

Standards & Quality Report 2021/22



Falkirk Council
Children's Services

SQR 2021/22 – Prefacing Text

The purpose of the annual Standards and Quality Report (SQR) is to record the successes and achievements in delivering improvement relating to the identified priorities in the improvement plan 2021/22.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, there has continued to be some disruption to the continuity of learning. The priorities identified in the improvement plan for session 2020-2021 continued to be progressed in session 2021-2022. Importantly, staff at all levels continued to undertake and participate in a range of professional learning and development to support both the identified priorities of the improvement plan and, digital learning and teaching.

This report provides a helpful summary for parents/carers and other stakeholders, of successes and achievements in academic session from August 2021 - June 2022, and outlines priorities for session 2022/23.

Section 1

This should include the school/setting badge/ crest, any motto/ aims/ values

A statement to describe staff stakeholder involvement in:

- the school improvement planning and evaluation processes and activities
- the generation of the S and Q report.

Context of the School/ELC Setting

This section should be used to give brief background information in relation to the type of establishment, its size, location, its management structure and staffing, the school community, SIMD, FME, school/nursery roll etc. It should also include some or all of the following: the school's vision, values and aims; local contextual issues; Scottish Attainment Challenge involvement; the Pupil Equity Fund allocation; factors affecting progress (e.g. staffing changes/issues); and outcomes from authority review/inspection etc.

Falkirk High School is a non-denominational comprehensive school within the town of Falkirk and has a roll of 1162 drawing from a wide catchment area. The percentage of pupils who have Free Meal Entitlement is 26% and over 50% of our school roll live in postcode areas that fall within the bottom 3 SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) deciles. The school continued to be a Scottish Attainment Challenge school in session 2021/22 and has used the money received from the Attainment Challenge fund to enhance provision with a view to meeting the needs of all pupils. Furthermore, Falkirk High School has also continued to receive Pupil Equity Funding which is also used to enhance our provision with this allocation of

finance focused upon supporting those pupils coming from high levels of deprivation. Our planning with respect to the use of both the Attainment Challenge and Pupil Entitlement Funding has centered around the development of the school's provision, increasing the capacity of what we can do and furthermore, changing the mindset within the school. A number of interventions have been implemented to help the school achieve these outcomes. Examples of interventions include; the further enhancement of our Support Hub, the creation of a targeted Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing Hive and the continuation, and enhancement of, alternative learning provision programmes such as our Inspiring Learning Space and Step Forward programmes.

Staffing, in line with the national context, has continued to present challenges throughout session 2021-22. The school faced significant staffing challenges throughout the session due to the pandemic and also had to adapt to some long term absence. Positively, throughout the session there has been no unplanned closures of the school due to staffing shortages, nor have any year groups moved to any online provision due to staffing challenges. This is testament to the significant flexibility demonstrated by school staff and furthermore, due to the school being able to access some consistent long term supply members of staff. As we progress into session 2022-23, the school will welcome a number of new staff including 5 Probationer teachers in August. Recruitment in a number of subject areas commenced in early March to ensure a full complement of staff will be in place for the commencement of the new session.

The school's management structure is currently made up of a Headteacher, 5 Depute Headteachers (one funded via the school's PEF allocation with a focus on raising attainment for decile 1-3 pupils), a Resource Manager, 8 Faculty Heads, 4 Pastoral Heads of House and 5 Principal Teachers who have remits focused upon key priority areas. Furthermore, a group of 5 PEF Principal Teachers were appointed for session 2021/22 with specific remits relating to school improvement. These included, the development of leadership opportunities and school ethos, DYW and destination planning support, targeted literacy and numeracy intervention, digital learning and health and wellbeing. Falkirk High School's last HMIE Inspection took place in November 2012 with the report being published in March 2013.

This report has been prepared through analysis of qualitative data and quantitative data. The school has an established VSE programme to plan and implement classroom observations however, due to ongoing covid restrictions, work in this area has been limited throughout the session. The VSE programme will be re-established in session 2022/23 to allow direct observation of learning and teaching to re-commence.

Falkirk High School engages in regular self-evaluation activities throughout the session to measure progress with respect to key improvement priorities and furthermore, to identify future improvement priorities. All stakeholders across the school community are involved in our self-evaluation activities through a variety of mechanisms. Examples include, Annual Surveys of stakeholder views, analysis of SQA performance, Faculty Annual Review of improvement priorities and analysis of attendance and exclusions data.

Section 2

Example of layout for reporting on 2021-22 improvement priorities:

Review of progress for 2021 - 22	
Priority 1:Raising Attainment and Achievement	
NIF Priority: Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy NIF Driver: School Leadership Assessment of Children's Progress Performance Information	FC Service and School Improvement Priority
HGIOS?4/HGIOELC? QIs (if appropriate HGIOURS themes 1- 5) Our Learning and Teaching Our Successes and Achievements	Has this work been supported by PEF? yes
Progress and impact (based on outcomes for learners) How well are you doing? How do you know?	
- We have placed a significant focus on ensuring that the learning provision for our middle 60% of learners is appropriate and allowing the best chance for pupils to achieve. Through the introduction of new courses across a wide range of curricular areas, we have been able to maximise the levels that pupils are working at. Whilst previously, pupils may have changed to a lower level based on ongoing progression through courses, faculties and departments have been working to ensure that appropriate alternatives were considered to maximise attainment for our middle 60% of learners. In addition to alternative courses offered within individual faculties, Falkirk High School also implemented a targeted 'Intervention Programme' with the intention of ensuring that 91% of our S4 pupils achieved a minimum suite of 5 qualifications at Level 4. The programme supported 43 S4 pupils and was led by our PEF Depute of Excellence and Equity with pupils involved being identified via our ongoing tracking data and also, in consideration of their SIMD profile. From the last tracking period of the session, the school is in line to achieve the set stretch aim of 91%. Furthermore, based on analysis of presentation levels, the 'Intervention Programme' has resulted in the cohort achieving an additional 196 qualifications as a collective group, which the school expects to result in positive Insight outcomes in September. Individual pupils have also increased their opportunities to enter employment training and college programmes at a higher level than initially predicted which should impact positively on their long term prospects, post school.	

- Following feedback from learners, Falkirk High School has implemented a new approach to Learner Conversations. Various strategies have been adopted to find a 'best-fit model' that could be adopted across all faculties. Initial feedback has been gathered with pupils indicating an improvement in the quality of Learner Conversation however, also highlighting some ongoing inconsistencies across faculties and staff. Further work will take place in session 2022/23 to enhance the provision of Learner Conversations in response to the feedback gathered.
- The school is currently engaged in a planning process to launch a 'Learning and Academy'. This will involve the re-purposing of some facilities within the school and will also involve the creation of a CPD programme to upskill staff members and provide comprehensive support with respect to enhancing learning and teaching pedagogy across the staff team. This work will carry over into session 2022/23.
- In addition to our targeted 'Intervention Programme' the school also introduced a new 'Mentoring Programme' during the session. The 'Aiming for an A programme' was focused on increasing pupil aspiration and supporting pupils to achieve their full potential. Whilst initial tracking data appears positive, the school will measure and evaluate the effectiveness of the programme upon receipt of the SQA results in August.
- Following development in session 20/21 in partnership with the Carol Milford and Kimberly Robinson, the school implemented a new senior tracking database which not only details traditional breadth and depth measures, but also provides predicted Insight data. The database has informed intervention work across various targeted groups throughout the session and has proven to be a vital data-source with respect to our ongoing attainment planning. An initial assessment of our accuracy in data predictions will be carried out in August. Enhancing whole staff knowledge and understanding of the system and how it will inform improvement planning in future, will be a key facet to future developments in this area.
- Building on the development of the Senior Tracking Database, we have entered into discussions about a similar, data-rich system in the BGE. Planning with respect to this has paused due to uncertainty surrounding OtB. There has been however, universal acknowledgement from the school's middle management team and cluster primary Headteacher colleagues, that a system which tracks the learning journey from Early Years to the end of the BGE is one which would provide significant advantage when planning pupil learning pathways. This work will be revisited in the new session.
- Falkirk High School has adopted a new 'Framework for Learning' in line with our school vision. This has been shared across our school community with a view to achieving greater consistency with respect to our learning provision. Some of the work has been limited due to Covid Restrictions ie lack of classroom learning visits.
- **We appointed 5 PEF Principal Teachers with a focus on enhancing the school's 'Framework for Learning' and focus on raising Attainment and Achievement with key focus areas identified. PT's were appointed with focus on Literacy and Numeracy, Digital Learning, Leadership, Positive Destinations and Health and Wellbeing. There has been a significant impact evidenced in each of these areas. Please access link to Improvement Science Posters [FHS Improvement Science 2021-22](#) for further data.**

Next Steps: What are you going to do now?

- We will review the success of our targeted programmes with a view to further improving in session 2022/23
- We will launch and implement our Learning and Teaching Academy
- We will improve the quality of tracking and reporting data available to track attainment progress within the BGE
- We will focus on improving pupil attendance levels which should subsequently have a positive impact on attainment
- We will work with our Cluster Primary schools to help develop understanding of the SCQF Framework and also, engage in moderation, activities to achieve consistency with respect to the achievement of levels

Review of progress for 2021 - 22

Priority 2: Closing the Gap

NIF Priority: Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged young people NIF Driver: School Leadership Assessment of Children's Progress Performance Information Parental engagement	FC Service and School Improvement Priority
HGIOS?4/HGIOELC? QIs (if appropriate HGIOURS themes 1- 5) Our Learning and teaching Our Successes and Achievements Our Health and Wellbeing	Has this work been supported by PEF? yes

Progress and impact (based on outcomes for learners) How well are you doing?
How do you know?

- **As detailed above, the school's Intervention Programme focused on raising attainment for those pupils living in the highest levels of deprivation. Initial data suggest that a significant impact has been made on outcomes of these targeted pupils. By identifying the correct group of pupils and focusing PEF resourcing on improving outcomes, we believe we have effective systems based approaches and models in place to impact positively on outcomes.**

- The school has increased 'Out of Hours' learning provision through further Supported Study offerings, Easter School, Study Clinics and Targeted Supported Study. Clear guidance has been provided to staff with respect to pupils who should be targeted for these interventions. Data gathered indicated an increase in attendance at 'Out of Hours' learning from those identified pupils. There were some challenges with respect to some planned work to improve parental engagement however, further work will continue in this area in the new session. Furthermore, the school introduced mentoring programmes with specific pupils identified to work with a mentor based on SIMD profile and attainment data. Attainment data will further evidence the effectiveness of this work. Furthermore, the school piloted a new online Interrupted Learner online programme whereby, home study packs, resources and assessments were uploaded to a pupil specific team. Led by Mr Barton, Head of Campbell House, those pupils who suffered from anxiety and significant barriers to attend school, were supported to re-engage in their education online. The pilot achieved positive success with over 6 pupils involved in the programme and all increasing their engagement in schoolwork. Also, all of the targeted pupils achieved an uplift with respect to their expected attainment outcomes. This small test of change will be further developed in the new session.
- A more detailed data-set has been provided to Faculty Heads as a consequence of the roll out of our new Tracking Database. Faculties are able to identify pupils easily with respect to their SIMD profile and can plan early intervention strategies accordingly. The lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% of learners, with respect to attainment, have also been flagged to Faculty Heads when sharing monthly tracking analysis. The sharing of data which can specifically underpin ongoing intervention and improvement work is something that has been significantly enhanced through the development of the Tracking Database. A future focus will be on upskilling staff with respect to the use of the data from the database.
- As detailed above, the school appointed 5 new 'PEF Principal Teachers' with a focus on key improvement areas specific to closing the attainment gap. Appendices are attached to detail the planning and impact of their work.
- The school launched a new Leadership Academy to maximise leadership opportunities. A significant focus was placed upon increasing participation in leadership opportunities for pupils from deciles 1-3. A whole-school audit took place to identify current leadership opportunities and those participating. Pupils were signposted to opportunities that were already established and a new 'Year Group Leaders' programme was introduced. The school now tracks involvement in leadership activities based on SIMD profile and the work of the Leadership Academy has seen not only an increase in opportunities and provision, but also in uptake of pupils. This accounts for whole school data and has also evidenced an increase in the number of leadership engagements from pupils living in deciles 1-3.
- Karen Kidd joined Falkirk High School in February 2022 as part of our ongoing partnership work with ETU. Karen has supported our families by providing a range of financial advice and guidance including supporting parents in applying for clothing grants, free school meals and subsidy vouchers for gas and electricity. This in turn has a positive knock on effect on the health and wellbeing of our pupils.

- 29 pupils in S4 (SIMD 1-2) and 45 pupils in S5/6 (SIMD 1-2) This equates to 13% of the S4 year group, and 15% of our S5/6 roll, participated in the 'Aiming for an A' intervention programme, these pupils were all on track to achieve 5 @ L5 , however the purpose was to improve skills in studying, in order to maximise their attainment outcomes. Following feedback gathered from those involved, 86% of participants found the sessions beneficial and 94% had a better understanding of the best way to approach exam preparation

Next Steps: What are you going to do now?

- We will create a new sustainable model whereby the 'PEF Principal Teacher' remits will be subsumed into existing Principal Teacher and Faculty Head remits.
- We will develop further targeted intervention programmes to best support pupils living in higher levels of deprivation
- We will place significant focus on improving whole school attendance with a particular focus on improving the attendance levels of pupils living in higher levels of deprivation
- We will upskill our staff with respect to the use of attainment data
- We will strive to improve parental engagement with our hardest to reach parents/carers

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Priority 3: Improving Health and Wellbeing

NIF Priority:
Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
NIF Driver:
School leadership
Parental engagement
Assessment of Children's progress

FC Service and School Improvement Priority

HGIOS?4/HGIOELC? QIs (if appropriate)
HGIOURS themes 1- 5)
Our Health and Wellbeing
Our Relationships
Our School and Community

Has this work been supported by PEF?
yes

Progress and impact (based on outcomes for learners) How well are you doing?
How do you know?

- We are currently working towards our Silver Rights Respecting Schools Award. Following on from becoming 'Rights Committed', the school has implemented a number of strategies with a view to becoming 'Rights Aware'. Led by our Rights Respecting Schools Steering Group, the school have been working with a view to increase the awareness of children's rights and linking this to our day to day work. Communication now links to articles from the UNCRC and furthermore, focused work including staff Inservice presentations and also, presentations to our Parent Council, have increased the focus on this work across the school community. Recent feedback gathered suggests that progress has been made with respect to increasing awareness of children's rights for both staff and pupils however, further work will be required to fully embed this work into our school policies, learning and teaching delivery and school ethos. The school is committed to achieving our Rights Respecting School Silver Award in session 2022/23.
- Towards the end of session 2021/22, the school engaged in an activity to review our school values. This work aligns with our new 'School Vision' and 'Framework for Learning' which have all been launched during the session. Pupils have engaged in an initial activity to propose values that they feel align with their school or, the school that they wish Falkirk High School to be. Work is ongoing with respect to streamlining the values suggested before progressing to a final vote on the new values. This work will be completed by the end of the session with a view to launching in August 2022.
- The school delivered a BGE Re-connection Activity following the significant impact of Covid 19 restrictions which impacted during session 20/21. Pupils identified a loss of connection with their teachers and peers due to the lockdown therefore a re-connection programme was designed and implemented by our Pastoral Team. The work culminated in the delivery of 'Re-Connection Activity Days' whereby, pupils were able to experience some reward and fun based activities with their peers for the first time in 2 years. Feedback from the activity highlighted a significant increase in pupil engagement and evidenced a re-establishment of connection with their peers, staff and the wider school community. Pupils have identified, through pupil voice activities, that this is something they would like to participate again in future to improve their connection to the school.
- We are currently working on the development of a 'Relationships Policy'. Initial consultation has taken place with respect to this work with the final policy to be completed and rolled out in session 2022/23. The new policy will be linked to our Rights Respecting Schools work and will underpin our approach towards the development of relationships and respect across our school community. The 'Relationship Policy' is in development following staff and pupil feedback with respect to achieving consistency in our approach towards the development and management of relationships across our school community.
- Learning for sustainability has become a hugely significant area of focus throughout session 2021/22. The school has introduced a new 'Changemakers Committee' with over 20 staff and 30 pupils engaged in this work. We have developed a Litter Action Plan in partnership with the local authority, following some concerns raised about litter in the local community, have engaged in the Dandelion project which focus on the growing of our own potato crops, engaged in

the development of Climate Action Planning and have also engaged with various partners. Our work has been recognised at Authority level with our 'Changemakers' engaging in the recent review of the 'Learning to Achieve' policy. Furthermore, our partnership with 'Fuel Change' has led to the provision of a climate change workshop during our recent 'Green Skills Week'. This involved several members of staff from 'Fuel Change' visiting the school to deliver a climate change workshop to our S3 pupils and furthermore, we welcomed the Chief Executive of 'Fuel Change' to open our Green Skills week. Feedback from pupils and staff has been very positive with respect to this work. Members of the community are passionate about the topic and further work will continue in this key area. The school has plans to integrate learning for sustainability qualifications into our Senior Phase offerings and also, has significant plans with respect to increasing recycling provision and creating sustainable working practices across our community. We will also continue our drive to reduce litter in the school grounds and local community. This work should see the school achieve our 'Eco Schools Award' during session 2022/23.

- **The school's focus on providing mental health support to our young people has continued throughout the session and will continue to be a key focus of our work moving forward. In all pupil feedback evaluations carried out during last session and into this session, mental health is highlighted as key priority area for our young people. Pupils are actively seeking support with their mental health and we have continued to strive to meet this ever increasing need. Our Principal Teacher of Health and Wellbeing has carried out significant work to signpost pupils to appropriate support systems. We have created a new Health and Wellbeing Website and Instagram page with a view to engaging pupils. Also, a number of staff were trained as Health and Wellbeing Ambassadors and provided 1-1 support for pupils. 56 pupils were involved in this focused work, on average, increased their wellbeing scores by 10 point. Further evidence and information on our work in this area is provided in the attached appendices.**
- During the session, we have embarked on our journey towards achieving our LGBTQI+ Award. We have established a staff and pupil working group to raise awareness and provide support to our LGBTQI+ community whilst aiming to raise awareness across the school community. Initial data has been gathered with a view to developing and implementing a plan during session 2022/23.

Next Steps: What are you going to do now?

- We will strive to create a more inclusive environment underpinned by new School Values
- We will further improve our communication with respect to signposting mental health and wellbeing support
- We will fully implement a new Relationships Policy underpinned by UNCRC Articles
- We will further enhance the school's focus and implementation of Learning for Sustainability

- We will re-establish our standards and expectations across the school community and our approach towards relationship-led practice

Review of progress for 2021 - 22

Priority 4: Achieving Positive Destinations

NIF Priority: Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people NIF Driver: Teacher professionalism Performance Information Parental Engagement	FC Service and School Improvement Priority
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HGIOS?4/HGIOELC? QIs (if appropriate HGIOURS themes 1- 5) Our Successes and Achievements Our Learning and Teaching	Has this work been supported by PEF? yes
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Progress and impact (based on outcomes for learners) How well are you doing?
How do you know?

- 94% of pupils progressed into a positive destination following session 20/21. This is a record figure for school.
- A new systems based approach has been adopted with respect to identifying the correct pupil pathways. The focus of this work is to plan early intervention to assess all appropriate options and support available. Furthermore, the work is focused on maximising attainment and increasing aspiration with respect to pupil destinations.
- The school engaged in CPD with staff on Career Education with SDS. This work focused on raising awareness of the SCQF Framework to support appropriate destination planning and help develop understanding of alternative pathways.
- **Our approach towards data-sharing with respect to pupil pathways has enhanced significantly with a focused team targeting intervention for pupils in this area. Alternative transition programmes have been implemented following the gathering of data to ensure that pupils are best prepared to make informed decisions about their next steps.**
- **The school has introduced the MCR Pathways programme with a full time member of staff added to our HUB Staff Team. Identified pupils from SIMD 1-3 have been allocated mentors and initial engagement has begun with respect to this work. The programme will continue to expand and develop in session 2022.23.**

- **Senior universal support provision has been enhanced via our Pupil Entitlement Period (PEP) 'Home and Away Programme'. Following feedback from pupils which identified the need for more focused and tailored support, depending on the intended destination pathway of the pupils, the school has developed an enhanced provision which offers specialised support for different pupil pathways. Young people are able to identify their intended pathway and attend sessions which offer specialised support with respect to next steps. Pupil feedback has indicated that the programme has provided positive support to with respect to destination planning and further enhancements to the programme have been suggested. These will be considered and developed in the new session.**
- **A new Principal Teacher of Transitions was appointed with a view to providing enhanced support to pupils from higher levels of deprivation. This focused work was designed to best prepare the young people for progression into a positive and sustained destination.**

Next Steps: What are you going to do now?

- We will enhance our support network with respect to pathway and destination planning
- We will raise staff awareness and provide CLPL opportunities with respect to supporting pupils with pathway planning
- We will raise parent/carer awareness of how they can support with destination/pathway planning
- We will work closely with our Cluster Primary Schools to increase knowledge of the SCQF framework, share data on destination outcomes for their former pupils and work in partnership to develop the best educational pathways towards positive destinations
- We will improve our universal support provision with respect to destination and pathway planning
- We will provide further work-based learning and skills development opportunities for or young people
- We will enhance the data set available to measure progress with respect to destination planning

Section 3

Key priorities for School Improvement Planning 2022- 2023

This section should articulate with the school improvement plan for the forthcoming session or plan cycle. It should focus on a small number of key improvement priorities which will be expressed as outcomes for learners (as they will appear on the strategic overview of the new improvement plan).

The school will continue to align our overarching priorities to those from the National Improvement Framework. Our work with respect to Rights Respecting Schools will become a new priority area. The schools improvement priorities for session 2022/23 will therefore be:

- Improving Attainment and Achievement
- Closing the Gap
- Improving pupil health and wellbeing
- Achieving positive and sustained destinations
- Children's Rights

Work-streams will be focused under these high level priorities. These priority areas continue to align closely with all our qualitative and quantitative data gathered with respect to self-evaluation activities.

What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

A brief statement that reflects your current evaluation of your school's capacity for continuous improvement. This should link to each of the QIs you have graded below.

As a school, we continue to evaluate our key strengths and areas for improvement through a process of triangulation whereby, we measure and evaluate qualitative and quantitative data against the Quality Indicators set out within How Good is Our School 4. Our overarching school improvement priorities have remained consistent in recent years due to the close alignment of our data to that of the national improvement agenda. We believe that by adopting this consistent approach, it allows longer term consistency in planning and provides clarity with respect to Falkirk high School's ongoing focus areas. Within the School Improvement Plan for session 22/23, the school has identified key areas which require focus within these overarching priorities, and have outlined appropriate interventions to ensure ongoing improvement across key priority areas. In order to achieve improvement in identified areas, the school will look outwards to learn from good practice from other educational establishments, look inwards on an ongoing basis to inform planning for future improvement in key identified areas and furthermore, we will look forward with aspiration and ambition to the type of learning environment we aim to provide for our pupils. By involving pupils, parents, staff and partners in our evaluation activities, the school believes that we take a holistic view of strengths and areas for further development. Also, by gathering data in a systematic and consistent way through our planned self-evaluation activities and by setting realistic, achievable and ambitious targets through strategic planning, we are confident that the school has capacity for continuous improvement as we move forward.

The introduction of our VSE model in session 19/20 has enhanced our self-evaluation capacity across the school and will provide a structured framework for planning and implementing future improvements. The school has established strong processes and

procedures to inform development needs and plan suitable interventions. Whilst these processes were negatively impacted and limited by Covid 19 restrictions throughout session 2021/22, the structures established should allow a seamless return to full self-evaluation activities in session 2022/23.

With a view to further enhancing our self-evaluation activities and improvement planning processes, the school continues to promote the use of Improvement Science methodologies. This systems based approach to improvement was adopted by all Principal Teachers appointed via our PEF allocation in session 2021/22. As evidenced from the attached appendices, this model has achieved consistency in approach whilst providing a structured methodology for planning and implementing change. By continuing to adopt these structured models, the school believes that we have the correct model for driving improvement and change.

Summary of Self-Evaluation – Reference QIs

Primary / Secondary Self-Evaluation of the Core HGIOS?4	
	Self-Evaluation Grading
1.3 Leadership of change	5
2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment	4
3.1 Ensuring Equality, Inclusion & Wellbeing	5
3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement	5