

STANDARDS AND QUALITY AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD



2023/24



Inverness Royal Academy

HIGHLAND COUNCIL | CULDUTHEL ROAD, INVERNESS IV2 6RE

Commitment, Compassion, Honesty, Respect & Responsibility

School Profile

Pròifil na Sgoile

Inverness Royal Academy

Inverness Royal Academy is a non-denominational, comprehensive school, situated on the south side of the city of Inverness, one of the fastest growing cities in Europe. The school is the largest school in the Highlands and has a roll of 1319 pupils with a free meal entitlement of 13%. The school takes pupils at all stages of the secondary curriculum through S1-S6. Inverness Royal Academy is the designated Gaelic medium secondary school for Inverness with a number of subjects being taught through the medium of the Gaelic Language. The number of Gaelic Medium Education (G.M.E.) pupils at Inverness Royal Academy continues to grow. Currently there are 129 pupils in the Gaelic secondary school provision but many more have experienced Gaelic Medium Education at some point in their time at the school. The school has three provisions to meet additional learning and development needs. The enhanced provision ('West Wing') caters for young people from across the city. These young people have a range of additional support needs, primarily autism. 'The Bothy' provides individual nurturing interventions for young people in S1-S6. This is to reduce social and emotional barriers to learning. Three years ago, we opened an additional base 'The Shieling' to further strengthen inclusion (including those at risk of financial exclusion) and to encourage those young people with attendance concerns to return to school following traumatic periods of absence, including during and following the Covid 19 epidemic. Although staff are heavily committed to seeking additional support for young people, including with external partners, this is not always straightforward. Unfilled vacancies and lengthy waiting lists for services from partner agencies have inevitably impacted upon young people's health and wellbeing. These include Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services; educational psychology; children's services workers; social work practice leads and primary mental health workers. As a result, young people's access to appropriate pathways of support is negatively affected.

The school is led by the Rector, supported by 5 Depute Rectors, with a middle leadership team comprised of 16 Curriculum Principal Teachers and 7 Principal Teachers, Pupil Support.

We have a committed, highly skilled team of teaching and support staff. We are also fortunate to have school-based colleagues from Skills Development Scotland, Developing the Young Workforce, 'Motivation, Commitment & Resilience' Pathways. We often reflect that in our school we are a 'team of teams'.

A significant number of staff lead on whole school improvement priorities through our School Improvement Groups. These priorities form the basis of much of this report. We hope that by reading this report you will get a sense of the huge amount of work that contributes to making Inverness Royal Academy a successful, inclusive school in the heart of the communities it serves. Student Leadership also plays a critical role in the success of Inverness Royal Academy. School and House Captains work closely with senior leaders and principal teachers to create the inclusive house communities of Glamaig, Lomond, Slioch and Wyvis. Students have been at the heart of a number of successes this year, most notably becoming the only secondary school north of Perth to have been awarded a Gold Award as part of the United Nations Rights Respecting Schools scheme. Student leadership has also led to us being nominated as finalists in the Pride Scotland 2024 awards.

Overall, attainment across the school in literacy and English and numeracy and Mathematics is satisfactory.

We have temporarily excluded 51 young people this year. Exclusion is always a last resort, and we only take it when we think order and discipline in the school, and the education of other pupils will be badly affected if the pupil in question continues to attend.

Data relating to our context:

Pupil Numbers	Attendance	Exclusions	Teacher Numbers (FTE)
1319	86.26%	51	88.

S1 numbers	S2 numbers	S3 numbers	S4 numbers	S5 numbers	S6 numbers
218	240	243	259	182	176

SIMD Q1	SIMD Q2	SIMD Q3	SIMD Q3	SIMD Q5	Unknown
8.19%	9.70%	16.22%	44.58%	16.91%	4.62%

Overall ASN	Free School Meal	EAL	Glossary:
46.22%	13%	7%	FTE – Full Time Equivalent SIMD – Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1= % of pupils living in most deprived areas 5=least deprived areas ASN – Additional Support Needs EAL – percentage of learners for whom English is an Additional Language

Attainment

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

Level 3 2023/2024 Percentage of pupils achieving Curriculum for Excellence Levels by the end of S3

Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
95.27%	93.87%	91.51%	94.04%

Level 4

Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
57.55%	54.25%	60.38%	75.69%

Gaelic Medium 2023/2024 Proportion of pupils achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence Levels by the

Level 3

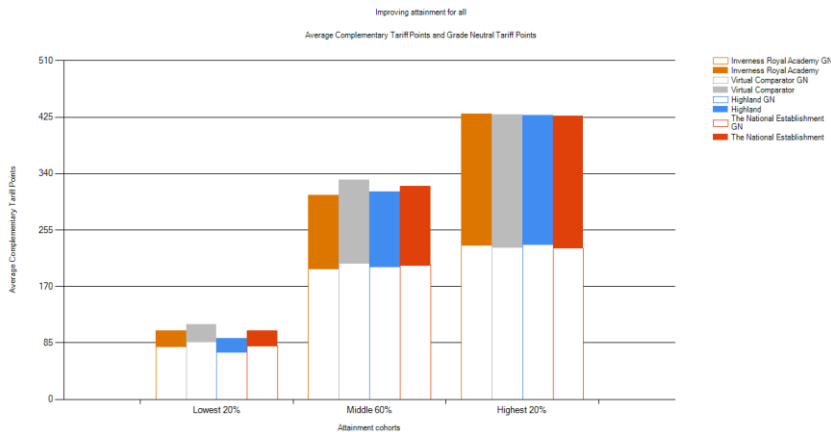
Gaelic reading	Gaelic writing	Gaelic listening and talking
100%	100%	100%

Level 4

Gaelic reading	Gaelic writing	Gaelic listening and talking
85.7%	85.7%	85.7%

Senior Phase

Improving Attainment for All: S4



S4 Highest 20%

- For the highest 20% for the first time in five years we are above our virtual comparator, Highland and National figures.
- Female students achieved the highest tariff points in five years (by 17 tariff points)
- Female students achieved the highest tariff points in five years (by 17 tariff points)
- Females, again, have the highest level of attainment in this quintile for five years
- Males significantly underperform in this quintile by an order of seventy tariff points.
- ASN pupils in this quintile were below both virtual and national comparators

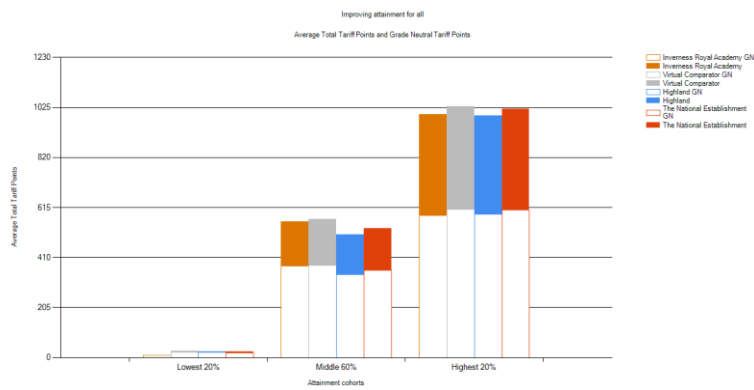
S4 Middle 60%

- Looked After Children's attainment was the highest in five years.
- ASN pupils were 27 tariff points above the virtual comparator and 34 points ahead of the National establishment.
- The tariff points for this group are the lowest in five years
- There is a very significant gap between students claiming free school meals and their peers. There seems little difference between genders.

S4 Lowest 20%

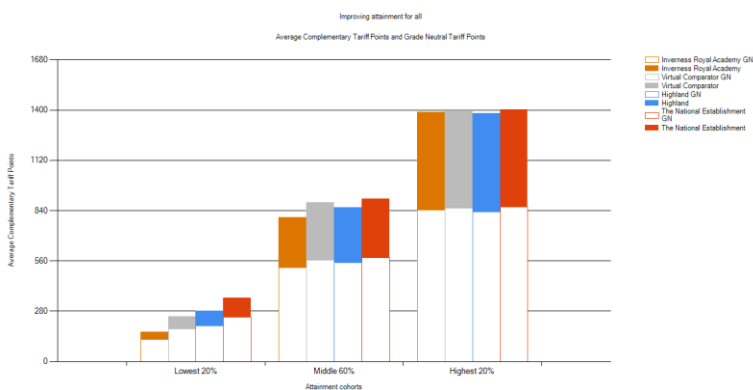
- Total tariff points for young people with additional support needs is the highest it has been in five years with a significant improvement compared to 2022
- There has been a significant improvement in the attainment of E.A.L. students and it is the highest in five years.
- There has been a marked improvement in the attainment of minority ethnic students and we rank above all comparison metrics.

Improving Attainment for All: S5

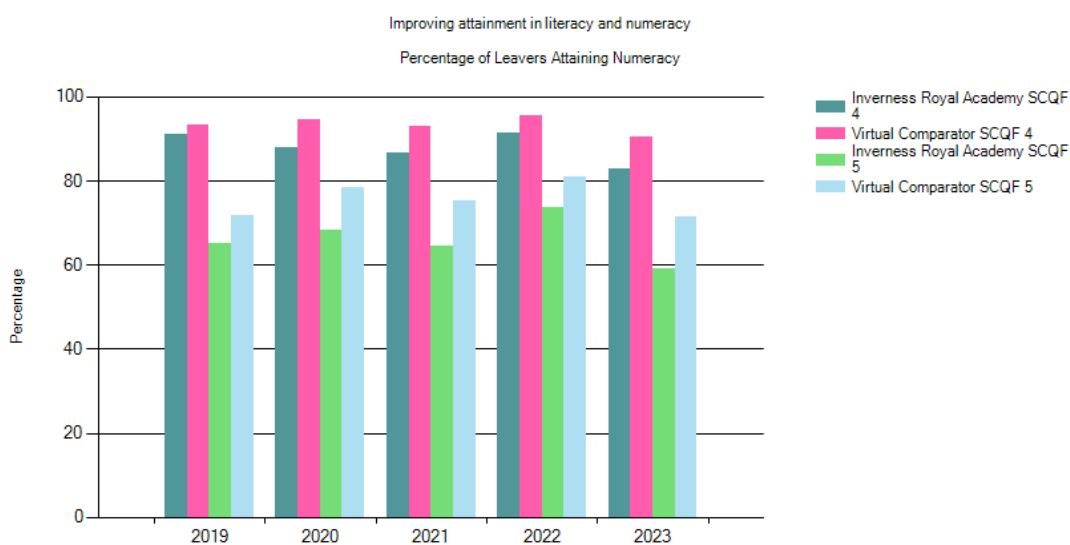


- While the attainment of students in the middle 60% is the highest in five years, it still lags behind V.C. but exceeds the performance of the Highland and National measures.
- The trend over the last five years has been slightly rising for the highest 20% with performance in the last two years lagging behind VC and National comparator metrics.
- Significant improvements in the attainment of pupils in Quintile 1 in both the highest 20% and the middle 60%. There appears to be no pupils in Quintile 1 who make up the lowest 20%
- Rising trends for 3+ and 5+ Level 6 performance
- Minority ethnic students in the highest 20% and middle 60% outperform the V.C.

Improving Attainment for All: S6



- At the highest level SCQF for the highest 20% students we have consistently outperformed the virtual comparator for five years.
- For the lowest 20% at Level 7 we significantly outperform the V.C. but are roughly in line with Highland and National measures.
- At level 6 for the second year we outperform the VC.



Literacy

S4 Literacy

Our levels of candidates achieving Level 5 literacy has been fairly stable. We are slightly below VC but there is an improvement on last year.

We continue to stretch our N4 candidates by sitting N5 literacy where appropriate. This has had a positive impact on our literacy levels.

There has been a slight improvement in L4 literacy this year and we are above VC which is pleasing. Department tracking and monitoring ensured that we 'caught' all pupils sitting N4 so that they completed their qualification. We also ensured that any N5s who were struggling had a back up N4 qualification

We have been banking N4 and N5 literacy qualifications in S3.

Our resulted entries at N5 is very slightly below national however we had few NAs at this level for size of cohort which would suggest that our judgement of pupils levels is accurate.

Our pupils with ASN performed well at both level 4 and 5 where we were above VC. However, pupils with FSM were below VC in both measures.

S5 & 6 Literacy

Our literacy levels are slightly below VC at levels 5 and 6 although by S6 our level 4 literacy is above VC.

Pupils with FSM performed in line with VC and exceed it at level 5 and level 6

Pupils with ASN were below VC.

There are 24 pupils in S5 whose highest literacy level is L4. Many of the pupils on this list have left school or there are issues with their attendance.

There are 5 pupils whose highest level is L3. Three of these pupils have left school, one is in the west wing and the other has moved to ESOL and is currently sitting N5.

The candidates who did not achieve literacy (8 pupils) are either non attenders, at The Bridge or HVA or have left school.

The English department continues to present a large Higher cohort -155 entries in S5 and S6 and has a positive presentation policy. This year the course comparator was -0.30 highlighting a need to further stretch pupils to reach the grade above. In particular the number of pupils achieving grade As is slightly down on previous years. In addition, we have more pupils achieving Ds than in previous years. However, only 5 pupils received NAs and this is due to strong tracking & monitoring in the department.

At N5 in S5/6, the number of pupils achieving a grade A was above national and Highland, however we had fewer Bs and more Cs than in previous years. However, this was a relatively small cohort (25 pupils). Any pupils who were at risk of not passing the course sat the N5 literacy unit if they had not achieved this in S4.

S4 Numeracy

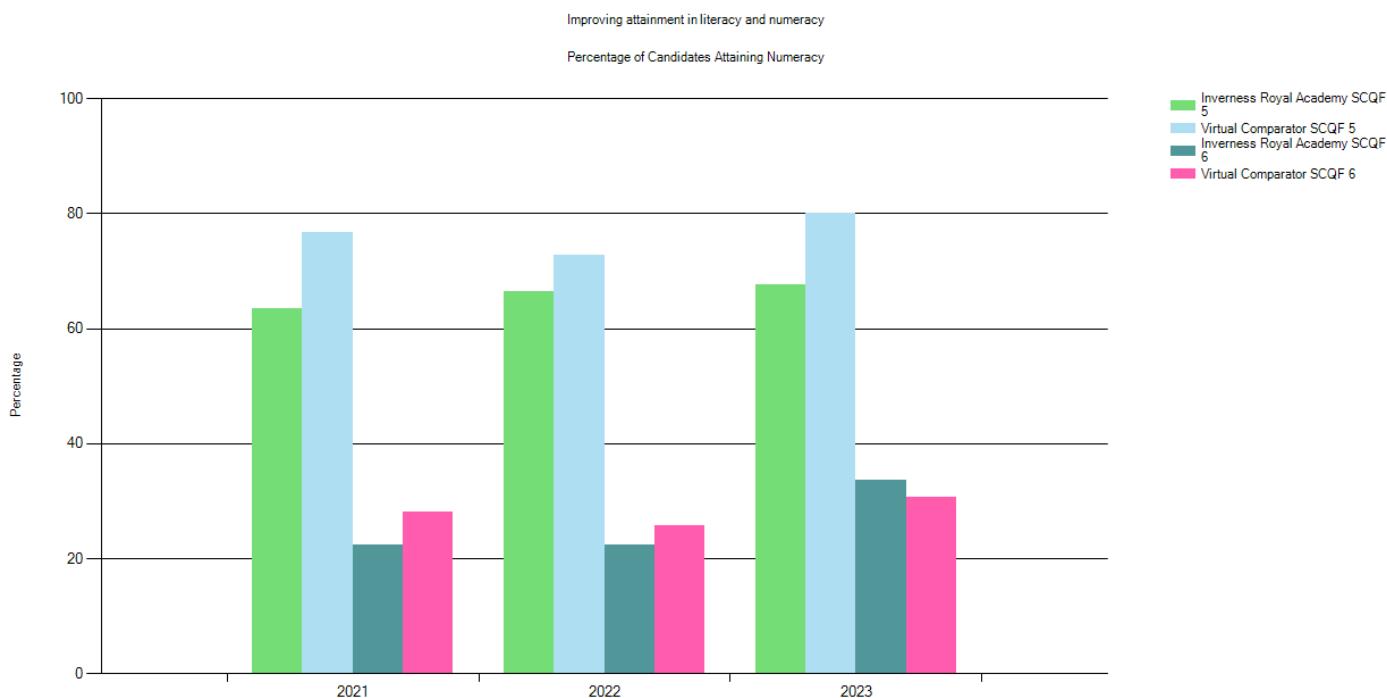
Mathematics N5 resulted entries were down on the national cohort however these figures did not take into account the presentations at Applications of Mathematics which is above the national cohort. Taken together the resulted entries for N5 Maths and Apps is 71% and the combined for the national cohort is 67.63%. Pupils who would not have attained a Maths N5 were gaining a qualification in N5 Apps. Entries at N4 in Maths were up on the National Cohort but down for N4 and N3 Apps.

In Numeracy at L5 there is no discernible trend but we are down on 2022. Levels 3 and 4 are up on previous years. In all measures we are behind the VC and significantly at Level 5. We are also behind the 2018/19 data for Level 5 but above at Level 4. Pupils with ASN are below the VC at Level 4 but we have closed the gap to the VC to 4% points. At L5 we are significantly below the VC

There were 28 pupils in SIMD Q1 and we are above the VC at L4 but significantly below at L5.

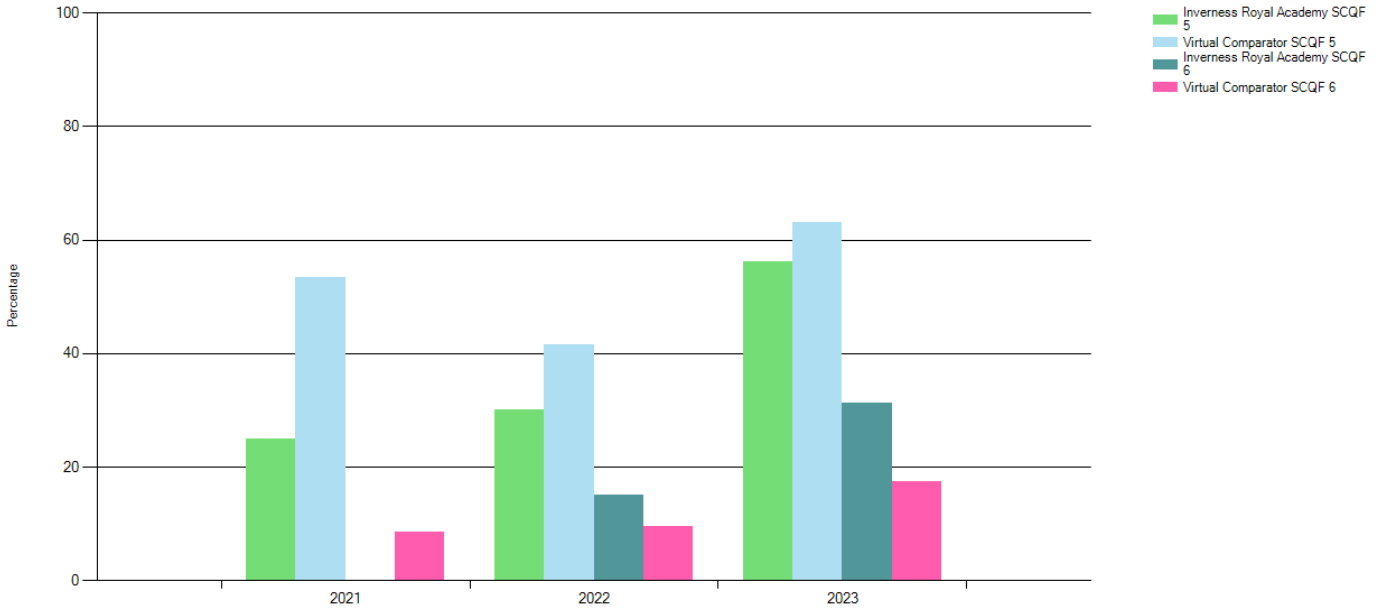
We will continue to use digital learning logs and any relevant data such as prelim results, NSA data etc to help target problem areas across the department and to continue to update courses.

In the coming session we will put a plan in place to get more pupils through either L4 or L5 Numeracy by the end of S4. This may involve pupils in S3 sitting N4 Numeracy and pupils early in S4 sitting N5 numeracy where appropriate.



Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Candidates Attaining Numeracy



In 2023 our Level 6 Numeracy for S5 outperformed the VC and the national figures for the first time. This will be due in some part to the introduction of Higher Applications of Maths which allowed pupils who would otherwise not have achieved a L6 numeracy qualification to do so.

Pupils in SIMD Q1 are above the VC at L6 but below at L5. The trend at L5 is upward and the gap is closing.

Pupils with ASN are slightly below the measure at L6 and further below at L5. There is no real discernible trend.

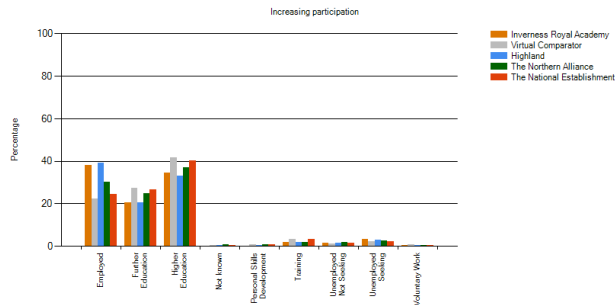
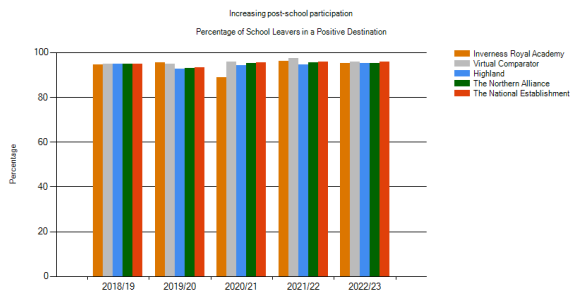
In numeracy at L6 we are up on the VC and our 2019 data. At L5 we are down on the VC but up on the 2019 figure.

The trend for the last 3 years at L5 is positive.

Destinations of School Leavers

95% of our school leavers go on to positive destinations which is around 1% less than nationally. More notably the destinations of our leavers differ significantly from our comparator school. Many more of our leavers go into employment (38%) compared to our comparator (22.3%). Our comparator school sees 41.5% of leavers go onto Higher Education compared to 34% of ours. Similarly, while 20.47% of our leavers go onto Further Education, a greater number our comparator school's leavers attend such institutions (27.4%)

The selected year is 2022/23



School Vision, Values & Aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile

Our school vision is for all of our young people to be **'Happy, Healthy & High Achieving'**.

Our core values are **Commitment, Compassion, Honesty, Respect & Responsibility** and we expect our young people to model these in every aspect of their lives.

Inverness Royal Academy and the foundation of the school and the grammar school that predated its royal warrant in 1792 were based on the ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment, which gave central importance to our ability to solve problems through the use of reason.

That optimistic belief in the ability of people to bring about change for the better in society and nature holds as true as our aim for us now in the 21st century as it did in the school in the 18th century.

Our aims include an offer of a wide variety of learning opportunities. We aim to engage every young person so that they are excited by learning and enjoy their time at school. Learning is at the centre of all we do, and we aim to encourage all of our young people to become independent, creative and confident learners.

Our primary aims are to encourage each student to be **self-confident, curious, tolerant, and positive**.

We hope to help develop each young person into a well-rounded character with an independent mind who respects the differences of others.

By the time they leave school, we want every young person to have that true sense of self-worth that will enable them to make their mark and make a difference and, in doing so, to be of value to society.

At Inverness Royal Academy, we strive to bring out the best in all of our pupils. In pursuing these broad aims, we intend to contribute significantly to the preparation of pupils for various adult roles in society, namely continuing education, employment, leisure, parenthood and citizenship.

We also hope to give our young people a sense of the heritage that stems from their Scottish, and, in particular, Highland environment including the place of the Gaelic language. We want them to be aware of the long traditions of the school, while at the same time fostering awareness of the place of our society in the wider international community

Review of progress of improvement plan projects for session 2023/24

Ath-sgrùdadh air adhartas airson an t-seisein

These projects are linked to the priorities for Scottish Education based on the National Improvement Framework aimed to deliver excellence and equity. Parent/Carer information is available [here](#).

School Improvement Plan Priority Example Ethos – Promoting Positive Relationships Policy into practice	
Summary of impact	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New Positive Relationships Policy implemented in November. This policy allows for the issuing of merit and demerits in classes. There is also a process whereby students can be transferred from class when their behaviour is poor. ✓ Rights Respecting Schools articles are incorporated into the policy, as it guidance on dealing with individual's needs and trauma-informed practice. ✓ 3,363 merits were issued this year, along with 792 demerits which reflects positively on the behaviour in school, the effective use of the system in recognising good behaviour and the overall embedding of the policy. ✓ As expected, the majority of merits/demerits were issued in BGE classes. ✓ 90% of teachers found the system easy to use and 60% found they were using the system at least once a week. ✓ The system was linked to our house group points system, another point of focus for the school in promoting a 'sense of belonging'. ✓ 70% of teachers feel it has helped to promote positive relationships in class. ✓ This year 232 students have been transferred from class. ✓ 85 of these transfers have resulted in the student no arriving to the school office. ✓ Effective and continued reference to school values in assemblies and staff meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ More can be done to promote positive use of the policy, especially when taking ASN and trauma into account. ➤ More sensible options can be taken when transferring certain young people to limit 'wandering'. ➤ Feedback from young people and parents is required. ➤ As an ongoing point, regular communication with staff will ensure the system remains as consistent as is possible. ➤ More can be done to promote 'playful' use of system in senior classes.

School Improvement Plan Priority 1: To achieve the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Gold Award	
Summary of impact	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Excellent progress was made in this area. Our 'Gold' accreditation visit took place on 8th May and, while we are still awaiting the final confirmation, our school looks set to be the first in the authority to achieve 'Gold' status. ✓ We have an active pupils and staff steering group who have worked on displays, embedding articles into the curriculum and promoting rights language across the school. ✓ We were heavily supported by parents and partners throughout the visit. ✓ Assemblies and registration classes were organised to allow time to reflect on and to engage with the 'Rights of the Month'. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We held our first 'Pupil Congress' where students had a chance to work in groups to create a new 'Rights Charter' for the school and to discuss the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Over 100 young people attended, as well as a member of the parent council. ✓ Teaching templates were shared with wider staff to help to embed rights across the curriculum. ✓ Training offered to staff from Highland One World. ✓ Our work was recognised with our nomination for, and winning of, a Proud Scotland award. ✓ Rights Respecting language and articles were incorporated into our new Positive Relationships Policy which has seen improvements made in relationships and behaviour in the school, evidenced elsewhere in this document. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Student and staff groups will continue to meet regularly. ➤ Pupil Congress will look at new issues in school and beyond, and will be held more frequently in the coming year. ➤ Our Youth Activism group is small but vibrant. More can be done to engage with UN's OutRight programme to help to promote global citizenship. ➤ Plans are in place to increase students' exposure to sustainability choices in the curriculum.

School Improvement Plan Priority 2: To introduce 'Teaching Sprints' (Learning & Teaching)	
Summary of impact	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teaching Sprints were successfully implemented and continued over a two-sprint run. Feedback from staff - quantitative/qualitative analysis of impact - feedback has since suggested that sprints were not a good structure for many staff/departments, but staff enjoyed having a clear, specific L&T focus area. Focus areas including questioning, retrieval practice and use of LI/SC. The decision was made to look at a more bespoke structure for IRA next session with the proposed introduction of "The Inverness Royal Lesson". ✓ A Staff CPD library was created with books ranging from learning & teaching strategies to staff HWB. This has been and continues to be well used by school staff. A professional lunchtime reading group was also formed - staff meet each term to discuss an article, journal or passage in relation to learning and teaching. A whole staff L&T drive created to store resources and files to share good practice to ensure L&T consistency across the whole school. ✓ Whole school focus incorporating learning community engagement - creation of retrieval practice booklets for pupils and parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ "The Inverness Royal Lesson" - a bespoke framework for lessons at Inverness Royal Academy that will form the basis for learning walks and observations in future. # ➤ Incorporation of AI tools and policy to support Learning & Teaching.

School Improvement Plan Priority 3: To close the attainment gap	
Summary of impact	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This year has focused on attendance with the Glasgow motivation and Wellbeing profile being carried out with all students S1-6. In addition, Alistair Mitchel (Educational psychologist) spent time talking with small focus groups asking questions in the four categories. Safe, Achieving, Respected and Teaching Styles. ✓ From the data affinity with the school was an area for development. and although pupils identified strongly as having friends a lack of a peer to discuss serious issues with came across as an area for development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This session has seen peer mentors attend training with the educational psychologist, covering the course for mentoring. We now have 20 trained mentors starting the session who will be paired with pupils. ✓ This new resource sits alongside our implementation of the other strategies in place to target attendance. Wandering has been reduced; attendance letters have been sent to pupils not attending on a regular basis whilst monthly SFMs bring in other professionals to help. The office produces attendance on a period by period basis for all SMT and guidance staff. ✓ This session a dashboard was created to analyse TMR data for S4 to S6 pupils at key points. Departments were asked to use this data to identify underperforming pupils and to target appropriate interventions. One of the filters allowed departments to drill in on SIMD levels and to target as appropriate. Departments were asked to make this a standing item at DMs. <p><u>The Bothy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 'The Bothy' continues to be an integral part of our support for FSM/SIMD pupils, both in S1 and S2 and, for a smaller number of students, throughout their time in school. ✓ Pupil surveys tell us that 95% of pupils rate the support base very highly and comment on the 'welcoming' nature of the space and that they feel 'more confident and happier'. ✓ Students have reported 'Being Outside' and 'Meeting New People' as being particularly helpful. ✓ Roughly one-third of pupils who access The Bothy also use this space to get breakfast in the mornings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will continue to build on how we use data gathered via TMR (via the dashboard), Insight, datasets etc. To identify and target pupils who are underperforming with a particular focus on SIMD Q1 ➤ There will be a review of the role of SMT and Guidance on period by period absence reports.

- ✓ 65% of pupils acknowledge that 'The Bothy' has helped them to manage their emotions more effectively and 95% state that 'The Bothy' helps them deal with school more generally.
- ✓ 80% of pupils feel 'The Bothy' helps them to improve their overall attendance.
- ✓ 46% of pupils feel that sessions in 'The Bothy' help the wider school to know more about how best to support them. This is an action-point for the coming year.
- ✓ 19 Pupils have been granted a subsidised place on an outdoor pursuits educational trip to the Alladale estate where they will focus on resilience and team-building skills.
- ✓ The majority of pupils engaged in interventions this term have been taken through a Youth Scotland Dynamic Youth Award.

The Shieling

10 school refusers offered support through: initial home visits, ongoing home visits, regular contact with parent/carer and student, attendance at SFM.

Total attainment supported

Senior Phase:

- 2 x Level 4 Mental Health and Wellbeing Award
- 11 Numeracy Qualifications (6 National 4; 5 National 3)
- 6 Literacy Qualifications (3 National 5, 3 national 3)
- 5 N4 Maths Qualifications (3 full award, 2 units only)
- 15 N4 English Qualifications (12 full awards, 3 units only)
- 4 N3 English Qualifications (full award)
- 2 N3 Maths (1 full award, 1 units only)

20 S4/5 students completed Level 4 Mentorship Award Theory Unit to prepare to be Peer Mental Health Mentors

- 5 Level 4 Volunteer Awards
- 1 Level 5 Travel and Tourism Award
- 1 Level 5 Creative Writing Award
- 2 N4 Biology Qualifications (1 full award, 1 units only)
- 1 N4 Geography Qualification (full award)

BGE

7 Personal Development Awards (Workplace Unit)
Subject-Specific support depending on need

39 students supported with classroom anxiety

S1/S2 Literacy and Numeracy Intervention

- ✓ 8 students identified as working below grade level in literacy and maths. Interdisciplinary project with individual targets (place value/sentence structure). All students met their individual targets and successfully planned and ran a Family Games Night.
- ✓ S1 Whole School Literacy support in collaboration with English Department - Literacy Lessons developed for all S1 students with the goal of upskilling staff as they work with small groups to implement reading and writing strategies aimed at closing the attainment gap.
- ✓ Pupil surveys tell us that 60% of students who have accessed the Shieling this year have felt supported in managing their anxiety, 10% have been supported in obtaining qualifications, 20% have been supported with their schoolwork, and 10% have felt supported as a result of having the space to work independently.
- ✓ Some pupil comments about whether they have felt supported this year:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “I have felt very supported to have somewhere to go if I need and get extra help with work. I am very grateful to have Shieling.” ✓ “it’s a place where you can go to get your work done because its relaxing and a comforting place” 	
<p>School Improvement Plan Priority 4: To improve our young people’s health and wellbeing</p>	
<p>Summary of impact</p>	<p>Next steps</p>
<p>House System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This year a working group in school put a particular focus on pupil’s ‘sense of belonging’ to school. A House Group system was one way of promoting this. S6 House Captain arranged events such as a football tournament, a rock/paper/scissors tournament, GymFest and many others. ✓ House group points were awarded for a wide range of interactions in school, both in and out of the classroom. Celebrations were held for the winning group (Lomond) at the end of term. ✓ House Captains spoke at all house group assemblies and engaged with younger pupils, also visiting their registration classes. ✓ A ‘Royal Games’ event, held during study leave, launched next year’s points system and served as a sports and games day for S1-S3. <p>Parental Survey</p> <p>79.5% of parents stated that their child likes attending the school. 86% felt their children were treated with respect. 88.8% felt that their child was safe in school. Toilets were a key issue which led to the appointment of a part-timer cleaner to help to monitor these tricky areas. 77.5% felt that the school helps their son/daughter feel more confident. 75.2% of parents stated that, overall, they were satisfied with the school. Where the responses were less positive tended to include high ‘Don’t Know’ responses with regards to assessment procedures, Parent Council matters, learning and teaching and the process of taking parents’ views into account.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parents also suggested sessions they might like to see in school to help promote wellbeing. Screen time was the most pressing issue for parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The high level of ‘Don’t Know’ responses to certain questions is a point of focus for the coming year. ✓ Parental event/information sharing about screen time.

School Improvement Plan Priority 5: **A' leudachadh cultar na Gàidhlig anns an sgoil / To Deepen the Gaelic**

Ethos of the School

Summary of impact	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Good Progress was made in this priority during session 23/24. Progress was made namely through the Gaelic department and the Gaelic working group. ✓ In session 23/24 the overarching GME Priority was to heighten the Gaelic Ethos in the school. ✓ The main strategy to engage staff and heighten the ethos of Gaelic in the school was a staff audit that sought views on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Perception of Gaelic as part of the school ✓ How do colleagues feel they engage with Gaelic culture in the school ✓ Ideas that colleagues have to further develop the Gaelic ethos in the school. ✓ As a result of the audit, staff sessions took place to learn basic Gaelic language that could be brought to classrooms across the school. 32% of staff responded to the survey. ✓ To make the language more visible, S1 pupils created Gaelic name plates for classroom doors across the school. This was a light touch approach allowing colleagues and young people to engage in the language more regularly. ✓ The senior phase Gaelic curriculum continues to expand its offer on the course choice form. The department now offer progression in all social subjects up to Higher which is a welcome addition from previous years. ✓ Scottish Studies has been driven forward by the Gaelic department in the school. The Scotland in focus unit is being delivered by the department and positive steps have been taken to deliver this unit in English & Gaelic language. ✓ The school continues to raise the profile of Gaelic culture through the use of outside agencies and partners. Most notably pupils participated in the Mod, Feis and Cafe Gaelic which is held each week. Cafe Gaelic has been a notable success with numbers increasing from around 8 regularly to approximately 25 pupils. Other notable extractions that offered opportunities to engage with Gaelic included: sporting events, literary opportunities, and drama events. These have been led not just by those in the Gaelic department, but by other teachers across the school who are choosing to engage in GME. ✓ The Gaelic department have made links with other centres and liaise regularly with colleagues to support GME in the school and across the country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue to heighten engagement within colleagues in the school. ➤ Improve the quality of Signage moving forward. ➤ Explore the possibility of tracking of school alumni into Gaelic related professions.

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund

Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

Literacy S2 group all improved reading age assessments

Numeracy – all pupils in target groups in S1, 2 and 3 now at least level 2, with feedback re improved number fact confidence

Successes & Achievements

Coileanaidhean nas fharsaing

3.1 Wellbeing & Inclusion

Development of the House System

We wanted to build the house system and house identity in order to ensure all learners feel included, engages and involved in the life of the school. We wanted to build the smaller communities of houses to ensure that being a pupil amongst many is not a barrier to participation and achievement and that young people's affinity to the school was improved. The key aims were to:

- Raise awareness of the House system
- Liaise with Positive Behaviour group /Learning and Teaching group about using individual points.
- Set up HG pupil councils which contain S1 - S6 with reps from all years.
- Bring back Inter House sports with a mix of year groups.
- Development of pupil leadership team to lead house assemblies.
- Ethos
- Use House Groups in curricular activities.

Summary of impact	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Made the house points relevant visual displays in the main atrium (token display, mounted on wall with designs etc)✓ Reward for the winning house for Prizegiving 2024✓ House points linked to SEEMIS system introduced.✓ Holding multiple events (not all sporting) to encourage house group pride.✓ Rock Paper Scissors was an absolute SCORCHER, a huge success.✓ House Captain responsibilities and expectations more fully met compared to last session.✓ House Captains leading assemblies was successful and lovely to see.✓ Hall of fame achievements during house registration were partially celebrated. more could be made.✓ House captain involvement at parents evenings/Christmas fayre has been very good overall and should continue!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ streamlined next term.➤ More emphasis from registration teachers

Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff

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

Comments from the Rights Respecting School Award Inspection

Strengths of the school include:

- Passionate and confident pupils who are clear on the importance of rights and are empowered to drive change within the school.
- A strategic approach of senior leaders and the RRSa lead, with passionate teaching staff and parents, to embed a rights-based approach, putting it at the core of the school's ethos.
- The school has a strong culture of inclusivity and respect which is understood and articulated by pupils and adults alike.
- Strong pupil participation. There are several different mechanisms for children to feed into decision making and leadership in different areas of school life. Children felt listened to, that their views matter and that they could make a positive difference.
- A Rights Respecting group who are increasingly taking ownership for reaching out to their community, beyond school, to share their knowledge of children's rights.

Almost all staff felt the school's vision & values underpin their work. Seventy five percent of staff feel the school is well led and managed.

In 2023 we conducted a pupil survey across all year groups. We also carried out surveys of teaching staff, support staff and parents throughout the year. Analysis of the pupil survey was through a dashboard set up for that specific purpose. The dashboard allowed staff to interrogate the responses more thoroughly than would otherwise have been possible. Staff were able to filter the data by, year, subject, SIMD Levels, SIL, FSM and in the case of S1/2 by class. Pupils were asked nine questions relating to their teaching and learning. Broadly speaking the majority of pupils, across all years, gave positive responses to all nine questions. There were, however, clear discrepancies between years in some areas.

It was clear that most pupils across the school felt that the staff created a nurturing environment and one that was welcoming, understanding and supportive. In addition, most pupils believed teachers always made it clear what they were learning through the sharing of learning intentions and how they could demonstrate their understanding through shared success criteria. Most pupils also felt that teachers provided work and assessments that were at the correct level of difficulty for them. Teaching staff were also surveyed in 2023 and when the results of the staff survey were compared to the corresponding questions in the pupil survey it did throw up some interesting differences.

Staff identified feedback as a strength with almost all saying that they regularly give pupils regular feedback which helps them to progress, however, the pupil survey indicated that only the majority of pupils felt that staff gave useful feedback which helped them to identify the next steps in their learning. It was a similar picture when it came to engagement and making lessons engaging through using a variety of tasks and approaches. Almost all staff thought that this was a strength however, only a majority of pupils felt that in lessons the timing, and variety of tasks enough to keep them engaged and focused.

The pupil survey clearly showed that an area for development going forward is higher order questioning. The majority of pupils across the school thought that teachers did ask them questions that made them think deeply but that majority was at the low end of the threshold.

Capacity for continuous improvement

Comas airson leasachadh leantainneach

Using indicators from 'How Good is our School 4' together with learner, parent, carer, partner and community feedback we believe we have made progress as follows:

	2023-2024
QI 1.3 Leadership of change	Good
QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment	Satisfactory
QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion	Good
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and Achievement	Weak
Other QIs reviewed	

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The pupil survey clearly showed that an area for development going forward is high order questioning. The majority of pupils across the school thought that teachers did ask them questions that made them think deeply but the percentages were on the threshold of less than half of all pupils.

Choose an item.

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is:

Good

Key priorities for improvement planning

Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

Improvement Priority Title
1. To achieve the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Gold Award

2. To introduce 'Teaching Sprints' (Learning & Teaching)
3. To raise attainment /close the attainment gap
4. To improve our young people's health and wellbeing
5. A' leudachadh cultar na Gàidhlig anns an sgoil / To Deepen the Gaelic Ethos of the School
6. Understanding and Improving Assessment and Moderation Strategies in Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Planning ahead

A' planadh air adhart

Full details of the school's 2024/25 improvement priorities and actions are detailed on the school improvement plan, which can be accessed on our website <http://www.invernessroyalacademy.org.uk> or by contacting the school office

Appendix 1: Local and National Context

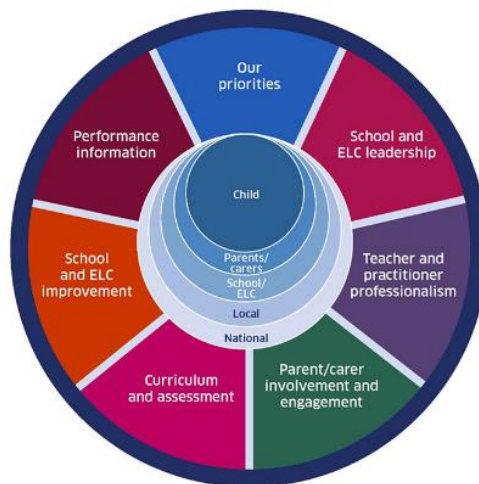
Ro-ràdh: Co-theacsa Ionadail agus Nàiseanta

This Standards and Quality Report is influenced by both Highland and national priorities. These can be summarised as follows:

Highland Priorities



National Improvement Framework Priorities



Accuracy?

Entitlement, Excellence & Equity:

We will raise attainment and achievement for all, especially for children and young people from disadvantaged circumstances, including rural deprivation. We will focus relentlessly on improving standards and the quality of learning and teaching, to ensure that entitlement, equity and excellence are delivered across the system.

Empowerment & Leadership:

We will develop leadership skills at all levels of the system, for now and the future, building a culture of empowerment and professional capital.

Relationships:

We will maximise health and wellbeing for all children and young people, to give them the best possible start in life. We will ensure every child and young person feels part of the community they live in.

Opportunity:

We will maximise opportunities for our children and young people, and for the wider Highland community and its visitors, through the provision of high-quality services.

The key priorities outlined in the National Improvement Framework are:

- Placing the **human rights and needs of every child** and young person at the centre of education.
- Improvement in children and young people's **health and wellbeing**
- **Closing the attainment gap** between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in skills and **sustained, positive school-leaver destinations** for all young people.
- **Improvement in attainment**, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Self-evaluation

To support self-evaluation, quality indicators from the national evaluative framework How Good Is Our School?4 are referenced.

Links to these sources (and others referenced) can be found here:

- [National Improvement Framework Improvement Plan](#)
- [HGIOS? 4](#) and [HGIOELC](#)
- [Health and Social Care Standards](#)
- [National Gaelic Language Plan](#)

In this report the following words are used to describe the numbers and proportions used:

Commitment, Compassion, Honesty, Respect & Responsibility

All	Almost all	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few
100%	91% - 99%	76% - 90%	51% - 75%	16% - 50%	Up to 15%

This report forms part of our quality improvement framework and provides important information regarding our school's progress to date and our next steps in school improvement.

Self-Evaluation for Self-Improvement is at the heart of our practice. We continue to develop our practice in making robust use of evidence as a basis for judgements regarding the impact of our work on our learners. All staff understand that self-evaluation is an integral aspect of our approach to continuous improvement through addressing the 3 key questions:

- **How well are we doing?**
- **How do we know?**
- **What are we going to do now?**

Throughout the year we continuously evaluate what we do and how it makes a difference to our learners. We want to know what is working well for our school community and what needs further improvement. We inform decision making and actions through a continuous process of looking inwards, outwards and forwards.

Looking inwards - starts with those working with our children and young people.

We focus on the impact on outcomes for learners. Our self-evaluation processes triangulate information, data, people's views and observation of practice to measure impact and inform planning for improvement.

Looking outwards - learning from others

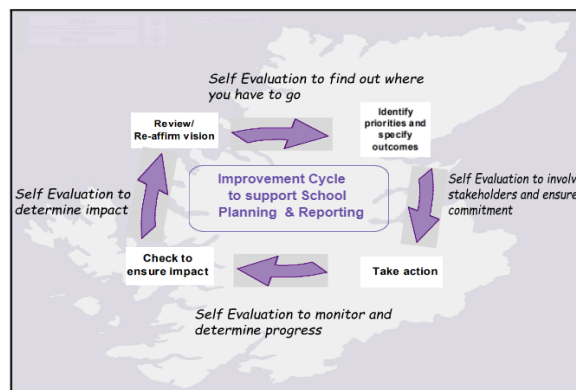
Looking to others for new ideas that challenge our practice and support continuous improvement allows us to learn from what works and what doesn't. This includes practice in other schools, learning communities and learning from educational research.

Looking forwards - creating a vision and planning for implementation

Through leadership at all levels, we anticipate challenges and explore creative solutions. This helps us to create an aspirational vision for our school which shapes our actions and provides a focus for improvement.

Our children and young people are actively consulted and involved in this process. We also give staff, parents/carers, and other partners the opportunity to participate in discussions and activities to shape our improvement journey.

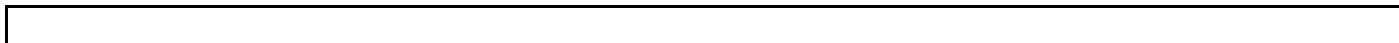
When we develop our improvement plan, we use key questions at scheduled review times throughout the session to know how well we are progressing towards achieving these positive outcomes and changes.



Together we are working hard to ensure the Highlands is the best place for children and young people to grow up safely, learn, develop and achieve.

With positive experiences, our children and young people will always see the Highlands as home.
Le eòlasan deimhinneach, bidh ar cloinn is ar n-òigridh daonna a' faicinn na Gàidhealtachd mar dhachaigh.

Name *Nigel Engstrand*
 Rector
 School *Inverness Royal Academy*



Self-evaluation summary for school improvement - Core QIs – For professional dialogue – remove from parental versions			
<p>How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)</p>	<p>How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?</p>	<p>What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?</p>	<p>How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale?</p>
QI 1.3 Leadership of change			
<p>How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)</p>	<p>How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?</p>	<p>What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?</p>	<p>How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale?</p>
<p>Theme 1: Develop a shared vision, values and aims. Click here to insert text</p>	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Choose an item.
<p>Theme 2: Strategic Planning for continuous improvement Click here to insert text</p>	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
<p>Theme 3: Implementing improvement and change Click here to insert text</p>	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment			
<p>How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)</p>	<p>How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?</p>	<p>What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?</p>	<p>How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale?</p>
<p>Theme 1: Learning and engagement The ethos and culture of our school reflects a commitment to children's rights and positive relationships. Using the UNCRC framework we have embedded rights and pupil voice across our curriculum. Where problems arise, restorative practice means these are resolved effectively. The atmosphere around the school is calm. Most young people- eighty five percent- report that staff create a nurturing environment, one that is welcoming, understanding and supportive. Such positive relationships mean that the tone is set for calm, nurturing and purposeful learning experiences. Our pupils understand the purpose of their learning through use of high-quality learning intentions & success criteria, often co-constructed by pupils and teacher. The school values of Commitment, Compassion, Honesty, Respect & Responsibility are clear to all of the staff, pupils, parents and visitors to the school as they are explicitly displayed throughout the school as well as always talked to at</p>	<p>Pupil Focus Groups, Pupil Feedback Forms, Registration Rights Engagement Forms, Learning Walks, Unicef visit and feedback, wide use of rights respecting language</p>	<p>Structured Observations in which all information is collated at departmental and whole school levels.</p> <p>Introduction of a L&T Structure for next session: The Inverness Royal Lesson.</p> <p>Staff opt-in twilights led by staff. Staff strengths identified from observations</p>	Good

Commitment, Compassion, Honesty, Respect & Responsibility

<p>assemblies. There are clear expectations for both pupils and teachers in regard to lesson expectations with most teachers reminding pupils of these and modelling them, themselves. School captains, prefects and house captains are very good at contributing to leadership opportunities which helps them to develop their leadership skills.</p>			
<p>Theme 2: Quality of teaching Both student feedback and observation tells us the majority of teachers use effective questioning techniques to gauge pupil's understanding and deepen learning. Feedback is presented to young people in a variety of different ways with most young people agreeing that the feedback they receive is helpful to them in understanding where they are at with their learning and how to progress. This is further evident in the regular learning conversations which pupils have with their teachers to assess their progress and plan their next steps in learning. Learning Intentions (LI) and success criteria (SC) tend to be provided at start of lessons and in a minority of lessons where LI and SC are used throughout the lesson to check for understanding. Staff training on the creation of high quality LI & SC was provided earlier in the session. Learning walks supported pupil feedback and in almost all lessons good quality LI & SC were shared. Care needs to be taken so that teachers do not become over reliant on the use of digital technology. Pupils tell us that in some departments Chrome Books are used as replacements for textbooks or Jotters. The pupils also tell us that they would value more teacher input and interaction in a number of their lessons across a week and in particular departments as they feel that, in those departments they are being left to get on with work on their Chrome Books rather than being taught. There was recognition from the pupils that the Chrome Books were a valuable resource when used properly</p>	<p>Pupil Focus Groups, L&T pupil Survey and Learning Walks</p>	<p>Introduction of a L&T Structure for next session: The Inverness Royal Lesson.</p> <p>Staff opt-in twilights led by staff. Staff strengths identified from observations</p> <p>Read, Watch, Listen & Do – Termly resources created by members of the L&T working Group</p>	

<p>and that they were especially useful for keeping up with work if they were off.</p>			
<p>Theme 3: Effective use of assessment Teachers feel comfortable differentiating their learning and varying the questioning, plenaries, materials and tasks in their classrooms. Students report that teachers make them feel safe which suggests that their knowledge of their classes, as well as their needs and abilities, is a key strength. There are some subject areas where the quality of teacher talk and explanation was a developmental need.</p> <p>Most subject areas understand the importance of matching tasks to students needs and interests as this can often drive engagement. However this is, by definition, an ongoing area for improvement</p> <p>Feedback is seen as an important part of the learning process in all classrooms. There is a wide variety of feedback used with pupils to promote learning.</p> <p>Staff use learning conversations to help with next steps and progression as an individual feedback method with senior pupils.</p> <p>Pupils often only recognise written feedback but are aware that oral feedback is a very useful tool as it can often be given immediately and more timely to help understanding.</p> <p>There is use of peer feedback in many classrooms. Staff have an understanding of the need to feedforward for future learning.</p> <p>There are classrooms where there is good use of self, peer and group feedback. Traffic lighting is used by some staff to gain feedback from the pupils on their understanding of a topic or task.</p>	<p>Learning Walks, L&T Survey and CPD feedback</p>	<p>Staff twilights with differentiation as a focus – scaffolding, AI tools, stretch & challenge.</p>	
<p>Theme 4: Planning, Tracking and Monitoring Most departments are satisfactory at moderating work within their departments, particularly at the planning stage but most departments are good at cross marking and moderating at the end of the process when the pupil work has been completed – the ACM model has continued to be used, but we need to</p>	<p>DM Minutes, Consistent and high quality use of our TMR</p>	<p>Opportunities to moderate with other schools</p>	

provide staff with more opportunities to moderate with colleagues outwith Inverness Royal Academy.# We have a robust Tracking & Monitoring Sytem that allows staff to highlight early interventions.			
QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion			
How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)	How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?	What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?	How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale?
Theme 1: Wellbeing Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Choose an item.
Theme 2: Fulfilment of statutory duties Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
Theme 3: Inclusion and equality Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement			
How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)	How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?	What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?	How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale?
Theme 1: Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy Click here to insert text	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Choose an item.
Theme 2: Attainment over time Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
Theme 3: Overall quality of learners' achievement Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
Theme 4: Equity for all learners Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	
QI 2.2 Curriculum: theme 3 Learning pathways			
How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)	How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?	What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?	How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale?
Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Click here to insert text	Choose an item.
QI 2.7 Partnerships: theme 3 Impact on learners (parental engagement only)			

Commitment, Compassion, Honesty, Respect & Responsibility

<p>How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners? Not solely a description of what you have been doing...evaluative language (see guidance document p10-14)</p>	<p>How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners? Observation/Peoples Views/Data Impact – outcomes/practice/ systems and processes to inform these?</p>	<p>What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?</p>	<p>How would you evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4 six-point scale?</p>
<p>Click here to insert text</p>	<p>Click here to insert text</p>	<p>Click here to insert text</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

Commitment, Compassion, Honesty, Respect & Responsibility