



# Graeme High School



## Standards & Quality Report for parents, carers and partners

Session 2018 - 2019



**Falkirk Council**  
Children's Services



# Our Community

where we:

**Aspire  
Attain  
Achieve**



#OurCommunityGHS

## Our Community Vision

As a community we strive to break down barriers, include all and deliver opportunities to develop potential, widen horizons and build positive futures. At the heart of this is a nurturing environment in which rights are respected.

## Our Community Values

At the heart of delivering our vision and aims, lie our core values that are supported by all members of our community and be lived out in our relationships and day to day work within Graeme High School.

- **Respect** – for one and all
- **Kindness** – in all we do and think
- **Honesty** – in everything we do
- **Responsibility** – for our words and actions
- **Determination** – to be the best version of ourselves
- **Excellence** – in all our or efforts

## Our Community Aims

1. To ensure everybody is equal, treated fairly and has access to the same opportunities to enable them to reach their potential. (UN Articles 1, 2 and 23)
2. To ensure that the physical and mental wellbeing of all pupils and staff is at the centre of all of our decisions. (UN Articles 3,19 and 34)
3. To encourage full participation in all aspects of school life to help pupils to not only attain but excel. (UN Articles 28 and 29)
4. To give everyone in our school community an opportunity to express their opinions and have their voice heard. (UN Articles 12 & 13)



## A Word from the Headteacher

I am delighted to provide you with this report on standards and quality in Graeme High School for session 2018-2019. In this report I will highlight strengths in key aspects of our work and share with you our agreed priorities for 2019-2020.



Our school is a 6-year comprehensive serving the East and South of Falkirk as well as the communities of Polmont, Westquarter, Hallglen and Whitecross. In Session 2018-19, the school roll was 1056, with 45% of pupils living in SIMD 1-3 areas of deprivation.

The school has a strong relationship with its 6 **partner primary schools** who provide almost all of the Graeme High pupils. Most of our pupils within our **SFA Performance School**, travel from outwith the catchment and many from outwith the local authority. A number of pupils also attend our school as a result of placing requests.

During a whole-school validated self-evaluation in January 2018, the external team comment *'the school's values underpin the totality of the work... there is strong evidence of that these values are lived by staff, pupils and partners and are used for continuous improvement, and to achieve a strong sense of purpose and direction.'*

Self-evaluation is a strength across the school with activities are carried out through a variety of means, including the scrutiny of quantitative data, direct observation and through seeking people's views. All stakeholders are involved in self-evaluation activities, and these form the basis of improvement planning.

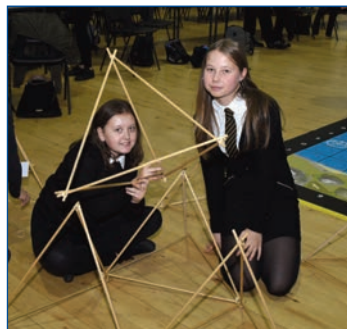
Parent views are sought through a series of questionnaires, Family Learning Festival activities, focus groups and Parent Council sessions. The views of pupils related to both their learning experience and support are gathered and evaluated through a variety of consultation exercises within faculty areas, VSE activities and Pupil Voice Conferences. The outcome of these is reflected in our improvement plan priorities. External validators have concluded that we know ourselves well and our improvement priorities reflect the needs and aspirations of our school community.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment and support for the work and life of our school.

Lesley A Carroll, Headteacher

## How well do all of our pupils attain?

Most pupils are engaged, motivated and positive about their learning experiences. Our contemporary and co-created vision, values and aims provide a strong and clear message that everything we do is to **develop potential, widen horizons** and **build positive future** in order that everyone in our community can **Aspire, Attain** and **Achieve**.



Our revised Tracking, Monitoring and Target Setting system for S1-3 was embedded across all curricular areas, allowing the identification of high level messages on the progress for all pupils and gives us information on our work to support equity. This work was shared widely with pupils and parents, and a Family Learning session on 'Understanding Your Child's Report' was positively received.

All subject areas now make a positive contribution to the development of skills across learning. Cluster Improvement Plans included a strong focus on Literacy and Numeracy development, and this work involved effective collaborative working across all seven schools.

Very effective use was made of the national BGE tracking tool to identify Learning Partner schools, using attainment in Literacy and Numeracy alongside school profiles. Schools included: Inveralmond Community High School, Carluke High School, Our Ladys' High School, Renfrew High School and Bathgate Academy. Representatives from each school attended a Looking Wider Conference at Graeme High School in October, to share effective practice and identify areas for collaboration.

Our validated self-evaluation process was also significantly enhanced by the introduction of Looking Wider sessions, which led to professional dialogue and learning across subject areas.

A clear focus on raising attainment and achievement for all ensured success within National



Qualifications, with S4 pupils and S6 pupils achieving our strongest results to date in several measures, at grades A-C. The **attainment overview** can be seen at the end of this report.

Throughout the session staff mentored borderline groups of learners, achieving considerable success with identified pupils.

For Session 2018-19, attainment in S6 was a particular focus with 82% of the tracked and mentored group for 5 Highers achieving A-C passes.

85 pupils in S4 were targeted for extra support and 87% of the group achieved 5 or more National 5s and 95% 4 or more National 5s.

In S5, 102 pupils were targeted for support and 84% of those achieved 3+ Highers.

In its second year, the **INSPIRE Programme** successfully targeted groups of learners in SIMD 1-3 and those entitled to free school meals, in S4, S5 and S6. An S6 group was also targeted to support transition to university and college. Very good progress was made by all pupils, with significant success at each stage.

Our Learning Café Programme offered 11 sessions for S4-6 pupils, averaging 40+ pupils each session. One pupil commented 'This gave me a way of getting support in the areas I needed it most'. In 2020 we will take the Learning Café on tour, with staff leading sessions in neighbourhood areas within cluster primary schools, targeting pupils who are unable to attend core programmes. We will also work to develop a programme of BGE Learning Cafes.

## How well do our pupils achieve?

To experience a flavour of the enormous achievements and opportunities across the last session please visit our website

**[www.graemehigh.com](http://www.graemehigh.com)**

and click on our review of the session presentation.



## How are we working to help pupils learn and engage?

All pupils took part in a series of **Pupil Voice Conferences** at the start of the session. These involved pupils in a range of activities to provide feedback on learner experiences, our Vision Values and Aims, resources and school supports for learning, pupils' outside interests, and their views on health and wellbeing supports.

Our School Learning Council made very good use of 'How Good is Our Library?' and 'How Good is OUR School?' with significant improvements made to our school library, purchase of resources and school activities to improve its impact on learner engagement.

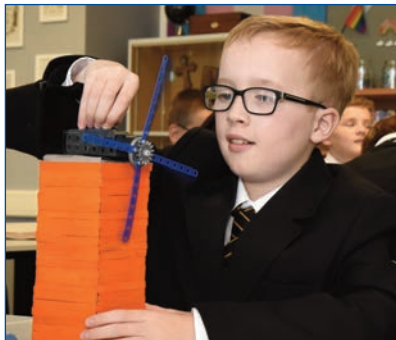
Most pupils report that their teachers provided feedback which helps their learning, and almost all said they felt comfortable asking their teachers for help. In session 2019-2020 our Pupil Voice Conferences will seek to measure the impact of the changes made as a result of this work.

Evidence gathered showed a significant increase in the use of Glow, especially Microsoft Teams, in support of learning with 280 pupil log-ins (March 2018) and 4229 pupil log-ins (March 2019)! Next session, we will continue this work, developing teacher engagement in the MIE Expert Programme, Immersive Reader and strengthening the use of Microsoft Teams.

Across the last three years, our staff professional learning sessions have covered over 70 different topics in response to ambition to give our pupils the best possible learning experiences. Staff feedback is overwhelmingly positive: "I have been very impressed with the support I have received and opportunities that I have been given". For Session 2019-20, 40% of staff will provide opportunities for colleagues as part of our professional learning programme



We have a great many expert teachers in our staff and 15 Graeme High teachers were involved in the delivery of sessions at the Falkirk Learning Festival, with several staff proving follow-up visits and supports to colleagues across Falkirk and beyond. Moreover, all staff engaged in our Practitioner Enquiry Programme, across a range of areas which research has identified as having strong impact on learners.



A group of teachers also revised our Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy, bringing together examples of effective practice to exemplify key areas. These resources will be embedded through collaborative sessions, Staff Meetings and in-service training in session 2019-2020. Differentiation was a whole school focus, supported by work in Pupil Support, and this will be further strengthened through our Practitioner Enquiry Programme.

Our ambitious Family Learning Festival was very effective in providing a range of opportunities for families to engage in learning. 15% of GHS pupils and their families attended, and along with 89% of our P7 cluster pupils and their families, providing 37 different workshops and activities on a wide range of areas. Very good use was made of partnership working, for example with sessions led by Educational Psychology on teenage mental health and anxiety. Parental feedback was overwhelmingly positive with almost all parents highlighting the benefits of the sessions: "The school had such a wide variety of activities on offer, there was something for everyone. I would definitely attend future events like this."; "I thought the school covered everything and tried really hard to address all the barriers of parental engagement."



## How well do we support the needs of our pupils and staff

The rich tapestry of targeted interventions available was again revised, enhanced and externally validated as very effective in support of learners and their needs. We now have **nurture nooks** and **MVP safe spaces** for pupils who may be feeling a little vulnerable at any time.



Irregular school **attendance** continues to be a significant barrier to pupils' attainment, achievement and wellbeing. We sought to improve cumulative pupil attendance and late coming, with a specific focus on S6 pupils as this is identified as a major barrier to attainment and achievement. Across all year groups, attendance improved by 1% this session (from 90% to 91%) across the same period as last session. Overall, the number of pupils with attendance below 90% fell by from 47% to 25% in Session 2018-19; late coming was also reduced. By November 2020, we look to strengthen this work with the creation of an **Attendance Support Officer**, to identify trends and patterns, allowing earlier interventions by House Teams. Please our new attendance data poster at the back of this report.

To support pupils whose attendance has been weak for a variety of reasons and who are therefore in danger of not achieving exam result, we have a dedicated support person focussing on **attainment recovery** for these pupils.



Our **school counsellor** provided very effective support for 71 pupils – 50 new pupils and 21 continuing, with a further waiting list of 7 pupils. Anxiety and stress are cited as the main presenting issues, with 47% of pupils stating these as the most significant issue for them. On average, post counselling scores showed pupils' wellbeing improved across all wellbeing indicators. Going forward, our Pupil Support team will explore further opportunities for group interventions.

A School Improvement team has sought to develop a coherent, robust strategy to support good **mental health and wellbeing**. They consulted with a wide variety of stakeholders: Pupils, parents, PSE Team, partner schools, LGBT group, staff groups, primary cluster colleagues, and Pupil House Councils. Training was welcomed by staff: "This training educated me and gave me strategies that I can use." Almost all staff reported improved skills, knowledge and confidence as a result of the training. Pupil groups identified examination stress as a factor, and were keen to know more about available supports. We are now planning activities to support pupils with examination stress and anxiety which will be incorporated into a new S4 Learning Conference. Some parents indicated that they too would like to receive mental health training. To support this, the **GHS Mental Health Strategy** will be launched with parents as well as pupils and staff in session 2019-2020.

A wide scale survey, involving teaching and support staff, concluded that our staff found it rewarding to work in our school. 98% of staff felt that they had a good understanding of the social, cultural and economic context of the school and 98% of staff felt actively involved in ongoing self-evaluation in their classroom, faculty and the wider school.

## How good is our curriculum at meeting pupils' ambitions and aspirations?

External verifiers concluded that the 'curricular principles takes account of the school's context using a range of data to plan relevant and effective pathways for young people... Curricular development is underpinned by strong professional learning, with an emphasis on *'looking outwards'*... Strong partnership working is enhancing the curriculum.'



The school has a strong commitment to science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM). The GHS STEM Strategy was further developed by the STEM Improvement Team. In S1, STEM@the Helix involved 30 S1 pupils, across 8 Falkirk Schools and 3 Clackmannanshire Schools, with further visiting schools from across Stirling and West Lothian. In total 300 pupils were involved. Business partners included Falkirk Community Trust, DYW; RIC, Doursen and Babcock, Syngenta, Stirling University, Edinburgh University, Institute of Civil Engineers and Forth Valley College.

Our S2 'September' Programme involved all S2 pupils in three separate events, partnering with BAE systems, and our S3 Elective Programme continued to involve all pupils in an 11 week rotation. In addition, a STEM primary project involved all cluster schools in the development of a Career Skills Week, with SDS and Forth Valley College.

We continued to support the development of new courses in Photography, Practical Cake Craft and national progression awards in Business to highlight a few.

School leaver data showed significant improvement with 97% of leavers securing a positive destination. There was also an increase in the number of pupils in college and university courses (Session 2018-19: 23% - FE, 34%- HE compared with Session 2017-18: 17% - FE, 33% HE).

## How well do staff, pupils and parents support school ethos and lead change?

Across all year-groups, almost 350 pupils participated in our **Leadership Academy** Programme, an increase of 35% on the previous session. Students participated in a series of workshops, aimed at developing their skills and capabilities in leading school improvement. In session 2019-2020 we will seek to deliver our **Wider Achievement Award** through the Leadership Academy Programme to maximise pupil achievement and recognise pupil contributions.

In Session 2017-18, we reviewed our **Vision, Values and Aims**. In 2018-2019 we ensured our school community had a common understanding of this work, within



daily school life. Our VVA are now clearly evident in displays across the wider school. Pupil focus groups confirm that almost all pupils are now familiar with our **Aspire, Attain, Achieve** and commitment to the **Rights of the Child (RRS)**.

Our school captains led a RRS Award pupil group in the removal of single use plastics in the Dining Hall, liaising with our school lunch provider company to find suitable alternatives. Staff sessions called for all staff to review existing courses and identify appropriate areas to incorporate the rights of the child within lessons and within practice. The team now plan to incorporate work on Rights within the Family Learning Programme, to further develop our **Uniform Bank** in partnership with **INEOS**, and to highlight our commitment in newsletters and House Inserts. All of this work is being successfully initiated and led by pupils and staff.

Our **Mentors in Violence Prevention** initiative increased from 12 to 30 senior pupil mentors, with students teaching 8 sessions to all S1 and S2 pupils. Follow-up lessons in PSE, and the introduction of a 'Safe Space' ensured all pupils were clear about their responsibilities towards others.



Our **LGBT pupil group**, created a range of resource and presented a roadshow across our cluster primary schools.

Staff have a strong commitment to our school vision, values and aims. Our approach to the leadership of change **empowers staff work collaboratively** and to be creative and ambitious for our school community. All staff are involved in at least one school improvement team, alongside identified faculty and subject leadership opportunities.

We continue to enjoy the support of a **dedicated Parent Council** who are involved in all key decisions and improvements. A good example of this for session 2018-2019 was their contribution to having Elected Members understand the implications of the removal of form time and their direct involvement in our Mental Health strategy.

# Our improvement priorities for next session are to:

School Improvement Priorities

Priority 1

- Raising Attainment & Learning and Teaching:** By June 2020, almost all staff use targeted, evidence based, interventions for individuals and groups of learners to support equity in attainment and achievement for all.

Priority 2

- Health and Wellbeing:** Implementation of GHS Mental Health Strategy, by November 2019, ensures almost all learners, staff and parents/carers have an understanding of what constitutes good mental health and an awareness of available supports.

Priority 3

- Vision, Values and Aims:** By June 2020, Graeme High School will achieve Gold Level Rights Respecting Schools Award, with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) at the heart of our ethos and curriculum.

Priority 4

- Skills:** By June 2020, almost all learners are able to confidently articulate the skills they are developing within classrooms and wider achievement opportunities.

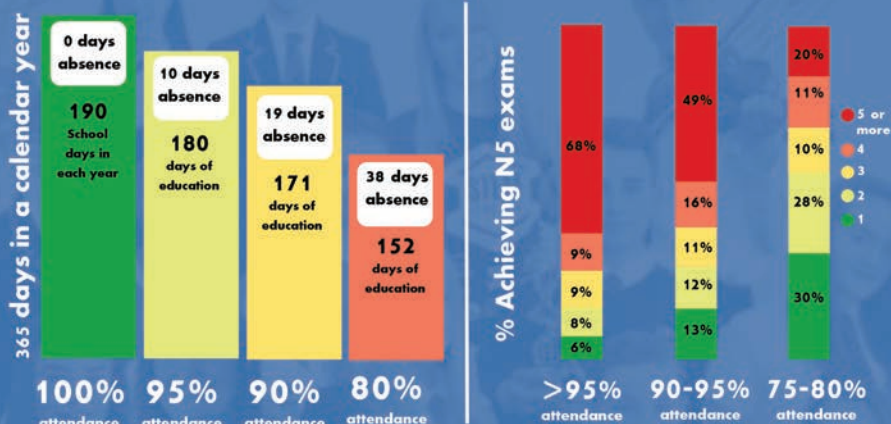
Quality indicators help schools to judge what is good and what needs to be improved. The following areas are reported to Scottish Government by Her Majesty's Inspectors in Education. Here is how we judge Graeme High School against new national standards:

|                                                |                                     |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1.3 Leadership of change                       | Very good with aspects of excellent |
| 1.5 Management of Resource to Promote Equality | Very good                           |
| 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment          | Good with aspects of very good      |
| 3.1 Improving wellbeing equality and inclusion | Good                                |
| 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement         | Good with aspects of very good      |

# Attend Today- Aspire, Attain, Achieve Tomorrow

## Good attendance in Graeme high school means...

... being in school every day, ready to learn.



190 school days in a calendar year

175 days not at school for shopping, holidays and appointments

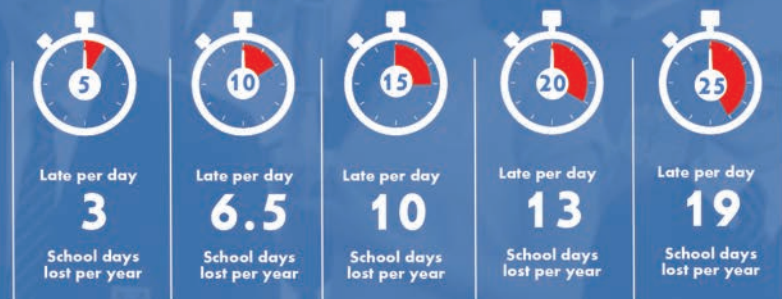
**DID YOU KNOW?**  
A two week holiday in term time means that the highest attendance you can achieve is 84.7%

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
If you are 15 minutes late each day you will have missed 2 full weeks of school in one year.

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
68% of good attendees achieve 5 national 5 exams. Only 20% of poor attendees achieve 5.

## Good time keeping in Graeme High School means...

... being in school, on time, every day, ready to learn.



# Graeme High School

● Aspire

● Attain

● Achieve

| Literacy and Numeracy end of S4 | Year | % Level 4 | % Level 5 |
|---------------------------------|------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Graeme High School</b>       | 2017 | 94        | 68        |
| Comparator                      | 2017 | 87        | 54        |
| Falkirk                         | 2017 | 92        | 55        |
| <b>Graeme High School</b>       | 2018 | 94        | 75        |
| Comparator                      | 2018 | 82        | 47        |
| Falkirk                         | 2018 | 91        | 58        |
| <b>Graeme High School</b>       | 2019 | 93        | 70        |
| Comparator                      | 2019 | 81        | 52        |
| Falkirk                         | 2019 | 93        | 65        |

| By the end of S4          |      | 5+ Level 4 | 5+ Level 5 |
|---------------------------|------|------------|------------|
| <b>Graeme High School</b> | 2017 | 83         | 42         |
| Comparator                | 2017 | 82         | 47         |
| Falkirk                   | 2017 | 81         | 38         |
| <b>Graeme High School</b> | 2018 | 93         | 53         |
| Comparator                | 2018 | 78         | 45         |
| Falkirk                   | 2018 | 86         | 49         |
| <b>Graeme High School</b> | 2019 | 88         | 51         |
| Comparator                | 2019 | 74         | 49         |
| Falkirk                   | 2019 | 79         | 38         |

| By the end of S6          |      | 3+ Level 6 | 5+ Level 6 |
|---------------------------|------|------------|------------|
| <b>Graeme High School</b> | 2017 | 48         | 30         |
| Comparator                | 2017 | 44         | 31         |
| Falkirk                   | 2017 | 45         | 31         |
| <b>Graeme High School</b> | 2018 | 43         | 32         |
| Comparator                | 2018 | 49         | 34         |
| Falkirk                   | 2018 | 45         | 31         |
| <b>Graeme High School</b> | 2019 | 53         | 42         |
| Comparator                | 2019 | 52         | 37         |
| Falkirk                   | 2019 | 45         | 30         |

| SIMD1-2 S6 based on S6 roll |      | 3+ Level 6 | 5+ Level 6 |
|-----------------------------|------|------------|------------|
| <b>Graeme High School</b>   | 2017 | 54         | 31         |
| Comparator                  | 2017 | 49         | 37         |
| Falkirk                     | 2017 | 43         | 21         |
| <b>Graeme High School</b>   | 2018 | 67         | 47         |
| Comparator                  | 2018 | 71         | 39         |
| Falkirk                     | 2018 | 62         | 36         |
| <b>Graeme High School</b>   | 2019 | 64         | 43         |
| Comparator                  | 2019 | 65         | 44         |
| Falkirk                     | 2019 | 60         | 36         |

*Level 4 - National 4 or equivalent    Level 5 - National 5 or equivalent    Level 6 - Higher or equivalent    SIMD - Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation - 1 is most deprived and 10 least deprived communities. Scottish Government aim is to reduce the attainment gap between SIMD 1 and 10.*

## READER'S EVALUATION

### Annual Report 2018 – 2019

It would be very helpful if you could take a little time to answer the questions below. This will help us to judge how useful the Report is and decide how it might be improved upon next year. Thank you in anticipation of your help.

|   |                                                                                                          | Yes | No |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| 1 | Does the Report give you helpful information generally?                                                  |     |    |
| 2 | Is it laid out in an attractive and engaging way?                                                        |     |    |
| 3 | Is it - easy to read?<br>- written in language that you can understand?                                  |     |    |
| 4 | Is the statistical information - easy to understand?<br>- helpful to you?                                |     |    |
| 5 | Is there any information which you feel we should include in next year's Report?<br>Please give details: |     |    |



Please return survey form to:

Headteacher, Graeme High School,  
Callendar Road, Falkirk

**Free  
School  
Meals**



A cartoon chef with a smiling face, wearing a white hat and apron, is cooking. He is holding a large round pan with both hands, and a red tomato is in the center of the pan. He is also holding a small green bottle of oil or sauce in his right hand.

[www.falkirk.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals)

**School  
Clothing  
Grants**



A blue school jacket with a crest on the left chest, hanging on a hanger. The jacket has a white shirt and a green tie underneath.

[www.falkirk.gov.uk/schoolgrants](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/schoolgrants)



Graeme High School  
Callendar Road · Falkirk · FK1 1SY  
Telephone: 01324 622576 · Fax: 01324 508681  
[www.graemehigh.com](http://www.graemehigh.com)  
Follow us on Twitter @GHSfalkirk  
Parent Council email: [parentcouncil@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:parentcouncil@falkirk.gov.uk)