Dyce Academy



Progress Report for HMIE

November 2026

Introduction

HMIE Inspectors visited Dyce Academy in January 2023, producing a report in April of that year. During this visit, they identified the following strengths and areas for improvement:-

Strengths

- *Friendly young people who enjoy positive relationships with staff across the school. They demonstrate the school values of responsibility and respect around the school and in lessons.*
- *Enthusiastic teachers who support learners within a welcoming environment. They provide helpful access to digital technology resources to enhance learning and teaching.*

Areas for Improvement

- ***Area 1:*** *Improve attainment and increase expectations for all young people.*
- ***Area 2:*** *Develop more robust systems to monitor the attainment and progress of all young people.*
- ***Area 3:*** *Improve the quality of learners' experiences throughout the school. This should include teachers planning more challenging and relevant learning experiences that allow learners to make better progress as they move through the school.*

A further HMIE visit took place to review progress and a report in February 2025 confirmed progress made since the initial visit. This set out the request for a Local Authority Report within eighteen months to provide further evidence of progress. The Local Authority Report was submitted in October 2026 and a summary of the key areas of this report is found below.

Key Areas for Improvement

The HMIE progress report from the Local Authority provided detailed evidence of improvement against the key areas set out by HMIE.

Area 1

- **Improve the reliability of Literacy data at fourth level and maintain progress from the Broad General Education (BGE) to the Senior Phase.**
  The reliability of Literacy data has improved, greater concordance is evident and translating into a three-year trend of improved attainment in the Senior Phase (fourth level translating into National 5 results).
- **Improve the reliability of Numeracy data in BGE and improve progression from the BGE into Senior Phase.**
  The reliability of Numeracy data has improved in the BGE and is allowing for greater concordance in the Senior Phase.
- **Improve attainment of young people at SCQF Level 5 for Numeracy.**
  SCQF 5 improvements are providing greater depth in the learning experience in S4 to support further improvement as young people progress to qualifications in S5.

- **Improve attainment of young people at SCQF 6 for Literacy**.
  Awards at SCQF 6 in S5 has a three-year improving trend.
- **Improve presentation levels in English at National 5 by S4, and at Higher by S5.**
  There are increased presentation levels for National 5 English at the end of S4, and Higher by S5.
- **Improve the quality and reliability of teachers' judgements about young people's progress in the BGE.**
  Improvement has been made due to the triangulation of evidence to support decision-making on young people's progress through the BGE. Robust evidence is gathered through observations, exemplification of pupil work, and rich tracking and monitoring data. As a result, data is being used more effectively to support teacher understanding of where young people are in their learning and the identification of next steps in learning. Moreover, young people have a better understanding of their progress and increased independence in their learning.
- **Improve attainment of complementary tariff points by S5 (by S5 roll) for all young people.**
  There is a three-year improving trend in performance of the Lowest 20%, Middle 60% and Highest 20%.
- **Improve attainment at one or more to six or more at SCQF level 5C in S4.**
  There is a two-year improvement journey of improvement evidence in this area.
- **Improve attainment at one or more to five or more at SCQF level 6C in S5.**
  There is an improving trend in this area. Due to improvements in coursing and pathway planning, there is an increase in the percentage of young people achieving at key benchmarks at SCQF 6 in S5, broadly in line with the Virtual Comparator.
- **Improve the attainment of those on Free School Meals in S4 and S5**.
  There is an improving trend at SCQF level 5C in S4 and SCQF level 6C in S5.

<u>Area 2</u>

- **Maintain the whole school strategy to monitor attainment of young people.**
  The school has continued to operate the Faculty and Whole School Tracker system that was implemented following the initial inspection in January 2023 across all year stages S1-S6. This allows staff at all levels to monitor the attainment of the young people in their class, through the recording of key assessment pieces throughout the year.
- **Agree a consistent approach in the language used to measure young people's progress within CfE levels to help learners and parents understand better the progress they are making and improve the reliability of our data.**
  The school has introduced a common language to measure young people's progress within CfE levels. This is allowing staff to make more accurate and more reliable judgements of pupil progress and to determine more effectively when interventions are required for young people who are not making the appropriate progress.
- **Senior leaders should continue their plans to increase moderation activities across their associated school groups.**
  The school has continued to keep our moderation focus within faculties on planning for learning teaching and assessment. Moderation records are being maintained by faculties which demonstrates that learning experiences and assessment activities are closely linked to the national benchmarks.
  External moderation work was extended to associated schools groups during session 2025-26 with a focus on achievement of levels in Literacy (writing) which has supported

curriculum planning and professional judgements across both schools, and led to amendments in the literacy transition work that is carried out during P7.

- **Teachers and middle leaders should continue to develop the range of assessment approaches used to assess learners in the BGE. Class teachers should use data more regularly to inform their planning of high-quality learning experiences**
  Assessment data is being used to inform learning and teaching through adaptive lesson delivery, responsive lesson planning, and it is informing development work and improvement planning.
  Attainment review discussions have highlighted that faculties have been developing their assessment practices to ensure assessments are accessible, robust and meet the needs of all learners.

Area 3

- **Maintain the improvement in classroom routines and greater consistency in the quality of learning and teaching across subject areas**
  The school has continued to see improvement in the quality of learning and teaching. In **most** lessons there remains a positive climate for learning and our pupils are active participants in their learning. SLT Observation records include measures on pupil engagement in lessons which confirms that in the **majority** of lessons (72%), Engagement and Strategic Compliance was observed from pupils.
  Relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils themselves remain positive and respectful the **majority** of the time. Overall, the learning environment is built on positive and appropriately challenging relationships which leads to high quality learning outcomes.
  The school has continued to embed their learning, teaching and assessment policy in their practice. The Dyce Academy 'Features of a Good Lesson Structure' and 'Features of Effective Practice' in differentiation, pace and challenge documents, are supporting staff to plan effective lessons.
- **Continue with the planned next step of focusing on pace and challenge to ensure young people receive learning well matched to their needs and ability.**
  At a whole school level the focus during sessions 2024-26 has been on developing practice in Differentiation, Pace and Challenge. Collegiate work was carried out in session 2024-25 to arrive at an agreed set of strategies for effective practice across the categories of Differentiation, Pace and Challenge, based on existing best practice and identified areas for development.
  Across observations over the course of 2026-27, it was found that the pace in lessons was meeting the needs of **almost all** learners. The level of challenge was meeting the needs of **most** learners, and differentiation was meeting the needs of **the majority of** learners.

Key Next Steps

The HMIE progress report from the Local Authority provided information about the next steps the school plan to take in their continued journey of improvement.

Area 1

- Improve presentation levels and attainment of young people at SCQF 6 for Numeracy.
- Continue to improve presentation levels and attainment in Maths at Nat 5 by S4, and at Higher by S5.
- Improve attainment of complementary tariff points for all leavers.
- Improve attainment of S6 pupils through increased complementary tariff points by S6 (by S6 roll) and improved attainment at SCQF level 6C or better.
- Continue to improve the attainment of young people attaining one or more to six or more awards at SCQF level 5C or better in S4 and close the gap with the VC.
- Improve top-quality passes at both National 5 and Higher level.
- Continue to close the gap with the VC for FSM pupils in S4-6.

Area 2

- The Dyce Academy School Improvement Plan for Session 2026-27 includes a focus on assessment, linked with the work of the ACC subject specific networks. This aims to support the further development of the range of assessment approaches being used, particularly within the BGE.

Area 3

- The school focus within learning and teaching will move towards building greater consistency in the approach to, and assessment of, lesson observations through joint Senior Leadership Team / Faculty Head lesson observations.
- In addition, the school will be continuing to develop their pedagogy through the work of new pedagogy groups with a focus on PBL, HOTS and Marginal Gains.
- Finally, the school will continue to look at approaches to assessment across the curriculum as they look to round off their work on planning for learning teaching and assessment in the BGE.