



STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 24/25

The purpose of the annual Standards and Quality Report (SQR) is to record the successes and achievements in delivering improvement relating to the identified priorities in the improvement plan 2024/25.

This report provides a helpful summary for parents/carers and other stakeholders, of the successes and achievements throughout the academic session from August 2024 - June 2025, and outlines priorities for session 2025/26.

OUR VISION, VALUES AND AIMS

Our vision at Braes is to ensure that every pupil in our care feels valued, respected and challenged. Braes High School aims to be a school of the highest quality, providing an education which is appropriate yet challenging to all our young people. As part of our ongoing self-evaluation, we continue to develop and refine our courses and curriculum to ensure our young people are well prepared with the skills required for our ever-changing world of work.

Our motto "Build Respect and Earn Success - Be Part of It!" defines the school and remains significant in building our school vision and ethos which continues to flourish. Through our commitment to restorative practice, we build respectful relationships and encourage hard work in order to gain success. Our pupils fully immerse themselves in the wide and vast ranging opportunities available - both in school and within the community.

We are certain that by developing skills, both academic and personal, that our young people will thrive throughout and beyond their school years at Braes High School.

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Braes High School is a six-year comprehensive school serving the communities of Avonbridge; California; Standburn; Maddistoun; Shieldhill and Wallacestone. Our school roll is estimated to be 1151 pupils in session 2025/26. We have a thriving Pupil Council, Parent Council and an association from parents and friends entitled Friends at Braes (FAB) who fundraise and support us at school events.

- Our three pillars for improvement are:
- Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment
 - Culture, Ethos, Relationships, Equality and Inclusion
 - Improving Outcomes

We are clear that our school must continue to look forward, be ambitious and continually seek to improve further. This view is based on the recognition that our young people in school deserve no less than this, and that we as colleagues wish to continue our professional development.



FURTHER IMPROVING OUR ... OUTCOMES

Pastoral data management:
We have continued to develop our wellbeing procedures with enhanced use of the Progress system for pastoral information, enabling better tracking of pupil wellbeing and staff confidence in its use. This is supported by our wellbeing surveys which are completed with all young people 3 times during the session ensuring the right support at the right time.

Embedding UNCRC
Rights based approaches have continued to be embedded across wellbeing activity in all areas of the curriculum and our community, ensuring all voices are heard and respected. We, once again, achieved re-accreditation as a Gold Rights Respecting School.

Brightside Ambassadors
Our pupil led Brightside strategy continues to promote positive wellbeing strategies and activities and signposting to supports ensuring our young people have a proactive approach to their wellbeing and know where to get support if they need it.

LGBT Youth Scotland Charter Progress
We have been working with LGBT Youth Scotland to progress our work towards the Bronze Charter - our staff have engaged with professional learning and the lead team have engaged with our young people to reform our equalities group.

Equally Safe At School
We are one of 27 schools in Scotland to have started implementing ESAS activities including pupil & staff surveys and staff e-module training with more activities planned for next session.

Sports Scotland Gold Award
As a result of our strong sports offering and leadership opportunities for young people, we have been awarded the Sport Scotland Gold Award for the seventh consecutive year.

Wellbeing Forum
This year we launched our Brightside Forum bringing together young people from across our wellbeing groups and projects to consider our data and feedback ensuring pupil voice is at the centre of our wellbeing strategy and planning.

EXPERIENCES

Learning, Teaching & Assessment Framework
There has been a focus on AifL strategies including plenaries, effective use of success criteria, feedback, and differentiation. Our self-evaluation procedures indicate that most learners experience these effectively in their day to day learning. Consultation with Parent Council continues to be ongoing.

Professional Learning Programme
Delivered to build the capacity of staff across Learning & Teaching; Leadership and Wellbeing. Our own in-house programme was informed by our self-evaluation processes to identify good practice and measure the impact of CLPL on the experiences of our young people.

Cluster Curriculum Refresh Groups
All groups took forward development work in their areas that focused on shared understanding of levels; moderation and transition experiences. Each group can evidence their impact through their own measurable outcomes.

Learning for Sustainability
Pupil led sustainability work tied to COP legacy, with new courses and measurable impact being developed. Winners of Climate Action Project of the Year 2025.

Progress Tracking System
Enhanced clarity for learners and parents regarding progress, with built-in features to change levels and inform timely interventions. 100% achieving 5NQs

Gen+ Skills Programme
All BGE pupils are completing Gen+ to articulate and develop their personal skills.

Improved Learning Environments
Phase 1 and 2 of school redesign completed, improving aesthetics and reflecting school values—positive feedback in pupil surveys.

LEADERSHIP

Staff Leadership and CLPL
Extensive CLPL aligned to learning and teaching priorities, wellbeing, and leadership. Improved staff attendance and engagement. All staff in the Braes Cluster from Secondary to Early Years were members of Curriculum Cluster Refresh Groups. Impact on learning can be measured through our self-evaluation processes of which young people are a part of.

Pupil Leadership
Launch of BGE Pupil Leadership Strategy increased engagement in extracurricular activities and leadership groups.

Pupil Voice at Braes!
Our Pupil voice Group have led on a number of whole school initiatives, including

- Charities
- P7 Transition
- Cost of the School Day
- Learning, Teaching & Assessment
- Mobile Phone Consultation

Self-evaluation leaders
Our active SE leaders been gathering systematic feedback from their peers on their learning experiences. Leaders have then shared good practice and effective teaching experiences from the learner's perspective at staff meetings and at Parent Council.

STEM
Driven by an active and passionate community of STEM Leaders, our inclusive, real world and interdisciplinary approach ensures STEM is accessible, engaging and empowering for all. Our distinctive, peer-led model has gained international recognition, inspiring the Swiss MINT Network to establish their own STEM Leader programme following their visit to Braes in September 2024. From a numeracy perspective, best practice has been shared through hosting a STEM Nation Open Day and involvement in a variety of Education Scotland projects including curriculum design and CLPL development.



INFLUENCING PRACTICE

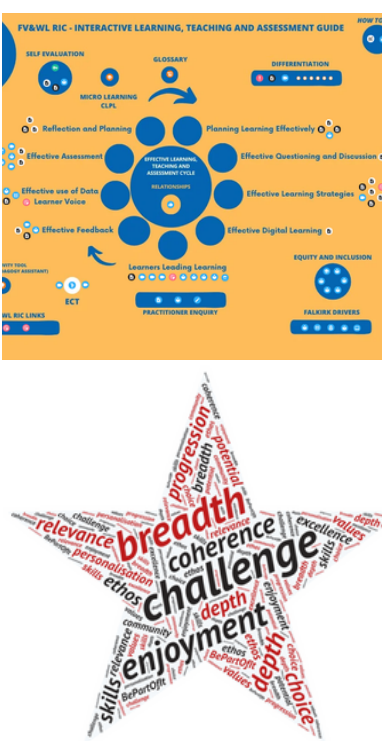
Interactive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Toolkit: This resource was created as an aid to all practitioners within classrooms with resources, guides and AI tools to help in the delivery of effective lessons. This guide has been used widely across the Forth Valley and West Lothian RIC and now sits within Falkirk's Effective Learning and Teaching Policy.

ECT Programme: The Early Career Teacher Programme has been co-designed and delivered across all Falkirk Cluster areas for staff who have been teaching for less than a year. This programme concentrated on what makes effective Learning and Teaching across both sectors.

Sharing Cluster Approaches: Braes HS staff had lead a number of sessions at National level on Cluster Working and Practitioner Enquiry and supporting colleagues across multiple local authorities.

Digital: Our digital leaders have gained international recognition for their work, actively contributing to and collaborating with the European Digital Schools Award initiative. Their involvement highlights our commitment to digital excellence on the international stage. Through their active participation in this award they have successfully demonstrated their innovation - 3D Printing, VR, Flight Simulator and Cyber Security to name a few. Their involvement highlights our significant contribution to advancing digital literacy skills in every young person.

Authority Development Work: A number of Braes HS staff have been leading work within the local authority across areas such as; Learning & Teaching; Rights Respecting Schools; Equity; and Learning for Sustainability.





NEXT STEPS...

CURRICULUM, LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Through a review of our S3 curriculum model, our aim is to further improve the depth of young people's learning and overall quality of passes in the Senior Phase.

Continue to refine and embed our Learning, Teaching and Assessment framework to ensure learners experience a range of assessment approaches and experience high quality differentiation and adaptive learning techniques

Enhance the range of pupil leadership opportunities to ensure a greater number of learners in S1 are participating both in and out of school

Review and implement a new Braes Skills Framework to align with SDS skills 4.0

CULTURE, ETHOS, RELATIONSHIPS, EQUALITIES & INCLUSION

Continue to ensure all young people experience the same opportunities through our COSD strategy

We will continue to ensure all young people feel equally safe at school and feel welcome in our school community. We will also ensure young people have the opportunity to contribute to our LGBT Youth Scotland Charter Mark

Staff and young people will work together to form a positive relationships charter, further contributing towards strong and positive relationships within the school

Refinement of staff leadership opportunities with a particular focus on non-teaching staff

IMPROVING OUTCOMES

We continue to aim to further improve overall levels of attainment and achievement and positively impact on localised and authority wide stretch aims

Further improve our pace, challenge and rigour in the BGE in line with our benchmarked expectations

Ongoing development of our Family Learning Strategy

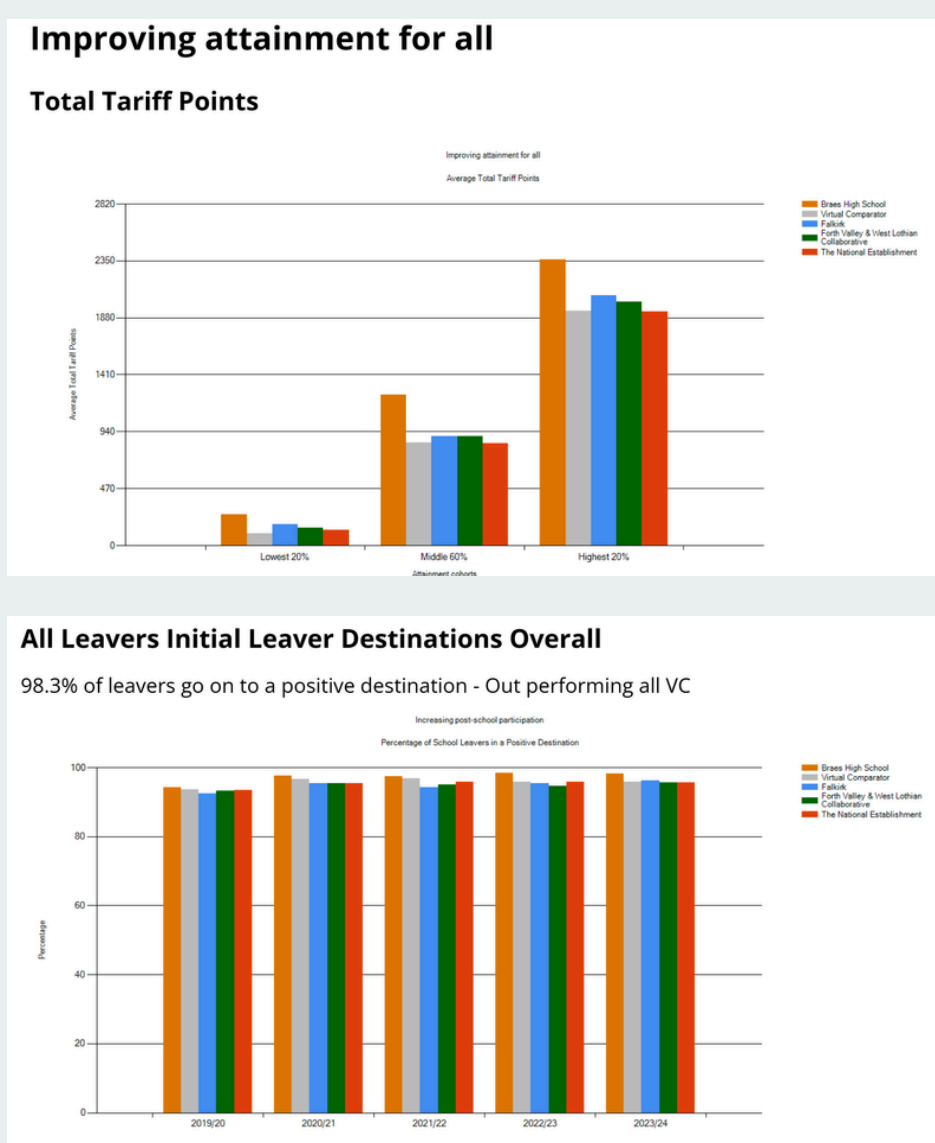
Re-launch of our positive attendance strategy - Be Here and Go Far! to support young people's attendance at school

ATTAINMENT & ACHIEVEMENT

Key message: We continue to achieve high attainment and sustain positive destinations for nearly all Leavers. Our key focus areas, outlined in our school improvement plan, remain unchanged.

Leavers' data – Successes

- **Attainment for all**
 - Braes High School pupils achieve excellent overall results in terms of Total Tariff Points, significantly outperforming all comparators. This reflects the high-quality provision pupils receive, both academically and in wider achievements
 - For complementary tariff points, our five-year trend shows that we consistently outperform all Insight comparators in both the lowest 20% and middle 60% attainment groups
- **Equity and excellence**
 - We have closed the equity gap for S4 Leavers in both the 1@L5 and 1@L6 measures
 - Over the past five years, all Leavers' attainment at 1@L5 and 1@L6 has consistently exceeded both the Falkirk Council average and our Virtual Comparator
- **Leaver destination**
 - Leaver destinations remain high and sustained, supported by our strong partnership approach
 - 100% of Leavers from S6 have moved into a positive destination, with 72% progressing into Higher Education, which is above all comparators

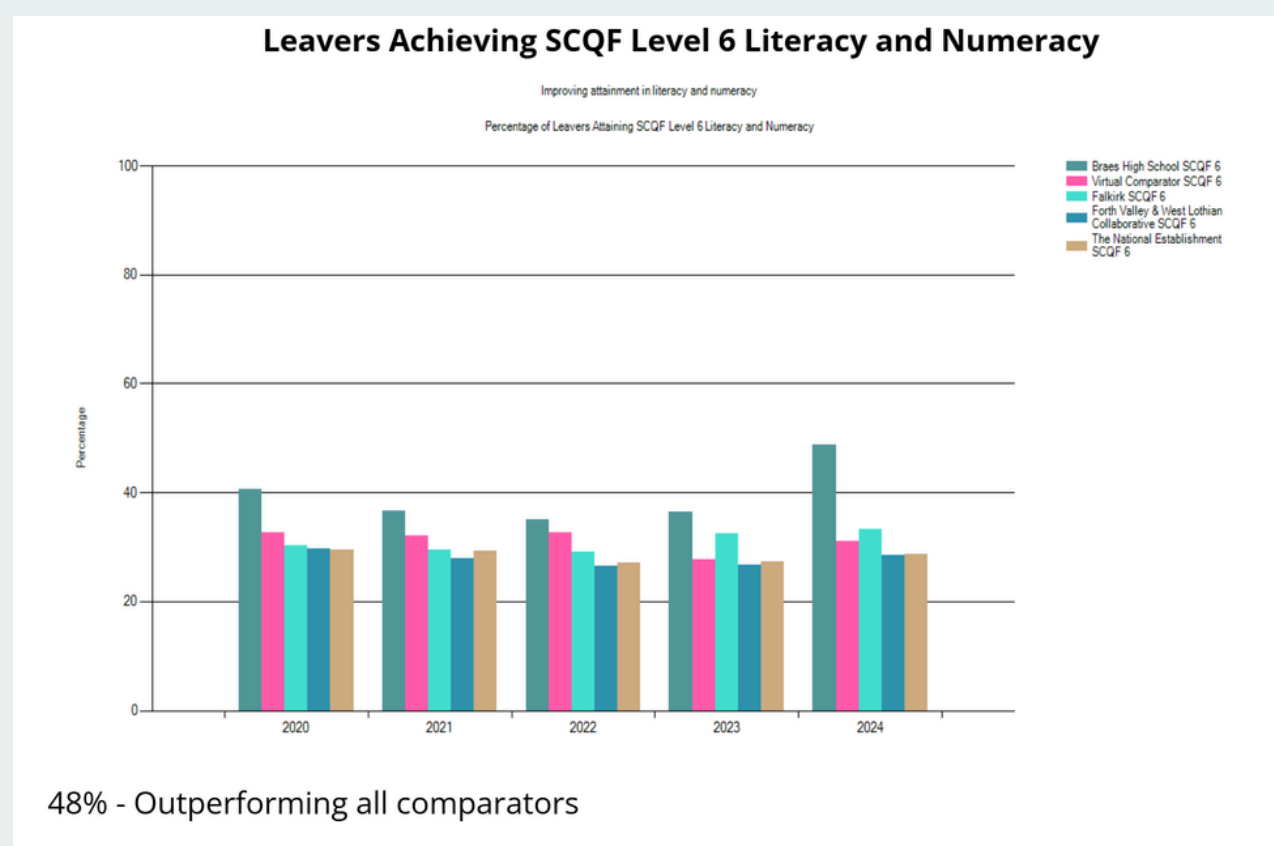
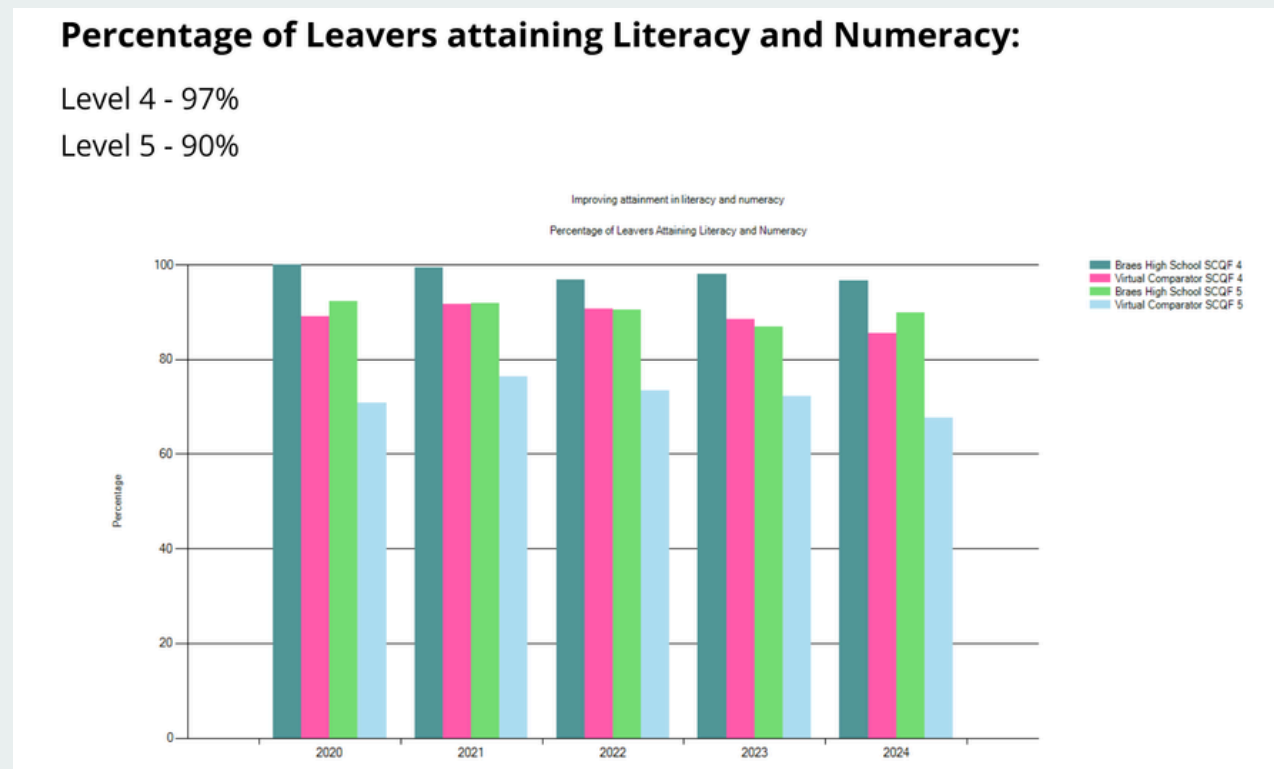


LITERACY & NUMERACY

- **Literacy and Numeracy**

We have sustained our high performance for Leavers in level 4 and 5 literacy and numeracy

Additionally, we have achieved a significant increase in our level 6 literacy and numeracy performance



ONWARDS & UPWARDS & COSD

This session we have continued to prioritise our work with our targeted attainment groups in S1 - S4

- S1 - 72 young people (37 FME, 50 SIMD 1-4)
 - 71% improved overall attendance by at least 5% for attendance target group
 - 12 young people took part in Flourish programme
 - 41% of the cohort part of extra curricular by May 2025, comparing to 24% in September 2024

- S2 - 71 young people (27 FME, 55 SIMD 1-4)
 - Improvement in attendance and reduction in the attendance between our young people least and most affected by poverty from 5.17% to 4.29%
 - 83% of our cohort achieved L3 literacy or above by the end of S2
 - 70% of our cohort achieved L3 numeracy or above by the end of S2

- S3 - 71 young people (28 FME, 47 SIMD 1-4)
 - 94% of our cohort reached level 3 bronze/silver in literacy and numeracy by the end of S3 with 52% reaching level 4 bronze
 - 12 young people have reached level 4 gold in literacy and numeracy by the end of S3
 - All 6 of our Skills Academy Group have secured work placements for next session

- S4 - 56 young people (21 FME, 37 SIMD 1-4)
 - 100% of cohort on track to achieve a minimum of 5 National qualifications
 - 61% of our cohort achieved L5 numeracy
 - 89% of our cohort achieved L5 literacy

COSD

We continue to reduce the cost of the school day and support our families to maximise income through our pupil cost of the school day group initiatives and our work with a dedicated housing support service alongside partnership working with Barnardos.

*FME - free school meal entitled



PARENT COUNCIL

Our Parent Council have supported the development of a number of school improvement priorities this session, including:

- Enhancement of pupil pathways
- Development of our Mobile Phone Policy 'Turn off to Tune in'
- Informing thinking around the S3 Curriculum structure
- Contributing the development of our Anti-bullying policy
- Supported the reaccreditation of our Rights Respecting School UNICEF Gold award
- Supporting the the Pupil Voice Group in their contribution to school improvement planning
- Contributed to discussions surrounding our Learning, Teaching & Assessment Framework



FRIENDS @ BRAES

Our Friends at Braes parent group have actively supported our young people, family and community through a number of projects, including:

- Providing refreshments at a range of events including our Summer Show, Braes Big Night In, Dance Showcase and Sports Day
- Supporting the innovative and enthusiastic members of our Flight Club group
- Supporting our Family Fun Day
- Working in partnership with our Science Faculty to secure funding from INEOS
- Supporting our Braes Brightside Ambassadors with prizes for their wellbeing challenges
- Supporting young people with access to uniform items



high school
braes

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN SESSION 2025-26



PILLAR ONE

Curriculum, Learning, Teaching & Assessment

Improve depth of learning and quality of National 5 passes through adjustment to S3 curriculum structure

Almost all learners experience learning as outlined in our Learning, Teaching & Assessment framework

Most young people participate in extracurricular activities or pupil leadership opportunities

Implementation of revised Braes Skills Framework allowing almost all young people to be able to recognise their key skills

PILLAR TWO

Culture, Relationships, Equality & Inclusion

All young people can access the same opportunities regardless of background or financial situation

All young people in Braes High feel safe and welcome in our community

Staff and young people will work together to form a positive relationship charter to further support positive relationships

All staff, teaching and non teaching, develop their leadership capacity to enhance the learning experience

PILLAR THREE

Improving Outcomes

Maintain and improve the overall attainment and achievement outcomes for all learners in line with stretch aims

All young people progress through the Broad General Education in line with our benchmarked expectations

Continue to enhance our Family Learning Strategy

Re-launch of our positive attendance strategy - Be Here and Go Far! - to support young people's attendance