Summarised inspection findings

Ayr Academy

South Ayrshire Council

11 March 2025

Key contextual information

School Name: Ayr Academy
Council: South Ayrshire Council
SEED number: 8235538
Roll (2024): 513

There have been changes to the senior leadership team in Ayr Academy this session. There are currently two acting depute headteachers, two permanent depute headteachers and the headteacher. The school has faced significant staffing issues and shortages, in particular in English and mathematics.

Attendance is generally below the national average.

Exclusions are generally in line with the national average.

In September 2023, 34.7 per cent of pupils were registered for free school meals. Senior school staff and the local authority senior staff recognise this should be higher.

In September 2023, 56.1 per cent of pupils live in 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.

In September 2023, the school reported that 54 per cent of pupils had additional support needs. Senior school staff reported that the figure for 2024 has risen to 70 per cent.

1.3 Leadership of change	satisfactory

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

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

- The headteacher has been in post for six years. She is highly regarded by young people, staff, parents and the wider community. Last session, the headteacher worked with a range of stakeholders including young people, staff, parents, and partners in the community to revise values for the school. The values contribute well to the need to raise aspirations for all young people to achieve outcomes that are aligned more to national expectations. Staff are beginning to promote the values of success, honesty, ambition, respect and kindness (SHARK), throughout the school. Staff should continue to embed these values consistently in their daily interactions with young people. Ongoing work is required to develop at pace, the 'success' and 'ambition' areas of the school's values.

- Senior leaders are working with staff to develop a more focused culture of self-evaluation. Staff are aware of the school improvement plan and identified priorities. The school action plan supported and agreed by the local authority highlights important areas of improvement. This however needs to have a higher profile with staff and feature more explicitly in all areas of school improvement work. As a next step, senior leaders need to develop clear timelines, aspirations and criteria to self-evaluate areas for development that are being embedded. This will help them to monitor the success and progress of priority areas that require improvement across the school.

- Faculty improvement plans focus on many of the key priorities set out in the school improvement and action plans. Faculty improvement plans could be more streamlined with specific, clear and measurable targets to clearly identify actions for improvement. Currently, most faculty improvement plans would benefit from being more specific around how staff intend to improve uptake and attainment and achievement, across the curriculum. All staff should be involved in driving forward the improvement actions stemming from the school action plan.This will help to drive forward the four key areas within this plan at a better pace.

- The majority of middle leaders are developing their role in contributing to strategic planning and improvement. Overall, middle leaders and staff would benefit from developing a collective understanding of the role, purpose and importance of self-evaluation in identifying and driving forward whole-school change and improvement. This will help to enhance the strategic direction and pace of change. There are a few middle leaders and staff who are beginning to develop aspects of self-evaluation for self-improvement well. This is resulting in improving uptake, learning experiences and outcomes for young people in a few subject areas. Self-evaluation should focus more on benchmarking areas of the school's work and progress, against national standards and expectations.

- The headteacher and senior leaders are supporting all staff to engage in appropriate professional learning which will lead to improved outcomes for young people. All teachers have

taken part in useful professional learning to enhance the quality of learning and teaching across the school. For example, the 'Ayr lesson' is providing a consistency of expectations for how young people will learn across all subject areas. A focused programme of professional development on wellbeing has been very well received by staff. This is supporting staff to create warm, nurturing environments in the classroom.

- Middle leaders conduct planned annual professional review and development meetings with teachers which are well structured. Actions and next steps for staff should be more closely aligned with school and faculty priorities. Currently, actions and next steps are not always focused enough on areas of the school's work. Support staff engage well in professional learning. This helps them to understand better how to support teachers and meet better the needs of young people.

- There are positive signs of middle leaders and teachers creating opportunities to lead whole-school improvement. Some of this work is beginning to generate change and improvement. For example, the work led by staff on improving approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. This work has brought about more consistent approaches to creating well-planned, structured lessons. A few teachers are also engaging in the school's 'associate principal teacher (PT) of guidance' development programme. This well-planned programme to develop potential PTs guidance for the future is building capacity in interested staff and is helping to enhance the profile of this role.

- There are a number of effective leadership activities where young people lead on aspects of the life and work of the school. For example, a group of senior pupils are trained in providing mental health coaching to younger pupils. The programme is helping to develop further the positive relationships across the school that exist between young people. Younger pupils respond well to this. This is also a good example of young people having the opportunity to demonstrate and develop skills in many of the school's values through their interactions with one another. Groups of young people have also been involved in driving the school's next stage of achieving a gold award for a rights-based national accreditation.

- The student council leads the school's Eco group. At various points throughout the session, they are responsible for presenting updates to the whole school community, for example, at assemblies. Overall, young people feel they have a voice in shaping how they learn and in whole school improvement. They are not always aware of how their opinions have affected change and improvements. Almost all subject areas are starting to develop pupil voice feedback walls. A next step is to roll this out more consistently across the school. A group of young people have been involved in writing a novel which is themed around cyber security. This has been a high-profile project which has also fed helpfully into the P7-S1 transition programme.

- Senior leaders have created a comprehensive plan for the allocation of the school's pupil equity fund (PEF). There are robust systems in place to monitor the progress of interventions and resources funded through PEF. Senior leaders who are responsible for PEF monitor the progress of anticipated impact of resources and interventions very effectively. This is increasingly having a positive impact on the outcomes of targeted groups of young people.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory

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

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

■ Highly positive and respectful relationships between staff and young people are evident in almost all classes. This results in calm supportive learning environments for young people. Almost all young people are respectful and demonstrate a willingness to learn. In the majority of lessons, young people are focused well on their learning and participate in class discussions and activities. Young people appreciate the support they receive from their teachers within and beyond the classroom. Staff work very well together to create a positive learning environment for young people. This has been supported by the whole school approach of adaptive teaching strategies in learning.

■ The majority of staff understand the needs of individual young people from their staged intervention (STINT) plans. Senior and middle leaders need to consider how best to monitor and evaluate the impact of the information in STINT plans. This will ensure that appropriate strategies are in place to support young people who require additional support. In the majority of lessons, learning is not sufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of all learners.

■ In the majority of classes, young people are doing the same task at the same pace, directed by the teacher. This results in a few young people not being fully engaged with their learning and demonstrating low-level behaviour. In a few lessons, tasks are well matched to the needs of young people and staff use a variety of strategies to differentiate and support individual learners sensitively and creatively.

■ The Ayr Academy lesson is supporting improvement well in the consistency and routines of learning. Young people are able to talk confidently about the Ayr lesson which supports their readiness to learn. They value the clear consistent structure of lessons. In most classes, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. The majority of teachers recap prior learning through a variety of starter activities. In the majority of lessons, young people are clear about the purpose of the lesson and what they need to do to achieve success. In a few lessons the clear intention of the lesson is supporting the development of skills and knowledge and the lessons learning intentions is differentiated. Moving forward, teachers should ensure that all learning is appropriately challenging, well-paced and matched to the needs of individual young people. The learning and teaching group are well placed to take forward this important area for improvement.

■ In the majority of lessons, teachers use questioning well to extend learning and check for understanding. All teachers should now develop and extend the use of questioning to engage all young people in their learning and develop further the use of open-ended questions to challenge thinking.

- Almost all departments have assessment plans in place across the broad general education (BGE) and senior phase. Staff are developing their confidence in planning a range of assessment approaches in the BGE. Teachers in a few departments are using a wider range of relevant assessment evidence to make holistic judgements about the progress young people are making. Assessment approaches are variable across faculties. There needs to be a clearer, shared understanding about the principles, purpose and aims of assessment across the school. Assessment is not yet being used consistently to inform next steps in learning. Senior and middle leaders need to ensure all teachers develop their understanding of the relationship between checking for understanding, assessment and the adaptation of planning of future learning.

- In the senior phase, almost all teachers use summative assessments well to measure progress and attainment. All curriculum leaders participate in local authority subject networks which support confidence in judging attainment levels. A number of staff undertake Scottish Qualification Authority duties and participate in professional learning events relating to understanding standards. As a result, most teachers have a good understanding of assessment standards in National Qualifications and plan learning appropriately.

- In the majority of subjects in the senior phase, teachers are engaging young people in well planned learner conversations which support young people to understand their strengths and next steps in learning. Young people are supported well to identify aspirational grades and working grades. As a result, young people in the senior phase speak confidently about knowing what they need to do to progress in their learning. Good practice in learning conversations could be shared more widely to make this more consistent across departments. An important next step will be to develop a more robust approach to learner conversations in the BGE.

- All staff engage in moderation activities in the BGE within departments. All teachers would benefit from taking part in wider moderation activities out with the school. Senior leaders should prioritise the moderation of young people's work with teachers across all curricular areas. As a priority there is a need to work closely with staff from associate primary schools to support improved progression in learning at the point of transition. This would help to ensure there is a consistent understanding of applying national standards.

- Departmental approaches to tracking young people's progress should be developed further in the BGE. This will help to ensure that tracking approaches across the school are sufficiently detailed to inform ongoing interventions effectively. The recently introduced whole school BGE tracker is supporting middle and senior leaders well to have a strategic overview of the progress being made by young people. Teachers should continue to support young people who are off track in their learning in the BGE.

- All departments in the senior phase use internal tracking systems which support the whole school tracking system. At a departmental and whole school level, tracking is used to plan, track, monitor and assess young people's progress across all subjects. This allows teachers and senior leaders to identify young people who are not making sufficient progress. Senior leaders should further develop a shared understanding of the expectations of class teachers and faculty heads following tracking periods. This will support a more consistent approach to how data is informing well planned interventions and improvements in the classroom.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

■ Young people experience all curricular areas in the BGE through common progressive courses based on Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes. As planned, staff should continue to develop and implement a more appropriate, meaningful and relevant curriculum in the BGE. Young people have benefited from recent additions to widening the curriculum offer including Drama, Textiles and Construction. Young people make choices on their learning pathway at the end of S2 and S3. This is supported through one-to-one meetings with guidance staff and senior leaders.

■ Young people in S1-3 benefit from opportunities to participate in Schools of Sport - football, rugby, dance and athletics. Senior Leaders should ensure that this group of young people continue to receive their entitlement to a full BGE curriculum. In Modern Languages (ML) at Ayr Academy young people receive two periods of French and a taster session of Spanish within the BGE. This is not in line with national guidance. Staff should now move forward with their plans to develop ML in the school.

■ Young people in S4 receive only one period of Physical Education (PE) and Religious Moral Education (RME) on a rotation. Consequently, there are young people in the senior phase who do not receive their entitlement to PE and RME in line with national guidance.

■ For session 2024/25, the senior phase curriculum has changed to maximise learning for learners in S4-6. Young people now specialise in up to seven courses in S4 and up to five courses in S5 and S6. The whole school tracking system for the senior phase is effectively supporting option choice conversations between staff and young people.

■ All departments are considering how further qualifications, and accreditation could enhance the senior phase curriculum to improve outcomes. The vocational programmes at SCQF Level 4 and 5 offered by the school provide valuable pathways for young people in the senior phase, covering areas such as Barista, Bakery, Criminology, Construction, and Early Learning and Childcare. College-supported programmes provide a clear progression for pupils moving from school into further education. As part of the school's improvement agenda, departments should continually review the curriculum to ensure courses are relevant, progressive and increase young people's aspirations.

■ The school is at the early stages of implementing a literacy and numeracy strategy. As planned, senior leaders should monitor the impact of this across the curriculum. An important next step for senior leaders is to improve collaboration with cluster primary schools to ensure common approaches to curriculum and pedagogy in literacy and numeracy. This will support improved progression and attainment for young people.

■ A few departments are at the early stages of developing and introducing a skills framework. Senior leaders and staff should now work together to develop a skills framework which reflects the DYW agenda for Ayr Academy. This will positively impact on young people's ability to articulate their awareness of the relevance of career management skills.

■ School staff and pupils enjoy effective relationships with local employers and third sector organisations. Employers such as NHS, Armed Forces and local construction companies attend career events which pupils can attend.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

■ Parents speak very positively about the school and are proud of what it offers their children. They appreciate the variety and regularity of communications from the school including the use of apps and newsletters. The majority of parents feel that they receive regular feedback on their child's learning with most parents feeling that information is received at appropriate times. Parents value the opportunity to attend two Parents' Nights a year as well as receiving regular tracking reports.

■ Most parents feel that they can approach the school with issues or concerns. They speak very positively about strong, trusting relationships that are experienced by their young people. Parents are clear that staff at all levels know their young people well and value the warm, inclusive environment, which allows them to feel welcome and listened to. Parents particularly value the transition support from primary to secondary school. Parents of young people who require additional support speak very positively about the communication, support and planning for their child.

■ Parents feel that they are encouraged to take part in the Parent Council. The active Parent Council offers in-person and on-line meetings and has a strong turnout from parents and the wider school community. They positively influence the life and work of the school, supporting whole school events including Parents' Nights and Open Day events. They greatly appreciate the variety of events to celebrate their children's successes, such as the Award Ceremony, Christmas Concert and School Show. Senior Leaders should continue to actively seek the views of the Parent Council and wider parent forum through planned opportunities for consultation and planning.

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

■ The wellbeing of young people lies at the heart of the school's support for all learners. The school's programme of professional learning has been developed to reflect a clear focus on health and wellbeing as the shared responsibility of all staff. This includes nurturing approaches, an understanding of emotional wellbeing and mental health and resilience. These reflect well the needs of young people across the school. This is leading to staff creating positive and calm learning environments in almost all classes. Wellbeing is a key driver in planning learning and support. The school's values of respect and kindness promote a strong sense of pride and care. Most young people feel that they are treated with respect and are encouraged to model this daily in their interactions with others.

■ Most young people in the BGE are very familiar with the wellbeing indicators. They use wellbeing webs regularly to assess their wellbeing. This supports young people in the BGE to assess their own wellbeing, including their own safety, their health, and how active they are. Guidance staff and senior leaders use this information to implement appropriate interventions and support. In the senior phase, there is a need for young people to regularly assess their wellbeing. Senior leaders and staff should embed further the recently introduced tracker to monitor more accurately the wellbeing of all young people.

■ The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and young people. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole-school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of young people through food in school. Several areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.

■ Young people are receiving their entitlement to universal support. Staff know young people very well and respond to any issues that arise in a sensitive and timely manner. The pupil support team are accessible to young people, offering appropriate pastoral and curricular support. Young people speak very positively of the support which they receive from staff and senior pupils across the school both in their learning and on personal matters.

■ Health and wellbeing are promoted through a planned programme of personal and social education (PSE) for young people from S1–S4. Across a number of other curriculum areas, young people are encouraged to reflect on factors which impact on their health, wellbeing and development. Young people in the senior phase recognise that they would benefit from more focussed and explicit learning in PSE as they prepare for life beyond school. Staff should work

in collaboration with young people and partners to further develop a relevant and meaningful PSE programme which reflects better their needs and the challenges of life in modern society.

- Most young people have a clear understanding of the importance of mental health. Young people in S1-3 are supported well by mental health ambassadors in S6 who undertake an accredited course through the NHS. They provide small group and one-to-one conversations, inputs into PSE classes and to community events. Most young people are very alert to the dangers of social media and appreciate the support to manage examination pressure and develop healthy study skills.

- Staff and young people have a strong commitment to acknowledging the rights and responsibilities of the individual and the importance of respect for others. The school's work in this area has been recognised through a rights focussed national award. The senior leadership team are aware of their responsibilities to ensure that practices reflect national guidance and legislation. Arrangements are in place which ensure that the rights of young people with protected characteristics are met. Senior leaders and staff confidently respond appropriately to any request from young people for advice and support.

- The ethos of anti-bullying is evident in day-to-day practices and embedded in the school's relationship policy. There is a respectful, inclusive culture where respect and promoting positive relationships are evident. As a result, incidents of bullying are low and most young people feel that bullying is dealt with effectively.

- Arrangements are in place to monitor the attendance of learners in line with local authority procedures. A range of strategies have been introduced to improve engagement and support continuity in young people's learning. This includes 'Team with the family' meetings and 'Family forum meetings' to discuss and implement supports for young people at risk of disengaging with education. These interventions are leading to an improvement in attendance and a reduction in exclusions in the current year. As recognised in the school's improvement planning, there is still further work required in this area. Senior leaders and guidance staff should consider ways to more effectively monitor and address absence.

- Most young people facing potential barriers to their learning are supported well. This includes encouraging the participation of young people in a range of activities to build their self-esteem, self-worth and wellbeing. Examples include outdoor learning programmes, construction and "Champs" lunches for young carers. As a result, individual social, emotional and learning needs are addressed. This is helping facilitate a strong focus on building individual capacity to attend school and achieve success.

- Care experienced young people are supported well in school. Close monitoring of attainment, attendance and the wider life of the school takes place to ensure the learners are progressing well. All care experienced young people are considered for a coordinated support plan (CSP).

- All young people with more complex additional support needs are supported to achieve their individual targets. Senior leaders work closely with staff to develop clear plans to support these young people in a wide variety of ways. These include strategies and interventions for classroom teachers, key partners and families to support well these young people to improve their outcomes. The recent introduction of a communication room to support young people who are neurodiverse, is valued by young people who require it.

- Approaches to promoting inclusion and equality take account of the school's demographic, social and cultural context. An LGBTQ plus group is led by staff and valued by learners. Most

young people have developed a good awareness of the needs of other people. Staff and senior leaders should now provide a strategic approach to ensuring the consistent promotion of equality and a celebration of diversity across the school.

- Well-defined procedures support young people in their transition from primary to secondary. Enhanced arrangements take account of the specific needs of identified young people. Young people with additional support needs and their parents/carers are supported well to plan for transition. A ten-week input for young people in the senior school from the local university is supporting young people to transition from school into adult life and the world of work.

- Staff have a good understanding of the needs of young people as individuals and the wider implication of socio-economic disadvantage as a potential barrier to learning. The school is proactive in providing all young people with equipment and personal items they may require. As a next step, senior leaders and staff should work with young people to promote the availability of these resources. A universal approach will ensure that all children are able to access these important resources. Senior leaders and pupil support staff, working closely with parents, should encourage all eligible young people to access their entitlement to a free school meal.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	weak

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

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy
BGE

■ In 2022/23, by the end of S3, most young people have achieved Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) third level or better in literacy and numeracy. The data indicates that the majority of young people achieved CfE fourth level in literacy and a quarter of young people achieved this level in numeracy. This has been a decreasing trend for CfE third level literacy and an increasing trend for fourth level literacy over the last few years. Numeracy shows an inconsistent pattern of improvement.

■ Moderation in literacy and numeracy takes place within the department, at PT networks and with one other school. This has built staff confidence in their understanding of national standards and achievement of a CfE level. As planned, a next step for senior leaders is to work with the associated primary schools on pedagogical approaches and moderation in literacy and numeracy.

■ The English and mathematics department have reviewed and modified their S1-3 courses this year to ensure content is more relevant and more skills based. This should prepare young people better for National Qualifications.

Senior phase

Leavers (literacy)

■ The majority of young people leaving school between 2018/19 and 2022/23 achieved SCQF level 5 or better in literacy, and a minority achieved SCQF level 6. This is in line with the virtual comparator (VC) over the last five years. There is no consistent pattern of improvement.

■ A minority of young people leaving school who require additional support for their learning achieved SCQF level 5 or better and SCQF level 6 literacy between 2018/19 and 2022/23. There is no consistent pattern of improvement.

■ Young people's attainment in 2023/24 in National 5 English at S4 is in line with the national average. However, entries are low in comparison to the national average. In S5/6 the number of entries for Higher English is low and attainment is below the national average. For this academic session, 2024/25, there are early signs of increased presentation levels and a higher percentage of young people on track to achieve at both S4 and S5/6.

Leavers (numeracy)

- Most young people leaving school in 2022/23 achieved SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy. This has been significantly much higher than the VC for four years. A few young people leaving school between 2018/19 and 2022/23 achieved SCQF level 6 in numeracy. This is significantly lower or significantly much lower than the VC for four years.

- The majority of young people leaving school who require additional support achieved numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better in 2022/23. This is above the VC for the last four years. A few young people achieved SCQF level 6 numeracy, which is mainly below the VC.

- There are a low number of entries in 2023/24 for National 5 and Higher mathematics compared to the national average. High quality attainment at National 5 mathematics is not strong.

Cohorts (literacy)
- At S4, the majority of young people achieved SCQF level 5 or better in literacy between 2020/21 to 2023/24. This is significantly lower or significantly much lower than the VC.

- By S5, based on the S5 roll, most young people achieved SCQF level 5 between 2019/20-2022/23. This declined in 2023/24 to the majority of young people achieving this level. A minority of young people have achieved SCQF level 6. This is significantly much lower than the VC in 2023/24.

- By S6, based on the S6 roll, almost all young people achieved SCQF level 5 and the majority achieved SCQF level 6. This was in line with the VC with the exception of 2023/24 which is significantly lower than the VC.

- The English department have introduced the level 6 Literacy and Communications Award in the senior phase this session. This has the potential to support an increase in achievement for some young people at level 6.

Cohorts (numeracy)
- At S4, performance at SCQF level 5 or better has declined between 2019/20 and 2023/24 from being significantly higher or significantly much higher to being in line with the VC. The majority of young people in 2023/24 achieved SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy. By S5, based on the S5 roll, performance at SQCF level 6 shows no consistent pattern of improvement. A few young people achieved this level in S5 and a minority in S6. This is significantly much lower than the VC. As young people move through the school, the performance at SCQF level 5 is not converting to strong performance at SCQF level 6.

- The mathematics department has introduced maths pathways this academic year to ensure that all young people achieve their highest level of numeracy. This includes the introduction of level 4, 5 and 6 numeracy units in conjunction with the course award. The department has introduced level 5 Personal Finance Award and have longer term plans to introduce Applications of Maths. These positive steps should continue to be monitored by senior leaders to ensure they are supporting young people to achieve their highest levels of achievement.

Attainment over time
BGE
- Senior leaders introduced a rigorous whole school tracking system which monitors progress across the BGE. This demonstrates that the majority of young people achieve third level in most curricular areas by the end of S3.

- Senior leaders use the tracking information to monitor the progress of cohorts of young people closely, including those who are at risk of underachieving, care experienced and those who require additional support. They use this data to identify young people's highest attaining subjects which is resulting in more appropriate coursing of young people.

- Senior leaders need to address the high percentage of dual presentations at S4 where young people are presented for both National 4 and National 5 in more than one subject.

Senior phase

Improving attainment for all
Leavers
- When using average complimentary tariff points, the attainment of young people leaving school between 2018/19 and 2022/23 shows no consistent pattern of improvement. The attainment of the lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% of young people leaving school is broadly in line with the VC.

- When compared using complimentary tariff points, attainment for the lowest 20% is in line with the VC by S4, S5 and S6. The attainment of the middle 60% and the highest 20% of young people in 2022/23 is either significantly lower or significantly much lower than the VC. There is no consistent pattern of improvement for these groups at S4, S5 or S6.

Breadth and Depth
- At S4, less than half of young people achieve three or more to five or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better. Over the last three years there has been a declining pattern, either significantly lower or significantly much lower than the VC. Passes at A grade show a decline over the last three years. A few young people achieve three or more and five or more awards at SCQF level 5A. This is significantly lower than the VC.

- By S5, based on S5, attainment at SCQF level 6C or better shows an inconsistent pattern of improvement for one, three and five or more awards. This is in line with the VC, with the exception of 2023/24 which is either significantly lower or significantly much lower than the VC. Performance at SCQF level 6A or better is a declining pattern and is broadly in line with the VC, with the exception of 2023/24 which is significantly lower or significantly much lower than the VC.

- By S6, based on S6, attainment at SCQF level 6 or better shows no consistent improvement. Attainment has fallen in 2023/24 across all measures. At SCQF level 7C there is improvement between 2020/21 and 2022/23 with a decline in 2023/24 for one or more and two or more awards. At level 7A there is no consistent pattern of improvement. This is generally in line with the VC across all measures.

Overall quality of learners' achievement
- Young people are increasing their skills for learning, life and work through participation in a wide range of achievement activities across the curriclum and within the wider community. Young people enjoy taking leadership roles, display confidence and responsibility and actively contribute to the life and ethos of the school and wider community. A next step for the school, and its partners, is to explore more programmes and activities that can be

accredited. This will help to increase formal recognition of young people's volunteering and achievements across the school.

■ Young people in the senior phase develop leadership skills through involvement in areas such as Eco-Schools, sport leaders and dance leaders. Young people use these volunteering positions to contribute to accredited awards at SCQF level 5 and 6. A few compete Saltire Awards or Duke of Edinburgh's awards Almost all young people in S5 complete a First Aid Award.

■ Senior leaders have started to record young people's involvement in wider achievement activities. However, the tracking and monitoring of individual or collective achievements across the school is not routinely captured or analysed. Senior leaders recognise that extending their model of tracking would help the school develop a strategic approach to achievement. This would support staff to target those young people who would benefit most from engaging in achievements.

Equity for all learners

■ All staff have a very good understanding of the social, cultural and economic context of the school. Senior leaders have used PEF to provide targeted and family support. The PEF plan has very clear aims, interventions and expected impacts. Supports include attendance interventions, family liaison, supporting work placements/college partnerships and wellbeing support. Senior leaders carefully monitor these interventions which show positive improvements in young people's attendance and engagement for young people in SIMD 1 and 2. The attainment of young people leaving school living in SIMD decile one, when compared using complementary tariff points, is in line with the VC in 2022/23.

■ Staff have a clear focus on leavers destinations, supported by various members of staff and programmes. This has resulted in all young people moving on to a sustained positive destination on leaving school. Staff provide effective support for young people and their families as they transition from school to college, employment or university. The number of young people entering a positive destination on leaving school has continued to increase over the past few years and has been higher than the VC as well as local and national measures since 2019/2

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.