
Report To:	Education & Lifelong Learning Committee	Date:	17 March 2009
Report By:	Corporate Director Education & Social Care	Report No:	EDUC/20/09/IF
Contact Officer:	Ian Fraser	Contact No:	01475 712761
Subject:	HMIe Report on Port Glasgow High School and Community Learning and Development in Port Glasgow		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Education & Lifelong Learning Committee of an HMIe external evaluation of Port Glasgow High School. Members should note that henceforth when a secondary school is inspected by the HMIe there will be a concurrent evaluation of Community Learning and Development in the area.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Port Glasgow High School has received a good report from the HMIe. The report was produced on 27 January 2009. Members should note that the indicators of quality have been amended by the HMIe. Previous reports, including the report on Greenock Academy, include 17 indicators of quality: the new reports issued by HMIe are intended to be more readable, are shorter to reflect more focused processes and now contain 5 indicators of quality. The five indicators of quality in Port Glasgow High School have been evaluated as Good.
- 2.2 The report on the learning community surrounding Port Glasgow High School was produced on 27 January 2009. HMIe check 5 important quality indicators to keep track of how well the Community Learning and Development provision is going. The results of the learning community surrounding Port Glasgow High School were 2 'very good's', 2 'good's' and 1 'weak'.
- 2.3 Members should note that the example of good practice given in Port Glasgow High School were teaching and promoting the skills of learning. Members should also note the examples of good practice in relation to the learning community, outlined in page 2 of the HMIe report.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Education & Lifelong Learning Committee approve the HMIe report on Port Glasgow High School and approve the report on the inspection of the learning community surrounding Port Glasgow High School.

Ian Fraser
Corporate Director Education & Social Care

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Port Glasgow High School and the learning community surrounding Port Glasgow High School were inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) in December 2008. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school and the Community Learning and Development Service at all stages, identified key strengths and main points for action using the following 6-point scale:

Excellent	-	outstanding, sector leading
Very Good	-	major strengths
Good	-	important strengths with some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	-	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
Weak	-	important weaknesses
Unsatisfactory	-	major weaknesses

4.2 HMIE assessed and reported on the views of parents, staff and pupils, the quality of learning and teaching, how well the school is raising achievement for all pupils, achievement in national examinations, the school's processes for self evaluation and innovation and the school's capacity for improvement.

4.3 The report on Port Glasgow High School was published on 27 January 2009 and is attached as an appendix to this report. It has been issued to staff, parents, local elected members and the Convener and Vice-Convener for Education & Lifelong Learning.

4.4 Port Glasgow High School was inspected under the evaluation framework 'How Good Is Our School 3?'

4.5 In assessing the indicators of quality, HMIE found all 5 aspects of the work of the school to be 'good'. The evaluations of the indicators of quality can be found on page 8 of the appended report.

4.6 Members should note that HMIE comment on examples of good practice. The report indicated on example of good practice:

- Teaching and promoting the skills of learning

4.7 The school has devised a school improvement plan which will be circulated to HMIE and in due course a follow-through report will be issued to HMIE.

5.0 INSPECTION OF THE LEARNING COMMUNITY

5.1 The learning community surrounding Port Glasgow High School was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education in December 2008. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of Community Learning and Development, identified strengths and main points for action using the same 6-point scale as outlined above.

5.2 HMIE evaluated how well participants, including young people and adults, learn and achieve and how well CLD helps the community to develop. The report was published on 27 January 2009 and is attached as an appendix to this report. It has been issued to those involved in Community Learning Development, to local elected members and to the Convener and Vice-Convener for Education & Lifelong Learning.

5.3 In assessing the indicators for quality, HMIE found 2 aspects of the work of Community Learning and Development to be 'very good', 2 to be 'good' and 1 to be 'weak'.

5.4 Members should note that HMIE comment on examples of good practice. The report indicated that 6 examples of good practice were in place:

- The strong impact of the well focused More Choices More Chances (MCMC) partnership
- Learning outcomes at Jericho House
- Progression in the Dyslexia Support Group
- Development of core skills accreditation
- Your Voices Training programme
- Reflection and self-evaluation in adult learning

- 5.5 Members should note that adult learning and adult literacy has been very positively viewed by HMIE and members will find more information on this on page 3 of the report.
- 5.6 Members should also note the criticism of Community Capacity Building which is outlined in page 4 of the report. Economic and Social Regeneration are very disappointed by the outcome of the HMIE report in respect of the comments on their element of Community Development in Port Glasgow. An action plan has been developed to address the failings identified. The focus of the plan is on who, what, when, why, where and how, so that any interventions will be clearly accountable and auditable. The outcome of this approach will be reported to the Community Learning and Development Strategy Group, and will be reported to the Regeneration Committee and the Inverclyde Alliance Board under the auspices of the Fairer Scotland Fund.
- 5.7 The response by Education Services to this is to quantify how secondary schools contribute to Community Capacity Building, quantify what Community Learning and Development currently contributes to Community Capacity Building and to quantify the structures in Regeneration & Resources to promote Community Capacity Building. A further paper will indicate these structures and some of the improvement actions which have been put in place to address the evaluation of 'weak'.



**Port Glasgow High School
Inverclyde Council
27 January 2009**

This report tells you about the quality of education at the school. We describe how young people benefit from learning there. We explain how well they are doing and how good the school is at helping them to learn. Then we look at the ways in which the school does this. We describe how well the school works with other groups in the community, including parents¹ and services which support young people. We also comment on how well staff and young people work together and how they go about improving the school.

Our report describes the 'ethos' of the school. By 'ethos' we mean the relationships in the school, how well young people are cared for and treated and how much is expected of them in all aspects of school life. Finally, we comment on the school's aims. In particular, we focus on how well the aims help staff to deliver high quality learning, and the impact of leadership on the school's success in achieving these aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the school, please visit www.hmie.gov.uk. Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns and details about young people's examination performance. Where applicable, you will also be able to find descriptions of good practice in the school and a report on the learning community surrounding the school.

¹ Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers, residential care staff and carers who are relatives or friends.

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1. The school

Port Glasgow High School is a non-denominational school which serves the town of Port Glasgow and the village of Kilmacolm. The inspection was carried out in November 2008 at which time the roll was 536. Young people's attendance was in line with the national average in 2006/07.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Confident and friendly young people who relate positively to staff.
- An increasing range of opportunities for young people to learn and achieve out of class.
- The use of well-focused and agreed learning and teaching approaches across the school.
- Staff's commitment to school improvement.
- The development of leadership skills for young people and staff at all levels.

3. Example of good practice

- Teaching and promoting the skills of learning.

4. How well do young people learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Most young people are committed to learning and get on well with their teachers. They are becoming confident learners. This is partly due to the way in which many staff are following agreed good practice in teaching and reinforcing important learning skills. This is particularly evident at S1/S2. Teachers now need to encourage the use of young people's learning skills across all curricular areas. Most teachers share the purposes of lessons well with young people which helps to

focus their learning. Young people are motivated and take part enthusiastically in discussions and group activities when given the opportunity. However, this active involvement is not yet consistent across the school. Occasionally, a few are poorly behaved and unresponsive. In a few lessons, young people are not given enough opportunity to learn from each other in groups and to think for themselves. Overall, they need to be given better oral and written feedback on how to improve their work.

Young people are improving their achievement by taking part in an increasing number of activities both in and out of class. Most seniors take on leadership roles and are enhancing their citizenship skills. Good examples include mentoring their younger peers and becoming involved in community service activities. An increasing number of young people benefit from out-of-class activities in areas such as music and sport.

By the end of S2, the majority of young people are achieving appropriate national levels in reading and mathematics, but less than half are doing so in writing. They are progressing well in classwork in a range of other subjects. By the end of S4, the proportion gaining General or Credit awards is in line with schools which serve young people with similar needs and backgrounds, but consistently well below the national average. At S5/S6, the proportion of young people achieving A-C awards at Higher or Advanced Higher is much better than in schools which serve young people with similar needs and backgrounds, but generally well below the national average. At S5/S6 too many young people have not achieved an award in a range of subjects. Young people with additional support needs are making good progress. The majority of young people leave school for university, college or employment.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

At S1/S2, young people study a suitable range of subjects. The school's Transit Programme successfully supports those with identified needs in moving from primary to secondary. However, curricular links

with primary schools need to be improved to ensure that subject departments take full account of all young people's previous learning. Through partnership with its neighbouring secondary schools, a wide range of courses is offered at S3 to S6. A small number of young people participate in vocational learning in partnership with James Watt College but other opportunities for practical, skills-based learning experiences are limited. The school has begun to establish curricular links with business partners to make learning more relevant. Courses across stages enable young people to progress in their learning.

Most staff help young people to overcome difficulties in learning through well-planned activities. The pace of learning is mostly well matched to young people's needs. Most staff use information and communications technology well to support and stimulate learning. Pupil support staff successfully identify learning needs. Recent improvements to the sharing of information have helped subject teachers develop strategies to support young people. Some young people have well-designed individualised educational or behavioural programmes. These include clear targets which are regularly reviewed to help them progress. Support for learning and behavioural support staff provide very high quality support for young people in classes or through targeted help in learning and behaviour support bases.

5. How well do staff work with others to support young people's learning?

The school has developed helpful partnerships with various organisations which extend opportunities for young people's achievement. These include local businesses, sports organisations, health development groups, and home-school link and youth workers. Inverclyde Volunteer Centre is working with the school to provide opportunities for those taking part in the Millennium Volunteer awards scheme. The National Theatre Team have delivered innovative drama and music programmes. This is helping to improve young people's confidence, further their understanding of the history and traditions of

the area, and develop relationships with parents and the wider community. Better planning of links with adult learning workers could help parents to be more involved in their child's learning. Most parents are happy with the school and feel that they are kept well informed about their child's progress. The active Parent Council helps the school to raise funds and seek parental views.

6. Are staff and young people actively involved in improving their school community?

Staff contribute much to the life and work of the school and are committed to improving it. Less than half of young people feel that the pupil council is good at getting improvements made in the school. However, senior members of the recently improved pupil council feel confident they can make more of a difference. Overall, young people would like to have a greater say in how to improve learning. Staff regularly reflect on their own work and the work of the school, and encourage young people to do the same. Appropriate systems are in place for senior managers and other staff to evaluate the quality of learning and teaching and identify and share areas of good practice or for development. The senior management team now needs to increase the pace of development to improve the consistency of learning across the school for all young people. The views of staff have been used well to evaluate the work of the school and plan improvements. The school now needs to take more account of the views of young people, parents and community partnership groups. Procedures for checking young people's progress are in place but have still to be used consistently across the school, particularly at S1/S2.

7. Does the school have high expectations of all young people?

Young people respond well to teachers' high expectations of their behaviour and attendance. They are clear about the school's procedures for positive behaviour. Most staff expect young people to

work to the best of their ability. The school gives young people a sense of achievement by celebrating and displaying their successes in a number of ways. The school actively promotes healthy living. The majority of young people feel safe and cared for in school. Overall, they feel they are treated fairly. Some feel that fairness would be improved if all staff used the positive behaviour policy in the same way. Equality and diversity are promoted through personal and social education classes, religious and moral education and programmed assemblies. However, young people should have more opportunities to consider a broad range of equality and diversity issues and to understand a wider range of world religions.

8. Does the school have a clear sense of direction?

The school has a clear sense of direction, led by the headteacher and his leadership teams. Staff have consulted widely with young people and their parents to agree the school's aims and values. Many teachers and young people have responded well to opportunities to develop and take on important leadership roles. The school is working in a productive School of Ambition partnership with neighbouring St Stephen's High School to improve the range of opportunities for young people to achieve. This initiative is having a positive impact on the young people involved. Staff and young people have adjusted well to considerable recent staff changes in management. The school is showing it has the ability to improve. With increasing pace of change and careful management of change, the school is well placed to make necessary improvements.

9. What happens next?

We are confident that the school will be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. As a result, we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. The school and the education authority will inform parents about the school's progress in improving the quality of education. We have agreed the

following areas for improvement with the school and education authority.

- Reduce the number of young people in S5/S6 who fail to gain awards in subjects they study.
- Improve curricular links with primary schools.
- Work with partners to provide a wider range of learning activities which increase young people's achievements and further develop their work-related skills.
- Continue to improve approaches to improvement through self-evaluation.

Quality indicators help schools, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the school. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publication *How good is our school?*. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish schools are doing. Here are the evaluations for Port Glasgow High School.

Improvements in performance	good
Learners' experiences	good
Meeting learning needs	good

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school.

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	good

HM Inspector: Marie McAdam

27 January 2009

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This report uses the following word scale to make clear judgements made by inspectors.

excellent	outstanding, sector leading
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

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Inspection of the learning community



Inspection of the learning community surrounding
Port Glasgow High School
Inverclyde Council
27 January 2009

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1. About the report

This report tells you about community learning and development (CLD) activities in the communities surrounding Port Glasgow High School. It complements a separate report on the school. We explain how well people involved in community learning activities do in a wide range of experiences, and the quality of learning activities on offer to them. We describe how communities can influence decision making and how they can respond positively to their own issues. We also talk about how organisations work together and how they improve lives in local communities. Finally, our report looks at the vision for the area, and how well all organisations and the community are working together to achieve it.

2. The learning community

The learning community around Port Glasgow High School includes the town of Port Glasgow and the nearby village of Kilmalcolm.

The proportion of jobless people is higher than the Scottish average and higher than the rest of Inverclyde Council area. Poor health, low quality housing and a stronger than average fear of crime are amongst the challenges facing the community.

3. Particular strengths of the learning community

- Effective youth work and adult learning.
- Strong and purposeful partnerships.
- Effective engagement with, and support for, disadvantaged groups and individuals.
- Core skills accreditation and celebration of wider achievements.

4. Examples of good practice

- The strong impact of the well focused More Choices More Chances (MCMC) partnership.
- Learning outcomes at Jericho House.
- Progression in the Dyslexia Support Group.
- Development of core skills accreditation.
- Your Voices Training programme.
- Reflection and self-evaluation in adult learning.

By visiting www.hmie.gov.uk you can find out more about these examples of good practice.

5. How well do participants learn and achieve?

Staff in the area are very committed to providing high quality services. They work well with those taking part to ensure that they get the most out of their involvement in activities. Targets for the number of adult learners are being met and in some cases exceeded. The impact of MCMC programmes is very good and performance is improving faster than other local authority areas. Young people are being helped to progress to employment, further education and training. Adult learning provision is very successful in helping to prepare potential police service recruits from the area for the Police Standard Entry Test. There is a need to improve support to local community organisations through developing a stronger focus on planned outcomes and setting measurable targets through which progress can be assessed.

Young people

Young people are gaining confidence and skills through taking part in well designed youth work programmes and activities. High numbers of young people are achieving awards including The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Young people in need of MCMC are being helped to progress into employment, further education and training. The GOALS project is helping a very high proportion of those taking part to make positive progress. Youth workers are making particular efforts to work with young people most in need of support through street based activities and some work with young people with disabilities. Young people place a very high value on the help and advice they receive. Relationships between youth workers and young people are highly positive. Many young people are able to describe how they have been helped to improve their behaviour and take up positions of responsibility. The Girl Power and street football programmes have

contributed to a local reduction in reported crime. Through the Speak Up group, young people have led contributions to the Inverclyde Youth Festival which attracted large numbers of participants. Opportunities for young people to reflect on their learning and development could be improved in some activities. Support to enable young people to exercise influence on wider policy and local youth issues needs to be strengthened. The positive achievements of young people need to be highlighted more strongly with local community groups and organisations. There is scope to develop intergenerational work and to improve the relationship between young people and the Community Warden Service.

Adults

Adults benefit from a wide range of very effective literacy and wider learning activities in the area. Those taking part are gaining confidence and are able to report improvements in their personal lives, employment and involvement in the community. Many learners are progressing on to further learning opportunities and employment. Increasing numbers are taking part in programmes which offer accreditation of core skills. Effective communication and joint-working arrangements amongst partners is contributing to the range and success of local provision. Adult learning provision with residents of Jericho House is assisting recovery for individuals with drug dependencies. Achieving certificates in core skills and gaining Community Sports Leader awards is helping participants to set longer term goals and see opportunities for progression to further learning, work or volunteering opportunities. The ABC project is enabling learners with additional support needs to use computer technology and access learning opportunities. In almost all local activities, learners recognise their achievements and are receiving effective help through individual learning plans to assess their progress. They support each other well and an annual event is held to celebrate success. Those taking part in a Dyslexia Support Group have improved confidence and are actively planning to apply their skills and knowledge to develop wider opportunities including improving services for others with dyslexia. The links between adult learning provision and community capacity building support are not sufficiently well developed. Members of local community associations could benefit from adult learning opportunities relevant to their voluntary roles. This could strengthen the ability of treasurers, secretaries and other office bearers to carry out their responsibilities with more confidence. Progression opportunities for adult learners need to be improved through further development of partnership work with James Watt College.

6. How well does CLD help the community to develop?

Some activities in the area give local people opportunities to improve their community. The Council's Community Work Team apply a well-informed and systematic approach to needs analysis with residents, community groups and organisations. Local people conduct surveys to seek views on priorities. Those taking part in the Your Voice programme reported significant improvements in confidence, knowledge and negotiation skills. They are applying these skills to seek improvements in health services and facilities in the area. Some have progressed to an accredited health issues in the community course. The Council

for Voluntary Service (CVS Inverclyde) provides effective support to some voluntary organisations and social enterprises delivering services in the area. Members of the Children's Services network are sharing effective practice, developing childcare services, applying for funding and seeking tenders for service delivery. Support to some local organisations is not sufficiently effective in delivering change or improvement. The Community Council needs help to extend its membership, improve representation and develop its capacity to plan. Plans have been developed to improve support to community councils but these have not yet been implemented. Members of local residents associations are highly committed to their communities but need better, more purposeful support and training from community workers to achieve the changes they desire. Improvements in confidence, skills, knowledge and influence are not sufficient. There is a need for some groups to consider social and cultural diversity and to address negative views of young people in the community. Community workers supporting residents associations are appropriately focused on housing issues but there is also a need to give more consideration to wider regeneration issues including health, educational achievement and access to social and cultural opportunities. Joint planning and working between the staff responsible for community capacity building activity and other aspects of CLD is not sufficient. Some learning and training needs for community activists are not being met. The voice of young people in helping to determine local priorities needs more development. Overall, focus on delivering positive change needs to improve through the development of better planning and target setting.

7. How effective are providers in improving the quality of services?

Staff working in the area are committed to providing high quality services. They reflect on their practice in most aspects of work and use established self-evaluation tools to assess the difference that learning activities make. The Council's Adult Learning and Literacies team provides very good information on progress to partner organisations, tutors and learners. Managers have regular contact with learners and tutors and undertake visits to sample practice, record impact and discuss plans. Partners have effective arrangements in place to plan and implement improvements in adult learning. Annual reports are used to outline achievements, identify new developments and set priorities for improvement. Some of the information used in reports could be presented more clearly and succinctly to enable stakeholders to see more easily what progress has been made. More consistent and systematic approaches to information sharing and joint evaluation amongst provider organisations could improve understanding of outcomes achieved. Joint planning between services responsible for community capacity building and those responsible for adult learning and youth work needs to be improved.

8. Do CLD providers have a clear sense of direction?

Partners work well together and have a clear sense of direction in adult learning and youth work. Leadership for CLD is strong and effective. There is a good understanding of strengths and improvement priorities in most aspects of activity.

Uncertainty on levels of staff and resources to provide community capacity building support is having a detrimental effect on planning for some community groups.

9. What happens next?

There are some important improvements needed, but because CLD providers have a good understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement we have ended the inspection process at this stage. We will monitor progress through our regular contact with the education authority.

We have agreed the following areas for improvement with the education authority and its partners.

- Develop and implement a specific action plan to improve the impact of capacity building work.
- Improve joint planning and working between teams and partners providing youth work and adult learning support and capacity building work.
- Develop intergenerational work and plans to improve the relationship between young people and community wardens.
- Improve reporting to stakeholders through more succinct and clear progress reports.

Quality indicators help CLD providers and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the school. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publication “How good is our community learning and development? 2”.

The report uses the following word scale to make clear judgements made by inspectors.

Excellent	Outstanding, sector leading
Very good	Major strengths
Good	Important strengths with some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	Strengths just outweigh weaknesses
Weak	Important weaknesses
Unsatisfactory	Major weaknesses

HMIE checks five important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish CLD provision is doing. Here are the results for the learning community surrounding Port Glasgow High School.

Improvements in performance	good
Impact on young people	very good
Impact on adults	very good
Impact of capacity building on communities	weak
Improving services	good

Managing Inspector: Peter Hamilton
27 January 2009

How can you contact us?

HMIE has responsibilities to evaluate the quality of pre-school education, all schools, teacher education, community learning and development, colleges and local authorities. We also publish reports of interest to the public and professionals about services for children and evaluate child protection services. From this extensive evidence we are able to give the professional advice needed to support the development of educational policy.

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