

◆ EDINBURGH ◆

THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

DRUMMOND COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

FOLLOW THROUGH REPORT

1. The inspection

HM Inspectors inspected Drummond Community High School in October 2009. 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 visited the school in September 2011 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*

Young people have continued to benefit from positive learning experiences. Most staff engaged young people effectively in their learning through experiences which were soundly based on staff understanding of well researched learning strategies. The planning of the learning experiences was often collaborative e.g. with other teachers and partners and increasingly involved the young people. The school had plans in place to further develop the joint planning of the curriculum with its associated primary schools to further enhance the good transition. In almost all lessons, young people were actively involved in their learning and development. Young people were increasingly more confident in their learning experiences as they knew that their thinking and views were valued. There were more opportunities for young people to discuss the ways in which they were learning. In a few learning experiences there was a need to improve the pace of learning.

The majority of young people in S1 to S3 made good progress from their prior levels of attainment. Most young people were clear about what they were learning and why and were involved in setting targets for their learning.

There were early signs that the well led school focus on literacy across learning was positively impacting on young people's literacy skills. This included learning activities such as the "word of the week", the support of learning assistants in reading programmes and the involvement of parents in literacy "events".

Overall, attainment levels in the national examinations 2011-2012 were below those of similar schools and this continued to be an area for further improvement. Appropriate priorities had been identified in the annual school plan to improve attainment outcomes and positive destinations for young people in the course of this session. A comprehensive school calendar for tracking, monitoring and target setting had been produced and all staff had

received training in this new electronic (SEEMIS) system which will be used consistently for all learners S1 to S6.

The school had further developed its programme of wider achievement opportunities (WAO) for session 2011-2012. Every young person in S1-S4 made a choice from a range of pursuits that included sporting, artistic, environmental, craft, technical and enterprise activities. The school had also developed close links and an exchange with young people in Kenya. These activities were planned and offered by teaching and support staff and partners and an increasing number were accredited e.g. the John Muir Award, sports leadership certificate and the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme. A start had been made to monitoring and evaluating the impact of the WAO programme. The school had also developed more consistent approaches to the recording of young people's wider achievements and was working towards more comprehensive recognition, profiling and celebration across the school.

Almost all members of staff had a shared vision for developing *Curriculum for Excellence* and had continued to make very good progress in planning experiences for young people. The majority of learning experiences provided breadth and challenge to develop progression for young people in their learning. Staff were increasing opportunities for young people to make connections across their learning through interdisciplinary experiences which involved several subject areas. This had started to enable young people to apply their learning in new situations. The curriculum continued to be broad and flexible and provide choice for young people. The school had identified the need to ensure that all young people are following the most appropriate courses/levels and that progress is more closely monitored to ensure improved attainment outcomes.

The school had improved its provision for physical education, religious and moral education and religious observance. This included appropriate physical activities and religious and moral education experiences for S4-S6. Good links with the local community had been established to develop religious observance which meets the needs of the young people. The school had identified further improvements in the annual school plan.

2.1 *Meeting pupils' learning needs*

The school had continued to make good progress in supporting young people's learning needs. Regular and frequent meetings involving key staff and partners and good communication ensured that there was a coherent understanding of learners' needs. The school was very good at identifying barriers to learning and ensuring appropriate strategies to meet learning needs. The good practice of collaborative planning by the pupil support team, specialist staff and learning assistants had been extended to include a majority of staff to meet the needs of young people across the school. Young people felt that staff knew them well and were very satisfied with the school's provision. The school had continued to improve its use of assessment information to support the learning of the majority of young people and to help them to understand their next steps in learning. The school had started to improve consistency and expectations in the use of homework.

Young people for whom English was not the first language were very well supported by visiting specialist staff and learning assistants. There was strong English as a second or other language (ESOL) and English as an additional language (EAL) provision across the school and in the community school adult provision. The tutors delivered high quality provision and were responsive to individual adult learning needs. There had been a drive to increase work between the community school, parents and subject departments. This included the confident leavers programme, coaching, school students attending Adult Education classes in the school and the cultural peer project. This was led by the community school programme manager and supported by teaching staff. There had been increased opportunities for young people to be actively engaged in learning through the community school provision. This had led to improved cultural integration, new skills and better collaborative working.

Attendance was still below the city average. There were signs of improvement and the school had identified appropriate strategies for further improvement.

2.3 *Leadership and direction*

The senior leadership team had increasingly provided the school with a very clear strategic lead based on continuous improvement and successes and achievements for young people. The new headteacher had further developed an ethos of collegiality. Her focus on leadership at all levels had sustained and developed the professional and personal commitment of staff across the school. This had supported staff and the school community to map out future developments to improve outcomes for young people. 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 voice had an increasing profile across the school.

The school had improved the rigour of self-evaluation and there was a well managed range opportunities for staff, partners, parents and young people to be actively involved in school priorities. This included consultation with young people on their learning, high quality continuous professional development for staff and the involvement of parents and partners. Staff, parents and partners were satisfied that their views were taken into account. Outcomes from self-evaluation opportunities were consistently used to inform improvement priorities for the school. The deputy headteacher had led a very well planned range of shared classroom experience and had recently piloted 'learning rounds' for a group of staff. This had enabled further sharing of expertise which had improved the quality and consistency of learners' experiences. There were good signs that the improvement in self-evaluation had positively impacted on the quality of young people's learning experiences at Drummond Community High School.

3 Conclusion

With support from the education authority, Drummond Community High School had continued to provide a good standard of education for its pupils. The school had progressed well since the inspection and had made the necessary improvements in most of the inspection findings. The current improvement plan will have an impact on the work of the school. The leadership and teamwork in the school, with support from the education authority, provides a strong basis for continued improvement. The education authority will publish no further reports in connection with the 2009 HMIE inspection.

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