



COATBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2012-13

Introduction

Coatbridge High School is a six year non-denominational comprehensive secondary school serving Coatbridge and the surrounding communities within North Lanarkshire. The current roll is 1170 with a teaching staff of 83.84 FTE. The school is very well supported by our Parent Council with a number of new members including a new Chairperson.

There are ten associated primary schools and strong links exist between our two sectors.

Our aim is to care for all our young people equally. We actively promote a culture of positive achievement which develops the skills, knowledge and qualities of our learners to enable them to achieve a positive destination. The school has an inclusive ethos and has a track record of providing positive support to young people who experience a range of social, emotional and behavioural problems.

Our HMI inspection in October 2011 identified the need for the school to improve in a number of key areas such as; attainment at all stages, raised expectations of all stakeholders of what young people can achieve, increased frequency and quality of feedback to learners, build young people's confidence in learning and develop a culture of achievement, to increase the pace of curriculum development and finally to establish more effective teamwork, visible leadership and direction from promoted staff. Following the continuing engagement visit in December 2012 HMI noted a number of improvements. Young people now have improved opportunities to be actively involved and to take on more responsibility for their learning and there have been improvements in the frequency and quality of feedback given to young people. This is particularly apparent in S5/S6 where it was noted that pupils have experienced more regular discussion about their progress. The new behaviour policy was launched in August 2012 and in the recent questionnaires issued, staff, pupils and parents confirmed an improvement in behaviour across the school.

HMI noted that pupils are positive about their teachers' willingness to recognise positive behaviour, including through the issuing of praise cards. In terms of behaviour they felt that there had been an overall improvement and that the learning environment in classes is calm, orderly and more stimulating with attractive and motivating displays of work. HMI also noted a clear sense of direction in terms of improving the school.

2. How well do young people learn and achieve?

SQA Performance

There was an improvement in whole school measures of performance in 2012 with the percentage of pupils achieving Higher increasing in every measure for S5 and S6 except one. Looking back to last session's S5 cohort's CAT results there is evidence that some pupils who did well at Higher scored relatively modest scores in S1. This suggests that the school has served the educational needs of these young people effectively as they have progressed through High School. Attainment at SG is presenting a greater challenge despite the strategies adopted by the school, these did not have the impact we would have hoped. There was a decrease in S4 performance between 2011 and 2012, although this was still an improvement on every measure from 2010. This is an area for continued focus this session and measures have already been introduced such as daily mentoring via the establishment of S4 VAR classes for 5 plus Credit pupils. We recognise that attainment across a number of departments is a key area for improvement and we have taken a number of steps to address this including good practice visits to high attaining departments and CPD opportunities for staff.

Wider Achievement

This session there has been a greater emphasis placed on the recognition and recording of wider achievement. To date we have over 400 pupils who will achieve wider achievement awards and there is scope to extend this to an even greater number of young people at all stages in the future. This shows significant improvement compared to session 2011 (54 pupils) and 2012 (253 pupils) and at the time of writing this report our figures for this session stand at over 500 and demonstrates the school's commitment to recognising achievement. Senior pupils have been given increased leadership opportunities and they have embraced the opportunity to lead reward events, whole school talent shows and charity fundraising events.

We have developed an enhanced role for the Pupil Council with a very active Chairperson at the helm. Pupil Council members have been included in the School Improvement Planning process and have met with the School Improvement Planning group to ensure pupil views are taken on board when identifying school priorities.

We are delighted that our young people are embracing the opportunity to get involved in the wider life of the school in a variety of ways. In November 2012 a group of our S3 pupils came third in the Royal Society of Chemists competition in Glasgow University out performing a number of schools from the independent sector. In first place was The Glasgow Academy and in second place St Aloysius College.

Now into a fourth year the Malawi project has gone from strength to strength. This session the school held our first ever 'Malawi week' which was an interdisciplinary learning project involving all departments and many pupils throughout school. Young people at Coatbridge High School demonstrate time and again that they take their responsibilities to their fellow citizens seriously. Since the start of this session pupils have raised over six thousands of pounds for charities including the STV appeal, St Andrew's Hospice and for Luchenza Community Day School in Malawi. ASDAN pupils hosted a St Andrew's Day 'tea dance' for our Senior Citizens which was a great success, our school show continues to go from strength to strength with pupils performing brilliantly both on and off stage and we have also enjoyed a successful talent show which was organised by our senior pupils. HMI noted that these activities are helping to ensure that the school is improving its reputation within the community as well as ensuring pupils are developing their confidence and self-esteem, an area of focus identified by HMI during the initial inspection in 2011. We continue to celebrate the achievements of our young people through regular updates on the school website, via our extended assemblies programme, through rewards ceremonies, newsletters, wall displays, praise cards, 'Good News' letters, our 'Good News' board and through a dedicated achievements slot in our Value Added Registration (VAR) programme.

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

The school continues to develop the curriculum in line with Curriculum for Excellence. A number of promoted staff have taken on lead roles to develop the school's work in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and interdisciplinary learning. Departments are continuing to develop new courses across S1 to S3 and some have developed innovative contexts to enhance young people's learning, for example, the "Band Heroes" project in business education. Dance, philosophy and photography have been introduced this session to widen the range of opportunities for young people to achieve. Senior phase planning is well underway and National 4 and 5 courses have been developed for delivery in session 2013-14.

We have made good progress within the area of interdisciplinary learning with the Diamond Jubilee project forming the first natural link between subjects last session. The Malawi week in September was a further opportunity to connect learning. Staff and pupil feedback indicated that pupils could see the relevance of this work and that it was engaging pupils. The Scotland interdisciplinary learning project was launched at a special assembly on Monday 26th November with pupils singing, dancing and talking about what Scotland means to them. An IDL project relating to the Scottish Referendum is planned for senior pupils' when they return in June 2013.

Following the cessation of the S2 enhancement project additional periods have been allocated to English and mathematics to further develop literacy and numeracy skills, key building blocks for an improvement in future attainment.

There are very good pastoral transitional links in place within the school, particularly for the P7 to S1 stage. This is an area of strength for our school and curricular transition has had a greater focus for us. Over the last two sessions, the school has continued to improve links with associated primary schools to ensure young people build on their prior learning. A number of departments have developed cross sector learning activities this session including English, Mathematics, Science, Home Economics and Modern Languages with a number of others indicating they would like to develop links in session 2013-14. The upper school transition process is supported through targeted PSHE classes dependent on the young person's exit plan in relation to college or university. Last session we also created registration classes which reflected the number of Highers pupils were undertaking and a mentor to support the young people on a daily basis. Feedback from pupils as part of our improvement planning process has been very positive in relation to this initiative

Young people and their parents are supported through the transition stages within the school very effectively. The Support for Learning (SfL) department in our school provides a very high level of support to our young people with rigorous and effective systems in place to meet learning needs -this was identified as a strength by HMI. Extensive transition planning meetings take place prior to the transfer from P7 to S1. Transition meetings also take place prior to pupils leaving school. Looked after Children are monitored in line with legislation and we have had success in supporting some of these young people in to a positive destination. Last session we established a HART (Health and Wellbeing Resource Team) group and we have made very good progress in terms of identifying appropriate support for our vulnerable learners.

Our enhanced monitoring and tracking system enables staff to identify areas for improvement with clear targets during an identified tracking week for every year group. In response to staff evaluations we now send a monitoring report home to S5/6 parents every six weeks and have introduced less formal parental 'drop ins' at the end of January and the beginning of March to support our parents and learners. Pupil, staff and parental feedback relating to the enhanced monitoring and tracking is very positive. In session 2013-14 S4 pupils will be included, for the first time, in this initiative.

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

As a school we are totally committed to improving the work that we do and to providing the highest possible standard of education for our young people. We have identified areas for improvement which reflect the RIF and more recently the ROV. Following the continuing engagement visit HMI reported the school had strengthened its approach to evaluating and improving its work.

The remits of the senior management team have been realigned to give greater focus on key quality indicators and as a result, their responsibilities are now clearer, and approaches to leadership are more consistent. The Head Teacher and senior managers are now providing higher levels of support and challenge to improve the work of departments.

There is a more robust approach to the monitoring and tracking of young people's progress and to managing their behaviour. A School Improvement Planning group, chaired by the Head Teacher has been formed this session. The group, made up of a number of staff, promoted and unpromoted and also representatives from the pupil council has contributed effectively to the SIP this session. HMI noted that the improved planning process had been used more effectively to bring about a more consistent approach to improvement.

Regular Quality Assurance meetings held throughout the year between the HT, link DHT and PTs has contributed positively to the ongoing process of improvement.

There are regular link meetings between PT and SMT with a standardised form introduced this session to improve consistency.

5. Assigning levels using Quality Indicators

1.1 Improvements in Performance	3
2.1 Learners' experiences	4
5.3 Meeting learning needs	4
5.1 The curriculum	4
5.9 Improvement through self-evaluation	4

6. Areas for Improvement

As a result of our self-evaluation we have decided that in the coming year we will:

- To continue to develop the framework within which Curriculum for Excellence can be successfully delivered to meet the entitlements of all learners.
- To improve the quality of learners' experiences and learner engagement in order to improve attainment at all levels across the school. A greater focus on learning and teaching through the revision of the current lesson observation policy incorporated into a new learning and teaching policy'
- To improve the quality and frequency of feedback to learners through further development of the whole school monitoring and tracking procedures. An increased focus on target setting through the introduction of the requirement of two set targets per subject for every pupil in the Senior Phase across four reports throughout the session.
- To improve the ethos of the school by continuing to develop the four capacities in our learners. To continue to strive for greater consistency at all levels when promoting positive behaviour.
- To continue to improve transitions for learners at all stages.