



1. ATTENDANCE

In primary we saw a slight increase in overall attendance by comparison to Session 2021/22. In secondary, we observed a slight dip. This dip is part of a trend which spans three sessions (2020/21 – 2022/23), however it mirrors attendance patterns across Perth and Kinross Council (PKC), with attendance rates at Community School of Auchterarder – in both primary and secondary – being consistently higher than PKC.

Over the past three sessions, there has been a slight increase in both authorised and unauthorised absence within both our Primary and Secondary. It is however notable that, even with this increase, in Primary, authorised absence has changed from being slightly above PKC averages (2013-2021) to being slightly below (2021-23). Likewise, in Secondary, authorised absence has changed from being slightly above PKC averages (2016-2020) to being slightly below (2020-23).

Unauthorised absence in both Primary and Secondary has been consistently below PKC averages since 2013.

School attendance can be impacted by a range of factors which are supported on an individual basis by our pastoral support team and Depute Head Teachers. We take a solution focussed, whole school approach to promoting positive attendance at school and work closely with our Community Link Worker, and other professionals, to support children, young people, and families.

Analysis of our attendance data provides reassurance that these approaches to supporting children and young people to attend school continue to be effective.

2. ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

Developmental Milestones

Developmental Milestones are the building blocks of how we grow, develop, and achieve our potential. The milestones considered for each child are: attention, behaviour, emotional development, fine motor skills, gross motor skills, hearing, social development, speech and language and vision.

Almost all (91%) of our pre-school children achieved all of the appropriate milestones during session 2022/23.

Attainment in the Broad General Education (BGE) (P1 to S3)

During their years in the Broad General Education, we are asked to report on the progress of children and young people by indicating whether they have achieved the appropriate levels within Curriculum for Excellence in relation to Listening and Talking, Reading, Writing and Maths. The national expectation is that most children and young people will have achieved Early Level by the end of P1, First Level by the end of P4, Second Level by the end of P7 and Third/Fourth Level by the end of S3. The following table shows attainment within the Broad General Education at Community School of Auchterarder and describes the proportion of young people who met the national expectation during Session 2022/23.

	Listening & Talking	Reading	Writing	Maths
Early Level	Most	Most	Most	Almost All
First Level	Almost All	Most	Most	Almost All
Second Level	Most	Most	Most	Most
Third Level	Almost All	Almost All	Almost All	Almost All

Please note that the following words are used to describe numbers and proportions: Almost All (91%+), Most (75%-90%), Majority (50%-74%), Less than Half (15%-49%), Few (Less than 15%).

This year's BGE attainment was strong with our school surpassing PKC averages in all measures. We observed a particularly strong performance from our S3 cohort where 91%+ young people met national expectation in Listening & Talking, Reading, Writing and Maths. Performance at all other stages and measures was equally good with most children and young people achieving national expectations. Our assessments are based upon teacher judgement which is supported and quality assured using data gathered through our young people's completion of national standardised assessments (SNSA).

Senior Phase Attainment

S4 Cohort: 5+ N5 Awards (A-C)

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
TCSOA	45%	56%	61%	74%	48%	59%	53%
PKC	45%	41%	45%	54%	47%	47%	45%

S5 Cohort: 1+ Higher Award (A-C)

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
TCSOA	67%	57%	69%	68%	78%	56%	58%
PKC	56%	59%	56%	65%	65%	57%	55%

S5 Cohort: 3+ Higher Award (A-C)

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
TCSOA	46%	45%	45%	60%	68%	33%	45%
PKC	35%	38%	35%	46%	46%	38%	35%

S5 Cohort: 5+ Higher Award (A-C)

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
TCSOA	26%	22%	26%	34%	36%	12%	25%
PKC	19%	20%	19%	22%	24%	18%	17%

S6 Cohort: 1+ AH Award (A-C)

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
TCSOA	13%	28%	22%	33%	41%	28%	9%
PKC	25%	25%	26%	30%	35%	33%	22%

During Session 2022/23, the Scottish Qualifications Authority continued to implement support mitigations following the COVID-19 Pandemic. This meant that young people in S4-S6 sat formal examinations in May 2023 but did not have to submit coursework as had been the case before Session 2019/20.

As is evidenced in the tables above, young people attending Community School of Auchterarder continue, on the whole, to perform strongly by comparison to young people across Perth and Kinross Council.

In pursuit of further improvement, our school team continues to focus on improving outcomes for all young people, however young people with additional support needs, whose attainment falls within the bottom 20% of their cohort or are in S6 continue to be a particular focus.

Wider Achievement

During Session 2022/23, wider achievement continues to be celebrated at weekly assemblies in primary through "Believe and Achieve". A range of extra-curricular clubs are offered throughout the school year with children going onto participate in local authority events such as Crieff Highland Games, where the primary relay team placed first. Our timetabled wider achievement programme in Secondary offers young people in S1-S3 and S5/6 the opportunity to engage in a range of activities out with their chosen subjects.

A number of trips took place including enrichment trips for S1-S3, a trip to St. James Park, a trip to David Livingstone Centre and our annual P7 trip to Nethybridge.

3. LEADERSHIP

Throughout Session 2022/2023 our school leadership team has continued to grow and evolve. Following a period of considerable change within our Nursery, Extended and Senior Leadership Teams, our teams have now become well established with clear remits and areas of responsibility agreed and in place.

Whilst this consistency in leadership at all levels has been a strength, due to a variety of circumstances, a number of staff have had the opportunity to challenge themselves and develop professionally by taking up acting principal teacher roles. These opportunities are extremely important for individuals to develop their capacity as leaders, and we have been delighted to support a number of staff in these roles.

Firstly, we were delighted to welcome Miss E. Harvey as Principal Teacher of Expressive Arts (Acting) from April 2023. Miss Harvey joined our school from Blairgowrie High School and has covered for Mrs A. Murch during her maternity leave. This arrangement continues to be in place. In addition, Miss K. Robertson and Mr B. Henderson undertook the roles of Principal Teacher of Guidance (Acting) from August 2022 (through to August 2023) whilst Mrs A. Kesson and Mrs S. Magee took their maternity leave.

Finally, Miss E. Platt took on the role of Principal Teacher of Science (Acting) one day a week where she worked alongside Mrs J. Anderson, whilst Mrs P. Welsh undertook the role of Principal Teacher of Support for Learning (Acting) at various points throughout the year in support of Mrs K. Nicol.

During the absence of our Head Teacher, Mrs Dalrymple undertook the role of Head Teacher (Acting) before Mrs Leslie, substantive HT at Blairgowrie High School, took on the role for six weeks over the Christmas period.

Our Nursery had an unannounced visit from the Care Inspectorate during June 2023. This was an extremely positive experience with leadership being highlighted as a key strength. Some comments from our report include: *'Visible Leaders promoted a shared vision for the setting. The strong senior nursery management team provided effective leadership and support to staff. They had formed very positive working relationships and worked effectively together to support an ethos of continuous improvement'*.

Our Quality Improvement Plan for Session 2022/23 focussed upon three key improvement outcomes: to secure positive progress and attainment for all children and young people through the delivery of an effective and appropriate curriculum; to ensure that the learning experience of all children and young people is engaging, exciting and impactful through the use of effective and inclusive pedagogy; and, to promote positive relationships between all members of our school community by embedding school-wide, consistent, approaches to inclusive practice and behaviour management.

In line with this plan, highlights from our school improvement journey last session include the following:

- Our school was accredited by a selection of external agencies for aspects of our improvement work. We achieved our Bronze ['Reading Schools'](#) and Bronze and Silver [Emotion Works](#) accreditation in Primary alongside our Bronze and Silver [SCQF Ambassador School](#) status in Secondary.
- Our curriculum rationale was refreshed in line with our recently relaunched vision, values and aims and took the views of a range of stakeholders into account (children, young people, parents/carers, and staff). This work is now being finalised after which it will be used across our school to influence the decisions, we take regarding both our approach and content of what is taught in our classrooms.

- Considerable work was undertaken in reviewing our school approaches to promoting positive relationships through the review of our existing relationships policy and behaviour protocols. This led to some significant changes in Secondary through the introduction of the language ‘reminder, warning, consequence’ and the introduction of Class Charts, a tool to allow greater levels of parental engagement in their child’s experience of school. This work will continue into Session 2023/24 and will have a further focus on our school approaches to anti-bullying.

We were pleased that in our annual parent/carer survey (April 2023) the majority of parents expressed that they felt comfortable approaching the school with questions, suggestions, and/or a problem. As a school we strongly believe that we are best able to support children and young people well where we have positive relationships and effective communication with families.

We continue to review our processes for this; however, we were heartened that, through our survey, most parents/carers expressed that they feel school staff treated their child fairly and with respect and that the majority knew their child as an individual.

4. LEARNING

Throughout session 2022/23 school staff in both primary and secondary engaged in a variety of activities designed to quality assure and support the continuous improvement of learning and teaching within our school. During January 2023, our school participated in a ‘Validated Self-Evaluation’ (VSE) process which was led by a peer Head Teacher supported by central PKC officers. This involved a number of local authority officers and staff from other schools visiting Community School of Auchterarder to help us review the learning experience of young people in attending the secondary phase of our school. This process supported a robust programme of school wide classroom observations. These observations were undertaken by school staff where each individual focussed upon recognising the strengths and areas for development in our practice.

Across these processes, the following strengths were identified in both primary and secondary:

- Strong and positive relationships including warm and welcoming language was evident in lessons.
- In the most effective lessons, children and young people understood what they were learning about and knew how they would recognise if they were successful. In these lessons, teachers provided truly differentiated materials to support barriers to learning.
- Staff make good links to prior learning in lessons helping pupils make connections and engage in class.
- Effective use of questioning to promote deeper and more visible thinking, modelling, and scaffolding of answers, sharing of learning intentions and success criteria, as well as clear presentation of content and positive reinforcement.
- All primary and nursery classrooms make use of the CIRCLE framework and Up, Up, and Away. In Secondary, where staff have used the CIRCLE framework, classes are more organised and inclusive.
- The wellbeing of young people is being supported effectively by staff. During their participation in focus groups, young people state that they have a trusted staff member and that staff care about their wellbeing.
- Staff felt that they had good involvement in the creation of the school values HEART. The school values are well known by young people in primary and S1 through S3.
- The majority of pupils agree that they are involved in the full life of the school and have the opportunity to undertake leadership roles, participate in Article 12 groups, etc.
- Young people report that Class Charts is supporting their engagement and achievement in learning.

Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) is used to fund our Enhanced Support Officer post in primary. Mrs McNaughton has now been in post for five years and, in this role, runs our ‘Pitstop’ where additional input is provided to children who require short interventions to help bridge gaps in their learning. Literacy and Health & Wellbeing groups, supported by our intergenerational volunteers, complement work taking place in classrooms.

Throughout Session 2022/23, Mrs McNaughton and our team of intergenerational volunteers provided literacy support to 90 children with a further 71 young people receiving support through health and wellbeing sessions. Parents engage well with this support, with regular attendance from our parent body at drop-in sessions.

The Care Inspectorate recently commented that within our nursery a warm and nurturing environment has been created which ensures all children have the best possible learning experiences to thrive. They observed that our children benefit from nurturing, responsive and compassionate care as they learn.

Staff understand the value of play and, as a result, our children are confident, happy, and secure within the setting. Our staff interact warmly with the children as they play, joining in their play when invited, or with well-timed interventions. They offer cuddles, support and are responsive to our children's requests. All of which improve outcomes for children.

5. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

Our school improvement plan is informed by the National Improvement Framework, as well as developments unique to Perth and Kinross Council and the school itself. This session, our school improvement priorities have also been influenced by the Validated Self-Evaluation process. Having also carefully considered the feedback we have received from children, young people, parents/carers, and school staff, we have agreed the following school improvement priorities for the session ahead.

Improvement Outcomes

- ➔ *We will ensure that children and young people are well supported, have their views listened to, and make the most of a range of the leadership opportunities available to them.*

We will continue to engage with children, young people, staff, and parents/carers around our approaches to supporting young people in both their learning and behaviour. We will review our approaches to anti-bullying with the aim of creating a new anti-bullying policy to supplement the work already undertaken around our approaches to promoting positive behaviour. We will also support our children and young people to make the most of the numerous leadership opportunities which exist in our school.

- ➔ *Children and young people will access higher quality and more consistent learning experiences.*

To ensure greater levels of consistency in our approach and high-quality learning across our school, we will develop a learning and teaching policy which clearly states the features of excellent and effective learning and teaching that should be present in all our classrooms. Throughout Session 2022/23 new Promethean boards have been installed in the majority of our classrooms. This session we will therefore provide training and support to teaching staff to ensure that they are equipped with the skills necessary to use this technology to its greatest potential thereby increasing levels of engagement in learning.

- ➔ *Children and young people will have confidence in the skills they develop through their learning and know that their achievements in and out of school are celebrated.*

Through our 'Believe and Achieve' programme, in primary, we already have a well-established process for families to share the successes experienced by their children. This session we will build on this to ensure young people in Secondary, and their families, are able to share their good news and help us join in the celebration in a way that is appropriate and meaningful for each individual. We will also begin working towards a unified approach where the explicit skills taught in school are recognised and have a clear link to our strategic school approach for developing the young work force. This will have a focus on both our implementation of playful approaches to learning in the early years, and how we support young people into positive and sustained destinations beyond school.

In addition, we have set improvement outcomes that relate directly to our Nursery setting.

For Session 2023/24, these are: for children to have access to high quality learning experiences (enhance our approaches to numeracy and STEM); that children are well supported with wellbeing and enhanced transition processes (increased opportunities for parental engagement); and that children will have opportunities to build a sense of community and lead learning through purposeful engagement with the school and wider community (involve parents/carers more deeply in our self-evaluation and improvement planning processes).

6. EVALUATION OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

The following evaluations are based on the on-going self-evaluation processes of the school, as well as the most recent HMIE inspection and local authority quality improvement visits.

Quality Indicator 1.3 – <i>Leadership of Change</i>	Evaluation: <i>Satisfactory</i>
Quality Indicator 2.3 – <i>Learning, Teaching and Assessment</i>	Evaluation: <i>Satisfactory</i>
Quality Indicator 3.1 – <i>Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity, and Inclusion</i>	Evaluation: <i>Satisfactory</i>
Quality Indicator 3.2 – <i>Attainment and Achievement</i>	Evaluation: <i>Good</i>

These quality indicators are taken from 'How Good is Our School 4', Education Scotland (2015).

Our nursery was inspected by the Care Inspectorate in June 2023. The was a positive experience and the gradings from this inspection are shown below.

How good is our care, play and learning?

Quality Indicator 1.1 – <i>Nurturing care and support</i>	Evaluation: <i>Good</i>
Quality Indicator 1.3 – <i>Play and learning</i>	Evaluation: <i>Very Good</i>

How good is our setting?

Quality Indicator 2.2 – <i>Children experience high quality facilities</i>	Evaluation: <i>Good</i>
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How good is our leadership?

Quality Indicator 3.1 – <i>Quality assurance and improvement are led well</i>	Evaluation: <i>Very Good</i>
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How good is our staff team?

Quality Indicator 4.3 – <i>Staff deployment</i>	Evaluation: <i>Good</i>
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7. CONSULTATION

We value feedback from all children, young people, parents/carers, partners, and our community. We aspire to provide the very best experience to all learners which fosters curiosity whilst providing exciting and engaging learning opportunities for all our young people. Where we receive positive feedback, we like to celebrate this as it provides reassurance that we are meeting the needs of our children, young people, and families. Where we receive constructive criticism, we see this as an opportunity to review our practice and improve. Throughout the year we try to engage with all stakeholders in a range of ways to gather this feedback and inform our continuous cycle of improvement.

Throughout Session 2022/23 we engaged in regular discussion with our Parent Council regarding a variety of issues including our improvement priorities and our progress towards achieving these targets. Parent Council meetings continued to take place online enabling higher levels of attendance than had been observed when in-person meetings took place. This therefore allowed a wider spread of parents to the opportunity to contribute.

We have also sought the views of children, young people and parents/carers using a variety of surveys and focus group activities throughout the year. This included consultation around a future home learning policy, our approaches to support young people who, for whatever reason, are out of class, as well as a wider range of issues through our annual parent/carer survey. The knowledge gained through these activities have helped shape our strategic improvement priorities for Session 2023/24.

