

Midlothian Council – Education, Communities and Economy

# **Standards and Quality Report**

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## **Dalkeith High School**

### **Summary Report**

November 2016

## **Introduction**

This summary report has been prepared to show how far we are on our journey to being an ambitious, excellent school resulting in improved educational outcomes for all our young people.

At the heart of our self-evaluation are the three questions

- How are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now?

Our self-evaluation has looked in-depth at the following and is based on the Quality Indicators in 'How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition)':

### **How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?**

- Leadership of change (Quality Indicator 1.3)

### **How good is the quality of care and education we offer?**

- Curriculum (Quality Indicator 2.2)
- Learning, teaching and assessment (Quality Indicator 2.3)
- Personalised support (Quality Indicator 2.4)

### **How good are we at ensuring the best possible outcomes for all our learners?**

- Improving wellbeing, equality and inclusion (Quality Indicator 3.1)
- Raising attainment and achievement (Quality Indicator 3.2)

The evaluation statements are based on a firm evidence base, with the evidence being gathered from ongoing work and involving the views of all in our school community.

The outcome of our self-evaluation is highlighted in this summary report. A full version can be obtained by contacting the school.

## **How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?**

### **Leadership of change (QI 1.3)**

#### **How are we doing?**

The overall quality of leadership of change is **very good**.

#### **How do we know?**

Senior Leaders in Dalkeith High School provide strong leadership which has enabled our school to continue to improve; all members of staff are committed to ensuring that we achieve the highest possible standards and success for all of our learners. Our Extended Leadership Team drives forward improvements in the school. There is a strong culture of collaborative leadership at all levels in the school and we always strive to do better than our previous best.

Strategic planning for improvement is based on a sound knowledge of education policy and a good understanding of the school's current position; this is guided effectively by senior leaders. We have a clear understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of our catchment area.

#### **What are we going to do now?**

We will work with staff, pupils, and parents/carers to develop and articulate our shared vision for Dalkeith High School. Consideration will be given to how we can improve the participation of our school community partners during the improvement planning process.

Staff will continue to develop their knowledge of the use of data to improve practice.

## **How good is the quality of care and education we offer?**

### **Curriculum (QI 2.2)**

#### **How are we doing?**

The overall quality of the curriculum is **very good**.

#### **How do we know?**

Our curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for all of our learners to succeed and progress in their learning. We work in partnership with others e.g. colleges, employers, voluntary sector, to deliver the curriculum. There is a clear focus on the development of skills for learning, life and work. All staff take responsibility for the development of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

#### **What are we going to do now?**

We will continue to develop the curriculum in light of recent and ongoing advice from Scottish Government. Intelligent use will be made of workforce planning research to inform decisions about the further development of the Senior Phase curriculum.

We will introduce the 'Midlothian Top 10 Employability Skills' through the delivery of learning in all departments in the school. Better use will be made of contacts in the parental community as we strive to improve our pupils' awareness of the world of work.

### **Learning, teaching and assessment (QI 2.3)**

#### **How are we doing?**

The overall quality of learning, teaching and assessment is **very good**.

#### **How do we know?**

The learning environment in the school is based on positive, nurturing and appropriately challenging relationships which lead to high-quality learning outcomes. Our learners' achievements both in and out of school are recognised and rewarded. Good use is made of assessment procedures to inform pupils of where they are in their learning to help them to identify their next steps.

#### **What are we going to do now?**

We will continue to work towards consistency in the quality of learner conversations across the school. There will be a special focus on encouraging our pupils to become responsible, resourceful, resilient and reflective learners. The introduction of Learning Walks by Senior Leaders will help to ensure consistently high-quality learning experiences. We will build on the good practice of inviting parents/carers to take part in Learning Visits by expanding this offer of participation.

## **Personalised support (QI 2.4)**

### **How are we doing?**

The overall quality of personalised support is **good**.

### **How do we know?**

We have high expectations of all of our learners and provide support to meet their needs as appropriate. There is a very strong ethos across the school to minimise the impact of potential barriers to learning. All young people benefit from high-quality universal support, with targeted interventions for those who need it most.

### **What are we going to do now?**

We will continue to improve our systems for the sharing of information with staff to allow them to better meet their needs within the classroom. There will be a focus on further differentiation of tasks, activities and resources to meet the needs of all learners, including highly-able learners.

## **How good are we at ensuring the best possible outcomes for all our learners?**

### **Improving wellbeing, equality and inclusion (QI 3.1)**

#### **How are we doing?**

The overall quality of improving wellbeing, equality and inclusion is **very good**.

#### **How do we know?**

We fully comply and actively engage with statutory requirements and codes of practice, with regular professional learning to ensure that we are fully up-to-date with any changes. All staff have a shared understanding of wellbeing and children's rights and promote a climate where our young people feel safe and secure. Inclusion is at the heart of our practice.

#### **What are we going to do now?**

We will fully embed restorative practices across all areas of the school over a period of time. Consideration of progression in health and wellbeing skills will be a focus for us.

### **Raising attainment and achievement (QI 3.2)**

#### **How are we doing?**

The overall quality of raising attainment and achievement is **good**.

#### **How do we know?**

We have in place a robust tracking system with effective interventions to allow for continuous progress for learners. Attainment for all of our learners has improved over time, with particular improvements for our most disadvantaged young people. Our learners are making good progress from their prior levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy. Almost all of our young people move on to positive destinations when they leave school.

#### **What are we going to do now?**

We have identified areas where we can make further improvements and have clear strategies in place to start to close them. There will be a continued focus on raising attainment in literacy and numeracy.

## **What is our capacity for continuous improvement?**

Dalkeith High School provides a good quality of education for the young people in its care, with many aspects of practice evaluated as being very good.

We are in a strong position to improve further as a school with all stakeholders committed to this. Our School Improvement Plan details the priorities for the session ahead and is available on request by contacting the school office.