

Context of the Establishment

Our Establishment

St Columba's High School is a Catholic school serving the South-west of Greenock along with Gourock and the villages of Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. We occupy a modern school campus overlooking the Firth of Clyde and have a capacity for 686 pupils. The school roll has steadily increased in recent years and in session 2025-2026, the roll was 652 pupils. Around 49% of our pupils live in SIMD 1-3. The school is very successful in securing positive outcomes for pupils' future destinations including Higher Education, Further Education, training and employment. The number of pupils who leave school to attend university, college or enter employment remains high. Vulnerable young people continue to enjoy excellent support into employment, college or university through very effective transition programmes and post-school support planning.

Highly effective cluster partnerships with St. Andrew's, St. Joseph's and St. Ninian's Primary Schools are a key feature of successful school improvement. Families across the school community are active participants in the life of the school and are well led by the Parent Council.

Every member of our school community is encouraged to uphold our values which include - Faith; Ambition; Inclusion; and Perseverance. St Columba's High School is a nurturing and inclusive school committed to high levels of support, participation and achievement for all.

We aim 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. By regular prayer and worship, we foster the distinctive Catholic ethos of the school.

Following a short model HMIE Inspection in March 2024, the school approach to Learning, Teaching and Assessment and Raising Attainment and Achievement were validated as Very Good.

Further information can be found in our school handbook which is available on our school website at <http://st-columbashigh.inverclyde.sch.uk/>

Our Vision:

We nurture every young person's God-given talents within a climate of love and kindness.

Our Values:

We value: Faith; Ambition; Inclusion; Perseverance

Our Aim:

To offer rich learning experiences which enable young people to be successful and use their gifts and talents to serve others.

Establishment priority 1 – Raising Attainment

NIF Priority

Improvements in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

Choose an item

NIF Driver

Assessment of children's progress

Parental engagement

Performance information

HGIOS/ELC QIs

1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

2.5 Family learning

UNCRC

Article 3 (Best interests of the child):

Article 28: (Right to education):

Outcome:

Attendance

To increase the average attendance of all pupils from 90.6% to over 91% by June 2026

To increase the attendance of S4 pupils from 87.9% to over 89% by June 2026

To increase the attendance of S5 pupils from 87.3% to over 89% by June 2026

Attainment

BGE –

The percentage of pupils in S1 on track to achieve Level 3 Writing will be above 92% by June 2026

The percentage of pupils in S2 on track to achieve Level 3 Numeracy will be above 92% by June 2026

The percentage of pupils in S3 achieving Level 4 Reading will be above 75% by June 2026

The percentage of pupils in S3 achieving Level 4 Writing will be above 75% by June 2026

The percentage of pupils in S3 achieving Level 4 Numeracy will be above 66% by June 2026

Senior Phase –

The percentage of pupils in:

S4 achieving 5+ National 5 awards will be above 50% by August 2026

S4 achieving 1+ National 5 awards will be above 90% by August 2026

S5 achieving 5+ Highers will be above 20% by August 2026

S5 achieving 3+ Highers will be above 40% by August 2026

S5 achieving 1+ Highers will be above 60% by August 2026

S6 achieving 1+ Advanced Higher will be above 20% by August 2026,

S4 achieving a Level 5 numeracy award will be above 60% by August 2026

The percentage of leavers gaining a qualification in literacy and numeracy will be 100% by August 2026

Learning, Teaching & Assessment

Enhance approaches to Learning, Teaching and Assessment, focusing on Artificial Intelligence, Checking for understanding to inform next steps in learning, effective use of Pupil Support Assistants, and differentiation.

PEF used to support closing the gap:

DHT Excellence & Equity - £9,855.49 – Strategic leadership and management of Wellbeing Officer

PT Literacy & Numeracy - £3,325.92

PT Inclusion - £4,518.44

PT Guidance - £6,373.41 – back-fill for Acting DHT

Wellbeing Officer – £10,381.17 - Liaising with partner agencies, families and guidance staff to improve attendance for all and identified individuals.

Starter Pack - £1487.56 – resources identified by pupils and families to support P7 to S1 transition.

Senior Phase Supported Study - £7,000 – support identified by pupils and families to enhance preparations for SQA examinations.

Progress and impact of outcomes for learners:

Attendance

We recognise attendance as a key driver in improving attainment and securing positive outcomes for all young people. Our current attendance sits at 89.5%, which is below our ambitious target; however, we have significantly strengthened our systems and approaches to support improvement. We have robust and effective approaches in place for tracking, monitoring and early intervention:

- Our use of attendance tracker data, including weekly attendance and analysis of attendance patterns, enables us to identify early those young people at risk of disengagement.
- We take a proactive approach to addressing negative attendance patterns, ensuring timely and targeted interventions are in place.
- Four-weekly meetings between SLT link staff and Guidance staff provide a structured and consistent forum to interrogate attendance data, track progress and plan interventions.
- We make effective use of the local authority attendance dashboard to support analysis and benchmarking.
- Rigorous implementation of our updated Attendance Policy, ensuring clarity, consistency and high expectations across the school

Our targeted interventions are well planned and increasingly impactful:

- Our Wellbeing Officer and Guidance Team work closely with identified pupils and families to provide personalised, needs-led support.
- We maintain a clear focus on cluster and sibling attendance patterns, enabling a more holistic and joined-up approach to supporting families.
- Targeted wider achievement opportunities are used effectively to improve engagement and encourage attendance for identified young people. These include: Be-Inn Unity, Gourrock Golf Club, Beacon Arts Centre, Craig Malloy Football, Rig Arts.
- Interventions are informed by robust data and are regularly reviewed to ensure they are making a positive difference.

Parental engagement is a key strength in our work to improve attendance:

- Regular communication, including weekly updates, targeted contact and home visits, supports strong and trusting relationships with families.
- Pupil and parent questionnaires are used effectively to identify barriers to attendance and inform targeted support.

We have successfully increased the attendance of S5 pupils to 91% which exceeds our target of 89% by June 2026. This is an increase of 3.7% attendance compared to their S4 attendance.

Further strategic interventions are required to support attendance in S4 (87.7%) as the target of 89% was not achieved.

Attainment – BGE

Attainment within the Broad General Education remains a key strength, particularly in literacy, reflecting our continued focus on high-quality learning and teaching and personalised support.

Our most recent tracking data highlights strong performance across BGE:

- 95% of S1 pupils are on track to achieve Level 3 in Writing, exceeding our target
- 90% of S2 pupils are on track to achieve Level 3 in Numeracy
- 82% of S3 pupils are achieving Level 4 in Reading, with strong performance also evident in Writing. They both exceed our targets by 7%.
- Numeracy attainment at level 3 (97%) increased by 3% this session and level 4 (65%) by 1%.

We have developed and embedded a range of effective approaches to support attainment:

- Learners experience a coherent and progressive learning journey
- A robust BGE tracking dashboard supports detailed analysis of progress and informs timely interventions
- Regular BGE attainment meetings with Principal Teachers ensure a consistent focus on progress and targeted support
- High-quality formative assessment and feedback, enabling staff to adapt learning to meet individual needs
- Effective moderation practices, strengthening the reliability of assessment judgements
- Use of digital technology to enhance engagement and provide a range of learning experiences
- Curricular transition work in literacy and numeracy including: regular visits from secondary teachers, moderation, joint planning, common language and methodology and professional learning.

Attainment –

Attainment in the Senior Phase continues to show positive progress, underpinned by a strong commitment to academic excellence and a clear focus on targeted support for key groups, including the middle 60% and highest 20% of learners.

Our current data highlights the following key strengths and areas for development:

- 49.5% of S4 pupils achieved 5+ National 5 qualifications.
- 17.4% of S5 pupils achieved 5+ Highers, 39.7% for 3+ Highers and 62.8% for 1+Highers.
- 14.2% of S6 pupils achieved at least one Advanced Higher
- 97% of leavers are on track to achieve literacy and numeracy qualifications

Across all measures, with the exception of Advanced Higher, we either met or exceeded our target outcomes.

We have implemented a range of targeted and strategic interventions to improve attainment:

- Robust tracking and monitoring systems, including dashboards and attainment meetings enables the forensic analysis of attainment data to identify and track targeted groups
- Strategic timetabling, including increased access to Level 5 courses
- Staff mentoring for identified pupils
- A well-established Supported Study programme, including:

- Study Hub
- Booster sessions
- Personalised study plans
- Strong and consistent parental engagement, including weekly communication and targeted contact

Throughout the session, we strengthened learning, teaching, and assessment by embedding consistent pedagogical approaches across the school, with a particular focus on: checking for understanding, effective use of questioning, and high-quality assessment practices. Staff planned engaging learning experiences aligned with the St Columba's Lesson structure, using targeted questioning and ongoing formative assessment to identify next steps and ensure all learners are appropriately challenged. This includes the integration of Digital pedagogy and AI. Professional learning, informed by learning visits and our inspection findings, prioritised differentiation, effective use of both questioning and assessment.

Next steps

- Further improve attendance, particularly in new S3 and S4 cohorts.
- Further enhance approaches to tracking and monitoring, particularly from S3 into S4.
- Strengthen numeracy progression to National 5 Mathematics.
- Increase attainment in S5 and S6, particularly:
 - 3+ and 5+ Highers
 - Quality of passes for all
- Ensure all young people achieve a qualification in literacy and numeracy by the time they leave school.
- Continue to refine targeted interventions for the middle 60% in S4 and S5.
- Engage with practitioner enquiry and small tests of change to enhance pedagogical practice.
- Further embed differentiation and high quality questioning strategies in all classrooms.
- Continue to develop parental engagement through the development of our Digital Home Learning Hub.
- Share effective practice and plan and implement next steps for curriculum improvement to maximise attainment and achievement for all learners. This includes engagement with the Curriculum Improvement Cycle and Project Based Learning.

Establishment priority 2 – Closing the Attainment Gap

NIF Priority

Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
Choose an item

NIF Driver

Parental engagement
Assessment of children's progress

HGIOS/ELC QIs

1.5 Management of resources to promote equity
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

UNCRC

Article 31 (Leisure, play and culture):
Article 28: (Right to education):

Outcome:

BGE:

To narrow the gap in S3 Level 3 Writing by 6% (from 16% - 10%) by June 2026

To narrow the gap in S3 Level 4 Writing by 10% (from 35% - 25%) by June 2026

To narrow the gap in S3 Level 3 Numeracy by 8% (from 18% - 10%) by June 2026

To narrow the gap in S3 Level 4 Numeracy by 10% (from 34% - 24%) by June 2026

Senior Phase:

The percentage of pupils in S4 living in SIMD 1-2 achieving 5+ National 5 awards will be above 26% by August 2026

The percentage of pupils in S4 living in SIMD 1-2 achieving 3+ National 5 awards will be above 50% by August 2026

The percentage of pupils in S4 living in SIMD 1-2 achieving 1+ National 5 awards will be above 80% by August 2026

The percentage of pupils in S5 living in SIMD 1-2 achieving 5+ Highers will be above 8% by August 2026

The percentage of pupils in S5 living in SIMD 1-2 achieving 3+ Highers will be above 30% by August 2026

The percentage of pupils in S5 living in SIMD 1-2 achieving 1+ Highers will be above 60% by August 2026

Wider Achievement:

The percentage of target pupils participating in at least one wider achievement activity will be above 90% by June 2026

- 86% of pupils willingly participated in at least 1 of our Wider Achievement targeted intervention.
- 87% of SIMD 1/2 pupils willingly participated in at least 1 targeted intervention.

S1 87% of targeted pupils participating

S2 90% of targeted pupils participating

S3 78% of targeted pupils participating

PEF used to support closing the gap:

DHT Excellence & Equity - £9,855.49 – Strategic leadership and management of Wellbeing Officer

PT Literacy & Numeracy - £3,325.92

PT Inclusion - £4,518.44

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Starter Pack - £1487.56 – resources identified by pupils and families to support P7 to S1 transition.

Senior Phase Supported Study - £7,000 – support identified by pupils and families to enhance preparations for SQA examinations.

Progress and impact of outcomes for learners:

BGE

Across the Broad General Education, targeted interventions in literacy and numeracy are demonstrating measurable impact, although progress remains variable across levels and curricular areas.

In S3 literacy, progress towards closing the attainment gap in writing has been positive. At Level 3, our target was exceeded and the gap has narrowed by 9% and is now 7%. At Level 4, the gap in writing has reduced by 5% but remains a focus for us. The progress made this session reflects the positive impact of targeted class setting, increased pace, and a focus on National 5 pathways. There have been significant developments towards ensuring our S3 curriculum articulates with National 5 skills. This has raised expectations and improved progression routes, particularly for SIMD 1–2 pupils.

In numeracy, there is strong evidence of accelerated progress. The Level 3 gap in S3 has reduced to 6% which has exceeded the June 2026 target by 4% (narrowed by 12%). This indicates that early intervention and small group teaching approaches are having a positive effect. At Level 4, the gap remains wider at 24%, however, we observe a significant improvement upon last session and our target of narrowing the gap by 10% has been exceeded by 3%. We continue to focus on challenge and progression within higher-attaining groups.

A range of targeted literacy interventions has supported engagement and attainment. These include the reintroduction of the Fresh Start programme (including for EAL learners), the use of SRA Reading Laboratory, and the introduction of graphic novels to promote reading engagement. Opportunities such as the S2 creative writing competition, Reading Champions, Reading Ambassadors, and paired reading programmes have strengthened reading culture and pupil confidence. There is a common approach to developing skills for Reading for Understanding. This has improved learner outcomes.

In numeracy, small group teaching and targeted support in both S1 and S3 have enabled the majority of learners to make expected progress, with S3 pupils now progressing towards National 4 and engaging with National 5 applications of maths. Overall, these approaches demonstrate clear progress in closing the gap at Level 3 and 4.

The S6 Learning Leaders programme provided effective peer support for literacy and numeracy in the early part of the session. Further development of this programme is a priority going forward to ensure that it is sustainable across the academic session.

Senior Phase

- 37% of SIMD 1 - 2 pupils in S4 achieved 5+ National 5 awards (target 26%)
- 63% of SIMD 1 - 2 pupils in S4 achieved 3+ National 5 awards (target 50%)
- 97% of SIMD 1 - 2 pupils in S4 achieved 1+ National 5 award (target 80%)

This represents very strong progress in closing the attainment gap and reflects the cumulative impact of targeted support, improved BGE pathways, and effective use of Pupil Equity Funding to support learners most affected by poverty.

For S5 attainment, our targets were ambitious for SIMD 1-2 pupils:

- 17% of SIMD 1 - 2 pupils in S5 achieved 5+ Higher awards (target 8%)
- 39% of SIMD 1 - 2 pupils in S5 achieved 3+ Higher awards (target 30%)
- 83% of SIMD 1 - 2 pupils in S5 achieved 1+ Higher awards (target 60%)

The improved S4 and S5 outcomes provide a strong foundation for future success. Continued focus on progression, course choice, and targeted support will be key to sustaining this trajectory.

Wider Achievement and Equity

Participation in wider achievement is a key strength and is having a positive impact on engagement and attendance. Current data shows that:

- 86% of targeted pupils have participated in at least one wider achievement activity (exceeding the 80% target)
- 87% of SIMD 1–2 pupils have participated
- Participation rates across year groups are strong (S1: 87%, S2: 90%, S3: 78%)

Targeted tracking and monitoring every 19 school days has ensured that those most impacted by poverty are identified and supported to engage. This has contributed to improved attendance outcomes, with 51% of participating pupils improving their attendance compared to the previous session. The average attendance of targeted pupils remains positive at 85%, rising to 86% for SIMD 1–2 pupils, demonstrating the effectiveness of these interventions in promoting engagement.

The implementation of data-driven approaches ensured that all pupils, including those in key equity groups (SIMD 1-2, ASN, CEYP), made expected progress, with attainment gaps identified and addressed. S4 pupils residing in SIMD 1-2 received substantial support, with 41% estimated to achieve 5 or more National 5 awards, 59% achieving 3 or more National 5 awards, and 82% achieving at least 1 National 5 award.

The appointment of a Principal Teacher of Inclusion has significantly strengthened the wider achievement offer by developing robust systems for tracking participation and skills development, particularly for pupils impacted by poverty. Engagement and attendance of targeted pupils are monitored every 19 school days, ensuring equity of access and participation. As a result, programmes are increasingly responsive to pupil voice and family engagement, supporting sustained participation and improved outcomes.

A comprehensive Language and Ethnicity audit was completed, which informed targeted support, with detailed information integrated into the school's confidential overview. The Equalities Policy was effectively embedded, with ongoing engagement in Local Authority Continuous Professional Learning (CLPL) on Building Racial Literacy, alongside a cluster-wide Equalities project that was underway.

A universal tracking system was established to identify under-represented groups in wider achievement, supporting targeted interventions aimed at promoting equity. Feedback from pupils, staff, parents, and partners indicated that the values of inclusion and equality had made an explicit and positive impact on the school ethos.

Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) planning was widely consulted with staff, pupils, and parents of targeted cohorts, leading to the establishment of a PEF stakeholders group that supported participatory budgeting and equity-focused decision-making.

Next steps

BGE

- Increase targeted support for S3 Level 3 writing, including structured writing approaches, regular assessment, and moderation.
- Strengthen 6-weekly tracking of target cohort, with clear identification of SIMD 1–2 pupils and timely intervention.
- Relaunch S6 Learning Leaders with timetabled sessions, clear roles, and monitoring of impact.
- Continue early intervention in S1–S2, using reading age data, numeracy diagnostics, and targeted groupings.

Senior Phase

- Sustain strong S4 attainment through targeted support and tracking of SIMD 1–2 pupils.
- Increase focus on S5 attainment, particularly improving outcomes in 1+, 3+, and 5+ Highers.
- Expand supported study, mentoring, and intervention programmes for targeted pupils.
- Use attainment data to identify underperformance early and adapt support accordingly.
- Review curriculum pathways and course choices to maximise attainment opportunities.

Wider Achievement

- Target non-participating pupils, particularly in S3, to ensure equity of access.
- Strengthen family engagement to remove barriers to participation.
- Track skills development and links to attainment and attendance more effectively.
- Maintain focus on improving attendance for pupils below 85% through targeted interventions.

<u>NIF Priority</u> Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education <u>NIF Driver</u> Assessment of children's progress Parental engagement	<u>HGIOS/ELC QIs</u> 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion 3.2 Securing Children's Progress <u>UNCRC</u> Article 12 (Respect for the views of the child): <i>Article 28: (Right to education):</i>
Outcome: Health, Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion By June 2026, all BGE and Senior Phase pupils will experience a consistent and progressive PSE curriculum. Tracking evidence will show progression in knowledge, skills and understanding, and almost all pupils will report that PSE lessons help them make informed choices about their wellbeing and relationships. By October 2025, all BGE and Senior Phase pupils will complete the updated Inverclyde HWB survey, with follow-up by April 2026. Most will evaluate positively against SHANARRI indicators, showing improved perceptions of safety, inclusion and wellbeing. By October 2025, all identified pupils impacted by poverty will complete the Inverclyde HWB baseline, with follow-up by April 2026. At least 75% will report improvements in affiliation, agency and autonomy as a result of targeted interventions. By April 2026, almost all pupils will demonstrate an enhanced understanding of protected characteristics, racial equality and diversity through PSE journals, group discussions and equalities questionnaires. SEEMIS data will show a further reduction in bullying and equalities incidents compared with 2024–25. By May 2026, the majority of BGE pupils will have participated in at least two outdoor learning experiences. Pupil evaluations will evidence improved engagement, teamwork and application of learning in real-world contexts. By May 2026, almost all pupils will participate in opportunities across the four contexts of learning. Universal tracking will show progression in key skills, and identified non-participants will have accessed targeted interventions to increase engagement. By May 2026, all pupils will have engaged in assemblies and PSE learning focused on trauma, with almost all reporting increased confidence in using strategies for resilience and self-regulation. By May 2026, almost all pupils participating in targeted programmes (e.g. nurture, CLD, Blues, boxing) will report improved mental health, self-confidence and a greater sense of belonging in school. PEF Spend to support HWB 0.2 FTE Health and Wellbeing Teacher - £14,751.12 (to identify a targeted group of S2/3 pupils and implement appropriate interventions to improve wellbeing; to make continuous improvements to PSE courses in line with national, local policy and stakeholder views) 0.2 FTE Nurture - £14,751.12 (to work with pupil support to identify pupils in S1/2/3 who would benefit from nurture and to lead nurture groups) Be-Inn-Unity - £9,000 (Supporting mental wellbeing and achievement through mentoring) Craig Molloy Coaching £720 (Supporting wellbeing and leadership of identified group of pupils) Reece McEwen - £480 (Supporting wellbeing and leadership of identified group of pupils) Progress and impact of outcomes for learners:	

By June 2026, all BGE and Senior Phase pupils will experience a consistent and progressive PSE curriculum.

- PSE tracking in S1 and S2 is now embedded, providing clear evidence of progression in learners' knowledge, skills and understanding across key health and wellbeing themes.
- Staff professional learning has strengthened the delivery of a consistent PSE curriculum, including learning related to relationships, resilience, personal safety and wellbeing.
- PSE evaluation and learner feedback indicate that most pupils feel lessons support them to make informed choices about their wellbeing, relationships and future decision-making.
- PSE tracking information is increasingly being used to identify learners requiring additional support and to inform targeted interventions.

By October 2025, all BGE and Senior Phase pupils will complete the updated Inverclyde HWB survey, with follow-up by April 2026.

- The Be Well survey provided comprehensive wellbeing data across the school and established a clear picture of learners' experiences.
- Most pupils evaluated positively across wellbeing indicators, reporting that they feel safe, supported and respected within school.
- Survey findings highlighted particular strengths in relationships, peer support and school ethos.
- Areas identified for improvement, including sleep, academic stress, emotional regulation and belonging, have informed targeted actions and improvements to the PSE curriculum and pastoral support systems.

By October 2025, all identified pupils impacted by poverty will complete the Inverclyde HWB baseline, with follow-up by April 2026.

- Learners identified as being impacted by poverty accessed a range of targeted interventions including nurture groups, mentoring, Be-Inn-Unity and Craig Molloy Football Coaching.
- Evaluation evidence demonstrates improvements in learner confidence, engagement and sense of belonging among participating pupils.
- Attendance and participation data indicate increased engagement in school life for many learners receiving targeted support.
- Follow-up evaluations suggest progress in learners' feelings of affiliation, agency and autonomy.

By April 2026, almost all pupils will demonstrate an enhanced understanding of protected characteristics, racial equality and diversity.

- Almost all pupils have engaged in learning relating to protected characteristics through PSE, assemblies and cluster equalities work.
- The development of the Anti-Bullying Charter through consultation with Learner Council representatives and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors has strengthened pupil ownership of inclusion and respectful relationships.
- Pupil feedback and equalities activities indicate that most learners can confidently discuss issues relating to diversity, inclusion and protected characteristics.
- SEEMiS monitoring recorded 19 bullying incidents, including six racist incidents, all of which were investigated and addressed in line with policy. This information continues to inform targeted preventative work and awareness-raising activities.

- Staff learning in equalities and racial literacy has improved confidence in identifying and responding to discriminatory behaviours.

By May 2026, the majority of BGE pupils will have participated in at least two outdoor learning experiences.

- The majority of BGE pupils accessed outdoor learning opportunities through curricular and cross-curricular experiences.
- Learners participated in a range of activities including fieldwork, partnership projects and outdoor learning experiences that supported curriculum delivery.
- Pupil evaluations indicate improved engagement, teamwork, communication skills and opportunities to apply learning in real-world contexts.

By May 2026, almost all pupils will participate in opportunities across the four contexts of learning.

- Pupils continue to access a broad range of opportunities across the four contexts for learning through wider achievement, leadership, sports, arts and community-based activities.
- Participation in programmes such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, sports leadership and creative partnerships has increased.
- Learners report that these experiences have enhanced their confidence, employability skills and awareness of post-school pathways.
- Tracking systems have been strengthened to monitor participation and identify learners requiring additional encouragement to engage in wider achievement opportunities.

By May 2026, all pupils will have engaged in assemblies and PSE learning focused on trauma.

- All pupils have engaged in learning that promotes emotional wellbeing, resilience and self-regulation through assemblies and PSE.
- Staff commitment to trauma-informed practice has increased, with 80% completing Keeping the Promise training and all staff completing safeguarding and child protection training.
- Additional Signs of Safety training for pastoral and senior staff has strengthened support for vulnerable learners.
- Learner feedback indicates increasing confidence in understanding wellbeing strategies and accessing support when required.

By May 2026, almost all pupils participating in targeted programmes will report improved mental health, self-confidence and a greater sense of belonging.

- Targeted interventions, including nurture provision, mentoring, community partnerships and wellbeing programmes, have supported learners experiencing barriers to engagement.
- Evaluation evidence demonstrates improvements in self-confidence, resilience and school connectedness among participating pupils.
- Most pupils involved in targeted support report stronger relationships with peers and staff and a greater sense of belonging within the school community.
- Attendance, engagement and learner voice evidence indicate positive impacts on wellbeing and readiness to learn.

Next steps

- Target key wellbeing gaps (sleep, senior phase stress, emotional regulation) using data-informed interventions and track impact over time.
- Refresh the school Equality policy in line with local authority guidance.
- Strengthen inclusion and equality by deepening pupil understanding (through curriculum, assemblies, Romero group, Culture Day, Cluster working) and improving analysis of bullying incidents.
- Embed consistent practice across staff through ongoing CLPL in trauma-informed approaches, Equally Safe at School and Keeping the Promise.
- Develop a Recognising Achievement Strategy to ensure achievement is identified, valued, celebrated and tracked consistently across: subject departments, year groups, whole school and pupil support.
- Further develop the pupil leadership programme to include all year groups across all curricular areas.

Establishment priority 4 – Developing the Young Workforce

NIF Priority

Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

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NIF Driver

Assessment of children's progress

Performance information

HGIOS/ELC QIs

2.6 Transitions

2.7 Partnerships

_3.3 Increasing creativity and employability

UNCRC

Article 28: (Right to education):

Outcome:

School leavers in sustained positive destinations, will increase by 3.5% to 100% by February 2026.

School leavers from SIMD 1-2, in sustained positive destinations, will increase by at least 4% to over 97% by February 2026.

School leavers in receipt of FSM, in sustained positive destinations, will increase by at least 4% to over 99% by February 2026.

Progress and impact of outcomes for learners:

We are continuing to secure positive destinations for school leavers, with 96.72% of young people sustaining a positive destination. This reflects a high level of success and maintains previous strong performance. Targeted work with key equity groups has contributed to improved outcomes for pupils in SIMD 1–2 (improved by 3%) and those in receipt of free school meals (improved by 5%).

Robust tracking systems have been implemented in partnership with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to identify pupils at risk of not securing a positive destination. Proposed destinations are monitored closely, with targeted interventions led by the Depute Head Teacher and Guidance team.

Partnership working continues to be a key strength. Ongoing collaboration with employers such as DXC Technology and Babcock, alongside college links, has expanded pathways for learners and reduced duplication in course provision. Engagement in employer-led activities has been positive, including DXC interview experiences, where 12 senior pupils participated. Opportunities have also extended to apprenticeship pathways, with targeted pupils supported to access these routes.

The school's work experience opportunities are becoming increasingly responsive to learner needs, with placements facilitated through Developing the Young Workforce (DYW). There is a clear focus on enhancing this further through more structured opportunities and the inclusion of SCQF accreditation, ensuring that wider achievement is recognised and contributes to learner pathways.

The Gen+ meta-skills programme in S1 and S2 has supported pupils to self-evaluate their skills, with follow-up evaluations planned to measure impact on confidence and awareness of employability skills.

Work is ongoing to strengthen employability education within the BGE, including inputs from SDS and the development of structured lessons within the PSE programme. This will ensure that all learners develop a clearer understanding of career pathways from an earlier stage.

Tracking of wider achievement and meta-skills is improving. Data on pupil participation and skills development is collected and analysed for S1 – 3. Further development is now required to create learner profiles that capture cumulative progress. This will support more effective tracking of skills and ensure that achievements beyond the classroom are recognised and linked to future pathways.

Next steps

- Seek views of pupils, staff, parents and partners to inform our refreshed curriculum rationale for session 2026-27.
- Develop and implement a profiling system for wider achievement and meta-skills, ensuring clear links to learner pathways and destinations.
- Continue to improve securing positive destinations by increasing support for remaining leavers, including targeted SDS input, college applications, and employer links.
- Engage with the Work Placements Standard in Scotland to ensure that young people in the senior phase receive high-quality, relevant, and safe work-related learning to help them make informed career choices and develop essential employability skills.
- Fully embed the Career Education Standard (S1–S6) across the curriculum, including structured employability learning within PSE.

<u>NIF Priority</u> Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people	<u>HGIOS QIs</u> 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion 3.2 Securing Children's Progress <u>UNCRC</u> Article 3 (Best interests of the child): Choose an item.
Spend: Removing the barriers to the cost of the school day remains a priority for us. This includes: subsidising school trips for identified young people, school uniform bank, cut-cost caddy. Progress and impact of outcomes for learners: Last year's: <i>A group of PEF-entitled young people are now active participants in the Learner Council, which enables their voice to shape how we reduce the cost of the school day.</i> <i>PEF-entitled young people have been instrumental in the launch of our Cut-cost caddy. In our ongoing commitment to addressing the 'Cost of the School Day', we successfully established a Learner Council sub-group that spearheaded several initiatives launched during Challenge Poverty Week. Among these were the provision of a trolley stocked with essential toiletries, snacks, and stationery, alongside the Creative Industries' innovative 'New2U pre-loved clothes swap shop'. These interventions have resulted in young people feeling included, valued and respected.</i>	
Next Steps: PEF Stakeholders' Group to consider how we can use additional PEF spend to reduce the cost of the school day for identified families.	

National Improvement Framework Quality Indicators

1.3 Leadership of change

Very Good

Key Strengths:

Vision Values and Aims:

- Staff demonstrate a strong shared commitment to the school's vision of nurturing every young person's God-given talents within a climate of love and kindness.
- A highly positive, inclusive and nurturing ethos is evident across the school, underpinning consistently high expectations and aspirations for all learners.
- Respectful, rights-based relationships are well established across the school community.
- Learners report that they feel safe, valued and supported, and are appropriately challenged to achieve their full potential.
- The values of faith, ambition, inclusion and perseverance are embedded in daily practice, with the consistent application of the whole-school approach, Ready, Respectful and Safe, supporting positive relationships and behaviour and contributing to a calm, orderly and purposeful learning environment.

Strategic planning for continuous improvement:

- We make well-informed judgements about our key priorities and consider timing and pace of change.
- Change is driven by improving learning outcomes for all young people.
- We protect time for professional dialogue, collegiate learning and self-evaluation so that all stakeholders can contribute to plans for continuous improvement.

Implementing improvement and change:

- We build leadership capacity at all levels to improve learning outcomes for all young people. We have established Leadership for Improvement groups involving all staff who will take forward key improvement priorities for session 2026-27.
- We take account of our self-evaluation findings to inform continuous improvement and systematically monitor the impact of change on outcomes for all young people.

Key Priorities:

Vision Values and Aims:

- Seek views of pupils, staff, parents and partners to inform our refreshed curriculum rationale for session 2026-27.

Strategic Planning for continuous improvement:

- Continue to systematically communicate with all stakeholders the outcome of our self-evaluation activities and how this informs our plans for continuous improvement.

Implementing improvement and change:

- Establish Senior Pupil Leadership programme to drive forward whole school improvement priorities.
- All teaching staff will engage in a small test of change (practitioner enquiry) to support improved experiences for young people.
- Continue to support and develop leadership capacity for all teachers to improve learning outcomes for all young people. Introduce a teacher leadership residential programme in May 2027.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

Very Good

Key Strengths:

Learning and engagement:

- Our school ethos is characterised by very positive relationships that reflect both the gospel values and the school's values of faith, ambition, inclusion, and perseverance.
- In almost all lessons there is a calm and supportive learning environment where young people are eager to learn.
- Almost all young people are well behaved, courteous and are proud of their school.

Quality of teaching:

- The 'St Columba's Lesson' model is fully embedded across the school.
- All teachers use this model to support highly effective planning of learning, teaching and assessment. This includes a common structure for lessons, checking for understanding, and how different tasks and activities aim to meet the needs of all learners.
- Almost all teachers share effectively the purpose of learning and describe how young people can be successful.
- In almost all lessons, young people experience learning at an appropriate pace

Effective use of assessment:

- In the BGE, most teachers use a range of assessment approaches effectively to assess and support the progress of learners.
- The reliability and validity of assessments in the BGE have been strengthened through well-planned moderation activities within departments.
- In the senior phase, almost all staff are confident when making their assessment judgements in the senior phase.
- Most young people have indicated that regular feedback from teachers helps them to improve their learning

Planning, tracking and monitoring:

- Most teachers plan learning very effectively to include a range of formative assessment strategies to check for understanding of all pupils.
- The 'S3 Skills for the Future' option, offers young people the opportunity to develop meta-skills and these courses also offer progression into the senior phase.
- At all levels, we effectively track and monitor the progress of all young people in the senior phase. All staff are supported and challenged to analyse tracking data and identify targeted interventions for learners who are not making expected progress.

Key Priorities:

Learning & Teaching

Learning and engagement:

- Review and enhance our use of mobile phones expectations in order to maximise pupil engagement. This includes a 'no mobile phones in school' policy for all S1-S4.

Quality of teaching:

- Further improve the consistency of high quality questioning techniques. This includes both checking for understanding and higher order thinking skills.

- Further develop formative assessment approaches to ensure high-quality, timely evidence of learner progress, enabling staff to implement more responsive and adaptive teaching strategies which better meet learners' needs and improve attainment.

Effective use of assessment:

- Continue to engage in BGE moderation activities at school, local authority, and national level across all curriculum areas. This is critical to improving progression in learning from P7 to S1 and BGE to senior phase.

Planning, tracking and monitoring:

- All teachers to engage with national and local developments and training opportunities regarding the Curriculum Improvement Cycle.
- Further enhance approaches to tracking and monitoring at key transition points, particularly, S3 into S4.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

Very Good

Key Strengths:

Wellbeing (key strengths identified during QI 3.1 Deep Dive May 2025)

- The school values of faith, ambition, inclusion and perseverance are evident across the whole school community.
- Relationships between staff, pupils, families and partners are excellent and support the highly inclusive nature of the school, ensuring positive outcomes for almost all young people.
- Almost all pupils are supported well in their learning. The calm and welcoming ethos within classrooms and in the wider school creates a safe and nurturing learning environment.
- There is a clear and well-structured strategic approach to wellbeing, based on data from a variety of sources. This strategy is clearly understood by all and is highly effective in supporting pupils.
- Universal and enhanced transitions from associated primary schools are highly valued by staff, partners, pupils and families.
- There is extensive sharing of knowledge between schools. The flexibility of St Columba's to support families and new pupils has ensured that all learners identify as part of the secondary school before arriving.

Fulfilment of statutory duties

- All staff are aware of their statutory duties and are kept up to date with legislation and current trends impacting young people.

Inclusion and equality

- Almost all learners are included and most are engaged and involved in the life of the school.
- We understand, value and celebrate diversity and challenge discrimination. In our school, protected characteristics are not barriers to participation and achievement.
- We have effective strategies in place which are improving attainment and achievement for children and young people facing challenges such as those from our most deprived areas, young carers, those who are care experienced and those with additional support needs.

Key Priorities:

Wellbeing

- Target key wellbeing gaps (sleep, senior phase stress, emotional regulation) using data-informed interventions and track impact over time.

Fulfilment of statutory duties

- Continue to ensure that all staff are aware of their statutory duties and are kept up to date with legislation and current trends impacting young people.

Inclusion and equality

- Refresh the school Equality policy in line with local authority guidance.
- Strengthen inclusion and equality by deepening pupil understanding (through curriculum, assemblies, Romero group, Culture Day, Cluster working) and improving analysis of bullying incidents.
- Embed consistent practice across staff through ongoing CLPL in trauma-informed approaches, Equally Safe at School and Keeping the Promise.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement/Securing children's progress

Very Good

Key Strengths:

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Very strong curricular transition between St Columba's High School and its cluster primaries is allowing teachers to set appropriate expectations and standards from S1. Teachers regularly work with cluster primary colleagues to ensure improved outcomes for young people.
- In 2024/25, almost all young people achieved Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) third level or better in literacy, and third level or better in numeracy by the end of S3. These high standards have been maintained over time. Most young people achieved CfE fourth level in literacy and the majority achieved fourth level in numeracy by the end of S3.
- As young people move through the senior phase, particularly by S5 and S6, they have been consistently sustaining very high standards in literacy over the last five years. By S6, most young people achieved SCQF level 6 or better in literacy.
- Almost all young people leave school with Level 4 literacy and numeracy or above.
- Over the last five years, most young people left school with Scottish Credit and Qualifications (SCQF) level 5 or better in literacy.
- Over the last five years, 2020/21 to 2024/25, most young people left school with SCQF level 5 or better in literacy and numeracy.

Attainment over time

- By the end of S3, almost all young people are achieving third CfE level or better in almost all curriculum areas out with literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics. By the end of S3, the majority of young people are achieving fourth CfE level or better in most curriculum areas beyond literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics.
- The lowest attaining 20% and middle attaining 60% of young people are attaining very well and consistently over time at S4, by S5 and by S6.

Breadth and depth

- Teachers present young people for a wide range of SCQF qualifications and there is a relentless focus on ensuring that young people achieve full course awards.
- Young people across the senior phase have generally sustained a level of attainment in line with or above the Virtual Comparator.
- By S5, based on the S4 roll, most young people have generally achieved one or more awards at SCQF level 6.
- By S6, based on the S4 roll, most young people have achieved one or more awards at SCQF level 6. Performance in three or more or five or more courses at SCQF level 6 has been broadly in line VC over the last five years.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Most young people benefit from one, or more, wider achievement activities run by school staff. The number of young people involved has risen over time and it is an important strength in the school's provision of high-quality experiences for young people. Staff run these activities for all year groups, which successfully supports the development of young people's confidence, aspiration and skills for life and work.
- Teachers track young people's involvement in wider achievement activities across the BGE and senior phase. This allows staff to support and encourage all young people to become involved in these clubs, groups and activities.
- A minority of young people develop their leadership skills through wider work in the school. Young people also gain further accreditation through this leadership work, for example with Saltire Awards, the Caritas Award and SQA leadership qualifications. Young people's involvement in these leadership opportunities continues to rise and those involved further develop their skills in organisation, leadership and independence.
- The school has also had notable success in a range of partnerships that support young people's achievement and skills development. This has included Gold Rights Respecting Schools, Digital Schools Award, Gold SCQF Ambassador School. Staff are innovative in the wide range of course offered within the curriculum that develop skills and knowledge for young people. This has resulted in an increasing group of young people benefiting from further SCQF accreditation.
- Teachers continue to develop an innovative approach to 'skills for the future'. As part of this, all learners in S3 choose a selection of bespoke skills-based courses which are focused on developing the skills required in the future workplace. Young people are confident in talking about general and specific skills they are developing across the wider curricular offer.
- Staff recognise and celebrate the achievements of young people regularly and very effectively. Most young people feel they can discuss their achievements from beyond the school with school staff. Parents and carers also regularly inform the school of their child's notable achievements. The recording and celebrating of young people's achievements is embedded very well in the culture of the school.

Equity for all learners

- School staff are fully committed to ensuring equity for all. This permeates the work of school staff at all levels.
- Attendance has generally been in line with the national average. The school tracks attendance by SIMD, showing a positive pattern of reducing the gap between SIMD deciles 1 and 2 and SIMD deciles 3 to 10 over the last five years.
- Targeted interventions have had a positive impact on improving the attendance of selected young people.
- The school's exclusion rate has been below the national average for the last three years where national comparisons are available.
- Approaches to eliminating the cost of the school day and knowledge among staff of learners' backgrounds are key drivers to ensure there are no barriers to young people's engagement across the school.
- Senior and middle leaders have established a strategic and successful focus to improve literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing outcomes for those young people in SIMD deciles 1 and 2. This has been part of the use of the school's Pupil Equity Funding (PEF).
- Teachers closely track the progress of identified groups of young people and ensure interventions are timely, targeted, measurable and sustainable. As a result of this focus, level 4 and level 5 attainment in literacy and numeracy for S4 learners in SIMD 1 and 2 has been significantly greater than the VC for the last three years.
- Almost all young people have moved onto a positive destination in 2024/25 and for each of the previous four years. Young people are supported well to these destinations and young people benefit from a culture of high expectations. A proportion of young people greater than the national average stay on at school until the end of S6 to benefit from the staff's support.
- As a result of the school's very strong and targeted focus on equity, almost all leavers in SIMD deciles 1 and 2, almost all those in receipt of free school meals, and almost all with an additional support need moved onto a positive destination in 2024/25.

Key Priorities:

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Continue to build upon well-planned and collaborative transitions to further improve outcomes for young people.
- To ensure all young people gain a qualification in literacy and numeracy by the time they leave school.
- To continue to explore how to further improve young people's attainment in SCQF level 6 in numeracy.

Attainment over time

- Continue to explore ways in which the range of qualifications can be expanded to allow greater opportunities for targeted groups of young people to achieve at a higher level.
- Continue to focus on improving the quality of passes for young people, particularly in S4, to help further improve outcomes for the highest attaining 20% of young people.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Further develop a coherent approach to tracking the skills that young people develop within their wider achievement involvement. This will allow young people to understand better how their skills can be applied and developed in different contexts.

Equity for all learners

- To identify young people in key equity groups who are not making expected progress and/or not engaging in wider achievement opportunities.
- To implement strategies and interventions which will improve attainment and achievement outcomes for young people in key equity groups.

Other quality indicators evaluated from 3 year plan

2.2 Curriculum

Choose an item.

Key Strengths:

Rationale and design

- Curriculum rationale is underpinned by our values and aspirational vision for our school. It is clear and understood by all stakeholders.
- Our curriculum rationale is informed by national priorities (including the 7 design principles) in addition to local needs and we work together as a school community to deliver an ambitious curriculum for all.

Development of the curriculum

- Our curriculum is regularly reviewed and refreshed with all stakeholders, taking into account the articulation between BGE and Senior Phase, the development of meta-skills, new SCQF courses, and the local labour market.

Learning Pathways

- Our curriculum offers a range of flexible learning pathways which ensure we are meeting the needs and aspirations of all learners.

Skills for life, learning and work

- We are beginning to develop a more coherent approach to embedding meta-skills in our curriculum planning within the BGE.

Key Priorities:

Rationale and design

- Revisit all design principles with middle leaders and consider appropriate focus for session 2025-26
- Engage with the work of the local authority curriculum group and embrace opportunities to look outwards.
- Develop a BGE Roadmap online resource to enhance parental engagement.
- Engage in the local authority pilot of Project-Based Learning approaches in S1.

Development of the curriculum

- Evaluate the impact of our curriculum offer with key stakeholders' by analysing attainment and achievement data, and through learning observations as per self-evaluation calendar.

Learning Pathways

- Evaluate the impact of our flexible curriculum offer with key stakeholders', by analysing attainment and achievement data, and through learning observations as per self-evaluation calendar.

Skills for life, learning and work

- Evaluate the impact of our approaches to embedding meta-skills across the curriculum with key stakeholders' by analysing achievement data, and through learning observations as per self-evaluation calendar.

Key Achievements of the Establishment

- Keeping The Promise Award
- Vision Schools award – level 1
- RHS School Gardening Award
- Reading Schools (Gold Award)
- Gold SCQF Ambassador Award
- Digital Schools Award
- Rights Respecting School Award (Gold)
- 36 x S6 pupils achieved the Pope Benedict XVI Caritas Award