



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath



STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT

September 2026

This report will inform you of the school's progress and achievements in the last session and let you know about our plans for 2026-2027.

I hope that you find it helpful and informative.

John Doherty
(Head Teacher)



OUR SCHOOL

Largs Academy is a non-denominational school of around 1000 pupils and 80 teaching staff located in North Ayrshire. The campus incorporates Largs Academy, Largs PS, St Mary's PS and Largs Early Years and was opened in June 2018. The Head Teacher is John Doherty. Mr Doherty has been Head Teacher since January 2020.

Largs has four associated primary schools within the cluster: Largs PS, Fairlie PS, Skelmorlie PS and Cumbrae PS. We also have a high number of pupils who join us from out with the catchment area – around 25% of our total school roll.

Key measures show that we are a very successful school. In 25/26, Largs Academy was the #1 school in all of the Ayrshires for % of pupils attaining 5 or more Higher passes in S5. In addition, 99.5% of our school leavers in 24/25 moved into a positive post-school destination. We are committed to making sure that we meet the needs of all our pupils. 12% of our cohort attend school from SIMD Q1 and Q2 with 10% being in receipt of Free School Meals. Around 15% of pupils receive the clothing and footwear grant. At present, 30% of our pupils have a recognised additional support need.

We celebrate success daily through our Instagram account @Largs.Academy and via a monthly newsletter to our school community. Our school website is kept up to date with school policies and procedures: <http://largsacademy.com/>

Our vision at Largs Academy is a whole school community based on...

Building Strong Relationships

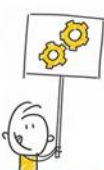
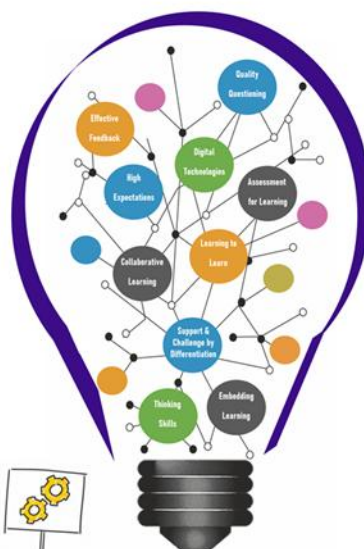
1. Arrive on time.
2. Ready to learn.
3. Wearing school uniform.
1. Be honest.
2. Do your best.
3. Allow others to do their best.



1. Be kind.
2. Care for our school environment.
3. Make everyone feel accepted.



High Quality Learning + Teaching



Developing Skills for Life + Work



Underpinned by our school values of...

Ambition

Respect

Achievement

Community

Responsibility

OUR VISION, VALUES AND AIMS

At Largs Academy, our mission is simple: Care and Flourish.

We believe that young people achieve their best when they feel safe, valued and supported within a school community built on strong relationships and high expectations. Our mission reflects our commitment to ensuring that every learner is cared for and empowered to flourish in their learning, wellbeing and future aspirations.

Our **CARE** values underpin everything we do:

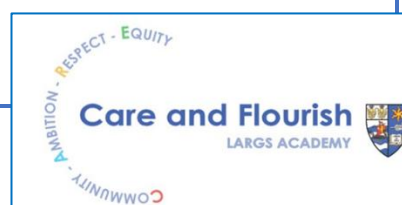
Community – fostering a sense of belonging where everyone feels connected, supported and valued.

Ambition – encouraging all young people to aim high, embrace opportunities and realise their potential.

Respect – treating ourselves, others and our environment with kindness, dignity and consideration.

Equity – ensuring that every learner receives the support, opportunities and encouragement they need to succeed.

Together, our mission and values shape a culture where young people are inspired to learn, supported to overcome challenges and equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to flourish and thrive in learning, life and work.



ATTAINMENT & ACHIEVEMENT

Our attainment in session 25/26 is good. The following headline figures highlight some of our main achievements in this area:

Literacy and Numeracy

Our school leavers data shows the % of pupils leaving school with levels 4, 5 and 6 (equivalent of National 4, 5 and Higher) in literacy and numeracy is high and improving.

- 90% of school leavers achieved a level 5 in literacy with 64% of leavers achieving a level 6 literacy qualification (Higher English or equivalent). We are above our virtual comparator in both measures for the second year running.
- 75% of school leavers achieved a level 5 in numeracy with 42% of leavers achieving a level 6 numeracy qualification (Higher Maths or equivalent). The % of leavers achieving a level 6 is our highest in three years.
- 97% of school leavers achieved both a literacy and numeracy qualification at level 3 or more.

Our BGE (S1-S3) data in literacy and numeracy is also very strong with 98% of our pupils reaching their expected level 3 in literacy and numeracy by the end of S3 and 76% of our S3 pupils reaching level 4 in literacy and level 4 in numeracy. All of these figures are significantly higher than the local authority averages.

National Qualifications

In session 25/26, our school leavers data for pupils achieving National Qualifications is high and improving on session 23/24.

- 94% of our school leavers achieved 5 qualifications at any level (3% above VC)
- 78% of school leavers achieved 5 qualifications at level 5 / Nat 5 (1% above VC)
- 55% of leavers achieved 5 qualifications at level 6 / Higher (up 5% year on year)
- 25% of our school leavers achieved at least 1 qualification at level 7 / Advanced Higher

We are proud of these very good increases in attainment bringing us above our virtual comparator in each of the listed measures.

Positive Destinations, Attendance and Exclusions

97% of our school leavers moved into a positive destination. This included 49% to Higher Education, 27% to Further Education and 18% into employment.

Our average attendance for 24/25 was 88.5% which was 1.5% above the North Ayrshire secondary average. This figure is a slight increase year-on-year. Alongside this we aim to review our attendance processes and procedures to continue to improve attendance in session 26/27.

Our Exclusions per 1000 pupils are the lowest in the local authority (secondary) at 7.5 per 1000 pupils and represent a significant decrease from session 23/24 and session 24/25.

WIDER ACHIEVEMENT

So much goes on every day at Largs Academy it would be impossible to squeeze it all into this report. For this reason we have made two videos showcasing our wider achievements from session 25/26:

S1 – S3: https://youtu.be/UuPP0_OnzoU

S4 – S6: <https://youtu.be/Zs2IXG5V5A4>

We also celebrate wider achievements every month in our Newsletter. Every Newsletter from 2024-2026 can be found on our website.

Highlights from the year includes:

- We were awarded the SportScotland Gold Award in 2025/2026 representing a fantastic array of programmes, opportunities, participation and leadership.
- Our extracurricular timetable provided approximately thirty-five whole school clubs. Twelve of these are physical activity or sports clubs. In February, 80% of our pupils were involved in wider achievement opportunities both in and outside school.
- Our school show “Footloose” was a four performance sell out and featured over 70 staff and pupils. Alongside this, we celebrated 25 years of school shows with a Largs Academy All-Stars show “Lights in the City” featuring pupils – past and present in key roles.
- At our YPI final, the YPI coordinator deemed the quality of our presentations and the celebration event “one of the best in Scotland”. All of our S2 pupils participated in the programme.
- Our Events Management class led and organised: Staff Strictly Come Dancing; Staff vs Pupils MasterChef; Christmas Snow Ball; Largs’ Got Talent our Christmas Fayre and the Prom.
- Our Malawi partnership led to the first visit to Mzambazi CDSS (our partner school) in over 6 years. 13 staff and pupils spent a fortnight working, learning and sharing with our peers in Mzuzu raising a significant amount of money for the school and community.
- Our Mary’s Meals partnership fundraising hit £40,000 since 2018 with over £6000 raised this session through our Fundraising Friday fun run.
- Our Pupil Leadership Team of 38 pupils completed their first full plan improving school facilities; developing our approaches to learning and teaching; supporting our anti-bullying awareness and introducing a low cost Activities Day for all pupils that over 300 pupils participated in. Our other pupil leadership programmes continue to be successful including our Sports Council, Sports Academy and Young Ambassadors programme
- We increased the number of pupils and staff involved in our Duke of Edinburgh programme with 76 of our S4s now participating and moving to completion of the Bronze Award.
- 180 of our pupils participated in Communities Day where they volunteered in the local area.
- We won the North Ayrshire Secondary Schools Athletics Championships.
- Many pupils have represented at a regional and national level in Swimming, Athletics, Sailing, Table Tennis, American Football, Football and Rugby.

HOW SUCCESSFUL HAVE WE BEEN IN IMPROVING OUR ESTABLISHMENT?

Priority 1: Continue to develop our learning and teaching to increase pupil participation in lessons and to ensure a more consistent lesson structure across the school.

We have made very good progress at improving the quality of learning and teaching to increase pupil participation.

The very good progress has been achieved through:

- Working with Bruce Robertson – author of “Power Up Your Pedagogy” – for two days in Nov and Feb exploring our pedagogy.
- Introducing the Teaching Sprints model for introduce small tests of change linked to Learning & Teaching.
- Working with staff and pupils to create a common approach to lesson structure.
- Developing a whole school approach to Reading.
- Developing the Young Leaders of Learning Programme and a Pupil Leadership Team focused on L&T has ensured that pupil voice and leadership is a much more integral part of life at Largs Academy.

Our most recent staff, pupil and parent evaluations evidence the following improvements in learning and teaching:

- Almost all pupils feel they are treated respectfully by staff; that they are encouraged by their teachers to do their best; are supported in their learning and are happy with the quality of learning at our school.
- Almost all parents are satisfied with the quality of teaching at Largs Academy; think that there are high expectations in the classroom and feel that their child is treated respectfully by staff.
- Almost all staff feel that the school is well led and managed and all staff believe that young people are engaged in learning in their class and are provided with learning material that meets their learning needs.

In almost all of the key questions asked about learning and teaching, a greater % of staff, parents and pupils responded more positively than in session 24/25.

Classroom observations and whole school quality assurance of learning and teaching in term 3 showed improvement in the number of high quality lessons across the school.

When evaluating the School Improvement Plan for 25/26, 45% of staff felt that the on-going work in Learning and Teaching had been the most impactful of all our headline priorities for professional learning for the session – the highest of any area.

Priority 2: Evaluate our attainment data then reintroduce targeted classroom interventions to improve Senior Phase attainment.

We have made very good progress at ensuring our attainment data and interventions are improving outcomes for young people.

The very good progress has been achieved through:

- Working with staff to develop a better understanding of areas of underperformance and how to plan and implement targeted classroom interventions in order to improve Senior Phase attainment.
- Introducing individual class teacher analysis following the Qualifications Scotland results to support better self-evaluation of class performance.
- Developing the understanding of our school tracking systems, INSIGHT and CFE Machine across all staff to scrutinise data.

Working together as a staff to look at our school context and identify recent changes (% of learners with ASN) and trends (underperformance of SIMD 8-10 learners; under performing at level 7 and pupils attaining 7x As at National 5 level) has led to a greater understanding of our pupils. Following this, we then explored how these trends may impact on our Senior Phase pupils and plan bespoke interventions for small groups of pupils. These interventions included:

- Small group tutoring (PEF funded)
- Additional learner conversations
- Increased parental communication
- Targeted coursework
- Additional assessments

In September 2025, staff evaluated their interventions against SQA data in order to ascertain where success has happened. 48% of staff reflected that their intervention was successful and 34% were neutral with only 18% feeling it had been unsuccessful.

In addition, our INSIGHT data for 24/25 shows that S4 pupils in the top 20% are above the VC for the first time in 3 years and our pupils in S5 are in-line with the VC for the first time in 3 years. These pupils were a key focus of the intervention programme showing the impact of marginal gains.

Our end of year staff, pupil and parent evaluations evidenced the following progress in attainment:

- 89% of pupils reporting that they feel challenged in their learning (up 5% on 24/25).
- Almost all parents feel that their child is supported and challenged in their learning and almost all parents feel that Largs Academy is preparing their child for life after school.
- 24% of staff when evaluating the main priorities of the School Improvement Plan felt this work had the most significant impact on them this session (2nd of 5 priorities) second only to the professional learning we are doing on learning and teaching.

Priority 3: - Work with parents, pupils, partners and staff to re-evaluate our school vision and values and our Trios to evaluate our approaches to Wellbeing, Inclusion and Equality.

We have made good progress in these areas.

The progress has been achieved through:

- Working with our Parent Council, Pupil Leadership Team and a staff working group in single and combined collaborative sessions to update our school's vision and values.
- Visiting Greenwood Academy and St Matthew's Academy to learn from their approaches to Wellbeing, Inclusion and Equality and hosting a visit from their school teams to demonstrate our approaches.
- Preparing for an SSR review from North Ayrshire Council examining our approaches to Meeting Learner Needs and Inclusion.
- Embedding robust tracking of pupil wellbeing with follow-up support interventions where relevant.

Using the Glasgow Motivational Wellbeing Tool, our Year Teams assessed all young people in their caseloads against the SHANNARI indicators to examine attitudes to self and school. From there, PTs Pastoral analysed the data and chose a small group from their caseload for additional interventions. This included:

- Additional 121 time with PT Pastoral
- School Counsellor
- Family meetings
- Curriculum adaptations

Pupils were then reassessed 6 months later and the data was reanalysed to look for evidence of impact or new and different emerging issues. 100% of the Pastoral PTs felt that this process was successful and were able to share case studies of pupils where interventions following the assessments had led to improved attendance, attainment and wellbeing.

The visiting teams from Greenwood and St Matthew's felt our self evaluation triangulated with their observations. In particular, they were positive about our Pupil Leadership Team; tracking and interventions linked to MHWB and of positive pupil feedback in all focus groups. The areas for focus: embedding our updated vision and values; tracking of attendance and rationale for our PSE programme have been built into this session's SIP.

Other feedback evidencing progress in this area includes:

- Reduction in exclusions year on year (lowest in North Ayrshire)
- Significant increase in % of staff reporting that behaviour in school was good or very good year on year.
- Significant reduction in % of pupils who feel that the school deals well with bullying or have never been bullied (from 50% to 75%) and almost all pupils (93%) reporting that they feel safe in school.

QUALITY INDICATORS

Provide your evaluation & brief summary statement for each of the 4 core QIs

QI 1.3 Leadership of Change

Evaluation

5 Very Good

Through our Largs Academy Framework and our updated vision and values we have created an ambitious culture that focuses on improvements for all. Our staff are committed to change and we use enquiry, tests of change and quality assurance for continuous improvement.

We have worked hard to make sure that not only staff but also pupils and parents are involved in our process of change and in setting future priorities on our school improvement journey.

We are developing our understanding of what high quality evidence of impact looks like and systematically gathering it across the school.

QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment

Evaluation

4 Good

Positive relationships underpin everything that we do. Pupils are positive about their school experience and engaged in their learning. The quality of learning and teaching is often very good with learners experiencing a wide range of learning environments and approaches. Planning, tracking and monitoring are key features of our daily practice and are used to support, challenge and identify where intervention may be required. However, we need to focus on consistency; improve our approaches to tracking achievement and develop our approaches to adaptive teaching to ensure that we move from Good to Very Good in L&T.

QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion

Evaluation

4 Good

The whole school community has a shared understanding of wellbeing and the rights of the child. Young people feel safe and cared for in school. Staff engage in professional learning affecting the rights, wellbeing and inclusion of all young people and The Rights of the Child. Children are knowledgeable about rights and inclusion. Our Year Teams are embedding the use of data to inform interventions and we are piloting attendance interventions for improvement.

QI 3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement

Evaluation

4 Good

Almost all young people are attaining appropriate levels and many are exceeding these. The school's data demonstrates that our current learners are making good progress and we are above the VC in almost all areas on INSIGHT. Young people are successful in moving on to a sustained, positive destination. Good progress is demonstrated through robust tracking of data over time in all curricular areas. We have a few stubborn areas of underperformance (numeracy; AH) to address. We are also streamlining our approaches to tracking achievement across the curriculum to identify strengths and those in need of additional support.



PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING

This year we have made very good use of our Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) in order to reduce the poverty related attainment gap.

We complete a PEF Impact Report annually analysing our use of this money to ensure quality outcomes for young people. This can be shared with anyone who wants further information on how PEF is allocated and evaluated by contacting the school.

Highlights of our use of PEF and the impact are as follows:

- 100% of our pupils identified as most deprived left school and moved into a positive destination. Of this group, 37% have progressed into Higher Education. Both of these figures are significantly above the North Ayrshire Council and national average.
- We have the lowest rate of exclusions in the local authority secondary sector. Alongside other interventions, this has been achieved through investment in our pastoral support team.

Our most deprived pupils (those living in quintile 1) currently outperform the virtual comparator in the following key measures:

- 43% of our most deprived pupils leave school with 5 or more level 6 / Higher qualifications a figure that is 12% higher than the virtual comparator.
- 64% of our most deprived pupils leave school with 5 or more level 5 / National 5 qualifications a figure that is 6% higher than the virtual comparator.

IMPROVEMENT PLAN PRIORITIES 2025-2026

Priority 1

- Improving learning outcomes for all

Priority 2

- Supporting needs, wellbeing, equality and inclusion

Priority 3

- Building a self-improving service

Our full School Improvement Plan with a detailed breakdown of what each priority will entail can be found on our school website.

