

**Report To:** Education & Communities Committee  
**Date:** 06 May 2014

**Report By:** Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development  
**Report No:** EDUCOM/38/14/PC

**Contact Officer:** Patricia Cassidy  
**Contact No:** 01475 712761

**Subject:** Education Scotland inspection report on Notre Dame High School

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Education & Communities Committee of an Education Scotland external evaluation of Notre Dame High School.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Notre Dame High School has received a very good report from Education Scotland. Members should note that in the indicators of quality two aspects of the school were judged to be 'very good' and three aspects as 'good'. The report was produced on 04 March 2014.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Education & Communities Committee approve the report on Notre Dame High School.

**Patricia Cassidy**  
**Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development**

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Notre Dame High School was inspected by Education Scotland in November 2013. 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 six-point scale:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 6 | - | Excellent – outstanding, sector leading                    |
| 5 | - | Very Good – major strengths                                |
| 4 | - | Good – important strengths with some areas for improvement |
| 3 | - | Satisfactory – strengths just outweigh weaknesses          |
| 2 | - | Weak – important weaknesses                                |
| 1 | - | Unsatisfactory – major weaknesses                          |

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

4.3 The report was published on 04 March 2014. It has been issued to staff, parents, local elected members and the Convener and Vice-Conveners for Education & Communities.

4.4 Notre Dame High School is inspected under the evaluation frameworks "How Good Is Our School?".

4.5 In assessing the indicators of quality, Education Scotland found two aspects of the school to be 'very good' and three aspects as 'good'.

4.6 The report lists five particular strengths of the school:

- An inclusive and supportive ethos based on Catholic faith and values.
- Young people's pride and participation in the life of the school.
- Courteous and motivated young people who are successful learners and achieve widely.
- Leadership at all levels to improve young people's learning experiences.
- The headteacher's leadership in managing change.

4.7 The reports lists three areas for improvement:

- Continue to review and develop approaches to meeting the learning needs of all young people.
- Continue to develop the curriculum in line with national expectations.
- Continue to develop approaches to improvement through self-evaluation.

4 March 2014

Dear Parent/Carer

**Notre Dame High School  
Inverclyde Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I inspected your child's school. During our visit, we talked to parents and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well young people are learning and achieving and how well the school supports young people to do their best. The headteacher and others shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including young people's wider achievements and their impact, and the leadership opportunities for staff and young people. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school is at improving young people's education.

**How well do young people learn and achieve?**

The school's strong ethos of respect and inclusiveness, based on shared Gospel values, ensures that young people learn and achieve very well. Almost all young people are very well-behaved, motivated and engaged in their learning. Relationships between young people and staff are very positive. Young people enjoy active learning approaches which provide them with opportunities to investigate, discuss and reflect. In many lessons, they share ideas, discuss challenging questions, and work very well in teams to complete tasks. Almost all young people report that staff encourage them to do the best they can and that they get help when needed. Across the school, young people use learning logs to record their achievements within a subject area, evaluate their own learning and set future targets. Young people wear their school uniform with pride and value strongly the high quality facilities within the stimulating school environment. They talk of a sense of community built on their Catholic faith and values, and feel safe and cared for in school. Young people from the Stella Maris Base have developed increased confidence in their learning by being part of the large school setting.

Young people achieve significant success in a wide range of activities, both in and outwith school. For example, young people work enthusiastically with the music department to produce highly successful school shows, including pantomimes, for the local and wider community. A notable number of young people have achieved success at the Inverclyde Music Festival. Many young people have achieved success in a range of sports including, golf, cross-country running, weight-lifting and girls' football. Young people take on leadership roles with enthusiasm and confidence as buddies, Sports Ambassadors and peer mentors across a number of subjects,

including physical education, technology and English. The school was the sole Scottish representative at the final of a technology competition hosted by the Royal Society in London, where one team won their category. An increasing number of young people are achieving the Caritas Award which recognises their active faith commitment in the school and their local parish. Young people involved in this initiative are developing their life skills through volunteering in geriatric care and learning disability units. They are developing organisational and leadership skills through working with children in neighbouring primary schools and fundraising. Young people in S6 are also developing important leadership skills through the school's citizenship and community programme. Most young people are making suitable progress from S1 to S3, including in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. From S4 to S6, young people's attainment in national qualifications is above the national average in most key measures. Attainment from S4 to S6 is significantly better than in schools serving those with similar needs and backgrounds. The number of young people moving on to positive destinations when leaving school is above the national average.

### **How well does the school support young people to develop and learn?**

In most lessons, tasks and activities provide appropriate challenge and support for young people. We have asked the school to continue work to ensure all teachers adopt this good practice so that all young people are able to make suitable progress. The Student Support Team has effective procedures to support young people with additional learning needs. Support for learning staff now need to widen their role and be involved more in developing the expertise of subject teachers to meet the needs of all young people in their classes. Support assistants and classroom assistants support young people effectively in lessons. They fulfil a range of other roles including supporting young people in lunchtime clubs. The school and relevant partners work closely with parents to ensure that their children receive the appropriate support. The Home School Link Worker and other agencies, such as educational psychology and allied health professionals, work effectively with the school to help meet young people's learning needs. All young people from the Stella Maris base are included in mainstream classes and in most aspects of learning and teaching. They are provided with a high level of support from teachers and additional support needs assistants. Staff should now involve young people more in planning their learning. Subject teachers are well informed about the additional support needs of young people through good communication from the Student Support Team and from the Stella Maris base.

The school provides a curriculum that offers young people opportunities to achieve, as well as for personal and spiritual growth. Religious observance is an integral part of the daily life of the school. The school's current curriculum is an interim one and will be modified further next year. Young people at S1 and S2 are receiving a broad general education. The school is aware of the need to ensure that young people in S3 also benefit from a suitably broad experience, and at the same time, continue to be challenged to ensure they can make appropriate progress from S4 to S6. The school and its partners are working very well together to develop the curriculum from S4 to S6. Young people at these stages are benefitting from a range of opportunities to meet their needs, for example vocational courses at colleges, and following courses at neighbouring schools. Teachers have developed, reviewed and modified the

curriculum in line with Curriculum for Excellence guidance. Departments are working effectively together to plan projects that provide young people with interesting learning experiences across different areas of the curriculum. The school should continue to ensure young people can build progressively on their knowledge and skills through these projects. The needs of young people requiring continued support after they leave school are being addressed very successfully by partners. A number of departments work closely with their associated primaries to develop courses and programmes. The school should continue this work to ensure young people entering S1 are able to build on what they already know and make appropriate progress. The curriculum for young people in the Stella Maris base is designed well to meet the needs of young people with additional support needs.

### **How well does the school improve the quality of its work?**

The headteacher has a clear and strong vision for the school. He has led improvements in a very thoughtful and sensitive manner with the aim of ensuring high-quality learning experiences for young people. The depute headteachers work effectively with the headteacher to support staff to ensure ongoing improvement to their work. Teachers have a planned programme of observing each other in lessons, and regularly review their learning and teaching with the aim of ensuring continuous improvement. Almost all teachers are members of school working parties and many have led new developments linked to curriculum and assessment. Teachers use a variety of evidence to evaluate the effectiveness of their work. Young people have opportunities to comment on lessons and discuss with their teachers what can be improved. Parents are asked for their views about school matters and the information is used to identify areas for improvement. We have asked the school to ensure that all the information available from self-evaluation activities is used more effectively to support and monitor school improvement as fully as possible. The school has systems in place for tracking the progress of young people at all stages. It is aware of the need to use the information from tracking more rigorously to ensure that young people from S1 to S3 are achieving the best they can. Staff in the Stella Maris Base have identified the need to review their approaches to self-evaluation and how they take account of the views of pupils, partners and other organisations.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- An inclusive and supportive ethos based on Catholic faith and values.
- Young people's pride and participation in the life of the school.
- Courteous and motivated young people who are successful learners and achieve widely.
- Leadership at all levels to improve young people's learning experiences.
- The headteacher's leadership in managing change.

We discussed with staff and Inverclyde Council how they might continue to improve the school. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue to review and develop approaches to meeting the learning needs of all young people.
- Continue to develop the curriculum in line with national expectations.
- Continue to develop approaches to improvement through self-evaluation.

## **What happens at the end of the inspection?**

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further evaluative visits in connection with this inspection. During the inspection, we identified innovative practice in the music department which we would like to explore further. We will work with the school and Inverclyde Council to record and share this innovative practice more widely.

Hakim Din  
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/NotreDameHighSchoolInverclyde.asp>

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 0141 282 5000, or e-mail: [complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk) or write to us addressing your letter to the Complaints Manager, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Livingston EH54 6GA.

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 publication *How good is our school?*<sup>1</sup>. 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 Notre Dame High School.

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Learners' experiences</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Meeting learning needs</b>	<b>good</b>

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

<b>The curriculum</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Improvement through self-evaluation</b>	<b>good</b>

A copy of the full letter is available on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/NotreDameHighSchoolInverclyde.asp>

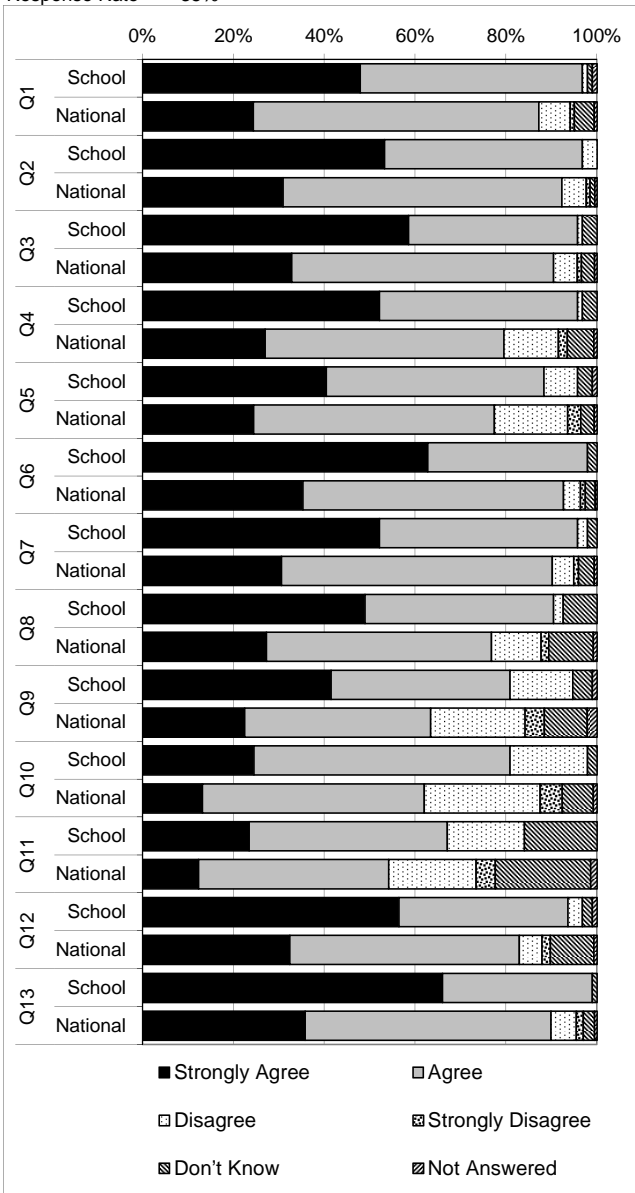
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<sup>1</sup> *How good is our school? The Journey to Excellence: part 3*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007, [http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HowgoodisourschoolJtEpart3\\_tcm4-684258.pdf](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HowgoodisourschoolJtEpart3_tcm4-684258.pdf). Please note that the term "adequate" in the document has been replaced with "satisfactory".

A sample of parents, children and young people, and all members of staff were invited to give their views of the school using a pre-inspection questionnaire. Their views informed the inspection process, including the nature of discussions in a number of meetings. Strengths and issues identified were explored by the inspection team, and the findings are included in the inspection report. The following information gives the statistical detail from those that returned questionnaires.

## Parent Questionnaire Summary

Centre Name Notre Dame High School  
 SEED Number 8645132  
 Quest. Issued 266  
 Quest. Input 94  
 Response Rate 35%



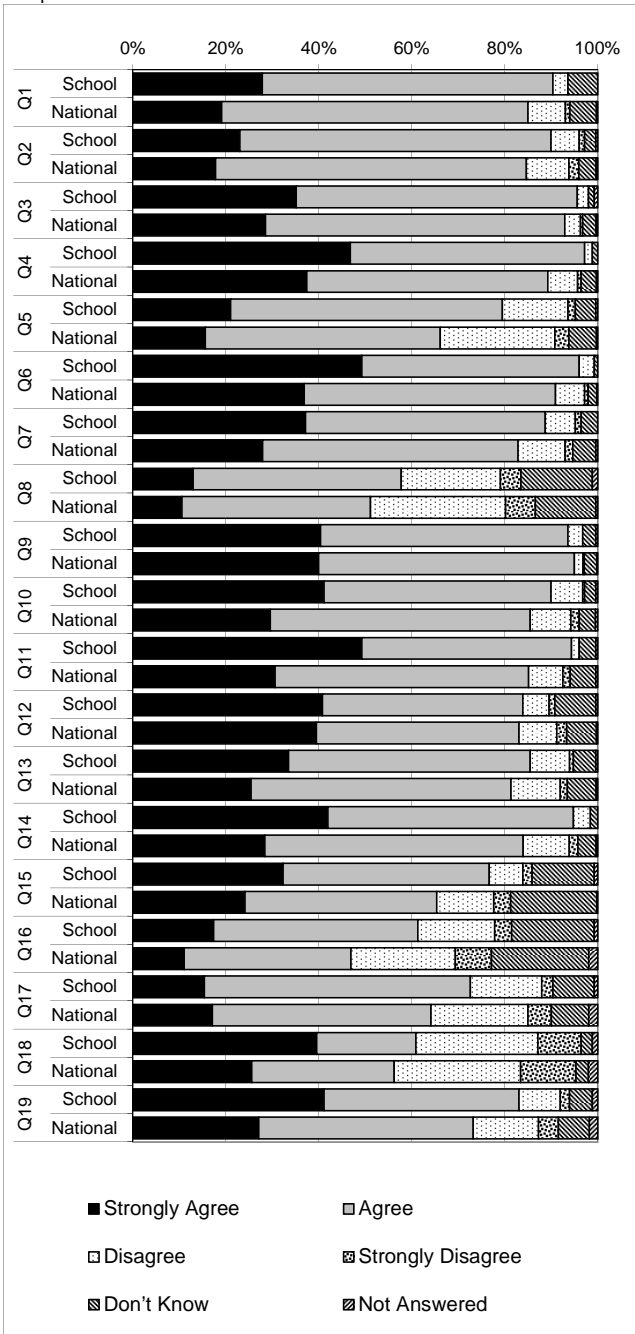
		Percentage %							
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Answered	Strongly Agree & Agree	Disagree & Strongly Disagree
Q1	School	48%	49%	1%	0%	1%	1%	97%	1%
	National	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q2	School	53%	44%	3%	0%	0%	0%	97%	3%
	National	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q3	School	59%	37%	1%	0%	3%	0%	96%	1%
	National	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q4	School	52%	44%	1%	0%	3%	0%	96%	1%
	National	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q5	School	40%	48%	7%	0%	3%	1%	88%	7%
	National	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q6	School	63%	35%	0%	0%	2%	0%	98%	0%
	National	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q7	School	52%	44%	2%	0%	2%	0%	96%	2%
	National	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q8	School	49%	41%	2%	0%	7%	0%	90%	2%
	National	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q9	School	41%	39%	14%	0%	4%	1%	81%	14%
	National	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q10	School	24%	56%	17%	0%	2%	0%	81%	17%
	National	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q11	School	56%	37%	3%	0%	2%	1%	94%	3%
	National	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q12	School	66%	33%	0%	0%	1%	0%	99%	0%
	National	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q13	School	66%	33%	0%	0%	1%	0%	99%	0%
	National	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%

**Note: Will not always sum to 100% due to rounding**



# Pupil Questionnaire Summary

Centre Name Notre Dame High School  
 SEED Number 8645132  
 Quest. Issued 250  
 Quest. Input 248  
 Response Rate 99%

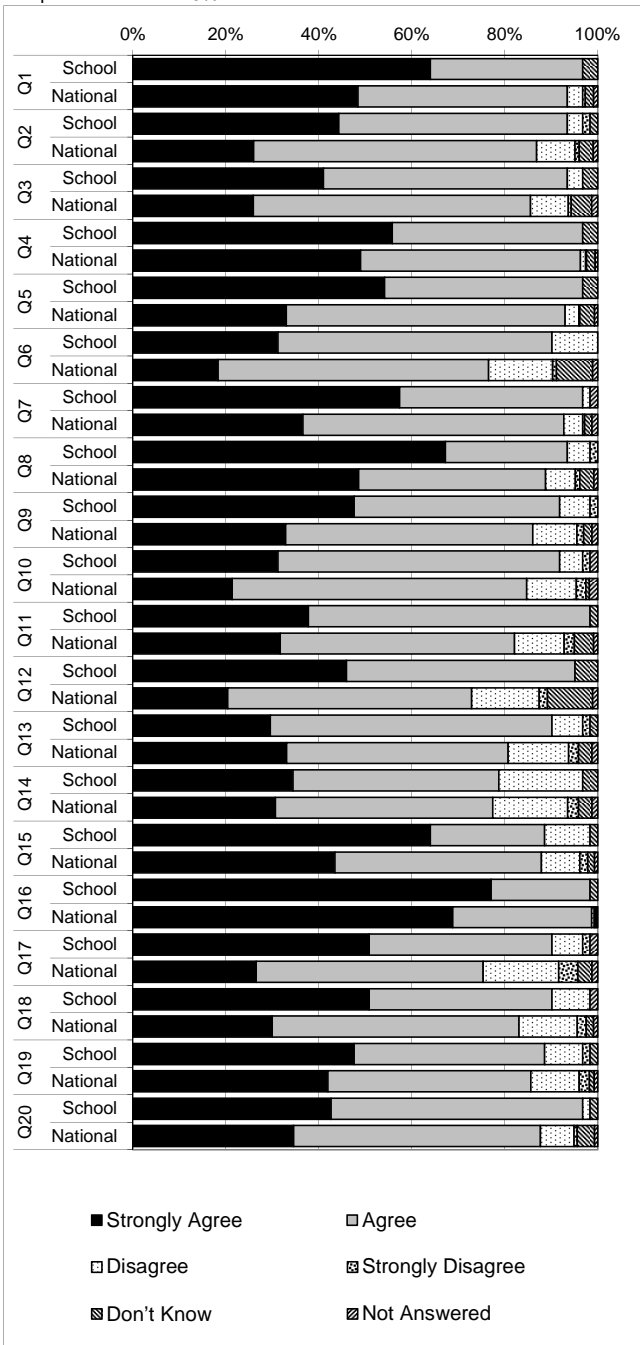


		Percentage %							
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Answered	Strongly Agree & Agree	Disagree & Strongly Disagree
Q1	The school is helping me to become more confident.	28%	63%	3%	0%	6%	0%	90%	3%
Q2	I enjoy learning at school.	23%	67%	6%	1%	2%	0%	90%	7%
Q3	I am getting along well with my school work.	35%	60%	2%	0%	1%	1%	96%	2%
Q4	Staff encourage me to do the best I can.	47%	50%	2%	0%	1%	0%	97%	2%
Q5	Staff talk to me regularly about how to improve my learning.	21%	58%	14%	2%	4%	0%	79%	16%
Q6	I get help when I need it.	49%	47%	3%	0%	1%	0%	96%	3%
Q7	Staff listen to me and pay attention to what I say.	37%	52%	6%	1%	4%	0%	89%	8%
Q8	I have a say in making the way we learn in school better.	13%	45%	21%	4%	15%	1%	58%	26%
Q9	Staff expect me to take responsibility for my own work in class.	40%	53%	3%	0%	3%	0%	94%	3%
Q10	Staff and pupils treat me fairly and with respect.	41%	49%	7%	0%	2%	0%	90%	7%
Q11	I feel safe and cared for in school.	49%	45%	2%	0%	4%	0%	94%	2%
Q12	I have adults in school I can speak to if I am upset or worried about something.	41%	43%	6%	1%	9%	0%	84%	7%
Q13	I find it easy to talk to staff and they set a good example.	33%	52%	8%	1%	5%	0%	85%	9%
Q14	Staff make sure that pupils behave well.	42%	53%	4%	0%	2%	0%	95%	4%
Q15	Staff are good at dealing with bullying behaviour.	32%	44%	7%	2%	13%	1%	77%	9%
Q16	The pupil council is good at getting improvements made in the school.	17%	44%	17%	4%	18%	1%	61%	20%
Q17	The school encourages me to make healthy-food choices.	15%	57%	15%	2%	9%	1%	73%	18%
Q18	I take part in out-of-class activities and school clubs.	40%	21%	26%	9%	2%	1%	61%	35%
Q19	I know what out-of-school activities and youth groups are available in my local area.	41%	42%	9%	2%	5%	1%	83%	11%

**Note: Will not always sum to 100% due to rounding**

# Teacher Questionnaire Summary

Centre Name Notre Dame High School  
 SEED Number 8645132  
 Quest. Issued 84  
 Quest. Input 61  
 Response Rate 73%



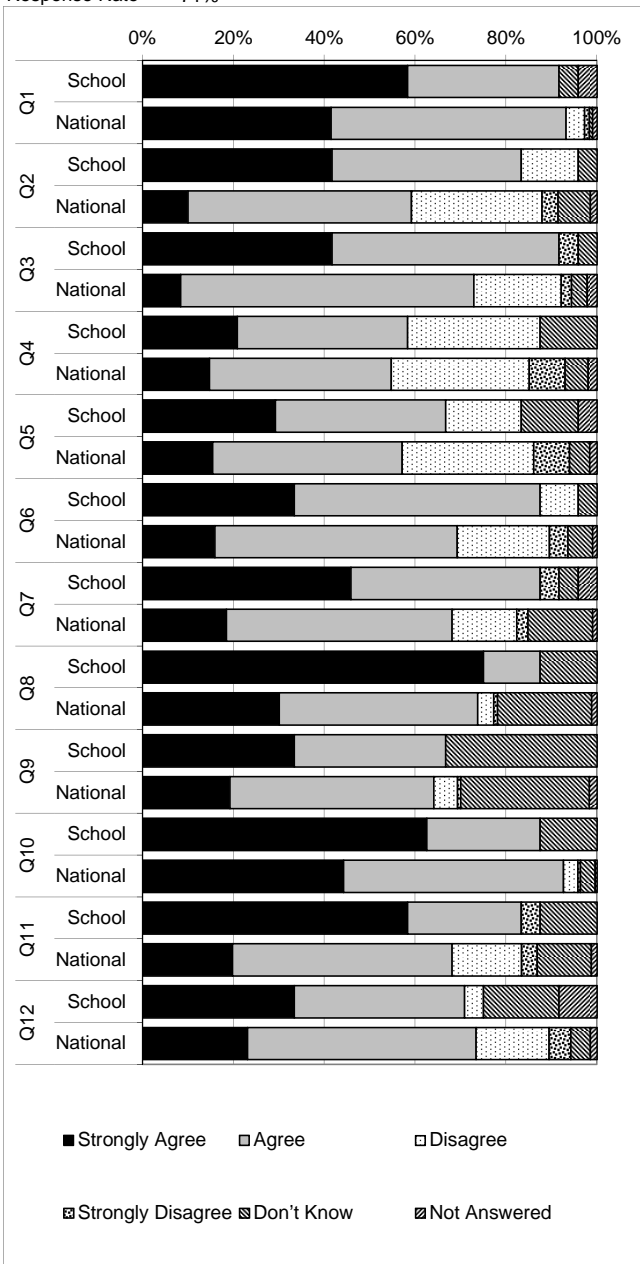
		Percentage %							
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Answered	Strongly Agree & Agree	Disagree & Strongly Disagree
Q1	Staff regularly discuss how to improve achievement for all pupils at both stage and whole-school level.	64%	33%	0%	0%	3%	0%	97%	0%
Q2	All pupils are given activities which meet their learning needs.	44%	49%	3%	2%	2%	0%	93%	5%
Q3	Pupils are involved in setting learning targets.	41%	52%	3%	0%	3%	0%	93%	3%
Q4	Pupils are provided with regular feedback on what they need to do to improve.	56%	41%	0%	0%	3%	0%	97%	0%
Q5	Pupils are provided with opportunities to evaluate their own work and that of others.	54%	43%	0%	0%	3%	0%	97%	0%
Q6	Staff regularly ask for pupils' views on how their learning experiences could be improved.	31%	59%	10%	0%	0%	0%	90%	10%
Q7	Pupils take an active part in their learning.	57%	39%	2%	0%	0%	2%	97%	2%
Q8	Staff treat all pupils equally.	67%	26%	5%	2%	0%	0%	93%	7%
Q9	Staff and pupils respect each other.	48%	44%	7%	2%	0%	0%	92%	8%
Q10	The pupils are well behaved.	31%	61%	5%	2%	0%	2%	92%	7%
Q11	Support for pupils with additional support needs is effective.	38%	61%	0%	0%	2%	0%	98%	0%
Q12	Parents are fully involved in the school and their children's learning.	46%	49%	0%	0%	5%	0%	95%	0%
Q13	I have been actively involved in developing the school's vision and values.	30%	61%	7%	2%	2%	0%	90%	8%
Q14	I am actively involved in setting priorities to improve the school.	34%	44%	18%	0%	3%	0%	79%	18%
Q15	I have regular opportunities to help shape the curriculum by having staff discussions and working groups.	64%	25%	10%	0%	2%	0%	89%	10%
Q16	I am aware of the school's procedures for protecting children.	77%	21%	0%	0%	2%	0%	98%	0%
Q17	Leadership at all levels is effective.	51%	39%	7%	2%	0%	2%	90%	8%
Q18	Staff communicate effectively with each other.	51%	39%	8%	0%	0%	2%	90%	8%
Q19	I have good opportunities to take part in continuing professional development.	48%	41%	8%	2%	2%	0%	89%	10%
Q20	Staff across the school share good practice.	43%	54%	2%	0%	2%	0%	97%	2%

**Note: Will not always sum to 100% due to rounding**

**DISCLOSURE CONTROL APPLIED**

# Non-Teaching Questionnaire Summary

Centre Name Notre Dame High School  
 SEED Number 8645132  
 Quest. Issued 34  
 Quest. Input 24  
 Response Rate 71%



		Percentage %							
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Answered	Strongly Agree & Agree	Disagree & Strongly Disagree
Q1	I have access to the information I need to carry out my work.	58%	33%	0%	0%	4%	4%	92%	0%
Q2	All staff and pupils respect each other.	42%	42%	13%	0%	4%	0%	83%	13%
Q3	Pupils are well behaved.	42%	50%	0%	4%	4%	0%	92%	4%
Q4	I am involved in staff discussions about how to achieve school priorities.	21%	38%	29%	0%	13%	0%	58%	29%
Q5	I have good opportunities to be involved in making decisions.	29%	38%	17%	0%	13%	4%	67%	17%
Q6	Staff communicate effectively with each other.	33%	54%	8%	0%	4%	0%	88%	8%
Q7	Staff treat all pupils equally.	46%	42%	0%	4%	4%	4%	88%	4%
Q8	Support for pupils with additional support needs is effective.	75%	13%	0%	0%	13%	0%	88%	0%
Q9	Parents are fully involved in the school and their children's learning.	33%	33%	0%	0%	33%	0%	67%	0%
Q10	I am aware of the school's procedures for protecting children.	63%	25%	0%	0%	13%	0%	88%	0%
Q11	Leadership at all levels is effective.	58%	25%	0%	4%	13%	0%	83%	4%
Q12	I have good opportunities to take part in training activities.	33%	38%	4%	0%	17%	8%	71%	4%

**Note: Will not always sum to 100% due to rounding**

**DISCLOSURE CONTROL APPLIED**

## Additional inspection evidence

### Selected attainment information

Inspectors use this information together with a wide range of other information gathered during the inspection to evaluate and report on young people's overall achievement. It helps inspectors and schools to understand how successful young people are in SQA qualifications compared to young people nationally and to those in other schools which serve young people with similar needs and backgrounds<sup>1</sup>. However, this is only one aspect of young people's achievement, and it is only by blending these results with a wide range of other information, including achievement in the four capacities of curriculum for excellence<sup>2</sup>, the quality of learning in lessons and other activities, the impact of the curriculum, and the extent to which learning needs are being met, that a well-informed evaluation of achievement can be made. You can find this evaluation of young people's overall achievement in the report on the school, published on this website.

#### Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels:

7: Advanced Higher at A-C/CSYS at A-C

6: Higher at A-C

5: Intermediate 2 at A-C; Standard Grade at 1-2

4: Intermediate 1 at A-C; Standard Grade at 3-4

3: Access 3 Cluster; Standard Grade at 5-6

#### Percentage of relevant S4 roll gaining awards by end of S4

		2011	2012	2013 <sup>3</sup>
English and Mathematics @ Level 3	Notre Dame High	92	99	95
	Comparator schools <sup>1</sup>	94	93	94
	National	93	94	94
5+ @ Level 3 or better	Notre Dame High	95	96	93
	Comparator schools	92	93	93
	National	93	94	95
5+ @ Level 4 or better	Notre Dame High	85	86	87
	Comparator schools	74	76	76
	National	79	80	82
5+ @ Level 5 or better	Notre Dame High	45	38	45
	Comparator schools	29	31	30
	National	36	37	38

## Percentage of relevant S4 roll gaining awards by end of S5

		2011	2012	2013 <sup>3</sup>
5+ @ Level 4 or better	Notre Dame High	87	87	87
	Comparator schools <sup>1</sup>	78	78	81
	National	81	82	84
5+ @ Level 5 or better	Notre Dame High	59	57	57
	Comparator schools	44	46	47
	National	51	52	54
1+ @ Level 6 or better	Notre Dame High	53	55	53
	Comparator schools	38	42	44
	National	45	47	48
3+ @ Level 6 or better	Notre Dame High	32	33	33
	Comparator schools	21	22	23
	National	26	27	28
5+ @ Level 6 or better	Notre Dame High	16	16	14
	Comparator schools	8	9	9
	National	12	13	13

## Percentage of relevant S4 roll gaining awards by end of S6

		2011	2012	2013 <sup>3</sup>
5+ @ Level 5 or better	Notre Dame High	63	62	62
	Comparator schools <sup>1</sup>	48	49	51
	National	53	55	56
1+ @ Level 6 or better	Notre Dame High	61	59	60
	Comparator schools	45	46	48
	National	50	52	53
3+ @ Level 6 or better	Notre Dame High	45	43	45
	Comparator schools	29	32	32
	National	35	37	38
5+ @ Level 6 or better	Notre Dame High	30	30	31
	Comparator schools	19	20	21
	National	24	26	26
1+ @ Level 7 or better	Notre Dame High	19	21	18
	Comparator schools	10	11	13
	National	16	16	17

More attainment information and other statistics for this school can be found on the Scottish Schools Online Website <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/scottishschoolsonline/>

<sup>1</sup> The comparator schools taken into account in HMIE's evaluations are those schools (up to 20) which are statistically close enough to the school in terms of the key characteristics of the school population.

<sup>2</sup> The four capacities are successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, effective contributors.

<sup>3</sup> 2013 Pre Appeal