

Winchburgh Academy

School Improvement Plan

2026-2027



Head Teacher's Introduction

Winchburgh Academy is a non-denominational secondary school in West Lothian Council, which opened for the first time in August 2022, with modern, innovative and open plan teaching areas and spaces. The school is situated in a development of 3 new schools (Winchburgh Academy, Sinclair Academy and Holy Family Primary School) with a shared sports HUB. The school has been built using a 'School in the Park' architectural design, with direct access via the school grounds into Auldcathie Park to the North, with a rich and versatile range of outdoor learning opportunities available on our doorstep.

The school has two catchment primary schools, Winchburgh Primary School and Hawkhill Primary School (which opened in August 2025). The school roll in session 2026-27 will be approximately 330 S1-S5 students, and the building has a capacity of approximately 660 students. The senior leadership team includes the Headteacher and two Depute Headteachers and an Extended Leadership Team of 5.5 FTE Principal Teachers of Curriculum/Faculty plus 2 Principal Teachers of Pupil Support. Including the leadership team, the full time equivalent of teaching staff is 32.5.

Working creatively with colleagues from other schools, particularly Sinclair Academy is required to ensure high quality and extensive learning experiences and to meet the needs of all young people. 52.19% of young people are recorded as having at least one additional support need and 13.94% are entitled to free school meals. Most young people attend Winchburgh Academy from Quintile 2 (27.49%) and Quintile 4 (55.78%) postcodes in accordance with the Scottish Index for Multiple Deprivation.

Winchburgh is a rapidly evolving village/town, with significant investment in new house building and infrastructure changing the demographic of the population. The town's location in the central belt means that a broad range of locations are accessible for post-school opportunities, such as further, higher education and employment. There are significant employment opportunities in the local area in the building and construction sectors and there is expected growth in hospitality opportunities as the local area continues to develop. We are also aware through labour market intelligence that health sector employment will be extensive throughout the next 10 – 15 years.

Following consultation including values, vision and aims workshops and surveys with all young people, families and staff our agreed school **core values** are:

Respect

Kindness

Ambition

Our Academy has three main **aims**. Through working in close partnership and collaboration with our Academy community:

1. Each person is fully supported as an individual to be included and celebrated to be happy and successful with their health and wellbeing at the centre of everything we do.
2. We will provide excellent learning, teaching and assessment for all, using the most modern, collaborative and forward-thinking practice.
3. Each person achieves and attains at excellent individual levels to prepare them fully for a successful future.

Our Academy vision:

To be a school community that is sector leading in providing excellent experiences, opportunities and outcomes for all young people - united in the joy of learning, collaboration and improvement to build healthy and successful futures.

Raising Educational Attainment Strategy 2023-2028

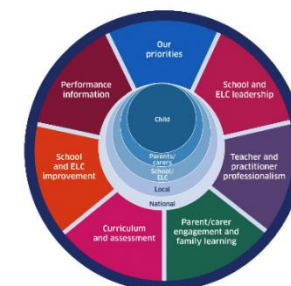
Outcome 1 – Learning and Curriculum

Ensuring every child and young person experiences varied, vibrant and challenging learning experiences which are built on the provision of high quality and inclusive learning, teaching and assessment. Fundamental to this is the design and implementation of a curriculum that creates the conditions, culture and ethos for all four capacities (successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors) to thrive and be equally valued.



Outcome 2 – Wellbeing, Inclusion and Attendance

Improving wellbeing, inclusion and attendance for all children and young people, promoting confidence, independent thinking and resilience. Fundamental to this is working with families and partners to support the highest possible levels of engagement and equity for all. Improving health and wellbeing for all children and young people will lead to raised educational attainment and achievement, ensuring that learning promotes confidence, resilience, engagement, independent thinking and positive mindsets which in turn increase personal, social, cultural and economic opportunities.



[National Improvement Framework](#)

[NIF sketchnote 2025](#)

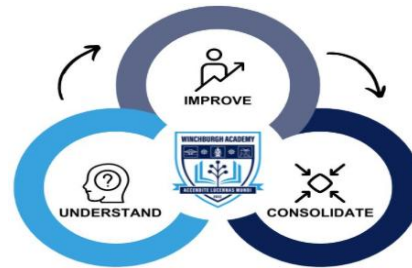
[West Lothian Raising Education Attainment Strategy 2023-2028](#)



Summary of Priorities 2026-2027

Together we will improve:

- Meeting learner needs through inclusive & impactful learning, teaching and assessment
- Meeting learner needs through our curriculum
- Meeting Learner Needs – Wellbeing, Equality, Inclusion & Personalised Support



Together we will understand:

- Our planning for implementation of 21 hours class contact time
- The changes occurring through the national curriculum improvement cycle (CIC)
- Interdisciplinary and project-based learning at classroom level
- What a high-quality practitioner enquiry is and how it improves learning, teaching and assessment

Together we will consolidate:

- The wider life and ethos of the school as a community
- Engagement, enjoyment and achievement in Maths & Numeracy

Priorities for Improvement

1. Meeting Learner Needs through inclusive and impactful learning, teaching and assessment

Desired Outcome	Aims (STAN*)	QIs	Action(s)	Timeline	Who	What do we need to know? How will we measure it?	Progress Update
(i) Increased confidence and consistency of all staff across the school to plan and facilitate inclusive pedagogy to meet learner needs .	By June 2027, all staff will have a shared understanding of Universal Support and inclusive classroom practice, enabling almost all learners to access learning successfully within their mainstream classroom through adaptive teaching, high-quality learning and teaching and appropriate targeted support.	2.3	All teaching staff will engage in an agreed in-school collegiate MLN programme throughout the session (INSETs & Staff Workshops). Through engaging in WLC MFIL professional learning (4 sessions across the session) , further improve the capacity of DHT and middle leaders (PTs) to lead this and how to self-evaluate/quality assure this across the school and in faculties. Review and revise our Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy to embed Universal Support expectations, adaptive teaching approaches and an agreed Universal Support Toolkit. Develop, implement and embed a shared Universal Support self-evaluation framework to support classroom practice, professional dialogue, coaching and quality assurance of inclusive learning and teaching. Coop Learning Workshop in with Sinclair Academy.	Ongoing - by May 2027 25 Aug 2026 16 Sept 2026 14 Oct 2026 18 May 2027 June 2027 October 2026	C Kerr S Oliver	Classroom practice consistently reflects the agreed Universal Support expectations. Staff have a developed understanding of MLN in the classroom. - Staff views - Learner views - Learning visits Young people are experiencing inclusive learning, teaching and assessment. - Learning visits - Learner views - Parent/carers views - Data (TMR/QS/ACEL)	

(ii) Effective & robust learning, teaching and assessment self-evaluation processes and systems are being developed across the school.	By June 2027, learning, teaching and assessment in most classes observed (at least 75%) are 'good' or better.	2.3 3.2	Revised School Self-Evaluation strategy is in place including coaching & mentoring programme for middle leaders. Revised whole school 'Supporting Self-Evaluation' faculty programme/strategy in place (3 faculties per session). Engage in WLC Young Leaders of Learning Programme involving 6 S3 students to facilitate YP becoming more understanding and central to all Self-evaluation activities. WLC VSE Consistent, faculty self-evaluation programmes and activities are understood in place and being embedded.	By Sept 2026 By Sept 2026 From Sept 2026 Feb 2027 By June 2027	J Mitchell C Kerr ELT S Oliver C Kerr ELT	Young peoples' experiences in the classroom are effective. - Learning visits - Learners' views - Parent/carer views Staff and some students have a developed understanding rigorous self-evaluation. - Staff views - Pupil Views - Learning visits	
	(iii) Continue to raise attainment , supported by intelligent use of data.		BGE: By the end of S3 almost all young people achieve at least 3rd level with a majority achieving 4th level in literacy and numeracy. In line with whole school systems, each faculty area continues to develop and embed effective TMR processes in the BGE leading to a range of appropriate interventions to support and challenge all learners.	By June 2027		All young people are progressing well in their learning. - Tracking & monitoring - CAT/SNSA/ACEL	
	(iv) Effective moderation processes provide staff with confidence and consistency in		S4 & S5: National 5 and Higher pass rates (A-C) and quality of passes are at least in line with our virtual comparator. All ELT colleagues engage in a series of Insight and Power BI analysis/interpretation training sessions to ensure effective interventions.	Ongoing		Teachers are supporting young people effectively by interpreting data to plan successful interventions. - Tracking & monitoring - Data (Prelims/QS) - Staff views	

QS National Qualifications	By the end of S4, at least 78% of young people achieve 5 SCQF Level 5 qualifications.		Appropriate and well-planned opportunities and interventions are used across the school. All faculties have a clear and robust moderation programme throughout the session that all staff engage in.	August 2027 By February 2027		- Parent/carer views - Learners' views	
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2. Meeting learner needs through our curriculum

	Aims (STAN*)	QIs	Action(s)	Timeline	Who	What do we need to know? How will we measure it?	Progress Update
(i) Improve the understanding of all staff in curriculum making and how to meet the needs of all young people through an inclusive curriculum.	Through improved awareness of the curriculum improvement cycle, by January 2027, almost all staff will demonstrate a shared understanding of curriculum making.	2.2 2.7	Work in partnership with cluster colleagues to make and build our BGE curriculum together in line with national CIC developments. Subject specific CIC activities to support staff understanding and preparation for implementation.	By June 2027 By June 2027	C Kerr C Kerr ELT	Staff are developing their understanding of curriculum making and how to meet the needs of all young people. - Staff views - Curriculum plans/designs Young people are fully involved in and at the centre of our decision making and planning. - Learner views	
(ii) Our curriculum is fully inclusive for all learners providing pathways into positive, sustained post school destinations.	By October 2027 the percentage of school leavers will be in line (at least) with local targets: 96.7% o/a 93.7% ASN 91%+ CEYP At least 75% of young people achieve 5 Level 5 SCQF awards by the end of S4.		Continue to develop our Positive Destination Hub, working closely with all relevant partners. Appoint an Acting PT DYW to lead on DYW across the curriculum and work experience. Revise our Work Experience strategy to offer all young people in the senior phase (S5) a relevant, high-quality opportunity.	Ongoing By Sept 2026 By June 2027	S Murray S Oliver J Mitchell PT DYW C Kerr	All young people are prepared fully to leave school and enter ambitious, positive and sustained post school destinations. - PD data - Learner views - QS data - SCQF data - Insight/PowerBI	

(iii) A well planned, high quality S6 curriculum/experience is designed to offer suitable and ambitious learning pathways for all young people in line with our culture, skills for learning, life and work.	All young people are engaged in a curriculum that meets their needs and provides pathways for positive post-school destinations.		Extend the senior phase curriculum offer to meet the needs of all young people (re-convening with our Curriculum Design/Advisory Hub).	By Feb 2027	C Kerr J Mitchell	Our S6 curriculum provides experiences that are engaging, motivating and excellent preparation for post school transitions: - Data (attendance/engagement) - Learner views	
(iv) To develop and implement key aspects of our PSE programme in line with national guidance.	By June 2027 we will have reviewed our PSE programme and have developed a clear plan for implementation in 2027-28.		Undertake a full review of the current PSE curriculum, informed by learner voice, staff feedback and national guidance, to develop a progressive and coherent PSE programme for implementation from August 2027.	By April 2027 Ongoing Ongoing	S Murray S Oliver	Our PSE curriculum is in line with national guidance and serves our community and context well. - Curriculum review - Staff views	
(v) Implement an effective UCAS support programme and strategy	All young people applying for further/higher education are fully supported with their applications.		Staff delivering PSE/PSR are engaged in training/support sessions written into our agreed school calendar. UCAs strategy and programme in place. LEAPS programme in place. Senior phase PSE programme in place, communicated and understood across the school community.	October 2026 October 2026 September 2026	S Oliver		

3. Meeting Learner Needs – Wellbeing, Equality, Inclusion & Personalised Support

Desired Outcome	Aims (STAN*)	QIs	Action(s)	Timeline	Who	What do we need to know? How will we measure it?	Progress Update
Improved attendance	Overall attendance - 90.7% Attendance of Q1 young people – 84% Attendance of FME young people – 80%	3.1 2.4	Launch our Winchburgh Academy: Supporting Positive Attendance Strategy (aligned to West Lothian procedures). Re-establish expectations regarding accurate SEEMiS coding and attendance recording with all staff. Introduce a Safeguarding Support Worker role to ensure safeguarding and promote attendance throughout the school day Embed a fortnightly attendance review as a standing agenda item for Year Group meetings with SLT and Pupil Support colleagues which will highlight trends, emerging concerns and allow for early interventions. Enhance interventions for those below 50% Supported interventions in place for target group of S3 boys in the 70-80% band 2025-26. Embed attendance as everyone's responsibility through staff professional learning and consistent classroom practice.	Aug 2026 Aug 2026 August 2026 Ongoing By June 2027	S Murray S Oliver C Ssentamu	Overall attendance is continuing to improve as is the attendance of target groups of young people. - Attendance data (SEEMiS/PowerBI) - Learner views - Parent/carer views	

(i) To improve outcomes for young people requiring enhanced/intensive support as part of their learning experience (ASN) To further embed practice in line with our revised Positive Relationships Policy.	Young people requiring enhanced/intensive arrangements/interventions are attending, achieving, engaging and making progress in their learning.		Implement The Bridge as Winchburgh Academy's graduated intervention model, providing time-limited, targeted wellbeing, inclusion and learning interventions which support young people to successfully engage with, and return to, their mainstream curriculum.	August 2026	S Murray C Ssentamu	Young people attending classes in The Bridge are progressing well in their learning and well-being. - Attendance data - Well-being data - Intervention tracking/data - Tracking & monitoring - QS/SCQF data - ACEL/YARC/SNSA	
	Almost all young people feel safe, valued and included.		Revise, further update and launch our Positive Relationships Policy/Strategy, including introduction of an improved reporting, tracking & monitoring strategy for behaviour.	October 2026	S Murray	Young people feel engaged, motivated, valued and young people behave well: - HWB surveys - Positive behaviour tracking & monitoring - Ethos surveys - Attendance	
			Review and update our Preventing Bullying Behaviour Policy/Strategy.	February 2027	S Murray		
			Achieve The Promise Award	June 2027	C Ssentamu		
			Introduce a 'buddy' system for senior students to effectively support target groups of younger students.	September 2026	S Oliver		
			Introduce a cluster pupil advisory group with cluster to inform assemblies and support emerging community themes.	September 2026	S Oliver		

Priorities for Consolidation

Desired Outcome	Aims (STAN*)	QIs	Action(s)	Timeline	Who	What do we need to know? How will we measure it?	Progress Update
An effective house system and programme is implemented to further build the life and ethos of the school community.	Most young people feel engaged in the life and ethos of the school community.	3.3	Design an improved House programme and identity. Create a school-working group that includes House Captains.	By September 2026	A Kemp	Young people are engaged and valued and participating in the life and ethos of the school community. - Attendance - HWB survey - Ethos surveys	
An effective student leadership group is in place and representing student voice in all aspects of school life	Most students report that their voice is heard and that their views are taken into consideration and acted upon.		Design and implement an improved pupil leadership model – School Captains, House Captains, Class Captains – student parliament updated.	August 2026	C Kerr		
Building Thinking Classrooms approaches in Maths are furthering student engagement and collaboration	Students are furthering their engagement, enjoyment and achievement in Maths.		Continue to work with cluster colleagues to further consolidate practice.	October 2026 February 2027	C McNally	Staff are using well considered approaches to support progress and engagement in Maths. - Pupil views - Staff views - Observations	

My World of Work profiling	All young people are using MWow effectively to profile their learning and achievements.		Design best way for young people to profile and be supported to do that well.	October 2026	R Carter	Youn people are using MWow regularly and effectively to create and continuously update their profiles: - Pupil views - SLDR	
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Priorities for Understanding

Desired Outcome	Aims (STAN*)	QIs	Action(s)	Timeline	Who	What do we need to know? How will we measure it?	Progress Update
21 hours plan in place.	All staff have developed their understanding and for the introduction of 21 hours class contact time.	2.3	Project and implementation plan in place for the school.	By June 2027	J Mitchell C Kerr	Staff views	
IDL/Project based learning is more understood by staff	All staff have an improved understanding of high-quality inter-disciplinary and project based learning.		Create a working group to research, discuss and plan our next steps as a school.	June 2027	R Carter	Staff views Student views	
Staff have developed their understanding of high-quality Practitioner Enquiry regarding school improvement priorities	A pilot practitioner enquiry programme is in place with at least 20% of staff engaged.		Create a working group to plan and implement a range of practitioner enquiries.	June 2027	R King	Staff views Learning visits	

* Specific, Timebound, Aligned and Numeric

Desired Outcome	Aims (STAN*)	QIs	Action(s)	Timeline	Who	What do we need to know? How will we measure it?	Progress Update
To develop a shared understanding of what inclusive curriculum and pedagogy involve (CIC)	By January 2027, almost all staff will demonstrate a shared understanding of curriculum making. By June 2027 almost all staff will apply this understanding to the four contexts of learning in CfE	2.2 2.3	Participation by staff in authority led opportunities and activities organised by school strategic lead	Throughout the session as per calendar	All staff CIC secondary authority development postholders CIC school strategic leads	The CIC central strategic group will define measures	

* Specific, Timebound, Aligned and Numeric