



STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD

2025-2026

MILLBURN ACADEMY



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.

Millburn Academy is in Inverness, the capital of the Highlands. We seek to create a nurturing environment in which all feel a sense of belonging, ensuring our school provides a foundation for a lifetime of learning, embracing the diversity within our wider community, so that everyone can excel in their own unique way.

Our school has developed a strong reputation in the local community, based on several key strengths:

- ✓ High quality learning experiences for pupils
- ✓ Conscientious pupils who work hard to achieve their goals
- ✓ Wide ranging opportunities - cultural, sporting, voluntary and community activities – in which to participate and excel
- ✓ An ethos of achievement

The school aims to provide a safe, supportive and challenging environment, based on mutual respect, where staff and pupils are encouraged to develop their skills to the highest level. The school roll is currently 1204 with a free school meal entitlement of 9%. Several year groups are at capacity with the number of out of catchment placing requests contributing to this. 46.61% of pupils went on to Higher Education in 2025; 14.03% to Further Education; 33.94% directly into employment with the remainder into the voluntary sector, training or seeking employment. In 24/25 95.93% of leavers moved into a Positive Destination, exceeding figures for Highland and the National Establishment whilst marginally lower than our Virtual Comparator.

Staffing for 26/27 is 84FTE. The management structure is made up of thirteen curriculum leaders for subjects, six Principal Teachers (Pastoral) and two Principal Teachers (Additional Support for Learning) whose focus is on ensuring every young person can meet their full potential and move into positive destinations when they are ready to leave school. The Senior Leadership Team comprises the Head Teacher and five Depute Head Teachers (Year Heads) each with year group responsibilities, focussing on attainment, behaviour and curriculum. There has been significant change within the Senior Leadership Team over the last two years, due to staff taking up promoted positions or relocating. The Head Teacher was appointed in August 2023. Currently there is a vacant DHT post arising from the postholder moving into headship and we aim to recruit on a permanent basis for August 2026.

We have committed and highly skilled teaching and support staff with wide ranging experiences which contribute to Millburn Academy being a thriving learning environment. Large numbers of our pupils are involved in sports, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, the SQA Leadership Award, World Challenge, Operation Wallacea and Ocean Youth Trust Scotland and all pupils are encouraged to participate in the opportunities we offer through an extensive extracurricular offering. Many departments offer curricular trips such as the Battlefields Trip, trips of the UK and Scottish parliaments as well as cultural and geographical trips within the UK and abroad.

There are seven primary schools in our associated school group, some of which are large urban primaries and smaller, rural primaries. We link also with several other primary schools because of placing requests. We have Inverness wide enhanced provision for young people who require significant additional support for learning with placements agreed through a Joint Admissions Group (JAG). This provision is known locally as The Hub.

The school building was built for 1100 therefore we do have some capacity issues although roll projections indicate this will settle over the coming years. Despite this, we work diligently and creatively to extend our curriculum offer and to support young people in our care. The school was inspected during session 24/25 and evaluated as Good in each of the four core Quality Indicators. We believe this position will be strengthened by the work we have planned in relation to improving pedagogy and further improvements to the ethos and culture of the school. Our overarching improvement priority is Learning and Teaching and it will continue to have prominence in 26/27 and beyond, it being fundamental to how we will continue to raise attainment and maximise opportunities for achievement.

Data relating to our context:

Pupil Numbers		Attendance		Teacher Numbers	
1206		87.34%		84	
S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6
185	217	238	240	192	132
SIMD Q1	SIMD Q2	SIMD Q3	SIMD Q4	SIMD Q5	Unknown
8.29%	6.88%	14.51%	44.94%	23.63%	2.16%
ASN	FSM	EAL	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		
43%	9%	16.4%			

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

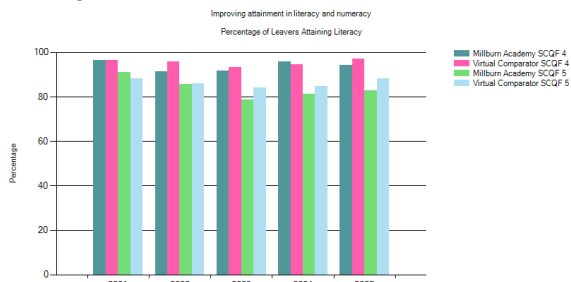
Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
Most	Most	Most	Almost all

Level 4

Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
Most	Most	Most	Most

Senior Phase

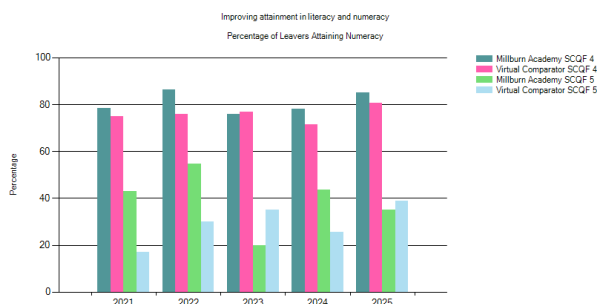
% Pupils Lit/Num at level 3/4/5/6 in S4/5/6 compared to VC/National
eg headline message from
Literacy - Leavers



Overview:

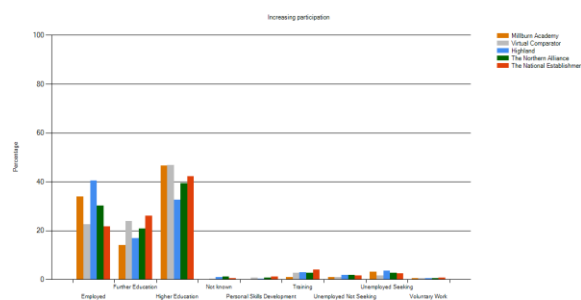
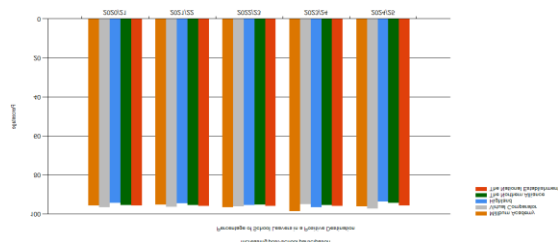
- Generally below VC for Literacy although we exceeded VC for L4 in 2024.
- L5 attainment has improved this session (82.81% in comparison to 81.41% in 2024) although the VC has improved too.

Numeracy – Leavers



- L4 Numeracy has exceeded VC in 4 out of the past 5 years. L5 attainment is more mixed.
- A small number of S4 pupils sit L6 Numeracy if achievable.

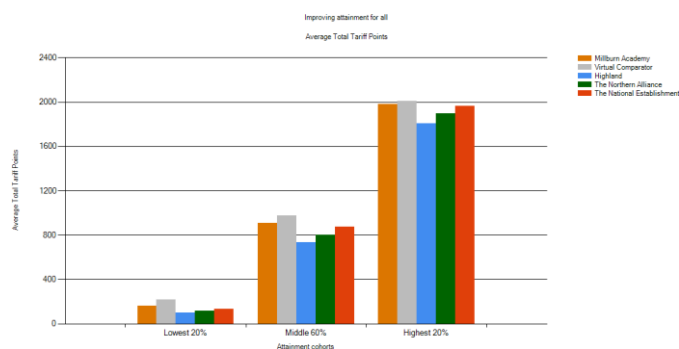
Senior Phase Leavers



- 95.93% of Leavers moved to a Positive Destination in 24/25
- Whilst this is higher than Highland and the National Establishment it was slightly lower than the Virtual Comparator (VC).
- For the past 3 years our data has exceeded Highland and the National Establishment, exceeding the VC in 2 of the 3 years.
- 46.61 of pupils progressed to Higher Education, marginally lower than the VC and significantly higher than Highland and the National Establishment

- 33.94% of pupils proceed directly to employment, significantly higher than the VC and the national Establishment but lower than the Highland figure.
- 14.03% of pupils go to Further Education, significantly lower than VC, Highland and the National Establishment.

Cohorts – Attainment for All



- Average total tariff points for the highest 20%, the middle 60% and the lowest 20% of pupils in terms of attainment are lower than the VC although they exceed Highland figures and those of the National Establishment.
- We need to better utilise our tracking system and our support for pupils through intervention to ensure we are closing the gap with the VC year on year.

School vision, values and aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile

VISION

Our vision is for every member of our school community to feel safe, happy, valued and respected, and to feel well supported with opportunities to experience academic and personal success. This is accompanied by high expectations of all our pupils, expecting them to be positive, responsible and to become increasingly active role models for others.

VALUES

- Ambition
- Respect
- Community
- Kindness

AIMS

- We will set high goals and strive for personal and academic excellence through perseverance and curiosity in the world around us.
- We will encourage respectful behaviour towards others, ourselves, our environment and our community.
- We will promote teamwork, shared responsibility and a sense of belonging among all members of the school.
- We will treat others with care and understanding, even when it is not easy by being thoughtful in how we speak and act.

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: Improving Pedagogy	
Summary of progress	Next steps
✓ Professional learning for all staff continued to prioritise improving pedagogy this session with almost all staff reporting a sustained focus on pedagogy across the school. ✓ Through peer, self and formal observations almost all lessons evaluated as being Good with a few evaluating as Very Good or Excellent. ✓ All staff agree that the Millburn Academy Learning Standard has had a positive impact on their own practice, providing a clear and consistent structure to how they plan and deliver learning experiences. ✓ Almost all staff can clearly identify, through their self-evaluation activities, areas of strength and areas for improvement in learning and teaching. ✓ All departments can clearly set out next steps for their identified areas for improvement to achieve our aim of consistently high-quality teaching and learning in almost all lessons across the curriculum. ✓ There is a range of quality assurance activities in place to carefully monitor the impact of developments in Learning, Teaching and Assessment. ✓ In most departments meeting time prioritises sharing best practice and resources on a regular basis. ✓ A whole-school moderation recording template was developed to improve consistency in approaches to moderation within the BGE. ✓ This has strengthened staff understanding of the moderation cycle and created a more consistent approach to planning, assessment evidence and standards across departments. ✓ Departments now have a clearer focus on ensuring that Experiences and Outcomes (Es and Os) are explicitly reflected in planning, and that assessment success criteria are aligned appropriately with national benchmarks. ✓ Moderation activities have become a more regular feature of departmental meetings. ✓ To support greater consistency and accountability a revised Quality Assurance and Self-Evaluation Calendar was introduced, clarifying expectations around moderation activities, assessment review and monitoring processes across the school year. ✓ The majority of departments are now embedding opportunities for skills reflection in BGE lessons. ✓ Guidance staff are incorporating more resources from Unifrog this session to support career education. ✓ Pupils' views are sought routinely as part of our ongoing self-evaluation of learning and teaching. ✓ A programme of targeted career long professional learning, in planned collegiate time, supports staff to share good practice. ✓ We continue to make good progress within this priority.	*This remains our core priority for the 26/27 School Improvement Plan as we seek to embed Very Good and Excellent practice consistently across all classrooms. *We will further embed the features of highly effective practice outlined in the Millburn Lesson Standard with a particular focus on differentiation and formative assessment. *Collegiate Time will focus on collaborative approaches to sharing practice and to accessing and applying relevant findings from educational research to move forward with pedagogy and professional learning.

Impact
Our journey towards being able to peer and self-evaluate Very Good and/or Excellent practice consistently in relation to learning, teaching and assessment continues. The impact of this priority continues to be positive but has yet to result in sustained improvements in attainment data.

School Priority 2: Ethos and Culture	
School Improvement Plan Priority 2	
Summary of progress	Next steps
✓ Strong, trusting relationships between all staff and almost all young people underpin a calm, purposeful ethos across the school. ✓ Almost all young people are polite, confident and respectful. ✓ Most young people feel they are treated fairly and with respect and that school helps them to understand and respect others. ✓ Most young people feel safe, well supported and cared for in school. ✓ School attendance has declined slightly. ✓ Merit totals are shared with BGE pupils termly. ✓ The work of the Promoting Positive Relationships Policy working group has shifted its emphasis slightly to ensure success is celebrated consistently. ✓ The PSE programme was reviewed with pupils in June 2025 and S3 resources for alcohol awareness, SHARE and employability were updated. Additionally, in light of feedback, the S5 programme was refreshed with new content about misogyny and gambling awareness. ✓ We are undertaking accreditation towards being a Reading School, knowing the importance of reading for pleasure in terms of wellbeing and its potential for impacting on attainment ✓ All staff have been assigned to a house and there has been a slight increase in house activities this session. ✓ The number of exclusions remains consistent with 24/25, which signals a significant and sustained improvement on previous years. ✓ Young people who come to the school from other countries feel welcomed and included. ✓ The PSE programme has been reviewed with all pupils consulted and areas for improvement identified. ✓ Events which celebrate cultural diversity and challenge discrimination have taken place, impacting positively on the school and its extended community. ✓ Family and community learning relating to Ramadan impacted positively on many pupils, their families and members of the community. ✓ All departments offer curriculum enrichment opportunities through participation in extracurricular events and activities with many offering trips within the UK and abroad. ✓ Absence management through the 3-day absence register enables us to identify and capture early trends, bringing about early intervention opportunities / SFMs to identify barriers with a view to removing them where possible. ✓ Our Celebrating Success end of year awards ceremonies now include awards for demonstrating school values, with nominations from staff. ✓ Core skills are now linked to the merit system and celebrating success nominations.	*Maintain these relationships through nurturing approaches and whole school events which promote a sense of community and kindness toward one another. *Parents/carers of S5 pupils alerted to class absence by daily text messaging, extending our contact from S1-4 only. *Continue to develop the house system by extending the range of activities. *Recognise and celebrate more frequently pupils demonstrating school values. *Revisit professional learning on nurture, trauma and wellbeing to support the continuing development of a caring school culture. *Seek and create professional learning opportunities for de-escalation and restorative conversations. *Shift our emphasis from attendance monitoring to a belonging and engagement strategy

✓ Participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award is available through curriculum time with significant numbers achieving Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards relative to other schools. ✓ By the time they leave school, pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve well in their literacy and numeracy at levels 4 and 5. ✓ Parent Council membership has increased with representation from parents with young people across all year groups. ✓ Parent Council members have supplemented our thinking about the school's position in relation to mobile phones. ✓ Fundraising activities across the school continue to be well supported by parents/carers.	
Impact	
Our ethos and culture remain calm and purposeful with trusting relationships with staff much in evidence but our work on improving attendance, to date, has yet to impact positively. A shift of emphasis is planned, from attendance monitoring to developing a belonging and engagement strategy.	

School Priority 3: Raising Attainment and Achievement	
School Improvement Plan Priority 3	
Summary of progress	Next steps
✓ Attainment focused tracking of PEF and FSM pupils is leading to literacy and numeracy attainment being banked in S3 where possible to give a sense of achievement. ✓ A decrease in the number of pupils at risk of not attaining due to the above and closer monitoring and tracking of pupils attending offsite provisions. ✓ We have introduced Communication NC and Literature 1 as an alternative to Higher English. ✓ Increasingly staff are structuring courses in ways which enable N3/N4 passes to be achieved in S3 before progressing to N4/N5 in S4. ✓ Most S6 pupils will study four subjects or three Advanced Highers in 26/27 ✓ Continued discussion and dialogue about extending our SCQF level 5 and 6 course offer beyond National 5s and Highers. ✓ BGE moderation has taken place across all departments and we will continue with this to refine practice further. ✓ Young people who require additional support are well supported by a range of targeted interventions. ✓ Pupils who have additional support needs are making good progress in literacy over time. ✓ Our online platform for recording and tracking skills development is well embedded in the BGE and our planned rollout in the Senior Phase continues. ✓ All departments have Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) links which supplement and enhance provision, affording pupils to see and experience real life application of skills developed in the classroom. ✓ In 2024/25, almost all young people achieved CfE third level or better in literacy by the end of S3. ✓ Most young people achieved CfE fourth level. ✓ In 2024/25, almost all young people achieved CfE third level or better in numeracy by the end of S3. Most achieved fourth level.	*We will continue to bank attainment in S3 particularly for those young people at risk of disengaging. *We will continue to review our Senior Phase curriculum offer. *A Moderation and Assessment policy will inform and guide practice across departments. *Our aim is to exceed VC across all Literacy and Numeracy measures in 26/27.

✓ Increased time in English and Maths is impacting positively on attainment in literacy and numeracy. ✓ Attainment in Literacy at SCQF L4 in S4 exceeded the Virtual Comparator (VC) for the first time in 5 years. ✓ Attainment in Numeracy at SCQF 4 and 5 shows a strong performance, exceeding VC in both measures. ✓ Opportunities for personal achievement are a significant aspect of whole school and department life with awards, events and activities providing platforms for this. ✓ Prefects are supported to work towards achievement of the L6 Leadership Award as part of the role and responsibility.	
Impact	
Attainment remains strong across the school. Although outcomes are slightly below the SQA attainment levels achieved in 2024/25, current performance reflects sustained good attainment and secure progress across key groups.	

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund

Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

- Banking of attainment as S3 progresses to ensure literacy and numeracy attainment at appropriate level particularly if attendance and engagement are persistent concerns.
- Vocational qualifications in e.g. Level 1 Cycling Award and Employability Skills.
- Targeted attendance, engagement and belonging work which has increased attendance for some of our pupils.
- Integrated working with pastoral and SfL staff to ensure coherent approaches.

Wider achievements

Coileanaidhean nas fharsainghe

NB the list below is illustrative rather than exhaustive.

- The S1 Girls Basketball Team became national champion, winning the Scottish Schools Cup 2026.
- The U15 Boys Basketball team was runner up in the Scottish Schools Cup 2026.
- The senior boys basketball team was the winner of the local basketball trophy, the MacKay Cup.
- Many pupils volunteer with Active Schools, achieving hundreds of volunteering hours in the community and in local primary schools. Some pupils have achieved more than 500 hours of volunteering, earning a gold hoodie which is worn with pride.
- Each year the school identifies two senior pupils who become Sport Scotland Young Ambassadors who become advocates for young people, promoting participation, inspiring others and encouraging involvement in sport across school, local clubs and the wider community.
- The Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) workstream affords opportunities for wider achievement across all year groups and subjects through work related learning and events and competitions which supplement classroom learning, the Great Millburn Bake Off being just one.
- Remembrance Day is acknowledged widely throughout the school with History Prefects taking a lead role in planning events and activities which mark the date respectfully.
- The Reading Schools pupil leadership team planned activities for Book Week Scotland 2025 and Millburn's first Book Day.

- The S4 Pupil Council and the Prefect team organised a collection of foodbank items for Blythswood in the pre-Christmas period and donated more than £2000 to the charity.
- The S3 Pupil Council focused on the school value of Community and completed a litter pick in the local area.
- The Music department hosted a popular and well attended Christmas Concert which built on the success of the previous year.
- The Millburn team will compete in the Final of the 2026 Scottish Association of Geography Teachers (SAGT) National Geography Challenge Quiz for a second year, having won at north area level.
- Pupils participate in anti-racism education through involvement with the Show Racism the Red Card Creative Competition.
- Many pupils excel in their chosen sports, representing not only the school but the area and, at times, the country in for example football, basketball, shooting, golf, squash, shot put, boccia and rowing.
- Pupils have enjoyed success in debating and public speaking competitions, making national finals in the Mace Debate Competition and winning the Junior Public Speaking Competition at the Inverness Music Festival.
- Higher Psychology pupils attended the Scottish Schools Psychology Conference at the University of Aberdeen for the third year.
- The Band of the Royal Marines Scotland spent a day at school, affording many of our pupils the opportunity to attend workshops before having the opportunity to play with the band at a concert in the evening.

Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff

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

‘The school does well with attendance, parent teacher meetings and information sessions on subject choices.’

‘The school has helped my daughter in Maths by putting her in a smaller class due to her neurodiversity.’

‘The transition events offered prior to S1 were excellent and I know my child had more events than most peers from P7 moving to different high schools.’

‘The Guidance staff offer prompt counselling services.’

‘Opportunities to represent the school in S1 have been excellent.’

‘Year Head was very responsive on an issue I raised on behalf of my child and there were no further issues raised at home. I think this was handled well – timely/appropriately/proportionately.’

‘I feel many staff are very supportive and interested in my child and their development. To be able to take part in opportunities such as Duke of Edinburgh and outdoor learning experience is a valuable addition to the academic experience.’

‘Communication, fun and interesting ways to learn, good teachers, support if needed.’

‘I feel the teaching staff all know my child’s individual strengths and difficulties and support their learning well.’

‘My daughter is currently sitting her Higher exams and the teaching and support she has had from her teachers this year has been incredible and I am so grateful for all their hard work in getting her ready to sit these exams.’

‘Some excellent teachers who are great at getting the best from children and supporting to be the best version of themselves.’

‘The man leaving school is almost unrecognisable from the boy who started almost seven years ago and that is due to teachers’ hard work. I very much appreciate it.’

AMBITION, RESPECT, COMMUNITY, KINDNESS

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	Good
QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion	Good
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and Achievement/Securing children's progress	Good
Other QIs reviewed:	1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.5 and 2.7

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is: Very Good

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

Key priorities for improvement planning

Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

1. Improving Pedagogy
2. Ethos and Culture
3. Raising Attainment and Achievement

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: <https://www.millburnacademy.co.uk/> or by contacting the school office.