

16 June 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2020, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Bell Baxter High 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's drive and determination to improve outcomes for young people. She has a strong focus on raising attainment, improving learning and teaching and supporting young people to achieve.
- The steps taken to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment through robust approaches to self-evaluation. This is beginning to have a positive impact on learners' experiences in classrooms.
- The increasing range of partnership working and learning pathway options which is helping to support almost all young people, including all those in the Department for Additional Support, to a positive destination. This includes further and higher education options as well as employment.
- The improvements in attainment, achievement and attendance, particularly for those young people most at risk of missing out.

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

- Staff now need to work together to drive forward improvements for all young people. Senior leaders should work with staff to ensure staff feel confident in leading change. This includes all staff developing a greater understanding of the strategic role they have in school improvement.
- Continue with approaches to raise attainment for all young people, particularly in S5. Staff should also improve the rigour and consistency of assessment across S1 - S3 to support raising attainment.
- Senior leaders should continue to keep the development of the curriculum under review. They should ensure all entitlements are being met. For example, young people's entitlement to a broad general education and Developing the Young Workforce.
- Improve approaches to wellbeing, inclusion and equality for all young people. Staff should develop clear plans and targets for all young people who require them. Staff would also benefit from further professional learning on how to support young people who face challenges.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four 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 Bell Baxter High School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	satisfactory
Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
Raising attainment and achievement	satisfactory
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	satisfactory
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 at:
<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/inspection-reports/reports-page/?id=1625>

What happens next?

As a result of our inspection findings we identified areas where improvements are required. In light of the current circumstances, we will liaise with Fife Council to discuss our findings and support for the school. We will provide you with an update on next steps once the school has reopened.

Stuart Cathro
HM Inspector