



West Lothian
Council



The James Young High School

Standards & Quality Report

Session 2013/2014

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-evaluation is in the pages that follow, along with our key areas for development for session 2014-15. 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 areas we developed in our 2013-2014 School Improvement Plan (SIP) is outlined in *Appendix 1*.

Context of the School

School roll is currently 1120 and serves the 4 cluster primary schools of Dedridge, Bankton, Williamston and Bellsquarry. In addition we have placing requests of 26%. New DHT Curriculum took up post in August 2013. Our Board of Studies (BoS) consists of HT, 2 DHTs, and one Business Manager (who works across all cluster schools), our 6 PTCs Curriculum, 5 PTCs Support and 1 Pupil Support Manager form the SMT (with BoS), and we also have 4 PTs within subject areas. We have a provision for young people with autistic spectrum disorder which currently accommodates 16 pupils. In October 2013 we had an HMle Inspection resulting in the following key strengths: well-behaved young people who enjoy positive relationships with each other and staff, high-quality opportunities for young people to extend their personal achievements and effective partnership working to secure positive destinations for young people who are at risk of missing out. Main points for action were to improve arrangements for assessing, tracking and monitoring progress to raise attainment, to improve additional support needs provision and practice to better meet the needs of all young people, to improve the curriculum to ensure all young people experience an appropriately broad curriculum and to improve outcomes for young people through self-evaluation.

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 all young people show good skills in evaluating their success in learning and that of others. There is some good practice across the school in providing high-quality feedback to young people about their progress, and in involving young people in evaluating their learning experiences. Most young people are developing good skills in listening, talking, reading and writing in a number of subjects. Almost all young people achieve 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.

Areas for Development

- To focus on improving attainment trends in comparison with similar schools in national levels of performance is needed.
- To improve overview of progress across the curriculum from S1 to S3 and increase awareness of young people's levels of involvement in wider activities and to track what young people achieve more formally.
- To increase the proportion of young people leaving school to go to Higher Education to come in line with comparator schools.

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. The curriculum is improving 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.

Areas for Development

- To improve individual curriculum planning and tracking for young people with additional support needs to enable them to make better progress with their learning.
- Although opportunities for inter-disciplinary learning are evident throughout S1 – S3, these need to be more consistently planned into learning, whilst supporting progression.
- Opportunities for wider achievement require to be developed in the BGE.
- Further 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.
- Although personal support for pupils when choosing subjects from the senior phase to post school is positive, arrangements in S3 need to be developed in order that planning takes place for 1 – 3 year progression through flexible routes.

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

The school is making satisfactory 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 in the past year. 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 improvement planning leading to improved experiences for pupils. Almost all staff reflect 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. Learning rounds have taken place in the school involving a few teaching staff which has motivated staff, created greater confidence in identifying areas of best practice which can be shared to provide higher quality experiences for pupils across the school. All teaching staff are engaging in a range of professional learning to support Curriculum for Excellence implementation including using, sharing and developing good practice in assessment and profiling; and becoming familiar with the new qualifications, developing courses and programmes. This leads to high quality learning experiences.

Areas for Development

- The roles of all promoted staff relating to school improvement need to be more fully developed.
- Departments carry out a range of activities to review their work. These activities now need to lead more consistently to improvements for young people.
- The school improvement plan should be shared and discussed 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 pupils in 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. The school successfully works with external 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 Chance (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.

Areas for Development

- Increased partnership working with CLD would increase partnership approach to meeting needs.
- Greater involvement of community partners and young people in evaluating the life and work of the school.

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 partnership-working with most of our external services. We have established our own first stage nurture programme, supporting early intervention with some of our most vulnerable pupils. In addition we received funding to develop this further, working closely with our educational psychologist. This session the nurture base has supported 12 pupils. The JYHS hub supports young people in reintegrating into the curriculum. 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. 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 2014 -2015: Raising Attainment

Our key areas for development to take this priority forward are:

Area for Development 1:

To continue to improve the quality of learning & teaching across 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	Satisfactory
5.3	Meeting learning needs	Good
5.9	Improvement through self-evaluation	Satisfactory
8.1	Partnership with the community, educational establishments, agencies and employers	Good

Appendix 1

In session 2013- 2014, 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 2013 – 2014

Progress made

Priority: Raising Attainment

Area for Development 1:

The Curriculum Framework including Learning & Teaching

Good progress was made in this area.

Evidence indicated:

- Following consultation with staff, pupils and parents, we developed the S3 curriculum to ensure that the entitlement to a broad general education will be provided for all pupils. A curriculum action plan is also in place highlighting improvements for following sessions.
- Courses for new national qualifications were developed and implemented for pupils, ensuring pupils were well prepared for the new qualifications and standards were understood.
- The Learning & Teaching group led a variety of staff development opportunities for interested staff allowing them to continually improve pedagogy. Peer observations did not recommence this session due to time and staffing constraints. Introduction of Anytime Anywhere Learning was postponed due to council-wide constraints.
- Work has begun by the PTCs on understanding of standards, assessment and moderation to increase staff confidence in measuring the progress of all learners.
- Tracking and monitoring policy has been reviewed and launched to staff ensuring responsibility of all staff is understood regarding this. This is linked closely with target settings, review of different types of targets and how this is communicated to pupils and parents, thus making sure that pupils and parents clearly understand how progress is being made.
- Following collegiate discussions across the Council, significant progress was made on establishing processes for attainment analysis complementing the changes to tracking and monitoring and ensuring that there was increased staff awareness of the use of data and analysis, and consequent impact on pupil attainment.
- Partial progress was made on improving self-evaluation processes. Training has taken place with principal teachers to support them in the writing of self-evaluation summaries at the end of the session. This will be developed further next session into collaboration school improvement.

- We involved the Pupil Council more in evaluating learning & teaching through pupil learning rounds and discussion about QI 2.1 at Pupil Council meetings. Pupils reported back to staff in March and highlighted areas for improvement.

Next steps:

- Pupils consistently experience high quality learning and teaching which actively involves them in their own learning & development, allowing them to be aware of their progress and strengths as learners.
- Programmes and courses for the new higher and the new advanced higher (2015) are to be designed and developed in order to meet the needs of all learners in progressing from prior levels of achievement. These programmes of learning should emphasise depth and application of learning as well as the development of skills.
- Assessment & Reporting BGE
- The structure of the school day and arrangements the organisation of the senior phase is to be designed in order to meet the needs of learners, take account of local and national advice and be designed to deliver the entitlements.
- Planned opportunities for personal achievement are to be developed which ensure coherence and progression for pupils
- A strategic approach to IDL is to be developed for the BGE which supports coherence and progression for pupils through range, variety and depth
- In order to further develop curricular transition, there is to be a focus on the technologies which will build staff capacity, confidence and familiarity with standards, thus ensuring an improved experience in this curricular area for pupils.

Area for Development 2:

Pupil Support & Development

Very good progress was made in this area.

Evidence indicated:

- Vertical structures have been explored in other schools and plans put in place to move to a vertical structure for session 2014/15. This has also included a review of pupil support staff remits. The new structures should more closely meet the needs of pupils allowing greater continuity S1 – S6.
- GIRFEC practices have been further developed and used by all pupil support staff. All staff have been introduced to the principles of GIRFEC and universal support.
- The role of pupil support workers was reviewed with increased impact on pupil experiences.
- Specific action plans have been created for the autistic resource and support for learning to promote greater strategic collaborative throughout the school.
- The use of SEEMIS was extended to include merits and demerits. This information is included in reporting to parents thus increasing communication. This information has also been used to motivate pupils at assemblies.

- New procedures were introduced for effective curricular guidance including staff training, pupil application form and senior school prospectus. This has streamlined processes, developed greater staff understanding and provided greater support for pupils in choosing appropriate learning pathways.

Next steps:

- Further integration of pupil support, support for learning and autism in order to meet the needs of pupils
- To ensure that learning pathways meet the needs of all pupils at transitions through a range of information including wider achievement, pupil self-awareness and the use of profiling
- Increase the numbers of pupils who move onto higher education

Area for Development 3:

Partnership Working

Good progress was made in this area.

Evidence indicated:

- Curricular consultation and information provision took place with pupils and parents through surveys, documentation, information evenings and videoscribe in order to involve pupils and parents in key decisions impacting on pupil learning.
- Curricular briefings were sent to parents at key points in the session to increase their awareness of subject expectations and deadlines. Standard letters were introduced in order that parents are informed early where there are concerns. This increased involvement of parents in pupil learning.
- Parental drop in sessions were available throughout the year to allow parents the opportunity to discuss any areas of concerns with the headteacher, thus improving home-school communication which impacts on pupil learning through parental involvement.
- The planned use of enhanced groupcall was used with parents for attendance which allowed parents to communicate more quickly regarding attendance concerns however due to staff changes was not used for study support. This keeps parents fully involved in pupil attendance.
- The school website is being revamped by the parent council and should improve the provision of up to date information along with opportunity to celebrate pupil success.
- Partnership working with CLD has not yet developed further at a strategic level due to staff changes.
- Whole school council meetings established in order that there is a co-ordination of pupil council activities throughout the school.

Next steps:

- Development of whole school strategy policy document for self-evaluation and school improvement to include partners. Included in this will be an evaluation with parents regarding whole school communication.
- New school website to be launched in August 2014 and further developed into a second phase
- Whole school council meetings to be led by the S6 pupil council

Area for Development 4:**Responsibility of All**

Satisfactory progress has been made in this area.

Evidence indicated:

- Groups for Literacy, Numeracy and Health & Wellbeing met on an inservice day with volunteers from each department – this allowed discussion to take place on steps for the creation of whole school policies in these areas to enhance pupil learning
- Members of the English department worked with cluster colleagues on reading which helped to develop a common understanding of standards, thus ensuring greater impact on pupil learning through consistency of teaching and understanding of assessment and progress
- 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. 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.

Next steps:

- Collate coverage of Literacy/Numeracy/Health & Wellbeing Experiences & Outcomes and display publically
- Further develop the role of the personal support teacher.
- In order to further develop curricular transition, there is to be a focus on the technologies which will build staff capacity, confidence and familiarity with standards, thus ensuring an improved experience in this curricular area for pupils.