Summarised inspection findings

Berwickshire High School

Scottish Borders Council

23 April 2019

School Name   **Berwickshire High School**
Council: **Scottish Borders Council**
SEED number: **5647339**
Roll (Sep 2017):   **680**

Attendance was in line with the national average in 2016/2017.
Exclusions for 2016/2017 have reduced to 2.9 per thousand pupils.
In February 2018 12.2 per cent of pupils were registered for free school meals.
In September 2017 0% per cent of pupils live in 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.
In September 2017 the school reported that 36 per cent of pupils had additional support needs.

Key contextual information

Berwickshire High school is a non-denominational secondary school which serves the town of Duns and the surrounding areas within Borders Council. Berwickshire High school collaborates with five associated primary schools. The headteacher has been in post for since 2012, though was seconded for a short period in 2016 returning to the school in 2017. Two depute head teachers joined the school in May 2018, one of whom is an acting depute head.

1.3 Leadership of change	unsatisfactory

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 vision, values and aims statement, which was developed in session 2016-17, is not yet informing the work of the school. As yet there is no shared understanding to underpin the required school improvement key stakeholders, such as staff, pupils and parents, need to be involved in reviewing the vision and values in order to have collective ownership. A shared sense of purpose is required to secure important improvements in the school. This will support all stakeholders to have a meaningful sense of ownership and help to secure collaborative commitment to shared goals, which will benefit all young people in the school.

- Senior leaders are developing a more informed understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the school. This is not yet fully developed or shared effectively among staff across the school. At present, they are working to re-establish an effective link with the learning community partnership. This understanding should inform the school aims, curriculum and professional practice in learning, teaching and assessment more clearly to ensure the needs and aspirations of all young people are met.

- Senior leaders are devoting too much of their time to operational matters on a daily basis. These are often linked to persistent poor behaviour issues across the school. The present systems and processes in place for senior and middle leaders, are not yet enabling the school to function well, calmly and without ongoing interruptions. This constant operational focus is having a very negative impact on the capacity of senior leaders to develop the leadership strategies needed to move the school forward. It is essential that the headteacher and senior leadership team develop, and articulate, a clear, strategic vision for change which identifies appropriate priorities including those which ensure a calm working environment. These priorities need to be agreed and take account of the views of all stakeholders more effectively. The agreed priorities should focus on those improvements which are most urgently needed and will have the greatest impact on improving outcomes for all learners.

- Staff report feeling that senior leaders are beginning to work together more effectively this session. They have an increasing sense that they are starting to establish a more stable basis from which improvements can begin to be made. Staff and senior leaders should agree how young people can be best supported and challenged to attain and achieve their best. Clear standards and expectations need to be agreed by everyone involved in the school community. This, along with a more comprehensive vision, values and aims, should develop a shared understanding of respective roles in ensuring that all young people develop to their full capacity.

- At present the school is unable to identify positive impact from improvement activities. The only teacher-led working group has been working to improve learning and teaching. While

this has supported some valuable peer observation across departments, it is not yet leading to demonstrable and consistent improvements in learning and teaching across the school. Priorities which were identified by staff in 2017 have seen little, if any, progress and have not been clearly addressed through improvement planning. Senior leaders need to develop a stronger strategic plan for improvement which is clearly based on priorities agreed through meaningful engagement with all stakeholders. The pace of improvement needs to increase significantly in order to address areas where senior leaders acknowledge that the needs of young people are not being met sufficiently.

- Teachers are developing their own departmental approaches to self-evaluation. There are a few effective examples of approaches which are evidence-based and take account of pupil voice. However, the lack of a common approach across the school is limiting opportunities for teachers to learn from each other and share effective practice. Departmental improvement plans are not always clearly linked to the school improvement plan. Principal teachers lack a systematic structure to enable them to work together more strategically in order to focus, and maximise efforts, on aspects of school improvement. They are ready to accept greater responsibility for whole-school improvement. Strong continuous professional learning is needed to provide opportunities to share effective practice and develop more effective, evidence-based self-evaluation across the school. Greater cognisance needs to be taken of the importance of developing clear and well-understood leadership roles at all levels to support more effective collaborative working.

- The recent appointment of a principal teacher for Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) is having some early positive impact on raising awareness of DYW priorities. However, work in this area is well behind national expectations. The work of the principal teacher DYW needs to be supported by a strategic approach to develop the capacity of all teachers and guidance staff to ensure that young people are receiving their full entitlements in this area.

- Senior leaders have developed a rationale for use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) which targets interventions appropriately to improve learning outcomes for identified individuals and groups. There is evidence that interventions are leading to improved outcomes for some of these targeted young people in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders acknowledge that they need to confirm progress through formal assessment and rigorous self-evaluation. This will help to assess the effectiveness of interventions and inform future planning to close the poverty-related attainment gap.

- School partners and employers are generally positive about their work with the school. They are keen to develop their work further. A few partners such as Berwickshire Housing Association, Community Learning and Development and Connect, have a clear understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the local community. This is informing their partnership offer to the school. As a result young people are positively benefitting from one-to- one and group work support which is building confidence, resilience and skills required to maintain a tenancy. There is not yet a shared understanding by partners of the school's vison, values and aims. A more systematic approach to collaborative planning for continuous improvement with wider partners is required. This will help to ensure that shared intelligence informs planning for improvement.

- The absence of formal forums for youth voice is impacting negatively on their ability to inform, develop or lead aspects of school improvement. This is a significant gap. Young people would welcome the opportunity to influence and drive improvements.

■ The headteacher demonstrates strong core values of integrity, respect and compassion and is aiming to develop a culture where staff work together to improve learning for young people. Effective use of professional learning around key national priorities and strategies would enhance the capacity of the senior leadership team (SLT) to drive forward necessary change. This should include extensive support from the local authority and other agencies.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	weak

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

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

■ The majority of young people report that staff are approachable and that they treat them fairly. The majority of young people are respectful of staff and are appreciative of the support they receive both in classes and in out of class activities such as supported study and clubs.

■ In the majority of lessons, teachers plan learning activities well and use learning intentions to help young people understand the purpose of the lesson. The majority of young people are motivated to learn and achieve. They engage well in lessons by working independently, with their peers during paired or group activities, and during whole class question and answer sessions. Across the school teachers do not have a consistent approach to seeking, and acting effectively on, the views of young people in relation to their learning. Implementing suitably high expectations for all learners and agreeing these with all shareholders should be a key priority for all staff as they go forward.

■ Currently, the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in the school is too variable. While inspectors observed a few examples of effective practice, this was inconsistent across the school. A few staff used skilful questioning to develop young people's understanding and learning activities which challenged learners and encouraged them to work at pace. Activities were also created to allow learners sufficient time to consolidate their learning. Senior leaders acknowledge that there is a strong need to ensure such practice is shared more widely. This will ensure young people experience a better quality of learning across the school. The opportunities for developing creative learning activities across the school are already afforded by the well-considered design and facilities of the school and its setting.

■ A minority of lessons do not engage young people effectively. Such lessons are not meeting the needs of young people and the level of challenge is too low. In a minority of lessons, young people spend too long copying from boards, completing low-level tasks that are of limited learning value, or spend lengthy periods of time listening passively. As a result, young people become easily distracted and disengaged from their learning. In a minority of lessons, the quality of learning is reduced by very disruptive behaviour which is not managed well by teachers. Across the school, poor behaviour is impacting negatively on learning. Senior leaders should ensure that, as a key priority, there is a whole-school focus on creating calm, safe and purposeful learning environments which are conducive to high quality teaching and learning. This should focus on promoting positive relationships across the school and ensuring that there is much greater consistency in dealing with challenging behaviour. In addition, staff should work on creating high-quality learning activities which are well matched to learners' needs and interests. This will help to motivate and engage young people more in their own learning.

■ The recently-formed Teaching and Learning group has started to engage teachers in discussing the features of highly effective teaching practice. The group has created the

'Berwickshire High School Lesson/Self-Evaluation Framework' which exemplifies the features of an effective lesson. At present, such shared understanding of these features is not evident across the school, resulting in very variable quality in teaching and learning.

- A whole-school approach to using digital technology is required to support faster pace and challenge in learning. In a few lessons, digital technology is used effectively to promote high quality learning. For example, through projecting exemplar answers, teachers helped young people to self and peer assess. Young people speak positively about on-line assessments which have been created by their teachers to help them check their understanding of their learning. Such opportunities are inconsistent across the school which is limiting young people's opportunities to benefit from digital technology more widely.

- In a few departments young people can articulate how teachers help them understand their progress in learning. In these departments, young people take part in learning conversations and complete learning logs or evaluations of their work. This does not occur consistently across all departments and is more evident in the senior phase than in the BGE. In addition, evaluations by learners and feedback from teachers are not always detailed enough to inform next steps in learning. All teachers should ensure that learners benefit from high quality feedback at all stages in their learning and that young people develop skills which will enable them to reflect more meaningfully on their learning.

- A new reporting system being developed, informs parents of their child's levels of learning and next steps. The reporting comments are not detailed enough to give young people and parents clarity on next steps in learning. Senior leaders have shared their plans to develop this system further taking into account of feedback from young people and parents.

- Further work is required to ensure that assessment of levels within Curriculum for Excellence is both valid and reliable. A shared understanding of effective moderation across the school is not yet sufficiently well developed. Whilst there are a few examples of faculty and cluster working, such practice is not consistent across the school. Staff are also aware of the need to continue to widen the range of assessments used to help inform subsequent planning for learning, teaching and assessment. In a few departments teachers are developing effective use of peer- and self-assessment. This can be shared and developed further across all departments.

- During the school session, departments provide assessment information on each young person's progress in learning, and on their effort, behaviour and homework. This is informed by departmental tracking systems and teachers' professional judgement. The recently-developed whole-school tracking system is used to collate this data and allows senior staff to monitor young people's progress. This tracking has enabled staff to intervene where young people appear to be underperforming. This is a recent initiative which requires further development. Specifically, there is a need to ensure that all departments are making full use of the system and that interventions are in place in the BGE as they are currently more common in the senior phase.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

■ Berwickshire High School is in the process of reviewing its curriculum. At present the curriculum does not meet the needs of all young people. It does not provide a range of vocational pathways to enable young people to succeed and it does not or take account of national priorities or entitlements. The curriculum is failing to provide appropriate personalisation and flexible pathways for learners.

■ Senior leaders recognise the need to improve the school's curriculum to raise attainment and to ensure that every young person has access to courses which are matched to their needs. In taking this forward, the school should consult widely with learners, staff, parents and partners, taking appropriate account of local Labour Market Information (LMI) and the Regional Skills Assessment (RSA). This will ensure that the necessary revisions made are understood and supported by the school community and, more importantly, the changes made will meet the diverse needs and aspirations of the young people in the school.

■ Young people benefit from a transition programme in primary 7 that involves specialist input to science and health and wellbeing, as well as a two day secondary experience. Although there are examples of partnership activities between secondary and primary colleagues, senior leaders identify correctly the need to formalise such working. In order to ensure continuity and progression in learning, more effective partnership working is required with primary schools.

■ In S1 and S2, learning is planned using third level Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes. At the end of S2, young people make choices for S3 whilst still maintaining breadth in the curriculum. Courses in S3 are mainly constructed using fourth level Experiences and Outcomes. In addition, all young people in S3 work towards achieving an SQA Health and Wellbeing Award through learning in physical education (PE), home economics and social education (SE). At the end of S3, young people make choices for the senior phase. As part of the review of the curriculum, we have asked senior leaders to review the BGE offering so that all young people receive their full entitlement to learning in the expressive arts. In addition, senior leaders should ensure that learning in the BGE provides appropriate pace and challenge so that young people are prepared for the demands of the senior phase.

■ All young people in S1-S4 experience two periods of high-quality PE and, in S1-S6, all young people receive one period of social education (SE) and one period of 'Learning for Life'. Young people in S5 and S6 do not have a continuing element of religious and moral education (RME). Senior leaders should ensure that all young people continue to experience learning in RME that is meaningful and progressive from S1 to S6. Teachers should review their use of SQA units in RME in S3 to ensure that all young people receive their entitlement to all third level Experiences and Outcomes. Senior leaders have also shared with us their plans to review the offering of 'Learning for Life' as they recognise that the current programme is not delivering the intended outcomes for young people. There is scope to develop religious observance to link meaningfully to learning across the curriculum and to take greater account of diversity.

■ The mathematics and English departments lead the teaching and assessing of numeracy and literacy. Staff are at a very early stage of developing these skills as a responsibility of all. At pace, there is a need to ensure that all staff have greater clarity on how they can contribute to the development of young people's numeracy and literacy skills. This should be combined with further work with primary colleagues to ensure that staff can build on young people's prior knowledge.

■ The senior phase is timetabled as a single cohort and is based predominantly on courses leading to National Qualifications (NQs). In general, young people choose up to six NQs in S4 and a combination of five or six NQs in S5/6. Young people have a few options to study courses through links with Borders College and neighbouring schools. There is a need to ensure young people make informed course choices, including college courses, when these best meet their needs.

■ Senior leaders acknowledge the need to broaden the options for the senior curriculum to meet the needs of more young people. The current curriculum has a very limited offering for young people who wish to go into work, further training, further education or apprenticeships on leaving school. There are no structured vocational pathways available.

■ Partners are enthusiastic about their potential to contribute to learning pathways. Where young people are benefiting positively from engaging with partners, there is no formal mechanism to agree learning outcomes or joint self-evaluation. Partners would benefit from a forum to plan their contributions and develop approaches to joint self-evaluation.

■ In a few subject areas, there are good links with employers who contribute positively to young people's learning. There is a need to ensure that such links are planned and evaluated across all curriculum areas so that young people benefit equally from the involvement of employers in curriculum design and delivery. The Career Education Standard (CES) is not yet embedded in the curriculum. As a result, young people do not routinely relate their learning to their career aspirations. There is a need to ensure that young people can articulate their developing skills in relation to their understanding of the workplace.

■ Arrangements to help young people to make informed choices about their future are unclear and uncoordinated. With the exception of planned and regular engagements with the school's Careers Adviser, young people are unsure how to plan their next steps after school. Although registrations for 'My World of Work' (MWoW) are high, young people do not routinely use the tool and teachers do not encourage them to do so in a systematic way.

■ Young people receive support from the SDS Careers Adviser, who provides advice on career aspirations and next steps beyond school. Statistics for the numbers of group and individual engagements by the Careers Adviser with young people are well above the average for the region. There are no arrangements to encourage and support young people in their development of Career Management Skills (CMS). As a result, they have not developed these skills and do not understand the importance of the development of these skills to their future career choices and decisions.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

■ Senior leaders acknowledge the need to engage parents and carers more regularly and meaningfully in the work of the school. The majority of those who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed, or strongly agreed, that they receive helpful, regular feedback about how their child is learning and developing. Some parents expressed the view that information is improving for young people in the senior phase with the introduction of three tracking reports per session. A few departments are starting to develop ways to give parents better information about what young people are learning in school. However, in the pre-inspection questionnaire, the majority of parents did not agree that they received advice on how to support their child's learning at home. Only a few parents agreed that the school organises activities for them to learn together with their children.

■ The school needs to work with Community Learning and Development partners to develop more formal processes to engage with parents and carers of those young people referred to their provision.

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 of urgency.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	weak

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

- Senior leaders recognise the importance of building positive relationships as key to engaging young people with learning, and supporting their wellbeing. The recently developed Relationship and Behaviour Policy, created in consultation with staff, parents and young people, is well founded on current advice and guidance. It provides useful advice to staff on how to develop positive relationships in the classroom and to manage young people's behaviour. Posters, designed by young people to 'Be Ready, Have Respect, and Stay Safe', are displayed in most classrooms and corridors.

- Across the school however, relationships and behaviour are inconsistent, and this is having a negative impact on young people's wellbeing. Many young people do not feel respected by their peers, and a considerable number of staff and young people do not feel safe in the school. In addition, a majority of young people and staff do not feel that the school deals well with bullying. Senior leaders should take immediate action to address these concerns. This includes putting in place clearer systems and processes to deal more effectively with challenging behaviour and class truancy, so that all members of staff and young people have a clear understanding of expectations. All staff across the school now need to work together to ensure greater consistency of approaches, including sharing good practice. Staff training in nurturing approaches, trauma-informed practice and adverse childhood experiences should, as planned, continue to be rolled out to support staff's understanding and practice. Teachers should build on the recent work with third year to address bullying, which showed positive outcomes. It is important that all critical incidents are reviewed thoroughly, with the local authority informed, in order to ensure that practice is continuously improved. This includes, consideration of risk assessments, support strategies for young people and staff, and analysis of lessons learned.

- There is a growing understanding for most staff about their responsibility for young people's wellbeing, and Getting it Right for Every Child. However, senior leaders are aware that the wellbeing indicators are not yet embedded in the work of the school. Young people need support to understand their relevance, and to use them to take responsibility for their own wellbeing. Whilst the majority of young people have someone in school to talk to if they have a worry or concern, less than half feel that they have opportunities to discuss achievements with an adult who knows them well. Overall, there is an over-reliance on pastoral and support for learning staff. Senior leaders now need to improve strategic approaches to wellbeing, including reviewing the purpose and effectiveness of the Learning for Life period, and improving universal support for all young people.

- The well planned health and wellbeing period in the BGE is helping young people to learn about the benefits of being active, and about mental and emotional wellbeing. Young people

benefit from their good experiences in PE and home economics, and most are positive about the opportunities they have to take exercise and attend clubs. They are learning how to cook using ingredients they grow in the school garden. Young people in S1 learn to plan menus and prepare food for their annual residential trip. There is scope for further collaboration between catering and school staff around nutrition and health, and sharing resources, expertise and knowledge to best effect. Teachers involved in developing and delivering the health and wellbeing programme should continue to work with primary colleagues and young people to ensure progression and relevance in learning. Young people are less positive about social education, and all teachers should ensure that learners are more actively involved in planning their learning to ensure it is relevant and meaningful.

- Overall, senior leaders have a good understanding of statutory requirements in relation to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. They should continue to keep all young people currently on part-time timetables under regular review, and work closely with the local authority and community partners to support individualised packages of support to ensure positive outcomes for all young people. Senior leaders should also ensure that no informal exclusions are taking place, and take action to address truancy from class.

- The main duties under the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007, including promoting the school meal service, protecting the identity of those entitled to free school meals, and access to free drinking water throughout the day, are being met. The food and drink standards across the day are not currently being met. Catering service staff are aware of changes that need to be made. The nutritional analysis of the four-week menu shows there is further work to ensure full compliance with the nutritional regulations.

- Effective targeted support is helping the majority of young people with additional support needs to make progress in their learning, and appropriate plans are in place. This includes support for care-experienced young people, young carers and learners for whom English is not their first language. Good information is shared with staff which is helping them to understand the needs and circumstances of individual learners. Enhanced transitions and the use of safe spaces help vulnerable young people to settle well into school. We have discussed with senior leaders the need to review strategic approaches to supporting all learners facing barriers to their learning. This includes how well class teachers are meeting learners' needs, and how often young people are extracted from classes to learn in a support base.

- Support staff work well with partners, including the college, through the Borders Young Talent initiative which provides mentoring support for vulnerable young people. This joint initiative has had positive results. While there are some well-established community partnerships which support learners with specific needs, there is no strategic overview or plan for coordinated inclusion of such provision, and opportunities to support flexible pathways within the curriculum. This results in potential missed opportunities for learners, as well as overlap of, and gaps in, provision. A few external partners are doing good work in isolation, and are not aware of where their work fits into the wider work of the school. Senior leaders and staff need to ensure that academic and vocational pathways are valued equally, and are open to all young people.

- Across the school, approaches to learner participation need significant improvement, so that young people feel that their views are listened to and taken into account. This will help to create a greater sense of belonging, ownership and pride in their school. At present, young people have little understanding of their rights, and do not feel that they have many opportunities to take responsibility or to contribute to the life of the school community.

■ A group of young people and staff have done good work in promoting understanding of diversity, and have achieved the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Youth Scotland bronze award. Young people are able to talk with some confidence about their understanding of diversity and discrimination. Teachers should ensure that all young people have progressive opportunities to learn about equality and diversity, including all protected characteristics, to ensure this is fully reflective of 21st Century Scotland as well as the context of the school. This will help all young people to develop more understanding and tolerance of others, for example for those whose behaviour can be challenging.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	weak

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
Broad general education (BGE)

■ In 2018, the school reports that by the end of S3 most young people achieved third Curriculum for Excellence level in reading and writing and almost all in listening and talking. Attainment in numeracy remains stable with the school reporting that almost all learners achieved third Curriculum for Excellence level numeracy by the end of S3. Numeracy attainment is above both local authority and national average achievement.

■ A majority of young people achieved fourth Curriculum for Excellence level in literacy and numeracy by the end of S3 in 2016 and 2017. There is a dip in literacy in 2018 where less than half of all pupils attained fourth Curriculum for Excellence level in reading and writing. This is only the third set of achievement data for the BGE data to be collected and the dip may be as a result of the developing reliability of the data from the use of staff moderation. Senior leaders comment that a number of new initiatives are beginning to support the development of and better understanding of moderation standards. This includes the recent addition of learning rounds to support attainment improvement. It is still too early to measure any impact from this work.

■ Teachers use professional judgment, Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) testing in S3 and a range of internal class tests as part of their approaches to demonstrate attainment improvement. In a few classes young people are using the National Benchmarks to consider how well they are achieving a level. Middle leaders are developing subject tracking systems in almost all departments. These systems are beginning to help subject teachers to assess young people's progress more effectively.

■ Senior leaders recognise that BGE tracking is an area which requires further work across all subjects to ensure consistency, identify attainment gaps and to highlight early anyone at risk. The use of a Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officer (QAMSO) is limited at present to supporting moderation in maths.

Senior phase:
Attainment of young people in literacy by the time of leaving school:
All leavers, Literacy:

■ Almost all young people leaving school in the five years between 2013 and 2017 achieved SCQF level 4 or better in literacy. The majority achieved SCQF level 5 or better between 2013 and 2016 with this improving to most achieving this in 2017 .Attainment was in line with the VC and above the national figure at SCQF level 5 in 2017. This was an improvement on the

previous three years where the school was significantly lower or significantly much lower than the VC.

- S4 leavers, literacy**:** At SCQF level 5 or better the school is in line with the VC but is showing a gain in the percentage of young people attaining at this level in the latest year (2016-2017). The proportion attaining at SCQF level 3 and level 4 or better is in line with the VC. The school understands their responsibility to ensure that every child is functionally literate when leaving the school and to this end has put in place identified support for anyone flagged up as not achieving at the expected level. Support includes using the learning support staff offering one to one learning, providing differentiated resources such as targeted questions.

- S5 leavers, literacy: At SCQF Level 5 or better the percentage of S5 leavers attaining at this level was significantly much lower than the VC in three out of the last five years up to 2017. The proportion attaining at SCQF Level 3 or better is in line with the VC with most learners achieving this award in the latest three years to 2017. The proportion attaining at SCQF Level 4 or better is in line with the VC in 2017 with most learners achieving this award in the latest three years. At SCQF level 6 the percentage attaining in the school is in line in three out of five years though significantly much lower than the VC in two out of five years**.**

Attainment of young people in numeracy by the time of leaving school:
- Attainment in numeracy is in line with the VC at SCQF level 3 or better over a five year period to 2017. The percentage attaining in numeracy is significantly lower than the VC at SCQF Level 4 or better in two out of five years. A majority of young people left school with SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy in 2017. This is in line with the VC. There is a slight disparity between the number attaining in numeracy as a course and as unit only at level 5 or better. This isn't evident in literacy. A small number of the learners are achieving well at their predicted level in the Learning Centre.

- Teachers plan for any learner leaving school before the end of S5 and departments endeavour to ensure they have achieved a literacy and numeracy qualification before leaving the school. These very few learners receive supported intervention work within the maths department, sometimes one to one support to try to ensure they can achieve a literacy and numeracy award at SCQF level 3.

- S4 leavers, Numeracy: Over five years to 2016/17, the proportion of learners attaining at SCQF level 5 or better is in line with the VC in the last five years and improved in 201. The data for the school shows an improving picture in the last five years though the numbers of young people leaving at the end of S4 are low.

- S5 leavers, Numeracy: Over five years to 2016/17, the proportion of learners attaining at SCQF level 5 or better is significantly much lower than the VC in four out of five years. The data for the school shows a fluctuating picture over the five years. Insight figures show learners in S5 in line with the VC at SCQF level 3 or better over the five year period with almost all learners achieving a pass in the last three years. Over five years to 2016/17, the proportion of learners attaining at SCQF level 4 or better is significantly lower or much lower than the VC in two out of five years. Senior leaders are working to provide more support in S4 with an improved curriculum choice to ensure success.

Attainment over time
BGE
- Senior leaders recognise that previous BGE attainment tracking gathered over time is not yet reliable and still data under development. Staff in departments use evidence from assessments

and their professional judgement to record young people's progress over time. Senior leaders are discussing this information with principal teachers to ensure that evidence is reliable.

Senior phase - Attainment over time
Leavers

■ Across the school three tracking cycles are in place to track attainment but senior leaders agree they need to monitor this much more closely in the senior phase to provide better targeted support.

■ Performance in raising attainment for all leavers shows average total tariff scores for the lowest attaining 20% are significantly lower or much lower than the VC in the latest five years to 2017. The middle attaining 60% are significantly much lower than the VC in two out of the five years and in line with the VC in three out of the last five years in terms of their total tariff score. In the highest attaining 20% of leavers the school is in line with the VC in four out of the last five years. Senior leaders recognise they need to do more to improve the range of options and extend the pathways available for subject choices The extended leadership team is proposing a number of curriculum changes for next session to support further improvement in attainment.

How well is the school improving young people's attainment as they move through senior phase in school?

■ In S4 average complementary tariff scores for the lowest attaining 20% are in line with the VC in four out of the last five years. The average complementary tariff scores of the middle attaining 60% has improved from significantly lower than the VC to in line with the VC in the last two years and attainment of the highest attaining 20% is significantly higher than the VC in two out of the last five years including in the latest year.

■ For those staying on to S5, the lowest attaining 20% are attaining significantly much lower than the VC in four out of five years, though they are in line in the latest year. Average complementary tariff scores for the middle attaining 60% are significantly lower or much lower than the VC in four out of the last five years. The highest attaining 20% are in line with the VC in four out of five years and significantly much higher in 2017.

■ For those staying on to S6, the lowest attaining 20% are attaining in line with the VC in the last five years. The middle 60% are attaining in line with the VC in four out of five years and the highest 20% are attaining in line with the VC in four out of five years and significantly higher than the VC in 2017.

■ The headteacher recognises that course choices for S5 need widened and this has led to disengaged learners in S5. Senior leaders are working to ensure all young people are presented for courses which are well- suited to their needs and aspirations.

■ The school provided evidence that learners with English as an Additional Language (EAL), around 4.6% of their learners, are achieving well. A few learners are now working to achieve English as a Second Language (ESOL) qualifications this session at Higher level.

■ There is scope to improve awards further through most heads of departments focussing more on reducing the number of SQA 'No Awards'.

Breadth and depth:
Qualifications:

■ In S4 the majority of learners study 6 courses. At SCQF level 3 and 4 or better the percentage of pupils attaining is mostly in line with the VC for one to five or more courses in the last five years. At level 4 or better the percentage of pupils attaining six or more courses is significantly lower or much lower than the VC in four of the last five years though there has been an improvement in the latest year and 53% of young people attained 6 or more courses at SCQF level 4 or better which is in line with the VC. The breadth and depth measures for SCQF level 5C or better are significantly lower than the VC in three out of the last five years for four or more courses. However, the percentage of young people attaining one to six courses at SCQF level 5C or better has improved to in line with the VC in the latest year. The breadth and depth measures for SCQF level 5A or better are in line with the VC in four out of the last five years for five or more courses.

■ By S5, the breadth and depth measures for SCQF level 5C or better are significantly lower or much lower than the VC in three out of the last five years for two, three, four or five or more courses. There has been a recent improvement to in line with the VC in the latest year. For two, three, four or five or more courses at SCQF level 6C or better, results are in line with the VC in three out of the last five years and significantly lower than the VC in the latest year. For one to four or more courses, the percentage of pupils attaining at 6A or better has fallen in 2017/18 compared to previous years and to the VC. Senior leaders recognise that they need to reflect why this has happened and whether course choices need to be reconsidered for this group.

■ By S6, the breadth and depth measures, in percentages of young people, for SCQF level 5C or better for one to five or more courses is significantly lower or much lower than the virtual in the last five years with the exception of 2016/17 when results for these courses were in line with the VC. By S6, the breadth and depth measures for SCQF level 6C or better is mostly line with the VC in the last five years. By S6, the breadth and depth measures for SCQF level 6A or better is mostly in line with the VC in the last five years. By S6, less than half of those learners presented are achieving success at SCQF level 7 for one or more courses. Advanced higher presentations are increasing with a few students achieving two Advanced Highers.

■ In a few subjects, young people attained significantly lower than national averages at National 5 and at Higher.

Overall quality of learners' achievement:

■ Young people are achieving a range of additional skills and attributes including in sport, music, leading clubs and from charity work. They are developing confidence as prefects. There are a few examples of formal accreditation of achievement including Dynamic Youth, Saltire Awards and Duke of Edinburgh's Award, however, uptake and completion rates are low. Achievements are also recognised through school assemblies, certificates of achievement and the use of social media. However, this is not consistent in celebrating all levels of achievement across the school consistently. More effective analysis of trends and patterns of achievement by all learners would enable better planning for improvement. This could include identifying those young people who may be at risk of missing out through taking part in few or no wider achievement activities

■ Young people's performance skills are improving through valuable opportunities to play in a variety of school bands, concerts and school shows. Young people are improving their fitness, and team work, through participation in sports such as hockey and rugby, including the school of rugby. A few learners have reached the standard to compete at county and national level.

■ The absence of a systematic approach to partnership working is impacting negatively on those young people who would benefit most from access to wider opportunities. The few young people that are participating are improving their life chances for life and work.

Equity for all learners: (SIMD 1-3)

■ Senior leaders understand the need to place a relentless focus on raising the attainment of all learners especially those who live in areas with the highest socio-economic disadvantage. Staff know who the 3.1% of learners are in SIMD 3 and put extra support in place to enable them to achieve. This is leading to positive outcomes for these young people. Young people in SIMD 3 who left school in 2017 performed significantly higher than the national figure in terms of tariff scores. The school is using Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) with an aim of supporting improvement in digital learning in literacy and numeracy. In addition they have appointed a full time maths PT and two Additional Needs Assistants (ANA). This is providing an increased timetabled provision for identified learners to receive individual or group support in literacy and numeracy. Impact is noted in literacy and numeracy for a few learners with additional challenges.

■ Attendance has remained stable over a five year period and in line with the national average. The incidence of unauthorised absences in 2016/2017 was slightly above the national average but is reducing within the school. These figures do not account for the significant number of pupils who were observed by inspectors during the inspection week wandering corridors unsupervised during the school day and as such missing out on valuable learning time.

Attainment versus Deprivation

■ The SIMD profile shows 6.2% learners living in deciles 3 and 4. 83.4% of learners are living in deciles 5-7 and 8.3% learners live in deciles 8-10. For those learners from the most challenging socio-economic backgrounds in decile 3, the school is demonstrating success in their attainment. Staff have put in place a number of helpful interventions that are ensuring these targeted learners are supported to achieve.

How well is the school improving or maintaining positive and sustained destinations for all leavers?

Destinations

■ Over the last five years, almost all young people who left school have moved to a positive destination and this sits in line with the VC in the last five years. In 2016/2017 the majority of learners left school for either higher education (HE) or further education (FE). Other learners go into a variety of employment including agricultural work, factory work and a few are working in services industries such as in care work.

■ A recent appointment with responsibility for Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) within the school structure has had a very positive impact over a short period of time, both within and outwith the school. However, school leaders are at an initial stage of planning for the implementation of DYW priorities across the school. Currently, leaders provide no clear direction to staff on how they should embed DYW priorities in the curriculum, in their teaching practice, or in guidance and support services. Teaching staff are unfamiliar with Career Education Standards (CES) and the Work Placements Standard. The school has provided no Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) on the Standards and no guidance on how teaching staff should support young people through their use. Children and young people are unaware of the opportunities and resources to which they are entitled within the Career Education Standard (3-18) (CES), and teaching and support practitioners are unaware of the expectations that the Standard places upon them. As a result, learners are not benefitting from the provision of important resources and support, are not developing appropriate career development skills. School pastoral staff attend monthly DYW meetings with SDS colleagues and the QIO at which

learners' progress is monitored and points for improvement considered. The impact of these meetings is not clear.

Development of career management skills (CMS)

■ Career Management Skills (CMS) are not delivered and monitored by guidance or teaching staff. Although some young people have received a brief session on CMS, this has not been followed up by planned sessions to help learners further develop their skills. Therefore, young people have not developed their CMS and have missed out on opportunities to develop their career aspirations and plans. Teaching staff have had no CLPL on CMS and are unaware of the need to develop these skills in young people. The social education curriculum does not include Career Management Skills.

Choice of QI : 2.4 Personalised support

■ Theme 1: universal support
■ Theme 2: targeted support
■ Theme 3: Removal of barriers to learning

■ Staff receive valid and detailed information regarding the identified needs of young people and the associated strategies that support learning. This includes communication of helpful data that supports transition from primary school. Additionally, the provision of regularly up-dated "house" notes advises staff of existing and emerging challenges that young people may be facing. When this information is used by teachers to shape appropriate flexibility in approaches to learning, young people feel supported and confident in how to make progress. Across the school there is significant inconsistency in the use of this approach to meet young people's needs in classes.

■ Whilst in the majority of lessons there are positive relationships between staff and learners, the wider school ethos does not support young people in behaving responsibly and demonstrating high levels of punctuality and commitment to their learning. Overall, the climate in the school does not generate a widespread respect for learning. Confirming suitably high expectations of all learners is a key priority for the school.

■ There is an emerging focus on how the wellbeing of young people is supported. This includes extensive opportunities for young people to participate in physical activity and a timetabled focus on health and wellbeing. Young people are also supported through engagement in a reflective programme considering emotional wellbeing. These approaches to universal support are assisting young people in reflecting on aspects of their individual wellbeing. Professional learning for teachers has included focus on restorative approaches and establishing positive relationships. Building on their already effective practice, there is a need to establish relevant learning opportunities for all Additional Needs Assistants. The school needs to further develop this approach.

■ The majority of young people feel that they have someone in the school they can speak to if upset or worried. Pastoral teachers have a holistic overview of the needs of young people. There is clear communication of opportunities for support including individual access to the school nurse. A few learners also benefit from aspects of peer support and a violence reduction programme allows them to act as mentors to other young people.

■ When learners are engaged in conversations about their learning with their teachers, they feel this supports them to identify next steps towards making progress. The application of this process is inconsistent. In a few lessons young people contribute to evaluating the learning process, but overall less than half feel that the school listens to and takes account of their views. Additionally, there is a very inconsistent approach to sharing and celebrating the achievements of young people. As a result, not all learners feel valued as part of a learning community.

■ Overall, there is a need to evaluate current approaches to universal support. The school should devise a cohesive plan to ensure equity of provision and to increase the awareness of all staff regarding their responsibility to deliver universal support entitlements.

- Targeted support for young people is based on reliable information that is shared effectively and confidentially with staff. Identified needs are reviewed as necessary and in nearly all cases this is done in consultation with parents and young people themselves. Well-planned interventions have a positive impact on young people's learning. Effective targeted support is also planned through collaborative working with a range of partners and co-professionals. Partnerships that support individual young people include engagement with the inclusion and wellbeing service, the educational psychology team and specialist staff with expertise in specific areas of need. There are also arrangements that support learning beyond school when appropriate.

- A few young people are benefitting from a developing commitment to a nurturing approach and there is a positive climate for learning within the Learning Centre. This is being compromised when unplanned withdrawal of young people from classes effects planned activities. The commitment and professionalism of specialist staff is assisting young people significantly in receiving targeted support. Aspects of support include establishment of flexible and individualised timetables, designation and review of appropriately aspirational plans and the provision of safe, quiet social areas for some young people. Specialist staff also offer support in classrooms across the school. As a priority there is a need to review procedures to extend this approach as opposed to using withdrawal of learners to specialist accommodation. There is a similar need to continue to ensure that plans for individual young people confirm routes to support return to mainstream classes in a consistent fashion.

- Initiatives supported by Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) are targeted towards securing positive outcomes on individual learners identified as facing difficulties in improving literacy and numeracy. The school is aware of the need to more effectively plan for and evaluate this provision and subsequently amend plans as required.

- To complement the target of all young people attending full-time, staff are developing plans to extend engagement with parents of young people not attending school. Increasingly, the school is sharing with staff, information regarding the socio-economic circumstances of young people. Clear planning is now needed to ensure actions taken lead to equity of outcome for all learners.

- Young people who are young carers or care-experienced or have English as an additional language are identified successfully by support staff. Teachers are advised of any learners facing such potential barriers to learning. Specialist support staff are becoming increasingly effective in applying appropriate interventions to respond to such identified needs. The school has also begun to consider how aspects of rurality may be compromising some young people's opportunities for learning and wider achievement. Overall, staff are increasingly well-supported with information pertaining to potential barriers facing individual learners. There is now scope for senior leaders to develop a strategic plan that confirms responsibilities of all staff to work collaboratively to remove such barriers.

Quality of provision of Special Unit

Context

A specialist provision within Berwickshire High School provides education for young people with severe, profound and complex additional support needs. At the time of the inspection there were 12 young people within the provision, representing S1 through to S5. There are two dedicated teaching rooms; one for those undertaking learning in the Broad General Education and one for those in the Senior Phase. There has been a high turnover in staff in recent years, including the appointment of an principal teacher who has been in post for just over two years. Young people's placement in the base follows a decision by Scottish Borders Council Central Overview Group that their needs would be best met in Berwickshire High School. The majority of young people attending the enhanced provision live outside the catchment area for the school.

Leadership of change

■ The principal teacher for the enhanced provision department has developed an explicit shared vision with staff, based on promoting independence, social inclusion, healthy attitudes and behaviours, and young people reaching their potential. The direction for the future is ambitious and challenging. It is shaped by an informed awareness of current educational thinking on complex additional support needs and involves reflection and debate among stakeholders. There is a recognition that the vision for the department could be aligned more closely to the wider whole-school vision. The school should proceed as planned to raise the profile of the enhanced provision so that both staff and young people have a greater awareness and understanding of the needs of young people with complex needs.

■ The vision shapes thinking and strategic planning within the department. The Improvement Plan is focused on aspects that result in improvements in the quality of learning provision and continue to increase young people's success and achievements. Improvement Plan priorities are based on the results of accurate and effective self-evaluation undertaken by all staff, although these could be more formalised and rigorous. The department should proceed as planned to develop a quality assurance calendar.

■ Leadership of change is developing well within the enhanced provision department. Teaching and support staff are strong agents of change and work well together in driving forward improvements. They are benefiting from the inclusive, collegiate and democratic leadership style of the principal teacher. He provides highly effective leadership and direction to staff. His inward, outward and forward-looking approaches to self-evaluation are resulting in improvements in learning, teaching and assessment, the curriculum and approaches to achievement.

■ Moving forward, there is a need for senior school leaders to take a more active role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the enhanced provision department.

Learning, teaching and assessment

■ Young people show high levels of motivation and engagement in their learning, and participate with enthusiasm in the range of activities provided by staff. Highly personalised learning, that taps into individual interests, engage young people well in their learning. Individual 'passports', 'This Is Me' plans and monitoring levels of engagement are supporting teachers to provide relevant and purposeful learning. Individual work stations are enabling young people to become more independent in their learning. As young people demonstrate confidence in using

these work stations, staff have increased the level of challenge for example through morning routines.

■ The quality of teaching is effective with well-planned and structured lessons. Teachers and highly skilled Additional Needs Assistants (ANA) provide a range of relevant activities which meet young people's needs effectively, providing suitable support, pace and challenge. For those young people who have limited or no verbal language, staff employ a range of strategies to support and enable understanding and communication. Use of on-body signing, mutual signing, sensory cues and visual supports are enabling young people to understand. Effective feedback from staff to young people is helping them to make progress in their learning.

■ Young people's experiences when in mainstream classes are adversely affected by the behaviour of a number of young people. The quality and regularity of liaison between the enhanced provision department and school staff will be a key factor in underpinning the effectiveness of integrating young people. In addition, in order to develop the mainstream context as an enabling environment, it would be beneficial to build the capacity of teaching staff and reinforce expectations to young people of acceptable behaviour.

■ The physical environment, local facilities and a range of trips are well used to enhance and promote opportunities for speech, language and communication. Most notably, partners such as Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) and the local swimming pool provide therapy, fitness, skills development and opportunities for achievement.

■ Current access to the department is through a busy area of the school, which also houses the management suite and a number of offices used for other purposes. Daily traffic within this area can be intrusive and upsetting to learners in the department. There is a need to create well-defined areas for free flow, and the use of key pad security to access outdoor areas and designated space solely for young people with complex needs. At the moment, there are too many interruptions to young people's learning. Young people would benefit from improvement in the use of school grounds, including the Learning Centre Garden area, as a context for engagement with the natural and social environment. In addition, greater investment in digital technology would enable staff to support young people's expressive language even further.

■ Staff use a range of suitable approaches to assess young people's progress. Planning is based increasingly around Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes and milestones developed by Education Scotland. Staff monitor and track progress of individual learners regularly and make adaptions to their planning of teaching and learning as a result. They are highly responsive to the needs of young people. Staff recognise the need to develop approaches to moderation in order to support shared expectations of standards to be achieved. Plans are in place to work with special secondary sector specialists in the cluster and colleagues in the primary support centre to achieve this aim.

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion
■ The ethos and culture of the department reflects a commitment to young people's rights and positive relationships. There is a nurturing, supportive and positive climate for learning with respectful interactions between staff and young people. However, social experiences at break and lunchtimes is an area of concern when young people can be stressed when accessing social spaces such as the canteen. This needs to be addressed.

■ There are appropriate individual education plans (IEP) and co-ordinated support plans in place for all young people. A number of targets, bespoke to individual young people, exist for many areas of practice and therefore it would be worthwhile to streamline these in order to measure

progress against these. Although informal opportunities exist to review targets, the principal teacher recognises the need to formalise these arrangements with relevant stakeholders for all young people.

■ Teachers and ANAs know the pastoral needs of young people well and as a result young people feel safe and have strong bonds with staff. The language of feelings is used throughout the base to help young people monitor their own emotions and behaviour and to recognise how their actions can impact negatively on the feelings of others. Staff incorporate time to speak to young people where negative change is shown.

■ The deployment of ANAs has been supported through monitoring and evaluating their work using a self-assessment guide. ANAs would benefit from professional learning to support safeguarding further, such as first aid and physical intervention and restraint.

■ There is effective planning, with partners, to support young people's transition. Staff are taking forward Developing the Young Workforce ensuring that all their young people leave school with appropriate and relevant independence and employability skills. All young people experience the world of work through work placements. This is resulting in positive destinations for young people as they move from high school to alternative providers.

Raising attainment and achievement

■ From the school's attainment information, most young people are making good progress towards the early level of Curriculum for Excellence in literacy and numeracy with a few working within first level in literacy and numeracy.

■ In the senior phase, young people are achieving a wider range of qualifications. These have increased in recent years and include a wide spread of National 1 (6) and National 2 (3) Awards. Young people's attainment is monitored and tracked using a Red, Amber, Green rating for different unit awards. All young people are working towards a SQA Personal Achievement Award.

■ Learners' progression is viewed in the context of the optimum learning environment for them. There is a clear understanding of individual learners' needs that results in adaptations to the environment. Staff focus on what young people can do and progress is at times made in very small steps. Staff have an in-depth knowledge of young people with whom they work enabling them to identify development and progression when it occurs.

■ Young people's progress is evidenced in their learning folders, and support plans. The school needs now to develop further their tracking and monitoring of young people's progress to provide a more simplified and clearer picture of young people's progress against time. This will support staff to identify how well young people are progressing against their targets and to plan more effectively for next steps.

■ There are strong examples of teachers supporting literacy. They support young people in how to listen by slowing speech down, using intonation in their voice and using visual cues to help those who have poor auditory memory skills. In addition, they support those with speech difficulties by encouraging non-verbal communication and using multi-sensory approaches. Using simple repetitive language during everyday activities, such as morning routine, and encouraging phonological awareness is supporting young people's progress in literacy.

■ Young people's achievements are recognised and displayed well within the department. Young people speak positively about the Olympics closing ceremony where they achieved medals and developed their team working skills. They are also developing their leadership and independence through their morning and end of day jobs. They also participate in local competitions such as a local supermarket's Schools Art competition giving them a sense of success. In addition, young people also work towards accredited awards such as Duke of Edinburgh and Saltire Award.

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.