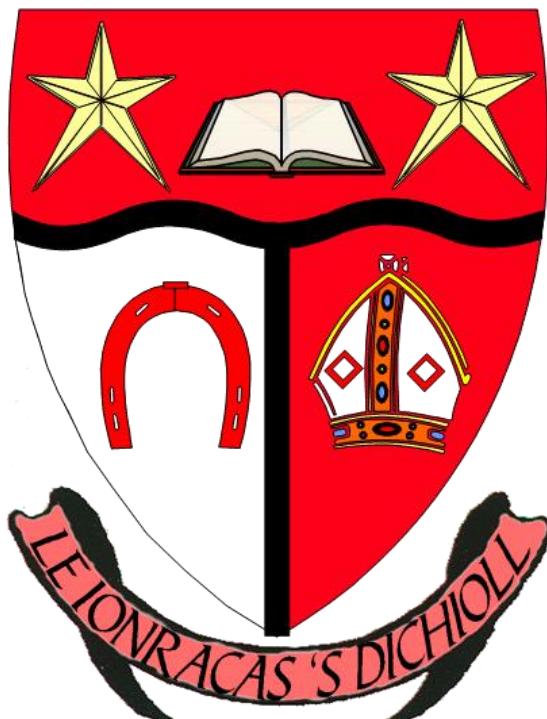


STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT

AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD

2024/25



Dornoch Academy – Dornoch Firth 3-18
Campus
EVELIX ROAD, DORNOCH, SUTHERLAND, IV201XP

School Profile

Pròfil na Sgoile

It is important to remember that statistical data alone is not a measure of how well we are doing. All schools are unique. To understand how well we are doing it is important for us to look at a range of different sources.

Dornoch Academy is the secondary school part of Dornoch Firth 3-18 Campus. We are located in a rural, coastal setting serving the local community of South East Sutherland. There are currently 217 children on the secondary school roll.

The headteacher is supported by 3 Depute Head Teachers, 2 of whom are based in our primary schools as well as 8 principal teachers, across our primary and secondary schools.

Overall, attainment across the school in literacy and English and numeracy and Mathematics is good. Children achieve appropriate CfE levels in literacy and numeracy and, across the school, a few children are exceeding nationally expected levels. Almost all children who face barriers to learning are making good progress towards meeting their individual targets.

The small number of exclusions that occur in schools may lead to individual pupils being identified, therefore this data is not contained in this report. If you have any questions about exclusions, please contact us directly.

Data relating to our context:

Pupil Numbers	Attendance	Exclusions	Teacher Numbers (FTE)
203	89.17%	See above.	18.9

S1numbers	S2numbers	S3 numbers	S4 numbers	S5 numbers	S6 numbers
46	46	40	37	34	15

SIMD Q1 3%*	SIMD Q2 45%*	SIMD Q3 4%*	SIMD Q4 46%*	SIMD Q5 0%*	Unknown 3%*
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* From 22/23 data

Overall ASN 49%	Free School Meal 6%	EAL 3%	Glossary: FTE – Full Time Equivalent SIMD – Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1= % of pupils living in most deprived areas 5=least deprived areas ASN – Additional Support Needs EAL – percentage of learners for whom English is an Additional Language
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Attainment

Literacy and Numeracy in S1-S3 – Broad General Education -

Level 3 2023/2024 Percentage of pupils achieving Curriculum for Excellence Levels by the end of S3

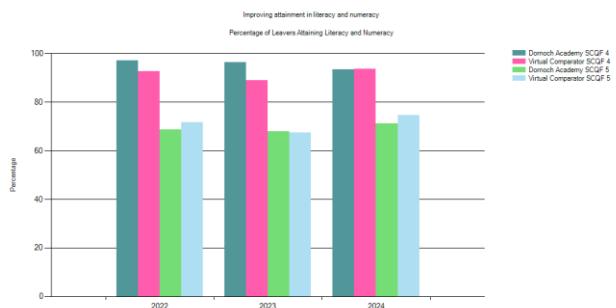
Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
89**%	89**%	91**%	94%
Level 4			
Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
65**%	61**%	70**%	53%

In this report the following words are used to describe the numbers and proportions used:

All	Almost all	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few
100%	Over 90%	75% - 90%	50% - 74%	15% - 49%	Up to 15%

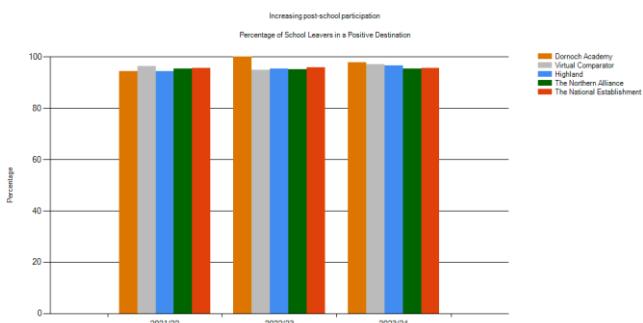
Senior Phase

Achievement of Dornoch Academy Leavers in Literacy and Numeracy



- in 2024, 93.33% of leavers gained at least a National 4 in Literacy and Numeracy
- 71.11% of leavers gained at least a National 5 level in Literacy and Numeracy, an increase from 2023
- both measures show Dornoch Academy pupils performing favourably in line with similar schools
- Level 5 performance against our virtual comparator is better than in 2022, and higher than our own on 2023

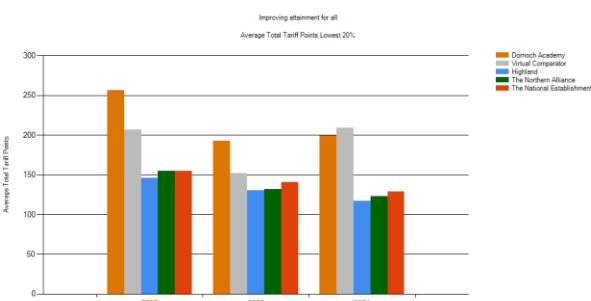
Destinations of School Leavers



- In 2023, all our leavers successfully transitioned to a positive destination
- In 2024, only one leaver did not attain a positive destination
- 44.44% of our leavers went into full time work – this is significantly above our virtual comparator and national levels
- 20% of our leavers went into further education – almost double the amount from last session
- 31.11% of our leavers went into higher education – this is on par with leavers across Highland

Cohorts

Our pupils who experience more challenge tend to achieve more in Dornoch Academy, in comparison to the authority:



- this shows that in 2024, the 20% of our pupils who experience the greatest challenge tend to achieve similar to our virtual comparator, and beyond the authority and national rates
- in 2024, these pupils averaged 199 tariff points as opposed to 117 tariff points for Highland
- this means that these pupils were, on average, gaining the equivalent of a Higher by being in Dornoch Academy

We note that the middle 60% of our pupils tend to achieve in line with other schools in the authority. These pupils have also achieved in line with similar schools, prior to 2023. We review the impact of our revised curricular structure on attainment for these groups who will go through national qualifications in 2026.

School vision, values and aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile

Dornoch Academy is part of the Dornoch Firth 3-18 Campus. Each of our three schools share vision, values and aims; summarised in 'Achieving, Belonging, Caring'.

Our campus is a thriving group of schools comprising of Bonar Bridge Primary and Nursery, Dornoch Primary and Nursery and Dornoch Academy. Our schools are committed to working with everyone involved with the learning of our children and young people. We strive towards an inclusive, nurturing, family-oriented ethos for our pupils from ages 3 through to 18. We are delighted to welcome new learners to each of our schools.

We want our children, families and staff to be happy, resilient and flourish in all aspects of our development and learning. We are hard-working with a strong focus on the wide range of achievements that are open to our children and young people. Our young people are supported to work creatively and effectively, and to fulfil their aspirations. We aim to have learning led by our pupils' curiosity, supporting them to develop imaginative solutions to problems. We encourage open-minded responses to complex issues. We work hand in hand with partners to provide an individualised education for all our young people to prepare them for learning, life and work.

Our 3-18 curriculum rationale is focused and aspirational. It is built around our curriculum areas and subjects; learning together; the ethos and life of our school as well as opportunities for personal achievement. To ensure that we remain a vibrant and progressive campus, we re-visit our rationale on a regular basis with our partners and school community. This means we build on our past and continue to prepare our pupils for a full and successful future as global citizens in the 21st century.

Review of progress of improvement plan projects for session 2024/25

Ath-sgrùdadh air adhartas airson an t-seisein

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

School Improvement Plan Priorities: Delivering high quality learning, teaching and assessment, in every classroom, for every pupil.; Raising Attainment, through improving literacy, numeracy and attainment outcomes for every pupil	
<p>Summary of impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned and executed evaluation across sectors has improved staff collegiate engagement and professional dialogue. In some areas, we see improved standards of assessment as well as improved achievement. Annual analysis of attainment data shows impact of improved provision of learning opportunities. SIP processes are more focussed on collegiate sharing of impact and good practice – with continual focus on high-quality learning, teaching and assessment. Faculties produce improvement plans to feed from and into our campus plan. The day-to-day pupil experience of learning, teaching and assessment ranges from satisfactory to good, with some areas that are very good. <p>Our Raising Attainment approaches continue to maximised opportunities for all pupils. We work with staff and parents to ensure the widest learning pathways are available to pupils, and that appropriate progression routes exist, within the capacity of our school.</p> <p>We have revisited our approaches to Tracking and Monitoring, to engender greater depth in our ongoing analysis of pupil performance. Coupled with staff mentoring of senior phase pupils, we observe greater engagement and participation in learning. Analysis of achievement in the senior phase will reflect on this aspect.</p> <p>We continue work to provide equal opportunities for attainment across the breadth of National Qualifications and wider achievement. We have worked to provided consistency and continuity in the delivery of numeracy, as well as broadening our provision of opportunities to attain in numeracy.</p> <p>We maintain collegiate working across our two sectors, with earlier interventions being focussed on attainment across literacy and numeracy, as well as on pupil health and well-being.</p>	<p>Next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will revisit our approaches to self-evaluation, to highlight development needs at personal, departmental and school level. We will embed a more consistent approach to improvement planning, to ensure staff and pupil voice are evidenced more effectively. We will ensure appropriate time is allocated is covered in our WTA for 2025-26, for authority directed improvements to raising attainment. We will revisit and evaluate the leadership of our individual SIP projects to improve impact and accountability. We will seek greater input from our pupil voice in our approaches to raising attainment.

School Improvement Plan Priority 1: Delivering High Quality Learning ,Teaching and Assessment in every classroom, for every pupil	
<p>Summary of impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through shared high expectations, we continue to support and develop teacher professionalism, and work assiduously to support our shared delivery of quality learning and teaching. As a school, we continue to focus on improving our quality of learning and teaching in classrooms, and across curricular areas. Our pastoral approaches ensure the needs of every child and young person stay at the centre of their education. We have collegiately worked to update our LTA policy, to develop a shared vision of what a Dornoch 3-18 lesson looks like. 	<p>Next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Analysis of Learning observations will become a standing agenda for SLT, to inform good practice * Recommendations from March 2023 and February 2025 inspection findings will continue as central in our evaluation of learning and teaching. *We will engage with the 'Use of Consequences' draft paper from SG, to align our pastoral and

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have revisited our approaches to positive relationships, taking into account staff and pupil voice, and changing features in the educational environment. ✓ Our approaches to ensuring high quality learning, teaching and assessment continue to allow our pupils opportunities to achieve at National Qualification levels, and in learning environments suited to their needs. This is reflected in the learning pathways we are able to provide for our pupils. 	<p>behavioural support with national policy.</p> <p>*Through staff deployment and external courses, we will continue to broaden course choices and accreditation, for all our learners.</p>
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School Improvement Plan Priority 2: Raising Attainment and Achievement 3-18	
Summary of impact	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We continue to place the needs of every child at the centre of their education in Dornoch Academy, and work consistently to raise attainment and achievement for all, focussing on an equitable provision for all our learners. ✓ We support pupils to attain at aspirational levels – we work to ensure that pupils have opportunities to succeed regardless of context or environment. ✓ We continue to make progress in raising attainment and achievement across the school. Our attainment relative to other schools is healthy across various measures – subject performance in literacy is very good, and is showing improvement in numeracy in our BGE. ✓ The ‘small school’ effect of varied cohort composition and challenges around staffing can impact on progress in raising attainment – we focus on early intervention and continuous engagement to support pupils at risk of losing out. ✓ We continue to support all our pupils to positive destinations – this includes curricular destinations during their learning journey through our school. This means that we support all our pupils into realistic and challenging learning opportunities. ✓ We continue to review our approaches to Raising Attainment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All pupils have equity of opportunity to experience appropriately challenging learning, through the way we structure our curriculum and the way we support our pupils towards appropriate learning pathways - We ensure our pupils have both aspirational and realistic opportunities to achieve, across as wide a range as our curriculum provides. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * We will consistently monitor and apply our Raising Attainment policy, across all phases. * We will further embed our data analysis skills to improve early intervention and targeted support. * We will continue to target and support 100% of our school leavers into positive destinations. * We will monitor the impact of our 2/2/2 curriculum structure and respond to pupil voice. * We will evaluate and support our partners to deliver further opportunities for achievement

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

- Despite reduced resource, we initially continued to provide additional support for attainment in Numeracy, through our allocation of PEF funding towards the teaching of Numeracy, and through focussing support on pupils identified as appropriate for PEF.
- We continued to utilise support to allow classroom teachers to focus on pupils at risk of missing out on numeracy progression and attainment.
- Once again, we have had some success in improving numeracy performance with the majority of our PEF identified pupils. We measure this by looking at their progress in numeracy across the session.
- We will evaluate this approach for 2024 – 2025. We anticipate a greater degree of consistency. We will continue to intervene for our PEF identified pupils to ensure almost all or all show progress with performance in numeracy.

Wider achievements Coileanaidhean nas fharsainge

- We have delivered the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme at Bronze, for a second consecutive year, following its reintroduction last session
- We have recommenced our outdoor learning programme, attending the Alladale Wilderness Challenge, to prepare our BGE pupils for their Duke of Edinburgh experience
- We continue to work towards Silver accreditation as a Rights Respecting School, and expect accreditation to follow early next session
- Once again, our pupils have successfully participated in the Scottish European Educational Trust competition, and have been successful in reaching the finals of this competition
- Our pupils have represented the school in the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service public speaking contest – and won in the authority
- We continue our participation in the Youth Philanthropy Initiative, and our pupils are successful in supporting local charities
- We continue to participate in all small schools sports competitions, and welcome other schools to our campus
- As in 2023, all of our S6 leavers have successfully gone to positive destinations, ranging from full-time training and employment, to further and higher education.
- we have now achieved Gold accreditation for Reading Schools

Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff Beachdan bho luchd-ionnsachaidh, teaghlaichean, luchd-ùidhe is luchd-obrach

Learners

'The school is encouraging and welcoming'

'Takes bullying seriously'

'Everyone believes that pupils have the potential to do well'

'Personal choice is given as much as possible'

'There's no discrimination – people are not forced to do anything'

'The school listens to pupils – we have an established Pupil Council that has four representatives per year group – this shows commitment from the pupils.'

'Teachers are passionate and knowledgeable about their subject and encourage you to do your best – they care for more than just their subject and share knowledge beyond just the exams – they advocate for you to carry on in their subject.'

'If you're not quite comfortable in the subject, you'll get help, and you'll be made comfortable when you ask for help.'

'Class sizes are good and pupils have a good attitude, and teachers encourage you, even if you learn differently.'

Families

Almost all parents state their children like being at our school.

Almost all parents state they feel their child is safe at our school.

Most parents feel their child is making good progress at our school.

Most parents say their child has either never experienced bullying, or it is dealt with well.

'The school has a friendly atmosphere.'

'We are grateful that the concerns we previously raised are now being addressed.'

'Staff have a friendly manner and it is a pleasure to contact the school, staff are a real credit to the school.'

Staff

'Students are encouraged to achieve their potential – all my discussions with other staff are about what we can do to help our pupils get what they need.'

'Pupils are safe, respected, nurtured and looked after.'

'When pupils have an issue, someone is always there for them.'

'Staff and pupils acted in concert, with a positive attitude, supporting each other driving improvement.'

'An array of extra-curricular activities came back into school, which has helped pupils' ability to make links between their different learning contexts.'

'Positive ethos continues.'

'The majority of pupils are very proud of their school.'

'The enhanced PE provision in the new pitch is leading to healthier and happier children.'

Capacity for continuous improvement

Comas airson leasachadh leantainneach

Using indicators from 'How Good is our School 4' together with learner, parent, carer, partner and community feedback we believe we have made progress as follows:

	2024-2025
QI 1.3 Leadership of change	Satisfactory
QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment	Good
QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion	Good
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and Achievement	Good
Other QIs reviewed	N/A

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is:

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

Key priorities for improvement planning

Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

Improvement Priority Title
1. Delivering high quality learning, teaching and assessment, in every classroom, for every pupil.
2. Raising Attainment, through improving literacy, numeracy and attainment outcomes for all.

Planning ahead

A' planadh air adhart

Full details of the school's 2023/24 improvement priorities and actions are detailed on the school improvement plan, which can be accessed by contacting the school office.

Appendix 1: Local and National Context

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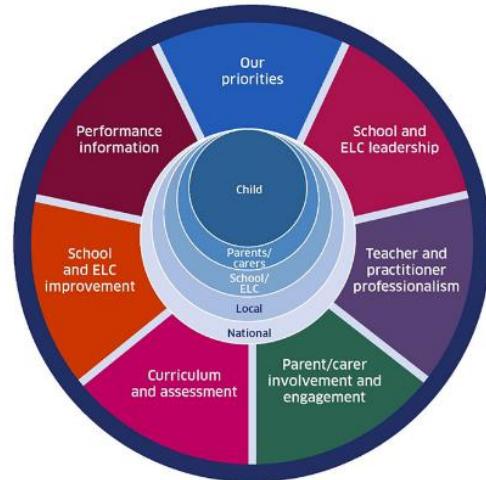
Ro-ràdh: Co-theacsa Ionadail agus Nàiseanta

This Standards and Quality Report is influenced by both Highland and national priorities. These can be summarised as follows:

Highland Priorities



National Improvement Framework Priorities



Accuracy?

Entitlement, Excellence & Equity:

We will raise attainment and achievement for all, especially for children and young people from disadvantaged circumstances, including rural deprivation. We will focus relentlessly on improving standards and the quality of learning and teaching, to ensure that entitlement, equity and excellence are delivered across the system.

Empowerment & Leadership:

We will develop leadership skills at all levels of the system, for now and the future, building a culture of empowerment and professional capital.

Relationships:

We will maximise health and wellbeing for all children and young people, to give them the best possible start in life. We will ensure every child and young person feels part of the community they live in.

Opportunity:

We will maximise opportunities for our children and young people, and for the wider Highland community and its visitors, through the provision of high-quality services.

The key priorities outlined in the National Improvement Framework are:

- Placing the **human rights and needs of every child** and young person at the centre of education
- Improvement in children and young people's **health and wellbeing**
- **Closing the attainment gap** between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in skills and **sustained, positive school-leaver destinations** for all young people
- **Improvement in attainment**, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Self-evaluation

To support self-evaluation, quality indicators from the national evaluative framework *How Good Is Our School?*⁴ are referenced.

Links to these sources (and others referenced) can be found here:

[National Improvement Framework Improvement Plan](#)
[HGIOS? 4](#) and [HGIOLC](#)
[Health and Social Care Standards](#)
[National Gaelic Language Plan](#)

In this report the following words are used to describe the numbers and proportions used:

All	Almost all	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few
100%	91% - 99%	76% - 90%	51% - 75%	16% - 50%	Up to 15%

This report forms part of our quality improvement framework and provides important information regarding our school's progress to date and our next steps in school improvement.

Self-Evaluation for Self-Improvement is at the heart of our practice. We continue to develop our practice in making robust use of evidence as a basis for judgements regarding the impact of our work on our learners. All staff understand that self-evaluation is an integral aspect of our approach to continuous improvement through addressing the 3 key questions:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now?

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. We inform decision making and actions through a continuous process of looking inwards, outwards and forwards.

Looking inwards - starts with those working with our children and young people

We focus on the impact on outcomes for learners. Our self-evaluation processes triangulate information, data, people's views and observation of practice to measure impact and inform planning for improvement.

Looking outwards - learning from others

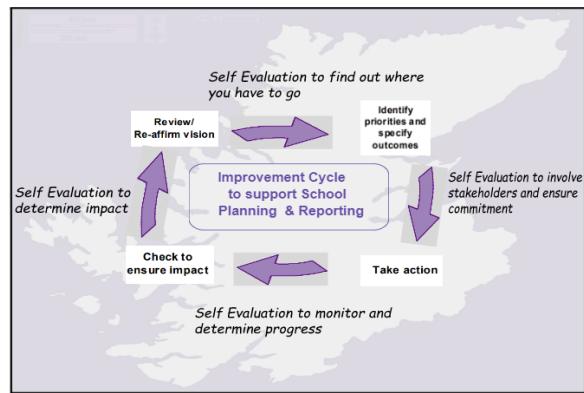
Looking to others for new ideas that challenge our practice and support continuous improvement allows us to learn from what works and what doesn't. This includes practice in other schools, learning communities and learning from educational research.

Looking forwards - creating a vision and planning for implementation

Through leadership at all levels, we anticipate challenges and explore creative solutions. This helps us to create an aspirational vision for our school which shapes our actions and provides a focus for 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 to shape our improvement journey.

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



Together we are working hard to ensure the Highlands is the best place for children and young people to grow up safely, learn, develop and achieve.

With positive experiences, our children and young people will always see the Highlands as home.
Le eolasan deimhinneach, bidh ar cloinn is ar n-òigrigh daonna a' faicinn na Gàidhealtachd mar dhachaigh.

Name
Head Teacher
School

Self-evaluation summary for school improvement - Core QIs – For professional dialogue – remove from parental versions			
How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)	How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?	What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?	How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale ?
QI 1.3 Leadership of change			
How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)	How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?	What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?	How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale ?
Theme 1: Develop a shared vision, values and aims Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Choose an item.
Theme 2: Strategic Planning for continuous improvement Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
Theme 3: Implementing improvement and change Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment			
How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)	How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?	What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?	How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale ?
Theme 1: Learning and engagement Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Choose an item.
Theme 2: Quality of teaching Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
Theme 3: Effective use of assessment Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
Theme 4: Planning, Tracking and Monitoring Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion			
How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)	How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?	What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?	How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale ?
Theme 1: Wellbeing Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Choose an item.
Theme 2: Fulfilment of statutory duties	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	

Click here to insert text			
Theme 3: Inclusion and equality Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement			
How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)	How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?	What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?	How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale ?
Theme 1: Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy Click here to insert text	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Choose an item.
Theme 2: Attainment over time Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
Theme 3: Overall quality of learners' achievement Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
Theme 4: Equity for all learners Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
QI 2.2 Curriculum: theme 3 Learning pathways			
How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)	How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?	What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?	How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale ?
Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Choose an item.
QI 2.7 Partnerships: theme 3 Impact on learners (parental engagement only)			
How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)	How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?	What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?	How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale ?
Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Choose an item.