

1 THE INSPECTION

HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) published a report on the quality of education in Boroughmuir High School in December 2008. Subsequently the school with support from the education authority amended the school improvement plan to take account of the findings of the inspection.

An education authority team recently visited the school to assess the extent to which the school was continuing to develop the quality of its education including the areas identified for improvement and produced a progress report for parents.

This report tells you about the quality of education provided by the school since the original inspection. It also comments on the progress made in the agreed areas for improvement.

The main areas of focus are on learning and achievement, meeting the learning needs of the pupils and leadership to help the school achieve its aims.

2 IMPROVEMENTS IN THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

2.1 Learning and achievement

Learners in S1 and S2 had continued to sustain high attainment levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Standard Grade and National Qualification results

had improved in both S4 and S5 with the attainment of young people in S5 being particularly strong. The school's performance in national assessments had been consistently well above national averages and now compares very well with schools which serve young people with similar needs and backgrounds.

The school had continued to make good progress in developing its systematic and accessible monitoring and tracking system for attainment. This is now in place for all learners. Young people were generally clear about the use and purpose of their targets and there were increasing opportunities for these to be negotiated in a meaningful way at more frequent intervals. The school had effectively used this information to introduce intervention strategies to ensure individual learners were supported to achieve their academic potential. Learners spoke very positively of the way staff provided opportunities for extra support when they were having difficulties.

All learners with additional support needs were involved in developing and reviewing their educational plans and were clear about their targets for learning.

Learners were very positive about the wide range of opportunities available which allowed them to take part in activities which promote wider achievement. The school actively encouraged participation in these opportunities and continues to extend

the scope of these activities to develop the variety of talents and skills of their young people. Learners clearly described how the school celebrated their achievements although the school recognised that it needed to consider how to track this more systematically.

The school had made a good start to developing its new curriculum in line with both national and local developments. All S1 courses had undergone changes designed to reflect national guidance and make them more stimulating, challenging, relevant and enjoyable. Teachers were also engaged in exploring a number of interdisciplinary learning opportunities.

2.2 Meeting pupils' learning needs

The relationship between staff and learners was one of mutual respect. Almost all learners were motivated and engaged in the learning process and contribute well in lessons. Learners enjoyed the increased opportunities to discuss with their peers and learn together which was now a feature in most classrooms. They worked confidently both individually and in groups and were increasingly involved in discussions about the purpose of their learning and what they need to do to improve. Lessons were well planned with a range of tasks and activities to support learning. Teachers had increased the range and quality of teaching and learning strategies and these were being applied more consistently across the school. The use of information and communication technology had increased in the school and this is most evident in

those curricular areas where the school had invested in improved resources and facilities, for example media studies and drama.

The practice of sharing classroom experience is now recognised by teachers in the school as a mechanism for improving learning across the school. Staff spoke positively of the usefulness of this activity and it was now integrated into the departmental improvement processes. The school senior managers had effectively supported this development and were aware of the need to maximise the impact of this activity.

The school was very good at identifying barriers to learning and devising strategies to overcome them. Regular and frequent meetings involving key staff and partners ensured that there was a coherent understanding of learners' needs and the support strategies which were put in place. Learners with additional support needs were very well supported by the support for learning and the support for pupils' staff and they effectively communicated the needs of these learners to all staff. Educational plans provided clear guidance to staff on how to support specific young people's learning.

The school had increased the range of courses and opportunities to ensure that the needs and aspirations of all young people were addressed. The introduction of national qualifications at Access 3 level and the provision of curricular programmes such as the Jobs, Education and Training (JET) initiative had increased the choices available.

2.3 Leadership and direction

The headteacher and his senior managers continued to provide a very positive lead in the school. They worked effectively as a team and were committed to meeting the needs of their learners as well as creating a culture of continuous improvement. They had continued to develop the very positive working atmosphere in the school.

There was a growing culture of developing leadership capacity at all levels. The school's senior managers had successfully engaged with the principal teachers to increase their ownership of the improvement priorities and the self-evaluation of the work of the school. This had had a significant impact on the consistency of the learners' experiences across the school.

Staff felt able and confident to show initiative and take on lead roles within and beyond the classroom. They had contributed well to the progress with the improvement plan priorities and the implementation of aspects of the new curriculum. Particular staff had taken the lead in the development of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across the school. Other staff were involved in the provision of professional development opportunities by delivering or supporting a number of in-school activities designed to share and improve teaching practice across the school.

Self-evaluation had become an important part of the school's improvement procedures. The school had a number of examples of effective self-evaluation strategies in place both at school and departmental levels. Improved communication combined with an improved sense of responsibility and accountability throughout the school was having a significant impact on the quality of the process.

The school continued to develop leadership opportunities for its young people. S6 learners helped to improve the school through their work as prefects and the pupil council had an increasing profile across the school.

3 CONCLUSION

With support from the education authority, Boroughmuir High School continued to provide a very good standard of education for its pupils. The school had progressed well since the inspection and had made the necessary improvements in terms of the inspection findings. The current improvement plan had had a very positive impact on the work of the school. The leadership and teamwork in the school provided a very good basis for continued improvement. The education authority will publish no further reports in connection with the 2008 HMIE inspection.

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October 2010

BOROUGHMUIR HIGH SCHOOL

Follow through report on the HMIE inspection

OCTOBER 2010