

# Sinclair Academy



# PROGRESS REPORT FOR SESSION 2023/24

(Standards & Quality Report)

Sinclair Academy

Linlithgow Road  
Winchburgh  
EH52 6FY



## ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Sinclair Academy is a denominational secondary school in West Lothian, that opened in August 2023 to S1 learners, with modern and innovative teaching areas and spaces incorporating both indoor and outdoor learning facilities. The school is situated in a development of three new schools (Sinclair Academy, Winchburgh Academy and Holy Family Primary School) with a shared sports HUB. The school has been built as a 'School in the Park', with direct access via the school grounds into Auldcaithie Park, with a rich and versatile range of outdoor learning opportunities available on our doorstep. The school currently has three catchment schools: Holy Family Primary (Winchburgh), Saint Nicholas Primary (Broxburn) and Saint Joseph's Primary (Linlithgow). The initial school role in year one was 79 first year learners and in year two this has increased to 179 first and second year learners. The school building has a capacity of approximately 660 students, which it is predicted to reach within six years of opening.

Values are at the centre of all we do as a Catholic school community and shape our daily existence within Sinclair Academy. Through consultation with our wider school community including our local parishes, our school values represent "Our Aims": Aspiration, Integrity, Mercy and Service.

Sinclair Academy strives to develop our community by the key features of Margaret Sinclair by ensuring our young people are:

- Confident learners ready for the world
- Courageous and willing to accept challenges
- Committed to Succeed and Develop Their God Given Talents
- Dedicated to be the best version of themselves

We will achieve this through striving to ensure:

- We create a Catholic school community which engages with our local community in building a strong identity.
- Our curriculum is innovative, creative and meets the needs of all learners to develop of skills for life, learning and work beyond life beyond Sinclair Academy
- We provide effective universal and targeted support which allows all learners to achieve success. This includes effective intervention and partnership working to develop positive outcomes.
- The highest quality of learning and teaching is consistent throughout all areas of our curriculum and learners experience pace and challenge to develop their skills across the curriculum.
- Participative practice is a key part of our daily school life centred around the partnership working of all stakeholders.
- That effective self-evaluation processes are prevalent through all aspects of our school.

### IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

Our improvement priorities are always based on the national priorities in the National Improvement Framework (NIF). Below we have indicated what progress we made with these priorities in Session 2023/24, what the impact has been and what our next steps will be to continue to address these priorities in session 2024/25.

We have also shown which NIF driver for improvement we used – you can find out more about the National Improvement Framework and drivers at:

[Education: National Improvement Framework and improvement plan 2024 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/consultation-papers/collections/documents/ImprovementFramework2024.pdf)

We have also evaluated our overall provision using quality indicators (QIs) in How Good is our School 4 (HGIOS4) which is a key aspect of the Scottish approach to self-evaluation and school improvement.

PRIORITY	HOW DID WE DO?
<p>1.</p> <p>To raise attainment, especially in literacy and numeracy</p> <p><b>Our measurable outcome for session 2023/24 was to:</b>            -develop a consistent approach to learning and teaching to raise attainment            -establish a targeted support programme to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy.</p> <p><b>NIF Driver(s):</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Improvement.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Leadership  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parental Engagement  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum and Assessment  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance Information</p>	<p>We have made good progress.</p> <p>What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of the 'Sinclair Lesson' guide in partnership with staff, young people and parents/carers to support consistency and high standards in learning and teaching. Significant progress made in sharing the purpose of learning through reference to skills and children's rights. Improved consistency in meaningfully sharing "WHAT we are learning", "WHY we are learning this" and "HOW we will be successful in lessons".</li> <li>• Literacy interventions focussed on reading as there are strong links between reading ability and enjoyment, and pupil wellbeing and attainment across the curriculum. At the beginning of the year, all pupils carried out a reading comprehension test. Through analysing performance in this test, along with consideration of ASN and engagement in class, 18 pupils were identified as most at need of additional input to boost their confidence and attainment. To build a more detailed sense of their needs, the NGRT (New Group Reading Test). 12 of the 18 pupils were found to have a discrepancy of chronological age vs reading age of more than 2 years. Interventions focussed on reciprocal reading skills, with some RUAЕ reading comprehension activities. Targeted pupils worked in small groups, guided by a PSW facilitator, which met once per week for 30-40 minutes. Engagement was highest when the group was conversational and used collaborative reading strategies, rather than the jotter/workbook based tasks. In addition, five pupils were referred to the WL Literacy (Dyslexia) Service for a 7 week block of 1-1 teaching support. Two of which had been identified with dyslexia recently and did not take part in a transition/knowledge and confidence boosting activity in P7, and three were our pupils with the highest level of need whose sessions focussed on reading, spelling and decoding skills.</li> <li>• Numeracy interventions focused on improving understanding of the 'four operations'. A range of assessment information, including CAT data was analysed resulting in 13 young people being identified for numeracy targeted support facilitated by a PSW. Interventions covered a range of strategies such as SEAL interventions, CPA and Number Talks.</li> <li>• 'Building Thinking Classrooms' has been introduced as the main teaching methodology in Mathematics to improve engagement and encourage deeper thinker to raise attainment. This has improved confidence and enjoyment in the Mathematics classroom. This approach is now being adopted by our Cluster primary schools and is a key part of the Cluster improvement plan.</li> <li>• Family learning events for literacy and numeracy were held for parents/carers to engage in a number of workshops with their children. The literacy family learning event focused on reading. The numeracy family learning event focused on 'Building Thinking Classrooms' and the importance of numeracy skills for learning life and work. Information leaflets with practical advice to support the development of literacy and numeracy skills at home were issued. Parent/Carer evaluations highlighted that they felt more empowered to support their child with literacy and numeracy following the events.</li> </ul>

	<p>Evidence indicates the impact is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethos survey results highlighted excellent satisfaction rates with learning and teaching at Sinclair Academy. 100% of parent/carers stated that their child enjoys learning at school. 99% of parents/carers stated that their child was progressing well (excellent/good) in their learning. 83% of young people stated (excellent/good) that learning is enjoyable.</li> <li>• Literacy targeted intervention proved successful as in May 2024, a second NGRT was sat, the amount of pupils with a gap of more than 2 years between chronological and reading age fell from the majority, 12 of 18 (67%) to less than half (39%, 7 of 18 pupils). At the start of the year, less than half (4 of 18, 22%) pupils had a reading age of 11 or above. In May, the majority now had a reading age of 11 or above was (11 of 18, 61%).</li> <li>• Almost all pupils who engaged in targeted numeracy interventions improved their knowledge of the four operations based on assessments completed at the start and the end. 12/13 pupils (92%) increased from their baseline data. Additionally, all pupils were able to articulate their thinking to the teacher during the second assessment.</li> <li>• In a survey completed in August 2023, 39 pupils (almost 50% of our cohort) stated they: did not enjoy Mathematics, were not good at Mathematics and were scared of Mathematics. In April 2024, a second survey highlighted that this figure had significantly reduced to 12 pupils (15% of our cohort).</li> </ul>
<p>2.</p> <p>To close the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children</p> <p><b>Our measurable outcome for session 2023/24 was to remove barriers associated with cost of the school day.</b></p> <p><b>NIF Driver(s):</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Improvement.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Leadership  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parental Engagement  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum and Assessment  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance Information</p>	<p>We have made good progress.  What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the school opening in August 2023, no Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) was awarded for session 2023-24.</li> <li>• A partnership was established with 'Stephen's the Bakers', which has allowed for a breakfast club to be established and it is open to all pupils. A healthy breakfast is provided free of charge, including: milk, water, cereal, toast, yoghurt and fruit. The breakfast club ensures that all young people can have a positive start to the day as they are able to have a nutritious breakfast and be ready to learn. The breakfast club also promotes good attendance and timekeeping.</li> <li>• A partnership was established with the 'Families and Young People's Advice Service' (FYPAS). Several families were referred to the service for food and financial support. The school hosted a 'drop-in' session for families and provided advice on energy grants, benefit entitlements, eligibility criteria for disability benefits, free school meals and school clothing grants.</li> <li>• A 'Cost of the School Day' statement has been produced in consultation with staff, pupils and parents/carers. This will be continuously reviewed.</li> </ul> <p>Evidence indicates the impact is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families engaging with FYPAS reported that this was beneficial in supporting them financially.</li> <li>• Positive outcomes for families have been highlighted through the Ethos survey undertaken by 95% of all families.</li> </ul>

<p>3.</p> <p>To improve children and young people’s health &amp; wellbeing</p> <p>Our measurable outcome for session 2023/24 was to establish Sinclair Academy as a nurturing school where all young people feel supported and know how to access support.</p> <p><b>NIF Driver(s):</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Improvement.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Leadership</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parental Engagement</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum and Assessment</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance Information</p>	<p>We have made good progress.</p> <p>What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurture and Trauma Informed Practice training has ensured that that staff are aware of barriers to learning, all behaviour being a form of communication and the need for ‘curiosity’ to be our default position. Staff employ restorative approaches to resolve issues.</li> <li>• Focus on universal support - Establishment of a Key Adult programme to ensure that every learner has an adult who knows them well and supports them in their learning journey. SHANARRI assessments used to assess wellbeing and put supports in place when required. There is a weekly well-being check-in at Key Adult time to encourage young people to express how they are feeling with the aim of early intervention to support them.</li> <li>• Creating an anti-bullying culture has been central to our work in Sinclair Academy. At the start of S1, Key Adults delivered an anti-bullying lesson where young people were made fully aware of the definition of bullying. This has been further supported at assemblies and in Key Adult lessons on the themes of Anti-bullying, disability and refugees. This is linked to our work as a Rights Respecting school. Within 2 months of opening, the school achieved Bronze committed RRS status and within 9 months achieved Silver accreditation. The RRS Charter (created in consultation with P7 pupils, S1 pupils, Staff and Parents/Carers) has anti-bullying articles identified as key priorities. All young people in S1 have engaged in a workshop with ‘Show Racism the Red Card’. A trusted adult system has been put in place where young people can self-refer to inform of bullying or any concerns.</li> <li>• Established partnership with SMILE Counselling. Almost all young people engaged in a mental health group work session. Almost all young people who engaged in Counselling sessions reported improved wellbeing.</li> <li>• A resilience group work programme was developed and delivered by our Pupil Support Worker. Almost all pupils engaging in this programme of targeted health and wellbeing support reported improved wellbeing in the survey completed.</li> </ul> <p>Evidence indicates the impact is:</p> <p>Ethos Survey Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Almost all pupils feel safe at school (91.14%), which is significantly higher than the WL average (84.85%). All (100%) of parents/carers feel that their child is safe at school (WL average, 87%).</li> <li>• Almost all (92.54%) parents/carers identified that the school deals well with bullying (WL average 65.02%). Most pupils (79.75%) believe the school deals well with bullying (WL average 39.76%).</li> <li>• Almost all (98.5%) parents/carers believe that their child is treated fairly by school staff (WL average, 83.24%). Almost all (93.67%) of young people feel that staff treat them fairly (WL average, 85.96%).</li> <li>• Most (80.77%) students reported having an adult at school to speak with when worried or upset ‘all of the time’ or ‘often’.</li> </ul>

<p>4.</p> <p>To improve employability skills, and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people</p> <p><b>Our measurable outcome for session 2023/24 was to establish a skills framework, pupil leadership opportunities and IDL opportunities for all.</b></p> <p><b>NIF Driver(s):</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Improvement.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Leadership</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parental Engagement</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum and Assessment</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance Information</p>	<p>We have made good progress.</p> <p>What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A partnership was established with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) with a Careers Advisor identified. All young people engaged in SDS group work about skills. Young people and parents/carers had the opportunity to participate in a SDS workshop linked to numeracy and skills for learning, life and work.</li> <li>• All staff engaged in a CLPL about the Career Education Standard. In turn, staff are aware of their responsibilities in supporting young people to understand their capabilities and develop their aspirations to make informed learning and careers choices as they progress through their learning journeys.</li> <li>• A partnership was established with 'Gen+'. The Gen+ programme has supported the development of a skills framework and a pupil skills profile. In S1, pupils focused on learning and evaluating three meta-skills: Communication, Organisation and Resilience.</li> <li>• All pupils engaged in two IDL projects – one related to Creative Industries and the other STEM. Personalisation and choice was key to both projects. The Gen+ modules and were used to support learners in evaluating their skills development throughout the IDL learning blocks.</li> <li>• A Pupil Council was elected at the start of the session and met regularly to shape and evaluate school improvement. A number of other leadership opportunities have been developed, including: Rights Respecting Schools Ambassadors, Reading Ambassadors and Sports Ambassadors.</li> </ul> <p>Evidence indicates the impact is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners were able to articulate their skills related to the Gen+ framework through the profile they produced over the course of the year.</li> <li>• IDL projects allowed for learners to demonstrate their skills across the curriculum related to the specific performing arts and STEM curricular areas.</li> <li>• Learners are able to articulate their understanding of career pathways through group engagements with SDS.</li> <li>• All staff can demonstrate awareness of the CES and there is visible evidence of elements of DYW across the curriculum.</li> </ul>
--	---

**How has the school been placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education?**

Ensuring that Children’s Rights are fully embedded into our school community has been a priority at Sinclair Academy since the opening of the School in August 2023. The school quickly received formal accreditation of

this work from UNICEF UK by receiving our Bronze Rights Respecting School Award in October 2023, followed by our Silver Award in June 2024.

Children's rights underpin our curriculum, our ethos, our values and our relationships, they are the framework for real moral dilemmas, to provide and support our young people with a rights-based language. Staff promote and deliver a rights-based curriculum. Rights are fed into everyday learning, across all subjects. Staff link rights naturally across the curriculum and in conversations, especially during the start of each day through 'Key Adult Time'. Every Tuesday morning, classes focus on one UNCRC right through their 'Article of the Week' lesson. Rights have a consistent presence in all assemblies and are visible throughout the school. Rights are also threaded through our Ethos and Relationships with the Social and Emotional Wellbeing of pupils being prioritised through wider achievement clubs and events, PSE lessons, and our wider wellbeing and support structure.

### **How has the school been improving/taking action on attendance and exclusion data?**

Young people, staff and parents/carers are aware of the link between attendance and wellbeing and attainment. Every opportunity is taken to promote this using WL and RIC resources. Attendance data is analysed daily so that early intervention can be put in place to support young people when required. This is further supported by Power BI to ensure an in-depth analysis of individuals and groups of learners. Robust internal attendance procedures are in place and safe arrivals protocols are followed.

Overall attendance for session 2023/4 was 93%+, which is significantly higher than WL stretch aim (86-88%). There is a 2.71% gap between Q1 and Q5 attendance. This is significantly lower than WL stretch aim (8-12%). The Ethos survey results highlighted that 100% of parents/carers believe that the school promotes attendance at school (WL average – 77%).

In session 2023/4, there was one exclusion due to a significant incident (2023 school exclusion rate per 1,000 students 12.7%).

### **How effective is the school's engagement with parents and other stakeholders in improvement planning and on reporting school performance?**

Our first Parent Council was established at the start of the school year and was consulted about the improvement plan. We have made very good progress in engaging with Parents/Carers and they have responded to a series of surveys/questionnaires about school evaluation and improvement.

### **Developing in Faith Focus: Serving the Common Good**

In session 2023/2024, the Sinclair Academy Cluster (Sinclair Academy, Holy Family PS, St Nicholas PS and St Joseph's PS) chose 'Serving the Common Good' as the Developing in Faith Focus for our first year working with each other.

- The Cluster joined together to start our first academic session with Mass and an Inservice session on the theme of building our new Catholic community.
- The Cluster worked together to celebrate 'Catholic Education Week' and the theme 'Pilgrims of Faith'. We attended Mass together in the local parishes, participated in liturgy and addressed parishioners about our new Catholic Community and 'Serving the Common Good'.

- The young people in Sinclair Academy participated in a lengthy process to identify Saints to represent our four House groups: Saint Francis, Saint Patrick, Saint Cecilia and Saint Catherine. Each House group created a charism, vision statement and mission statement to shape their identity. Each House group has a particular role in 'Serving the Common Good'.
- Sinclair Academy has registered as a Laudato Si school. The school hosted the Laudato Si conference and participated in this event.
- The S1 Religious Education curriculum was developed to promote 'Serving the Common Good'. Key lessons about our new school values and our patron Margaret Sinclair were created to educate and inspire young people.
- During Advent, young people engaged in a number of activities to raise funds and donations for the local foodbank.
- A strong partnership has been established with SCIAF. The organisation has led workshops and assemblies to inspire and motivate young people to 'Serve the Common Good'. During Lent, young people led a number of activities to fundraise for SCIAF. All young people and staff participated in the 'Big Lent Walk'.

**Our Wider Achievements this year have been:**

- Bronze Rights Respecting Schools Award, October 2023.
- Silver Rights Respecting schools Award, June 2024.
- Level 1, RHS School Gardening Award, June 2024.
- Laudato Si School

How good is our school? The quality indicators\* evidence that:

1.3 Leadership of Change	GOOD
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	VERY GOOD
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	VERY GOOD
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	GOOD

\*(Indicators used in How good is our School? 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Education Scotland 2015 and How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare? 2016)