

1. SCHOOL CONTEXT

Community School of Auchterarder is a 2-18 through school with a total school roll of 1017 children. This currently consists of 53 nursery children, 430 primary children, and 534 secondary young people. In Primary, we have 17 classes with specialist teachers in PE and Music. In Secondary, we have a teaching staff allocation of 45.6FTE which is allocated proportionally between curricular areas and pupil support roles.

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation is a relative measure of deprivation across all areas of Scotland. In this context, 81% of children and young people who attend Community School of Auchterarder reside in data zones categorised as being within SIMD Quintiles 4 and 5.

Our Senior Leadership Team consists of our Head Teacher, five Depute Head Teachers, and our Business Manager. Three Depute Head Teachers are based within our Primary whilst two work within Secondary. Our Senior Leadership Team is supported by a Nursery Leadership Team which consists of a Principal Early Childhood Practitioner, two Senior Early Childhood Practitioners, and our Nursery Teacher. Our Principal ECP oversees the day-to-day operation of the nursery.

2. ATTENDANCE

In both Primary and Secondary we observed an increase in overall attendance by comparison to Session 2022/23 (an increase from 93.4% to 93.9% in Primary, and 87.8% to 88.6% in Secondary). In Primary, this improvement is in line with attendance patterns across Perth and Kinross Council (PKC). In Secondary, this improvement surpasses performance across our local authority. Attendance rates at Community School of Auchterarder have been consistently higher than PKC since 2020/2021.

Between session 2022/23 and 2023/24, there has been a decrease in unauthorised absence in both Primary (1.6% to 1.5%) and Secondary (4.8% to 3.6%). In Primary, there has also been a decrease in authorised absence (5.1% to 4.7%). In Secondary, we observed a slight increase in authorised absence (7.4% to 7.8%).

Unauthorised absence in both Primary and Secondary has been consistently below PKC averages since 2013.

School attendance can be impacted by a range of factors which are supported on an individual basis by our Pastoral Support Team and Depute Head Teachers. We take a solution focussed, whole school approach to promoting positive attendance at school and work closely with our Community Link Worker, and other professionals, to support children, young people, and families.

Analysis of our attendance data provides reassurance that our approach to supporting children and young people to attend school continues to be effective for most young people.

We have however identified certain cohorts of young people who do not attend school regularly, or – in secondary – struggle to attend all their classes. Our aspiration is to support all children and young people to attend school regularly in order that they can meaningfully engage in their learning. School attendance has therefore been identified as a key improvement priority for Session 2024/25.

3. ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

Developmental Milestones

Developmental Milestones are the building blocks of how we grow, develop, and achieve our potential. The milestones considered for each child are: attention, behaviour, emotional development, fine motor skills, gross motor skills, hearing, social development, speech and language and vision.

Most (76%) of our pre-school children achieved all of the appropriate milestones during session 2023/24.

Attainment in the Broad General Education (BGE) (P1 to S3)

During their years in the Broad General Education, we are asked to report on the progress of children and young people by indicating whether they have achieved the appropriate levels within Curriculum for Excellence in relation to Listening and Talking, Reading, Writing and Maths. The national expectation is that most children and young people will have achieved Early Level by the end of P1, First Level by the end of P4, Second Level by the end of P7 and Third/Fourth Level by the end of S3. The following table shows attainment within the Broad General Education at Community School of Auchterarder and describes the proportion of young people who met the national expectation during Session 2022/23.

	Listening & Talking	Reading	Writing	Maths
Early Level (by P1)	Almost All	Most	Most	Almost All
First Level (by P4)	Almost All	Most	Most	Almost All
Second Level (by P7)	Most	Most	Most	Most
Third Level (by S3)	Almost All	Almost All	Almost All	Almost All
Fourth Level (by S3)	Most	Most	Most	Most

Please note that the following words are used to describe numbers and proportions: Almost All (91%+), Most (75%-90%), Majority (50%-74%), Less than Half (15%-49%), Few (Less than 15%).

This year's BGE attainment was strong with attainment in listening and talking and maths standing out. We observed a particularly strong performance from our S3 cohort where 91%+ young people met national expectation in Listening & Talking, Reading, Writing and Maths. Performance at all other stages and measures was equally good with most children and young people achieving national expectations. Our assessments are based upon teacher judgement which is supported and quality assured using data gathered through our young people's completion of national standardised assessments (SNSA).

Senior Phase Attainment

Within this report, Senior Phase attainment will be reported as a percentage of the relevant year group who achieved each benchmark listed below. When interpreting this data, please note that Session 2019/20 and Session 2020/21 were impacted by COVID; altered assessment arrangements were in place which mean that the figures reported should not be directly compared to more recent sessions where more traditional assessment arrangements have been in place.

In four out of the previous five sessions, S4 performance in Level 5 Literacy has been stronger by comparison to both PKC and National averages. S5 performance in Level 6 Literacy has also been stronger than PKC averages in four out of the previous five sessions.

Senior Phase Literacy (S4, Level 5)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
TCSOA	88.4%		70.4%		78.1%		84.7%		79.8%	
PKC	76.1%	↑	73.1%	↓	74.3%	↑	73.8%	↑	77.7%	↑
National	73.8%	↑	73.3%	↓	74.6%	↑	75.9%	↑	74.8%	↑

Senior Phase Literacy (S5, Level 6)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
TCSOA	64.0%		65.5%		33.7%		49.5%		48.0%	
PKC	52.2%	↑	52.8%	↑	46.4%	↓	47.4%	↑	46.5%	↑
National	50.5%	↑	52.2%	↑	49.9%	↓	49.2%	↑	48.5%	↓

Over the course of the previous five sessions, S4 performance in Level 5 Numeracy has been stronger by comparison to PKC averages (four out of five sessions by comparison to National averages).

S5 performance in Level 6 Numeracy has also been stronger than both PKC and National averages during the previous two sessions.

Senior Phase Numeracy (S4, Level 5)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
TCSOA	83.0%		70.4%		71.9%		60.2%		85.3%	
PKC	57.8%	↑	51.3%	↑	62.2%	↑	59.0%	↑	65.0%	↑
National	61.4%	↑	56.4%	↑	61.6%	↑	64.2%	↓	63.7%	↑

Senior Phase Numeracy (S5, Level 6)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
TCSOA	28.1%		23.9%		18.4%		26.8%		25.5%	
PKC	25.8%	↑	24.5%	↓	22.2%	↓	22.5%	↑	21.9%	↑
National	24.6%	↑	23.8%	↑	23.0%	↓	23.7%	↑	23.4%	↑

During Session 2023/24, performance in each of the key benchmarks remained strong by comparison to both Perth & Kinross and National averages. In each of these measures, the performance of young people at Community School of Auchterarder exceeded that of both the PKC and National cohorts.

Notably, during Session 2023/24 we observed a increase in the number of young people achieving all Level 5 (N5) benchmarks in S4. There was also a significant increase in the number of young people achieving 1x Level 7 (Advanced Higher) qualification in S6.

S4 Cohort: 1+ N5 Awards (A-C)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
TCSOA	87.5%		80.6%		88.5%		81.6%		90.8%	
PKC	84.1%	↑	82.2%	↓	82.4%	↑	81.1%	↑	81.0%	↑
National	82.8%	↑	82.4%	↓	81.3%	↑	80.6%	↑	79.36%	↑

S4 Cohort: 5+ N5 Awards (A-C)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
TCSOA	73.2%		48.0%		59.4%		53.1%		58.7%	
PKC	54.0%	↑	47.1%	↑	47.6%	↑	45.2%	↑	46.2%	↑
National	48.8%	↑	45.9%	↑	44.4%	↑	42.9%	↑	41.8%	↑

S4 Cohort: 7+ N5 Awards (A-C)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
TCSOA	50.9%		21.4%		49.0%		31.6%		40.4%	
PKC	31.7%	↑	26.8%	↓	26.5%	↑	23.3%	↑	24.4%	↑
National	21.9%	↑	20.5%	↑	21.5%	↑	21.8%	↑	22.6%	↑

S5 Cohort: 1+ H Awards (A-C)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
TCSOA	80.3%		80.6%		59.0%		68.3%		65.9%	
PKC	74.7%	↑	72.6%	↑	66.0%	↓	67.2%	↑	64.9%	↑
National	68.6%	↑	69.6%	↑	65.0%	↓	64.0%	↑	62.9%	↑

S5 Cohort: 3+ H Awards (A-C)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
TCSOA	71.1%		70.4%		34.7%		52.4%		47.6%	
PKC	53.6%	↑	51.8%	↑	44.3%	↓	43.5%	↑	40.1%	↑
National	46.5%	↑	47.2%	↑	42.7%	↓	41.1%	↑	39.3%	↑

S5 Cohort: 5+ H Awards (A-C)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
TCSOA	40.8%		37.0%		13.7%		29.3%		23.2%	
PKC	25.6%	↑	27.4%	↑	20.7%	↓	20.6%	↑	17.7%	↑
National	22.7%	↑	22.6%	↑	20.5%	↓	20.4%	↑	19.6%	↑

S6 Cohort: 1+ AH Awards (A-C)

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
TCSOA	40.0%		54.4%		41.0%		18.4%		45.3%	
PKC	48.2%	↓	49.4%	↑	51.1%	↓	38.1%	↓	38.8%	↑
National	36.3%	↑	37.8%	↑	35.4%	↑	34.7%	↓	33.2%	↑

This data demonstrates that young people attending Community School of Auchterarder continue, overall, to perform strongly by comparison to other young people across Perth and Kinross Council and nationally.

In pursuit of further improvement, our school team continues to focus on improving outcomes for all young people, however the achievement of young people with additional support needs, those whose attainment falls within the bottom 20% of their cohort, and those in S6 continue to be a particular focus.

Wider Achievement

A range of extra-curricular clubs are offered throughout the school year with children going on to participate in local authority events. With specific reference to sport, the hard work and commitment of our children, young people and staff was recognised through our school's achievement of the Sport Scotland Gold School Sport Award in June 2024.

Our timetabled wider achievement programme in Secondary offers young people in S1-S3 and S5/6 the opportunity to engage in a range of activities out with their chosen subjects. Examples of wider achievement classes held during Session 2023/24 include: Mindfulness Colouring, Mentors in Violence Prevention, Bike Maintenance, Football Refereeing, IDEA Awards, Lab Skills, Knitting, Cheerleading, Netball, Rugby and Spanish.

A number of trips took place including a whole school trip to the Perth Panto and our annual P7 trip to Nethybridge. Groups of children and young people also visited Bannockburn, the Edinburgh Christmas Market, Dynamic Earth, and the STEM Expo in Dundee, in addition to seeing Tally's Blood at the MacRobert Theatre.

4. LEADERSHIP

Throughout Session 2023/2024 our school leadership team has continued to grow and evolve. Following a period of considerable change within our Nursery, Extended and Senior Leadership Teams, our teams have now become well established with clear remits and areas of agreed responsibility agreed and in place.

Our Quality Improvement Plan for Session 2023/24 focussed upon three key improvement outcomes: to develop the sense of respect, support and safety young people have in our school through the development of refreshed 2-18 relationships and anti-bullying policies; to further develop the learning experience enjoyed by children and young people throughout our school ensuring that our approach is consistent and of high quality; to ensure our children and young people have opportunities to develop their skills and confidence through an engaging DYW programme delivered by a network of local businesses in line with our context driven plan.

In line with this plan, highlights from our school improvement journey last session include the following:

- Our school has been accredited by a variety of external agencies for the approaches we have adopted to working with children and young people.
 - In May 2024, following external accreditation, our school achieved Silver '[Rights Respecting Schools](#)' status confirming that children's rights are learned, understood, and lived in our school.

- In February 2024, following external accreditation, we achieved our [Digital Schools Award](#). This award recognised both the progress and commitment our school team have demonstrated to making effective use of digital learning technologies.
- In June 2024 we were delighted to receive confirmation of our Gold Sport Scotland [School Sport Award](#). This award was made on the basis of the extensive opportunities our young people have to engage in and lead physical exercise and activities in and around our school. These three awards represent the considerable achievements of both our children and young people and the staff who work with them to achieve fantastic outcomes.
- Our improvement work throughout Session 2023/24 led to the creation of several policies which will strengthen the various areas of associated work as well as promoting more consistent approaches between both practitioners and sectors across our school as they are implemented throughout Session 2024/25. New policies include: 2-18 Relationships Policy; 2-18 Anti-Bullying Policy; Learning & Teaching Policy; Secondary Homework Policy. Appropriate consultation opportunities were offered to all stakeholders within our school community with feedback considered and embedded within the final documents. These documents have now been launched and will be further shared as they are implemented during Session 2024/25.

Whilst much of this policy development has been undertaken collaboratively by staff during collegiate meetings, significant levels of school improvement activity – including the work that led to the awards noted above – has been undertaken by teacher led school improvement groups.

These groups have offered the opportunity for middle leaders to take forward delegated aspects of school improvement which has, in turn, expanded our overall capacity for improvement in a way that improves outcomes for our young people.

5. LEARNING

Throughout session 2023/24 school staff in both primary and secondary engaged in a variety of activities designed to quality assure and support the continuous improvement of learning and teaching within our school. During May 2024, a team of central officers from PKC Education and Learning visited our school for a Quality Improvement Review visit.

During the review council officers visited classrooms in ELC, primary, and secondary, to observe learning and teaching. They talked to staff, parents, partners and children, and worked closely with the Head Teacher and other senior leaders to review the self-evaluation and quality assurance procedures.

During the visit, the team found the following examples of positive practice:

- There was a positive, calm, learning environment across the school.
- There were some examples of effective learning, teaching, and assessment across the school.
- There was some evidence of good relationships between pupils and staff across the school.
- There are positive experiences for children in the nursery resulting from a well lead ELC setting.

The following strengths have also been identified and validated through classroom observations undertaken by the school Senior Leadership Team, Quality Improvement Officers, and during a recent Validated Self-Evaluation (VSE) process which was undertaken during the previous session.

- All children within the ELC experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches to their personal care and learning needs with daily access to well-resourced outdoor areas.
- The school has worked with stakeholders to introduce play pedagogy approaches in P1-P3 classes. This has had a very positive impact on classroom organisation, accessibility and purposeful engagement of children.
- Most lessons across the school demonstrated clear instruction and appropriately referenced prior learning.
- Most lessons featured effective explanations of concepts that supported pupils to access their learning.

- In the most effective lessons, children and young people understood what they are learning about and know how they would recognise if they were successful.
- Primary children engage well almost all of the time and are eager and enthusiastic to learn in most classes.
- Teacher subject specialists have a very positive impact on the delivery of PE and Music across the primary school. Learners demonstrate good skills and show great enjoyment and engagement in these subjects.
- The school community feel that they have had good involvement in the creation of the school values which are encapsulated by the acronym 'HEART'. These values are well known and inform the daily experience of young people from Nursery through to S3.
- The wellbeing of students is supported effectively by school staff. During their participation in focus groups, young people stated that they have a trusted staff member, and that staff care about their wellbeing.

Pupil Equity Fund

As noted earlier in this document, the profile of Community School of Auchterarder is that most young people reside in SIMD Quintiles 4 & 5. No matter their background, most children and young people within our school achieve in line with young people from a similar demographic across Scotland.

Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is used to fund our Enhanced Support Officer post in Primary. Mrs McNaughton has now been in post for six years and, in this role, runs our 'Pitstop' where additional input is provided to children who require short interventions to help bridge gaps in their learning. Literacy and Health & Wellbeing groups, supported by our intergenerational volunteers, complement work taking place in classrooms.

Throughout Session 2023/24, Mrs McNaughton and our team of intergenerational volunteers provided literacy support to 90 children with a further 71 young people receiving support through health and wellbeing sessions. Parents engage well with this support, with regular communication being shared with families from Mrs McNaughton via the Pitstop blog.

In Secondary we had planned to recruit a second Pupil Care and Welfare Officer, however due to recruitment difficulties this did not proceed as planned. In place of this, following bids from secondary departments, PEF funds were spent on a variety of resources including [Achieve Online Resource](#), [Bedrock Learning](#), [Teaching Walkthrus](#), [Class Charts](#), and [Zeta Maths](#). These resources supported the attainment of young people at both universal and additional levels in addition to supporting improved parental engagement.

Nursery

The Care Inspectorate recently commented that within our nursery a warm and nurturing environment has been created which ensures all children have the best possible learning experiences to thrive. They observed that our children benefit from nurturing, responsive and compassionate care as they learn.

Staff understand the value of play and, as a result, our children are confident, happy, and secure within the setting. Our staff interact warmly with the children as they play, joining in their play when invited, or with well-timed interventions. They offer cuddles, support and are responsive to our children's requests. All of which improve outcomes for children.

6. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

Our school improvement plan is informed by the National Improvement Framework, as well as developments unique to Perth and Kinross Council and the school itself. This session, our school improvement priorities have also been influenced by a Quality Improvement Review undertaken by Perth and Kinross Council in May 2024. Having carefully considered the feedback we have received from children, young people, parents/carers, and school staff, we have agreed the following school improvement priorities for the session ahead.

Improvement Outcomes

- ➔ *School processes will be strengthened to ensure children and young people have the best opportunity and support to attend school regularly.*

During Session 2023/24, the majority of children and young people across both Primary and Secondary had an average attendance of 96%+ (Primary) or 92%+ (Secondary). Most children and young people had an average attendance of 85% or above. Throughout Session 2024/25 we will continue to engage with children, young people, staff, and parents/carers around our approaches to supporting children and young people to attend school regularly and strengthen our school processes around this.

- Attendance data will be reviewed regularly by appropriate staff with intervention taken in line with the PKC Staged Intervention for Attendance.
- School processes will be reviewed following the recent publication of updated PKC guidance.
- Supported by the PKC Educational Psychology team, we will consider our use of both the School Experience Contextual Assessment Tool (SECAT) and School Refusal Assessment Tool.
- Work to track and monitor the wellbeing of children and young people will be strengthened.

- ➔ *Children and young people will access higher quality and more consistent learning experiences.*

Our school Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy, created during Session 2023/24, will be embedded into the practice of colleagues throughout our school during session 2024/25.

- Senior and middle leaders will continue to work with staff to create a shared understanding of highly effective learning and teaching and promote consistency in practice across the school. School participation in PKC Teacher Leaders of Inspiring Schools will support this.
- Professional learning to be provided to teaching staff to promote active learning and engagement strategies, skilled questioning, use of digital technology, and pupil leadership of learning.
- School and departmental level quality assurance calendars to be reviewed; SLT/PTs to quality assure the implementation of identified QA activities, with a specific focus on the quality of learning and teaching on offer across the school.
- There will be a school-wide focus on ensuring consistent, high expectations for pupil engagement both in class and in the wider life of the school. SLT/PTs to ensure that the needs of all pupils are effectively met through the provision of appropriately differentiated activities in all lessons.
- Classroom observation programme to be strengthened with clarity established around the role of Principal Teachers in both their participation and analysis of associated data.

- ➔ *Children and young people will access improved attainment following a whole school focus on improving performance within identified key measures.*

Analysis of whole school data has led to the identification of key measures which we will target for improvement this session. There will be a school wide focus in primary on raising levels of achievement in writing. Within the senior phase, a focus on key benchmarks and attainment in literacy and numeracy has been planned.

- All teaching staff in Primary will engage in professional learning provided by Stephen Graham relating to 'explicitly teaching text types'. We anticipate that our engagement in this programme will lead to young people achieving improved CfE writing outcomes across all stages in our school.
- Faculty and whole school attainment tracking systems will be reviewed in secondary with a specific focus on improving literacy and numeracy outcomes. As a school, we will increase our aspiration and ambition for all young people ensuring effective intervention is in place for young people who require additional support to achieve level 3/4/5 literacy and numeracy.

- A continued focus will exist throughout our school on the attainment of young people with identified additional support needs, those whose attainment lies within the bottom 20% of their cohort, and the attainment of young people in S6.

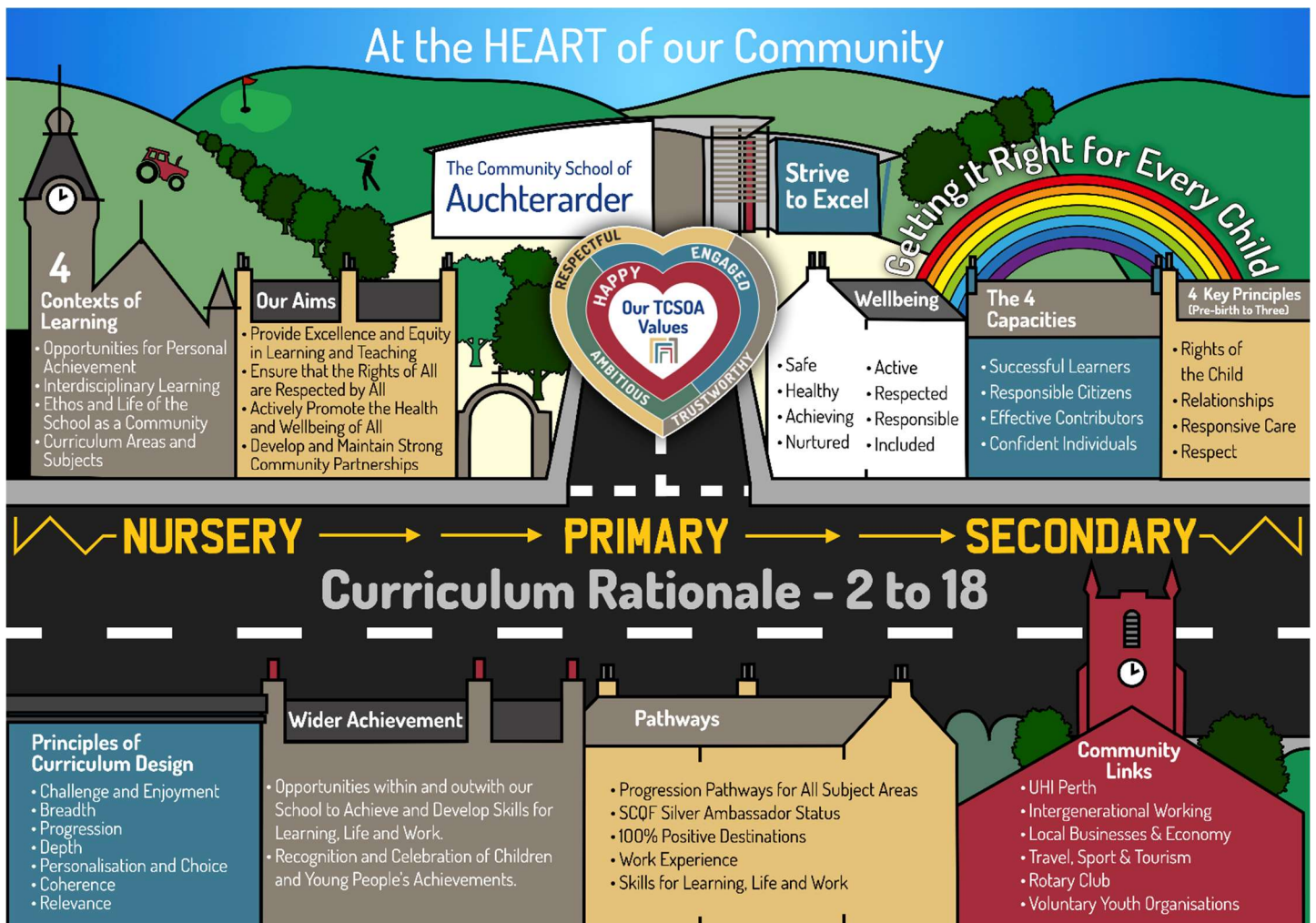
In addition, we have set improvement outcomes that relate directly to our Nursery setting.

For Session 2024/25, these are: for children to be well supported with their wellbeing in line with the child's right to be heard (under the articles of the UNCRC); to ensure all children access high quality learning experiences through the universal approach and pedagogy used by staff; for children to have high quality experiences in digital learning (increasing their skills and knowledge).

Following our school's engagement with the PKC Quality Improvement Review process, throughout Session 2024/25 we will have a school wide focus on the impact of leadership at all levels.

This will focus on the following broad areas:

- Building capacity through distributive leadership approaches which empower staff to lead improvement work throughout our school.
- Ensuring the impact of leadership at all levels with a focus on providing appropriate levels of challenge, support, and accountability throughout our school.
- Understanding current perspectives around communication within our school and developing a strategic approach which improves current perspectives around the effectiveness of this and address concerns raised by our school community.
- School staff have opportunities to work collaboratively to take forward and contribute to whole school improvement agenda items.



7. EVALUATION OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

The following evaluations are based on the on-going self-evaluation processes of the school, as well as the most recent HMIE inspection and local authority quality improvement visits.

Quality Indicator 1.3 – <i>Leadership of Change</i>	Evaluation: <i>Satisfactory</i>
Quality Indicator 2.3 – <i>Learning, Teaching and Assessment</i>	Evaluation: <i>Satisfactory</i>
Quality Indicator 3.1 – <i>Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity, and Inclusion</i>	Evaluation: <i>Satisfactory</i>
Quality Indicator 3.2 – <i>Attainment and Achievement</i>	Evaluation: <i>Satisfactory</i>

These quality indicators are taken from ‘How Good is Our School 4’, Education Scotland (2015).

Perth and Kinross Council Officers visited our school in May 2024 to undertake a Quality Improvement Review. As part of this review, our evaluations of the HMIE Quality Indicators above were validated.

Our nursery was inspected by the [Care Inspectorate](#) in June 2023. This was a positive experience and the gradings from this inspection are shown below.

<i>How good is our care, play and learning?</i>	
Quality Indicator 1.1 – <i>Nurturing care and support</i>	Evaluation: <i>Good</i>
Quality Indicator 1.3 – <i>Play and learning</i>	Evaluation: <i>Very Good</i>
<i>How good is our setting?</i>	
Quality Indicator 2.2 – <i>Children experience high quality facilities</i>	Evaluation: <i>Good</i>
<i>How good is our leadership?</i>	
Quality Indicator 3.1 – <i>Quality assurance and improvement are led well</i>	Evaluation: <i>Very Good</i>
<i>How good is our staff team?</i>	
Quality Indicator 4.3 – <i>Staff deployment</i>	Evaluation: <i>Good</i>

8. CONSULTATION

We value feedback from all children, young people, parents/carers, partners, and our community. We aspire to provide the very best experience to all learners which fosters curiosity whilst providing exciting and engaging learning opportunities for all our young people. Where we receive positive feedback, we like to celebrate this as it provides reassurance that we are meeting the needs of our children, young people, and families. Where we receive constructive criticism, we see this as an opportunity to review our practice and improve. Throughout the year we try to engage with all stakeholders in a range of ways to gather this feedback and inform our continuous cycle of improvement.

Throughout Session 2023/24 we engaged in regular discussion with our Parent Council regarding a variety of issues including our improvement priorities and our progress towards achieving these targets. Parent Council meetings continued to take place online enabling higher levels of attendance than had been observed when in-person meetings took place. This therefore allowed a wider spread of parents/carers the opportunity to contribute.

We have also sought the views of children, young people and parents/carers using a variety of surveys and focus group activities throughout the year. This included consultation around policy development in four main areas: relationships, anti-bullying, learning and teaching, and homework. Views on a wider range of issues were sampled through our annual parent/carer survey, which this session was implemented in conjunction with Perth and Kinross Council. The knowledge gained through these activities have helped shape our strategic improvement priorities for Session 2024/25.