



Braes High School Standards & Quality Report 2023/24



Falkirk Council
Children's Services

The purpose of the annual Standards and Quality Report (SQR) is to record the successes and achievements in delivering improvement relating to the identified priorities in the improvement plan 2023/24.

This report hopefully provides a helpful summary for parents/carers and other stakeholders, of successes and achievements in academic session from August 2023 - June 2024, and outlines priorities for session 2023/24.

Context of the School/ELC Setting

Braes High School: Vision, Aims and Values

Our vision at Braes is to ensure that every pupil in our care feels valued, respected and challenged. Braes High School aims to be a school of the highest quality, providing an education which is appropriate yet challenging to all our young people. As part of our ongoing self-evaluation, we continue to develop and refine our courses and curriculum to ensure our young people are well prepared with the skills required for our ever-changing world of work.

Our motto "Build Respect and Earn Success - Be Part of It!" defines the school and remains significant in building our school vision and ethos which continues to flourish. Through our commitment to restorative practice, we build respectful relationships and encourage hard work in order to gain success. Our pupils fully immerse themselves in the wide and vast ranging opportunities available - both in school and within the community.

We are certain that by developing skills - both academic and personal - that our young people will thrive throughout and beyond their school years at Braes High School.

School Context

Braes High School is a six-year comprehensive school serving the communities of Avonbridge; California; Standburn; Maddiston; Shieldhill and Wallacestone. Our school roll is estimated to be 1120 pupils in session 2024/25. We have a thriving Pupil Council, Parent Council and an association from parents and friends entitled Friends at Braes (FAB) who fundraise and support us at school events.

Our three priorities are:

- further improving outcomes for all learners
- further Improving our learning provision
- further enhance our leadership and approach to Improvement

We are clear that our school must continue to look forward, be ambitious and continually seek to improve further. This view is based on the recognition that our young people in school deserve no less than this, and that we as colleagues wish to continue our professional development.

Section 2

Review of progress for 2023 - 24	
Priority 1: Further improving outcomes for all learners	
<p>NIF Priority/Driver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and ELC leadership S/ELC Leadership • Teacher and practitioner professionalism TPP • Parent/carer involvement and engagement PIE • Curriculum and assessment CA • School and ELC improvement SI • Performance information PI 	FC Service and School Improvement Priority
HGIOS?4 QIs 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 1.2, 1.3	Has this work been supported by PEF? yes/no
<p>Progress and impact (based on outcomes for learners) How well are you doing? How do you know?</p>	
<p><u>Focus on Health and Wellbeing</u></p> <p><i><u>Context</u></i></p> <p>In Braes High School we are a community that values, supports and prioritises positive wellbeing for all. Wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do in Braes High School and is reflected in our school motto, "Build Respect and Earn Success, Be Part of It". We prioritise the wellbeing of every member of our school community to create a positive environment for young people to achieve success and this is embedded in our ethos and practice which impacts positively on our young people's experience.</p> <p><i><u>Impact</u></i></p> <p>Our strategy has three strands:</p> <p><i><u>Robust structure, procedures and practice</u></i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. House team structure with weekly, targeted, house team meetings that take place on a weekly basis. 2. Wellbeing referral system that allows staff across the school to identify and record wellbeing concerns and interventions to be applied. 3. Our pastoral structure and approach ensure young people are listened to and can discuss all aspects of their lives while enabling us to assess and respond to wellbeing needs on a universal and individualised basis providing suitable and early support and facilitate appropriate learner pathways. 4. Time is given to support productive working relationships across our school community through a range of formats including weekly collegiate self-improvement meetings, 	

practitioner enquiry groups, improvement planning working groups, self-evaluation sessions, staff led CLPL sessions and sharing good practice events.

5. All staff have engaged in professional learning relating to Children's Rights, Child Protection, GIRFEC and The Promise. These actions ensure that we have knowledgeable, informed staff across our school community which leads to pro-active, consistent support for our young people.
6. Young people, S1-S6 inclusive, represent the pupil body on our junior and senior pupil councils, providing pupil voice on strategic and operational planning and progress in school in relation to Wellbeing.
7. Pupil HWB Survey results for individual young people inform Pastoral Head and House Team decisions and sign posting to in school supports such as Key Teachers, school counsellor, Talk To Me, Braes Buddies, extra-curricular clubs, and external supports when required.
8. Young people have access to Pastoral staff, SDS staff and partners throughout their school careers to support decision making resulting in considered and maintained positive destinations.

Promotion of positive wellbeing and self-help, preventative, supports for young people, families and staff.

9. Braes Brightside, our hub of information, signposts to support and wellbeing challenges
10. Promotion of house identity and school ethos through house competition and assemblies.
11. Peer Support programmes: Talk to Me, BrAce Aware, Mental Health Awareness Project, MVP.
12. Respect is embedded in our school ethos and communicated through assemblies, staff professional learning and communication with families. Everyone in our school community is encouraged to treat themselves and others with respect creating a positive learning environment for young people.
13. Restorative approaches are embedded across our school community and used by all staff and at all levels in our daily interactions with our young people. This ensures a calm and solution focussed approach for young people when issues arise.
14. We take opportunities for staff to engage in professional learning relating to trauma - aware practice, nurture strategies, Talk to Me and restorative approaches to ensure staff across our school community are knowledgeable in factors influencing the wellbeing of our young people.
15. We have an in-school pupil support worker (trained counsellor) who is available to work intensively with young people who are facing difficulty.
16. We make use of and work with national and local wellbeing organisations to support young people and families and create our own, Braes specific, supports including Braes Brightside.
17. Gained Gold accreditation, and re-accreditation, as a Rights Respecting School.
18. Young people in Braes High School are given regular opportunities to evaluate their school experiences, through Braes Buzz and whole school surveys which influence school improvement planning and interventions.

Supportive, timely and appropriate interventions when required for young people, families and staff.

19. Falkirk Adult Mental Health Service parent information sessions

20. Onwards and Upwards referral system with support from Barnardos family Support
21. Referrals to partner services: TogetherAll, Kooth, FDAMH young person service, Barnardo's wellbeing service, Equally Safe.
22. Partnership referral and working with GPs, Intensive Family Support Service, Social Work and CAMHS.
23. Information regarding all of the above supports is also accessible through 'Braes Brightside'.
24. All young people with a learning support need have access to our Pupil Support staff and resources. Strategies to support young people are shared with staff across the school to ensure consistency of approach to support young people to reach their potential.
25. Partners including SDS, CLD, Barnardo's, Active Schools and our cluster primary staff are supported to be involved in all aspects of school life in Braes High School and we ensure they are aware of procedures and have staff to support them in school.

Next Steps

We will continue to prioritise the wellbeing of all members of our school community and look for opportunities to promote wellbeing as the foundation of our school community. In addition, we will create further opportunities for young people to influence our wellbeing strategy in school through the creation of a wellbeing forum including staff and young people from across our community

Positive Destinations

Context

Our aspiration in Braes High School is to ensure every young person is leaving to, and able to maintain, a positive destination. In order to fulfil this aim, we have implemented rigorous procedures, fostered positive partnerships and adapted our practice to support young people and navigate challenges. Every young person matters, we want to ensure that each of our young people is supported into relevant and appropriate opportunities and is leaving school ready for their next challenge.

Impact

- Tracking - We maintain a close track of all of our young peoples' intended destinations. This information is pulled in S3 and updated each year. The Pastoral Team track these destinations and ensure that courses meet the entry requirements for any progression pathway. These are updated throughout the year when destinations change or are found.
- Partnership working – We maintain positive relationships with various partners, including SDS and CLD, employers, including Ebony Joiner and The Inchyra Grange Hotel, and training providers, including Cloybank, Construct Ed and Professional Salon Training, to be able to provide a wide range of opportunities for young people.
- Volunteering – We have been able to reinstate a number of volunteering opportunities, particularly within our cluster primary schools, where our young people are able to develop the skills they need to take them into the World of Work.
- Course Choice and Careers– We know that correct coursing ensures the young people are more likely to succeed, so being transparent with the pathways they are offered supports them accessing courses where they will remain engaged and will achieve in. We have successfully re-engaged with employers, industry representatives and front-line workers to be able to facilitate our careers and course choice fayre in person this session providing face-to-face interactions. We also continue to develop our virtual platform which outlines each of the courses offered

across all qualification levels which allows families to discuss course choices and course refinements at home. The platform also includes over 50 videos, from school contacts outlining routes into and job requirements of their roles.

- Post school supports – We work closely with SDS to ensure all young people are sustaining their chosen destination.

Impact

Latest Insight data demonstrates the positive impact of these interventions. We have maintained our previous School Leavers Destination Result (SLDR) in securing over 98% of our young people gaining positive and sustained destinations in session 2022/23

Year	Positive Destination (%)
2019/20	94.23
2020/21	97.69
2021/22	97.34
2022/23	98.49

Next Steps

Next session, we want to develop our DYW strategy further in school to co-ordinate opportunities and support for our young people by scheduling regular meetings with our DYW team and providing drop-in opportunities for our young people. We will also reinstate regular opportunities to discuss young people with our pastoral team.

Supporting families – enhancing equity and reducing the cost of the school day through our Onwards & Upwards strategy

Context

Onwards and Upwards, our Pupil Equity Funded programme, tracks the progress of young people who are free school meal entitled, live in SIMD 1-4, or are referred by a member of staff. A wide range of staff and pupil facilitated, universal and targeted, interventions are available for young people and their families to remove poverty related barriers to learning, giving young people the opportunity to maximise their potential, regardless of their background.

Our aspirational approach helps remove barriers to progress for protected learners, impacting positively on their learning experiences and outcomes.

We continue to focus on increasing awareness within our school community around the cost of the school day and of the supports available in school to maximise income for families. As well as creating a dedicated COSD section within our school website we have hosted pop up shops, provided parcels for those in need and Braes Backpacks full of resources for pupils joining the school as our new S1. We continue to focus on closing the gap in the classroom through targeting and supporting specific young people with dedicated PEF year leads to ensure every Braes pupil can maximise their potential regardless of their socio/economic background.

Impact

- Income maximisation - Since August 2023, 21 families have been referred directly for support. More than £54,000 in benefit gains has been achieved for those households, an average of over £2.5k for each family supported through the project.

- Our Cost of the School Day Pupil Group continues to develop and participated in a Parliamentary roundtable underlining the need for affordable uniform and clothing grant access, and delivered input to Faculty meetings discussing the hidden costs of education and giving staff a reminder of ways we can address poverty and support learners in the classroom.
- Lesson starters for pupils during Challenge Poverty Week, exploring different aspects of how poverty impacts upon the school day
- Focus on Free Travel to encourage sign ups to Young Scot.
- Braes Pantry - expanded to offer fresh and frozen items through National Lottery funding
- “Brew and Blether” - further development of parent / carer group. Parents/carers introduced Braes Bistro which provides low cost, home-made, microwaveable meals for young people and families.
- Barnardo’s - increased our offering of support to more families

Next steps

- Continue to evaluate our supports and respond to the needs of our young people and families through universal supports and targeted interventions where required.
- Further develop our support for literacy and numeracy to support vulnerable learners to develop skills that will allow them to access all areas of the curriculum successfully.

Further develop our young people’s study skills

Context

Our current support of young people is extensive and is shared with our Senior Phase students and their parents at the start of the session. In addition to staff providing over 40 weekly subject specific sessions, we provide opportunities to ensure the best possible success for our Senior Phase learners. Our *Prepare to Pass* programme includes extensive subject specific support, but also highlights our weekly study cafes, our peer mentoring programme, Braes Brains, stress workshops, mentoring opportunities, Easter school and wide range of online supports.

Impact

To further prepare our young people for National Qualifications, we ran workshops for S4/5/6 pupils to ensure they understand the **Rigour, Aspiration and Perseverance** they will need for success in the Senior Phase. Our RAP workshops were run for year groups in September and then again in February by our Faculty Heads, to emphasise to young people the need to aim high, work hard and persevere with courses throughout the year. They also included strategies for dealing with stress at exam time. Pupil feedback from the workshops was positive and our whole school estimate data is looking healthy for this session.

Next Steps

We will continue to run RAP workshops for our new S4 and seek to ensure the supports on offer meet our young people’s needs.

Review of progress for 2023 - 24	
Priority 2: Further improving our learning provision	
NIF Priority/Driver:	FC Service and School Improvement Priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and ELC leadership S/ELC Leadership • Teacher and practitioner professionalism TPP • Parent/carer involvement and engagement PIE • Curriculum and assessment CA • School and ELC improvement SI • Performance information PI 	
HGIOS?4 QIs: 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 1.5, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2	Has this work been supported by PEF? yes/no
Progress and impact (based on outcomes for learners) How well are you doing? How do you know?	
<p><u>Continuing to develop our learning and teaching approaches</u></p> <p><i><u>Context</u></i></p> <p>Our approaches to Learning and Teaching are underpinned by our shared school vision and values – that every young person is given every opportunity to succeed, maximise their potential and experience enriching and engaging learning.</p> <p>In session 23/24 we placed an increased focus on improving our wide range of learning and teaching methodologies through our Braes Learning, Teaching & Assessment Framework. Pupils' experience of learning is enriched and supported by our effective use of digital technologies, Active Learning Techniques and AfL to promote creativity and confidence.</p> <p>All stakeholders are committed to achieving the best outcomes for our young people. Pupils are afforded the opportunity to lead and develop their own learning in consultation with staff, ELT and partners within the school community.</p> <p><i><u>Impact</u></i></p> <p>This academic session saw an increased triangulation between learning, teaching and assessment alongside our CLPL programme and self-evaluation strategies. Ensuring pupil voice was at the heart of this development, we sought views from our learners as to the essential key principles within our Teaching Framework. This was then devised into a pupil-friendly poster, presented in every learning</p>	

area and on every young person's iPad to ensure all stakeholders were aware of the standards expected within teaching and learning.

Alongside this, the LTA Working Group devised a clear outline of learning and teaching foci relevant to the key principles of the framework and linking to our in-house CLPL programme. For example, in October our LTA focus of the month was 'Lesson Starters and Plenaries'; along with creating space and time for practitioners to discuss and share practice we offered an in-house session focused on plenaries and starters which staff could make use of in lessons. Our self-evaluation leaders also led monthly surveys to establish the impact on pupil experience as a result.

The impact of this approach and implementation was recognised as part of our HMIE inspection visit whereby it was evident our framework and learning and teaching strategies are clearly embedded across the school and positively impacting upon learner experience.

Staff continue to show commitment towards improving the quality and standard of their teaching practice. This session also saw staff engaging in revised learning observations through more robust self-evaluation practices, paperwork and through learners being directly involved in evaluating the quality of lessons.

Next Steps

Moving forward, this session our focus will be on strengthening and enhancing the triangulation between the three strands of LTA, CLPL and Self Evaluation. Our priorities include improving our approaches to supporting learners, including differentiation and Afl strategies along with further engaging families with opportunities to learn together.

Review and further development of our Senior Phase Curricular Provision

Context

Strong attainment and creative curriculum development is deeply embedded at Braes and is central to our school's ethos, vision and success. Our Broad General Education offers a variety of opportunities for our young people to develop the skills required across a number of curriculum areas and our young people are able to begin specialising in subjects in S3, leading them on to studying courses which match their career aspiration in their Senior Phase. Our vision in session 23_24 was to further develop and grow these opportunities for pupils in the Senior Phase, in particular, focusing on offering curriculum options that allow pupils more choice, flexibility and opportunities to enhance their skills and achieve awards across a variety of levels. Whilst our S5 cohort typically go on to study Highers and Level 5 and 6 SCQF courses, our Sixth year cohort expressed some difficulty with accessing courses which provides them with skills for moving on beyond school.

Impact

In light of the current education review, we focused on two key areas: refreshing our curriculum rationale and diversifying our senior phase curriculum to include further opportunities for young people to study a range of SCQF qualifications and begin promoting greater parity between these

NQs and traditional National courses. As such, we now have a refreshed curriculum rational shaped and designed by all stakeholders along with a range of new courses on offer within our senior phase curriculum, including:

- Safe Road Users Award Level 5/6
- Tenancy Level 5
- First Aid at Work
- PC Passport L5
- Powering Futures Level 6
- First Aid Level 6
- NC Communication Level 5 in S3
- International Sustainability Diploma L6
- Achieving Excellence in Sport L6

Next Steps

Moving forward into session 24_25 our focus will be to continue to promote and publicise our refreshed curriculum rationale, curriculum pathways and grow additional Level 6 and 7 National Qualifications into our Senior Phase curriculum. Likewise, keeping a close eye on the Educational Reform and changes to local and national policy which may impact our curriculum structure.

Enhance opportunities for achievement and attainment

Context

At Braes High, we are committed to ensuring young people have the best chance to be successful. Recognising attainment and achievement and celebrating the success of young people is at the heart of all we do at Braes High School and is encapsulated in our motto “Build Respect and Earn Success – Be Part of It!”. Our school community offers a variety of opportunities for our young people to develop, show case and celebrate success and our vision is to ensure that we further grow these opportunities with input from our full community.

Impact

We are rigorous in our tracking of attainment and achievement, evidenced by our high levels of achievement and attainment. This session we introduced a new tracking, monitoring and reporting system, *Progress*, in consultation with pupils, parents and staff. We have been developing this to give us greater insight throughout the year to ensure our high standards of attainment are maintained. This involved consulting with key parties, communication with staff and parents, working alongside colleagues in other schools and regular meetings with the service provider.

Achievement is tracked using our *positive referral system* to log any achievements from both in the classroom and out with the classroom. This record is kept in our system for each learner. Any positive referral adds points to the individual learner’s record, used for our Celebrating Success Assemblies, and also generates an email to the family/carers of the learner so they too can read the positive referral.

We have developed and implemented our own *Achievement Database* to track the achievements of learners. The Achievement Database is stored online and keeps a permanent record of achievements that learners themselves have entered. It can be accessed by all pupils at any time through a tile on their Glow account dashboard. When learners click on this tile it takes them to a page where they can enter their achievements in four different categories – *in school, out of school, trips and other*

achievements. Once these have been entered, staff who form our *Celebrating Success Group* can access the database.

Whilst learners can enter an achievement at any time, there are also dedicated times across the school calendar where all learners have the opportunity to update their own record in their Personal & Social Education lessons. Below are some examples of learner entries in the Achievement Database:

- In school – ‘interhouse activities’, ‘an award at Sports Award’, ‘my attendance has increased’
- Out of school – ‘Air Cadets’, ‘learning guitar’, ‘raising money for charity’
- Trips – ‘Flourish trip’, ‘school basketball’, ‘Edinburgh Zoo’
- Other achievements – ‘positive referral’, ‘football trophy’, ‘Boy Brigade badge’

The data gathered in our Achievement Database is used in a number of ways.

Firstly, the Achievement Database allows interventions to be put in place for pupils who have not made entries and increase opportunities for young people to achieve. Staff work with pupils to help them better recognise achievements that they are accomplishing through their day to day lives. Furthermore, the database enables us to identify and put in place opportunities for learners to achieve through extracurricular clubs, supporting young people and families in an equitable way to participate in school trips, and to access opportunities through partners within the local community. Secondly, it allows us to gain a greater understanding of learners’ impact in the local community, and enhance pupil relationships by recognising and celebrating their successes out with school. Finally, it allows all learners to be recognised for their achievements and have them celebrated through the methods listed below.

How do we recognise and celebrate pupil achievements?

At Braes High School, every single achievement is valued. We use a range of different ways to showcase the achievements of our learners to ensure our entire school community is a part of celebrating the successes and achievements of our young people!

- Termly Newsletter - <https://sway.office.com/dQEX8YK7KIDtEWYb?ref=Link>
- Bi-Annual SWAY - <https://sway.office.com/bwcPnmaktS08K1yf?ref=Link>
- Social Media
- Celebrating Success Assemblies
- Braw Awards
- S1 & S2 Awards Ceremony
- S3 BGE Graduation
- Senior Awards Ceremony
- S6 Graduation
- Sports Awards Ceremony
- Activities Day
- Clubs and leadership activities (i.e.. Braes Youth Theatre, Digital Leaders etc)
- Showcase Events (Art exhibition, Music concerts, Drama performances etc)
- Department Pupil of the Month Awards
- School displays on noticeboards and screens
- Positive Referrals

Next steps

We will further develop our use of Progress to ensure we meet the needs of our learners and their parents, giving them clear information as to where they are with their learning and what needs to be done to get to the next level. Alongside this, our staff can clearly see where their learners are and plan their lessons to ensure success at the next level. We will continue to consult with all parties and work with the team at the authority to develop a system which provides us with the key data required to ensure our attainment continues to improve.

In terms of achievement, our next steps are to ensure we continue developing the wide variety of opportunities that young people have across the school to achieve through in class opportunities, extra-curricular opportunities and our leadership programme. Furthermore, we want to continue to recognise the successes of young people and celebrate these with our school community.

Learning for Sustainability

Context

Learning for Sustainability is embedded both across the curriculum and whole school community. In terms of the former there are a number of examples of departments exploring outdoor learning in their curriculum including Science and Geography who incorporate field work. Social justice, equity and global citizenship are embedded within Modern Studies and RMPS.

Impact

Both departments foreground a proactive approach to contemporary global issues where learners are able to understand their own impact locally, nationally and international as well as how they can take further action. All S3 pupils produced projects for the Global Moral Issues Fair this year on an international issue of their choice including climate change, conflict, inequality and racism. Sustainability, biodiversity and climate change have taken an increasingly central role across both stem and non-stem faculties including in the Creative Arts and Humanities. Both faculties have taken an interdisciplinary approach to these themes. For example, S2s created papier-mâché birds inspired by an artist who explores habitat loss and climate change through recycled materials. The birds were inspired by particular species and were decorated with placards and messages about the impact of climate change and other environmental issues.

Within the whole school a number of initiatives related to LfS have taken place led primarily by the Eco Committee, Junior Leadership Captains and Senior Rights Respecting School Group. In September the eco committee organised a harvest festival which explored our relationship to culture and place. S1s participated in a number of activities throughout the day including creating hairst knots, interviewing staff and senior pupils about the Braes community, learning about harvest festivals around the world and listening to a storyteller performing local tales tied to the themes of food, identity and place. Eco members have also completed a number of community litter picks this year and have been working on improving outdoor spaces to encourage outdoor learning. Members worked with Falkirk Waste Services to create a banner for the canal highlighting the links between biodiversity and litter prevention. Representatives of the eco group also attended the Falkirk Sustainability Fair to share the work they did in order to receive a Green Flag Award for the school. These initiatives will continue into the next session with a focus on getting more young people

involved in maintaining the outdoor space and increasing its flexibility for different learning opportunities. Eco members will also implement a recycling rota and continue to develop resources around single-use plastics.

During the second half of the year eco members and Junior Leadership Captains participated in a course led by Keep Scotland Beautiful about carbon literacy and became accredited climate ambassadors. They used that experience to develop and lead workshops for all S1 pupils in order to encourage a wider awareness about climate change. Pupils in other year groups also participated in carbon footprint workshops in order to deepen their understanding of the significance of their choices in relation to climate change. Eco members and senior RRS members are now working with Falkirk Council and One Carbon World to participate in the UN Carbon Neutral Now Initiative and develop a plan to become carbon neutral. Members of both groups have used this term to collect data and have received a grant from One Carbon World for that data to be analysed and a detailed plan to be put in place.

Next steps

Next session members of both groups will be working with Senior Management and the council to address each of the proposed targets. Our Pupil Sustainability Leadership Group have planned to deliver the authority's first pupil COP event and host it at Braes High School. This will involve local businesses, MSPs and be led by pupils with the aim of agreeing the first Falkirk secondary school charter, committed to achieving agreed sustainability targets.

Rights Respecting School / Building Racial Literacy

As part of our RRS agenda we have been working in conjunction with the authority on delivering and building our racial literacy awareness. This session we started by creating a working group of pupils and staff with the aim of looking at key terms and the idea of privilege. We completed an audit of the S1 & 2 History & Modern Studies courses to look for possible areas of diversity where possible. We also looked at what was already diverse about the courses. Our next steps are to audit the Geography and RMPS S1/2 courses with the group, looking for possible areas of diversity and what is diverse about the curriculum already.

Continued development of our digital learning experience:

Context

We know the positive impact Digital Learning has had on our community, as a way of developing both skills and knowledge. In collaboration with Connected Falkirk, we have continued expanding our digital learning offerings for pupils. These initiatives focussed on leveraging cutting-edge technology to enhance experiences and equip young people with essential digital literacy skills.

Impact

We have made significant strides in enhancing our digital learning infrastructure and capabilities. We successfully refreshed our PC infrastructure and implemented Windows 10, ensuring a modern and efficient operating system for all. A major milestone was the annual 1:1 device rollout for new S1s,

providing each young person with their own personal learning device. Additionally, we expanded the use of GLOW services to include Google Additional Services, such as Tour Creator and Maps, following the collection and implementation of explicit user consent, this was undertaken in partnership with the Digital Education Support Officer. Google Classroom has been further explored as a valuable tool for learning, and VR headsets have been integrated into the curriculum to offer immersive educational experiences. We also focussed on educating young people about the benefits and safety of Artificial Intelligence. There has been continuous investment in ICT resources across the school, strengthening our digital infrastructure. Our staff benefited from contributions to the Career Long Professional Learning programme, particularly through input from our Google Leaders, enhancing digital pedagogy and learning methodologies.

Next steps

We plan to further develop and expand our digital learning offerings in collaboration with Connected Falkirk. We will enhance the utilisation of additional GLOW services and ensure all necessary consents are in place. Increasing the use of Google Classroom as a central tool for learning is also a key priority. We aim to further integrate VR and other cutting-edge technology into various curriculum areas, enriching the learning experiences. We will continue to educate young people on the safe and beneficial uses of Artificial Intelligence. We will maintain our investment in ICT resources to support ongoing advancements in digital learning – including in digital information signage across the school campus. Continuing our CLPL programme will also be crucial, with a focus on innovative digital pedagogy and learning methodologies.

Refresh our tracking, monitoring and reporting approaches

Context

Parental feedback highlighted a desire for more comprehensive information about their children's learning journey and how they can support them. To address this, we refreshed our monitoring, tracking, and reporting systems for both the Broad General Education and Senior Phase. We successfully implemented a new online system called Progress. This initiative focussed particularly on sharing clear information about where a young person is with their learning and how young people can be supported in making their next steps in learning.

Impact

We successfully introduced a new reporting, monitoring and tracking system to provide clear and accessible information to pupils, parents and staff about a learner's academic progress. We produced a number of guides, including information about levels in the Broad General Education to support parent understanding of a young person's progress. Additionally, we began to explore the use of Google Classroom as a Home Learning Tool to facilitate better communication between the school and home, providing an email based system where parents can track assignments and educational activities. These initiatives are part of the package of tools we are using to ensure that parents have the necessary resources and information to support their children effectively.

Alongside this, we have further strengthened our tracking of cohorts in order to identify suitable interventions where necessary. We have shared the whole school data with all staff in an accessible way, which allows faculties to plan, adapt and develop to ensure learners maximise their potential in their subject area.

Next steps

We aim to continue enhancing parental confidence by providing clear and consistent information about the supports available for pupils and their families. We plan to further develop and refine our monitoring, tracking, and reporting systems to ensure it meets the needs of all stakeholders. This includes increasing the functionality and accessibility of the Progress reporting system. We will also continue to evaluate integrating Google Classroom as a central tool for communicating home learning with families.

Refine and relaunch of Braes Skills for life, learning and work

Context

Our existing skills framework was developed in 2012 and then underwent a refresh in session 2019/20, just as Covid hit. While skills development is embedded in our curricular provision, we were keen to revisit this and identified the Gen+ platform as a dynamic means of focusing on skills development across the S1 curriculum.

Impact

We introduced the Trailblazer course to S1 pupils, which focused on Communication, Organisation and Resilience skills. All curricular areas were involved in the delivery of skills-focused lessons using the Gen+ platform. The Pastoral Team carried out a full evaluation with pupils, which was extremely positive, and informed our decision to continue with the platform for all S1 to S3 pupils in session 2024/25.

Next steps

We are going to extend our Gen+ skills programme to include all pupils in the BGE, and hope to bring some of our cluster primary schools on board. The S3 Innovator course, is project-base and focuses on Adaptability, Creativity and Critical-Thinking skills, which will be a good preparation for their transition to the senior phase.

Enhancement of Pupil Voice

Context

Pupil voice is a crucial element in driving the school's improvement agenda. By enhancing and bringing together our Pupil Council and Self-Evaluation Leaders groups under the Pupil voice banner, we involved a broader pupil base and offered more opportunities for pupil leadership.

Impact

We formed a new Pupil Voice Group. This group was rebranded with the strapline "Our Voice Matters" and a new logo to emphasise its importance and inclusivity. To ensure broader participation, we removed the previous class-based voting system, allowing any young person to complete an application form to join the group. The Pupil Voice Group was tasked with focusing on the strategic influence of six key improvement areas within the school. To celebrate and recognise the contributions of these leaders, we organised an end-of-year celebration known as the Pupil Voice Festival, which involved all young people in the Broad General Education.

Our Self Evaluation Leaders were integral to gathering reliable, regular and systematic data throughout the course of the year through our Braes Buzz initiative. As well as gathering feedback on our Teaching and Learning Foci of the Month, they helped to design and contribute to our new learning observation paperwork, delivered CLPL sessions to staff on preferred teaching methodologies, presented to parents and carers the impact of Braes Buzz and led a pupil session on learning styles.

Next steps

Our next steps involve continuing to increase the number of pupils engaged in whole school improvement priorities and ensuring their voice is heard. We aim to further recognise the importance of pupil voice across the school community and ensure that young people have a significant impact on school leadership. We will continue to encourage broader participation in the Pupil Voice Group and ensure it remains focused on strategic improvement areas. We also plan to sustain the momentum by organising regular events and initiatives that highlight the importance of pupil contributions to school development.

Our Self Evaluation Leaders now plan to assign key roles and responsibilities to all members to ensure an equal spread of learners attending SLT meetings, Parent Council Sessions and staff CLPL. A strategic plan to celebrate impact of their work will also be devised along with more involvement for learners to be involved in learning walks.

Literacy & Numeracy

What we did

Our Literacy and Numeracy working group have worked to establish strong partnership working across all Faculties, including our cluster, to ensure all subject areas are contributing to the assessment and planning of literacy and numeracy outcomes from S1 to S2. All faculties were asked to choose a topic/unit of work where they would organically assess within literacy and numeracy. The English and Maths staff liaised with each faculty to visit CSI sessions to discuss criteria and the selected piece of work. The levels generated were then moderated to form part of the wider tracking and monitoring of literacy and numeracy. This session, we have continued to closely monitor pupils in the BGE, through teacher judgement and SNSA data to identify young people who required interventions in literacy and numeracy to ensure they achieve their potential by the end of S3. SNSA data has also been shared with all staff to ensure that this becomes a collaborative approach.

In addition, we have worked closely with our cluster colleagues to plan the learning to ensure that we are making the transition process as smooth as possible. This has included staff working within the primary cluster schools to improve skills and knowledge.

Impact

Staff have become more familiar with the benchmarks for BGE literacy and numeracy, which has resulted in increased confidence when approaching the assessment of work using the specified criteria.

Our latest S3 authority data collection continues to be in line with our expectations and plans are in place to gather evidence for our most vulnerable learners.

S3	% at L3 or better
Reading	98%
Writing	98%
Listening	97%
Numeracy	95%

Our Insight data highlights our consistently high levels of Literacy and Numeracy Attainment by the end of S4:

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Pupil Gaining Level 4 Literacy by End of S4	99%	99%	98%	99%	99%	98%	96%
Pupil Gaining Level 5 Literacy by End of S4	98%	98%	95%	98%	96%	96%	91%
Pupil Gaining Level 4 Numeracy by End of S4	97%	97%	98%	100%	97%	98%	98%
Pupil Gaining Level 5 Numeracy by End of S4	74%	75%	90%	92%	88%	86%	84%

Next Steps

- Extend and embed a tracking system into the whole Broad General Experience, inclusive of S3.

- Provide updates on progress being made in school with this area of development.
- Develop family learning sessions with the focus being on learning together and provide opportunities to explore how best to support their young person at home.
- Learners being given opportunities to reflect on how they have used literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Strengthen links already in place with Cluster primary schools to allow for a more progressive 3-18 curriculum.

Priority 2: Further improving our approaches to leadership and improvement

NIF Priority/Driver:	FC Service and School Improvement Priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and ELC leadership S/ELC Leadership • Teacher and practitioner professionalism TPP • Parent/carer involvement and engagement PIE 	
Curriculum and assessment	CA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and ELC improvement SI • Performance information PI 	
HGIOS?4 QIs: 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 1.5, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2	Has this work been supported by PEF? yes/no
Progress and impact (based on outcomes for learners) How well are you doing? How do you know?	

Focus on professional learning

Context

Professional Learning and Practitioner Enquiry is the main driver of our Cluster's ongoing development. As professionals, we know that teacher efficacy has the most significant influence on the learning experiences and outcomes of young people. Teachers within Braes High School are intrinsically motivated to be critically reflective and to engage with new and emerging ideas about teaching and learning. This session all staff at Braes High School have engaged in cluster curriculum groups with all colleagues from our primary and early years sectors. These groups have met regularly throughout the year, assessing the learner journey through the 3-18 curriculum, and driving forward improvements across the 14 different curriculum groups.

Braes High School runs an extensive programme of in-house CLPL sessions. Our programmes are delivered online as well as in person with a focus of improving learning and engagement and in particular active approaches to learning. Staff have led sessions offering their expertise on a range of teaching strategies. Each programme includes around 5-10 sessions under a particular theme. These

sessions are recorded and uploaded to our whole staff Team page to reach a larger number of practitioners. This gives staff the flexibility to engage with the learning at their own pace. Furthermore, as part of our reflective practices, we have uploaded snippets of some sessions to our website with the aim of sharing good practice.

Impact

Following each programme there is the opportunity for our stakeholders to provide feedback regarding areas of strength and areas of development. This includes feedback from pupils, parents and staff. Working collaboratively as a learning community gives us the opportunity to further improve our learning and teaching strategies and, in turn, ensures a positive outcome for all learners. The impact of these programmes is evident in the attainment of our young people, with pupils performing either in line with or above expectations in relation to perceived deprivation, and achievement in Literacy and Numeracy significantly outperforming expected standards by pupils deemed to be our most deprived, and also among those pupils with Additional Support Needs. After each CLPL programme, staff have the opportunity to provide feedback on each session and suggest further areas to be included. In our most recent feedback form, our overall effectiveness scored 4.8/5. It is worth noting that this approach has been recognised with the awarding of Excellence in Professional Learning from the GTCS.

Due to these strong working relationships, we believe the following has been achieved:

- ✓ Staff are engaged in personally identified, self-motivated approaches to CLPL
- ✓ Staff are given the opportunity to self-evaluate, share and critically converse around their practice and any methodologies they have tried within the classroom
- ✓ Staff have built strong connections with cluster staff with the shared aim of improving outcomes for pupils within our shred community
- ✓ Pupils are reaping the benefits of this professional development through the service they receive in the classroom

Next Steps

In session 2024-2025, we aim to further develop the focus of our CLPL programmes on Active Learning in the Classroom. This will coincide with the launch of our refreshed approaches to the basics of leaning and teaching – The Braes Standard which will be an interactive working policy based around the expectations within learning and teaching at Braes High School. There continues to be an appetite amongst staff to collegiately work and refresh our knowledge on active learning strategies to promote engagement and attainment in the classroom. We are continuing to add recordings and reading materials to our CLPL website. This resource will also be used during our ERD process.

In addition, during our self-evaluation process, some colleagues have requested the use of podcasts to deliver our CLPL sessions. We aim to start using podcasts as an additional resource in session 2024-2025.

We will continue to build on our cluster work with more flexibility for staff to choose their enquiry and develop further our partnership work with Primary cluster colleagues in particular focussing on cluster curriculum development and sharing of good practice.

Refresh pupil leadership programmes

Context

Developing pupil leadership is an important part of the ethos at Braes High School. There are an extensive range of opportunities for young people to develop their leadership skills as part of their learning experience. This ensures that young people move on from Braes high with skills and qualities that enable them to move into positive destinations.

Impact

Our leadership offering ranges across different context; in the classroom; Faculty leadership programmes; whole school leadership opportunities. In the classroom, learners are given opportunities to lead their own learning and develop their holistic learning skills. Faculties across the school continue to provide leadership opportunities through various leadership roles for young people. Examples of these include; STEM Leaders; Digital Leaders; Sports Leaders; Language Ambassadors; Literacy Leaders; Numeracy Leaders as well as a range of extra-curricular opportunities that pupils can participate in. Learners who are part of these leadership roles have various responsibilities that contribute to the ethos of the school. These pupil leadership roles are also part of whole school groups. For example, Pupil Voice Group; Self Evaluation Leaders; Rights Respecting School Leaders.

Next steps

The next steps are to continue to provide leadership opportunities across the school day for all learners to participate in. Next session, there will be a focus on our leadership programme for S1-3, ensuring that the wide range of opportunities on offer are clear for young people and linking this to our celebrating success offering.

Refresh leadership opportunities for staff

Context

All staff lead the learning of young people daily, therefore continuing to refresh leadership opportunities of staff ensures that the learning experiences of young people remain high quality across the school.

Staff have opportunities to lead on various working groups across the school linked to whole school priorities such as Literacy and Numeracy; Self Evaluation; Learning and Teaching. All staff are also engaged in our cluster curriculum working groups and leading their own practitioner enquiries, with a strong focus on improving teaching and learning methodologies. As part of our own Professional Learning programme, staff with expertise in particular areas are leading other staff in these sessions, developing and building the capacity of all involved.

Next steps

Our next steps are to continue to provide staff opportunities to develop their leadership both in the classroom and across the school community. Our focus next session is to continue engaging with other schools and agencies to support the growth of staff. For example, working with Insight to develop data literacy in staff that allows us as a school to drive forward improvements to learning and teaching; pathway development and positive destinations.

Section 3

Key priorities for School Improvement Planning 2024- 2025

This section should articulate with the school improvement plan for the forthcoming session or plan cycle. It should focus on a small number of key improvement priorities which will be expressed as outcomes for learners (as they will appear on the strategic overview of the new improvement plan).

Key priorities for improvement planning 2024-25

**Outcomes for Learners
Improving Learning Provision
Leadership Approach to Improvement**

We continue to focus on a set of core ongoing priorities, which include:

- Our ongoing commitment towards improving our Literacy & Numeracy levels*
- Continued development of our Digital Learning methodologies
- Supporting our learners through our Onwards & Upwards Programme
- Our commitment towards lowering the Cost of the School Day
- Maximising pupil attainment and achievement to ensure the leave school into a Positive Destination

The following priorities have been identified by key stakeholders:

Wellbeing, equity & inclusion:

- Further develop our whole school Health and Nutrition Strategy
- Further develop our wellbeing strategy with a focus on Equity and Equality

Further improving our learning provision:

- Continued development of our Learning, Teaching & Assessment Framework with a focus on AifL and supporting learners.
- Continued refinement of our BGE Curriculum with a focus on pedagogy and assessment
- Continue to develop our Learning for Sustainability Strategy
- Further development of our Progress Tracking system
- Further enhance our home learning offer and approaches
- Continue our relaunch of our Braes Skills through our GEN+ initiative
- Ongoing development of our Family Learning Strategy
- Ongoing enhancement of our school aesthetics

Further enhancing our leadership and approach to improvement:

- Continue to enhance our professional learning offer and opportunities for staff leadership
- Further develop our Pupil Leadership Strategy with a focus in the Broad General Education
- Further enhance opportunities to grow and recognise pupil voice at Braes

What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

A brief statement that reflects your current evaluation of your school's capacity for continuous improvement. This should link to each of the QIs you have graded below.

What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

As a school committed to critical reflection, with a well-established cycle of school improvement and self-evaluation activity, we are confident in our ability to continually build on and enhance the experiences and outcomes for our young people. These processes, combined with our investment in professional learning for all those who work with young people in our school cements this assertion. Similarly, the combination of quantitative data outlining continuing improvements in the outcomes for our learners, our analysis of areas in which we can improve further, and qualitative observations from an array of evidence sources, also supports our belief in our capacity to develop further as a school. In addition, the contributions of those who work with us, colleagues from our local authority and Education Scotland, parents/carers and community partners reinforce our aspiration to continually develop. Finally, the positive ethos within our school, resting heavily on the positive

attitudes of our pupils, allows us to conclude that we have the ingredients necessary to ensure the young people of Braes High School grow and learn in an ambitious and critically reflective school.

Summary of Self-Evaluation – Reference QIs

Primary / Secondary Self-Evaluation of the Core HGIOS?4	
	Self-Evaluation Grading
1.3 Leadership of change	5
2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment	5
3.1 Ensuring Equality, Inclusion & Wellbeing	5
3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement	5