



EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

VALIDATED SELF-EVALUATION: LINLITHGOW ACADEMY

REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (SECONDARY, COMMUNITY LEARNING AND INCLUSION)

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To bring to the Committee's attention Linlithgow Academy's validated self-evaluation and identified areas for improvement for session 2023-2024.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of the report and the school's arrangements for continuing improvement.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Caring and Compassionate Open, Honest and Accountable Collaborative, Inclusive and Adaptive
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Education (Scotland) Act 1980 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2014
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Education Scotland quality indicators are used to measure the performance of schools – How Good Is Our School?4 (HGIOS?4).
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Positive inspection reports are used as a key outcome measure in the Single Outcome Agreement. Positive is measured by satisfactory or better in the quality indicators used by Education Scotland.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	School's Devolved Budget/Pupil Equity Funding
VII Consideration at PDSP	Not applicable
VIII Other consultations	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

Date of VSE	20 – 22 November 2023
School Census roll	1328
Staffing and date of appointment of management team	1 Head Teacher (16/08/2021) 3 Depute Head Teacher(s) 18 Principal Teacher(s) 2 Chartered Teacher(s) 81 Teacher(s) 1 Business Support Manager 1 Pupil Support Manager(s) 8 Pupil Support Worker(s) Advanced 17 Pupil Support Worker(s) 1 Administrative Officer 1 Administrative Assistant 2 Clerical 4 Technician(s)
Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) – 1 st being most deprived and 13 th being least deprived	SIMD Rank – 5250.13 Order 13 out of 13 West Lothian Secondary Schools
Pupil Equity Fund Allocation	£79,625

D2 Context of the school

Linlithgow Academy is a six-year comprehensive school supporting over 1300 students in the Linlithgow, Winchburgh and Bridgend communities providing a progressive, relevant, challenging and enjoyable curriculum with opportunities for personalisation and choice. The school strives to ensure that students have the highest quality learning experiences.

The curriculum offers the full range of National Qualifications found in a modern Scottish secondary school and aims to provide experiences that result in a creative and enterprising attitude in students, to develop young people with a sense of pride and ambition to contribute positively to the local and wider community.

Linlithgow Academy offers the opportunity for all students to succeed. The very good facilities available, allied to commitment of staff, provides students with the highest possible standard of education in a safe, caring and stimulating environment - an environment in which all members of the school community are valued and their achievements recognised.

Linlithgow Academy recognises that the curriculum is not only 'what' students learn but also 'how' they learn. Emphasis is placed on the student experience and the school seeks flexibility to ensure that students achieve success in examinations and through personal achievement pathways. The school has departments that are organised under the direction of a Principal Teacher Curriculum responsible for each Curricular Area.

The school vision statement 'Together We Thrive' underpins their improvement rationale.

2023/24 GIRFEC Levels (% of students)

Stage	Roll	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
S1	202	75.74%	23.27%	0.99%	0.00%
S2	204	78.92%	19.61%	0.98%	0.49%
S3	231	72.73%	22.08%	5.19%	0.00%
S4	290	76.55%	15.17%	7.24%	1.03%
S5	231	81.82%	14.29%	2.16%	1.73%
S6	170	87.06%	8.82%	2.94%	1.18%
School	1328	78.39%	17.32%	3.54%	0.75%

Level 1 (Core): Needs are met within the classroom by teacher

Level 2 (Targeted): A higher level of support possibly in consultation with agencies outwith education

Level 3 (Enhanced): The child's additional support needs require input from two, or more, support services and/or different agencies

Level 4 (Intensive): Referral to SORG who will allocate alternative provision

Snapshot taken 20 November 2023

D3 Evaluative Analysis of School's Current position - Learning, Teaching and Assessment

The school has an ambitious plan for continuous improvement in the areas of learning, teaching and assessment that is underpinned by the newly established school vision of 'Together We Thrive'. All staff have been involved in the development of a school framework for learner engagement which emphasises the development of pupils' thinking skills, encourages their active participation in lessons and develops their capacity to learn from and with their peers. Most staff show a strong commitment to professional learning, both individually and collaboratively, as evidenced through their involvement in Teacher Learning Communities, whole school working groups and programmes led by partner providers. Staff at all levels are involved in quality improvement activity focused on learning and teaching, including learning rounds (lesson observations carried out by senior and middle leaders) and peer observations and collaborative reflection activities. These activities are having a demonstrably positive impact on the quality of learning and teaching across the school. Increasingly, pupils are also involved in evaluating learning and teaching and planning for improvements through the school's Pupil Parliament.

Staff have high expectations for pupils. In almost all lessons there are positive relationships between pupils and staff and a climate conducive to learning has been established across the school. In most lessons, pupils are engaged in their learning and play an active role in the classroom. Teachers communicate the purpose of learning effectively and plan activities that build on prior learning. In some subject areas, teachers enable students to understand the relevance of their learning in a wider context, including the world of work. This is leading to deeper engagement in learning and enhanced skills development. In most lessons, teachers' explanations are of a high quality and the purpose of learning is revisited with pupils to reinforce understanding. In some areas, there is high quality questioning which engages pupils by cultivating their curiosity, stimulating thinking and supporting them to take the lead in their learning.

The school places inclusion at the heart of its activities. This inclusive approach is embedded in the school's recently launched 'Inclusive Classrooms Charter' and 'Equality and Diversity Pledge', developed by groups of staff with input from pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and understand their needs. In some departments, innovative approaches are used to support pupil participation in learning, such as writable walls and write-on desks and scaffolding frameworks to facilitate self and peer assessment and promote reflection on learning. In some classes, there are examples of very good practice integrating digital tools into learning, such as Microsoft Teams and Microsoft OneNote, as well as the use of visualisers for modelling examples during instructional episodes.

In almost all classes, teachers use a range of assessment approaches including formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment is used particularly effectively across a number of faculty areas to gauge pupils' progress and inform the planning of future learning. In these areas, this is significantly enhancing pupils' experiences and improving the inclusive culture of the classroom for all. Moderation of assessment is supporting teachers to develop understanding of national standards at all levels within the secondary curriculum and make reliable judgements on pupils' progress. Time is protected in the school for moderation, including teacher collaboration with colleagues across West Lothian. In some cases, teachers are moderating with primary colleagues, and this informs their assessment judgements and next steps for pupils. In the senior phase, assessment approaches are aligned to SQA qualifications. At department and faculty levels, colleagues who are SQA appointees play a key role in the sharing of standards. Teachers' planning and delivery of National Qualifications at all levels is strong. The school's tracking system allows easy identification of targeted groups and individual pupils to support rigorous learning conversations. Some classroom teachers and faculties also use pupil 'Progress Check-ins' to enable pupils to self-evaluate their progress and identify their next steps. In the senior phase, pupils know their target grades as well as their current progress and next steps.

D4 School's Identified Areas for Improvement - Learning, Teaching and Assessment

The school's strategic vision for improvement in the area of learning, teaching and assessment is impacting positively on classroom practice. Staff across the school have collaborated to develop a 'learner engagement framework' and associated resources to enhance the quality of pupils' learning experiences. The school should continue to focus on the effective use of this high-quality framework to ensure it is embedded consistently across all classes. To this end, the school should continue to provide opportunities for all staff to undertake professional learning with a focus on improving their pedagogy.

Teachers should continue to challenge all pupils and, in particular, ensure that there is enough challenge within mixed ability groupings in the broad general education phase. In some subjects, skilful use of questioning to develop higher order thinking in pupils could create greater challenge and promote richer classroom dialogue. Presently, there are more examples of this in the senior phase than in the broad general education. There is also scope for teachers to make greater use of success criteria, co-constructed by pupils, to support self and peer assessment and the setting of next steps in learning, especially in the broad general education phase. Teachers should continue to use assessment feedback to support the planning of future learning and ensure that this is acted upon by pupils. In a few subjects, pupils receive feedback digitally, via Microsoft OneNote. This is an area that could be developed further across the school.

Staff should continue to ensure all pupils are included, with particular attention paid to pupils in the lower socio-economic quintiles or those otherwise impacted by financial inequality. More effective use of pupil data to plan learning could facilitate this and the school should now seek to measure the impact of any interventions on targeted pupils.

D5 D5 Evaluative Analysis of School's Current position - Raising Attainment and Achievement

Literacy and Numeracy qualifications are of the utmost importance and there is an emphasis on securing these qualifications for all young people in the school. Those who face barriers to their learning are given additional bespoke opportunities in order to gain such awards.

Almost all young people have left school having achieved SCQF level 4 or better in Literacy in the last two years. In the latest four years, almost all young people are achieving this through a course award but there are opportunities for learners not sitting N5 to achieve Level 5. The percentage of young people achieving Literacy at SCQF level 4 or better is above the virtual comparator (VC) in the last two years. Most young people left school achieving SCQF Level 5 since 2020 and this is above the virtual comparator. In Numeracy, almost all leavers achieved SCQF level 4 or better from 2018 to 2022. Achievement in Numeracy at this level has been in line with the VC for the last 3 years. Most young people are achieving at SCQF level 5 or better, through either course awards or an alternative route.

Young people across the Broad General Education and Senior Phase develop skills such as leadership and teamwork through their participation in activities within and out with class such as sporting clubs, environmental groups, musical ensembles and subject specific clubs.

There are opportunities for young people to access a range of accredited and non-accredited programmes that build their confidence and interpersonal skills.

In S4 the percentage of students achieving 5 or more qualifications at both SQA and SCQF is above both the National and VC percentages. The school has also improved on the last moderated year before the pandemic (18/19) in both measures. The percentages of S5 students achieving 1+, 3+ and 5+ SQA and SCQF at Level 6 are significantly above the VC and National.

In S6, the level 6 breadth and depth measures of 1+, 3+ and 5+ SCQF and SQA are all above the VC and National. There was a slight drop in the SCQF 1+ between 2021/22 and 2022/23 but there had been improvements in all other measures. Performance at Level 7 for SCQF and SQA measures is significantly above the VC and National.

Initial positive destinations are strong with almost all young people who left in 2021/22 moving into a positive destination (95.41%). This is below the VC (97.01%) though in line with National and has shown an improving trend since 2019/20.

The majority of young people (72%) go on to Higher or Further education, with 22% going on to employment.

D6 D6 School's Identified Areas for Improvement - Raising Attainment and Achievement

The school has identified that there could be further opportunities provided for learners to maximise Literacy and Numeracy levels, even for those learners not sitting a full qualification. The school has plans in place to address this in Literacy and is exploring opportunities for Numeracy.

Recent changes to the Broad General Education tracking system are still being embedded. It is important that the school continues to review these changes and evaluate the effectiveness of the system in showing attainment over time in all curricular areas. More importantly, the school needs to monitor how the tracking data is being used to support interventions to ensure that learners are achieving in line with expectations in the Broad General Education.

Whilst there are already robust systems in place to allow staff at all levels to easily identify specific groups of learners and a clear understanding of the barriers that these learners face, there now needs to be a clear strategy for how to continue to support these learners, within mainstream classes in addition to current interventions.

D7 Performance Information

Attendance (Previous Session 2022/23)

Attendance	School – 90.55% West Lothian – 85.93%
Authorised Absence	School – 7.71% West Lothian – 8.42%
Unauthorised Absence	School – 1.71% West Lothian – 5.62%

Teacher Professional Judgement

Data was not collected in 2019/20 or 2020/21 by the Scottish Government due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Pupils Achieving Expected National Curriculum for Excellence Levels – S3

2022/23	Roll	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
School	288	97.57%	97.57%	95.57%	98.61%
Authority	2290	96.55%	95.98%	96.33%	94.93%
National	#N/A	90.00%	89.00%	91.00%	90.00%

2021/22	Roll	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
School	251	98.80%	98.41%	98.80%	99.20%
Authority	2241	97.05%	96.61%	97.55%	96.07%
National	#N/A	88.00%	87.00%	89.00%	89.00%

2018/19	Roll	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
School	223	95.96%	94.17%	97.31%	95.07%
Authority	2067	96.81%	96.13%	97.87%	94.63%
National	#N/A	90.00%	89.04%	91.18%	89.04%

Senior Phase Breadth & Depth

SCQF 5+ Level 6 (By end of S5)					
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
School	59.66%	61.88%	63.00%	66.52%	70.76%
Virtual Comparator	34.41%	33.42%	32.03%	36.35%	38.31%
Authority	41.15%	43.62%	47.70%	48.11%	49.09%
National	22.36%	24.17%	24.77%	24.36%	24.97%

SCQF 3+ Level 6 (By end of S5)					
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
School	74.37%	73.27%	74.45%	74.78%	78.81%
Virtual Comparator	58.49%	59.01%	57.09%	60.57%	61.06%
Authority	57.82%	59.89%	63.17%	61.18%	61.78%
National	42.72%	46.31%	47.88%	46.03%	45.03%

SCQF 1+ Level 6 (By end of S5)					
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
School	84.87%	83.17%	84.58%	83.04%	86.86%
Virtual Comparator	74.24%	74.50%	73.13%	76.00%	75.51%
Authority	70.78%	74.99%	77.78%	81.75%	86.21%
National	61.75%	64.31%	66.12%	63.98%	63.59%

SCQF 1+ Level 7 (By end of S6)					
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
School	42.42%	45.80%	41.09%	42.67%	45.45%
Virtual Comparator	28.94%	36.22%	36.09%	34.62%	37.14%
Authority	20.68%	24.53%	25.40%	24.48%	24.93%
National	21.64%	24.22%	27.47%	27.19%	25.74%

School Leavers Destinations					
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
School	96.57%	91.60%	94.86%	95.41%	
Virtual Comparator	96.62%	95.59%	96.21%	97.02%	
Authority	94.81%	92.88%	95.27%	94.64%	
National	95.05%	93.36%	95.48%	95.74%	

Subject Performance – S5 SQA Highers

Subject	School Pass Rate 2022/23	National Pass Rate 2022/23	School Presentation Rate (% of S4)	National Presentation Rate (% of S4)
Mathematics	87.27%	74.50%	46.61%	24.90%
English	94.61%	77.80%	70.76%	50.20%

Strengths:

Subject	School Pass Rate 2022/23	National Pass Rate 2022/23	School Presentation Rate (% of S4)	National Presentation Rate (% of S4)
Geography	92.50%	80.40%	16.95%	8.00%
Modern Studies	80.77%	78.80%	11.02%	11.80%

Areas for Improvement:

Subject	School Pass Rate 2022/23	National Pass Rate 2022/23	School Presentation Rate (% of S4)	National Presentation Rate (% of S4)
Health & Food Technology	100%	63.60%	0.85%	1.20%
Design and Manufacture	66.67%	56.40%	2.54%	2.30%

Overall Evaluations

Quality Indicators	School	VSE
2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment	Good	Good
3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement	Very good	Very good

E. CONCLUSION

This report highlights many strengths of Linlithgow Academy in learning, teaching and assessment and raising attainment and achievement. The local authority is satisfied that Linlithgow Academy will continue its improvement journey in both quality indicators to ensure that its young people maximise their progress and achievement.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Team Members

Tracey Loudon	HT Whitburn Academy
Greg McDowall	HT West Calder High School
Stephen Small	DHT Deans Community High School
Claire Gill	DHT St Kentigern's Academy
Ed Marsh	DHT Linlithgow Academy
Siobhan McGarty	Head of Education (Secondary)
Catrina Hatch	Central Team
Alison Lewis	Central Team
Avril McLean	Central Team

Appendices/Attachments:

None

Contact Person: Grant Abbot
Tel: 01506 280180
Email: grant.abbot@westlothian.org.uk

Contact Person: Siobhan McGarty, Head of Education (Secondary, Community Learning and Inclusion)
Tel: 01506 281680
Email: siobhan.mcgarty@westlothian.gov.uk

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