

19 September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In March 2020, HM Inspectors published a letter on Clyde Valley High School. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and North Lanarkshire Council. We subsequently returned to the school to look at how it had continued to improve its work and published another letter in June 2022. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We heard from the headteacher and other staff about the steps the school has taken to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection and at other aspects of the school's work, as proposed by the headteacher. As a result, we were able to find out about the progress the school has made and how well this is supporting young people's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

Improve the strategic leadership of change and improvement across all key areas of the school. Leadership at all levels should be focused on improving outcomes for young people.

The school has undergone significant changes to the post of headteacher since the first inspection and this has impacted on school improvement. The recently appointed permanent headteacher has quickly gained a strong understanding of the school context. Staff and pupils report having confidence in her leadership. Parents would welcome greater involvement in agreeing the vision and setting priorities for the school. The supporting headteachers and school senior leaders developed a number of plans following the initial inspection in 2020. Whilst the plans helped to drive a few changes, these remain at an early stage. It would now be helpful for the new headteacher, staff, young people and parents to take time to reflect on the journey so far. This will ensure everyone is involved in working towards realistic and shared goals to support every young person achieve their full potential.

Senior leaders have created a number of additional staff posts which are beginning to support key areas across the school. Senior leaders now need to review how all staff are taking forward important leadership responsibilities. All staff should now work together to ensure a clear, coordinated whole school plan for improvement.

Young people are enthusiastic about the leadership opportunities afforded to a few of them and they report feeling cared for and supported in school. The headteacher is aware that all young people now need to be fully involved in making decisions about all aspects of school life.

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment should be more focused on supporting young people's individual learning needs. Staff across the school should develop a shared understanding of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment.

Senior leaders have continued to prioritise the work of the existing Teacher Learning Community (TLC) group to support improvements in learning, teaching and assessment. Most teachers provide effective individual support to learners who are struggling in class by

working one on one with them. However, too often, tasks and activities are set for the whole class irrespective of individual learning needs. Teachers are also trying out new approaches to better meet the needs of learners, including alternative ways of assessing progress. As a next step, teachers should review their planning of tasks and activities so that they are set at the right level of challenge for all learners.

Senior leaders should proceed as planned to develop a shared understanding of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment. There continues to be too much variability in the quality of teaching across the school. Further to this, senior leaders need to continue to prioritise the work on developing positive relationships. At times, the behaviour of a minority of young people whose needs are not being met, in class and across the school, results in disruption to learning activities. All staff need to develop a more consistent and rigorous approach to support all young people to meet high standards of conduct.

Improve approaches to identifying young people who have additional support needs. Ensure all staff understand how they can support young people to achieve and attain better. This should lead to more young people feeling included in all aspects of school.

Overall, there is evidence of some improvement in this area. The additional leadership posts should further increase the school's capacity to support young people. Teachers have improved the way they identify young people's additional support needs. As a result, there are support plans in place for young people who need them. Senior leaders should ensure that all support plans are high quality and include clear strategies to support learning. Senior leaders should work with all staff to ensure that learners' targets address their additional support needs successfully. Young people now have weekly lessons in personal and social health. The topics being discussed are being consulted on with young people to involve them more fully in issues that matter to them.

Senior leaders have implemented a programme of professional learning on inclusive practice for all staff. They should continue to provide high-quality professional learning for all staff in supporting young people with barriers to learning.

A whole school strategy to support wellbeing would benefit staff, families, and young people. This should include an overview of mental, emotional, social and physical health and also include track the wellbeing of all young people. This would allow young people to identify the connections between wellbeing and learning and receive appropriate support if required.

Improve attainment for young people at all stages, particularly those at S4. This should involve progress in learning being well tracked from S1 to S6. The pace and challenge for learners needs to be reviewed and young people should know their next steps in learning in all areas of the curriculum.

Attainment across all year groups has not yet sufficiently improved. There are only a few areas where attainment has increased slightly. In a few other areas, attainment has declined. There remains a need to focus closely on attainment in S4 and to reduce the number of school leavers at this stage. Staff have been working together on this but have not yet had a consistent enough focus on raising attainment. Teachers should make sure young people and their families have a better understanding of the progress they are making.

Teachers and senior leaders are aware that they now need to look more closely at what happens in classrooms. This focus should enable young people to have more input into the factors which will make the biggest difference to their learning.

Staff have had a clearer focus on attainment data in S4 to S6. This is helping them to target support to specific young people and beginning to lead to improvements in their learning. Senior leaders need to ensure this data is used to identify the next school improvement priorities. School leaver destinations and school attendance remain areas that needs to be improved.

What happens next?

The school has made insufficient progress since the original inspection. We will liaise with North Lanarkshire Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within six months of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with North Lanarkshire Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school, we will write to you as parents informing you of the progress the school has made.

Ann Floyd
HM Inspector