**PENICUIK HIGH SCHOOL STANDARDS AND QUALITIES REPORT 2015-16**

Penicuik High School is a co-educational, non-denominational school built in 1937 and situated on the south-western boundary of Midlothian. The school is one of two schools which serve the community of Penicuik. Structural changes to the original building have improved both facilities and access.

Penicuik High School is a school that embraces change, aims to promote learning as an exciting, independent and lifelong activity and broaden student horizons and aspirations. The school is well regarded in the community. Our core values are Participation, Respect, Inclusion, Determination and Excellence and these underpin all that we do as a school. Many of our parents are former pupils and tradition is a notable feature of the school.

Particularly strong features of our school are positive attainment and achievement, high quality learning and teaching, positive relationships between staff and pupils and hard working staff who work in partnership with the community and other agencies to meet the needs of pupils and improve the numbers of pupils who go on to positive destinations.

**HOW WELL DO YOUNG PEOPLE LEARN AND ACHIEVE? (QIs 1.1 & 2.1)**

The overall quality of how well young people learn and achieve is very good for S5 and S6 and good for S4.

In S4, almost all pupils achieve at least SCQF level 3 in English and Mathematics. The 2014-14 S4 group did less well at Level 5 than previous groups, with 24.71% achieving

5 or more awards. While this is consistent with predictors from CAT testing undertaken in S1, their results express a ‘value added’ element of more than 8% on the S1 baseline. Local benchmarking data shows that the lowest 20% exceed all comparator measures, the middle 60% are marginally below while the highest 20% continue to exceed Midlothian average and only narrowly miss national averages. There have been improving trends in performance of S5 pupils with this cohort achieving a high of 70.87% for one pass at SCQF level 6, an increase of 10%. The number of S5 candidates achieving 5 or more Level 6 qualifications has increased by 100%, to 20.47%. By the end of S6 there continues to be a high level of achievement across all measures with averages for 5 Highers and Advanced Higher frequently exceeding national and Midlothian averages. Higher Education continues to be a preferred destination for many leavers. Pupil achievement is celebrated through presentations, sporting awards, merit ceremonies, assemblies and where appropriate, certification. We offer a wide range of activities which enhance the curriculum through our excellent partnerships with Skills Development Scotland, Edinburgh, Queen Margaret and Napier Universities, Edinburgh College, Midlothian Training Service, CLD, SQA and local employers. Our well-established interdisciplinary learning programme delivers a high degree of ‘connectivity’ for all young people as part of their BGE. There is, in addition, excellent cooperation across the Associated Schools Group via our extended transition work.

**Existing strengths**

* Penicuik High School fosters a climate of equality, fairness and respect.
* The overall quality of young peoples’ learning experiences is very good. Our learners are respectful, responsible and effective contributors.
* IDL work has successfully promoted collaborative planning and working across departments to improve the experiences of learners.
* There is a wide and effective range of vocational and achievement opportunities to meet the needs of young people including John Muir, Duke of Edinburgh, Scottish Youth and Sports’ Leaders’ Awards.
* Accreditation for Wider Achievement is increasingly supported by partner agencies including SQA
* Pupils experience a wide and stimulating range of learning and teaching approaches including active and cooperative learning.
* ‘Pupil voice’ is being further enhanced through our tutor period initiative which provides significant opportunities to support the development of confident and reflective individuals.
* Learning intentions and success criteria inform learning in almost all classes.

**Priorities for further development**

* Continue to improve performance at 5+ at SCQF level 3 and 4.
* Continue to develop Health and Wellbeing, Literacy and Numeracy as whole school responsibilities.
* Further develop feedback within AifL strategies to ensure that we get the best outcomes for learners.
* Increase certification for Wider Achievement activities.
* Develop greater use of ICT and web-based learning.
* Develop whole school tracking and monitoring to more effectively track pupil progress at all stages, including key transitions.

**HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE TO DEVELOP AND LEARN? (QIs 5.1 & 5.3)**

The overall quality of how we support young people to develop and learn is very good.

Our learners are motivated and eager participants in their learning. They are actively involved in their own learning and development and show increasing skills as learners. High-quality feedback makes them aware of their progress and strengths as learners. They are responsible and contribute actively to the life of the department, school and the wider community. In our department, learners are treated with equality, fairness and respect. Almost all, including those at risk of missing out and those who are vulnerable have progressed well and make very good progress from their prior levels of attainment and wider achievement. Our learners know that their views are sought and acted on. They tell us that they are very satisfied with curricular provision, feel that they are valued and have appropriate opportunities to express their views which are taken into account in decision making. Our learners feel successful, confident and responsible (HGIOS Level 5 Illustration for 2.1).

**Existing strengths**

Barriers to learning are identified through a comprehensive Primary transition programme to ensure continuity of support for pupils, with the following key areas of focus:

* Daily Attendance is given high priority within the school and pupils are encouraged and supported into school by flexible timetables.
* Barriers to learning are identified through a comprehensive Primary transition programme to ensure continuity of support for pupils.
* The Support for Learning department welcomes referrals for assessment from pupils, parent/carers and all staff within the school community.
* There is excellent Support for Learning provision which aims to promote independence for all learners while meeting needs in a very child-centred, nurturing and flexible way. The SfL department ensures all pupils with ASN have appropriate arrangements for assessments through a rigorous system of arrangements which are closely monitored through professional dialogue with subject specialists.
* Our student support systems ensure that we work closely, and effectively, with relevant school staff, partner agencies and parents to meet the needs of the young people in the most appropriate way.
* Learning Assistants provide effective in-class and tutorial support for pupils with a wide range of needs.
* Very good use is made of Additional Support Needs information, which is regularly updated to ensure that teaching staff are able to meet the learners’ needs within their classrooms. SfL reps ensure that ASN are kept high on the agenda for departmental meetings.
* CPD sessions have been delivered to all staff on Education for All and GIRFEC, particularly for Children with Care Experience.
* Pupils who are LAC are well supported by Guidance staff and the SfL team and there are very close links with social work and other partner agencies, providing individual and group support for targeted pupils.
* Staff provide study and homework clubs to further support learning.
* Our very effective Careers provision, both from Guidance staff and from our SDS Advisers, ensures that all pupils are encouraged to engage in a wide range of opportunities and pathways which lead to very high levels of participation and positive outcomes post 16.

**Priorities for future development**

* Ongoing consultation on BGE and Senior Phase to ensure curriculum delivers.
* Appropriate breadth, application and challenge along with increased opportunities for personalisation and choice.
* Continue to extend the range of vocational programmes and links with further and higher education to further enhance the Senior Phase.
* Review assessment practices within the Senior Phase.
* The establishment of a Nurture Room and the development of nurturing approaches/practice with all staff.
* Extension of participation in range of programmes available throughout “Opportunities for All”

**HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF ITS WORK?**

**(QI 5.9)**

The overall quality of how we improve our work is very good.

There is a very positive approach to self-evaluation that has, as its basis, effective communication and dialogue across the school community. There is also a well developed improvement planning process that informs the work of whole school working groups who drive forward identified priorities. All staff are involved in highly focused and effective working groups.

**Existing strengths**

* All departments produce a school improvement plan which reflects on the evidence to produce a S&Q report, outlining key strengths and areas for development.
* There is a well-established, extensive, and developed, programme of peer observation throughout the academic session.
* Working groups are led by staff, at all levels.
* Professional learning, based on the requirements in annual PRD interviews is provided through high quality in-house CPD and is very well attended by our committed staff.
* House and Year Assemblies, twitter and daily newsletters notify all of the wider achievement of pupils and these are recognised and celebrated by the school and community.
* Stakeholder surveys are informing next steps pedagogical reflection.
* P7 to S1 transition is strengthened by a highly successful annual camp.

**Priorities for future development**

* Continue to develop the analysis and dissemination of stakeholder surveys so they impact positively on the development of learning experiences across the school.
* Good practice, especially with our visible learning focus, continues to be shared and developed at department and whole school level.
* Utilise high quality departmental tracking and monitoring to develop a whole school system that provides an effective overview of progress.
* Continue to improve the pupil voice through surveys and Student Council meetings.
* Through identified curricular areas, such as literacy and numeracy transition arrangements continue to develop at key stages.
* Continue to explore further strategies to increase parental engagement with the planning process.
* Continue with the successful assertive mentoring programme.
* Further develop profiling to involve students at all stages.

**How good is our leadership?**

**Leadership of improvement and change (QI 9.4 and QI 9.1-9.3**

The overall quality of leadership of improvement and change is very good.

The senior management team work effectively as a team, each member is significantly involved in developing whole school initiatives and building leadership across the whole school. There continues to be a sharp focus on leadership of improvement and change throughout the school. The leadership of whole school working groups, short life working groups and individual department initiatives all contribute a distributed leadership model throughout the school.

**Existing strengths**

A wide range of leadership roles are taken on by staff at all levels.

Staff are becoming increasingly skilled in the area of self evaluation at personal and departmental levels.

**Priorities for future development**

Ensure more effective use is made of the work of trios in developing and nurturing leadership.

Continue to support staff who wish to take on initiatives focussed on leadership.

Whole School Priorities For 2015-16

1. Visible Learning Approaches to include Learning Feedback and Self Evaluation
2. Tracking & Monitoring In BGE to help reduce bureaucracy for teachers
3. Universal and Targeted Pupil Support