

**Learning community inspection  
Continuing engagement**



**A report by HM Inspectors**

**Inspection of the learning community  
surrounding Oldmachar Academy  
Aberdeen City Council  
22 March 2016**

We published a report on the learning community surrounding Oldmachar Academy in January 2015. That report set out key strengths of the learning community and areas for improvement.

This continuing engagement report is based on an inspection visit which was carried out in February 2016. It tells you about improvement since the original inspection in the quality of learning opportunities provided. It also comments on how providers are getting on with the main points for action. We describe how learners are doing and how good the learning community is at helping them to learn. We comment on how well staff, learners and groups work together and the difference they are making in the learning community. Finally, we focus on how well the learning community is led and how leaders help the learning community achieve its aims.

If you would like to learn more about our original inspection of the learning community, please visit:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/othersectors/index.asp>

You will also find a report on the secondary school.

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In January 2015, HM Inspectors published a report on the learning community surrounding Oldmachar Academy. We visited the learning community in February 2016. During this visit we met with a range of staff, volunteers, partners and learners. We focussed on the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection. As a result we were able to find out how well partners across the learning community are now working together to support learners and communities to improve life chances.

**1. How well are partners improving learning, increasing life chances, promoting and securing wellbeing?**

The Community Learning and Development (CLD) partners have begun to develop approaches to recognise and celebrate learning in the area. There is an early stage of development of award programmes in the school and there is now a group of school & CLD staff who are working together to deliver award programmes. Active Schools is making good progress within the Associated Schools Group (ASG).

There has been no extension of adult learning programmes or the range of provision in the area since the original inspection. While the extension of wider achievement programmes is to be welcomed, almost all of the work is at early stages of development and impacts are limited at this point in time. There is not yet a systematic approach to celebrate achievement by the Learning Partnership in the Oldmachar area. Work to celebrate success has happened in Dyce but not yet in Oldmachar. There is insufficient progress on this area.

Young people in the S1 cohort are beginning to engage with wider achievement activities. Young people in S4 undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh's Award are becoming more confident and are engaging in volunteering. Young people who are involved in local sports clubs volunteer and support coaching activities with younger children. A few young people in the local Boys Brigade Battalion have gained the Saltire Award in recognition of their volunteering activity. All of these activities are making a positive contribution to recognising achievement. This work now needs to be sustained and further developed.

The CLD team are piloting the Adult Achievement Awards but this is again work at an early stage of development. This has further potential to be expanded and developed. Accredited learning opportunities are available to learners mainly at city centre venues; publicity material promoting the learning offer has been circulated city wide. However, there has been insufficient progress to develop locally based adult learning provision.

## **2. How well are partners working together and improving the quality of services and provision?**

There is early stage work to begin to improve youth voice and participation within the school. A consultation is currently underway with pupils at Oldmachar Academy mapping the range of activities young people participate in, the areas where they socialise and what they think is lacking in the local area. The consultation process combines a number of Personal and Social Education activities relating to Health and Wellbeing that works well in attracting the pupils to participate. Results of the consultation will be reported to the pupil council. While this is positive it is too early to demonstrate impacts at this point in time. This work should continue to be developed. However, there is still considerable work to be done to involve a wider range of learners and local providers in the local Learning Partnership.

The CLD partners have begun to undertake a survey of volunteer activity in the area. They have also produced a new booklet on CLD provision in the Bridge of Don area. These activities have provided the CLD partners with a clearer idea of local provision. However, there has been no significant development of joint self-evaluation in the Learning Partnership. There is now an urgent need to complete and take forward the local action plan.

## **3. Does the learning community have a clear sense of direction?**

The learning community, while making some early progress on aspects relating to young people, the Oldmachar area does not receive sufficient attention and resources to enable progress to be made. As a result, this means there has been no significant improvement in the quality of CLD services.

## **4. What happens next?**

The Learning Community around Oldmachar Academy has made some progress in meeting one of the recommendations of the original report. However there has been insufficient or limited progress on the other three main points for action. HM Inspectors will carry out a further visit to assess progress in one year from the date of publication of this report.

Phil Denning  
HM Inspector  
22 March 2016

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for this learning community can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/othersectors/communitylearninganddevelopment/OldmacharAcademyLC.asp> .

If you would like to receive this report in a different format, for example, in a translation you can contact the administration team on 0131 244 4684.

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