

"Working together to inspire learning and achievement in Highland Communities"



Standards and Quality Report

The Highland Council Care and Learning



Kilchuimen Academy

Session 2014-2015

Our school vision, values and aims

Our vision is to provide a **happy, caring and inclusive environment where children will recognise and achieve their fullest potential**, so that they can make their best contribution to society.

Kilchuimen Academy is a place where:

- everybody is welcomed and treated fairly and with respect
- we learn together within a challenging but supportive environment
- we respect and care for everyone and everything around us

Kilchuimen Academy sets high standards of learning and celebrates the achievements of each student. It is a place where individual differences are recognised and respected.

Now that the school has moved to a 3-18 campus, the focus will widen to take renewed account of the needs of the entire age range.

The Core Areas of our Practice

This report summarises the strengths of our school, our recent improvements and what needs to improve further. We gather this information throughout the year in a variety of ways so we can make sure our report is as accurate as possible. We take time to compare what we do with national examples of best practice. We visit each others' classes to share standards in learning and teaching. We look at children and young people's work to see how they are progressing. We cross mark work. We make use of factual data and information including attainment results responding and adapting our teaching in line with children's needs. We assess using our own expertise, standardised testing, cross marking and results tracking. Children peer assess and self assess. We gather the views of children, parents, staff and members of the local community. We use all of this information to arrive at our view of the quality of education we provide.

Our Key Strengths

- An inclusive ethos.
- Strong teacher/pupil relationships.
- Distributed leadership.
- Good communication.
- Flexible time-tabling to meet individual need.
- Our emerging Wider Achievement agenda.
- Effective 16+ provision leading to 100% positive destinations.
- Partnership working.
- Fund-raising.

"Teacher/pupil relationships in the school are fantastic. There isn't a teacher in the school that I wouldn't feel able to talk to and every single teacher has helped me realise my strengths at some point in my school life." (S5 pupil, "What do we think of our school? June 2015)

Our Improvements Last Session

- Timetable architecture now meets CfE BGE and Personal Support entitlement more fully.
- Continued implementation of new SQA exam courses.
- Widened networking with other secondary schools to share standards relating to new SQA exam (and more established) courses.
- Creation of new PT SfL post with a 3-18 management remit.
- Establishment of Primary/Secondary joint Literacy, Numeracy and HWB Working Groups.
- Ongoing revision of Transition, PSE and Personal Support programmes.
- Fund-raising for French trip in August 2015.

Our Priorities For Improvement for Next Session

- Continuing to develop our 3-18 management strategy.
- Continuing to develop tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress, particularly via the SEEMIS integrated school management information system, known as ***Click + Go*** and the new benchmarking tool for secondary schools, ***Insight***, which looks at both SQA results and Wider Achievement; to ensure staff training in these new systems.
- Continue to develop Wider Achievement programmes, promoting the volunteering and skill-based opportunities required to receive accreditation for Wider Achievements awards.
- Continuing to implement new SQA courses.
- Continuing to evaluate S1-3 BGE provision.
- Embedding of skills for work across the curriculum in line with ***Developing Scotland's Young Workforce***.
- Continuing efforts to encourage parental involvement as part of the local authority and school response to the Joseph Rowntree Report, ***Closing the Attainment Gap***.

1. How well do young people learn and achieve?

1.1.Improvements in performance

- *Standards of attainment over time*
- *Overall quality of learners' achievement*
- *Impact of the school improvement plan*

2.1 Learners' experiences

- *The extent to which learners are motivated and actively involved in their own learning and development*

Key Strengths in these areas...

- Recent SQA results reveal that, in S4 attainment, Kilchuimen Academy over the last four sessions has been consistently above the Highland average for 5+ Awards at Level 5 (what was SG Credit/Intermediate).
- Our pass-rate for Advanced Higher remains 100%.
- Pupils at all stages were again provided with a wide range of learning opportunities inside and outside of the classroom, opportunities which we continued to celebrate in end-of-term newsletters. All pupils, without exception, recorded wider achievements (see Item 2 below for examples) which we were delighted to list in the Celebration of Wider Achievement which is included in the end-of-session Awards booklet.
- Pupils participated confidently in a range of activities which include a range of sports (e.g. football, shinty, skiing, basketball, badminton, track & field, golf, taekwondo); destinations for residential trips again included Lochmaddy Outdoor Centre on Uist, Orkney, Fairburn Activity Centre, and visiting Auschwitz courtesy of the Holocaust Educational Trust. In the local community pupils were seen to participate e.g. in the Summer Concert, the annual "Buskathon" to raise money for the Poppy Appeal, the Community Christmas Quiz, Christmas Carol singing in the village, a Macmillan Coffee Afternoon, bulb-planting in public spaces, litter-picking and a French Evening to raise funds for the August 2015 French trip.
- Developments were made to PSE and Personal Support programmes.
- The SIP plan continued to take account of the school's vision and local and national priorities. In producing our improvement planning, at whole school and departmental level, we made careful use of information from self-evaluation, SQA review, QI visits and pupil and parent focus groups.

In the course of Session 2014-15 our priorities will be...

- Becoming more familiar with the SEEMIS integrated school management information system, known as **Click and Go**. This package, which addresses all aspects of school administration including attainment information, attendance and timetabling, is still being rolled out across Highland schools. We hope to integrate our in-house tracking processes into **Click and Go** to provide earlier warning signs of potential under-achievement. This is something that will be clearly explained to pupils to make them fully aware of the procedures that are in place to address any problems arising.
- Continuing to develop staff knowledge and understanding of Assessment for Excellence electronic data, **InCAS** and **SOSCA** (Secondary On-Screen Curriculum Assessments), to help support the needs of pupils to ensure effective curricular transitions.
- Continuing to develop the sharing of standards for the new National and Higher SQA qualifications by forming links with partners in other schools for single staff departments to benchmark standards and share work; begin to look at developments for new Advanced Higher courses

- Further developing Personal Support time to facilitate learning conversations between pupils and key adults leading to effective target-setting.
- Continuing to encourage pupils to recognise the importance of self-reflection as part of taking responsibility for their own learning, remaining vigilant around the distinction between providing genuinely needed support and the importance of promoting independent learning.

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

5.1 The Curriculum

- *The rationale and design of the curriculum*
- *The development of the curriculum*
- *Programmes and courses*
- *Transitions*

5.3 Meeting learning needs

- *Tasks, activities and resources*
- *Identification of learning needs*
- *The roles of teachers and specialist staff*
- *Meeting and implementing the requirements of legislation*

Our key strengths in these areas...

- Kilchuimen Academy was able to provide pupils with their first-choice academic subjects, again designing the timetable to reflect individual pupil choices and learning needs rather than fitting pupil choices to fixed option blocks.
- As in recent years, we worked hard to widen the range of college-based and on-line courses available to pupils from S3 upwards. In 2011-12 pupils were able to follow courses in Rural Skills with Abriachan Forestry Trust and in Maritime Skills at Portree; in 2012-13 pupils took Uniformed Services, Early Education & Childcare and European Computer Driving Licence courses with the two local colleges that form part of the University of the Highlands and Islands; in 2013-14 the school introduced new *Skills for Work* courses in *Sport & Recreation* and *Energy* to meet the needs of the senior cohorts at that point; in 2014-15 a number of pupils gained valuable work or volunteering experience in Kilchuimen Primary and Nursery.
- In May 2015 **John Muir Award Week** was organised for S1-3 leading to virtually all pupils receiving certification. Virtually all S6 Leavers in Class of 2015 have completed **Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Awards**. Pupils are beginning to recognise that Wider Achievement awards are increasingly valued by employers and FE/HE institutions as a means of evaluating the capabilities and character of an individual beyond his/her academic grades.
- Targeted visits to Coca Cola and Rio Tinto were arranged as preparation for the world of work. College visits, trips to UCAS/Higher Education fairs and presentations on Modern Apprenticeships were also arranged, giving pupils the chance to collect up-to-date information on courses and application processes directly from providers in these areas. Pupils were again encouraged to attend university summer schools and open days.
- The 2014-15 Senior Transition Week, involving a number of our much-valued 16+ partners, laid considerable emphasis on self-presentation and interview skills in line with Highland's emerging guidelines on Developing the Young Workforce (DYW).
- We continued to work effectively with Kilchuimen Primary and other local primary schools as part of our well-established P7/S1 transition programme with pupils competing for the Kilchuimen Transition Trophy. This year's STEM project was bridge-building. The pastoral dimension of this year's P7/S1 programme has been re-designed by the new 3-18 PT SfL.

- Pupils of all abilities remained well supported in their learning needs; specialist SfL staff were again assiduous in keeping up to date with their own training to remain au fait with requirements of legislation and in keeping with the Highland Practice Model. Teaching staff were again generous with their time over lunch breaks and after school, if pupils needed help; regular 1-1 interviews afforded pupils an opportunity to discuss their own perceptions of their strengths, weaknesses and needs. Pupils were comfortable with the support offered and happy to accept help but were also encouraged to work independently. The school continued its practice of allowing pupils, in consultation with their parents, to study either at home or in school during Study Leave.
- Meeting SQA Alternative Assessment needs of pupils remained a key focus with staff receiving guidance and direction on the assessment needs of individual pupils as well as advice on gathering evidence. At all stages, regular communication amongst pupils, parents and teachers allowed for review and evaluation of ASN support strategies offered to pupils and the ongoing identification and setting of targets.
- The PT (Pupil Support) and SfL Department maintained very positive relationships with partner agencies, e.g. Social Work, ISO, Community Paediatrician, Occupational Therapist, School Nurse, Skills Development Scotland, Youth Development Officer and Active Schools Coordinator. Meetings and regular communication with partner agencies ensured that pupils and parents continued to feel supported and directed.
- 100% of school leavers achieved positive destinations.

In the course of Session 2014-15 our priorities will be...

- To work closely with pupils, staff, parents, Parent Council and QIO to appraise the impact (and further potential) of moving to a 3-18 Campus on the learning needs of pupils.
- To continue to support staff in implementing consistent and meaningful differentiation across all subjects areas to encourage pupils of all abilities towards independent learning and achieving their potential.
- To continue to evaluate new timetabling structures with particular emphasis on S1-3 curriculum and the new arrangements for Personal Support. In line with local authority guidance on the delivery of the Broad General Education, pupils will continue to make course choices towards the end of their S3 year, with a view to following six National courses in S4. This allows for the wide-ranging education laid down as the BGE entitlement to be comprehensively delivered, with decisions regarding certificate courses being taken a year later at a point when pupils are more mature and arguably better able to judge the best combination of subjects for their career aspirations. The introduction of a Tuesday 7-period day for Session 2014-15 has allowed the whole school to attend Personal Support/PSE at the same time, something which also assists in the delivery of Wider Achievement. When consulted in June 2015, staff were virtually unanimous in the view that Tuesday Period 7 should be retained as part of the 2015-16 timetable to ensure delivery of pupils' entitlement to a high level of Personal Support
- To implement new Higher courses in subjects that elected to stay with the old Higher in 2014-15; implementation of new Advanced Higher courses will become a priority over the next couple of years.
- To continue to enhance opportunities for Wider Achievement - e.g. the school has successfully fund-raised to ensure that the new S4 can all be registered for D of E, at no cost to families, and a member of staff will receive ring-fenced D of E management time to ensure effective delivery in this area.

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

5.9 Improvements through self-evaluation

- *Commitment to self-evaluation*
- *Management of self-evaluation*
- *School improvement*

Our key strengths in this area...

- In Kilchuimen Academy promoted, teaching and support staff are aware of and respect each other's work and there is helpful sharing of practice amongst all colleagues e.g. staff are comfortable to have Lesson Observation write-ups and Departmental Improvement Plans shared with colleagues.
- As a staff, we remain committed to the idea that improvements can genuinely be made as a result of robust self-evaluation; all promoted, teaching and non-teaching staff are routinely involved in evaluation and planning.

In the course of Session 2015-16 our priorities will be...

- Taking account of staff changes, to re-focus on specific aspects of observed lessons to ensure consistent and effective teaching across all curriculum areas.
- Continuing to canvass pupil views on their learning and experience of being a Kilchuimen Academy pupil and renewing our efforts to engage parents with a greater number of school-related issues.
- Targeting KA and KPS Collegiate Activity Programme (CAP) sessions carefully towards shared and separate self-evaluation and SIP priorities.
- Appoint a DYW lead and use DYW funding further to strengthen practice and partnerships at 16+, engaging partners and the community in focus groups to triangulate perceptions of the school within the wider community.
- Develop use of *Insight* better to inform planning and, based on the collected data, identify and establish a learning partnership agreement with another Highland secondary school beyond useful curriculum links which already exist.