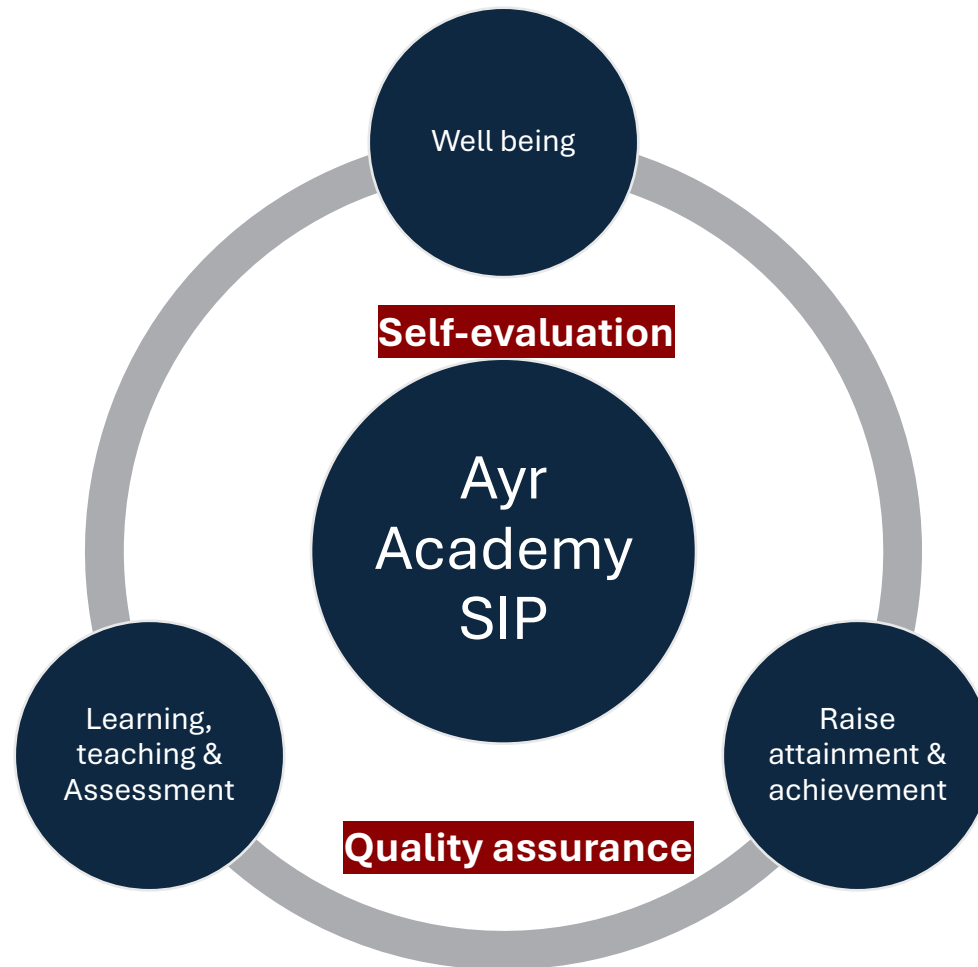




Ayr Academy School improvement plan 2026- 2027





VISION, VALUES AND AIMS

Vision

Believe...Achieve

At Ayr Academy we strive for continuous improvement. If we believe we can, we will achieve. High quality learning and teaching along with support and nurture is our core business.

We will:

Raise attainment and achievement.

Improve life chances.

By:

Being a school of inclusion that supports our families and their needs.

Offering a caring, nurturing, and welcoming environment where our pupils can achieve their potential and develop the skills they will use in their adult life.

Engaging with children, families, and the wider community to learn and grow together.

Values

Our core values are:



Ambitious pupils will:

- Actively set targets for themselves in each subject
- Take initiative by, asking teachers for clarification, or using additional learning resources.
- Engaging in Class Discussions & Activities – Pupils participate actively in lessons, contribute ideas, and challenge themselves to think critically beyond just completing tasks.

Success will include:

- Pupils achieving 3 'wider achievement awards' by the end of S2.



- S3 pupils achieving N3/4 awards in all curricular areas by the end of S3.
- Senior pupils achieving inline with our virtual comparator.

We aim to:

- Ensure inclusive, quality education and support for all pupils.
- Create a school ethos which is caring and challenging and provides opportunities for the development of personal responsibility.
- Deliver planned lessons tailored to individual needs, that support progress and development.
- Recognise and value each pupil as an individual, foster their self-confidence and sense of accomplishment.
- Develop strong partnerships with parents and carers, encouraging their active involvement in their child's learning.
- Develop the skills to foster positive relationships
- Ensure adults in the school are positive role models for pupils.
- Bring pupils and staff together as a community to reinforce the values of the school
- Enrich the curriculum to meet pupils needs.
- Ensure all young people make very good academic progress.



South Ayrshire Council Plan

- Spaces and Places
- Live, Work, Learn
- Civic and Community Pride

Children's Services Plan

- The Promise: Our commitment to Keeping the Promise
- Family: Promoting whole family wellbeing
- Included: Early help for children with diagnosed or undiagnosed additional support needs
- Healthy: Improving physical and mental health for children and young people
- Voice: Involving children and young people in local decision making
- People: Collaborative learning and reflection opportunities for the work force

Education Services Priorities

- Included, engaged and involved
- Delivering excellence in learning, teaching and assessment
- Transforming our curriculum
- Towards a self-improving education system

National Improvement Framework Priorities

- Placing the human rights of every child and young person at the centre of education
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations for all young people
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy



Raising attainment

Priority 1

NIF Priorities: Closing the attainment gap; Improvement in attainment (particularly literacy & numeracy)
NIF Drivers: School leadership, Teacher professionalism, Curriculum & assessment, School improvement
HGIOS?4: 3.2 Raising Attainment
SALO: CPL for all staff; Learning with/from wider system; Growing learning leadership

Outcome one	Actions	Who	When
To raise attainment in the Broad General Education through consistent tracking, targeted intervention, and increased challenge, ensuring clearer progression into the Senior Phase.	Implement a consistent whole-school model for learning conversations linked to Success Plans and departmental trackers.	SA & SK	Aug 2026– June 2027
	Continue to provide PT/SLT training on moderation of benchmarks to ensure quality of data within and across departments.	GB & RM- all staff	Aug 26- on-going
	Continue to provide PT/SLT training on robust use of BGE tracking data, early identification of risk and earlier stretch for high-potential learners.	PT's & class teachers	Aug 26- on-going
	Establish a whole-school protocol for pupils not making expected progress in the BGE, including escalation routes and earlier parental engagement.	GB and RM	October 26
	Strengthen BGE–Senior Phase progression by ensuring senior-phase-aligned learning in S2/S3.	GB	Nov 26
	Increase challenge in S3 by ensuring tasks, assessments and expectations reflect National 5 demand.	PTC's	Aug 26
	Increase parental engagement through earlier phone calls, targeted invitations and co-produced support plans.	PT's	Oct 26
Observation data will show that: Pupils can articulate strengths, next steps and progress through consistent learning conversations. - Lessons show improved challenge in S3 and clearer progression into Senior Phase.			



- Staff use tracking data confidently to plan interventions and stretch all pupils.

Other evidence:

- Improved BGE tracking data and earlier identification of “at risk but capable” pupils.
- Increased retention of potential N5 candidates and reduced withdrawals.
- Strengthened progression into National 5 with fewer pupils under-placed or over-stretched.

Priority 2

NIF Priority: Improvement in attainment (particularly literacy & numeracy)

NIF Drivers: Curriculum & assessment, Teacher professionalism, School improvement

HGIOS?4: 3.2 Raising Attainment

SALO: Growing learning leadership; Learning with/from wider system

Outcome two	Actions	Who	When
To increase the quality of Higher passes through stronger confidence in national standards, earlier identification of potential, and a sustainable, high-quality qualification offer	Actions • Strengthen Higher challenge- Increase pace, depth and demand in Higher courses through strengthened confidence in national standards, systematic moderation, and shared exemplification. • Identify A/B potential early - Use baseline data, early assessments and professional dialogue to spot A/B candidates quickly and provide targeted stretch from August. • Tighten prediction accuracy - Reduce variation in estimates through clearer guidance, shared standards, and joint assessment activities across faculties.	Higher teachers & PT's DHT attainment S4-6 PT curriculum	Aug 26 Aug 26 Dec 26- March 27



	- Review qualification offer - Ensure the Senior Phase offer is deliverable within staffing capacity, reduces overstretch, and supports high-quality learning and teaching. - Embed CIC alignment - Engage with CIC materials to strengthen assessment literacy, ensure alignment with national expectations, and improve consistency of judgement.	GB & LT with PTC's	Nov 26
		GB & PT's	ongoing

Observation data will show that:

- Higher classes demonstrate increased pace, depth and alignment with national standards.
- Teachers apply national standards confidently and consistently.
- Lessons with increased cognitive demand, stronger modelling of national standards, and tasks aligned to Higher-level exemplification.
- Teachers referencing national benchmarks, using shared exemplars, and demonstrating consistent judgement during live learning.
- High-potential learners experiencing targeted challenge from the outset: extended responses, higher-order questioning, and accelerated progression.
- Planned support for learners not yet secure, with clear evidence of responsive teaching and adaptive feedback.
- Staff confidently discussing standards, assessment decisions, and next steps using CIC language and national expectations.
- More consistent pacing, expectations, and assessment approaches across parallel Higher classes.
- Lessons that reflect a manageable, high-quality offer: no overstretch, clear sequencing, and purposeful use of time.
- Young people explaining what quality looks like at Higher, how they are assessed, and what they need to do to improve.

Other evidence:

- Improved A/B pass rates at N5 and Higher through earlier intervention and clearer expectations.
- Increased retention of Higher candidates and improved progression from N5.
- Senior Phase attainment improves in line with VC, particularly middle 60% and top 20%.
- Curriculum offer is sustainable and aligned with staffing capacity.



Priority 2 Learning, teaching and assessment

NIF priorities: Improvement in attainment; Closing the gap NIF Drivers: School leadership, Teacher professionalism, Assessment of progress, School improvement HGIOS?4: 1.2 Leadership of Learning, 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment, 3.2 Raising Attainment SALO: CPL, inquiry culture, knowledge-exchange systems			
Outcome one	Actions	Who	When
To improve the quality and consistency of learning, teaching and assessment across the school.	• Shift whole-school language from “tests” to inclusive assessment aligned with principles and purpose.	JW & All staff	Aug 26
	• Strengthen consistency of the Ayr Lesson and 5Ps with a renewed focus on plenaries and independent evidence-gathering.	JF & All staff	Aug 26
	• Refresh PLCs to allow greater staff choice, practitioner-led inquiry and flexible observation opportunities.	PT’s	Sept 26
	• Increase moderation opportunities within and beyond the school, especially for new/revised courses.	GB & JF- PT’s	Oct 26
	• Provide clear guidance on roles/responsibilities in T&M and expectations for assessment evidence.	PT’s cover DHT	Aug 26
	• Ensure departments have protected time for purposeful assessment planning and moderation.	PTC’s	Ongoing
	• Increase challenge in the BGE by ensuring tasks, questioning and assessments reflect the cognitive demand of N5.	PT’s	Aug 26
	• Strengthen Higher-level challenge by improving shared understanding of national standards and increasing cross-department moderation.	All teachers	Aug 26
	• Ensure feedback is consistently high-quality and supports pupils to understand how to improve.	PT’s	Aug 26
Evidence/Measures Observation data will show that: • Staff consistently use the Ayr Lesson structure to support high-quality learning and teaching. • Plenaries are used effectively to consolidate learning and identify next steps. • Increased challenge is evident in S3 and Higher classes. Other evidence:			



Higher classes demonstrate increased pace, depth and cognitive challenge.

- Moderation evidence demonstrates improved consistency and confidence in professional judgements.
- Staff feedback indicates improved understanding of assessment purpose and evidence requirements.
- Attainment improves in key measures (L4/5/6 Literacy/Numeracy, 5@4, 5@5, 1/3@6).
- Increased engagement in PLCs, cross-school networks and professional learning.
- Improved prelim-to-final conversion at Higher.

Priority 3 Wellbeing

NIF priorities: Attainment; Closing the gap; Health & wellbeing

NIF Drivers: Leadership, professionalism, parental engagement, assessment, school improvement

HGIOS?4: 1.3 Leadership of Change, 2.4 Personalised Support, 3.1 Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion

SALO: Shared vision, team learning, knowledge-exchange systems

Outcome one	Actions	Who	When
Improve equality, inclusion, attendance and behaviour through consistent expectations, strengthened parental engagement and enhanced pupil voice.	• Implement a refreshed Positive Relationships Policy with clear, consistently applied expectations and consequences.	CD/ LBR & group	Aug 26
	• Re launch a whole-school attendance strategy linking attendance to ambition, expectations and pathways. (I,E,I 2026)	CD/ AA	Aug 26
	• Promote uniform as part of a belonging and identity strategy.	All staff	Ongoing
	• Increase parental engagement through open events, department showcases and positive-experience evenings.	TBC	Ongoing
	• Strengthen wider-achievement tracking with clear expectations for departments and time allocated for recording. To provide opportunities for all.	KL & RM	Ongoing
	• Expand celebration of success through house competitions, reward events and targeted recognition.	KL & PTG's	Ongoing
	• Enhance staff wellbeing through a planned calendar of social events and collaborative activities.	CD	Oct 26
	• Ensure consistency of expectations across all departments and classrooms, reinforcing the whole-school culture of ambition.	PT's	Aug 26
	Develop strategic pupil voice through SHARK tank	JF	Aug 26



Evidence/Measures

Observations:

- Pupils feel more included and engaged in learning.
- Higher participation in school activities across diverse pupil groups.
- More staff using inclusive teaching strategies in lessons driven by STINT.
- Pupils can articulate their skills and achievements more clearly.
- Greater visibility of pupil achievements within the school community.

Other Evidence:

- Attendance improves to above 87% with fewer pupils below 50% Reduced number of pupils with below 50% attendance to 4%.
- Reduced corridor wandering and improved punctuality.
- Increased participation in wider-achievement activities and improved tracking data.
- Positive feedback from pupil and parent surveys on inclusion and safety.
- Improved staff wellbeing and stronger Team Ayr ethos.
- Greater uptake of support services and engagement with well-being initiatives.
- Positive feedback from pupil and parent surveys on inclusion and equity, everyone feels safe and included
- More positive post-school destinations, supported by a broader skills profile.



South Ayrshire Service Plan Priority

Priority: Improving Our Curriculum

ALL SOUTH AYRSHIRE SCHOOLS 2025-2026

Aims	Actions	Intended Impact	Resources	Measures	Completion Date
<i>To increase all teacher understanding of the purpose and relevance of the CIC and the rationale behind</i>	- The school will identify a curriculum lead to support the implementation of curriculum reform and act as a link with authority-wide developments.	<i>Staff are clear on the key terminology around curriculum and educational reform.</i>	Presentation created by Curriculum PTs	Staff survey (pre and post twilight sessions)	August 2026
	- The curriculum lead will participate in authority Train-the-Trainer professional learning to ensure	<i>Staff can clearly articulate why curriculum change is being made.</i>		Evaluation	September 2026



curriculum reform.	consistent messaging and build internal capacity. - All staff will engage in planned CLPL to build understanding of curriculum reform during the two allocated twilight sessions using materials created by Curriculum PTs.	<i>All staff are clear on the national timeline for implementation of the CIC</i>			January 2027
<i>To provide clear and consistent communication for all staff and stakeholders in relation to Scotland's Curriculum</i>	- Staff will access the authority's central digital hub for curriculum resources, exemplars and professional learning materials. - All staff will attend the relevant authority curriculum conference. - Content will be created centrally to raise awareness of the CIC and used by schools to engage wider school community. - The Curriculum PTs will offer support with parental engagement as requested. - School leadership team will receive regular CIC information via director's education update. - All Head Teachers will attend two authority HT Curriculum Conferences.	<i>Staff will feel supported during the early stages of transition.</i> <i>Staff feel well informed and confident in discussing curriculum changes with colleagues, learners and families.</i> <i>Parents and stakeholders will better understand Scotland's curriculum and the future changes.</i>	Central digital padlet Exemplars and professional learning materials Schools preferred media platforms	Analytics from shared online space (comments, resources, access to the toolkit and materials)	June 2027 May 2027 December 2026 June 2027
<i>To establish an understanding of a concept-based curriculum and to introduce the Know-Do-Understand model.</i>	- 'Curriculum of Hope' professional reading distributed during the 'Train-the-Trainer' session to key leads. - Values from the 'Curriculum of Hope' text shared with all staff during twilight sessions . - Key leads to gather staff feedback at the beginning of the first twilight.	<i>All staff understand the principles of a concept-based curriculum.</i> <i>All staff will have had opportunities to engage with the values and</i>	'A Curriculum of Hope' professional reading Microsoft form for twilight	Pre/Post Survey Data	October 2026



	- Key leads to repeat the staff survey at the end of the second twilight to gauge progress.	<i>principles of 'A Curriculum of Hope'.</i>			February 2027
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Appendix

S3

The percentage of pupils in S3 achieving	by June 2025	by June 2026	By June 2027	By June 2028
Level 3 Writing/Reading and L&T	86%	90%	93%	
Level 3 Numeracy	90%	92%	93%	
Level 4 Writing, Reading and L&T	above 53%	55%	69%	
Level 4 Numeracy	above 35%	40%	48%	
Level 3 in all curricular areas				
Level 4 in all curricular areas				

S4

Senior Phase - The percentage of pupils in S4 achieving	by August 2025 SQA	by August 2025 SCQF	by August 2026 SQA	by August 2026 SCQF	by August 2027 SQA	by August 2027 SCQF
5+ L5 SQA	25%	above 35%	30%	50%	45%	65%
3+ L5 SQA	40%	above 54%	45%	60%	55%	80%
1+ L5 SQA	66%	70%	71%	76%	80%	85%



The percentage of leavers gaining a qualification in literacy and numeracy	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%
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S5

The percentage of pupils in S5 achieving	by August 2025 SQA	by August 2025 SCQF	August 2026 SQA	August 2026 SCQF	August 2027 SQA	August 2027 SCQF
	S5 based on 126 in S4		Based on 114		Based on 119	
5+ L6	above 4%	above 10%	6%	5%	10%	25%
3+ L6	above 12%	above 27%	20%	17%	25%	45%
1+ L6	above 32%	above 40%	38%	51%	53%	59%

S6

The percentage of pupils in S6 achieving	by August 2025 SQA	by August 2025 SCQF	August 2027 QS	August 2027 QS	August 2027 SCQF	August 2027 SCQF
	S6 based on S4- 114 pupils.		Based on 114	Based on 37	Based on 114	Based on 37
5+ L6	above 24 %	Above 93%	16%	49%	29%	89%
3+ L6	above 25%	Above 97 %	23%	70%	30%	92%
1+ L6	above 25%	Above 100%	26%	81%	32%	100%

