

Summarised inspection findings

St Luke's High School

East Renfrewshire Council

5 March 2024

Key contextual information

School Name: St Luke's High School
Council: East Renfrewshire Council
SEED number: 8626138
Roll: 673

St Luke's High School is a co-educational denominational school in the Barrhead area of Greater Glasgow. It serves the communities of Barrhead, Neilston and Uplawmoor. There are three primary schools in the Learning Community.

Currently 26.8% of pupils live in 20% most deprived data zones (SIMD 1-2) in Scotland, and 54.1% in SIMD 1-4.

The headteacher has been in post for seven years. She is supported by three Deputy Headteachers (DHT) and a Business Manager.

Attendance is generally in line with the national average.

Exclusions are consistently below the national average.

In September 2022 18.9% of pupils were registered for free school meals.

In September 2022, the school reported that 29.6% of pupils had additional support needs (ASN).

The percentage of leavers at S4 is lower than the national average.

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

- Young people benefit from high-quality relationships, based on the strong Catholic ethos, nurturing culture and high expectations across the school community. Almost all young people feel that they are treated with respect. Most young people are enthusiastic, self-motivated and enjoy learning at school. In almost all classes, most young people engage well with their learning, as a result well-planned, high-quality learning activities. Most young people work confidently, independently and in group settings. Young people enthusiastically assume leadership roles within classes, for example providing feedback to their peers and delivering presentations.
- Young people respond very positively to the opportunities they have to contribute to the life of their school, parish and the wider local community. They feel valued as members of their school community. Almost all know that they are listened to and that their views are taken into account. This includes young people being involved in planning their learning, influencing the curriculum and informing school policies. This ensures that learning is meaningful, relevant and appropriate to them.
- Teachers use the agreed 'St Luke's Visible Learning Lesson' format very effectively to frame young people's learning. This format was developed by teachers after extensive professional learning and enquiry. There is now a shared and consistent approach to most lessons across the school. Almost all teachers are skilled at referencing clear outcomes for learning and how young people can judge their success in achieving them throughout and at the end of lessons. Teachers make effective use of questioning to deepen young people's understanding.
- In most classes, teachers provide a skilful balance of teacher-directed and independent learning. Teachers continue to develop opportunities for young people to lead their learning, apply their skills in higher-order thinking and provide challenge for young people. A few young people would benefit from greater challenge in their learning.
- Young people draw on a range of creative and varied teaching approaches at all stages of their learning. This is evidenced, for example, in rich outdoor learning opportunities provided through the John Muir Award in S1. Staff make extensive use of the school's purpose-built 'Maker Space' to provide engaging learning activities in a creative environment. Staff have made significant improvements to digital technology pedagogy and resources. Digital technology is very effectively used by staff and young people across the curriculum to enhance the learning experience. This has led to the school becoming a mentor school for schools in the local authority.
- Teachers are very aware of the challenges some young people face in their learning. They skilfully make appropriate adjustments and well-designed adaptations to ensure success is achievable for all. Teachers know learners' needs very well and adaptations have a

significantly positive impact on young people accessing their learning. Almost all young people who require additional support with their learning are well supported in class. They are supported through, for example, differentiated materials, particular approaches to learning or through the use of digital devices and applications. Most young people benefit from tailored assessments to inform more specialised and targeted programmes of learning. Pupil support staff work very effectively alongside teachers to support young people who require additional interventions.

- Senior leaders ensure that teachers and support staff benefit from relevant and well-planned professional learning on teaching and assessment pedagogy. They have clear frames of reference in the revised policy guides on learning and teaching, assessment, tracking and monitoring, as well as practical guidance. These guides very effectively support teachers to ensure that assessments are valid and reliable, and that moderation activities feature prominently. The robust approach to moderation includes teachers collaborating across curriculum areas, in the cluster and local authority as well as contributing to national seminars. Staff who undertake Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) responsibilities share their expertise with colleagues helpfully. Together, these approaches support staff to have confidence in determining the achievement of a level and reinforce clear expectations of national standards. Teachers also share their insights within the school in formal and informal settings. These include the school's own annual learning and teaching conference, regular teach meets and learning walk programme. Teachers also share effective practice with practitioners beyond the school and local authority through a range of regional and national professional learning events.
- Assessment strategies are embedded firmly in the life and work of the school. Teachers use information gathered at points of transition to form a baseline from which to track learners' progress over time. They use a wide range of assessment strategies appropriately to monitor the progress of all young people. Teachers effectively draw on a range of formative assessment strategies in class to skilfully plan young people's next steps in learning. Teachers make effective use of learner conversations, ongoing feedback, peer and self-assessment and formative assessments which adds to this very strong practice. Young people benefit from regular opportunities to reflect on their progress and identify next steps with staff. Almost all young people in the senior phase have an accurate picture of their strengths and required next steps in learning. This now needs to be extended fully across the broad general education (BGE).
- The St Luke's five learner dispositions of creativity, bravery, resilience, curiosity and independence underpin effectively teacher's approaches to planning learning across all curriculum areas. This reflects an agreed visible learning approach alongside the school-wide focus on the development of meta-skills. As a result, young people are developing their understanding of how they learn well. Additionally, the school-wide commitment to foster and develop these skills is helping young people recognise how they develop skills and attributes for life beyond school.
- Across all curriculum areas, teachers plan learning effectively in the BGE to reflect the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Young people feel that their views are taken into account fully in planning learning.
- Classroom teachers monitor and track young people's progress very well. They use a range of assessment evidence to check how well their learners are performing and almost all teachers make subsequent revisions to their planning of learning, teaching and assessment to ensure that they meet the needs of young people. The whole school planning template used by classroom teachers provides a very helpful structure to ensure a common approach to

planning learning, teaching and assessment. Classroom teachers should continue to build on this very strong practice by ensuring that they use day-to-day assessment evidence to plan tasks and activities set at the right level of difficulty for all learners. Across the school, there are highly effective strategies designed to support individual learners and key equity groups.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

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

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

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

BGE

- Overall, by the end of S3, young people attain very well in literacy. In 2021/22 and 2022/23, all young people achieved third CfE level in all literacy measures, and most young people achieved fourth CfE level in all literacy measures. The school have maintained high levels of performance over the last four years.
- In numeracy, by the end of S3, almost all young people achieved third CfE level, and the majority achieved fourth CfE level. This has been a stable picture over the last five years. Teachers work very well with staff across the cluster to ensure that consistency of learning, teaching and assessment is accelerating the progress of young people well in S1. Assessment evidence leading to these professional judgements is valid and robust.
- Staff across the school recognise their shared responsibility to promote the skills of literacy and numeracy in different learning contexts. They are working very well to embed literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Senior phase

Leavers

Literacy

- School performance in literacy for leavers is strong. The school has maintained high levels of performance at SCQF level 5 or better, which has been significantly higher or much higher than the VC in 2020/21 and 2021/22. The majority of young people leaving school from 2019/20 to 2021/22 attained Scottish Credit Qualification Framework (SCQF) level 6 or better in literacy. This is significantly much higher than the virtual comparator (VC) in the latest three years.
- For literacy, almost all young people with ASN leave with SCQF level 4 or better course award from 2017/18 to 2021/22.

Numeracy

- The majority of young people leaving school from 2017/18 to 2021/22 attained SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy, with the exception of one year, 2020/21. At SCQF level 6, performance has declined over the last three years from 2019/20 to 2021/22.

- For numeracy, most young people with ASN leave with SCQF level 4 or better course award over the last five years.
- As a result of the significant work with associated primary schools and as a responsibility of all across the curriculum, there have been sustained improvements at SCQF level 4 literacy for all leavers. There is no consistent pattern of improvement for attainment in numeracy for all leavers. Senior leaders and staff are heavily committed to continued partnership working with primary schools to raise attainment in numeracy.

Cohorts

Literacy

- Young people perform very well in literacy as they move through the school.
- At S4, almost all young people attain SCQF level 5 or better course award from 2021/22 to 2022/23. By S5, the majority of young people from 2018/19 to 2022/23 attain SCQF level 6. By S6, the majority of young people from 2018/19 to 2022/23 attain SCQF level 6. By S5 and by S6, these figures are regularly significantly higher, or much higher than the VC.

Numeracy

- Young people are performing well in numeracy as they move through the school.
- At S4, the majority of young people from 2018/19 to 2022/23 attain SCQF level 5 or better. There has been an improvement at SCQF level 5 or better over the five-year period. By S5, the percentage attaining at SCQF level 6 is largely in line with the VC in each these years, other than in the latest year when the percentage attaining at this level was significantly higher than the VC. By S6, young people's attainment in numeracy is broadly in line with the VC. Senior leaders continue to monitor the difference in success between unit passes and the overall course award at SCQF level 5.

Attainment over time

BGE

- Most young people attain third CfE level and the majority attain fourth CfE level by the end of S3 in all curricular areas, out with literacy and numeracy. For the past three years, concerted efforts to improve the quality of learning teaching and assessment has led to almost all faculties improving the percentage of young people achieving third and fourth CfE level by the end of the BGE in S3.
- Young people's progress in the BGE is tracked very well across all curriculum areas. A timeline of assessment and review brings a sharp focus to monitoring young people's progress. The headteacher ensures that tracking and monitoring data provides senior and middle leaders with a strategic overview of the progress of different cohorts of young people. The roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders are clearly defined. Highly effective interventions are designed to support individuals and key equity groups. An extensive range of supports and interventions are used very effectively to support young people who require additional support. These include study skills advice; supported study; mentoring support; and ongoing liaison with parents. Young people appreciate this further guidance and support. Additionally, individualised plans support identified young people very well. These initiatives are having a very positive impact young people's engagement and progress in learning.

Senior phase

Leavers

- Based on average complementary tariff scores, all young people who left school between 2017/18 to 2021/22 attained broadly in line with the VC. The lowest attaining 20% of leavers who have ASN generally perform above the VC over the same time period.

Cohorts

- The lowest attaining 20% and middle attaining 60% of young people at S4, by S5 and by S6 regularly attain significantly higher than the VC. The highest attaining 20% of young people at S4, by S5 and by S6 consistently attain in line with the VC. Senior leaders are addressing the need to improve the performance for the highest attaining 20% of young people by S6 given the decline in average complementary tariff scores in the last three years. Senior leaders are for example, working with staff to improve the quality of passes at S5, as well as exploring further introducing additional SCQF qualifications.

Breadth and depth

- At S4, young people have consistently attained very well over the last five years. The percentage of young people achieving seven or more course awards at SCQF level 5C or better is significantly much higher than the VC from 2020/21 to 2022/23. Attainment at A grade passes is also strong.
- By S5, young people attain very well at SCQF level 5C or better. By S5, the percentage of young people attaining one or more to four or more qualifications at SCQF level 6C or better is consistently significantly higher than, or significantly much higher than the VC over the last five years. Young people attaining top quality passes shows a decline over the last three years for two or more to five or more courses.
- Although performance by S6 is broadly in line with the VC, senior leaders should continue to monitor improvement at SCQF level 6C or better, including top quality passes.
- Senior leaders need to review the number of courses young people are presented for to ensure that young people maximise success. Although young people do well in National Qualifications, it is important for senior leaders to identify the value added of additional courses and the extent to which this supports attainment, particularly high-quality passes.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Most young people take part in an extensive programme of activities across the school. Young people talk highly of the annual freshers' fayre which showcases the wide range of achievements. For example, activities in sport, music, drama, board games and a plastic construction toy club help young people feel included in the school and talk confidently about the skills they are developing. A few pupil-led committees such as the pupil forum and St Martin de Porres Equalities United group are developing the responsibility, communication and leadership skills of young people.
- Senior leaders track and monitor effectively young people's participation in activities both within and outwith school. As a result, they know young people who are not involved in such activities and encourage them to take part. Achievements are recognised across the school and celebrated in a variety of ways including pupil of the month; wall of fame, praise cards and formal awards ceremonies. This helps most young people feel valued. The school effectively celebrates the few young people who achieve very highly in a range of sporting, cultural and musical activities both within and outwith school. Young people record examples of where they have applied their meta-skills through these activities in their learner profiles in order to show how they are progressing.

- A minority of young people gain accredited awards. Examples include Duke of Edinburgh's Award, John Muir Award, Industrial Cadets Award, St Luke the Evangelist Award and Caritas Award. Through these achievements young people develop resilience, confidence and teamwork.
- Young people make positive and effective contributions to the life of the school, parish, the local community and charities. Young people positively support the inclusive ethos of the school through for example, being Mentors in Violence Protection, anti-bullying ambassadors and through the pupil additional support needs (ASN) forum. These skills development activities provide young people with a genuine voice in school improvement. Young people have a very strong understanding of their responsibility to others and contribute well to the local community and charities through for example, the Youth Philanthropy Initiative, Fare Share and charity fundraising events.

Equity for all learners

- Staff have created helpful specific plans to support young people who are 'equity entitled' and consequently have a barrier to their learning. These young people benefit from targeted support and a wide range of individualised interventions to support for example, literacy, numeracy, wellbeing, attendance, attainment or positive destinations. The school makes very good use of Pupil Equity Funding to provide additional staff roles to track the progress of young people and ensure interventions lead to improved outcomes for learners. As a result, attainment, attendance and engagement for the majority of targeted young people has improved significantly.
- The schools' approach to addressing the barriers to learning resulting from poverty is a major strength. Senior leaders ensure that any financial barriers to participation are removed. Effective support is available to families to remove financial barriers so that all young people participate fully in curricular and wider curricular opportunities. Young people living in quintiles 1 and 2 are achieving and attaining very well. Most young people in quintiles 1 and 2 participate in at least one wider achievement activity and a few excel in activities relating to sports or the arts. Using complementary tariff points, the attainment versus deprivation leavers' data is higher than the national average for young people in quintiles 1 and 2 over a five-year period. There has been a consistent picture of improvement for four out of the five years.
- Staff have closed the poverty related attainment gap in literacy and numeracy at third CfE level.
- Staff are aware of the need to improve attendance for a few young people, post pandemic. There are very effective approaches based on professional learning and improvement methodology to improve attendance. These include an exciting partnership with Strathclyde University. The introduction of an 'attendance team' who work closely with families and young people provides a continued focus to encouraging young people to attend school. These interventions are supporting improvements in attendance for specific young people.
- Staff with responsibility for employability work closely with families, young people and partners to support young people as they leave school. There is a well-established range of employability experiences, work experience opportunities, targeted employer mentoring programmes and a curriculum fayre which help prepare young people for the world of work. The majority of young people left school from 2017/18 to 2021/22 for higher or further education and around a quarter went on to employment. A few left school for training, voluntary work or personal skills development opportunities. Overall, almost all young people progress to

a positive destination on leaving school, higher than the VC in four of the last five years to 2021/22.

Other relevant evidence

- The school submitted 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 and young people. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole-school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of young people through food in school. A few areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider. Aspects of good practise were identified in relation to food in schools.
- The library is a central resource within the school. Curricular areas access the area for research and for hosting larger group gatherings. Reading materials including access to audible texts, are available to reflect the different needs and interests of learners. In S1 as part of school induction, young people develop their understanding of how to use a library and how resources, including digital technologies, can support them in their learning.
- Staff have a strong understanding of equity across the school community. All staff are very aware of the social, cultural and economic context of the school community. Key information is shared with staff on an ongoing basis. Most staff are aware of young people affected by socioeconomic disadvantage, or from other challenges such as young carers, care-experienced young people or those with ASN. This contributes to all staff knowing young people very well and almost all young people feeling well supported

Practice worth sharing more widely

The school as a professional learning community.

Senior leaders and staff invest heavily in professional learning with regard to sustaining learner engagement. Following a comprehensive programme of professional learning with the whole school focussing on developing pedagogy, approaches to learning and teaching improved. Practitioners are skilled at designing learning activities which challenge and cognitively engage learners.

Young people are 'assessment capable learners,' highly engaged and motivated to learn, because of:

- strong relationships;
- an ethos of support and challenge;
- participation in focused learner conversations;
- future-focused skills development and
- high-quality and relevant learning experiences.

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.