

**Cults Academy
Aberdeen City Council
30 January 2007**

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1. Background

Cults Academy was inspected in September 2006 as part of a national sample of secondary education. The inspection covered key aspects of the school's work at all stages. It evaluated the quality of the curriculum, analysed pupils' performance in examinations (see Appendix 3) and assessed the quality of pupils' broader achievement. It also evaluated the quality of learning and teaching and pupil support, the environment for learning, the school's processes for self-evaluation, and its overall effectiveness and capacity for improvement. There was a particular focus on the work of the English, mathematics, geography, and chemistry and S1 science departments.

HM Inspectors observed learning and teaching and examined pupils' work. They analysed responses to questionnaires issued to a sample of parents¹ and pupils and to all staff. They interviewed groups of pupils, including the pupil council, and staff. Members of the inspection team also met the chairperson of the School Board, representatives of the parent-teacher association (PTA) and a group of parents.

The inspection team also evaluated aspects of the school's progress in implementing national recommendations related to improving aspects of school meals provision.

Cults Academy is a non-denominational school serving the Bielside, Cults, Maryculter, Milltimber and Peterculter areas of Aberdeen. At the time of the inspection, the roll was 1153. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals was well below the national average. Pupils' attendance was above the national average.

2. Key strengths

HM Inspectors identified the following key strengths.

- Teachers' high expectations of pupils' attainment.
- Pupils' positive behaviour, their aspirations of success and high levels of participation and achievement, particularly in music, sport and physical activities.
- Excellent overall results in external examinations at S4 to S6.
- The commitment of many staff to supporting pupils and extending their achievements.
- Very successful promotion of fairness and equality amongst pupils.
- Well-developed and very beneficial links with associated primary schools, businesses and other external organisations.

¹ Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers, residential care staff and carers who are relatives or friends.

3. What are the views of parents, pupils and staff?

Parents were very pleased with most aspects of the school. They were very positive about their contacts with staff, the leadership of the school and its reputation in the area. A minority expressed concerns about the condition of the building. They also felt they received too little information about the school's priorities for improving educational standards and advice on supporting their children with homework. Most pupils were positive about every aspect of the school's work. Many felt well served by the school and enjoyed their experiences there. Teachers were highly positive about working in the school. The views of non-teaching staff were more mixed. Whilst they enjoyed working in the school, a significant proportion did not feel well enough included in communications and consultation.

Further details about what most pleased parents, staff and pupils, and what they would most like to see improved, can be found in Appendix 2 of this report.

4. How good are learning, teaching and achievement?

The curriculum, learning and teaching

The curriculum was very good overall. It met the needs of almost all pupils. In most subjects, pupils had benefited from the recent increase in the length of teaching periods. The impact on a few subjects, including home economics, required further monitoring. At S1/S2, the curriculum was broad and generally well balanced. Too little time was given to religious and moral education to enable pupils to achieve a full understanding of the elements of the 5-14 programme. The number of different teachers that pupils met in the course of a week was higher than necessary. At S1, pupils' skills in information and communications technology (ICT) were developed through a well-structured programme. In English, modern languages, mathematics and science, curricular links with the associated primary schools helped pupils to build on their prior learning. Other subjects should follow their good example. At S3/S4, pupils could choose from a wide range of subjects at Standard Grade or Intermediate level. A minority had limited technological activity in their programmes. In partnership with Aberdeen College, the school was piloting a Skills for Work course in sport and recreation. The course had been well planned, delivered and evaluated. A small number of pupils would benefit from other vocational options. At S5/S6, the wide choice of courses at Intermediate, Higher and Advanced Higher enabled pupils to build on courses studied previously. There was a high uptake of Advanced Higher courses. S5 pupils benefited from a technology-based induction programme through which they achieved the core skill of 'Working with Others' at Intermediate 2. Other enrichment opportunities were available for S5 and S6 pupils. Only a minority of senior pupils chose to benefit their health through opportunities for physical education. A progressive programme of enterprise education was included from S2 to S6.

The quality of teaching was variable, but good overall. Teachers encouraged pupils to be confident and had high expectations of their achievements. Many lessons had major strengths, notably in the quality of direct teaching. Across the school, teachers gave clear explanations and questioned pupils effectively. In most cases, they used a variety of teaching approaches effectively to sustain pupils' interest. Sometimes, lessons were too teacher-directed and pupils did not have sufficient opportunities to be actively involved.

Only a few teachers shared with pupils what they expected them to learn during lessons. Some teachers involved pupils effectively in assessing their own performance and setting personal learning targets. Others used ICT to enliven and support pupils' learning. These good practices, however, were inconsistent across the school. Teachers gave regular and appropriate homework to help develop pupils' learning. In most respects, pupils' learning experiences were very good. The very settled atmosphere in almost all classes meant that pupils could learn effectively. Pupils were highly motivated and worked very hard. Their learning would be enhanced through more opportunities to develop their own views and challenge the thoughts of others. Pupils felt valued, and knew that when they asked questions or sought advice their teachers would help them. Courses and teaching approaches suited the needs of most pupils. Support for learning staff worked effectively alongside individual pupils within the class setting to help them to progress. In many classes, all pupils were expected to work through the same activities at a challenging pace. Particularly at S1/S2, a small proportion of lower-attaining pupils under-achieved because tasks were not adjusted to reflect their prior attainment and individual needs. The work of the librarian made a strong contribution to the development of pupils' research skills, enjoyment of reading and independence in learning.

Achievement

The overall quality of attainment at S1/S2 was very good. By the end of S2, almost all pupils achieved appropriate national levels of attainment in reading, and most did so in writing and mathematics. The majority of pupils were exceeding these levels in reading and a minority were doing so in writing and mathematics. Lower-attaining pupils could achieve more success if their learning experiences were better matched to their needs.

The following comments are based on Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) data, using the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)² for the three year period 2004-2006 and also draw on the overall evaluations of the quality of learning, teaching and meeting pupils' needs.

The overall quality of attainment at S3/S4 was excellent. The proportions of pupils attaining five or more awards at SCQF levels 4 and 5 were consistently well above the national averages. At both these levels, the school performed much better than other schools with similar characteristics.

The overall quality of attainment at S5/S6 was excellent. The proportions of pupils attaining three or more and five or more awards at level 6 were consistently well above the national averages. The proportion of S6 pupils attaining one or more awards at level 7 was also consistently well above the national average. At both these levels, the school performed much better than other schools with similar characteristics. Most pupils presented for Intermediate 2 attained A-C grades.

² 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

Information on the subjects inspected is given later in the report. Significant features of attainment in the subjects not inspected were as follows.

- At Standard Grade, pupils performed notably better in biology, physics and craft and design than in their other subjects.
- At S5/S6, the proportions of pupils attaining A-C grades at Higher were well above the national averages in biology, German, music and technological studies.

Pupils' learning was enhanced through a wide range of out-of-class activities which encouraged active participation and citizenship. Musical and sporting activities were prominent. Twice-yearly concerts involved as many as 200 pupils who performed in an impressive number of different musical groups within the school. Pupils organised and publicised Cults Academy Young Musician of the Year. Over 400 pupils took part in a variety of clubs and activities, including a wide range of team sports, gymnastics, golf, table tennis and dance. Individual pupils had achieved significant sporting successes playing for local and national teams. About 60 pupils were working towards bronze or silver Duke of Edinburgh awards. In recent years, significant numbers of senior pupils had taken part in challenging and life-broadening expeditions to India and South America. Large numbers undertook important duties, for example, by serving on the pupil forum, acting responsibly as prefects, running the debating club and other activities, and acting as library assistants. Pupils were active in pursuing Eco School activities such as litter picks, developing a school travel plan and recycling. Across the school, they demonstrated considerable self-motivation in raising significant funds for charity. About 60 senior pupils contributed their time, initiative and enterprise skills to organising charitable activities such as fashion and talent shows. All of these many activities contributed significantly to developing pupils' confidence, self-esteem and leadership skills.

English

Learning and teaching

Teaching was good overall and sometimes very good. In a few lessons it was unsatisfactory. Almost all teachers had good relationships with pupils and explained work clearly. They questioned pupils skilfully, but needed to encourage more extended answers. Pupils were highly motivated and, in most lessons, worked at a brisk pace and made good progress in their coursework. At all stages pupils read interesting and challenging texts and wrote about them perceptively. However, they had too few opportunities to take more responsibility for their own learning and to collaborate effectively. Teachers assessed pupils' attainment in listening and talking but did not monitor their progress systematically in all courses. The choice of activities and pace of learning were not always sufficiently well matched to the needs of lower-attaining pupils.

Achievement

By the end of S2, almost all pupils achieved appropriate national levels of attainment in reading, and most achieved them in listening, talking and writing. The majority exceeded these levels in reading. At Standard Grade, all pupils attained a General award or better. The proportion of Credit awards was well above the national average. At Higher, the proportion of pupils attaining A-C grades had improved and was now above the national

average, with A grades well above. Most pupils attained A-C grades at Intermediate 2. The numbers sitting Advanced Higher were unusually high. The proportions attaining A-C grades at this level were generally below the national average, but A grades were above.

Other features of pupils' achievement included the following.

- Many pupils produced creative writing of high quality, and had developed very effective literacy skills through their studies of the media.
- S3 pupils had produced their own digital television programme.
- At all stages, pupils achieved success in public speaking, promoted through local and national competitions.

Mathematics

Learning and teaching

Teachers related positively to their classes and provided pupils with clear directions and explanations. However, the range of teaching approaches used was quite narrow and questioning did not sufficiently develop pupils' reasoning skills. The department had yet to develop the use of ICT to enrich pupils' learning. Pupils were keen to learn and almost all worked conscientiously on the tasks they were given. However, their role in learning was often passive and they had too few opportunities to take responsibility or work together. At all stages, the department organised classes to take account of prior attainment, and teachers set tasks which were appropriately demanding for almost all pupils. More real-life and relevant contexts were required to help ensure appropriate challenge for lower-attaining pupils.

Achievement

Most pupils were achieving appropriate national levels of attainment by the end of S2. A minority exceeded these levels. At Standard Grade, the proportions of pupils attaining Credit and General awards were well above the national averages. At S5/S6, the proportions attaining A-C grades were generally well above the national average at Higher, and above the national averages at Intermediate 2 and Advanced Higher. At Higher, the proportion attaining A grades was consistently well above the national average. The majority of pupils studying Intermediate 1 at S5 attained A-C grades.

Other features of pupils' achievement included the following.

- A significant number of pupils had achieved very considerable success at junior level in the UK Mathematical Challenge competition.
- A small team of S2 pupils had been selected to attend mathematical masterclasses to enhance their problem-solving skills.

Geography

Learning and teaching

At all stages, teachers used a variety of approaches very effectively to motivate pupils and ensure their progress. All teachers gave clear explanations. They used questions effectively to check pupils' knowledge and understanding and to engage them in discussion. Pupils collaborated well on group tasks and were highly motivated, especially when given responsibility for aspects of their own learning. The pace of lessons was good and teachers made very good use of a range of resources, including ICT, to enhance pupils' learning experiences. A programme of fieldwork was being developed at all stages to help extend pupils' understanding of geographical concepts. The learning needs of most pupils were well met. The content of lessons at S1 sometimes lacked challenge.

Achievement

At S1/S2, most pupils were making good progress in their classwork and were developing a good knowledge and understanding of geographical ideas, particularly in the area of sustainable development. At Standard Grade, the proportion of pupils attaining Credit awards was well above the national average. The proportion attaining General awards was above the national average. At S5/S6, the proportion of pupils achieving A-C grades at Higher had recently improved to above the national average.

Other features of pupils' achievement included the following.

- Pupils at S4 and S5 contributed effectively to raising awareness of fair trade issues in the school by using their geographical knowledge of trade, aid and development to run a fair trade stall.
- Pupils at S2 to S4 developed their geographical knowledge and self-confidence through participating in the Scottish Association of Geography Teachers' World Wise Quiz.

Chemistry and S1 science

Learning and teaching

The quality of teaching ranged from good to very good. Teachers supported pupils very well and set high expectations of their work. They gave clear instructions and explanations and emphasised the everyday applications of science. Some used questioning very effectively to challenge pupils' understanding. Pupils worked hard and cooperated very well during practical work. Many showed high levels of interest and enthusiasm. At times, however, learning was too passive and teachers required to develop pupils' initiative and independence. Teachers gave pupils too little advice on how to improve their classwork. The needs of most pupils were well met, but the pace and content of lessons at S1/S2 was often over-demanding for a few pupils. Despite strong advice from staff, a few pupils at S5/S6 chose to study courses which were too demanding for them.

Achievement

Almost all pupils were performing well in their classwork in S1 science and most were doing so in S2 chemistry. In Standard Grade chemistry, the proportion of Credit awards was well above the national average. In chemistry at S5/S6, the proportion of pupils attaining A-C grades was well above the national average at Higher, and above at Advanced Higher. The proportion of A grades was well above the national average at these levels. Almost all pupils presented for Intermediate 2 chemistry in 2004 and 2005 had attained A-C grades.

Other features of pupils' achievement included the following.

- Pupils studying Advanced Higher chemistry developed their independence and skills in using analytical equipment by carrying out practical work at the University of Aberdeen.
- A group of S3 pupils had achieved success in the local heat of a national competition to design an imaginative model powered by a non-polluting power source.

5. How well are pupils supported?

The overall quality of pastoral care was very good. Guidance staff were committed and knew pupils very well. They supported them effectively in a range of ways including regular individual interviews. Guidance and learning support staff worked effectively as a team and with partner agencies to address the needs of pupils. Pupils valued the level of care and support they received and were confident that any concerns would be dealt with effectively. The school had appropriate procedures to deal with instances of bullying. Pastoral links with primary schools included varied and imaginative approaches to easing the transfer of pupils from P7 to S1. The school had effective procedures for child protection and sound arrangements for dealing with bullying. It promoted healthy lifestyles well. The dining room provided a healthy range of food options which were attractively presented.

The quality of personal and social development was very good. The personal and social education (PSE) programme covered appropriate aspects of pupils' development from S1 to S6. The existing good practice in developing positive attitudes and citizenship skills would be enhanced by more opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in their learning in PSE. Pupils had planned opportunities to show care and consideration to others. S6 pupils worked as peer counsellors and paired readers for younger pupils, and were actively involved in the P7 induction programme. At all stages, pupils were encouraged to develop their personal and social skills through various out-of-class activities, including an activities week for S1 to S3.

Pupils received very effective curricular and vocational guidance. At key stages of transition, pupils and their parents received comprehensive information on course choices through in-school events and information booklets. Pupils made very good use of the careers adviser, the careers library and the school librarian. The school had developed productive links with universities, colleges and businesses to help prepare pupils for further study and the world of work. It prepared pupils well for making career choices through a range of activities, including work experience, a careers convention and mock interviews. Pupils

developed enterprise skills progressively through a series of activities including the S2 Business Awareness Day and the ‘Technology is the Business’ event for S5.

The overall quality of support for learning was very good. Committed teachers and support assistants were caring and effective in helping pupils with additional support needs. Pupils were assisted by support in mainstream classes and through well-targeted individual and group programmes. The department used some good alternative tutorial programmes to enhance the ICT and study skills of S3/S4 pupils with additional support needs.

Arrangements for support enabled most pupils with additional needs to make very good progress towards achieving their targets. Effective systems were in place to set and review targets for pupils requiring individualised educational programmes (IEPs). Teachers were given helpful information about the needs of specific pupils and had received helpful training on visual and auditory impairment and autistic disorders. The roles of support for learning and behaviour support staff in consultancy and staff development were beginning to be developed.

The school had identified the potential to involve all staff more fully in the inclusion and support of pupils with additional needs. It was now taking forward its more integrated approach to supporting pupils. The work of guidance, behaviour and support for learning staff was coordinated effectively by an acting deputy headteacher.

6. How good is the environment for learning?

Aspect	Comment
Quality of accommodation and facilities	<p>The building was full to capacity, and a significant number of classes were housed in demountable units. Plans to build a new school on the existing site by 2009 were well advanced. The quality of accommodation varied across the school and was adequate overall. Arrangements for school security were good but the reception area for visitors was too small. There were no facilities for disabled users. Some teaching areas had been updated to provide a pleasant environment for learning. Others were worn and dated but generally sound. Some rooms overheated in sunny weather. Modern ICT facilities had recently been added to a number of classrooms. However, easy access to ICT facilities was restricted. The modern library was spacious and well equipped. Pupils had ample social areas. They were positive about the enhancement of the dining room which had encouraged them to take school meals. Other assets were the good-sized swimming pool and extensive outdoor play areas. There were no suitable facilities for teaching drama. School shows had to be held in a community hall because the stage facilities in the school hall were unusable.</p>

Aspect	Comment
<p>Climate and relationships, expectations and promoting achievement and equality</p>	<p>The morale of pupils and teachers was high. Almost all pupils behaved very well and related positively to staff. Many staff gave freely of their time to broaden pupils' achievements by providing a wide range of out-of-class activities. Pupils were friendly and helpful, but overall not very courteous. The school had varied and effective arrangements for consulting pupils. Almost all staff set appropriate expectations of pupils' behaviour and followed school policy on discipline. Teachers and pupils had very high expectations of attainment. Steps taken to challenge and raise the attainment of S5 pupils had been successful. At whole-school level, pupils' wide-ranging achievements were very well publicised and celebrated. Teachers' use of praise and display of pupils' work was more variable. The school promoted fairness and equality very effectively. Pupils from a wide range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds were fully accepted by other pupils and integrated very effectively into the school. Staff were well trained in racial equality policy and procedures. Pupils showed empathy towards peers with additional support needs. Issues to do with discrimination and prejudice were covered effectively in the curriculum. The school's arrangements for religious observance were appropriate and were supported by its close links with local churches.</p>
<p>Partnership with parents and the community</p>	<p>Overall, the school communicated very effectively with parents using a wide variety of approaches, including its prospectus, website, telephone surveys, newsletters and leaflets on specific topics. It responded positively to surveys of parents' views and issues raised by the local community. Potential existed to give parents further information about individual subjects and about the school's priorities for improvement. There was a helpful flow of information to parents about their children's progress, with particular strengths at S1. Written reports to parents were informative but gave too little specific advice on how pupils could improve their attainment in each subject. The very supportive School Board took a keen interest in school matters. The PTA was very active in fundraising and in organising events which involved the school with its local community. The school had developed valuable partnerships with its associated primary schools. Its highly-developed links with businesses and other organisations significantly enhanced pupils' skills of problem-solving and teamwork.</p>

7. Leading and improving the school

Pupils at Cults Academy benefited from the high expectations, support and commitment of staff. In almost all cases, they were able to learn effectively in a secure and very supportive environment. The curriculum met the needs of most pupils very well. Standards of teaching were good overall and often very good. Overall attainment was very good at S1/S2 and excellent at S3 to S6. Pupils benefited greatly from the many out-of-class activities that staff provided to broaden their achievements. Pupils overall were highly motivated and responsible learners with very high expectations of their own success. The learning needs of a small proportion of lower-attaining pupils required greater attention by teachers. The school's very good links with outside organisations enriched pupils' learning experiences and helped them develop a range of important life skills. In the classroom setting, more could be done to develop pupils' life-long learning skills and involve them more often in reflection and discussion.

The quality of leadership, both by the headteacher and others across the school, was good. The headteacher had been in post for 20 months, after previously serving as deputy headteacher. She was positive, energetic and very well organised, and kept staff well informed about national priorities in education. Teaching staff found her very responsive and supportive when difficulties arose. There were some weaknesses in consulting non-teaching staff and involving them in corporate decision-making. The headteacher had raised expectations of pupils' behaviour and attainment, with clear success in raising attainment at S5. However, key developments in assessment and quality assurance were not being taken forward with sufficient commitment by all staff. Senior promoted staff, who also included four deputy headteachers, worked effectively as a team. All of them were viewed by staff as approachable and supportive. Their individual remits were about to be reviewed pending the appointment of a school support manager. Each member of the team made important contributions to the effective running of the school. Key contributions included curricular planning, the professional development of staff, primary-secondary partnership, support for pupils and enterprise education. The headteacher had begun to raise expectations of her senior colleagues' quality assurance role in their links with departments. These expectations were not yet clear enough in their remits. Most principal teachers provided positive leadership, especially in curriculum development. Many teachers keenly and actively contributed to the development of school policy by serving on a variety of working groups. Overall, leadership had important strengths. However, senior and middle managers were not yet fully effective in ensuring the highest possible standards of learning and teaching across the school.

Approaches to self-evaluation were adequate. Staff had developed a promising policy on quality assurance but had still to implement it. The school gave good attention to gathering and responding to the views of pupils and parents. Senior managers worked closely with their linked departments to analyse examination results and monitor progress with development plans. This helped to improve courses and, where necessary, to raise attainment. Effective approaches were in place to identify the minority of pupils who required additional support or were under-performing. Approaches to tracking the attainment and broader achievements of all pupils were less well developed. Self-evaluation was least well developed in the key area of learning and teaching. Departments did not evaluate all aspects of their work systematically enough or reflect sufficiently on teaching approaches. Overall, the monitoring of classroom practice by principal teachers and senior

managers lacked rigour and had been allowed to become too informal. As a result, a few important issues, such as meeting the needs of the lowest-attaining pupils, were not being fully addressed. It also made it more difficult to share best practice around the school. Nonetheless, staff were highly motivated to benefit the pupils. Early and effective implementation of the new policy on quality assurance would build on the school's many successes and strengthen its capacity for continuous improvement.

Main points for action

In taking the school forward, the school and education authority should take account of the need to:

- ensure that all subject teachers take sufficient account of the learning needs of the lowest-attaining pupils;
- improve self-evaluation at all levels and introduce greater rigour in the monitoring of classroom practice in order to share good practice and achieve consistently high standards of learning and teaching; and
- ensure that non-teaching staff are more fully involved in decision-making.

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.

Tom Straiton
HM Inspector

30 January 2007

Appendix 1 Indicators of quality

The sections in the table below follow the order of this report. You can find the main comments made about each of the quality indicators in those sections. However, aspects of some quality indicators are relevant to other sections of the report and may also be mentioned in those other sections.

How good are learning, teaching and achievement?	
Structure of the curriculum	very good
The teaching process	good
Pupils' learning experiences	very good
Meeting pupils' needs	good
Overall quality of attainment: S1/S2	very good
Overall quality of attainment: S3/S4	excellent
Overall quality of attainment: S5/S6	excellent

How well are pupils supported?	
Pastoral care	very good
Personal and social development	very good
Curricular and vocational guidance	very good
Learning support	very good

How good is the environment for learning?	
Accommodation and facilities	adequate
Climate and relationships	very good
Expectations and promoting achievement	very good
Equality and fairness	very good
Partnership with parents, the School Board and the community	very good

Leading and improving the school	
Leadership of the headteacher	good
Leadership across the school	good
Self-evaluation	adequate

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

What parents thought the school did well	What parents think the school could do better
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoyed being at school and were treated fairly. • The school was well led and had a good reputation in the local community. • Staff made them feel welcome in the school. • Parents' evenings were helpful and informative. • There was mutual respect between teachers and pupils. • Staff showed concern for the care and welfare of their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the quality of the building. • Provide clearer information on the school's priorities for improving pupils' education, and on how to support their children with homework.
What pupils thought the school did well	What pupils think the school could do better
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They enjoyed being at school and got on well with other pupils. • Teachers explained things clearly and helped them when they experienced difficulties. • Teachers expected them to work to the best of their ability. • They felt safe and secure in the school. • The school helped them to keep safe and healthy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deal more effectively with bullying. • Treat all pupils fairly.
What staff thought the school did well	What staff think the school could do better
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They liked working in the school. • Teachers set high standards for pupils' attainment. • Teachers provided constructive feedback to pupils about their work. • The school communicated clearly to parents the standard of work expected from pupils. • Staff showed concern for the care and welfare of pupils. • The school dealt effectively with any instances of bullying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that standards set for pupils' behaviour are applied consistently. • A significant proportion of non-teaching staff felt that they were not sufficiently involved in the decision-making process, that their training time was not well used, and that senior managers did not work effectively as a team.

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

		2004	2005	2006 ³
<i>English and Mathematics @ Level 3</i>	Cults Academy	97	98	98
	Comparator schools ⁴	97	96	96
	National	91	90	91
<i>5+ @ Level 3 or Better</i>	Cults Academy	97	99	98
	Comparator schools	97	96	96
	National	91	90	91
<i>5+ @ Level 4 or Better</i>	Cults Academy	93	96	94
	Comparator schools	90	89	90
	National	77	76	76
<i>5+ @ Level 5 or Better</i>	Cults Academy	71	78	66
	Comparator schools	54	55	56
	National	35	34	34

Percentage of relevant S4 roll attaining by end of S5

		2004	2005	2006 ³
<i>5+ @ Level 4 or better</i>	Cults Academy	95	94	101
	Comparator schools ⁴	90	93	90
	National	78	78	78
<i>5+ @ Level 5 or better</i>	Cults Academy	81	79	89
	Comparator schools	66	67	68
	National	45	45	45
<i>1+ @ Level 6 or better</i>	Cults Academy	81	70	79
	Comparator schools	60	57	60
	National	39	39	38
<i>3+ @ Level 6 or better</i>	Cults Academy	60	55	52
	Comparator schools	43	41	41
	National	23	23	21
<i>5+ @ Level 6 or better</i>	Cults Academy	26	28	33
	Comparator schools	20	23	21
	National	9	10	9

Percentage of relevant S4 roll attaining by end of S6

		2004	2005	2006 ³
5+ @ Level 5 or better	Cults Academy	83	83	82
	Comparator schools⁴	69	68	69
	National	47	47	48
1+ @ Level 6 or better	Cults Academy	85	84	77
	Comparator schools	67	66	61
	National	44	43	43
3+ @ Level 6 or better	Cults Academy	68	71	68
	Comparator schools	54	53	51
	National	31	30	30
5+ @ Level 6 or better	Cults Academy	49	53	51
	Comparator schools	38	38	38
	National	20	19	19
1+ @ Level 7 or better	Cults Academy	36	43	41
	Comparator schools	27	28	24
	National	12	12	12

³ Pre Appeal

⁴ 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

Copies of this report have been sent to the headteacher and school staff, the Head of Service, Culture & Learning, local councillors and appropriate Members of the Scottish Parliament. Subject to availability, further copies may be obtained free of charge from HM Inspectorate of Education, 1st Floor, Endeavour House, 1 Greenmarket, Dundee DD1 4QB or by telephoning 01382 576700. Copies are also available on our website at www.hmie.gov.uk.

If you wish to comment about secondary inspections

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.

Our complaints procedure

If you have a concern about this report, you should write in the first instance to Hazel Dewart, Business Management Unit, HM Inspectorate of Education, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA. A copy of our complaints procedure is available from this office or by telephoning 01506 600258 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. The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman 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@spso.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.spso.org.uk.

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