

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE1 February 2024Report by Director of EducationEDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT ON BARRHEAD HIGH SCHOOL**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To inform Education Committee of the report by Education Scotland on Barrhead High School.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) note and comment on the outstanding Education Scotland report on Barrhead High School; and,
- b) commend the school's achievements by awarding it accreditation from October 2023 until October 2026.

BACKGROUND

3. Barrhead High School was inspected by a team from Education Scotland in October 2023. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school and identified particular strengths and areas for improvement using the Education Scotland six-point scale and the self-evaluation framework *How Good is our School?*

4. Since August 2016, Education Scotland use 2 models of school inspection. The full and the short model.

5. The full model evaluates 4 quality indicators, with the short model focusing on 2. Both models include an evaluation of Learning, Teaching and Assessment and Raising Attainment and Achievement.

6. The school was inspected using the full model, with an evaluation for 4 quality indicators and a short report which details the strengths and areas for improvement. The report was published in January 2024 and is attached as Appendix 1. It has been issued to staff, parents, local elected members, the Convener for Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure and made available to the local community.

REPORT

7. In assessing the indicators of quality in the school, Education Scotland found 2 aspects of the work to be **excellent**: leadership of change and ensuring wellbeing, equality and

inclusion; and 2 areas to be **very good**: learning, teaching and assessment and raising attainment and achievement.

8. This is an excellent report on an East Renfrewshire establishment, with the evaluations and report matching the department's evaluations.

9. The report highlights sector leading practice across Scotland and notes three areas worth sharing more widely nationally. These include:

- The collaborative whole school approach to leadership is a key strength worth sharing more widely. All staff and young people are involved in agreeing whole school priorities and in making changes for improvement.
- The approaches to involving partners to support all young people in a bespoke and inclusive manner is resulting in greater levels of inclusion and increased wellbeing for young people.
- The approaches to anti-bullying involving young people. This is enabling them to have a clear understanding of how to behave and how to self-manage. The result is a much lower incidence of bullying.

10. The particular strengths highlighted by the inspection team included:

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher in creating a culture where all staff and young people lead change and improvement effectively across the school.
- The very strong use of digital technology by teachers to motivate learners and provide them with very high quality feedback.
- The school's outstanding approach to seeking and acting upon the views of young people. Young people feel respected and highly valued. They are fully involved in decisions about important aspects of the daily life of the school.
- The school's excellent approach to working with partners to support and plan for young people's health and wellbeing.
- The very strong focus on the progress of young people. Staff use data exceptionally well to ensure all young people are supported to achieve their very best.

11. The achievements and progress of the children across the school were identified by the inspection team:

- *The school's vision, which was co-developed with stakeholders, has a strong focus on aspirations for all young people and improving their future life chances.*
- *A sector-leading approach to developing and sustaining partnership working ensures that the needs of individuals and groups of young people are very well met. Young people and their families are fully involved in decisions about interventions and targets as they work towards improved wellbeing outcomes.*

12. It was particularly pleasing that the commitment and professionalism of all school staff were highlighted in the Summary of Inspection Findings.

- *All staff demonstrate an exceptional use of professional learning to improve their practice. They undertake research, extensive and relevant professional reading and draw upon local and national policy and practice from across Scotland.*
- *The school's excellent joint support team, including school staff and partners, hold highly effective weekly meetings. They take a solution-focused approach to planning well-designed and supportive interventions for individual young people and very regularly review the impact of these interventions. As a result, school support staff have an outstanding level of knowledge about young people's health and wellbeing and the effectiveness of a very wide range of interventions. Young people's needs are being met in a way that respects their dignity.*

13. The inspection team identified 2 areas for improvement:

- Continue to build on highly effective practice in learning, teaching and assessment.
- Develop approaches to skills development so that young people can confidently discuss what they gain from their participation in wider achievements.

14. Given that the school has been judged to be excellent in two indicators assessed by Education Scotland, there is no need for an additional action plan to address the areas for improvement as noted above. The school will continue to use the results of its own self-evaluation to identify priorities for improvement which will be published in its annual standards and quality report and school plan.

15. The letter to parents/carers and more detailed summarised inspection findings is available on the [Education Scotland website](#).

16. The department will continue to work in partnership with the head teacher and staff to share the sector leading practices with other schools within East Renfrewshire and across Scotland.

17. Education Scotland will make no further reports in connection with the inspection of Barrhead High School and the Education Department recommends that the school be accredited for its achievements. This will mean that the authority will not carry out any formal quality assurance activities in Barrhead for a period of 3 years from the date of the publication of report, i.e. until October 2026.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

18. There are no financial or efficiency implications related to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

19. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) note and comment on the contents of the Education Scotland report on Barrhead High School; and,

- b) commend the school's achievements by awarding it accreditation from October 2023 until October 2026.

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
1 February 2024

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Appendices

1. Education Scotland Report on Barrhead High School
2. Education Scotland Letter to Parent/Carers

Summarised inspection findings

Barrhead High School

East Renfrewshire Council

23 January 2024

Key contextual information

School Name: Barrhead High School.
Council: East Renfrewshire
SEED number: 8626730
Roll: 616

Attendance is generally in line with the national average.

Exclusions are generally below the national average.

In September 2022, 26% of pupils were registered for free school meals.

In September 2022, 31% of pupils live in the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.

In September 2022, the school reported that 44% of pupils had additional support needs.

38% of the learners live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 1-3 areas and 25% live in SIMD 8-10.

There are 63 FTE teachers including seven Newly Qualified Teachers. There are 12 full-time pupil support staff. There are three deputy headteachers, nine curricular principal teachers, six pupil support principal teachers and three development principal teachers.

Over the last three sessions the school has recruited a deputy head and seven middle leaders. Seven new staff across the school started in August 2023.

1.3 Leadership of change

excellent

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- The headteacher is held in very high regard by her staff, young people, parents and across the school community. She leads and manages change exceptionally successfully and skilfully. Her analysis of evidence and use of data helps to inform and evaluate relevant improvement priorities. Regular collaboration with all key stakeholders across the school and community further supports school improvement. The headteacher's clear, strategic direction for whole-school improvement is empowering all staff very well to develop the curriculum, pedagogy and self-evaluation activity. She has very high expectations of all members of the school community and a relentless focus on improving outcomes for all young people. Her calm, sensitive and considered approach enables a culture of confident collaboration, empowerment and leadership to be firmly embedded in the daily life and work of the school. The headteacher models the key value of respect very well and this underpins all relationships across the school. As a result, young people are very respectful, calm and well behaved.
- The headteacher plays a significant role in supporting system wide improvement. She currently chairs the local authority performance and reporting group. She presents at national conferences, for example, the national DYW event on curriculum pathways. The headteacher and her staff have also been involved in sharing good practice both within the local authority, in other local authorities and also nationally. The Education Scotland case study on learning ambassadors was published in 2022. This is leading to a staff group who are continually looking outwards to support improvement and to give back to the system.
- The school's vision, which was co-developed with stakeholders, has a strong focus on aspirations for all young people and improving their future life chances. This is captured very well through the school motto "# RaiseTheBarr." This vision results in a collective sense of purpose for all staff and young people in the school. Senior leaders empower staff at all levels to build and embed the strong vision and well-understood values.
- The school's shared vision informs improvement planning. Senior leaders use the vision to set priorities, make decisions, and evaluate the work of change initiatives. The vision is providing a clear sense of direction for the school and guiding decisions along the way. The school's very strong consultative, collaborative approach to strategic planning engages learners, parents, staff and partners effectively. Parents and stakeholders are fully involved in school improvement and kept up to date about the progress of the school improvement plan in a variety of ways. These include, for example, through online engagement, the Parent Council (PC) and the high-quality annual standards and quality report.
- There is a clear focus on well-considered improvement priorities and explicit references to aspirational outcomes for learners. This is driving a culture of very high expectations across the school community. As a result of highly effective approaches to planning and self-evaluation,

senior leaders are able to demonstrate clear improvements in expected outcomes over time. This includes strong attainment, highly effective learning and teaching, a well-balanced curriculum that meets the needs of young people, and young people who feel included in the life and work of the school.

- Faculty improvement plans are well aligned to the school improvement plan. Priorities at faculty level are well defined and driven through the rigorous approaches to self-evaluation. Local authority staff also support a rigorous and robust approach to self-evaluation activity through their collaborative faculty visits. Areas of strength and improvement are clearly identified as part of these visits and shared with all staff. Commendably, almost all middle leaders demonstrate improvements achieved against faculty improvement plan targets. Attainment is very strong across almost all departments and any areas for improvement are acted upon successfully.
- Senior and middle leaders work very well together to support the head teacher in driving change. They develop and inspire creativity and leadership in all staff and across faculties. This is helping to generate a culture of shared leadership across the school. Senior and middle leaders support faculties regularly to discuss the progress of improvement priorities, pupil tracking information and the outcomes from self-evaluation activities. Middle leaders provide very strong leadership within their faculties. Almost all teaching and support staff are empowered to initiate and lead key areas of change in faculties and across the school. These include, for example, the equalities group, the LGBT+ team and the Eco committee.
- All staff demonstrate an exceptional use of professional learning to improve their practice. They undertake research, extensive and relevant professional reading and draw upon local and national policy and practice from across Scotland. All teachers undertake a professional enquiry project linked to areas of development across the school. Staff then share the progress and impact of these projects with young people and colleagues. This helps to develop areas for whole school implementation. Teachers also undertake highly appropriate professional learning within the school and externally. All professional learning focuses on improving outcomes for all young people.
- Staff have a very strong understanding of the socio-economic context of the school. School staff's focus on fairness for all supports those young people most impacted by poverty. Staff know their families very well and are aware of the challenges they face. They also use data to identify individuals and groups who require additional support. Teachers monitor closely the progress made by individuals affected by additional challenges such as poverty, care experience or caring responsibilities. The Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) has been used well to improve attendance rates and the wellbeing of targeted learners.
- The school leadership team work highly effectively with partners to develop the senior phase curriculum to meet the needs of young people. Curriculum design aligns particularly well with Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) priorities to meet the needs of learners and the local economy. SDS and DYW staff also work very closely with senior leaders and plan opportunities for learners. Senior and middle leaders regularly and robustly monitor activities and provision throughout the school year. They make adjustments where necessary to meet the needs of young people most effectively.
- Almost all young people are very clear on how sharing their views contributes significantly to affecting change and improvement. There are outstanding strengths in how young people lead improvement across the school. This includes how their views are acted upon on all aspects of school practice such as wellbeing, equality and diversity, aspects of learning and teaching help

to inform improvement. Staff seek the views of young people across the school regularly. They act upon these views which are a very strong feature of quality assurance and self-evaluation processes.

- The 'Learning Ambassadors' visit classes to observe learning and teaching. They discuss teaching and learning strategies with staff and contribute meaningfully to meetings about the learner experience and how it can be improved. A teaching and learning group of young people and staff meets regularly to discuss ideas around classroom environments, course content and learner engagement. These powerful and carefully considered inputs from young people underpin the school's self-evaluation processes and are driving changes in approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- The very positive and nurturing ethos and culture within classrooms at Barrhead High School reflect the school's vision and values of 'RESPECT' and '#RaiseTheBarr'. These school values are underpinned by the school community's commitment to promoting the articles of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). As a result, the school has achieved Rights Respecting Schools (RRS) Gold award status. This leads to very positive relationships and a calm atmosphere in classrooms between staff and pupils.
- In the majority of lessons, young people participate well in learning activities. The majority of young people are very well motivated to achieve. In the majority of classes, young people take decisions, initiate tasks, ask questions and take control of their own learning. Teachers should build on this highly effective practice to ensure that all young people are actively engaged in the learning process more regularly. The learning and teaching group are well placed to take this forward.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers plan activities which provide appropriate challenge and support for learners. In most lessons, learning intentions are clear and relate well to the intended learning. This helps to focus formative assessment opportunities, such as self and peer assessment between young people. Most teachers model effective approaches to learning and share high quality pieces of work to exemplify what success looks like. Teachers create opportunities for young people to develop success criteria with each other. In the majority of lessons, young people have the opportunity to be active participants in a very good range of learning activities. In most lessons, staff use questioning well to check the understanding of young people and recall previous learning.
- In almost all subject areas, learners' experiences are enhanced by teachers' creative use of digital technologies. This helps to engage learners and promote high levels of participation. For example, young people can access good quality digital feedback through an online application. Parents are able to access a digital feedback platform and this supports their engagement in their child's learning. Most parents agree that staff, commendably, give them advice on how to support their child's learning at home.
- Staff use a variety of very effective assessment strategies and robust evidence to monitor the progress of young people at all stages. Teachers make very good use of a wide range of formative as well as summative assessment strategies. They use these to monitor progress and in the majority of classrooms adjust their planning to meet needs. Young people have regular opportunities to take part in a range of helpful peer and self-assessment activities.

Most young people are very positive and clear about improvements they are making in their learning following regular feedback from their teachers, particularly via digital technology platforms. As a result, they are able to talk confidently about their strengths and what they need to do to improve, particularly in the senior phase. Young people are increasingly confident in describing the skills they are developing through learning activities. Young people benefit from regular conversations with their teachers to review their progress and agree targets and strategies for improvement.

- A highly effective system of professional enquiry is used to promote improvement in learning and teaching and involves all teachers. Through this collaborative professional activity, teachers identify key areas for improvement linked to their professional review and development. This is very well supported by a teaching and learning group comprising staff from every faculty, as well as young people. An annual showcase event shares practice across all subject areas and this helps to inform faculty improvement planning. Peer evaluation and collaboration is embedded well across the school. This is leading to a shared understanding of what highly effective learning and teaching should look like. In supporting system wide improvement, young people in the school recently created a film for the west partnership with a focus on learning and teaching.
- Almost all teachers are confident when making assessment judgements of young people's learning in the broad general education (BGE). Teachers make very good use of tracking data to strengthen assessment judgements. They are currently working on a revised approach to moderation in the BGE which should also help to strengthen assessment judgements further. Teachers are looking outwards in their approach to moderation, leading to increased confidence in learning, teaching and assessment processes. Teachers are very confident when making assessment judgements in the senior phase. They have well-developed senior phase verification procedures in place to ensure that their judgements are valid and reliable.
- Teachers track the progress of individual learners very effectively and design timely, appropriate interventions to support young people, including adaptations to their planning. The headteacher ensures tracking and monitoring data provides middle and senior leaders with a strategic overview of the progress of different cohorts of young people. This includes individual support and a wide range of study classes. As a result of these intervention strategies, almost all young people are supported very well to progress and achieve.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Secondary teachers are working very effectively with cluster primary teachers to develop a consistent approach to the data gathered in literacy and numeracy. Across the cluster, teachers gather standardised assessment data and teacher professional judgement data on young people's progress from primary school. This data is used as a baseline for secondary subject departments and helps them to design bespoke support strategies for young people as they move into S1. Senior leaders should continue to work with cluster colleagues to roll out this data analysis exercise to subject areas beyond literacy and numeracy.
- Teachers plan programmes and courses in the BGE linked to experiences and outcomes. They also make use of national benchmarks for assessments. In most curriculum areas in the BGE, teachers also plan learning against aspects of National Qualification requirements. Senior leaders and teachers should ensure that young people have the opportunity in all subject areas to experience their entitlement to a full, broad and deep BGE. This will allow them to develop more of the skills they require to be successful in their learning through the senior phase.
- Over the past five years in S2, the curriculum structure allows most young people to make choices to continue to study nine courses until the end of S4, five in S5 and three in S6. Senior leaders should ensure that there is sufficient scope for young people to change their pathways into S4. Almost all young people benefit from high quality conversations with principal teachers of pupil support (PTPS) when making choices in both the BGE and senior phase.
- Senior leaders and teachers are currently engaged in a robust review of the curriculum. Staff have designed the very useful 'Barrhead capacities' digital curriculum framework. This highlights very well the school's journey in making improvements to the curriculum. This is aimed at ensuring young people experience more consistent high quality courses where learning is challenging, enjoyable and relevant. As a next step, it is important to ensure that young people receive their full entitlement to study modern languages in line with Scottish Government's 1+2 languages policy. In addition, senior leaders should also ensure that the delivery of religious and moral education (RME) aligns with the statutory requirement to deliver a coherent programme at all stages across the school. Young people experience their entitlement to high quality PE at all stages.
- The senior phase offers young people clear progression pathways for all curriculum areas and subjects. The school offers a range of qualifications from National 3 to Advanced Higher for young people. Commendably, teachers provide an increasing range of Advanced Highers that young people can access without the need to travel to consortium schools. Aspects of outdoor and interdisciplinary learning are an increasing strength of the school, improving the learning experiences and outcomes of targeted cohorts of young people.
- Staff who lead literacy and numeracy across the school have developed clear and effective strategies for the development and assessment of these as a responsibility for all in all curriculum areas.
- DYW and SDS staff monitor young people at risk of not achieving a positive destination at 'No One Left Behind' meetings. Staff at these meetings plan support interventions very well to encourage learner engagement. This is further supported through home visits by DYW staff to reach those who have disengaged completely from school. As a result, almost all young people move on to a positive destination.

- All senior phase learners can access vocational pathways delivered at several colleges or in purpose-built vocational facilities at the school. Enrolment numbers are strong and the programme successfully caters for partner secondary schools in the local authority area. This supports the school very well in achieving very high positive destination figures.
- Staff promote vocational programmes very well within course options provided to learners and parents. This demonstrates clearly the parity of esteem vocational programmes have with other course choices.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- A key strength at Barrhead High School is the involvement of parents in shaping the work of the school and empowering parents to lead aspects of improvement work. The Parent Council plays a prominent role in the life and work of the school. The headteacher works very closely with the Parent Council. The Parent Council has recently been involved in leading parental workshops to raise awareness of study skills and how parents can support their children's learning at home.
- Senior leaders ensure there is highly effective communication between the Parent Council and the wider parent body. Parent Council members have developed their own improvement plan which links very clearly to current whole-school priorities. This is an important strength and impacts very positively on young people, parents and stakeholders, as well as the wider school community.
- Almost all parents are positive about the strength of leadership and communication at Barrhead High School. Varied approaches to ensuring effective communication with parents and stakeholders and the impact this is having on young people's experiences is an important strength. For example, senior leaders and subject departments use a number of online platforms to promote school events and celebrate young people's achievements. Parents all highlight that any issues reported to the school are resolved quickly and discreetly. A strength of the school is how effectively staff communicate to young people and parents around feedback on homework and celebrations of learning.
- Almost all parents feel that they receive helpful, regular feedback about how their child is learning and progressing. Almost all parents report that the school gives them advice on how to support their child's learning at home. Senior leaders regularly seek and act upon the views of parents throughout the school year.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, young people. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

excellent

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- The school's highly inclusive values are at the heart of staff and young people's work on wellbeing, equality and inclusion. Young people are confident, articulate and inquisitive. Almost all young people believe that staff and their peers treat them fairly and with respect. This aspect of the school's work is of key importance in bringing about a wide range of positive outcomes relating to wellbeing, inclusion and equality.
- Most young people believe that the school is helping them to become more confident. This is due to the school's outstanding approach to seeking the views of young people on a range of matters. This includes young people providing staff with feedback on approaches to learning and teaching, curricular content and opportunities to develop wellbeing and inclusion. Young people, as a result, feel valued, included and listened to. Staff across the school actively seek out the views of their learners and act upon them to improve their experiences. This approach to empowering young people is an outstanding strength in the school. All young people feel a very strong sense of belonging at Barrhead High and feel that their views are appropriately considered.
- All young people feel that there are members of staff who know them well and to whom they can go with any concerns. Staff are proactive in following up concerns young people may have. Partners and the wider school support staff are very attentive to young people's needs.
- Young people benefit from a vibrant, relevant and responsive personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, ensuring they are well informed to make positive and safer choices. Young people have contributed to the development of the PSHE programme. For example, they successfully negotiated the inclusion of learning about mental health and dealing with poverty. Young people demonstrate outstanding knowledge and understanding of personal and social education.
- Almost all young people participate very well in healthy activities in the school and community. These help young people understand the benefits of healthy lifestyles and to feel connected to the school community. For example, young people work closely with canteen staff to provide advice about menu choices that reflect healthy eating advice. The work of staff in this regard has received national recognition.
- Senior leaders and support staff have an excellent understanding of statutory duties and responsibilities. They have established rigorous and comprehensive systems to ensure that all young people, especially those facing additional barriers, are included, supported and challenged to attain and achieve.

- A sector-leading approach to developing and sustaining partnership working ensures that the needs of individuals and groups of young people are very well met. Young people and their families are fully involved in decisions about interventions and targets as they work towards improved wellbeing outcomes. Partners feel that they are fully involved in discussions about meeting young people's needs and regard the school's engagement with them as brave, creative and productive.
- Staff and young people support broader improvement through their ongoing work within and beyond the local authority. They recently presented on care experienced young people at a Scottish Attainment Challenge event. They also recently piloted a local authority wellbeing measurement toolkit and have been working collaboratively with Strathclyde University on pupil attendance. These experiences are empowering and enabling an outward looking approach.
- The school's excellent joint support team, including school staff and partners, hold highly effective weekly meetings. They take a solution-focused approach to planning well-designed and supportive interventions for individual young people and very regularly review the impact of these interventions. As a result, school support staff have an outstanding level of knowledge about young people's health and wellbeing and the effectiveness of a very wide range of interventions. Young people's needs are being met in a way that respects their dignity.
- Care experienced young people feel fully included in the school. They achieve positive outcomes as a result of the broad range of support packages that staff and partners provide. These packages are carefully tailored to meet the needs of the young people who are currently experiencing care or who have experienced care in the past. Commendably, a few of these young people have contributed to staff professional learning about corporate parenting by explaining their own experience of being in care.
- Young carers are all given the option to create their own personal statement and most of them have taken up this opportunity. As a result, they feel that their challenges are well understood by school staff and that they receive support when they need it.
- Staff, partners, young people and their families collaborate very effectively on well-written and comprehensive child's plans, when these are needed to formalise the support around individual young people. Targets in these plans are SMART and very well designed and are reviewed very regularly.
- Staff monitor the use of exclusions very carefully. Young people who have experienced exclusion are very well supported on return to school and feel respected as they re-engage with their school work. Partners, such as the campus police officer and the school's link educational psychologist, very effectively support young people who find themselves in this position. Specific interventions for targeted groups of young people are helping to keep the exclusion rate low. For example, young people involved in the Forest Schools initiative and the targeted Duke of Edinburgh Award group are becoming increasingly skilled in regulating their own behaviours.
- Staff collect a wide range of data about young people's wellbeing, using a sophisticated questionnaire based on the wellbeing indicators. The results of the questionnaire show that young people are increasingly resilient and connected to the school community. Young people are skilled in reflecting on their progress in relation to the wellbeing indicators and are very clear about how to seek support if their wellbeing is causing them concern.

- Young people have a strong understanding of the protected characteristics and are fully involved in ensuring that the school's culture is inclusive for all. For example, S1 young people organised an effective Diversity Day and the school equalities group is involved in planning a forthcoming information week on gender identity.
- The school deals very promptly and effectively with bullying incidents and have engaged very well with the wider school community to understand what constitutes bullying and how those involved will be supported. Almost all young people and parents who expressed a view believe bullying is dealt with well, or have never experienced bullying. The work done by school staff to deal with bullying is highly commendable. They take a proactive approach to reducing the likelihood of bullying incidents happening in a number of ways. For example, young people who feel they might be at risk of behaving inappropriately can take part in 'walk and talk' with a member of staff to help them to feel calmer. Young people in S4 have been trained as Mentors in Violence Prevention. They help others to understand the negative attitudes, beliefs and assumptions which can lie behind bullying behaviour. As a result, the incidence of bullying behaviour in the school is low. Almost all staff believe young people are well behaved and that any bullying incidents are dealt with effectively.
- Young people have frequent opportunities to reflect on their views of equality and diversity in a range of subject areas across the school. Staff adjust subject content to reinforce the school's commitment to challenging discrimination and prejudice. For example, staff in social subjects have introduced work on the civil rights movement, and in English young people have been able to influence the texts they study to reflect their interest in anti-racism. Young people make important contributions to the development of courses in personal, social and health education. This exemplary work illustrates the centrality of young people as they support the school community to become increasingly inclusive. Young people are given encouragement to share their views and act as positive role models for others.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement**very good**

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy**BGE**

- Almost all young people achieved Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) third level or better in literacy by the end of S3 in 2021/22. Most young people achieved CfE fourth level in literacy. Almost all young people achieved CfE third level or better in numeracy by the end of S3 in 2022/23. A majority of young people achieved CfE fourth level in numeracy. The school have maintained high levels of performance in literacy and numeracy in recent years.
- Data from primary 7 is shared with all staff and literacy and numeracy leads use the data to plan an appropriate curriculum. Staff across the school have a shared approach to aspects of literacy and numeracy. This supports young people across all areas of the curriculum.

Senior phase

- The school is above the virtual comparator (VC) for the proportion of young people in S4 who are dual presented in one and two subjects for both National 4 and National 5. Staff should review the proportions of young people who are presented for two courses in one subject area in order to ensure appropriate progress and workload for young people.

Leavers

- Almost all young people leave school with SCQF level 4 or better in literacy. The school has maintained these high standards over the last five years (2017/18 to 2021/22). Most young people leave school with SCQF level 5 or better and the majority so at SCQF level 6 or better. Attainment is generally in line with the VC across these measures.
- Overall, between 2017/18 and 2021/22, almost all young people leave school with SCQF level 4 or better in numeracy. A majority do so at SCQF level 5 or better and a minority do so at SCQF level 6. Attainment is generally in line with the VC across these measures.

Cohorts

- Performance in literacy at S4, by S5 and by S6 is strong. In literacy, almost all young people achieved SCQF level 4 or better and most achieved SCQF level 5 or better. The school has improved attainment at SCQF level 5 over the five year period with attainment being generally significantly much higher and higher at these levels when compared with the VC. Over the latest five year period, attainment in literacy by S5 and by S6 is also generally significantly much higher and higher than the VC. By S5 and by S6, the majority achieved SCQF level 6 which is significantly higher than the VC.

- Performance in numeracy at S4 is strong. In S4 in numeracy, there are clear improvements in attainment at SCQF level 5 from 2018/19 to 2022/23. The school has performed significantly higher and much higher than the VC in the latest three years. There is a notable difference between the success young people have in achieving numeracy through units when compared to the percentage who achieve this through a course award at S4, by S5 and by S6. This remains an important area for improvement.

Improving attainment for all

BGE

- Staff in departments track attainment within CfE levels very well and this supports planning for interventions. Teachers track attainment across all stages of the senior phase very thoroughly. They have detailed data and information to support individuals and cohorts, and this enables interventions to be well planned. As a result, young people are achieving very well.
- By the end of S3, almost all young people are achieving third CfE level or better in all other curriculum areas outwith literacy and English, and numeracy and Mathematics. The high percentage of young people attaining at these levels has been sustained in recent years.

Leavers

- Attainment of young people leaving school is in line with the VC for 2017/18 to 2020/21. This includes the lowest attaining 20% of young people, the middle attaining 60% and highest attaining 20%. In 2021/22, the attainment of young people in the lowest 20% was higher than the VC and those in the middle 60% attained much higher than the VC.

Cohorts

- In S4, the lowest attaining 20% of young people have performed significantly much higher and higher than the VC in four of the last five years. By S5 and by S6, the lowest attaining 20% generally perform in line with the VC apart from two years out of five, where performance was significantly higher than the VC. The middle attaining 60% of young people have performed significantly much higher than the VC consistently over the last five years in S4. By S5 and S6, the middle attaining 60% of young people perform significantly much higher and higher than the VC. In S4, by S5 and S6, the highest attaining 20% of young people perform in line with the VC. This does not include two years by S5 where performance was significantly higher than the VC. There is no consistent pattern of improvement for this measure.

Breadth and depth

- In S4, almost all young people achieve five or more awards at SCQF level 4 or better. This is significantly much higher than the VC in four out of the last five years. The majority of young people achieve six or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better which remains consistently significantly much higher than the VC over the last five year period. A minority of young people achieve five or more awards at SCQF level 5A or better. This is also significantly higher than the VC over the last five years from 2018/19 to 2022/23.
- By S5, the majority of young people achieved six or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better from 2019/20 to 2022/23. This is significantly much higher and higher than the VC. A majority of young people achieved four or more awards at SCQF level 5A or better over the five year period. This is generally significantly much higher than the VC. The majority of young people achieved three or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better which has been significantly much higher than the VC.

- By S6, a majority of young people attained six or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better. This is significantly much better than the VC from 2018/19 to 2022/23. Performance at SCQF level 5A or better is also strong and significantly much higher than the VC in the latest two years. The majority of young people attained four or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better in the latest three years from 2020/21 to 2022/23. This is significantly much higher than the VC. At SCQF 6A or better, young people generally perform significantly higher than the VC. A few young people attained one or more awards at SCQF level 7C or better which is generally in line with the VC.
- At S4 in 2022/23, 68% of young people were presented for 9 courses yet only 56% attained at SCQF level 4 or better and 21% attained at SCQF level 5C or better for 9 or more courses. Senior leaders explained the aspirational approach to presentation for a number of young people. The school should continue to review the number of courses young people are presented for in relation to their attainment levels.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Effective use of data is ensuring that the school is well informed about the achievements of young people in school and in the community. If participation drops, staff have an early conversation with the young person to understand the barriers and ensure that the offer is meeting their needs. As a result, most young people are gaining new skills, developing their confidence and improving peer relationships. A few young people are not yet involved in any activities. The school should continue to build on the tracking system to highlight the skills gained through participation in clubs.
- The Positive Parenting programme is supporting young people to consider their future choices. Through the RespectER programme, a targeted intervention for young people displaying risk taking behaviour, young people are increasing engagement in learning, building communication and resilience skills. Young people who were specifically targeted to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award have successfully completed their silver award. As a result, young people are more confident to consider further volunteering and employment. Whilst a range of accredited awards, such as Saltire, John Muir, Duke of Edinburgh are in place, the offer to young people is much broader. Young people would benefit from accreditation of existing activities to gain externally validated recognition for their skills and achievements.
- The positive and respectful relationships between young people, staff and key partners such as youth workers is valued by young people. Young people are confident to approach staff and youth workers if they need further support with any aspect of their life. At the Friday Club, school staff often participate in sports activities led and coached by young people. This joint activity is continuing to build relationships between teachers and young people, resulting in improved engagement in learning.
- Volunteering and leadership are supporting further education aspirations and career in school and in the community. For example, young people plan and lead a range of sports sessions through the Sports Leaders Academy. They support younger peers in school and attend local primaries to support transition work. This has also led to paid employment.
- There is a consistent and embedded approach to celebrating young people's successes. Recognition of achievement, both in school and in the community, is linked with the school values of RESPECT. Regular postings on social media, on school notice boards and at assemblies is an ongoing positive experience for young people. In addition to monthly certificates, the effective tracking of achievements produces a certificate presented at an

annual celebration event. As a result, young people feel recognised, supported and encouraged.

Equity for all learners

- The attainment of young people leaving school living in SIMD decile one, using complementary tariff points, is in line with the national figure in the latest year 2021/22. The attainment of young people living in SIMD decile two has been significantly much higher in two of the last five years. Senior leaders and teachers have robust strategies in place to ensure that no young person is at risk of underperforming as a result of socio-economic disadvantage. SIMD data is analysed and discussed regularly by senior leaders and teachers. Staff can link this data confidently to identify potential links to the lowest, middle and highest attaining cohorts of young people. This is helping to ensure that staff are equipped with strategies to support all cohorts of young people to be as successful as they can be, and to remove potential barriers to their success and learning experiences.
- Senior leaders have deployed resources using PEF funding well to appoint additional staffing to key support posts. This is having a positive impact on the outcomes of targeted groups of learners. Senior leaders should continue to ensure the sustainability of the very valuable achievements and improvements that have arisen as a result of these additional resources. The deputy headteacher recently delivered a presentation at a national DYW event to the cabinet minister in relation to raising attainment and improving school destinations.
- Initial leaver destinations are positive with almost all young people entering a positive destination over the last five years. In the last two years, 2020/21 and 2021/22, the school performed significantly much higher than the VC where young people achieved a positive destination. This is over 4% higher than the VC.

Practice worth sharing more widely

The collaborative whole school approach to leadership is a key strength worth sharing more widely. All staff and young people are involved in agreeing whole school priorities and in making changes for improvement. The approaches to involving partners to support all young people in a bespoke and inclusive manner is resulting in greater levels of inclusion and increased wellbeing for young people. The approaches to anti-bullying involving young people. This is enabling them to have a clear understanding of how to behave and how to self-manage. The result is a much lower incidence of bullying.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

23 January 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

In October 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Barrhead High School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher in creating a culture where all staff and young people lead change and improvement effectively across the school. These changes are well informed by robust approaches to monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. All members of the school community are highly committed to creating the very best experiences for young people. The school vision underpins all of the work of the school and drives a culture of very high expectations.
- The very strong use of digital technology by teachers to motivate learners and provide them with very high quality feedback. As a result, young people enjoy learning, and are able to confidently discuss their strengths and their next steps. Commendably, parents/carers are also able to access a digital platform to further support learning at home.
- The school's outstanding approach to seeking and acting upon the views of young people. Young people feel respected and highly valued. They are fully involved in decisions about important aspects of the daily life of the school. This approach to empowering young people is resulting in a strong sense of belonging and high levels of motivation.
- The school's excellent approach to working with partners to support and plan for young people's health and wellbeing. Supports are planned carefully with the full involvement of young people and families. This ensures that the needs of individuals and groups of young people are a high priority and are very well met.
- The very strong focus on the progress of young people. Staff use data exceptionally well to ensure all young people are supported to achieve their very best. As a result, attainment is very strong and young people at all stages make very good progress in their learning.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from East Renfrewshire Council.

- Continue to build on highly effective practice in learning, teaching and assessment.
- Develop approaches to skills development so that young people can confidently discuss what they gain from their participation in wider achievements.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Barrhead High School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	excellent
Learning, teaching and assessment	very good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	excellent
Raising attainment and achievement	very good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

[Details](#) | [Find an inspection report](#) | [Find an inspection report](#) | [Inspection and Review](#) | [Education Scotland](#)

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. East Renfrewshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Ann Floyd
HM Inspector