

21 January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

In October 2019, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Earlston 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.

- Under the highly effective leadership of the headteacher and other senior leaders, teachers are using a range of approaches to improve learning, teaching and assessment. These approaches, linked to teachers' ongoing professional learning, are beginning to lead to increasingly high-quality experiences for young people. Staff have high aspirations for all young people and positive and respectful relationships exist across the school.
- The school is maintaining high levels of attainment for all leavers. In particular, young people who stay on at school until the end of S6 are attaining very well.
- Young people are benefitting from an extensive range of out-of-class activities that are helping them to develop their skills and attributes well. This includes them having increased responsibility as they progress through the school and being active participants in their local community.

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

- Teachers need to ensure that assessment is used appropriately in S1 to S3 to ensure all young people can demonstrate their knowledge and skills effectively. This will help them to understand their next steps in learning more effectively, make better progress and attain more highly.
- The school needs to improve how it is tracking and monitoring young people's learning from S1 to S3. This will enable teachers to plan appropriate interventions consistently to raise all young people's attainment.

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 Earlston High School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Raising attainment and achievement	very good
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=2458>.

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. Scottish Borders Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Celia McArthur
HM Inspector