

Inspection of St David's High School

Report by Maria Lloyd, Acting Head of Education

1 Purpose of Report

This report outlines the outcome of the above inspection as carried out by Education Scotland which was communicated in their letter dated 30 April 2019.

2 Background

2.1 St David's High School was inspected in February 2019. The report was published on 30 April 2019. A copy is included in appendix one.

2.2 Following inspection, Education Scotland gathers evaluations of the core quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish Early, Learning and Childcare settings and schools are doing. The short inspection model was used for this visit as decided by Education Scotland. This visit had a specific focus on QI 1.3, 2.3, 3.2 and 3.1. Education Scotland published a statement as part of this report on the confidence they had in the school's capacity to continue to improve.

Noted below are the evaluations for St David's High School:

QI 1.3 Leadership of change	Very Good
QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Good
QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Very Good

2.3 The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The headteacher has provided inspiration and aspiration to the school community. The shared vision and values, ASPIRE, provide a very strong sense of direction and purpose for St David's High School.
- A culture of empowerment exists where staff at all levels and young people take on leadership roles to take forward school improvements. Commendably all staff are initiating changes which are helping to ensure positive outcomes for young people. This is resulting in young people who attain well and are being well supported to achieve.
- The very effective work of the integrated pupil support team is leading to improvements in wellbeing, and young people feeling highly included and valued. They work together with partners in a creative, flexible and imaginative way to meet the needs of young people and their families.
- Highly effective approaches to parental engagement that result in parents having improved confidence in supporting their children's learning and development. School based family and parent support activities have a clear and consistent goal of improving wellbeing and learning.

2.4 The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Midlothian Council.

- To build on the existing enthusiasm and collaborative practices of staff to continue improving the consistency of learning, teaching and assessment.
- Teachers should continue to develop approaches to assessing and monitoring young people's progress in the broad general education. This will support all young people to understand their own strengths and identify next steps in learning. Evidence from assessment should be used to plan effective interventions to raise attainment of young people.
- Senior leaders should review the curriculum to ensure that young people benefit fully from learning opportunities that meet their needs. For example, further developing partnership working to provide appropriate pathways for all learners.

2.5 Conclusion

As outlined in the inspection letter, Education Scotland is confident that the school has effective arrangements for ensuring continuous improvement in the quality of education for all learners. As a result Education Scotland will not return to the school with regard to this particular inspection.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

Actions related to the Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will form part of the school's improvement plan and will be monitored through the quality assurance process. Good practice from this report will be shared across schools and via the South East Improvement Collaborative.

3.2 Risk

Education Scotland visits a sample of nursery, primary and secondary schools every year to find out how they are performing. A report is published which informs parents about the key strengths of the school, its capacity for further improvement and sets out the main points for action.

Monitoring, review and evaluation of progress by School Group Managers and Senior Education Managers is the control measure in place to reduce the risk of failure of any school to demonstrate its capacity to improve. In the case of this report, the school will continue to receive the same level of support as other schools as detailed in the 3-18 Improvement Team's quality assurance calendar. This will ensure that the school continues to improve.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- X Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- X Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

3.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The setting will continue to improve its work in line with its improvement plan and the Education Service will continue to challenge and support the setting in relation to developing and implementing a range of quality improvement strategies.

3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The Education (Scotland) Act aims to take preventative action in order to close the attainment versus deprivation gap by implementing key policies and programmes which are designed to target support to children and young people from disadvantaged communities. Midlothian is highly committed to closing the attainment gap which compliments the strategies employed by Midlothian which are highlighted in the National Improvement Framework (NIF) report which was initially presented to Council on 3 November 2015. The NIF is updated annually and reported to the Scottish Government.

3.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Copies of the report have been made available to Elected Members, parents of children currently in the school and other interested parties.

3.7 Ensuring Equalities

The School Improvement Plan will be screened for equalities implications.

3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The School Improvement Plan allows for sustainable development and improvement.

3.9 IT Issues

There are no IT implications.

4 Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Note the content of the inspection report
- (ii) Congratulate the staff, pupils and parents on the very positive outcome of this inspection
- (iii) Note the key strengths outlined in the report
- (ii) Note the areas for improvement outlined in the report
- (iii) Note that Education Scotland will not return to the school with regard to this particular inspection
- (iv) Pass this report to the Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee for its consideration.

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