



STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD

2025-2026

Golspie High School



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 91%	75% - 90%	50% - 74%	15% - 49%	Up to 15%

School Profile

Pròifil 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.

Golspie High School is located in a rural and coastal setting serving the local communities of Rosehall, Lairg, Rogart, Golspie, Brora and Helmsdale in the East Sutherland area. We have 6 associated primary schools.

There are currently 246 children and young people on the school roll. The headteacher is supported by 1 deputy headteacher, 3 curriculum faculty heads, 2 principal teachers pupil support and 1 principal teacher support for learning.

More than 90% of pupils use school transport. Of our current pupils, 58% have recognised additional support needs and 12% are registered for free school meals.

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.

We have had 3 exclusions this year.

Data relating to our context:

School Overview Dashboard

Pupil Numbers	Attendance	Teacher Numbers
246	88.3%	25

S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6
44	49	45	48	36	24

SIMD Q1	SIMD Q2	SIMD Q3	SIMD Q4	SIMD Q5	Unknown
0.81%	38.21%	59.76%	1.22%	0%	0%

ASN	FSM	EAL
58.9%	12.2%	2.0%

Glossary:

FTE – Full Time Equivalent

SIMD – Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

SIMD1 % pupils living in most deprived areas

SIMD5 – % pupils living in least deprive areas

ASN – Additional Support Needs

EAL – percentage of learners whom English is an Additional Language

Attainment

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

2024/2025 Proportion of pupils achieving Curriculum for Excellence Levels by the end of S3

Level 3

Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
Almost all	Almost all	Almost all	Almost all

Level 4

Reading

Majority

Writing

Majority

Listening and talking

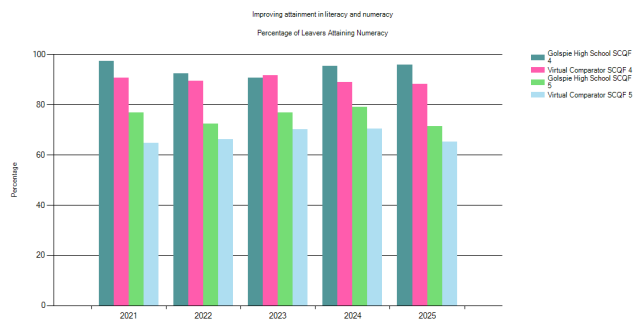
Majority

Numeracy

Majority

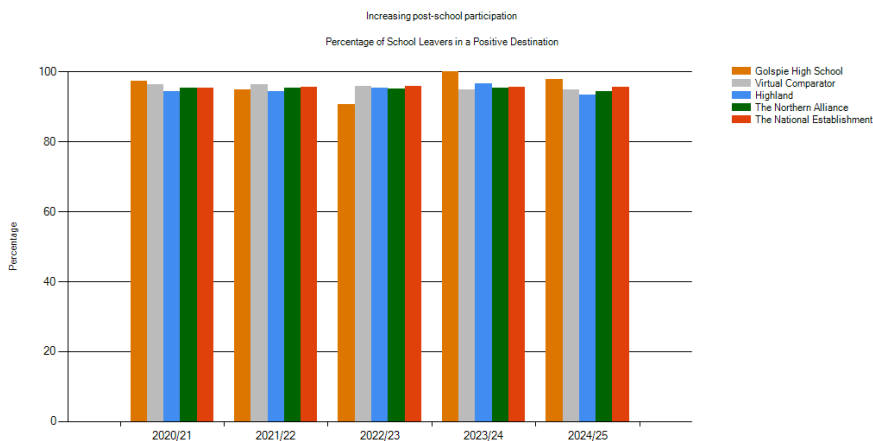
Senior Phase

% Pupils attaining Literacy & Numeracy



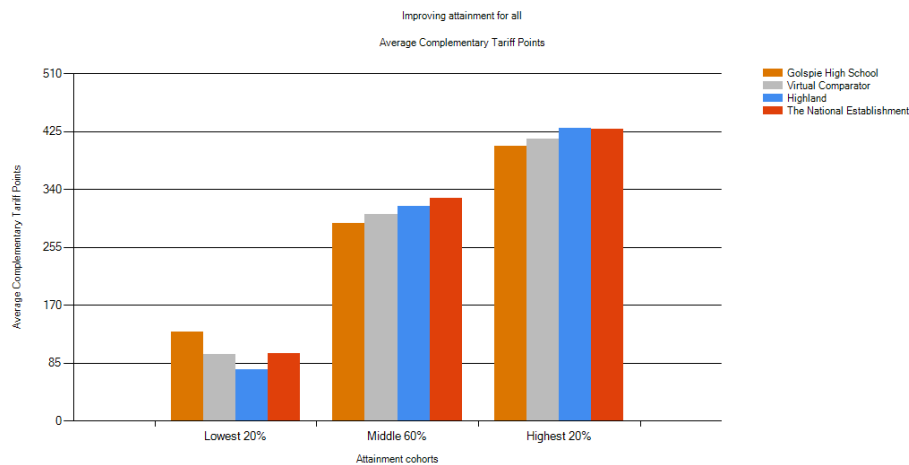
Performance in literacy greater than VC at both level 4 and 5
Performance in numeracy greater than VC at both level 4 and 5

Senior Phase Leavers



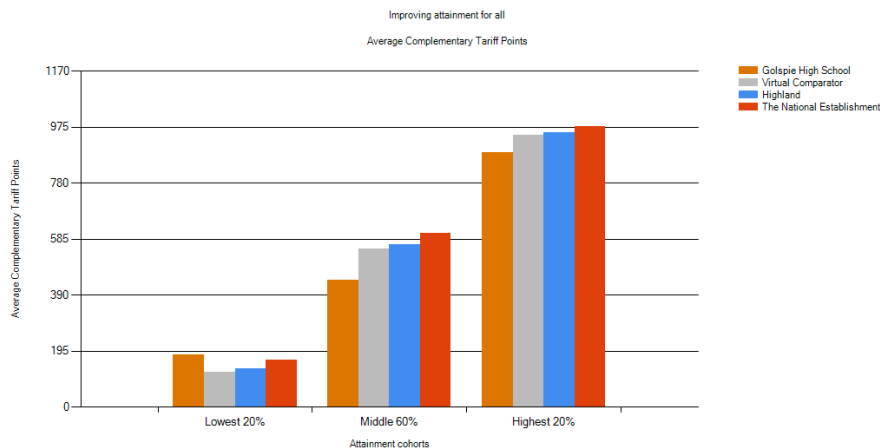
Almost all leavers in a positive destination. Slightly outperforming VC.

Cohorts – Attainment for All



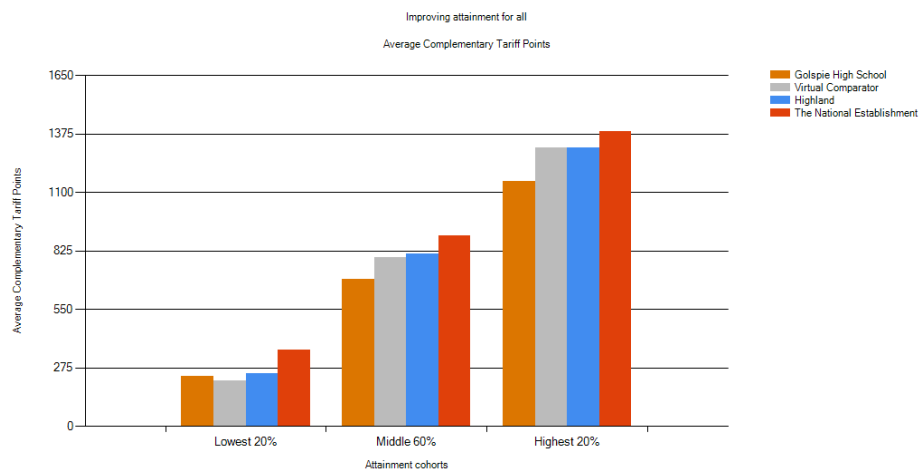
S4 pupils

Performance in the lowest 20% greater than VC.
Highest 20% and middle 60% is slightly lower than VC.



S5 pupils

Performance in the lowest 20% is greater than VC.
Middle 60% and Highest 20% is lower than VC.

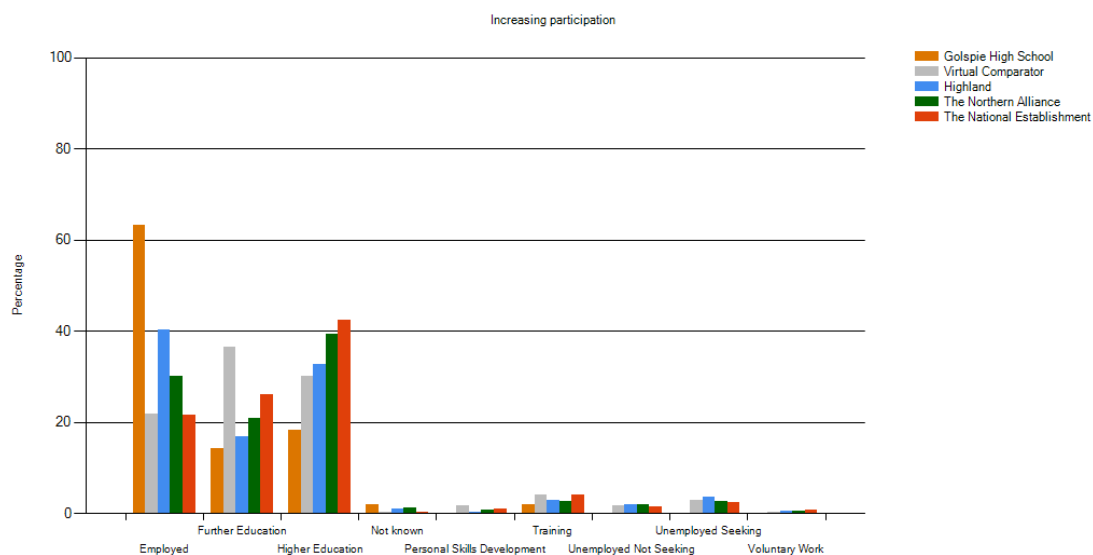


S6 pupils

Performance in the lowest 20% is greater than VC.

Middle 60% and Highest 20% is lower than VC.

Destinations of School Leavers



Almost all leavers gaining employment/apprenticeships or attending further/higher education.

School vision, values and aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile



Review of progress of improvement plan projects for session 2025/26

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 Priority 1: Learning and Teaching	
School Improvement Plan Priority 1	
Summary of progress	Next steps
L & T Working Group - The group focused on identifying key aspects of an effective lesson. This was a relevant focus. - These aspects were shared with staff and used to support professional discussion on the “Golspie good lesson.” GHS Excellent Lesson - There has been clear progress in defining a “good lesson,” with scope to improve further towards excellent. - All faculties contributed descriptions of key lesson features showing positive staff engagement. - A staff meeting was used effectively to create pupil-friendly descriptions. This supports better understanding for learners.	A working group should be re-established next session with clearer expectations for participation. All staff should engage in at least one group. This will increase consistency across the school. Each group should have a clear focus and regularly share effective practice. This will strengthen learning and teaching. The descriptions need to be shared with pupils and parents. They should also be visible and used in classrooms. The approach needs to be embedded across the school. It should link clearly to lesson observations and career-long professional learning (CPD). This will help improve consistency and impact.

Observation Template

- A new template has been agreed and refined by Faculty Heads. Showing a clear and collaborative approach.
- Staff are now using the template for peer observations. Early feedback has been gathered.
- The template links well to the 12 aspects of a good lesson. This supports a shared understanding across the school.

Learning Walks

- Learning walks took place in Term 2 (Faculty Heads) and Term 4 (peer visits).
- This highlighted:
 - Strong positive relationships
 - Consistent routines and expectations.
 - Clear learning intentions and success criteria
 - Use of praise, feedback, and encouragement.
 - Effective use of modelling, demonstrations, and active learning approaches.

Pupil Voice group:

- FH for practical and creative has created a pupil voice group and leads regular meetings. This is a positive step in gathering pupil views.
- Pupils have been surveyed on a range of topics, including learning and teaching. This provides useful feedback on their experiences on different aspects of a lesson, well-being, toilets, learning spaces and school trips. This has led in changes to the improvement of learning spaces and a focus on creating more opportunities for school trips (i.e. Ski Trip 2027)
- The visit from the Youth Convener added value and strengthened the group's work.

Professional reading library:

A collection of professional reading is available in the staffroom. This is a useful resource for staff learning.

Feedback from staff now needs to be reviewed and used to improve the template.

This will help ensure it is practical, clear, and supports effective practice.

The approach now needs to look outward. This means learning from practice in other schools.

Future learning walks should include Faculty Heads and SMT from other schools. Staff should also visit other schools to observe lessons. This will help share ideas and improve practice.

Feedback should be shared more widely with staff and pupils.

Clear actions should be identified and followed through. This will help ensure pupil views lead to real change.

Staff should be encouraged to share key ideas from the books. This will help spread effective practice.

A "book of the month" could support regular engagement. Reading groups may also be useful.

Department meetings should include time to discuss learning from these resources. This will increase impact across the school.

Impact

There has been clear progress in developing a shared understanding of effective learning and teaching. Staff have worked collaboratively to define key aspects of a “good lesson.” This has improved consistency in language and expectations.

Professional discussion has increased through working groups, staff meetings, and peer observations. The observation template and learning walks support a more structured approach to improving practice. Pupil voice has strengthened. Regular feedback now provides useful insight into learning and teaching. However, overall impact is not yet consistent across the school. Engagement has been variable, and some approaches are not fully embedded. There is limited evidence, at this stage, of sustained change in classroom practice.

Next steps rightly focus on wider engagement, stronger sharing of practice, and learning from other schools. If implemented well, these actions should lead to more consistent and effective learning and teaching.

School Priority 2: Raising Attainment

School Improvement Plan Priority 2

Summary of progress

Department/Faculty Attainment Meetings & Review:

- Attainment reviews have been completed. Staff discussed how the process can improve next session.
- Targeted support was in place for pupils before and after prelim exams. This shows a planned approach to raising attainment.

Academic Mentoring:

- Pupils have been identified and matched with mentors.
- Additional pupils were included after prelims, following targeted interventions.

Next steps

Changes to departmental attainment review paperwork have been discussed and agreed in principle. This should make the process clearer and more effective.

Targeted interventions should continue after reporting periods, and before and after prelims.

These should link closely with mentoring and pastoral interviews (planned support meetings with pupils).

The structure of meetings should be reviewed. Fewer meetings may be more effective if they are longer and more focused.

There should be a meeting after each reporting period, with extra meetings before and after prelims.

Pupils should review their reports in PSHE. They should identify next steps in each subject. These should then be discussed with their mentor and through pastoral interviews.

Impact

Attainment reviews and targeted interventions have strengthened the school's approach to tracking and supporting learner progress. Academic mentoring has provided personalised support for identified pupils, helping them to remain focused on their attainment goals. As a result, staff are making more effective use of attainment data to identify needs and provide timely support for learners.

School Priority 3: Promoting Positive Relationships

School Improvement Plan Priority 3

Summary of progress and impact

Curriculum

- The pastoral teachers introduced new aspects to the senior phase curriculum:
- Powering Futures is developing well, and the school pupils were praised for their presentations in the final in Dingwall.
- Insight into Apprenticeships was introduced but was unsuccessful. The timing and implementation model is being reviewed by the organisers and will be tried again next year.

Next steps

Programme outlines for each year group with age appropriate and relevant material for PSE. Planned with outcomes week by week.
JM BGE AM SP

Powering Futures will continue. AM

- SQA Awards – Mentoring, Work Placement, Employability and Leadership were all delivered to targeted groups and 1:1 with the assistance of our Youth Development Officer. Our Active Schools Co-ordinator ensured that leadership was accredited with SQA Leadership. This ensured that all pupils attained accreditation for their activities within and out with school. - New units introduced to junior PSE to accommodate and adapt to needs with a focus on substance use, first aid and misogyny.	Young Enterprise to be introduced. AM Peer mentoring service to be set-up. AM Personal Finance Award in S3 Wider Achievement. JM Religion, Values & Beliefs Award in S3 wider Achievement. RM
ASN & Inclusion - Child Plans opened, reviewed or closed – annual process. - ASN Matrix Levels reviewed L1,2,3,4 as a whole support team. - ASN Data Process and system for storage of digital updated for staff – Seemis Pupil Profile & Personal tab. - ASN Pupil Adapted Timetables folder created and populated and updated – shared with office staff for registration purposes. - ASN PT has small caseload of Level 3/4 pupils as named person, partner & parent link. - Wider Support Team SharePoint tile created with caseloads and timetables of MCR Pathways Co-ordinator & Youth Development Officer and shared and reviewed weekly at team meeting and 1:1s.	SharePoint – new system for ASN Pupil Profile information planned '27 ASN Pupil Adapted Timetables shared with all staff
Pupil Attendance Daily monitoring report of absences shared with all support and managers and monthly report of attendance data shared. Merits issued accordingly. Wholistic overview of very low attenders. Interventions and continued for some pupils with low attendance. Meetings held for attendance and wider support.	Whole school focus and monthly reviews on team agenda. Consistent parental meetings with agreed actions.
Positive Destination Almost all Golspie High School leavers have a positive destination. Management and pastoral staff focus their work on	

leavers without positive destination - submitted to Highland Council. Pastoral and management have purposeful, close working relationships with Skills Development Scotland and families. Regular 16+ meetings are timetabled across the year, alternating between in-school (SDS only) and all wider partners, e.g. colleges, post-school and third sector. Work Related Learning - Developing the Young Workforce co-ordinator provision has been limited this session. Senior leaders and pastoral staff took positive action to protect the work-related interests of pupils by arranging placements and speakers and trips in-house. This proved successful and almost all pupils in S4-S6 were involved in work related learning. Almost all pupils who expressed an interest in a work placement, were placed in a sector of their choice. Thanks to local employers, HC and DYW managers for their support and teamwork. - Golspie High School are in a pilot for S4 leavers for next year 2027. Initial planning identified 10 sectors our pupils are interested in, we ranked by pupil numbers and events have been planned and carried out across all, ranging from workshops (Civil Engineering), visits (Creative Industries), PSE sessions (Drones) and whole school days (Army/Navy) across year groups, to more tailored programmes for interested pupils only (maritime careers, world host training, etc. Pastoral self-evaluation - Pastoral staff conducted 1:1 interview with each pupil for each year group. - S1 based on wellbeing indicators and S2 – S6 more destinations related. Child Protection Training & CPD Records - CEOP – Child Exploitation and the Law assemblies were delivered to the whole school which were delivered in partnership with Police Scotland, Action for Children and Highland Council. Attended by some Social Work staff and local HTs and it raised awareness of the issues in the Highlands and Scotland in terms of risks and signs of exploitation and what to do with concerns. - Mandatory training attended by support management team Levels 1 to 3 Basic Child Protection training for all staff Level 1 Trauma Informed Practice Level 2 - volunteer support staff. Recognition and Response Child Protection Level 2 – all staff Understanding Child Protection Processes Level 2 – all staff. CALM and de-escalation training - all support staff.	Continue to enlist local employers for work related learning using new WorkIt system. Invite speakers and arrange visits to curricular lessons or whole school/year groups as appropriate and liaise with SDS Pilot Project for S4 leavers with Highland Council will be baseline for next year's work-related learning programme. New programme to be discussed and developed with DYW. Calendar 1:1 interviews placed into whole school calendar at the beginning of session. Focus questions agreed to cover wellbeing & attainment & destinations as appropriate, within a private space using active listening techniques. Whole school evaluation on wellbeing into calendar. Roll out the Trauma Informed Practice Level 2 training to all staff. Signpost CALM de-escalation training for staff.
--	--

	Signpost CPD from HCPC calendar and signpost to relevant staff.
Impact	
Pupils have experienced more informative and up to date information in PSE classes and assemblies, enabling them to be more informed of current and developing issues and risks in their lives, both digitally and in real life. ASN pupil needs have been reviewed and Seemis records updated so that all staff can see information clearly. This is a work in progress and will continue next session on SharePoint. Attendance is same as last year and is just above 88%, which is in the green zone for Highland. Almost all leavers have a Positive Destination and staff at GHS work very hard to ensure this will continue and will always be a priority for our pupils. Work related learning is a key strength of GHS, and we now have pupils being proactive and approaching employers themselves to register for visits or placements. Self-evaluation strategy of the school, including health and wellbeing, is a priority for 26-27, we have introduced pupil voice surveys using How Good is Our School 4 and will develop this further. Child protection and a skilled, adaptable and knowledgeable workforce is essential to school improvement. We have trained many staff at all levels this year, and this is a positive step for our pupils, who will benefit the most.	

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund

Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

Improvements in Numeracy and Literacy measures in S1 to S3 for targeted small intervention groups
 Literacy S1, S2 and S3 target groups all improved in their reading age assessments across the session
 Numeracy S1, S2 and S3 target groups all improved in their basic numeracy skills across the session

Survey feedback from the pupils involved showed that most pupils felt more confident in their basic Literacy and Numeracy and were able to transfer these skills into their mainstream classes.

Wider achievements

Coileanaidhean nas fharsainghe

YDO – Youth space break & lunch daily – open to all pupils
 YDO caseload - Group & individual work, volunteers, awards: Saltire & Dynamic Youth
 GYAP – Clothes swap, volunteering, fashion show, donations, youth club lunchtime drop-in
 TYKES – Twice a week lunchtime drop-ins in school
 Lairg Learning Centre – Short courses ongoing through year – coding, crafts, creativity, confidence, CVs
 YPI – embedded into life of the school in S3 through English department, with finale in assembly hall
 Music – numerous pupils are very successful in music and perform in community events and beyond.

Drama – increasingly successful drama club after school, two productions per year, links with industry writers, actors and editors and set design for local fashion show and lighting and stage consultants.

Football- much team success, all age groups, boys' and girls' teams after school

Many play on local youth teams: Ross County, Alness, Tain, Helmsdale etc.

One pupil plays in the North of Scotland team and has been recently selected to try for Scottish boys' team.

Sport – many individual achievements in and beyond school including local teams, dancing, skating, riding.

Visiting speakers and agencies – countless through the year to assemblies and small groups and classes

Partnerships – GYAP, TYKES, Lairg Learning Centre, Brora Development Trust, Action 4 Children

MCR Pathways co-ordinator – mentor recruitment and matching with young people, increasing uptake

Volunteers - Hairdressing & Beauty group, link with local employers, charities and make-up artists

Mountain Bike Club – initiated with staff volunteers

Garden Club - initiated with staff volunteers

Wellbeing room – developed to provide a calm, nurturing, device-free zone for pupils

Life skills Cooking - developed to facilitate curricular provision for small group cooking & 1:1 sessions

Craft Club – developed to provide lunchtime space for crafts and wellbeing activities

Alladale and Nethybridge – pupils enjoyed outdoor learning & quality relationships through teamwork

Friday Community Car Wash – developed this year to take bookings and wash cars from local community

Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff

Beachdan bho luchd-ionnsachaidh, teaghlaichean, luchd-ùidhe is luchd-obrach

- Safeguarding is a real strength in the school. Staff are clear about procedures and feel confident in supporting the wellbeing and safety of our young people.
- There are good opportunities for professional learning, and staff feel encouraged and supported to develop their skills and improve their practice.
- Relationships across the school are positive and respectful. Staff work well together and there is a strong commitment to treating young people fairly and with respect.
- Staff enjoy working at Golspie High School and feel proud of the support provided to learners. There is a strong sense of commitment to helping young people achieve their potential.
- The teacher explains things clearly and helps us understand what we need to do. If I need help, I know I can get support."
- The class has a positive atmosphere and behaviour is good. The teacher deals with any issues quickly so we can focus on learning.

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:

QI 1.3 Leadership of change	Good
QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment	Satisfactory
QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion	Good
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and Achievement/Securing children's progress	Satisfactory
Other QIs reviewed	

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

Action Plan 1: Learning, Teaching & Attainment

Action Plan 2: Wellbeing, Equity & Inclusion

Action Plan 3: Primary to Secondary Transition

Planning ahead

A' planadh air adhart

Full details of the school's 2026/27 improvement priorities and actions are detailed on the school improvement plan, which can be accessed on our website [Golspie High School](#) or by contacting the school office.