



STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT

2025-2026

Airport House, Caithness I.S.V.T.U.



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%

Centre Profile

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.

Airport House is an Intensive Support and Vocational Training Unit established in 2005 to complement other support services for young people of secondary school age residing in Caithness. Young people who attend Airport House from either Wick, Thurso or Farr High Schools remain on their school roll and attend Airport House on a part-time basis only. On occasion, Airport House staff work with young people as they prepare to leave primary school. Airport House is managed by a Principal Teacher of ASN on a full-time basis and there is currently one full-time teacher to support literacy and numeracy and three Children's Services Workers to support young people's vocational, social and emotional learning.

Our ethos is to promote learning and enable young people to plan for their future in a safe, supported environment. Staff work with young people in an emotionally literate manner, and they aim to help the young people better understand and manage their emotions and reactions, as well as their relationships with others.

Airport House currently offers part-time support for up to 16 young people who have social, emotional or behavioural needs and are having difficulty engaging or coping in full-time mainstream education. We experience a high level of attendance from most of our young people and staffing levels have met the current demand. Most young people can engage well with the sessions that are delivered in Airport House. Collaborative problem solving is used between staff and young people when issues around engagement/attendance arise.

Staff understand the individual needs of the young people well and instead of a behaviour policy we focus on 'working together' and building relationships through a trauma informed approach. Timetable planning is well thought out to avoid conflicting personalities and social groups to ensure that young people have the best chance at being able to engage with their sessions. At present, this is working well.

Our young people often join staff in the community, and they are able to demonstrate great personable qualities such as politeness and manners. Parents and guardians are very supportive of the work that Airport House does, and key working staff keep in regular contact with them via email, phone, text and face to face.

Airport House has close links with Skills Development Scotland and Developing the Young Workforce, along with other partners, to ensure that our young people are supported towards a positive destination.

As there is a relatively small number of young people attending, attainment and progress will be expressed in 'overall' statements, rather than specific year groups or Curriculum for Excellence levels. This is to ensure the identity of individuals is not disclosed.

All of the young people who attend Airport House face barriers to their learning and have additional support needs. All of the young people who attend have a Child's Plan that is led by the school and an Action Plan outlining their targets in Airport House. Almost all young people who attend Airport House are making very good progress towards meeting their individual targets in literacy, numeracy and health and well-being.

Senior Phase

The majority of the young people attending Airport House are working towards senior phase qualifications in English/Literacy and Maths/Numeracy. The majority of young people attending Airport House are also accessing English/Literacy and/or Maths/Numeracy at either Wick High School or Thurso High School.

School Leavers

Almost all school leavers in the 25-26 session have moved on to a positive destination, with the most common destination being college. Leavers who have not secured a positive destination upon leaving have been offered support from and encouraged to engage with the Highland Council Employability service, SDS and the High Life Highland adult skills services.

We have had no exclusions this year.

School vision, values and aims



To promote learning and teaching to enable our young people to achieve their full potential by –

- ♥ Providing appropriate programmes based on individual needs
- ♥ Providing positive learning experiences
- ♥ Setting realistic and achievable goals
- ♥ Evaluating and reviewing with the high schools

Encourage our young people to become good citizens by –

- ♥ Ensuring our young people have the right support in place to help them meet the expectations that are put on them through problem solving practices
- ♥ Modelling positive behaviour and attitudes and encouraging it's use
- ♥ Supporting young people to address their social and emotional needs
- ♥ Promoting confidence and self-esteem in our young people
- ♥ Adopting a non-judgemental and non-discriminatory attitude towards our young people
- ♥ Encouraging inclusion in positive activities
- ♥ Instilling self-belief in our young people that they can achieve good things

To create a calm and safe environment where our young people's developmental needs can be met –

- ♥ Setting good examples by providing appropriate role models
- ♥ Ensuring staff development is ongoing and relevant to improve practice
- ♥ Using Trauma Informed Practice and the Nurturing Principles

Support and prepare our young people to make a successful transition into adulthood by –

- ♥ Forming good links with partnership agencies and maintain good working relationships
- ♥ Identifying local resources e.g., colleges, employers etc
- ♥ Ensuring parents/carers are involved in all aspects of their young person's life at Airport House
- ♥ Involving young people in the decision-making processes

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

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: Raising attainment through improved teaching and learning leading to increased learner engagement	
School Improvement Plan Priority 1	
Summary of progress	Next steps
We made some progress with this priority this academic year, although not as much as planned, and so this will continue to be a priority for next year. Staff completed self-evaluation and created a baseline for student engagement. A learning walk framework was created and shared with staff, and learning walks were carried out by the manager with feedback provided based on learner engagement which was displayed in the office for staff to engage with. The disengaged teen was purchased and available to staff, but due to time constraints staff did not have a chance to read this. Tracking meetings were utilised to ensure learner progress continued with specific focus on discussing learner engagement – this has helped staff to become more confident when identifying the types of learner engagement happening within Airport House. Moderation meetings were held 1x with local high schools, this was extremely beneficial to the manager and the class teacher and ensured that Airport House felt supported with our learning and teaching strategy.	Continue to develop this area in the Centre Improvement Plan 26-27 to ensure that a learning and teaching framework can be developed. Young people to be included by completed surveys at the start of the academic year and at the end.
Impact	
Staff are more confident at identifying learner engagement levels and how this may have an impact on learning and teaching. Staff feel supported by the schools in moving learning and teaching forward.	

School Priority 2: Raising attainment through improved curriculum design**School Improvement Plan Priority 2****Summary of progress**

All staff engaged with the 'Curriculum Rationale Toolkit' and built confidence in their knowledge of our unique curriculum. Young people were given the opportunity to contribute to our curriculum rationale by adding information on to a whiteboard where all views could be gathered. Almost all young people were motivated to lead forward this initiative and have their say about our unique curriculum. Our draft curriculum rationale was completed and was available for pupils and parents to see during the week of our family engagement sessions. A final version of the curriculum rationale was created and was then used to support discussions at the end of term with young people about what learning opportunities they would like to see on offer at Airport House in the future.

Next steps

Using the curriculum rationale, staff will now analyse the curriculum on offer in Airport House, look specifically at the 4 contexts whilst engaging with the curriculum improvement cycle and ensure that the capacity to deliver other curricular experiences is explored and where possible available for the following academic year.

Impact

Young people, parents and staff have a shared understanding of the unique curriculum of Airport House, with it's focus on vocational, social and emotional curricular areas remaining key to ensuring good progress in more formal curricular areas.

School Priority 3: Development of the use of the online profile to support positive destinations**School Improvement Plan Priority 3****Summary of progress and impact**

Staff became familiar with the 'My World of Work' online profile tool by completing their own profiles. This ensured that when introducing the young people to them, that it was a smooth process. All of our young people have completed a 'My World of Work' online profile and almost all have uploaded multiple targets – these have ranged from academic targets, employability targets and personal hobby targets. Priority for target setting was given to those in S3 and above.

Next steps

At the start of each academic year and term, young people will be encouraged to create a 'My World of Work' profile if they have not already and will use their end of term reviews to then add their targets to this. They will continue to be supported by their Key Workers to do this.

Impact

The young people are now more aware of the tools that are available on the 'My World of Work' website. Young people have begun to be more confident in using meta skills language when discussing their strengths and abilities and when setting targets for themselves. Young people are aware that employability is important and that they can play a part in working towards their own positive destination.

Wider achievements

- ♥ One of our young people has been successful in gaining funding of around £850 from MFR Cash for Kids in order to create 'Boxes of Comfort' to provide to teenagers from Wick High School for free to support mental wellbeing. This has been part of a project for their 'Well-being Award Level 4'.
- ♥ Our Formula 24 Car is almost complete – it has been for a short test drive by the STEM Ambassador and only a few tweaks need to be made and it should be ready to drive!
- ♥ One of our young people raised money for local charities by completing the 'Kilt Walk' in Edinburgh.
- ♥ Some staff attended the Wick High School 'Health and Well-being Day' for the second year running – we were able to look at supporting young people with emotional regulation strategies.

Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff

Information has been gathered from young people from their feedback questionnaires –

When asked: *What do you enjoy most/not enjoy about attending Airport House as part of your education?*

- ★ *"I enjoy doing nails and I don't enjoy class I don't want to just do maths and English"*
- ★ *"Making food"*
- ★ *"The thing I enjoy most is interacting with people more and them helping me build up my confidence."*
- ★ *"Enjoy: Annoying my key worker Not enjoy: class"*
- ★ *"Tea and scrambled eggs"*

When asked: *What could we do to improve your time in Airport House?*

- ★ *"More things to do"*
- ★ *"Make it less boring"*
- ★ *"Nothing, everyone has done their best"*
- ★ *"Idk"*
- ★ *"Don't know"*

Information that has been gathered from parents/carers feedback questionnaires –

- ★ 100% of parents/guardians that responded to our questionnaire either agreed or disagreed that their young people were happy at Airport House, that staff were welcoming and approachable, that they were happy with the level of contact that staff had with them, that they felt included in their young persons education, that we provide a safe, nurturing and trauma informed environment for their young people and that their young person is treated with respect and supported to reach their potential
- ★ 20% of parents/guardians that responded would like Airport House to promote a healthier lifestyle to their young person and to meet their young person's learning needs more.

When asked: *Please tell us about any areas in which we could improve the service currently provided at Airport House?*

- ★ *"No improvements needed"*
- ★ *"Our young person really enjoys when I come into school and spend a little time with the team. They like to tell me about it before and after and can start looping about specific things. To have this as a positive experience for them is great as they have no positive memories of attending school at all. It's really important to them so please continue this."*
- ★ *"More time as my child loves it and feels safe"*
- ★ *"We think Airport House provide an excellent service. Unsure of how this can be improved, other than young people having the option of more time there"*

A common theme is that parents/guardians would like more time for their young person.

Information that has been gathered from partner feedback questionnaires –

When asked about any improvements that could be made:

- ★ *"A Thurso version would always be welcome, however being based in Wick also has it's advantages."*
- ★ *"Communication between us - this isn't just Airport House. I am pointing to myself on this topic too. I haven't asked for any joint meetings but it would be handy to update the child plan, etc. I feel that when I get in touch you reply promptly."*

- ★ *“Carry out CP reviews as the provision best placed to know the needs/progress of the young person and to develop positive relationships with families. Also, it would be good to have a less formal communication method and a regular meeting to discuss pupils.”*

When asked for any comments regarding the service:

- ★ *“The service has been hugely beneficial to the pupils I've been involved with.”*
- ★ *“Great communication, always feel kept informed about clients who attend. Staff always happy to work together for benefit of young person.”*
- ★ *“Support from Airport House has been excellent throughout the year. Frequent meetings with Airport House to share updates and to hear feedback on pupils' engagement and progress works very well.”*

Capacity for continuous improvement

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	Very good
QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment	Good
QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion	Very good
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and Achievement/Securing children's progress	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

- ★ Raising attainment through improved learning and teaching leading to increased learner engagement
- ★ Raising attainment through improved curricular opportunities

Planning ahead

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 or by contacting the Airport House office.