

STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD

2024/25



WICK HIGH SCHOOL

LEARNING - AMBITION - RESPECT

ADD ESTABLISHMENT NAME

HIGHLAND COUNCIL | ADD ESTABLISHMENT ADDRESS

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.

Wick High School

Wick High School has a positive learning ethos, and we take pride in the strong relationships we develop between our young people and staff. We actively promote our Vision, Values and Aims.

Attendance: In session 2023–24, attendance was **85.7%**, slightly below the Scottish national average of **90.3%**

Free School meals: As of September 2024, **14.9%** of pupils were registered for school meals), matching the national uptake

Additional Support Needs (ASN): In September 2024, **37.7%** of our pupils had ASN, consistent with the national figure of **40%**

Exclusions: Nationally, exclusion rates in 2023–24 were around **16.4 per 100 pupils**. Locally, our rate was significantly lower, at **4.1 per 1,000** pupils in the same year.

The school management team consists of the head teacher and three deputy head teachers. The school has a middle management team of six Faculty heads and four Principal Teachers of Pupil Support and a Principal Teacher of Learning support.

The school currently has the equivalent of 51.9 fte teachers and 22 Pupil Support Assistants.

The school received additional funding from the Scottish Government to help support work to close the poverty related attainment gap. In 2023-24 the school received £88,200 in Pupil Equity Funding. This funding targeted at interventions to support development in literacy, numeracy and health and well-being. It also funds our family links workers (CSW team)

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. Majority children who face barriers to learning are making satisfactory progress towards meeting their individual targets.

Data relating to our context:

| Pupil Numbers | Attendance | Exclusions | Teacher Numbers (FTE) |
|---------------|------------|------------|-----------------------|
| 737 | 85.7% | 3 | 51.9 |

| S1numbers | S2numbers | S3 numbers | S4 numbers | S5 numbers | S6 numbers |
|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 134 | 146 | 138 | 140 | 117 | 62 |

| SIMD Q1 | SIMD Q2 | SIMD Q3 | SIMD Q4 | SIMD Q5 | Unknown |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 22% | 26% | 33% | 19% | 0% | 0.1% |

| Overall ASN | Free School Meal | EAL | 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 |
|-------------|------------------|------|---|
| 37.7% | 14.9% | 1.6% | |

Attainment

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

Level 3 2024/2025 Percentage of pupils achieving Curriculum for Excellence Levels by the end of S3

| Reading | Writing | Listening and talking | Numeracy |
|---------|---------|-----------------------|----------|
| 84% | 86% | 89% | 90% |

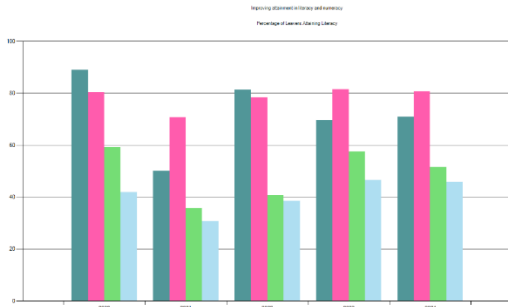
Level 4

| Reading | Writing | Listening and talking | Numeracy |
|---------|---------|-----------------------|----------|
| 52% | 50% | 68% | 68% |

Senior Phase

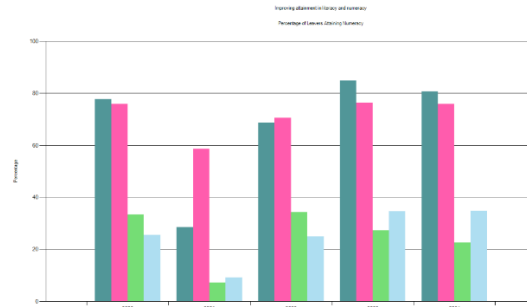
Percentage of S4 leavers attending literacy.

Level 5 Literacy is a very positive picture, with 52% of S4 leavers have achieved level 5 literacy. It is above Virtual comparator (VC) 45% for 2024. Level 4 Literacy: 71% of S4 leavers have achieved level 4 literacy. This is slightly above WHS last year result 69% but is below VC 80% from 2024



Percentage of S4 leavers attending Numeracy.

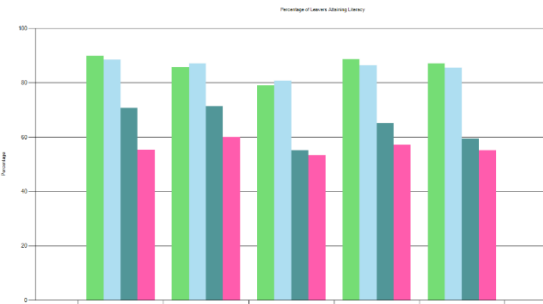
Level 4 Numeracy is a very positive picture, with 81% of S4 leavers have achieved level 4 numeracy. It is above VC 76% for 2024. Level 5 Numeracy: 23% of S4 leavers have achieved level 5 Numeracy. This is below WHS last year result 27% and VC 34% from 2024.



Percentage of S5/6 leavers attending literacy.

Level 5 Literacy is a very positive picture, with 87% of S5/6 leavers have achieved level 5 literacy. This is in line with last years 88%. It is also above VC 85% for 2024.

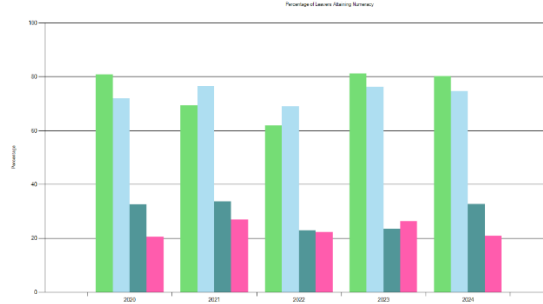
Level 6 Literacy: 59% of S5/6 leavers have achieved level 6 literacy. This is also VC 55% from 2024.



Percentage of S5/6 leavers attending Numeracy.

Level 5 Numeracy is a very positive picture, with 80% of S5/6 leavers have achieved level 5 numeracy. This is in line with the positive result achieved last year 81%. It is also above VC 74% for 2024.

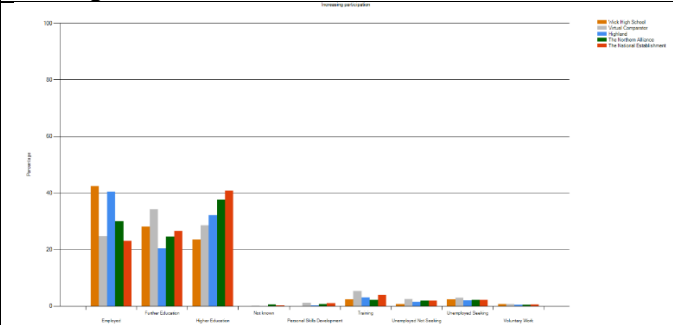
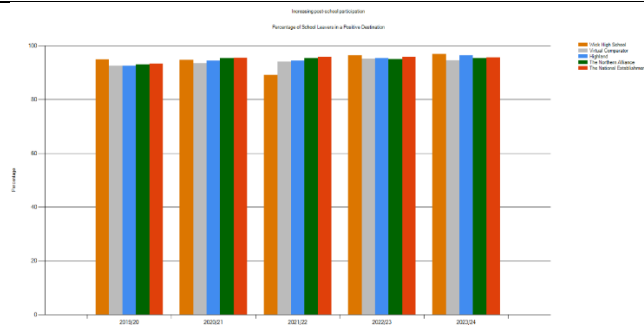
Level 6 Numeracy: 33% of S5/6 leavers have achieved level 6 numeracy. This is a significant improvement on last year 23% and it is also above VC 21% from 2024



Destinations of School Leavers

Percentage of school leavers in a positive destination. It is a very positive picture, with 97% of WHS leavers have secured a positive destination in 2023/24. This is in line with the positive result achieved last year 96%. It is also above all other competitors: VC, Highland, The Northern Alliance and The National Establishment.

Leavers initial destinations: 42% of our students leave WHS for Employment, this is the highest mark amongst other comparators. Further Education 28% and Higher Education 23% are our second and third most popular leavers destinations. The 23% for Higher Education is below all our comparators with biggest gap being against The National Establishment where the average was 40% in 2023/24.



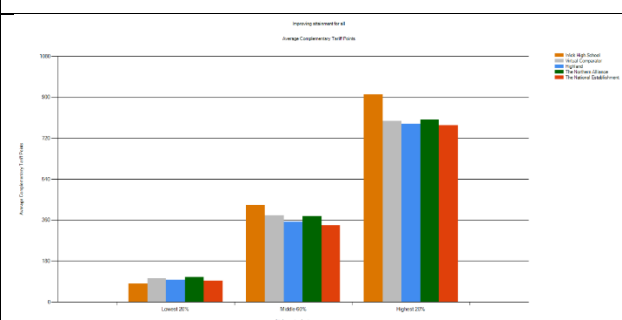
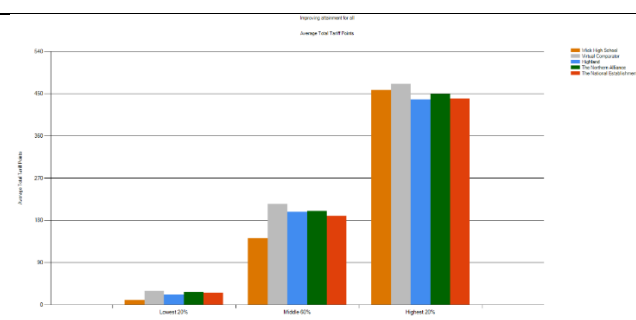
Cohorts

Improving attainment far all. Average complementary tariff points of S4 cohort.

- The group of lowest 20% have achieved on average 10 complementary tariff points. This is below last year's 50 points. It is also below all other competitors: VC 29pts, Highland 21 pts, The Northern Alliance 27pts and The National Establishment 25pts.
- The group of middle 60% have achieved on average 133 complementary tariff points. This is below last year's 234 points. It is also below all other competitors: VC 190pts, Highland 183pts, The Northern Alliance 185pts and The National Establishment 171pts.
- The group of Highest 20% have achieved on average 345 complementary tariff points. This is in line with last year's result of 351 points. It is also in line with other competitors: VC 354pts, Highland 351pts, The Northern Alliance 357pts and The National Establishment 343pts.

Improving attainment far all. Average complementary tariff points of S5 cohort.

- It is a very positive picture, especially amongst the Middle 60% and Higher 20% of cohorts.
- The group of lowest 20% have achieved on average 117 complementary tariff points. This is below last year's 117 points. It is also below all other competitors: VC 103pts, Highland 97 pts, The Northern Alliance 109pts and The National Establishment 94pts.
- The group of middle 60% have achieved on average 371 complementary tariff points. This is a significant improvement on last year's 371 points. It is also above all other competitors: VC 380pts, Highland 353pts, The Northern Alliance 377pts and The National Establishment 336pts.
- The group of Highest 20% have achieved on average 912 complementary tariff points. This is a significant improvement on last year's 711 points. It is also above all other competitors VC 796pts, Highland 784pts, The Northern Alliance 801pts and The National Establishment 776pts.



School vision, values and aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile

Our Values

We have three core values, which are a clear and concise statement of what we are working to achieve in Wick High School and are at the core of all our decisions and future developments.

Learning

Ambition

Respect

Our Vision

We want Wick High school to be an excellent school in all regards. Our 'vision' is to continue to build an inclusive and successful learning community.

Our Aims

To help us achieve our vision we have the following aims:

To provide the highest quality of learning and teaching for all.

To create an environment where everyone in the school community is encouraged to participate and to achieve to his/her potential.

To provide a safe and supportive environment where everyone is valued and treated with respect.

To promote social, emotional, mental and physical health and well-being. To enable our pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens who can make a positive contribution to their community.

Summary of Standards and Quality Report/School Improvement Plan engagement process:

The process of engaging with the whole school community when we are developing our Standards and Quality Report and School Improvement Plan involves seeking the views of a wide range of people.

- Teachers and other school staff
- Parents and our Parent Council
- Pupils
- Partners that work with and support the school
- Other schools with which we link (ASG)

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 - Priority 1: Raise attainment and achievement together with improving consistency of our Learning, Teaching and Assessment approaches. | |
|--|---|
| Summary of impact | Next steps |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased Young people achieving in key measures:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- S4 - 5+@L5 – 53% of pupils have achieved minimum five N5 qualifications in 2024. This is an improvement by 7% in comparison to 2023 result.- S5 - 1+@L6 – 67% of pupils have achieved minimum one Higher qualifications in 2024. This is an improvement by 2% in comparison to 2023 result.- S5 - 3+@L6 – 43% of pupils have achieved minimum three Higher qualifications in 2024. This is an improvement by 9% in comparison to 2023 result.- S5 - 5+@L6 – 20% of pupils have achieved minimum five Higher qualifications in 2024. This is an improvement by 7% in comparison to 2023 result.- S6 - 3+@L6 – 69% of pupils have achieved minimum three Higher qualifications in 2024. This is an improvement by 5% in comparison to 2023 result.- S6 - 5+@L6 – 40% of pupils have achieved minimum five Higher qualifications in 2024. This is in line with 2023 result. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To increase the quality and consistency of faculty improvement plans, enabling specific improvement targets to be identified and progress measured effectively.• To develop internal departmental tracking and monitoring systems, supporting the creation of targeted attainment plans for pupils.• • To renew strategic approaches aimed at improving whole-school outcomes in literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing for all learners.• To continue reviewing and developing our curriculum to enhance opportunities for all pupils. |

School Improvement Plan - Priority 1: Raise attainment and achievement together with improving consistency of our Learning, Teaching and Assessment approaches.

| Summary of impact | Next steps |
|--|--|
| <p>Our restructured leadership groups supported the sharing and implementation of effective pedagogical strategies, particularly around differentiation, pace, and challenge. The “speed dating” professional learning model delivered in February was positively received and generated useful reflection across faculties. However, further embedding and follow-up will be needed to ensure consistent practice across the school.</p> <p>Peer observation was introduced to encourage professional dialogue and the sharing of good practice. While some staff engaged meaningfully with this opportunity, uptake was variable, and further structure and support will be required to ensure its long-term impact on professional growth.</p> <p>Progress was made in enhancing assessment practice in the BGE through more formalised moderation processes using WHS-specific documentation. There is evidence of improved dialogue and increased reliability in teacher judgements, but a need remains for greater consistency across departments.</p> <p>The use of data to inform interventions showed potential but requires further development. While some positive impact was noted in areas such as literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, and underperformance in the Senior Phase, there remains scope to strengthen how data informs targeted support and measurable outcomes.</p> <p>Homework and home learning practices improved in some faculties, but whole-school implementation of our policy remains inconsistent. Continued focus is needed to ensure all learners receive high-quality, manageable tasks that support progression.</p> <p>Overall, while the plan achieved moderate success, it highlighted the importance of sustained and strategic follow-through to maximise the impact of interventions. These foundations will inform and shape the priorities for next session’s improvement planning.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To further embed the WHS learning standard to ensure all young people experience consistently high-quality learning and teaching matched to their needs. • Refine the focus of leadership groups to ensure strategic planning, clearer goals, and measurable outcomes. • Embed a structured peer observation model with clear expectations, optional coaching support, and time allocation to ensure sustained engagement and professional dialogue. • Continue developing faculty-level moderation using the WHS documentation to ensure greater reliability and consistency in BGE assessments. • Develop more consistent approaches in sharing feedback across the curriculum. • Develop strategies to encourage good routines and revision skills to support effective and ongoing progress towards learners’ attainment targets. |

| School Improvement Plan - Priority 2: Improve the health and well-being of students, families, and staff. | |
|--|--|
| Summary of impact | Next steps |
| <p>Over the past year, progress has been made towards developing a clear, whole-school strategic approach to health and wellbeing. Awareness of the school's HWB priorities has improved among staff, learners, and parents, fostering a shared commitment to wellbeing as a whole-school responsibility.</p> <p>The Pupil Council has been partially re-established, with increasing opportunities for learners to contribute their views. While engagement is growing, further work is needed to fully embed pupil voice as a key driver of school improvement, supported by senior pupil leaders and the Parent Council.</p> <p>Collaboration between ASN and classroom teachers has strengthened, resulting in more inclusive learning environments where the diverse needs of learners are better understood and supported. This has contributed to a safer and more ambitious atmosphere for all pupils.</p> <p>The Health and Wellbeing leadership group successfully organised events during Healthy Living Week, bringing together staff, pupils, and the wider community to promote wellbeing and positive relationships. These activities have enhanced community spirit and raised awareness of health and wellbeing issues across the school.</p> <p>Overall, these initiatives have laid a solid foundation for further development. Continued focus on embedding pupil voice, enhancing collaboration, and expanding wellbeing events will be essential to sustain and deepen these positive impacts on the whole-school community.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will prioritise reactivating the Pupil Council to ensure it functions as a strong, representative body by providing ongoing support and training to its members and S6 leaders, enabling them to effectively gather and act on pupil feedback, while also developing clear channels of communication between the Pupil Council, staff, and the Parent Council to implement meaningful changes. • Formalise and increase opportunities for ASN and classroom teachers to plan, review, and share best practices. • Develop targeted strategies to improve overall pupil attendance, identifying and supporting those with persistent absences. Engage families, pastoral staff, and partners to address barriers to attendance. • Implement the New Mobile Phone Policy. Monitor and review the policy's effectiveness and impact on learning and wellbeing. • Revisit the current Positive Relationships Policy to ensure it reflects best practice and school values. Embed the policy consistently across the school, supporting staff and pupils to maintain a positive, respectful environment. |

| School Improvement Plan - Priority 3: Review the Broad General Education (BGE) and senior curriculum to ensure successful learning pathways for all students. | |
|--|--|
| Summary of impact | Next steps |
| <p>Some progress has been made in reviewing and redeveloping the S1/2 curriculum to better align with benchmarks, skills development, and future learning pathways. Pupil voice has begun to play a more active role, with Year Heads engaging with Pupil Councils to gather valuable feedback, although further work is needed to fully embed this.</p> <p>The senior curriculum review has been advanced, with investigations into models both within and beyond the local authority completed. This has informed ongoing efforts to increase qualification options and progression pathways for learners.</p> <p>Departments have been supported in researching and piloting additional units and qualifications tailored to pupil needs, although some areas require further development. PTPS teachers have dedicated time to support UCAS and college applications, helping to enhance senior pupils' preparation for post-school transitions.</p> <p>Overall, improved curriculum planning using data has begun to impact learner experiences positively. However, ongoing efforts are required to ensure all BGE pupils receive their full entitlement</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further embed pupil voice by strengthening Year Heads' engagement with Pupil Councils to ensure learner feedback directly influences curriculum planning. • Continue to refine and develop the S1/2 curriculum to fully align with benchmarks and skill development, ensuring clear pathways that promote success in the senior phase. • Expand opportunities within the senior curriculum by implementing additional units and qualifications tailored to meet diverse learner needs, based on research and pilot outcomes. • Increase wider achievement opportunities by developing and promoting alternative courses and accreditation options for learners. • Enhance support for senior pupils in their applications for further and higher education, building on existing progress with UCAS and college preparation. |

| | |
|--|--|
| to two modern languages and to expand wider achievement and accreditation opportunities. Support for senior pupils applying for further and higher education has improved but remains an area for continued focus. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue collaboration with partner organizations to evaluate and improve curriculum offerings, ensuring they remain relevant and effective. |
|--|--|

| School Improvement Plan - Priority 4: Continue to develop and improve the delivery of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) and partnership initiatives. | |
|--|---|
| Summary of impact | Next steps |
| <p>Significant progress has been made in embedding Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) initiatives across the school. The establishment of a dedicated DYW leadership group has ensured a coordinated and dynamic approach, resulting in a wide range of meaningful opportunities for pupils. Faculty-led events, real-life employer engagement, and personalised work experience placements have all contributed to raising pupils' awareness of future career pathways and building essential skills for life, learning, and work.</p> <p>The ongoing 'Lunch with Employers' initiative and enhanced collaboration with external partners have created strong links between pupils and the local workforce, inspiring young people to make confident and informed decisions about their futures. The introduction of a termly curriculum newsletter has also strengthened communication with parents and carers, fostering greater involvement and support in pupils' learning journeys.</p> <p>Overall, these developments have successfully enhanced pupils' motivation, aspirations, and preparedness for the next stages of their education and career paths, reflecting the school's commitment to supporting every learner's success.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Work Experience Opportunities: Continue to increase and diversify personalised work experience placements, ensuring they meet the evolving interests and needs of all pupils from S4 to S6. Strengthen Employer Partnerships: Develop new local and regional employer partnerships to broaden the range of industry sectors accessible to pupils and enhance real-world learning experiences. Enhance Pupil Engagement: Increase opportunities for pupils to engage directly with employers through workshops, mentoring, and career talks, with a focus on raising awareness of emerging industries. Improve Data Tracking: Implement more robust systems to track pupil participation and outcomes in DYW activities, enabling better evaluation of impact and targeted support. Parental Involvement: Build on the curriculum newsletter by creating additional channels for parents and carers to engage with DYW initiatives and support their child's career planning. Integrate Skills Development: Further embed employability skills, such as communication, problem-solving, and digital literacy, across the curriculum to prepare pupils for future pathways. |

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund

Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

- **Attendance Gap Reduction Progress:** Although the attendance gap between SIMD 1&2 and SIMD 3-8 pupils has not yet been fully closed, ongoing efforts have stabilized attendance rates, providing a solid foundation for further improvement.
- **Behavioural Improvements:** Exclusions among SIMD 1&2 pupils remain very low, showing positive progress in managing challenging behaviours and creating a safer, more supportive learning environment.

- **Positive Trends in Behaviour Referrals:** Behaviour referrals for pupils engaged with support teams remain low, indicating that targeted interventions are effectively supporting pupils at risk of exclusion.
- **Significant Growth in Wider Achievements:** There has been a notable increase in the number of SIMD 1&2 pupils attaining wider achievement awards, demonstrating enhanced pupil engagement and success beyond traditional academic measures.
- **Increased Youth Engagement and Participation:** Participation in youth work and enrichment activities has grown, contributing positively to pupils' health, wellbeing, and social development, which supports overall behavioural and attendance improvements.

Wider achievements

Coileanaidhean nas fharsainghe

- **Geography - Fieldwork**
- National 5 Geography pupils visited the peatland near Lyth. They took part in some fieldwork activities where they measured the depth of the peat at various sites using GPS trackers. They also learned about the importance of peatlands and the biodiversity within them as well as what can be done to manage peatlands and the work the Peatland Restoration group do to ensure the area is healthy.
- **RDA**
- Riding at the RDA Riding School in Halkirk an opportunity that our pupils really enjoy at this time of year. We have a riding lesson once a week, followed by a Summer Show and Prize-Giving at the end of term. Their time here gives them such confidence and sense of achievement as they progress throughout the year. We are very proud of them.
- **Junior Maths Challenge**
- The Junior Maths Challenge is a 60-minute, multiple-choice challenge. It encourages mathematical reasoning, precision of thought and fluency in basic mathematical techniques to solve interesting problems.
- At Wick High, there were 56 participants and 15 of them received either a Bronze or Silver award with 1 pupil receiving a Gold award and an invitation to the next level of competition, the Junior Kangaroo challenge.
- **Wick High School Netball**
- Wick High School offers weekly after-school Netball sessions for pupils from S1 to S6. These sessions are split across two evenings: one dedicated to S1 and S2 pupils, and the other for S3 to S6. Around 70 pupils attend these sessions regularly.
- Coached by staff, pupils not only develop their technical skills but also prepare for competition in both the Scottish Cup and a range of informal matches against other schools from across the North. This year, pupils have had the opportunity to travel to schools in Orkney, Thurso, Inverness, and Fortrose, with more fixtures planned in the near future.
- Beyond improving their playing ability, the Netball programme helps pupils build social skills, confidence, and a sense of commitment. The opportunity to travel and meet students from other schools adds to the experience, fostering teamwork and sportsmanship.

- The impact of the programme has also been reflected in academic outcomes, with many pupils selecting Netball as one of their chosen activities for assessment in National 5 and Higher Physical Education. Their continued development through these sessions has contributed significantly to strong practical performance results.
- **Step Forward Wick**
- Saltire and Leadership Awards – Pupils this year have been working hard and volunteering within the school and our community. Some pupils have completed over 50 hours of work. We are so proud of the time given to improve our school and community.
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- **Sponsored Walk**
- Our S1-3 pupils undertook a longer route this year, raising money for both the school fund and the SFW group. Lovely morning was had by all, with a great game of capture the flag out on the pitches at the end of the day.
- **Healthy Living Day**
- We held our first Health & Wellbeing Day. S1-3 pupils and staff enjoyed a day of healthy activities such as golf, zumba, motorcycle maintenance and many more, as well as having the chance to meet with visiting health professionals who set up information stands in the school's Dance Studio and canteen area. Our talented Home Economics teachers, Miss Swanson and Mrs Manson prepared a beautiful buffet of healthy foods for pupils at lunchtime and, if the lengthy queues were any indication of the quality of what was on offer, the pupils ate very well indeed!
- The day was a great success with 97% of 217 pupils stating, in a survey on the event, that they hope the school will do it again next year. 94% said that they enjoyed the day while 64% of the pupils surveyed said that the event made them more aware of their own Health & Wellbeing.
- **Radio Club**
- The club continues to go from strength to strength. This term, pupils had the opportunity to visit Wick Harbour Marina and learning about amateur operations. This has helped the pupils build connections all over the world as well as giving them the chance to gain further qualifications.
- Wave of Hope Art Project
- Our Advanced Higher Art students worked with local artist Lisa MacDonald. The project focussed on combining 'Art with positive mental wellbeing', with the pupils being asked to name their pieces and give their reason 'for Hope for the Future'. It was great project for the pupils to learn techniques from a local artist, and also to work at a pace and scale that many haven't worked at previously.
- **S2 Charity Challenge**
- During PSE, S2 pupils successfully worked in groups to research, visit, and create presentations about well-deserving charities with a focus on local social issues. Each PSE class held semi-final presentations in the Dance Studio with the cream of the crop going into the final. The final consisted of 7 brilliant presentations which were shown to the S1 audience, a panel of judges, and members from the charities represented. All pupils involved did a fantastic job at showcasing some of the brilliant charity work that takes place in Wick and beyond.

Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff

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

Live Highland, Live Happy event:

Lindsay Matthews (Live North) “I spoke with many students who said the event gave them a lot to think about. They said that there were more opportunities than they’d realised.

Some students spoke confidently about what they wanted to do when they leave school/future careers. The majority didn’t have any idea what they wanted to do. Taking part was definitely worthwhile.”

Neillian Rodger (Murphy) “Every event I attend at Wick High School is extremely well organised by DYW and I always have a very pleasant visit. We played Jenga at our table, on each Jenga block there was a question about our sector and business, along with blocks for prizes only. The Game went down really well, with everyone taking part and enjoying the giggle when the Jenga fell, giving us a chance to talk through why strong foundations are important and the importance of pausing before you make your move and rebuilding when things don’t go to plan. I feel it was a good way to introduce the skills we look for and the #NoWrongPath hashtag.”

Step into STEM event:

Fionnadh Carroll (Skills Development Scotland) “the pupils loved the drones – great way to explain meta skills and fill their buckets with confidence.”

Patti Bremner (Highlife Highland) “absolutely fantastic event, all the kids were engaged and well behaved!”

Choices Evening:

Laura O’ Kane (Salt and Stars Studio) “The Choices Evening at Wick High School is a fantastic opportunity to connect with young people as they start thinking seriously about their next steps.

It’s all about helping them connect the dots and showing how the subjects they pick today can open doors tomorrow.

This is a great chance to shine a light on the options available and offer real-world insight into where each path could lead. There’s a saying, “You can’t be what you can’t see,” and I believe that’s true. Events like this help show young people in our region what’s possible.

The students engaged really well, spoke confidently about their hopes, and asked lots of thoughtful questions. I think being in smaller groups, with a drop-in style in their classroom environment, felt more equitable and helped the conversations flow. I felt really welcome at the school, and was happy to have been asked to take part.”

Alladale Trip

At the end of our recent trip to Alladale the staff from Aban commented on how positively the viewed WHS pupils, feeling that they performed better than pupils from other schools. This was down to their resilience in tough weather, enthusiasm, and willingness to support their fellow pupils.

Jordan Tillier – FPT Social Subjects and RME

SQA

I always enjoy my time at WHS supporting the staff and pupils with the SQA exams. Pupils are extremely polite and focussed on the exam papers.

Anne Harrold – SQA Chief Invigilator

The pupils showed remarkable determination and resilience as they navigated their SQA courses. Most courses had further content and assignments required this year. We are delighted to report that our S4 cohort has performed very well with increasing numbers of pupils passing their National 5 subjects.

S Laybourne – DHT/SQA Coordinator

HLH Music Tuition

I always feel welcomed when I teach in WHS. The staff take time to engage with the work that I do and the pupils are very enthusiastic about their lessons. I teach across Caithness and East Sutherland, I look forward to my morning in Wick High.

N Laybourne – Highlife Highland Strings Instructor

Children in Need fundraising week

I am incredibly proud. ... Our students have shown their kindness and compassion to help children who are less fortunate.

Scott Mackenzie, S6

Pupil Comments from Health Living Day 2025

I loved it because it was fun and calm and I loved making the bracelets.

There was no boredom sat behind a desk, but it was healthy and educational, which how school is meant to be.

I liked having more lunch and hanging out with friends. It was a fun day and I learned more and it made it enjoyable going to school.

I enjoyed it because everyone was happy and nothing bad happened and everything was fun, me and my friends had a really good time and we wish it happened more often.

It was very fun to not have classes all day and to actually do different activities.

Made me think of mental health.

I enjoyed it because it was different and made me excited to come in.

I did because it was very relaxing and the activities were very fun.

I got to wear clothes I was comfortable in and not be crowded in a room the entire time.

I enjoyed it as it gave me an insight on the effects of substances and how to keep myself safe, As well as the mental health organisations to help me.

I thought it was very fun and a nice change to the day. Made Monday morning exciting for once as well! :)

Learning, Ambition, Respect

I really liked having a “day off” actual school but still with some structure and doing things I actually enjoy.

It was a nice change of pace.

I enjoyed my day because I was with my friends at golf and the staff were really nice.

I enjoyed it because it raises awareness of a big problem within people at the moment, and it's good to have that bit of freedom and do what you would like to do. The netball and tennis was super fun and the roadshow was great too! The food was so tasty as well.

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 | Good |
| QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment | Good |
| QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion | Satisfactory |
| QI 3.2 Raising attainment and Achievement | Good |
| QI 2.2 Curriculum: theme 3 Learning pathways | Good |
| QI 2.7 Partnerships: theme 3 Impact on learners | Good |

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. Raise attainment and achievement for all learners |
| 2. Improving the consistency of learning and teaching across the school. |
| 3. Improve the health and well-being of students, families, and staff. |
| 4. Review the Broad General Education (BGE) and senior phase curriculum to ensure successful learning pathways for all students, while continuing to develop and improve the delivery of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) and partnership initiatives. |

Planning ahead

A' planadh air adhart

Full details of the school's 2025/26 improvement priorities and actions are detailed on the school improvement plan, which can be accessed on our website <https://wickhighschool.co/> or by contacting the school office

Appendix 1: Local and National Context

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



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.

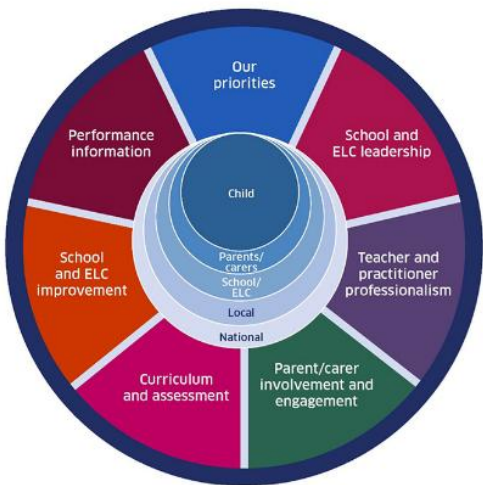
Relationships:

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.

National Improvement Framework Priorities



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 [HGIOELC](#)
[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

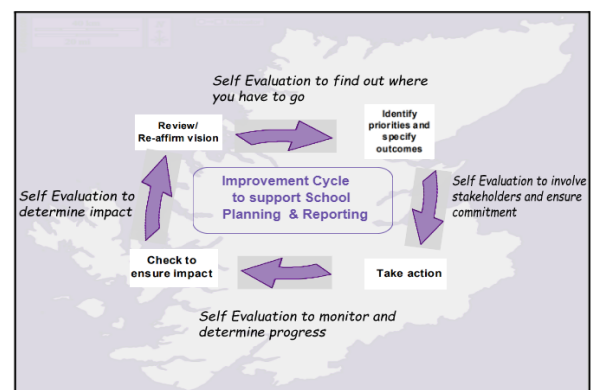
Looking to others for new ideas that challenge our practice and support continuous improvement allows us to learn from what works and what doesn't. This includes practice in other schools, learning communities and learning from educational research.

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 eòlasan deimhinneach, bidh ar cloinn is ar n-òigridh daonnan 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almost all staff have a strong understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of our school. We are in the process of refreshing our school vision to reflect our shared commitment that all young people experience success in their learning. We are working to ensure that this vision continues to underpin our collective work and direction. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and pupil surveys, and focus group feedback – These show growing confidence in leadership across the school and an improved understanding of school priorities. Pupils increasingly feel their voices are heard through structured opportunities like focus groups and council involvement. HMIe Summarised Inspection Findings – Our most recent inspection validated many of our approaches to leadership and change. The report affirmed our positive culture, clear vision, and increasingly strategic planning. Areas for further development were also highlighted and are being addressed through our improvement planning. Minutes from staff, faculty, and department meetings – These demonstrate that improvement work is being discussed and actioned collaboratively. They show growing engagement with school priorities and increasing ownership of improvement plans at department level. Regular link meetings with Principal Teachers – These support ongoing dialogue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude the process of refreshing our school vision and ensure regular opportunities for review and reflection. Engage pupils, parents, staff, and partners more deeply in school improvement. Define and communicate more clearly what success looks like across our school community. | Good |
| Theme 2: Strategic Planning for continuous improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Senior Management Team supports change effectively, creating a positive and aspirational culture across the school. We continue to build confidence in our approaches to improvement, with staff increasingly understanding and engaging with priorities identified through self-evaluation, surveys, and feedback. We have developed more collegiate approaches to school improvement planning, allowing for greater collaboration and consistency across faculties. Strategies to raise attainment have been strengthened by more effective use of data analysis and by the development of more coherent tracking and monitoring systems. We are making effective use of targeted professional learning and opportunities to share high-quality practice. We are continuing to grow distributed leadership across the school, with a few colleagues engaging in formal | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen consistency in faculty improvement planning, with a focus on measurable outcomes and robust evaluation. Continue to grow leadership at all levels by deepening staff understanding of leadership roles, supported by the GTCS professional standards. Create more meaningful leadership opportunities for young people, linked directly to school improvement. | |

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| <p>leadership programmes. Middle leaders are increasingly empowered to lead change within their faculties and are supported through regular link meetings and clear guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are also working to strengthen leadership at all levels by supporting all staff in developing their leadership roles, guided by the GTCS professional standards. | <p>around progress, challenges, and next steps. They are helping to ensure better alignment between school and faculty plans and promote consistency in leadership messages and expectations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole-school attainment tracking system, used consistently by all staff – This provides a clearer picture of learner progress, attainment patterns, and gaps. It allows for timely interventions and helps staff make more data-informed decisions to raise attainment. | | |
| <p>Theme 3: Implementing improvement and change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have introduced more robust and consistent approaches to self-evaluation, and these are helping us identify improvement priorities that align with the needs of our school. Our quality assurance calendar supports the involvement of senior and middle leaders in ongoing self-evaluation and allows all staff to better understand their role in contributing to improvement. We continue to strengthen the consistency and clarity of faculty improvement planning, although this remains an area for further focus. Collaborative working between senior and middle leaders has improved cohesion between school and faculty plans. Staff-led research projects in all faculties have supported local improvements, particularly around effective questioning and retrieval practices. These projects have stimulated productive dialogue and reflection among colleagues, contributing to shared professional learning and planning for next steps. Young people are beginning to engage more meaningfully in leadership roles, including pupil council representation, learning mentoring, and sports leadership. We continue to value the contributions of partners to the curriculum and learner support, and we recognise the need to strengthen coordination and joint planning in this area. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of learning and teaching observations – These show improvements in classroom practice, particularly in areas like questioning and retrieval strategies. The findings also help us identify professional learning needs and strengths across the school. Outcomes from leadership working groups and research projects – These projects have generated localised improvements in practice and fostered a culture of inquiry. They also demonstrate how staff-led initiatives are contributing to the wider improvement agenda. Curricular planning documents – These show increasing coherence between curriculum delivery and strategic priorities. They also reflect how faculties are planning with greater clarity and purpose, though some variation in quality remains. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve our coordination and planning with partners, and put in place mechanisms to evaluate the impact of partnership working. Maintain our focus on reducing the attainment gap for young people affected by poverty and its wider impacts. | |

| QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment | | | |
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| 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? |
| <p>Theme 1: Learning and engagement</p> <p>The ethos and culture of our school reflects our work on positive relationships. Most young people experience a classroom that is caring, welcoming and helpful. Positive and nurturing relationships are evident between staff and pupils in most lessons. Relationships across the school demonstrate an increasing culture of respect through structured dialogue and a shared purpose. Young people feel encouraged to do their best and that teachers have high expectations.</p> <p>Most pupils understand the purpose of their learning, supported by teachers sharing the purpose of lessons through learning intentions and success criteria. There is increasing use of co-constructed SC which further engages young people as active participants.</p> <p>In most classes pupils are engaged in their learning with this being reflected in the quality of their work. They are actively involved in lessons and can ask insightful questions, demonstrating their engagement.</p> <p>Our curriculum continues to expand, offering a broad range of subjects and areas of study. Schemes of work are well planned in all most all areas, with young people having increasing opportunities to engage in a choice of tasks/topics that reflect their interests and their abilities.</p> <p>The majority of our learners are well supported enabling them to participate effectively in their lessons. Our young people respond well to a variety of activities, supporting each other in pair and group work. Use of classroom routines ensures that pupils experience similar expectations and understand what is expected of them.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson Observations, both formal and information enable FPT, staff and SMT to identify good practice for sharing and areas for development. This is linked with WHS's learning standards, our School Improvement Plan and individual PRD plans as appropriate. The WHS Learning Standard continues to drive us towards high quality learning experiences for all in our classrooms. The collegiate compiled document is used to support PRD across our teaching staff and can be used for specific focus where need is identified. Feedback through pupil surveys, pupil focus groups and Faculty self-evaluation highlights priorities for improvement. The information gathered is also used to support individuals, departments or faculties in the sharing of good practice. | <p>To further embed the WHS Learning Standard to ensure all young people experience consistently high-quality learning and teaching, match to their needs.</p> <p>To further develop the work of our staff Learning and Teaching leadership group by actively creating opportunities for staff to engage in sharing good practice, contribute to professional learning opportunities and support professional development through peer observations.</p> <p>Increase collegiate time, focussed on learning and teaching targets, both at school and faculty/department level. Re-focus on Teaching Sprints as a vehicle for department improvement.</p> | Good |

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| <p>Theme 2: Quality of teaching</p> <p>Most lessons are well structured with increasing use of meaningful starter activities supporting retrieval practice. The majority of lessons are well paced and offer opportunities for further challenge. Most departments engage with the pupils and have been increasing opportunities for discussion about learning. Increasing use of learning questions is also evident.</p> <p>Teachers use a range of questioning techniques to illicit meaningful insight from pupils. Some faculties continue to build on their use of Learning Sprints to increase these opportunities and build higher order thinking skills into their schemes of work.</p> <p>Our learning and teaching working group has led a variety of initiatives this session. Increased opportunity for collegiate working through INSET events has encouraged the sharing of good practice and the production of the WHS LTA newsletter has shared approaches taken by departments. The focus of both initiatives has been differentiation and retrieval practice. This clear and focussed approach to improving learning and teaching enables teaching staff to build their professional skills and provide collegiate support.</p> <p>The majority of staff use a wide range of learning environments and learning approaches to support the students. Departments make good use of digital technologies, with increasing use of applications such as ACHIEVE, Canva, Google Suite, SCHOLAR etc.</p> <p>We have revisited and strengthened our school Homework Policy to better support learning and teaching across the school. Departments have continued to evaluate their HW for each Year Group, ensuring that it is related to the abilities and needs of pupils and that it is a</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson observation feedback and analysis. • Department self-evaluation – pupil voice through surveys and focus groups. • Whole school feedback through SMT led focus groups. • INSET day activities and feedback to the learning and teaching working group. • Learning and teaching termly newsletter – input and production. • Termly review of HW – quantity and quality evaluation. | <p>Support departments and encourage wider staff involvement to engage with the Teaching Sprints model to research, trial and embed strategies that improve consistency. Departments have their own focus, with learning questions, high order thinking skills and retrieval practice identified as areas on which to focus. Using the Learning Sprints format, departments can trial their strategies, measure their impact and share their findings during increased collegiate time.</p> <p>Monitor the consistency, quality, frequency and feedback of homework across departments.</p> <p>Continue to develop and share our curriculum newsletter in order to support pupils and their parent/guardians with their learning at school and at home.</p> | |
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| <p>purposeful additional to classwork. Effective and timely feedback is given by most teachers, especially in the senior phase. Communication of HW is now also available through our termly curriculum newsletter as well as through Google Guardian.</p> | | | |
| <p>Theme 3: Effective use of assessment</p> <p>In almost all lessons teachers use a range of assessment approaches to monitor the progress of our young people. This includes summative, planned assessment in line with our tracking system, but also formative approaches, quality questioning retrieval quizzes and self/peer assessment. Increasing use of online tool such as ACHIEVE and Scholar is also proving effective.</p> <p>Our learners respond positively to the clear explanations given with teachers regularly checking for understanding. Verbal feedback helps learners to identify their successes and next steps for learning. There is also increasing use of rubrics and feedback sheets so that pupils can understand their current levels. This creates opportunities for pupils to reflect on their progress, helping to foster their independence. Creating opportunities for effective feedback has been a focus of many departments in session 2024-5.</p> <p>Robust systems of moderation and verification support colleagues to reach accurate SQA judgements for our senior pupils. External verification reports are accepted by the SQA as valid with identification of good practice in all departments that have gone through the process. Our assessment judgements are scrutinized in school through our programme of attainment meetings between SMT/FPT/PTPS. This data is then used to support pupils in their progression.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of our school based TMR system used and analysed at all levels. • SMT link meetings – focus on raising attainment. • SMT attainment analysis – linked to key aims and improvement targets. • Staff development via formal SQA understanding standards events. • Increased number of staff involved in SQA marking – sharing their experience with their departments. • Increased opportunity and focus on moderation activities. Increasing collaboration with partner schools to share experience and expertise. • Collegiate dialogue at senior level to identify next steps for raising attainment. | <p>Continue to develop strategies to encourage good routines, revision skills and progress towards learner’s attainment.</p> <p>Build on approaches to quality feedback to ensure senior pupils can plan their revision and attainment goals with effective input from their subject teachers.</p> <p>Build pupils’ understanding of what success looks like through exemplars, success criteria and reflection on progress.</p> <p>Support FPTs and PTPS to evaluate how well pupils are using feedback to improve their attainment and to set individual targets.</p> <p>Further increase opportunities for authority wide moderation, especially in single person departments. This focus can support department understanding of assessment standards but also promote collegiate discussion on course design and what progression in learning looks like (BGE).</p> | |

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| <p>Theme 4: Planning, Tracking and Monitoring</p> <p>In almost all departments, tracking in the senior phase is determined by carefully considered, planned assessments and use of professional judgement. This information is then analysed by both SMT and PTs to track individual and whole school attainment. This in turn leads to appropriate interventions, to support pupil progress.</p> <p>The increased analysis of tracking data across Year Groups has enabled FPT and PTPS to identify pupils or groups of pupils who face additional challenges. This has been a focus throughout the session to ensure all pupils are supported to achieve. This includes those who struggle to attend, those facing interrupted learning and those with ASN.</p> <p>Use of assessment data is used to inform planning at all stages. Some departments have focused on their BGE curriculum and have redeveloped courses to sit better with both Experiences and Outcomes for CFE and the needs of the SQA in the senior school. Pupil feedback has been an important part of this redevelopment with pupils given opportunities to have their voices heard.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of our school based TMR system used and analysed at all levels. • SMT link meetings – focus on raising attainment. • SMT attainment analysis – linked to key aims and improvement targets. • Increased opportunity and focus on moderation activities. Increasing collaboration with partner schools to share experience and expertise. This informs planning for future sessions. • Collegiate dialogue at senior level to identify next steps for raising attainment. This includes priorities for session 2025-26. | <p>Further develop shared guidance on use of assessment data and professional judgements to determine tracking decision. This will be a focus on the BGE.</p> <p>Support departments to continue aligning BGE planning with CfE benchmarks and SQA expectations without narrowing the curriculum.</p> <p>Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions that stem from analysis of tracking data.</p> <p>Make greater use of pupil feedback as part of faculty self-evaluation and curriculum improvement cycles.</p> | |
| QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion | | | |
| <p>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)</p> | <p>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?</p> | <p>What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?</p> | <p>How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale?</p> |
| <p>Theme 1: Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has introduced a mobile phone policy which involves a ban on the devices in the school building to better assist pupil's learning and social skills. • Extracurricular activities, including social events and after-school clubs, contribute to building an inclusive school community. This was most evident in the whole school Health & Wellbeing Day held in May. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of SHANARRI referrals • Feedback from partners. • Number of referrals to counselling service as well as written case notes and assessments. • Pupil focus groups. • Positive destination data. • Surveys of parent/carers. • Parents evening feedback. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with staff in the school's ASN Dept to transition our work to our off-site provision, making sure that learners there receive the maximum benefits of our new facility. • Review the school's relationships and behaviour policies to ensure alignment with national guidance on consequences and to ensure they meet | <p>Satisfactory</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive relationships between staff and young people foster a supportive and productive learning environment. Staff have a strong understanding of their learners and collaborate effectively to enhance outcomes. • Senior leaders identify emotional wellbeing and inconsistent attendance as key challenges impacting young people's achievement. Supporting health and wellbeing remains a central focus. • Most young people enjoy school, with the majority feeling safe and confident that they have someone to turn to if they need help. • Young people with complex needs benefit from enhanced support tailored to both their immediate and long-term requirements. They respond positively to staff who create a warm and nurturing learning atmosphere. • Young people participating in support programmes show improved attendance and greater engagement with school life. • Staff are attentive to individual circumstances, offering meaningful support to both young people and their families. • We are to soon move into our off-site Enhanced Provision, Avonlea, which will allow us to better provide an education for those with the highest tariff Additional Support Needs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of stakeholder voice on mobile phone use and its effects on young people. • Feedback from the pupils on the impact of our school's Health & Wellbeing Day. | <p>the specific needs of the school community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the implementation of the school's mobile phone policy, which involves a ban on mobile devices within the school building to better support pupils' learning and social development. • Create a supportive environment where young people can develop a deeper understanding of wellbeing language, based on the SHANARRI indicators and confidently identify the support they need. • Establish a strategic framework to enhance current practices and embed health and wellbeing as a shared, whole-school responsibility. | |
| <p>Theme 2: Fulfilment of Statutory Duties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are well-informed about the barriers some young people face in their learning. Relevant information is shared appropriately and used effectively to support and tailor learning experiences. • Enhanced transition arrangements are in place for young people identified as needing additional support during key changes in their educational journey. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualised Education Plans (IEPs), Child's Plans, or Additional Support Plans. • Staff training records on inclusion, trauma-informed practice, or GIRFEC. • Minutes from multi-agency meetings or pastoral care meetings. • Transition plans for key stages (e.g. P7–S1, S3–S4, post-school). • School leaver destination data (e.g. Insight, SDS reports). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the school's attendance management policy and procedures and continue to monitor attendance and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies to address concerns. • Maintain an overview of complaints and instances of bullying, racism, or discriminatory incidents. Further analysis of patterns and evaluation of the impact. | |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning information is communicated clearly among staff to ensure consistent and informed support for all learners. • A three-tiered support system is implemented, ranging from short-term targeted interventions to specialised provision for the most vulnerable learners. The curriculum is broad and responsive to individual needs. • Young people at risk of not achieving a positive post-school destination receive targeted support, delivered in collaboration with a range of partner organisations. • The PSE programme offers meaningful opportunities for learners to explore themes of equality, diversity, and the dangers of discrimination and prejudice. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership agreements with Skills Development Scotland, colleges, or employers. • Case studies of pupils supported into positive destinations. • Feedback from pupils involved in employability or mentoring programmes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing partnership working to gain advice, contributions and evaluation of whole school planning. | |
| <p>Theme 3: Inclusion and Equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant number of pupils report feeling respected by both staff and the majority of their peers. This respectful culture contributes to a positive school climate where young people feel valued and safe. • Support for Learning teachers play a key role in enhancing classroom practice, offering tailored advice and strategies to subject teachers across all curriculum areas. In addition, Pupil Support Assistants provide essential in-class support, helping to meet the diverse needs of learners and ensuring that all students can access the curriculum effectively. • The majority of young people feel motivated and supported by school staff, who consistently encourage them to reach their full potential. This culture of high expectations helps to build confidence and resilience among learners. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil surveys or wellbeing questionnaires showing high percentages of students feeling respected by staff and peers. • Focus group feedback or pupil voice sessions. • Records showing low incidents of bullying or peer conflict. • Observations from classroom visits. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand opportunities for young people to actively participate in school decision-making processes, empowering them to build confidence, develop leadership skills, and feel a stronger sense of ownership and engagement in their learning environment. • Strengthen mechanisms for pupil voice, ensuring that students have regular, meaningful opportunities to express their views. Clearly communicate how their feedback influences decisions, reinforcing that their contributions are valued and impactful. • Enhance collaboration between Additional Support Needs (ASN) teachers and classroom teachers to | |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a clear and sustained focus on closing the attainment gap for young people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. Targeted interventions are carefully designed to address individual needs. Strong, trusting relationships with youth workers, project leaders, and children's services staff further enhance these efforts, promoting a sense of belonging and inclusion. • Wellbeing initiatives such as MCR Pathways and access to counselling services provide vital emotional and practical support for young people facing poverty or other barriers to learning. These programmes help to build self-esteem, improve engagement, and support positive outcomes both in and beyond school. | | <p>foster a more inclusive learning environment. By sharing expertise and co-developing strategies, staff can better support diverse learning needs and continuously evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and celebrate diversity across the school community by encouraging staff to create and support inclusive activities, events, and curriculum content that reflect and respect the varied backgrounds, identities, and experiences of all learners. • Work in partnership with pupils to ensure all learning and career pathways are recognised, accessible, and valued, supporting informed choices and aspirations for every young person, regardless of their background or ability. | |
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QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

| <p>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)</p> | <p>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?</p> | <p>What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?</p> | <p>How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale?</p> |
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| <p>Theme 1: Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of S4 leavers attending literacy. Level 5 Literacy is a very positive picture, with 52% of S4 leavers have achieved level 5 literacy. It is above Virtual comparator (VC) 45% for 2024. <p>Level 4 Literacy: 71% of S4 leavers have achieved level 4 literacy. This is slightly above WHS last year result 69% but is below VC 80% from 2024</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A whole school attainment tracking system with analysis documents. • Department Actions and Improvement Targets • Insight Data • Positive Destinations data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen consistency in faculty improvement planning, with a focus on measurable outcomes and robust evaluation. • Develop an attainment plan for each pupil, with targeted input from pupils, classroom teachers, and guidance staff. The plan should be coordinated by the Senior | <p>Good</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of S5/6 leavers attending literacy. Level 5 Literacy is a very positive picture, with 87% of S5/6 leavers have achieved level 5 literacy. This is in line with last years 88%. It is also above VC 85% for 2024. Level 6 Literacy: 59% of S5/6 leavers have achieved level 6 literacy. This is also VC 55% from 2024. • Percentage of S4 leavers attending Numeracy. Level 4 Numeracy is a very positive picture, with 81% of S4 leavers have achieved level 4 numeracy. It is above VC 76% for 2024. Level 5 Numeracy: 23% of S4 leavers have achieved level 5 Numeracy. This is below WHS last year result 27% and VC 34% from 2024. • Percentage of S5/6 leavers attending Numeracy. Level 5 Numeracy is a very positive picture, with 80% of S5/6 leavers have achieved level 5 numeracy. This is in line with the positive result achieved last year 81%. It is also above VC 74% for 2024. Level 6 Numeracy: 33% of S5/6 leavers have achieved level 6 numeracy. This is a significant improvement on last year 23% and it is also above VC 21% from 2024 | | <p>Management Team and shared with parents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue making the most effective use of transition and assessment information to ensure that all young people in the BGE are working at an appropriate and aspirational level. • Develop closer planning and moderation opportunities with ASG to identify potential support required. | |
| <p>Theme 2: Attainment over time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are getting better at using tracking information to identify underachievement in both the BGE and senior phase. This informs conversations with senior leaders about the support young people require with their learning. Information gathered at faculty level supports a whole-school view of progress across stages. A revised protocol for data analysis across the school is providing Principal Teachers with a clear structure for how to approach data analysis, helping to clarify their roles and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A whole school attainment tracking system with analysis documents. • Department Actions and Improvement Targets • Insight Data • Positive Destinations data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on specific cohorts to raise levels of attainment. This will be through agreed aims. • Work together to improve the quality of passes and increase the numbers entering levels of national qualifications. • Continue to focus on specific tracking to support and challenge young people sitting L5/6 qualifications. Improved | |

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| <p>responsibilities in this area. A more systematic analysis of progress within and across faculties is now providing senior leaders with robust data. This is being used to support targeted approaches to raise attainment and highlights key areas for action for Principal Teachers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leaders and faculty heads have a focus on raising attainment by using data to identify specific targets for improvement. These targets support aspirational levels in both the BGE and the senior phase. Working closely with faculty heads, senior leaders have correctly identified the need to improve the quality of passes and to increase the number of young people being presented for aspirational yet attainable levels in National Qualifications. • In the BGE, the school collates data for all subjects showing the percentages of young people achieving first to fourth CfE levels. Senior leaders have identified correctly the need to make the most effective use of transition and assessment information to ensure that all young people in the BGE are working at an appropriate and aspirational level. Senior leaders are working closely with faculty heads and teachers to share best practice in using data to support learners' progress. Teachers' increasing confidence is enabling them to begin to identify more ambitious and achievable targets within levels for, and with, young people more accurately. | | <p>progression routes that are mapped to maximise potential success.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 3: Overall quality of learners' achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people gain skills and confidence through participation in a wide range of groups and activities both within school and in their local communities. Young people recognise they are developing their capacity to communicate and work with others through these activities which they then apply in other settings to support their learning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A whole school attainment tracking system with analysis documents. • Department Actions and Improvement Targets • Insight Data • Positive Destinations data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop tracking and monitoring of achievements and skills, especially those awards gained through wider achievement and in the community. • Greater focus and development of students' skills for those on a further education pathway, especially with the application process. | |

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| <p>Theme 4: Equity for all learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people who are at risk of not gaining a positive destination receive effective additional support from a number of organisations. 'My Future My Success' mentoring programme has helped a few young people progress to the University of the Highlands and Islands who were at high risk of leaving without a positive destination. MCR Pathways are working with a number of young people and have established groupwork for young people in S1 and S2. They also mentor a few young people in the senior phase. This has had a positive impact on the attendance, confidence and resilience of the young people involved. Almost all young people move into a positive destination on leaving school. The majority of young people go to higher or further education, with a minority going to employment. Support for applications through Universities and Colleges Admissions Services is provided. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A whole school attainment tracking system with analysis documents. Department Actions and Improvement Targets Insight Data Positive Destinations data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work closely with those who face challenges including the poverty related attainment gap. | |
| QI 2.2 Curriculum: theme 3 Learning pathways | | | |
| <p>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)</p> | <p>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?</p> | <p>What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?</p> | <p>How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale?</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The S1 and S2 curriculum provides experiences for young people across all curricular areas. The majority of departments have designed their BGE curriculum to help develop the skills required for the Senior Phase as well as meeting the BGE requirements. A few departments have used pupil voice when reviewing their current courses. The revised S3 curriculum has been designed to foster aspiration in young people in the BGE. A number of departments have seen an increase in the number of young people undertaking qualifications, and improve attainment in the senior phase. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum plans and structure Choice forms/Pupil Choice Surveys Timetable Classroom Observations Tracking and monitoring data (INSIGHT, OtB, SQA, NSA) Pupil feedback/surveys Parent feedback/surveys Parent Council minutes Professional dialogue with other schools Minutes of DYW meetings Feedback from employer events Google Classroom | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to review and re-develop the S1/2 curriculum linked to benchmarks, skills and pathways to promote success in the senior phase. Pupil voice should play a key role in this. Continue to review of the senior curriculum to increase opportunities for students to gain further qualifications and to ensure improved progression options. | <p>Good</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some subjects are actively engaging with local employers and the majority of subjects have been involved in DYW events that link their subject to future careers. • The continued curriculum structure has allowed for additional qualifications to be undertaken. A small number of pupils have been able to complete an extra National qualification through independent study. • The majority of subjects allow personalisation and choice in either the BGE or the Senior Phase. • Through rigorous tracking and monitoring Senior Phase pupils are being set aspirational targets are able to achieve to the highest level. • Young people who engage in volunteering within the school and wider community are supported through the Saltire Awards Programme. Opportunities for young people to volunteer and increase their leadership skills and achieve appropriate accreditation. • Continued dialogue with young people and partners to increase the variety of school-based courses that we deliver. • We offer a wide variety of National 3/4/5, Higher, some Advanced Higher and Foundation Apprenticeships courses within the school. We work with the Highland Virtual Academy and UHI to increase our offering, our partners offer a range of subjects and levels which are appropriate and link well with intended careers. There has been an increase in the number of pupils accessing these courses and achieving. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to survey pupils and use their feedback to help increase opportunities. • Ensure that pupils are receiving a consistent experience in each subject in each classroom. • Ensure that all departments are incorporating DYW in their planning. • Ensure that personalisation and choice is built into each subject's curriculum from BGE through to Senior Phase. • Ensure young people in the BGE receive their entitlement to two modern languages. • Increase confidence in and use of attainment data in the BGE to support appropriate pathways for targeted young people. • Consider opportunities to deliver RME input to our S5/6 young people. • Increase the number of wider achievement courses and NPA Level 6 courses. | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational courses are available to learners through partnership with North Highland College further increasing the options available to our young people. Hospitality, Creative Industries, Engineering and Construction and Rural Skills have an increasing pupil uptake rate. • A few young people also access learning in a consortium arrangement online using Highland Virtual Academy. • Our outdoor learning opportunities include a school poly tunnel in which vegetables are grown for use within the life skills classes of our learning support department. • The school has continued its work in creating a more detailed, strategic progression framework to promote a consistent approach to both literacy and numeracy development across the curriculum with the aim of raising attainment for all. • All young people in S1-S4 experience two periods of high-quality PE and, in S1-S5, all young people receive one period of personal & social education (PSE). Young people in S5 and S6 do not have a continuing element of religious and moral education (RME) however they have an input through religious assemblies. • Young people can access the library in the East Caithness Community facility attached to the school. Learners are introduced to the library in S1 and by senior phase use it independently as a venue and resource for independent study. The network librarian works with the English department to plan research and learning opportunities for young people. | | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a level of career education and guidance support in place which covers many of the career management skills needed. | | | |
| 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? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The choice evening for all S2 to S5 pupils, parents/carers before choices were made has been developed. This provided parents/carers with an opportunity to meet staff, find out more information about subjects and for staff to showcase pupils' work. This year employers attended and were paired with different subjects. Almost all parents highly complimentary and found it a useful experience and welcomed the input of local employers. The format of parents' evening was revised to include more partners and to celebrate pupil achievement. UHI, Dounreay, school nurses, DYW co-ordinators were some of the partners included. Communication with parents/carers has continued to improve. Departments are celebrating achievements through certificates and early intervention letters. The DYW co-ordinator has organised a number of initiatives working with faculties to organise lunchtime sessions with employers, visits from employers and whole year events for all years. These include: a health and wellbeing speed dating event; a creative industries event; Live Highland; Live Happy event. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental surveys Homework parental survey Employer surveys Homework letters Faculty self-evaluations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop the choice evening and include more outside partners. Continue to support and collaborate with our DYW coordinator to plan and co-create opportunities for employability, enterprise and wider curriculum learning to take place with employers, educators and partners. Work with DYW to increase work placements and volunteering opportunities. Increasing consultation with our young people, parents/guardians and partners. Improve links with our delivery partners to consult with and discuss our improvement planning. Continue to collaborate with primary schools is required especially with a focus on the | Good |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links are being built between local community projects and businesses, for example: Lyth Arts Centre, Active schools, Newton Rooms, Dounreay, Murphys. • Links between the feeder primaries and WHS are further developing and the English and Maths department and moderation sessions are taking place. • A termly curriculum newsletter has been issued which provides parents with more information on each subject to encourage discussion about subject content, homework, and assessments. • | | <p>moderation and delivery of literacy and numeracy outcomes.</p> | |
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