

## Establishment Name Standards & Quality Report Session 2023 – 2024

This summary report is provided for parents/carers and partners to outline our achievements and improvements during session 2023 - 2024 and to share our improvement priorities for 2024 - 2025. Throughout last session we took forward our improvement priorities as detailed in our school improvement plan. Using our approaches to self-evaluation, we have detailed in this report the impact of our work and identified how we plan to continue to improve outcomes for our children and young people.

Bellahouston Academy is a non-denominational mainstream secondary school, situated in the south side of Glasgow. We have 1,130 pupils on our school roll, which has significantly increased over a number of sessions. Our school values - revised after a stakeholder consultation in 2022-2023 - are Belonging, Aspiration, Growth, Achievement and Respect. We currently hold bronze accreditation as a UNICEF Rights Respecting School, and are very proud to serve a particularly diverse catchment area. Our pupils and families come from a broad range of ethnic backgrounds, and a high number of our learners (58%) have English as an additional language. A comparatively high number of our families have home languages of Urdu, Punjabi and Arabic. 35% of our young people are in SIMDs 1-2, and 40% of our young people are in receipt of free school meals. We receive £183,750 in Pupil Equity Fund monies.

### Our achievements and improvements 2023 – 2024

#### Key developments (leadership of change) (Q1 1.3)

We continued to develop participative and purposeful approaches to school improvement, to ensure that all stakeholders feel empowered and able to influence our decision-making.

Our teaching **staff** formed new Professional Learning Groups (focusing on cross-cutting themes, such as Anti-Racist Education, Sustainability, Parental Involvement and Engagement, and Developing the Young Workforce) to support the design and delivery of our revised Curriculum Rationale. By distributing leadership in this way, we have been able to drive positive changes such as: the piloting of online booking systems for Parent Consultation Evenings; re-designing the school website to make this more parent-friendly; and co-designing (with our Anti-Discrimination Pupil Steering Group) a pupil survey to identify areas for improvement in the delivery of anti-racist education. When surveyed, 75% of our staff agreed or strongly agreed that they had opportunities to be involved in agreeing priorities for the school, and that they were actively involved in the school's ongoing self-evaluation. The broader revision of our Self-Evaluation and Quality Assurance calendar involved a renewed focus on collaborative improvement in our core business of learning and teaching; this is explored in greater depth under the *Developments in Learning, Teaching and Assessment (Q1 2.1)* heading below. We continue to build leadership capacity within the school at all levels, through our Leadership Growth professional development programmes: Aspiring Senior Leaders; Aspiring Principal Teacher of Pastoral Care; Aspiring Principal Teachers/Faculty Heads (Subject); Wider Aspects (Students and Probationer Teachers). 86% of participants surveyed felt that these programmes had empowered them through distributed leadership opportunities, and had deepened their knowledge of social justice and equity. 100% of participants surveyed would recommend participation in the programmes to others.

We have sought to, in a more formal, regular and purposeful way, access **pupil voice**. Our Pupil Council and new Pupil Parliament played a significant role in guiding improvements to our school environment (successfully promoting refurbishment of the pupil toilet areas, and the installation of new and improved lockers), and in the consultation exercise supporting the refreshment of our Curriculum Rationale (advocating for more curriculum enrichment activities (such as excursions) to supplement classroom learning, and the development of a more targeted vocational curriculum for young people who may benefit from this). Regular Pupil Focus groups centred on key aspects of our practice (learning and teaching, curriculum, and wellbeing and inclusion) were led by both the Senior Leadership Team, and colleagues from all 10 of our faculties; collated pupil views were then shared with all staff, and informed the revision of our Curriculum Rationale at both faculty/department and whole school level. Key emerging themes from these Focus Groups were: effective means by which active learning, enjoyment and engagement can be promoted in classroom lessons; the value of transferrable meta-skills in their subject-based learning; and the ways in which effective feedback can be given in varied ways.

We have worked more closely with **parents**. Our revived Parent Council led a full calendar of regular meetings, and supported changes which: led to improvement in the school environment; broadened the range of communication strategies used to engage and involve parents in the life of the school; and facilitated a programme of workshops designed to empower parents in better understanding various

aspects of the school's policies and provision (e.g. our anti-bullying policy, *We All Belong Here*; our approach to the spending of PEF monies; and our learning and teaching policy, *LEARN*). We have acted upon the views expressed by our Parent Council by: issuing a revised Parental Involvement and Engagement Calendar for 2024-2025; developing two additional Parent Information and Workshop Evenings led by pupils and all subject specialist staff (*Transitions* and *Pathways*); delivering a Headteacher's "Q and A" event for new parents; conducting regular satisfaction surveys with parents regarding their experiences at school events; developing parent-friendly course outlines for all S1 and S2 subject areas which highlight opportunities for related learning at home; and agreeing on a revised reporting model and calendar through a new tracking system.

Working more closely with our **Learning Community** partners, we identified common areas of focus within the improvement agendas of the schools and early years/nursery establishments in our locale, and are now working together on more coherent approaches to transitions, moderation, attendance, inclusion and wellbeing, and child protection, guided by our first Learning Community Improvement Plan. This collaborative approach was highlighted as a feature of effective practice at an authority-wide networking event in May 2024.

### **Developments in learning, teaching and assessment (Q1 2.1)**

As noted above, broader revision of our **Self-Evaluation and Quality Assurance calendar** involved a renewed focus on collaborative improvement regarding the core business of learning and teaching, specifically:

- a consultation exercise on and subsequent revision of our class visit schedule so that more staff felt involved in the process, and that these visits were more purposeful in identifying, sharing, and embedding good practice;
- regular collegiate discussion centred on the key aspects of our practice (learning and teaching, curriculum, and wellbeing and inclusion) through the issue of monthly department/faculty Challenge Questions derived from Education Scotland's How Good is Our School 4 resource, and the sharing of collated responses with the wider staff group;
- the introduction of Validated Self-Evaluation processes, where paired faculties (Health and Wellbeing and Performing Arts, and Science and Technologies) had opportunity to engage in reciprocal class visits and pupil focus groups, before undertaking collaborative improvement planning to build on strengths and address areas for development in regards to learning and teaching.

Following extensive consultation with staff, pupils, parents and partner agencies, we developed and published our **revised Curriculum Rationale**, which uses our school values of Belonging, Aspiration, Growth, Achievement and Respect as thematic benchmarks which clarify our expectations of both what is taught in our classes, and how we deliver this effectively through effective learning and teaching strategies. This was subsequently developed into a sketch-note format, in order to be more accessible to parents, and is available on the school's website.

Our IDL Professional Learning Group developed and successfully piloted an **S1 Interdisciplinary Learning** project (based on our school values) which has now been timetabled for all S1 classes in session 2024-2025. In June 2024, we were able to offer the parents of participating pupils an opportunity to attend school for a Showcase event, where young people were able to lead discussion on what they had learned about the value of Belonging, and the ways in which people within a community are made to feel valued and included. All staff are now involved in the development of S2 mastery-level Interdisciplinary Learning projects, to be delivered from August 2025.

In order to promote transferrable skills for life, learning and work, we are now, through a partnership with the *Gen +* group, developing specific **meta-skills** (organisation, communication and resilience; collaboration, initiative and leadership; adaptability, creativity and critical thinking), initially through PSHE lessons and – as we move forward – across the curriculum.

## Progress in Promoting Well-being Equality and Inclusion (Q1 3.1)

Consultation with staff, pupils and key stakeholders in regards to the introduction of a revised **House System** took place over term 3 in 2023/2024 Session. The House System was introduced in May-June 2024 and will continue to be embedded throughout session 2024-2025. Weekly House Team caseload meetings ensure high quality of support is swiftly and effectively offered to young people and their families in response to issues which may emerge. House Teams (A Depute Head Teacher and Principal Teacher of Pastoral Care) discuss not only our most vulnerable young people, but also monitor attendance, attainment, any bullying and equality log entries for all House Group pupils. Key information is shared with all staff regarding our vulnerable young people, in order to ensure a consistent whole-school approach to their support. Support for Learning Workers are also now attached to a House Group; their work with the House Team ensures that significant information is quickly shared with relevant staff, and acted upon. Their involvement in these meetings has allowed Support for Learning workers to become more involved in the planned interventions for young people. Weekly House Group assemblies at Tutor Time allow key messages regarding expectations, and information regarding upcoming events and opportunities to be shared

We continued to support the cultivation of positive **Mental Health**. 41 of our staff, and a group of senior pupils were trained as Mental Health First Aiders. Some of our trained pupil volunteers offered a very well-received presentation to teachers at the October 2023 Inset day, explaining how staff trained in Mental Health First Aid could support their wellbeing; as a result, safe spaces were subsequently organised and offered, giving young people who required a more mindful setting at intervals and lunchtimes a comfortable place to be. Our second Positive Mental Health Activities week ran in June 2024 for 3 days. All young people and school staff had the opportunity to select events from a wide-ranging offer, such as picnics in the park, baking, designing and applying henna tattoos, to street dance and poetry. Attendance at, and feedback on, the event was strong. Pupils and staff reported that the day helped embed the values of the school; young people were able to choose activities where they could achieve success, and were able to build positive relationships with staff in more informal settings. Positive feedback from staff and pupils has indicated that they would like to see the event expanded next session, including both more days and a larger choice of activities.

A group of senior pupils were trained as **Mentors in Violence Protection**. These pupils were able to use their training to deliver PSHE lessons to S1 pupils. They were visible across the school at breaks and lunches and provided additional supports in order to make sure that all young people in the school felt safe and included. Plans are in place to expand this next session, to allow more young people to be trained, thereby further enhancing the support our BGE pupils are able to access in Tutor classes, at PSHE and in social areas.

We sought to embed our school values through an extensive **curricular enrichment** offer of clubs, after-school events, and excursions. We used a newly-devised pupil survey in order to measure the impact of these curricular enrichment activities; learners were able – with gradually increasing confidence - to explain the skills and knowledge developed through these opportunities, and a high level of enjoyment was apparent (an average score of 4.39 out of 5 was given by pupils when asked to rate the impact of the activity). Our Faculty of Performing Arts continued to develop their external partnership with the National Theatre of Scotland, by building on the success of 2022's *Like Flying* production, and assisting in the development of a new dance performance *Thank U, Next*. Two sold-out shows took place in January 2024; two pupils were selected to undertake paid work with NTS following their success in the show. Sunshine on Leith, our school show in Summer 2024, created an opportunity for all pupils across the school to engage in wider achievement. The school had a total of 103 young people involved; a significant number of our most vulnerable pupils (including care experienced learners and some pupils with Additional Support Needs) were well-represented, as well as pupils from all stages in the school. The average attendance of those involved increased and survey responses noted that cast and crew took great pride in being involved, and saw such events as key in embedding and enacting the school values. In June 2024, we also had our first International Tea Party, an after-school event for female pupils, where food, fashion, music and dance of various cultures was shared and celebrated; the event was planned and delivered, in large part, by a group of volunteer S4 pupils. A group of our Senior Phase young people also achieved their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award.

We continue to promote a commitment to **financial inclusion**. Our Blazing Squad initiative (a sustainable uniform swap), and Breakfast Club and interval Grub Hub supported pupils who may otherwise be affected

by the cost of the school day. These initiatives are integral in ensuring that all pupils are able to have access to school uniform and that they have the chance to eat a healthy snack before the morning learning sessions. Our Financial Inclusion Support Officer has - in the 5 years since the programme began - assisted families in claiming £2,595,664 of benefits to which they are entitled. This has benefited over 1270 pupils in that time.

A significant proportion of our Pupil Equity Fund monies have been used to staff our **Partner Agency Hub**, which supplements our targeted delivery of strategies supporting learners at risk of disengagement; we finance a Home School Support Worker, a Developing the Young Workforce Admin worker, and a Youth Worker.

Last session, we used short temporary **exclusions** on 25 occasions (12 females and 13 males), involving 22 individual young people. In general, we prefer to use school-based consequences and supports as an alternative to short temporary exclusion; we use exclusion only on rare occasions where alternative strategies are felt inappropriate, and where such action is required to address unacceptable behaviours. We strongly believe that the continuous embedding of our school values of Belonging and Respect will see the number of exclusions continue to fall in the coming years. All short temporary exclusions are managed in line with Glasgow City Council's guidance.

### **Progress in Children's Learning/Raising Attainment and Recognising Achievement (Q1 3.2)**

#### ***Broad General Education (S1-S3)***

In regards to Achieved Curriculum for Excellence Levels, pupils – in both Literacy and Numeracy – performed better than the Glasgow average. 89.2% of young people achieved level 3 or better in Numeracy, broadly in line with a recently-improving pattern. 87.8% of young people achieved level 3 or better in Literacy, a very slight decrease from the previous session, but better than the sessions prior to this, and higher than the Glasgow average.

#### **S4**

The young people in our highest attaining 20% and middle 60% of learners performed broadly on a par with similar young people at other schools. Our lowest attaining 20% performed slightly less well than similar young people at other schools; this is largely due to low attainment of young people not regularly attending school, which has therefore remained a key priority in session 2024-2025. Learners experiencing socio-economic deprivation performed broadly on a par in comparison with similar young people at other schools. In comparison with previous recent sessions, more young people achieved 3 awards and 5 awards at level 5 (e.g. National 5). Fewer young people achieved level 4 and level 5 qualifications in literacy and numeracy, in comparison with similar young people at other schools. Our leavers were more likely to move on to positive destinations than similar young people at other schools.

#### **S5**

The young people in our lowest attaining 20% and middle 60% of learners performed broadly on a par with similar young people at other schools. Our highest-attaining 20% performed slightly less well than similar young people at other schools, and slightly less well in comparison with previous sessions' cohorts at Bellahouston Academy. Learners experiencing socio-economic deprivation performed slightly better in comparison with similar young people at other schools. Our leavers were more likely to move on to positive destinations than similar young people at other schools.

#### **S6**

The young people in our lowest attaining 20% and middle 60% of learners performed broadly on a par with similar young people at other schools. Our highest-attaining 20% performed slightly less well than similar young people at other schools, and slightly less well in comparison with previous sessions' cohorts at Bellahouston Academy; however, a higher percentage of young people achieved 3 or more and 5 or more awards at Level 6 (e.g. Highers) in comparison with previous sessions. Our leavers were more likely to move on to positive destinations than similar young people at other schools.

## Our improvement plan priorities 2024 – 2025

We have three key improvement priorities (or “missions”) for session 2024-2025 within our School Improvement Plan.

### 1. To raise attainment by embedding the equity-focused principles of our revised Curriculum Rationale and LEARN policy into our BGE and Senior Phase curricular offer and its delivery.

This means that the courses we deliver and the way in which we deliver them will meet the diverse needs of all pupils, so that they can achieve their best potential. To help us overtake this mission, we will make the following commitments:

- To raise attainment at all levels;
- To improve classroom pace and challenge, and assessment approaches;
- To consult with stakeholders regarding our curriculum and the arrangement of the school day;
- To develop interdisciplinary learning input within the BGE curriculum;
- To develop the Developing the Young Workforce agenda;
- To create opportunities within the curriculum for themes such equalities, equity, social justice, and sustainability to be explored.

### 2. To better meet needs by embedding our revised Vision, Values and Aims, LEARN Policy and Rights Respecting Schools Charter into all practice, so that we may deliver learning, wellbeing and inclusivity provision which is contextually-responsive.

This means that we will support the learning and wellbeing of all pupils, in a way which reflects the unique character of our school and the community it serves. To help us overtake this mission, we will make the following commitments:

- To empower parents and carers from all demographics to support learning at home;
- To improve the school environment and social time experience;
- To achieve Language and Communication Friendly Establishment status to support and develop the language and communication skills of all children;
- To develop a more coherent and holistic Faculty of Inclusion offer;
- To use classroom routines which foster a safe, calm, positive and purposeful learning environment;
- To improve attendance, punctuality and engagement through our revised Attendance Policy;
- To improve processes for the recognition and celebration of success;
- To embed our Pupil Empowerment Strategy;
- To safeguard pupil and staff welfare, by supporting positive mental health.

### 3. To develop - in a manner reflecting the key principles of the School as a Learning Organisation (OECD, 2016) - an increasingly consistent, collegiate and collaborative approach to quality assurance, self-evaluation and school improvement, and evaluate the impact of these approaches on the experiences of young people.

This means that all of those involved with the school will work together to make sure the support we offer makes a positive difference; we will offer the highest-quality professional learning to staff. To help us overtake this mission, we will make the following commitments:

- To involve all of those connected to our school in our Quality Assurance and Self-Evaluation processes;
- To track how effectively Self-Evaluation and Quality Assurance evidence is improving practice;
- To offer high-quality professional learning and leadership development to our staff;
- To work with other schools in our Learning Community to improve our attendance, transitions and moderation.

How Good Is Our School 4 Quality Indicator (QI)	Evaluation
Leadership of Change (QI 1.3)	Good
Learning Teaching and Assessment (QI 2.3)	Good
Ensuring Wellbeing Equality and Inclusion (QI 3.1)	Good
Raising Attainment and Achievement (QI 3.2)	Good

## How to find out more about our school

Contact us directly if you require further information about our school or if you wish to comment on this report.



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Further information is also available in our newsletters, on our school website, and in our school handbook