Summarised inspection findings

St Benedict's High School

Renfrewshire Council

25 April 2023

Key contextual information

School name: St Benedict's High School
Council: Renfrewshire Council
SEED number: 8620032
Roll (2023):   709 young people

St. Benedict's High School is a six-year Roman Catholic secondary school located in Linwood. The school's catchment area includes Linwood, Johnstone, Bridge of Weir, Houston and the surrounding areas. There are five associated primary schools. The headteacher took up post in October 2018 and is supported by three depute head teachers and a business support manager.

The schools includes the Columba Flexible Learning Resource (FLR), which supports 46 young people with additional support needs (ASN).

Attendance is generally in line with the national average. Exclusions are generally in line with the national average. In February 2022, 23.7% of pupils were registered for free school meals. In September 2021, 28.8% of pupils live in the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland. In September 2021 the school report that 31% of pupils had ASN.

1.3 Leadership of change	good

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

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

- The headteacher is developing a culture of increased expectations and higher aspirations for young people. Senior leaders are creating a strengthened culture of collegiality with staff working together to lead initiatives and share effective practice.

- The headteacher reviewed the values recently with the chaplaincy team so they reflect better the teachings of the Gospel. These values are deeply embedded, widely understood, and evident in actions and behaviours. As a result, staff and young people enjoy positive and caring relationships. They are proud of their school and demonstrate a strong sense of belonging to the school community. The headteacher is well placed to refine the vision with stakeholders to reflect the school community's shared understanding of their purpose.

- Senior leaders have introduced structures for strategic planning based on systematic self-evaluation processes. This includes an impactful whole school quality assurance calendar which is clarifying expectations for staff. Staff are benefitting from clear direction from senior leaders to support planned change. There is evidence of strong and effective leadership in a majority of staff who lead change across the school. All staff who lead change should demonstrate more clearly the impact of their work on improving young people's outcomes. Staff should continue to develop their approaches to self-evaluation, building on positive examples from within the school, to provide an overview of school improvements.

- Senior leaders devote a significant portion of staff development time to improving the consistency of high-quality learning and teaching. Staff who lead on this improvement priority are developing a clear vision, informed by relevant research. They use self-evaluation effectively to measure impact and inform the next steps of their plan. This includes providing a range of well-planned career-long professional learning (CLPL) opportunities. Senior leaders and a majority of faculty leaders can demonstrate improved practice as a result of these opportunities. Senior leaders are well placed to build on this model of leading change in other aspects of school practice.

- School improvement priorities are identified by senior leaders but there is scope for all members of the school community to have a greater role in identifying areas for improvement. The school improvement plan reflects local and national priorities. A majority of middle leaders have improved the quality of their faculty improvement plans. These plans match closely with whole school priorities. Senior leaders need to support middle leaders further to ensure improvement plans are clear, coherent and lead to positive change across the school.

- The School Improvement Plan (SIP) includes references to the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) agenda and the development of career management skills. Young people would benefit from a more strategic approach to implementing the DYW agenda that fully evaluates and coordinate the roles of Skills Development Scotland (SDS) staff, the DYW

coordinator and teachers. Staff need to develop more consistent approaches to ensuring all young people are supported sufficiently to make informed choices about career aspirations.

- Senior leaders and almost all staff have a clear understanding of the social, cultural, and economic context of the school. Senior leaders have targeted Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) towards additional leadership posts. Senior leaders now need to ensure that the PEF plan clearly outlines the rationale and aims of this funding to improve attainment for learners. Staff and senior leaders need now to be able to demonstrate how young people living in poverty are making accelerated progress in line with national expectations.

- A majority of middle leaders have clear strategies to improve outcomes for young people. Senior leaders have invested effectively in developing the leadership capacity of middle leaders. Senior leaders are supporting middle leaders to provide greater challenge to their faculties to improve learners' experiences.

- All teachers are involved in improvement groups in either learning, teaching and assessment, numeracy, health and wellbeing, or literacy. A few staff take up extended leadership roles. These opportunities are helping to develop their leadership skills, knowledge of partnership working, and enhance their understanding of the curriculum.

- A majority of young people have a range of opportunities to offer their views on how to improve their school experience. The pupil council is effective in capturing the views of young people and providing regular feedback on the changes being made as a result. This includes improvements to the fabric of the building, canteen provision and updates to the school uniform. There is scope to enhance the role of young people in developing and evaluating school improvement priorities. An important strength of the school is the increasing range of leadership opportunities available to young people at all stages. These roles are leading to improvements and change across the school and wider community.

- Almost all staff are encouraged to engage in the wide range of CLPL, including an in-house offer. Senior leaders ensure CLPL reflects and helps achieve whole school priorities. Senior leaders should continue with well-judged plans to ensure CLPL reflects the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) standards for Career-Long Professional Learning.

- There are effective relationships with community partners, who actively contribute to the life of the school. Senior leaders should develop a consistent approach to joint planning and evaluation. A next step will be to re-establish links with community planning structures such as Linwood Learning Partnership. This will ensure staff can better support vulnerable families.

- Although many planned changes are at early stages of implementation, young people, parents, staff and partners are confident that the school is improving. They comment on well-received changes to the house system, a greater range of leadership opportunities and improvements to aspects of learning, teaching and assessment. These improvements are developing a strong ethos, a sense of belonging to the community, and improving structures in place to enable more of the school community to lead change.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	good

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

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

■ The school values of respect, love, trust, tolerance and integrity underpin a positive school ethos. The well-developed climate for learning is characterised by nurturing and mutually respectful relationships between young people and staff. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in almost all classes. Teachers are particularly skilled at responding quietly and effectively to address incidents of low-level behaviour demonstrated by a few young people.

■ Almost all young people participate well in their learning.Young people are particularly enthusiastic and motivated in lessons where learning activities are appropriately challenging, varied, enjoyable and well matched to their needs and interests. Staff should continue to develop their use of creative and relevant contexts for learning. At times, lessons are overly teacher directed. This leads to all young people undertaking the same tasks and activities, and learning at the same pace. There is scope to meet better the needs of young people and improve the pace and challenge of learning, particularly in the broad general education (BGE).

■ Almost all teachers share the purpose of learning with young people. They also share success criteria which show young people what they need to do to be successful. Staff recognise the need to improve the quality of success criteria as they too often focus on the successful completion of tasks. In a few classes, young people have impactful opportunities to peer and self assess against this criteria. This is helping them to identify their strengths and next steps in learning. Young people value these opportunities to take more responsibility for their own learning and to identify how to make progress in their learning.

■ Teacher's explanations and instructions are clear in almost all lessons. As a result, young people know what is expected of them. In a few classes, teachers use skilled questioning to test the understanding of young people, develop their thinking skills, and actively engage them as partners in learning. There is scope to develop this practice further across the school. A majority of teachers also test for understanding well during learning using a variety of approaches, including show-me boards.

■ Staff are improving the structure of lessons. Almost all teachers make use of effective starter activities. These engage young people quickly and create opportunities to revisit prior learning. A few staff make strong use of exit passes to allow young people to leave comments which influence the teacher's forward planning. A few teachers offer young people effective opportunities to plan and lead aspects of their learning. Teachers should share these approaches with staff across the school to give young people increasing ownership of their learning.

■ In the Senior Phase, most young people benefit from detailed written feedback after assessments and have regular learner conversations with their teachers. As a result, they have a strong awareness of their target and working grades and know what to do to improve. Staff

should develop this practice further for young people in the BGE where most of their feedback is verbal. This will ensure all young people are aware of their progress through Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels and what they need to do to improve.

■ Staff are developing their confidence when making assessment judgements in the BGE. This is a result of appropriate moderation activities within most faculties. A few staff benefit from well-planned moderation with colleagues outwith the school. This includes English and mathematics staff who have undertaken literacy and numeracy moderation of assessment standards with primary colleagues. Staff across the school should develop an improved understanding of the moderation cycle and use this to inform planning for learning, teaching and assessment. Senior and middle leaders should also increase opportunities to moderate learning, teaching and assessment with colleagues beyond the school.

■ Senior leaders have identified appropriately the need to develop a shared approach to course planning to ensure all staff recognise assessment as an integral part of learning and teaching. Staff in the senior phase have a strong understanding of assessment standards in National Qualifications (NQs). This is developing well through a wide range of verification activities.

■ Senior leaders, within the BGE, developed an improved tracking system to monitor young people's progress. This includes monitoring identified cohorts, through CfE levels. This is helping staff to evaluate the quality and consistency of assessment data in the BGE. Senior leaders and staff should now review its approaches to assessing progress within the CfE levels. This should support young people, staff and parents to have a clearer and more consistent understanding of the criteria now in place to describe progress through a level.

■ The school has also developed a tracking system in the senior phase. Senior leaders and staff are beginning to use this information well to plan interventions to support individuals and groups when underachievement is identified. There is potential to see an increased impact in identifying and addressing young people's barriers to learning, as staff develop their confidence in using the tracking system.

■ Staff have worked together, and with young people, to agree the 'key features of an effective lesson'. Staff are developing a research informed understanding of what constitutes highly effective learning, teaching and assessment. There is evidence of the positive impact of this work in most faculties. Staff should continue to review the 'key features' to support ongoing improvements in the consistency of learners' experiences.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

■ Staff are committed to improving the curriculum to raise attainment and increase the range of courses and awards on offer to learners. This includes the level of subject choice offered to young people in S3 and the range of courses available in the Senior Phase. Staff have consulted well with learners, staff, parents and partners to seek their views on these changes.

■ Staff provide an effective cluster transition programme from primary to S1. A strength of the programme includes collaborative work between the transition teacher and the English and mathematics departments. This ensures young people's learning builds on their prior learning successfully. The programme is developing collaborative work across the cluster, including shared planning and moderation activities.

■ Young people in S1 and S2 follow a planned BGE. Senior leaders are currently reviewing the number of courses choices taken by young people in S3. They need to ensure the design of the S3 BGE curriculum does not limit the choice of courses and subsequent pathways available to young people. They must also ensure young people experience their full CfE curriculum entitlements in all areas. Staff anticipate that most young people will continue with subjects selected in S3 and be presented for NQs in S4. In the Senior Phase, young people in S4 and S5-S6 are timetabled as separate cohorts. Senior leaders should continue to look outwards to consider different approaches to curriculum models. This can inform their planning and improve choice and progression for all young people.

■ A few learners benefit from local consortium arrangements and from attending West College Scotland. The college offers a range of courses. However, uptake of these options by senior phase pupils is low. Senior leaders should continue to plan with local partners when reviewing the range of flexible pathways on offer.

■ Staff have recently introduced alternative courses and awards into the Senior Phase to meet the needs of all young people better. Staff should continue to reflect on the impact of young people selecting these options. They must ensure all young people can access progressive learning pathways that increase attainment. They should also consider the appropriateness of the offer in terms of local labour market information and the regional skills assessment.

■ Staff Leads have successfully raised the profile of literacy and numeracy. They are making steady progress in developing literacy and numeracy as a responsibility of all. Young people in the BGE experience additional periods of literacy and numeracy. An identified cohort of young people benefit from literacy support with the transition teacher. This is improving these learners' reading scores. Senior learners also offer 'numeracy clinics', led by senior learners, to build confidence in younger peers. Parents are positive about the events offered to develop their confidence in numeracy. The school library also provides young people with opportunities to develop their reading skills.

■ The health and wellbeing team are delivering activities to promote positive mental wellbeing and to encourage positive relationships across the school. Staff are not yet clear which aspects of health and wellbeing are the responsibility of all. A systematic approach is require to monitor and evaluate the delivery of health and wellbeing as the responsibility of all.

■ Religious Education (RE) is part of the curriculum from S1 to S6. All young people receive at least two periods of high-quality Physical Education (PE) per week from S1 to S4. Young people in S5 receive one period of PE as part of a rotation. Senior leaders should ensure all young people receive their full entitlement to learn two modern languages throughout the BGE.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

■ Staff engage and communicate effectively with parents through digital technology including the school website and virtual learning environment. Parents welcome the creative use of social media. This allows staff to share and celebrate young people's achievements.

■ Staff have developed positive relationships with parents based on mutual respect. This is demonstrated well across the school and parish and is grounded in the Catholic faith. Family members attend the annual Mass held in the school, where senior leaders present young people with their leadership roles. This helps to create a shared sense of identity and kinship.

■ The headteacher regularly consults with the Parent Council to seek their views on the school's priorities for improvement. The Parent Council also value regular updates from young people who have leadership roles across the school. The minutes for Parent Council meetings are available on the school website.

■ Parents welcomed information evenings to inform them of the different courses that children study at school. These were positively evaluated by parents. They also appreciate the parental workshops on mindfulness and meditation designed to promote positive mental health.

■ A few parents who have young people with ASN would welcome greater communication regarding how well their wellbeing and learning needs are met.

2.1 Safeguarding

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

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	good

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

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

■ Young people feel valued, nurtured, and benefit from positive interactions with staff. Young people's wellbeing lies at the heart of the school's work. Staff have a clear understanding of the importance of wellbeing in supporting young people. Almost all young people feel encouraged to do their best. Young people find staff approachable and value regular offers of time outwith class to access support with their learning. As a result, young people feel safe, supported and well cared for in school.

■ The health and wellbeing staff group have initiated helpful measures, such as departmental wellbeing posters to raise the profile of wellbeing. Young people have a strong awareness of the wellbeing indicators and are encouraged to relate them to their experiences across the school. Young people can discuss each of the indicators and what they mean. They can be supported further to understand their relevance to their lives. This includes the relationship between wellbeing and young people's ability to succeed. Principal teachers of pastoral care (PTPC) need to improve approaches to the collation and analysis of data on wellbeing to highlight improving outcomes for all young people.

■ Young people in the senior phase have meaningful opportunities to contribute to, influence and lead on aspects of wellbeing. An increasing number of young people are involved in 'Mentors in Violence Prevention' work. Many learners adopt leadership roles supporting the physical and social wellbeing of other young people, such as leading sports workshops. Young people speak positively of these opportunities which demonstrate their confidence and responsibility. Young people hold strong community values, show compassion for others, and are frequently positive role models to younger peers. This is an important strength of the school.

■ Staff have recently updated the social education (SE) programme to provide clear skills progression in health and wellbeing. There is a need to review this further as young people are not building on prior learning sufficiently well. There are gaps in their knowledge of important aspects of sexual health and post-school transitions. Young people would welcome further opportunities to learn about sensitive aspects of equalities and sexual health education.

■ There is strong practice in how departments seek learners' views. Young people provide positive feedback on aspects of learning and teaching, and ways to improve the school. This feedback informs school improvements. Staff share regularly how young people's views are acted on through 'you said – we did' displays. Almost all young people feel respected and included. A majority of young people are confident their views are valued by staff.

■ Senior leaders identify improving attendance as a priority. There are a few young people who do not consistently attend school. This is an important area for improvement. There are a high number of discrepancies and anomalies in recording attendance which need to be addressed. Young people also report that late coming and poor attendance are not acted upon rigorously.

Young people who do not attend school regularly are discussed at regular extended support team meetings, although the evaluation and impact of interventions is not well documented.

- Senior leaders have introduced an internal alternative to exclusion system to encourage young people to reflect on their behaviour and benefit from a range of approaches to self-regulation. Young people value this support from year heads. Senior leaders should review the arrangements for this system to ensure it aligns with the nurturing ethos of the school.

- A minority of young people feel the school does not deal well with bullying. A few young people suggest there is variability in how staff respond to bullying. PTPC should involve affected young people further in decisions on actions to address and resolve incidents of bullying. Staff should review their arrangements for recording, monitoring and responding to incidents of bullying to ensure they align with national guidance. This will help to ensure all young people feel respected and valued.

- Young people with ASN are well monitored by the principal teacher of support for learning. Young people have personal targets documented in support plans, although the targets could be better expressed as measurable outcomes. Young people, who access the support base, are very well supported and feel a strong sense of belonging. They recognise the base as a safe haven where they can go for wellbeing support when required.

- The extended support team are committed to addressing potential barriers to young people's learning and wellbeing. Senior leaders should now adopt a clear strategic approach to ensure support offered to young people is better coordinated. Currently, there are too many variations to the planning of support making it difficult to demonstrate improved outcomes for young people. Staff should continue to implement the local authority approach to support planning as this has the potential to help staff evidence the impact of interventions.

- Staff would benefit from further professional learning on statutory duties related to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. Senior leaders should review approaches used to consider care-experienced young people for a coordinated support plan. PTPC should review how they improve outcomes for care-experienced young people. Staff should develop their understanding of the challenges experienced by young carers. Staff should ensure they consistently support young carers to address barriers to learning.

- Staff work effectively with partners to support young people with barriers to learning. Partnership working helps young people feel supported to participate more fully in school.

- Most young people respect the rights of others and understand the importance of equality and diversity. Young people have frequent opportunities to reflect on and discuss their rights and demonstrate concern for and acceptance of others. This is well supported through religious services and assemblies. There is scope to build on an appreciation and celebration of cultural diversity across the school. Staff could do more to broaden the cultural horizons of young people, including their understanding of diversity.

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to compliance with the Nutritional Regulations and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007(the Act). Health and Nutrition Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and young people. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole-school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of young people through food in school. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

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
Broad General Education

■ By the end of S3, attainment in CfE third level in literacy and numeracy has remained high over the last five years. In 2022, by the end of S3, almost all young people achieved CfE third level or better in literacy and numeracy. There have been improvements in the attainment of young people, by the end of S3, in CfE fourth level in literacy and numeracy. In 2022, by the end of S3, a majority of young people achieved CfE fourth level in literacy and numeracy. Staff continue to improve the reliability of teacher professional judgements through developing approaches to moderation in departments and with primary colleagues.

■ Staff Leads in literacy and numeracy support young people to develop relevant skills. This work includes designated literacy and numeracy courses, helpful parent workshops, and positive primary to secondary transition events. Staff Leads are beginning to work with staff across the school to develop a shared understanding of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

Senior Phase
Leavers

■ Staff support young people at risk of leaving school without attaining appropriate literacy and numeracy awards. Almost all school leavers in the last five years from 2016/17 to 2020/21 achieved Scottish Credit Qualification Framework (SCQF) level 4 or better, and most achieved SCQF level 5 or better, in literacy. This is in line with the virtual comparator (VC). A majority of leavers in the last five years achieved SCQF level 6 in literacy. This is in line with the VC.

■ In 2018/19 to 2020/21, almost all school leavers attained SCQF level 4 or better in numeracy. A majority of leavers achieved SCQF level 5 or better in the last five years from 2016/17 to 2020/21, which is generally in line with the VC. Performance at SCQF level 6 in 2020/21 is the highest it has been over the last five years with a minority attaining at this level.

Senior Phase
Cohorts
Literacy

■ At S4, the school has maintained high levels of performance at SCQF level 5 or better in literacy. In three of the last five years, this was significantly higher than the VC. By S5, based on the S4 roll, most young people attained SCQF level 5 or better in the past five years. A majority of young people attained SCQF level 6 in the last five years, which was significantly higher than the VC for 2020/21 and 2021/22. By S6, based on the S4 roll, a majority of young people attained SCQF level 6, over the last five years. This is in line with the VC, apart from 2021/22 when it was significantly higher. Attainment at SCQF level 6 improved between 2017/18 to 2021/22.

Numeracy

- At S4, most young people attained SCQF level 4 or better in four of the past five years. This is generally in line with the VC. A majority of young people attained SCQF level 5 or better over the last five years. This is in line with the VC. By S5, based on the S4 roll, a majority of young people attained SCQF level 5 or better over the last five years, which is 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. A minority attained SCQF level 6 in the last five years. This is in line with the VC, apart from 2018/19 when it was significantly higher. By S6, based on the S4 roll, a majority of young people attained SCQF level 5 or better from 2017/18 to 2020/21. This improved to most young people attaining SCQF level 5 or better in 2021/22. A minority of young people attained SCQF level 6 in the last five years. This is in line with the VC, apart from 2018/19 and 2020/21, when it was significantly higher.

Attainment over time
BGE and Senior Phase

- Senior leaders are developing approaches to monitoring and tracking young people's progress in learning. These have the potential to help to demonstrate young people's attainment over time and to help identify young people's barriers to learning. Staff are not yet confident in making effective use of the data to target interventions to support progress in the classroom. Senior leaders should develop approaches to make it easier for staff to track the progress of groups of young people, such as those with ASN, as well as individual learners.

- Senior leaders are able to provide CfE achievement of a level data for all curricular areas over the last two years. Senior and middle leaders now need to use this data better to review the attainment of young people over time. Staff should continue to develop their professional judgements to ensure this data is reliable.

Senior Phase

- Young people in the senior phase benefit from approaches to raise attainment. These include an enhanced mentoring initiative, an extensive range of supported study opportunities and attainment seminars. Senior leaders should develop a raising attainment strategy to define clearly the roles and responsibilities of all staff for raising attainment.

- The attainment of the lowest attaining 20% of leavers has remained in line with the VC over the last five years when compared using complementary tariff points. The attainment of the middle 60% of leavers has improved from being significantly below the VC in 2017/18 and 2018/19 to in line with the VC in 2019/20 and 2020/21. There is no identifiable pattern of improvement in the attainment of the highest attaining 20% of leavers across the last five years.

- In S4, the performance of the lowest 20%, the middle 60%, and highest 20% has generally remained in line with the VC in the last five years from 2017/18 to 2021/22.

- By S5 based on the S4 roll, performance of the middle 60% and highest 20% has remained in line with the VC in the last five years. The attainment of the lowest attaining 20% shows improvements over the five years, moving from in line with the VC to significantly higher in 2021/22.

- During this same period, by S6 based on the S4 roll, the performance of the lowest attaining 20%, middle attaining 60%, and highest attaining 20% has remained in line with the VC. There is no identifiable pattern of improvement to the attainment of young people in S6.

Breadth and Depth

- Staff have increased the range of SCQF courses offered to learners. Staff should continue to review these arrangements to ensure all young people access learning pathways which offer appropriate breadth and depth of learning to meet their needs and aspirations. Staff should ensure young people continue to attain fully as they progress through the senior phase.

- At S4, the school has maintained high levels of young people attaining one or more to seven or more courses at SCQF level 4 or better over the five-year period. This is in line or significantly higher than the VC. A minority of young people achieve five or more to seven or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better. This is in line with the VC. A minority of young people achieve two or more to three of more awards at SCQF level 5A or better. There is no identifiable pattern of improvement in young people achieving awards at SCQF level 5A or better.

- By S5, a majority of young people achieved four or more to five or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better. This is in line with the VC. A minority of young people attained three or more to six or more awards at SCQF level 5A or better. This is in line with the VC. A minority of young people attained one or more or two or more awards at SCQF level 6A over the past five years. This is in line with the VC.

- By S6, around half of young people achieved six or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better from 2019 to 2022. This is in line with the VC. A minority of young people achieved four or more to seven or more awards at SCQF level 5A or better. This is in line with the VC. A minority of young people achieved three or more to five or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better in the last five years. A minority of young people achieved one or more award at SCQF level 7C or better in four out of five years. This is in line with the VC. There is no identifiable pattern of improvement in young people achieving awards at SCQF level 6 or 7.

Overall quality of learners' achievement
- Young people in the senior phase demonstrate leadership skills through achievements in areas such as sports, employability, and the Caritas and MVP programmes. These achievements are increasing learners' confidence, self-motivation and resilience. Young people demonstrate important citizenship skills through leading a variety of charity initiatives and work with local primary schools. The school has a highly successful partnership with a school in Malawi which enables young people to develop positive attitudes to global citizenship. Young people contribute positively to the caring ethos of the school and increase their employability skills, including communication, teamwork and organisational skills.

- Young people demonstrate their success participating in a wide range of lunch time and after-school clubs. Through these clubs, young people display confidence and engage positively with their peers.

- Staff regularly celebrate well the successes and achievements of young people through house hero awards, subject learner of the month initiatives, the annual awards ceremony, and social media platforms, newsletters and assemblies.

- Young people can gain accreditation for their achievements through a wide range of SCQF awards. A few young people demonstrate their community spirit as they work towards a Saltire Award. There is scope to implement a wider range of youth awards to recognise further young people's leadership, volunteering and achievements. This includes current plans to increase the number of young people undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

- Staff request data on young people's achievements, from parents and young people. Staff record young people's attendance at extra-curricular activities but this information is not yet being used to target young people who require further opportunities for achievement. Staff are currently piloting a new system to track and monitor young people's achievements. This has

the potential to support staff to identify gaps in young people's achievements. Staff should continue to develop young people's awareness of their development of skills and support them to develop an individual skills' profile.

Equity for all learners

■ The attainment of school leavers living in SIMD data zone 1 and 2 has improved over the past three years, when compared using average complimentary tariff points. The attainment of young people living in SIMD data zone 1 and 2 moved from being in line with national data to being significantly much higher than national data in 2020/21.

■ Senior leaders have used PEF to appoint staff to additional pastoral, literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing support roles. Staff are not yet able to evidence fully the impact of their roles in accelerating the progress of young people living in poverty. Senior leaders should ensure the impact of PEF on positive outcomes for young people is regularly monitored and measured to demonstrate fully a reduction in the poverty-related attainment gap.

■ Senior leaders target young people from SIMD 1 to SIMD 3 to encourage them to participate in available supported study, holiday revision, homework clubs and enhanced mentoring initiatives. Staff can demonstrate improved outcomes for young people living in poverty through their participation in these interventions.

■ Staff should consider further how to use PEF to remove barriers to young people's participation in events and reduce the cost of the school day. A well-received breakfast club is ensuring young people feel motivated and ready to learn at the start of the school day.

Post-school destinations

■ Almost all young people stayed on at school from S4 to S5 in the last five years. In 2020/21, most young people stayed on until S6. In 2020/21, a majority of young people left school to go to higher or further education. A minority of young people left for employment. In four of the last five years, almost all young people moved on to a positive destination on leaving school. This is generally in line with the VC. Recently, staff have been working proactively with partners, such as Skills Development Scotland, to ensure more young people achieve positive and sustained destinations.

Context

The Columba Flexible Learning Resource (FLR) is a local authority resource which supports 46 young people. Following an ASN review which concluded in 2022, the original Columba base became a locality resource. Young people with a variety of ASN are allocated to the FLR by the Education Support and Resource Group. They include young people with autism spectrum disorders, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, and social emotional and behavioural needs. Seven young people in S4 and S5 attend the FLR on a full-time basis. The FLR supports an additional 39 young people from across the locality on an outreach basis. The base provides support to a few young people from within St. Benedict's High School. The FLR became fully operational in August 2022. The principal teacher manages the base and links closely with other FLRs across the locality and outreach schools. The FLR has 2.6 teachers, five key workers and two additional support for learning assistants.

Leadership of change

■ The FLR vision, to develop more flexible approaches to supporting learners, is well understood by all staff and partners. Staff aim to meet a broader range of learning needs and support young people to attend their local school. While the vision and model of support is at an early stage, staff have achieved some notable success in promoting resilience for young people. A few young people who were not engaging with school are now happy, settled and making progress in their learning. FLR staff plan to build on the positive relationships they have developed with young people and parents to further increase young people's time and attendance in school.

■ The principal teacher and staff provide a range of well-received, bespoke support and coaching for mainstream staff through outreach support to local schools. As a next step, staff should evaluate the broader impact of these approaches on young people's engagement and progress in learning. This will help staff to further improve their approaches to providing the right kind of help for schools and young people.

■ Staff have worked very hard to build positive, trusting relationships with young people and their families. The local authority and all staff recognise fully the need to establish a stable staff team, including key workers, to maintain these relationships. This will ensure young people feel safe, supported and understood when they come to school. Staff feel involved increasingly in decisions about improvement priorities and their professional development needs. Staff plan to share their expertise and resources across other FLRs. This will support them to develop and share professional skills to meet the needs of a broader range of learners more effectively.

Learning, teaching and assessment

■ Teachers are skilled in using approaches to ensure young people engage well with learning activities. They tailor learning consistently to young people's individual needs. They often match tasks to young people's personal interests to motivate them to learn successfully. Young people experience most success when the purpose of learning is clear and teachers and staff check regularly for understanding. Young people use digital technology effectively to support their learning and communication skills.

■ Staff use opportunities to learn in the community well through visits to local shops, restaurants and country parks. These visits support learners to develop essential life skills, including road safety, shopping, healthy eating and managing money. Staff regularly seek and value young people's views and opinions on their progress. In a few lessons, young people lead learning activities to demonstrate their understanding of tasks and solve problems. Staff should develop

further opportunities for young people to learn outdoors and participate in activities which develop skills for work.

■ Staff report on young people's progress in learning regularly. Reports take account of the views of all staff working with each young person and include young people's views. Staff identified accurately the need for more robust approaches to tracking and monitoring of learners' progress. Working with other FLRs, they plan to develop a comprehensive system for checking and moderating young people's progress.

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

■ The nurturing ethos and culture in the FLR reflects staff's commitment to building resilience and helping young people regulate their emotions. As a result, young people who attend the FLR feel calm, respected and able to participate in conversations and learning activities. Young people feel listened to, less stressed and able to achieve more in smaller groups. Staff recognise the importance of helping young people to overcome barriers to accessing education. Staff are fully aware of young people's experiences outwith school through their regular contact with parents. Teachers adapt their activities and approaches regularly to support young people to take account of any incidents or concerns.

■ Mainstream and FLR teachers know young people's learning preferences and use flexible approaches to help them achieve their potential. Subject teachers provide individual and small group teaching within the FLR and support access to practical subject areas. This is helping those young people who attend regularly to make progress towards achieving SCQF qualifications at an appropriate level. Staff review systematically young people's progress towards targets set within support plans. Wellbeing indicators are embedded within support plans and reviewed regularly. Young people could have more input into, and a clearer understanding, of their targets and plans.

Raising attainment and achievement

■ A majority of young people who attended the FLR before August 2022 achieved at least CfE first level in English and literacy. Most young people achieved CfE second level and a few achieved aspects of the CfE third level in talking and listening. A few young people achieved CfE second level in reading and writing. In mathematics and numeracy, all young people achieved CfE first level. The FLR provides additional literacy and numeracy lessons to address gaps for those who do not attend regularly.

■ A majority of young people are on course to achieve appropriate SCQF qualifications in English and mathematics. Around half of young people are on course to achieve appropriate literacy and numeracy awards. A majority of young people are making good progress towards outcomes within a broader range of SCQF qualifications. These include Life Skills and Developing Essential Skills, Mental Health and Wellbeing and Wider Achievement Awards. Staff are developing approaches to gathering meaningful data over time on young people's progress in the BGE and senior phase. An analysis of young people's progress in achieving literacy and numeracy targets in support plans would offer further helpful information to support progress.

■ The principal teacher is planning to increase wider achievement opportunities. A few young people achieve success with the Junior Ranger Award for outdoor learning, Q-Bikes and a few young people have supported a local charity shop. Staff have created a positivity tree to motivate young people to achieve in the school and community. They could further develop opportunities for young people to achieve a broader range of personal awards.

■ Staff work closely with partners to support young people to achieve positive, post-school destinations. All young people who left school over the past five years moved on successfully to a positive destination at college. No young people have been excluded from the FLR.

Other information

■ Teachers have developed flexible curriculum pathways which meet most learner's needs effectively. Planning ensures young people have opportunities to apply essential skills for life in a range of contexts, including outdoor learning. Staff should continue to develop their approaches to ensure young people receive their curriculum entitlements, including opportunities to develop skills for work.

■ Parents commended the links made with key workers and strongly valued their regular communication, advice and support for their children. This is supporting a few young people to improve their attendance at the FLR. As a next step, the school should explore ways to involve parents more in supporting their children's learning.

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.