

# Summarised inspection findings

**Shawlands Academy**

Glasgow City Council

14 March 2023

## Key contextual information

School Name            Shawlands Academy  
Council:                Glasgow City Council  
SEED number:        8436932  
Roll (Sep 2021 from SSR or 2022 if provided by school): 1471

Attendance is generally above the national average.

Exclusions are generally below the national average.

In February 2022 30.7 per cent of pupils were registered for free school meals.  
In September 2021 25.2 per cent of pupils live in 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland.  
In September 2021 the school reported that 47 per cent of pupils had additional support needs.

Shawlands Academy is a comprehensive secondary school situated in the Shawlands area of the south side of Glasgow. The Headteacher has been in post for three years. She is assisted by a team of five Depute Headteachers. The school's catchment area comprises of some of Glasgow City's most culturally diverse communities. At the time of the inspection, 44 per cent of young people attending the school had a main home language which is not English.

## 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

- Young people benefit from the positive and inclusive ethos across the school, where diversity is valued and celebrated. The calm and purposeful learning environment reflects the school's values of respect, integrity, compassion and equality. Young people benefit from very positive and nurturing relationships with almost all staff. Young people are proud to be part of their school community.
- Most young people participate well in their learning and enjoy working in groups or pairs. Young people are highly motivated by opportunities to be active in their learning in most lessons, such as during group discussions, presenting to their peers, or demonstrating their problem-solving skills. Young people would like further opportunities to lead their learning across the curriculum.
- Most teachers use a range of well-planned tasks and activities to engage learners. A majority of teachers use effective routine activities, such as an appropriate starter task at the beginning of a lesson to help young people focus or re-cap on prior learning. In most lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning and make explicit links to prior learning well. A majority of teachers discuss what successful learning looks like with young people. However, success too often relates to the completion of tasks instead of fully considering how young people can demonstrate knowledge or skills gained from learning.
- In almost all lessons, young people benefit from very clear and effective explanations and instructions. Most teachers use digital technology well to support learning, such as through research tasks using the internet or by sharing resources with young people on digital platforms. A few teachers use digital technology creatively to successfully enhance learners' experiences. This good practice should be shared and adopted more widely across the school. Senior leaders should liaise with the local authority to consider how to improve internet connectivity and digital hardware across the school. This should support a more creative use of digital technology.
- Most teachers use questioning effectively to check for learners' understanding throughout a lesson. In a few strong examples, teachers use highly-effective questioning to encourage and develop young people's higher-order thinking skills. Teachers should consider a greater focus on learners' skills development as part of the learning. This will help learners to understand the relevance of what they are learning and help them to connect their learning across the curriculum.
- Almost all staff are aware of those young people identified as having additional support needs (ASN). They are aware of the strategies they should use to address young people's barriers to learning. A majority of teachers offer differentiated tasks to young people with ASN which are designed to help them progress with their learning. Senior leaders recognise the need to

enhance the levels of challenge experienced by young people in their learning, especially in the Broad General Education (BGE). Teachers should continue to improve appropriate challenge when planning learning to allow all young people to progress and achieve to their fullest potential.

- Senior leaders and staff have recently developed, in consultation with young people, the 'Shawlands Academy Excellent Learning and Teaching Framework'. The framework outlines a collective agreement on the features of high-quality learning and teaching. The framework has the potential to improve the consistency and quality of learner experiences across the school. It is too early to assess the impact of the framework as this has only recently been launched. The development of the framework builds on relevant and impactful professional learning undertaken by all teachers. This professional learning is focused on developing high-quality learning and teaching. It has led to teachers successfully embedding the use of positive teaching strategies, such as retrieval practice and modelling worked examples. These approaches are improving young peoples' learning experiences.
- Teachers use a range of effective strategies to assess the progress of young people. Most staff use formative assessments well, such as regular quizzes and the use of show-me boards to check for understanding. In a few departments, young people in the senior phase undertake valuable peer-assessments using Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) assessment frameworks. Young people recognise this is helping them to understand and apply National Qualification assessment criteria.
- Young people in the senior phase value feedback they receive on their learning. They appreciate teachers offering whole class feedback following assessments and verbal feedback during class activities. Most teachers use effective learner conversations with young people in the senior phase which supports learners to know their current level, targets and next steps in learning. Teachers should extend the use of learner conversations to young people in the BGE across all subject departments to ensure that young people recognise their strengths and next steps in learning.
- In a few departments, teachers work with primary colleagues to develop a shared understanding and application of National Benchmarks. All teachers engage in structured departmental moderation activities to increase their confidence in arriving at valid and reliable decisions on learners' achievement of a level in the BGE. When moderating standards in the senior phase, teachers also work collaboratively with other secondary schools. Teachers in a few departments would benefit from developing further their understanding of moderation. They should ensure processes focus on establishing a shared understanding of national standards. Staff employ moderation processes which have been adopted across the local authority. They should ensure all adopted moderation activities support fully the purpose of moderation.
- Senior leaders are developing well their approaches to monitoring and tracking the progress of young people at all stages. Staff are now well placed to identify more readily those young people not on track to achieve expected outcomes. As new approaches to tracking and monitoring embed further, this will also allow senior and middle leaders to track better the progress of targeted groups of young people. Senior leaders should continue to develop staff skills in using data to adapt their planning learning and teaching at classroom level. They should also consider how data is used to evaluate interventions for a young person and to inform next steps in their learning.

## 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

- Young people currently attain well in both literacy and numeracy across the BGE. Overall, in the past five years, most young people have achieved literacy at CfE third level. In numeracy, most young people have also achieved third level in three out of the last five years. In the latest year 2021/22, almost all young people achieved CfE third level. Attainment in literacy and numeracy at CfE fourth level have been inconsistent over the past five years. There have been notable improvements in young people's achievement of CfE fourth level in 2021/22, with most achieving fourth level in literacy and the majority achieving numeracy.

### Senior phase Leavers

#### Literacy

- Overall, attainment in literacy for leavers over the past five years (from 2016/17 to 2020/21) has been inconsistent, but is showing recent signs of improvement. This has improved from being significantly lower than the VC for young people achieving SCQF level five or better by the time they leave school in three out of the past five years, to being in line with the VC in the most recent year 2020/21. Over the past five years from 2016/17 to 2020/21, most young people have achieved SCQF level five or better by the time they leave school. Attainment in literacy for leavers at SCQF level six has been broadly in line with the VC over the past five years from 2016/7 to 2020/21.
- Well planned interventions, such as intensive support for the large number of young people who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) and pupil equity fund (PEF) planned interventions and support, are beginning to have a positive impact on outcomes in literacy. In the latest year 2020/21, almost all leavers with ASN achieved SCQF level 4 or better. This has been the strongest performance over the last five years.

#### Numeracy

- Over the past five years from 2016/7 to 2020/21, the school has improved attainment in numeracy for leavers at SCQF level five or better and is in line with the VC. Attainment in numeracy for leavers at SCQF level six or better has been strong over the past five years. In two out of the past five years, this has been significantly much higher than the VC.

- At SCQF level 5 or better, there is a notable difference between the success young people have in achieving numeracy through units when compared to the percentage who achieve this through a course award.

### **Literacy and Numeracy (Cohorts)**

- In S4, performance at SCQF level 5 or better shows improvement between 2019/20 to 2021/22. As young people move through the school, attainment in literacy has been consistently strong over the last five years at SCQF level six. By S5 and by S6, this has been significantly higher and much higher than the VC.
- As young people progress through the school, attainment in numeracy is improving by S5 at level five or better and by S6, at levels five or better and at level six. These measures have been mostly significantly higher or much higher than the VC over the past five years.

### **Attainment over time**

#### **Broad General Education**

- Senior leaders have recently adjusted the school's Working Time Agreement to allow all staff time to engage in professional moderation activity. This should help to strengthen the robustness and reliability of achievement of a level data across the BGE. Achievement of expected national levels across all subjects is currently variable. As planned, senior leaders and teachers should continue to engage in moderation activity with other schools. This will help to improve teacher professional judgement of learners' progress across BGE levels, against national expectations. Senior leaders are aware that this will also help to strengthen decisions made to course young people more successfully into and through the senior phase.
- A consistent overview of reliable subject CfE levels data is not yet available to show young people's progress in the BGE over the past five years. New systems recently introduced to track and monitor young people's progress should now begin to show progress over time across all curriculum areas. This will allow senior leaders and subject staff to monitor individual's progress more reliably and create appropriate interventions to support and challenge learners where needed.

### **Senior phase**

- Average complimentary tariff scores show overall improving attainment for leavers. However, this has been significantly lower than the VC or significantly much lower than the VC over the past five years for the lowest attaining 20% of learners. Average complimentary tariff scores for the middle attaining 60% of leavers has been consistently in line with the VC over the past five years. Average complimentary tariff scores for the highest attaining 20% of leavers has been in line with the VC and significantly higher, in three out of the past five years.
- The lowest attaining 20% in S4, by S5 and by S6 is generally in line with the VC. As young people progress through the school, average complimentary tariff scores for the middle attaining 60% and highest attaining 20% of young people are consistently strong. These are often significantly higher or much higher than the VC. The lowest attaining 20% are generally in line with the VC. In 2021/22, this fell to being significantly lower than the VC.

## Breadth and depth

- Overall, attainment over the past five years at level five or better and level six or better has been consistently good. At SCQF levels 5C or better and 6C or better, attainment has frequently been significantly higher than the VC. At SCQF levels 5A or better and 6A or better, attainment has remained broadly in line with the VC.
- In S4, attainment at SCQF level 4 or better has been significantly higher than the VC for seven or more courses, in four out of the past five years. In the most recent year for one or more to three or more courses, this has fallen to significantly lower than the VC. Attainment at SCQF level 5C or better is good and is improving for six or more to eight or more courses. This has been significantly higher than the VC for three out of the past five years. Attainment at SCQF level 5A or better is broadly in line with the VC.
- By S5, at SCQF level 5C or better, attainment has broadly been significantly higher than the VC. Attainment at SCQF level 5A or better has been broadly significantly higher than the VC for one or more to five or more courses. Attainment at SCQF level 6C or better has been consistently good and occasionally very good, for one or more to five or more courses. Attainment at SCQF level 6A or better has been steady and in line with the VC over the past five years.
- By S6, attainment at level 6C or better has been consistently good and occasionally very good for one or more to five or more courses. Attainment at level 6A or better has been consistently good and occasionally very good over the past five years for one or more and two or more courses. For four or more to seven or more courses, this has improved to being significantly much higher than the VC in the most recent year. Attainment at level 7C or better for one or more and two or more courses has been consistently strong over the past five years. This has been significantly much higher than the VC in three out of the past five years. At level 7A, attainment is broadly in line with the VC.

## Overall quality of learners' achievement

- A number of young people benefit from their participation in the 'Schools of ....' initiative in the BGE, and lunchtime and out of school activities. Young people value the choice they are afforded in building their interest in a range of areas such as sports, mechanics and performing arts. They are developing important skills for learning, life and work through their engagement in these activities.
- Young people in the BGE are beginning to record and self-evaluate their achievements as part of their self-assessment of wellbeing. Young people gain valuable experience in sports leadership, coaching and employability activities. Learners report they have benefited from improved confidence and enhanced health and fitness as a result of participating in these courses. The well-established Duke of Edinburgh (D of E) award is benefiting learners in S3 who report improved confidence and team working skills. Young people who have EAL benefit from an adapted D of E award. The school was recently celebrated as being the presenting Centre of the year for D of E. Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) contributes to increasing young peoples' awareness of citizenship themes in relation to protected characteristics, bullying and discrimination.
- Young people undertake a number of volunteering roles. These include mentoring roles in curriculum classes, in clubs and in community. These roles are beginning to support embedding the school values and the development of the four capacities. Young people recognise that they would benefit from further training and support relating to these roles. Staff



endeavour to ensure equity of access to provision regardless of socio-economic barriers, taking account of the needs and circumstances of all learners including those with protected characteristics.

- There is scope to identify and implement a wider range of formally accredited awards at all levels to reflect all young people's aspirations, interests and skills development needs across the school. Senior leaders have correctly identified that through a refreshed approach to tracking and monitoring, a strategic approach to the planning of skills for learning, life and work across the school is required. This will support the identification of gaps in participation and skills development and provide an overview of achievement for all learners.

## Equity

- Senior leaders have introduced a number of support strategies to help ensure equity for all groups of young people, supported by Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). This includes leadership opportunities for staff to develop approaches to increase pupil attendance and engagement, and improve career pathways. Many of these initiatives are targeted towards young people experiencing socio-economic barriers to learning. The school should continue to monitor and evaluate the impact of these supportive interventions, ensuring that they are clearly aligned to accelerating progress in closing the poverty-related attainment gap.
- Average complementary tariff scores for young people living in the lowest deciles show improvement over the past 5 years.
- In 2020/21, the attainment of young people leaving school who reside in deciles 1, 4, 5, 6, and 9, as measured by average complementary tariff points, was higher or significantly much higher than young people who live in similar data zones across Scotland. Attainment for all other young people was broadly in line with young people leaving school who live in similar SIMD data zones across Scotland.
- The percentage of young people in S4 and S5 who stay on at school is higher than the national average for secondary schools. In the past five years almost all school leavers have achieved a positive initial destination. In 2020/21, most school learners moved to higher or further education destinations. This is higher than the national levels of leaver destinations. Recent changes in procedures and targeted work by the school 'Developing the Young Workforce' (DYW) team, in partnership with external agencies have ensured a focused approach on each individual's transition. These interventions are in the early stages of development. However data provided by the school shows an increase in initial positive destinations for school leavers.

## Other relevant evidence

- All young people receive their national entitlements to physical education and religious and moral education.
- Staff have a very good knowledge of young people and their individual needs and circumstances. Staff take account of the context of young people's personal circumstances and try to reduce barriers to accessing aspects of school life. For example, the school is making good progress in reducing the 'cost of the school day' for young people. This includes providing support for school trips, uniform and home-learning resources.
- The school library service works well with young people to ensure it is a supportive resource for all learners. Young people have had a leadership role in ensuring the library's literature provision takes account of the diverse culture of the school.

## 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.