Summarised inspection findings

Carluke High School

South Lanarkshire Council

26 November 2019

Key contextual information

Carluke High School is a non-denominational secondary school in South Lanarkshire. The school serves the town of Carluke and a number of rural communities around Carluke and Clydesdale. The recently appointed headteacher took up post in May, 2019. The senior leadership team (SLT) currently consists of three full time permanent depute headteachers (DHTs), one part time DHT and one full time temporary DHT. There have been a number of changes within the senior leadership team over the last five years. As a result of appointments to substantive senior leadership posts in the last few months, the school is now in a more settled period of staffing this session across the SLT.

Attendance is generally in line with the national average. In February 2019, 17.3% per cent of pupils were registered for free school meals. In September 2018, 19.2% per cent of pupils lived in the 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland. In September 2018, the school reported that 28% per cent of pupils had additional support needs. The school's exclusion rate over the last four years had been in line with the national average. In the most recent year, this has increased to 75 per 1000 pupils. There have been recent interventions put in place designed as 'alternatives to exclusion,' to maintain pupil attendance in classes and improve progress, attainment and achievement for targeted groups of learners at risk.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	good
This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are: ■ learning and engagement ■ quality of teaching ■ effective use of assessment ■ planning, tracking and monitoring	

■ The school has a calm atmosphere and supportive ethos that reflects the school values of optimism, ambition and respect. Staff should continue to share these clearly and consistently with young people in order to maintain the positive climate for learning across the school. Staff know the needs of young people well. Most young people interact well with each other and with staff in their learning. Relationships between almost all young people and teachers across the school are positive. As a result, most young people engage well in their learning and stay on task. They value the increased opportunities they have to work collaboratively and learn independently. Most young people benefit from learning experiences that are well-planned. Active learning strategies continue to be developed and implemented across departments.

■ Teachers should ensure that all young people are challenged appropriately and are working at levels of challenge that support them to achieve. Senior leaders and staff should ensure that they have consistently high expectations of all learners, reflecting the school's values. This should help to provide more suitably challenging learning experiences more consistently across all subject areas. In some lessons across the broad general education (BGE), a few young people do not find their learning experiences interesting or relevant enough to sustain engagement.

- Teaching is effective across the school. Senior leaders and staff have a clear focus on improving the quality of young people's learning experiences through increased collegiate working and focussed professional learning. All teachers have opportunities to take on leadership of learning in a range of ways. These include membership of teacher learning communities, leading professional discussion at faculty meetings, delivering professional learning to colleagues and visiting each other's classrooms to share and give feedback on practice.

- In a few departments, young people's views are used to inform improvements in the quality of learning and teaching. Young people's views on their learning experiences should be taken into account more widely to inform key aspects of school improvement. Most young people understand the purpose of their learning.

- In almost all lessons, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. In most lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning and in the majority of lessons they make explicit links to prior and future learning. Teachers share the school's 'social goals' with young people in the majority of lessons. This is beginning to reinforce the principles of the school's values and aims. In a few classes, learning is overly teacher-led and young people have limited opportunities to take an active or leading role in their learning.

- The majority of teachers use skilful questioning to develop young people's higher order thinking skills, provide challenge and promote deeper learning. Building on these examples of strong practice, staff across the school should work together to develop their use of questioning techniques. This should help to increase challenge for young people and provide more opportunities for them to develop their understanding and application of skills.

- In the majority of lessons, particularly in the senior phase, young people receive individualised feedback, both orally and written, on their learning and progress. Senior leaders and staff should also continue to ensure that areas of strong practice in the school around active and collaborative learning and teaching are shared. This should help to achieve greater consistency in high quality learning experiences for all learners.

- Senior leaders are committed to ensuring that staff and young people have continuing opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge in using digital technologies. Commendably, teachers are making increased use of digital resources to provide effective feedback to young people. In a few areas of the school, staff use the available digital technology effectively to enhance learners' experiences. This includes use of the school's digital platform to support home learning, share resources, conduct assessments, provide feedback and survey young people's views. Young people's learning experiences through digital technologies need to be enhanced further. Improvements to digital infrastructure will help staff to make high quality resources accessible to all young people, particularly for young people who require enhanced visual aids to access digital resources.

- In the senior phase, teachers increasingly use a variety of approaches to assess progress in learning. This includes peer and self-assessment activities and tasks. In the BGE, staff should plan more consistently to use a wider range of assessment approaches that enable young people to reflect on and improve their learning.

- Teachers are improving the reliability of their professional judgements in the BGE through engaging in moderation activities at department level and as planned, more widely from this session onwards. The 'Clydesdale secondary schools' collaborative' programme of moderation activities covering all curriculum areas is building on this work. Teachers speak positively about the value of this programme, the range of opportunities to share assessment and moderation

practice and how this informs enhanced discussion about professional judgements at department level. A number of departments are also involved in moderation and sharing of standards with primary colleagues through well-established cluster activities, including as part of enhanced transition. This collaboration is enabling teachers to engage in further professional dialogue about standards and develop an improved shared understanding of progress within and across the BGE levels. Extending opportunities for collaboration to all curriculum areas should help ensure that young people's progression in learning is improved across the school.

- Approaches at department level to track and monitor the progress of all young people in the senior phase are being improved and embedded. These should help staff to improve interventions to support all young people to improve their attainment and quality of achievements. Senior leaders acknowledge that approaches to tracking and monitoring progress in the BGE are in the early stages of development and are not yet having the desired impact on improving outcomes for all young people. Improved robustness of tracking and monitoring processes across the school has correctly been identified as a continuing priority for improvement.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

■ The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, young people. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	**satisfactory**
This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are: ■ attainment in literacy and numeracy ■ attainment over time ■ overall quality of learners' achievement ■ equity for all learners	

Attainment in Literacy and numeracy
BGE

■ The school provided BGE data, including data for 2019, which shows a variable picture of attainment in literacy and numeracy by the end of the BGE. In 2018 by the end of S3, most young people achieved Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) third level in reading, writing and listening and talking. Almost all young people have achieved third level in numeracy over the last four years. Senior leaders are aware that in three out of the last four years, data linked to professional judgement of a CfE level needed to be more robust and reliable. As a result, increased planned opportunities for all staff to be involved in moderation activity within and increasingly, beyond the local cluster, is now a priority and is reported to be improving teacher professional judgement.

■ Data supplied by the school shows that by the end of S3 in 2019, most young people achieved fourth level in literacy. This is a significant increase from 2018 where less than half of young people achieved fourth level in literacy. Senior staff have deployed a range of additional support, resources and interventions to improve literacy in the last session, including additional staffing to provide more intensive support to groups of learners. Teachers have also been engaging more with moderation of achievement of a level for literacy, to help bring about these improvements in achievement. The majority of young people in 2019 achieved fourth level in numeracy. As a priority, further development of course and assessment planning at fourth level is required in order for young people to be more aspirational and successful through the senior phase.

■ In literacy and numeracy, the school is using PEF funding to provide extra support and resources, including targeted staffing resources. This is helping to provide better support for young people. Planned interventions and support strategies are beginning to demonstrate positive impact for the outcomes for targeted groups of young people.

■ Teachers use their professional judgement, Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSAs) and a range of other assessment tools, to monitor improvement in young people's attainment. The school is currently embedding approaches to tracking and monitoring young people's attainment and achievements across the BGE and senior phase. Senior leaders are working closely to support groups of promoted staff in the first instance, to improve teachers' interpretation of attainment and progress data. Over time, this should help to lead to better understanding of the improvements required to raise the attainment and achievement of young people.

Senior phase

■ Almost all young people leaving school in the past four years have achieved literacy at SCQF level 4 or better and most leavers achieved literacy at SCQF level 5 or better. The percentage of young people attaining these levels in literacy over the last five years has been variable, but has remained in line with the VC.

■ Young people are attaining broadly in line with the VC in numeracy by the time of leaving school. Most young people leaving school in the past five years achieved numeracy at SCQF level 4 or better. The majority of leavers have achieved numeracy at SCQF 5 or better, which has remained overall stable and in line with the VC in the past four years.

■ Senior leaders and staff are currently reviewing the school's range of interventions to improve young people's overall attainment throughout the BGE. For example, increased frequency of staff dialogue and data interrogation to monitor the progress of cohorts of learners at risk, as well as a range of PEF funded supports geared towards improving attainment and achievment. It is currently too early to identify the impact that the school's suite of interventions is having on outcomes for young people.

■ The recently revised whole-school approaches to tracking and monitoring young people's progress have real potential in allowing staff to have a clearer overview of the progress within BGE levels across all subjects, for all groups of learners. This is beginning to allow staff to identify and intervene earlier, to address attainment gaps that have been identified by senior leaders and teachers across various groups of learners. Senior leaders and teachers are planning improved target setting approaches and mentoring conversations with groups of young people linked to revised whole school approaches to tracking and monitoring to help raise attainment. Senior leaders are aware of the importance of monitoring assessment and progress at departmental level along with PTs, for individual and cohorts of young people. This should help to ensure that interventions continue to help young people to make intended progress and raise expectations and overall achievement of young people at all stages. Importantly moving forward, the revised monitoring approaches should include up-to-date pupil participation information in wider engagement activities and associated skills development.

■ Senior leaders should continue with the positive start made this session to revise the school's curricular offer and pathways through both the BGE and senior phase. This work is progressing as a key priority. Staff are aware that current arrangements in S3 do not always allow flexibility and breadth for all young people to make confident coursing decisions into the senior phase, and ultimately, to achieve the best they can.

Leavers with additional support needs

■ Over the last five years, most young people who require additional support with their learning, achieved literacy at SCQF level 4 or better by the time of leaving school. The majority of these young people achieved literacy at SCQF level 5 or better, by the time of leaving school. It remains a school priority to continue to improve outcome for young people with additional support needs.

■ Over the last five years, the majority of young people who require additional support with their learning, achieved a numeracy qualification at SCQF 4 or better by the time of leaving school. Less than half of these young people achieved numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better, by the time of leaving school. Senior leaders highlighted that focused, regular team meetings are helping to improve the outcomes for young people who require additional support in their learning.

Attainment over time
BGE

■ This session, senior leaders are planning opportunities for teachers to work collaboratively with other colleagues across the cluster and the 'Clydesdale collaborative group' of neighbouring secondary schools, to improve their judgement of young people's progress and through and achievement of a CfE level. Senior leaders and pastoral care staff currently engage in regular progress update conversations with class teachers, to track and monitor young people's progress and review interventions for support. This session, tracking and monitoring data is being updated more regularly and interrogated by senior leaders and middle leaders. This is supporting staff in taking forward work to support learners and design agreed strategies and actions to help drive improvement across the school. All staff should continue to work together and with colleagues more widely, to build a collective understanding of national standards and expectations in order to support particular groups of learners, including those most at risk.

Senior phase
Attainment over time

■ Improvement in the attainment of young people as they move through the school is variable over the past five years. Average complimentary tariff scores of the middle attaining 60% and highest attaining 20% of leavers is often significantly lower or much lower than the VC between 2014 and 2018. By S6, the attainment of the lowest and highest attaining 20% of learners has improved to be in line with the VC. Again, for the middle attaining 60% of learners, there remains considerable scope for the school to improve overall attainment.

■ Recent plans being developed to support improvements in the attainment of young people are geared at increasing the percentage of young people obtaining qualifications in S4. Senior leaders are working with all staff to provide a wider range of courses suited to the relevant aspirations of all learners in order to achieve this. There remains headroom to continue to improve the percentage of young people obtaining qualifications in S5 for two or more to four or more courses at SCQF levels 5C and 5A and 6C and 6A. Staff are working to improve the attainment of young people by implementing changes for improvement in attainment. They are planning to make better use of learning conversations linked to targets and information on young people's' progress to help young people make more informed course choices. One of the school's overall aims of more robust and individualised course choices for young people, is to improve overall quality of passes achieved in a number of subject areas. By S6 at SCQF level 5C or better, the percentage of young people obtaining courses is broadly in line with the VC. The percentage of young people attaining one or more to four or more courses at SCQF level 6 or better by S6 is significantly lower than the VC. The percentage of young people obtaining 5 or more courses at SCQF level 6C or better by S6 has fallen to significantly lower than the VC in the latest year.

■ Information on raising attainment for all leavers shows the lowest attaining 20% achieving broadly in line with the VC. Senior leaders are aware of the correlation with this group of learners and gaps in attainment linked to equity. They are continuing to reshape learning pathways and opportunities both within the school and with partners more widely, to improve this picture. As planned, staff should continue with the development of interventions to support targeted cohorts of young people to achieve more by the time of leaving school. This will help to refine interventions for equity that will allow targeted groups of young people to achieve improved outcomes over time. Importantly, this should also address existing gaps in attainment for cohorts of learners and raise attainment for all leavers.

■ Plans to revise the curriculum offer across the BGE and senior phase should help to ensure that moving forward, no young person leaves the school without formal recognition of attainment and achievement. This should also help to raise the bar for expectations and

aspirations of attainment for all young people. Senior leaders agree that current benchmarks and targets set for more vulnerable groups of learners and those at risk of not achieving, should be more aspirational.

- Across all subject areas in the senior phase, there is variability in the overall quality of attainment and achievement of young people. In a few subject areas, attainment in the most recent year has been adversely affected by recruitment difficulties, which have now been addressed with the support of the local authority. In light of recent changes to assessment arrangements for National Qualifications, there is a need to revise the school's overall presentation policy for qualifications. Staff should continue to prioritise plans for improvement which address areas where a number of young people continue to gain no award in various courses. Continued collaboration across all subject areas is important in order to share experiences of those subject areas where the number of young people gaining no award has reduced as a result of specific interventions. There is also headroom to share good practice from subject areas where the quality of passes across courses for young people has improved.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Young people benefit from belonging to a school which prides itself in being at the heart of its community and contributing clearly to the life of that community in a number of ways. These include, for example, football coaching at their former primary school where they act as important role models for younger peers and volunteering as befrienders. Young people confirm that as they exercise responsibility and develop leadership skills in a range of contexts, they increase their self-confidence and gain valuable accreditation. A few examples of the context for young people to develop their leadership opportunities include; Saltire, SQA Leadership John Muir Awards, Equitots and the My Brighter Future programmes.

- Opportunities exist to develop skills and attributes in a range of areas. Participation in the 'Erasmus +' programme allowed a class of S2 young people, at minimal cost to them, to act as international school ambassadors in Barcelona. Large numbers of young people achieve through the Duke of Edinburgh's (DofE) Programme, at both bronze and silver levels. Partnership working with a local engineering company encourages young people to see their developing skills in a relevant context.

- Individual achievements are frequently promoted and celebrated through assemblies and social media. This diversity of achievement, which includes sporting success, is recognised by the formal award of International Ties which celebrate performance at national and international level.

- As the school continues to develop and embed its monitoring and tracking system, staff should as planned include a more explicit focus on both skills progression and on supporting young people to recognise their application to new contexts, building further confidence and resilience. This system should also support more robust tracking of those at risk of missing out through lack of engagement in wider achievement activities.

Equity for all learners

- The school promotes equity of success and achievement for all young people. Staff have a clear understanding of the socio-economic context of the school, including the potential barriers unique to a rural context. They are becoming increasingly confident in their analysis of data to target interventions. Both staff and parents have benefitted from information sessions on 'Cost of the School Day'. As a result of the school's provision of learning experiences being viewed through the lens of equity, all young people benefit from a wide range of learning experiences where the barrier of finance has been removed. The large numbers of young people developing skills through the DofE Programme, with minimal costs, are testament to this. In response to requests from young people themselves, all new S1 learners receive a

welcome equipment pack supporting them in their readiness to learn. Partnerships with parents to support learning have been developed further through the Family Club.

■ The school now has more robust overview of all learners who benefit from a wide range of interventions. There is growing evidence of increased levels of engagement and motivation from learners in these targeted groups. The school should continue with its plans for evidencing raised attainment and achievement. A clearer whole school overview of all interventions in place will help provide a better picture regarding those which are making most impact specifically in relation to the poverty related attainment gap. Senior leaders recognise that there is a need to refocus priorities to close the poverty-related attainment gap with increased pace.

■ Positive destinations are a strength of the school. The school has improved the percentage of young people moving to positive destinations on leaving school. The percentage of leavers entering a positive destination in 2018 improved to being significantly much higher than the VC. The school's efforts to offer a range of courses in the senior phase to meet the needs and interests of all learners have contributed to this successful outcome. These include Employability Awards, Foundation Apprenticeships in Social Services and Skills for Work courses. Increasingly, a range of opportunities is offered in the senior phase with other partners across the local authority. Staff should continue with plans to improve the design of the curriculum, developing more flexible learning pathways and building on this successful foundation.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.