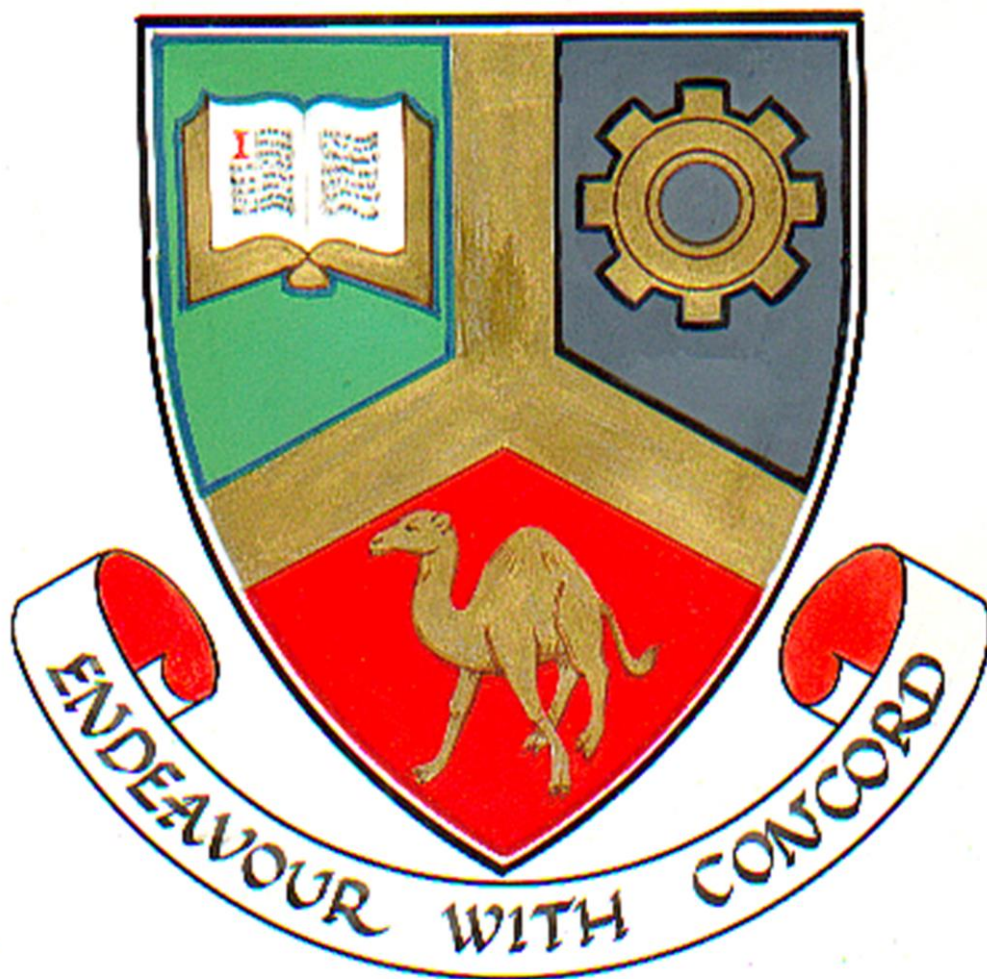


Standards and Quality



2022/23



INVERNESS HIGH SCHOOL

HIGHLAND COUNCIL | MONTAGUE ROW, INVERNESS, IV3 5DZ

This report is provided to families and partners to identify our achievements this session. The next steps in our improvement journey are also outlined.

Throughout the year we continuously evaluate what we do and how it makes a difference to our learners. We want to know what is working well for our school community and what needs further improvement.

Our children and young people are actively consulted and involved in this process. We also give staff, parents/carers, and other partners the opportunity to participate in discussions and activities in order to shape our improvement journey.

When we develop our improvement projects we use key questions at planned review times throughout the session in order to know how well we are progressing towards achieving these positive outcomes and changes.

Our School

Inverness High School lies on the western side of Inverness with its catchment area enclosed between the River Ness and the Caledonian Canal. The school serves a completely urban population and has a current role of approximately 510 pupils. A total of 64% of our pupils live in postcode areas within SIMD bands 1 and 2. Free school meal entitlement is around 40%. There are 37 full-time equivalent classroom teaching staff and a large pupil support base with a faculty principal teacher, three principal teachers of guidance and a large pupil support faculty. The ASN profile for the school also shows the highest level of need in the Highlands. Our staff are very committed to the school, highly nurturing in their approach to the education and pastoral needs of our pupils and are responsible for their remarkable individual success stories.

In some categories, attainment has historically been lower than our comparator schools but is improving. Measures of one plus and three plus Highers have been on the increase and, with the help of Scottish Attainment Challenge funding, we have made advances in literacy and numeracy. Initial positive destination figures are historically above the national average (and our comparator schools) with pupils going on to university and college placements, apprenticeships and straight into paid employment.

We have recently undergone the first stages of a huge refurbishment programme which has brought new life to classrooms and facilities in science, home economics and technologies. When the remaining sections of the school including physical education and art facilities are complete, it should bring us a school fit for 21st century learning and teaching.

Our School Vision, Values and Aims

At Inverness High School we believe in the principles of social justice and the universal right of everyone to a high quality education. Our aim is to provide a curriculum which enables every single one of our pupils to survive and thrive in the 21st century and develops:

- a life-long love of learning
- high levels of achievement and attainment
- skills for life, skills for work and a thirst for knowledge
- a growth mindset encouraging resilient attitudes and 'stickability'

- a wide range of possible pathways for life after school and,
- the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence.

This will be done by increasing the opportunities for our young people and expanding the range of academic and vocational courses we offer throughout the school years.

Pupil Voice: what is working well in our school?

Our children and young people identified the following strengths for our school this session:

- Almost all pupils feel safe in school with refurbished toilets, welcoming classes, quiet areas such as the library and cabin-based nurture spaces and good relationships
- Many learning experiences are of a high quality with pupils feeling they get help when they need it, with quiet spaces for those with anxiety issues, teachers interacting well with classes and guidance and support staff being well aware of issues outside of school
- S6 pupils in particular said there was good mental health support
- Almost all pupils felt that they could share ideas in the class or in the school by talking to staff
- Almost all pupils appreciated the school building and thought it was welcoming.

Pupil Voice: what changes would you like to see made?

Our children and young people identified the following changes they would like to see and the difference these changes could make:

- Pupils were in general agreement that the school's behaviour system was not applied consistently and could be used for minor issues or issues out-with the pupil's control
- Some learners with ADHD and Autism felt they were not given enough support in class
- Some learners felt feedback was not consistent and tended to focus on summative, rather than formative approaches (such as tests and report cards)
- Some pupils felt a lack of involvement with decision making in learning and many were not aware of the work of the pupil council.

Our Improvement Journey Headlines Session 2021/22

These projects are linked to the vision and priorities for Scottish Education based on delivering excellence and equity. Parent/Carer information is available [here](#).

Improvement Project 1:

Primary focus: School and ELC improvement

Purpose:

Recovery from Covid-19 impact:

- 1) Health and wellbeing
- 2) Recovery of learning, teaching and assessment

3) Attainment in session 21/22 (focusing on identifying new or widened gaps caused by the Covid-19 situation)

Progress and impact:

Review of health and wellbeing of pupils including work in small groups and individual counselling sessions; work with parents on influencing hwb

Mentor programme started by staff for vulnerable pupils in S2 and S3

Work with MCR Pathways on mentoring programme for pupils identified as being at risk of a negative destination

Continued close association with Skills Development Scotland to ensure pupils leave school to enter a positive destination

Regular staff health and wellbeing check-ins at department and senior management level

Analysis of information and guidance from SQA to ensure pupils are prepared for assessment regime for 2022 awards

Good SQA qualification results in a number of different subjects including e.g. maths, English, Art, Modern Studies and others

Re-introduction of prizegiving ceremonies – separated into afternoon junior and evening senior events

Community involvement projects to restore a sense of belonging – including pupil placements in local primary schools and community litter-picking projects

A concentration on outdoor learning for the new S3 ARK (Acts of Random Kindness) class including achievement through Duke of Edinburgh and volunteering awards and participation in the Shieling Project

Interactive reading session with school library assistant for S1 and S2 pupils during Mental Health Awareness Week

S6 leavers' trip to London identified by many as a school highlight

Next steps:

Full review of curriculum in the Broad General Education in collaboration with Mark Priestley and researchers from Stirling University

Introduction of new NPA courses in Rural Skills, Criminology and Cyber Security: departments to look for more opportunities for introduction of NPAs and other awards

Improvement Project 2:

Primary focus: Curriculum and assessment

Purpose:

Raising attainment, achievement and employability

Progress and impact:

Continued development of school leaver pathways to take account of post-Covid employment patterns and further work on incorporating Career Education Standards and Career Management Skills through the curriculum (including in PSE); development of partnerships with Inverness business community

Good SQA qualification results in a number of different subjects including e.g. maths, English, Art, Modern Studies and others

Enhanced options and increasing access to wider achievement courses for senior pupils

Introduction of NPA Bakery award with funding for equipment through Education Scotland's Food for Thought funding

Introduction of Modern Languages for Life and Work by modern languages department

Data Science and Cyber Security introduced into BGE Computing courses

Work on introduction of National 3 qualification in art for all pupils choosing the subject in S3

Liaison with Education Scotland on work to ensure that all learners have an appropriately differentiated curriculum, with pace, support and challenge

Individual, and whole-staff training based on needs identified from GTCS Professional Standards including in digital literacy and assessment methods

Engagement with Aberdeen University's student outreach programme with two medical students providing in-class support and teaching through two-week placement in school

Visits from Senior Crime Scene Examiner as part of S2 Science Forensic units – setting the scene for the introduction of Criminology

Production of school magazine – IHS Satellite – by S1 class developing skills including fundraising, design, journalism and editorial

S3 pupil winning the national Neil Gunn writing award

S3 recycling group winning the National SEA award at presentation ceremony in Edinburgh

Three National 5 pupils gained highest performance marks ever achieved by IHS pupils in music

Two former pupils gained university places to degree courses in music and performance respectively following high marks in Advanced Higher and a placement with Youth for Christ musical group

Progression of two pupils with high levels of Additional Support Needs into degrees in outdoor learning and sports

Successful art trip to Edinburgh for senior pupils – three of whom have gained places at schools of art in Dundee and Aberdeen

S1 pupils engaged in the Rube Goldberg (chain reaction) machine challenge at the end of the school year

Next steps:

Full review of curriculum in the Broad General Education in collaboration with Mark Priestley and researchers from Stirling University

Introduction of new NPA courses in Criminology and Cyber Security: departments to look for more opportunities for introduction of NPAs and other awards

Increasing certification of national course units in S3

Departments and faculties to engage with Education Scotland on improving methods of differentiation in class

Improvement Project 3:

Primary focus: Teacher and practitioner professionalism

Purpose:

Quality of care and education (including through family learning and community partnerships)

Progress and impact:

Training in aspects of gender identity and equality; increased recognition of how different cultures interact with the school

Initial work on developing a relationships policy that supports restorative approaches to supporting learners and staff (including PSAs)

New extra-curricular activities provided including textiles club and pupil digital team – the latter gaining nine pupil drone licences and knowledge in multimedia editing

Collaboration with ASG primary schools on literacy project = pupils in S1 making picture books to read to P1 classes in primaries

Next steps:

Investigation into House system through guidance to increase support for pupils

Review of school values with pupils, parents and staff

Work on attendance and lateness with pupils, recognising this is as a community problem and will require support from partners to progress

Refocussing of school behaviour group to monitor aspects of positive relationships and behaviour within the school and to ensure alignment with Highland Council guidance and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Development of peer-observation programme for staff development

Tracking and monitoring within the BGE through implementation of pilot THC project

Evaluation of Progress

We believe we have made the following progress this session:

Quality Indicator	School self-evaluation
Leadership of Change	1.3 Satisfactory
Learning, teaching and assessment	2.3 Satisfactory
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	3.1 Good
Raising attainment and achievement	3.2 Satisfactory

Our overall evaluation of our school's capacity for continuous improvement is:

We have some concerns about our capacity for continuous improvement.

There are issues outwith our control which will have an impact on our capacity for continuous improvement. Some of these issues are related to resources available in terms of school staffing rolls but, apart from this, we predict that the cost of living crisis will have a severe impact on our pupils and their families. It is likely that high numbers of our children will arrive in school cold and hungry over the winter months and their health and wellbeing will be our initial concern.

Planning Ahead

Full details of the school's 2022/23 improvement priorities and actions are detailed on the school improvement plan, which can be accessed on our School App (download School App for Parents on your app store) or by contacting the school office.