

Summarised inspection findings

Gleniffer High School

Renfrewshire Council

10 June 2025

Key contextual information

School Name: Gleniffer High School
Council: Renfrewshire Council
SEED number: 8628831
Roll Sept 2023: 1110

Attendance is generally below the national average.

Exclusions are generally above the national average.

In September 2023, 19% of pupils were registered for free school meals.

In September 2023, 27% of pupils live in 20 percent most deprived data zones in Scotland.

In September 2023, the school reported that 36% of pupils had additional support needs. In March 2025, the school reported that 43% of pupils have additional support needs.

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

- Across the school, positive relationships between staff and young people support a nurturing culture and strong ethos. This is based on the school values of acceptance, ambition, nurture, respect and trust. In most lessons, young people are respectful, willing to learn and participate well in class discussions and activities. Most staff use praise effectively to build confidence and support the engagement of young people.
- In a minority of lessons, staff use a variety of effective strategies to support individual learners sensitively and creatively. They match tasks well to the needs of young people, using helpful information from the 'additional support needs (ASN) pupil profiles'. In the majority of lessons, learning is not always sufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of all learners. At times, almost all young people do the same task at the same pace, directed by the teacher. This is resulting in a few young people not being fully engaged with their learning.
- All teachers have participated in well-considered professional learning to support the implementation of the 'Gleniffer learning and teaching toolkit'. This is effectively supporting improvements in a range of aspects of learning, teaching and assessment across the school.
- In most lessons, teachers provide clear instructions and explanations. The majority of teachers use starters to recap prior learning effectively. In a minority of departments, planned active learning approaches are promoting higher levels of engagement, motivation and challenge. This is not yet consistent across the school. Senior and middle leaders should ensure that learning is more consistently appropriately challenging and well-paced. In most lessons, teachers use success criteria to support young people to understand better what they need to do to complete the task. In a minority of classes, learning intentions and success criteria help young people understand the purpose of activities and articulate what successful learning looks like. In a few departments, teachers use plenaries well to check for understanding and plan next steps in learning. In the most effective examples, plenaries support young people to make good progress with their learning. Most teachers use questioning effectively to check for understanding. In a minority of lessons, teachers use questioning well to promote thinking and deeper understanding.
- Staff are improving their use of digital technology to engage and support young people with their learning through increased use of one-to-one devices and assistive technology. A majority of teachers in the senior phase use digital platforms effectively to share resources, support revision and completion of work.
- Most teachers use a variety of assessment approaches effectively in the broad general education (BGE) and senior phase to support young people to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills. In the BGE, most teachers continue to develop the range of assessment evidence used to inform their judgments of achievement of a Curriculum for

Excellence (CfE) level. As a result, they are becoming increasingly confident in their use of a wide range of assessment strategies. In the BGE, effective moderation occurs within all subject areas through local authority subject networks. This is resulting in increased confidence in assessment judgements. As planned, teachers should continue to use their understanding of the learning, teaching and assessment cycle to support improvements in young people's learning in the BGE. Senior leaders should continue to support staff to engage in well-planned, robust moderation activities, across and beyond the school. This will help to improve reliability in assessment judgements in the BGE and support teachers to plan differentiated learning more effectively.

- In the senior phase, teachers plan assessments that are well-matched to Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) standards. Staff speak confidently about the value of working in subject networks and capitalising on SQA appointee expertise to support better their understanding of SQA standards. In turn, this helps teachers support young people to progress confidently through their learning in the senior phase. Senior leaders should continue to support staff to engage in regular and robust moderation activities in and beyond the school.
- Effective learner conversations take place in almost all subjects in the senior phase. These conversations in the senior phase support young people effectively to know what they need to do to make progress in their learning. Young people in the senior phase speak confidently about their knowledge of their working grades and target grades and how this motivates them to learn and stay focused. This also supports young people to better understand the progress they are making with their learning. They value the individual conversations they have with their teachers.
- In the BGE, most young people are aware of the level they are working at (Bronze, Silver and Gold). These levels support young people to understand the progress they are making in their learning. In a few departments, young people have a clear understanding of what they what they need to do to improve. These departments use learner conversations well to set targets to support the progress of young people. Teachers need to consider how best to improve the quality, consistency and impact of learner conversations in the BGE across the school.
- All staff are involved in the recently redesigned departmental and whole school tracking system in the BGE. This is beginning to support a more consistent approach to assessment in classrooms. This is also supporting senior and middle leaders to have a more effective strategic overview of the progress being made by all young people.
- Staff's implementation of the 'Gleniffer approach to raising attainment' is developing a consistent approach to planned interventions to support young people who are off track with their learning. This is improving outcomes for identified young people. In the senior phase, young people speak very positively about the range of interventions used by their class teachers, following tracking, to support them to achieve their target grades. Interventions in the BGE are less well developed currently. Senior leaders and staff should now consider how to share best practice more widely across the school.

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

good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

BGE

- In 2022/23 and 2023/24, by the end of S3, almost all young people attained CfE third level in literacy and numeracy. In 2023/24, a majority of young people attained CfE fourth level in literacy and numeracy. Senior and middle leaders have a strong focus on moderation in the BGE in school and across the local authority.

Senior phase

Literacy

- Most young people who left school achieved Scottish Credit Qualification Framework (SCQF) level 5 or better in literacy from 2018/19 to 2022/23. This is generally in line with the virtual comparator (VC), apart from 2022/23 when it was significantly lower than the VC. There is a decrease in the number of young people who left school achieving SCQF levels 5 or better and 6 in literacy.
- Most young people who require additional support left school with SCQF level 4 or better in literacy between 2018/19 to 2021/22, improving to almost all in 2022/23. A majority of young people who require additional support left school with SCQF level 5 or better, with the exception of 2020/21, when most young people requiring additional support left school with SCQF level 5 or better.

Numeracy

- A majority of young people who left school achieved SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy in 2021/22 and 2022/23, decreasing from most young people between 2018/19 to 2020/21. This is in line with the VC. A minority of young people who left school achieved SCQF level 6 from 2018/19 till 2022/23. This is in line with the VC.
- Most young people requiring additional support left school with SCQF level 4 or better in numeracy. A minority of young people requiring additional support left with SCQF level 5 or better in 2020/21- 2022/23, decreasing from most in 2020/21.

Cohorts

Literacy

- At S4, from 2019/20 to 2023/24, most young people achieved SCQF level 5 or better in literacy in two of the past five years. This is in line with the VC.
- By S5, based on the S4 roll, most young people attained SCQF level 5 or better in literacy from 2019/20 to 2023/24. This is in line with the VC. Around half of young people attained SCQF level 6 over the same period, which is in line with the VC.

- By S6, based on the S4 roll, a majority of young people attained SCQF level 6 from 2018/19 to 2022/23, declining to a minority in 2023/24. This is in line with the VC.

Numeracy

- At S4, a majority of young people achieved SCQF level 5 or better in 2022/23 and 2023/24. This is in line with the VC.
- By S5 and S6, based on the S4 roll, a majority of young people achieved SCQF level 5 or better in 2022/23 to 2023/24, decreasing from most between 2019/20 to 2021/22. A minority of young people achieved SCQF level 6 from 2019/20 to 2023/24. This is in line with the VC.

English and mathematics

- Young people generally attain well in National 5 (N5) in S4 and Higher English courses by S5 at A-C passes. Staff should now focus on improving the number of young people achieving high quality passes in these courses.
- Young people generally attain well in N5 and Higher mathematics and applications of maths, broadly in line with national figures. Staff consider carefully who should be presented for both N5 mathematics and applications of mathematics.

Attainment over time

BGE

- Most young people attain CfE third level in almost all subjects. Assessment evidence underpinning these professional judgements is increasingly reliable and valid. Almost all staff are confident in using data to help raise attainment.

Senior phase

- Between 2018/19 and 2022/23, the attainment of young people who left school has broadly been in line with the VC when compared using average complementary tariff points. The attainment of leavers who require additional support, when using average complementary tariff points, is below the VC from 2019/20 to 2022/23. As young people move through S4-S6, based on average complementary tariff scores, performance is in line with the VC.

Breadth and Depth

- At S4, most young people attained six or more qualifications, and a majority of young people attained seven or more qualifications, at SCQF level 4 or better from 2020/21 to 2023/24. This was significantly much higher than the VC for this period. A minority of young people attained five or more to seven or more courses at SCQF level 5C or better from 2019/20 to 2023/24, with the exception of 2020/21 when a majority of young people attained five or more at SCQF level 5C. This is overall in line with the VC. A minority of young people attained one or more, and two or more, courses at SCQF level 5A or better from 2021/22 to 2023/24. This has been significantly lower than the VC over the last two years. Staff should continue to support young people in S4 to attain more high-quality passes at SCQF level 5 or better.
- By S5, a majority of young people attained one or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better between 2019/20 to 2023/24. A minority of young people attained two or more to four or more, awards at SCQF level 6C or better from 2020/21 to 2023/24. This is in line with the VC. A minority of young people attained one or more qualifications at SCQF level 6A or better over the same period. This is in line with the VC, apart from 2023/24 when it was significantly lower than the VC. There is a decrease in the number of young people attaining qualifications at SCQF level 6C and 6A or better over time. Staff have recognised the need to further support young people in S5 to attain more high-quality passes at SCQF 6 or better.

- By S6, in 2023/24 a majority of young people attained one or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better and a minority attained two or more to six or more awards at SCQF Level 6 or better, generally in line with VC. At SCQF level 6A or better, a minority of young people attained one or more to three or more awards, in line with the VC. A minority attained one or more passes at SCQF level 7C or better, in line with the VC.

All SCQF courses

- In the senior phase, there is an increase in breadth across SCQF levels 5 and 6 or better as a result of the wide range of National Progression Awards and skills development awards. These courses provide young people with more opportunities to achieve, as well as providing progression within subjects and supporting learners to develop a wider range of skills. For example, the focus on employability skills in faculties has resulted in a significant increase in the range of qualifications, such as awards in events planning, painting/drawing, care and bakery. Young people participating in wider SCQF provision report positively on their experience of these courses, and of the skills that they are developing to prepare themselves for intended destinations. Staff are working effectively to ensure that these courses and pathways have a clear rationale within the curricular offer. The courses form a cohesive approach to adding value to the learning of young people learning as they progress through the school.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Senior leaders track young people's participation well across a range of wider achievement and extra-curricular opportunities within and beyond school. Their tracking links young people's wider achievements to the school's critical skills framework. Young people, parents and staff are given regular opportunities to share achievements. Senior leaders recognise the need to ensure that they gather participation data for all young people. There is early evidence of staff data analysis and sharing which has been used well to increase the wider achievement offer.
- Young people's daily achievements within departments are captured via a digital merit system that all pupils can access at any time. Young people can confidently explain the ways in which their daily achievements are recognised. This system informs wider celebration of achievement, led by the headteacher. All stakeholders have access to an annual achievement summary and young people receive tiered awards at assemblies throughout the year. At the annual end of year celebration, young people receive an overview of their achievements and the skills that they have developed by way of participation. This aids them to reflect upon their skills and qualities when completing applications linked to their desired destination. Merit and awards data inform wider House competition and rewards events.
- Senior leaders have used pupil voice to gather an overview of opportunities within and beyond school that young people would like to access. This has led to engagement with parents and wider community partners to provide opportunities that are beyond the scope of school staff. Staff offer a wide range of activities and supported study during lunch and after school.
- Partner organisations such as 'Street Stuff', Renfrewshire Young Carers and Dumfries House, work with school staff to offer a range of programmes. These are designed to engage young people positively in the community and in contexts that extend beyond school. Partners, staff and pupils speak positively of the impact these partnerships have had on maintaining engagement and attendance and on the development of skills.

Equity for all learners

- The majority of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) has been used well to support wellbeing, inclusion and employability. Senior leaders and PEF funded staff can confidently detail the context that has informed the targeting of these areas and know their learners and the barriers they face well. There are several carefully planned interventions that support young people to self-regulate and participate in the life of the school. These interventions by staff demonstrate improvement in attendance rates and reductions in exclusions for targeted groups of pupils. For example, over a ten month period, the attendance rate of a targeted group of 50 learners improved by 11% at cohort level, with the majority of individuals improving their attendance. Young people and staff report that the various safe spaces and learning areas utilised by young people has impacted positively upon the propensity of young people to remain in school and engage with learning.
- Senior leaders analyse this year's attendance data against that of last session, and can identify challenges in real time. Staff have a realistic target to improve whole school attendance rates from 86% to 89% this session. There is evidence which demonstrates that staff are making good progress towards this target, with attendance currently at 88%. Staff know their community well and have analysed attendance patterns to conclude that the majority of attendance challenges impacting the overall figure, can be tracked to those learners for whom a wide range of PEF funded support exists. Interventions around emotional regulation, including through outdoor learning, are contributing to improved attendance for targeted learners.
- From 2018/19 to 2022/23, almost all young people secured a positive destination. Staff worked closely with partners to develop a range of support at the point of transition beyond school, and the school website contains a dedicated employability page which acts as an ongoing source of relevant information for young people and families. This resource includes local opportunities for further study, employment and training. In 2024, 99.1% of young people secured a positive destination, which is much greater than the VC. Employment accounted for 33% of leaver destinations in 2021/22 and 25% in 2022/23. The increase in employment correlates with the significant focus on employability within the school improvement plan.
- Improvements in attainment at SCQF levels 3 and 4 or better, evidence the positive impact of PEF spend to date. By the end of S4, between 2019/20 and 2023/24, almost all young people attained five or more qualifications at SCQF level 3 or better, significantly higher than the VC. This sustained pattern of strong attainment at SCQF levels 3 and 4 or better is the outcome of extensive work to support wellbeing, inclusion and employability through PEF.

Other relevant evidence

- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and young people. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of young people through food in school. Minor areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.
- Young people can consistently describe the ways in which they are supported by pastoral staff and PEF funded colleagues to access uniform, breakfast provision and funding which supports participation in the wider life of the school, including school trips. There is a strong culture of compassionate support that young people value. These interventions ensure that young people do not experience internal barriers to participation. Where they do at times experience barriers, they trust school staff will support them to overcome barriers.
- The library within Gleniffer High School is situated very close to the English department. The library is staffed by a librarian three days per week (shared with a nearby school). The library is inviting, well-organised and well-resourced with a wide range of texts. The library also has an area that has books to support young people with dyslexia (for example, summarised text, yellow paper, appropriate font size and style). The librarian recently secured funding for new texts and organised a group of young people to visit a book shop in Glasgow to select new texts for a range of different reading levels and ages. These are now available to borrow from the library. The library is very well used by the English department, including a reading period for young people within the BGE. Staff have also introduced strategies within the library to encourage further personal reading. Other departments across the school also make effective use of this resource.

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.