

Dalziel High School Improvement Report June 2013-14

1. Introduction

Dalziel High School is a non-denominational secondary. The school incorporates a specialist Hearing Impaired Department. The current roll is 933 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 and 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?

Learner's attainment at the end of S4 is consistently well above the national average. In 2013 65% of the S4 cohort achieved 5+ credit awards, an outstanding achievement for the school. There were strong performances in Geography, Drama, Business Management and Physical Education at standard grade when compared to comparator schools. 19% of S5 pupils achieved 5 higher grade passes in their first sitting, 42% of S6 pupils achieved 5 higher grades by the end of S6, an outstanding achievement and the highest to date for the school. There were strong performances in Graphic Communication, Photography, Business Management, Human Biology, Modern Studies and Physical Education at higher level when compared to comparator schools.

A broad general education is provided for all young people from S1-3. This is carefully planned to deliver entitlement and to encourage development across the four contexts of the curriculum. An internal audit has identified that all third level E's & O's are being covered by the end of S2 and through this the development of skills for life, learning and work is evident. Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing are being delivered across all curriculum areas and are also discussed with learner representatives during the learning group meetings.

Interdisciplinary approaches are evident within classes and through enterprise and whole school events. A well-developed programme of personalisation and choice provides learners with breadth, challenge, enjoyment and a smooth progression into the senior phase. Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL) is evident in many curricular programmes through natural links between E's & O's, sharing of IDL topics and themes or through skills development.

Learners continue to regularly self-evaluate in classes, a process which includes identifying their next steps and is often completed at the end of a unit of work. In addition to this, they meet with their pupil support tutor to discuss and set subject targets as well as health and wellbeing targets. Learners from S4, S5 and S6 participate in a target setting process within each of their subjects. This is completed three times per academic session and involves learners discussing their working levels, targets and ways to develop with their class teacher. Together with the regular verbal and written feedback given to learners from their class teachers, this amounts to a strong level of feedback on progress and strengths.

Learners' views are regularly taken into account through pupil council, the annual school survey and learning groups. Their views are also sought during the planning and implementation of new initiatives, often through focus groups, or where it is deemed to be useful to seek their views. For example, all S1 pupils were asked to comment on the P7 to S1 transition programme. Also, S2 pupils were asked for their subject choice preferences in advance of the timetable option choice sheets being written. In all cases, learners are informed of how their views have been taken into account via school assemblies and the school web site.

The school provides learners the opportunity for wider achievement working with a range of partnerships. This allows appropriate pathways for all learners and is supported greatly by various members of staff and departments. Wider Achievement awards are also obtained through PSE/PE, Work Experience and through programmes of work offered in school. This year we have formed a partnership with AMEC one of the world's leading engineering, project management and consultancy companies. This has led to AMEC supporting the school in many ways including; attendance at Careers Events, work experience placements, sponsorship of the Science Fayre, and Engineering visits to their Aberdeen plant.

Learners are achieving success and most are leaving school to enter employment, training, further or higher education. The post-16 transition arrangements are exceptionally strong with 98% of leavers going on to a

positive destination in 2013. 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/centre support young people to develop and learn?

The outstanding relationships between staff and learners have created an environment where our learners feel supported to achieve their potential. Thorough curriculum planning supports progression within curriculum areas and addresses the needs of the learners. Staff are confident in the courses currently being offered at each stage and are aware of ongoing national curricular changes. Progression is evident relating to moderation and sharing of standards within departments. Learning experiences in S1-3 are appropriate and enjoyable however, although evident in most departments, as a school we wish to further enhance opportunities for learners by ensuring depth, challenge, pace and choice within every curricular area and level. This is to ensure a seamless transition into the Senior Phase for each learner.

The school has an extremely well established transition programme delivered in collaboration with the cluster primary schools. However in order to support progression and challenge during transition stages further development is taking place in this area. Successful steps have been taken this year to implement pupil profiling in Health & Wellbeing and once again this will continue to be developed to enhance the sharing of pupil achievement.

Principal Teacher 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 enhancement of the Health and Wellbeing Resource Team (HART) ensures that pupils benefit from targeted support from internal and external agencies to support their wellbeing.

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, 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 Hearing Impaired Department provides effective support to our hearing impaired pupils to encourage attainment and achievement.

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 the 50+ extra-curricular activities offered by the school. Numerous high profile events were performed to capacity audiences. The School Show "Back to the 80's" 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; Barcelona, Pistoia, York, Outward Bound, Glasgow Art Galleries and Dalziel Day Out activities. The immersive and collaborative approach of the Creative Residency within North Lanarkshire is an excellent example of the type of high quality opportunities, learning experiences and real life challenges for young people that are intrinsic to the core principles of Curriculum for Excellence; the development of creativity and of skills for learning, life and work. Dalziel High School is extremely proud of the pupils and their achievements within this process. The highly skilled work of the talented and creative artists, designers, musicians and creative writers was celebrated within an exhibition.

The Parent Council and the Parent Teacher Association allows appropriate opportunities for discussing important curricular and pastoral school priorities.

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

Overall the quality of self-evaluation is 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 culture of self-evaluation which aids school improvement. Deputies lead monitoring groups that support rigorous self-evaluation. Monitoring meetings facilitate the sharing of good practice, challenge and support department development. Effective procedures

to monitor and track attainment and achievement ensures senior managers and pastoral staff can support individual pupils.

We have revised school improvement planning to ensure a genuine collegiate approach to school improvement through the establishment of the Self-Evaluation and Leadership Group. The school's vision, values and aims are being reviewed through the group and all stakeholders are involved in the process. Collegiate time is being used to good effect to respond to educational issues and to refine learning experiences.

Staff are involved in evaluating and auditing their work against 5 key HIGOS quality indicators through an annual scoping exercise. This collaborative approach ensures all staff have a shared understanding of their contribution to taking forward the agreed areas for improvement. Leadership continues to be developed amongst all staff. Teachers from all levels are engaged in regular 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.

Our annual school survey continues to feature as part of our self-evaluation strategies. Views expressed are taken into account in drawing up the school improvement plan and in refining practice. Levels of parental support and satisfaction are evident in the parental responses to our planned survey over a number of years.

We have retained the Customer Service Excellence Award with a glowing report, no categories were marked as only Partial Compliance with an increase to five categories marked as Compliance Plus (defined as 'Behaviours or practices which exceed the requirements of the standard and are viewed as exceptional or as an exemplar to others, either within the applicant's organisation or the wider public service arena').

5. Assigning levels using Quality Indicators

Quality Indicator	Level
1.1 Improvements in performance	5
2.1 Learners' / Children's experiences	5
5.1 The curriculum	4
5.3 Meeting learning needs	5
5.9 Improvement through self-evaluation	4

6. Areas for Improvement

Improvement Priority 1: To evaluate the impact of the Broad General Education and to prepare for National Qualifications and the Senior Phase.

Improvement Priority 2: The school will develop clear, consistent and systematic approaches to self-evaluation and quality assurance that focus on impact.

Improvement Priority 3: To enhance learners' experiences by further promoting, developing and implementing a variety of teaching approaches. To encourage Learners' to be actively involved in their own learning.

Improvement Priority 4: To continue to deliver effective personal support for every learner incorporating the principles of GIRFEC.