

Dalziel High School Improvement Report June 2014-15

1. Introduction

Dalziel High School is a non-denominational secondary. 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 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 2014 65% of the S4 cohort achieved 5+ credit awards. 22% of S5 pupils achieved 5 higher grade passes in their first sitting which is an increase from last year. 41% of S6 pupils achieved 5 higher grades by the end of S6, contributing to the outstanding achievements of the school. There were strong performances in Computing, Graphic Communication, Photography, Modern Studies, Music and Mathematics at higher level.

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. All S2 pupils participated in a growth mindset learning morning. The feedback from pupils was extremely positive and reflected their understanding of their individual learning styles. Also, S2 and S4/5 pupils were asked for their subject choice preferences in advance of the timetable option choice sheets being produced. 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 further strengthened our partnership with AMEC Foster Wheeler (AMECFW) one of the world's leading engineering, project management and consultancy companies. The partnership between AMECFW and Dalziel High School has been pivotal in raising the aspirations of pupils within the school and providing outstanding opportunities for high quality vocational education in association with New College Lanarkshire (NCL). The partnership framework breaks down social/economic barriers to allow a number of pupils to not only realise their science/engineering dreams but to have a much deeper educational experience in order to develop key skills. In line with the key recommendations of the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce, this is a successful example of business, schools and colleges working together in collaboration to enrich the opportunities available to young people. This partnership has created a forum in which young people are actively mentored as they develop a greater understanding of the skills required for the world of work. New College

Lanarkshire has supported the programme through the accreditation of a National 4 Engineering Award for participating pupils. The partnership with NCL has been further enhanced by offering pupils in the senior phase the opportunity to study National 5 Child Care and National 5 Construction for session 2015-2016.

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 94% 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. We have continued to strengthen our links through meaningful subject specific visits to collaborate on content and progression. 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 "All Shook Up" 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; France, Belgium, Italy, London, 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 through Insight 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. Deputes 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.

The collation of departmental timelines for moderation has ensured sharing of standards and moderation of courses across all departments. The strengthening of moderation across all departments has inevitably enhanced staff understanding of assessment standards and ultimately staff capability and confidence in the delivery of the new qualifications has grown. This supports learning and teaching and ensures inclusion and that equal opportunity and standards are offered to all 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 improvement process is now completely transparent, encouraging staff to take ownership of the improvement plan and to increase the capacity for change across the school. Staff are involved in evaluating and auditing their work against 5 key HIGOS quality indicators through an annual scoping exercise. Staff have developed the use of evaluative language and departments engage in meaningful dialogue, which focuses on the impact which their practices have on learners. This collaborative approach ensures all staff have a shared understanding of their contribution to taking forward the agreed areas for improvement. Collegiate time is being used to good effect to respond to educational issues and to refine learning experiences.

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. For the first time ever we have received 8 Compliance Plus categories 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'. The assessor also recommended that our partnership work be considered by the consortium as an example of 'transformation practice' which may result in further promotional activity for the school by SGS.

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

- Improvement Priority 1: To review and evaluate the impact of the Broad General Education and the National Qualifications to prepare for the Senior Phase.
- Improvement Priority 2: The school will continue to 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.