



# Standards and Quality Report 2020 - 21

## Kirkintilloch High School

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**Context of the school:** Kirkintilloch High School is a non-denominational state secondary school that serves the communities of Kirkintilloch, Milton of Campsie and Twechar in East Dunbartonshire. Our school roll continues to rise and is presently sitting at 675 pupils, a significant rise from around 500 pupils in 2016. This has been boosted further by the East Dunbartonshire Council Consultation on school placements for the young people of Craighead Primary School in Milton of Campsie, who have subsequently joined our cluster. The purpose-built school environment was completed under the PPP Programme in 2009 and consequently, the school community benefits from outstanding facilities and a bespoke learning environment that is conducive to maximising the potential of our young people, ably maintained by an excellent team of support staff.

Kirkintilloch High School is a truly comprehensive school which serves young people from all backgrounds and across the full range of SIMD indicators. 22% of our young people are in receipt of free school meals and we have a high number of care-experienced young people (6.5%). As such, we have been in receipt of substantial Pupil Equity Funding which enabled us to focus wholeheartedly on raising attainment and closing the equity gap. In addition we received significant care-experienced funding, that led to the appointment of a Principal Teacher of Care Experienced young people and to buy resources to support their learning. Our drive towards equity was complemented by the work of our staff-led Cost of the School Day Committee.

Over the past five years, Kirkintilloch High School has experienced a significant culture shift which has been strategically led in a manner that has involved the full school community. This has resulted from regular consultation with pupils, parents and staff on significant issues that led to a review of several key policies and subsequent improvements to provision. We continue to actively seek and embed opportunities for our community to have a voice and to feel empowered in delivering a strategic approach that is to the benefit of our young people and the school.

Our aim remains to improve outcomes for all learners and in doing so, to change lives for the better. Our vision is that all members of the school community 'dream big, work hard and show kindness.' This vision underpins our Positive Relationship Policy and forms our core expectations for all staff and pupils. Key appointments in staffing this session have led to significant improvements in attainment, as evidenced in strong prelim performances that led to robustly evidenced predicted grades/SQA Performance. In addition, significant changes to curricular provision in both the BGE and Senior Phase have led to improved attainment. Last session, our work included additional Senior Phase accreditation such as Higher Leadership/Statistics, and the establishment of a Foundation Apprenticeship Hub delivered here in our school. Our key priorities for improvement planning 2021-22 will focus on health and wellbeing, including nurture; family engagement; transitions and continuing to ensure equity, excellence and educational continuity.

#### What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

Quality indicator	School self-evaluation
<b>1.3 Leadership of change</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<b>2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<b>3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<b>3.2 Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>Very Good</b>

**SCHOOL PRIORITY 1:** To enhance the wellbeing of our young people by creating a positive school ethos and promoting a culture of 'compassion' and 'kindness'.

**NIF Priority: Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.**  
**NIF Drivers: School leadership, Teacher professionalism.**

**HGIOS 4 QIs**  
**3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion**

**Progress and impact:**

One of the main strengths of our school community is how much staff care for our young people. We are a compassionate community that prioritises the wellbeing of staff and pupils and places the nurture principles firmly at the core of our practice. This key aim is reflected in our policy and practice and is an area of considerable and continued progress for our community. We continue to build upon and expand our accommodation and good practice in this area to meet pupil needs.

Parental partnerships are at the core of our practice, both formally through our excellent relationship with our Active Parent Council and informally in our ongoing engagement with pupils and their families. Our Guidance and Pupil Support Teams work tirelessly to communicate effectively with families and to ensure that the needs of our young people are met. Our school roll continues to rise which has led us to establish a new 'House' to our school – Napier House. Our pastoral care team maintain weekly contact with targeted families and our team around the child engage in fortnightly school liaison group meetings with our educational psychologists.

We provide in-house school counselling from the EDC funded Sparks Counselling Service as well as our existing school counsellor to provide continuity and access to this service for the many pupils who need this support. Targeted wellbeing provision in our ALE and Wellbeing Bases since school reopened has been a strength of the school and has supported our recovery plan extensively.

Last session, a number of wellbeing activities for staff were implemented such as Fizz Friday, Secret Friends, Moments of Magic and virtual social events. All staff were invited to complete a staff wellbeing survey and each participant received a personal follow up from the head teacher. Staff devised a live Mindfulness app for colleagues to interact with, our wellbeing teacher offered stress management sessions for colleagues and implementation of the EDC Wellbeing at Work policy continued to ensure that staff felt well supported through a very challenging session.

**Examination Stress:** In the absence of formal examinations, support is ongoing for pupils in relation to their wellbeing. Our LIAM training supports young people with anxiety management.

**Pupil Participation:** A pupil survey was conducted on remote learning: Focus groups were led by staff: BGE focus groups were led pre-lockdown by S6 Pupil Voice leaders. Three of our young people also participated in an EDC Consultation on remote learning provision. Young people continue to support the head teacher with staff recruitment through pupil led pre-interview visits.

**Outdoor Learning:** Outdoor PE/Dance activities continue. Hub activities incorporate outdoor learning activities. BGE Wellbeing sessions in March encompassed outdoor learning sessions. Targeted support for individuals via EDC provision continues. Our garden has been prepared and is well underway. Ordnance survey points for orienteering have been installed around our school grounds.

**Targeted Interventions:** High quality targeted interventions remain a feature of our practice across our Pupil Support Resource. We have appointed a PT Care Experienced, another SLA for Equity, a family support worker and we have now welcomed our new youth worker, Jackie Adam.

**Next steps:**

- Continue to develop provision in our Wellbeing and ALE Bases, including increased staffing.
- Roll out further CPD for all staff on key policies and practice relating to wellbeing and nurture principles.
- Deliver a pilot on managing examination stress, in conjunction with our Educational Psychologists.
- Launch a new, pupil led pupil parliament to increase pupil voice and leadership further.
- Develop a range of strategies and approaches to improve the effectiveness of differentiation for all learners, including through blended learning.
- Create a sheltered area on school grounds to support outdoor learning.



**SCHOOL PRIORITY 2: To raise the attainment of all young people through a robust system of assessment, tracking, monitoring and data analysis. This will lead to high quality interventions that impact positively on levels of attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.**

**NIF Priority: Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.  
NIF Driver: Assessment of Children's Progress, Teacher Professionalism, School Improvement.**

**HGIOS 4 QIs  
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement**

**Progress and impact:**

In recent sessions, we have focused our raising attainment strategy across very specific actions, namely:

- Ensuring that young people have access to appropriate provision and coursing that delivers success.
- Embedding curricular changes that provide greater depth in the BGE and better choice in the Senior Phase
- Ensuring that staff appointments reflect the experience and vision needed to deliver success for all.
- Continuing to develop effective strategies that maximise the impact of our learning and teaching.
- Detailed tracking, monitoring and data analysis to support judicious professional judgements and progress support.

Our curricular innovation has also extended through our broad general education where we redesigned our course provision in 2017 to offer greater depth of learning in S3. This resulted in pupils having more time in their chosen subject classes, moving from 2 periods to 3 periods of each subject in S3 and following 9 course options instead of 14. The cohort who benefitted from this change sat their National 5 qualifications last session and their results demonstrated notable improvement in performance due to their depth of experience in the BGE as outlined further below.

Our continued focus on effective pedagogy and differentiation is bearing fruit in terms of pupil attainment and staff delivered extensive raising attainment sessions to our young people to support them to progress. Using our attainment tracker to gather and analyse detailed data about our pupils prior and current progress, we were able to confidently make robust predictions during lockdown which informed pupils' SQA Qualifications.

Our key successes in SQA Performance last session can be summarised as follows:

- 51% of S4 pupils achieved 5 or more awards at Level 5, an increase of 16% from the previous cohort, with 29% gaining 7 awards at Level 5.
- 9 S4 pupils (9%) achieved 7 straight A passes at National 5, an increase of 4 pupils from the previous cohort.
- 54% of S5 pupils achieved 3 or more awards at Level 6, an increase of 18% from the previous cohort, with 19% gaining 5 awards at Level 5.
- 8 S5 pupils (6%) achieved 5 straight A passes at Higher, an increase of 7 pupils from the previous cohort.
- 42% of S6 pupils achieved 1 or more awards at Level 7, an increase of 23% from the previous cohort, with 5% of pupils gaining 3 or more awards at Level 7.
- In addition, 29 pupils (38%) achieved the SCQF Level 6 Higher Statistics Award and a further 36 (43%) achieved SCQF Level 6 Higher Leadership Award.

Due to the anticipated and validated increased attainment across the Senior Phase, we are confident that our approaches to raising attainment are bearing fruit.

**Next steps:**

- Build on and improve upon the high level of academic progress by continuing to effectively implement our raising attainment strategy.
- Provide time for staff across the school to develop high quality online materials for use in contingency planning and blended learning and to support pupils who are self-isolating.
- Ensure that staff are supported to engage with collaborative platform such as the EDC Digital Network and the West OS.
- Launch a variety of accessible raising attainment sessions both in-house and remotely.
- Continue to focus on effective pedagogy, sharing practice for improvement and developing online learning systems that engage and challenge all young people.
- Continuously develop and review curricular provision in order to maximise opportunities for all.
- Adapt and update our employability strategy to meet the demands of remote learning/risk mitigation.

**SCHOOL PRIORITY 3: To continue to ensure that our learning environment secures inclusion and delivers high quality interventions for equity.**

**NIF Priority: Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.**

**NIF Drivers: Parental engagement, school leadership, performance information.**

**HGIOS 4 QIs  
1.5 Management of resources to promote equity**

#### **Progress and impact:**

In order to deliver both targeted and universal support effectively, we have recruited three full-time Teachers of Wellbeing Support and two support for Learning Assistants for Equity. We have also timetabled our Alternative Learning Environment with a consistent member of staff throughout the week and additional, consistent staffing wherever possible. This has enabled us to scaffold success for a number of young people who required individual programmes of study and bespoke timetabling arrangements. In particular, this allowed us to support college places for a group of S4 pupils who due to adverse childhood experiences would have struggled to attend independently. and led them to achieve positive destinations.

Our monthly School Liaison Group provides a forum for us to discuss the needs of our young people with our educational psychologists to agree strategies for support moving forward. This often involves tapping into external resources and as such, we have forged excellent working relationships with partner agencies such as Health and Social services, Police Scotland, Skills Development Scotland, Addaction, CAMHs, LGBT Youth and other organisations that are of benefit to our young people. The individual needs of vulnerable young people are discussed specifically in individual Team around the Child Meetings, where planning is underpinned by inclusive GIRFEC values.

Our in-house tracking and monitoring tool was further developed last session to provide a bespoke and detailed overview of every young person and their attainment and pastoral care needs. Individual pupil profiles listing interventions for equity and attainment provided rich information for staff to reflect upon when planning for our young people and working to improve outcomes for learners. Training was provided to staff on the Seemis Broad General Education reporting and assessment package. This will be rolled out in the coming session.

Kirkintilloch High School developed its own Youtube channel which quickly enabled staff to upload and share videos, demonstrations and lesson plans with our young people and their families. Live lessons were delivered to young people and regular contact was made by teaching staff with pupils during lockdown. Twitter was used extensively to celebrate the achievements of our young people and remind them of tasks and educational updates. Many of our young people benefited from access to devices through the EDC Devices for Pupils Scheme to scaffold equity of opportunity across the school community. In addition, our young people received targeted support through our Cost of the School Day Committee, such as access to discretely funded excursions and participation in school events. In addition, S1 kit bags filled with stationary and mindfulness messages were issued to every S1 pupil in our school emanating from the work of the pupil led social justice group.

#### **Next steps:**

- Take further strategic steps to develop a positive culture of nurture and support for all.
- Conduct a school wide pupil ICT health check to identify young people who do not have access to devices.
- Secure access to ICT and develop staff and pupil confidence with online platforms in readiness for any future return to lockdown. This will ensure that we are fully prepared to support our community and that we can address equity issues in support of all families.
- Continue the positive work of the Cost of the School Day Committee and Social Justice Pupil Group.



**SCHOOL PRIORITY 4: To provide a range of quality experiences bespoke to each young person, that will secure the very best learner journeys for every pupil.**

<p><b>NIF Priority</b>  <b>Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.</b></p> <p><b>NIF Driver</b>  <b>Teachers' Professionalism, Assessment of Children's Progress</b></p>	<p><b>HGIOS 4 QIs</b></p> <p><b>3.3 Increasing creativity and employability</b></p>
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#### **Progress and impact:**

Our Guidance Team has taken a keen focus on ensuring that pupils are appropriately coursed at transition points. Pupils are guided towards their 'best chance' subjects based on data from our attainment tracker relating to prior performance. This aims to secure the best possible outcome for young people in terms of their attainment. In order to scaffold this success, our middle leaders have been looking closely at course provision in the Senior Phase and have worked to identify appropriate course provision that provides challenge and progression for all pupils. This has led to a number of subject offerings being introduced, such as National Progression Awards that provide a suitable platform for young people to develop their skills and gain accreditation without having to opt for a linear route towards Higher courses.

In addition, our in-house provision at Senior Phase has benefitted from our positive partnership with Tigers and Genius People in delivering in-house Foundation Apprenticeships to S5/6 pupils. This has proven highly beneficial to the young people involved and has resulted in positive destinations in associated employment areas. We also offered external foundation apprenticeships to young people through our college partnership and courses offered through the East Dunbartonshire Council Senior Phase Partnership. We were also the first Scottish secondary school to offer access to a distanced learning qualification in animal care through our partnership with the Scottish Rural College.

We continue to strive to maximise the opportunities that we offer to build pupil success. The impact of this has been notable in our leaver's destinations. We once again liaised with the University of Glasgow to deliver their Top up and Reach programmes to eligible pupils in S5/6. This, coupled with their solid performance in SQA Examinations, resulted in 49% of the cohort successfully securing places in Higher Education.

#### **Next steps:**

- Continuously develop and review curricular provision in order to maximise opportunities for all.
- Adapt and update our employability strategy to meet the demands of remote learning/risk mitigation.

