

# Summarised inspection findings

Langlands School

Dumfries and Galloway Council

20 June 2023

## Key contextual information

School Name Langlands School  
Council: Dumfries and Galloway Council  
SEED number: 5940745  
Roll (March 2023): 20

Langlands School is a special school for young people with severe and complex learning needs from across Dumfries and Galloway Council. The school is located within the North West Community Campus in Dumfries. The current school building opened in 2018. Langlands School was relocated to the campus in 2019. There are 20 young people on the roll at present, across the secondary broad general education (BGE) and senior phase stages.

The school has been impacted by recent changes in leadership structures and staff absence. This situation is now improving. The acting headteacher took up post in February 2022. The acting principal teacher took up post in August 2022. Pupil attendance is above the national average. No young person has been excluded in the last year.

In September 2022, 35 percent of pupils live in areas 1 - 3 of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). In September 2022 the school reported that 100 percent of pupils had additional support needs.

### 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

**satisfactory**

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

- Led by senior leaders, staff have developed a calm, caring and nurturing culture based on the school's vision and values. All young people enjoy positive relationships with staff. Staff value and respect young people, treating them with dignity and kindness at all times. Almost all young people are happy at school and enjoy learning. Staff help young people to feel safe, included and confident in seeking support when required. If a young person becomes anxious or distressed, almost all staff use individualised strategies well to support them to regulate their emotions and reengage with their learning.
- In most lessons, young people are motivated to learn. They engage purposefully with their learning, supported by a high level of tailored one to one support. They participate well, particularly in activities centring on fine motor skills, communication skills, play and sensory experiences. In most lessons, teachers offer young people a range of learning activities incorporating a mix of practical and worksheet based learning. Most lessons are activity-led and delivered using one to one staff ratios. In a minority of lessons, particularly in the senior phase, staff expectations of what young people can achieve are not sufficiently high. Staff need to ensure that all young people engage in learning activities which provide appropriate levels of challenge, building on existing skills and knowledge. In doing so, staff should provide young people with more learning activities which promote collaborative working.

- The school should ensure that all young people receive their full entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum across the school week. In taking this forward, staff should offer young people more learning activities that support skill development based on individual needs across all areas of the curriculum. Staff recognise that the school environment is not conducive to delivering aspects of the curriculum. They should continue building on existing partnerships with neighbouring schools and community partners to help provide learning spaces for physical education, science and technologies.
- There is a strong sense of teamwork across the school. Teachers and learning assistants work well together. Collectively, staff respond sensitively to young people's wellbeing and health needs. During learning activities, teachers and learning assistants give clear instructions and explanations to young people while adopting a relational approach to support progress. However, in a few classes, learning assistants lead the learning without teacher input. Senior leaders need to ensure all learning activities are planned, assessed and reviewed appropriately.
- Most staff use creative, individualised approaches to help young people to communicate and engage in their learning. Staff are supported well by visiting speech and language therapists, who offer helpful advice on digital technology and other communication aids. As a result, most young people are able to communicate better with peers and adults and contribute in learning activities. Staff should continue to develop their skills in using digital technology and communication aids to support all learners to participate as fully as possible in their learning.
- Staff have a sound knowledge of young people's strengths, needs and personal circumstances. All young people have pupil profiles which provide useful personalised information about their preferred learning styles and any barriers to learning. Staff monitor and assess young people's wellbeing effectively, responding well to any identified wellbeing need. Staff should now develop a shared understanding of assessment as part of learning and teaching. They need to determine better how young people's progress will be recognised and agree how this information will be used to build on prior learning. In doing so, staff should continue to explore more effective assessment approaches to provide a basis for planning future learning across the BGE and the senior phase. Teachers would benefit from further moderation activities, both within the school and with other schools, to inform their professional judgement. This will support teachers to develop a shared understanding of standards and inform better young people's progress.
- Senior leaders have introduced a range of appropriate tracking and monitoring approaches. These approaches include an increased focus on individualised learners' plans (ILPs) and milestones. As a result, staff have made a positive start to gathering useful data on learners' progress. Their use of ILPs is introducing individualised ways to plan, assess and track the progress of learners. Teachers are becoming more confident in tracking and monitoring progress, including small milestones where appropriate. Senior leaders now need to embed and review these new approaches, streamlining bureaucracy where appropriate.

## 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, young people. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

## 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

weak

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

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

### Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- The school is unable to provide data to evidence the progress young people are making in literacy and numeracy across the BGE and senior phase. Senior leaders' newly introduced planning and ILP's systems in literacy and numeracy do not yet provide reliable information to track young people's attainment. Young people are not meeting their individual literacy and numeracy targets within their ILPs. Senior leaders need to review young people's progress in literacy and numeracy more systematically.
- Taking into account individual learner profiles, most learners' demonstrate some aspects of the literacy and numeracy skills they have developed. However the school was unable to evidence young people's progress from prior levels of learning. Senior leaders and staff need to ensure that all planned learning builds on young people's prior levels to judge accurately the progress all learners are making. The expectation of what a minority of learners can achieve is not high enough. Senior leaders and teachers need to ensure that targets set within ILPs provide all learners with sufficient challenge.

### Literacy and English

- Most young people are making appropriate progress in listening and talking. The majority of young people are making limited progress in reading and writing. At all stages, most young people are developing literacy skills through a range of learning activities incorporating practical and worksheet based learning. Most literacy lessons are activity-led and delivered using one to one staff ratios. Young people need to strengthen their developing literacy and communication skills through applying them in real life situations.

### Reading

- Most young people across the stages are offered a small range of opportunities to develop their pre-reading and reading skills. Most young people at early and first level need to develop greater depth in their reading, strengthening further their reading skills in finding and using information. Teachers need to extend the range of text young people use in their learning, including using text relevant to real life contexts.

### Writing

- Most young people are offered limited opportunities to write to develop their fine motor, pre writing and writing skills. Most young people at early and first level need to focus more on organising and using information in writing to develop their skills. This will support them to convey better a message and make choices. Teachers should include more use of digital approaches to support learners writing, reducing the overreliance on over writing.

## **Listening and Talking**

- Taking account of learners' individual communication profiles, most young people are making satisfactory progress in listening and talking across the stages. Most young people working at milestones give shared attention to a range of sensory stimuli, objects, and people. A few young people demonstrate an awareness of others by turn taking and using symbols or words to communicate. Young people working at early level join in with verbal conversations. A few use preferred modes of communication and alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) to join in with conversations. At first level, a minority of young people take turns and contribute at the appropriate time when asking and answering a range of questions. Teachers need to support better a minority of young people to develop their communication skills further. This will help ensure that young people are more able to participate in communication exchanges and conversations in real life contexts.

## **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Most young people are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. A minority of young people need to be challenged better in developing their numeracy skills, particularly at the senior phase.
- At all stages, most young people are developing numeracy skills predominantly through the use of worksheets and desk based puzzles. Young people need to strengthen their developing numeracy skills through the increased use of real life situations.

## **Number, money and measure**

- Most young people working at milestones participate in rhymes and songs which involve an introduction to number. They demonstrate an awareness of numbers in a familiar sequence. Young people working at the upper levels of milestones can sort coins. Most young people at early level sequence numbers forward up to 20. They link daily events to time sequences. Most young people identify the value of coins and use these to calculate the cost of items when visiting the local cafe. They perform additions and subtractions using single and double digit numbers. A majority of young people use a range of times tables to perform multiplications and calculate divisions. They identify the value of coins and use these to calculate the cost of a group of common things they might purchase.

## **Shape, position and movement**

- At all stages, young people are building their confidence in understanding the properties of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. Young people need to understand further the properties of shape through play and real-life situations.

## **Information handling**

- At early level, most young people can read pictograms and interpret simple graphs and charts. Most young people at first level gather information and illustrate their findings in a bar graph or tally chart.

## **Attainment over time**

- The school is unable to provide data to evidence progress over time across the BGE and senior phase. Senior leaders' newly introduced school tracking systems do not yet provide reliable information to track young people's literacy and numeracy attainment over time. Senior leaders should now work with staff to develop further the tracking system to capture the progress all learners are making more fully. This will support all staff to track attainment and use data to evidence better progress over time.

## Senior Phase

- The senior phase curriculum requires to be developed. At present it is too narrow in choice. Almost all young people are not yet able to attain National Qualifications above National 1. In session 2021-2022, most young people in their senior phase received accreditation for a minimal number of National Qualifications units at level 1. For session 2022-2023, the school predicts a few young people will complete a small range of National Qualifications unit awards at National 1. Almost all young people in the senior phase are capable of attaining more. Staff now need to develop senior phase progression pathways to provide young people with a wider range of opportunities for accreditation across a broader range of curriculum areas.

## Overall quality of learners' achievement

- In the BGE young people have access to a range of opportunities to participate in community visits to the local shops and parks. Young people do not yet understand fully the skills they are developing and would benefit from skills being a more explicit part of planned learning. Staff should now track and record young people's participation and skill development in activities both in and out of school more fully. Tracking this information will allow staff to identify better young people's potential barriers to participation in activities and take steps to support them more effectively.
- This year a minority of young people are on track to achieve Saltire Awards for volunteering in recognition of their work in the community. As a result of these experiences, a few young people are developing successfully their citizenship, skills in working with others and gaining practical vocational skills. Overall, the experiences and skills young people are developing within the school and across the community are not tracked and celebrated effectively. This is reducing the opportunity for young people to attain and build a sense of achievement.
- The school was not able to provide information on young people's post-school destinations. Senior leaders acknowledge the need to continue to work closely in partnership with Skills Development Scotland.

## Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders have a strong awareness of the complex additional support needs and social and economic backgrounds of all learners at the school. As a result, almost all young people have effective individualised plans and strategies in place to overcome any barriers to learning. Staff respond well to the needs of families. Senior leaders are using the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) to increase the teaching complement in the school. They now need to measure better the impact of PEF interventions on young people's outcomes. Senior leaders need to identify what impact PEF interventions are having in reducing the poverty related attainment gap.

## Other relevant evidence

- For a minority of young people, taking account of their individual complex physical needs, the school provides two hours of planned physical education per week. Senior leaders should work with staff to ensure all young people have two hours of high-quality physical education.
- The local authority submitted self-evaluation information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties, as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff. The HNI also examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole school health promotion duties as far as they relate to food and nutrition. Areas for development have been agreed with the school.



## Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.