Summarised inspection findings

Portobello High School

The City of Edinburgh Council

SEED No: 5533538

28 June 2017

School Name   **Portobello High School**

Council: **City of Edinburgh Council**

SEED number: **5533538**

Roll (Sep 2016):   **1,323**

Attendance in 2014/15 of 91 per cent is in line with the national average of 92 per cent.

In February 2016 7 per cent of pupils were registered for free school meals, lower than the national average of 14 per cent.

In September 2015 10-<15 per cent of the pupils lived in the 20 per cent most deprived data zones in Scotland[1].

In September 2015 10–<20 per cent of the pupils were from minority ethnic groups

In September 2016 the school reported that 31 per cent of pupils had additional support needs

The school is located in a 'large urban area'[2].

The move from the old school building to the current new building took place in October 2016. The headteacher has been in post since November 2015. Two of the four deputes have been in post for less than one year.

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[1] Data is based on SIMD 2012. Pupils whose address cannot be matched to an SIMD data zone have not been included in the calculation

[2] Location is grouped into eight categories based on the size of the population the school is in. These categories are:
- Large urban areas (population >125K)
- Other urban (population >10K)
- Accessible small town (population 3-10K but within 30 minutes of 10K)
- Remote small town (population 3-10K and more than 30 minutes from 10K)
- Very remote small town (population 3-10K and more than 60 minutes from 10K)
- Accessible rural (population <3K but within 30 minutes of 10K)
- Remote rural (population <3K and more than 30 minutes from 10K)
- Very remote rural (population <3K and more than 60 minutes from 10K)

1.3 LEADERSHIP OF CHANGE	**satisfactory**

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- *Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community*
- *Strategic planning for continuous improvement*
- *Implementing improvement and change.*

- Since taking up post in November 2015, the headteacher has provided clear leadership during a period of considerable change. This has included changes to staffing at all levels within the school. The headteacher has overseen the many aspects involved in the move to a new school building. She has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. The headteacher has demonstrated an ability to take difficult decisions and shows a strong commitment to school improvement. Depute headteachers bring a wide range of skills and experience to the senior leadership team and provide the headteacher with a strong level of support. After a significant period of change in the senior leadership team, there is now a much greater level of stability. The pace of change and improvement has been affected by the transition into the new school building. There is now scope to move forward with greater pace and confidence.

- The headteacher has enhanced the capacity for leadership in the school by creating an extended leadership team (ELT). Reflective discussion on the curriculum, as part of the school's improvement planning, is helping to shape future curricular structures. The ELT has the potential to enable the sharing of good practice more effectively and to build on existing areas of very positive practice. It will be important for all members of the ELT to work together and take a shared and consistent responsibility for making a strategic contribution to the leadership and direction of school improvements. A planned review of working groups will continue to provide staff across the school with further opportunities to develop as leaders.

- In January 2016, under the leadership of the (then) newly appointed headteacher, pupils, parents and staff began the review of the vision and values of the school. This work continued as they prepared to move to the new school building. As part of this process, staff were given valuable opportunities to reflect on what was working well and to suggest what needed to change. Young people were involved through pupil council, focus groups and learning conferences. However, young people do not always feel a sufficient sense of ownership of both vision and values with many lacking knowledge or awareness of them. Plans are in place to ensure that recently created posters and charts outlining vision and values are displayed more prominently and to ensure that the vision and values guide practice.

- There is scope to improve how the developed vision and values underpin actual practice; for example, by improving the quality of respectful relationships across the school (a sizeable minority of young people feel that staff do not always treat them

fairly and respectfully). There is scope, too, to improve levels of morale and trust across the school community. Around a third of staff responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire do not feel that they are a valued part of the school community. All staff now need to work together more effectively to improve school ethos and the quality of learners' experiences.

- One of the outcomes of a staff self-evaluation exercise in January 2016 was an agreed need to enhance the provision of key adult group time. As a result, a daily programme of 20 minutes duration has been implemented. This provides opportunities for staff to check attendance and punctuality. As a result, there have been important improvements in young people's attendance and punctuality. The time also provides scope for tracking and monitoring more generally, including young people's wellbeing. Young people are not consistently positive about their experiences at key adult group time. In too many classes, the 20 minute slot of time is not yet being used sufficiently effectively .

- Senior staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the school's very mixed social, economic and cultural context. At staff meetings, senior leaders have made staff aware of how the school's attainment results are affected by circumstances (SIMD profile analysis). As a result, staff are able to discuss how the available data should inform their own improvement priorities. Staff and pupils work well together as part of the 1 in 5 working group which aims to raise awareness of, and tackle, aspects of prejudice and discrimination related to poverty.

- Senior staff acknowledge that there is a need to continue to improve the consistency of high expectations of staff across the school. There has been no whole school strategic focus on learning and teaching for some time. Approaches to monitoring the quality of lessons have varied over recent years. Currently, there is no shared, clear expectation regarding the role of all staff in monitoring the quality of young people's learning. As a result, the quality of learners' experiences varies too much across, and sometimes within, subject areas. Staff are not yet sufficiently confident about assessment in the broad general education (BGE) and approaches towards using assessment as part of learning are not consistently of a high enough quality. Approaches to promoting positive behavior and a robust emphasis on expecting high standards from young people more generally are not yet consistent. A paper on the principles of good learning and teaching has been prepared and is about to be shared with all staff.

- The school improvement plan for 2016/17 contains three relevant, overarching key improvement priorities (knowing our school community, reviewing our curriculum, supporting individuals). These are developed into seven secondary drivers. Although positive progress is being made in implementing most of these drivers, it will be important to carefully monitor the impact of these and how well they benefit all learners. The important key features of effective learning and teaching need to be fully reflected in the secondary drivers.

- Staff are aware of the school's key strengths and areas for improvement as outlined in the school improvement plan. Staff are not consistently confident that they are sufficiently involved in the school's improvement work based on ongoing

- self-evaluation activities. Clearer expectations for approaches to self-evaluation need to be developed shared and then implemented consistently across the school.

- Staff have not yet protected sufficient time through working time agreements to fully encourage and enable professional dialogue, collegiate learning and self-evaluation. There is considerable scope for staff to work together more effectively to maximise the time available for professional dialogue and other collegiate activities.

- A recent staff professional learning day provided the opportunity for all staff to discuss and answer the question, *How well do we know our school?* This has helped to provide all staff with a better understanding about strengths and areas for improvement in attainment. An emphasis has been given to helping staff understand and analyse appropriate data related to the attainment gap between those living in disadvantage and their peers. A recent survey of the views of parents, staff and learners has been carried out. This has the capacity to provide important evidence, based on reflection, and to provide appropriate direction to future priorities for improvement.

- Senior leaders are now engaging positively with the local college and collaborative working has improved as a result. College senior staff describe improved levels of involvement from the school and improved planning for joint working and development of curriculum opportunities. The number of young people progressing to college from the school has increased slightly in the last year.

- Senior leaders work increasingly effectively with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) staff to plan and target the delivery of career advice and guidance. The School Partnership Agreement is reviewed regularly to ensure that targets are met. However, to date, the school has not yet taken up the offer from SDS, as part of the agreement to deliver professional learning to staff, to raise awareness of key aspects of developing skills for employability.

- Senior school staff are aware of the need to support young people facing particular challenges in their lives and positive relationships with partners are helping meet these. Partners, including, Fairbridge, Police Scotland and Community Renewal are supporting young people to engage better with their learning. Programmes are planned and some are delivered in conjunction with school staff. However, there are only a few examples of where evaluation findings are shared. Partners recognise that this is not consistent and there is further scope to jointly evaluate shared outcomes for continuous improvement.

2.3 LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT	**satisfactory**

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Learning and engagement*
- *Quality of teaching*
- *Effective use of assessment*
- *Planning, tracking and monitoring.*

Learning and engagement
- In most classes, there are positive relationships between young people and teachers, and most young people in a focus group spoke positively about classroom relationships. However, in too many lessons observed, challenging behaviour shown by a few young people was impacting negatively on the learning of others. Staff should continue to work together to develop a shared understanding of how to best promote positive behaviour. This will enable them to plan and implement appropriate and consistent strategies which encourage good behaviour and manage challenging behaviour more successfully. Teachers should also set higher expectations of the presentation of learners' work. The school's values of respect and community are not yet evident consistently throughout the school.

- Although the majority of young people are engaged in their learning and eager to do well, a few appear to be passive and lack motivation in their learning. In the best practice, young people are able to exercise choice in their learning. However, this practice is not consistent across the school. There is scope to match learners' experiences more effectively to their needs and interests and increase levels of challenge in most classes. Most learners would benefit from additional opportunities to enable them to learn more independently and collaboratively.

- The majority of young people recognise and value being able to speak to teachers about their learning and how they can achieve success. They do not always understand the purpose of their learning and are not able to identify their next steps clearly. Teachers should continue to develop young people's understanding of their progress. This should include development of an understanding of the levels at which they are working in the BGE.

- In the pre-inspection questionnaire, less than half of young people who responded think the school listens to their views and takes them into account. Young people in a focus group show limited understanding about children's rights. As the new school develops, teachers should continue to involve young people in discussions about the life and work of the school and involve them in shaping school improvement.

Quality of teaching
- The school needs to continue to take forward planned improvements in relation to learning and teaching. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory, although at

times it is weak. Whilst the majority of teachers use a range of strategies to motivate and engage young people, teaching in a few classes would benefit from increased pace, stimulus and variety. Teachers should ensure that the purpose of learning meets the needs of all learners and helps them to understand their work more effectively. There is scope to develop teachers' practice in questioning, enabling all learners to develop higher-order thinking skills.

- Most teachers are beginning to use new digital technologies with some success to enhance young people's learning. Increasingly, learners are using digital technologies to save and collate their work, communicate with teachers, and undertake revision and research. Young people speak positively about the increased use of tablet computers in classes. Through the work of the Digital Literacy group, teachers should continue to explore the use of digital technologies, to contribute further to more creative and engaging learning and teaching. Whilst teachers use different types of feedback to support learners, they are in the early stages of using electronic 'written' feedback. Learners would benefit from receiving written feedback more regularly to help them in their learning.

Effective use of assessment
- The school recognises it needs to review and develop its approaches to assessment and the moderation of standards. A range of assessment strategies are used across the school, including self and peer-assessment and some linked to the wellbeing indicators. However, most teachers mainly use assessments on the completion of tasks for summative purposes. Although a few teachers are using assessment feedback well to inform and support the next steps in young people's learning, teachers in a few subject areas need to ensure that assessments are appropriate and provide meaningful information on pupils progress. Staff expertise linked to their involvement in SQA procedures is having a positive impact on the reliability of assessment in the senior phase.

- In the pre-inspection questionnaire, the majority of parents who responded agreed that they receive helpful information about their child's progress. This is in the form of informal feedback and reports. A majority of parents say they receive this information at the right time. In school reports, young people's progress is supported by the identification of curricular targets.

- The majority of teachers are in the early stages of considering assessment as a key part of learning and teaching when planning and developing the BGE. A few subject areas demonstrate strong practice through closer alignment between learning, teaching, and assessment

- In a few faculties, teachers are developing shared expectations for standards to be achieved and are engaging in some moderation activities. The school should now explore ways of identifying and sharing good practice more effectively to enable all staff to learn well from one another. All staff need to ensure that data being collected on young people's progress within the BGE is reliable and robust, ensuring appropriate challenge and support for learners. This requires staff to have a clear and shared understanding about achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence level.

Planning, tracking and monitoring

- A new school tracking and monitoring system has been developed recently. Information, including primary school data, standardised test results, SIMD data, senior phase attainment, prelim exam results and information on the progress of young people in vulnerable groups, is being gathered now to be used more systematically in planning. The school needs to use this system to good effect to track and monitor the progress of all young people more rigorously. This data will help staff to plan and target appropriate interventions, as well as improve progression in young people's learning between the BGE and the senior phase, and close the attainment gap.

- Currently, a range of approaches is being used across curricular areas to track and monitor learners' progress in the BGE. However, some of these approaches lack rigour and are at an early stage of development. The school should now build on the approaches which are well developed to ensure that all learners are making sufficient progress in their learning.

2.2 CURRICULUM: Theme 3, Learning Pathways

- Across S1 and S2 the school is providing opportunities for young people to experience learning in all curricular areas. Young people in S2 have choice in their learning by selecting from a wide range of enrichment courses. At the end of S2, young people make choices for specialisation. The school needs to ensure all young people experience their entitlement to a broad general education in S3. The school should review the transition from the BGE to the senior phase against national guidance. This will support senior leaders to ensure there are appropriate pathways for all learners through the BGE and into the senior phase.

- Recent improvements to course choice information for young people have led to an increased range of pathways which are promoted well, and with parity of esteem. The senior phase curriculum includes a range of opportunities for learners to undertake courses leading to qualifications in both college and university. The promotion and uptake of Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs), is at an early stage with low numbers of young people involved in the current year. Plans are in place to broaden the range of FAs available in the senior phase curriculum and introduce a wider range of vocational options.

- Young people across the school benefit from work experience opportunities. These help to support the development of skills for employability and raise awareness of the world of work. However, there is insufficient linkage between these work experience opportunities and pupils' wider learning. This is currently limiting the impact of work experience on the development of skills for learning, life and work.

- The implementation of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) is at a very early stage and therefore strategies for the development of employability skills is under developed across the school. Plans are in place for the introduction of a school-based DYW Improvement Group. This will help provide clarity and direction for activities within the school to support the development of skills for employability and further increase the understanding of the world of work for all young people.

- Senior leaders recognise that implementation of the Career Education Standard (CES), and the Work Placement Standard is at a very early stage, and currently limited to awareness amongst the senior team. These standards have not yet been promoted to staff and there is no clear strategy in place in relation to how this will be achieved. It is therefore unclear whether the requirements within the CES are being delivered to pupils.

- In S5 and S6 there is no continuing experience of religious and moral education (RME). Although young people can choose to progress to National Qualifications in religious, moral and philosophical studies (RMPS) the current arrangements do not meet statutory requirements. The school should consider how it can celebrate the shared values of the diverse school community through its religious observance (RO) policy and involve pupils in planning RO events.

- Young people are provided with a range of opportunities to enhance their learning through the use of digital technology. This includes access to an individual tablet

device for all young people from S3-S6. The use of digital devices is supporting learning in almost all curricular areas. There is scope to improve the consistency of this approach across the school to ensure learners are developing clear, well defined, progressive digital skills as they move through the phases of their education.

- All young people experience a range of planned interdisciplinary learning (IDL) opportunities in S1 and S2. These have literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing as cross-cutting themes. The IDL project "Porty does Strictly" involves young people throughout the school who organise, promote and report on the event. This also involves staff, parents and the wider community. Young people are not yet aware of the skills they are developing and how these can be applied in new and unfamiliar contexts such as the IDL experiences.

- **Literacy**: The school offers a number of initiatives, including the S1 Literacy Project, which provides a successful introduction to these key life skills. Evaluation by the cross-curricular Literacy Working Group confirms that learners value this and recognise the transferability of skills across a number of curricular areas. The work of staff, leading at a local level in sharing standards, provides a solid foundation to take forward the planning and assessment of literacy skills. This will both support skills progression and provide a helpful context for developing a consistent approach to sharing standards. The school is well -placed to develop this more coherent approach while ensuring that all staff take a greater responsibility for young people's progress in literacy.

- **Numeracy:** Staff have participated in learning to raise awareness of numeracy standards. The school needs to create a progressive skills framework for the development of numeracy in consultation with appropriate curricular areas. This will help to create a consistent approach to the development of young people's numeracy skills across the curriculum.

- **Health and wellbeing (HWB)**: The school is at the early stages of developing HWB across the curriculum. The HWB group has plans to extend this further. The school is not yet assessing how well young people are progressing in HWB out with physical education (PE) and food and textile technology (FTT). Young people should have opportunities to reflect on their progress and development in health and wellbeing and set next steps.

- Overall, staff should continue with their plans to develop the curriculum and how it will meet the needs and aspirations of all young people in Portobello High School. Planning should be undertaken in consultation with all stakeholders to inform ongoing development of learning pathways through S1-S6.

2.7 PARTNERSHIPS: Theme 3, Impact on learners and families – Parental Engagement

- Newsletters, the school website and social media help keep parents informed of the life and work of the school. Senior leaders are taking positive steps to make information more accessible and up-to-date. Parents have been consulted on a range of issues and have recently taken part in a survey seeking their views. Most parents are positive about their relationship with the school and feel staff treat their child fairly and with respect.

- The school needs to share its vision, values and aims more effectively so that they are understood by all parents. Staff should continue to engage parents more fully in the life of the school and their child's learning. Most parents report a lack of opportunities to engage in activities where they can learn together with their child. Staff should develop these opportunities and provide guidance to parents on how they can support their child's learning at home.

- The school has an active Parent Council (PC). Most parents feel they are kept informed about the work of the PC. This is done through email and social media. Two way communications between the PC and the wider parent body could be further improved. The PC should continue with its plan to engage more parents in the work of the council and ensure that it is representative of all parents and carers in the school.

2.1: SAFEGUARDING

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and where appropriate, young people. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority

3.1 ENSURING WELLBEING, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION	**satisfactory**

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Wellbeing*
- *Fulfilment of statutory duties*
- *Inclusion and equality.*

- Senior leaders have a shared understanding of the central role wellbeing has in the life and work of the school. It is visible in the school vision and values statements and prioritised in school improvement planning. This understanding is not yet fully shared by all staff and young people across the school community. There is a need to increase staff understanding of their responsibility for supporting the wellbeing of all young people. Although staff are aware of the *Getting it Right for Every Child* (GIRFEC) approach, the wellbeing indicators and children's rights, they are at the early stages of using these to underpin their work and improve outcomes for young people. Young people could be supported more to enable them to better understand the relationship between wellbeing and their ability to achieve success.

- A key priority in the recent move to the new Portobello High School building has been to develop a strong school community with shared values and expectations. This culture has not yet been fully established. Interactions across the school and in social areas at interval and lunchtime are mainly positive. Most young people benefit from positive relationships with staff and with each other. A few young people demonstrate a lack of respect for each other, staff and the learning environment. This is having a negative impact on the quality of young people's learning experiences. The school is currently revising its approaches to promoting positive behaviour and restorative approaches. This is at the early stages and there is currently a lack of consistency across the school in how staff are managing young people who display challenging behaviour. Reviewing approaches to pedagogy to ensure young people are more engaged in their learning and that learning meets their needs would help to address this Young people with identified additional support needs and who have behavioural issues would benefit from individualised behavioural support plans being developed and shared with key staff. These plans should provide staff and the young people with strategies to support improvements in behaviour.

- Young people's health and wellbeing is improving as a result of the range of planned opportunities for learning. They have a sound understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and physical activity through their learning in physical education and food and textile technology and through the S3 'Health Day'. Young people are developing strategies to support positive mental and emotional wellbeing through aspects of the personal and social education (PSE) programme. Pupil support

leaders have rightly identified the need to further develop the PSE programme to ensure it takes full account of the local context and better meets the needs of young people. Young people's learning is supported well by strong community partnerships. Health and wellbeing programmes are targeted to young people's needs, for example, building young people's capacity to take responsible decisions and minimise risk taking or supporting achievements and self-esteem. There are a few opportunities for young people in the senior school to take on responsibilities. For example, leading and sharing their learning in health and wellbeing with their peers, as mentors in Mentors in Violence Prevention, as 'Alcolols' in the alcohol awareness programme and through the '1 in 5' project. They act as positive role models to younger learners. They support young people to discuss issues in an open and honest way and help them to develop responsible attitudes.

- While many young people can reflect on their learning and progress in health and wellbeing when asked, there is significant scope to ensure that opportunities for reflection and personal support are better planned and more regular for all learners. The wellbeing indicators should be used more consistently to discuss and assess health and wellbeing with young people or demonstrate improved outcomes for them. Young people would also benefit from being supported to see the connections between different aspects of their learning in health and wellbeing. There is a need for staff to track and monitor health and wellbeing outcomes and gain a better understanding of how the curriculum and targeted programmes are impacting on young people.

- Most young people feel that there are members of staff who know them well and who they can go to with any concerns. Pupil support leaders provide pastoral support to individuals and teach PSE to young people from S1 to S4, for whom they have responsibility, enabling them to build positive relationships with young people. The key adult initiative demonstrates staff's understanding of the need to ensure all young people are known well and supported to achieve success. While key adult time each morning is having a positive impact on relationships, attendance and time keeping, it has not yet developed to the extent that it is providing universal support for all young people. A few young people did not feel confident in approaching their pupil support leader or key adult with concerns and did not feel they were known well to them. As planned, the school should continue to develop the capacity of staff to fulfil their role as key adults. At present, young people have limited opportunities during this time to discuss their wellbeing, learning, and achievements and set appropriate next steps. There is a lack of clarity for some young people about the roles of key adults and pupil support leaders.

- A few young people have a strong voice in decisions which affect them which is making them feel included and respected. Young people across the school would benefit from more opportunities to contribute their views and have a voice in aspects of school life that affect them. A minority of young people who responded to pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that the school listens to their views and takes them into account.

- The school has identified a significant number of young people requiring additional support with their learning. The new additional support needs (ASN) database has

increased staff's awareness and understanding of individual learning needs. This is resulting in young people feeling better supported in classes and appropriate strategies being employed to support their learning. For example, staff reported increased confidence in supporting young people with dyslexia and English as an additional language. The next step is to monitor how consistently these strategies are being used by staff to support learners across all classes.

- There are a number of targeted interventions in place that are resulting in young people feeling safe, cared for and nurtured. For example, the peers group, delivered in partnership with the NHS and "Emotion Talks", has led to young people with social and communication difficulties having increased confidence and resilience in establishing friendships. There is evidence of young people now attending school and on track to achieve National Qualifications as a result of new goal setting work.

- Young people in the learning base benefit from targeted interventions in literacy, numeracy and emotional wellbeing. Support for learning staff are proactive in developing interventions to support young people with identified literacy difficulties. A useful next step is to monitor the impact of this. In the BGE, working in partnership with staff, support for learning teachers have ensured equity of opportunity for young people to access assessments and make progress in their learning. Young people and staff talked positively about improvements made to Additional Assessment Arrangements (AAAs). This has led to young people feeling well supported and confident when sitting examinations. Pupil support assistants receive appropriate training to enable them to provide targeted support in nurture and paired reading. This is supporting young people to make progress in targets.

- House teams closely monitor and review the progress of learners requiring more targeted support. These young people benefit from timely interventions to support their learning and wellbeing. Effective partnership working with key agencies has supported positive outcomes for identified young people. These include improved attendance, social inclusion, less repeat exclusions, improved behaviour and securing a positive destination. The current developments to create the 'Space' for nurture work has the potential to support better outcomes for young people experiencing attachment difficulties and anxiety.

- Pupil support leaders have a working knowledge of statutory requirements and codes of practice. A child's/young person's plan is in place when required. There is evidence of a solution focused approach to the Young People's Planning Meetings (YPPMs). Outcomes are identified in agreement with partners in the child's plan, the voice of the parent and young person is heard and informs planned interventions. A useful next step is to include specific attainment outcomes to support learning and progress. As planned, the wellbeing indicators should be used more consistently across all YPPMs to assess individual needs and plan appropriate interventions.

- Young people have a better understanding of issues of equality such as ageism, gender and homophobia through learning in religious and moral education. This is supporting them to celebrate difference and recognise the importance of equality and respect. Emerging opportunities for young people to explore issues of equality and diversity such as the pupil equalities group and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award girls

group initiative are supporting young people to feel valued and included. Young people would benefit from increased opportunities to develop their understanding of equality, diversity and tackling discrimination and lead groups or activities to promote or support this work.

3.2 RAISING ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT	good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- *Attainment in literacy and numeracy*
- *Attainment over time*
- *Overall quality of learners' achievement*
- *Equity for all learners.*

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

BGE
- The school provided the following data: In 2016, by the end of S3 most young people achieved third curriculum level in listening and talking, reading and writing. Almost all achieved third curriculum level in numeracy. Further work on moderation is needed to ensure the information is reliable.

Senior phase
Attainment of young people in literacy by the time of leaving school:
- Almost all young people attain literacy at SCQF level 4 or better by the time they leave school and most attain literacy at SCQF level 5 or better. The school has performed in line with the virtual comparator (VC) over most of the past 5 years and performance was significantly higher than the VC at SCQF level 4 or better in 2016 (though not as a course). The percentage of leavers attaining SCQF level 6 in literacy shows an overall improving trend and is line with the VC.

Attainment of young people in numeracy by the time of leaving school:
- In 2016 almost all young people leaving school attained SCQF level 4 or better in numeracy. Most attained at SCQF level 4 or better as part of a course award. Whilst there are improvements in the percentage attaining at SCQF level 5 or better, the percentage attaining as part of a course has fallen in the latest year and is significantly lower than the VC. The percentage of leavers attaining at SCQF level 6 has fallen in the latest year and is significantly lower than the VC. More young people should be achieving a course award at SCQF level 5 to provide progression to SCQF level 6.

Those leaving at the end of S4:
- The percentage of young people attaining **literacy** at SCQF levels 3 or better, 4 or better, and 5 or better has improved since 2013/14 and is overall in line with the VC.

- The percentage of young people attaining **numeracy** at SCQF levels 3 or better, 4 or better and 5 or better has not shown consistent improvement over the past three years. Performance is significantly lower than the VC at SCQF level 3 or better and SCQF level 4 or better as a course.

Those leaving at the end of S5:
- The percentage of young people attaining **literacy** at SCQF level 5 or better has improved since 2013/14. Performance was significantly higher than the VC at SCQF level 5 or better (though not as part of a course award) in 2014/15. The percentage of young people attaining **numeracy** at SCQF level 5 or better has improved in the latest year (although not as part of a course award).

As young people move through the school from S4 to S6:
- **In S4**, the percentage of young people attaining **literacy** at SCQF levels 4 or better (as a unit) and 5 or better is significantly higher than the VC. **By S5**, the percentage attaining literacy at SCQF level 5 or better or SCQF level 6 is significantly higher than the VC. **By S6**, the percentage attaining at SCQF level 5 or better and SCQF level 6 is showing an improving trend and is significantly higher than the VC in the latest year (although not as part of a course at SCQF level 5).
- **In S4**, the percentage of young people attaining **numeracy** at SCQF levels 4 or better is in line with the VC in the past two years. The percentage attaining at SCQF level 5 or better as a unit award is significantly higher than the VC but significantly lower than the VC as a course award. **By S5 and by S6**, the percentage of young people attaining numeracy as part of a course at SCQF level 5 or better and SCQF level 6 is in line with the VC in the past two years.

Attainment over time
- The school has developed, and very recently put in place, a very useful tracking and monitoring system across year groups. This will allow staff to analyse data on progress of individuals along with a range of other factors which may be influencing their progress and attainment. The system has been designed to provide staff with information on, for example, young people's attendance, standardised test scores, additional support needs, target and working grades in subjects and effort, behaviour and homework. As this system comes into regular use by all staff, it will be important that there is a shared understanding of the need for reliable assessment information and how to make best use of the data to secure improved outcomes for all young people. The school is well placed to now move from the technical implementation of the system to educational use of the system.

BGE
- Currently there is no available data for attainment over time across all curriculum areas The new tracking tool will support the gathering of a wide range of useful information. It is expected that teachers will input data about achievement of a curriculum level. It will be important that the assessment evidence used to provide the data is reliable and valid. Curriculum leaders will have an important role to play in working together to benchmark and agree approaches to describing progress of learners in Portobello HS.

Senior phase
- 56% of young people in Portobello HS have been presented for 8 qualifications in S4 in the past two years, compared to national figures of 21% in 2015 and 16% in 2016. In 2016, 54% of young people in S4 passed 8 qualifications at SCQF level 4 and 15% at SCQF level 5, achieving at grade C or better. Early presentation in maths up

to 2013/14 is affecting some of the available figures.

- The average complementary tariff score of all **leavers** has improved from being significantly lower than the VC between 2013 and 2015 (may have been affected by early presentation in maths) to being in line with the VC in 2016. The average complementary tariff score of the lowest attaining 20% of leavers and highest attaining 20% of leavers is overall in line with the VC. The average complementary tariff score of the middle attaining 60% of leavers has been significantly lower than the VC over the past 4 years.
- **In S4**, complementary tariff scores are overall in line with the VC. There have been steady improvements over the past five years in the average complementary tariff scores of the middle attaining 60%. The average complementary tariff scores for the lowest attaining 20% and highest attaining 20% are showing an overall improvement over the 5 year period.
- **By S5**, complementary tariff scores are overall in line with the VC. The lowest attaining 20% and middle attaining 60% are showing improvements in the past three years. The complementary tariff scores of the highest attaining 20% fell slightly between 2015 and 2016.
- **By S6**, complementary tariff scores are overall in line with the VC. Five year trends are positive (although not consistently improving).

Breadth and Depth
- **At S4**, the percentage of young people attaining 1 or more to 6 or more courses at SCQF level 3 or better has remained steady over the past 5 years and is significantly higher than the VC for 6 or more courses in the latest year. The percentage of young people attaining 1 or more to 4 or more courses at SCQF level 4 or better is in line with the VC over the past 3 years and significantly higher than the VC for 5 or more or 6 or more courses in 2014 and 2015. The percentage of young people attaining at SCQF level 5C or better is overall in line with the VC. There have been steady improvements in the percentage attaining 3 or more, 4 or more and 5 or more courses at this level over the past 5 years.
- **By S5**, attainment at SCQF level 5 at grade C or better and SCQF level 6 at grade C or better is in line with the VC. Five year trends are positive.
- **By S6**, the percentage attaining at SCQF level 5 at grade C or better and 6 at grade C or better is in line with the VC for 1 or more to 6 or more over the past 3 years. .

Overall quality of learners' achievement
- There are a wide range of out of class activities supported by teachers and wider partners. Targeted sports activities to attract more girls have increased uptake. Active Schools participation numbers have increased. Positive links with the community sports hub have enhanced the sport learning offer. Young people are competing at local, national and international level in sports such as basketball, badminton and football. The annual Sports Personality Award and associated video capturing achievements are helping recognise and celebrate achievements across a range of sporting activities. There are increased opportunities for training and leadership pathways, as a result of the schools registration as a training centre.

- There are a few young people in the senior stages taking on leadership roles in aspects of school life. A few young people are coaching younger pupils in sports

activities. Through these roles they are developing important skills in leadership, communication and self-confidence.

- Young people involved in the 1 in 5 working group use their interests and personal stories to raise awareness of poverty and inequality across the school. The introduction of an Inclusion Fund is helping address barriers to participation in excursions. The school now need to introduce measures to demonstrate the impact of the fund.

- Young people involved in the Debating Team reached the semi-finals of an English-speaking competition. The school consumer group very recently won the Scottish Young Consumer of the Year Award. Young people are rightly proud of these achievements, which are recognised across the school.

- Young people across all years are developing skills and attributes through a range of activities. For example, a few S4 pupils are working towards an SCQF level 4 Employability Award through the *Jobs, Education and Training Academy* (JET). They have developed skills for learning, life and work through the education aspect of the training and the work experience element. They have increased self-confidence, motivation and improved timekeeping. Feedback from work placement employers is shared with pupils and guidance staff. Pathways for older pupils include college placement opportunities as part of the JETS Plus programme. However, young people would benefit from more opportunities to reflect on the skills they are gaining from learning activities delivered by partners in order to identify areas they need to build on and develop further.

- A few young people are working towards certification through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award at bronze level. A female-only group are exploring women's rights and different cultures through a heritage project. They have increased understanding of cultural differences. Their art work will be displayed at Edinburgh's National Art Gallery and they have presented project work on role models to Members of the Scottish Parliament.

- The school does not yet have an accurate overview of the extensive range of achievements gained by young people within and out with the school. The school does not systematically track or share young people's skills through their wider achievement programmes. More needs to be done to ensure all young people gain recognition for their achievements. The school should work with partners to put systems in place which will help identify trends in participation and achievement.

Equity for all learners

Attainment vs Deprivation
- The school has young people living in all SIMD deciles. The percentages living in data zones designated as deciles 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 are more than 10% of the school roll in each case. Complementary tariff scores have often been significantly lower/much lower than national levels in deciles 9 and 10, especially by S5 and by S6.

Destinations

- Almost all young people leave school for a positive destination. The percentage of young people leaving school for higher education was significantly lower than the VC in 2016. The percentage moving on to other destinations (FE, training, employment) are in line with the VC and the local authority in the past two years.
- The school has a strong focus on supporting young people to make informed choices about their future. Recent improvements to promotional materials are helping to make young people aware of the full range of post-school opportunities. Very effective partnership working with SDS staff is helping almost all young people to progress to a positive destination on leaving school.

Q.I.1.2 LEADERSHIP OF LEARNING

This indicator relates to leadership of improvements in learning and teaching. It highlights the importance of professional commitment to improving pedagogy through a range of approaches to career-long professional learning including collegiate working. It focuses on leadership which improves outcomes for learners through enabling them to lead their own learning.

- Professional engagement and collegiate working.
- Impact of career-long professional learning
- Children and young people leading learning

- Senior staff have recognised that the strategic leadership of learning needs to be a priority for improvement. As a result, they have gathered evidence on the quality of learning and teaching and how improvements may be realised. This is based on practitioner enquiry, observations of learning, and the views of curriculum leaders, some teachers and young people. The next stage for senior leaders is to share and agree with staff, expectations of what will constitute high-quality learning and teaching at Portobello High School. With the arrival of a new depute headteacher leading on this aspect, a two-year strategic implementation plan was written at the start of the school session, to be incorporated into the overall school improvement plan. This plan needs to have commitment from all staff and should be regularly reviewed to demonstrate the measurable difference that is being made in improving the leadership of learning. Senior leaders need to define the collegiate professional learning and collective activity which all staff will engage with to assist achieving positive outcomes.

- Senior leaders, curriculum leaders and staff would benefit from having a shared and consistent approach to leading improvements in learning and teaching in which they have clear accountability. This should be for their curricular areas, as well as all other contexts of learning. Senior leaders should continue with their plans to work with the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) to provide bespoke professional learning for middle managers.

- The plan that senior leaders have to improve learning and teaching is set within the vision, values and aims of the school. However, the commitment to the vision, values and aims from young people and teachers is still to be fully secured. The statement on learning to be extended to promote high-quality experiences for all the young people of Portobello High School would be a positive next step.

- Staff are currently encouraged to engage with peer observation. Going forward, it is essential to give teachers individual and regular feedback on their practice, with a particular focus on where practice needs to improve. This needs to be part of a robust and systematic approach in which achievable points for action are set and monitored with staff. Staff need to continue to build their knowledge of highly-effective practice to which they should aspire.

- Staff use the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) professional standards in considering their priorities for professional learning. Staff appreciate

opportunities which are arranged to enable them to gain experience to advance their careers. A few engage with practitioner enquiry. They participate in subject-based professional learning, particularly for the senior phase. This supports curriculum change and improving attainment. A few staff take on whole-school leadership, local authority and national responsibilities. Other staff work collaboratively on priorities through improvement groups. There is much scope for staff to develop a clear and shared understanding of their across-school responsibilities for leading learning as the core business of the school. Staff should show more impact of their collective responsibilities in securing better-paced change for learning and teaching. For this, staff need to work together to establish a culture for more regular and targeted collegiate whole-school working. This could usefully involve staff sharing their experiences and skills to support whole-school priorities. Engaging with collaborative practitioner enquiry, professional dialogue and peer learning which is tailored to improving learning and teaching will support this work. Senior leaders should continue to analyse participation in professional learning to ensure staff are equipped to implement the school's priorities for improvement, as well as local and national priorities.

- There is variability in how well young people are taking responsibility for their own learning. Young people's independence is hampered by learning which is often overly directed by teachers. Teachers are not yet all sufficiently skilled in defining the purpose of learning, and explaining to young people how they will know that they are successful. This is a priority to address in order to enable young people to set their own next steps and take ownership of their learning. In more than a few cases, teachers need to have higher expectations of the behaviour they will accept from their pupils. This would help build a culture in which all young people enjoy mutual respect, trust and confidence in which to discuss their learning and achievement. Staff need to build their awareness of the skills for learning, life and work that young people are developing across all contexts of their learning, both within school and beyond. Young people's time with their key adult needs to have more impact to support them in making decisions about the totality of learning and to meet future aspirations.

PARTICULAR STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

- The commitment of the headteacher and senior leadership team to planning and taking forward school improvement.

- The school's approaches to supporting young people requiring additional help with their learning. Interventions and strong partnership working are leading to young people feeling included, supported and nurtured. They are progressing well in their learning as a result.

- The school is beginning to develop a range of learning pathways in the senior phase to support young people in the development of skills for life, learning and work.

- Young people are attaining well in National Qualifications. Almost all young people move to a positive destination on leaving school.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR THE SCHOOL

- All staff now need to work together to improve the quality and consistency of young people's learning experiences. Staff should build on existing strong practice to provide learning and assessment which supports young people at all stages to make the best possible progress in their learning.

- Continue to improve staff's understanding of their roles and responsibilities in supporting the wellbeing of all young people. A shared understanding of the importance of positive relationships, high expectations and wellbeing should underpin the school's work to improve young people's learning and achievement.

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- Staff should take forward plans to review the curriculum taking into account national advice on the broad general education and the senior phase

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

As part of their ongoing support, officers from the City of Edinburgh Council will carry out a review of the school within 18 months of publication of this letter. Education Scotland will support the council's review of the school. A report will be published informing you of the progress being made by the school. Taking account of the progress report, Education Scotland will then decide whether further engagement with the school is required. This may involve another inspection visit.