

# Summarised inspection findings

**Kemnay Academy**

Aberdeenshire Council

27 February 2024

## Key contextual information

School Name: Kemnay Academy  
Council: Aberdeenshire Council  
SEED number: 5233038  
Roll: 964

Kemnay Academy is a non-denominational school serving a catchment area covering Kemnay, Kintore, Blackburn and the surrounding rural area. Over two thirds of the young people at Kemnay Academy are bussed to school.

Attendance is generally above the national average.

Exclusions are generally above the national average.

In September 2022, 8.7% of pupils were registered for free school meals.

In September 2022, none of the school's pupils live in the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.

In September 2022, the school reported that 47.7% of pupils had additional support needs. Data provided by the school shows that in the current session, that figure is now over 50%.

The school has faced recent challenges with recruitment of teaching staff and supply staff to cover teacher absence.

The head teacher is supported by a team of five depute headteachers (with two sharing one post) and a Support Services Coordinator.

### 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 school values and motto of 'Be the best you can be' were developed by senior leaders in consultation with stakeholders seven years ago. These have served their intended purpose of increasing ambition and aspiration within the school community. However, they are not presently regarded by the majority of young people and staff as being central to the work and life of the school. Senior leaders should now, as planned, engage young people and other stakeholders fully in reviewing and renewing the school's vision and values. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the rural context of the school community and the particular needs of young people and their families. This should now be reflected in the vision so that it captures the unique mission and purpose of Kemnay Academy and its key role in meeting the needs of the local community. It should inform and underpin all aspects of the school's work.
- Senior leaders should, as planned, develop further the school's engagement with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as they review the school's values. For example, young people are currently increasing their knowledge of the articles of the UNCRC. However, they are not yet always clear about the implication of these regarding their learning and the wider life of the school.
- The senior leadership team and other staff have worked effectively with Skills Development Scotland partners to agree and develop a strategic approach to the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) agenda. Partnerships with local employers and industry support the further development of career management skills across the curriculum. This is an important strength of the work of the school, and supports young people to plan carefully their future pathways within and beyond education.
- Improvement priorities are shaped by national policy and informed by evidence gathered and analysed by middle and senior leaders. Middle leaders and unpromoted staff are increasing their knowledge and skills in using a range of evidence in evaluating the quality of their work. They develop effective faculty improvement plans to address priorities in their own curricular areas and to support the agreed priorities in the school's improvement plan. Senior and middle leaders should continue to work together to monitor and evaluate the impact of improvement plans in improving outcomes for learners. Improvement plans, including for the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), should contain more detailed measurable, time-limited targets against which progress can be regularly reviewed and assessed. As far as possible, senior and middle leaders should express these targets as intended improvements in outcomes for young people. They should also work to increase the involvement of all stakeholder groups in self-evaluation processes and improvement planning. This will build on the currently successful support of business partners in shaping the direction of improvement activities in the school.

- The headteacher successfully empowers members of the school community to contribute to school improvement. As a result, promoted and unpromoted staff lead an increasing range of aspects of school improvement. The shared leadership and development of interdisciplinary learning (IDL) is a particular strength of the school. Middle leaders feel very well supported by senior leaders as they work on improvement activities. They appreciate the balance between autonomy and accountability that is provided by senior leaders. Senior leaders and middle leaders are sensitive to the capacity of staff as they plan the implementation of improvement activity.
- Young people in the senior phase are unsure about how they contribute to school improvement. They appreciate the significance of roles such as captain or house captain but feel these could be developed further to support school improvement more effectively. A few younger learners describe ways in which they have contributed ideas to improve aspects of the school through their class representatives. Overall, staff should consider how they can support young people at all stages to contribute to school improvement.
- Faculty heads and principal teachers support teachers well to develop their use of self-evaluation to improve their professional practice. Teachers use two-dimensional barcodes and other research methods to gather feedback from young people and evaluate their engagement in learning. The quality of self-evaluation across faculties is not yet consistently robust. Staff should build on the effective practice in the school to develop a sharper focus on outcomes for young people as measures of success. Senior and middle leaders should, as planned, continue to develop approaches to gathering feedback from young people for specific purposes. This will inform self-evaluation more effectively and will help staff to develop improvement projects designed to have positive impacts on outcomes for young people.
- Senior and middle leaders have a well-planned approach to career-long professional learning (CLPL). Through the Professional Review and Development (PRD) process, they identify professional learning needs and align these to school improvement priorities. Staff engage well in a wide range of formal and informal professional learning opportunities. These support senior leaders to use creative approaches to develop the curriculum offer and manage recruitment issues. They also support staff to increase their skills and confidence in classroom practice and meeting young people's needs. Staff have developed the use of 'impact statements' to support self-evaluation. For example, young people complete questionnaires to give their feedback on planned innovations in classroom practice. The school is therefore well placed to continue to develop a more detailed understanding of the pedagogical skills teachers are developing and what improvements in outcomes for learners result from these.

## 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

- Staff have good knowledge of young people's needs and circumstances and provide them with a supportive learning environment as a result. A majority of young people indicate that it is easy to ask questions, seek advice and get help. In almost all lessons, most young people respond positively to the encouragement and help they receive from their teachers and support staff. Young people, particularly in the senior phase, appreciate the efforts taken by classroom teachers to support their learning.
- Teachers have a shared whole-school approach to planning and delivering lessons. In most classes, teachers provide clear instructions and explanations. In almost all lessons, teachers have a clear structure to their lesson. They share the purpose of the lesson, what successful learning looks like and use a range of starter activities to frame the learning. Most teachers also use plenary activities and link lessons with prior learning to support continuity of learning for young people. Middle leaders should continue to share strong practice in teaching approaches to ensure greater consistency in young people's classroom experiences across the school.
- In a minority of classes, teachers explicitly reference the school's skills framework to help young people recognise the relevance of their learning. For example, the school's approach to IDL highlights connections with real-life contexts. The project-based learning approach in IDL provides rich learning experiences where young people can confidently describe the skills they are developing. Staff should now embed the school's skills framework more fully in classroom learning. This will help young people appreciate the relevance of what they are learning and their personal responsibilities as learners.
- Teachers should continue to reflect on the balance between teacher-directed activity and more independent learner-led enquiry. In the BGE, a majority of lessons are delivered as a whole class activity, with limited additional challenge for young people who require it. Young people respond positively when they are working collaboratively with others or when they are given greater responsibility for their own learning.
- Across all stages and curriculum areas, teachers use questioning strategies effectively to gauge young people's understanding. Teachers should now work together to build on existing practice and increase the emphasis on more open-ended questioning that requires an evaluative response. This will help increase the level of challenge for all learners, including the highest attaining, and will help to develop their skills of analysis and evaluation.
- Staff have developed a shared understanding of digital pedagogy and its contribution to learning and teaching. Across all curriculum areas, almost all teachers use the interactive whiteboard, often linked to other devices, to outline and demonstrate planned learning. Young

people develop their skills and confidence in using digital technology in a variety of different and imaginative contexts. Teachers should continue to develop further the opportunities for young people to refine their skills in using information technology to research and present their work.

- Teachers use a range of formative and summative assessment strategies across the BGE and senior phase to monitor the progress of young people, plan learning and provide feedback. However, they do not use these strategies to best effect across all curriculum areas. Teachers should ensure that the number of assessments is proportionate and designed specifically to inform young people about their next steps. This is particularly applicable to learning in the senior phase. At present, young people are not always clear about how assessment provides them with information to help them to improve their work. Ensuring an appropriate balance between formative and summative assessments will support staff to monitor the young people's progress. It will support teachers to adjust planning to meet the needs of all learners. In the senior phase, almost all young people are aware of their target grades, though a few are less confident in knowing the next steps required to sustain and improve their attainment.
- There is variability in the quality of feedback that staff give to young people about their progress. Senior leaders should identify and share existing effective practice where feedback helps young people to be clear about where they are in their learning and how to make improvements. Teachers should develop further opportunities for young people to take part in peer and self-assessment so that learners are clearer about how to evaluate their own progress.
- All teachers engage in moderation activities with colleagues, building their confidence in using the national benchmarks to judge young people's progress through the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in the BGE. They have taken part in professional learning about the learning, teaching and assessment cycle and the use of data. As a result, their judgements about progress are robust. As planned, senior leaders should continue to work with staff to develop further approaches to moderation, including with colleagues from other schools, to develop approaches to assessing achievement, especially of CfE fourth level. Teachers who are engaged in the assessment of National Qualifications as Scottish Qualifications Authority appointees share their professional insights with colleagues effectively.
- All teachers track and monitor young people's progress well in the senior phase. They set and monitor attainment targets for young people. Faculties use different approaches to record levels achieved by young people in the BGE. Senior and middle leaders should consider reducing the variability of these approaches. The use of common terminology to record progress through CfE levels will make it easier for young people to understand their progress.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- School staff work very well with a wide range of partners, including those in the private sector, to plan and deliver the curriculum. As a result, young people develop key skills and experiences that better prepare them for the world of work. Young people now have a greater range of progression routes. This is an important strength of the school.
- Teachers develop courses across the BGE in line with CfE expectations. In S3, young people make choices about their learning pathways. Young people receive their entitlement to access a second additional language throughout the BGE, in line with national expectations. The school meets the minimum national recommendation in relation to the provision of high-quality physical education. The school does not currently meet national expectations relating to RME and therefore senior leaders should continue to explore ways in which they can ensure there is a meaningful continuing element of RME for all young people in S5 and S6. This will provide an important opportunity for young people to engage with the significant social, moral and religious issues of our world. It will also support the school's work in relation to improving learning about inclusion and equality.
- Senior leaders are creative in finding solutions where staffing and recruitment challenges affect the delivery of courses. For example, teachers deliver some food and health experiences and outcomes through the universal pupil support programme.
- In S1 and S2 young people experience one period focused on skills development, and two periods of IDL. Young people can choose IDL experiences which are project-based and, in some cases, involve links to outdoor learning, associated primary schools and the local college. Almost all involve input from local business and community links. As a result of the work done in these periods, young people talk clearly about the skills they develop in these courses.
- In the BGE, teachers have worked together to develop a strong culture of reading across the curriculum. The school librarian works with young people in the English department in a well-developed and planned approach. This supports young people to develop their reading skills, for example through their understanding of genres, and this impacts positively on literacy attainment. School staff should now work together to consider how to make further progress with literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing as a responsibility of all. This will help young people achieve success as they progress through the school.
- The school has developed a skills framework in partnership with young people, parents, teachers, business, and community links. This provides a common language which is helping to support consistency across the school in the promotion and development of transferable skills. Teachers and partners plan activities that allow young people to develop their skills. For example, almost all young people in S3 and S4 engage in an enterprise initiative delivered through Personal and Social Education (PSE). They prepare and participate in a mock interview with business and community links and are provided with written feedback from employers. This is highly valued by young people. These experiences support an ongoing focus on employability and transferable skills. Senior leaders should now consider introducing further planned activities to allow young people to be clear about their progressive skills development. Across curriculum areas, teachers should now include more explicitly skills development in supporting young people as they progress with subject learning.

- The school has developed a large network of local partners to support the delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships (FA) in S4 to S6. These one-year work-based learning opportunities provide learning that is well-matched to young people's chosen career pathways.
- School staff communicate effectively with the school community about FAs. An information evening for parents and carers, with input from partners of the school, helped families to understand the value of FAs. There have also been presentations to year group assemblies, and targeted focus groups led by employers and young people who have successfully completed FAs. Substantially more young people now undertake FAs as a result.



## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents and the Parent Council are very supportive of the school. A minority of parents feel their views are considered regarding changes or improvements to the school. Senior leaders should continue to work with the wider parent body to involve them in improvement priorities of the school.
- Most parents appreciate the helpful, regular feedback they receive about how their child is learning and developing. A few parents of young people in S1-S3 would appreciate further clarity on the language used in report cards and more detail on their child's next steps in learning. This would enable them to provide further support for their child's learning at home.
- Most parents understand how their child's progress is assessed. A few parents of young people in the senior phase express concerns regarding the number of formal assessments which take place in lessons and the impact this is having on their child's wellbeing. Senior leaders should explore with parents how they can support greater understanding and provide reassurance about the nature and purpose of assessment.
- Parents appreciate regular communication about achievements and events in the school. They benefited from the recent careers fair which improved their understanding of career pathways and the range of possible routes to success.

## 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

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

- Most young people appreciate the regular planned contact they have with adults they trust through programmes such as the Universal Pupil Support (UPS) and PSE. The evolving UPS supports young people to build positive relationships with others and consider further their wellbeing through, for example, the weekly 'Wellbeing Wednesday' focus. This support time provides young people with consistently high-quality experiences that align well with the programme's aims. Most young people experience positive relationships with most of their teachers and this is supporting them to achieve. The wellbeing of most young people is supported by positive relationships with their peers.
- The majority of young people feel that staff and peers treat them with respect. Most feel the school helps them to understand and respect others. However, they feel that the behaviour policy, which makes use of interventions and merits logged on the school's data management system, is not applied consistently. Senior leaders need to review this policy to reflect better their vision for an inclusive school, based on a supportive ethos and culture which fully reflects children's rights.
- All young people benefit from a dedicated period each week to meet with their Guidance teacher. Young people feel that they can discuss and raise personal issues with their pupil support staff. Young people also have a good understanding of the wellbeing indicators and use these to reflect on their wellbeing by completing wellbeing webs. These webs are used by staff to prioritise supports for young people, as well as enabling young people to recognise how they can help themselves. Young people do not currently benefit from a progressive and relevant PSE programme. Young people should be more involved in shaping the programme so that they build on their prior learning more effectively.
- Young people are benefitting from effective support to address mental health concerns such as distress and anxiety. Young people are aware of the supports available, such as peer projects and wellbeing walking sessions, in dealing with stressful situations. They are learning skills and strategies that are supporting them in challenging times, particularly in relation to anxiety.
- A few young people develop resilience and confidence through effective targeted help from support staff. This includes one-to-one sessions for identified young people. Additionally, a few young people attend the lunchtime gardening group where they help maintain a community garden. This fosters their sense of belonging and helps them contribute to the wider community.
- Support for learning teachers led a variety of well-received professional learning opportunities for staff. These enabled staff to recognise need and put in place support for young people to

achieve. This includes, for example, approaches to differentiation and how to work most effectively with support staff. This has led to more young people being supported effectively in their mainstream classes. There is, however, more work to be done to ensure that all staff promote and implement inclusive practices across the school. This includes sharing appropriate information on additional support needs so that teachers can more effectively plan tasks and activities set at the right level of difficulty.

- Support for learning teachers, guidance teachers and senior leaders meet together, often in house teams, to monitor and review young people's attendance, attainment, achievements and wellbeing. Where appropriate, staff seek additional advice and support from other agencies to inform these meetings. This has led to more support for young people's mental health. As planned, staff should continue to review these systems, decisions and the impact of interventions to ensure they lead to improved outcomes for young people.
- All care-experienced young people are considered for a coordinated support plan and the decision is recorded. Young carers are supported to develop statements by an external partner, and this helps their personal challenges and goals to be understood in school.
- Senior leaders have developed a range of supports to encourage young people's attendance at school. This includes personal welcomes, a breakfast club and recognition of 'safe' spaces for young people to meet before school starts. Senior leaders should consider carefully how they identify and monitor patterns of attendance for individuals and groups and take appropriate action to address concerns. Additionally, they need to review processes and procedures leading up to and following exclusions to ensure that young people's needs are considered fully. This includes providing a package of support and closely monitoring the use of part-time timetables.
- A minority of young people feel the school deals well with bullying. Senior leaders recognise the need to ensure that young people are clear about the approaches school staff are taking to deal with any bullying incidents, and actions taken to reduce bullying. Senior leaders currently record incidents of bullying appropriately. They should review this information regularly and implement whole school approaches to addressing issues raised, such as patterns in types of bullying behaviour that they have identified.
- Senior leaders acknowledge the need to develop whole-school approaches to promoting equalities, diversity and children's rights. There are a few examples where young people across the school consider a few protected characteristics, unconscious bias and diversity. However, young people do not have a strong understanding of rights, equalities, and diversity. This is an important area for improvement.
- 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 discussed 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

- Levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy have been consistently strong. Teachers have introduced a range of initiatives to support young people's literacy. These include using of digital resources to support young people's reading development and the sharing of information with staff about young people's reading ages, alongside advice about adjusting resources. This helps staff remove literacy barriers preventing young people from access learning activities. A reading group has supported young people in the BGE who find it difficult to engage with written texts. A writing competition has been developed by English teachers, working with a local partner, to provide challenge for young people who are the most skilful writers. Teachers support young people in numeracy through the introduction of a dedicated weekly numeracy lesson in S1 and S2, which has helped young people to reinforce their key number skills. The mathematics department has introduced new courses to improve pathways for young people in the senior phase.

#### Broad General Education

- In 2021/22, almost all young people achieved CfE third level in all literacy measures and in numeracy by the end of S3. Most young people achieved CfE fourth level in all literacy measures and in numeracy. Attainment in numeracy has improved compared to previous years when the majority of young people achieved CfE fourth level in numeracy. The school's own data from session 2022/23 shows that almost all young people achieved fourth level in numeracy. Assessment evidence and professional judgements in literacy and numeracy are robust and reliable. Senior leaders track the literacy and numeracy attainment of young people as they move from the BGE to the senior phase. This has further confirmed the reliability of BGE assessment in these aspects of the curriculum.
- Young people with additional support needs (ASN) make good progress in literacy and numeracy.

#### Senior Phase Leavers

##### Literacy

- Over the last five years 2017/18 to 2021/22, most young people who left school achieved SCQF Level 5 or better in literacy, and the majority achieved SCQF level 6. This is generally in line with the VC.

## Numeracy

- Over the last five years 2017/18 to 2021/22, most young people who left school achieved SCQF Level 5 or better in numeracy, and a minority achieved SCQF Level 6, which is generally in line with the VC.
- For young people who require additional support for their learning, the school has generally maintained this level of attainment in literacy and numeracy over recent years.

## Cohorts

- As young people move through the senior phase, they make good progress in both literacy and numeracy. Most young people at S4, by S5 and by S6 over the last five years attained SCQF level 5 or better in literacy. The majority in S4 and most by S5 and S6 attained this level in numeracy. This is in line with the VC. The majority of young people by S5 and by S6 attained SCQF level 6 in literacy, and the minority achieved this level in numeracy. This is generally in line with the VC. There is headroom for improvement at SCQF level 6 as young people move from S5 to S6. Most young people at S4 are presented for national qualifications at SCQF Level 5 in English and mathematics and the majority achieve a B or better.
- Staff in the maths and English departments should continue to explore the differences between those achieving literacy and numeracy through units compared to course awards to ensure all young people are attaining as highly as possible.

## Attainment over time

### Improving attainment for all

## BGE

- In most departments almost all young people have achieved CfE third level. In the majority of departments, the majority of young people are working confidently within CfE fourth level. There is no consistent pattern of improved attainment across departments in the BGE.

## Senior Phase

- Based on average complementary tariff points, the lowest attaining 20%, middle 60% and highest attaining 20% of leavers attained in line with the VC for the last five years (2017/18 to 2021/22).
- As young people progress through S4 to S6, based on complementary tariff scores, the lowest attaining 20% of young people attain in line with the VC. The middle 60% of leavers attain in line with VC in S4. By S5 and S6 the middle 60% generally perform significantly lower than the VC, but in line with the VC by S5 in 2022/23. At S4 and by S5 the highest attaining 20% of young people attain generally in line with the VC. By S6 they have performed in line with the VC for three of the past five years and significantly lower for two, including in 2022/23.

## Breadth and depth

- Senior leaders and faculty heads, working very effectively with partners, have introduced a wide range of new courses and awards in the senior phase in order to raise attainment for more young people. As a result of a change in the number of young people being presented for courses at S4, the percentage achieving eight or more awards at SCQF Level 5 in 2022/23 has doubled since 2020/21.
- At S4, the majority of young people achieve five or more qualifications at SCQF level 5C or better. This has improved over the past five years. This has been in line with the VC for four of the last five years and is significantly higher in 2022/23. A minority of young people in S4

achieve seven or more qualifications at SCQF Level 5C or better. This has improved over the past three years and in 2022/23 was significantly higher than the VC, having previously been in line. A minority of young people achieve seven or more qualifications at SCQF Level 5A. This is in line with the VC.

- By S5, a minority of young people have achieved three or more qualifications at SCQF Level 6C or better. This has been significantly lower than the VC for two of the past five years and in line with the VC for three, including 2022/23. A minority of young people have achieved five or more qualifications at SCQF Level 6C or better, which is in line with the VC for 2022/23, having previously been significantly lower or much lower than the VC. The percentage of young people achieving three or more qualifications at SCQF Level 6A was in line the VC for 2022/23, having been significantly much lower for the previous two years. A few young people achieved five or more qualifications at SCQF Level 6A in each of the past five years. This has improved to being in line with the VC for the past two years, having previously been significantly much lower. Overall, there is room for improvement by S5 in young people achieving the highest quality passes.
- By S6, there is no consistent pattern of improvement in young people achieving SCQF level 6 or better for one or more to five or more courses. This also includes passes at the highest grades. The school's performance is generally significantly much lower or lower than the VC. The percentage of young people achieving one or more SCQF Level 7 qualifications at C or better also shows no consistent pattern of improvement and has been significantly lower or much lower than the VC for four of the past five years.
- Senior leaders have correctly identified the need to improve attainment in S5 and S6. This should include a focus on the quality of passes in Higher courses. Senior leaders, as they develop the school's curriculum rationale, should carefully consider the impact of providing an extended range of courses. In particular, they should explore the impact this increased breadth may have on young people attaining high-quality passes. Further development of the school's tracking system will provide senior leaders with a clearer overview of young people's progress over time, enabling timely interventions where required to ensure positive outcomes and increased attainment.

### **Overall quality of learners' achievement**

- The school's rural context impacts on staff's ability to support achievements outwith the school day for young people to achieve and develop skills for learning, life and work. Staff creatively seek ways to overcome these challenges, for example through partnership working to help strengthen young people's achievements. The majority of young people in S6 support younger pupils in a range of ways, including with achievement and skills development.
- Young people develop skills and confidence through participating in a wide range of community groups and out of class activities. They enjoy taking part in competitions and events locally and at national level. Young people are supported well to set up additional interest clubs in the school such as the reading groups, tabletop role-playing games club or the recently re-established plastic construction toy club. Peer-run groups enable young people to pursue interests that support their wellbeing. This has helped more young people to participate in activities, including young people who prefer to be in quieter locations at break and lunchtime.
- Young people contribute well to the learning of their peers and of children in cluster primary schools, for example through interdisciplinary project-based learning and through the work of sports leaders. Active Schools staff run a wide range of different groups at lunchtime and after school, and support senior phase volunteers to lead some groups.

- Staff record the details of young people who achieve praise postcards, merit letters and positive messages home. However, this does not yet provide a complete picture of young people's participation and achievement. School staff should continue to work with young people, parents and partners to track more fully all young people's achievements and the skills they are developing through participation. This will help to support young people to recognise their progress and achievements more accurately. It will enable the school, working with partners, to help young people to build on the skills they are developing both within and outwith school. It will help to ensure that young people at risk of missing out on activities and skills development are well supported.
- A minority of young people receive recognition through the school awards evening for successes such as community involvement and sporting achievements. Young people would appreciate a wider range of successes being celebrated through such events.
- Over the last three years the number of young people gaining SCQF level five awards in Personal Development and Employability has increased. Young people value the outdoor learning, volunteering and team working they undertake as part of completing Duke of Edinburgh's Awards, which is run by school staff. Young people have achieved important successes through this programme. School staff, working closely with partners, should now explore how to increase the use of accredited achievement awards. This should include awards to recognise further all young people who contribute effectively to the school and to their communities through volunteering.

### **Equity for all learners**

- School leaders report that the school's Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) profile does not fully reflect the range of financial challenges that young people and their families face. Staff have detailed knowledge of the circumstances of all young people and work effectively to improve outcomes for those facing financial and other challenges. For example, staff have provided mentoring to help individuals to remain in courses and to achieve qualifications to help them move on to positive destinations.
- The school's leadership team prioritised Pupil Equity Funding to employ additional staff to support the wellbeing of those most affected by poverty and those who face additional challenges such as young carers or care experienced young people. These interventions positively impact on identified young people. For example, a few young people's attendance in school has improved, and specific interventions have helped young people to improve their literacy skills.
- Senior leaders and house teams track the progress of all young people who require additional support with their learning through 'gap tracking'. This enables them to identify interventions to support young people. Senior leaders should review this system to monitor closely the impact of these interventions. This will help ensure that resources are used to the greatest effect in increasing young people's ability to engage successfully with their learning and achieve successful outcomes.
- Almost all young people move on to a positive destination on leaving school. This has improved over the past three years. All young people with additional support needs and all young people in S4 moved on to a positive destination in 2021/22. This has improved over the past two years.
- Staff have developed effective approaches to minimising the cost of the school day for young people. There are no charges for any aspect of subject delivery across the curriculum. Staff



support young people to access funding to allow them to participate in school activities and excursions. The 'Kemnay Kit' provision enables young people to access a wide range of equipment and materials that they need for school activities or to support them at home.

## 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.