

Exemplar School 6 - Self-evaluation Summary Paper

Context of the school

Exemplar School 6 is a comprehensive, six-year secondary school. Our aims are to: work in partnership for the good of our pupils; provide a Christian atmosphere of love within which pupils will develop their full potential; promote spiritual development; provide a learning environment which allows pupils to achieve the highest level of success in all that is attempted; promote respect for people of all backgrounds, cultures, religions and ethnic origins; encourage and develop acceptance and personal responsibility; celebrate our successes. We enjoy a very close relationship with our Family of Schools which provide the majority of our pupils. Distinctive features of the school include: shared moral and spiritual values; high quality pastoral care and positive relationships; strong leadership; the support and commitment from staff; distributive leadership at all levels; staff team-work in meeting the needs of pupils and developing the work of the school; sustained attainment and achievement over time, and a high proportion of positive destinations; very good behaviour.

How well do young people learn and achieve?

Existing Strengths:

Attainment levels high (by comparison) across the school: over past 5 years a consistent pattern of pupils achieving above national pattern and well above comparator schools in almost all of the 10 key PI's. Attainment of pupils most at risk of missing out is very good.

S5-14: Overall attainment by S2 in Reading and Mathematics is very good, while writing is good - most pupils at expected national level in reading and mathematics and majority in Writing by end of S2. School performing well above similar schools (Fyfe data). Strong, improving trend over previous 5 years. SOSCA scores for S2 broadly in line with the average in reading and mathematics. Overall, pupils making expected progress in SOSCA reading and mathematics from prior levels in PIPS P7.

S4: Almost all young people achieving minimum national levels in English at level 3. 5 year trend for mathematics at level 3 well above national levels. Performance in English and mathematics together at level 3 has been well above comparator schools and national levels (Top Quartile in 6 of the last 7 years); percentage achieving 5 awards at level 3 in line with national levels and above similar schools.

S5: consistently high numbers achieving 1 and 3 or more Highers; results in line with national levels by S5 and better than similar schools; percentage achieving 5 or more awards at Higher same level for 5 of previous 7 years; very good results in English and music.

S5/S6: pupils achieving 3 and 5 or more awards at Higher in S6 above national and Fife levels; generally doing better than similar schools; achieving significantly more grade awards in Higher administration and geography than expected by attainment in S4 and results in other subjects;

Most pupils take part in activities aimed at providing wider achievement, including participation in sporting events, Fair Trade, charities and other fund raising activities, music, trips and residential experiences. Opportunities to further develop responsible citizens – peer support/buddying by senior young people, pupil council, enterprise, citizenship, working parties and other leadership opportunities. Pupils have a very good awareness of their roles as global citizens. Parents and pupils report high levels of satisfaction in this area. Culture of high expectations where staff provide very good support for pupils to achieve. Most pupils motivated and increasingly active in own development. In many classes, pupils experience a range of learning and teaching approaches; increasingly, they are encouraged to learn through thinking and doing. Pupils are treated with equality, fairness and respect. Most pupils assert they have a positive learning experience. Group of 12 pupils working towards Bronze in Duke of Edinburgh; group of 8 pupils undertaking Bronze XL Club Award through ASDAN.

Priorities for future development:

5-14: in the current interim year, maintain 5-14 results in reading, writing and mathematics. S4: Reverse decline in the percentage of young people achieving 5+ awards at levels 4 and 5; particular improvements sought at S4 in history, modern studies and chemistry. S5: attainment by S5 1 and 3 + at SCQF level 6 which is still top quartile but there is now a declining trend.

S5&S6: Improve performance by S6 1+ at SCQF level 7 - Lower middle quartile; improve performance by S6 3+ at SCQF level 6 - Upper middle quartile and declining trend.

Enhance pupil voice: developments in pupil council, develop GLOW as tool for capturing pupil views; further develop focus groups to give pupils greater say in making learning better; pupils more involved in discussions in class: formulating and sharing views and opinions; develop use of challenging questions to encourage deeper thinking; continue to ensure formative assessment, active learning and feedback are employed more consistently to improve learning and to set appropriate targets; all staff to involve pupils more actively in target setting process; further develop opportunities for pupils to access Study Support in own communities; further develop approaches to monitoring learning and teaching and evaluate for impact; develop accreditation through various awards schemes.

How well does the school support young people to develop and learn?

Existing Strengths:

Vision, Values and Aims; account of local circumstances; S1-S3 curriculum map – all developed. S1 and S2 enrichment programmes in place; exciting and imaginative themed weeks. Plans in place for re-introduction of PE, RME and SHE into S5/S6. Wide range of certificated courses, including Advanced Higher. Partnerships with FE- skills for work - and arrangements with local schools when we cannot offer a course. Work with CLD and other partners to deliver quality experiences. XL Club, Restricted Curriculum – behaviour and learning support. Identification of learners' needs involves pupils, parents, members of staff (teaching and non teaching), PSAs

and partner agencies. Approaches are pupil centred and flexible. DHT Support for Pupils has overview of Pupil Support, Learning Support, Behaviour Support, P7/S1 transition, LAC and LAAC and Child Protection. Helps ensure that needs of all pupils taken into account. An integrated support provision is high on our agenda. Effective planning with partners to ensure support in place for targeted priority groups: includes transition planning. Very strong framework of care for almost all of our young people. Good planning and review processes in place for LAAC Children. All Support for Pupil Staff linked as named person to pupils with ISPs/CSPs: done by DHT according to pupils' needs. CSP timelines are adhered to. Shared Child's plan now being used. Workshops on SHANARRI targets and SMART targets held. System for Review of ISPs/CSPs now in place. Most ISPs are updated within the timescales set. We involve parents and learners in reviewing learners' needs. Use of appropriate short term and long term targets is developing. 16+ group established. Good progress made in identifying and supporting pupils who may not achieve a positive destination.

Priorities for future development:

Continue to review provision at key transition stages to increase flexibility and choice and to ensure all needs are met. Continue to investigate and develop new courses to meet needs of local jobs market and aspirations and choices of our young people. Increase opportunities for young people to develop skills. Continue to develop confidence and expertise of staff in taking forward Building the Curriculum 5. Curriculum kept continuously under review to ensure contributing to priority of raising attainment and achievement. Continue to develop CfE in line with SIP plans and evaluate progress for input on young people's experiences. Ensure accreditation schemes are developed to benefit all learners. Consider ways of developing library further to support school initiatives and projects. Begin planning and consultation for implementation for Senior Phase. Full implementation of GIRISC initiative. Development of CPD programme to take forward areas highlighted by teaching staff in 'Meeting Learning Needs' questionnaire issued previously. Review the classroom visit programme in the school to improve the quality of feedback to all teachers: identified needs should then feed into the PRD programme and inform CPD provision. Improve the identification of gifted and talented pupils and the strategies for progression of their learning.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

Existing Strengths:

Catholic ethos encourages pupils, staff and parents to work collegiately to secure improved learning and outcomes. Clear and strong commitment by most staff to self-evaluation; improved processes to evaluate work and identify actions to ensure high standards. Majority of staff use quality indicators to reflect on their practice. Performance information used effectively to focus on areas for improvement – attainment review process undertaken at all levels. Systems in place to gather views of staff, parents, pupils and partners about quality of work of school. Improvement Plan focussed on policy formation in key areas of work of school: quality

improvement, CfE, active learning and teaching, homework etc. Promoted staff take lead role in self-evaluation at department and whole-school level. Well developed arrangements to identify and monitor achievement of lowest attaining 20%. SMT and PT's regularly observe learning and teaching; increasing culture of peer observations helping to share good practice.

Priorities for future development:

Review the programme of Senior Leaders' classroom visits across the school to ensure that the findings are used consistently to identify strengths and development needs. Continue to develop tracking in the new MIS to increase effectiveness in monitoring pupils' progress, identifying needs and target setting. Enhance the CPD programme for all staff to improve learning and teaching and outcomes. Improve pupil voice in subject and whole school. Encourage sharing good practice by departments producing their own 'good lesson' guide.

How do you ensure equality and inclusion and promote diversity across the school?

As an SMT, we promote and plan for an inclusive community where each pupil can experience success in learning both in class and through ethos of school. Introduction of Access 3 French for new S3 and extended range of Int. 1 courses in S5/S6 to meet needs of growing number of pupils returning to school. Last year we employed a primary teacher for 3 months to support identified group of low achievers in S1 with English and Mathematics. Low usage of 2nd and 3rd tier provision demonstrates success of inclusive policies. Assemblies provide a forum for recognising pupil achievement and celebrating diversity. All learners valued as individuals and needs taken seriously. Close liaison is undertaken with schools requesting host-school transfer or placing request to ensure appropriate curricular and other information received prior to transfer. Tracking system in place to monitor progress of all pupils. Pupil Support Team know pupils well and receptive to needs of individuals. SHE programme has been updated in S1/S2 and delivered by Pupil Support teachers and external partners, where appropriate. Includes experiences in health and wellbeing and citizenship. RME courses promote diversity through study of world religions. Pupils are satisfied that their views are taken into account and they are treated fairly. Equality, fairness and respect are promoted through a range of activities e.g. eco-work, enterprise, fair trade, health promotion, human rights etc.

What would you suggest as possible areas for focused attention by the inspection team?

- Distributive leadership for staff and pupils, S6 in particular
- Opportunities for learning through the ethos and life of the school
- Media themed week in S1 (Natives and Immigrants)
- Use of ICT in computing, business education and RE, and active learning in modern languages, PE, English, RE, home economics and art
- Provision of Careers education within the school
- Global citizenship