

To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 23 August 2018

Report by: Director of Children's Services

**Heading: Education Scotland Continuing Engagement Visit to
Johnstone High School**

1. Summary

- 1.1 Following the Education Scotland inspection of Johnstone High School in November 2016, a further visit took place in February 2018. The letter to parents, published by Education Scotland on 5 June 2018, is attached as an appendix to this report. The letter to parents is also available on the Education Scotland website: <https://education.gov.scot/>.
- 1.2 The purpose of the visit was to evaluate the progress made with the recommendations for improvement set out in the inspection report. The areas of focus were: learning, teaching and assessment, raising attainment, health and wellbeing and the S1-S3 curriculum.
- 1.3 The letter highlighted a number of positive improvements including:
 - The introduction of teacher learning community groups which had facilitated the sharing of best practice and improved consistency in learning and teaching.
 - More rigorous approaches to tracking, early intervention and targeted support which had impacted on improved attainment.
 - The work which had been done with staff to ensure they were aware of their role to support the wellbeing of all young people.
 - The increased breadth of subject choice in S1-S3.
- 1.4 The letter also identified the following areas for further improvement:
 - Continue to develop approaches to departmental reviews which focus on evidencing impact on improved outcomes for learners.
 - Continue to improve attainment in the senior phase.
 - Increase the opportunities for young people in S1-S3 to develop their literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across the school.
 - Continue to build on the work being done to ensure that all young people feel safe in school.

- 1.5 Education Scotland confirmed that the school had made progress since the inspection and that they would ask for a report from Renfrewshire Council in one year's time detailing continued progress made.
The school and the service will prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the recommendations for further improvement in the report, and share this plan with parents. The school will be supported in its improvement by children's services.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members of the Education and Children's Services Policy Board are asked to note the improvements and the areas for further improvement identified by Education Scotland.

3. Background

- 3.1 Education Scotland's letters to parents are published online by Education Scotland.
- 3.2 The letter includes a number of recommendations for further improvement. These recommendations will be addressed through an action plan, produced by the school and supported by children's services staff.
- 3.3 Progress on the action plan will be monitored by children's services staff on a proportionate basis. A report will be prepared within one year of the Education Scotland visit detailing the progress made with the recommendations. This report will be made available to parents.
- 3.4 Children's services welcome the process of audit undertaken by Education Scotland as supportive to continuous improvement in Renfrewshire Council's education establishments.
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Implications of this report

1. **Financial**
None.
2. **HR and Organisational Development**
None.
3. **Community/Council Planning**
- Our Renfrewshire is thriving: high standards of education provision ensure that children and young people are given the best start in life so that they promote and contribute to a more prosperous, fairer society.
 - Our Renfrewshire is well – by providing an environment which encourages care, welfare and development, establishments play a crucial role in developing children and young people so that they become responsible citizens. The establishment's success in promoting wellbeing is evaluated as part of the inspection process.

- 4. **Legal**
None.
- 5. **Property/Assets**
None.
- 6. **Information Technology**
None.
- 7. **Equality and Human Rights**

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

- 8. **Health and Safety**
None.
- 9. **Procurement**
None.
- 10. **Risk**
None.
- 11. **Privacy Impact**
None.
- 12. **Cosla Policy Position**
None.

List of Background Papers

None

MS 20/7/18

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5 June 2018

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Johnstone High School
Renfrewshire Council**

In March 2017, HM Inspectors published a letter on your child's school. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Renfrewshire Council. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We heard from the headteacher and other staff about the steps the school has taken to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection. As a result, we were able to find out about the progress the school has made and how well this is supporting young people's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

Plan and implement improvements in a streamlined way so that the strong vision for the school can be further advanced.

The senior leadership team has a high priority on developing a culture of school improvement, which is focused on the school vision and values and involves young people, parents, staff and partners. As a result the school community feels that this is creating a more inclusive and supportive learning and working environment. The headteacher and senior leaders provide clear direction for a more streamlined approach to improvement planning by focusing on two key priorities; health and wellbeing, and learning, teaching and assessment. While new self-evaluation arrangements are at the early stages of implementation, staff are showing a good awareness of their collective responsibility for improving outcomes for learners. Opportunities for young people to contribute to school improvement and develop their leadership skills have increased. Senior staff recognise that more work is required to develop these opportunities further into a coherent programme that enables young people to participate more fully in school improvement. The school benefits from strong partnership with the Parent Council and wider parent body. Parents speak positively about their opportunities to actively engage in supporting self-evaluation and school improvement.

Through distributed leadership of learning, develop a shared understanding across the school community of what effective teaching, learning and assessment look like. This will ensure consistently high-quality learning and teaching in all lessons.

As members of professional learning groups, all staff have good opportunities to lead aspects of improving teaching, learning and assessment. The work is well supported by senior leaders. These groups are an important part of everyone working together

to improve young people's learning experiences. Staff are positive about the impact of development opportunities on their own leadership skills, in supporting young people's wellbeing and in improving practice in classrooms. The school is making good progress in developing a shared understanding across the school community of what effective learning and teaching look like. Staff have worked hard in consultation with parents and young people to develop 'The Johnstone High School Lesson' (JHS Lesson). This sets out clear expectations for structured lessons and methodologies which involve young people more actively in their learning. Staff have used the JHS Lesson as a focus for learning visits across departments and faculties. In most lessons young people are quietly attentive, motivated and engaged. The school recognises that further work is needed to ensure consistency in young people's experiences across the school. More time is required to evaluate the impact of the improved practices in learning and teaching across the school. There is also a need to ensure that young people have a better understanding of their progress in learning through more effective target setting and improved feedback.

Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities for the health and wellbeing of young people across the school.

By focusing on promotion of positive behaviour and respect for all, senior leaders have built a strong foundation for improving young people's health and wellbeing. A variety of developments across the school are improving staff's understanding of their roles in relation to improving young people's engagement in learning, young people's relationships with others and their health and wellbeing. These developments are having a positive impact on young people's awareness of their own wellbeing. The school recognises that further work is required to embed fully a culture where staff and young people are using the school's values to incorporate wellbeing in all aspects of school life. The school has developed further its approach to making sure that all young people know an adult they can speak to if they have any concerns. Most young people say they have someone to talk to if they are worried about anything. There is still work to be done to fully ensure that all young people feel safe in school and believe that the school helps everyone to treat others fairly and with respect. The school should continue to build on developments such as the 'Go To' room, created by young people in S6 to provide support to younger pupils.

Raise attainment and continue to prioritise equity for all young people.

The school is significantly improving its use of data to plan for improvements in attainment. Senior leaders have developed processes to monitor progress towards targets with identified outcomes for young people. They have recognised the need to have a clear overview of young people's progress from S1 through to S6 across all curriculum areas, as well as from S4 to S6. Senior leaders and staff at all levels are beginning to track carefully the attainment of young people in S1-S6. All staff show a good awareness of their collective responsibility for raising attainment. At S4 to S6, whilst there are encouraging early signs of improvements, we have asked the school to continue to prioritise attainment and improve the percentage of young people achieving qualifications, especially in mathematics. The attainment of young people in S4 to S6 remains below that of other young people with similar needs and

backgrounds from across the country in some key measures. The school's tracking data predicts improvements in attainment in this year's qualifications. The school is continuing to prioritise equity through a number of measures. This includes using Scottish Attainment Challenge funding to provide additional targeted support for young people who require extra help. More time is required to see the impact of the improvements in learning and teaching on young people's attainment.

Review the curriculum for S1-S3 to ensure that young people at these stages benefit fully from Curriculum for Excellence.

The school has undertaken widespread consultation with young people, parents and staff to review the curriculum S1-S3. This review aims to ensure that all young people can access learning which provides the right range of skills, qualifications and achievements to allow them to succeed. In a majority of curriculum areas, teachers have extended the range of courses and programmes to cater more effectively for young people's needs and interests. It is too early to evidence the impact of these changes yet on young people. However the school has carried out a survey of young people and their parents. This reports positive comments about the changes to date. Senior leaders have developed a three year plan to increase the breadth of learning across the S1 to S3 curriculum. They recognise that further work is required to ensure that young people have opportunities to develop their literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across the school.

What happens next?

The school has made progress since the original inspection. We will ask for a report on progress within one year of the inspection. This report will inform any decision made by Education Scotland regarding further engagement. The Area Lead Officer will work with Renfrewshire Council to support ongoing improvements. We will write to you again detailing the improvements the school has made and outlining any further action, agreed with Renfrewshire Council that we intend to take.

Jacqueline Gallagher
HM Inspector

If you would like to receive this letter in a different format, for example, in a translation please contact the administration team on the above telephone number.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact us by telephone on 0131 244 4330, or e-mail: complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us addressing your letter to the Complaints Manager, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Livingston EH54 6GA.