Summarised inspection findings

Broxburn Academy

West Lothian Council

27 February 2024

Key contextual information

School Name: Broxburn Academy
Council: West Lothian Council
SEED number: 5510031
Roll: 907 at the time of inspection

Broxburn Academy is a non-denominational school serving the communities of Broxburn, Uphall, Uphall Station, Dechmont and Pumpherston. The senior leadership team is generally well established. There is an active parent council, who work well to support the school. At the time of the inspection, the school faced significant staffing shortages and issues with recruitment. This is impacting adversely on provision for young people.

Attendance is generally in line with the national average.

Exclusions have been consistently significantly above the national average for the last five years (2016/17 to 2020/21).

In September 2022, 14.2 % of young people were registered for free school meals. This is below the national average of 17.8%.

In September 2022, a few young people lived in the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.

In September 2022, the school reported that 39% of young people had additional support needs.

1.3 Leadership of change	satisfactory

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

- Staff and young people are proud of their school and its reputation within the local community. Most relationships across the school reflect the key value of respect. Most staff describe how the school's vision of 'empowering respectful learners' underpins their work. Senior leaders should proceed with plans to refresh the vision and values, ensuring all stakeholders are fully involved. This work needs to result in staff and young people being able to identify clearly how the vision and values informs all improvement priorities and actions.

- Senior leaders and staff have refined and revived their improvement focus as a result of participation in their local authority's validated self-evaluation arrangements. This remains the main influence on identifying current improvement priorities. Senior leaders involve staff and a few young people well in identifying priorities, for example, through the new Pupil Parliament. Parents are consulted on improvement priorities and value the opportunities available to them to provide feedback. Senior leaders need to continue to streamline plans and ensure that the rationale for change is clear to all stakeholders.

- Senior leaders introduced a helpful planned programme to guide quality assurance activities. This has clarified expectations for staff and is leading to a more consistent approach in undertaking self-evaluation actions. Senior leaders need to ensure all staff have a clear understanding of how to evaluate rigorously the impact of planned improvements or interventions in improving outcomes for all young people.

- Senior leaders have developed a range of approaches to ensure that staff are aware of, and respond effectively to, young people who may be affected by socio-economic disadvantage. Staff increased their understanding of equity through recent professional learning. They are targeting support more closely to identified groups of young people. This is improving the attendance and engagement of a few young people who are being supported through these interventions. Senior leaders should continue to involve the parent council and young people in developing the strategy to allocate the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF). Senior leaders should ensure that they identify all young people entitled to benefit from this fund and that they are supported appropriately to make the best progress in their learning. Senior leaders need to use data more rigorously to ensure that PEF impacts positively on improving the attainment of all young people who may face barriers as a result of their socio-economic context.

- The headteacher is well established as an important member of the school community. He is visible, compassionate, and approachable. The senior leadership team (SLT) supports staff well in developing a learning culture. Senior leaders guide the pace of change well and use the working time agreement effectively to maximise time for staff to improve learning and teaching. Most parents and staff agree that there have been significant improvements in communication, particularly from the SLT. The majority of senior leaders have leadership roles across the local

authority. This results in staff being involved in networks to share practice and agree standards. Senior leaders have also improved arrangements to monitor young people's progress. These are improving young people's attainment in the senior phase. Senior leaders should work more closely together to develop a stronger overview of all processes and procedures. This needs to result in a more consistent and effective approach from senior leaders. They should also ensure remits are strategically focused on making the required improvements to learning and teaching, the curriculum and ensuring the best attainment for all young people.

■ Most middle leaders demonstrate effective leadership within their remit. They play a key role in developing and driving forward improvements in their departments and across the school. Senior leaders have introduced planned opportunities for middle leaders to work together on a regular basis to share practice and agree improvement actions. This has led to them working well together, encouraged through a renewed focus on a clearer improvement agenda. Middle leaders would benefit from greater support and challenge from senior leaders to ensure improved learning experiences for all young people.

■ Senior and middle leaders encourage staff to undertake leadership roles. A majority of staff undertake additional responsibilities such as leading working groups linked to school improvement. A minority of staff have successful leadership responsibilities beyond the school or have undertaken leadership qualifications. Staff should continue to share their learning and knowledge across the school to support improvement.

■ Teachers enjoy positive working relationships with each other across the school. Senior leaders developed 'collaboratives' in recognition of the need to improve collegiate working and professional learning among teachers. All teachers are involved in these groups and participation is clarifying expectations of practice as well as increasing understanding of the features of quality teaching and learning. Teachers welcome the protected time to support this work and the associated professional reading. Teachers' participation in the collaboratives is beginning to improve specific aspects of their individual practice. Senior leaders have supported staff to connect the work of the collaboratives to strengthened Professional Review and Development (PRD) approaches. This has led to a clearer and more meaningful PRD process for teachers which is helping them to improve their practice. Senior leaders need to maintain a strong strategic direction to this developing learning culture to ensure it improves all learners' experiences.

■ Staff are in the early stages of engaging young people meaningfully in leading change and improvement in the school. For example, the recently established Pupil Parliament shows some early signs of success in improving young people's participation, such as consideration of young people's improvement priorities. This includes young people using aspects of How Good Is OUR School? (2018) to provide valuable feedback to middle leaders. Staff have increased opportunities for a few young people at all stages to lead successfully across the school. This is impacting positively on providing support to peers through additional learning and achievement experiences. As a result, the majority of young people feel that their views are valued, listened to and that the school is improving.

■ Senior leaders articulate well their vision of how Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) priorities align with the curriculum in the senior phase. Senior leaders should now support staff to understand better how to embed DYW priorities. Staff need to design and deliver experiences across all stages which support young people better to understand the relevance of career management skills and the career education standards in the classroom. Senior leaders work effectively with partners such as Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Career

Ready to support career planning for young people. As a result, almost all young people are supported well and progress to positive destinations on leaving school.

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

■ Young people benefit from positive relationships between their peers and teachers in most lessons. Most young people learn in calm, motivating and welcoming learning environments. At times, a few young people demonstrate low level behavioural concerns. Young people are confident to seek help as required and are eager to learn. Young people appreciate that teachers support their learning outwith lessons. They value opportunities such as lunchtime drop-ins and supported study to help make improved progress in their learning. Young people feel that staff encourage them to do their best.

■ Senior leaders have developed a rights-based approach to learning and are involving more learners in driving forward improvements in learning and teaching. They should build on the recent progress of involving young people more actively in shaping what and how they learn. Staff should strengthen approaches and empower all young people to have a stronger voice in evaluating and improving their learning experiences across all curricular areas.

■ Staff are developing their skills in using digital technology to support aspects of young people's learning. This includes the regular use of digital technology by young people in lessons to complete tasks, for research or accessing additional materials to enhance learning. In a few highly effective examples, teachers use digital tools creatively and this supports young people's curiosity, motivation and involvement in their learning. Senior leaders are well-placed to build on this practice so that all staff are supported to deliver high-quality digital learning experiences for all young people.

■ Most teachers provide clear explanations and instructions which help almost all young people to participate well in their learning. In the majority of lessons, young people understand the purpose and relevance of their learning. The majority of lessons are teacher led which results in young people being passive in their learning. It also leads to tasks not always being suitably differentiated to meet all young people's needs. Young people, particularly in the Broad General Education (BGE), would benefit from greater levels of challenge in their learning. Senior leaders should build on the few examples of where young people are given the opportunity to lead aspects of their learning. In these instances, young people are motivated by the enhanced learning experience.

■ Most young people in the senior phase understand their progress in learning. Most young people receive verbal feedback in lessons which helps them to understand where they are in their learning. A minority of teachers use self and peer assessments or plenary discussions effectively to help young people to reflect on their learning. In these lessons, young people are confident in understanding the progress in their learning and how they can further improve. Teachers should focus on using success criteria more regularly to help young people understand and reflect on their learning.

■ Teacher collaborative groups have focused on improving the use of questioning to extend and challenge young people's learning. As a result, almost all teachers use questioning consistently to check learners' understanding or to recall prior learning. A few teachers use questioning skilfully to elicit reflective responses and develop higher-order thinking skills. Teachers should continue to develop questioning techniques that result in all young people being suitably challenged in their learning.

■ In a few faculties, assessment is closely linked to the planning of learning and teaching. In most subject areas, BGE assessment is focused on end of unit or topic tests. In a few subject areas, teachers plan regular BGE topic assessments and make reference to the National Benchmarks as part of their assessment approaches. All staff need to ensure a more consistent use of the National Benchmarks to support assessment of learning in the BGE. Assessment in the senior phase is closely linked to Scottish Qualification Awards (SQA) standards. Teachers adopt a range of approaches to assess learners' understanding in most classes. This includes supporting young people on an individual basis in almost all classes as well as using self- and peer-assessment techniques in a minority of lessons to understand and monitor young people's progress. Teachers should use a greater range of both formative and summative assessments to check young people's progress and use this information to inform subsequent planning of learning, teaching and assessment.

■ Almost all teachers take part in activities to verify their assessment judgements in the senior phase. This continues to strengthen teachers' understanding of standards. In the majority of departments, teachers are part of local authority or national networks, including SQA markers. This is improving the sharing of standards with young people and helps prepare them well to complete National Qualifications (NQs). Senior leaders should continue to build on recent improvements in how staff gather assessment evidence in the BGE. They should ensure this is robust, links to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) expected levels and increases further the reliability of judgements on young people's progress in all curricular areas.

■ Staff support young people who face additional challenges through a variety of targeted interventions, largely beyond the class. These young people are progressing well in line with expectations. Teachers receive information on the specific needs of individual young people. At present, teachers' use of this information is inconsistent in meeting all learners' needs. Senior staff need to ensure this information is used effectively and appropriately in all classes. All teachers need to take greater responsibility to meet the needs of every young person, including those who require additional support.

■ Teachers in almost all subject areas have effective systems to measure young people's progress. Senior leaders maintain an overview of progress and meet regularly with middle leaders to identify young people who are not making appropriate progress in their learning, mainly in the senior phase. They also meet with middle leaders as a group to use this data collectively to strengthen assessment, planning and monitoring processes. They should proceed with plans to develop a whole school approach to measuring learners' progress across all stages. Young people need to be more involved in tracking their own progress to enable them to understand more fully their next steps in learning. Young people's progress in learning should be clearly communicated to parents at all stages. This should improve more parents' understanding of their child's progress in learning.

■ Senior leaders and teachers are at the early stages of developing a strategy for improving learning and teaching. This needs to result in young people experiencing a greater consistency of high-quality learning and teaching. Senior leaders are strengthening quality assurance processes to improve learners' experiences. This includes senior leaders expanding their

approach to classroom visits with middle leaders, collaborative professional learning and gathering the views of young people. Senior leaders recognise that they need to continue to engage with staff and young people to develop more effective learning experiences.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

■ The majority of middle leaders plan well-developed and effective learning pathways in the BGE. In S2 and S3, in addition to English and mathematics, young people experience choice to specialise within curriculum areas. This results in a minority of learners not experiencing their entitlement to a BGE to the end of S3. Senior leaders should now ensure that all young people experience a full and progressive BGE that prepares them well for success in the senior phase.

■ Staff introduced a range of qualifications from the Scottish Credit Qualification Framework (SCQF) in the senior phase. This is increasing the number of awards young people achieve in the senior phase. Senior leaders recognise that an important next step is to ensure this offer is part of a planned and progressive pathway for all young people. Staff need to take greater account of individual needs as well as local employer and labour market needs when planning learning pathways.

■ As a result of course choice at the end of S3, the majority of young people learn modern languages in line with national expectations. A few young people do not benefit from learning a modern language in the BGE. Senior leaders should ensure effective planning with associated primary schools to enable appropriate progression. Young people experience their entitlement to high-quality physical education in S1 to S4 and in RME from S1 to S6.

■ Young people benefit from opportunities to develop skills further in all curriculum areas through a wide range of activities beyond the classroom. A minority of young people benefit from quality outdoor learning experiences. This includes, for example, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme or through participation in the Cadet programme. Staff should consider how to ensure that all young people can experience quality outdoor learning more frequently.

■ Young people are supported well by a wide range of partners working in school to support them in a range of curriculum and pastoral initiatives. Young people also benefit from a wide range of well-promoted academic and vocational pathway opportunities which lead to relevant accreditation. This includes a well-established partnership with West Lothian College.

■ Young people choose from a range of additional wider achievement options in the senior phase. This enables young people to develop important skills and qualities as well as gain additional qualifications. Teachers have identified the need to develop a strategic overview of skills development across learning. This includes continuing to embed meta-skills throughout the curriculum. Staff in all curricular areas need to understand better the importance of links with industry and embed these when planning learning pathways.

■ Young people access a varied range of stimulating and appropriate resources through the school library. There is a significant range of relevant texts appropriate to the needs and interests of learners. Young people often use the facility for study or quiet reflection. Teachers from all curricular areas should increase their use of the library to enhance young people's learning.

■ Senior leaders should develop the confidence of all teachers in understanding their responsibility for promoting literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, and digital skills. Senior leaders should prioritise and manage plans for the implementation and development of young people's skills for learning, life and work. They need to ensure these are embedded across learning.

■ Young people benefit from an effective transition from primary to secondary school. Teachers need to work with associated primary school staff to ensure a better shared understanding of standards so that transition data can be used to build on young people's prior learning. Young people are supported well by staff and partners in the senior phase as they prepare to move on from school towards positive destinations.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

■ Most parents feel that their child is making appropriate progress. They are comfortable in approaching the school for information and support. They note that staff are approachable and respond effectively to concerns or issues.

■ The majority of parents are encouraged to participate in the parent council (PC). The PC works well with senior leaders and staff to support the school in a range of ways. The PC successfully raises funds to support teacher research, young people's participation in wider curricular opportunities and provide resources to enhance young people's learning. Leaders of the PC work well with staff to agree the allocation of the PEF. The PC is consulted regularly on school improvement priorities and changes within the school. Senior leaders are well-placed to involve parents more fully in identifying improvement priorities. The PC informs the wider parent forum of their work successfully online. They should continue to explore further approaches to co-ordinating their fundraising to support young people's outdoor learning experiences.

■ Senior leaders have an effective family learning strategy which is increasing parental involvement. Most parents agree that communication from the school has improved recently and they value opportunities to offer their views. The majority of parents agree that they receive regular feedback about their child's progress. Senior leaders should consider improving the frequency and quality of this information so that parents understand better how to support their child's learning.

2.1 Safeguarding

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

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

■ wellbeing
■ fulfilment of statutory duties
■ inclusion and equality

■ Relationships between almost all young people and staff are positive with most young people feeling well supported by staff. They feel that their wellbeing is enhanced through the individual support provided by staff.

■ Young people reflect on their own mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing in health and wellbeing classes, assemblies and, increasingly through other classes. This is supporting more young people to self-reflect, support others and develop positive relationships with a trusted adult. Young people are more physically healthy, active, responsible and achieve more as they recognise the need to look after their own wellbeing.

■ Young people benefit from a personal and social education programme, known as the health and wellbeing (HWB) curriculum in the BGE. This is informed by local issues. This increases young people's knowledge and understanding of important issues which may affect them or their community. Young people also benefit from undertaking roles such as mental health ambassadors and lead aspects of the development of rights and equalities. As a result, a few young people have developed 'Brox Talks', which offers their peers well-received additional support. They also influence the personal and social curriculum. In the senior phase, almost all young people gain additional accreditation through a wellbeing award and personal development awards. It is important that staff, with young people's input, continue to review these programmes so that they remain purposeful, progressive and engaging for all learners.

■ The majority of young people, particularly in the senior phase, have an appreciation of the importance of equality and fairness. The articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child are referred to regularly during lessons and across the school. As a result, the majority of young people are aware of Children's Rights and respect other people's dignity. Staff need to plan a greater range of opportunities across the curriculum to increase young people's confidence in challenging discrimination, prejudice and intolerance.

■ Senior leaders and pastoral care staff know young people's needs well and fulfil their statutory duties effectively. Leaders of pastoral support have made progress in establishing operational procedures to ensure that young people are supported appropriately. This includes key staff meeting weekly and using a range of data including referrals, surveys and a risk matrix to identify appropriate supports from a range of partnership or in-school interventions. Most young people are positive about the support they receive from staff and partners such as the school counsellor. Senior leaders are at the early stages of monitoring planned interventions across the school and support bases. Staff across the school need to continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of their statutory duties related to wellbeing, equality and inclusion.

- Most young people who require additional support with their learning have appropriate plans in place. Heads of house and support for learning staff plan with young people and their families to overcome barriers to learning. These plans are usually informed by their views, reviewed appropriately and shared with staff. A few plans lack detailed information to support young people's learning and are not always reviewed timeously.

- A few young people benefit from targeted interventions in smaller group settings outwith the classroom. The learning, curriculum and environment in almost all of these small settings is appropriate. Learning and teaching in most of the group settings is well planned to meet the needs of specific individuals. This has supported well a few learners who have found it difficult to engage in school or who need extra support in their learning. As a result, attendance and confidence is improving for these young people.

- Most care experienced young people are supported well in the school. They benefit from enhanced transition arrangements from primary 7. 'CE Me' groups in S1, S2 and S4 help care experienced young people feel safe and included. All care experienced young people have weekly check-ins. Staff track and monitor their attendance, attainment and destinations. This ensures appropriate supports are in place and is contributing to almost all care experienced young people having a sustained positive destination on leaving school. Senior leaders should ensure that all care experienced young people have been considered for a coordinated support plan and this has been recorded.

- Senior leaders, alongside an external partner, support young carers effectively to sustain attendance and make appropriate progress with their learning. A next step is to ensure that all young carers receive their entitlement to a young carers' statement.

- Staff with responsibility for improving attendance and engagement are supporting specific groups of young people. This is beginning to improve attendance for these young people. Senior leaders should monitor the frequency and length of time that young people follow bespoke timetables to ensure they receive their full entitlement to education. A few young people continue to find regular and sustained attendance a challenge. This is adversely affecting their outcomes. An important next step is for staff to plan more rigorously how to support and include these young people positively in the life of the school.

- Exclusions have been significantly above the national average across the latest five-year period. Senior leaders and pastoral staff implement alternatives to exclusion and organise additional support where appropriate. A few young people at risk of being excluded are supported in small group settings. There are positive indicators of reduced exclusions over the past two years.

- Staff worked together to develop a policy to promote positive relationships and behaviour. Most young people enjoy relationships across the school which are positive and founded on a climate of mutual respect. However, too many young people do not feel safe at school. Often this is attributed to the bullying behaviour of others. A minority of young people are not confident that staff deal effectively with incidents relating to, for example, disability, gender and race equality. It would be helpful if staff, along with stakeholders, reviewed this policy to ensure that if fully reflects current national guidelines, and supports more young people to feel safe and flourish at school.

- 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. Several areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	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

■ Almost all young people achieve CfE third level or better in literacy and numeracy by the end of S3. In 2022/23, most young people achieved CfE fourth level in literacy and numeracy by the end of S3. These measures have shown a pattern of improvement over the latest five years from 2018/19 to 2022/23.

■ Staff who lead literacy and numeracy are establishing strategies to improve literacy and numeracy attainment. This includes the allocation of additional time in the curriculum, regularly scheduled moderation activities, and the sharing of resources electronically. These are improving teachers' understanding of standards and leading to an increasingly consistent approach. Staff need to work closely with primary colleagues to increase confidence in the reliability of BGE data. They need to use this data to identify those who require additional interventions and ensure appropriate progression through to the senior phase. All staff now need to consider how they are taking forward literacy and numeracy as a responsibility of all.

Senior Phase
Literacy

■ Generally, most young people who left school between 2017/18 to 2021/22 achieved Scottish Credit Qualification Framework (SCQF) level 5 or better in literacy. The majority of young people achieved SCQF level 6 or better in literacy, with the exception of one year. Performance at these levels has been generally in line with the virtual comparator (VC) since 2017/18.

Numeracy

■ Most young people who left school in 2021/22 achieved SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy, in line with the VC. At SCQF level 5, there is a notable difference between the success young people have in achieving numeracy through units when compared to the percentage who achieve this through a course award. In 2021/22, a few young people achieved SCQF level 6 or better in numeracy. For the latest year, this is significantly much lower than the VC and has declined from being a minority of young people achieving at this level since 2017/18. Senior leaders should continue to explore approaches to ensure that all young people achieve the appropriate numeracy qualification.

■ In the latest two years, 2020/21 and 2021/22, the majority of young people with additional support needs leaving school achieved SCQF level 5 or better in literacy. A minority of young people achieved SCQF level 6 or better in literacy. Performance in numeracy is weaker than literacy with around half of leavers achieving SCQF level 5 or better.

Cohorts

- At S4, there has been an improvement in performance with most young people now achieving SCQF level 5 or better in literacy in the latest two years (2021/22 and 2022/23). By S5, as a percentage of the S4 roll, a minority of young people generally achieved SCQF level 6 or better over the last five years. This is in line with the VC and has improved since 2018/19 and 2019/20 when this was significantly lower than the VC. By S6, based on the S4 roll, just over half of young people achieved SCQF level 6 or better in literacy in 2021/22 and 2022/23. This is in line with the VC for the latest two years having previously been significantly lower than the VC.

- At S4, there has been an improvement in performance with most young people now achieving SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy in the latest two years. This is significantly much higher than the VC. By S5 and by S6, based on the S4 roll, there has been no consistent improvement in performance at SCQF level 6. Performance is either significantly much lower or lower than the VC over the last five years. As young people move through the senior phase, they are not making sufficient progress in numeracy.

- Young people's attainment in NQs in English is consistent with national averages. At both SCQF levels 5 and 6, entries and young people's attainment is in line with national data.

- Young people's attainment in NQs in mathematics requires improvement. At SCQF level 5, entries and young people's attainment is generally in line with national data. At National 4, entries are significantly higher than the national average. For applications of mathematics, at National 5, entries and attainment are generally lower than national averages.

Attainment over time
BGE

- The majority of young people achieved CfE third level or better and just under half achieved CfE fourth level in their chosen subject areas by the end of S3 in 2022/23. Senior leaders are unable to demonstrate improvements in attainment over time in the BGE. Senior leaders should continue to support staff to increase their understanding of standards to improve the reliability of professional judgements in the BGE. All staff need to use data more rigorously to measure the progress and attainment of all young people and cohorts over time.

Leavers

- Attainment for all leavers, when using complementary tariff points, is consistently in line with the VC since 2017/18.

- Young people benefit from increased opportunities to achieve a range of awards beyond NQs. Senior leaders have expanded their senior phase curricular offer to provide more choice for young people.

Cohorts

- At S4 and by S5, the attainment of the lowest attaining 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% of young people has been generally in line with the VC over the last five years. By S6 based on the S4 roll, the attainment of the lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% is generally in line with the VC having been significantly lower in identified years.

Breadth and depth

- The increased offer of a range of awards beyond NQs is adding value to young people's breadth of attainment. However, senior leaders should review the number of courses young people are presented for to ensure that young people maximise success.

- At S4, the school has maintained levels of performance for one or more to five or more courses at SCQF level 5C or better, but performance has declined in recent years for six or more and seven or more courses. Performance is generally in line with the VC. There is scope to improve the quality of passes for young people who achieve two or more and three or more courses. Young people in S4 are presented for a significantly higher number of SCQF qualifications than the national average. Most young people attain four or more courses at SCQF level 5 or better and a majority of young people achieve eight or more awards at SCQF level 5 or better when taking account of courses beyond national qualifications. It is important for senior leaders to identify the value added by young people undertaking ten courses given that only a third achieve success at SCQF level 5 or better in these.

- By S5, the percentages of young people gaining one or more to four or more qualifications at SCQF level 5C or better is significantly higher than the VC for the latest year 2022/23. The school has raised attainment at SCQF level 5C or better and SCQF level 5A or better over the last five years. Although performance at SCQF level 6C has improved over the last five years, performance has declined in the last three years for young people who attain three or more to five or more courses. This includes the quality of grades that young people achieve. When taking account of young people's performance in courses beyond national qualifications, young people do well with the majority achieving three or more courses at SCQF level 6.

- By S6, a majority of young people gain two or more qualifications at SCQF level 6C or better and a minority achieve three or more qualifications at SCQF level 6A or better. In a few measures, there are declines in attainment although the school performs in line with the VC having previously been significantly lower than the VC. A minority of young people gain one or more qualifications at SCQF level 7C or better, and a few young people gain three or more qualifications at SCQF level 7A. Performance at SCQF level 7C or better has been in line with the VC since 2019/20 when performance at this level was significantly lower or much lower than the VC.

Overall quality of learners' achievement
- The majority of young people benefit from participation in a wide range of achievement activities beyond the classroom. Young people gain leadership skills through the various roles they undertake in school. This includes supporting other learners as Autism Ambassadors or supporting English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learners. A few young people lead sports activities such as basketball and volleyball. Young people also organise whole school events and shows. A few young people develop their organisational skills by planning and delivering clubs, activities and transition events for peers. Young people develop social skills, gain friendships, and learn new technical skills related to the activity through a wide range of clubs.

- An important strength in the school's work is the significant number of young people who achieve through participation in the cadets. Most young people attending the cadets demonstrate strong leadership skills and progress to leading others. These young people are becoming more successful and confident. They apply their learning in other settings across the school. Young people increasingly exercise responsibility through leading and teaching others. Almost all cadets gain first aid certificates and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award at Bronze level. Most young people also participate in cadet groups in the local community. This helps them gain a sense of pride in their achievements as well as developing citizenship.

- Young people who are part of the school's debating society are building confidence and developing effective leaderships skills. They increasingly take responsibility for their learning across all stages. Most young people who take part in the debating club in the senior school

gain awards at local and national level. A few young people progress to the Scottish National Debating team. Recently, young people from the school were successful in a national debating competition held in London. Commendably, Broxburn Academy was the only state school to reach the final. A few young people are applying these skills in other activities well.

- A few young people who were previously disengaged from school are developing their confidence and participation in school as a result of them taking part in out of class activities. Staff should now consider how to ensure all young people are aware of the wide range of clubs on offer which can help them to achieve.

- Young people's success is celebrated well through assemblies, social media and regular newsletters. A majority of young people who take part in achievement activities gain accreditation. This includes Youth Achievement, first aid, exercise and fitness leadership and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

- Senior leaders should continue to develop their approaches to tracking the achievements of all young people. This should include skills development. They should continue to develop the tracking of participation and engagement to measure the quality of these achievements for all young people. They need to use this data to identify gaps in young people's achievement so that all young people can be supported to participate.

Equity for all learners

- There are very few young people who reside in SIMD deciles one and two. Generally, young people attain in line with other young people living in similar deciles across the country.

- Senior leaders worked collaboratively with stakeholders to develop an effective action plan to reduce the cost of the school day. This includes helping with applications for clothing grants and other entitlements, a uniform store, provision of a breakfast club, and a foodbank. Staff report that this is increasing the attendance, engagement, and attainment of young people impacted by socio-economic disadvantage.

- Senior leaders allocate PEF appropriately to a range of interventions designed to improve young people's attendance and engagement with school and in wider achievements. A minority of young people have improved their literacy skills in the BGE as a result of a PEF funded literacy programme. A next step is for senior leaders to demonstrate the impact of these interventions on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. Senior leaders should review how the PEF is used to raise attainment and accelerate progress for all young people affected by poverty, in line with national expectations.

- Almost all young people progress to a positive destination on leaving school. The majority go on to further or higher education and a significant minority of leavers progress directly into employment. These measures are in line with the VC.

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.