

Dalziel High School Improvement Report June 2013

1. Introduction

Dalziel High School is a non-denominational secondary. The school incorporates a specialist Hearing Impaired Department. The current roll is 965 pupils serving the southern and central areas of Motherwell. Our aims are to create an atmosphere and learning environment where all learners are given equal opportunity to realise their maximum potential; personally, academically, physically and culturally. Distinctive features of the school include our high expectations and high levels of attainment, our successful approaches to promoting learner's health and wellbeing, our commitment to the care and welfare of our learners. We have developed strong links and effective joint working with our associated primary schools and partner agencies.

2. How well do young people learn and achieve?

We continue our focus across the school on improving the quality of teaching and learning. It is evident from the recent scoping exercise and from the cross curricular observation programme that staff are now using a number of co-operative learning techniques. Learners' are experiencing more opportunity to work collaboratively. Our learners are now more often involved in tasks which require them to work in groups to solve problems and to develop their skills in working with others.

The quality of feedback we are giving to pupils on their learning is improving. We need, however, to explore more ways in which learners are given advice about their strengths and what they need to do to improve their work. Timely feedback also helps support target setting discussions between learners and Pupil Support staff. Learners in the senior phase have benefited from timely target setting discussion to support and challenge their achievements. We will continue to roll out the systematic approach to monitoring and tracking across all year groups.

Curriculum for Excellence remains a key focus for the school and very good progress has been made. In S1 the Broad General Education through extensive monitoring shows that the majority of level 3 outcomes are being experienced by most learners. All staff are working with increasing confidence with the experiences and outcomes and we are using these to develop a more coherent approach to learning, teaching and assessment. All staff consistently share the purpose of lessons and the expected success criteria at the start of each lesson and review at the end of the lesson.

High quality learning experiences are evident across the curriculum to support creativity. This was validated by a recent visit from Education Scotland. Education Scotland stated they were very pleased with current practice of the school, and were struck by the enthusiasm of our staff in this area of work. Furthermore, they commented that 'our young people shared their views in a very articulate and helpful way.'

Learner's attainment at the end of S4 is consistently well above the national average. In 2012, 57.5% of the S4 cohort achieved 5+ credit awards, an outstanding achievement for the school. There were strong performances in Business Management, Computing, Graphic Communication and History.

We have very effective strategies in place to track learner's progress and attainment at S3-S6. Over a 5 year period by the end of S6, at higher level, the school has performed better than other schools at authority and national level which serve learners with similar needs and backgrounds. In particular pupils did very well in higher Business Management, Computing, Graphic Communication, Music, Biology, Geography and History.

We are good at supporting many young people to make a positive contribution to the school and the wider community. Our young people gain personal and citizenship skills through their roles leading charity work, organising school events and by volunteering either within the school or in the local community. We are helping young people in the senior school to develop leadership capacity through their role as School Captain and Vice-Captain and as House Officials. They are responsible for inter-house activities and participate as subject and STAR Buddies. Participation in

such events has led to a significant number of learners achieving a range of wider awards including Duke of Edinburgh Award, John Muir Trust Award, Princess Diana Award and The Millennium Volunteer Award.

Learners are achieving success and most are leaving school to enter employment, training, further or higher education. The number of leavers who entered higher and further education in 2012 was the highest to date. Pupils are very well supported in making applications to both further and higher education institutions, with assemblies dedicated to the UCAS process. We have made excellent links with our partner agencies and local employers to increase our positive leaver destination figures. Our Home School Partnership Officer and Skills Development Scotland play a vital role in supporting pupils who are approaching school leaving age.

3. How well does the school support young people to develop and learn?

Principal Teachers Pupil Support and Pupil Support Tutors are very effective in their role. They have the responsibility for the overview of the educational and pastoral needs of pupils in their caseloads. The extended pupil support team work very well together in carrying out their specialist roles. Through raising the profile of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) our staff have a deeper understanding of the structures and strategies to support learners. The implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Resource Team (HART) and Multi Agency Support Team (MAST) ensures that pupils benefit from targeted support from internal and external agencies to support their wellbeing.

The school continues to provide learners with a broad range of courses and activities. Staff across different subject areas are working very well together to develop and deliver courses which aid learners to link their learning across different subjects. Pupils are able to apply skills developed during the annual Science Fayre and Health Fayre events. We have been working closely with our primary colleagues to develop the curriculum in line with CfE to improve transition from P7 to S1. We will endeavour to continue to plan the introduction of the senior phase of CfE.

A new curricular model has been implemented in the lower school to ensure that learners' entitlements are being met. The CfE Steering group have consulted staff and are currently producing a position paper on Curriculum Structure, highlighting recommendations to ensure we have a coherent and progressive structure to support the transitions from the BGE to the Senior Phase. Other position papers written by the group this session, in consultation with staff have included: inter-disciplinary learning; assessment, moderation and profiling; reporting to parents; literacy, numeracy and health & wellbeing.

All teaching staff undertake peer observations across the school. The focus for session 2012/13 has been co-operative learning. Conclusions from staff cross curricular observations indicate that learners are engaged in a variety of roles within group settings.

A recent audit conducted by the CfE Steering Group has confirmed that literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing level 3 experiences and outcomes are being delivered across the S1 curriculum.

A number of staff in the Mathematics department have been trained on using On Track with Learning, which the Authority has developed to allow staff to plan, evaluate, and comment on the quality of learning.

All young people in our school are given the opportunity to develop confidence and skills for life through a wide range of sporting, cultural and community based activities offered by the school. An overwhelming amount of pupils are taking part in extra curricular activities targeting of this shows 86% of pupils in S1 are participating. Numerous high profile events were performed to capacity audiences. The School Show "Hairspray" highlighted our dramatic and musical talent; our Choral Shield competition demonstrated the creative and artistic skills of our young people. Educational trips are seen as a valuable way of expanding pupils learning beyond the classroom. This session a number of school trips were arranged including; Normandy, Pistoia, York, Outward Bound, Glasgow Art Galleries and Dalziel Day Out activities.

The Parent Council and the Parent Teacher Association allows appropriate opportunities for discussing important curricular and pastoral school priorities. From our annual school survey, almost all parents are happy with the school and feel that it is providing their children with the opportunities to develop effectively as learners.

4. How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

Overall the quality of self-evaluation is very good. Examinations results are analysed carefully to identify opportunities for further improvement. The Head Teacher expects nothing but the best from all young people, staff and others who work in the school. There is a strong culture of self-evaluation which aids school improvement. Deputes lead monitoring groups that support rigorous self-evaluation using HGIOS indicators. Opportunities for staff to share good practice have increased leading to greater professional dialogue about teaching and learning.

Our capacity for improvement has lead to the successful implementation of new S1 courses. We continue to develop our courses to ensure breadth and progression is evident across all stages. In-service day planning has allowed departments the opportunity to continue their implementation of the Broad General Education. Principal Teachers have attended Continued Professional Development events lead by SQA allowing them to become more confident in the new qualifications framework.

Leadership across the school is encouraged. Both promoted and un-promoted staff led short life working groups and committees. New initiatives have been successfully implemented, with all being carefully monitored and evaluated throughout. The school has made good progress utilising SEEMIS period by period registration and monitoring and tracking systems to support whole school functions. The attendance policy has been reviewed and updated ensuring a consistent approach to recording and monitoring attendance is applied across the school.

Dalziel High School has a focused approach to continuous improvement and we have made very good progress in the last year in almost all of the areas identified. Evidence from the school survey has been used to set our priorities in the School Improvement Plan and CPD activities for staff. We will continue to use rigorous approaches in evaluating our work to enhance learners' experiences.

5. Assigning levels using Quality Indicators

Quality Indicator	Level
1.1 Improvements in performance	6
2.1 Learners' / Children's experiences	5
5.1 The curriculum	5
5.3 Meeting learning needs	5
5.9 Improvement through self-evaluation	5

6. Areas for Improvement

- To further implement CfE for all learners. Staff will continue to review and update where appropriate the broad general education provision to ensure delivery of entitlement. To ensure transition into the senior phase S3 courses will incorporate level 4 experiences and outcomes, as well as the requirements of NQ4 and NQ5 where appropriate.
- To further enhance quality assurance systems to include the development of assessment, and tracking and monitoring to ensure all learners are making progress with CfE.
- To enhance learners experiences by further promoting and developing learning and teaching approaches.
- To continue to deliver effective pastoral support for every learner. Providing support for their academic, personal, social and health needs.