
Report To:	Education & Communities & Committee	Date:	12 June 2012
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/10/12/AH
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Subject:	Progress Report on Inverclyde Academy		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Education & Communities Committee of the progress made by Inverclyde Academy's Senior Management Team and staff in addressing the areas for improvement outlined in the HMIE Inspection Report in March 2011.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Inverclyde Academy received a positive report from the HMIE. Members should note that in the indicators of quality two aspects of the school were judged to be 'good' and three aspects were judged to be 'satisfactory'.
- 2.2 It was agreed at the meeting of the Education & Lifelong Learning Committee on 11 May 2011 that the Corporate Director would provide Committee members with a report on the progress made in addressing the recommended areas for improvement in May/June 2012.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Education & Communities Committee note the good progress made by Inverclyde Academy to date in addressing the areas for improvement identified in the school's HMIE Report published on 22 March 2011.

Albert Henderson
Corporate Director
Education, Communities and Organisational Development

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Inverclyde Academy was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) in February 2011. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school 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 Inverclyde Academy was published on 22 March 2011 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 Inverclyde Academy was inspected under the evaluation framework 'How Good Is Our School 3?'

4.5 In assessing the indicators of quality, HMIe found all two aspects of the work of the school to be 'good' and three as 'satisfactory'. The evaluations of the indicators of quality can be found on page 7 of the appended report.

4.6 The report lists five particular strengths of the school:

- Confident, helpful young people who are keen to learn
- Health promotion across the school
- Partnerships to enhance learners' experiences and achievement
- High-quality accommodation and facilities for learning
- The success of senior managers and staff in establishing a positive climate for learning

4.7 The report lists four areas for improvement:

- Improve attainment at all stages
- Improve the strategic direction and rate of development of the curriculum
- Improve the focus and impact of self-evaluation to ensure appropriate pace and challenge in young people's learning
- Staff, led by senior managers, continue to develop teamwork to ensure consistently high-quality learning experiences

4.8 A detailed Action Plan has been produced by the Head Teacher which outlines how the areas for improvement will be addressed. The implementation of this Action Plan has been closely monitored by the Corporate Director of Education, Communities & Organisational Development and the Head of Education.

INVERCLYDE ACADEMY PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF HMIE ACTION POINTS

Background

Inverclyde Academy was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in January 2011. The resulting inspection report was published in March 2011 in which the following areas for improvement were recommended:

- Improve attainment at all stages
- Improve the strategic direction and rate of development of the curriculum
- Improve the focus and impact of self-evaluation to ensure appropriate pace and challenge in young people's learning
- Staff, led by senior managers, continue to develop teamwork to ensure consistently high-quality learning experiences

Following the publication of the inspection report an Action Plan was drawn up showing how the areas for improvement would be addressed and this was included in the School's annual Improvement Plan for session 2011/12. To ensure progress with implementation of the areas for improvement, regular monitoring meetings were held with the Head Teacher, the Corporate Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development, and the Head of Education. In addition, a Quality Visit to the school by the Head of Education, the Head of Planning and Culture, and a Quality Improvement Manager took place in November 2011 to discuss the implementation of the areas for improvement with staff and pupils.

This report summarises the progress made this session by staff in Inverclyde Academy in taking forward each of the recommended areas for improvement.

Recommended Areas For Improvement

1 Improve attainment at all stages

- Pupil focus groups have been established to enable members of the Senior Management team to gather feedback on pupils' learning experiences. Steps have been taken by departments to involve pupils in discussions in relation to planning next steps in their learning to raise attainment. Staff have been planning and discussing next steps with pupils as part of a tracking and target setting process. Departments are using electronic questionnaires to gather feedback from S1/2 pupils on their learning experiences. This exercise is ongoing and will continue during session 2012/13.
- A merits/demerits facility is being piloted whereby pupil daily achievements are recognised as well as any incidents of inappropriate conduct. Training sessions have taken place for Senior Managers and Principal Teachers on restorative practice which will support the school's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy. There are plans to roll out this training to all teaching and support staff next session.

- Principal Teachers have produced a blueprint of the essential elements of an effective classroom lesson, which has been shared with teaching staff and used as the focus of classroom observation. Members of the school's Senior Management Team and Principal Teachers have been monitoring learning and teaching across departments to enable a consistent sharing of good practice. Teachers have also been encouraged to undertake peer observation in their own department and in others across the school to support the sharing of good practice.
- An ongoing exercise is in place whereby Principal Teachers sample pupil homework diaries on a monthly basis to ensure that homework issued is being recorded accurately by pupils. Principal Teachers are rigorously monitoring pupil homework with appropriate actions being taken by staff and Principal Teachers to follow-up on the non-completion of homework tasks. There are plans to review current homework monitoring procedures to incorporate the use of GLOW for pupils and parents.
- Principal Teachers and their staff are taking steps to ensure that all pupils are presented for the correct level of SQA exam. Steps are being taken, where required, to present pupils for alternative qualifications which better meet their needs. Principal Teachers and their staff will continue to closely monitor their SQA results. This involves a close analysis of SQA results and the production of an Action Plan which outlines areas where improvement in performance is required. Departments share their exam results analysis and associated Action Plan with the Senior Management Team through the production of an annual departmental Standards and Quality Report. In addition, each department discusses their SQA results analysis with their link member of the Senior Management Team who will monitor the implementation of the associated Action Plan primarily through attendance at departmental meetings.
- During session 2011/12 an analysis of S4, S5 and S6 prelim exams was undertaken and an Action Plan produced detailing how underperforming pupils will be supported to improve their attainment. There are plans to undertake a similar exercise in relation to this session's S3 exam results.
- Staff volunteers have taken on the role of mentors for targeted S4 and S5/6 pupils as part of the school's mentoring programme. S4 pupils have been mentored during October/November 2011 and March/April 2012. S5/6 pupils have been mentored in January 2012 and April/May 2012. This programme is ongoing and will continue during session 2012/13. Senior pupils have been given the opportunity to mentor younger pupils with a focus of supporting them in class.
- Supported Study and an Easter School have been in place this session for S4, S5 and S6 pupils.

2 Improve the strategic direction and rate of development of the curriculum

- The Head Teacher is a member of the authority's S1-S3 Curriculum/Senior Phase Working Group which has been tasked with producing an authority model to ensure a smooth transition from the Broad General Education to the Senior Phase for all pupils. The work of this Group has supported the Head Teacher in her role to lead Curriculum for Excellence across the school.

- A Senior Leadership Team has been formed, consisting of all Principal Teachers, with a focus on cross-curricular activities (also known as inter-disciplinary learning) which will develop pupils' learning experiences across departments.
- Curricular links with Inverclyde Academy's associated primary schools has been a priority this session in order to facilitate the sharing of pupils' prior learning. For example, teachers from Inverclyde Academy's Art and Drama departments spent 6 weeks in the associated primary schools supporting P7 pupils as part of the cluster's P7-S1 transitions programme.
- An ICT Working Group has been established this session to identify and share good practice in the use of ICT to support learning and teaching. In-house Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses in ICT have been expanded for all staff. The work of this Group will continue next session with the aim of ensuring a consistent use of ICT to support pupils' learning experiences.
- A Literacy/Numeracy Working Group has been established tasked with coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the impact of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Plans are underway to provide literacy and numeracy advice for pupils in Study Planners.
- Flexible Learning Packages have been extended to meet the needs of individual pupils who are at risk of disengaging from education. These young people, in partnership with other agencies, have a timetable for learning that combines both in-school and out-of-school elements where this is deemed appropriate for an individual young person.

3 Improve the focus and impact of self-evaluation to ensure appropriate pace and challenge in young people's learning

- The School Improvement Planning Group has produced a Department Quality Booklet which is being used by all staff. This booklet includes Quality Indicators from 'How good is our school 3?' and it use encourages staff to reflect on their practice and identify strengths and areas for development. All of the activities included in the booklet are linked to a whole school Quality Calendar.
- All departments have produced a Standards and Quality report for session 2010/11.
- Principal Teachers have been undertaking classroom observation in order to monitor the quality of learning and teaching in their departments.
- Procedures for homework monitoring by Principal Teachers are in place with a review planned in the near future.
- As part of the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, S1 and S2 courses will be reviewed to ensure appropriate pace and challenge in young people's learning.
- Steps have been taken to involve pupils' in the evaluation of their learning experiences. This process will support departmental self-evaluation procedures.

4 Staff, led by senior managers, continue to develop teamwork to ensure consistently high-quality learning experiences

- The Senior Leadership Team has been formed which includes all Principal Teachers (Curriculum and Guidance) and members of the Senior Management Team with a key focus on developing high quality pupil learning experiences across departments.
- A number of staff have volunteered to participate in the school's Peer Learning programme which provides an invaluable opportunity for teachers to share practice.
- Staff across departments have been developing inter-disciplinary projects for pupils. For example, Olympics (S1-S3); Holocaust (S1) and a new project for S2 on Malawi.
- The Principal Teachers of Learning Support and Behaviour Support have been liaising closely with all staff to monitor the performance of pupils who require additional support.
- Several Working Groups have been set up in the school tasked with driving forward a key aspect of the work of the school, such as Learning and Teaching, Health and Wellbeing, and Literacy and Numeracy. Staff participation in these Working Groups is very high.

Conclusion

Overall, Inverclyde Academy has made good progress in addressing the recommended areas for improvement. Many of the actions taken to date are work in progress and will continue into and during session 2012/13. This will be reflected in Inverclyde Academy's School Improvement Plan for session 2012/13.

The Corporate Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development, the Head of Education and the Head Teacher of Inverclyde Academy will continue to have monitoring meetings to ensure continued implementation of the HMIE recommended areas for improvement.