



Session
2022/23

Girvan Academy Standards & Quality Report



Head Teacher's Introduction

Dear Parents & Carers

It is my pleasure to present Girvan Academy's Standards and Quality Report for 2022-2023.

Each year the Scottish Government and South Ayrshire Council publish information highlighting how well schools and local authorities are improving pupil performance and achievement year on year.

In similar fashion, this report will inform you on how we are progressing in our school and provides an overview of our successes. It is our 'Standards and Quality Report' for 2022-23.

This session it has been fantastic to leave behind many of the worries and stresses of Covid, with restrictions and school closures a thing of the past. However, the impact of Covid on our young people can still be felt, and we continue in our work to mitigate the impact on young people to ensure they are able to attain and achieve within Girvan Academy.

I am delighted to present to you this report which provides an overview of our achievements over the course of the session 2022-23.

The evaluations in the document are based on a range of evidence including:

- Analysis of pupil performance in SQA examinations, other forms of accreditation, and other statistical data relating to young people's achievements
- Analysis of a range of whole school data
- Annual surveys of the views of students, parents, staff and partners, at whole school and departmental levels
- Senior Leadership Team and Principal Teacher observations and evaluation of teaching and learning in lessons
- Self-evaluation using Education Scotland's evaluation tool 'How Good is Our School 4th Edition' and other Education Scotland publications to support self-evaluation

I hope you find this report interesting and useful. If you have any questions about it, please do not hesitate to telephone the school office or use our school e-mail address to contact us for an appointment. I would be pleased to offer any clarification.

Yours faithfully,

Mark Anderson
Head Teacher

Context of the School

Girvan Academy is a non-denominational school which serves the town of Girvan and surrounding areas. Our cluster primary schools are: Girvan, Dailly, Barr, Barrhill, Ballantrae and Colmonell. The school roll at the beginning of session 2022/23 was 523, a decrease from from 546 the previous session, and our teaching staff at census day in September 2022 was 48.2 (full time equivalent).

Following the considerable changes to the Senior Leadership in session 2021-22, our staffing remained consistent, with the new leadership team established and able to lead the school without the hindrance of Covid restrictions. Our staffing in general remained stable and, as a result, there was greater capacity to drive the school forward to achieve the best possible outcomes for our young people.

The percentage of pupils in receipt of free school meals is 27%, which is similar to the previous year. Approximately 25% of our young people reside in an area described as Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 1&2, 50% reside in SIMD 3&4 and the remaining 25% in SIMD 5&6. Only two pupils reside in SIMD 7&8 and we have no pupils in SIMD 9&10. The attendance rate for the session 2022-23, **up to the end of term 3**, was 84.1% (South Ayrshire Council – 85.5%) compared with 85.3% (SAC 86.4%) in 2021-22. The authorised rate of 8.8% (SAC 6.7%) was the highest in SAC and the unauthorised absence was 7.0% (SAC 6.7%). Our attendance, in line with South Ayrshire, continues to decline year on year and this will be a key focus of our work next session. Care experienced pupils, including previously looked after, have a higher attendance rate in Girvan Academy than both the overall school and the SAC average attendance, but those young people who receive free school meals have a lower attendance than the school and SAC averages. Up to the end of term 3 in 2022-23, our exclusion incidents per 1000 pupils was 14.8 (24.8), a reduction from 27 the previous year. Six pupils were excluded once, and one pupil was excluded twice.



Vision, Values and Aims of the School

During session 2022/23, our vision was to continue to grow as a LEARNING COMMUNITY and:

- To motivate and inspire all of our young people.
- To equip young people with the attributes, capabilities and experiences to be successful in life and to reach their true potential.
- To inspire all of our young people to be healthy, happy and achieving.

Values

Girvan Academy has developed a robust set of values based on consultation with all stakeholders. These values are embedded within our school community.

AMBITION RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY COMMUNITY

Our Aims:

- To provide the highest quality learning experiences for all of our young people in an inspirational environment.
- To promote an ethos where young people are listened to, respected and supported to reach their potential.
- To promote learners who lead and take an active role in their learning, life and community.
- To enable each of our young people to become:
 - successful learners
 - confident individuals
 - responsible citizens
 - effective contributors

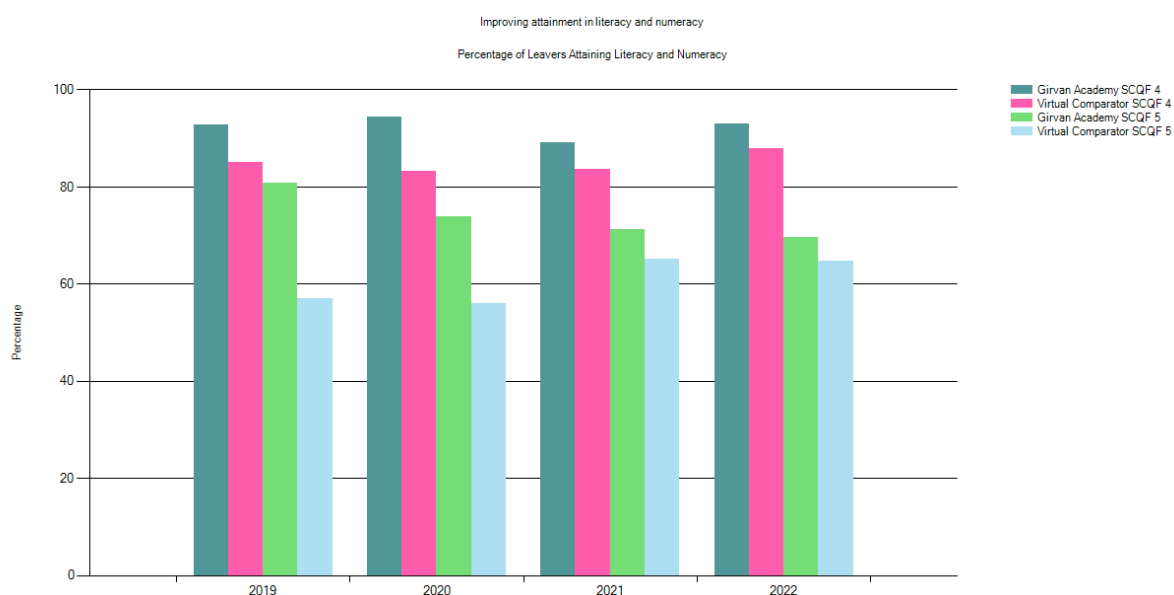


Successes and Achievements

1. Raising Attainment and Achievement

Improvements in Literacy and Numeracy

Performance in attainment in Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF level 4 & 5 for young people by the time they leave school has been consistently much greater than the virtual comparator across both levels from 2018 to 2020. As can be seen in the graph below, our SCQF level 5 performance in Literacy & Numeracy is lower than the pre-Covid level in 2018 and 2019, the figures remain consistently above the virtual comparator, although not significantly in the last two years. After a dip in 2021 at SCQF level 4, the performance of our young people has again increased in 2022 in line with the performance prior to Covid. These figures also remain comparable against our virtual comparators.



	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
% of leavers achieving level 4 literacy and numeracy	94	93	94	89	93
% of leavers achieving level 5 literacy and numeracy	74	81	74	71	70

Attainment over Time - S3 Broad General Education

Due to COVID-19, final data for S3 BGE was not collected in 2020 or 2021. However, this session staff have tracked attainment in the Broad General Education and the following percentage of S3 learners achieved Third and Fourth Level in Literacy and Numeracy:

Girvan Academy		Reading			Writing			Listening & Talking			Numeracy		
BGE 3 rd & 4 th Level Data		18/19	21/22	22/23	18/19	21/22	22/23	18/19	21/22	22/23	18/19	21/22	22/23
3 rd level Achieved	S3	92	89	81	91	88	76	91	88	84	81	88	93
4 th level Achieved	S3	57	47	69	59	47	69	64	48	69	36	37	38

As a result of this data and other relevant data such as Scottish National Standardised Assessments and standardised GL assessments undertaken throughout the session, appropriate interventions have been planned for our young people to ensure they have had the opportunity to recover from missed learning and improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

SQA Attainment Data

This year the SQA examinations returned to pre COVID-19 pandemic system of final exams in National Qualifications. However, in line with last session, course content continued to be streamlined, with content and/or elements of courses reduced or removed.

All young people in the senior phase choose up to six subjects to study in order to gain qualifications at the level appropriate to their ability and progress. The majority of young people are presented for course awards at National 4 (SCQF 4) or National 5 level (SCQF 5) in S4 and progress accordingly through S5 and S6. A small number of young people will study some subjects at National 3 level and some young people may be studying at Higher level in S4 and Advanced Higher in S5. The results achieved by young people in Girvan Academy are compared to the results of a virtual comparator school. Some results are also shown against an average of all South Ayrshire schools as well as results nationally. A virtual comparator is determined by the Scottish Government selecting at random 10 young people from across Scotland with a similar background to one of our young people. This enables a fair comparison with similar young people nationally.



The following table details attainment over time in key measures.

Girvan Academy: % of pupils achieving SQA National Awards at grades A-C by end of S4, S5, S6

Performance Measure	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	% point change on last year	% point change from 2019	2023 incl. SCQF Quals.
5+ awards @ Level 3	85	91	95	94	89	-5	4	98
5+ awards @ Level 4	79	87	85	85	86	1	7	89
5+ awards @ Level 5	30	49	34	40	36	-4	6	38.2
1+ awards @ Level 6	52	48	68	52	58	6	6	58
3+ awards @ Level 6	22	27	35	24	26	2	4	34.8
5+ awards @ Level 6	11	19	17	9	11	2	0	13.5
1+ awards @ Level 7	8	12	19	14	11	-3	3	11

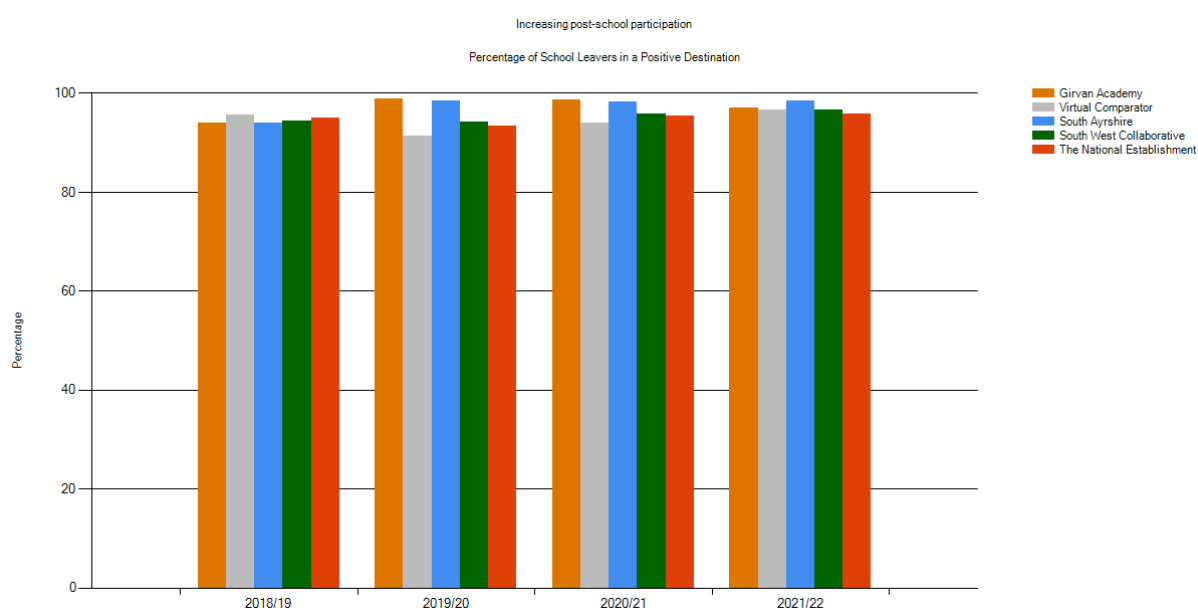
Again, this session, we continued with a number SCQF courses as part of the senior phase pathway experience. Alternative courses delivered within Girvan Academy included: Level 4 Uniformed Services, Level 5 Lab Skills, Level 5 Early Learning & Childcare, National Progression Award (NPA) Level 4-6 Games Development, NPA Level 5 & 6 Cyber Security, SfW Level 5 Photography, SCQF Level 6 Leadership Awards, National 5 Sport and Recreation, SfW National 5 Travel & Tourism, Level 5 Enterprise & Employability and Level 6 Leadership and Level 6 Journalism.

In session 2022-2023, 36% of S4 students achieved at least 5+ N5 qualifications. If we compare this figure with the previous session, then it is a slight decrease of 4%. However, if we add our SCQF Level 5 data, the figure increases to 38.2%. Furthermore, if we compare with our data from 2019, the last cohort unaffected by the Covid pandemic, then there is a 6% increase from 30% in 2019. It should also be highlighted that 89% of our S4 pupils attained at least five qualifications at National 3 level or better and 86% attained at least five qualifications at National 4 level or better. Again, however, when SCQF level 3 & 4 courses are added these figures rise to 98% and 89% respectively. Both these figures compare very favourably, not only with the school figures from 2019 but also with the South Ayrshire average for session 2022-23.

In S5 last session, 58% of pupils achieved at least 1+ Higher, 26% achieved 3+ Highers and 11% 5+ Highers. These figures were all an increase from 2021-22 in line or above previous attainment at these measures in 2019, despite the impact of COVID on these learners. In Girvan Academy, these figures do not tell the full story of our attainment as they are based solely on Higher and National 5 passes. Our curriculum offers a wider range of courses at SCQF levels 5 & 6 which allows our young people to attain a level of course that may not be achievable within the normal SQA progression routes. For example, our 3+ SCQF Level 6 increases from 26% to 34.8% and our 5+ SCQF Level 6 increases from 11% to 13.5%. This means more young people are achieving a higher level of qualifications and therefore improving their life chances in a very competitive world.

Leaver Destinations

When our positive destination data for 2021/22 was published, the latest School Leaver Destination Follow Up Report for 2022 confirmed that 98.6% of young people in South Ayrshire moved into employment, training, further or higher education. This is amongst the best local authorities figures in Scotland. Our own initial leavers' destination figure was 97% which is slightly above our virtual comparator figure. This means that only a few young people left Girvan Academy and did not progress straight into a positive destination. In partnership with Skills Development Scotland, these young people will continue to be tracked and supported into employment, training or further education. These consistently high figures are testament to the hard work and partnership working between our Care & Wellbeing Team and our colleagues in Skills Development Scotland, Educational Services and Thriving Communities.



2. Overall Quality of Learners' Achievements

Our young people have been successful in a range of other achievements and wider experiences. This is a hugely important focus for schools as it helps to develop a wide range of skills and experiences that benefit young people in their development for life and work. Last session, free from the shackles of Covid restrictions, our young people benefitted from activities including:

- We were the first school in Scotland to achieve the Cyber First Schools Gold Award for our cyber work embedded in our curriculum
- A team of S2 girls again qualified and participated in the Scottish final of the CyberFirst Girls Competition 2023 at the RBS/NatWest worldwide headquarters in Edinburgh. Although they did not win this year's competition, we punch well above our weight in this area. As a result of this ongoing success, we are due to host a prestigious school cyber competition in early November, 'The Cyber 9/12 Strategy Challenge for Schools.' We have the honour of hosting the first school-based competition anywhere in the world due to the publicity and credibility of our Cyber work, led by Gareth Rae, PT Computing & Business

- Other notable awards we have secured in the last year include becoming an SCQF Bronze Ambassador school, a designated Cycle Friendly school, we achieved Reading School Programme accreditation and we were awarded a Royal Horticultural Society Level 4 Gardening Award



- Two of our pupils had great success in the Junior Scottish Mathematical Challenge 2023, with Declan gaining a Gold award and Carolina achieving a Silver. The level of challenge in these awards is extremely demanding and it is a brilliant achievement by both of them

- Our Duke of Edinburgh scheme is the envy of the vast majority of schools. We have a very experienced and dedicated groups of staff, expertly led by Mr Reed and ably supported by a growing group of staff including Mrs Johnston, Mr Brown and Miss Braidwood. With some support from the central SAC Duke of Edinburgh team, we are in the very fortunate position of becoming self-sufficient at Bronze and Silver levels. Last session, twenty-four young people achieved Bronze, ten Silver and four young people gained their Gold award. All fantastic achievements, and the impact and prestige of the Duke of Edinburgh awards should not be underestimated for the young people who complete the awards. As an inclusive school we are keen for as many young people as possible to gain this experience and we provide financial support to those who require it to ensure that cost is not a barrier to participation. This year we are expanding our numbers and will include a range of young people including those who are care experienced and a healthy number from our SWB department



- As a taster for Duke of Edinburgh, in June our S2 pupils undertook the 'Big Walk'.

This was a hugely enjoyable day with climbs up the Byne and Grey Hills. There are not many schools who have the staff expertise and the fantastic local hills on their doorstep to allow young people to experience such an excellent but challenging day. There were a lot of weary feet and legs by the end of that day!

- Our Eco group, led by Miss Logan & Mrs Johnston, continue to be at the forefront of our work on sustainability and all things eco-related. In June, the group presented at the Provost Footprint Challenge. This is a competition between all secondary schools in South Ayrshire to encourage young people to look after the environment and reduce carbon emissions. The pupils gave an excellent presentation on their work, covering a range of projects including the Biosphere, tattie growing, litter picking and waste reduction in the school. Although they did not win this year, their work continues to be of great significance.



The group have also worked closely with Jenna Cains, the Community & Education Lead Officer for The Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere and, as a result, twelve pupils from the Eco Group achieved a Carbon Literacy award. The school is a Proud Supporter of the GSA Biosphere, making it the only secondary school to feature on the Explore the Biosphere map, and currently the only secondary school in the

biosphere that is a Proud Supporter. Furthermore, eight pupils achieved a City & Guilds qualification during the Environmental STEAM sciences week at Dumfries House

- In late March we held our Arts Festival over two nights. It showcased our talented pupils in dance, music and art, ably led by our dance leader Mrs Newmarch. These evenings, with a full theatre and live performances of enthusiastic young people are hugely enjoyable to watch
- All our S3 pupils participated in the Youth Philanthropy Initiative, which involves groups selecting and researching a local charity. They then present to a panel of judges to pitch why their chosen charity should be awarded the available funding. Place2Be, our school counselling service, was our chosen winner and received a cheque for £3000. This funding is to be used to support our young people with their mental health and will fund a range of resources and website subscriptions
- In July, Shay in S5 was selected to visit the NASA International Space School in Texas, as one of only two young people from the whole of Scotland. During the two-week programme, with other students from around the world, Shay undertook a range of activities including a tour of the Johnston Space Centre and he met a number of former astronauts who shared their experiences of space
- Our fundraising achievements are supported throughout the session by staff, pupils and ultimately parents & carers. We raised funds for various charities including The Ayrshire Hospice, Samaritans, Children in Need, Headway, National Autistic Society, YPI and Pakistan Flood Appeal. At the last count, this has seen us raise over £1800, a healthy total given the current financial burdens on families
- Our PE department offer a massive range of activities and opportunities. There are too many to mention them all but a sample of the activities includes: volleyball tournaments, football teams at all levels, netball fixtures, self-defence workshops, a futsal tournament, water safety training for S1&2, self-defence classes for girls, various inter-house activities in a range of sports and a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs. There was also the opportunity for our young people to gain leadership skills through supporting events including Cluster primary school sports days, Primary 7 transition events, our Sports



Academy pupils supported community activities and Sport & Recreation pupils gained work experience in the Quay Zone. The department were also instrumental in organising the senior leaving event, Christmas parties, the promoting positive behaviour

reward days and extra-curricular passport for pupils

- The school was well represented at the S1-3 South Ayrshire Cross Country Championships where we achieved a bronze medal and further success at the South Ayrshire Athletics Championships, where we again punched above our weight. In total, our athletes in S1 to 3 achieved seven gold, ten silver and six bronze medals across the track and field - fantastic achievements all round! The successful athletes then progressed to the Ayrshire Athletics

Championships where our young people won a further three gold, five silver and one bronze medals

- Other achievements well worth highlighting include Karli (S4) winning the Woman's U18 Scottish Cup with Glasgow City and Jack representing South Ayrshire in the U16 Scottish Cup Volleyball final
- Our Expressive Faculty offer a host of trips, competitions and in-school events to widen the knowledge, skills and experience of our young people. To give a flavour, this includes: Scottish Chamber Orchestra trip, Karaoke King/Queen, Christmas Concert, Scottish Schools Pipe Band competition, Young Musician of the Year, Theatre trips and workshops with the Academy of Music & Sound and Glasgow School of Art. In addition, in partnership with Hillcrest Care Home, our Art department designed and constructed a mural to brighten up their Dementia Friendly garden



- Our Support & Wellbeing Department also offers a diverse curriculum throughout the year to our young people, developing skills for life and work. A flavour of these experiences includes: volunteering with the Z1 charity shop, working with TAG Girvan for community litter picking, developing lifesaving skills at the Quay Zone, cycle maintenance and road safety skills, working with the Girvan Community Bike Library

and a strong working relationship is established with Biosphere Bikes. Furthermore, supported by the Royal Horticultural Society, Go Girvan for tatties and Thriving Communities, the young people maintain the school polytunnel, growing a large variety of produce which is then used by the department and school

- Wider experiences for our pupils also included a number of trips such as visits to the Scottish Assault Course, the Royal Highland Show, various rugby trips, visits to Dumfries House, Culzean Castle, Dolphin House and the Three Lochs activity centre
- To reward pupils for meeting school expectations associated with our school values, positive behaviour was again rewarded by activities such as an inflatables day, Christmas parties and the aforementioned Three Lochs trip. It is our intention to expand these activities this session and we are very grateful for the continued support of the Parent Council who help fund these activities
- Another great success has been our extra-curricular passport initiative, initially developed by the PE department but expanded across the school. Our young people are rewarded for attending the various clubs and activities around the school at lunchtimes and after school. This has been popular as you may have seen if you follow us on Twitter, Facebook or now Instagram
- Our Supporting Families Initiative has been a key focus of our work. We introduced a range of initiatives throughout the session to support families with the cost of the school day. These included a breakfast station each morning, preparation stations to ensure all pupils were equipped for classes, the provision of personal care items and hygiene packs, support for families with Christmas presents, our prom dress stall to reduce the substantial cost to S6 pupils and their families and we continue to provide school uniform at no cost to those who wish it. This work was shared with all schools in South Ayrshire and has been highlighted by the Child Poverty Action Group as good practice

- Our partnership working with the Girvan Youth Trust continues to be a unique and key strength in the school. We work collaboratively to support our young people and this partnership will be further strengthened this session with Pupil Equity Funding being used to increase the number of young people that can be supported.

3. What Key Outcomes have we Achieved?

School Priority 1: A focus on high-quality learning, teaching and assessment to ensure the best possible outcomes for all young people

Progress and Impact

Learning & teaching continues to be a key focus for improvement. We continue to provide professional learning opportunities, both in-house and looking outwards, and give collegiate time for teachers to discuss what good learning and teaching looks like within their departments.

A key focus of this has been expanding the use of learning walks within and across departments to get a shared understanding of what high quality learning & teaching looks like and consistency of approach across departments. Key areas of focus where progress was made included: learning intentions/success criteria, the development of the Girvan Academy Skills Framework, retrieval practice techniques, visible consistencies and disciplinary literacy

Next Steps

- Continue to develop consistently high-quality learning & teaching with a focus on feedback, modelling and questioning
- Further develop our approaches to differentiation
- Refine our use of data in the Broad General Education and Senior Phase and support our learners to be able to better articulate their progress across subjects

School Priority 2: Raise attainment & achievement to close the attainment gap and develop young people's skills for learning, life and work

Progress and Impact

Our PT Raising Attainment and Achievement, funded by our Pupil Equity Fund, targeted cohorts of senior pupils to aid them with their studies, which resulted in senior pupils feeling supported and attainment in the targeted cohorts increased from the previous session.

To support Literacy in S1, Accelerated Reader was introduced to complement an additional reading period added into the S1 course. As part of supporting literacy we also the Reading School Programme Award.

Our acting PT Developing the Young Workforce developed our Girvan Academy Skills Framework to establish a consistency of approach across the school and ensure that learners could identify and discuss the skills they were developing within classrooms.

Next Steps

- Develop systems to track pupil achievement and participation in the wider curriculum, both in school and out with

- Refine our approaches to monitoring & tracking all learners, with greater emphasis on point of exit tracking to ensure learners meet our minimum expectations
- Further develop our literacy interventions including the use of Accelerated Reader and our approach to reading from the South Ayrshire Reads strategy
- Review our curriculum rationale and investigate and increase accreditation in the wider curriculum

School Priority 3: Support and improve young people's health & wellbeing by Getting It Right for Every Child

Progress and Impact

Our Supporting Families Initiative has been a key focus of our work. We introduced a range of initiatives throughout the session to support families with the cost of the school day. These included: a breakfast station each morning, preparation stations to ensure all pupils were equipped for classes, the provision of personal care items and hygiene packs, support for families with Christmas presents, our Prom dress stall to reduce the substantial cost to S6 pupils and their families, and we continue to provide school uniform at no cost to those who wish it. This work was shared with all schools in South Ayrshire and has been highlighted by the Child Poverty Action Group as good practice.

Our partnership working with the Girvan Youth Trust continues to be a unique and key strength in the school. We work collaboratively to support our young people and this partnership continues to grow from strength to strength.

We introduced family learning together sessions for S1 pupils and their families and extended this to later in the session to P7 sessions as part of our transition programme. The purpose was to allow parents/carers and children to have a positive experience of learning together; to develop and improve the relationship between school and parents/carers by having contact through a non-threatening, fun experience; and to provide parents/carers with a better understanding of current educational practice to further support their children.

To promote a strong school ethos and promote positive behaviour, we launched our visible consistencies policy, extra- curricular passport and positive behaviour rewards days.

Next Steps

- Continue to develop, refine and implement our Supporting Families Initiative to reduce the cost of the school day for families
- Increase our partnership working with the Girvan Youth Team to support more young people develop their employability skills and support positive relationships and engagement with the school
- A greater focus on whole school attendance as it continues to decrease from 2020/21
- Continue to develop our pupil voice and opportunities for pupil leadership

4. What is our Capacity for Continuous Improvement?

Quality Indicator	School Evaluation
<p>1.3 Leadership of Change</p>	<p>Girvan Academy is an enjoyable place to work. Staff are committed to our young people and community, and we work collegiately with a range of partners who support our clear focus of supporting wellbeing, raising attainment and improving our learners' experiences. The school is a very welcoming environment that is underpinned by our school values and also our tagline of Safe, Happy and Achieving. Our values are embedded in the work of the school, with respect, responsibility and community driving our ambition for all our young people. Most of our young people live these values and are approachable, polite and engaging. Our values are embedded in much of our work in assemblies, GIRFEC, class lessons and the wider curriculum.</p> <p>Moving on from Covid and with our senior leadership team now well established, our school priorities are identified from our collaborative self-evaluation and are in line with local and national priorities. Through our Pupil Council young people have a voice in school improvement, particularly on learning & teaching, but this will continue to be developed and expanded next session. A range of data including Insight, CfE Machine, GL assessments, SNSA, stakeholder surveys and our own health & wellbeing data is analysed to ensure our areas for improvement are targeted. The process of managing change and school improvement involves all teaching staff, and our professional review and development processes informs our staff professional learning. We prioritise collegiate time for professional discussion and the sharing of practice, which most often has the focus of learning and teaching. Staff have also used their own time for additional professional reading which has impacted on their thinking and practice.</p> <p>Staff engage with a range of CLPL opportunities including Masters level studies, the SAC Leadership Development Programme, Understanding Standards, MTV and use of digital technology. Our PT Pedagogy shared interesting practice from departments, book reviews and an in-house CLPL programme throughout the course of the session. Looking outwards, our Principal Teachers undertook a five-day Leadership of Learning programme, looking at research-informed practice as to how they could develop themselves as middle leaders. Next session, this professional learning will be extended to all teaching staff to support our focus on learning & teaching and developing our 'plus ones'. In addition, our senior leadership team provide strong leadership which supports an appropriate pace of change at all levels. Almost all teaching staff (98%) feel that they are supported to engage in professional learning and 98% acknowledged that their professional learning enables them to reflect on and improve their practice. 93% of support staff also stated that their professional learning enables them to reflect on and improve their practice.</p> <p>All staff are clear on the social and economic context of our school and community, and how the cost of the school day can impact on our young people. Much work has been done in school to support young people and families through our Supporting Families Initiative, and our Parent Council's work in partnership</p>

	<p>with the school has significantly contributed to reducing the financial burden of many wider curriculum opportunities.</p> <p>Overall, leadership of change is good.</p>
<p>2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment</p>	<p>Our positive ethos is built upon strong relationships between staff and young people, and our visible consistency policy introduced this session has supported a consistency of practice and standards in areas that staff identified as priorities. There continues to be a calm atmosphere within classrooms and school in general, with most young people motivated and engaged in their lessons. Much of the focus of our work this session has been on learning & teaching and developing consistency across departments. We have expanded our learning walks to include trios of observations in and across departments involving SLT, PTs and class teachers. This is allowing us to create a shared understanding of good quality learning and teaching, an improved consistency, and it is making a difference to our learning and teaching. Through our PT professional learning programme, Leader of Learning, PTs have also had significant time to focus on learning and teaching and what the priorities for their departments will be moving forward. Our focus post Covid has been on improving the consistency in some key areas. Learning intentions and success criteria, retrieval practice techniques and the use of our newly created Girvan Academy Skills Framework has enhanced the learner experience, and the purpose of the learning is shared in almost all classes. Where this occurs, the approach taken is appropriate to the learning environment. Clear teacher explanations and a focus on disciplinary literacy was evident in most lessons and there is a variety of MTV routines and use of mini-white boards being used in the majority of departments. Pace and challenge are evident in an increasing majority of classes, but it was widely agreed by observers that there is scope to increase this further. Equally, differentiation continues to be an area of priority moving forward with a range of strategies evident but we will continue to explore how this can be enhanced by varying the degree of challenge to ensure all learners' needs are met. We will continue to give opportunities to staff for professional learning using research-informed practice to shape our thinking and development.</p> <p>Assessment evidence is used effectively by staff to monitor and track the progress of our young people in the senior phase and increasingly so in the broad general education. Data from the broad general education and senior phase is shared and discussed at whole school and department levels and used to plan next steps in learning for our young people. Our improved tracking and monitoring of both the senior phase and BGE has allowed us to identify targeted cohorts and put in targeted interventions where required. Next session we will develop our systems to allow young people, particularly in the BGE, to be able to better articulate their learning and progress in curricular areas.</p> <p>Moderation activities regularly take place within departments and most share the assessment standards in the BGE and senior phase with colleagues in their subject networks across the local authority to develop the consistency of standard in each subject area.</p> <p>There are important strengths in this area; however, learning, teaching and assessment will continue to be a major focus of our work as it is our core business.</p> <p>Overall, learning, teaching & assessment at Girvan Academy is good.</p>

**3.1
Ensuring
Wellbeing,
Equality &
Inclusion**

A significant part of our ethos and what lies at the heart of our work at Girvan Academy is our focus on supporting the wellbeing of our young people. All staff have a clear understanding of this wellbeing work and know their responsibility. All young people and staff are very familiar with the wellbeing indicators, which are used and discussed in planned wellbeing days and GIRFEC time in accordance with the Care & Wellbeing quality assurance calendar. They are used as a tool to identify emerging issues with individual young people and provide supports. Through this work, young people are encouraged to reflect on and take responsibility for their wellbeing. All stakeholders promote a climate where almost all young people (96%) feel safe and secure. We comply with all statutory duties and legislation to ensure young people are protected and safeguarding measures are in place. All staff participate in a range of appropriate and relevant professional learning, including child protection training on the first day of the new session, with catch up sessions arranged for other partners. Additional Support Needs (ASN) information and plans are in place for those learners who require them and are easily accessible and well-used by all staff. Care experienced young people are identified and targeted as a cohort for additional tracking and monitoring and we work closely with partners to support young people who are identified as young carers.

Promoting positive behaviour through our visible consistencies policy, school values and behavioural system has been a positive experience for almost all our young people. Our exclusion rate is reduced from the previous session and it is our aim to reduce exclusions further. However, in line with South Ayrshire Council, our attendance continues to decline year on year, and this will be a key focus next session, both in school and as an authority. We have begun a renewed emphasis on the Rights Respecting School agenda and aim to have both our bronze and silver levels re-accredited in the coming session to complement our understanding of children's rights. Our extra-curricular passport has been a welcome addition to reward young people who participate in the wider life of the school.

A few of our young people need additional targeted interventions to support their wellbeing and are a focus of discussions at our weekly Care & Wellbeing Team meetings and as part of the staged intervention processes. Our Education Support Officer, funded from our Pupil Equity Funding, has provided a much needed link with families to support wellbeing and, as a result, increased attendance and attainment of individual young people. This collegiate working has resulted in almost all young people in S4 achieving at least five qualifications. Young people's wellbeing is further assisted by our in-school counselling service, Place2Be. This service is funded by community partners and has proved to be invaluable in supporting individuals.

To remove barriers to learning and support equality and equity amongst our young people, our Supporting Families Initiative was introduced with a range of supports throughout the session to support families with the cost of the school day. These supports included a breakfast station, preparation stations to ensure all young people are equipped for learning, the provision of personal care items and hygiene packs, support for families with Christmas presents, our Prom dress stall, and we continue to provide uniform at no cost to those families who wish it. This has been admirably supported by our Parent Council who raised over £18500 in grant funding and fundraising to support some of these initiatives and considerably reduce the cost of transport for our young people and families.

	<p>Our Pupil Equity Fund is used effectively to address challenges and break down barriers faced by our young people, as well as upskill staff to support young people and improve their life chances. Young people are identified and interventions put in place. This has resulted in improvements in literacy in S1 and S2, and positive attainment and positive destinations for these identified in the senior phase. This work will be expanded next session with our youth work partners, the Girvan Youth Trust, having an increasing role in supporting our young people with their wellbeing.</p> <p>Overall, our progress in ensuring wellbeing, equality & inclusion is very good.</p>
<p>3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement</p>	<p>Young people are making very good progress in both Literacy & Numeracy. In 2022, almost all leavers left school with qualifications in both literacy and numeracy at Scottish Credit & Qualification Framework (SCQF) level 4 or above. This was achieved in four of the last five years, with 2021 being the exception when most young people achieved this level. Equally, in four out of the last five years, including 2022, a majority of young people left with Literacy & Numeracy at SCQF level 5 or above. The exception was prior to COVID in 2019, where most leavers achieved Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better. At both SCQF level 4 and 5, the percentage of leavers was above our virtual and other comparators. For S4 leavers only, all leavers achieved at least SCQF level 3 Literacy & Numeracy and almost all achieved level 4.</p> <p>In the Broad General Education (BGE), by the end of S3, most young people achieved Third level in Literacy (76%); however, this figure is down from 88% last session and almost all (91%) achieved Literacy in 2019. However, almost all young people achieved Third level numeracy (93%), which is an increase from 2022 (88%) and pre-Covid data in 2019 (81%). The achievement of Fourth level in Literacy is a more positive picture for the majority of young people with a significant increase from the previous session to 69%, whereas maths is more consistent over the same timescales but only the minority (38%) achieved Fourth level.</p> <p>Improving literacy, especially those young people who did not achieve Fourth level, will be a focus. Some of these young people have attendance and/or mental health issues and will require targeted support to be able to achieve success. Other evidence such as GL assessment data and attendance figures highlight the challenge this will be for a targeted cohort in the new S4. Appropriate interventions will continue to be planned using a wide range of partners to engage these young people.</p> <p>Our monitoring and tracking systems have been developed to ensure the progress of all young people within the Broad General Education is tracked and is as data rich as our senior phase tracking. We are now using this data more effectively and with more confidence across the school to monitor progress, identify issues and are beginning to provide additional interventions at departmental level. A more bespoke focus on our care-experienced young people is ensuring that any issues are identified early and appropriate support put in place by our care-experienced champion. Similar tracking of young carers will also be introduced to ensure they have the same increased level of personal support. In the senior phase our PT Raising Attainment & Achievement worked with targeted groups including our</p>

highest 20% of learners in S5 to support them with the demands of multiple Highers. Next session we plan to identify the wider achievement of all our young people within the wider curriculum including leadership opportunities and begin to link these experiences to the skills they are developing from our skills framework. It will also identify young people who do not or cannot access these experiences and offer them the opportunity to participate.

This session we began to examine more closely the exit qualifications of our young people. Our S4 leavers were consistently above their virtual comparators in all years except 2020 and all key measures examined were improved in 2022 from 2021. Over the five-year trend almost all measures improved or remained at 100% except during the Covid years of 2020 & 2021. For S6 leavers, all measures improved in 2022 from 2021 when SCQF Level 6 measures are considered and are in line with or above the virtual comparators. Our five-year trend, comparing 2022 leavers with 2018 leavers highlights a significant improvement in 5+@SCQF Level 6, 3+@SCQF Level 6, 1+@SCQF Level 6 and 5+@SCQF Level 5.

Overall, our progress in Raising Attainment & Achievement is good.

5. Overall Capacity for Improvement – Priorities Session 2023/24

Girvan Academy continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to improvement. Our continuous drive for consistency of practice across learning within the classroom is again a key priority for session 2023/24. As well as raising attainment & achievement, we will continue to mitigate against the impact of Covid on our young people, and progress on our journey to close the gap. Furthermore, the health & wellbeing of our young people continues to be at the core of our work to ensure young people are safe, happy and achieving - our mission statement for young people in Girvan Academy.

We continue to be ambitious for all of our learners and our school, and focus on improving outcomes for young people, knowing that what we do in school as a community makes a difference to the lives of young people.

Our Priorities – What are we going to do next?

Our School Improvement Plan maps our agenda for the year ahead and our strategic priorities for next session continue to be focussed on these three key priority areas:

Priority 1: A focus on high-quality learning, teaching and assessment to improve consistency and ensure the best possible outcomes for all young people

Priority 2: Raise attainment & achievement to close the attainment gap and develop young people's skills for learning, life and work

Priority 3: Support and improve young people's health and wellbeing by Getting It Right for Every Child

Further details on each of these priorities can be found in our Improvement Plan for Session 2023-24 on our school website – www.girvanacademy.sayr.sch.uk