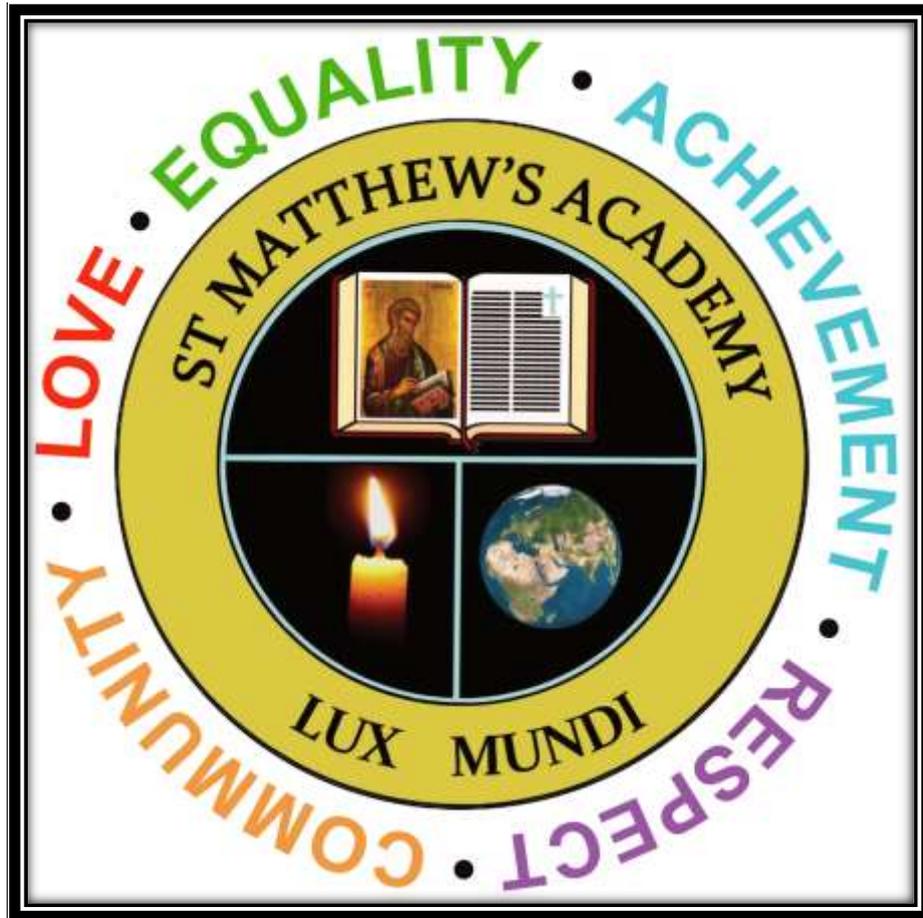


# SAINT MATTHEW'S ACADEMY



## STANDARDS & QUALITY REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2021

St Matthew's Academy is a six-year denominational secondary school situated in Saltcoats, North Ayrshire. The catchment area of the school covers the whole of North Ayrshire. Pupils who attend the 10 denominational primary schools have the right to enrol in St Matthew's while others are enrolled through the placing request legislation. The current roll (September 2021) is 1285, a large number of whom live in recognised areas of socio-economic deprivation: 50.6% of leavers in 2020 live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 1 or 2.

At present, the school has a teaching staff of 89.5 full-time equivalent (FTE). The Senior Management Team comprises the Head Teacher and 4 Depute Head Teachers. There are currently 11 Curriculum Leaders each of whom manages a group of subjects, a leader of Pupil Support and 6 Principal Teachers of Pastoral. The teaching staff are supported by a full complement of Administrative, Technician, Librarian and Classroom Assistant staff.

St Matthew's Academy is a denominational school and, as such, we seek to be a centre of excellence providing the highest possible quality of education in a Catholic community where care, cooperation and mutual respect are at the heart of everything we do. We want to give all the members of our community the opportunity and encouragement to achieve their full potential.

### **Vision**

*Our vision for Saint Matthew's Academy is one of a community of faith and learning dedicated to Gospel Values. We work together to ensure the effective formation and development of the whole child by providing the highest quality of education. We strive to ensure our young people develop their talents and abilities in order to best support the common good.*

### **Values**

Our values underpin our ethos within Saint Matthew's Academy. They are CLEAR and we strive to ensure they are visible throughout our school.

Community - we understand that each of us - pupils, parents, staff, parishes and partners - are called to engage as full members of our Community of Faith and Learning. We must use our gifts and abilities to help and support those around us while at the same time allowing ourselves to be supported.

Love - Jesus teaches us that the greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart. The second is that we must love our neighbour as ourselves. We show love in our charity, in our service, in our forgiveness, in our compassion and in our patience. Love is the foundation of all our actions.

Equality - we believe that all people are created in the image and likeness of God. By recognising the equal dignity of all, we celebrate difference and strive to create an inclusive, tolerant and welcoming ethos where each individual has the opportunity and support to participate fully in our community.

Achievement - our Catholic school is one in which everyone has the opportunity to reach their potential. By providing high quality learning experiences we encourage all to achieve. We pursue excellence in all that we undertake to ensure each member of our community has opportunities to develop and grow their talents and skills in order to fulfil their potential in every area of their lives.

Respect - Gospel Values only truly exist in our interaction with each other and with the world around us. By ensuring that all relationships are built on a mutual and genuine respect we create a Community of Faith and Learning where all can attain their full potential. We have respect for others and for ourselves as we understand and greatly value the gift of life we have been given.

As a Catholic school, our aims are:

- *to promote Gospel values of love, understanding and respect through all our activities and at all times;*
- *to develop all members of our community spiritually, morally, intellectually, socially and physically;*
- *to provide the highest possible standards of learning and teaching;*
- *to develop in our young people awareness of and respect for different cultures and an understanding of our social responsibilities;*
- *to nurture in our young people creativity and aesthetic appreciation;*
- *to provide a safe, stimulating and welcoming environment;*
- *to work in close partnership with parents, the Church and the wider community; and*
- *to provide opportunities for the personal and professional development of staff.*

Our Gospel values are at the heart of the Curriculum for Excellence which Saint Matthew's Academy provides. We strive to ensure our young people have opportunities to put faith and learning into practice. We encourage our students to act justly and with compassion. We challenge them to use their gifts and abilities in order to work together for the good of the whole community so that they may aspire to become:

- successful learners;
- confident individuals;
- responsible citizens; and
- effective contributors.

In order to assess the school's current level of performance, a range of self-evaluation procedures are usually used including analysis of Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and other assessment results, visits to classrooms, consultations and discussions with pupils, parents, staff and outside agencies, and detailed consideration of some of the key Quality Indicators (QIs) from "How Good Is Our School 4" (HGIOS4) and "Developing In Faith". However, due to COVID-19 not all aspects of our usual self-evaluation procedures were possible.

Despite this a wide range of evidence was collected in the process of carrying out this evaluation of performance including minutes of meetings, pupil tracking data, some classroom observation summaries, staff surveys and focus groups, departmental displays of pupil work, pupil evaluations, press articles, social media, questionnaire results, presentations to various groups, draft policy and procedure documents, improvement plans and evaluations of the impact of initiatives.

Data is measured against a variety of comparators – Authority and National Averages are used to consider whether Saint Matthew's Academy is achieving in comparison to schools across the authority and the country. The key comparator is known as the "Virtual Comparator". This figure is based on young people from the same socioeconomic circumstances as our students and offers an insight into how these pupils from across Scotland are achieving in other establishments.

*For 2020 the absence of external assessment information, and the Ministerial direction to award estimated grades, have led to a different pattern of attainment than we have seen in previous years. The results for 2020 should not be directly compared to those in previous years or future years. The 2020 Insight data cannot therefore be used to directly demonstrate subject, school or authority improvement compared with previous years. Care should also be taken when comparing attainment to the Virtual Comparator, or indeed when making comparisons across schools.*

### **Literacy and Numeracy – Leavers Data**

*(Leavers data is calculated based on those students who left in Summer 2020 – Summer 2021 leavers data does not become available until Spring 2022 and will be presented in the 2022 Standards and Qualities Document.)*

Attainment in Literacy at Level 4 for school leavers continues to outperform Local Authority and National data and is consistently higher than the Virtual Comparator school, which is a measure from

the Insight Benchmarking Tool. Attainment in Literacy at Level 5 for school leavers continue to outperform the Virtual Comparator school but dipped below Local Authority and National Data for the first time in 3 years. A review of the collation of the Literacy data was carried out and more robust processes were implemented to ensure all possible data was captured in time for the release of Insight Data.

The English Faculty continues to work to improve Literacy at all levels and delivered very good outcomes for leavers with 95% achieving at least at Level 4. This reflects the quality of learning and teaching in the Faculty.

Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy
Saint Matthew's Academy	2018	99.59	88.02
Virtual Comparator	2018	94.34	81.74
North Ayrshire	2018	96.38	83.54
National	2018	94.30	81.67
Saint Matthew's Academy	2019	98.25	86.84
Virtual Comparator	2019	91.80	76.14
North Ayrshire	2019	95.19	83.83
National	2019	93.93	81.73
Saint Matthew's Academy	2020	95.29	78.53
Virtual Comparator	2020	90.58	75.50
North Ayrshire	2020	94.99	81.48
National	2020	93.93	81.80

Attainment in Level 4 Numeracy rose steadily between 2018 and 2020 and now outperform the Virtual Comparator and the Authority figure. In 2017 a renewed focus on Level 4 Numeracy in S4 led to significant improvements and this is now starting to be seen consistently in Leavers data. It is anticipated that this will be a trend that continues in the coming year.

Level 5 Numeracy attainment consistently outperforms the Virtual Comparator. Work has been underway to address the gap between Saint Matthew's Academy Level 5 Numeracy and that of Authority and National averages. In Session 2018/19 saw Saint Matthew's Academy outperformed the Authority and National averages and our next task is to ensure this becomes a consistent feature of our data.

Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy
Saint Matthew's Academy	2018	90.50	67.36
Virtual Comparator	2018	90.37	66.98
North Ayrshire	2018	88.34	70.04
National	2018	90.81	69.18
Saint Matthew's Academy	2019	94.74	71.05
Virtual Comparator	2019	87.81	61.75
North Ayrshire	2019	89.80	69.26

National	2019	91.39	68.77
Saint Matthew's Academy	2019	94.76	64.40
Virtual Comparator	2019	88.85	63.46
North Ayrshire	2019	92.05	70.67
National	2019	91.56	72.03

### **Improving Attainment for All – Leavers Data**

Lowest 20% - our school continues to ensure that pupils in our lowest 20% are given opportunities to be successful and are fully tracked to ensure that they achieve a positive set of qualifications and experiences. Pupils in this cohort do better at Saint Matthew's Academy than the Virtual Comparator. We have also produced stronger outcomes than the North Ayrshire figure in two of the past three years and stronger outcomes than the National figure in two of the past three years.

Middle 60% - attainment for 2020 leavers is below our Virtual Comparator schools and the other two main comparators. A review of our data would suggest that attainment for our young people improved in session 2020 in line with our expectations but the gap increased when viewed against National and Local Data.

Highest 20% - as with the middle 60% attainment is below our Virtual Comparator schools and the national figure. However, attainment at this level has remained broadly constant over the past three years and has increased slightly in 2020. In order to ensure all have the opportunity to achieve we have introduced a wide range of learning experiences in Senior Phase. Careful review of tracking and effective parental engagement has helped to ensure that fewer pupils opt to drop subjects in S6 following unconditional university offers. S6 students are encouraged to aspire to achieve at the highest level possible and in many cases this means success at Advanced Higher level.

	Year	Lowest 20% Tariff Points	Middle 60% Tariff Points	Highest 20% Tariff Points
Saint Matthew's Academy	2018	228	776	1810
Virtual Comparator	2018	165	775	1722
North Ayrshire	2018	170	815	1785
National	2018	164	858	1851
Saint Matthew's Academy	2019	135	687	1794
Virtual Comparator	2019	103	676	1719
North Ayrshire	2019	145	697	1665
National	2019	151	821	1829
Saint Matthew's Academy	2020	130	713	1816
Virtual Comparator	2020	97	761	1839
North Ayrshire	2020	110	782	1779
National	2020	151	889	1930

*What is meant by "Tariff Points"? They provide a summary view of a wide range of achievements and different awards from a range of providers. They capture the latest and best achievements of a learner – for example if your child has sat National 5 in Geography and then Higher in Geography the tariff point that is captured is from the Higher.*

If a course is SCQF accredited it will be given tariff points – if you are interested in learning about tariff points then please access the Insight Help pages on <http://insight-guides.scotxed.net/support/InsightTariff.pdf>

Almost all our young people are motivated to learn and behave well in class and this is reflected both in the continuing improvements in examination performance as well as by the fact that Saint Matthew’s Academy performs above expectations and better than the Virtual Comparator in many attainment indicators.

### **Broad General Education**

Positive progress continues to be made with regard to the Broad General Education (BGE). All pupils from S1-3 engage with the Experiences and Outcomes in the 8 curricular areas. Staff are confident in their delivery of the BGE and significant progress is being made with regard to assessment and moderation. In many areas, S3 pupils are progressing through the Fourth Level.

The school continues to identify targets for improvement and makes effective use of detailed target setting using the planning and attainment history reports within the school’s electronic management system, SEEMIS. Our bespoke BGE tracking system continues to be used to track learners’ progress and attainment. Education Scotland previously identified our systems as supporting teachers to make effective use of assessment information to plan targets in learning, monitor young people’s progress and make appropriate interventions, where required. They are also helping teachers to make robust judgements of achievement of CfE levels based on each learner’s progress.

### **Breadth and Depth**

Attainment continues to be very good at Saint Matthew’s Academy.

This section breaks attainment down into the number of qualifications achieved (A to D as shown on the Benchmarking tool - Insight) by a pupil at the end of S4, S5 and S6 compared to the Virtual Comparator school. From the data below, you can see that in all measures, positive trends are apparent over the past five years. This very good achievement is due to the strong commitment of staff, parents and pupils to establishing an ethos of achievement and maximising potential. The school usually delivers a strong supported study programme that takes place in November. This is usually complemented by a similar programme in March and an Easter School programme and Masterclasses that takes place just prior to each SQA examination.

The second Lockdown prevented this programme from occurring but improved attainment outcomes continued to be in evidence. An important aspect of this improvement has been the tracking and monitoring system in Senior Phase which is robust and ensures that all children are tracked regardless of level. Detailed learning conversations take place with all pupils at three key points in the year and this ensure pupils have a clear understanding of where they are in their learning and the next steps they should take. In order to maintain and enhance improvements in attainment we reflect on all existing learner pathways, identify alternative courses which provide greater opportunities for young people to achieve and continue to review the Broad General Education in S1-S3. This final step ensures young people have the appropriate skills in order to succeed in the Senior Phase.

Category	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
S4 5+ SCQF 3/N3	96% (83%)	97% (86%)	81% (78%)	77% (80%)	92% (85%)	85% (83%)
S4 5+ SCQF 4/N4	95% (78%)	93% (80%)	76% (71%)	70% (74%)	83% (79%)	79% (77%)
S4 5+ SCQF 5/N5	57% (48%)	47% (51%)	49% (38%)	37% (41%)	42% (37%)	36% (35%)
S5 1+ SCQF 6/H	74% (63%)	60% (54%)	52% (55%)	58% (54%)	50% (50%)	58% (54%)
S5 3+ SCQF 6/H	55% (44%)	40% (34%)	33% (36%)	38% (33%)	30% (30%)	37% (35%)

S5 5+ SCQF 6/H	30% (21%)	20% (16%)	20% (16%)	17% (15%)	16% (13%)	17% (16%)
S6 1+ SCQF 6/H	68% (58%)	62% (59%)	63% (58%)	57% (55%)	63% (59%)	61% (59%)
S6 3+ SCQF 6/H	54% (45%)	51% (45%)	48% (42%)	44% (39%)	48% (42%)	41% (42%)
S6 5+ SCQF 6/H	41% (31%)	37% (32%)	33% (28%)	30% (25%)	33% (28%)	25% (28%)
S6 1+ SCQF 7/AH	22% (20%)	22% (19%)	21% (16%)	18% (16%)	26% (18%)	19% (17%)

*All percentages taken from the Scottish Government Insight website. Data in brackets represents Virtual Comparator data.*

The 2021 SQA outcomes were unlike any previous year due to the pandemic which led to all exams being cancelled. This meant results were based on the Alternative Certification Model (ACM) of in-class assessment rather the more common form of SQA external assessment.

Careful consideration of prior departmental and whole school attainment had previously been employed to establish anticipated outcomes and this data was also used when the decision was made not to proceed with external exams.

The re-introduction of a seventh course choice in S4 ensured that our young people had the opportunity to achieve results that were in line with attainment prior to the Authority led change to six choices. However, the second lockdown once again denied our S4 the opportunity to take part in the Skills Academy: Life programme that had led to a significant increase in attainment in 2019. It is our intention to deliver this programme in June of each year and we are confident that S4 outcomes will continue to increase as a consequence.

To ensure the robustness of our results, detailed SQA analysis meetings took place remotely throughout May. Class teachers led this process by evaluating the performance of their own section(s) in some detail. Staff worked with colleagues from different schools to review assessment tools, assessment outcomes and grade boundaries. This collaborative approach to moderation tasks ensured all assessment approaches were robust and ensured the value of the aware was carefully considered before any decisions were reached.

Attainment outcomes form the basis for ongoing discussions/monitoring within departments and between PTs and link SMT members. These strategies are shared across the school as well as with the local authority and lead to a number of whole-school initiatives that contribute to improvements in performance on an ongoing basis. The strategies included:

- closer ongoing monitoring (pupil by pupil);
- target-setting and tracking reports in S4 – S6;
- gathering evidence early in the session in order to ensure that pupils either improved their performance or were placed at a more appropriate curricular level;
- undertaking a comprehensive analysis of both S4 and S5/6 prelims and using this analysis to target pupils whose performance lay on the boundaries between levels/grades;
- making further use of the analysis to inform anticipated SQA outcomes at Departmental and Whole School level;
- reviewing the existing curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of each cohort;
- participation in Skills Academy: Life opportunities to recognise wider achievement;
- and sharing information between PTs on strategies to raise attainment.

All departments are utilising a wide range of learning and teaching approaches to deliver the curriculum which is resulting in developing our pupils to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. All students from S1-S3 participated in the Broad General Education last session in line with Curriculum for Excellence expectations. The various approaches being used in classrooms have enabled young people to develop their skills by taking greater responsibility for their own learning as well as developing their ability to work in partnership with others. Strategies such as active learning, critical skills and assessment for

learning are widely used and teachers are reporting notable improvements in young people's thinking and communication skills, increased confidence and a continued improvement in classroom and whole-school ethos. Learning pathways have been developed in Mathematics to allow young people to access the curriculum at the most appropriate level while learning logs are employed across year groups to encourage reflection on feedback.

All attainment is underpinned by high quality learning and teaching. Education Scotland defined learning, teaching and assessment in Saint Matthew's Academy as "Very Good" and we have continued to provide opportunities for colleagues to develop their professional skills. A Principal Teacher (PT) Learning and Teaching has been appointed through use of Pupil Equity Funds. This Pt is required to oversee our Continued Lifelong Professional Learning programme, which is designed to ensure skill sets remain current and relevant for all staff. In session 20/21 this programme saw a particular focus on Digital Learning and Teaching approaches to support remote learning.

As part of classroom practice, pupil views are sought both in relation to the learning experience and in connection to individual target setting. All departments display pupil voice outcomes which show the impact of pupil consultation.

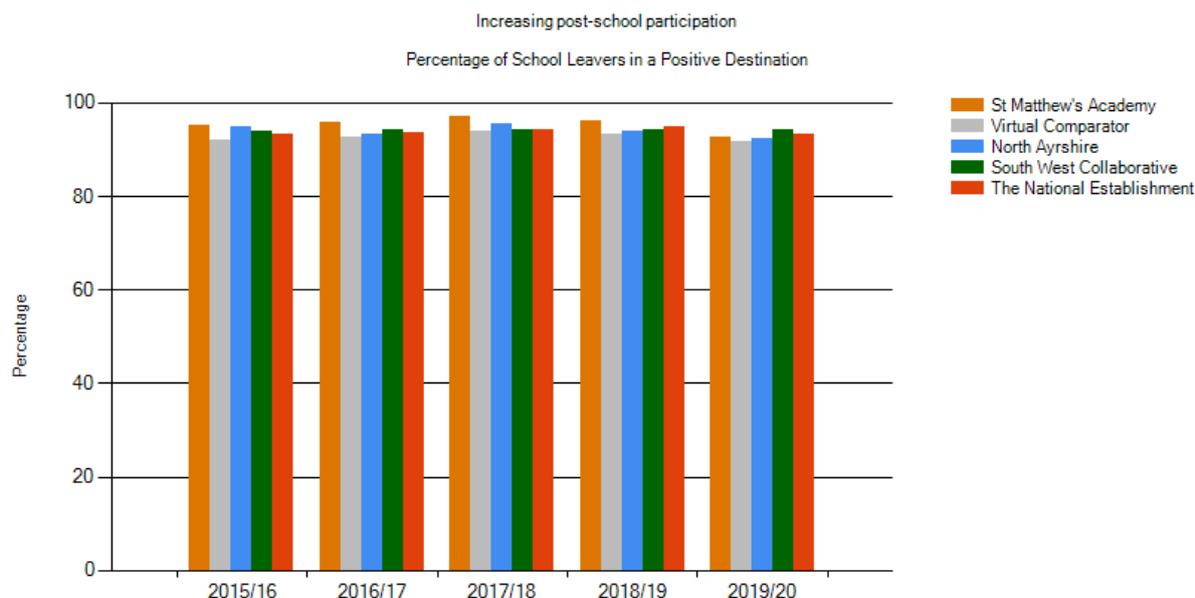
Young people are increasingly able to evaluate their own and others' work. Pupil voice is accessed through regular Pupil Council meetings. The information obtained was reviewed alongside the programme of reflective questions undertaken by all stakeholders. The Improvement Planning group used this data to inform and direct the school improvement agenda. A Principal Teacher Pupil Participation has been appointed through use of Pupil Equity Funds to oversee the implementation of Education Scotland's "How Good Is OUR School?"

Skills seminars are delivered at the end of each year of the BGE. This allows pupils to evaluate the skills developed over the course of the past year. Pupil evaluations of the successful strategies employed in S1-S3 were shared with departments and form a key aspect of their self-evaluation and reflection.

Skills Week was introduced for S3. A "Skills Framework" consisting of key skills was developed and delivered to young people. This allowed pupils to make connections across the curriculum and to identify the key skills they are developing. Saint Matthew's Academy supported Skills Development Scotland during their Inspection in session 19/20 and our Skills Framework was considered to be an innovative approach to skills development.

Most young people are taking part in a wide range of opportunities outside the classroom where they can demonstrate their talents in a variety of ways. Leadership, volunteering and buddying in the Senior School are supplemented by musical, sporting, creative, linguistic and other opportunities many of which are developed in partnership with the local community and outside organisations. These events were curtailed during Lockdown due to Government guidelines.

## Positive Destinations – Leavers Data



Saint Matthew's Academy continue to have significant success in ensuring that our young people move onto positive destinations when they decide to leave school. In four of the past five years, positive destinations have outperformed all available comparator data and in all of the past five years positive destinations have outperformed the Virtual Comparator. This continues to be a key priority for all within the school. By allying our award winning Skills Academy: Work programme with a robust Careers Education programme delivered through Personal and Social Education and our very good partnership working with local businesses, Skills Development Scotland and Ayrshire College, we ensure that our learners receive appropriate advice and valued experiences. This enables students to make informed decisions regarding their next steps when they decide to leave school.

Young people found it particularly challenging to find employment in the summer of 2020 and significant time and energy was invested in ensuring as many pupils as possible could move to a positive destination. Fewer young people have chosen to leave at the end of S4 than in previous years and we are working with Skills Development Scotland to ensure all young people have the skills needed to move to a positive destination. We intend to continue to develop this highly successful aspect of our curriculum to ensure all young people move directly to a positive destination.

We introduced a new post of MCR Pathways Co-ordinator in partnership with North Ayrshire Council and the MCR Pathways national charity. Through the creation of this post we seek to ensure that every care-experience young person achieves the same educational outcomes, career opportunities and life chances as every other student.

By delivered group work sessions in S1/S2, our Pathways Co-ordinator supports pupils to build their confidence, improve literacy and numeracy and engage fully in the life of the school. S3 pupils work with an identified mentor from the local community. The young person usually meets with their mentor once a week for one hour. Mentors come from all walks of life and help young people to develop their abilities and confidence which in turn supports them to move into a positive destination when they leave school. More information relating to becoming an MCR Pathways Mentor can be found here - <https://mcrpathways.org/faqs/>

### *Education Scotland Visit*

Session 18/19 saw Education Scotland staff conduct an inspection of Saint Matthew's Academy. This was a short model inspection focusing on Learning, Teaching and Assessment and Raising Attainment and Achievement. Education Scotland rated Saint Matthew's Academy as "Very Good"

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the Head Teacher and a representative from North Ayrshire Council.

- Continue to look outwards at other practice nationally, to help staff to develop further their understanding of national standards and expectations for the achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence level across all curriculum areas.
- Continue to support young people to understand and articulate the skills they are developing, for example, in using digital technology.
- Continue to focus on improving flexible learning pathways in the senior phase to further raise attainment and meet the needs of all young people.

In taking these areas for improvement forward we have undertaken the following:

- Continued to review all relevant publications and resources issued by Education Scotland. We have also engaged in professional visits to schools in other Local Authorities to review practice and to enhance our own understanding of national standards.
- Reviewed all aspects of digital learning and have achieved with the "Digital Schools" award.
- Developed additional pathways in senior phase to further raise attainment through the expansion of our Skills Academy programme into Skills Academy:Life and Skills Academy:Work and Skills Academy:Community. Each programme is targeted at a different year group and makes use of the SCQF accreditation awards. As part of this approach a Principal Teacher: Raising Attainment has been appointed using Pupil Equity Funds and the school has achieved Bronze SCQF Ambassador status. We are now working towards the Silver level award.

**School Priority 1:**

We will create the conditions for our children and young people to access the highest quality learning experiences.

National Improvement Framework Priority

How Good is Our School?  
(version 4) Quality Indicator

“Improvement in children's and young people’s health and wellbeing”  
“Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.”

1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.3

**Catholic Ethos**

*Our Catholic Ethos continues to be central to all we undertake here in Saint Matthew’s Academy. During what turned into a(nother) year like no other we took comfort from the support and strength our community of Faith and Learning provided. Due to the need to avoid assemblies, liturgical celebration took place in smaller class groups rather than whole year group celebrations. Where possible, senior students supported local parishes and participated in the Queen Margaret Adoption Agency training which provided them with opportunities to reflect on their values and to put them into practice. We continued to clearly articulate our vision and values and, through the embedding of our Promoting Positive Relationships (PPR) Policy, we worked to ensure our values were clear and visible throughout all interactions in the school. The lack of whole year group assemblies meant that our usual values assemblies were delivered in smaller class groupings. We achieved Rights Respecting School Silver status following detailed assessment. The assessor stated that he was “especially impressed by the school's holistic approach and by the impact of pupil voice on learning and teaching.” We continued to work with parents and parishes as they support young people on their faith journey. A notable success was the 44 students who successfully completed the Caritas Award – this translates into 1760 hours of volunteering in the local community and parishes. A fine example of our school vision in practice.*

**Digital Technology**

*Due to the pandemic, our 3 year strategy to embed Digital Learning was overtaken by the need to introduce Remote Learning in March 2020. Our planned approach had consisted of a programme of training for staff and pupils followed by a measured increase in the delivery of online learning. However, we were required to embark on a much steeper learning curve for all members of the school community. Through the support of North Ayrshire Council, we were able to provide digital devices to many pupils who did not have access to the relevant technology. This programme continued in session 20/21. Staff made good use of Teams to deliver online learning and pupils were encouraged to access the online content. Since our return, we have continued with the use of Teams to deliver home learning and the day-to-day contact with teaching staff has seen a marked improvement in the numbers participating in online learning. A programme of professional learning for staff was introduced and all pupils in S1 now have weekly lessons designed specifically to support digital competence. As a consequence of this work we received the Digital School Award and are now operating as a mentor school for colleagues in other establishments.*

**Personalised Learning Pathways**

*By adapting our option requirements we enabled significant numbers of our senior students to participate in our Skills Academy: Life programme. This programme took into account our vision for the young people and delivered a number of courses which allowed them to evidence the skills and qualities they have developed during their time in Saint Matthew's Academy. Many of these pathways involve ongoing assessment and, while some students prioritised SQA assessment, our most recent Breadth And Depth Data (see above) shows the success of this model with 98% of S6 students leaving Saint Matthew's Academy with at least 1 SCQF6 award.*

*We also successfully delivered a programme of Skills Academy: Work. This ensured senior students received accreditation for work related learning in S3-S6.*

*All students in S4 now have the opportunity to sit at least 7 subjects. This had a significant positive impact on attainment for this year group.*

*Moving forward departments are reviewing existing pathways within their subject specialisms to provide additional courses within the senior timetable.*

### **Professional Learning**

*Our Professional Learning programme to support and enhance professional skills and abilities of all staff was delivered. The Principal Teacher: Learning and Teaching oversees this programme with support from Senior Management. Almost all aspects of delivery are facilitated by colleagues and this enables the school to share the high quality practise which exists within our classrooms. This allows colleagues to share and develop key skills and approaches to Learning and Teaching.*

*Despite Lockdown, work shadowing and leadership opportunities were provided to further develop capacity in colleagues.*

### **Next Steps:**

*We will continue to prioritise our Catholic Ethos, our vision and our values in all that we seek to achieve.*

*We will begin the work towards Rights Respecting School Gold Award.*

*We will ensure our learning and teaching involves current and relevant use of Digital Technology.*

*We will seek Digital Schools accreditation of Cyber Resilience and Internet Safety.*

*We will further develop and consolidate personalised learning pathways to ensure young people have access to accreditation relating to skills for life, learning and work.*

*We will continue to deliver a well considered programme of professional learning to ensure Learning and Teaching remains very good.*

## School Priority 2:

We will continue to design and implement programmes to achieve excellence and equity for our learners, with a clear focus on reducing the poverty-related attainment gap.

### National Improvement Framework Priority

“Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy”  
“Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.”

### How Good is Our School? (version 4) Quality Indicator

1.1, 1.5, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.2

### **Use of Pupil Equity Fund to close the Attainment Gap**

*We secured additional staffing to focus on Literacy, Numeracy, Engagement and Support for Learning. This allow us to deliver Literacy and Numeracy in smaller class sizes and continue our approach to mixed ability in the BGE.*

*Our Campus Police Officer worked in partnership with all colleagues to enhance the health and wellbeing of our young people through regular inputs into our Social Education programme.*

*Additional ICT resources were purchased to support remote learning such as the Achieve online programme.*

*A Data Coach was funded through PEF to ensure we had access to current and relevant attainment data that could positively affect learning and teaching.*

*Pupil wellbeing was supported through initiatives such as the SNAG breakfast club. This ensured all young people had access to a healthy breakfast at the start of each school day.*

*Pupil Equity Funds were used to support parents in their understanding of SQA expectations and provided opportunities for accreditation.*

*A rigorous tracking and monitoring programme was continued to be delivered through use of the fund to identify pupils for targeted support.*

### **Insight Analysis**

*Our Insight analysis document and approach continues to be used to inform improvement in practice.*

*Faculty Heads work with Senior Management to review whole school attainment and propose next steps for improvement.*

*Departments review departmental attainment.*

*Insight training is provided to all member of staff to enhance understanding of the resource.*

*Detailed analysis of the Insight data was used to support and inform our approach to the Alternative Certification Model in May 2021.*

### **BGE Analysis**

*We continued to make use of our BGE tracking system to inform improvement and next steps. No standardised testing took place in session 20/21.*

*Senior Management reviewed whole school attainment, whole school curriculum and moderation by reviewing the data presented in our analysis.*

*Departments used the system to review Departmental attainment, Departmental analysis of curriculum and to support moderation.*

*Our BGE analysis approach was reviewed in conjunction with our Insight analysis to ensure effective progression from BGE attainment levels into Senior Phase attainment.*

## **Learning and Teaching Strategies**

*Due to Covid we were unable to visit other schools to review approaches to Learning and Teaching so we employed alternative communication approaches to share and develop practice. This helped inform the development of a robust professional learning programme for staff.*

*Through our learning walks around departments we continue to ensure that the use of Learning Intentions and Success Criteria in lessons remained consistent with expectations.*

*Significant moderation exercises took place with colleagues in school and in partner schools, particularly in the run up to Alternative Certification Model in May.*

## **Literacy and Numeracy**

*Literacy and Numeracy data continues to be monitored via Insight. Our outcomes outperform the Virtual Comparator.*

*A transition programme to support P7 pupils was implemented. Pupils were required to stay in their Primary School groupings but benefited from the opportunity to visit the school and meet with their future teachers.*

*We continued to review our Dyslexia Friendly approaches with a view to renewal of our Dyslexia Friendly School status. Toolkits continue to be available to support pupils in every classroom. Staff continue to engage with professional learning relating to Dyslexia.*

## **Skills Framework**

*The Skills Framework, which assists young people in making connections across their learning, was delivered to S3 pupils. The Framework had a clear focus on developing skills of literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, creativity, digital and employability skills in a progressive way across the curriculum.*

*Young people were able to articulate which skills were being learned and could make links across the curriculum.*

*Lockdown prevented other year groups engaging with the Framework.*

## **Next Steps:**

*We will continue to use Pupil Equity funds to provide additional staffing in core subjects where possible.*

*We will continue to review all approaches to Learning and Teaching.*

*We will continue to ensure moderation in BGE and in the Senior Phase delivers positive outcomes for young people.*

*We will monitor and review Insight data for Literacy and Numeracy.*

*We will set further ambitious targets for BGE level attainment and for SCQF 4 and 5 outcomes.*

*We will build on the Skills Framework programme and deliver to further year groups.*

### **School Priority 3:**

We will offer opportunities to young people and their families to play a more active role in the life of the school and encourage more participation in learning.

#### National Improvement Framework Priority

“Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.”

“Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.”

“Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing”

#### How Good is Our School? (version 4) Quality Indicator

1.5, 2.5, 2.6. 3.2

### **Family Engagement Strategy**

*We continued to reduce jargon in all literature issued by the school.*

*Departments continued to develop resources which could be used at home to promote family learning.*

*Family Engagement Ambassadors in all year groups supported remote learning through delivery of online 'how to' videos which encourage parents to support their child's learning at home.*

*We continued our programme of Parents in Partnership through our work with CELCIS and the NAC Family Engagement Team.*

*We delivered some opportunities for parental engagement through a variety of online Family Learning events, health and wellbeing sessions and curriculum information evenings.*

*We replaced our usual Parents' Night sessions with additional reporting.*

*Our Parent Council continued to play a key role in the development and implementation of our school policies and quality assurance processes.*

### **Activity Tracker**

*Our Activity Tracker is designed to allow us to identify pupils who are in danger of missing out on the wider opportunities available in Saint Matthew's Academy. However, session 20/21 saw very few wider opportunity events take place due to Covid restrictions.*

### **Next Steps:**

*We will deliver Parents' Night sessions through online video conferencing.*

*We will return to termly newsletters to share news of the school.*

*We will return to tracking engagement through use of the Activity Tracker once more familiar extra curricular events have returned.*

## **School Priority 4:**

We will work with young people to build their resilience, supporting their mental health and physical wellbeing.

### National Improvement Framework Priority

“Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing”

### How Good is Our School? (version 4) Quality Indicator

1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.7, 3.1

## **Whole School Approach to Nurture**

*We continued the whole school 3 year strategy to embed Nurture principles.*

*The Steering committee continued to implement our programme and approaches.*

*Through the effective delivery of professional learning we supported staff to develop and deliver the nurture Principles 3 & 6. This built on the work in session 18/19 to develop understanding of Principles 2 & 5 and 19/20 with Principles 1 & 4.*

*The classroom observation cycle was interrupted due to Covid/Lockdown and will be completed in Session 21/22.*

*The Nest, our Nurture base, continued to provide a safe and welcoming environment for identified pupils.*

*We started to explore external quality assurance procedures for our approaches and made contact with Nurture UK.*

*These approaches continue to be designed to ensure our children and young people feel safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.*

*The success of our programme is evidence in the fact that young people tell us they feel known as individuals by key staff in the school.*

*We continue to work with partners to create environments where children and young people feel listened to and are secure in their ability to discuss personal and sensitive aspects of their lives because they know they are valued as individuals.*

## **Development of Emotional Wellbeing Strategy**

*We continued to promote our Emotional Wellbeing strategy and approaches.*

*Senior students were trained in wellbeing approaches and served as Wellbeing ambassadors in support of younger pupils.*

*Staff had opportunities for professional learning and training which enhanced the implementation of the emotional wellbeing strategy.*

*Pupils had access to Mental Health counselling, bereavement support, anti bullying groups and suicide prevention training.*

*Pupil Equity Funds were used to appoint a Principal Teacher: Wellbeing who had overall responsibility for the strategy.*

## **Promoting Positive Relationships strategy**

*We delivered year 2 the Promoting Positive Relationships policy and strategy.*

*We delivered opportunities for staff professional learning in restorative practice and de-escalation strategies.*

*We continue to work to deliver a learning environment built on positive, nurturing and appropriately challenging relationships, which lead to high-quality learning outcomes.*

## Next Steps:

*We will finalise our 3 year strategy of embedding Nurture Principles.*

*We will continue to deliver support to young people as they manage their emotional wellbeing.*

*This will include individual, group, stage and whole school approaches.*

*We will evaluate the impact of our Promoting Positive Relationships approach.*

*We will work towards Nurture UK's Marjorie Boxhall Quality Mark Award to evaluate our Nurturing approaches.*

## **Conclusion**

Despite the restrictions that Covid-19 placed on all schools, Session 20/21 was one of significant success. All members of our school community should be proud of the improvements that were achieved despite the challenges of Covid-19. We continue to build on the very success Inspection Report of 18/19 and use the feedback provided to take forward key areas of improvement. Attainment data continued to suggest year on year improvements in academic achievements. 2021 results are the strongest since the school opened in almost every category without being out of step with the steady improvement we have shown over the past 5 years. Evaluation of the improvement plan suggests, despite limited opportunities and a requirement to focus on the Alternative Certification Model, many improvements are becoming increasingly embedded in practice. However, complacency cannot be allowed to take hold and we are committed to continuing the improvement journey of the school in the session ahead.

Throughout all that we try to achieve we must never lose sight of the shared vision for Saint Matthew's Academy - *Our vision for Saint Matthew's Academy is one of a community of faith and learning dedicated to Gospel Values. We work together to ensure the effective formation and development of the whole child by providing the highest quality of education. We strive to ensure our young people develop their talents and abilities in order to best support the common good.*

It is only by working in partnership with parents and parishes to deliver the highest quality of education will we be able to provide our young people with the values and skills required to best support the common good and make a positive difference to the lives of others. This remains the guiding principle of our Catholic secondary school.

Stephen Colligan  
Head Teacher  
September 2021