

Castle Douglas High School



Marginal Gains for Attainment

Small improvements. Repeated consistently. Powerful collective impact.

Inspired by the marginal-gains approach associated with British Cycling: rather than searching for one dramatic intervention, we improve the small behaviours that influence learning every day. Individually they may seem minor. Together they can change outcomes.

Pupils - build small habits that make success more likely

Marginal gain - What it looks like.

Attend. Being in class consistently protects access to learning.

Be punctual. A few lost minutes each day quickly accumulate into hours.

Be prepared. Bring the equipment and materials needed to learn.

Start immediately. Reduce wasted transition time and get into the learning quickly.

Ask when unsure. Deal with confusion before it becomes a knowledge gap.

Review for 10 minutes. Short, regular revision is more manageable than last-minute cramming.

Retrieve, don't just reread. Quiz yourself, use flashcards and answer questions from memory.

Learn key vocabulary. Build the language needed to understand questions and express ideas.

Act on feedback. Correct mistakes and improve previous answers.

Complete homework. Treat independent work as an extension of classroom learning.

Control phone distraction. Create genuine periods of focused, interruption-free study.

Practise exam questions. Become familiar with how knowledge has to be applied under assessment conditions.

Know your next step. Be clear about the specific thing that would improve your performance.

Use available support. Attend supported study, revision or help sessions before problems grow.

Protect sleep. Good sleep supports concentration, memory and learning.

Read regularly. Regular reading develops vocabulary, comprehension and general knowledge.