

# GRACEMOUNT HIGH SCHOOL

## Standards and Quality Report Session 2022/23

This report is meant for parents/carers

### Our Vision – a statement of our intent

“Committed to Care and Excellence”

### Our Values

**Responsible** - We are responsible for coming to school ready to learn, participate and contribute to the success of our school.

**Respectful** - We respect ourselves, our environment and the rights of others.

**Safe** - We all work to ensure our school community is safe and understand that everyone matters.

Gracemount High School is a non-denominational secondary school which serves the community of Southeast Edinburgh. The roll at the time of the September census 2022 was 602.

The school was founded in 1959 as a junior secondary school and since the late 1960s has been a fully comprehensive six-year high school. The “new” Gracemount High School was built under PPP and opened in 2003. The school’s management team comprise the Head Teacher, and moved only recently from a two to a three Depute Head Teacher structure. Each Depute Head lead one of 3 houses, Lewis, Skye and Tiree. The Senior Leadership Team is further supported by a Senior Development Officer (PEF funded) and a Business Manager. We have a complement of 50 teaching staff and 20 support staff.

The rapid change in the social demographics of our community presents the school with the widest of challenges in supporting the diverse needs and aspirations of a complex and socially diverse community. The school works hard to live up to its vision of “committed to care and excellence” and we build our team around our school vision and values.

The school context does present one of significant challenge. Our Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data (see table below) shows that 44% of our pupil cohort live in SIMD deciles 1 and 2 with 37% in decile two alone. Our 2022 SIMD mean was 3.5, the 5<sup>th</sup> lowest in the city.

Stage	SIMD Decile										Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
S1	10%	34%	19%	8%	8%	0%	12%	2%	5%	2%	100%

<b>S2</b>	6%	39%	13%	8%	8%	1%	18%	3%	4%	1%	<b>100%</b>
<b>S3</b>	6%	36%	26%	5%	10%	2%	5%	7%	3%	2%	<b>100%</b>
<b>S4</b>	6%	45%	11%	7%	10%	1%	8%	4%	8%	0%	<b>100%</b>
<b>S5</b>	10%	31%	12%	8%	14%	0%	10%	8%	5%	1%	<b>100%</b>
<b>S6</b>	5%	33%	21%	5%	12%	0%	10%	7%	7%	0%	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>100%</b>

In session 22/23 a total of 155 pupils (26%) were entitled to Free School Meals. During session 2022/23 we had 10 looked after young people across all stages of the curriculum with a further 29 being care experienced. In total 7% of our school roll are care experienced.

We have 181 pupils (31 % of the school roll) identified who have English as Additional language. 102 of these pupils are new to English, early acquisition or developing competence level. 14 pupils are registered as disabled.

357 pupils (60% of the school roll) are identified as having an additional support need and receive support in and out of class and from our Support for Learning Department. In total we have 119 pupils (20% of school roll) with active GIRFEC plans, and 20 currently have active Social Work involvement. 35 pupils have an ASD diagnosis of which 20 have an active GIRFEC plan. This level of need places a significant demand on our school.

Our staff are highly skilled in working in such a demanding context and as a school we have focused on developing positive and caring relationships built upon trauma informed and attached led approaches. This work shapes our commitment to being a gold award Rights Respecting School. All our staff have undertaken authority lead ASD and relational based training to support our practice.

In line with Curriculum for Excellence we have focused on developing our curricular structure and aim to provide an exciting and relevant curriculum which would best support learners' needs. This remains under constant review.

**QI 1.3 Leadership of Change: Developing a share vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community, Strategic planning for continuous improvement, Implementing improvement and change**

**What have we done?**

In May 2022 the school volunteered for an HMle recovery visit to support our evaluation and improvement planning. Along with the school's own evaluation, the recovery visit contributed towards the identification of the school's improvement planning priorities for session 2022/23 [School-Renewal-and-Recovery-Plan-2022-2023.pdf \(gracemounthighschool.co.uk\)](https://www.gracemounthighschool.co.uk/School-Renewal-and-Recovery-Plan-2022-2023.pdf)

Three key themes were identified with the school's improvement planning.

### Theme 1 - Raising Attainment for all.

- **Monitoring and Tracking** - This theme included a whole school update to the monitoring and tracking approaches with a particular focus on interventions within the senior phase. The school utilized a tracking system to identify named pupils in targeted attainment groups. Faculties and class teachers were then asked to ensure that pupils identified as being “off-track” were targeted for interventions throughout the course of the session.
- **Attendance and engagement** – period by period attendance is now embedded as part of our daily practice and is helping to identify truancy and patterns where attendance may be a concern. We have monthly attendance House Team meetings and have partnered with Youth Link to gather pupil voice and plan a partnership approach for session 23/34. Our EWO and attendance PSA are also working in partnership with targeted pupils and families to identify and reduce the barriers that are contributing to low attendance. Our quality assurance procedures around flexible and alternative timetables have been strengthened with monthly reviews at SLT supporting this process.
- **PEF strategy** – our PEF funding supported the employment of our Senior Development Officer (SDO) and teacher of inclusion. As a result of these posts, we have been able to work more closely with our most at-risk pupils in S3 and S4 and target them for individualized supports to help them attain and achieve. We work towards a target of 100% of S4 pupils achieving a minimum of 5 qualifications at level 3.

### Theme 2 – Curriculum Development

- **S3/ 4 Curriculum** - we have embedded our new S3/4 curriculum structure moving from seven to six subjects in S4 and from seven to eight subjects in S3. The increased time in S4 is supporting departments to overcome most of the learning gaps created by the pandemic and will continue to support departments as we move towards a full re-introduction of course specifications as detailed by the SQA for session 23/24.
- **BGE Curriculum Development** – a considerable amount of development time (25 hours per teacher) was given to the development of courses within the S1-3 curriculum. Faculties identified areas that they felt were most in need of development and worked collaboratively to implement updated course materials with a link to the meta-skills framework [meta-skills-progression-framework-final.pdf](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/meta-skills-progression-framework-final.pdf) ([skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk))
- **Key Adult Time (KAT) program** – this remains under consultation with a view to implementing in session 24/25. The aim is to create an enhanced universal support offer for all our pupils with a key focus on improving attendance and facilitating discussions on learning with a key adult. We aim to be in a better place to know and respond well to the individual needs of all our children.

### Theme 3 – Climate for Learning

- **Teaching and Learning Toolkit** - after significant work the previous session we introduced our GHS Teacher Toolkit to support a more consistent approach to L&T. The toolkit was then used to support a Local Authority visit to the school in late October, early November. The school has engaged with Quality Improvement Officers on the outcome of this visit to help shape our next priorities. This work has been supported by all faculties evaluating themselves against Quality Indicators and identifying areas for improvement. Faculties have fed back on this and subsequently reevaluated in May 2023. From this re-evaluation all faculties are to identify one key area that they will continue to develop for session 23-24.

- **Relationships for Learning** - our work with Nicola McCallister consultancy looked at training all teaching staff on the cycle of self-regulation through the lens of being trauma and attachment informed. There was a clear focus on the development of high-quality relationships and “how to” support self-regulation. Nicola followed up her work with staff with a visit to the school and further engagement with staff and pupils. This led to several recommendations which the school are in the process of implementing to support their work.
- **Our 1 in 4 group** have been very proactive in supporting families and reducing the impact of poverty. This work is detailed below in section 3.1.

All members of the Senior Leadership Team took part in the Agile leadership training program this. Senior leaders are working together to implement the agile leadership practices into their leadership work to support leadership of change. The learning has been shared with colleagues that have joined the team and this work is facilitating our improvement journey.

#### **How well are we doing? What’s working well for your learners?**

All staff have a very strong understanding of the schools’ socio-economic profile which is built around our renewed vision statement of “**Committed to Care and Excellence**”. Plans are being developed to renew and build on this vision with our school community after consultation with our pupil cohort.

The profile of our school (SIMD, FME, ASN, GIRFEC) is one where there are significant day-to-day challenges. However, our staff, in partnership with our parents and carers respond very well to meet the challenges and to provide the targeted support needed to remove barriers to learning.

Our school values of Responsible, Respectful and Safe are embedded in our school and all pupils and staff are aware of these. These values enable the school to model and promote positive behaviors and facilitate our conversations with our pupils. Our vision and values help to build a positive and caring ethos in our school and are supporting the school in its continued recovery from the pandemic.

Our school focus on our 3 key improvement areas has ensured the work we have done this session has concentrated on improvement in these areas.

There has been a concerted effort to effectively use data to identify attainment gaps. Focus on key attainment targets has taken place and this work has been detailed throughout the session in communication with heads of education and quality improvement officers. There have been focuses on 5@ level 3 and 3@level 6 whilst also trying to improve outcomes for 1 @Level 5 and 1@level 6 in line with national stretch aims. Achievement in literacy and numeracy also continues to be an area of focus with targets being set for each level. Our PEF funding has made a significant contribution to our 5@3 target and has also allowed us to focus on targeted support for literacy and numeracy. Our partnerships with Columba 1400 for our Care Experienced pupils along with MCR Pathways support has also ensured that our care experienced pupils have been supported to attain and achieve this session.

Our focus on learning and teaching is improving consistency for our students. The QIO report from November stated that “**In almost all lessons relationships were strong and restorative approaches were used to maintain a positive learning environment. In almost all lessons, this resulted in a calm learning environment where most young people were eager to learn and provides a good foundation to accelerate learning and progress**”. Changes in senior leadership staffing resulted in some of our

work with learning and teaching having to be paused until we recruited our new Depute Head Teacher. Mr Gregor has been appointed and will now take this forward.

Our continued focus on Developing the Young Workforce initiatives and links with our partners is supporting almost all our pupils to move into a positive and sustained destination with 97.46% of school leavers moving into a positive and sustained destination last session. This is 3.5% ahead of our Virtual Comparator and 1.5% higher than the local authority average.

Improving school attendance rates remains a continued area of focus for the school. Our investment in supporting this through our Attendance PSA (PEF funded for session 23/24) is helping to support some of our most at risk pupils and families and is beginning to have impact with identified pupils attending more regularly. The percentage of pupil with less than 85% attendance in S4 has ranged from between 30-34% and remains stubbornly higher than we would like.

Annual consultations with pupils (162 responses), staff (36 responses) and parents/carers (182 responses) has provided valuable feedback and is helping to evaluate our work and shape our priorities for next session. Our plans are to build in planned time through SLT visits to classes for pupil focus groups and staff inset time to ensure we receive a higher number of responses to the consultations issued. We will also consider how we more regularly consult our parents/carers.

Our Pupil Parliament has been introduced this session and pupils have engaged very well in opportunities to share their views and contribute to school decision making. This will be extended into next session along with the introduction of pupil committees after a very positive response.

#### Key strengths

- Almost all staff have consistently high expectations.
- Almost all staff have a very clear understanding of the socio-economic context of the local community and use this knowledge to support the pupils and families.
- Pupils, parents and staff are involved in the creation and on-going review of the schools' vision and values
- The vision is ambitious and is focussed on improvement (key attainment targets are shared with all staff and pupils, parents)
- Almost all staff are committed to change and contribute to school improvement through leadership opportunities and or involvement in school improvement groups.
- Almost all staff are clear on strength and areas for development. The whole school improvement plan and key themes has been shared with staff in June 2023 after consultation with all staff in May 2023.
- Senior leaders are carefully guiding the pace of change. The identification and commitment to three themes for improvement has been shared and is welcomed by almost all staff.

#### Areas to develop

- Learners need to be more effectively supported to understand the vision aims of the school through the 4 contexts of learning (particularly ethos and life of school and opportunities for personal achievement and IDL).
- Leadership at all levels should develop further to inspire others to sustain their collective commitment to school priorities (staff leadership and how SLT and ELT work together is being reviewed).

- Senior leaders should more effectively engage staff with improvement methodologies to support change (School Improvement Groups/Staff Leadership, in-house CLPL on agile leadership approaches)
- Opportunities for all staff to contribute to evaluating impact should be more effectively planned (build into Inset days/ collegiate times)
- Senior leaders should create more effective conditions to support innovation and creativity (staff leadership opportunities and partnerships with other schools – more opportunity to look outwards).
- There should be more opportunities for staff to engage in critical and reflective thinking (opportunities to be created within the school such as ELT protected period, CAT time for faculties, involvement in SIG's)
- Practitioner enquiry opportunities should be more embedded to support continuous improvement (CLP lead)
- More opportunities for practitioners to review and re-fresh pedagogical practice should be planned (further development of teacher toolkit, Top Tip Thursday and GHS learning festival planned for May)

**How do we know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?**

- 88% of parents that completed our annual survey agreed or strongly agreed that their child is treated fairly and with respect.
- 63% of pupils surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that they had a positive and respectful relationship with staff. This is down 7% from last session and is an area we will look to address.
- Improving attainment for all – our lowest 20% (school leavers) performed above of VC.
- National benchmarking for literacy and numeracy combined remain above our Virtual Comparator at levels 4 and 5 (February 2023 Update)
- 97.46% of school leavers moved into a positive and sustained destination last session.
- 67% of pupils surveyed reported that they felt they could speak to someone if they worried or upset, up 7% from last session.
- QIO report on learning and teaching indicated areas of good practice and gave the school a clear focus on areas to develop. The school continues to engage with the Edinburgh Learns Team to support their work in this area.
- Predicted levels of attainment in targeted areas are shown to have impact:
  - 5 @ level 3 predicted to be 91% up 6% from last session.
  - 3@ level 6 – 23% - up 16% from last session.
  - 1@N5 grade A-C in S4 –80%. Up 11% from last session
  - 1 Higher A-C for S5 pupils – 40%. Up 6% from last session
- Our S3 cohort have attained across their subject areas with numerous awards being achieved.

**What are we going to do now? What are your next improvement priorities in this area?**

Our improvement priority themes will remain the same as part of a 3-year plan. This is year 2.

**Ensuring best possible attainment and achievement for all**

- We will further develop our monitoring and tracking approaches through EdICT to ensure more continued and effective interventions. We will also be reporting more regularly on the Senior Phase progress.

- Raising whole school awareness to more effectively identify and support pupils with ASN. This will include targeted approaches for our Care Experienced pupils.
- We aim to develop a culture of celebrating success and wider achievements and as part of our tracking more effectively track wider achievements across our school.

**Further develop our curriculum mapping and pathways to enhance outcomes for all.**

- All faculties will build on their DYW links to effectively engage with employers and improve DYW skills and experiences.
- We will continue to develop our curriculum mapping exercise to enhance the quality and provision within our BGE and create interdisciplinary links. This will include incorporating the meta-skills framework.
- Further develop our universal support through implementing our Key Adult Time program.

**Develop a Positive Climate for learning through positive relationships and excellent learning and teaching.**

- Develop pathway 1 (classroom) supports for all teachers to support literacy development.
- We will further develop our teacher toolkit to help improve consistency of quality learning and teaching.
- All staff will engage with the EL teachers charter with a focus on differentiation (EL) and structures and routines (circle).
- Work towards accreditation for our Rights Respecting School Gold Award.

We aim to further developing leadership opportunities for staff and pupils. As a result, our updated pupil leadership model will be implemented for next session, and we have brought a more transparent approach to creating and promoting teacher leadership across our school. These opportunities have been shared with staff and positions are being applied for now. The distributed leadership model will aim to support implementing change and improvement across our school.

The Head teacher was part of the Southeast Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) HT trio forum, consequently we are looking to develop a partnership with two other schools out with Edinburgh to support looking outwards and identifying best practice. Head Teacher colleagues will provide critical friend support on key issues identified by each school.

**How you would evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4**

**Good (4)**

**QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment: Learning and Engagement, Quality of Teaching, Effective Use of Assessment, Planning Tracking and Monitoring – *Including evaluative comment on progress made with the Teachers' Charter***

**What have we done?**

Due to staffing changes in the Senior Leadership team progress was less than expected however we have successfully recruited and plans are well developed for session 23/24 .

During session 22/23 we focused on creating a framework to support high-quality learning and teaching. We also wanted to investigate current practice and establish strengths and areas for development across the school.

**Embed Teacher toolkit.** This was created in consultation with staff, pupils and parents from October 2021 – June 2022. The Teacher Toolkit was then launched with all staff in August 2022. The Teacher Toolkit is designed to support consistently excellent teaching and learning across the school. The pedagogy is based on research and evidence and is designed to be used as a professional learning aide to support lesson planning, self-evaluation, coaching and professional discussion. The toolkit embeds the Edinburgh Teachers’ Charter and aims to improve the quality of learners’ experiences and raise attainment and achievement.

**Individual Learning Observations.** A planned program of learning observations took place in September 2022. For observations the teacher identified an improvement focus using the Teacher Toolkit. The purpose of these observations was to support with areas for development rather than grading skills. The observer met with teacher within one week of lesson to feedback and discuss area identified.

**Edinburgh Learns Team** – In October the Edinburgh Learns Team delivered a session to all staff on formative assessment. The focus was on engineering effective classroom discussion, questions and tasks that elicit evidence of learning. Faculties were asked to select one area of AIFL to focus on within classes. In January, Curriculum Leaders were involved in a session on Leadership of Learning. This looked at strategies and planning tools that could be used to develop Learning and Teaching at Faculty level.

**QIEO Visit.** In November we received a Learning and Teaching visit from City of Edinburgh Quality Improvement Officers. Over the two days, 23 lessons were observed by pairs made up from QIO’s, SLT and our cluster Primary Head Teachers. They focused their observations and feedback on the three key areas of the Gracemount Learning and Teaching Toolkit.

**Learning Rounds.** This took place in February 2023 and the focus of this week was on Learning Intentions/Success Criteria and/or evidence of learning. 20 lessons were observed by pairs of staff. We also held several pupil focus groups to gather learner feedback. Feedback was given to individual teachers involved and collated findings fed back to all staff.

**2.3 Audit and Development Areas.** All faculties were asked to complete a self-evaluation of QI 2.3 using the challenge questions and reflecting both on current practice and level 5 illustrations. The gradings of the challenge questions were collated to create a whole school response. This was shared to staff in October. Faculties were then asked to identify 3 areas of strength and 3 for development. In May, the 3 areas for development were evaluated based on progress made, challenges faced and next steps required. Finally, each Faculty was asked to identify one focus area for Learning and Teaching to take forward within their Faculty Improvement Plans.

**How well are we doing? What’s working well for your learners?**

**Learning Environment:** The school ethos reflects a commitment to children’s rights and positive relationships. Staff treat pupils with an unconditional positive regard. Staff praise in public and make efforts to acknowledge efforts and recognise achievement. Mistakes are embraced as part of making progress, feedback, and continued development. Restorative approaches are used to sustain productive learning environments. Most pupils are eager to learn and are given the opportunity to progress through effective structures and routines in classes.



**Structural Features:** Staff provide learning intentions to outline what pupils are learning and how they can be successful during lessons. Starter tasks are used to effectively recap on prior learning. Learning content is clearly presented and well explained by staff, with PowerPoint the predominant format. Pupils are engaged with additional resources and activities that challenge and encourage active learning, effective use of ICT enhances this. At the end of lessons staff plan plenaries to allow learners to receive feedback on their progress.

**Key Principles:** Staff are confident at using questioning to ensure learners know what the expectations are and to provide verbal feedback to pupils. Some staff use questioning to progress learning. Tasks are effectively differentiated verbally so that pupils can access or accelerate their learning. AifL strategies are routinely used to check for understanding with some staff using these strategies to generate information which will guide future learning. Our empowered learning strategy is exemplified through courses being available digitally. This is beginning to improve engagement and when used effectively can make learning more accessible for pupils, especially those with additional support needs and supported home learning.

**How do we know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?**

### **Learning and engagement**

The ethos and culture of our school reflects a commitment to children's rights and there is a relentless focus on building positive relationships. The majority of our children are eager and active participants, and we are developing ways to enhance engagement more through our work on our curriculum, our approaches to AifL strategies and our empowered learning work. 100% of teaching staff surveyed reported they felt they provided effective feedback to learners which helped them progress with learning. Our work on curriculum development is helping to support learners to make connections with their learning and this area will be further developed next session.

### **Quality of Teaching**

From self-evaluation, observations and learning rounds we are seeing a much more consistent approach to the quality of our teaching. This is supported through regular engagement with Quality Indicator 2.3. Learning is beginning to be underpinned by use of digital technologies although this needs to be much more consistent. Well timed interventions are much more of a focus across our school and this area of development will be strengthened even further next session.

Key principles of development were highlighted through the shared classroom experience visits in October 2022 by the QIO team. These will be further developed and reviewed at part of the school's own self-evaluation approach in session 23/24

### **Effective use of assessment**

Assessment is becoming a more regular feature of our learning and teaching approaches and more effective use of assessment is noticeable in BGE, particularly S3. We have used EdICT much more effectively to plan for interventions in the senior phase. More regular low stakes assessment is being built into the experiences with the BGE these are providing reliable evidence which we then use to report on the progress of our learners.

### **Planning, Tracking and Monitoring**

Through our tracking and monitoring we have clear information on attainment across all areas of the curriculum. This has allowed us to plan interventions with learners and families and more effectively

support their progress. Those with additional challenges are well known and our ASN database allows teachers to identify and plan for supports for pupils.

**What are we going to do now? What are your next improvement priorities in this area?**

Next session we will further embed our approach to rolling out our teacher toolkit. There will be a continued focus on quality assuring our teaching and learning through a planned schedule of learning rounds. From a whole school perspective, we will take forward a whole School focus on differentiation and work with our QIO and the Edinburgh Learns team. Consultation with Louise Stevenson has taken place with proposals shared. Support has been offered from Edinburgh Learns and we are in the process of confirming the details. All Faculties will develop one identified area from the GHS Teacher Toolkit within their Faculty Improvement Plan next session.

In our staff feedback only 24% of staff surveyed felt they were given the opportunity to learn and share practice with colleagues. To address this the Learning & Teaching School Improvement Group will re-establish an in house CLPL Programme. This will take various forms through out the year and culminate in a Gracemount Learning Community Learning and Teaching Festival planned May 2024.

**How you would evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4**

**Good (4)**

**QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion: Wellbeing, Fulfilment of Statutory Duties, Inclusion and Equality – Including Leadership for Equity and The Promise**

**What have we done?**

This session we have made it a priority to strengthen approaches to improving attendance, engagement, and punctuality. This has been done in a number of ways:

- **Maintaining period by period attendance checks** – Each day a member of the school office staff is dedicated to monitoring SEEMiS and sending text messages home to all families of pupils who are marked as TBC. Staff have been trained on updating SEEMiS and are required to complete all registers within the first 10 minutes of a class. GroupCall is then used to text all main contacts and follow up calls are made for pupils who are marked as TBC for the majority of the day. This system has taken a significant amount of staff resource.
- **Focused House team meetings to address concerns and action early intervention** – House Team Meetings (HTMs) are held weekly, with a different focus each week. Each month there is a dedicated HTM for attendance where the DHT, PSL and SfL staff discuss all pupils' attendance across the three house groups and then look to implement targeted support. Supports will be tailored to the individual pupil and may require input from the PSL, Attendance Officer, EWO, SDO of Learning Hub or other supports.
- **Monthly attendance updates to SLT** – STL review overall attendance data each month and review attendance plans
- **Youth link partnership to identify barriers to attendance and engagement** - YouthLink carried out a piece of research with a group of around 25 pupils from Gracemount High School who were disengaged with school, but had strong links and engagement with our youthwork partners. Dunedin Canmore Youth Projects, Goodtrees Neighbourhood Centre

and Canongate Youth staff met with a with the GHS pupils and discussed the barriers to attendance and engagement and then shared this information in a report to the school. Plans are underway to take this forward next session.

- **Focused work of attendance officer and EWO on identified cases <85%** - EWO meetings with PSL have been introduced on a fortnightly basis where pupils who are under 85% attendance, or who are at risk of falling under 85% attendance are discussed. This session we have introduced intensive targeted support for pupils including attendance groups (delivered by the attendance office and EWO) and 1:1 attendance intervention from the attendance officer. 23 pupils in total have been targeted this session and we hope to be able to expand this next session. This work also includes a greater level of family engagement through group work and also 1:1 sessions as regular contact is made to families.
- **Whole school focus on attendance – registration/assemblies/parental focus** – All registration/class teachers received training at the start of the session on maintaining accurate registers, we have delivered three whole school assemblies on attendance as well as a specific Attendance Matters assembly for pupils with 80-85% attendance. All pupils have received two Attendance Matters PSE lessons and also a monthly attendance update in PSE to ensure that they know their attendance. We have increased parental contact around attendance with our period-by-period attendance as well as an increased number of parental meetings around attendance.
- **Establish a clear system to implement flexible and alternative TT's ensuring 6 weeks review period is actioned** – A tracking spreadsheet has been created to monitor all flexible and alternate timetables. This is reviewed monthly at STL meetings and any timetables that have not been reviewed are actioned as quickly as possible.
- **Learning Community Approach to Attendance** – The Gracemount Learning Cluster has been involved in all Attendance Matters conferences and have met an additional two times to discuss shared approaches to improving attendance as well as sharing good practice. During the next meeting we will look at a common approach to our contact with parents around attendance.

Evaluate the cost of the school day and action priorities to remove poverty related barriers to learning and achievement:

- **All staff received training during CAT session** – School 1 in 4 lead delivered this training in September CAT session. Staff were trained on how to remove barriers to poverty, hidden poverty/homelessness and how to speak to families about poverty related issues.
- **Leadership for Equity Training** – School 1 in 4 lead took part in the full Leadership for Equity Training and will share the training with 1 in 4 group for the 2023/24 session.
- **Evaluation of cost of the school day** – All faculties have been involved with audit of the cost of the school day. This has been carried out for teaching staff and school staff, with the intention of surveying parent/carers and pupils next.

- **Breakfast club has been reintroduced** – GHS staff volunteer to run a free breakfast club that is available to all pupils every morning. This is well attended and staff have started to build strong relationships with the pupils in attendance.
- **Maximise/Chai** – GHS now has a Maximise/Chai staff member working with the school one day per week to support families with various different applications for funding that is available to them. This work has help to strengthen relationships with families and school staff as well as improve financial outcomes.
- **Family Support Leaflet created** – A financial family support leaflet has been created and this is shared with all families who have young people at the school. It is also been embedded into the enrolment process.
- **Family Events, Mission Christmas and Eid Festival** – The learning community put on a number of events throughout the year, and two major events are Mission Christmas and our Eid Festival. Both events are planned to help alleviate poverty around times of the year that may traditionally cost families more money. Christmas presents and Eid presents are given to families who are in SIMD 1/2 and free food is provided for the whole community.
- **Cash for Kids application** – applications have been made this session.
  - Cost of living - £1650 (for utility bills, food or clothing)
  - The Royal Merchant Company Charities Committee - £750 to fund the book club and the Carnegie project.
- **Challenge Poverty Week October 2022** – A whole school, cross curricular piece of work was planned this session and delivered in October. All faculty areas contributed to this and engaged in some form of education on eradicating poverty.
- **Family Coffee Evening** – Specific families were invited to an event in the library where they could meet colleagues from various organisations that could support them. Organisations in attendance were: Maximise, Children 1<sup>st</sup>, Who Cares Scotland, Skills Development Scotland and our local youth work partners.

#### How well are we doing? What's working well for your learners?

##### Attendance, engagement and punctuality:

- Almost all young people are aware of their attendance and have created an action plan on how to improve or maintain positive attendance in PSE.
- Feedback from the attendance groups and 1:1 attendance sessions has been positive and we are starting to see an improvement in the targeted pupils attendance. This is in its early stages though and more robust data will be available by the end of June 2023.

- Attendance plans are in place for all pupils with poor attendance (under 85% or close to 85%). Both the Pupil Support team and also the Senior Leadership Team have a greater knowledge of pupil attendance and plans to support.

#### **1 in 4 Poverty Reduction Work:**

- The staff survey showed that we have removed the cost of the school day, and this will be cross checked with the pupil/parent survey.
- Feedback from families has been extremely positive, especially from the families who have accessed the Cash for Kids resource.
- The breakfast club reintroduction has been extremely positive and now a regular cohort of around 20 pupils attend daily.
- Our Family events have been very well received and the Family Coffee Evening had around 40 families involved and Mission Christmas/Eid Festival had over 200 people in attendance at each event.

#### **How do we know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?**

##### **Attendance:**

- Our attendance data is key to understanding how well we are doing to improve in this area. This is tracked each month and shared with SLT and all members of our House Team.
- In certain months we have seen some positive impacts of the Attendance Matters work in the school. We started this intensive tracking in November and we saw 12 less pupils with under 85% attendance in December, and a further 12 less pupils with under 85% attendance in January/February. We then saw another positive month in March, before our numbers started to fall again in April and May. The challenge next session will be to maintain the positive momentum of attendance as the year goes on.
- Although we did see the number of pupils with under 85% attendance increase later in the year. The pupils who did have under 85% attendance almost all say improvements in their attendance. This data was shared through our EWO/PSL meetings.
- Attendance PSO and EWO have worked with 23 pupils across the year for targeted interventions including 1:1 work and also small attendance group work. This has led to a number of pupils increasing their attendance and in some cases pupils increasing attendance as much as 17% over the course of the intervention.

##### **1 in 4 Poverty Work:**

- Data around the number of pupils engaging regularly in the breakfast club, on average 20 pupils involved.
- 33 families supported by our Cash for Kids initiatives and money was provided for food, utility bills and clothing.
- Over 250 families engaged in some form of community work or family engagement work linked to alleviating poverty.

**What are we going to do now? What are your next improvement priorities in this area?**

**Attendance:**

- We plan to introduce Key Adult Time with a focus on attendance. All Key Adults will be trained on how to support young people with attendance and will lead Attendance conversations with our young people.
- Attendance Policy to be reviewed and shared with all staff, pupils and parents. Key attendance checks will be built in through quality assurance throughout the year.
- Continue to build on a Learning Community Approach to improving attendance.

**1 in 4 Poverty Work:**

- Review the cost of the school day surveys from pupils and parents and ensure any hidden cost is tackled.
- Expand on family engagement initiatives and create a safe space for struggling families to approach and visit the school.

**How you would evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4**

**Good (4)**

**QI 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy, Attainment over Time, Overall Quality of Learners' Achievement, Equity for All Learners - *Including progress made on Stretch Aims***

**What have we done?**

We continually analyse data that supports the identification of attainment priorities. The Head Teacher has regularly liaised with Senior Education officers and Quality Improvement Officers to discuss attainment priorities and plans for the school. We understand there is much to do in this area.

Our work on improving attainment and especially targeting our most at risk to ensure they achieve qualifications has been a key focus for this session. Our "5 to Thrive" program aims to support our S4 cohort to achieve at least 5 qualifications at level 3 or above.

Our work on targeting our most at risk has progressed into supporting S3. This is to ensure that no pupil achieves zero tariff points. To date we have secured well over 100 qualifications within our S3 cohort. We are liaising with the SQA and the LA on presentations due to the changes planned for next session at National 4.

We have more effectively used tracking and monitoring through EdICT to identify pupils at risk at the earliest possible opportunity and these pupils are discussed by the integrated support team at House Team meetings. Targeted groups of pupils were discussed and shared with staff and all faculties undertook attainment review meetings with meetings in September/October with a further review meeting for faculties in January. Faculties set individual targets and will feedback on these in August/September next session.

**Numeracy – achievement of a level by end of S3**

From the table below the percentage of pupils achieving at 4<sup>th</sup> level in session 2022-23 has seen a drop from previous sessions. The maths department have tracked their pupils throughout the session and are confident in the data provided. This is in line with November and March data.

Stage	S3 Third Level or better						S3 Fourth Level					
	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	2021/22	2022/23	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	2021/22	2022/23
GHS	81.9%	71.2%	85%	93%	73.2%	73.3	23.9%	26.9%	27.6%	50%	43.3%	33.6

#### Numeracy – Local benchmarking – S4

Achievement at level 4 saw an 11% rise from the previous session. We were able to achieve this through our targeted work in Maths and in our qualifications hub. This level of achievement is the highest the school has recorded and is significantly above the virtual comparator.

We are delighted to have been able to improve our figures at level 5 and for the first time bring this in line with our virtual comparator. This is a significant achievement, and we must work to maintain this through our tracking, monitoring and intervention work. See table below and cells highlighted yellow.

Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy	Number in Cohort
Gracemount High School	2022	91.59%	50.47%	107
Virtual Comparator	2022	82.62%	50.75%	
Gracemount High School	2021	80.7	35.96	113
Virtual Comparator	2021	84.3	47.19	
Gracemount High School	2020	86.79	35.85	106
Virtual Comparator	2020	84.53	49.43	
Gracemount High School	2019	72.65	16.24	117
Virtual Comparator	2019	85.73	53.68	
Gracemount High School	2018	76.42	17.92	106
Virtual Comparator	2018	83.96	46.7	

#### Numeracy – Local Benchmarking S5

For three consecutive years we have outperformed our VC at level 4 and level 5 Numeracy in S5. This number is based on S5 roll. See table below and cells marked in yellow.

Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy	Number in Cohort
Gracemount High School	2022	90.43	60.64	
Virtual Comparator	2022	88.62	60.63	
Gracemount High School	2021	96.59	71.59	88
Virtual Comparator	2021	90.45	62.39	880
Gracemount High School	2020	95.35	75.58	86
Virtual Comparator	2020	92.44	68.02	860
Gracemount High School	2019	85.87	32.61	92
Virtual Comparator	2019	93.7	63.48	920
Gracemount High School	2018	87.76	41.84	98
Virtual Comparator	2018	90.2	65.2	980

#### Numeracy – Local Benchmarking S6

We have been above our VC or just in line for 3 years at level 4 and for two consecutive years have managed to outperform our VC at level 5. There is a sustained effort to ensure pupils who have not

secured levels in S6 are given the opportunity to do so. At Gracemount we see these qualifications as an essential part of each pupil's portfolio and all efforts are made to support securing achievement at the highest possible level for every pupil.

Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy	Number in Cohort
Gracemount High School	2022	96.43	89.29	
Virtual Comparator	2022	96.96	82.32	
Gracemount High School	2021	100	95.24	63
Virtual Comparator	2021	98.41	88.57	630
Gracemount High School	2020	97.5	75	40
Virtual Comparator	2020	95.25	81.75	400
Gracemount High School	2019	96.43	73.21	56
Virtual Comparator	2019	97.5	85	560
Gracemount High School	2018	100	76	50
Virtual Comparator	2018	95.6	81.2	500

#### Numeracy – National benchmarking (school Leavers)

For two consecutive years our national benchmarking (school leavers) at both level 4 and level 5 were above our VC . This is very pleasing and is a result of the significant work in tracking pupil progress and ensuring timely interventions in class and through our school hub.

Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy	Number in Cohort
Gracemount High School	2022	88.98	58.47	118
Virtual Comparator	2022	86.61	57.63	
Gracemount High School	2021	92.04	69.91	113
Virtual Comparator	2021	88.41	64.25	1130
Gracemount High School	2020	85.71	51.19	84
Virtual Comparator	2020	87.5	56.31	840
Gracemount High School	2019	76.74	35.66	129
Virtual Comparator	2019	89.22	57.75	1290
Gracemount High School	2018	84.47	47.57	103
Virtual Comparator	2018	86.99	57.96	1030

#### Literacy – achievement of a level

We have seen an improvement in all areas of literacy this session and particularly at level 4 where we have seen a 14% improvement. English staff are reporting increased levels of confidence in assessment and moderation in terms of being secure at a level and the figures are more reflective of the presentation percentages at National 5.



Stage	S3 Third Level						S3 Fourth Level					
	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Reading	90.5%	91.3%	95.6%	94%	85%	93.2%	23.9%	26.9%	39.7%	56%	50%	64.4%
Writing	89.7%	89.4%	87.1%	92%	85%	93.9%	23.9%	21.2%	41.4%	56%	48%	62.9%
Listening and Talking	91.4%	91.3%	86.2%	99%	86%	91.7%	23.9%	9.6%	31.99%	56%	52%	65.9%

#### Literacy – Local benchmarking – S4

In 2022 we were able to get above our VC for the second time in 3 years at level 4. We are particularly pleased to have improved again at level 5 and have the highest percentage of passes in the last 5 years. This data is much closer to expected levels as demonstrated by our VC. See table below and cells highlighted in yellow.

Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy	Number in Cohort
Gracemount High School	2022	93.46	62.62	107
Virtual Comparator	2022	89.53	65.23	1070
Gracemount High School	2021	89.47	59.65	114
Virtual Comparator	2021	90.7	66.32	1140
Gracemount High School	2020	94.34	61.32	106
Virtual Comparator	2020	88.4	57.83	1060
Gracemount High School	2019	87.18	48.72	117
Virtual Comparator	2019	90.85	70.51	1170
Gracemount High School	2018	92.45	53.77	106
Virtual Comparator	2018	88.47	63.49	1060

#### Local Benchmarking – Literacy – S5

Level 4 literacy has been above our VC for 3 consecutive years and for 4 out of the last 5 years. We have seen a dip at level 5 and have aimed to address this issue through targeted supports this session.

Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy	Number in Cohort
Gracemount High School	2022	96.81	70.21	94
Virtual Comparator	2022	94.36	76.81	940
Gracemount High School	2021	96.59	82.95	88
Virtual Comparator	2021	95	76.25	880
Gracemount High School	2020	95.35	79.07	86
Virtual Comparator	2020	94.42	81.98	860
Gracemount High School	2019	96.74	68.48	92
Virtual Comparator	2019	96.85	82.72	920
Gracemount High School	2018	96.94	83.67	98
Virtual Comparator	2018	94.9	79.08	980

#### Local Benchmarking – Literacy – S6

For the first time in 4 years not all pupils have been able to achieve level 4 literacy. This was due to a few S6 students with intellectual disabilities who were supported to stay on at school to achieve

qualifications and move into a positive destination. It is pleasing to note that we have been above our VC for two consecutive years at level 5. See table below and cells highlighted yellow.

Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy	Number in Cohort
Gracemount High School	2022	98.21	94.64	56
Virtual Comparator	2022	99.11	94.29	560
Gracemount High School	2021	100	98.41	63
Virtual Comparator	2021	99.52	95.71	630
Gracemount High School	2020	100	90	40
Virtual Comparator	2020	98.5	96.25	400
Gracemount High School	2019	100	94.64	56
Virtual Comparator	2019	99.11	96.07	560
Gracemount High School	2018	100	96	50
Virtual Comparator	2018	98	93.2	500

#### National Benchmarking (school leavers) – Literacy

For two consecutive years Gracemount has been above or equal to our VC at level 4 and level 5 literacy. Our aim is to sustain this progress and ensure school leavers are targeted for appropriate interventions for literacy and numeracy.

Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy	Number in Cohort
Gracemount High School	2022	94.92	66.1	118
Virtual Comparator	2022	90.59	72.03	1180
Gracemount High School	2021	92.92	76.11	113
Virtual Comparator	2021	92.92	75.31	1130
Gracemount High School	2020	92.86	60.71	84
Virtual Comparator	2020	91.07	69.76	840
Gracemount High School	2019	90.7	63.57	129
Virtual Comparator	2019	91.55	74.34	1290
Gracemount High School	2018	92.23	74.76	103
Virtual Comparator	2018	91.55	72.43	1030

#### S4 National 5

We are closely monitoring our ratio of entries against the national figure considering that Gracemount are equivalent of 85-90% of the national figure based on expected levels of attainment (virtual comparator).

The table below gives us a useful insight into National 5 data but does not let us analyse the level 5 qualifications achieved through National Progression Awards and Skills for Work courses. This is an area where there has been a considerable focus across all faculties. Please refer to Vocational Awards section below.

The table below gives data on achievement in National 5 qualifications. These are percentages of passes.

Year	S4				
	1@5	2@5	3@5	4@5	5@5
2020	76	52	41	31	24
2021	79	56	36	25	18
2022	69	54	44	34	27
Average	75	54	40	30	23
2023	80	67	48	27	20

### S5 National 5 and Higher

The table below gives data on passes at National 5 and Higher for Gracemount HS.

S5									
1@5	2@5	3@5	4@5	5@5	1@6	2@6	3@6	4@6	5@6
					42	28	21	11	6
85	66	58	43	31	34	25	13	4	3
83	63	46	34	24	34	20	9	6	1
56	43	35	26	18	37	24	14	7	3
82	68	56	47	35	40	31	23	14	6

### S6 – National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Data

S6												
1@5	2@5	3@5	4@5	5@5	1@6	2@6	3@6	4@6	5@6	1@7	2@7	3@7
										5	1	
					55	43	37	26	17	14	1	
85	67	63	50	34	41	25	18	16	4	4	1	
28	22	21	17	11	32	23	18	14	7	8	1	
83	65	47	36	31	37	28	18	13	11	2		

### Vocational Awards – Session 22/23

At level 6 we secured awards in the following areas:

1. 4 Scots Language
2. 2 Excellence in Sport

At level 5 we secured 121 awards in the following areas:

1. 18 employability awards
2. 5 Childcare awards
3. 23 Laboratory Science awards
4. 7 NPA Awards in Photography

5. 3 NPA Awards in Sport and Fitness
6. Excellence in Sport
7. 22 Personal Finance Awards
8. 8 Retail Awards
9. 14 Travel and Tourism Awards
10. 21 Web Design Awards

This was supported by a further 47 awards at level 4 including:

1. 27 Employability awards
2. 3 Childcare awards
3. 11 Personal Development awards
4. 1 Travel and Tourism Award
5. 4 NPA Construction Crafts
6. 1 Scots language

We also has 13 pupil presented for our Design, Engineer and Construct at level 1.

#### **How well are we doing? What's working well for your learners?**

The school has a clear focus on numerous attainment targets that continually evolve and are developed through analysis of data.

Pupils in target groups were identified through tracking and monitoring and names were shared with staff. Departments were made aware of specific pupils and asked to target supports detailing intervention strategies through the EdICT tracking database. These were reviewed at each tracking period.

To support earlier intervention the senior report calendar was adjusted and has been revised again for session 23/24.

A parental engagement session was held for pupil studying at Higher and key strategies to support study and access study support was shared. Pupils identified with low attendance were targeted for supports through pupil support.

The school offered numerous after school study support session through its Gracemount After School Study (GASS) program to combat barriers to study/revision for pupils out of school.

After securing private funding a partnership with Saturday school was developed for Biology and Maths at National 5 and Higher to target these two subject areas. Pupils on the borderline of a pass were prioritized and offered a place in the program which ran from February to the Easter Break.

Easter study school was offered to all N5/Higher classes and Grade booster days were planned as close to the exam as possible to support exam preparation for pupils.

A rigorous approach to coursing and change of level was adopted an all pupils and parents in S5 were informed that there was no option to drop a subject.

#### **How do we know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?**

**3 at 5@Level 3 – 100%**

91% of our S4 cohort achieved 3 a minimum of 3 qualifications at level 5. Whilst short of our 100% target this is a considerable improvement and would be our best results at this level.

This work has been led by a focused approach on pupils at risk of not achieving, utilizing our EdICT tracking and monitoring system. Then school's senior leadership team have regularly discussed individual pupils and provided targeted support, most of which have come through our school hub funded by our Pupil Equity Fund (PEF). Targeted supports have included extraction from class, flexible and alternative timetables, attendance support and work with community partners including delivering qualification in community locations for anxious non-attenders.

Our work on this target has extended into S3 with identification of our most at risk who have been presented for qualifications.

### **S5 3 @level 6 – 23%**

At the start of the year a target was set for 23% of S4 roll of 107 (25 pupils) to achieve 3 or more Highers. From tracking period 1 38 pupils were identified to be sitting 3 or more Highers in S5. Pupil names were shared with departments and parents were targeted for an information event and parents evening meeting with the Head Teacher. 20 parents in total were seen. Attendance was tracked and communication was sent home in November to support preparation for formal assessments. There was rigorous quality assurance approach to change of level and pupils were encouraged where possible to continue their studies. A no-drop policy was introduced in S5 so pupils were aware they had to commit to a subject for the full session.

We were delighted to achieve this target.

### **S5 1 @ level 6 (based on S4 roll) – 40%**

The national stretch aims related to performance in national qualifications only and this was the area we identified this session to track and set targets for. We have traditionally been behind our VC in this area and in 2022 were 18% behind our VC. A stretch aim of 50% (54 pupils) to achieve 1 Higher was set. 63 pupils initially started the year with 1 or more Highers which reduced to 59 in tracking 2 and 42 in Tracking 3. We have identified that pupil who sit 1 or 2 Highers only are an at risk group and we will be taking action to support them further this session.

### **What are we going to do now? What are your next improvement priorities in this area?**

Moving into next session we will set clear improvement targets based on the evaluation of our data and the information we have regarding our new cohorts. Our 5 to Thrive program will remain a priority along with 1@level 5 and 1@ level 6 in line with national stretch aims.

We will continue to focus on our very positive outcomes related to literacy and numeracy at levels 3, 4 and 5.

Improvement priorities will be focused on the following:

1. Further development of our monitoring and tracking policy included targeted intervention work, We are evaluating and reconfiguring our tracking calendar to support earlier interventions.
2. Raise the whole school profile of identifying and supporting pupils with ASN including plans for alternative assessment arrangements.
3. Develop a culture of recognizing and celebrating success (including tracking wider achievements)

4. Continued the roll out of teaching and learning toolkit to improve consistency and quality of learning and teaching. This will include supports from our Edinburgh Learns Team

**How you would evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4**

**3 Satisfactory**

### **QI 2.2 Curriculum: Theme 2 Learning Pathways**

#### **What have we done?**

In session 22/23 we focused on embedding the new curriculum model of S3 choosing 8 subjects. English, Maths and a Modern Language are compulsory and then a further 5 options are available. A course reduction to 6 subjects for S4 pupils is then introduced. This meant a change to the period allocation, with Maths and English gaining an additional period in S3 and the period allocation for all other subjects being weighted so that they have 3 periods in S3 and 5 in S4, where previously it was 4 and 4. The idea behind this was to give more time to allow pupils to cover the coursework and develop the skills and knowledge to attain at a higher level.

The re-introduction of Modern Languages as a compulsory entitlement for the majority of pupils in S3 was designed to ensure that pupils received their entitlement but also as part of a drive to try and improve the literacy levels of young people. The Modern Languages department strived to ensure that almost all pupils in S3 received a full award to support their attainment – with the majority attaining N4 and some at N3.

We introduced a NPA Construction Crafts Level 4 which was delivered at school by Edinburgh College. This was part of a pilot program designed to ensure all pupils who wish to do Construction are not constrained by the capacity of the college building to deliver this. 16 pupils initially started the course based and did this in addition to their other 6 subjects, being extracted for 3 periods per week to complete. Due to the demands of other subjects and the make-up of the cohort only 4 pupils successfully completed this course. These pupils have built an appropriate space for the new cohort to use as their workshop – there are currently 16 in the new cohort. There has been a more significant induction in June this session to try to support retention in the class.

Our continued focus on ensuring pupils attained at the highest level meant that an addition to the staple course offer, we also offered Skills for Work courses in: Retail, Travel & Tourism, Early Learning & Childcare and Lab Science. NPAs in: Sport and Fitness, Excellence in Sport, Web Design, and Photography were also offered. Personal Finance was also offered, as an alternative pathway for pupils who wanted to continue in Maths but for whom N5 was not yet an appropriate pathway. SQA Awards in Personal Development and Scots Language were also delivered, along with Design Engineer and Construct.

The coursing strategy is to try to ensure all young people are coursed in the subjects where they can attain the highest, whilst also taking cognisance of what the individual pupils need for their intended destinations, as well as their interests.

This session we have also started mapping our BGE curriculum, identifying the knowledge being taught and the SDS meta-skills being delivered. This has been completed for 1 BGE year group (faculties chose which year to develop so we do not have a full curriculum map of any one year yet) and this allowed us

to look at where natural cross curricular links occur so that we can help to draw on learner experiences in other areas and help to support them to make links in their learning.

### **How well are we doing? What's working well for your learners?**

The uptake in vocational courses is proving that there is a need for these courses and young people value them. Most pupils can take a combination of subjects which will support them in what they need and want to learn. Staffing remains a vital part of this offer.

We hope that the change to the curriculum model will have an impact on the learners' attainment – both in S3 and then on into S4 – due to pupils securing passes in Modern Languages as well as other subjects at NQ level and then having more time in S4 to complete and work on courses.

4 pupils in S4 completed an additional qualification through the Construction Crafts NPA Level 4 and enjoyed this practical element in their learning pathway.

Departments were encouraged to engage with learners when developing their BGE courses and take pupil voice into account when developing for next session.

#### **What's going well:**

- All stakeholders contribute to the rationale, design and ongoing development of the curriculum. Everyone understands what the school is trying to achieve through its curriculum – a new curriculum rationale has been designed and launched.
- Planning for progression in children and young people's learning is in place for the four contexts and shows how knowledge, understanding and skills are built over time – SDS meta-skills have been developed this session to be launched next session within the BGE. Natural IDL links have been identified as a result of curriculum mapping and will be worked on next session.
- There is a clear focus on developing employability skills through the DYW agenda and there are faculties where work is being done in conjunction with the DYW group to ensure employer engagement and Career Management Skills are being taught.

#### **Areas for improvement:**

- There is a clear focus on developing skills of literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, creativity, digital and employability skills in a progressive way across the curriculum. – Next session there will be a whole school focus on literacy development across the school curriculum.
- Outdoor learning is a regular, progressive curriculum led experience for all learners. – this is something we need to further develop in a more meaningful way. This is embedded in some curricular areas e.g. PE, Gardening, Nurture, but we need to look at how this can be used in other curricular areas to support learning.
- Learning for sustainability is embedded across our curriculum – this is covered in some curricular areas but needs further developed to be embedded across the curriculum. It will form part of the Key Adult program next session.

### **How do we know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?**

Across S3 there has been a concerted focus to deliver a curriculum with more pace and challenge which, in many cases, is aligning with Level 4. There has been a key focus on securing S3 attainment for the pupils we have identified as being at risk of being in our lowest attaining 20%. Historic data related

to attendance and Insight tariff points has led us to target these pupils for qualifications at levels 3 and 4 in S3. We are noticing a significant increase in pupil confidence and engagement with school as they achieve and experience success.

This has also led to several pupils attaining at level 4. The initial feedback from staff and pupils is that they have been enjoying the more rigorous approach to a meaningful S3. An example of very positive practice is in Modern Languages where the vast majority of pupils have attained a full award, with many of these at N4 level. Of 31 pupils who responded to a survey, 27 pupils felt that completing the course in S3 was a positive, with most pupils stating that it was good to gain extra qualifications.

**What are we going to do now? What are your next improvement priorities in this area?**

We will curriculum map and develop another BGE year, looking to embed the SDS meta-skills and use this to share learning and teaching with pupils, parents and staff and try to build this into joint plans within the learning community.

Literacy needs to be developed with a common approach across the school to support young people to further develop their literacy skills.

The Construction Crafts L4 NPA will be offered again, with learning taken on board to ensure more young people complete the course and benefit from this link with the college.

**How you would evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4**

**3 Satisfactory**

**QI 2.7 Partnerships: Theme 3 Impact on learners (parental engagement only)**

**What have we done?**

DYW has been high on our agenda and we have continued to grow and develop the program we offer to young people. We have had employer engagement sessions throughout session 22/23 across years, though mainly focusing on senior phase. We have had over 50 different employers and training/FE/HE providers in school this session speaking to young people. Following feedback from learners we had a Careers Fair for all pupils in December and an opt in Careers Week in February, aimed at senior pupils who could opt into at least one and as many sessions as they wanted to.

We also had pupils on our working group who gave us an insight into the types of careers they would like to hear about, using this, as well as feedback from pupils we surveyed, we tried to ensure that as many sectors as possible were covered by employers. It was important to us that we listened to what pupils wanted as well as using the data we know about the sectors our pupils go into in addition to trying to broaden horizons of the types of jobs that are available. Labour Market Intelligence is also at the heart of what we do and we use this when talking to pupils and parents about post-school options, for example at the Options Evening in January.

We introduced an S1 Technologies Day in conjunction with Heart of Midlothian Innovation Centre. They came into school and delivered a session to all S1 pupils about coding using micro bits and about some of the different careers available in coding.



We also ran our Meaningful May program to great success. The program is an employability course where pupils build skills, learn about CVs and then this culminates in a practice interview with an employer. All sessions are delivered by employers or SDS/DYW.

In session 22/23 we continued to improve our mental health and wellbeing support for both pupils and staff by working with a number of different partner agencies. The Back on Track service has been introduced to Gracemount High School to support the emotional and mental health of pupils. This service is available across the learning community and can offer support to pupils and parents in school, or in the local community. We have continued working with our School Counsellor this session. The school counsellor is split between the learning community and is supporting pupils from P6 to S6. We have also introduced a self-referral QR code for our pupils to use this session. Cannongate youth has built on the successful groups of last session and several BGE groups are being supported in the school to help with emotional regulation. We continue to work closely with CAMHS for pupils who need a greater level of support that can be offered in school or with our partners. Place 2 Think has been introduced to the school to offer wellbeing support to staff as well as guidance on how to work with pupils who have complex social, emotional and behavioral needs.

Our community partnership has been detailed in our 3.1 response. This entailed significant parental engagement and supports for our families, especially our most at risk.

Pupils and parents studying Higher level were invited to a specific event to support their child at working at Higher level. Essential support information was provided and well as hints and tips on to support study. Further parental engagement took place through planned reports and parents' evenings with follow up discussion with members of the Senior Leadership Team and Pupil Support team encouraged.

#### **How well are we doing? What's working well for your learners?**

We are doing well with our progress in raising the profile of DYW in school. There were over 1600 pupil-employer engagements (some pupils had more than one) which is more than double the number we had last session. Pupils asked for both a Careers Fair as well as the opt in Careers Week sessions and we put that in place this session. Pupils fed back on what they had learned from sessions to allow them to reflect on the information they were received.

The pupils are getting more used to engaging with employers and we can see confidence growing as well as the understanding of the different types of jobs and employment out there.

Our mental health and wellbeing partnership work has been extremely well received by our students and staff. This additional support that was missing after Covid has helped a number of pupils in the early stages of mental health challenges and helped them to stay in school and receive support. This session 28 pupils have accessed the back on track service, 20 pupils have accessed the school counsellor and 6 pupils have been engaged in Cannongate Youth groups.

#### **How do we know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?**

Feedback from the S1 Technologies Day was positive: 33% of pupils who completed the evaluation who were not previously thinking about taking a Technological subject, said they were now more likely to do so and 82% of pupils said they felt they had learned more about different career paths in the technology and coding sectors.

Meaningful May was comparatively well attended again this year – with about 50% of pupils who were supposed to attend, attending. Pupils were really positive about the experience – particularly the practice

interview. 100% of pupils who completed an evaluation said that they felt their confidence and understanding of what will be asked of them when they apply for jobs had increased. We have also had feedback from employers who have said that they feel it is well run and meeting the needs of the pupils and also the needs of the employers. We will use the suggestions to plan improvements for next session.

<https://sway.office.com/zBJbVPr3N8IGBboc?ref=Link>

Mental Health and Wellbeing Support is regularly reviews at House Team Meetings, PSG and through 1:1 meetings between the DHT and the School Counsellor. Although the work in the sessions is confidential, discussion around the success of interventions takes place between the lead professionals and various partner. Pupil's attendance and Wellbeing will be discussed at HTMs on a regular basis and this will be monitored to assess if improvements are made in these areas.

**What are we going to do now? What are your next improvement priorities in this area?**

Our annual parental survey can be found [here](#)

We plan to build on areas of strength and take forward areas of development from the feedback we have received.

We have a clear focus on getting DYW employer engagement sessions into curricular areas to allow pupils to see the relevance of what they are learning and start to make links between the skills they are developing in school and how these can be transferred to the workplace. We are looking for at least one session per faculty nest session.

**How you would evaluate this QI using the HGIOS 4**

**Good (4)**