

22 May 2018

Dear Parent/Carer,

In February 2018, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Dalkeith 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 is highly committed and has a clear vision for improvement at Dalkeith High School. She is working well with young people, staff, parents and partners to ensure that young people are benefiting from positive experiences and outcomes.
- Staff work well together. They are engaging in a range of professional learning and leadership activities to improve their practice, and are contributing enthusiastically to whole-school improvement.
- The school is developing a creative and enriched curriculum to provide learning pathways for young people to succeed as resourceful and resilient learners. It is making considerable efforts to ensure all young people achieve accreditation for the skills which they gain through an extensive range of opportunities.

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

- Continue to enable staff to engage in professional learning, which includes opportunities for them to engage further in moderation activities. This will assist them to develop their understanding of standards associated with the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels.
- Evaluate the success of curricular developments on an on-going basis to ensure they continue to provide an appropriate range of learning pathways to help young people to achieve and attain successfully.
- Align the school's work in refreshing the promoting positive behaviour policy with its work in developing and promoting restorative approaches. This should provide staff with a clear framework to support them to ensure positive learning experiences for all young people.
- Improve the consistency of how systems and procedures are used to ensure the wellbeing, inclusion and equality of all young people. Monitoring and tracking the progress of all young people should be carried out in a rigorous and structured way to ensure that barriers to learning are considered regularly and addressed.

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 Dalkeith High School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	good
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Raising attainment and achievement	good
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 will be available on the Education Scotland website at <https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/midlothian/5545838>.

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. Midlothian 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