

Summarised inspection findings

Arbroath High School

Angus Council

27 March 2024

Key contextual information

School Name: Arbroath High
School Council: Angus
SEED number: 5307139
Roll (Sep 2022): 880 young people

There have been changes to the senior leadership team at Arbroath High School. A new headteacher was appointed in April 2023 and an acting deputy headteacher was also recently appointed.

A specialist base, Harbour, within Arbroath High School provides education for young people with complex and severe needs. At the time of the inspection there were 21 young people within the provision, representing S1 through to S6. Young people are placed here when a transition meeting of the associated primaries to Arbroath High School decides that their needs would be best met in the in-house school base. A few young people also attend after an assessment within Arbroath High School or a placing request from another secondary school.

Attendance is below the national average.

Exclusions are generally above the national average. From August 2023 to January 2024, the number of exclusions has declined significantly.

In September 2022, 18.7 per cent of pupils were registered for free school meals.

In September 2022, 15.4 per cent of pupils live in 20 per cent most deprived data zones in Scotland.

In September 2022, the school reported that 29 per cent of pupils had additional support needs.

1.3 Leadership of change

weak

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 recently appointed headteacher has a clear vision for the future success of the school. This vision is in the very early stages of developing a collective sense of purpose and common goals for all staff and young people across the school. The vision is underpinned by a set of values which were developed in consultation with groups of parents, key staff and partners and further reviewed in session 2023/24. The school values of 'commitment' and 'respect' are demonstrated well by staff and young people alike. The value of 'ambition' and the vision of 'Higher Things' is not yet demonstrated well across the school. The further embedding of the Arbroath High school vision and values will be an important part of the change journey for the whole school community.
- Since coming into post, the headteacher has clearly identified a number of key areas of focus by monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. She is beginning to develop an understanding of the needs across a number of important areas of the school including learning and teaching, curriculum, and attainment. Her approach to leading these areas of the school and working with middle leaders to effect improvement is appreciated and supported by her team of middle and senior leaders. The headteacher should now prioritise those areas that will have the greatest impact on learners by developing clear expectations across a number of strategic areas. This then needs to be followed by clear action plans for implementing improvement.
- The current revised school improvement plan (SIP) is supporting the school community to understand the key areas of focus for improvement. All senior and middle leaders worked together to identify these areas of focus. They should now streamline those school improvement plan priorities that will have the strongest impact on practice. They should also reframe priorities to identify specific outcomes for learners. This should be done in partnership with parents, staff and learners to ensure a collective and shared understanding of priorities across the school community. Senior and middle leaders should use these plans to work collaboratively at pace to improve outcomes for learners.
- There are a number of changes led by deputy headteachers that have resulted in improvements in practice and provision. Examples include a recent curriculum review which resulted in an increase in the variety of learner pathways for young people as they move into the senior phase. A whole school learning and teaching intervention has also been introduced, along with approaches to monitoring and tracking pupil progress. The senior leadership team now need to strengthen the strategic direction they provide in all key remit areas, particularly aspects of wellbeing, inclusion and equality. They should develop a clear rationale for improvements and be more rigorous and systematic in evaluating the progress and impact of change. This includes the newly introduced school-level attainment meetings which would benefit from increased rigour and challenge.

- Faculty improvement plans link closely with school improvement priorities. Currently, departmental improvement plans are not focused clearly enough on outcomes for young people and are overly task driven. Departmental priorities must include reference to raising attainment and learning, teaching and assessment. Curriculum leaders have introduced a greater number of quality assurance activities such as classroom observation and tracking and monitoring discussions with classroom teachers to help inform priorities. However, these priorities are not clearly focused on evidence from robust, accurate self-evaluation activities. Approaches to monitoring and evaluating practice within respective faculties does not yet align well with national standards and expectations.
- In recent months, a helpful professional learning calendar has been produced, highlighting regular opportunities for professional learning and dialogue. This supports teachers and other staff to inform their practice and consider wider educational issues. All middle leaders conduct professional review and development meetings for teachers on an annual basis. At present, these are inconsistent in their focus. All staff should be supported to undertake a more robust self-evaluation process. Actions and next steps for staff should be more closely aligned with school and departmental priorities. Teachers should engage in professional learning that may include understanding national standards, universal support, wellbeing, and inclusion, and raising attainment through improved learning and teaching. This should include a greater emphasis on sharing practice and looking outwith the school.
- There are very limited opportunities for classroom teachers to lead improvement across the school. The development of collaborative groups will support class teachers to take more ownership of school priorities, offering a wider perspective on how they can affect improvement and change. Classroom teachers should be supported to understand national standards and expectations but also exercise greater responsibility for ensuring that they enhance their practice.
- Curriculum focus groups meet occasionally to discuss faculty and departmental priorities. These set out for all departmental staff, key areas of focus which include, for example, courses and programmes and classroom practice. Understanding national standards and detailed discussions about attainment should be included in these meetings.
- House captains and prefects support areas of school life well. This includes, for example, working with senior leaders to prepare and lead assemblies. The development of the pupil council is at the very early stages and a few young people attend their meetings. The current focus for this group is the further development of a rights-based school. Almost all young people have very limited opportunities to lead improvement across the school. Only a minority of young people feel that their views are sought and acted upon. Senior leaders need to establish a more coherent approach to listening to and including the opinions of all young people in school decision making and school improvement.
- Senior leaders have produced a Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) spending plan which identifies priority areas for intervention for young people who are living in the most economically disadvantaged areas locally. Plans have prioritised inclusion as an area of focus and highlight interventions to meet the needs of disadvantaged young people to close their learning gaps. Currently, this plan is not well constructed or detailed enough. It does not provide sufficient detail about the interventions and outcomes or their impact on young people. Senior leaders and staff are not yet able to evidence specific positive improvements for these young people or the direct impact of spending decisions on these pupils. Identified groups of young people are discussed at a whole school level in relation to closing the poverty related attainment gap but

not yet consistently at faculty level. Senior leaders should include from the outset parents, partners and young people in decision making around how PEF spending is allocated.

- Overall, school leaders have a good understanding of the priorities for Developing the Young Workforce (DYW). The school now need to develop a clear vision and plan to embed these priorities into curriculum pathways.
- The school leadership team is aware of the significance of employability and meta-skills in the senior phase curriculum. However, they have not yet developed a skills framework to plan and evaluate the delivery of these skills within the curriculum. Most teaching staff have engaged in professional learning on Career Management Skills and meta-skills. This is supporting staff to promote skills for learning, life and work in their subject delivery and discuss future employment opportunities with young people. However, staff are not clear about their involvement and responsibilities for change, such as embedding meta-skills into subject delivery.
- Partners, parents and stakeholders who engage with the school value the positive relationships they have with school staff. There are no systematic arrangements in place for partners, employers, and parents/carers to influence the rationale, development, and design of the curriculum.

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

- Relationships are of a high standard between learners and teaching and non-teaching staff. In classes, young people consistently demonstrate responsible attitudes towards each other and staff. Strong peer relationships are evident in a variety of curriculum contexts reflecting the school's values of commitment and respect in particular. Senior leaders and teachers are developing ways to ensure that the school values and rights are central to how the school operates and develops. They are doing this in conjunction with a review of the school's rights-based approach with a view to gaining accreditation. Staff should now consider how to ensure that their school values and the rights of young people are clearly communicated to all and underpin everyday practice across the school.
- The work of teachers on the learning evaluation toolkit is beginning to support a greater structure to lessons. Almost all teachers begin lessons with a daily review and then provide clear explanations which help young people engage with the tasks and activities set. In almost all lessons the purpose of learning is shared with learners. In a few lessons, staff skilfully construct success criteria that enable young people to understand and achieve expectations. This practice is inconsistent and in the majority of lessons, teachers do not link the intended learning and success criteria to the learning sufficiently well. Learners would benefit from opportunities to co-construct a shared understanding of what success looks like. There is a need for all teachers to use plenaries to support young people to reflect on their learning.
- In most classes, tasks and activities are directed at the whole class and overly teacher led. The majority of teachers fail to take opportunities for young people to actively engage in and lead their learning. In a few classes, the majority of young people are engaged in active learning, with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through the skilful use of personalisation in task design. Teachers should consider how to motivate young people and develop their confidence by offering a greater variety of approaches. These should involve young people learning independently, working collaboratively with peers and making use of digital technology. Teachers should seek and act on the views of young people on how to learn as an important next step.
- In a few lessons, learners benefit from staff setting high expectations and appropriate challenge to meet the needs of all learners. In the majority of lessons, the pace of learning and level of challenge do not meet the needs of all learners. As a result, young people are not challenged in their learning. There are too many lessons that lack stimulation and excitement with undemanding experiences. Senior leaders and teachers must address the underlying issue of expectations that are too low. All staff need to develop an ethos of self-challenge for young people along with a culture of ambition characterised by higher expectations of young people's progress and attainment.

- In the majority of lessons, teachers use questioning to engage learners. Across the school however, the quality of questioning is too variable and consists mainly of lower order recall questions. A few teachers use a range of questioning techniques to promote higher order thinking skills. In these lessons, young people benefit from opportunities which provide challenge to extend their learning. A few teachers refine their teaching following the assessment of young people. Teachers should consider a wider range of approaches for checking for understanding on a day-to-day basis and then use this assessment evidence to help inform subsequent planning of learning, teaching and assessment.
- There are a few individual teachers across the school who provide high-quality feedback to learners on a regular basis through a variety of techniques. However, only a few young people are aware of their strengths and next steps in learning in both the broad general education (BGE) and senior phase. All young people would benefit from more effective feedback and learner conversations with their teachers.
- In a few faculties, teachers use a variety of assessment approaches which allow young people to demonstrate their progress in learning. Across the school, teachers are inconsistent in their use of experiences and outcomes to plan learning in the BGE. In S3, almost all faculties use the assessment arrangements for National Qualifications at SCQF Level 4 for planning learning, teaching and assessment. This approach fails to deliver the level of challenge and depth of learning required for success for most learners in the Senior Phase.
- A promising start has been made where teachers work collaboratively with primary colleagues to develop a shared understanding and application of the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. However, few staff use the National Benchmarks to consider assessment in the BGE. While part of the moderation process is conducted in curriculum networks across the local authority, there are few examples within the school of effective moderation of assessment evidence against the National Benchmarks. The majority of teachers do not currently fully understand the breadth and variety of evidence required to make reliable judgements on young people's progress in the BGE. As a result, their judgements about achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels lack reliability. Senior leaders should work in partnership with middle leaders and teachers to develop a whole school approach to assessment and moderation. This will help to ensure that learners' progress is reliably tracked and supported. Continuing to work with colleagues beyond the school would have the potential to support teachers in planning tasks and activities that are better suited to meet the needs of all learners.
- There is no common approach to planning learning, teaching and assessment across the school. This session, senior leaders introduced a cloud-based tracking system developed by the local authority where teachers enter information on young people's progress and attainment. Teachers should now ensure that reliable attainment data is used in this system at classroom level in order to plan timely and effective interventions to support learning for individuals and groups of young people. Additionally, they should consider how they use this data to help inform their ongoing planning of learning, teaching and assessment.
- In the senior phase, teachers' assessment and verification approaches support young people to make progress in their learning and understand the standards required for qualifications. However, few young people within the senior phase are aware of their target grades or working grades. In a few departments, learners know their current level and what they need to do to achieve their target grade. Senior and middle leaders should develop a consistent approach to target setting through regular and focused learning conversations.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Senior leaders are in the process of reviewing the curriculum. They are aware that S1 needs to provide young people with much better continuity and progression, building more effectively on what they have learned and achieved at primary school. Promising work has been undertaken by senior leaders who are gathering a more reliable picture of children's achievements in literacy and numeracy as they leave primary school. This should be used to support progression in literacy and numeracy as young people move from primary 7 to S1.
- Young people do not yet receive their national entitlement to experience the full range of experience and outcomes across all curriculum areas at third curriculum level by the end of S3. Senior leaders have plans in place to ensure all young people's entitlements are met. Young people access a second additional language during the BGE in line with national recommendations. The school is meeting the minimum national recommendation in relation to PE.
- The current approach to progression in the BGE focuses on delivering common courses and programmes based on third Curriculum for Excellence level experiences and outcomes. Curriculum leaders would benefit from professional learning on planning for progression and looking outwards for good practice. They need to review how well they are planning for progression, based on reliable monitoring and tracking, to support learners to progress in different ways and at different rates. This will ensure that they achieve the best they can from their BGE and provide a solid foundation for progress into the senior phase.
- Young people make choices at several points in their learning pathways. Support for making the best choices is provided through individual meetings with pupil care and support (PCS) staff. Learners would benefit from having more information about their progress, including whether they have achieved third level or fourth level within all curricular areas, before making choices for S3. Middle leaders need to ensure there is reliable assessment evidence across a young person's learning before they make choices for courses and qualifications. Senior leaders have recently developed approaches for school-wide tracking and monitoring through the broad general education and senior phase. This has the potential to support more effective coursing for young people, including reviewing the number of qualifications young people are presented for in S6.
- The senior phase offers young people clear progression pathways for all curricular areas and subjects. There are a range of qualifications from National 3 to Advanced Higher for young people. In recent years, the school has broadened the number and range of SCQF qualifications for young people, including National Qualifications. While they meet the needs of some young people, greater focus needs to be given to the quality of learning, teaching and assessment to meet the needs of all learners.
- There is a significant need to review the timetable. Split classes are adversely impacting on young people's experiences of progressive learning and staff accountability for young people's attainment is unclear. Young people choosing to stay for S6 should be supported to choose learning pathways which will ensure progression into the next stage of their learning and prepare them for life beyond school. Senior leaders should review current registration provision. There is need to ensure that the purpose of this provision is well understood by all staff in order that young people receive a consistently high quality experience.
- The school is at the early stages of developing a clear and shared strategy for the development and assessment of literacy and numeracy as a responsibility for all. Young people benefit from

a range of supports developed by the school librarian. This includes information literacy workshops, promotion of reading for enjoyment and a range of interventions for young people for whom English is an additional language.

- School leaders have a good knowledge of local employment opportunities and make effective use of labour market information data from SDS to inform. They use this information well to support young people with their ambitions for further learning and employment. However, it is not clear how these pathways are used by staff and school leaders to raise the attainment levels of young people.
- The school offers a good range of learning pathways in the senior phase at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 4-7, including Foundation Apprenticeships, National Progression Awards and Personal Development Awards, in partnership with the local college. School leaders and teaching staff promote these opportunities well to help improve positive destinations for young people.
- The SDS Careers Advisor has a good working relationship with all staff. They offer appointments for parents/carers to attend careers advice sessions, and these are effective in supporting young people to make well informed career choices. The Careers Advisor also attends events such as Next Steps to promote opportunities for young people to prepare for the world of work.
- School managers and staff have very supportive relationships with pupils across all year groups. All young people feel valued and are confident in seeking advice to support their decisions on their future learning and career aspirations. Staff support young people well with their applications to college, employment, and university.
- Most young people have an opportunity during their time at school to engage in a work placement. This helps them to align their subject choices with potential career pathways and provides them with experience of the world of work. However, the school are not making effective use of the Career Education and Work Placement Standards. These should be used to inform and support school reflection on areas for development around career education and identify opportunities for professional learning.
- School managers work collaboratively with SDS to plan career information advice and guidance services that benefit young people. The school has signed a School Partnership Agreement with SDS which identifies activities for the senior phase to prepare young people for the world of work. These include careers fairs, guidance sessions and the use of SDS data to inform planning for positive destinations.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The school is beginning to develop a more strategic approach to effective engagement with parents. The recent introduction of a newsletter is starting to inform parents about the work of the school. Whilst parents find the newsletter helpful, they feel it could focus more effectively on the achievements of all young people across the school. A few parents would welcome more information on how well their children are progressing. This has the potential to help them more effectively to support their children's learning.
- Senior leaders engage regularly with the Parent Council (Friends of Arbroath High School). The headteacher is well placed to engage with the Parent Council to discuss improvement priorities and strategies to raise attainment.

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.

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

- The wellbeing of young people is supported by positive relationships with their peers and staff. This contributes to a calm learning environment across the school. Most young people say that staff treat them fairly and with respect. They speak positively about having a range of staff they can go to with concerns. However, all young people's rights are not upheld consistently at all times. All staff need to have a clearer understanding of national expectations rooted in the latest Scottish Government guidance in relation to nurture, inclusion and positive relationships.
- Young people in the BGE are aware of the wellbeing indicators and use these to assess their wellbeing. Young people from S3 to S6 have a limited understanding of wellbeing indicators and their progress against these. An important next step for senior leaders is to raise the profile of wellbeing across the school so that all staff take forward their responsibility to providing more effective universal wellbeing support to all young people in the classroom. Senior leaders need to provide clear strategic direction in this area.
- Staff in the Harbour base meet the wellbeing needs of young people well and, as a result, young people feel nurtured, safe and have strong relationships with staff. They learn to respect themselves and others. Young people enjoy discussing their wellbeing needs and their rights within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Young people in S1 and S2 have a strong understanding of mental, emotional, social and physical health wellbeing through the dedicated wellbeing period. This is supporting them to understand the importance of wellbeing for life, learning and work. Young people in the senior phase would welcome further opportunities to develop their understanding of mental wellbeing.
- Young people would benefit from further opportunities to build on their prior learning in PSE. Teachers should review the PSE curriculum to ensure it remains relevant. It is important that course content covers themes such as aspects of safeguarding, racism and diversity. This is an important area for consideration given the changing school context. Young people and stakeholders should be more involved in reviewing the PSE programme.
- Staff use clear procedures to track and monitor young people's attendance, however attendance is currently below the national average. The school is supporting a few young people with the lowest levels of attendance well through the Lighthouse (school based targeted provision), and more recently, by working with staff provided through PEF. Registration has been introduced this session to provide young people with a consistent point of contact each morning. Although this is at an early stage, there are early indications of improved timekeeping for period 1. The school would benefit from an overarching strategic approach to improving attendance to help more young people, including those impacted by poverty, feel included in

school, attend well and succeed in learning.

- The number of exclusions in the most recent year 2023-24 is low and shows a decline from previous years. Senior leaders should continue to ensure the work of the school reflects national guidance in relation to exclusions. This should include reviewing the use of part-time timetables regularly, particularly for those few young people who have been previously excluded, to ensure that all young people access their full entitlements.
- Most young people feel that the school deals well with bullying and feel well supported by Pupil Care and Support (PCS) faculty if and when it occurs. The school formally record all bullying incidents. However there has been limited analysis of trends and patterns in this area. Senior leaders should review the school's anti-bullying policy to ensure it aligns with national guidance, 'Respect for All'.
- There are areas for improvement related to additional support needs provision and practice. Teachers currently do not identify and record accurately all those who have barriers to learning. As a result, there are young people across the school whose needs are not being met. For those young people whose needs are recorded, they receive effective targeted support from key staff. There are a wide range of provisions across the school for many young people. They benefit from appropriate support plans which are reviewed regularly. Parents speak positively about communication and the support their child receives. In order to improve outcomes for young people who require additional support, support plans should contain appropriately specific and measurable learning targets to ensure young people are receiving the right level of support and challenge in order to achieve success in school. There is also a need to ensure more effective integrated working across the school between PCS and support for learning staff to ensure coherence of support. Support for learning staff should review the five roles of support, particularly consultation. This will help to ensure that they are effectively building the capacity of staff to meet the needs of learners within the class.
- Young people with more significant barriers to learning are being supported well through the school's Lighthouse and Harbour provisions. Learners engage positively with staff who are providing warm and nurturing contexts for learning. Support provided ranges from short-term targeted support for young people to individualised provision for learners with the most complex needs. As a result of this provision, there are a number of previously disengaged young people now experiencing success through a range of activities, achievements and qualifications. There is scope for the school to make better use of attainment data for young people who require additional support. This will help to ensure that they are achieving the best possible range of qualifications at the correct level of challenge. Young people supported by the Lighthouse or Harbour are well supported into a post-school destination.
- Young people who are care experienced are supported well by the PCS team. Their wellbeing is carefully monitored and young people speak positively about their relationships with key adults in the school. Senior leaders discuss progress in learning for individual care experienced young people during regular local authority meetings. They now need to ensure that all staff have an overview of outcomes, including attainment, and progress of these young people to ensure improvement. A next step for senior leaders is to ensure that all care experienced young people are appropriately considered for a coordinated support plan. A few young people who attend the Harbour should also be considered for a co-ordinated support plan.
- An important area for improvement across the school is developing inclusive practice. A minority of young people who do not feel a strong sense of belonging in the school. They experience too many lessons where their wellbeing needs are not appropriately met. Senior leaders and staff need to challenge any negative views and attitudes that colleagues display

towards young people with particular characteristics. All young people's differences should be valued and celebrated across the school. Young people who attend the Harbour should have greater opportunities to attend mainstream classes as appropriate to their needs.

- The library is a strength of the school and is viewed as an inclusive, safe place in the school. Young people develop their knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity by reading a wide range of genres which are available in various languages. They enjoy fiction texts that cover themes such as sexual orientation and ethnic diversity. There is also a monthly celebration of equality and diversity in the library, for example, for Ramadan, Pride and Eid. Young people speak very positively about how this makes them feel included and valued as part of the school community.
- Young people who have English as an additional language are supported very well. English for Speakers of Other Languages classes, support groups and S6 subject ambassadors are all contributing to these young people improving their English as well as feeling included and safe in school.
- As yet senior leaders have no strategic overview of where young people learn about equalities, diversity and discrimination and therefore the school are unable to demonstrate improved outcomes for learners. A next step for senior leaders is to evaluate existing practice and provision including uptake in subjects by gender, incidents of bullying by protected characteristics and how the lived experiences of diverse young people are reflected in the school's curriculum.

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

- In 2022/23, the school reports that, by the end of S3, almost all young people have achieved CfE third level or better in literacy and numeracy. School data indicates that most young people achieved CfE fourth level in literacy and the majority of young people achieved this level in numeracy. The school has maintained these performance levels over the last few years. These professional judgements, derived from the English and Maths departments, are not yet based on robust assessment evidence. Staff should continue with plans to develop more effective moderation approaches to generate more robust attainment data.
- The school is not yet able to provide data on CfE levels for those young people who require additional support in their learning.
- Staff are developing approaches to raising attainment in literacy. 'Drop Everything and Read', a reading recovery programme and paired reading are helping to support young people to progress in reading.

Senior phase

Leavers (literacy)

- The school has maintained high levels of performance in literacy over the last five years. Almost all young people leaving school between 2017/18 and 2021/22 achieved SCQF level 5 or better in literacy, consistently significantly much higher than the Virtual Comparator (VC). The majority of young people leaving school between 2017/18 to 2020/21 achieved SCQF level 6. Performance at this level declined in the latest year, 2021/22, with a minority achieving this level.
- Most young people leaving school who have an additional support need achieved SCQF level 5 or better in literacy between 2017/18 to 2021/22. This is above the VC. Performance at SCQF level 6 has declined in the last three years (2019/20 to 2021/22).

Leavers (numeracy)

- Most young people leaving school between 2017/18 and 2019/20 achieved SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy. This has been significantly higher or much higher than the VC. Performance at this level has declined in recent years. A minority of young people leaving school achieved SCQF level 6 in numeracy. This is generally in line with the VC. 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.

- There is no consistent improvement in the numeracy performance of young people with additional support needs over the last five years.
- Senior leaders have ensured that almost all young people leave school with a literacy and numeracy qualification. The reading recovery programme and the numeracy recovery pilot for a few young people has resulted in success at SCQF level 4 or better in literacy and numeracy respectively.

Cohorts (literacy)

- At S4, there is strong performance at SCQF level 5 or better in literacy. At S4 and by S5 based on the S5 roll, performance at this level is significantly much higher and higher than the VC for the most recent five-year period. However, as young people move through the school, the strong performance at SCQF level 5 or better is not continued to strong performance at SCQF level 6. By S5 based on the S5 roll, a majority of young people achieved SCQF level 6 in literacy from 2018/19 to 2022/23. By S5 and by S6, performance at SCQF level 6 has declined over the last three years, although remains in line with the VC.

Cohorts (numeracy)

- At S4, performance at SCQF level 5 or better has declined considerably from 2018/19 to 2022/23 from most young people achieving this level to a minority in the latest year. Performance at this level is significantly lower than the VC in the latest year 2022/23. By S5 and by S6 performance at SCQF level 6 shows no consistent improvement over the five-year period. As young people move through the school, the performance at SCQF level 5 or better is not continuing to strong performance at SCQF level 6.

English and mathematics

- There is a significantly high number of entries for National 4 Mathematics compared to the national average. High-quality attainment at National 5 Mathematics, National 5 Application of Mathematics, and National 5 English is not strong and in the latest year 2022/23, was significantly lower than the national average. A high proportion of young people are dual-presented for both National 4 and National 5. This is significantly higher than the VC.

Attainment over time

BGE

- The school is not yet able to demonstrate attainment over time in the BGE for curriculum areas outwith literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders have recently developed a monitoring and tracking tool which is now being used across the school by teachers to share information on pupil progress. This information allows comparisons to be made of how well learners are progressing and achieving across the curriculum, and over tracking periods. Middle leaders can also analyse the data through a range of useful filters.
- Middle leaders and classroom teachers need to develop a clearer shared understanding of national standards, including assessment evidence that underpins their professional judgement of achievement of a level. As this develops, middle leaders need to hold staff to greater account for the progress and attainment of young people.
- For those young people who attend the Harbour, senior leaders now need to develop their arrangements to monitoring and tracking further to provide evidence of progress over time. This includes how well young people meet their individual milestones and targets.

Senior phase

Improving attainment for all Leavers

- When compared using average complementary tariff points, the attainment of young people leaving school between 2017/18 and 2021/22 shows no consistent improvement. The attainment of the lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% of young people leaving school is broadly in line with the VC.

Cohorts

- When compared using average complementary tariff points at S4, attainment of the lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% is generally in line with the VC. By S5 based on the S5, the lowest and middle 60% perform in line with the VC but the highest 20% are significantly lower than the VC. By S6, based on S6, the lowest 20% and middle 60% generally perform significantly higher than the VC.

Breadth and depth

- At S4, the minority of young people achieve five or more awards at SCQF level 5 or better. Over the last five years, there has been no consistent improvement. Passes at A grade have shown a gradual decline for one or more to five or more courses since 2020/21, with the school performing significantly much lower than the VC.
- By S5 based on S5, attainment at SCQF level 5 or better shows a declining pattern from 2020/21 to 2022/23 for one or more to five or more courses. Attainment at SCQF level 6C or better including high quality passes does not demonstrate consistent improvement. Performance at SCQF level 6A or better is generally significantly lower or much lower than the VC.
- By S6 based on S6, attainment at SCQF level 6 or better shows no consistent improvement. Attainment has fallen considerably in the latest year, including top quality passes and is significantly lower than the VC. At SCQF level 7C or better the school has maintained levels of performance, although the latest year has experienced a decline.

All SCQF courses

- At S4, around 81% of young people are presented for eight or more courses. The majority of young people achieve success at SCQF level 4 or better at eight or more courses. No young person achieves success at SCQF level 5 or better for eight or more courses. The high number of courses presented is the result of a significantly high number of young people who are dual presented for both National 4 and National 5 at S4. Senior leaders, with the support from PCS staff, should review the number of courses young people are presented for. They should review their aspirations and ambition for and with young people to ensure success at the appropriate SCQF levels. In addition, curriculum leaders need to significantly strengthen their approaches to monitoring and tracking young people's progress so that they can determine more confidently the SCQF level that young people should be presented for.
- All young people in the senior phase who attend the Harbour attain a range of National Qualifications appropriate to their needs and interests that range from SCQF level 1 to 4.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- A majority of young people are gaining skills and attributes through participation in clubs at lunchtime and after school. A few young people in the senior phase are progressing to leading learning with younger children, for example as Sports Ambassadors and through paired

reading. Young people performing in the school show are becoming more successful and confident. They recognise that they are gaining new skills and building resilience.

- A few young people experiencing low levels of confidence are supported well by youth workers from Community Learning and Development. This helps them re-engage with learning whilst improving relationships with peers. For a few young people, attendance is improving.
- Around 30 young people each year undertake the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Almost all complete the bronze award and a few progress to silver and gold. Young people recognise that the award helps them develop skills whilst taking responsibility for their own learning. A few young people also gain Saltire awards for volunteering. There is scope for the school to explore the introduction of additional youth awards to fully recognise young peoples' achievements.
- The school has developed a system for tracking young people's achievements. Around half of young people take part in activities at school or in their community. School staff should use the data collected to target those young people not participating and offer appropriate programmes. Senior staff could support young people and their parents better to recognise and celebrate their achievements.

Equity

- When compared using average complementary tariff points, young people leaving the school from 2017/18 to 2021/22 who reside in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles one and two attain broadly in line with young people living in the same deciles across Scotland.
- Almost all young people move onto a positive destination. For the latest year 2021/22, this is significantly lower than the VC. Since 2019/20, fewer young people are leaving school to go to higher education with more young people moving into employment. In 2021/22, approximately a third of young people left school following S4. School managers work well with SDS and partners to monitor young people at risk of not achieving a positive destination and plan appropriate support interventions. Managers collaborate effectively with partners such as Street League, Young Enterprise, and Hillcrest Futures to help disengaged young people continue with activities relevant to achieving a positive destination.

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.