

Sub-Committee on Standards for Children & Families

Tuesday, 2.00pm, 29 January 2019

Follow-through Inspection at Portobello High School

Item number	6.1
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	
Council Commitments	

Executive Summary

Education Scotland (ES), undertake an annual sample of inspections across Scotland (approximately 240 per year) covering nursery, primary, special and secondary schools. A letter to parents/carers on each inspection is published approximately three months after the inspection. On the basis of this letter the school with the support of the authority amends its improvement plan to take account of any agreed areas for improvement. Inspectors usually revisit a school within a year of the publication of the letter where weak or unsatisfactory practice has been identified. For all other schools inspected the local authority will inform the parents about the progress made in improving the quality of education. This letter and evaluations (Appendix 1) and the Summary of Inspection Findings (Appendix 2) advises the Sub-committee on the outcomes of the initial inspection in March 2017.

As part of their ongoing support, officers from The City of Edinburgh Council, in partnership with Education Scotland, conducted a follow-through inspection in October 2018 at Portobello High School to determine the school's progress in relation to agreed areas for improvement arising from the Education Scotland Inspection. The follow-through report (Appendix 3) updates the Sub-committee on the steps taken by the school to address areas for improvement and progress made.

Education Scotland concludes that Portobello High School has the capacity to continue to improve and will publish no further reports in relation to the 2017 Education Scotland inspection report.

Follow-through Inspection at Portobello High School

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Sub-committee is requested to:
 - 1.1.1 note the findings of the report including the areas where the education authority and the school should continue to improve the school; and
 - 1.1.2 receive an authority inspection follow through report within two years of the publication of the inspection letter

2. Background

- 2.1 In March 2017, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Portobello High School. During their visit, they talked to parents/carers, children and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. Evidence gathered enables education Scotland to evaluate some quality indicators from How good is our school? (4th edition). Quality indicators help schools, education 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 evaluations of quality indicators to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing. As part of their ongoing support, officers from The City of Edinburgh Council, in partnership with Education Scotland, conducted a follow-through inspection in October 2018 at Portobello High School to determine the school's progress in relation to agreed areas for improvement arising from the Education Scotland Inspection.
- 2.2 Taking account of the progress report, Education Scotland would decide whether further engagement with the school is required. This may involve another inspection visit.

3. Main report

The report, published 27 June 2017 identified the following key strengths:

- 3.1 The commitment of the headteacher and senior leadership team to planning and taking forward school improvement.
- 3.2 The school's approaches to supporting young people requiring additional help with their learning. Interventions and strong partnership working are leading to young people feeling included, supported and nurtured. They are progressing well in their learning as a result.

- 3.3 The school is beginning to develop a range of learning pathways in the senior phase to support young people in the development of skills for life, learning and work.
- 3.4 Young people are attaining well in National Qualifications. Almost all young people move to a positive destination on leaving school.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from The City of Edinburgh Council:

- 3.5 All staff now need to work together to improve the quality and consistency of young people’s learning experiences. Staff should build on existing strong practice to provide learning and assessment which supports young people at all stages to make the best possible progress in their learning.
- 3.6 Continue to improve staff’s understanding of their roles and responsibilities in supporting the wellbeing of all young people. A shared understanding of the importance of positive relationships, high expectations and wellbeing should underpin the school’s work to improve young people’s learning and achievement.
- 3.7 Staff should take forward plans to review the curriculum taking into account national advice on the broad general education and the senior phase.
- 3.8 Here are Education Scotland’s evaluations for Portobello High School:

Quality Indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	Satisfactory
Learning, teaching and assessment	Satisfactory
Raising attainment and achievement	Good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Satisfactory

Progress to Date:

- 3.9 Staff are working together to improve the quality and consistency of young people’s learning experiences. There has been a shift towards positive, streamlined approaches to both learning and teaching, and behaviour management.
- 3.10 Improvements to the pupil support and key adult structure have promoted a greater understanding of roles and responsibilities in supporting the wellbeing of young people. Positive relationships between staff and young people are evident across the school.
- 3.11 Senior staff have taken important steps to review the curriculum.
- 3.12 The Quality Improvement Education Officer (City of Edinburgh Council) and the Headteacher collaborate effectively and this partnership working promotes continuous improvement at the school.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 As part of their ongoing support, officers from The City of Edinburgh Council, in partnership with Education Scotland, conducted a follow-through inspection in October 2018 at Portobello High School to determine the school's progress in relation to agreed areas for improvement arising from the Education Scotland Inspection. The follow-through report (Appendix 1.3) updates the Sub-committee on the steps taken by the school to address areas for improvement and progress made.
- 4.2 Overall, the school has taken steps to address the areas for improvement from the original inspection and has progressed well. Young people, parents and staff are positive about these steps and show pride and confidence in their school.
- 4.3 Education Scotland concludes that Portobello High School has the capacity to continue to improve and will publish no further reports in relation to the 2017 Education Scotland inspection report.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 There are no financial implications contained in the ES report.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The recommendations in this report have been assessed in relation to risk, policy, compliance and governance and no negative impacts have been found.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 There are considered to be no infringements of the rights of the child. Tracking of pupil performance by gender and Black Minority Ethnic (BME) is undertaken at school level and there are no adverse impacts.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 None.

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Parents, pupils and staff completed an ES questionnaire prior to the inspection.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 Inspection report for Portobello High School, Edinburgh - 27/06/17
<https://education.gov.scot/assets/inspectionreports/portobellohighins270617.pdf>
- 10.2 Summarised inspection findings for Portobello High School, Edinburgh - 28/06/17
<https://education.gov.scot/assets/inspectionreports/portobellohsedinburghsif280617.pdf>

Alistair Gaw

Executive Director Communities and Families

Contact: Roberta Boden, Acting Quality Improvement Education Manager

E-mail: roberta.porter@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 123 4567

11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1 - Follow-through Inspection Report for Portobello High School, Edinburgh – 18/12/18

Appendix 1

Follow-through Inspection Report for Portobello High School, Edinburgh

As part of their ongoing support, officers from The City of Edinburgh Council, in partnership with Education Scotland, conducted a follow-through inspection at Portobello High School in October 2018 to determine the school's progress in relation to agreed areas for improvement arising from the Education Scotland Inspection (March 2017).

Areas for improvement from the original report

1. *All staff now need to work together to improve the quality and consistency of young people's learning experiences.*

Staff should build on existing strong practice to provide learning and assessment which supports young people at all stages to make the best possible progress in their learning

Staff are working together to improve the quality and consistency of young people's learning experiences. The school has consulted with staff and agreed an approach to learning and teaching (the "plan, deliver, assess" model). Staff are positive about this and feel that in combination with other improvement strategies, there has been a shift towards positive, streamlined approaches to both learning and teaching, and behaviour management. In classes, young people are more engaged in learning and behaving respectfully.

There is scope for a brisker pace of learning to raise the level of challenge, particularly in S1-S3 (Broad General Education). In most lessons learners can explain the purpose of the learning. Staff should continue to develop strategies for effective teaching and learning, such as digital learning, differentiation and feedback, through their Professional Learning Communities and planned opportunities to share classroom experience. The school should continue to develop a more systematic approach to self-evaluation for improvement as this would further strengthen consistency across and within faculties.

Staff have engaged in assessment and moderation activities. Well-planned staff professional learning opportunities have supported staff to move beyond sharing the planning of learning, towards moderation of achievement of a level in all curricular areas, using benchmarks as appropriate. Maintaining a focus on the nature and purpose of assessment in the BGE will be useful in supporting young people to make the best possible progress in their learning.

Young people in the BGE are not always clear about their progress in learning and level of achievement across curriculum areas. Better consistency across staff in the language used to describe learning and how they track and monitor young people's progress in the BGE would provide a meaningful overview of attainment. This would support young people to make well-informed choices, in particular for Senior Phase pathways (S4-S6). The school has developed systems to track and monitor progress and now needs to ensure that this data is being used to best effect to better plan for improved outcomes for young people.

Areas for improvement from the original report

- 2. Continue to improve staff's understanding of their roles and responsibilities in supporting the wellbeing of all young people.*

A shared understanding of the importance of positive relationships, high expectations and wellbeing should underpin the school's work to improve young people's learning and achievement.

Improvements to the pupil support and key adult structure have promoted a greater understanding of roles and responsibilities in supporting the wellbeing of young people. There is greater rigour in managing attendance. The school should continue to develop the pace of improvement to the Personal and Social Education programme, based on national guidelines, as this will support young people's learning across the wellbeing indicators.

Collaboration between staff and pupils is fostering greater identification with the school's House system and reinforcing shared values and expectations. Young people are more able to articulate the school's values, and show pride in their school. Positive relationships between staff and young people are evident across the school. Young people appreciate the simpler, calmer, more purposeful ethos supported by the new behaviour management policy. The school should continue to monitor how well this policy is being implemented to ensure sustainability.

Areas for improvement from the original report

- 3. Staff should take forward plans to review the curriculum taking into account national advice on the broad general education and the senior phase.*

Senior staff have taken important steps to review the curriculum. They have taken a step change approach to making improvements to the overall framework. This approach is allowing time for consultation with staff, parents and young people. It also ensures that young people who have already made choices for courses will have their expectations met.

Improving the curriculum has started with changing the number of choices for S3 to better align the BGE and Senior Phases. Changes have been implemented for young people in S3 in the current session. They have made choices for seven courses (previously eight) which they will continue with in S4 in school session 2019-20. However, their S3 experience remains largely the same as previous years and they are not receiving their full entitlement to a Broad General Education to the end of S3. The school is currently addressing changes to the S3 experience to ensure this entitlement is met from next school session.

The senior phase continues to offer a broad range of options. The range of Foundation Apprenticeship programmes available to young people has broadened and uptake is

consistent. Young people describe how their college study is allowing them to develop specialist knowledge in their chosen subject, gain awareness of college level study, and become more aware of the world of work. Senior leaders continue to engage well with the local college to provide opportunities to broaden the Senior Phase curriculum.

Senior leaders have engaged with the local authority and other professionals to support their approach to the implementation of the Developing the Young Workforce programme. The school has continued to develop the approach to the promotion of post-school options. Activities to allow parents and young people to access providers of post-school destinations have increased the level of engagement compared to previous years. Young people speak positively about their opportunities to meet with staff from colleges and universities about the options available to them and how this helps them to make informed choices.

Senior leaders recognise that whilst awareness of both the Career Education Standard (CES) and Work Placement Standard (WPS) is developing amongst staff, implementation has not yet progressed to delivery of the entitlements to all young people. The re-design of the school curriculum should take CES and WPS into account to ensure these entitlements are delivered.

It is important that the curriculum framework provides learning pathways which meet the needs of the different groups of learners, both through the BGE and the Senior Phase. The useful range of data management approaches developed by the school will support more evidence-based approaches to consultations and decision making. A holistic overview of the framework and pathways, through primary to leaving Portobello HS, is needed to ensure young people are provided with opportunities which meet their needs and allow them to make the best possible progress. Given the progress in the whole school approach to leading and managing change, the pace of improvements to the curriculum now needs to increase. This should also include a review of the school's presentation policy for examinations in S4 to S6.

What happens next?

Overall, the school has taken steps to address the areas for improvement from the original inspection and has progressed well. Young people, parents and staff are positive about these steps and show pride and confidence in their school.

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and will publish no further reports in relation to the 2017 Education Scotland inspection report.