

Our Values and Aims

Our values are taken from the mace of the Scottish Parliament: Justice, Wisdom, Compassion and Integrity. We aim to exemplify these values in our actions and encourage each other to live by these values. Our decision making and strategic planning are founded on these values. *Mente et Manu*.

Compassion

We care about each other, the wider school community, and the whole of society. We see ourselves as global citizens with a responsibility to help those less fortunate than ourselves. We try our hardest to understand those who hold different values and beliefs and celebrate our differences.

Integrity

We promote and practise our values in our actions and reflect these values in our policies. We aim to face our challenges, identify areas for improvement and focus on meeting learners' needs by applying these values with honesty and transparency.

Justice

We treat everyone fairly and always strive to provide equal opportunities. The safety and happiness of our school community members will be prioritised as we aim to deliver the very best opportunities for all to achieve and surpass their ambitions. We believe in, and are committed to, being an inclusive school.

Wisdom

When making decisions we will apply our knowledge, experiences, understanding, common sense and insight. We understand that at times the rights of our community members may be conflicting and we will always consider our values to help us arrive at the right decisions. We are all committed to learning every day.

Our Key Aims

- To improve the lives and the life chances of all of our students.
- To promote respect and positive behaviour in all of our relationships.
- To ensure every student is included, participative and takes advantage of the wide range of activities on offer.
- To deliver the highest levels of attainment and achievement possible for every individual.
- To deliver positive and aspirational destinations for all of our students as they leave school.

The Broad General Education: S1 to S3

The change from a largely one-teacher approach in primary to a system based on a weekly timetable offering a wide range of subjects with different teachers and change of classrooms is a major feature of the transfer from P7 to S1. As a result, schools give a high priority to areas of pastoral and curricular liaison between primary and secondary.

The primary school years and the early years of secondary are now seen as a continuum in terms of what and how children learn. This is called the Broad General Education under Curriculum for Excellence. There is a great deal of contact between primary and secondary to ensure a smooth transition from one system to another, especially from our Pastoral team. Our Mathematics department work closely with Primary colleagues to ensure methodology, coverage of curriculum and assessments are consistent. Our English department make regular visits to our associated Primary schools to promote a reading culture.

In S1, young people are allocated to form classes of roughly equal size (maximum 30 per class). Information from our partner Primary schools is used to achieve gender, ability and geographical balance within each class. These mixed-ability classes are further sub-divided into practical classes (maximum 20 per class).

Young people are taught either by form class for certain subjects such as History, Geography and Modern Languages or by practical class for other subjects such as Science, Art, Music, Home Economics and Craft, Design and Technology.

The standard approach in S1 to S3 is that of direct teaching, group-work and active learning. Setting according to ability takes place in mathematics. Regular assessments are used to diagnose how each young person is progressing and whether young people can advance to more demanding work or whether further supportive work is required. Our curriculum takes full account of the guidelines issued under Curriculum for Excellence. The experiences and outcomes outlined are fully embraced, giving all young people the opportunity to respond to the challenge of learning and applying their skills and knowledge across the curriculum. Literacy, numeracy and health & wellbeing are embraced by all faculties. We also aim increasingly to give young people opportunities to develop choice within their curriculum, and to create increasingly personalised programmes of study.

Our S2/3 course consists of English, Mathematics, PE, RME, PSE and nine other subjects of the young person's choice, including at least one subject from each curriculum area. This makes up an interesting, varied and balanced group of subjects.

Moving into the Senior Phase – S4 to S6

As young people move into S4, inevitably SQA examinations will become more important and they will move on to a study of National Qualification courses. Young people will choose a curriculum in S4 which allows them to follow courses of study in a range of areas. They will also be able to follow increasingly personalised courses of study, including, where appropriate, extended work experience, courses in association with colleges and also links with the local community.

Accordingly, the Pastoral Team organises a full programme of information for S3 young people at this point:

- A Course Choice Booklet is published on the school website, giving details of National Qualification courses, as well as information about careers and advice about the choice process.
- This Booklet is studied with young people as part of the S3 PSE programme.
- Young people are encouraged to seek further information from class teachers.
- A Parents' Information Evening is held in the school to provide background information and advice to parents in supporting young people with course choice.
- Reports are sent to parents from subject departments.
- A Parents' Evening enables parents and teachers to discuss progress within individual subjects.

As young people move further into the Senior Phase, in S5 and S6, they will study for Highers and Advanced Highers, and also continue to study for National awards. We aim to have young people follow a diverse programme of study, increasingly tailored to their specific needs.

Parents are asked to note that course choices may alter according to changes in roll, staffing or policy and in line with national developments. Please note also that current courses may not be available when a young person enters S1, and options currently offered at later stages may not be provided when a young person reaches this stage in due course. In Senior Phase, it may not be possible to pursue all subjects through all levels from National 3 across the National Qualifications Framework.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

In the phase of Broad General Education from S1 to S3, most assessment of a young person's progress is built into normal class teaching. End of unit tests or assessments are used to assess strengths and weaknesses in their learning and are used to structure their work. These assessments are also based on various elements or skills which are central to a subject, e.g. reading, writing, talking and listening in English.

Reports to parents are therefore based upon a wide range of assessments and reports give information on progress according to the differing elements or skills appropriate to that subject. In addition, information on attendance, behavior, effort and homework is provided.

In S4 and beyond the regular, continuous 'diagnostic' assessment does continue as part of the normal classroom process. However, as a result of most courses in S4 to S6 leading to national certification, formal school examinations are built into the school programme including preliminary examinations, which are used as a trial run for the actual SQA examinations. These prelims also provide the evidence for Estimate grades which are sent to the SQA in March of the presentation year.

HOME LEARNING

Home learning is an important feature of school life. It allows pupils to develop the habit of study, to plan work within specified time limits and to undertake additional tasks which will be a reinforcement or extension of work done within the classroom.

Home learning can take various forms and will vary from subject to subject. It will largely be in the form of written exercises for return to the class teacher or may be revision of work done in class. Pupils may also be asked to undertake the reading of material in preparation for future lessons or general reading. The development of the reading habit is of great benefit to all subjects, not just English. Our PHS Bookchat initiative aims to promote this habit. Learn more by following @PHSbookchat on twitter or reading our regular column in The Peebleshire.

The amount of time spent on home learning will vary from child to child and will depend upon year stage. Many of our teachers use *Show My Homework* to post homework tasks. You can find out more about *Show My Homework* on the school website. Senior pupils should be applying themselves regularly and consistently to private study for a considerable part of each evening and over parts of the weekend. This is essential if they hope to secure good grades in national examinations.

Where there is a supportive partnership between the school and the home, a pupil's progress is greatly enhanced. Parents can help support the school in this area by checking their child's homework schedule, by helping to set aside a quiet area of the house for home learning, by helping the child to establish routine schedules for the completion of home learning and by providing a suitable schoolbag.

Parents are asked to let the school know whenever circumstances have prevented their child from completing the work set. Teachers will inform parents if home learning is not completed on time, or if the standard of work done is not satisfactory. Parents' interest in their child's education generally is much appreciated and co-operation between parents and teachers should ensure the most efficient learning by every pupil without an excessively demanding amount of effort and time.

Parents can also help by monitoring the effect which any part-time employment may have on the ability of their children to complete home learning.

PASTORAL SUPPORT

The aim of pastoral support is to ensure we have happy, settled and resilient young people who fulfil their potential. We achieve this through close co-operation between the Pastoral PTs and the Additional Needs Department.

The Pastoral Support model at Peebles High School is organised on a House basis. There are three Houses: Cademuir, Dunrig and Meldon. Young people who have elder siblings are normally placed in the same House and allocated the same Pastoral PT. The House team is responsible for the welfare of all the pupils in their House and their work is therefore directed at establishing very strong personal relationships with their pupils.

Subject to changes in staffing, Pastoral PTs and House Heads will move up through the school with their year, getting to know more about each child as a person.

As pupils progress through the school, staff will provide different forms of support and advice - personal, social, academic and vocational. At certain points Pastoral staff will be actively involved in helping pupils when important decisions have to be made, e.g. choosing subjects, or careers advice for senior pupils. At other times throughout the year they will be available on a regular basis to help with problems and difficulties.

Pupils are encouraged to approach their Pastoral PT as soon as possible if experiencing any difficulty. Equally, staff will welcome early contact from parents concerning any problems facing a child. An early conversation can often prevent longer term anxieties which may affect a pupil's progress. It is very important that parents keep us informed of changes in circumstances or personal details. Strategies for supporting any pupil who is causing concern may be discussed at weekly House meetings.

Parents are requested to contact the school by email or telephone to arrange an appointment as Pastoral PTs also have teaching commitments. In cases of urgency, however, parents are welcome to visit the school and one of the senior staff will be able to meet them.

Pastoral PTs seek to give support to pupils through formal and informal interviews and through Personal and Social Education classes. In PSE classes the pupils are encouraged to look at their personal aims, aptitudes and abilities, to consider their relations with their fellow-pupils and with adults and to examine their behaviour and responsibilities. From S2 onwards, careers advice begins to play an increasing part in guidance work and to this end staff liaise closely with Careers Service staff based in the school to provide up-to-date information on careers and further and higher education.

PERSONAL SUPPORT

One of the aims of Peebles High School is to provide an environment within which all young people realise their full academic potential. Personal Support classes are designed to provide additional support with learning for all young people and to build their skills to help them become resilient, independent and reflective learners.

One period per week is devoted to Personal Support and Personal Support classes are organised within House groupings. Every class has members from S1 to S6 and is assigned two Personal Support teachers. These lessons aim to coach young people so they learn to focus on overcoming any barriers they have in learning and to engender a positive and self-reliant approach to achieving their full potential. Every young person will receive at least six one to one coaching sessions per academic session allowing them to build a positive and productive relationship with their coach and to reflect on how they can identify and achieve their next steps and improve their learning. The rest of the time in Personal Support class is devoted to independent study; this can include working with other students or completing independent revision or homework as directed by the teacher. It is our expectation of every young person that they bring work to complete/revise to every Personal Support session.

EXAMINATION RESULTS AND IMPROVING ATTAINMENT

Our examination results at Peebles High School are very good and we are naturally very pleased with the achievements of our young people. However, we wish to stress to parents that examination results represent only one of the school's many activities. As a school, we value and encourage all kinds of achievement. We believe that the development of our pupils into confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors is every bit as important as their academic success.

We work closely with our young people to set ambitious targets for their learning and we are delighted with how they have responded year on year to bring themselves and our school such a strong reputation for high attainment. In March 2017, The Herald Newspaper reported Peebles High School as one of the top 20 attaining schools in the country with 54% of our leavers attaining 5 Highers or more; this was 10 percentage points ahead of schools with similar cohorts.

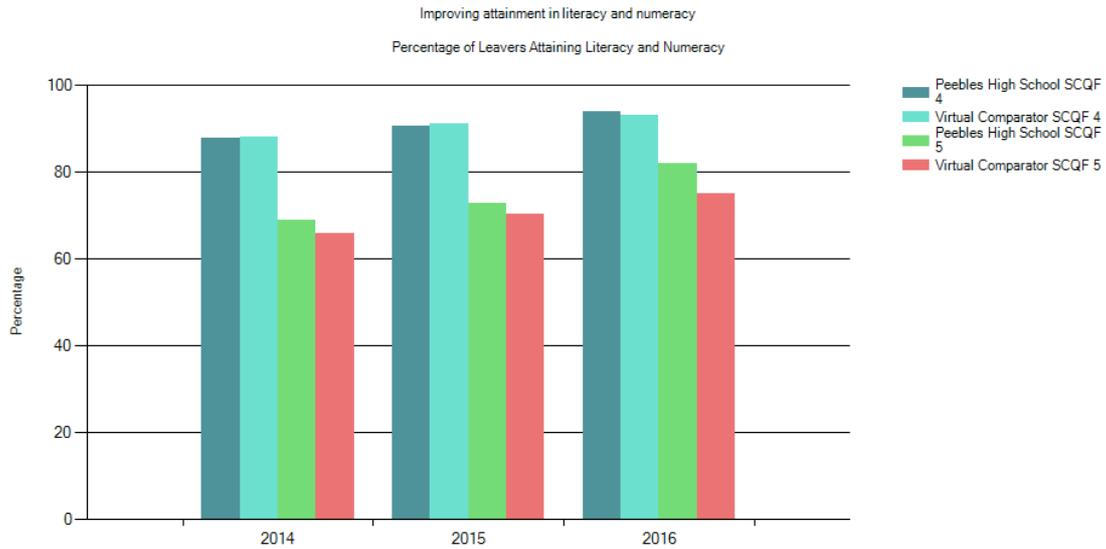
National Attainment and Destination Measures

The following tables show Peebles High School's performance in the four key measures of: percentage of leavers attaining literacy and numeracy; percentage of school leavers in a positive destination; attainment versus deprivation and average total tariff score.

NB: The 'virtual comparator' is a virtual school made up of students whose backgrounds and prior attainment match those of Peebles High School pupils.

National Benchmarking Measure: Literacy and Numeracy

View Options Change Options Help



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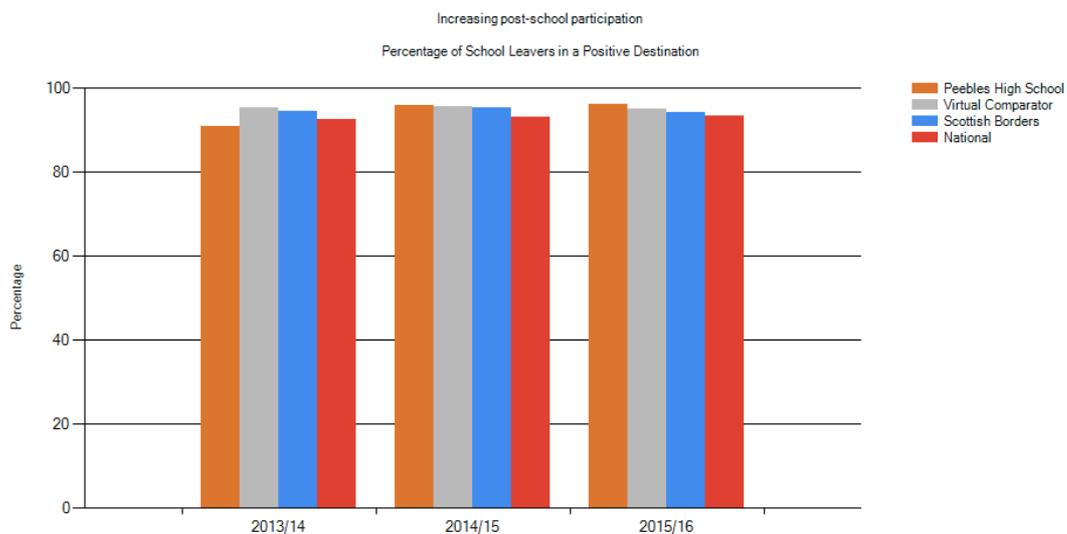
Testing found that the following comparisons were significant.

Performance in Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 5, 2016 is greater than your Virtual Comparator

The above shows the percentage of our leavers who have attained National Qualifications in both Mathematics and English at Levels 4 and 5 over the last three years against our Virtual Comparator.

National Benchmarking Measure: Leaver Initial Destinations

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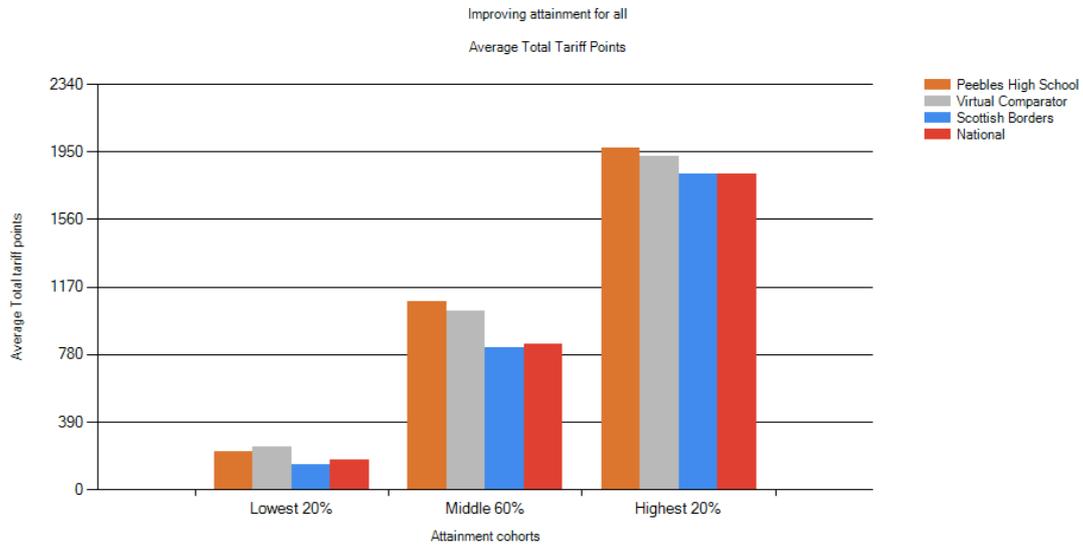


The above shows what percentage of our leavers have progressed to a positive destination over the last 3 years against our Virtual Comparator, Scottish Borders and National average.

National Benchmarking Measure: Improving Attainment for All

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The selected year is 2016



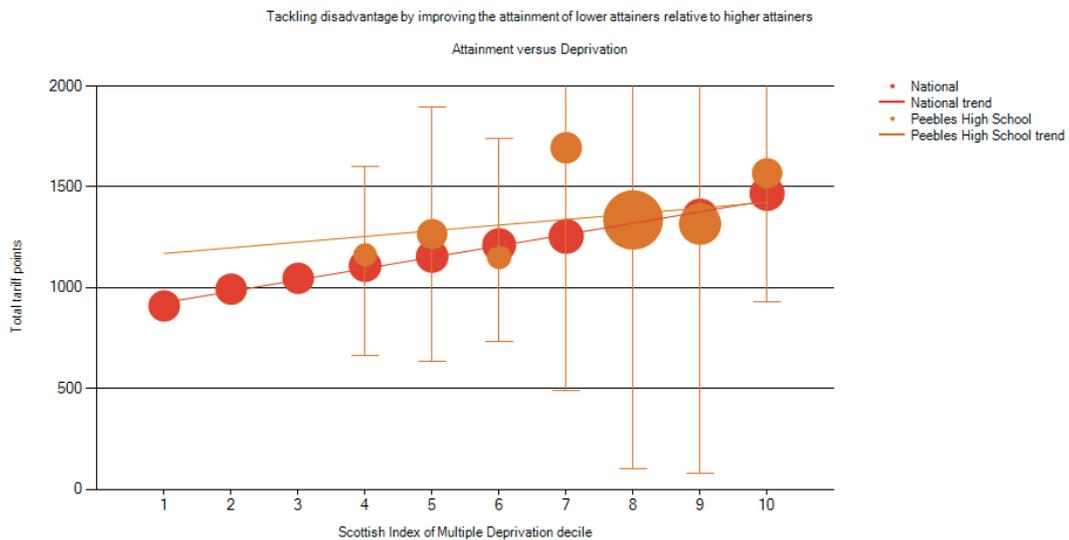
The above shows the relative performance of our young people across all subjects.

National Benchmarking Measure: Attainment versus Deprivation

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Candidates have been filtered according to your selections

The selected year is 2015/16



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Testing found that the following comparisons were significant.

In SIMD decile 7, your performance is much greater than the National Establishment

The above shows the attainment of our young people in relation to their SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation).