

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

December 2014

Dear Parent/Carer

**Broxburn Academy
West Lothian Council**

**Progress made during session 2013 – 2014 in relation to the Education Scotland
Broxburn Academy follow through report of 5 November 2013**

The Head Teacher, supported by the local authority, has taken a stronger role in directing and leading the work of the school, establishing a key role for promoted staff in a sustained drive for improvement. All staff have taken on board a range of improvement strategies through the clearer focus on raising standards, and particularly in raising attainment. More pupils are achieving awards in National Qualifications. As a result, attainment in national examinations improved significantly as follows:

By the end of S4	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
					Nationals
5+ Level 5	31	29	33	35	37
5+ Level 4	90	83	84	83	86
5+ Level 3	98	96	96	92	96

By the end of S5	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
1+ Level 6	39	45	44	44	60
3+ Level 6	15	27	21	24	33
5+ Level 6	7	11	12	10	18

The pace of change has increased with the implementation of a range of practices to support improvement. During the course of session 2013/14 the Head Teacher and the Senior Management Team (SMT) reviewed the current systems and procedures which monitor pupil performance. This has resulted in more robust tracking and monitoring which enables staff and senior managers to scrutinise pupil performance. The school is now able to show how well young people are progressing in their learning S4-6. Meetings to discuss examination results now have clearer actions, which are revisited regularly. The SMT has built in more robust performance review meetings with faculties following the Scottish Qualifications Authority examinations results. This enables realistic and achievable targets to be set for individual pupils. These targets include clearer time lines, timings for assignments and more regular feedback for improvement from the teacher to pupils. Regular progress meetings focussing on these targets are held between the SMT and Principal Teachers Curriculum (PTC).

In addition weekly attainment meetings take place with the PTCs and staff to discuss students' progress and identify support strategies to achieve improvements in attainment. Extended SMT meeting time is focussed on discussing the progress of students in S4, S5 and S6. Class teachers, young people and parents are all involved as appropriate.

Building on this improved practice, the school, supported by the local authority, will further develop tracking and monitoring of S1-3 pupils' learning across the broad general education. This will enable the school to better evidence the progress that S1–S3 pupils are making.

Very effective assertive mentoring by SMT took place with targeted students. These students were met regularly and interventions took place to support success. Monthly reporting to parents/carers better informs them of their child's progress, the next steps in their learning and also encourages them to become more involved in their children's learning.

Learners' views are sought and taken into account and they are responding well to the expectation that they take responsibility for assessing their progress and setting their targets. Whole school observations and faculty validated self-evaluations in science and mathematics indicate that self and peer assessment are now much more embedded across the school. Class teachers have increased further their expectations and there is evidence of them challenging all young people to achieve more by providing more appropriate classwork for all learners. Most teachers provide quality learning experiences and useful feedback to learners, with improved and more regular use of technology to support learning. Learning observations will continue to focus on pace, differentiation and regular quality feedback to pupils, involving them in setting their own learning goals. Outcomes of these learning observations are shared with staff and this ensures they are aware of where learning is effective and how this benefits the learner. This will continue as will further development to ensure that across the school all teachers build effectively on young people's prior attainment.

Parental engagement has been further developed through a range of strategies including enhanced transition procedures. In the Broxburn Learning Community very good collaborative working is continuing to ensure better coherence and progression in learning.

The curriculum continues to be reviewed to raise standards of attainment and achievement and advance equality of opportunity to meet the needs of all pupils. Learning pathways better ensure that young people are coursed for success and that there are progressive routes for learners. There are timetabled opportunities for additional supported study.

Pupils at risk of losing out are supported by buddies, Information Technology (IT) support staff and differentiated resources. Young people benefit from responsive, flexible support particularly in times of crisis. In developing effective Skills for Work courses good partnership working takes place with Oatridge College and with the Army Cadets. Appointment of House Captains has extended leadership opportunities. The school is working more collaboratively with Community Learning and Development services to identify more opportunities for students to benefit from experiences provided by external partners. The school's More Choices More Chances team works effectively with targeted pupils encouraging them towards positive post school destinations.

In the last year, self-evaluation has become more evident. Led by the Head Teacher and supported by the local authority, this has been achieved by specific changes in practice and there is now a culture of reflection and review to support quality improvement.

Revised practices have included a programme of learning visits which focus on department and whole school priorities for improvement. This gives opportunities for peer-evaluation and promotes consistency in learning and teaching. The sharing of good practice has been formalised through such organised activity, and for example, through staff sharing successful teaching strategies at weekly department meetings.

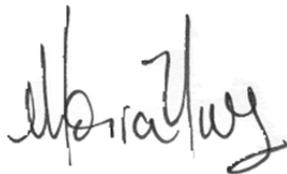
Most staff are aware of the impact of their professional learning on students and are committed to acting on the results of consultations and more rigorous self-evaluation. PTCs work well as a team to quality assure, identify effective learning and teaching strategies and share best practice. This session all faculties have produced Standards and Quality Reports which have enabled shared evaluation and reflection within staff teams leading to agreed next steps for improvement. The school values distributive leadership and many staff effectively take on leadership responsibilities and co-ordinator roles. All staff engage in annual professional review and experience more appropriate continuous professional learning.

Consultation and communication with all stakeholders has been improved significantly. The student council has a high profile. The number of partners who contribute to the development of young people has grown and more students' learning experiences have been enhanced through an increase in local business and community placements.

Conclusion

West Lothian Council considers that Broxburn Academy is in a position to sustain this level of improvement. As a result Education Scotland inspectors will make no further visits in connection with this follow through report. The council will continue to support and monitor the work of the school to improve standards further and raise attainment.

Yours faithfully



Moira Niven
Depute Chief Executive, Education, Planning and Area Services