

Summarised inspection findings

North Berwick High School

East Lothian Council

23 June 2020

School name North Berwick High School
Council: East Lothian Council
SEED number: 5556031
Roll (Feb 2020): 972

Attendance is generally above the national average.

Exclusions are generally below the national average and have shown a decline over the latest two years.

In February 2019, 4.4% of pupils were registered for free school meals, which is significantly below the national average of 15%.

In September 2018, no pupils lived in the 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland.

In September 2018, the school reported that 29% of pupils had additional support needs.

Key contextual information

North Berwick High School is a non-denominational secondary school with five associated primary schools. The senior leadership team consists of a headteacher and three deputy headteachers and two business managers who share a post. The roll is predicted to increase considerably by 2025 and an extension is planned to cater for this increase.

1.3 Leadership of change

very good

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- School leaders, staff and young people understand and model very well the school's agreed values of curiosity, diligence, kindness and belonging. Young people fully understand the importance of aspiring to achieve their best.
- The headteacher has been in post for seven years and is a highly effective leader who is well respected by staff, parents and learners. She provides very clear direction. Her leadership is characterised by openness and personal trust, promoting empowerment and strong collaboration within a supportive ethos. The three deputy headteachers have complementary skills and work very well together. They are clear about their roles and the expectation that they will demonstrate clear impact in their areas of responsibility. Almost all staff and most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire feel that the school is led well. Leadership and distributed leadership is a strength across the school with the leadership team often asked to share their successful practice across the local authority.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and staff use self-evaluation well to inform improvement. This includes using the results of thorough analysis of data, focused departmental reviews and well-planned agreed learning and teaching observations. Strong evaluative activities are leading to improvements in learning and teaching. Collegiate work using 'How good is our school? (4th edition)' supports senior, middle leaders and staff to provide accurate evaluations

of the school's strengths and the areas for improvement. All staff have a clear understanding of the social and cultural context of the school and can refer to this data easily to inform their classroom planning. The faculty review approach, with an emphasis on learning structure and goals, is supporting teachers and middle leaders to be evaluative with regard to learning and teaching and is supporting improvement.

- School planning links well into priorities identified in the National Improvement Framework and local authority plans. The school improvement plan is set out clearly with three key development priorities. These are learning and teaching to raise attainment, equity to close the gap and curriculum development to meet the needs of all learners. These priorities reflect well the improvement analysis from effective engagement with staff, pupils, partners and parents. Faculty improvement plans are clear and link well with the school improvement plan. Key to planning for continuous improvement is the school's robust faculty review process. This demonstrates clear improvements in attainment with staff becoming more robust in articulating learner progress. Young people participate well in improvement work through completion of pupil surveys and from commenting in focus groups on their classroom experiences. The headteacher recognises that closer tracking of school improvement plan actions, with the addition of agreed dates for completion, can improve the present pace of change.
- The strong collegiate work between senior leaders, middle leaders and non-promoted staff ensures a clear flow of intelligence across subject departments. This supports senior leaders and staff to lead the ongoing development of effective learning and teaching. This includes the use of agreed visible classroom routines, which support ongoing improvements in learning and teaching. Middle leaders lead their teams very well and are encouraged to be innovative and creative. They support and challenge their staff well. The faculty review process is explicitly linked to professional review and development (PRD) and General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) Standards. The leadership and empowerment of every member of staff to make a significant contribution to the holistic development of all young people is a strong feature of the school's work.
- Senior leaders offer a high-quality career-long professional learning (CLPL) programme. This supports staff development and is appreciated by staff. Senior leaders use PRD sessions well to enable staff to feel comfortable in being challenged and questioned about their professional learning, and confident in discussing the decisions and next steps. Staff comment that senior leaders empower them with the latest in educational research materials and regular in-house training and coaching to support them to develop strong enquiry skills. Practitioner enquiry is integral to developing teachers' professional learning. A very positive report from the GTCS Excellence in Professional Learning Award Panel highlights and recognises the "strong leadership of learning culture". Staff are rightly proud of how their efforts have been recognised and shared.
- Teachers undertake strong relevant professional development opportunities including, for a few, success in achieving the qualification for 'Into headship'. Almost all faculties have staff who benefit from working with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) in a variety of roles such as markers, depute principal assessors, verifiers and subject writers. In addition, staff are achieving a range of Masters accreditation linked to improving pedagogy.
- The curriculum rationale is clear and continues to be developed and refreshed. The present curriculum supports the school's vision and values of producing learners who demonstrate well the skills and attributes of the four capacities within Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). The strong attainment and achievement, particularly at S5 and S6 in the latest two years, is a positive endorsement of the curriculum development.

- Leaders in the school are committed to embedding the national priorities of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), Career Education Standards (CES) and Work Place Standards (WPS). A wide range of activities is taking place across the school and progress has been made over the last two years in implementing them. A clear strategy with targets and timelines would help to drive the work forward this work and help to monitor better the progress being made and impact. A useful DYW register has been developed to capture the totality of the work carried out across curricular areas. There is no analysis yet of what the information collected tells the school. DYW priorities need to be more explicitly mentioned in improvement plans, and Standards and Quality Reports.
- The school seeks the views of young people to inform planning for improvement. At whole school level, young people's views are sought on areas of school life such as learning and teaching, curriculum and equity. This is done in various ways such as the pupil council, and recently introduced youth strategy groups. A very wide range of opportunities is on offer to develop the leadership of young people. This includes for example, serving on the wellbeing committee, the charities group, or as an inclusion ambassador.
- Partners have a very clear understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the school and this knowledge is used well to plan provision locally. There is a reciprocal arrangement around professional learning, where some community learning and development staff and volunteers have attended training arranged by the school and vice versa. This helps to strengthen further relationships with partners and develops a shared understanding of approaches to supporting young people's learning. The school has an effective partnership with the North Berwick Youth Project (NBYP) who have strong links with guidance staff resulting in a range of well-targeted activities. A deputy headteacher attends regularly the long-established North Berwick Coastal Children and Youth Network. This connection helps to maintain effective relationships with partners and connects to wider community and area priorities, such as a shared focus on mental health. Whilst the school is well connected to community partners, there is scope to increase their involvement more systematically in school improvement planning and evaluation. For example, partners can be engaged more in new developments such as the use of the recently developed skills framework.
- The Parent Council participates in discussions on identifying school priorities for improvement and this gives it an input to shaping the work of the school. Parent Council members assist with teacher interviews. This session, plans are in place to enable parents be more involved in the quality assurance of learning and teaching in partnership with senior leaders. The Parent Teacher Association work to raise funds, which provide helpful financial support for additional events to enhance the wider learning provision.
- The completion of a well-crafted annual, school Standards and Quality report provides a useful summary of outcomes, learning developments and positive impact achieved throughout the year. The local council provides strong support within its service level agreement, as well as acting as a critical friend. The success of year-on-year improvement reflects the detailed knowledge classroom staff have of the young people.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very good

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

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

- The ethos and ambition of the North Berwick High School community is underpinned by the school motto: 'Aim Higher'. The ethos of the school is also characterised by very positive relationships between young people and staff, and young people and their peers, based on mutual respect and support. The school values of curiosity, diligence, kindness and belonging underpin young people's learning experiences. Young people can talk about how they are demonstrating these values in their learning experiences. Their achievements in this respect are celebrated through the school's policy to promote positive behaviour at school events.
- Young people have opportunities to evaluate their learning experiences in faculties through learning conversations, questionnaires and discussion groups. The results of these findings inform improvement planning at school and faculty level. Most young people believe they have opportunities to influence what and how they learn. They would, however, welcome more opportunities to be involved in evaluating, planning and leading their own learning in classrooms, and working more closely with staff, as partners in school improvement.
- Young people are engaged and motivated by their learning in most contexts. Where learning activities are appropriately challenging and enjoyable, and well matched to their needs and interests, young people are particularly diligent, creative and highly motivated. Planning learning to meet the wide range of needs within a classroom is a feature of learning in most lessons but particularly well developed in a few faculties. Staff should continue to develop planning to ensure learning is meeting the needs of all young people across all subjects. They have appropriately identified the need to continue to improve the consistency of pace, challenge and progression in learning in the broad general education (BGE) in particular.
- Teachers are highly committed to professional learning which has had a positive impact on the learning experiences of young people in most faculties. Staff have regularly undertaken enquiry-based action research, they share their findings across the school and this informs planning for improvement. This work contributed to the school gaining the GTCS Excellence in Professional Learning Award in May 2019. From June 2019, partnership work with the University of Edinburgh has enhanced further the practitioner enquiry work previously undertaken. All staff now regularly apply the findings from educational research to inform their planning to improve learning and teaching. To date, the focus of this work has included improvements in approaches to critical literacy, effective feedback, cognitive science in building long-term knowledge, and conducting high-quality learner conversations. The school's capacity to continue to improve learners' experiences has been considerably enhanced as a result.
- In almost all lessons, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. Most lessons are well structured. Lessons can often be predominantly teacher directed. However, through practitioner enquiry, teachers are developing a deeper understanding of highly effective direct instruction, resulting in improvements to learners experiences in this respect. For example, in

most classrooms, high-quality questioning ensures that learners interact very well during lessons and develop higher order thinking skills. In a few contexts, where their curiosity is developing, young people are also asking good questions. Teachers should now continue, as planned, to extend the range of teaching and learning approaches.

- Young people have good awareness of their progress in learning. They are also being well supported to take responsibility for their own learning in most faculties. For example, almost all staff share the purpose of learning with young people, and the criteria required to be successful. Young people subsequently have opportunities to self- and peer- assess against these criteria in almost all classes, which deepens their understanding of their strengths and next steps. When this is combined with high-quality teacher feedback, including learner conversations, young people can talk about the skills they are developing, and the steps they need to take to improve their progress. Well-developed approaches to profiling strengths and next steps in learning in the BGE in a few departments are also helping young people to set targets to improve their learning and progress. In the senior phase, almost all young people receive high-quality feedback through learning conversations with their subject teachers. Young people at these stages are confident in discussing their working grade and target grades. They are very clear about their strengths and next steps in learning and almost all take responsibility for their own learning and progress.
- Almost all teachers are using digital technology effectively to share the purpose of learning. Teachers have engaged in several useful professional learning opportunities to develop their skills in digital technology. Staff use a variety of digital platforms to provide resources for young people and to give feedback on their work. Young people value this. In a few lessons, digital aids such as visualizers are used to help develop young people's understanding of new ideas. The school should continue with planned approaches to use digital technology to support and enrich learners' progress.
- There is an extensive range of opportunities for young people to develop their interests and skills through lunchtime and after school clubs and activities outwith the classroom. They have very good opportunities to experience wider personal achievement, and can talk confidently about the skills they are developing in these contexts. For example, they have opportunities to lead learning in a range of activities including the Youth Philanthropy Initiative, the eco school group, the health and wellbeing committee and the LGBT club. There is now scope for the school to consider how to ensure that young people experience progression in their personal achievements, and continue to seek ways to accredit these experiences as they progress through the school.
- Staff are increasingly confident when making their assessment judgements in the BGE. They are developing their use of a range of assessment evidence to inform their judgements and moderate them against the National Benchmarks. They have worked with colleagues in associated primary schools to agree shared expectations and standards in literacy and numeracy. All staff have also had opportunities to moderate standards of literacy. There is now scope for the school to develop a more consistent and rigorous approach to moderation across faculties. This should include the moderation of course planning as well as standards of learning, teaching and assessment. Staff would also benefit from opportunities to moderate standards within their own subject area in the BGE with teachers in other schools. In the senior phase, staff make very confident assessment judgements based on the expertise provided by the large number of staff who undertake assessment duties for the SQA.
- Approaches to planning, tracking and monitoring are developing in the BGE and senior phase, with evidence of positive impact on outcomes for young people. In almost all classes, teachers closely monitor the progress of individual learners during each lesson and provide well-timed

interventions to ensure they make progress in their learning. Staff closely monitor the progress of young people requiring additional support and intervene to address underachievement where this is detected. Monitoring and tracking data from faculties is collated centrally and provides senior and middle leaders with a strategic overview of young people's progress. This is being used well by staff to inform discussion about the progress of individuals and groups of learners and plan appropriate learning and targeted interventions, at school, faculty and classroom level.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- There has been a recent review of the curriculum as well as a proposed change to the structure of the school day. A new 32 period common school day is to be implemented in line with the other local authority secondary schools in June 2020. This should support a more coordinated approach to college options for young people in the senior phase.
- The school has a programme of support for children moving from primary school. There is a calendar of activities, which supports children socially and emotionally and an enhanced transition from P6 for a few children. Information on achieved levels in literacy and numeracy as well as aspects of wellbeing, is transferred from the five primary schools. Faculty heads have access to this information to support them in planning learning. Helpful work has begun with the business education faculty and associated primaries, which is supporting curricular transitions. It would be helpful to build on this very positive start across other curricular areas.

Broad General Education

- Almost all young people from S1 to S3 currently experience learning across all eight curriculum areas. Courses are designed using the experiences and outcomes of CfE. This should stay the same with the proposed new structure of the school day starting in June 2020. Senior leaders need to ensure that all young people receive their entitlement to a BGE until the end of S3. Currently, a few young people are not experiencing a modern language until the end of S3. In addition, the current arrangement is not sufficient for young people to receive their entitlement to a meaningful experience of a third language. Teachers should ensure that learning at S3 across all curriculum areas remains focussed on the experiences and outcomes of CfE and does not prioritise the requirements of National Qualifications (NQs). Senior and middle leaders should ensure that learning experiences in S3 provides those young people specialising at fourth level with appropriate depth in their learning to provide successful progression to the senior phase. There is also a need to ensure that there is an appropriate learning pathway for the few in S3 who require further consolidation of third level experiences and outcomes.
- Senior and middle leaders have carried out reviews of S1 and S2 courses and have identified some common areas for focus across subject areas. They are developing a shared plan for how these areas for focus can be taught in a consistent way across faculties. The planning of this work is now also supporting the school's development of interdisciplinary learning. Learners across the BGE also have experiences of outdoor learning in the outdoor classroom as well as through learning experiences beyond the school. The school is at an early stage of using the 'Sustainable Development Goals' adopted by all United Nations Member States. There are a few examples of using these to raise young people's awareness of learning for sustainability. This good practice could be developed and shared across the school.
- The plans for developing literacy across the curriculum are more progressed than those for numeracy and health and wellbeing. Senior leaders are planning to include numeracy, and health and wellbeing through the school improvement planning process. Middle leaders are developing approaches well to improving young people's literacy skills across the BGE. The principal teacher of literacy, supported by staff in the English department, has planned approaches to improve writing, listening and talking in all curricular areas. Collaboratively, they have developed a literacy tracking tool, which is used effectively in almost all departments. Young people benefit from a wide variety of literary events, and the school library is used effectively to support young people to research their learning, and also to access texts.

Senior Phase

- S3 learners are offered a free choice of courses for the senior phase. In most classes, young people are aiming for the same level of qualification. In a few classes, there are learners aiming for qualifications at two different levels. These include physics, chemistry and biology classes with young people studying for National 4 and National 5 being successfully taught together.
- The current curriculum arrangement offers a combined senior phase from S4 to S6 with all courses available to all learners. The new curriculum framework from August 2020 includes a plan to offer seven courses instead of six, to all S4 learners. Young people will then continue with an offer of up to five courses in S5 and S6. Parents, young people and staff were consulted on the proposals to move to seven course choices and the change was viewed favourably. The rationale for the new curriculum framework is currently being finalised. The overall aim is that the change will improve progression, offer further flexible pathways and continue to raise attainment.
- A few young people at S4 are able to take up college options as part of their learning pathway. It is anticipated that there will be an increase in the college offer following the introduction of the common school day. It should enable a more streamlined provision with the local college and other local authority secondary schools. The school has also increased the range of courses and diversity of learning pathways for young people moving through the senior phase. This has offered greater choice beyond NQs, in line with the needs, interests and aspirations of young people. The increasing number of vocational pathways being developed for the senior phase enhances choice for young people. There would be benefit in senior leaders considering the Labour Market Information and the Regional Skills Assessment when developing the future curriculum offer.
- Young people are given good advice to support them in making informed choices about choosing appropriate courses to meet their needs. They talk with guidance staff and class teachers through both personal and social education (PSE) and careers interviews with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) staff. There is a need to ensure that every young person has easy access to the relevant information and for staff to support such decision-making. Young people value the guidance they receive in school and generally find the content of their PSE sessions useful. A few feel more information about a broader range of careers would be useful. Parents have opportunities to be involved in course choices if they wish. They are kept well informed of decision-making and have a clear calendar outlining key dates for young people.
- The school works well with East Lothian Works and Edinburgh College to ensure a range of Foundation Apprenticeships (FA) are being offered to young people. Where specialist vocational areas are identified by individual young people, guidance staff work hard to ensure that a personalised curriculum can be arranged.
- During 2019-20, 15% of S4, 34% of S5 and 58% of S6 are undertaking work experience. Many young people secure placements through their own family contacts. Other young people regard experiencing the world of work from S4 as a voluntary activity rather than an opportunity, which the school promotes for everyone. The school is trying to capture and monitor all work experiences that young people may be involved in.
- Staff in a few curriculum areas make useful links between their classroom teaching and employability or career opportunities. Most curriculum areas have developed good quality noticeboard information, which highlights the range of career opportunities in particular subject areas, together with more general inspirational material.

- Information provided by faculties for the course choice booklets varies, with a few providing very useful skills and possible careers clearly outlined.
- The school has developed a very strong relationship with SDS Careers Advisers and the Work Coach. All have worked well together to develop knowledge and understanding of Career Management Skills (CMS) and more general employability.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents are highly supportive of the school. They are represented through the Parent Council and also the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The PTA are mainly a fundraising group. Both parent groups are well organised and work very well with the headteacher and staff. Minutes of meetings are available on the school website.
- Members of the Parent Council are kept well informed of school events by briefings from the headteacher at each meeting. There are also parental events across the school calendar to update parents on key issues such as curriculum changes and eco school information. Senior leaders are committed to increasing the number of events for parents to support family learning. These events will be an important next step to empower parents to support their child's learning at home. A successful numeracy event was held for a few parents recently. Most parents would welcome opportunities to participate in, and contribute to, activities where parents and their children can learn together.
- The school has been working with parents to support their request for better organisation of parent meetings. In a positive move, the school has planned an online system for booking appointments. The parental request to ensure the availability of all staff for appointments and for the organisation of the timings should be kept under review. A few parents are concerned that they are not able to make appointments with all of their child's teachers.
- The school regularly consults with parents, for example, regarding the common school day, the new school extension and the planned dates of parents meetings. These have led to improvements for example, in the change to the dates of the parents meeting for S1. The PTA also helped to secure funding towards support for young people's mental health and wellbeing. The Parent Council is keen for more members of the broader parent forum to become involved in its work. This will be helpful to support continuing strengths in parental engagement.

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

good

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

- Young people benefit from positive relationships with staff, which support them to achieve. There are positive peer-to-peer relationships that support the wellbeing of almost all young people. Senior leaders should amend the school's 'positive behaviour policy' to reflect the increasing emphasis placed on developing a positive whole school ethos and culture which better reflects the school's approach. There is a need to ensure that restorative strategies are applied consistently across the school, as a few young people feel that they are not treated in a fair and just manner.
- The work on Getting it Right for Every Child 'GIRFEC at NBHS' is a useful document. It provides a starting point to clarify roles and responsibilities of staff in relation to health and wellbeing. Senior leaders should build on this work by developing a whole school strategic approach to universal support, including the role of registration. A majority of young people feel that the school helps them develop their confidence. This could be further strengthened if all staff take greater accountability for promoting all aspects of wellbeing for young people.
- Recent adaptations to the S1 PSE programme and course are beginning to help staff to have a more consistent focus on wellbeing. There are early indications that young people in S1 are engaging with and reflecting on their wellbeing by using the common language around GIRFEC. Extending the use of the wellbeing indicators across all year groups will support young people to reflect on their progress and development in wellbeing. In addition, it will allow senior leaders and pupil support staff to consider and demonstrate improved outcomes for young people more easily.
- Young people are very positive about their accessibility to a wide range of support measures, including a diversity of services delivered by partners. Referrals to the specialist mental health agency have reduced. Young people's self-assessment of how they feel about aspects of their mental health shows improvement. They value and have evaluated positively the Guided Self-Help service that supports them with anxiety. Commendably, the service has been nominated for national recognition. The wellbeing committee, led by young people, is raising awareness of mental health issues through posters, assemblies and 'I'm here to talk about anything' system. Young people feel more confident to speak about their emotional wellbeing with a range of teachers.
- There are strengths in the way the school targets specific groups of young people to ensure that they are achieving and feel well supported. There are a number of well-led initiatives that are benefiting young people. The guidance department has a close working relationship with the NBYP. Staff from NBYP attend the monthly-extended pupil support meeting, helping them to plan together and identify resources for young people facing barriers to learning. This partnership is leading to a range of targeted provision, including the Prince's Trust achieve group and a NBYP residential trip, for a few young people to build their resilience.

- Senior leaders and middle leaders of support recognise the need for a streamlined set of support plans. The work on creating individualised education plans and a pupil support matrix are early attempts at bringing a coherence to planning for support. Plans need to be clear with specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-related outcomes. This would make it easier for appropriate support staff to evaluate more rigorously and robustly the extent to which young people are overtaking their targets. This has the potential to support fully integrated working between inclusion staff, support for learning and guidance.
- The school's core value of 'belonging' resonates with almost all young people who feel part of the community of North Berwick High School. Young people who require additional support, do not always feel fully included in a minority of mainstream classes. This happens when tasks and activities are not set at the right level of difficulty. Meeting their needs more effectively in class would allow them to feel a greater sense of success. The recently introduced inclusion ambassadors are well placed to identify young people's barriers to feeling included and valued across the school.
- Young people who access the support base speak very highly of the work undertaken to support their wellbeing. Support staff have a positive relationship with young people and understand their needs. Young people feel safe and secure, highly nurtured and have a strong sense of attachment to the base. Staff should continue to consider the balance of providing support and building young people's resilience, independence and coping skills.
- The school maintains high levels of attendance and sets ambitious targets for improvement. These are clearly understood and principal teachers of guidance understand their role in promoting attendance. Attendance is discussed regularly at house meetings. Principal teachers of guidance offer customised care, support and guidance to pupils where attendance is an issue. They would welcome greater involvement from partner agencies to 'get it right for every child'. Senior leaders should review the planning of flexible arrangements such as part-time timetables, involving partner agencies where necessary to ensure young people's needs are met. The school should continue with approaches to ensure rigorous arrangements to monitor period-by-period anomalies.
- Exclusion rates have decreased overall from 14/15 to 18/19. In the current year, there have been no exclusions.
- Care-experienced young people are well supported by principal teachers of guidance. Their needs are considered, including the requirement for a coordinated support plan. Their attendance, progress, and effort are monitored routinely to support positive outcomes. As a result, care-experienced young people speak positively about the support they receive. They are included in the life and work of the school through their involvement in after-school activities and committee work.
- Young carers would benefit from all staff having an appropriate understanding or better appreciation of issues associated with caring responsibilities. They would welcome greater flexibility in meeting deadlines, completing homework or being punctual. In line with the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, it is important that young carers are considered for having a young carer statement that contains information about their caring role and support available to them. Young carers are very appreciative of opportunities provided to them by the local authority.
- A minority of young people feel that bullying is not dealt with effectively by the school. Although they know where to go for support, they feel that issues related to bullying are not always effectively resolved and followed up. The school should undertake a review of approaches to tackling bullying in line with national guidance 'Respect for All'. An agreed understanding of

what constitutes a reportable incident of bullying and bullying based on protected characteristics would be helpful across the school community.

- Young people would welcome increased opportunities to develop their understanding of equality and diversity. There is potential to capitalise on young people's cultural heritage, their rich, diverse experiences and for this to be reflected more fully in the life and work of the school. There are a few areas where there is a need for staff to understand, and successfully counter, unconscious bias, which is impacting on young people's uptake of subjects, and opportunities within the class. Staff should continue to develop strategies to address anti-stereotyping and promote gender balance in subject choices. There is innovative practice within the computing department that has redressed the gender imbalance and improved uptake amongst girls.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy in the BGE

- The school reports that by the end of S3, almost all young people achieved third CfE level in literacy and numeracy from 15/16 to 18/19. Young people's attainment in numeracy at fourth level has been improving since 2016 with almost all achieving this in 18/19. The majority of young people achieved fourth level literacy in 18/19.

Attainment of leavers in literacy and numeracy

- The percentage of leavers achieving literacy at SCQF level 5 or better through a unit has improved from 14/15 to 18/19. In 18/19 almost all young people left school having achieved literacy at this level or better. This brings attainment at this level back in line with the virtual comparator (VC) where it had been since 14/15. It had fallen to significantly lower in 17/18. The percentages achieving literacy at SCQF level 5 or better through a course award has improved from 2013-18.
- Most young people have achieved numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better through a unit from 16/17 to 18/19, whereas it had been the majority in the two years prior to this. Although there was a decline in 18/19, the percentages achieving at this level show an overall improving trend over the five-year period. Attainment at this level is in line with the VC from 16/17 to 18/19, having been significantly lower in the two years prior to this. There has been a year-on-year improvement from 2013-18 in the percentage of young people achieving numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better through a course award. Most young people left school in 17/18 having achieved numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better through a course award. This is the highest attainment recorded by the school at that level in the five-year period.
- The percentage of leavers with additional support needs achieving literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better through course awards has been improving from 2013-18 with most achieving literacy at this level in 17/18 and the majority doing so in numeracy.

Attainment over time at the BGE

- Each faculty has its own system for tracking the progress of young people through the BGE and transfers information to the school-wide tracking system. This new whole-school system enables senior leaders to gather and analyse data for all curriculum areas at set times across the year. Attainment data for cohorts of young people in S1, S2 and S3 across all curriculum areas indicates overall, attainment is strong at these stages. There is variability in attainment between a few subject areas. Senior leaders and staff are now better placed to identify underperformance or any attainment issues in the BGE. The improved systems are helping staff to target support for young people more effectively. Senior leaders now need to work with staff to ensure that information recorded in the tracking system is grounded in sound professional judgements. This new approach also enables staff to view performance of young

people across their subjects in the school and is helping to raise expectations. As the new system develops, the school should be able to gather attainment data over time and monitor trends over time.

Attainment over time at the Senior Phase

- The average complementary tariff scores of the lowest attaining 20% of leavers improved in 18/19 from the previous year. This brings the attainment of this band of leavers back in line with the VC as it had been from 14/15 to 16/17. It had fallen to significantly much lower in 17/18. The scores of the middle attaining 60% of leavers improved in 18/19 from the previous year and are now significantly higher than the VC. Similarly, the average complementary tariff scores for the highest attaining 20% of leavers also improved in 18/19 from the previous year and are significantly higher than the VC. The scores for this band of learners has been significantly higher or much higher than the VC in four out of five years from 14/15.
- From 14/15 to 18/19, most young people at S4 have been presented for six or more NQs. Over this period, most young people achieved six or more qualifications at SCQF level 4 or better. From 14/15 to 18/19 a majority of young people have achieved five or more qualifications at SCQF 5C or better. This is significantly higher than the VC in 15/16 and 16/17 but in line in the following two years. The percentage of young people achieving two or more to five or more awards at SCQF 5C or better and 5A or better was overall significantly higher than the VC in 16/17. This was a particularly strongly attaining S4 cohort. The percentages achieving one or more to five or more awards at SCQF 5C or better and 5A or better declined in 17/18 and improved in 18/19. These measures have been almost always in line with or very occasionally significantly higher than the VC in each of these two years. The school reports that a contributory factor to the increase in the percentage of young people achieving qualifications in the latest year is the success of a mentoring programme for targeted groups in the senior phase.
- From 16/17 to 18/19, the majority of young people have been presented for five courses at S5. By S5, the percentages of young people achieving qualifications at SCQF 6C or better and 6A or better has decreased from 17/18 to 18/19. This can be partly explained by the high attaining S4 cohort in 16/17 maintaining a strong performance in S5 in 17/18. However, overall the percentages are significantly higher than the VC for those achieving two or more to five or more awards by S5 at SCQF 6C or better or 6A or better in the latest two years. In the latest two years, senior leaders have analysed post prelim data in greater depth and as a result, presentation levels for qualifications are improving.
- In 16/17 young people in S6 were most commonly presented for four courses. However, in 17/18 and 18/19, young people in S6 were most commonly presented for three courses. The percentages taking four courses over this three-year period has decreased and in 17/18 and 18/19. Young people in S6 choose from an increasing variety of qualifications or awards on offer. When they are not doing courses leading to qualifications they undertake learning which develops attributes and skills further, and will serve them well for life beyond school. The school should develop with young people and parents, a clear rationale about the purpose of S6 for different groups of learners. The percentages of young people achieving National Qualifications by S6 at SCQF 6C or better and SCQF 6A or better have improved in 2018/19. Again, this is the high attaining S4 cohort in 16/17 maintaining a strong performance as they move through the senior phase to S6. The percentages achieving one or more to six or more at SCQF 6C or better in 2018/19 is significantly higher or much higher than the VC. The percentages achieving one or more to four or more at SCQF 6A or better in 2018/19 is significantly higher or much higher than the VC. There is strong attainment at Advanced Higher. The percentage of young people achieving one or more to four or more qualifications at

SCQF level 7C or better has been significantly higher or much higher than the VC from 14/15 to 18/19.

Overall Quality of Learners' Achievements

- Young people enjoy participating in an extensive range of well-promoted and inclusive opportunities to develop their skills and personal achievement during lunchtimes and outside of school. Sports, such as rugby and hockey, and music activities are particularly popular across all year groups. This is improving physical wellbeing, confidence enhancing team-working skills and leading to success for individuals and teams in a range of competitions and festivals. In addition to traditional bands and orchestras, the music department organises a battle of the bands and young people regularly present on a local radio station. This is helping young people to showcase their talents, develop interests and skills for work.
- Young people from S1 to S3 particularly enjoy 'activities week', which offers them a choice of activities to suit their interests. Overall, young people are gaining in confidence and self-esteem, making new friends and developing their teamwork and communication skills. The Model United Nations conferences are a good example of young people developing their confidence, resilience and analytical skills. Young people in S5 and S6 also demonstrate their well-developed leadership abilities and time-management skills across the range of activities.
- There are several opportunities for young people to develop leadership skills across the school. These include the pupil council, eco and charity committees. Young people also lead several of the clubs such as the drama club, soul band and ukulele orchestra. There are currently more opportunities for young people to develop their leadership skills in S5 and S6 than there are for younger peers. Such opportunities include serving in the senior council, becoming a peer mentor or a sports ambassador. There is scope to increase leadership opportunities for young people from S1 to S4.
- The school uses a wide range of approaches to recognise and celebrate achievement. Increasingly it is recognising and celebrating wider aspects of achievement in addition to attainment. The increasing use of social media and the new summer ceilidh is supporting this.
- The identification of non-participation across the full range of school and community-based achievement opportunities is currently quite informal. Although Active Schools do track young people's participation in sport, the school recognises that it needs to develop systems to better track young people's wider achievements. The use of recognised and accredited achievement through a wider range of qualifications and awards is beginning to develop, but is currently limited. As the school extends its offer, such as introducing the Junior Awards Scheme Scotland, it should consider how to plan for appropriate progression from S1 to S6.

Equity for all learners

- Staff have a sound understanding of the socio-economic context of the school, which includes an understanding of barriers faced by young people. All pastoral staff have a good knowledge of young people, their families and personal circumstances. They work in collaboration with senior leaders to ensure that personal circumstances are not a barrier to attainment and achievement. Almost all young people leaving school from 2014/15, including those requiring additional support with their learning, attained literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 4 or better.
- The school uses its Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) well to support young people access a range of activities such as residential trips. A PEF plan with clear priorities and strategies is in place to support targeted young people to make progress in their learning in the areas of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Data shows that almost all targeted young people's literacy skills have improved as a result of literacy interventions. In addition, across two years,

young people's attendance and aspects of wellbeing across targeted groups have also improved.

- The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) profile indicates that almost all young people attending North Berwick High School live in deciles 6 to 10. The highest proportion of young people live in deciles 8 and 10, which are among the least socio-economically disadvantaged datazones in Scotland. The average total complementary tariff scores for leavers living in SIMD 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 in 2018/19 are significantly higher than those of young people living in the same deciles across Scotland.
- Almost all young people have moved on to initial positive destination in each of the years from 2014/15 to 2018/19. In the latest year, the school recorded its highest figure of 99.4%, which is above its VC, local authority and national average. The majority of young people move on to higher education.

School Empowerment

■ Empowering Teachers and Practitioners

Empowering teachers and practitioners through developing leadership of learning

- Staff are proud of the very strong culture of professional learning they are building with the clear aim of achieving long-term impact on classroom practice. They work very well together to create effective learning opportunities for all staff. Senior leaders are establishing a strong culture of enquiry, innovation and growing leadership of learning. They are developing effective systems for collecting and exchanging knowledge. Each faculty benefits from well-planned strategy days to shape their focus on how they will take forward enquiry-based learning. This is completed in conjunction with effective faculty reviews. In addition, classroom teachers have opportunities to lead the development of new coursework and this is providing them with additional responsibilities to help prepare them for middle leadership roles.

The development of professional learning to include critical enquiry

- Professional learning is supported well through the addition of recommended and directed reading information, inspiring research articles and video talks, shared regularly by senior leaders and peers. Impact from this work includes an improved focus by staff on the overall quality of learning. Teachers have planned, and quality time to take responsibility for an agreed educational development. This links well into the school improvement plan and annual PRDs. Most faculties have a useful digital platform for sharing information and the use of a whole-school learning and teaching HUB. This repository supports further the wide sharing of educational research.

Empowerment through developing strong professional learning communities

- Senior leaders streamline the work of the school strategy groups to reflect well the actions for the school improvement plan. Middle leaders work together very well to share departmental ideas to improve teaching and learning. Collegiate activity time and additional informal meetings, enable staff to work well to achieve a variety of educational outcomes. These include improving the quality of GIRFEC activities, enhancing devolved leadership, looking inwards at the quality of classroom learning and the use of new learning strategies and styles of learning.

Professional learning as Critical Enquiry (PLaCE)

- Staff are developing strong critical enquiry skills through partnership with a nearby university. This project is focused on developing a collaborative school-wide approach to improving learning and teaching, whilst capacity building at all levels. Senior leaders have identified the role of the middle leader as pivotal in taking forward this initiative. Class teachers volunteer to be trained as enquiry leads. They will use the second phase of the project, to work with existing teacher learning communities. This initiative, to empower staff, is developing teachers' research skills well. Teachers appreciate the opportunities to focus deeply on an aspect of learning and teaching, observing the developing success of a few learners. They enjoy leading and supporting staff in mixed subject groups, participating in meaningful discussions and sharing effective strategies to support learner success. Teachers involved in the project are now focussing on a detailed analysis of how they can meet selected young people's learning needs.

Building up middle leadership and developing distributed leadership

- Middle leaders are supported and empowered to be confident leaders. They take overall responsibility for a variety of faculty led, and for a few, whole school initiatives to improve the quality of learning and teaching. Staff benefit from middle leader courses to share ideas and good practice. Middle leaders meet with the headteacher individually to set professional goals and overcome staffing challenges. They value and appreciate the effective challenge and

support they get from this. Classroom teachers are supported well to improve their skills or teaching qualifications through, for example, working with the SQA or through achieving Master level credits from educational projects. Staff appreciate opportunities to gain temporary promoted posts, which help them to be better ready to take on more permanent promoted positions.

Career-long professional learning to support empowerment

- CLPL is a key element of school's empowerment agenda. Identified courses and programmes linked to developing an empowered school are beneficial for staff. Coaching and mentoring with university partners and school leaders has been particularly beneficial. Teachers have developed confidence through this work. They share their developing research enquiry skills with colleagues both within school and from across the local authority.

Practice worth sharing more widely

- The developing range of well-informed and innovative approaches to learning, teaching and assessment, which are supporting young people at all stages to take responsibility for their own learning and progress to improve their attainment.
- The positive impact that the wide range of professional learning activities have had on the quality of leadership for learning at all levels in the school. In particular, the focus on critical engagement with professional reading and a programme of action research has empowered all teachers to develop their practice to meet their unique individual professional needs as well as the needs of the learner.

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.