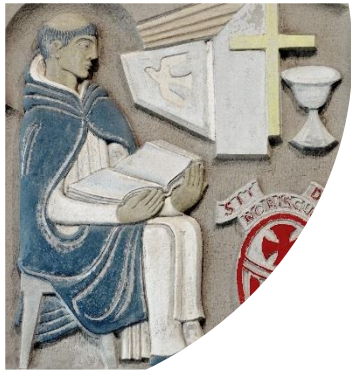


# Draft Standards and Quality Report (August 2023)

## St Thomas of Aquin's RC High School



Self-Discipline

Teamwork

Trust

High Expectations

Openness

Mutual Respect

Achieving Excellence

Success

**St Thomas of Aquin's Roman Catholic High School is a learning community which ensures a safe, supportive and enjoyable environment where pupils, staff, and parents are inspired and motivated to work hard for one another to fulfil the God-given potential of all pupils**

## **Context of The School**

St Thomas of Aquin's RC High School is a denominational secondary school serving one third of the City of Edinburgh. The school draws most of its pupils from Holy Cross, St Mary's, St Peter's, and St Mark's Primary Schools, although we annually work with over 15 other Primary Schools for S1 transition. The wide catchment area stretches from the Pentlands to Granton, and St Thomas of Aquin's enjoys a varied social and cultural mix of pupils. The school is committed to the education of the whole child, body, mind, and spirit, to ensure that all our pupils fulfil their God-given talents. The projected school roll for August 2023 is 790, although the notional capacity of our building is set at 750. Our S1 & S2 roll is capped at 140 per year. The Senior Leadership Team consists of the Head Teacher, 2 Depute Head Teachers, and a Business Manager. In session 2023-24 there will be 10 Curricular Leaders, 3 pupil Support Leaders, 1 Support for Learning Leader, and a Curricular Leader of The Wellbeing Hub & Sensory room. The Parent Council provides collegiate and constructive support to all aspects of school life.

Summary of Standards and Quality Report, grades and statements in support

- **QI 1.3 Leadership of Change**
- **QI 2.3 Teaching, Learning and Assessment – including the Teachers' Charter**
- **QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality, and Inclusion – including Leadership for Equity and The Promise**
- **QI 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement – including progress made on Stretch aims.**
- **QI 2.2 Curriculum – Theme 2, Learning Pathways**
- **QI 2.7 Partnerships – Theme 3, Impact on Learners, Parental engagement only**
- **Evaluated PEF Plan**

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in Standards and Quality Report

All 100%

Almost all 91%-99%

Most 75%-90%

Majority 50%-74%

Minority/less than half 15%-49%

A few less than 15%

### Quality Indicator 1.3: Leadership of Change – Evaluation Level of Good

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

This indicator focusses 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 pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners.

#### **Developing a shared vision, values & aims relevant to the school and its community.**

All staff have a very good understanding of the vision and the values of the school (2023 staff survey return). The vision of the school being a safe, supportive, and enjoyable learning community with an aim to fulfil the talents of all pupils is understood and underpins the work of staff at St Thomas of Aquin's (Draft 2023 staff survey return). The school is very proud of the 2023 pupil and parent surveys analysis in providing evidence of how safe and supportive pupils and parents describe St Thomas of Aquin's (<https://www.st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Draft-S1-S6-2023-Pupil-Survey-Analysis.pdf>). All staff take time and care to know the pupils they teach and through staff meetings, pupil plans, Edict tracking systems, and an open-door policy by the Integrated Support Service and Senior Leadership Team, staff are very much aware of the social, economic, and cultural context of pupils in the school (2023 staff, pupil, and parent surveys evidence this). St Thomas of Aquin's vision of fulfilling the talents of its pupils manifests itself in the commitment to the highest possible attainment levels, highest achievement levels of Literacy and Numeracy, and the highest rates of sustained positive destinations for all pupils. The 2022 Insight Data exemplifies very good attainment, very good positive destinations, and the closing of the attainment gap at St Thomas of Aquin's (<https://www.st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/about/achievements>). As Headteacher I am very proud of the commitment, intelligence, and nurturing capacity of the Senior Leadership Team and the 2023 pupil, parents, and staff returns consistently identify a highly respected and effective senior leadership team.

The school's nurturing and inclusive vision and values are at the centre of how the school supports pupils to reach their God-given talents and school improvement planning is shaped with pupil and staff safety, support, and enjoyment at its centre. The Headteacher ensure Health and Safety is on the BM/HT meetings (every 2 weeks) as well as chairing the monthly staff Health and Safety meeting. The senior leadership team's focus on the health, safety, and success of pupils ensures St Thomas delivers its vision into a daily reality. The high expectations for all pupils at St Thomas' are a core value on a daily, weekly, and termly basis. These high expectations can be exemplified in the calm and focussed working ethos of the school (visitors continue to tell us about the very good ethos at the school); the very good S1-S6 attendance percentages (which are above the CEC average) averaging 92% for session 2022-23; and the very good attainment levels over the last 5 years - these metrics indicate a school improving outcomes for almost all pupils. The school community embraces restorative practice, and our positive relationships are supported by the BrBIBb staged intervention policy (<https://www.st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/St-Thomas-of-Aquins-BRBLBB-Policy.pdf>). The policy has been evaluated and improved by staff in session 2022-23 and is now ready for consultation with pupils and parents. All staff work hard for pupils who can, at times, experience unjust behaviours from peers and communication of how staff work in investigating and resolving incidents is an improvement priority for the school.

St Thomas' engagement with parents is open, respectful, and based on mutual trust and the evidence of 80% of parents identifying the school as well led supports this claim (<https://www.st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/bulletin/weekly-bulletin/>). Parents understanding of how the school helps their children to fulfil their potential is supported through information evenings, parents' evenings, or individual meetings with the Integrated Pupil Support Team and the Senior Leadership Team. The Headteacher ensures the highest

standards of communication are in place to support parents understanding of the leadership of change process; weekly parent briefing emails are sent out and placed on the school website; the continued growth and use of Twitter by Faculties supports up to date pupil work and successes; a school App (linked to the school website) supports Parents with pupil updates; school attainment and achievement data and school policies are continuously updated and shared with pupils and parents on the school website (<https://www.st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/about/policies-documents/>); Pupil voice groups such as The Pupil Parliament, The Equalities Group, and The Climate Action Groups meetings are shared in Daily Key Adult classes and through the Key Adult Bulletin (placed on the school website for parents information). The re-introduction of the Daily Key Adult programme for all S1-S6 year groups has ensured that there is a timetabled system for the pupils and staff at St Thomas' to support attendance, standards, and pupil voice. Daily Key Adult time will continue to be developed throughout the next 3 year rolling school improvement plan.

### Strategic planning for continuous improvement

St Thomas engages systematically in effective quality improvement and moderation activities to improve the outcomes for all pupils. St Thomas of Aquin's uses a 3-year rolling school improvement plan that is contextualised using How Good is Our School 4. The senior leadership team update the plan 3 times during the year and Faculty plans are updated twice a year to support a robust analysis programme. St Thomas of Aquin's uses SQA data, Insight data, Pupil, Parent, and Staff surveys, and HGIOS4 Quality Indicators to assess and moderate school improvement to identify priorities which will lead to improvement in outcomes for pupils. The whole school self-evaluation calendar is a core (1<sup>st</sup> agenda item) on the weekly senior leadership team meeting and Leadership of change team meeting (2 weekly rota). The self-evaluation calendar ensures that all Leaders are aware of the month by month school improvement tasks and impact needed to continue St Thomas' drive in self-improvement. The self-evaluation calendar has supported drafting the 2023-24 Faculty self-evaluation calendars led by the DHT of S4-S6 which will enhance a strong culture of collaborative working and collective learning by all staff. Staff are supported to take on leadership opportunities that support delivering impact on pupils' experience that range from Pupil Equity Funding, Chaplaincy, Learning and Teaching, Homestudy/BGE Levels, Literacy and Numeracy, Sustainability, Rights Respecting Schools, Equalities, and Mentors in Violence. These leadership opportunities are articulated in the school improvement plan and staff are supported through time, CATs, and Inservice slots to drive through their specific vision and outcomes for pupils. (<https://www.st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Feb-update-CS-2022-23-St-T-of-Aquins-School-Improv.-1-2-23.pdf>).

The S4-S6 DHT strategic lead on Learning, Teaching, and Assessment has developed a robust understanding of the quality of the learning experience for pupils in the school. Through learning observations, sharing good practice both inside and from outside the school, use of HMIE Inspection findings, iPad training for pupils, the S4-S6 DHT has the evidence of where the school is now and how it will achieve a Very Good for Learning, Teaching, and Assessment over the next 3 years – a key focus for St Thomas of Aquin's. All Staff at St Thomas' are committed to the educational success of pupils, and Faculty attainment statistics placed on the school website (<https://st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/about/achievements>) exemplify their commitment. The school is committed in using the City of Edinburgh Teachers Charter to improve the consistency of pupils' learning experience and the effective development of iPad creative use is a testament to that commitment.

The S1-S3 DHT strategic lead on Ensuring Wellbeing and Inclusion is articulated in the draft Learning, Development, and Support Policy. There is a determination to complement the Very Good attainment of pupils by ensuring that the school is a safe and nurturing, supportive and inclusive, and mutually respectful environment for all pupils to reach their potential. The school has developed a robust pathway system of support for all pupils; a universal support approach in Key Adult classes and all subject classrooms; use of Support for Learning and Pupils Support Leaders for targeted intervention; and finally, a bespoke targeted system of support using Place2Be counsellors, the Wellbeing Hub, the Additional Support Services, and other organisations that work with St Thomas of Aquin's to get it right for all pupils. The Depute head for 3.1 is leading on the standards and quality analysis and improvement in this area to ensure a Very Good experience is in place for all pupils moving into session 2023-24 and beyond.

The Senior Leadership Team and the Leadership Team work together strategically and operationally to ensure that the school continues to develop, promote, and sustain an aspirational vision that places all pupils at the centre of the decision-making process. The combined SLT/LT meetings (every 2 weeks) support School and Faculty improvement planning implementation and as stated the whole school self-evaluation calendar and draft Faculty self-evaluation calendar support a focussed and collaborative strategy. All

Staff have access to Impact Folders, found on the school server, in which annual key strategic and operational information is stored to support their analysis and evaluation of school improvement – CEC returns, school improvement updates, draft policies, and policy updates. The school improvement plan is systematically supported by CATs, DATs, and In-services which supports all teaching staff to analyse and evaluate improvements in their practice. The Senior Leadership Team continues to support the growth of the Pupil Parliament and the Parent Council to ensure that the voice of pupils and parents are translated into sustainable and effective practice in the school.

Despite the challenges of Covid-19, the school has adapted school and faculty planning to a 3-year continuous cycle to support the need for change and the appropriate pace of change. Faculties complete a 2.3 and 3.1 Quality Indicator analysis in May and 3.2 Quality Indicator evaluation and grade for their Faculties in August/September. The school is ensuring HGIOS4 1.3, 2.3, 3.1, and 3.2 Q are fully understood, in terms of their benchmarking and demands, by staff and the sharing of HMIE Inspection Reports continues to support their understanding of standards. It is very encouraging to write that so many colleagues support the school improvement plan via taking on Leadership remits (found at the end of the school improvement plan - <https://st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Feb-2022-IJP-updates-St-Thomas-school-1.pdf>) and that S6 pupils and staff support a comprehensive lunchtime and afterschool clubs programme ( <https://st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/St-Thomas-of-Aquins-School-Clubs-2.pdf> ). Staff are involved in supporting pupils leading the Pupil Parliament and the Equalities and Ethos groups, chairing working groups in the areas of positive behaviour, learning and teaching, and equalities and ethos. Staff also plan and implement engaging outdoor learning experiences and invite visiting guest speakers which adds to the shared learning experience at the school. There is a commitment from all stakeholders, pupils, parents, staff, and outside agencies to continue to work collegiately to improve the school.

The school has close partnership working with the 4 associated Primary Schools in St Thomas of Aquin's Learning Community and a comprehensive communication system to support the significant amount of other Primary Schools that support transition of P7 pupils to St Thomas of Aquin's (around 20 per year). Our transition systems (enhanced and universal transition days) support the wellbeing and progression of P7 and other pupils transferring to the school. The St Thomas of Aquin's Learning Community is now benefitting from a permanent Transition Teacher who supports enhanced transitions in May, CfE Level moderation in Literacy, and new S1 pupils who benefit from a flexible timetable when starting at St Thomas of Aquin's High School. All HTs meet on a regular basis with an agreed Learning Community plan as a means to continue to support improvement outcomes for pupils at the 5 schools.

### Implementing improvement and change

St Thomas of Aquin's collegiate approach ensures the whole school community is aware of the improvements needed to develop, enhance and ensure impact in pupil attainment and achievement. Over the last 3 years, the S4-S6 DHT, in line with CEC advice, has implemented a Meaningful May curriculum so that pupils who are experiencing 3 or less National 5 Qualifications examinations have an engaging educational involvement during the SQA calendar. The Meaningful May planning has also supported the annual change of timetable being brought forward by 2 weeks to the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in May to support S1-S3 pupils engagement and learning. The school is constantly identifying improvements that can be made and collegiately plans to ensure long-term progression. To support the implementation of improvement and change, effective communication is essential. The Headteacher liaises with staff every Friday morning to brief them on the running of the school and emails parents on Monday with a HT school briefing so that the school community are kept abreast of the school week. The HT continues to walk round the school (3 times daily) to informally speak with staff and pupils to capture the day to day experience of the school. Through an open and transparent school negotiating committee, St Thomas has a balance of whole school collegiate and Faculty learning time which supports self-evaluation and allows staff to contribute to the plans for continuous improvement. Each CAT is linked to a school improvement area and identified in the school improvement plan. The Faculty/Departmental times for session 2023-24 will link in with the draft Faculty self-evaluation calendar.

The Senior Leadership Team, the Leadership Team, and Staff members have developed and continue to work in a collegiate working partnership at St Thomas. Since 2020 and the experience of 2 Lockdowns the school has balanced the need to support wellbeing of the school community with the need and pace of change and improvements. Although the school has not experienced a consistent Educational Psychologist since 2019 there is very good partnership working with outside agencies to get it right for every child and the DHT S1-S3 has invested strategic planning to incorporate Volunteering Scotland and Spartans for targeted pupils. The new Wellbeing Hub is in place at St Thomas and now

that a full complement of staffing is in place for the first time (May 2023), the DHT will plan accordingly to ensure the strategic and operational outcomes of the Wellbeing Hub delivers for pupils. The Place2Be Counselling service continues to provide wellbeing provision for pupils, parents, and staff and the Learning Community HTs are working collaboratively to support Primary pupils receiving Place2Be experiences. The Equalities Captains, Equalities Group, and staff supporting the Equalities improvement plan continue to make progress in ensuring the school is a safe and inclusive place to learn and work and the responses in both pupils and parents surveys identify a school that respects the rights of the individual and supports pupils to do so (<https://www.st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Draft-S1-S6-2023-Pupil-Survey-Analysis.pdf> ).

### Features of highly effective practice:

- All staff have consistently high expectations of all learners.
- Pupils, parents, partners and staff are all involved in the creation and ongoing review of the vision, aims and values of the school.
- All staff have a very clear understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the local community of current educational policy. They use this knowledge well to shape the vision for the school.
- The vision of the school is ambitious and focuses on improvements in outcomes for all.
- Learners are supported to understand the vision aims and values through the four contexts for learning.
- Leaders at all levels motivate and inspire others to sustain collective commitment to the shared vision through daily actions.
- All teaching staff regularly reflect on, and show commitment to, the shared values as embedded in the GTCS standards.
- All staff are committed to change which results in improvements for learners.
- All staff are clear on the schools strengths and areas for development based on a range of evidence. This is used to create a clear rationale for future improvements.
- Senior leaders carefully guide the strategic direction and pace of change to ensure changes result in positive outcomes for learners and are sustainable. Careful consideration is given to how best to take forward priorities (e.g. use of a range of improvement methodologies).
- All staff are involved in the process of change and in evaluating the impact of improvements. This is supported by carefully planned individual and collective career-long professional learning.
- Senior leaders create conditions to support creativity, innovation and enquiry.
- Opportunities for learners and staff to regularly engage in critical and creative thinking are embedded.
- Practitioner enquiry forms a regular feature of approaches to continuous improvement.
- Practitioners have systematic opportunities to review and refresh their pedagogical practice.

### Next steps:

- **Enhance Staff, Parent and Pupil voice in the school improvement planning (SIP 23-24 1.1)**
- **Support Parent Council meetings and agendas through Parent Survey analysis (SIP 23-24 1.1)**
- **Redraft Senior Leadership Team remits and amend SLT meetings to support specific strategic improvement priorities. (SIP 23-24 1.3)**
- **2023-24 re-evaluation of specific words of school vision. (SIP 2022-23 continuation)**
- **Embed the Faculty self-evaluation calendar and its links to the whole school self-evaluation calendar and Departmental Activity Time. (SIP 23-24 1.3)**
- **Support Staff with Leadership Opportunities in school and visiting and working with colleagues outwith St Thomas and other Secondary schools. Use PRDs, CLPL, PUs and the GTCS standards to support opportunities. (SIP 23-24 1.3)**
  
- **3.1 Communication BrBbBl policy to pupils and parents and how Bullying incidents have been resolved. (SIP 3.1)**
- **3.1 Learning Development and Support policy - plan for Wellbeing Hub and Support for Learning Base. (SIP 3.1)**
- **3.1 Continue to support an Equalities focus on the school curriculum and improvement focus in pupils experience at school. (SIP 3.1)**

## Quality Indicator 2.3: Learning, Teaching, and Assessment – Evaluation Level of Good.

- **Learning and Engagement, including use of digital technologies**
- **Quality of Teaching**
- **Effective use of Assessment**
- **Planning, Tracking & Monitoring**

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.

### **Learning and Engagement, including use of digital technologies**

Our school's values underpin the climate of learning at St Thomas. The climate of learning across the school is in line with our values. Pupils, staff, and parents know our school values and the Senior Leadership team consistently lead by example to ensure that these values underpin the environment in which our young people learn.

Positive respectful relationships are fostered between pupils and staff. 83% of our pupils are 87% of our parents agreed or strongly agreed that staff treat pupils with respect in our recent whole school surveys March 2023. Pupils feel cared for and safe at school and feel that they have a member of staff that they could approach to discuss any issues or concerns. 84% of parents and 79% of pupils agree or strongly agree that their child/they feel safe at school with 83% of our parents agreeing or strongly agreeing that their pupils like being at our school.

The school has achieved the bronze award for the UNCRC Rights Respecting schools which is successfully led by a teaching staff member and group of pupils. Through collegiate activity times the teacher has delivered successful training to all staff as well as assemblies to all year groups to ensure that the profile of this RRS group is raised in the school. All classrooms have a UNCRC poster, and the group also delivered a successful RRS day which delivered coordinated events in all classrooms. 85% of our pupils and 81% of our parents agreed or strongly agreed that the school helps me to understand and respect other people. This group is now on track to working towards the silver award. 71% of Pupils strongly agreed or agreed that other young people treat them fairly and with respect at St Thomas of Aquin's.

Our pupils have opportunities to contribute to the wider life of the school. We have an extensive variety of groups that pupils can join and have their voices heard. These groups include the Rights Respecting Schools group, the Climate Action Group, the Equalities group, the Caritas award group as well as an extensive selection of clubs coordinated and organised through our Health and wellbeing lead teacher. We also have leadership roles for our senior pupils including S6 leadership team, House captains, sports captains, equalities captain, peer mentors and volunteering opportunities to support our younger pupils in class as well as paired reading. The HT meets regularly with the S6 leadership team to ensure that their voices are being heard. 86% of Pupils strongly agreed or agreed that St Thomas of Aquin's offers them opportunities to take part in activities in school beyond the classroom and timetabled days. Well planned activities throughout the academic session including Feast- day events and retreats give pupils the opportunity to contribute effectively to the life of the school.

Pupils can share their views about the school through a variety of forums including surveys, focus groups and the Pupil Parliament. Only 59% of Pupils strongly agreed or agreed that St Thomas of Aquin's listens to their views. This year has seen the rebranding of the Pupil council, now known as the Pupil Parliament. The Pupil Parliament is still in the early stages and its development has been identified as a whole school priority for academic session 23-24. Pupils have also engaged in a survey to gather their views about a variety of aspects of the school. The Learning and Teaching working group consisting of 15 members meet termly to identify action points to drive learning and teaching

forward in the school. This academic session the group carried out an extensive number of pupil focus groups (240 pupils were involved). The feedback from these focus groups was then shared with all staff at CAT and faculties were asked to use this information along with the survey information to inform next session's faculty improvement plans. Faculties are increasingly using surveys to gather pupil views on their learning in their faculties and inform next steps in planning.

This academic session the school rolled out iPads to all pupils and staff in September 2022. Under the strategic direction of the DHT all staff have engaged in an extensive range of training sessions to support this launch. An in house CLPL programme has allowed for peer to peer training sessions and sharing good practice. Each faculty has a digital rep who works alongside our Curricular Leader of Computing to ensure that we are on track to achieving the Digital Schools Award. In our Digital staff survey in January 2023 98% of staff rated the in school CLPL training sessions at either 4 out of 5 (31%) or 5 out of 5 (67%).

The school has a broad range of SIMD across the school community as well as having an Secondary Resource Provision and we are making good progress in ensuring that we are providing a broad range of courses across the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners. 79% of our staff have a clear understanding of the social, cultural, and economic context of the school. We have introduced NPAs in Computing and Art, skills-based courses such as Practical Electronics, Administration, Fashion and Textiles as well as Environmental Science and Computer Games Design. We have increased our provision in the senior phase in line with our current social, cultural, and economic context to ensure that we are meeting the needs of learners at all levels. Staff have engaged in sharing good practice sessions this academic session with a focus on inclusion and meeting the needs of all learners. The Learning Development and support team have presented sessions to all staff on differentiation, ASN, as well as a focus on how the accessibility functions on the iPad can support learners in the classroom setting.

This academic session we have launched and integrated our Wellbeing Hub which is a branch of the Learning Development and Support team and led by a Curricular Leader of Wellbeing. With the addition of a Wellbeing Hub this provision will enhance the Learning Development and Support Team by adding a layer of support focusing on pupil wellbeing which will complement the already established learning and pastoral support.

The school has co-ordinators in Literacy, Numeracy, and Health and Wellbeing who led in enhancing their specific whole school responsibility area. The school has after-school Literacy and Numeracy clubs where S6 pupils' mentor S1 pupils. The Health and Wellbeing co-ordinator has developed the school's systems for lunchtime and after-school clubs.

### **2.3 Quality of teaching**

The school's Senior Leadership Team uses evidence from out of school and in school learning visits, collegiately planned learning visits, and the use the 2.3 Quality Indicator Faculty returns to identify the areas of strength as well as next steps to move the school from Good to Very Good. Our whole school learner visits programme runs on a 3-year cycle with each member of teaching staff being observed once per year with a follow up feedback meeting. Learner visits are completed by SLT, CL and a peer on a rotation. This year we have introduced the use of MS Forms to record feedback which supports with sharing good practice across the school community. To triangulate evidence, we will be introducing mini faculty reviews from next academic session. These will involve pupil focus groups, pupil, staff, and parent surveys to support a deep dive into each faculty and provide evidence alongside their own self-evaluation calendar to support next steps in improvement. A visiting Curricular Leader will support the process and through professional dialogue with the CL and faculty it will allow teams to clearly understand areas of strength and areas that require improvement. The aim is to complete 3 mini reviews each session (2 larger faculties and 1 smaller faculty).

The whole school focus this session has been the implementation of Digital Learning through iPads. Through our programme of whole school Learner visits colleagues have had the opportunity to share good practice and engage in professional dialogue with colleagues. Through training and practice colleagues have become more proficient and creative in their use of the iPad to enhance learning and engage our young people. We have delivered training sessions during CATs, in-services as well as a differentiated in

house CLPL programme delivered by teaching staff to support staff develop their iPad skills. Some sessions were delivered by Krissie Davies from the Digital Empowerment group. We also have a whole school staff MS Teams which supports dissemination of resources and 'how to' videos to support staff in their own time. Some faculties use the private channels in MS Teams to support individual learners and encourage pupils to ask questions. Some faculties have channels in their MS Teams for pupils to access the resources and work if they have been absent to allow for them to ensure that they do not miss out on any part of the course.

The learner visits this academic session have demonstrated that there are positive relationships in classrooms across the school. Teachers are becoming more confident returning to pre-pandemic teaching and allowing pupils to work in groups and lead their own learning. In some faculties pupils have choice in what they learn and how they present their work. Most teachers use skilled differentiated questioning to support less able pupils feel success and build confidence as well as challenge more able pupils in their learning by encouraging more in depth thinking and analysis.

St Thomas of Aquin's Learning and Teaching has a wide range of good practices – good planning, a lesson structure which offers clear instructions and expectations, very positive staff-pupil relationships, individual, paired, and group work activities, staff confidence in their use of skilled questioning, and the use of plenaries to measure success criteria. The school has co-ordinators in Literacy, Numeracy, and Health and Wellbeing who led in enhancing their specific whole school responsibility area. The school has after-school Literacy and Numeracy clubs where S6 pupils' mentor S1 pupils. The Health and Wellbeing co-ordinator has focussed in on developing the school's systems for lunchtime and after-school clubs. The school continues to support colleagues in taking on SQA marking responsibilities. Through sharing SQA good practice at Leadership meetings, Faculty meetings, and Faculty activity time, there is clear evidence that the confidence from the SQA experience supports the planning of learning, teaching, and assessment in most Faculties. This expertise will continue to support the quality of teaching and assessment in the school and the raising of attainment at the school.

The school works with a range of partners to provide individualised opportunities to learn in a variety of settings including Spartans, 6V cafe', Be you Be strong programmes. For pupils who are at risk of not achieving targeted support has been delivered through the closing the gap teacher and the SfL faculty. There have been a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn out with the school setting including trips in Social Subjects, Science and Modern Languages as well as a range of activities that have been delivered through the Meaningful May programme.

The Learning and Teaching working group this session launched the Digital policy poster to all classrooms in line with the introduction of iPads. Ready to Learn posters are also displayed on all classroom doors. An extensive programme of pupil focus groups was carried out through November 22-January 23. The results from this pupil focus group were collated and presented to all staff at the CAT session in May 23. Faculties were given time to reflect on the feedback and identify areas of improvement to support their next steps and inform their FIPs.

In most faculties explanations and instructions are clear and consistent. Most faculties use learning intentions and success criteria across all year groups but there are still inconsistencies in some faculties which have been identified as an area of improvement. The launch of our new Learning, Teaching and Assessment policy 'St Thomas of Aquin's LEARNS' to the whole school community in August 2023 will support a comprehensive understanding of the school's direction towards being very good in 2.3. 76% of Parents strongly agreed or agreed that they are satisfied with the quality of teaching in the school and 69 % of Pupils strongly agreed or agreed that they enjoy learning at school. As a school community we have identified clear areas to improve the learning and teaching experience for all pupils. Most faculties have confidently integrated the use of iPads in their learning and teaching. Most faculties use a digital platform such as OneNote or MS Teams to upload resources and set assignments. Some faculties are also embarking on using iPads creatively to enhance the learner experience and engage pupils in their learning. Faculties are beginning to confidently use Apps and websites to support learning including Desmos, Kahoot, Minecraft education and clickr.

In most faculties learner conversations are carried out with pupils to identify their areas of strength and areas of development. 82% of Pupils strongly agreed or agreed that the feedback they receive on their work helps them to improve their learning but only 67% of Parents strongly agreed or agreed that they receive helpful, regular about their child. This is an area that requires streamlining and will form part of the SQIP for next session.

## Effective use of assessment

### Broad General Education

Most faculties use a variety of assessment approaches to monitor the progress of our young people in the Broad General Education. There is a wide range of creative formative assessment approaches being used in these faculties including the use of mini white boards, the apple classroom app, MS forms quizzes which provide pupils with instant feedback. Summative assessments still play an integral part in monitoring pupil progress and in these faculties, there are clear systems in place to ensure that these assessments are based on the CfE benchmarks and opportunities to standardise, moderate as a faculty team are planned. In some faculties pupils can choose how they can demonstrate their understanding by choosing the way in which they would like to present their work. The faculty 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment self-evaluation returns completed in May 2023 highlight that further development is required in some faculties next academic session to ensure that pupils in S1-3 are being consistently assessed in line with the Education Scotland CfE benchmarks. Faculty Leaders have developed self-evaluation calendars in line with the whole school calendar to support their faculty teams have regular and consistent approaches to standardisation, moderation and verification and these will support consistency and improvement next academic session 2023-24.

At a whole school level, we are continuing to develop staff confidence in their knowledge and understanding of the CfE Broad General Education levels. Our Curricular Leader of RMPS has taken on a whole school leadership role this year to look at how levels are being implemented across the curriculum. 74% of Parents strongly agreed or agreed that they understand how their child's progress is being assessed. Through this leadership role the Curricular Leader of RMPS was tasked with improving parental understanding of how their child is assessed. One step towards this has been to task Curricular Leaders with uploading CfE level 2, 3 and 4 exemplars of pupil work onto the school website to support parents and carers in their understanding of what and how these levels are assessed. In some subject areas teachers have had opportunities to share good practice to moderate with teachers from across the authority. However, there are inconsistencies with the provision offered at authority level by subject leaders which has resulted in some subject areas not having opportunities to work with colleagues from other schools this session. 54% of staff surveyed stated that they strongly disagreed to neutral when asked if they had opportunities to share and learn with colleagues from other schools. However, 88% of staff strongly agree to neutral that collaborative working is effective in taking forward school improvement.

### Senior phase

Following on from the alternative assessment models that were implemented in the pandemic to support SQA estimates we have continued to provide progress tests across faculties in class time to support SQA estimates and to provide pupils gauge where they are in their learning and to inform next steps. This is further complimented by January prelims for all S4-6 studying at National 5 and above. The prelims alongside progress tests provide robust evidence for SQA evidence and the exceptional circumstances process. In some faculties senior pupils are provided with a prelim evaluation sheet whereby pupils need to identify their own areas of strength as well as their next steps to support their progression. In some faculties MS teams is used to provide pupils with exemplar answers and revision material to support their learning at home.

The DHT S4-6 analyses whole school prelim results. This supports identification of pupils that are not on track in their learning and allows for targeted interventions to be implemented. This session the Closing the Gap teacher with the support of the Pupil Support Leaders and Curricular Leaders have identified pupils that are at risk of not achieving and well-timed interventions have been put in place to support these pupils achieve. One key target for the CTGT is to ensure that all pupils in S4 achieve at least 5 National qualifications by the end of the session. Some faculties communicate successes as well as concerns home via text messages, letters and seems referrals to Pupil Support Leaders who communicate with home to ensure that parents are informed of concerns in ample time to allow for interventions to be put in place.

## Planning, Tracking and Monitoring

Most faculties have a central spreadsheet to track pupil progress from S1-3 and in the senior phase if they continue in the subject area. This allows for the Curricular Leader to identify those at risk of not achieving in their subject areas and initiate well timed interventions. Key targeted groups are closely monitored and regularly discussed at faculty meetings, PSL/SfL house meetings, LDS meetings and 16+meetings. The PEF coaches identify pupils in S1 that require targeted support to ensure that they are not facing barriers to the learning. Through regular meetings the PEF coaches provide mentoring as well as opportunities to support raise their literacy and numeracy skills. This is a collaborative approach alongside the literacy and numeracy leads who provide targeted intervention to support PEF pupils via a senior pupil mentoring system. Most faculties plan their curriculum to ensure that all young people's abilities are being met. The Support for Learning faculty work collegiately with faculties across the school to support the development of differentiated material and courses that support our SRP pupils and pupils with ASN. The faculty use a variety of assessment data to plan supports and next steps for pupils with ASN. This data includes SNSA and standardises scores. Through Young Person's planning meetings pupils with ASN are fully involved in planning their learning and identifying their next steps along with parents/carers and partner agencies. Individualised support plans are in place to support teacher planning and to ensure that pupils are achieving at their own pace with their successes tracked and monitored at regular intervals. In line with the whole school reporting calendar faculties track pupil progress and inform pupils and parents of their current working level and next steps. In the March 2023 parent survey 67% of Parents strongly agreed or agreed that the information they receive about how their child is doing reaches them at the right time. This is an area that the school has identified as requiring improvement next academic session. Currently the DHT S1-3 and DHT S4-6 have separate systems to track and monitor pupils across the school in line with the reporting calendar. This allows for some effective interventions to be implemented including targeted learner conversations, at risk groups identified, communication with home. This is an area that has been identified as a whole school priority to ensure there is a consistent whole school approach.

#### **Features of highly-effective practice:**

- The learning environment is built on positive, nurturing and appropriately challenging relationships which lead to high-quality learning outcomes.
- Learners' achievements in and out of school are recorded and recognised. They understand how these achievements help them develop knowledge and skills for life, learning and work.
- Learners play an active role in the school and wider community and regularly take on leadership roles, including leading learning.
- Learners receive high-quality feedback and have an accurate understanding of their progress in learning and what they need to do to improve.
- Learners are able to give effective feedback to peers on their learning and suggest ways in which they can improve.
- Staff access and apply relevant findings from educational research to improve learning and teaching.
- Planning is proportionate and manageable and clearly identifies what is to be learned and assessed.
- Assessment approaches are matched to the learning needs of learners and are used to support them to demonstrate where they are in their learning.
- A quality body of evidence is used to support assessment judgements and decisions about next steps.
- Processes for assessment and reporting are manageable and very effective in informing improvements in learning and teaching.
- Tracking and monitoring are well-understood and used effectively to secure improved outcomes for all learners, including the most deprived children and young people and those who are looked after.
- All teachers have well-developed skills of data analysis which are focused on improvement.

#### **Next steps:**

- **Continue to develop our pupil voice across the school including the pupil parliament.**
- **Introduction MS forms to support learner visits and mini faculty reviews to triangulate evidence.**
- **To launch our new St Thomas of Aquin's LEARNS policy to the school community and to work collegiately to ensure that this is consistently implemented across the school in all classrooms. This will involve CLPL during in service and CAT sessions to further develop skills in the key areas of the policy.**
- **To continue developing the aesthetics of the school and ensure that display boards are used effectively and are up to date.**

- **Introduction of whole school learner conversation episodes in line with the reporting calendar across all year groups. All teachers including Key adult teachers to support with learner conversations. CLs, PSLs, DHTs to support with targeted intervention. Digital platform to be developed for pupils to record their learner conversations and next steps.**
- To ensure all faculties consistently assess pupils in the BGE based on the CfE benchmarks and in line with the moderation cycle.
- The introduction of a November formal assessment window in the senior phase and prelims pushed back to the end of January in line with the senior phase reporting calendar.
- **The implementation of faculty self-evaluation calendars which will include robust arrangements for standardisation, verification and moderation of standards both within the BGE and Senior Phase to ensure that assessments are reliable and valid.**
- The development of an S1-6 learner journey central tracking system with key groups identified including SIMD, LAAC, young carers and ASN pupils.
- **All faculties across the school to develop a central tracking and monitoring system.**
- Insight meetings with all faculties to ensure that all staff are aware of areas of success and areas requiring development in their subject areas.

### Quality Indicator 3.1: Ensuring wellbeing, equality, and inclusion – Evaluation Level of Good.

- Wellbeing
- Fulfilment of Statutory Duties, including presumption of ASN for Looked After, unless assessed to the contrary, and specific arrangements for support to improve outcomes
- Inclusion and Equality

This indicator focusses 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.

#### Wellbeing

Most staff have a secure shared understanding of the importance of wellbeing and of their responsibilities towards ensuring that young people feel safe, respected and nurtured within the school environment. The school has well-embedded systems in place to promote wellbeing across all aspects of the life of the school as part of universal and targeted support. Young people are encouraged to reflect on and take responsibility for their personal wellbeing through a range of learning experiences embedded in the curriculum and participation in school clubs and activities. School staff are working towards the recognition of pupil achievement in and out of school and encouraging young people who have not engaged to become involved. Most pupils (86%) agreed that the school offered them opportunities to take part in activities beyond the timetabled day and that the school helps them to lead a healthy lifestyle including opportunities for them to get regular exercise. The majority of pupils (65%) agree that the school provides them with opportunities to discuss their achievements with an adult who knows them well. As a follow up the school will roll out a bi-annual survey to gather, share and celebrate these achievements with the wider school community.

#### Universal support

Young people's entitlement to universal support has continued to be delivered through a range of strategies including a structured, relevant, and updated PSE curriculum, punctual House assemblies led by Pupil Support Leaders, DHTs, HTs and partners, daily contact with a KA teacher, wherever possible weekly contact with the Pupil Support Leader through PSE and individual interviews at times of transition. The vertical Key Adult system aims to provide continuity of support and opportunities for learners to review progress with key staff who know them well.

The structured Personal Education Programme provides a clear progression pathway from S1 to S6 and has been recently updated to be relevant to pupil needs. The S1-S6 PSE learning journey promotes physical, mental, emotional health and wellbeing and social interactions including for example support during transition, road safety, friendships, online safety, healthy life choices etc. The delivery of a new S1- S6 Relationship programme of work completed last session in response to pupil consultation was fully embedded this session across 3 curricular areas. This session Equalities units have been embedded across all year groups in the PSE curriculum as well as SLO inputs in the BGE curriculum. In the recent survey 70% of pupils agreed that school helped pupils to lead a healthy lifestyle and 76% stated that they can access regular exercise through school.

Mental Health support is available to pupils, parents and staff through our school-based partner Place2Be. Mental Health awareness is raised through a range of class-based activities during Place2Be Mental Health awareness Week activities. Staff are regularly provided with Place2Be resources as part of their ongoing CLPL programme for partner

schools. This session SfL and Wellbeing staff have accessed CLPL from a range of partners which will allow for the joint delivery of specific programmes such Journey of Hope (Loss and Bereavement) and LIAM. The school is currently developing eco-sensory therapy through the setting up of a flower and vegetable garden offering alternative learning experiences for learners with additional support needs. One member of the SfL faculty has completed training on social therapeutical horticulture and it is hoped that this will contribute to expanding the range of interventions available.

Over the course of the session the support available to pupils has been enhanced by the opening of a well-being hub which can provide a range of individualised or group intervention to young people with social and emotional needs. The Wellbeing Hub started to implement a systematic approach towards the tracking of the health and wellbeing of the young people attending the base with a view to informing development priorities and evaluating the impact of specific intervention.

Several whole staff sessions of CLPL have been delivered by the SfL faculty focusing on Dyslexia/`Literacy difficulties, use of assistive technology on iPad and differentiation during CAT and in service sessions with a view to embedding inclusive practice in classrooms. The Learning and Teaching pupil focus group reported that most teachers create an environment enhancing learning and are positive. There are effective systems in place to support all learners in their class at pathway 1&2 based on the belief that young people learn best in an inclusive classroom environment whilst also recognising the need for additional support strategies. The staged intervention approach is supported by a range of partners. These include the school-based counselling service place2Be, Be Strong, Be You, Ruts, Volunteering Scotland. These strategies ensure that overall attendance remains higher than the national average for all pupils including Care Experienced pupils.

### Targeted Support

Targeted support for learners with ASN is delivered by the Integrated Support Team in collaboration with wide range of partners including Place2Be, Project Scotland, Canongate Youth, 6VT. Through planned targeted partnership working pupils experiencing a range of barriers to learning can access advice and support in line with the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child. Young Persons Plans actively seeking pupil and parent views are reviewed on a regular basis. IST staff have a detailed knowledge of individual pupils and their personal circumstances supporting highly individualised and pupil centred solutions to arising challenges. Detailed and effective tracking and monitoring and systematic targeted tracking of pupils at risk of not achieving leading to individualised intervention r taking place. Pupils feel that their needs are being addressed by staff. Tracking and monitoring, follow up interventions and support plans are set up, monitored, and reviewed regularly by an integrated House Team consisting of the PSL/ SfL / Wellbeing Staff under the guidance and leadership of a DHT. More specialised support requiring partner involvement is available in response to individual concerns through a range of referral pathways. SfL PSLs and CL well-being also provide support and guidance to all staff in relation to individual pupil arrangements and most subject staff show high levels of flexibility and creativity in finding solutions to overcome the barriers to learning of pupils. Most school staff liaise closely and promptly with the Integrated Support Team to address identified issues and work collaboratively with creativity and flexibility to meet the learning and personal needs of learners requiring adjustments. Relevant information relating to pupils' additional support needs are shared appropriately resulting in + data feeling that staff have a strong knowledge and understanding of their child's needs. At BGE and Senior Phase level, PSLs, SfLL, Wellbeing staff and DHTs collegiately work with colleagues and partners in planning flexible pathways and ensuring positive destinations for all pupils. Most parents (71%) believe that their child receives the help they need to do well.

## Transitions

A transition programme from P7 into S1 is in place within the Learning Community and this session has been facilitated by a Transition teacher whose focus has been to support the literacy / numeracy and well-being of groups of identified P7 learners in each of the associated Primary Schools as well as deliver programmes of intervention to identified S1 learners. The transition teacher has also liaised with a wide range of other primary schools and in partnership with SfL and subject specialist staff contributed to the delivery of an enhanced transition programme available to all P7 pupils. Individual transition arrangements were also arranged where required. The needs of young people requiring targeted support are identified at the point of transition through close liaison with associated primary school and the use of CEC documentation. Reviews are held by the Primary schools and attended by SfL/ Transition staff to plan adjustments and additional support prior to the P7 visits in June. The information collated at the point of transition is communicated to all staff and updated regularly through an Integrated Support Sheet.

Regarding Senior Phase transitions the 16+ team meet on a 6 weekly basis led by S4-S6 DHT. It is attended by a range of partners who work collaboratively to ensure that all pupils achieve a sustained positive destination. Last session 98.4 % of school leavers went into training, university. College and employment on leaving school.

## Ethos and Leadership opportunities / Pupil voice

Pupils at BGE and Senior Phase level are provided with a wide range of opportunities to support the ethos of the school. Such opportunities have included volunteering (Project Scotland Partnership) S6 Mentoring, participation in the Equalities group, the Rights Respecting School group, the Pupil Parliament, and a wide range of after school clubs. Senior pupils have been encouraged to lead in key areas such as in class mentoring, equalities, and coaching/ mentoring of younger pupils.

The S1-S6 pupil-led parliament met on a termly basis. The majority of pupils (59%) agreed that the school listened to their views, but a significant minority (24%) were undecided which initiated a review of the systems and procedures.

Areas of good practice highlighted by the Learning and Teaching Pupil focus group included the regular use of end of topic surveys/ evaluation through Forms in curricular areas, opportunities to discuss, debate and share opinions in class, pupil focus groups, options for clubs and the Rights Respecting School.

## Fulfilment of Statutory Duties, including presumption of ASN for Looked After, unless assessed to the contrary, and specific arrangements for support to improve outcomes.

All staff have a good understanding of legislation pertaining to GIRFEC legislation and Child Protection procedures and use the wellbeing concern forms consistently and effectively. This session Staff attended a mandatory CLPL session on CP procedures in addition to the yearly update session in August. Most staff ( 80%) report that they understand how to apply the school's procedures relating to Child Protection and Safeguarding.

The learning Community works in close partnership with parents as first educators, Educational Psychological Services, Educational Welfare Services, CAHMs, 6VT, Place2Be, and Additional support for Learning Services. Pupil and Parents' views are central to the child planning process and pupil-centred plans embedding the principles of Girfec and partnership working are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that all pupils can access their educational opportunities and achieve their full potential.

Staff are proactive in supporting the prompt identification of additional support needs and considering the information provided to them in devising or implementing learning and teaching strategies to meet individual learners' needs. Staff show a solution-focused approach in addressing barriers to learning and respond positively to CLPL supporting

the development of their practice. As a result, most pupils enjoy learning in school (79%), feel that they are sufficiently challenged (85%) and that they are supported by staff in understanding how they are progressing in school (84%)

Child protection and Seemis data recording are in line with guidelines. CEC guidelines pertaining to PPR organisation and storage have been initiated for S1 pupils and will be rolled out for incoming year groups.

Quality Assurance is in place to ensure that wellbeing concern forms are fully completed and stored appropriately once they have been actioned. Next steps should focus on feedback being provided more consistently to staff initiating the referral. Learners' entitlement to assessment Arrangements for SQA NQ are planned well leading to positive outcomes for all learners as per Insight overall data.

### **Inclusion and Equity**

There is evidence that the school is improving outcomes for all pupils in some areas above the national comparator levels. See insight data. All staff have high expectations of pupils (81% of pupils agreed that they are encouraged by staff to do their best), which was also highlighted by the Learning and Teaching Pupil focus group.

97% of S3 pupils are on track to achieve level 3 or better in Numeracy and 94% level 4 or better. In Literacy, 91% of pupils are on track to achieve level 3 or better and 80% level 4 or better.) Strong attainment can also be evidenced at Senior school Level as a result of well-planned curriculum opportunities providing a range of flexible pathways to meet a range of individual needs and aspirations. High quality universal and targeted support allows for strong data in terms of Positive destinations (98.4%),

New learning experiences were created for S1-S6 pupils through a partnership with Volunteering Matters and local business Baillie Gifford which provided opportunities for 15 learners with additional support needs/ or at risk of disengaging from education. 15 pupils were able to access individual tailored and highly supported placements as part of our closing the gap strategy. A further 7 pupils also benefited from a mentoring programme delivered through Volunteering Matters.

This session all staff and pupils were provided with an iPad to promote digital inclusion and a regular programme of CLPL for staff was delivered throughout the year including opportunities to share good practice and a specific focus on iPad accessibility features to promote digital learning and support effectively pupils with additional support needs.

### **BR, BB, BL**

The school ethos and values are well established across the school among pupils, parents, and staff. Most staff (82%) report that their work is underpinned by the school's visions and values and feel that young people are treated fairly and with respect (86%). 89% of staff agree that pupils are encouraged and supported to treat each other with respect.

Almost all staff feel they have a clear understanding of the impact of positive relationships on attainment and improving outcomes for young people and are committed to the principles of the Better Relationships, Better Behaviour, Better Learning policy.

The school's better relationships, better learning, and better behaviour policy emphasises the importance of restorative practice, restorative conversations, and getting back on track through staged intervention. The policy was updated during the 2022-2023 session. Staff and pupils' views were sought on existing areas of strength, as well as areas for development. The clarity and consistency of the system were highlighted with many citing that the approach fostered positive relationships and worked to support staff and

pupils with steps and strategies when relationships temporarily broke down. Staff were also enthusiastic about using Seemis to record and manage behaviour-based referrals and favoured the implementation of an on-call system to support with instances of dysregulated behaviour.

As outlined in the Pupil Survey learners felt that within a supportive learning environment, they could access support and guidance from teachers. 72% of pupils reported that they could identify a member of staff they could speak to when upset and 75% of pupils said that they felt comfortable approaching a member of staff with questions. Pupil Support Leaders, Support for Learning & Wellbeing staff DHTs, and HT are actively involved in supporting young people and their families when challenges arise. Through intensive one to one support, pupils experiencing challenges are encouraged to reflect on behaviour, accept responsibility, understand the impact of their actions, and seek solutions in accordance with the principles of restorative justice. Individual target setting and individualised support plans are used widely to work towards changes in patterns of behaviour and sustained positive impact. Arrangements are reviewed regularly to reflect changes in circumstances and progress made. 73% of pupils agreed that staff helped young people to be responsible for their own behaviour.

The pupil survey shows that almost all pupils (89%) feel safe, secure and treated fairly and with respect by staff (83%) and peers (71%). 85% of pupils report that help them to understand and respect other pupils. This is in line with parental view which show that 87% of parents feel that staff treat their child fairly and with respect and that their child is safe at school (84%) and that the school encourages young people to treat each other with respect. However, a minority of pupils (47%) stated that the school deals well with any bullying highlighting the need to communicate investigation outcomes to pupils more promptly and with greater consistency. Most parents (83%) report that their child likes being at school.

The Learning and Teaching Pupil focus group identified other areas of strength such as staff being welcoming, approachable and friendly, SLT greeting pupils at the door and staff being responsive to issues arising. The caring nature of the culture with a focus on pupil welfare was also highlighted and the overall ethos described as positive with a feeling that all teachers wished the best for their pupils. Pupils commented on the dedication of their teachers and commented on the relaxed environment which gave learners autonomy in how they wanted to learn. Pupils felt comfortable asking questions to consolidate knowledge and understanding.

### Equalities

The St Thomas of Aquin's Equality Group is pupil led by three S6 Captains. The group and school community have shown a shared vision of celebrating diversity within our community whilst also raising awareness of local and global issues. Captains have presented to their peers and organised whole school activities via our Key Adult programme including Show Racism the Red Card – Wear Red Day, Dyslexia Awareness Week, Neurodiversity Week, International Women's Day, Anti-bullying Week, Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller Month. Arrangements have been made available to support the cultural and religious traditions of other faiths led by volunteer members of staff.

The CEC Equalities review undertaken this session identified areas of strengths such as pupils feeling represented, treated equally and able to voice their concerns. Areas for development included a streamlined way of reporting concerns to staff and further embedding of diversity and inclusion themes. Areas of strength identified by staff included. a shared strong of belonging to the school community, the celebration of the school diversity recognised as being at the core of its identity, positivity from staff and Senior Leaders, and a strong caring ethos. Areas for development included increased clarity on the certain aspects of the Ethos and Equality policy pertaining to the response to misogynist language for example as well as the continuation of the focus on decolonisation of the curriculum and cultural inclusion.

## Rights Respecting School

The whole school community is in the process of developing a deeper understanding of the UNCRC and its associated terminology. Staff are becoming more confident in referring to them and displaying articles in the context of the classroom. Pupils are increasingly able to discuss different rights and entitlements and understand their universal principle. This process is supported through weekly meetings of a Pupil Steering group who have raised awareness of UNCRC by presenting 2 pupil assemblies, organised displays around the school building and planned and delivered a whole school rights day. CLPL has been delivered to the whole staff on the RRSA and faculties have completed a return highlighting the rights embedded in the delivery of their curriculum. In Modern Studies S1 unit of work has been dedicated to learning about rights including UNCRC. Information is shared regularly with the wider school community via a dedicated section on the school website and a twitter page. A survey has been completed by staff and pupils to identify further areas for development next session.

## PEF

Most staff (79%) report that they have a clear understanding of the social, cultural and economic context of the school and report using information including data effectively to identify and reduce inequalities in children and young people's outcomes.

Targeted support in Literacy, Numeracy and Wellbeing has been delivered to S1-S3 pupils from SIMD 1-2 and FME with a view to close the poverty-related attainment gap. Strategies have included individual coaching sessions on a 2/3 basis, support from the Learning and Nurture Hub PEF coach, a 6-week numeracy programme. PEF coaches ensure that identified pupils are provided with the necessary equipment for school and that pupils and families are supported with clothing, the application for free bus pass or other arrangements if required. A daily breakfast club promoting healthy options is also available to all pupils as part of universal support with a view to supporting attendance. Using the Shanarri indicators, pupils feed-back has highlighted that the majority of pupils coached feel safe and listened to. Relevant information is shared with staff on a termly basis through the staff bulletin.

### Features of highly-effective practice:

- The whole learning community has a shared understanding of wellbeing and the children's rights.
- All stakeholders promote a climate where children and young people feel safe and secure
- All staff and partners model behaviour which promotes and supports the wellbeing of all.
- All staff and partners are sensitive and responsive to the wellbeing of each individual child and colleague.
- Staff, children and young people know, understand and use the wellbeing indicators as an integral feature of school life.
- Staff and partners have created an environment where children and young people feel listened to and are secure in their ability to discuss personal and sensitive aspects of their lives because they feel cared about.
- All staff and partners take due account of the legislative framework related to wellbeing, equality and inclusion.
- All staff engage in regular professional learning to ensure they are fully up-to-date with local, national and, where appropriate, international legislation affecting the rights, wellbeing and inclusion of all children and young people.
- The curriculum provides children and young people with well-planned and progressive opportunities to explore diversity and multi-faith issues, and to challenge racism and religious intolerance.
- Children and young people are knowledgeable about equalities and inclusion. They feel able to challenge discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance when they come across it.
- Outdoor spaces are used effectively to promote positive relationships and wellbeing. Staff take account of research linking benefits of outdoor learning and green space with wellbeing

### Next Steps:

- **Whole school CLPL in nurture training and trauma informed practice to further enhance inclusive practice across all curricular areas and a pilot to evaluate the sense of well-being across the school community** (including pupils, parents and staff), identify areas of strength and good practice and areas for development.
- A focus on ensuring that a revised schedule of assemblies led by HT, DHT, PSLs and other partners as appropriate contributes to improve the sense of belonging of learners to a specific House.
- **Emphasis on strengthening the pastoral role of KA teachers who will undertake learner conversations as part of the Tracking and Monitoring follow up according to a planned and systematic timeline and will develop an overview of the learners' journey from S1 to S6 in their Key Adult class. Relaunch of the wellbeing outcomes to staff and pupils to be used as an evaluation tool during learner conversations.**
- A termly schedule of meetings for the pupil parliament (BGE/ Senior Phase) will strengthen pupil voice and work towards young people feeling that their views are listened to (currently 59%) and taken into account (currently 49%)
- **Review of the 3.1 Quality Assurance calendar to ensure that pupils' needs are met with greater consistency in classrooms and evaluating the impact of the strategies used at pathway 1&2 prior to targeted intervention as well as the further integration of pupil Support Services to reflect to streamline referral processes and capitalise on the full range of skills, expertise and knowledge within the team.**
- Further whole school CLPL on Circle Resource to ensure that pathway 1 supports are fully embedded in all classrooms.
- Element of personalisation and choice to be introduced into the PSE curriculum at Senior Phase to ensure that the programme is relevant and meet local needs as identified by members of the learning community and stakeholder.
- **Launch of a whole school initiative (Mentors for Violence Prevention) led and delivered by S6 peer mentors to coincide with the relaunch of an anti-bullying policy**
- Piloting of a pupil-managed system allowing for anonymous reporting of bullying instances will be piloted.
- Focus on systems and procedures to improve the quality consistency of the feed-back provided to pupils, staff and parents following on from SEEMIS referrals, wellbeing concern forms and the recording of incidents on the SEEMIS Equalities and Management module.
- Transition project with associated primary schools
- **Embedding of PPR guidelines,**
- CLPL for all IST staff and time to be identify for PSLs to update their individual House records ahead of ScotExed Census.
- **Review of Health Care Plans and medical information**
- Follow up CLPL focusing on the teaching and learning of rights across the curriculum, establish pupil-focused groups to seek place pupils' views at the centre of RRSA towards the school's Silver and Gold accreditation as a Rights Respecting School, create opportunities for pupils to build their knowledge and understanding of UNCRC

## Quality Indicator 3.2: Raising attainment and achievement – Evaluation Level of Very Good

- Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy
- Attainment over time
- Overall Quality of learners' achievement
- Equity for all learners, including specific reference to Looked After children and other Equity cohorts

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.

### Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy – St Thomas of Aquin's S3 Numeracy and Literacy CfE levels for the last 3 years

#### Broad General Education

St Thomas of Aquin's pupils attain well in Literacy and these high standards are sustained over time. Over the last 3 years, almost all S3 pupils achieve Third Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Level or better in Literacy. In the last 3 years, the majority of S3 pupils achieve Fourth CfE level in all Literacy. The systems at St Thomas supports these high levels of Literacy attainment. The school continues to provide SRA classes to pupils who have a standardised reading score of 85 or under and this programme is co-ordinated between Support for Learning and the English Faculty. Maths and English S1 & S2 sets are constructed to support a smaller pupil-teacher ratio where necessary. All pupils in S1 complete a reading and research unit which uses resources from most CfE areas to teach them skills useful for pre-reading and research, this allows pupils to develop literacy skills relevant for all subjects. The English and Literacy Faculty have also developed IDL projects with Science (S1) and Social Subjects (S2) which enable progression in research and writing skills.

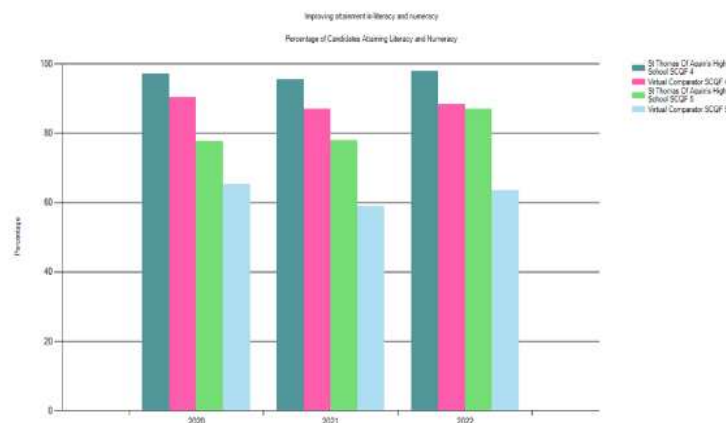
St Thomas of Aquin's pupils attain well in Numeracy and sustaining these high standards over time. Over the last 3 years, almost all S3 pupils achieve Third Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Level or better in Numeracy. In the last 3 years, the majority of S3 pupils achieve Fourth CfE level in Numeracy. Through a variety of experiences, Maths Week Scotland, Number Day, and National Numeracy Day St Thomas continues to raise the profile of Numeracy for pupils. A Numeracy booklet to support consistent approaches to the Numeracy is in place across the school. Parents of S1 pupils at risk of not achieving Level 3 Numeracy are invited to a parental engagement event at the school and this is also supported by a S1 Numeracy catch-up club led by S6 pupils from October onwards (these types of events are now in place for Literacy at St Thomas of Aquin's). In line with teaching methods introduced across the St Thomas Learning Community, the Mathematics and Numeracy Faculty have implemented SEAL strategies within the lower ability sets taking into consideration barriers to learning.

S3 March 2023	% on track to achieve Third level or better	% on track to achieve Fourth level
Numeracy	97% of pupils on track to achieve Third Level or better (135 out of 139)	88 % of pupils on track to achieve Fourth Level or better (123 out of 139)
Literacy	91% of pupils on track to achieve Third level of better (126 out of 139)	80% of pupils on track to achieve Fourth Level (111 out of 139 pupils)

S3 April 2022	% on track to achieve Third level or better	% on track to achieve Fourth level
Numeracy	99.3% of pupils on track to achieve Third level or better (136 out of 137)	97.1% of pupils on track to achieve Fourth Level (133 out of 137 pupils)
Literacy	96% of pupils on track to achieve Third Level of better (131 out of 137 pupils)	86% of pupils on track to achieve Fourth Level (118 out of 137 pupils)

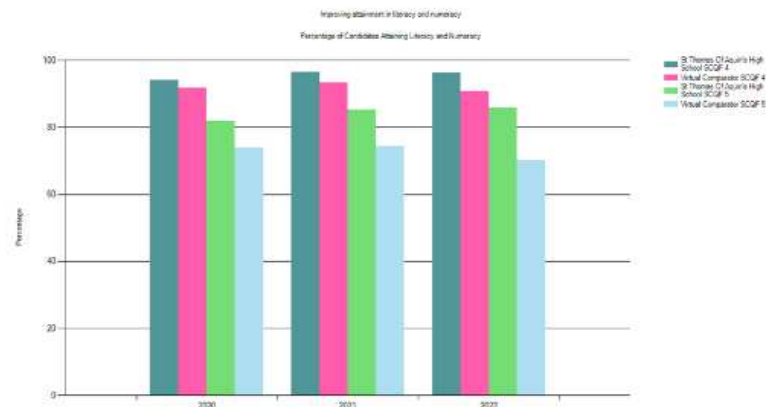
S3 2021	% on track to achieve Third level or better	% on track to achieve Fourth level
Numeracy	97.8% will achieve Level 3 and above	85.4% will achieve Level 4
Literacy	95% will achieve Level 3 and above	82% will achieve Level 4

#### 2021-22 Performance of S4 candidates in Literacy and Numeracy based on S4 cohort numbers.



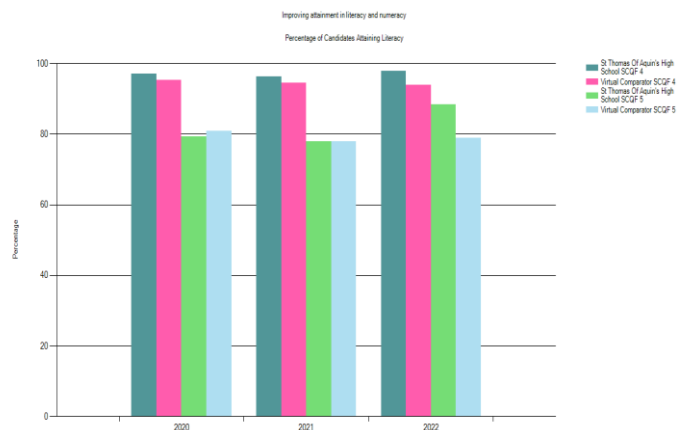
2022 S4 Level 4 in Literacy and Numeracy is at **97.83%** which improves from the 2021 statistic of 95.59%. St Thomas of Aquin's Level Literacy and Numeracy combines statistic is **9.41% above the Virtual Comparator**. 2022 S4 Level 5 in Literacy and Numeracy is at **86.69%** which improves from the 2021 statistic of 77.94%. St Thomas of Aquin's Level Literacy and Numeracy combines statistic is **23.48% above the Virtual Comparator**.

#### 2021-22 Performance of S5 candidates in Literacy and Numeracy based on S4 cohort numbers.



2022 S5 Level 4 in Literacy and Numeracy stands at **96.3%** and S5 Level 5 in Literacy and Numeracy stands at **85.93%**. The Level 4 statistic is 5% above the VC and the Level 5 statistic is over 15% above the VC.

### 2021-22 Performance of S4 candidates attaining Level 4 and Level 5 Literacy



2022 S4 Level 4 in Literacy is at **97.83%** which improves from last year's statistic of 96.32%. The 2022 S4 Level 5 in Literacy stands at **88.41%** which is an increase of 10% from the school's stats last year. Both Levels outperform the VC.

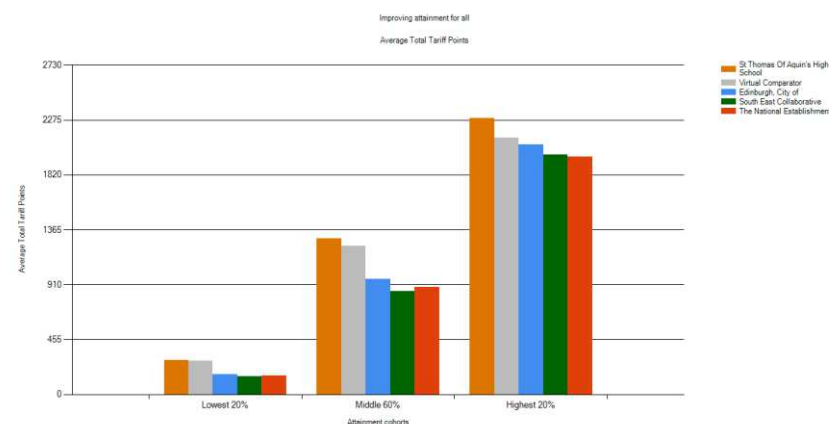
### Attainment over time

The attainment of pupils at St Thomas' is very good and the results over the last 3 years compared to the Virtual Comparator exemplify this (<https://www.st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/St-Thomas-of-Aquins-Insight-analysis-2020-21.pdf>). The school has self-evaluated Learning, Teaching and Assessment as Good

and is focussing on the consistency needed in every Faculty to achieve Very Good. There is a significant uptake of staff working as SQA markers which helps support our pupils' understanding of courses and assessment standards. Curricular Leaders and Faculty staff have benefited from the SQA alternative certificate assessment and internal assessment systems to support their professional understanding of SQA National Qualifications. There is a strategic approach to coursing by Curricular Leaders, the Integrated Support Team and Deputes Headteachers, led by The Headteacher, to support pupils' attainment. An annual review of the school's coursing timeline ensures deadlines are met timeously and in session 2022-23 the timetable has been brought forward by 2 weeks to support the S1-S2 pupil learning experience.

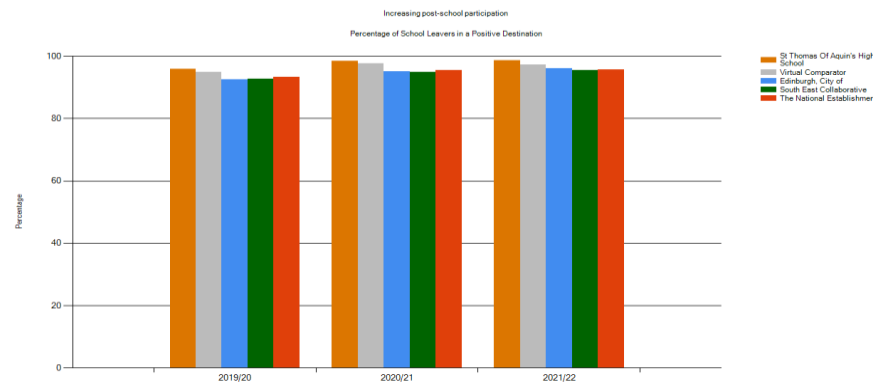
The Senior Leadership Team, Curricular Leaders, and the Integrated Support Team know the pupils of St Thomas' very well. Changes in SLT remits has supported the 2.3 Depute to have overall responsibility in tracking S1-S6 year groups. This move for session 2023-24 will support the DHT in using the school's Edict tracking system and the existing collegiate staged intervention process to help pupils who are underachieving to identify their next steps. St Thomas continues celebrating pupils' success through the use of Faculty corridor notice boards, congratulatory texts sent home to parents, and the increase of pupil certificates at the award ceremonies. Most Curricular Leaders have their individualised tracking systems in place and liaise well with Pupil Support Leaders to ensure the needs of learners are met and early intervention packages are implemented where need be. Faculty tracking will be supported by the newly created Faculty self-evaluation calendar. Daily Key Adult time will continued be used to discuss tracking/reporting results for all S1-S3 pupils.

### Improving attainment for all – average total tariff scores: St Thomas' outperforms all comparators for the Lowest 20%, Middle 60%, and Highest 20%



For session 2022-23, the school implemented an attainment checklist programme that ensures all Curricular Leaders, Integrated Support Leaders, Depute Headteachers are working collegiately to consistently raise whole school attainment, and this has now been formalised into a wider self-evaluation calendar. Curricular and Pastoral Leaders meet with the Headteacher and Depute Headteacher of S4-S6 to analyse the SQA Data in September of each year. For session 2023-24, All Faculties will invite the HT to a September insight Faculty meeting in which faculty colleagues have identified good practice in attainment and areas for improvement. Depute Head Teachers will lead on their specific QI area for analysis and improvement. Post prelim and estimate analysis are shared with all the Leadership Team and Teaching colleagues giving an overview of pupil performance to be evaluated with SQA exam results.

The school is very pleased with the continued improvement in the positive destination statistics. In 2022-23 the school achieved a positive destination statistic of 98.59%, outperforming the virtual comparator, the City of Edinburgh, The South East Collaborative, and the national averages.

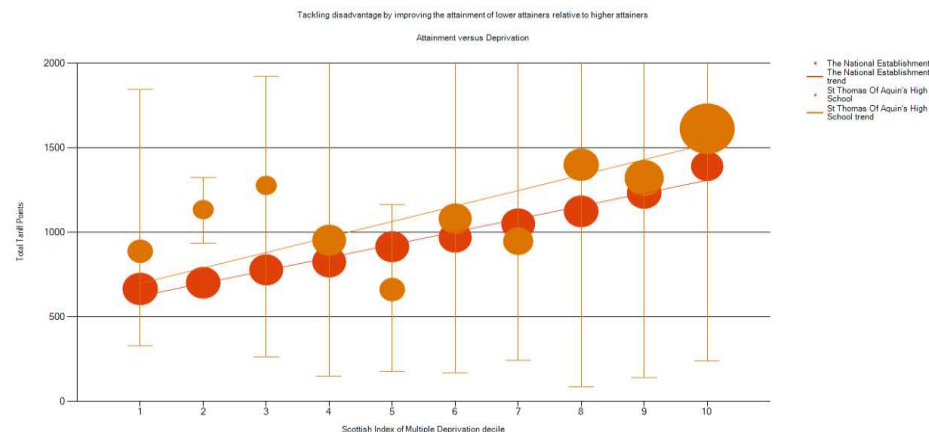


### Overall Quality of Learners achievement

Pupils at St Thomas' are given the opportunity to be successful, confident, and responsible in the life of the school, the wider community and as global citizens. The Headteacher, HWB co-ordinator, and Active Schools co-ordinator have implemented a MS Teams survey (twice yearly) to record and track young people's achievements. This analysis will start to be annually tracked and celebrated in Faculties and whole school systems. The school is working well to provide as many lunchtime and afterschool clubs as possible (<https://www.st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/St-Thomas-of-Aquins-School-Clubs.pdf>) and groups such the climate action group, caritas group, and S6 leadership group supports the inclusive ethos of the school. The HT also communicates with parents via a weekly school briefing and this engagement strategy often includes pupil successes and achievements. The Headteacher along with Science, Modern Languages, Maths, Computing Science, Integrated support Faculties use School Twitter accounts to celebrate the successes and achievements of pupils. Through the redrafted St Thomas' annual Junior and Senior Awards pupils' achievements awards have increased and are contextualised in Curricular, Sports, Arts, and Charity areas. The school uses accreditation in Caritas and Duke of Edinburgh to ensure pupils undertaking charity work are positively recognised within the school. The school 2 comprehensive newsletters complement the weekly HT parent briefing and is shared with the school community to celebrate the work of as many pupils as possible.

### Equity for all learners, including specific reference to Looked After children and other Equity cohorts.

St Thomas of Aquin's continues to strategically support all pupils to close the poverty-related attainment gap. The below Insight graph demonstrates that St Thomas of Aquin's outperforms the National SIMD attainment averages in SIMD 1,2,3,4,6,8,9, and 10. In areas where the school does not pupils are identified and coursed to support their attainment and achievement in the following year.



St Thomas of Aquin's is very proud that pupils in SIMD 1, 2, and 3 are outperforming the National SIMD comparators and that on average they are achieving higher attainment tariff points than the National comparators in SIMD 4-6. There is a whole school focus at St Thomas of Aquin's supporting Pupils achieving 5 National Qualifications at National 3,4, and 5 Level to support their progression in the senior phase. Parents are presented with a parent-friendly attainment summary every year to support their understanding of how the school is universally supporting pupil attainment and achievement. This has been a piece of collaborative work with the Parent Council and has been in place since 2017.

The percentage of St Thomas of Aquin's in S4 who move onto S5 and S6 is very high. Only a small number of pupils leave at the end of S4. The Depute Head of S4-S6 works with the 16+ positive destinations group to support pupils' securing positive destinations. The Skills Development Scotland partnership with St Thomas of Aquin's is highly valued and is a key stakeholder in the success of 98.58% of pupils in February 2022 achieving a positive destination. St Thomas of Aquin's is very proud of our 3-year trend of outperforming all metrics in terms of positive destinations. The majority of pupils at St Thomas of Aquin's go to further and higher education on leaving school with a minority leaving to enter employment.

#### Features of highly effective practice:

- Almost all children and young people are attaining appropriate levels and a few have exceeded these.
- Attainment levels in literacy and numeracy are a central feature of the school's priorities for improvement and are raising attainment.
- Very good progress is demonstrated through robust tracking of attainment over time in all curriculum areas and at all stages.
- The school's data demonstrates our current learners are making very good progress.
- Confident teacher judgements together with benchmarking and an appropriate range of assessments are leading to improvements in attainment.
- All young people are successful in moving on to a sustained positive destination on leaving school.
- Children and young people are fully engaged in their learning and participate in decision-making about their learning pathways and future career aspirations.
- The school empowers children and young people to have a say in the quality of their learning experiences and how to improve.
- Attendance levels are high and improving. Exclusion rates are low and inclusion is successful for all.
- There is evidence that children and young people are applying and increasing their achievements through active participation in their local community.

#### Next Steps:

- Emphasise the St Thomas of Aquin's attainment strategy of 5 @ Level 3 (95%), Level 4 (90%) in S4, and aspirational target of 65% of S4 pupils achieving 5 National 5 passes (**SIP 23-24 3.2**)

- Faculties to track SIMD 1+2, Care Exp, and LAAC pupils (**SIP 23-24 1.5**)
- Tracking of S1-S6 Pupil achievement in Key Adult classes (**SIP 23-24 2.2**)
- Strategically led Faculty Tracking of SIMD 1+2, LAAC, Care experienced pupils in place by DHT 2.3
- Share S1 Tracking information with Associated Primaries every February and share Learning Community moderation of BGE Literacy and Numeracy Levels (**SIP 23-24 3.2**)
  
- Literacy and Numeracy leads to share strategic work at the Learning, Teaching, and Assessment working group. (**2.3**)
- The Tracking of CfE 4 Capacities in S1-S6 Faculty notice boards (**3.2**)
- S1-S6 Skills tracking by DHT 2.3 (**3.2**)

## Quality Indicator 2.2: The Curriculum (Learning Pathways) – No Level evaluation required

- **Rationale and design**
- **Development of the curriculum**
- **Key area for CEC analysis and evaluation - Learning pathways**
- **Skills for learning, life and work**

This indicator highlights the importance of placing the needs of learners at the centre of curriculum design and development. The structure and delivery of the curriculum should take good account of local and national circumstances. The curriculum is the totality of learning experiences across the four contexts as delivered by the school and its partners. An effective curriculum results in strong outcomes for all learners.

### **Rationale and design**

The aim of St Thomas' curriculum is to fully prepare all pupils at St Thomas' to take their place in a modern society and economy through experiencing a challenging and engaging curriculum. The curriculum provides a framework for pupils to gain knowledge and understanding in a breadth of curricular areas and develop their skills for learning, skills for life, and skills for work. St Thomas' curriculum is coherent, relevant, and inclusive which allows a pupil to progress from S1 through to their specific leaving year experiencing high quality learning and teaching which will lead to a positive destination.

St Thomas' curriculum aims to develop a coherent, relevant, engaging and inclusive pupil experience that builds on prior learning so that pupils become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors. The curriculum supports pupils to achieve high standards in Literacy and Numeracy which is evidenced in the September 2022 Insight analysis: (<https://www.st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/St-Thomas-of-Aquins-Insight-analysis-September-2022.pdf>) and ensure they experience a holistic framework in Health and Wellbeing. The school is committed to closing the attainment gap through a curriculum that enables pupils to progress through and achieve CfE levels and National Qualifications when they are ready to do so. Pupils will experience a curriculum model that has a distinct Broad General Education (S1-S3) and Senior Phase (S4-6). Pupils will move from experiencing 19 subjects in S1 and S2, to 14 subjects in S3, to sitting a blend of 7 National Qualifications and bespoke courses in S4 and again a blend 5 National Qualifications and courses in S5. In S6 there is a range of flexible pathways to support the individual needs of pupils to ensure the best positive and sustainable destination beyond St Thomas'

### **Development of the curriculum**

#### **The Broad General Education (S1-S3)**

In S1-S3, pupils will experience a broad range of subjects in S1 and S2 with personalisation and choice occurring in S3. Courses and programmes will generally follow Level 3 and Level 4 experiences and outcomes and, where appropriate, National 5 outcomes. The Broad General Education at St Thomas' supports pupils to experience breadth and depth in the 8 curricular areas. In S1 and S2, pupils will experience as full a range of subjects within curricular areas as possible in line with the staffing complement of the school. In S1-S3 Modern Languages, pupils will study Spanish and French. Pupils who already have one of these languages as their first language, the school will try to meet the needs of such learners. Personalisation and choice in the Broad General Education will start at the beginning of S3. The course choice meetings for S3 personalisation and choice will take place in January of S2.

#### **The Senior Phase (S4-S6)**

Pupils in S4 will study 7 National Qualifications. The course choice meetings for S4 National Qualifications will take place in February of S3. S4 pupils will have the ability to experience JET courses and skills for life and work courses to complement their learning experience. Pupils in S5 will generally study 5 subjects depending on progression from their S4 National Qualifications. Some pupils may benefit from pursuing a complement of school-based subjects and a college placement and work experience. The school will

work with neighbourhood schools to support pupils in gaining their optimum course choices. There will be opportunities for pupils to sign up for the JET, Career Academy, and Career Ready programmes. Pupils in S6 will have the flexibility to pursue a range and number of subjects and experiences at the school and neighbourhood schools, as well as opting to attend at College, work experience, and for volunteering opportunities. This flexibility will allow pupils to experience a blend of subjects and experiences to ensure a sustained, positive destination when leaving school. As a general rule of thumb, pupils studying at Advanced Higher level only will study 3 subjects; pupils studying a blend of Advanced Higher and Higher subjects will study 4 subjects; pupils studying a blend of Higher and National 5 or National 4 subjects will study 5 subjects. The course choice meetings for S4 and S5 pupils will take place in early March.

### Learning pathways

St Thomas' curriculum provides flexible learning pathways which lead to raising attainment through meeting the needs and aspirations of all our learners. Learning pathways through the school curriculum, neighbourhood schools, school-college partnership and work experience support pupils to build on their prior learning and ensure engaging appropriate progression for all learners. There is a clear rationale for providing pathways for pupils in the school curriculum which is articulated in the curriculum policy. Learning pathways are based on the experiences and outcomes and design principles of progression, coherence, breadth, depth, personalisation and choice, challenge and enjoyment and relevance.

Faculties use information from primary to secondary transition to support continuity of learning and the school is strategically focussing on sharing Level 3 and Level 4 exemplars for pupils and parents – using the faculty corridor notice boards and school website. By the end of S3, most young people are undertaking learning in the fourth level of the BGE. Faculty BGE moderation is a focus in the newly drafted Faculty self-evaluation calendars and will continue to enhance staff understanding of Levels.

St Thomas continues to ensure that pupils receive their PE, RE, and 1+2 Languages entitlements and to support the Faith based entitlement of RE in S5 and S6, the Curricular Leader of Religious Education works with The Sisters of Mercy, The Archdiocese of Edinburgh and St Andrews, SCES, and Net Ministries in planning Senior retreats.

As a school with a S1 and S2 intake fixed at 140, St Thomas' has never reached a school roll of over 800 in the past decade and this does have an impact on the senior phase curriculum offer. Senior and Faculty Leaders meet on an annual basis to reflect, review, and where possible enhance the senior phase curriculum offer. The HT is very aware of the sustainability of courses and pathways for pupils and this critical focus lies at the centre of ensuring new courses and experiences are implemented. The Broad General Education delivers as many Curricular areas and specific subjects as possible and although there is not space for bespoke achievement experiences the school has worked hard to plan and implement as large a lunchtime and after-school club calendar as possible (<https://www.st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/St-Thomas-of-Aquins-School-Clubs.pdf>) and pupils positively refer to these opportunities in the 2023 pupil survey (<https://www.st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Draft-S1-S6-2023-Pupil-Survey-Analysis.pdf>).

The school timetable is strategically led by The Computer Science Curricular Leader who works collaboratively with senior leaders and all staff to ensure as many pupils as possible receive their preferred curricular choices. The work of the timetabler should not be underestimated to the strategic and operational curriculum experience of staff and pupils. Working with the HT in Faculty meetings in November, the timetabler has been able to complete annual TTs in March which has not only supported a more meaningful May experience for new S4 pupils but also allows the senior DHT to work with SCP and Neighbourhood school in offers that are needed at and can be offered by St Thomas of Aquin's. Skills Development Scotland work with year groups (in PSE and via the PSE curriculum) to ensure that personalisation and choice is understood in the context of the world of work and the school's sustained positive destinations stands at a 98.4% accuracy. The Parent Council is working with the S4-6 DHT to identify interested parents who are willing to support pupils with their field of work and experience and a sub-group of the Parent Council has taken this work on during session 2022-23.

### Summary of SCP:

**College:** Courses at Edinburgh College can be supported through Column C – Travel Column – Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. There will also be courses relevant to vocational opportunities – not timetabled during Travel Column C – which may involve whole days out. Edinburgh College offers course available in the evening but with direct curricular and/or vocational opportunities Pupils in S6 will have the flexibility of pursuing a range and number of subjects and experiences at the school and neighbourhood schools, College, work experience, and volunteering opportunities.

**Neighbourhood Schools:** City of Edinburgh schools work together to support S5 and S6 pupils who wish to study particular subjects or particular level of subjects. St Thomas' regularly liaises with Borroughmuir, JGHS and Firhill to support pupils learning experience.

**Work Experience:** Pupils can arrange their own work experience in S4-6 to gain experience in particular career areas or develop skills to support them beyond S6. St Thomas' continues to provide a S4 work experience week to support pupils in early identification of work, skills, and experiences that support their learning pathway.

### **Skills for learning, life and work**

The leadership team at St Thomas' support and develop pupils understanding and opportunities with their skills for learning, life and work. Opportunities to work out with the school building whether that is in the local, national, or international context are being developed and enhanced year by year. St Thomas' works to ensure there is an equity for pupils to learn in motivating contexts for learning. The high expectations we have for pupils supports them experiencing increasing levels of challenge as they develop skills for learning, life and work. Our staff and partners provide well-planned opportunities for learners to develop an awareness of the world of work.

### **Next Steps:**

- Sharing of BGE Level 3 and Level 4 exemplars on the school website
- Continue to evaluate S4-6 coursing to support introduction of courses to improve breadth and depth of coursing.

## Quality Indicator 2.7: Partnerships (Parental engagement) – No Level evaluation required

- The development and promotion of partnerships
- Collaborative learning and improvement
- Impact on learners

This indicator aims to capture the school's success in developing and maintaining strong partnership approaches which improve outcomes for learners and continued self-improvement for the school and community. All partnerships are based on mutual trust and respect for the particular contribution each partner brings. Partnerships are integral to the way a highly-effective school works.

### Progress and impact:

#### The development and promotion of partnerships

The 2023 Parent survey evidences that most Parents are enthusiastic supporters of their child's learning and wellbeing at St Thomas of Aquin's. 83% of Parents state their children like being at St Thomas of Aquin's, 78% of Parents state their children are making good progress at the school, 80% of the Parents state the school is well led and managed, and with an overall 77% satisfaction rate for the school in the 2023 Parent surveys the school continues to get it right for pupils and parents (<https://www.st-thomas-of-aquins.org.uk/bulletin/weekly-bulletin/> ).

Most parents welcome the regular feedback on their child's progress. The BGE Tracking Reports and 2 S1-S3 BGE Parents Evenings supports parents with their understanding of how their child is progressing throughout the Broad General Education. Senior Phase Parents meetings along with 2 Tracking Reports and 1 Full Report, Parent Council meetings and SLT reports, Christmas and Easter Music recitals, as well as school social gatherings continue to support parent participation in the school community. Senior leaders wish to involve parents and carers more meaningfully in creating priorities for improving the school and the 2023 surveys show that the Parent Council and its sub-groups can enhance the collaborative work that is already in existence. The headteacher wishes to hear as many parent vices as possible and has succeeded in achieving a 189 parental return survey around (55%+ of Parents) and has summarised all findings into key priority themes which will help shape the Parent Council agenda focus for next session and beyond.

#### Collaborative learning and improvement

Where and when appropriate, pastoral and senior leaders, Curricular Leaders, and Pupil Support Officers meet with groups and individual parents to increase their confidence in how to support their children's learning. Literacy, Numeracy and Additional Support for Learning meetings along with Child Planning Meetings have had a positive impact on raising attainment and achievement particularly in the Broad General Education. The Business Manager has strategically worked with members of the Parent Council to support the school improvement agenda in the making the school playground as inviting as possible and in re-evaluating and improving junior and senior awards ceremonies through streamlining yet increasing the Faculty award structure.

Most parents feel encouraged to take part in the work of the Parent Council and the majority agree that they are kept up to date with the work of the Parent Council. The Parent Council is looking for a new chair to take on a small contingent of Parent Council members and there is still work to do on ensuring the group reflect the diversity of families in the school community. The senior leadership team attend all Parent Council meetings are most parents appreciate the regular communication and consultation on attainment, achievement, and policy updates.

#### Impact on learners

There is a desire from senior leaders and parents to work collaboratively together to enhance the wellbeing, achievement, and positive destinations for all pupils. The new Chair is invited to co-create planning with the HT that takes on the key messages from the 2023 parent surveys.

- Parent Council to support pupils' positive destinations via individual Parent volunteer support system for pupils.
- Parent Council to support fundraiser for school pupil initiatives

### Self-Evaluation 2022 – 2023

	Quality Indicator	School Self – Evaluation 2022 - 23	Inspection Evaluation (If during 2018-19)
1.3	Leadership of Change	<u>Good</u>	
2.3	Learning, Teaching and Assessment	Good	
3.1	Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion	<u>Good</u>	
3.2	Raising Attainment and Achievement	Very Good	
2.3	The Curriculum – Learning pathways	No Evaluation Level required	
2.7	Partnerships – Parental engagement	No Evaluation Level required	

**Pupil Equity Fund**  
**St Thomas of Aquin's RC High School 2022-23**  
**Strategic Lead: HT and DHT 3.1**

**Overall Goal:** Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.

<b>Pupil Equity Coaches:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review pupil list and allocate coaches</li> <li>Curriculum support drive</li> <li>Analysis of H&amp;W/Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work collaboratively with peers and colleagues to develop a supportive coaching/mentoring approach to support FME pupils (18 pupils)</li> <li>Spreadsheet shared with staff. Spreadsheet contains PEF, FME and LAAC pupils. Improve communications and engagement and clarify key messages.</li> <li>Monthly pupil meetings - achieving equity: ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap Tackling needs early - it aims to ensure needs are identified as early as possible to avoid bigger concerns or problems developing.</li> <li>Child-focused - it ensures the child or young person – and their family – is at the centre of decision-making and the support available to them.</li> <li>Wellbeing indicators which help make it easier for children and families and the people working with them to discuss how a child or young person is doing at a point in time and if there is a need for support.</li> <li></li> </ul>	LR, JL, MW	Oct 2022 (Ongoing)
<b>Pupil Support Officer</b>	Position to be reviewed and modified to support Quality Indicator 2.7, specifically in developing and maintaining strong partnership approaches via a remit closely linked with the Pupil Support Team.		
<b>Wellbeing through Place2Be</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place2be works with pupils to support their targeted well-being needs</li> </ul> <b>In Autumn</b> Place2Talk: 29 different students attended 62 sessions Assessments: 4 new students were referred to the service 9 assessments completed One to One counselling: 10 students attended 41 counselling sessions		

	<p><b>In Spring</b>  Place2Talk:  25 different students attended 39 sessions  Assessments:  6 new students were referred to the service, assessed and signposted to counselling support  One to One counselling:  10 students attended 40 one to one counselling sessions</p>		
<p><b>Universal support for pupils via Uniform and Breakfast clubs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school provides a universal free breakfast club and uniform support system to ensure all pupils have the best start to the school learning day.</li> <li>• When the school is at full of pupils the breakfast club is used on a daily basis by between 70 to 80 pupils.</li> </ul>		