

# **Dalziel High School Improvement Report June 2012**

## **1. Introduction**

Dalziel High School is a non-denominational secondary school, the school incorporates a specialist Hearing Impaired Department. The current roll is 935 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, our very strong links and effective joint working with the associated primary schools, the strong teamwork within the school and with parents within the community, the leadership of the headteacher and other senior staff across the school.

## **2. How well do young people learn and achieve?**

Learner's attainment at the end of S4 is consistently well above the national average. In 2011, 63% of the S4 cohort achieved 5+ credit awards, an outstanding achievement and the highest to date for the school. There were strong performances in Biology, Craft and Design, English, Geography, Graphic Communication, History and Home Economics at Standard Grade when compared to comparator schools.

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 across the authority and nationally which serve learners with similar needs and backgrounds. In particular pupils did very well in higher Art, Biology, Music, Graphic Communication, Geography and Computing.

Relationships between learners and teachers are very positive. Our recent annual survey indicates that almost all young people enjoy their learning and feel valued and well supported in school. Across the stages, learners participate in a very wide range of activities to help them develop important team-working skills by taking part in the choir, school show, choral shield, spring concert, sporting events, inter-house competitions and the STAR programme. Participation in such events has led to a significant numbers 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. There are a wide range of opportunities for senior pupils to further develop as responsible citizens including participation in the STAR Buddy Programme and Prefect System. This year we became a Sports Hub with the aim of creating a more joined up approach to increasing participation in sports, allowing our learners and community to access the full benefits of sport. Pupils across all age ranges can participate in Pupil Council; Enterprise Events in S1-S3, Science Fayre (S1 Pupils), Summer Fayre and The Health Fayre.

Our S1 planning and assessment profiling shows that almost all pupils are making good progress in relation to the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Departments regularly review their own practice. Learners are using their literacy and numeracy skills and applying these across curricular areas. At both the Science Fayre and Enterprise Events confirm this.

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 2011 was the highest to date. Over a 4-year average 51.9% of our pupils enter Higher Education, making us the highest-ranking school in North Lanarkshire. We have made excellent links with our partner agencies and local employers to increase our leaver destination figures. Our STAR+ programme targets pupils who are approaching school leaving age. These pupils engage in an 8-week programme focusing on CV writing, completing application forms and engaging with potential employers.

In S4, pupils undertake an extended work experience placement for the duration of the year. Pupils attend the placement every Wednesday afternoon. Pupils work with various partners, including

local employers, the voluntary sector and primary schools. This has had a positive impact on preparing them for the world of work and has improved positive leaver destinations.

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

The school provides learners with a broad range of courses and activities. In S1 and S2 we are developing our courses to ensure that we deliver learners' entitlement to CfE experiences and outcomes. Teaching staff across different subject areas are working 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 also 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.

All teaching staff carry out peer observations across the school. Conclusions of the observations indicate that we support learners to develop and learn well, by providing a wide range of stimulating learning activities which support and challenge learners to allow them to make good progress. It is also evident from cross-curricular observations that literacy and numeracy are being delivered effectively across the curriculum.

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

All staff are very knowledgeable about the young people they work with. This is evident from the Customer Service Excellence Assessment Report carried out in November 2011. The following extracts highlight the successes of the Pupil Support Structure:

- The pupil tutor support system has continued to be developed and further improved. Pupils spoke of the importance of staff being very approachable and were highly satisfied by their pupil support teacher.
- Further improved customer insight through the tracking and pupil support system.
- Pupils interviewed by the assessor were delighted with the service provided by staff and advised that they were able to contribute and felt valued by staff and peers.

A wide range of partner agencies provide strong support to the learners in the school. These include the home school partnership officer, the attendance officer, the educational psychologist, speech and language therapist, audiologist links with local colleges and social workers. In addition to these strong links we have engaged with activity agreements in the local learning hub and secured places for vulnerable pupils through the Flexible Learning Initiative. Our HID (Hearing Impaired Unit) unit provide effective support to our hearing impaired pupils to encourage attainment and achievement.

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?**

We are highly committed to improving our school. The Headteacher leads the school well, expecting 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. Deputies lead monitoring groups that support rigorous self-evaluation including departmental self-evaluation exercises using HGIOS indicators.

Departments have made good progress in adapting their programmes of study to ensure pupils receive their entitlement to experiences and outcomes from S1 to S3, building on learners' experiences from Primary. Staff have had opportunities to familiarise themselves with new National Qualifications for the senior phase, to ensure learners' needs are met. In-service day planning has allowed departments the opportunity to focus on CfE implementation this session. Leadership

continues to be developed amongst all staff. Teachers from all levels are engaged in regular CPD (Continued Professional Development) activities, both as trainers and in being trained. In order to develop leadership across the school both promoted and unpromoted staff lead short life working groups and committees. New initiatives have been successfully implemented, with all being carefully monitored and evaluated throughout. This was highlighted as good practice from our recent Customer Service Excellence Assessment Report.

The school has made good progress utilising SEEMIS period by period registration and monitoring and tracking systems to support whole school functions. Teaching and learning remains a strong focus in the school through the implementation of co-operative learning techniques. Classroom observations indicate that there is excellent teaching taking place across the school. This is further reinforced by pupil evaluations and the recent school survey which indicated that pupils believe they are receiving a variety of teaching styles. Moreover, the school survey and feedback from observations are used to set our priorities in the school improvement plan and for teachers' CPD. We are proud of our commitment to self-evaluation and believe this has contributed to our success.

### **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	6
5.9 Improvement through self-evaluation	5

### **6. Areas for Improvement**

- (1) Enhance learners' experiences by continuing to promote and develop learning and teaching approaches in line with CfE design principles in conjunction with On Track With Learning.
- (2) To enhance quality assurance systems to include the development of assessment and moderation to ensure all learners are making progress with CfE.
- (3) Further develop monitoring and tracking to further enhance learners' attainment and achievement.
- (4) Increase use of GLOW, ICT (Information Communication Technology) and other media to further enhance opportunities for learners' and the wider community to access support materials and school related information.
- (5) To continue to deliver effective pastoral support for every learner. Providing support for their academic, personal, social and health needs.