

# Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families

Wednesday, 11 March 2020

## Follow-through visit at Tynecastle High School

Item number  
Executive/routine  
Wards  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 The Sub-Committee for Standards for Children and Families is requested to:
  - 1.1.1 the education authority and the school should continue to improve; and
  - 1.1.2 Note the progress made since the inspection, and the local authority's finding that the school has the capacity to continue to improve.

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## Follow-through visit at Tynecastle High School

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 Following the Education Scotland (ES) inspection of Tynecastle High School in December 2017, resulting in a published inspection report in February 2018, officers from The City of Edinburgh Council conducted a follow-through visit in November 2019 to determine the school's progress in relation to agreed areas for improvement. Officers will continue to work with the school to ensure progress continues.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 Education Scotland 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. 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. The latter was the case for Tynecastle.
- 3.2 In December 2017, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Tynecastle 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. Council officers are then required to provide an update on progress within 2 years of the inspection. The school Quality Improvement Officer continues to work with the head teacher and senior leadership team to plan for continuing improvement.

## 4. Main report

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The Education Scotland report, published on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2018, identified the following key strengths:

- 4.1 Ably led by the headteacher, staff's shared drive and commitment to working together to lead school improvement which includes a strong voice for young people.
- 4.2 Positive relationships between staff and young people and across the school community. This has built a strong sense of community and supports young people's progress.
- 4.3 The effective use of digital technology which is supporting young people to learn flexibly in and beyond the classroom in a range of different and motivating ways.
- 4.4 The positive impact of the school's work in overcoming barriers facing young people to improve participation, engagement and achievement and support equity. This is leading to improved attainment in some key measures.

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

- 4.5 Continue to ensure planning for improvement leads to measurable impact on the school's work.
- 4.6 Continue to improve approaches to the assessment, moderation and planning of learning to meet the needs of all young people more effectively.
- 4.7 Further improve the quality and consistency of planning for groups and individual learners with identified additional support needs.
- 4.8 Continue to raise attainment by developing learning pathways through S1 to S6 to ensure a more dynamic and flexible curriculum which meets the aspirations of all young people.
- 4.9 Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Tynecastle High School:

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

- 4.10 The current school roll is 628 young people; at time of inspection the school roll was 558. Growth and the creation of Pupil Equity Funded staff opportunities have led to an increase in staffing with nearly half the complement new since inspection.

- 4.11 Tynecastle won the Scottish Education Award for Digital Learning and Teaching in 2018. The school is also an Apple Distinguished School, an accreditation which spans 2018-2021.
- 4.12 The school has taken a more consistent approach to planning for improvement at faculty level, with better alignment of plans at faculty and whole school level. Curriculum Leaders demonstrate ownership of school improvement and report increased confidence with the use of data amongst their staff. This includes the use of improvement science amongst staff at all levels, which the school will continue to strengthen.
- 4.13 Staff are now tracking attainment more effectively in the BGE and this remains a school priority. Staff meet with young people to discuss their progress and agree next steps and the tracking and monitoring system supports this work. The school will continue to monitor the impact this is having on attainment. Staff are engaging with the benchmarks within the BGE which is leading to a clearer overview of assessment.
- 4.14 Progress has been made towards a shared understanding of high quality learning and teaching. Staff are working in Learning Triads this year to support their professional development. Staff and young people at Tynecastle speak increasingly positively about their ability to lead and take forward initiatives.
- 4.15 The school is effectively using a “Team Around the Cluster” model to plan support for specific cohorts of learners. The number of young people accessing emotionally-based support, tailored to individual needs, has increased. Appropriate pathways are in place for targeted groups of young people. The school’s Information Hub to support learners is continually reviewed and improved.
- 4.16 The schools continues to enhance planned curricular pathways S1 to S6. The school is currently engaged in a comprehensive review of its curriculum, in consultation with young people, parents/carers and staff. It is clear that senior leaders are aware of the importance of ensuring the new curriculum meets the aspirations of all young people and delivers increased levels of attainment and achievement.

## **5. Next Steps**

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- 5.1 The local authority is satisfied that the school has made good progress with the areas highlighted in the inspection report. The school is committed to continuing to improve outcomes for young people.
- 5.2 The local authority is confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 There are no financial implications contained in this report.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 Consultation and engagement:  
Parents, pupils and staff completed an ES questionnaire prior to the inspection.
- 7.2 Equalities impact:  
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.
- 7.3 Sustainability impact:  
None

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 Tynecastle Inspection Report, Education Scotland 27.02.18  
<https://education.gov.scot/media/0lxjvkg4/tynecastlehsins270218.pdf>
- 8.2 Tynecastle Summarised Inspection Findings, Education Scotland 16.03.18  
<https://education.gov.scot/media/i45fqjte/tynecastlehighschoolsif160318.pdf>

## **9. Appendix**

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- 9.1 Tynecastle High School Post-Inspection Visit Report, November 2019

## **Appendix 1**

### **Tynecastle High School post-inspection visit by City of Edinburgh Council, Nov 2019**

The following is taken from the Education Scotland inspection report for the school (February 2018):

#### **Identified Strengths**

- Ably led by the headteacher, staff's shared drive and commitment to working together to lead school improvement which includes a strong voice for young people.
- Positive relationships between staff and young people and across the school community. This has built a strong sense of community and supports young people's progress.
- The effective use of digital technology which is supporting young people to learn flexibly in and beyond the classroom in a range of different and motivating ways.
- The positive impact of the school's work in overcoming barriers facing young people to improve participation, engagement and achievement and support equity. This is leading to improved attainment in some key measures.

#### **Areas for Improvement**

- Continue to ensure planning for improvement leads to measurable impact on the school's work.
- Continue to improve approaches to the assessment, moderation and planning of learning to meet the needs of all young people more effectively.
- Further improve the quality and consistency of planning for groups and individual learners with identified additional support needs.
- Continue to raise attainment by developing learning pathways through S1 to S6 to ensure a more dynamic and flexible curriculum which meets the aspirations of all young people.

The City of Edinburgh Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

#### **The post-inspection visit**

In order to report on progress, a team of council officers visited the school during the week beginning 25 November 2019. The team consisted of the Quality Improvement Manager for CEC secondary schools and two Quality Improvement Education Officers. Over the two-day visit, a number of classes were observed. The team met with the school's Senior Leadership Team to discuss progress with the priorities identified by HMIE. The team also met with the following focus groups: young people from S1-S3 (the Broad General Education); young people from S4-S6 (the Senior Phase); teaching staff; staff with responsibility for leadership; and staff involved in Pupil Support and Support for Learning.

## **Context of the school**

The current school roll is 628 young people; at time of inspection the school roll was 558. Current roll projection for August 2020 is 702. Growth and the creation of PEF opportunities have led to an increase in staffing with nearly half of the staffing complement new since the inspection.

Tynecastle won the Scottish Education Award for Digital Learning and Teaching (2018). The school is also an Apple Distinguished School, an accreditation which spans 2018-2021. All young people S3-S6 have 1:1 iPads.

## **Findings of the visit: progress with areas for improvement**

*Continue to ensure planning for improvement leads to measurable impact on the school's work.*

The school has taken a more consistent approach to planning for improvement at faculty level. There is better alignment of plans at faculty and whole-school level. Advice regarding planning for Curriculum Leaders is more robust, and increased support from Senior Leaders has been welcomed.

Curriculum Leaders demonstrate ownership of school improvement and report increased confidence with the use of data amongst their staff. Data is now used more effectively to inform progression pathways for young people and to plan for improvement. The school is working towards setting appropriate targets for progression in the Broad General Education (S1 to S3) in order to ensure pace and challenge.

Curriculum Leaders are becoming more confident in the use of "improvement science" methodology to set targets. The school would benefit from revisiting this methodology to build on successes and strengthen staff understanding in order to ensure consistency.

*Continue to improve approaches to the assessment, moderation and planning of learning to meet the needs of all young people more effectively.*

There is clear progress with improving learning and teaching within the Broad General Education (S1 to S3) and staff are now tracking attainment more effectively. This remains a school priority. Staff meet with young people to discuss their progress and agree next steps. The school's tracking and monitoring system supports this work; the school should continue to monitor the impact which this is having on attainment.

The school has invested in learning and teaching through its extended programme of in-house staff development. Staff are working in Learning Triads this year to support their professional development and share in classroom experience. Staff have been trained in a variety of approaches and the school plans to revisit these strategies to ensure they are used consistently and effectively. This has resulted in progress towards shared understanding of high quality learning and teaching.

Staff and pupils speak increasingly positively about their ability to lead and take forward initiatives. The school continues to use “teachmeets” as an effective means to share practice. Digital technology continues to be used widely to promote effective learning.

The school is working towards a clearer overview of well-planned assessment in the BGE. Staff are engaging with the benchmarks within the BGE. This has led to greater confidence in teacher judgement of young peoples’ progress, although there remains a need to ensure greater consistency in this area.

Young people continue to speak positively about their opportunities to contribute to ideas for school improvement and to shape the school curriculum through their involvement in Faculty Reviews, recruitment and Participatory Budgeting.

*Further improve the quality and consistency of planning for groups and individual learners with identified additional support needs.*

The school is effectively using a “Team Around The Cluster” model to plan support for specific cohorts of learners. A wide range of partners regularly attend TATC meetings, including Educational Psychology, Additional Support for Learning Service, the school's Educational Welfare Officer, Family & Household Support, Social Work, Family Group Decision Making and cluster Primary colleagues. Discussions are focussed on support for targeted groups (including care experienced learners).

The number of young people accessing emotionally-based support, tailored to individual needs, has increased.

Appropriate pathways are in place for targeted groups of young people. In some cases, these offers could be opened out more widely. The school has plans for this.

The school's Information Hub to support learners is continually reviewed and improved to ensure it is user-friendly and has the maximum impact. Post-inspection, specific groups to track and monitor attendance, attainment and interventions for young people at risk of not achieving have been created. This is allowing timely and individualised interventions to be put in place to support young people’s outcomes.

The school has increased contact with the associated primaries regarding P7 pupils who may require additional support, with a variety of transition programmes in place.

Pupil Support and Support for Learning staff take a consistent approach to improvement planning, using attendance data, attainment data and ASN information to plan and review support for learners at fortnightly Year Head meetings. The use of “improvement science” is consistent with the approach being promoted across the whole school, with targets being set to allow improvements to be monitored and evaluated.

*Continue to raise attainment by developing learning pathways through S1 to S6 to ensure a more dynamic and flexible curriculum which meets the aspirations of all young people.*

The school continues to enhance planned curricular pathways S1-S6. A number of courses to improve the offer for young people in the Senior Phase (S4-S6), along with a smaller number of courses in S3, have been introduced. This includes, for example, the

introduction of ESOL National Qualifications, which allow young people with English as an Additional Language to attain appropriate levels in literacy. There has been an increase in the number of young people accessing offers from the school/college partnership.

The school is part-way through a comprehensive review of its curriculum, which involves consultation with young people, parents/carers and staff. This is a major piece of work and senior leaders are aware of the importance of ensuring that the new curriculum meets the aspirations of all young people and delivers increased levels of attainment and achievement.

Staff are more aware of the Career Education Standard and the importance of linking learning to employability and skills development. In Science, for example, young people engaged with an “employability skills wheel”, whilst Art & Design have introduced a consistent approach to developing awareness of skills in the BGE linked to careers. Young people are accessing a wider range of career information in general; this is well-supported by strong partnership working with Skills Development Scotland. There is now an opportunity to revisit the school’s skills framework in order to share and extend this good practice.

The school has developed its Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) strategy. This has included increased engagement in My World of Work, a series of “Pathways” assemblies, strengthened 16+ tracking and individualised support. All faculties have chosen an aspect of DYW for planned improvement, as evidenced in faculty improvement plans. Tynecastle should now ensure that meaningful, measurable impact measures of this work are put in place, in order to more robustly define what success of the school’s DYW strategy will look like.

## **Conclusion**

The school has made good progress with all of the identified areas for improvement and has planned for further improvements over time. The local authority continues to be confident that the school has a clear, strategic direction and the capacity to continue to move forward positively.