

**Larbert High School
Falkirk Council
29 January 2008**

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1. Background

Larbert High School was inspected in October 2007 as part of a national sample of secondary education. The inspection covered key aspects of the school's work at all stages. HM Inspectors evaluated how well the school was raising achievement for all pupils, taking into account the extent to which pupils' learning needs were met by the curriculum and teaching. They also analysed pupils' attainment in national examinations (see Appendix 3), the school's processes for self-evaluation and innovation, and its overall effectiveness and capacity for improvement. Inspectors focused particularly on English, mathematics, biology and S1/S2 science, and business education. The inspection team also evaluated aspects of the school's progress in implementing national recommendations related to improving aspects of school meals provision.

HM Inspectors observed teaching, learning and achievement in lessons and other contexts and examined pupils' work. They analysed responses to questionnaires¹ issued to a sample of parents² and pupils and to all staff. They interviewed groups of pupils, including representatives of pupil councils, and staff. Members of the inspection team also met the chairperson of the Parent Council, representatives of the parent-teacher association (PTA), a group of parents and the school chaplain.

Larbert High School is a non-denominational school serving Larbert, Stenhousemuir and villages in the surrounding area. At the time of the inspection, the roll was 1783. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals was in line with the national average. Pupils' attendance was in line with the national average. The school had received a number of awards including Enterprise awards and an Eco School Silver Award. All of the deputy headteachers and several principal teachers had been recently appointed and some were in temporary positions. Around half of the teachers in the school had been appointed since 2004 and around a third were in their first five years of teaching.

¹ See Appendix 2

² Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers, residential care staff and carers who are relatives or friends.

2. Key strengths

HM Inspectors identified the following key strengths.

- Pupils' achievements in enterprise and the extensive range of out of school activities.
- Effective promotion of healthy lifestyles including healthy eating.
- Aspects of ethos including relationships amongst staff and pupils.
- The school's approaches to promotion of equality and fairness.
- Partnerships with parents and the wider community.
- The impact of the headteacher on many aspects of the school.

3. How well does the school raise achievement for all?

To evaluate how well the school was raising achievement for all, HM Inspectors considered the extent to which the learning needs of all pupils were met through the curriculum and teaching. They evaluated the effectiveness of the school in promoting the learning and personal development of all pupils in lessons and in other broader contexts. They also considered the standards attained in specific aspects of learning.

Curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum was good. The school had recently introduced changes to the structure of its curriculum with the aim of improving pace, motivation and challenge and improving attainment by the end of S5. The school had consulted widely on this initiative and was monitoring its progress closely. It had given careful consideration to progression routes for pupils in S4 to S6 but required to continue to develop these to ensure that the needs of all learners were met.

Particular features of the curriculum included the following.

- At all stages, the school provided a wide range of courses. Enterprise and citizenship skills were being developed through a range of activities. For example, education for enterprise was delivered to all S1 pupils and to a group of S6 pupils by the food and consumer technology department.
- Pupils were now starting their Standard Grade and National Qualifications (NQ) courses at the beginning of S2 and will sit these examinations at the end of S3 rather than S4. In 2005 and 2006, almost all S3 pupils had been presented for Standard Grade English and some were presented for Standard Grade mathematics. From 2008, all S3 pupils will be

presented for national examinations in all their subjects. Although at an early stage, there were signs of improved pupil motivation and attitudes to learning in S2 and S3.

- The school was working towards providing two hours quality physical education for pupils, but this had not yet been achieved for S5/S6. Pupils at S1 to S4 studied religious and moral education (RME) but the school did not provide this at S5/S6 for all pupils.
- Personal, social and health education (PSHE) was taken by all pupils from S1 to S6 but this course required to be reviewed to ensure better progression in meeting pupils' needs. In addition, curricular and vocational guidance arrangements for pupils at key transitions needed to be improved.
- All S4 pupils took part in work experience and this was recognised by the achievement of national units. All S6 pupils took part in a wider school experience programme.
- A small number of pupils studied courses from the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) instead of a modern language. Other curriculum arrangements were made for a few other pupils but the school was aware of the need to provide more vocational opportunities.

Teaching and meeting pupils' needs

The overall quality of teaching was good but was variable across the school. Several staff were implementing strategies resulting from their involvement in the accelerated learning initiative. In most departments, lessons were well structured with clear links to previous learning. Most teachers provided clear and helpful explanations. They had positive relationships with pupils and used praise well to motivate and encourage them. In most classes, questioning was used well to involve pupils and to check their understanding. A few teachers used questioning well to extend pupils' thinking. The majority of homework tasks were well designed and challenging, but this practice was not consistent across the school. Many departments were beginning to make effective use of information and communications technology (ICT) to enrich lessons.

Overall, arrangements to meet pupils' needs were adequate. The majority of tasks and resources were well matched to the range of pupils' needs. However, teachers gave too much emphasis to whole-class teaching. Across the school, teachers' use of clear feedback to help pupils improve and of approaches to adapt learning to meet pupils' different needs was too variable. Too often, teachers did not provide sufficient challenge for pupils to achieve to their potential. Integrated pupil support staff provided very good support to pupils at all stages. Principal teachers of pastoral care, working closely with the principal teacher of integrated pupil support, ensured pupils requiring support were identified at an early stage. Pupils, who had been referred for additional, targeted support, were given appropriate work to involve them actively in their learning. Teachers monitored them closely to ensure they made good progress. Pupils whose behaviour caused concern were well supported by behaviour support staff and those from external agencies. Pupils with individualised educational programmes (IEPs) were making good progress towards their targets. Support for learning assistants and behaviour coordinators provided pupils with very good support. Pupils for whom English was an additional language (EAL) received good support from the specialist teacher. The services and support offered by the librarians made effective

contributions to pupils' learning. The school made good provision for pupils to gain additional support through out-of-class learning opportunities at lunch time and after school.

Learning and personal development

The overall quality of learning was good. Most pupils worked well in lessons and showed good levels of motivation. Pupils responded enthusiastically when they were actively engaged in their learning. The pace of learning was good in most classes, with examples of a well-judged brisk pace in a few lessons. Pupils worked well collaboratively in a minority of lessons. Pupils had insufficient opportunities to work independently and most lessons required them to work as a whole class or individually. Pupils were not often required to think for themselves or reflect on their own learning.

Overall the quality of pupils' personal and social development was very good. The PSHE programme covered an appropriate range of topics including careers education, health promotion and relationships. Regular high quality presentations at house assemblies supported the development of positive values. Most pupils demonstrated effective social skills and displayed respect for staff and one another. Senior pupils developed important leadership skills through acting as peer tutors in classes, as buddies to younger pupils and by taking on positions of responsibility within the school. Through the School Nutrition Action Group pupils made significant contributions to improving food provision within the school. Pupils were developing citizenship skills and were aware of the need to conserve and improve the environment through their eco-school activities. The school provided avenues for wider achievement through a large range of activities, including foreign trips, cultural visits, lunch time and after school clubs as well as extensive sporting opportunities. The school, in partnership with community education, had successfully presented pupils for ASDAN awards in personal achievement. All pupils had the opportunity to gain team-working skills through a wide range of enterprise activities. Pupils achieved success in several events including Young Enterprise, the Legal Challenge and the Learning for Life competitions. A large number of pupils had received awards in a wide range of sports including martial arts, dance, football and athletics.

English

Teachers clearly shared learning intentions with pupils to help them understand what they had to learn. They used effective direct teaching approaches and were developing ICT to support pupils effectively in their learning tasks. In a few lessons, pupils enjoyed learning independently and made valued and perceptive comments. Teachers needed to further develop their approaches to help pupils better understand what they had to do to improve their learning.

The quality of teaching, learning and meeting pupils' needs was good overall. The quality of attainment was adequate. Significant features were as follows.

- At S1, pupils generally were making insufficient progress in learning in reading, writing, listening and talking.
- Since 2005, pupils at S2 undertook courses at Standard Grade. Almost all of those presented gained awards at General or Credit at the end of S3.

- By the end of S4, the proportions of pupils gaining awards at Credit and General levels were in line with the national averages.
- At S5/S6, the proportion of pupils attaining an A-C award at Higher was variable and was below the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining an A-C award at Intermediate 2 was in line with the national average and was improving. The proportion of pupils attaining an A-C award at Intermediate 1 was above the national average. At S6, around half of the candidates presented for Advanced Higher gained an A-C award.

Mathematics

There had been recent improvement in the quality of learning and teaching across the department. Teachers provided clear explanations and made effective use of questioning. They did not always share the purposes of lessons well with pupils or provide effective feedback to them. Teachers had begun to review actively courses and programmes at S1-S4 to better meet the needs of all pupils. Almost all pupils worked purposefully and responded well to the brisk pace in most lessons. They had limited opportunities to be responsible for their own learning and achievement.

Overall, the quality of teaching was good and of learning and meeting pupils' needs was adequate. The overall quality of attainment was weak. Particular features included the following.

- By the end of S1 the majority of pupils had attained appropriate national levels.
- Since 2005, all pupils at S2 undertook courses at Standard Grade. The majority were presented for a General or Foundation award at the end of S3. Almost all were successful. In 2006, pupils with the potential to gain a Credit award were not presented as planned due to weaknesses in planning for the changes to the course.
- By the end of S4, the proportion of pupils attaining Credit or General awards at Standard Grade was below the national average.
- At S5/S6, the proportion of pupils gaining an A-C award at Higher or Intermediate 2 was below the national average and too many pupils did not gain an award. At Intermediate 1 and Advanced Higher, the majority were successful.

Biology and S1/S2 science

Teachers gave clear explanations and instructions and provided a wide range of activities including practical work. They used questioning well to check pupils' knowledge but needed to develop approaches to extend pupils' understanding. Teachers supported pupils' learning well, although tasks were not always sufficiently challenging. Pupils collaborated and interacted well, but would benefit from more opportunities to work independently.

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning was good and meeting needs was adequate. The overall quality of attainment was weak. Particular features included the following.

- At S1, the majority of pupils were making sound progress in their coursework. At S2, the majority of pupils were making appropriate progress in their Standard Grade, Intermediate and Access 3 courses.
- At S3/S4, the proportion of pupils who attained a Credit award was in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils gaining awards at Intermediate 1 biology was variable but improving. The number of No Awards and incomplete awards was above the national average. Most pupils presented for Access 3 biology over recent years had gained an award.
- At S5/S6, the proportion of pupils who attained awards in Higher biology was well below the national average with too few pupils gaining A awards. The proportion of pupils gaining A-C awards at Intermediate 2 in biology was variable but had improved in 2007.

Business education

Teachers created a positive classroom climate, planned effectively and gave clear explanations, instructions and directions. Almost all teachers shared learning intentions with pupils but they did not always communicate success criteria clearly or inform pupils of what they needed to do to improve. They knew their pupils well and provided effective support for their learning. Almost all pupils were interested in the work being undertaken and benefited from the high level of commitment shown by staff to developing a range of appropriate teaching materials. Teachers recognised and built on pupils' prior learning.

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning was good and meeting pupils' needs was adequate. The overall quality of attainment was good.

Particular features included the following.

- Almost all pupils presented in S4 for Intermediate 2 administration and most pupils presented for Intermediate 2 business management attained an A-C award.
- Pupils performed less well in Standard Grade accounting and finance than in their other subjects.
- At S5/S6, pupils performed better in Higher administration than they did in their other subjects. In 2007, almost all pupils attained an A-C award, with the number of A awards well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils attaining A-C awards in Higher business management had improved significantly over the past 3 years and was now above the national average.

Attainment

Information about the subjects inspected has been given earlier in the report. Across the school, particular features of pupils' progress, results in examinations and other qualifications, including those awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)³ for the three year period 2005-2007, are included below.

The school needed to improve attainment at all stages through addressing the variation in the quality of learning and teaching and in meeting learners' needs.

By the end of S2 attainment was adequate. Particular features included the following.

- The majority of pupils in S1/S2 were making good progress in their coursework. However, standards and progress across the inspected subjects and the school varied too much. The school needed to continue to work with its associated primary schools to build more effectively on pupils' earlier learning and attainment.
- The majority of pupils attained appropriate national standards in mathematics, reading, and writing. The school had recently begun to collate information on pupils' attainment in talking and listening.

By the end of S4 attainment was adequate. Particular features included the following.

- The proportion of pupils attaining five or more SCQF awards at level 5 was improving and was above the national average.
- The proportions of pupils attaining English and mathematics at SCQF level 3 or more and five or more awards at SCQF level 4 were in line with national averages. Pupils performed less well at these levels than those in schools with similar characteristics.
- The proportion of pupils attaining five or more SCQF awards at level 3 was in line with the national average and notably below schools with similar characteristics.
- Most pupils following the Life Skills course attained a bronze or silver ASDAN award. All those presented for units achieved success.
- At Standard Grade, pupils performed notably better in history, home economics and physical education, and better in French and German than in their other subjects.
- The proportion of pupils gaining grades 1-2 in geography, German, home economics, physical education and physics was above the national average. It was well above in French.

³ Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels:

7: Advanced Higher at A-C/CSYS at A-C

6: Higher at A-C

5: Intermediate 2 at A-C; Standard Grade at 1-2

4: Intermediate 1 at A-C; Standard Grade at 3-4

3: Access 3 cluster; Standard Grade at 5-6

- Almost all pupils presented for Intermediate 2 in art and design, chemistry and physics attained an A-C award. Around a third of pupils attained an A in art and design and chemistry and most pupils attained an A award in physics.

By the end of S6 attainment was weak. Particular features included the following.

- At S5, pupils did not build sufficiently on their prior attainment due to weaknesses in relation to independence and responsibility in learning.
- At S6, the proportions of pupils attaining one or more or five or more awards at SCQF level 6 were in line with the national averages. The proportions of pupils attaining three or more awards at SCQF level 6 were better than the national averages.
- At S6, the proportions of pupils attaining five or more and three or more awards at SCQF level 6 were below those in schools with similar characteristics. The school performed notably less well than these schools at one or more awards at SCQF level 6. At Advanced Higher, the proportion of pupils attaining one or more awards at A-C was better than the national average and in line with schools with similar characteristics.
- The proportions of pupils attaining Higher awards at A-C in product design and health and food technology were well above the national averages and above the national average in drama. The proportions of pupils attaining Intermediate 2 awards at A-C were above or well above the national averages in art and design, history, music and physical education.

4. How good is the environment for learning?

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| Pastoral care | <p>Overall, the quality of pastoral care was good. The school placed a high priority on ensuring the care and welfare of pupils. Clear policy statements were in place on important issues such as child protection, preventing bullying, drugs misuse or racial incidents and the safe use of the Internet. Not all staff had been trained in child protection procedures. Most pupils felt safe and secure in school and were confident that any difficulties they encountered would be dealt with effectively. Looked after and accommodated children had appropriate care plans in place and were making good progress. Pastoral staff had a clear understanding of their role in supporting and protecting young people and dealt with pupils' concerns sensitively. Recurring changes within the pastoral care team and the breadth of some staff responsibilities resulted in lack of continuity of support for some young people. The school was successfully developing its approaches to promoting healthy lifestyles. Staff supported the provision of a popular breakfast service through sport and exercise sessions. The school had a satisfactory system in place for the provision of pupils with special diets. Older pupils provided welcome and helpful additional support for younger pupils when starting school. Transition arrangements from primary schools were very effective.</p> |
| Quality of accommodation and facilities | <p>Accommodation was very good. Particular features included the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The large bright main dining area with TV screen and music. The dining facilities had recently been improved but overall, these areas were still over-crowded. • The range of well-used facilities for physical education. However, the changing facilities were limited. • Appropriate access for those with restricted mobility. • Recently improved ICT provision and security arrangements. • The building was well maintained and cleaned. However, temperature regulation was an issue in a number of areas. |

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| <p>Climate and relationships, expectations and promoting achievement and equality</p> | <p>The school's climate and relationships were very good. Staff and pupils were proud of the school and its achievements. Visitors and parents felt welcome and there was a strong sense of community. Morale was high and relationships between staff and almost all pupils were very positive. Staff were highly committed to the school and supported a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils were consulted regularly and had a strong voice in the school including in relation to food and healthy eating issues. Pupils had been involved in the selection of two deputy head teachers. Around a third of pupils felt that the behaviour of pupils was not good and that they were not treated fairly. This related to their perceptions of the consistency of the rewards system. However, the behaviour of pupils was mostly very good and any incidents of indiscipline were very well handled. School assemblies provided regular opportunities for religious observance. The school encouraged, recognised and celebrated pupils' achievements through the Talent Initiative, awards ceremonies, newsletters, the achievement gallery and the school website. All pupils had a wide range of opportunities to exercise responsibilities at all stages. Some teachers needed to raise their expectations of what pupils could achieve in their course work. The school successfully promoted an atmosphere of equality and fairness. Across the curriculum, staff used appropriate opportunities to make pupils aware of other races and cultures and to encourage tolerance and understanding of difference.</p> |

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Partnership with parents and the community | <p>The quality of partnership with parents and the community was very good. Particular features included the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents supported the work of the school well, including through the former School Board, the newly formed Parent Council, the PTA and good attendance at parents’ evenings and curriculum workshops. • Effective communications with parents included the well-used school website, the helpful school handbook, regular newsletters and informative standards and quality reports. Parents’ views were sought regularly through questionnaires. • The multi-faith chaplaincy team contributed well to assemblies and the RME programme. • The school contributed to the community through, for example, pupils’ involvement with Strathcarron Hospice, charities, musical concerts and art exhibitions. • Productive partnerships with local businesses provided sponsorship for school activities, mentoring for pupils and enhanced the range of curricular provision and pupils’ learning experiences. • Strong links with the police, including a school-based community police officer, contributed to behaviour support and improved community relations. |

5. Leading and improving the school

Pupils benefited from the school’s very positive ethos and committed and supportive staff. Overall, the school had a number of strategies to raise pupils’ achievement, including a wide range of extra-curricular activities, but was not yet successful in raising attainment for all. To address this, the school had initiated significant curricular change which included the introduction of examinations at Standard Grade or equivalent at the end of S3. The school had developed a sound rationale for curricular change and had consulted widely with its stakeholders. However, approaches to meeting pupils’ needs required to be improved to ensure the potential of the new curriculum framework was realised. Whilst most staff were committed to supporting the school’s initiatives, pressure resulted from the scope and complexity of change. The range of responsibilities of the depute headteachers and principal teachers impacted on their effectiveness, particularly in relation to their pastoral care and self-evaluation responsibilities.

Leadership across the school had important strengths and a number of areas for

improvement. The headteacher provided very good leadership. He had been in post for three years and had placed a high priority on addressing weaknesses in attainment through professional development to improve learning and teaching across the school. He had introduced a range of innovative initiatives which had inspired most staff in the school. The headteacher led the senior leadership team very well and together they provided very effective strategic leadership in the school. The recently appointed integrated learning community resource manager was developing well into her role in supporting operational aspects in the school. The principal teachers of pupil support and principal teachers in key priority areas made very important contributions across the school. Principal teachers of faculties were working hard to develop their roles and carry out their pastoral and whole school responsibilities as well as being curriculum leaders. The headteacher recognised the importance of leadership at all levels and teachers across the school effectively contributed through leading-teaching roles as well as through a range of working groups. However, the overall impact of leadership on meeting pupils' needs in order to raise attainment was limited. The school and the education authority now needed to review the extent to which the staffing complement and the deployment of staff matched the needs of learners, and agree a way forward.

The school had a wide range of approaches to evaluate and monitor its work. These included a rigorous analysis of SQA attainment data with clear action planning linked to improving the quality of learning and teaching. This annual activity was well supported by local authority staff. The school was monitoring carefully the effectiveness of curriculum developments and had taken action to minimise potential underachievement in for example mathematics. Departmental and school standards and quality reports were based on a wide range of quality indicators, a summary of which was shared with parents. The school regularly gathered the views of staff, pupils and parents about the work of the school. The information gathered helped identify priorities for the school improvement plan. The school was developing its approaches to target setting and monitoring of pupils' achievement of their targets. The senior leadership team carried out focused departmental reviews as part of an on-going programme. Subject departments had monitoring calendars in place, and principal teachers had visited classrooms to evaluate the quality of learning and teaching. However, across the school there was still too much variation in the effectiveness and impact of self evaluation, monitoring and tracking. All staff needed to further develop consistent approaches to evaluating the quality of learning and teaching and to share best practice to impact on pupils' achievement. With the strong leadership of the headteacher and support from the education authority, together with the commitment of the staff to improving the school's performance, the school had a good capacity for improvement.

As well as building on the strengths and addressing the issues raised throughout this report, the school and the education authority should address the following main points for action.

Main points for action

In order to raise further pupils' overall achievement:

- improve attainment, particularly at S5/S6;
- review and continue to develop a wider range of curriculum progression routes from S3 to ensure the needs of all learners are met;
- continue to improve the quality and consistency of teaching, learning and meeting all pupils' needs across the school;
- review staffing issues to match the needs of learners, improve learners' experiences and their pastoral care; and
- further improve self evaluation to have a greater impact on learning, including through an increased focus on sharing of good practice.

What happens next?

The school and the education authority have been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents and carers. Within two years of the publication of this report parents and carers will be informed about the progress made by the school.

Mary Hoey
HM Inspector

29 January 2008

Appendix 1 Indicators of quality

The following quality indicators have been used in the inspection process to contribute to the evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the school in promoting learning and achievement for all pupils.

| Section 3. How well does the school raise achievement for all? | |
|---|-----------|
| Structure of the curriculum | good |
| The teaching process | good |
| Meeting pupils' needs | adequate |
| Pupils' learning experiences | good |
| Personal and social development | very good |
| Overall quality of attainment: S1/S2 | adequate |
| Overall quality of attainment: S3/S4 | adequate |
| Overall quality of attainment: S5/S6 | weak |

| Section 4. How good is the environment for learning? | |
|--|-----------|
| Pastoral care | good |
| Accommodation and facilities | very good |
| Climate and relationships | very good |
| Expectations and promoting achievement | good |
| Equality and fairness | very good |
| Partnership with parents, the Parent Council and the community | very good |

| Section 5. Leading and improving the school | |
|--|-----------|
| Leadership of the headteacher | very good |
| Leadership across the school | good |
| Self-evaluation | good |

This report uses the following word scale to make clear the judgements made by inspectors:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| excellent | outstanding, sector leading |
| very good | major strengths |
| good | important strengths with areas for improvement |
| adequate | strengths just outweigh weaknesses |
| weak | important weaknesses |
| unsatisfactory | major weaknesses |

Appendix 2 Summary of questionnaire responses

The following provides a summary of questionnaire responses. Key issues from the questionnaires have been considered in the inspection and comments are included as appropriate throughout the report.

| What parents thought the school did well | What parents think the school could do better |
|---|--|
| <p>Around a third of parents responded to the questionnaire. They were positive about most aspects of the work of the school. In particular they thought that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff made them feel welcome and encouraged their children to work to the best of their ability; • parents' evenings were informative and the school provided helpful information on their children's progress; and • their children were treated fairly and found work stimulating and challenging. | <p>Around a quarter felt that they would like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more information on their children's strengths and weaknesses and how they could support their children with homework; • more information on the work of the school; and • to be consulted more on decisions which affected their children. |
| What pupils thought the school did well | What pupils think the school could do better |
| <p>Almost all pupils responded to the questionnaire. They were very positive about the school. In particular most thought that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they enjoyed being at school and felt safe and well looked after; • they had a say in deciding how to make the school better and teachers listened to them; • teachers expected them to work hard, helped them with their work and checked their homework; and • at least one teacher knew them well and the school was good at helping sort things out. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around a third thought that pupils' behaviour was not good. • Around a quarter thought that pupils were not treated fairly and that the school was not good at dealing with bullying. • A few pupils did not know what to do at school if they were upset. |

| What staff thought the school did well | What staff think the school could do better |
|---|---|
| <p>Staff were very positive about most aspects of the work of the school. In particular, most thought that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they liked working at the school and there was mutual respect between staff and pupils; • there was effective communication amongst staff and regular discussion about school priorities; • teachers provided constructive feedback to pupils on their work; and • pupils were enthusiastic about learning and success was regularly celebrated. <p>Most teachers felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time for continuous professional development was used effectively; and • standards set for pupils' behaviour were consistently upheld. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around a third of support staff did not feel that their training time was used effectively or that standards for pupils' behaviour were consistently upheld. • Around two thirds of support staff would like to have more opportunities to be involved in decision making. |

Appendix 3 Attainment in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) National Qualifications

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels:

7: Advanced Higher at A-C/CSYS at A-C

6: Higher at A-C

5: Intermediate 2 at A-C; Standard Grade at 1-2

4: Intermediate 1 at A-C; Standard Grade at 3-4

3: Access 3 Cluster; Standard Grade at 5-6

Percentage of relevant S4 roll attaining by end of S4

| | | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 ⁴ |
|--|---------------------------------|------|------|-------------------|
| English and Mathematics @ Level 3 | Larbert High School | 92 | 94 | 90 |
| | Comparator schools ⁵ | 95 | 95 | 94 |
| | National | 90 | 91 | 91 |
| 5+ @ Level 3 or better | Larbert High School | 89 | 91 | 91 |
| | Comparator schools | 95 | 93 | 94 |
| | National | 90 | 91 | 91 |
| 5+ @ Level 4 or better | Larbert High School | 74 | 79 | 74 |
| | Comparator schools | 80 | 82 | 79 |
| | National | 76 | 77 | 75 |
| 5+ @ Level 5 or better | Larbert High School | 32 | 37 | 39 |
| | Comparator schools | 38 | 37 | 35 |
| | National | 34 | 35 | 32 |

Percentage of relevant S4 roll attaining by end of S5

| | | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 ⁴ |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|------|------|-------------------|
| 5+ @ Level 4 or better | Larbert High School | 78 | 77 | 81 |
| | Comparator schools ⁵ | 86 | 81 | 83 |
| | National | 78 | 78 | 79 |
| 5+ @ Level 5 or better | Larbert High School | 39 | 44 | 48 |
| | Comparator schools | 52 | 48 | 48 |
| | National | 45 | 45 | 46 |
| 1+ @ Level 6 or better | Larbert High School | 34 | 42 | 40 |
| | Comparator schools | 43 | 41 | 40 |
| | National | 39 | 38 | 38 |
| 3+ @ Level 6 or better | Larbert High School | 17 | 24 | 18 |
| | Comparator schools | 25 | 22 | 22 |
| | National | 23 | 22 | 22 |
| 5+ @ Level 6 or better | Larbert High School | 8 | 9 | 8 |
| | Comparator schools | 11 | 10 | 10 |
| | National | 10 | 10 | 9 |

Percentage of relevant S4 roll attaining by end of S6

| | | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 ⁴ |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|------|------|-------------------|
| 5+ @ Level 5 or better | Larbert High School | 54 | 40 | 48 |
| | Comparator schools ⁵ | 51 | 52 | 51 |
| | National | 47 | 48 | 47 |
| 1+ @ Level 6 or better | Larbert High School | 51 | 35 | 46 |
| | Comparator schools | 49 | 48 | 46 |
| | National | 43 | 43 | 42 |
| 3+ @ Level 6 or better | Larbert High School | 37 | 26 | 31 |
| | Comparator schools | 34 | 34 | 33 |
| | National | 30 | 30 | 29 |
| 5+ @ Level 6 or better | Larbert High School | 19 | 17 | 19 |
| | Comparator schools | 21 | 21 | 21 |
| | National | 19 | 20 | 19 |
| 1+ @ Level 7 or better | Larbert High School | 9 | 14 | 15 |
| | Comparator schools | 15 | 14 | 11 |
| | National | 12 | 13 | 12 |

⁴ Pre Appeal

⁵ Comparator schools are the 20 schools statistically closest to the school being inspected in terms of the key characteristics of the school population.

How can you contact us?

If you would like an additional copy of this report

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HMIE Feedback and Complaints Procedure

Should you wish to comment on any aspect of secondary inspections, you should write in the first instance to Frank Crawford, HMCI, at HM Inspectorate of Education, Europa Building, 450 Argyle Street, Glasgow G2 8LG.

If you have a concern about this report, you should write in the first instance to our Complaints Manager, HMIE Business Management Unit, Second Floor, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston, EH54 6GA. You can also email HMIEcomplaints@hmie.gsi.gov.uk. A copy of our complaints procedure is available from this office, by telephoning 01506 600200 or from our website at www.hmie.gov.uk.

If you are not satisfied with the action we have taken at the end of our complaints procedure, you can raise your complaint with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The SPSO is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and agencies. You should write to The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, Freepost EH641, Edinburgh EH3 0BR. You can also telephone 0800 377 7330 (fax 0800 377 7331) or e-mail: ask@spsa.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.spsa.org.uk.

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