

Summarised inspection findings

Lockerbie Academy

Dumfries and Galloway Council

16 April 2024

Key contextual information

School Name: Lockerbie Academy
Council: Dumfries and Galloway
SEED number: 5948630
Roll: 730

Lockerbie Academy is located in the town of Lockerbie. The headteacher is supported by three deputy head teachers. The school faces ongoing significant staffing challenges. Departments such as mathematics and English are particularly affected by this.

Attendance has generally been above the national average from 2016/17 to 2020/21. There has been a slight decline in 2021/22 and 2022/23. Exclusions are generally above the national average. There has been a decrease in exclusion rates in 2022/23.

In September 2022, 14.5 per cent of pupils were registered for free school meals. In September 2022, almost all young people resided in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 4-7, with the majority residing in SIMD 5. In September 2022, 27.4 per cent 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

- The school's vision is for 'a caring and learning community'. The school values of compassion, achieve, respect and equity are demonstrated effectively through the positive relationships between almost all staff and young people. As a result, staff create a positive and caring ethos to support and nurture young people consistently.
- Almost all young people are well mannered and polite. They have a positive attitude to their learning and participate well in learning across almost all curriculum areas. In a few classes, young people are motivated to learn where they are active participants in their learning and take ownership of their learning tasks. They are also increasingly engaged in classes where they are involved in research tasks or can work with their peers.
- In a few lessons, young people's learning is enhanced when teachers use digital technologies creatively. This includes them using a variety of helpful resources, including applications and video links. Young people are more engaged when technology is used and say they would appreciate more of this in class.
- Almost all teachers provide clear explanations and instructions for young people. In most lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning with young people. However, this is of a variable quality across the school. Teachers often focus too much on the task that young

people have to complete rather than the knowledge, understanding and skills they are developing. Senior leaders should work with staff to share good practice in this area.

- Most lessons are overly teacher led. This leads to a few young people not engaging or learning as effectively as possible. In a few classes, teachers ensure a suitable pace of learning, which challenges young people appropriately. Teachers need to provide increased differentiation for a minority of young people.
- In a few lessons, teachers use questioning techniques well to engage learners. Across the school, however, the quality of questioning is variable. The majority of teachers should strengthen their use of questioning more effectively to develop young people's higher-order thinking skills.
- Staff across the school prioritise improving learning and teaching. Considerable positive work is taking place in this area. This is led by a staff Learning and Teaching group (LTG). In consultation with members of the school community, they have established 'The Lockerbie Lesson'. This provides a clear structure to support consistently high-quality learning, teaching and assessment. They have also adopted a collaborative and creative approach to sharing practice across the school, which includes 'The Learning and Teaching Bulletin Board'. This work has the capacity to improve further the consistency of the quality of learning and teaching across the school. Senior leaders should ensure that the work of the LTG looks beyond the school to share and learn further.
- Staff use an effective range of assessment approaches to determine young people's progress. Teachers provide verbal feedback to young people to help them develop their thinking and understanding. The majority of teachers also provide young people with written feedback on their work. However, this is not used in all departments. Most young people say that the feedback they receive helps them to improve their learning. They say that staff help them to understand their progress. Young people in the Broad General Education (BGE) however cannot articulate clearly or consistently what they need to do to improve. Teachers now need to give young people clear feedback on what they need to do to improve in their learning.

In the BGE teachers have introduced formal learning conversations with all young people in S2. They should develop this to include young people in S1 and S3. This will engage young people in helpful, structured discussions about their learning and support them to understand their progress and feel increasingly valued. In the senior phase, the majority of teachers across the school engage in regular learning conversations with young people. Additionally, a few young people are supported through additional mentoring. This helps them to remain focused on their targets.

- Increasingly, teachers are engaging in moderation activities with colleagues from their departments. However, most teachers need to develop a better understanding of the learning, teaching and assessment cycle to support young people's learning. Teachers should increase their range of moderation activities across the school and with colleagues from other schools. This will support them to improve their confidence further in relation to national standards and expectations. It will also help to ensure more rigour in determining young people's achievement of a level.
- Departments use a variety of effective departmental tracking approaches to record, monitor and track young people's progress. Teachers also contribute to, and use, a recently developed whole school tracking and monitoring system. This system is helping them to track young people's progress over time more comprehensively, supporting their understanding of young people's attainment. It is also helping them to intervene appropriately to support young people's learning, and to share relevant information with parents. A next step for most teachers

will be to take increased account of young people's needs when planning learning and assessment.

- Currently, the majority of parents say they receive helpful, regular feedback about how their child is learning and developing. The majority also say they receive information about their child's learning at the right time. An important next step for staff will be to help parents understand more consistently how their child's progress is assessed and how they can support their child's learning at home.

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

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

BGE

- In 2022-23, most young people achieved third curriculum for excellence level (CfE) and less than half achieved fourth CfE level in literacy by the end of S3. Over the last five years there has been no consistent pattern of improvement in the percentage of young people achieving fourth CfE literacy levels. The percentage of young people achieving third CfE level literacy has declined in the past two years. Literacy interventions, including literacy ladders, paired reading and rescue readers are starting to show improvements in literacy outcomes for targeted young people.
- In numeracy, most young people achieve third CfE level, and the majority achieve fourth CfE level by the end of S3. This is in line with the national average. There has been a decline in numeracy at third CfE level since 2018/19. Staff are at the early stages of redeveloping BGE course plans and are working with Education Scotland to develop numeracy pedagogy.

Literacy (leavers)

- In the last two years, most young people left school with literacy at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 5 or better. This is in line with the virtual comparator (VC) with the exception of 2018/19 and 2019/20 where it is significantly lower or much lower than the VC. Less than half of young people left with literacy at SCQF level 6 in four of the last five years. This is significantly lower or much lower than the VC.

Numeracy (leavers)

- The percentage of young people achieving SCQF level 5 or better is improving since 2019/20. Most achieved SCQF level 5 or better in 2020/21 and 21/22. This has improved from being significantly lower than the VC to being in line with the VC. A minority of young people achieved SCQF level 6 by the time they left school. This is generally in line with the VC. The introduction of SCQF level 6 application of maths has contributed to improvements in the percentage of young people achieving SCQF level 6 numeracy in the past two years.

Cohorts

- At S4, in 2022/23 the majority of young people achieve SCQF level 5 or better in literacy in 2022/23 which is significantly lower than the VC. There has been a decline in attainment from 2020/21. By S5, based on the S4 roll, most young people in 2022/23 achieve SCQF level 5 or better in literacy. This has declined from the previous two years and is significantly lower than the VC. A minority of young people achieve SCQF level 6 or better. This is significantly lower or much lower than the VC for four of the last five years. Senior leaders have correctly identified the need to improve the percentage of young people achieving at SCQF level 6. As

part of their raising attainment strategy, senior leaders and staff are implementing new literacy based SCQF level 6 qualifications and are adapting course choice structures to maximise opportunities for young people.

- At S4, in 2022/23 the majority of young people achieve SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy over the past five years. This is generally in line with the VC. Staff have introduced SCQF level 5 Applications of Maths in 2023 to provide more numeracy pathways for young people. By S5 and by S6, based on the S4 roll, a few young people go on to achieve SCQF level 6 numeracy. 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 both literacy and numeracy, most young people with an additional support need achieve SCQF level 4 or better, the majority achieve SCQF level 5 or better and a minority achieve SCQF level 6 before leaving school.

Attainment over time

- At present, the school is unable to provide robust data on young people's attainment in the BGE over time. Departments and faculties use a variety of tracking systems to monitor attainment in the BGE over time. The recently introduced whole school tracking system will now monitor attainment over time across all curricular areas. This data should support senior leaders and staff to monitor the progress of young people. It will also provide information to support the course choice pathways for young people. Senior leaders and principal teachers should now use this information to ensure measurable interventions are in place to meet the needs of all learners.
- As planned, senior leaders should enhance the approaches to moderation in the BGE within departments and with the associated primary schools. This will develop further the confidence of staff on professional judgements and provide more reliable data in achievement of a level.

Senior phase

Improving attainment for all

Leavers

- The attainment of young people leaving school, using average complementary tariff points is generally in line with the VC for the lowest attaining 20%, the middle attaining 60% and the highest attaining 20%.

Cohorts

- At S4, using complementary tariff points, the attainment of the lowest attaining 20%, middle attaining 60% and highest 20% of young people is generally in line with the VC. By S5, based on the S4 roll, the lowest attaining 20% is generally in line with the VC. The middle attaining 60% and the highest attaining 20% are in line with the VC for three out of the five years but are significantly lower than the VC in 2021/22 and 2022/23. By S6, based on the S4 roll, the lowest attaining 20% the middle attaining 60% and the highest attaining 20% are generally in line with the VC.

Breadth and depth

- At S4, a minority of young people achieve five or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better. The attainment at this level for one or more to six or more shows a pattern of consistent decline from 2019/20 to 2022/23 with the school performing significantly lower than the VC in the latest year. This pattern of decline is also evident for top quality passes.

- By S5, a minority of young people achieve one or more to four or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better. This is significantly lower or much lower than the VC. A minority of young people achieve one or more awards at SCQF level 6A or better. This is significantly lower than the VC for the last two years. A few achieve three or more awards, which is in line with the VC. In 2022/23, performance has dropped and is the lowest across almost all measures in the last five years.
- By S6, a minority of young people achieve five or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better. This is significantly lower than the VC for the last two years. A minority of young people achieve three or more awards at SCQF level 6A which is in line with the VC. A minority of young people achieve one or more award at level 7C or better and a few achieve one or more awards at level 7A. This is in line with the VC.
- Senior leaders recognise the need to increase the quality of passes at both SCQF level 5 and level 6. Senior leaders should increase presentation levels in some subject areas and build a culture of high aspirations for all young people.
- Senior leaders and staff have introduced new courses to provide different curricular pathways for young people. This includes skills for work courses and national progression awards. Senior leaders work closely with the local college to provide a wider range of qualifications, including foundation apprenticeships. These courses provide some young people with more relevant learning opportunities for their chosen pathway.
- Young people in S4 are presented for a significantly higher number of SCQF qualifications than the national average. Of this cohort 77% of young people are presented for 7 or more courses but only 1% achieve these at SCQF level 5 or better. It is important for senior leaders to identify the value added by additional courses to young people's attainment, learner pathways and experiences.
- Senior leaders and staff are at the early stages of developing a raising attainment strategy. A next step for senior leaders would be to involve young people in the development of this strategy. In addition, senior leaders have rightly focused on improving young people's wellbeing and attendance. Nurture groups, support staff and cohort attendance tracking are supporting the attendance of targeted young people.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Almost all young people across the school enjoy being involved in a large offer of wider achievement activities. This includes sports, the equalities club, volunteering, and the school show. The school show contributes to the strong relationships the school has with the local community. Most young people recognise and appreciate the opportunities they receive out with the school day.
- Senior leaders and staff track well young people's participation of in and out of school activities. Senior leaders use this information to encourage all young people across the school to participate. The Wider Achievement Ambassadors actively promote the experiences on offer in the school and support younger learners to participate. Young people are at an early stage of recognising the skills they are developing through participation in wider achievement opportunities. As a next step, senior leaders and staff should develop an approach to allow young people to track the skills they are developing.
- Senior leaders and staff celebrate the success of young people's achievements well. Young people talk positively about celebration of achievement through presentations, noticeboards, social media, assemblies, and a weekly local media focus. In addition, there is a formal

celebrating of achievement ceremony and a sporting celebration. A few young people represent the school both nationally and internationally. Young people report that this inspires a greater amount of pride in participating and sharing their involvement in wider achievement opportunities.

- Young people in the senior phase develop their responsibility and involvement in school improvement through their roles such as subject ambassadors and Mentors in Violence Prevention ambassadors. Young people in S1-3 would benefit from developing their leadership skills in addition to participating in the Pupil Parliament. Senior leaders should continue with their expansion of pupil voice across the whole school.
- A majority of young people access accredited achievements from S3 onwards, such as John Muir, Dynamic Youth, Saltire Award, Heritage Hero, First Aid or a Leadership Qualification at level 5. These achievements are developing young people's independence, problem solving skills and confidence.

Equity for all learners

- In consultation with young people and the Parent Council, senior leaders have used pupil equity funding (PEF) well to appoint a Pupil Equity Worker to support young people and families. This allows targeted interventions to be put in place to remove barriers to learning and to close the poverty related attainment gap. Creating confidence classes, numeracy interventions, Boys to Men groups and attendance interventions are some of the supports in place to reduce the equity gap. Early impact is evident through improvements in literacy and numeracy, reduced exclusion levels and improvements in attendance. Young people also talk about increasing their confidence in targeted areas due to supports in place. When using complimentary tariff points, young people across all SIMDs, with the exception of SIMD 4, are achieving in line with young people from similar demographics across Scotland.
- A Pupil Update tracker monitors the attainment of cohorts of young people and details all interventions for a young person. The school should continue to develop this tracker to evidence the impact of all interventions and continue to work with primary colleagues to ensure equity strategies are progressive and built upon.
- Senior leaders and almost all staff have a good understanding of equity across the school community. They work with the local authority to remove financial barriers so that young people can participate fully in curricular opportunities, which allows them to gain a breadth of skills. The school welfare fund supports pupil engagement in wider achievement opportunities. This enhances the experiences for young people.
- Over the last five years, almost all leavers move on to positive destinations. In 2021/22, more than one third of young people enter Higher Education, with the remaining two thirds moving into Further Education or employment. The school's Developing the Young Workforce lead and SDS officer work closely to ensure a proactive and supportive approach is in place to deliver the school's positive destination outcomes. Partnerships with local businesses within the BGE encourage a strong DYW input at an early stage, which also supports this.

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.