

21 January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

In October 2019, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Hazlehead Academy. 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. They apply to both Gaelic and English Medium Education unless otherwise stated.

- The headteacher and senior leaders promote values as central to the life and work of the school. This is resulting in positive relationships between staff and young people for most of the time. Relationships are strengthened further by staff and partners' offer of a wide range of opportunities for achievements and clubs. Young people's participation is encouraged by ensuring cost is not a barrier.
- Senior leaders and business partners have identified key skills for employment that young people will need for future careers in Aberdeen city and beyond. Almost all young people are aware of how opportunities for achievements progress these skills.
- Young people appreciate the opportunity to learn Gàidhlig, with Gaelic (Learners) recently added to the curriculum. Most of the young people studying Gàidhlig do well in National Qualifications.

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

- Ensure focused leadership of raising attainment, with all staff, led by senior leaders, clear on their roles and responsibilities. All staff should be able to evaluate the difference they are making to help young people achieve as highly as possible, particularly for those in S4 and S5.
- Take forward in depth, a manageable number of priorities for improvement. These should be underpinned by a clear vision, whilst ensuring well-paced change. Staff should continue to prioritise the work started on improving the curriculum.
- Continue to improve learning, teaching and assessment to better meet the needs of all young people. This should include ensuring tasks and activities support progression.
- Take account of Gaelic in the strategic planning of the school. This should focus on increasing the numbers of young people that continue with Gaelic Medium Education from primary and throughout each stage of secondary. Young people need more regular opportunities to develop their fluency in the language.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). 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 Hazlehead Academy

| Quality indicators | Evaluation |
|---|---------------------|
| Learning, teaching and assessment | satisfactory |
| Raising attainment and achievement | weak |
| Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale. | |

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website

<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/inspection-reports/reports-page/?id=2906>.

What happens next

As a result of our inspection findings, we think that the school needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. We will liaise with Aberdeen City Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within a year of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with Aberdeen City Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school, we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress the school has made.

Joan C. Esson
HM Inspector