The James Young High School

**Standards & Quality
Report**

Session 2014/2015

Introduction

The West Lothian Context

West Lothian Council is committed to delivering the best possible outcomes for children and young people so that they have the best start in life and are ready to succeed by following the principles of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC).

Within Curriculum for Excellence, every child and young person is entitled to experience a curriculum which is coherent from 3-18. Those planning the curriculum have a responsibility to work in partnership with others to enable children and young people to move smoothly between key transition points, building on prior learning and achievement in a manner appropriate to the learning needs of the individual. This should ensure that young people are well placed to move into positive destinations and adult life.

The Corporate Plan sets the strategic direction and our priorities for West Lothian Council. There are eight priorities that we, and our community, believe can make a lasting and sustainable impact on the local area and improve the lives of residents in West Lothian.

Priority 1: Delivering positive outcomes and early interventions for early years
Priority 2: Improving the employment position in West Lothian
Priority 3: Improving attainment and positive destinations for school children
Priority 4: Improving the quality of life for older people
Priority 5: Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality
Priority 6: Reducing crime and improving community safety
Priority 7: Delivering positive outcomes on health
Priority 8: Protecting the built and natural environment

The Corporate Plan informs Education Services Management Plan to ensure our work impacts positively on services for children and young people. Education Services focuses particularly on priorities 1, 2 and 3.

Education Services Management Plan

Education Services works towards achieving the key strategic aims of the council, in partnership with schools. In particular, Education Services aims to improve opportunities for children and young people by:

- Raising standards of attainment and achievement
- Improving employability and positive destinations for all school leavers
- Improving the learning environment
- Promoting equality of access to education
- Developing values and citizenship
- Promoting learning for life and encouraging a creative, enterprising and ambitious outlook.

Working with a range of partners, the key purpose of our work is to continuously raise attainment and achievement for all children and young people in West Lothian, ensuring that our young people succeed in securing a positive and sustained destination after school.

We want to know how well we are doing this and how we can improve. We are continuously evaluating what we do and how it makes a difference to our learners. In

moving forward together we have been asking ourselves-staff, pupils, parents/carers and stakeholders- key questions which are contained within this Standards and Quality Report. Our self-evaluationis in the pages that follow, along with ourkey areas for development for session 2015-16. This report is set within the context of CfE and GIRFEC and measured against the quality indicators within *Child at the Centre,How Good is Our School 3?*And*CfE National expectations: Self-evaluation resource.*

The progress of the areaswe developed in our 2014-2015 School Improvement Plan(SIP) is outlined in *Appendix 1.*

Context of the School

School roll is currently 1139 and serves the 4 cluster primary schools of Dedridge, Bankton, Williamston and Bellsquarry. In addition we have placing requests of 26%. New DHT Support took up post in August 2014, and our new Business Manager took up post in November 2014. Our Senior Leadership team (SLT) consists of HT, 2 DHTs, and one Business Manager (who works across all cluster schools).The SLT and our 6 PTCs Curriculum, 4 PTCs Support and 1 Pupil Support Manager form theExtended Leadership Team (ELT)We have a provision for young people with autistic spectrum disorder which currently accommodates 18 pupils.

How well do children and young people learn and achieve? (1.1; 2.1)

The school is making good progress in this area.

Strengths

In most lessons across the school, including in the Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Resource, young people are motivated and actively involved in their learning. They settle well to tasks and contribute enthusiastically to lessons. Almost all young people benefit from supportive and respectful relationships with each other and their teachers. They collaborate well and make some good use of information and communications technology in lessons. Most oung people show good skills in evaluating their success in learning and that of others. There is good practice across the school in providing high-quality feedback to young people in the Senior Phase about their progress, and in involving young people in evaluating their learning experiences. Almost all young peopleachieve success, develop informed attitudes and become self-confident through a range of activities in the school and wider community. A rich variety of opportunities for personal achievement are broadening young people's horizons. A significant number of young people develop their citizenship and leadership skills in their roles as mentors to their younger peers, and by leading or taking part in fund-raising activities or community environment projects. Whole-school, year group and subject activities help young people to improve their independence, self-esteem and team-working. Almost all young people, including those with additional support needs, are supported well to move on to a positive destination on leaving school. Good progress has been made in developing an understanding of progress across the curriculum S1 to S3 amongst middle management and senior staff. Very good progress has been made in focussing on improving attainment trends in comparison with similar schools with the introduction of Attainment Action Plans, ELT pupil focussed meetings and the introduction of a Senior Phase Tracking & Monitoring Policy and spreadsheet. Good progress has been made in terms of increasing awareness of young people's levels of involvement in personal achievement activities. Very good progress has also been made in supporting the number of young people leaving school to go to Higher Education.

Areas for Development

- To further improve overview of progress across the curriculum from S1 to S3
- To track, analyse and intervenewith what young people achieve more formally.

How well is the school helping children and young people to develop and learn? (5.1; 5.3)

The school is making good progress in this area.

Strengths

Overall, young people are encouraged and supported well in their learning. Young people in the ASD Resource are well supported by their teachers. Staff are aware of the GIRFEC agenda and implications for their roles thus enabling children's needs to be met effectively. The curriculum has improved to ensure that all young people receive a broad curriculum and benefit fully from Curriculum for Excellence. The curriculum from S4 to S6 has a wide range of progression routes for young people. The school has introduced volunteering and leadership opportunities to further extend young people's skills, engagement and achievement. Learners now have increased opportunities for personalisation and choice within real-life contexts. Opportunities for formal moderation throughout the year are planned by most subject areas in addition to ongoing informal discussions to ensure high quality understanding of standards leading to appropriate assessment for pupils. Pupils are benefitting from a range of assessment approaches within curricular areas. Work with our cluster partners is effective and pupils experience very good pastoral support at transition P7 to S1.Arrangements for personal support and induction into the next phase of learning, including preparation for the world of work and future careers ensure our learners are prepared for positive and sustained destinations. Individual curriculum planning for young people has been improved with a focus at the end of S3 on progression pathways in both curricular and personal achievement. A whole school strategy is being developed to plan opportunities for inter-disciplinary learning (IDL) with a focus on higher order thinking skills for learners. Opportunities for wider and personal achievement are planned for the Broad General Education (BGE).

Areas for Development
- To further improve individual curriculum planning and tracking for young people with additional support including the introduction of an Employability Pathway.
- Further development of opportunities for inter-disciplinary learning to be consistently planned into learning, whilst supporting progression.
- Continual planning of assessment, moderation, curriculum and sharing of standards is required across most curricular areas in the cluster as well as ensuring we make best use of all information (including diagnostic information) gathered from our primary schools.
- Implementation Plan to encourage wider participation in personal achievement opportunities

How well is the school improving the quality of its work? (5.9)

The school is making good progress in this area.

Strengths

The school has been developing a more effective range of approaches to improve its work, leading to a number of improvements in the quality of provision. The current school improvement plan draws on a wide range of sources of information and accurately identifies the main priorities for the school.Subject areas engage in self-evaluation exercises each session to inform department and faculty improvement planning leading to improved experiences for pupils. All subject areas write an end of year Standards & Quality Report. Almost all staffreflect on current practice and evaluate any new initiatives, ideas and changes which have been introduced when evaluating their departmental improvement plans demonstrating their commitment to continuous improvement and positive outcomes for learners. Through the introduction of the Professional Learning Community, good progress has been made in involving all staff in developing a vision for learning and teaching, and in sharing best practice to provide higher quality experiences for pupils across the school.The development of a whole school tracking policy in the senior phase has led to an increased number of pupils being supported in achieving their potential, as well as to increased awareness of ELT of pupil progress. Learner conversations in the senior phase have been developed to support pupil self-reflection and identification of next steps.

Areas for Development
- Tracking progress needs to extend to the BGE.
- To develop staff confidence in using Insight.
- The school improvement plan should be shared and discussed more widely with young people, parents and community partners to involve them all in improving the school.

How well is the school working with partners? (8.1)

The school is making good progress in this area.

Strengths

Almost all pupilsin the senior phase benefit from increased choice of courses and award programmes across a range of subject areas at college or at other schools, as part of the West Lothian Campus including foundation apprenticeships and academies with Queen Margaret University. The school successfully works with partner agencies to support some young people who are at risk of missing out, with a considerable number moving on to positive placements after school. The school's work with more vulnerable young people as part of the 16+ choice and More Choices More Chances (MCMC) group, draws on external partners to support the progress of a number of identified young people, to very good effect. Staff have worked with other partners to secure other opportunities for this group such as Prince's Trust, volunteering, photographers, nail technicians, Red Cross and baby-sitting courses to expand accredited awards and achievements. There is effective liaison with a range of partners including the Children and Young People's Team; Attendance Improvement Management; and Looked After Children's Coordinator; to assess the needs of vulnerable young people and to offer valued support. Business links have been developed over the session offering a range of opportunities to young people.

Areas for Development
- Increased partnership working with Community Learning and Development (CLD) would increase partnership approach to meeting needs.
- Further develop the implementation of Developing Scotland's Young Workforce

How does the school ensure equality and inclusion and promote diversity across the school?

All young people, staff, parents and members of the school community are welcomed into our school. There is good partnershipworking with most of our external services. We have established our nurture base, supporting early intervention with some of our most vulnerable pupils and have worked closely with our educational psychologist to develop this. Our autism resource is particularly effective in meeting individual needs and tracking progress of the young people they work with and many of our S6 pupils provide a 'Friendly Face'. The importance of values is evident throughout many aspects of the work done in school eg Level 1 assessment in Rights, Respecting Schools, Interfaith Conference, Christmas Reflection, Amnesty Group, European Day of Languages, World of Culture and Diversity Day, global citizenship activities including Peru Work Party Expedition, as well as consistent messages regarding values through assemblies, class lessons etc. Charity work in the school is very strong. MCMC work is excellent and pupils at risk of missing out are identified early on and well supported towards positive and sustained destinations. Staff received training on Equality (Racial Awareness) from WLC.   The risk matrix is used effectively by pupil support staff to identify pupils who require additional support. Success for all is promoted through updates at assemblies, merits, newsletters, tracking & monitoring interviews, Behaviour and Reward Tracking (BART) ceremonies, prize-giving, Saltire awards for volunteering, Stellar awards, work experience references, MCMC pupils in-house certification and presentations at assemblies.

Improvement Priority 2015 -2016: Raising Attainment

Our key areas fordevelopment to take this priority forward are:

Area for Development 1:
To continue to improve the quality of learning & teachingacross the school

Area for Development 2:
To continue to improve the curriculum in line with national expectations

Area for Development 3:
To improve additional support needs provision and practice to better meet the needs of all young people

Area for Development 4:
Improve outcomes for young people through self-evaluation

Based on the above information, at this point in time, we evaluate ourselves against the quality indicators as follows:

Our school:

1.1	**Improvements in performance**	**Good**
2.1	**Learners' experience**	**Good**
5.1	**Curriculum**	**Good**
5.3	**Meeting learning needs**	**Good**
5.9	**Improvement through self-evaluation**	**Good**
8.1	**Partnership with the community, educational establishments, agencies and employers**	**Good**

Appendix 1

In session 2014- 2015, Raising Attainment was the overarching priority in the SIP. This appendix details the progress made with the specific areas for development and again is set within the context of CfE and measured against the quality indicators within *Child at the Centre, How good is Our School 3?* And *CfE National expectations: Self-evaluation resource.*

Progress made with our areas for development Session 2014 – 2015

Priority: Raising Attainment

Area for Development 1:
To continue to improve the quality of learning and teaching across the school

Good progress was made in this area

Evidence indicated:
- A model for a professional learning community (PLC) was established involving all staff in the school discussing the future vision for learning and teaching. The PLC teams will now drive forward improvement in learning and teaching for young people

Next Steps:
- To cultivate a Growth Mindset ethos amongst staff, pupils and parents through the hubs and associated whole school activities.

Area for Development 2:
To continue to improve the curriculum in line with national expectations

Very good progress was made in this area

Evidence indicated:
- New Higher courses were developed and implemented in almost all subject areas, ensuring pupils were well prepared for the new qualifications and standards were understood.

- Work started on increasing staff confidence in assessing, moderating and communicating progress in the BGE and discussions took place with local hub schools, cluster schools and all secondary schools. Further work is required in this area next session.

- Following consultation with staff, pupils and parents, we revised the structure of the school day to move to a 32 period week, 6 period option in S4, and combined S4 – S6 structure, to ensure that the entitlement to a Curriculum for Excellence will be provided for all pupils.

- Following consultation with staff, pupils and parents, we developed a number of i-choose options in S3, allowing greater personalisation and choice for pupils.

- A working group researched opportunities for wider achievement for pupils which will form part of our whole curriculum strategy moving forward, this

ensuring that the totality of experiences for young people is valued, relevant and coherent.

- A strategic approach to IDL is being developed across the school, with research taken place into best practice. This will provide pupils with consistent opportunities to develop higher order thinking skills through inter-disciplinary experiences.

- Extensive development work was done with the Cluster primaries and Education Scotland in the area of Technologies -CDT which helped to build staff capacity, confidence and familiarity with standards, thus ensuring an improved experience for pupils.

Next Steps:
- Programmes and courses for the new advanced higher are developed.
- Curricular pathways for pupils to be developed
- Planned opportunities for wider and personal achievement are developed to ensure coherence and progression
- To create at least one long term (3-5 year) partnership with a local business that links with various parts of our school curriculum including feeder primaries (Recommendation 15 – The Wood Commission)
- Pupils who are prepared for the world of work. Each subject area contributes meaningfully to CMS development (Recommendation 2 – The Wood Commission)
- Staff have a greater confidence in linking their subject to the world of work.
- A strategic approach to IDL is developed for the BGE which supports coherence and progression for pupils through range, variety and depth.
- To raise attainment levels in literacy and numeracy including the lowest 20%

Area for Development 3:
To improve additional support needs provision and practice to better meet the needs of all young people

Good progress was made in this area

Evidence indicated:
- A joint planning team meeting cycle was established including monthly ASN meetings and weekly House Meetings. This allowed for increased discussion of pupil needs and planning for next steps involving all internal support teams.

- Work was started on a system for tracking personal and wider achievement in order that the school has a greater overview of participation. A strategic overview is being developed in order to provide a coherent and progressive approach to personal and wider achievement. Research was done in order to increase awareness of accredited opportunities for pupils in order to inform future curricular improvements.Pupil pathways profiles were introduced with S3 thus allowing a fuller discussion on future pathways to take place at course choice time, including personal and wider achievement. Work with CLD gathered pupil survey information regarding participation rates in wider activities.

- An audit was conducted in order to gather information on how career management skills are currently embedded across the curriculum. This has provided the focus for future developments in order to support pupils in making choices for future study based on their own skills and qualities.

Next Steps:
- To ensure that all learners, including those who experience challenge and disadvantage receive their full entitlement to personal support to enable them to gain the maximum benefit from CfE.
- Continue to work towards achieving a transformational change in culture, systems and practice to improve outcomes for all learners based on a shared understanding of wellbeing across the school community.
- In line with local priorities, building professional capacity across the spectrum of Pupil Support to better meet the needs of pupils will be a focus for next session.

Area for Development 4:
Improve outcomes for young people through self-evaluation

Good progress was made in this area

Evidence indicated:

- All departments/faculty areas produced self-evaluation summaries/Standards & Quality reports, and linked this to their departmental improvement plans enabling a consistent commitment to continuous improvement for young people.

- The self-evaluation pilot of collaborative school improvement took place involving English and Social Studies and adopted a validatedself-evaluation (VSE) approach. This allowed validation of the departmental approach to self-reflection thus ensuring appropriate future improvements for young people.

- The whole school tracking & monitoring policy for the senior phase was implemented which enhanced awareness and conversations regarding progress and next steps between staff, pupils and management. This included the introduction of pupil focussed Extended Leadership Team meetings, which ensured a collective responsibility and planning approach to raising attainment.

- The requirements of professional update were shared with staff and new professional review and development (PRD) procedures were introduced in order to ensure that career long professional learning (CLPL) is understood and established, to support improvements for pupils.

- A P7/S1 numeracy session was very successfully held for parents in November which highlighted common methodologies for teaching some aspects of numeracy and how parents can support their children with developing numeracy skills

- Health & Wellbeing, along with other curricular links, was promoted through the cluster commonwealth project which was launched in November with the P7 pupils. All pupils participated in this project which allowed them to have a common curricular focus for transition.

- A new format for Health Week was used, providing a wider range of activities for pupils

- Profiling continued to be developed with more subjects contributing and pupils increasing self-awareness

- Senior pupils were able to choose enhanced curriculum options including

extended work experience, volunteering and peer support, linking with Saltire awards. This allowed pupils to develop wider skills and personal achievement.

- Staff awareness was further raised regarding the use of Didbook in the classroom. A parental leaflet was developed and distributed to aid parental understanding of Didbook and the profiling process. Discussion has commenced with the cluster to establish a common, shared approach to profiling in order that there is coherence for pupils and the process and dialogue is an effective as possible.

- An enhanced approach to raising higher education participation was undertaken through UCAS parents' workshops, website information, and early intervention activities with Napier University with S1 & S2.

Next Steps:
- Enhanced teacher confidence in assessing progress in the Broad General Education (BGE)
- To increase staff awareness and confidence of how to intelligently use data, including Insight, as an informative tool to help raise attainment for all pupils including the lowest 20%