- Young people who are at risk of not gaining a positive destination receive effective additional support from a number of organisations. ‘My Future My Success’ mentoring programme has helped a few young people progress to the University of the Highlands and Islands who were at high risk of leaving without a positive destination. MCR Pathways are working with a number of young people and have established groupwork for young people in S1 and S2. They also mentor a few young people in the senior phase. This has had a positive impact on the attendance, confidence and resilience of the young people involved.

- Almost all young people move into a positive destination on leaving school. The majority of young people go to higher or further education, with a minority going to employment. Support for applications through Universities and Colleges Admissions Services is provided. However, young people are often unclear about the mechanism for accessing this support. Guidance staff, ASPIRENorth, DYW and MCR staff all offer elements of support, in addition to an optional drop-in class for UCAS applicants. The focus of this work is currently university applications. Young people who plan to attend college would benefit from an equal focus on the requirements of that application process.

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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.

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