

23 April 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

In December 2018, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited St Thomas Aquinas Secondary School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

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

- The headteacher has a strong focus on raising attainment and maximising each young person's potential. His very high expectations, combined with the commitment of staff to young people, has contributed to a strong performance in qualifications in the senior phase.
- Middle leaders are leading change and improvement well within their respective departments. They work well with colleagues to build positive relationships in classes which make a difference for young people. These efforts of teachers are supporting high levels of attainment.
- The work done by school leaders to embed the national priorities of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) and Career Education Standard into the curriculum. Activities related to careers and employment are reflected in courses for young people from S1 to S3. Young people are benefitting well from this approach which is supporting them in preparation for leaving school.
- The wide range of curriculum options available to young people in the senior phase. The school offers flexible pathways to widen course choice. The breadth of these choices is supporting the positive attainment outcomes for all young people.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and representatives from Glasgow City Council.

- Staff should continue to develop the new school vision and values along with parents and young people. This will enable a greater shared understanding and ownership of the values and further build a strong positive ethos across the whole school. Planning for improvements should be based on evidence and linked clearly to outcomes for young people .
- Senior leaders working with all staff, should agree a whole school approach to the choice and use of classroom strategies. This should include a focus on increasing the pace of learning and also on developing greater challenge in the activities to suit the needs of all young people.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4<sup>th</sup> edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for St Thomas Aquinas Secondary School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
<b>Leadership of change</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b>	<b>good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:  
<https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/glasgow-city/8438838>

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Glasgow City Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Ann Floyd  
 HM Inspector