

St Kentigern's Academy



PROGRESS REPORT FOR SESSION 2023/24

(Standards & Quality Report)

West Main Street

Blackburn

EH47 7LX



ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

St Kentigern's Academy is a Catholic school situated in Blackburn serving the west of West Lothian. It is one of two denominational schools in West Lothian. The catchment area retains a community spirit and aspects of its mining cultural heritage.

St Kentigern's Academy has an excellent reputation in the local community, particularly for the high standards of conduct and confidence displayed by students and the wearing of full school uniform. In addition to the formal curriculum, a wide range of extra-curricular and out-of-hours activities are on offer. The school receives a high level of support and encouragement from parents and is working to increase opportunities for parental partnerships. Attendance at parents' evenings is good, and information and consultation exercises are well supported.

The roll in August 2023 is comprised of 1180 students and the school's free meal entitlement (FME) for the session is 19% (up from 9.9% in 2009). Over 9% of the young people attending the school travel to the school via school buses. Due to the rural and distributed nature of the catchment students have difficult accessing after school support as extremely limited public transport links exist.

The school also has an integrated Autism Support Unit (Multi-Study) and both a Learning and a Nurture Base, a Health and Wellbeing Hub and an Employability Hub. The school has 9 associated primary schools, but in session 2023-2024 our S1 was made up of students from twenty-seven primary schools, drawing a comprehensive mix of students. Almost all of the students from non-associated primary schools are in SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) deciles 1 & 2. There is a close working relationship among schools in the cluster.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

Our improvement priorities are always based on the national priorities in the National Improvement Framework (NIF). Below we have indicated what progress we made with these priorities in Session 2022/23, what the impact has been and what our next steps will be to continue to address these priorities in session 2023/24.

We have also shown which NIF driver for improvement we used – you can find out more about the National Improvement Framework and drivers at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/achieving-excellence-equity-2022-national-improvement-framework-improvement-plan/documents/>

We have also evaluated our overall provision using quality indicators (QIs) in How Good is our School 4 (HGIOS4) and How Good is Our Early learning and Childcare? (HGIOELC) which is a key aspect of the Scottish approach to self-evaluation and school improvement.

PRIORITY	HOW DID WE DO?
<p>Improvement in all children and young people's wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further embed our approaches to UNCRC to achieve RRS Gold Award - Build on our progress in developing and promoting strategies to ensure positive mental health for students and staff. - Improve students' understanding of mental health and wellbeing. - Further develop Trauma Informed Practice across staff and school community - Expand on our initial work in building racial literacy from session 22-23 	<p>Awareness raising of supports in school including sharing details of Mental Health First Aiders, in-school counselling and WLC support services via registration, assemblies and PSE.</p> <p>Neurodiversity lessons delivered in PSE to all S4 via Unit 1 Mental health and Wellbeing Award.</p> <p>Raising awareness of the dangers of vaping is embedded into the PSE curriculum from S1-3. Next steps are to focus on S4-6.</p> <p>We have built on our bitesize CLPL from last session and deliver whole-school Trauma informed training. All staff have completed trauma informed module 1. 2 staff have undergone trauma informed practice 3</p> <p>The Child Brain Injury Trust CLPL was delivered to all staff via Inset.</p> <p>Work is ongoing to deliver on our building racial literacy work and this has been included in next session's SIP.</p>
<p>Raising attainment for all</p> <p>Improve the attainment, attendance and participation of Care Experienced Young People.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on the attendance of Care Experienced students to improve their attendance. - Individual targets set to overcome barriers to attendance - Encourage and support CECYP and at risk young people to participate in extra-curricular activities. <p>Further embed successful literacy strategies to continue to narrow the gap in literacy in the BGE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to embed Reading to Improve Comprehension strategies and choral reading in lessons in line with the whole school assessment focus. - Work towards silver accreditation in Reading Schools to further develop a whole school reading culture by continuing with stop, drop and read; sharing teacher "I am currently reading.."; sharing links to resources across the school; updating the parental library. - Upskill staff across curriculum areas to deliver impactful literacy interventions including offering opportunities to train in Read, Write, Ink, Reading To Improve Comprehension and to observe Target Literacy sessions. 	<p>Attendance of CECYP has increased from 84.8% to 86.5% by June 2024.</p> <p>We have monitored engagement and participation via wider achievement data capture and this has contributed to our increased attendance figures..</p> <p>Extra-Curricular activities have been introduced and a large number of young people have been involved in these.</p> <p>VSE observations suggest this is taking place in some classes and we remain focused on this strategy in our SIP 2024-25 to seek consistency across the school.</p> <p>We have made excellent progress with RWI and TL is well established. This has led to 60% of the staff reporting that they feel the literacy culture in the school has improved 'significantly' while 40% feel it has improved 'somewhat'. 2 of our young people have gained 2+ years in reading and 1 pupil's comprehension has improved by 4 years. This year 5/18 young people in S4 who were part of Target Literacy groups in BGE sat N5 English. 2 of our current S5 who were in Target Literacy in BGE are on track to pass Higher English.</p> <p>We undertook CLPL on SNSA in the May Inset and this led to teachers reporting an increased confidence around using this information to inform learning and teaching. There are videos for teachers to refer to on the learning and Teaching website.</p> <p>We have built on our Level 5 numeracy achievements of last session with 67% of young people on track to achieve L5 Numeracy.</p>

<p>- Continue to offer support with SNSA interpretation for both literacy and numeracy to enable teachers to plan effectively for all pupils.</p> <p>Increase the impact of numeracy strategies to narrow the gap in numeracy in the BGE and effectively prepare pupils for the senior phase.</p> <p>Improve the quality and impact of tracking and monitoring in the senior phase.</p> <p>Link assessment approaches to the learning needs of pupils to ensure effective planning for learning, including appropriate levels of challenge and support.</p> <p>Promotion of Inclusive pedagogy via a focus on moderation of assessment through INSET days and in-Tuesdays, informed by the work of the DHT Learning and Teaching group.</p> <p>Effective support for staff and students to ensure a successful reintroduction of all elements of SQA assessment including assignments.</p>	<p>Our plan to develop and issue interactive resource with links to preferred methods for key numeracy areas and add to the Learning and Teaching website did not come to fruition due to staffing and time constraints.</p> <p>This session we developed a mentoring programme to ensure close tracking of pupils undertaking five Highers. Each pupil had at least three meetings with their mentors and reported back that they felt supported in their journey towards 5 Highers.</p> <p>We undertook close tracking by House via S4 PSE lessons. This led to a greater understanding among S4 pupils of their strengths and next steps in learning and earlier interventions for those in danger of missing out. Our whole school focus on assessment and moderation via Inset days, pedagogy meetings and in-Fridays has led to the redevelopment of S3 assessments, providing more rigour, pace and challenge to prepare young people for the needs of the senior phase.</p> <p>Every Faculty undertook self-evaluation to identify priorities based on how assessment informs learning and teaching in each faculty. This was worked on at Pedagogy DMs throughout the year, leading to an increased focus on assessment in every faculty. VSE observations reflected this with almost all teachers employing a variety of AiFl strategies in their learning and teaching and BGE pupil feedback recognising that teacher use varied assessment approaches to get the best from young people.</p> <p>Our consistent focus on Inclusive pedagogy via learning and teaching newsletters, carousel activities and departmental focus has led to an increase in Inclusive practice in our learning and teaching. VSE feedback noted that almost all classrooms were welcoming with a positive ethos and that in the majority of classrooms all learners were included in a variety of ways.</p> <p>We created a group of Pedagogy leaders led by the PT Pedagogy to support and drive faculty pedagogy priorities and build leadership capacity. PTC feedback has been that this role has been a great support in providing resources and additional help in driving faculty pedagogy priorities.</p> <p>We created an assessment calendar for assignments and significant coursework which was shared in October and allowed young people to plan effectively for assignments and coursework. This was welcomed by young people and their families.</p> <p>We facilitated staff in accessing and attending understanding standards events including informal network CLPL and SQA Understanding Standards events</p>
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<p>Ensuring Equity and Tackling the poverty-related attainment gap Ensure students affordability and inclusion in all aspects of school life.</p> <p>Promote school attendance to support students to achieve their academic potential.</p> <p>Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people:</p> <p>Work to integrate skills for life learning and work in our curriculum</p>	<p>which increased their confidence around the reintroduction of assignments.</p> <p>All West Lothian schools are committed to continuously developing their approach to ensure equity and tackle the poverty related attainment gap. Each school's PEF Summary provides an overview of their approach and an outline of how Pupil Equity Funding is being used to provide a range of universal and targeted approaches and interventions. Please follow this link to view our PEF Summary and find out more about our use of Pupil Equity Funding.</p> <p>We aimed to reduce the Q1 to Q5 attendance gap by targeting groups with intensive support from our Family Link Worker. The Q1 to Q5 attendance gap is reduced from 9.63% to 8%. March 2023, Q1 attendance (305 students) 81.32%, Q1-Q15 gap, 9.87%, comprising of 85 Q5 students. March 24, average attendance for S1 Q1 caseload is currently 78.85%. 8 of these now have an attendance of over 86%.</p> <p>We continued to work with the Financial Inclusion Officer to promote awareness of the school clothing grant and increase awareness of the Child Poverty Action Group toolkit. Regular referrals were made to finance coordinator to request support for individuals - also invited to all assemblies to promote such support</p> <p>We created a pupil voice group focused on the cost of the school day. Very positive community and pupil feedback - parental feedback not yet carried out formally, but anecdotally on parents night etc it has been positive.</p> <p>We promoted sustainability and vintage purchasing for prom via a prom fashion show and 20 items of clothing and various accessories and pairs of shoes were taken by pupils for events.</p> <p>IDL project ran for the second year, but ran late in the session. We have maintained a positive relationship with Plexus who have supported the pupils with team building sessions. Projects are to be submitted for each class and a final showcase will run in June.</p> <p>We continued to provide tailored pathways for all students leading to positive outcomes, drawing on Labour Market Intelligence.</p> <p>We began a curriculum review with a view to ensuring young people have both the knowledge and skills appropriate to transition into College, University or Work. This will continue into next session.</p>
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School's Attendance and Exclusion Data

Our school attendance has been a clear focus for us in session 2023-24. This has had a positive impact as our attendance figures are up from 85.06 % in 2022-23 to 85.86% in 2023-24. This is almost in line with the West Lothian average of 85.93%

Exclusions have halved when compared to last year and compare favourably with the West Lothian average. In session 2022-23 our exclusion figures were 0.03% and in session 2023-24 they were 0.02%, which is below the West Lothian average.

Effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and other stakeholders in improvement planning and on reporting school performance

Students, staff, parents, and other stakeholders were involved throughout the improvement planning process including the evaluative stages. They provided a good level of challenge, insight and vision leading to the completion of both the School Improvement Plan, PEF (Pupil Equity Funding) Plan and this Standards and Qualities Report.

A full report on the school's attainment is given to the Parent Council annually as well as regular reporting of progress against our plans and targets throughout 2023 – 2024. School performance data forms a standing item as part of the Head Teacher's report to the Parent Council at every meeting. Stakeholders feel engaged and consulted on the direction and achievements of the school.

Developing in Faith

As a Catholic School our mission is to develop as a community of faith and learning, providing the highest quality of education and offering formation through the promotion of Gospel values, through celebration and worship, and through service to the common good. (Charter for Catholic Schools in Scotland) In session 2023 – 2024 the theme the school selected to develop was 'Promoting Gospel Values'

- We evaluated our PSE programmes that enable pupils to practically apply Gospel Values in their lives through staff and pupil focus groups and feedback.
- We continued to promote Gospel Values across the curriculum, throughout the school via regular liturgical events and celebrations including House feast days and Advent Services, St Kentigern's Feast Day Mass, giving young people a sense of our ethos and the opportunities to engage in the celebration of our Faith.
- We evaluated the teaching of other world religions, leading to a change in our curriculum to deliver a wider spread of teaching. We are now teaching Islam in S4, Judaism in S5 and Buddhism in BGE to promote a rounded view of world religion and prevent repetition.
- We continued to promote inter-faith dialogue and embed anti-sectarian, anti-racist education in our curriculum. Two of our PTCs undertook Education Scotland's Building Racial Literacy course and have created an action plan for our work in this area, including curricular changes related to the teaching of Black History in Social Subjects and linking with the DHT Support regarding a report and support model for racist incidents.
- We celebrated diversity of cultures and traditions through our languages tree as well as linking with the local primary via our Polish Choir.

Our Wider Achievements this year have been:

How good is our school? The quality indicators* evidence that:

1.3 Leadership of Change	Very Good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Good

*(Indicators used in How good is our School? 4th Edition, Education Scotland 2015 and How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare? 2016)