

Standards and Quality Report

Grangemouth High School

2025 - 2026



Grangemouth High School is the secondary school in the Grangemouth cluster. It serves the town of Grangemouth, with a small number of pupils coming from surrounding areas. It is a non-denominational six-year comprehensive school with a roll of 832 pupils and a teaching staff of 75.

School Context: Understanding the Landscape We Service

Grangemouth High School operates within a distinct local landscape that directly shapes our strategic improvement priorities. Understanding the specific health, educational, and economic challenges faced by our community is essential for tailoring support, ensuring that school-wide interventions are grounded in the lived realities of our pupils. This session, the school has focused on aligning resources and teaching practices with these local factors to close the poverty-related attainment gap effectively.

Our demographic profile presents a distinct set of operational and educational realities, heavily informing our strategic choices and curriculum design. The student roll is significantly weighted toward the lower deciles of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), demonstrating a stark divergence from the wider Falkirk Council average:

- **Context:** Approximately **84%** of our student roll resides in SIMD Deciles 1 to 5 (the most deprived 50% nationally), compared to a balanced local authority average of roughly 50%.
- **Acute Localised Need:** At the most acute end of the index, **15.30%** of our pupils live within Decile 1 areas—nearly triple the broader authority average of 5.41%. Furthermore, **43.25%** of our young people live within Deciles 1 to 3, compared to 26.22% across the rest of the council area.

Catchment Profile and Demographic Distribution: The largest single cohort of students at Grangemouth High School resides within Decile 4, accounting for 22.29% of the school roll, whereas the broader regional peak sits within Decile 9 at 14.45%. The school's demographic distribution reflects a unique bimodal catchment area, with a notable reduction in representation at Decile 6 (1.69% compared to the authority average of 12.46%). This statistical variance highlights a distinct geographical and socio-economic composition within our specific intake area, characterised by a lower proportion of mid-to-high decile households. Specifically, representation in Deciles 9 and 10 stands at 6.75%, compared to the local authority average of 21.39%.

Driving Equity and Excellence

Operating within this specific demographic landscape means that our poverty-related attainment challenge is significantly higher than the authority average. These systemic barriers directly shape our core vision.



Our Vision.

Place learning
at the heart of
everything we do.



Encouraging
AMBITION



Building
CONFIDENCE



Broadening
HORIZONS



Our Vision

Our core vision—*Placing learning at the heart of everything we do, Encouraging Ambition, Building Confidence & Broadening Horizons*—serves as the foundation for all school activity. Evaluative data from our recent learning visits confirms that this vision has been successfully put into practice within daily classroom routines, moving beyond a passive slogan to actively drive pupil engagement. The launch involved staff reflected on learning and teaching strategies, a process that has fostered higher engagement and strengthened the resilience necessary for pupils to navigate their Broad General Education and Senior Phase journeys.

To ensure staff can effectively meet the needs of all learners, the session began with a rigorous focus on data literacy across staff. We utilised staff surveys to baseline the shared understanding of the Grangemouth landscape to enhance staff capacity to interpret complex socioeconomic data. This initial focus on data literacy was critical; it established the baseline understanding required for Principal Teachers to later combine tracking data with demographic profiles, such as the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and gender, ensuring a more responsive and empathetic educational environment. This deep-rooted awareness provides the school with a robust foundation for leading sustainable change and driving overall improvement.

Leadership of Change

Driving school-wide improvement requires a strategic focus on empowering Principal Teachers and modernising internal policies to ensure they are fit for purpose within the current educational climate. A key achievement this session has been the evolution of our Relationships and Anti-Bullying policies. We have successfully transitioned from the previous subjective recording of incidents toward a unified, school-wide framework with standardised definitions. This modernisation involved a critical analysis of behaviour referrals to identify school-wide trends and eliminate past variations in how staff categorised incidents. By replacing varied interpretations with data-driven systems, we have created a more equitable and transparent environment for both staff and pupils.

Principal Teachers have demonstrated high-level leadership by combining robust tracking principles with demographic profiling. By filtering pupil data through equity lenses—including deprivation data and gender—middle leaders now identify what works with greater precision, moving past isolated data points. Furthermore, the implementation of the *Cost of the School Day* audit and faculty-specific audit sheets has been instrumental in ensuring fairness. This framework allows faculties to identify and remove financial barriers to trips and curricular activities, ensuring the curriculum remains accessible to every pupil regardless of their economic background.

We have also documented a significant shift toward a collaborative professional culture through the introduction of *Teach Meets*. This initiative has encouraged high-level professional dialogue, specifically focused on enhancing classroom pace and increasing academic challenge. By fostering an environment where teachers observe one another and share high-impact strategies, the school has moved toward a model of collective responsibility for pupil success, backed by evidence-based research. These leadership strategies have successfully transitioned from high-level planning to practical application within every classroom.

Learning, Teaching, and Assessment

The delivery of a high-quality learning experience is the primary vehicle for ensuring pupil success and narrowing the attainment gap. Consistent, research-informed teaching remains our core priority for school improvement. The *Ready to Learn* strategy has established a consistent lesson shape across the school. While widespread adoption is evident, our current baseline shows that Learning Intentions and Success Criteria are consistently displayed in 85% of classes, while learning is effectively rounded up in a summary review, or plenary, in 70% of lessons. This framework includes clearly displayed learning goals to provide purpose, defined benchmarks that encourage pupil ambition, and effective lesson plenaries to cement understanding. This strategy was revitalised through high-quality professional learning, including expert input from education speaker Bruce Robertson. The impact of this training is evidenced by a significant improvement in

pupil engagement during learning visits, which rose to 92% following the input compared to 73% in the previous cycle.

To sustain these improvements, we implemented collaborative visits across the school for low-stakes peer observations. These initiatives have empowered staff to experiment with and refine high-impact teaching strategies. Techniques such as 'Cold Call' questioning, 'Bounce' discussions, and 'Show Me Boards' are now widespread, revitalising classroom interaction and ensuring all pupils participate actively.

At the same time, our approach to tracking progress has been modernised through a new spreadsheet-based format. This system centralises pupil progress data, making it highly visible while simultaneously reducing the administrative workload for teachers. Teachers and Principal Teachers utilise this centralised data to spot subject-specific performance patterns and provide ongoing support. Following this, the "5+ Academy" serves as a critical intervention for at-risk pupils in the senior phase, using this real-time data to provide support from Support for Learning and the Additional Support Centre exactly where it is needed most. This rigorous tracking directly informs our ability to ensure the wellbeing and inclusion of every learner.

Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality, and Inclusion

Positive relationships and inclusive practices are essential prerequisites for effective learning, as a pupil who feels safe and recognised is a pupil who is ready to achieve. We have redesigned our recognition systems to ensure success is celebrated meaningfully. This includes the use of WOW cards, in-class recognition boards, and formal certificates. Pupil voice was central to this redesign; student focus groups were instrumental in shaping the new Anti-Bullying policy and ensuring the reward systems carry genuine value with the student body.

Focused efforts on attendance have yielded measurable results, supported by our Attendance work and collaborative documents created with local primary schools to ensure a consistent message across the community. Our overall attendance has shown a baseline improvement of 4.39%. Furthermore, persistent late-coming—defined as pupils arriving late three or more times a week—has dropped dramatically from 32 pupils down to 10, with an ultimate target of zero. Our monthly average for pupils who are late once a week has also decreased from 101 pupils down to 85, hitting our target and representing a 16-pupil reduction.

In partnership with families, we have shifted from passive information sessions to interactive, high-impact workshops like our "Practical Challenge Day." With a target of 75% parental engagement, we utilize a detailed Pupil Information Profile to personalise home-school dialogue. This highly personalised approach has earned positive praise from parents for our staff's individual understanding of every learner. An inclusive environment, supported by strong parental partnerships, provides the necessary stability for improvements in pupil attainment and post-school destinations.

Raising Attainment and Achievement

Our mission to broaden horizons is reflected in our attainment results, which consistently exceed those of similar schools across the country, known as our Virtual Comparator. Grangemouth High School continues to demonstrate strong added value across key metrics. In numeracy, 98% of pupils achieved success at Level 4 compared to 88% in similar schools, while 79% achieved Level 5 compared to a comparator of 68%. In literacy, 95% of pupils achieved Level 4 compared to 89% in similar schools. 100% of our S4 pupils achieved at least 1 qualification at Level 3 or above compared to 97% nationally. 95% of our S4 pupils achieved at least 3 qualifications at Level 4 or above compared to 88% nationally. 92% of our S4 pupils achieved at least 1 qualification at Level 5 or above compared to 86% nationally.

Our curriculum development pathways have also expanded. The "School of..." programme in S2 has successfully boosted subject uptake in S3 by allowing for greater personalisation and choice. We have expanded our accredited course offerings to broaden future pathways, including Level 6 National Progress Awards in Musical Theatre, Music for Wellbeing, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Musical Leader, and Scientific Technologies. Vocational pathways have been strengthened with Level 5 qualifications in Barista

skills, Customer Service, and Employability, while high-achieving senior pupils can access university-level learning through the Open University's Young Applicants in Schools Scheme.

We remain committed to a 95% positive school leaver destination target for October 2025. Our strategy focuses on securing qualification through the Qualifications Scotland Preparation for Employment framework at Levels 4 and 5, ensuring work-based learning is formally accredited. Monthly multi-agency transition meetings involving Skills Development Scotland, Social Care, and data portals ensure that at-risk leavers have a supported plan in place. Finally, *Getting To Know You* profiling for S2 and S4 pupils is complete and recorded in our school systems to further safeguard these future destinations. These achievements serve as a baseline for our future strategic commitments as we continue to refine our curriculum and support systems.

Strategic Initiative: Raising Attainment Leads

During this session, the school successfully implemented the Raising Attainment Leads initiative, establishing a distributed leadership model with dedicated coordinators across the S4, S5, and S6 cohorts to systematically monitor tracking data and address individual barriers to success. Following prelim examinations, leaders proactively utilised this data to engage off-track pupils in co-creating tailored action plans aimed at overcoming subject-specific challenges. To promote equity of opportunity and remove learning barriers, the initiative delivered cross-year study skills workshops and provided pupils with comprehensive, tailored study packs. Learning provisions were further enhanced through flexible, specialist-led "Twilight Sessions" that combined structured study with a welcoming environment and a pupil rewards system to maximise engagement. Furthermore, separate communication teams were established for distinct learner groups to actively capture pupil voice and facilitate rapid peer and staff interventions. Recognising wider contextual barriers, the school also introduced a staged Family Learning Plan initiative that successfully empowered parents—particularly within lower SIMD deciles—by guiding them from general study routines through to subject-specific exam preparation. Moving forward, the school will focus on developing explicit quantitative measures to evaluate the longitudinal impact of the RAL initiative, systematically tracking attendance at supported study sessions, and directly aligning qualitative family and pupil feedback with attainment outcomes.

MCR Pathways Mentoring

Following its successful launch at the start of session 2025/2026, the MCR Pathways "Young Talent" mentoring programme has become firmly embedded within our school's support framework. Aiming to bridge equity gaps and unlock pupil potential, the initiative connects care-experienced and school-referred pupils in S3–S6 with trained adult volunteers for weekly one-to-one mentoring sessions. Led by our school-based Pathways Coordinator, the programme achieved 100% parental engagement and comfortably exceeded its first-year target, with 13 active mentoring relationships delivering a total of 176 supportive sessions by May 2026. Qualitative feedback from pupils, parents, and staff highlights a profoundly positive early impact on student confidence, resilience, and self-esteem. Moving into the next academic session, we aim to build on this excellent foundation by expanding the programme to include eligible S2 pupils and exploring early-intervention group work for our S1 and S2 cohorts.

Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) Impact Review

During the 2025/2026 session, our Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) investments focused on breaking down structural barriers, supporting emotional wellbeing, and creating exciting educational and vocational pathways for our young people. To ensure every child arrives at school included and ready to learn, we introduced a 10-minute shift to the school day to ease morning family routines, matching this with a universal "grab 'n' go" breakfast alongside a targeted bi-weekly Breakfast Club. This was warmly supported by our "Everyday Essentials" project, which placed discrete, "no-ask" food and hygiene trolleys across all departments. We further championed visual equity and school pride through a uniform initiative that gifted school knitwear to all incoming S1 students, completely alleviating transition anxieties for families. Similarly, our Physical Education support strategy successfully eliminated "kit poverty" by providing an anonymous, high-quality

sportswear bank, supporting an average of 26 pupils a week and ensuring 100% of participating students felt completely included in peer groups without social stigma.

We also heavily invested in raising confidence, expanding horizons, and boosting formal qualifications. In the classroom, an S2 English excursion to see *Macbeth* at the Edinburgh Playhouse opened the doors of professional theatre to many students for the first time—resulting in a 100% positive satisfaction rating and vastly improving our young people's understanding of the text. Our targeted support framework was significantly enhanced by a vital partnership with the Community Learning and Development (CLD) service, which engaged 58 pupils across S1–S6 in bespoke group work, one-to-one interventions, and outreach that allowed disengaged young people to complete National 3 units from home. This partnership saw 31 young people make measurable gains in core skills and wellbeing indicators, while celebrating an array of wider achievements including Hi5, Dynamic Youth, Employability, and Personal Development Awards. For our senior students, alternative and vocational pathways yielded outstanding success.

Our partnership with the Go Youth Trust achieved a flawless 100% completion rate, with all S3/S4 participants earning a King's Trust Personal Development and Employability Award at Level 4, and the senior cohort stepping up to secure Level 5. The "Effective Now" initiative helped at-risk S4 students build essential workplace "Meta Skills," with eight pupils proudly walking away with a formal Level 5 Adult Achievement Award. Finally, our strategic outreach partnership with the Cyrenians provided crucial, relationship-first mentoring for vulnerable families, successfully guiding chronic non-attenders and school leavers into positive destinations including stable college placements, personal development programmes, and direct employment training. Together, these initiatives have fostered a deeply compassionate, inclusive school community where every young person is valued and supported to reach their full potential.

Qualification Scotland Attainment

For session 2025 - 2026, the overall attainment profile of Grangemouth High School demonstrates a highly positive and encouraging trajectory, with an increase in almost all key performance indicators compared to the previous session. Our data reveals a successful dual focus on both academic stretch and inclusive support. Firstly, there are strong trends indicating that aspirational coursing and presentation are having a direct, positive impact on our highest attainers. This is particularly evident in the senior phase, where we have seen robust growth in the proportion of S5 and S6 pupils securing multiple Higher qualifications, alongside a notable increase in S6 pupils achieving Advanced Higher awards at SCQF Level 7. During Session 2025 – 2026 we have increased the number of young people achieving 5 highers, and for the first time ever, we have had a significant number of pupils achieving 5 A at Higher Level. We have also seen the number of S6 pupils achieving one Advanced Higher double from the previous year's attainment. In parallel, our school-wide commitment to equity has delivered extremely positive accreditation for our lowest attainers, proving that our targeted processes are successfully supporting and re-engaging our hardest-to-reach young people. This inclusion is underscored by rising attainment rates in S4 at SCQF Levels 3 and 4. While we continue to refine our learning and teaching experiences to address specific pathway priorities—particularly around maintaining presentation rates at SCQF Level 5 and Higher—the school's general attainment trend represents a substantial step forward in encouraging ambition and raising standards for all.

Conclusion: Our Future Priorities and Next Steps

As Grangemouth High School moves forward, our strategic vision remains firmly rooted in placing **learning at the heart of everything we do**. Driven by our core mission to *Encourage Ambition, Build Confidence, and Broaden Horizons*, we will utilise robust self-evaluation and the collaborative Ceannas leadership model to foster a reflective, dynamic culture that directly enhances the classroom experience.

To ensure sustained improvement and excellence through to **June 2027**, our strategic next steps are structured around three core pillars:

1. A Curriculum Designed for Success & Future Readiness

- **Comprehensive Review:** Undertake a rigorous review of the curriculum from S1 through S6 to ensure seamless challenge, clear progression, and diverse learning pathways.

- **Meta-Skills Framework:** Embed transferable skills—such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration—to prepare students for a rapidly evolving, AI-driven global workforce.

2. Enhancing Learning, Teaching, and Assessment

- **High-Quality Learning Environments:** Foster consistent classroom experiences focused on optimal pace, high engagement, and meaningful learning conversations between staff and pupils.
- **Robust Assessment & Moderation:** Strengthen collaborative moderation practices among staff to guarantee fair, consistent, and accurate feedback and grading.
- **Digital Literacy:** Maximize classroom technology to build digital capability and literacy in both educators and learners.

3. Driving Academic Attainment & Progress Tracking

- **Targeted Qualification Pathways:** Implement data-driven departmental plans to boost attainment metrics across National 5 (Level 5), Higher (Level 6), and Advanced Higher (Level 7).
- **The 5+ Academy:** Provide bespoke mentoring and tailored study sessions to support targeted students in achieving a fifth Higher qualification.
- **Data Literacy:** Enhance staff capability to analyse student data efficiently, ensuring swift, targeted interventions for pupils requiring extra support.

4. Wellbeing, Relationships, and Transitions

- **Holistic Support:** Maintain positive relationships and emotional wellbeing as the baseline for learning, ensuring smooth transitions from Primary to Secondary, throughout the Senior Phase, and into positive post-school destinations.
- **Community Partnerships:** Strengthen links with external partners like LEAPS, and deepen parental engagement by providing comprehensive educational, financial, and mental health support to families.

By seamlessly linking leadership, a modern curriculum, high-quality teaching, and robust wellbeing frameworks, Grangemouth High School is dedicated to creating a holistic support system where every young person is empowered to reach their highest potential.