

"Working together to inspire learning and achievement in Highland Communities"



Standards and Quality Report

The Highland Council
Education, Culture and Sport Service

Name of Faculty/Department: Support for Learning
Date: 22nd September 2015

Our vision, values and aims

(Dept./Faculty position statement: BGE/Senior Phase-learner pathways-aspirations)

- To raise attainment and maintain high standards for pupils with additional support needs.
- Learners' needs are identified, reviewed and evaluated.
- The needs of individual learners are met.
- Barriers to learning are identified and mitigated.
- To motivate learners to be active participants in their own learning.
- To seek and act upon the views of our learners and their parents/carers.
- To develop individualised curricula based on a clear rationale and shared values.
- Teaching and learning is stimulating, challenging, relevant and enjoyable.
- Continuity and progression are maintained through transition phases.
- Pupil learning is effectively monitored, tracked and reported.
- The work of staff is fully reflective and is carefully evaluated.
- Good practice is shared
- Our vision, values and aims are used as a basis for reviewing our work.

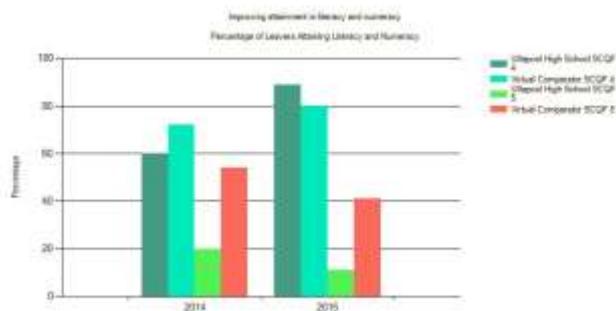
The Core Areas of our Practice

This report summarises the strengths of our faculty /department, our recent improvements and what needs to improve further. We gather this information throughout the year in a variety of ways so we can make sure our report is as accurate as possible. We take time to compare what we do with national examples of best practice. We collaborate with subject teachers and share standards in learning and teaching. We look at children and young people's work to see how they are progressing. We make use of factual data and information including attainment results responding and adapting our teaching in line with children's needs. We assess using our own expertise, using assessment tools in line with HC policy, and through onward referral to outside partners, as appropriate. Pupils peer assess and self assess. We gather the views of children, parents, staff and members of the local community when pupils are engaged in learning off site. We use all of this information to arrive at our view of the quality of education we provide.

Our Key Strengths

(What do you rate as Excellent/very good practice in your area-HGIOS/J2E)

The department has an inclusive ethos, receiving very positive feedback from HMIE at the last inspection. We have good partnerships with parents, based on regular communication. We maintain 13 full child's plans, 6 individualised education plans, 2 coordinated support plans. Regular review meetings and the use of solution focussed meetings, when necessary, are embedded in our current practice. Teaching and interventions are highly individualised. Learning support has traditionally been well staffed, with low staff turnover. At present there are 1.3 learning support teachers, 1 full time Pupil Support Assistant and 4 part-time Pupil Support Assistants. We are very fortunate to have well educated and trained staff. The use of IT to support independent learning is now widely embedded in classrooms. We manage a well-established transition programme (P7-S1) working collaboratively with UHS colleagues and staff from 7 local primary schools. Primary/Secondary transition is managed by a learning support teacher who divides her time between UHS and its associated schools group. Pupils have a named adult who is responsible for co-ordinating other professionals and functions as a key teacher for that pupil. Staff are reflective practitioners, working towards school improvement through self-evaluation and who measure up well to professional standards. Expertise is shared with teaching staff from UHS and the ASG.

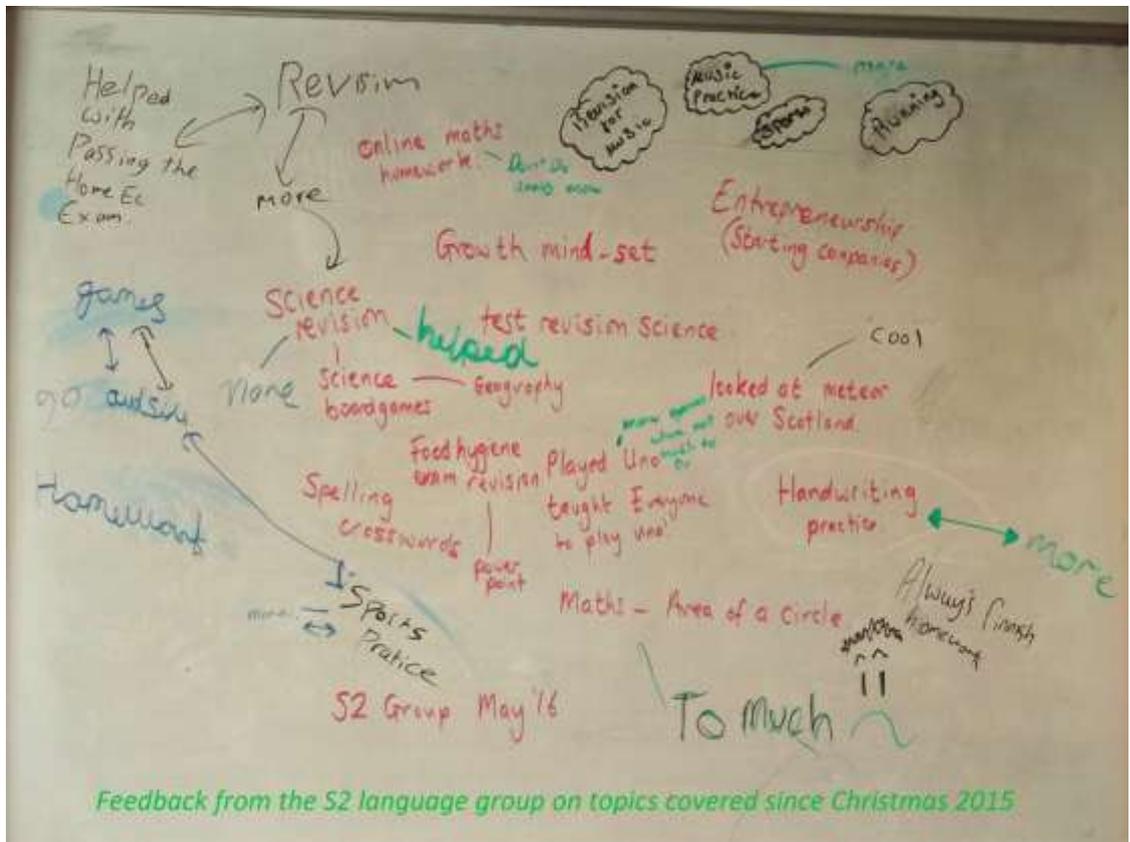


Improvements in literacy and numeracy for ASN pupils at level 4 is out-performing our virtual comparator school but there is further improvement needed at level 5.

Our Improvements Last Session

(Key developments since last year)

Our systems for monitoring and tracking of pupil progress have improved through the widespread use of progression frameworks for literacy and numeracy. We use the senior phase benchmarking tool (INSIGHT) to analyse the progress of pupils and we can isolate ASN as a subset of the school population to review the efficacy of our interventions. We are now using the SEEMIS database to record pupil's needs and to link that to alternative arrangements for SQA assessment and to inform teaching colleagues of pupil needs and successful strategies for individuals. Our assessment procedures for assessing dyslexia are in line with HC policy. Learner pathways have been developed to ensure learning progresses at an appropriate rate for each individual and some 3 different ASDAN courses are being developed to complement the standard curriculum. Developing the Young Workforce has enabled us to raise awareness around the lack of post school opportunities for school leavers with additional needs. Meetings are held "around the child" with subject staff, to keep them updated on successful strategies and pupil needs. SfL staff (teaching and non-teaching), plan and record their work collaboratively with subject teachers, working as a team. SfL teachers attend ASG meetings to plan and prepare for transition from P7, and work in collaboration with the educational psychologist as necessary. The quality of teaching within the department is monitored through participation in validated self-evaluation and peer observation by colleagues from other faculties. All staff undertake continuing professional development and new learning is shared across the department at weekly meetings. Staff take account of learner feedback when planning next steps for pupils.



Our Priorities For Improvement for Next Session

(Headline developments in progress)

Make more effective use of data from S2 SOSCA assessments.

Building on work from last session, develop the leadership skills of pupils focussing on S5/6 through events such as growth mind-set workshops and initiatives like Youth Philanthropy Initiative, but also through in-house programmes such as senior in-class support.

Continue to develop knowledge-sharing with primaries in the associated schools group.

Development of literacy across the curriculum through Teachers' Learning Communities.

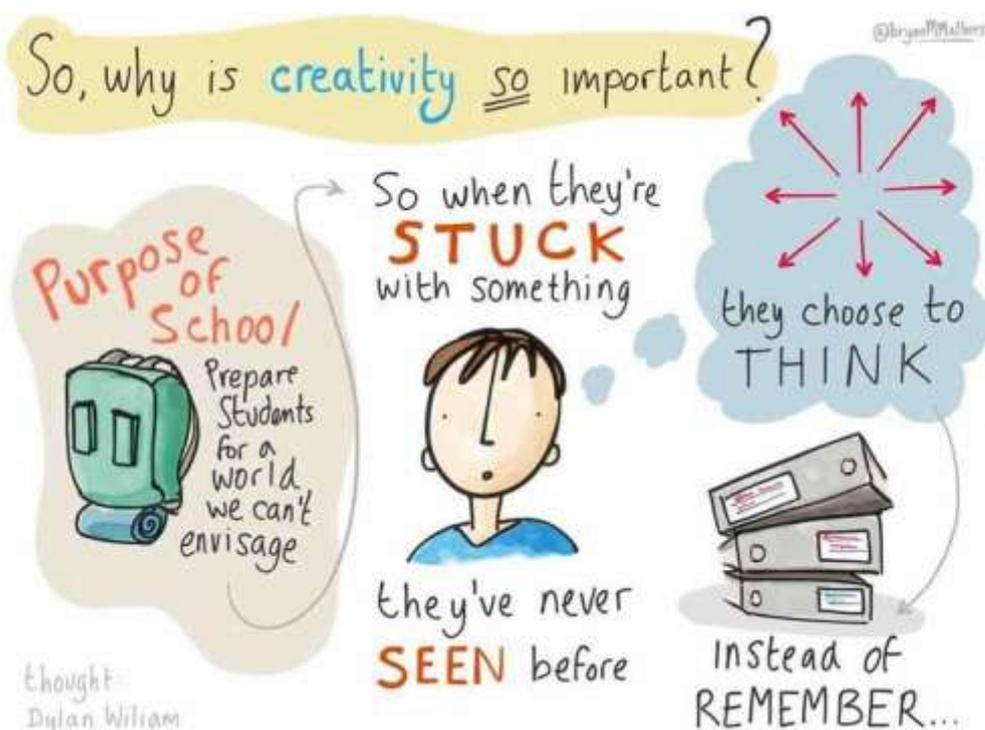
Participate in Professional Review & Development.

Develop an ethos of resilience and entrepreneurship, creativity and goal-orientation focussing on S3 pupils.

Developing a learner pathway for ASD pupils centring on understanding of an ASD diagnosis, development of social and communication skills, resilience and tolerance.

Addressing the issue of a growing number of pupils who are unable to cope with full-time attendance in mainstream lessons for different reasons.

Ensuring that opportunities for creative and divergent thinking are evident in all aspects of the work of the department.



1. How well do young people learn and achieve?

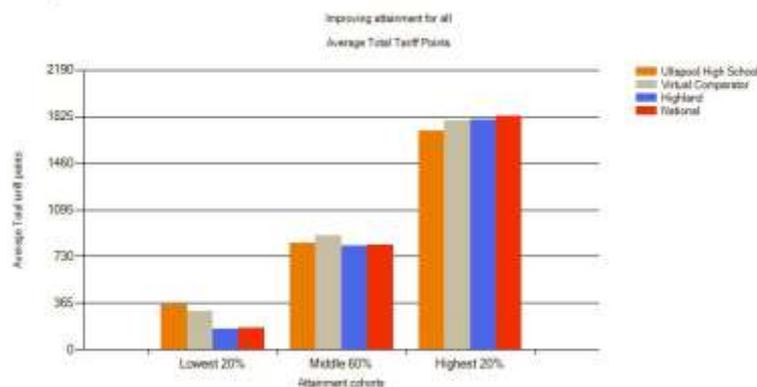
1.1.Improvements in performance

- *Standards of attainment over past three years (quantitative)*
- *Reference to SOSCA's data (above, on, below prediction)*

2.1 Learners' experiences

- *The extent to which learners are motivated and actively involved in their own learning and development-examples*
- *Any notable achievements (outwith exams)*

Pupils with additional support needs were again well represented amongst this year's exam results. The judicious use of alternative assessment arrangements allowed 44 pupils to work towards SQA qualifications on a level playing field and demonstrate their capabilities, irrespective of any barriers to learning.



The Scottish government's priority for education, 'closing the gap', centres on improved outcomes for the lowest 20% in schools, in terms of attainment. Input from the learning support department resulted in pupils at UHS out-performing the virtual comparator school as well as other schools in Highland or nationally.

The work of the Support for Learning department is very varied. In recent years pupils have experienced achievements in an extraordinary range of activities, either as part of SQA recognised study, or through the type of enhanced and enriched curriculum we try to provide for those pupils not following a mainstream curriculum.

A sample of these achievements is as follows:-

- 1 pupil working towards an ASDAN Key Steps Award.
- Successful completion of 'Social Use of Language Programme' by a group of 3 pupils.
- Target setting and growth mind-set programme undertaken by 6 pupils.
- 2 pupils enjoyed individualised cooking and baking lessons.
- 1 pupil became involved with the charity "Therapets".
- 1 pupil participated in still life drawing classes.

In addition SfL staff have been responsible for:-

- Delivery of a textiles module in Home Economics.
- Delivery of English and Lifeskills Mathematics at N4 level
- Delivery of a range of social and communications skills interventions for ASD pupils.

2. How well do we support young people to develop and learn?

5.1 The Curriculum

- *The rationale and design of our courses*
- *BGE specialisation*
- *Senior phase progressions*

5.3 Meeting learning needs

- *Describe identification of learning needs*
- *Describe use of specialist staff*

Courses are designed and developed as required, with individual needs very much in mind. Examples of this, ASDAN Key Steps (1 pupil), Goal setting with a growth (6 pupils), Social use of language programme (3 pupils) and I am unique! (4 pupils). Occasionally work has taken place with year groups around the needs of one individual child, at the request of that child and with parental permission. Every year the learning support department participates in the work of the English department S3 classes studying 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time', providing input to pupils on autism and its effects on those who have autism. The Principal Teacher has recently undergone training in leadership and change management and is attempting to pass on leadership skills to pupils, through the work carried out in the department.

The work of the department is in line with GIRFEC (Getting It Right for Every Child). Additional support needs are identified through a staged intervention process, aiming for lightest touch intervention. Pupils' needs are considered in relation to safety, good health, achievement, whether they are nurtured, active, respected and responsible and included. A range of assessments can be done internally e.g. for dyslexia, following the Highland Council dyslexia policy, but more in-depth assessment can also be carried out by partner agencies through referral.

The learning support department can call upon one full-time and one part-time specialist teachers working collaboratively with subject staff or directly with pupils through withdrawal from other lessons. We have a team of skilled and experienced Pupil Support Assistants who are reflective practitioners, and in all cases they bring their own life experiences and talents to bear in their work with our pupils. We can also draw on input from a wide range of outside agencies such as Skills Development Scotland, NHS where appropriate, or outreach support from different aspects of the Care & Learning service.

3. How well do we improve the quality of our work?

5.9 Improvements through self-evaluation

- *Examples of commitment to self-evaluation: QA calendar; Learning Log-profiling; Classroom Observation focus*

We are working collaboratively with colleagues around the school to improve our practice as teachers. Together with our subject specialist colleagues, we are promoting literacy and numeracy across the

curriculum, with the help of the new benchmarking guidelines that have recently become available. Additionally we are now beginning to use 'How good is Our School version 4' to audit our practice and challenge our own evidence for success using the new challenge questions. Over the course of 2016/17 we will aim to ensure that our classroom practice is line with the requirements of the government's new National Improvement Framework.



Pupil feedback is used as a planning tool for future lessons. Pupil voice is heard in everything that we do. Regular and informal contact with parents supports the work of the department.

The work of the department is driven forward by a quality assurance calendar which ensures that all functions of the department happen according to agreed timings throughout the year.