

**Standards and Quality Report**

**2012 - 2013**



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**The School in context:**

Bridge of Don Academy is a fully comprehensive secondary school serving the families of one of the biggest suburbs in Europe. The catchment area also extends out into Aberdeenshire as young people from Balmedie Primary school who live in the villages of Potterton, Belhlevie and Balmedie as well as the rural areas North of the city are in our zone. One third of our young people travel on school transport. The school also receives a high number of placing requests from families out of zone all of whom can be accommodated. The school has provision for 35 young people with additional support needs in our bases and have more than 50 young people who have English as an additional language. Therefore whilst we have experienced a drop in roll this has been mitigated by out of zone young people coming to the school. Almost all families who comment say this is because of the good reputation of the school.

In the Autumn of 2012 a new Head Teacher was appointed who took up her post in January 2013 following immediately on the retirement of the previous Head Teacher. As a former Depute Head Teacher of the school this provided for a smooth transition of leadership. The current senior management team is relatively inexperienced in terms of years in their current posts but all have had extensive leadership experience and success within the school in previous roles.

We receive many positive comments from partners, visitors and new staff on the school’s welcoming and positive ethos. This is born out in other data from young people, staff, parents and partners.

In the previous two sessions a great deal of work was done to finalise the schools aims and values and to promote these with staff, young people and parents.

We want young people to:

* Be Caring
* Be Honest
* Be Respectful
* Your Best

So that they will be

Successful learners

Confident individuals

Effective contributors and

Responsible citizens.

This year will be the chance to further promote our aims through posters, rulers and lanyards but also to audit our progress and so they will be the foundation for pupil voice activities as well as audit activities with staff and young people.

**How do we know how well we are doing? – the audit process**

The staff, young people and parents have developed or are involved in a number of processes which are designed to facilitate and encourage reflection with the aim of securing improvement. The following table describes the processes and indicates the stage of development for each approach.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| At the early stagevof development  | Good but further work required | Very Good: well embedded |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Process** | **Impact and Next Steps** |  |
| **Pupil Voice activities** |
| Pupil focus groups complete questionnaires. Pupil Focus groups use dot-rating exercise to give views on homework, feedback and their own ambitions for school and beyond. There is a successful student council – not perceived as such by students.  | Involve more young people in process through use of survey monkeyExpand exercise to take in their views on how well we are achieving our aims.Raise profile of and improve perceptions of student council.Invite young people to join SMT when key matters are being discussed.  |  |
| There are well developed systems in place in the majority of subjects/departments for young people to use feedback from teachers and peers to improve their learning and attainment.This was discussed at review meetings with PTs who shared their procedures. There are good examples of use of the Core Skills framework being used to provide a structure for this work in departments. Young people feedback to staff about learning, teaching and resources through questionnaires  | Young people know what they need to work on in individual subject areas. Pupil reflection time each morning to give young people the opportunity to reflect on their learning in each of their subjects from the previous day. Improvements to the PSE programme to give young people time to use their daily reflections to build a bigger and better picture of their own strengths and the steps they need to take to improve.Planning and development work began on the pupil monitoring and tracking system using e1. |  |
| **Staff – non-teaching** |
| There are (ACC) systems in place to support the PRD process for non-teaching staff. Almost all non-teaching staff had a PRD meeting by the end of the session.  | Issues and problems using electronic systems. All staff to have PRD each year. |  |
| All non-teaching staff given an opportunity to complete a questionnaire (HMIe) to give feedback on their experiences in school.  | As a result of the survey head teacher held meetings with team leaders of PSAs, technicians, office staff to discuss next steps. Agreed HT to meet with all non-teaching staff at least twice per year on in-service days – improvement plan and their role in new developments. |  |
| **Teaching Staff** |
| SMT and some PTs agreed to participate in ACC pilot for PRD process. Examples of good practice in teachers seeking feedback from peers and young people on learning and teaching to secure improvements are evident. Results of young people focus groups shared with all staff on In-service day and discussed. TLC established with five members but broke down due to changes of role within school.  | The process is well under way with SMT and PTs. New ACC process being followed as part of the pilot. Build on good practice by sharing this more widely - whole staff meetings and feeding into the improvement planning process- February In-service day. Consult more widely with young people on L & T and share the results again with staff. TLC has been re-established the group is underway with a plan for the year. Distributed leadership is developing and further investment of time for PTs and leadership development is planned. |  |
| **Staff Questionnaires**Almost all teaching staff completed a questionnaire (HMIe version) to give their views on a range of issues in school.  | Views collated and used to inform audit and improvement plan. Rotate use of this questionnaire with one designed to review how well we are achieving our aims and instilling our values. Use more ICT based approaches to gathering views as well as HT/staff focus groups to gather more detailed information e.g. on how well we are achieving our aims.  |  |
| **Staff Consultation**There is a well-established tradition within the school of staff consultation and discussion on any major new developments. E.G. Universal support and Monitoring and Tracking.  | Consultation models have been used successfully to bring about changes to policy: most recently in relation to discipline, Universal Support and Assessment/Monitoring and Tracking.  |  |
| **Attainment Reviews**Two review meetings take place with link DHT and HT per year which focus on improvement plan and attainment using STACs. Work done this year to streamline paperwork and reduce routine administrative work for PTs.PTs discuss attainment in DMs  | Positive feedback given to PTs and staff on results and where appropriate action plans to improve attainment are drawn up between HT, DHT and PT and monitored through link meetings. All results are shared with all staff and used to prepare for attainment reviews with local authority. Training to be undertaken as appropriate on new Senior Phase benchmarking Tool (SPBT).Involve whole staff in discussions on attainment at a whole school level. Particularly around the core measures such as 5+ level 5. Share attainment data with primary colleagues.  |  |
| **Parents** |
| The Parent Council is very active and a very good source of support for the HT and staff. They are a good sounding board for new developments in the school. The Parent council have been fully involved in discussions and decisions in relation to both the BGE and the senior phase. Parent Council fully involved in appointment of new HT and DHT. PC Meetings are well planned and well attended. Parental Questionnaires are use at parents’ evenings – relatively good rate of return  | HT to continue to work closely with the PC. PC and SMT to discuss way of getting the view of more parents on the quality of education provided for their children. Continue to use questionnaires at Parents Evening. Rotate HMIe questionnaire with one to seek views on how well we are achieving our aims and instilling our values.  |  |

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

Almost all young people report that they enjoy learning in school. Most think they are getting on well with their school work and that staff encourage them to do the best they can. Almost all are expected by staff to take responsibility for their own learning and most feel that staff and young people treat them fairly and with respect. The majority feel that staff are good at dealing with bullying behaviour. This was borne out by the comments that young people wrote when describing the key strengths of the school. There were many positive comments about the school ethos and the good relationships between staff and young people.

The views of young people are supported by the views of parents. Of those who returned a survey almost all agree that the school is helping their child to be more confident; that their child’s learning is progressing well and that their child is encouraged and stretched to work to the best of their ability. Most agreed or strongly agreed that their child enjoys learning at school and the school keeps them well informed about their child’s progress and that staff know their child as an individual and support them well. When asked to identify the key strengths of the school parents’ comments supported the views above; they highlighted the positive ethos and relationships within the school as well as the positive qualities of teachers and staff. It will be important to monitor these views and compare them over time.

**Attainment - Broad General Education**

In common with other schools in Aberdeen city Midyis Data indicated a decline in the potential of pupils in S1. The pattern is one of an increase of pupils in band D and a corresponding decrease in the numbers in Band A.

The school’s own data gives an indication of where our young people are globally in relation to the CfE levels. It can be noted that the majority of our young people in S1 are working within the third level. By the end of S2 we also have a significant number of young people working within the fourth level in numeracy and literacy.

However what will be more important next year will be the data on where young people are in relation to their own previous attainment and whether or not they are making progress in line with what could be expected given their prior attainment. SOSCA data indicates that pupils are making very good progress in their first two years. The gains are marked in all three areas –mathematics, reading and science. Discussion will now take place as to what the data tells us about the performance of pupils individually and in classes. This discussion will take place with all teachers which will help them to focus their efforts in supporting the learning of the young people in their classes in the final year of the broad general education and as they progress into the senior phase.

**Attainment by the end of S4**

The pattern of attainment overall confirms that the school is doing with lower ability pupils – as evidenced in attainment patterns for young people with additional support needs. Data shows that the majority of pupils attained 5+ SCQF level 4 award; greater than was predicted by MidYIS. This is also borne out by the NCD which puts the school above the national pattern with boys doing better than girls. Attainment of 5+ SCQF level 5 awards has been in line with the national pattern with a dip this year. Boys are again outperforming girls in this area. An analysis of the data in each of the standard grade subjects looking specifically at the NCDs for attainment in Grade 1 and Grades 1 and 2 supports this view.

In subject departments there are strong positive patterns of attainment in Standard Grade Mathematics, Standard Grade Chemistry, and Standard Grade Computing Studies. There is a positive pattern of attainment in Standard Grade French. There are also pleasing one year positive results in Standard Grade Science and in Standard Grade Music and Intermediate Spanish.

There are strong negative patterns of attainment in Standard Grade Art & Design and in Standard Grade Technological Studies. There are action plans in place for both of these courses agreed at annual review meetings with PTs. However we are very pleased with the improvements in attainment in Craft and Design, and Graphic Communication and PE which suggest that previous interventions have had a positive impact on attainment.

The attainment pattern in two main areas is impacting negatively on the whole school data. However our belief is that we also need to focus our efforts on raising the attainment of our middle to able pupils who have the potential to do better. We will need to harness the energies not only of staff but also of pupils and parents to improve their attainment. The focus will be on raising the aspirations of pupils in this group and working to motivate and encourage them to put the required effort into their learning and preparation for examinations. Although discussions are yet to take place with staff other than PTs we are sure there will be support for the following approach to raising attainment:

* Departmental action plans in areas on concern
* raised aspirations
* increased monitoring and tracking of pupil attainment by Heads of House, year head and head teacher and
* regular meetings to discuss support and strategies with those young people identified as underperforming

**Attainment by the end of S5 and S6**

The appendix shows the pattern of attainment in measures is one of steady improvement in S5. The measures for S6 show improvement in the percentage of pupils passing at least one advanced higher and a decline this year in attainment of 5 @ SCQF 6 and 3 @ SCQF6. There are positive patterns of attainment by the end of S5 in Higher Mathematics and Higher Business Management. This year there were also positive results in Intermediate 2 English, Higher Physics and Intermediate 2 Administration.

There are positive patterns of attainment by the end of S6 in Higher Mathematics and Higher Information Systems. There were positive results this year in Intermediate 2 English, Higher Physics, Intermediate 2 Administration and Higher Graphic Communication.

Pupils in Higher Modern Studies and Higher History are not making the progress suggested by their prior attainment and there are concerns about the pass rates in both. There are also concerns about the pass rates this year in Higher French, Intermediate 2 travel and Tourism and Higher philosophy. We are looking forward to recruiting a permanent full time member of staff for this subject for session 2014 – 15. Admission criteria are being looked at more carefully in Higher Philosophy and the PT is looking to adopt procedures used successfully in other areas. Travel and Tourism is attractive to young people who need more flexibility in progression through the senior phase.

**Destinations of our young people**

Most young people who leave Bridge of Don Academy go on to a positive destination. However between 10 and 12% of our leavers which is higher than the city average but still not good in a city where unemployment is low and employment is high in an area where there are jobs and training opportunities for young people. We are looking currently at working more closely with our colleagues in the consortium to improve positive destinations through the introduction of skills for work courses which include work placements. Our plans for universal support linked to core skills and personal reflection are linked to this as are our plans for more pupils in S4 to participate in one day per week work experience placements in the senior phase. Policies which put in place support for young people only when they reach 16 are too late. In many cases support from the age of 14 is required to divert young people from negative destinations and into, for example, a sustainable college place should be the aim.

**Achievements**

Almost all parents and most young people feel that the school is helping them to become more confident. Almost all young people in S1 and in S2 participate in activities each year designed to develop leadership skills and the majority fed back in 2011-12 that this had been a worthwhile experience. Suggestions made by young people were acted on to improve the experience and give young people more of a sense of ownership in the sessions we provided for 2012-13. This is now part of our annual leadership development programme and the core skills frame work is used to give feedback to young people about their progress.

The majority of young people know what out of class activities are available and participate in them. These activities enhance pupil learning and involve our partners in the community such as Jamie Hutcheon from Cocoa Ooze who supports our S2 leadership day as well as staff from Entier, Mains of Scotstown and The Holiday Inn who support interdisciplinary work such as *Master Chef* as well as targeted work experience and the development of practical skills in the kitchen. These and other activities are evident in the school magazine which is published three times a year and is used to celebrate pupil achievements, along with our, now traditional, Annual Awards Ceremony at the Beach Ballroom.

Almost all young people responded to a survey designed to find out about participation in activities in and out of school. Young people were involved in 32 extra-curricular activities associated with school and 50 activities out of school. The next step will be to provide a framework for young people to be able to capture and articulate the skills they are developing by participating in these activities and to see the links with their learning in classes. This will be done through the work our Heads of House are developing to support young people reflecting on their learning which will also culminate in the completion of their S3 profile, not just as an end product but in preparation for future CVs and personal statements.

Young people are encouraged to participate but there is more work to be done in raising the profile of activities as a significant minority (34%) report that they do not participate in out of class activities and school clubs. This is partly due to misperceptions as to what these activities are as each year almost all young people in S1 and S2 participate in the wide range of activities on offer in our activities week in June. However the school does have about one third of its young people on school transport from the shire or other parts of the city which makes after school activities more difficult for families to support. However these after school opportunities are still active – the debating club, school sports teams, Duke of Edinburgh preparation and training, the school orchestra and school show. Many activities are organised at lunch time to ensure school transport young people can attend with staff giving up time to run for example, the library club, amnesty international, the school choirs, the student council and sports activities. Senior young people also organise house events for younger young people. There are marked successes in our implementation of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme ably led by a PT and a former pupil studying at Aberdeen University. This success underlines the importance of leadership in this key area. In 2011-2012 18 young people completed their expedition as part of this Award scheme. This year 26 young people from S3 upwards participated in practice expeditions on the Glen Tanar Estate. Another five will be doing so later this year. This year one pupil is actively pursuing the Gold Award. In 2011-12 six young people achieved the Bronze Award and 12 achieved silver awards.

**Successful Learners**

There is much evidence of the academic success of our young people at all levels. This is echoed in our data for attainment at the end of S4 and at the end of S6. There is also much evidence of young people achieving well. In addition almost all of our young people report that they enjoy learning at school and most report that they are getting along well. This is echoed by parents almost all of whom report that their child’s learning is progressing well and that they are stretched to work to the best of their ability. Developing our young people’s skills has also been a focus of planning within the Broad General Education and we must continue to monitor our young people’ development of skills. The priorities in our improvement plan have had a demonstrable impact on the attainment of girls. There has been a steady improvement in girls’ attainment in 3+ Highers but there is still work to be done as indicated by other measures. We have focussed on raising standards of attainment in general rather than just on girls’ attainment. This is an approach we will continue with. We are renewing our partnership with GE Oil and Gas and are beginning discussions on how they can support us to raise the aspirations of our pupils.

**Responsible Citizens**

There are many opportunities for young people to take on responsibility within the school particularly within senior school. Developing pupils’ leadership skills has also been part of our programmes led by our Heads of House to work on this right from S1. The DHT with the lead for senior school has also worked with the DHT with the lead for S3 and S4 to build in leadership opportunities into S3 and S4, for example as prefects, dance leaders and in session 2013–14 as leaders in PE. Further development of leadership skills will be a part of the improvement plan in PE under the leadership of the PT and within his remit for wider achievement. Respect is one of our BODA Bs and most teachers agree that staff and young people respect each other. Most young people agree that staff treat them fairly and with respect and most non-teaching staff agree all staff and young people treat each other with respect.

**Effective Contributors**

We are working on improving the resilience and self-reliance of our young people. It has been noted and reported by some teachers that some of our young people do expect and sometimes prefer to be passive in their learning. However, almost all young people report that they are expected by staff to take responsibility for their own work in class. The introduction of Business in S3 will give young people the chance to work on enterprising activities in a more specialised way and our leadership development programme will also contribute to a greater willingness to contribute to the life and work of the school.

**Confident Individuals**

Almost all parents report that their child feels safe in school and most young people report that they feel safe and cared for in school which is an important aspect of their health and wellbeing. Support for young people and the positive ethos in the school was also commented on in staff, pupil and parental returns as a key strength of the school. We have had concerns about the ambitions of our young people and whether or not they are setting the bar too low for themselves in relation to attainment. A start was made on finding out more about this in our pupil focus groups. The most frequent answer to the question “What do you want out of life?” was to live comfortably/afford luxury items and the second was to go to university. In response to the question about what they would like to get out of school the most frequent answer by young people was good grades. This was borne out by their comments on homework and feedback. Our young people like feedback and homework which helps them to pass exams and this becomes progressively more apparent as they progress through school. More work needs to be done to look at the impact of our aims and values on our young people’s attainment and achievements and aspirations.

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

Most young people think they are getting on well with their school work and that staff encourage them to do the best they can. Almost all are expected by staff to take responsibility for their own learning and most feel that staff and young people treat them fairly and with respect. The majority feel that staff are good at dealing with bullying behaviour. This was borne out by the comments that young people wrote when describing the key strengths of the school. There were many positive comments about the school ethos and the good relationships between staff and young people.

The views of young people are supported by the views of parents. Of those who returned a survey almost all agree that the school is helping their child to be more confident; that their child’s learning is progressing well and that their child is encouraged and stretched to work to the best of their ability. Most agreed or strongly agreed that their child enjoys learning at school and the school keeps them well informed about their child’s progress and that staff know their child as an individual and support them well. When asked to identify the key strengths of the school parents’ comments supported the views above; they highlighted the positive ethos and relationships within the school as well as the positive qualities of teachers and staff. It will be important to monitor these views and compare them over time.

The student council has now been in place for two years. The council themselves have reported through their minutes their lack of confidence about their impact in terms of their contribution to the life and work of the school. This is borne out by the fact that less than half of young people think that the student council is good at getting improvements made in the school. This is despite attempts to raise the profile of the student council through assemblies delivered by members and their involvement in the homework working groups and the selection process of the new Head Teacher and the Depute Head Teacher. Pupil voice is important and work needs to be done to raise the profile of the student council. There are plans for the council to take charge of the pupil notice boards in the school canteen. A working group for pupil voice are to meet in the autumn term to plan for further improvements. The Head Teacher also has plans to further build on this work to enable more pupils to have a voice and influence on the learning environment of the school. By speaking to a small group of pupils each day and asking questions about learning and ethos a more accurate picture will be built up and more pupils will have had a direct voice.

Most teachers agree that young people are well behaved and most young people agree that staff make sure the young people behave well and so we are confident that our systems and processes are impacting positively on behaviour to minimise disruption to learning and teaching. However to fine tune our approach and to build on work undertaken by staff on solutions oriented approaches restorative practices a major piece of work led by a DHT and involving all young people and all staff was undertaken this year. The aim was to get young people to take more responsibility for their own behaviour, minimise disruption to learning and keep parents informed. One of our probationers , on the discipline group, chose the school discipline system as the topic for her research project. The results of her findings show a small decline in the number of hits young people are getting. However the consensus of young people is that the system which has added in a “stop and think” exercise is more effective. The DHT has also undertaken training in restorative practices this year and will be looking at the training that can be rolled out during next session to further support our very robust systems.

Our curriculum has a clear rationale which has been developed with the support and collegiate working of young people, parents, staff and partners. Most teachers feel that they have regular opportunities to shape the curriculum, the majority of parents agree that the school asks for their views and takes them into account and the majority of young people agree that they have a say in making the way they learn in school better.

In common with other schools in 2012-13 young people in our third year embarked upon their final year in the broad general education. Principal Teacher Forum meetings were used to discuss progress and as a result a major refresh of the curriculum for S3 was embarked upon with the aim of improving coherence and progression. A general view emerged that young people making choices within curriculum areas was having unintended consequences which would make their progression into the senior phase more difficult than it needed to be.

It was recognised that there needed to be an opportunity for young people to specialise as well as have a breadth of experience and the CfE briefing papers were used to support our discussions. The decision was taken to end traditional pupil choice at the end of S2 where all young people made choices within the curriculum areas. Instead young people are able to maintain breadth of learning by continuing with all subjects until the end of S3 but specialise as detailed in the appendix. The aim was to further support young people’s transition into the senior phase.

Consultation took place with teaching staff, parents and young people. Although there were some initial concerns raised by young people through the student council these fears were allayed by visits from the HT and link DHT to all S2 PSE classes where the rationale and practicalities of this decision were discussed. Clearly session 2013–14 will require us to further consult with young people, parents and staff and to monitor pupil progress closely. We now have what we believe gives our young people breadth as well as the opportunity to specialise. The marginal savings in time made have been used to timetable more flexibly to support pupil specialisation.

All national courses are designed to be overtaken in the course of a year by young people who have had a broad general education. We intend to carefully monitor attainment over the coming years to see what impact the change from a two year standard grade course or Intermediate 1 course in S3 and S4 followed by one year courses in S5 and S6 has on attainment. We are hopeful that attainment will be improved because the pace of learning in S4 will improve as young people will be undertaking one year national courses rather than two year courses. This will be better preparation for the experience of S5 and S6. In the past young people found the jump to S5 much harder after the relatively slow pace of S3 and S4. The young people have made very good progress from S1 to the end of S2 as evidenced by SOSCA results. If this is a pattern that has been replicated in previous years it could indicate that, rather than S3 and 4 increasing the pace and challenge of work and thus attainment by the end of S4 that it slowed the momentum of learning and put a ceiling on young people’s achievements too soon.

We will still be doing estimate examinations but have changed the timing of these. Young people in S4 will not have study leave whilst those in S5 and S6 will be granted study leave. This is to maximise learning time for S4 in this new era and a recognition of the extra demands of Higher courses.

More work needs to be done to audit the provision of learning to develop skills for life learning and work as outlined in our core skills framework. Learning and Teaching is enhanced by working with our partners particularly in the hospitality sector and sciences. The Learning and Teaching Group monitor changes to the curriculum and currently all departments/faculties have a review of the broad general education as an action point on their improvement plan for 2013-14. This will be done with the design principles, Es and Os and skills for life learning and work in mind as well as progression to the senior phase.

Considerable work has been undertaken by staff in departments to review and evaluate the broad general education being provided for our young people in S1–S3. All departments and subject areas have a review and refresh in their improvement plan for 2013–14 and this will be based on the design principles of the curriculum. This will be done to ensure that programmes provide a broad general education and prepare young people for the senior phase. Already a great deal of work has been undertaken with young people, parents and staff to review and refresh our third year curriculum as detailed above. Further work has also been undertaken to embed more securely our core skills framework to deliver and ensure progression in literacy, numeracy and health and well‑being.

Work is well established to link learning in mathematics in primary with that in secondary. Visits to primaries take place throughout the year and the young people also come together to attend maths days using a local community centre. This allows teachers to discuss matters relating to the curriculum.

Local authority support allowed us to plan a day for PE and HE PTs to meet with primary colleagues to discuss the Es and Os for Health and Wellbeing. This was marginally successful for those who could attend. We have decided as an ASG to use parts of appropriate in-service days to further this work.

Young people’s entitlement to personal support which enables them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities provided by our new curriculum has been the focus of much work by the learning and teaching group, the Heads of House and the whole staff and we are embarking on phase two of its implementation next session to encourage and develop reflection based on feedback on learning.

The focus will be on young people knowing themselves better as learners and will build on skills and work done in primary school, for example using some of the same reflection questions. This work will be supported through our programme of assemblies and work in PSE which will build up to the completion of the S3 profile and be good preparation for life beyond school.

As can be seen from the analysis of the attainment of our young people with additional support needs the school has experienced considerable success. This is supported by the views of young people and staff. Most young people agree that they get help when they need it and the majority report that staff talk to them regularly about how to improve their learning. The majority of teachers report that young people are involved in setting their learning targets.

The system for monitoring young people’ attitudes to learning in S1–S4 through the pupil motivation scheme is well embedded and good at highlighting for the Heads of House and Year Heads the young people who are exhibiting negative attitudes to learning – whether these are one off instances or more prolonged and thus cause for more heightened concern and further intervention. There are also good systems in place within departments and faculties to monitor pupil progress. Principal Teachers use marksheets to monitor the progress of the young people in their departments and use is made of MidYIS information to support this tracking and target setting. Many of these are well developed systems that work effectively within the departments. There is however a need for a system which allows Heads of House and Year Heads to more easily monitor and track the progress of young people they are responsible for across the entirety of their experiences in school and to intervene when necessary. This would also be very beneficial for young people so that they know where and why they are doing well and what they need to work on and it would allow more timeous and appropriate intervention based on rigorous data.

Currently Principal Teachers and class teachers make good use of the referral systems within school to raise concerns about young people’s learning, progress and/or attitude to learning with Heads of House and the PT SFL who will in turn canvass the views of all teachers working with that pupil. Intervention is in line with the staged procedures model. In turn they will, if necessary, make a referral to the Pupil Support Management Group which would take over the monitoring of the progress of young people with identified additional support needs whether these are related to learning, behaviour or short term factors likely to influence attainment and achievement. The rigorous approach to planning, monitoring and reviewing the progress of our young people with additional support needs alongside the positive partnership working with outside agencies means that support for young people is well targeted and has contributed to the positive attainment pattern of young people.

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

There is much evidence of genuine commitment to the process of self-evaluation. It is important that, as a part of this process that all staff, young people and parents as well as partners share a common vision of what we are trying to achieve. A major development in session 2011-12 was a review of our aims and values to ensure that we are all working towards the same vision for our school and its young people. This was led by a member of the senior management team and the Head Teacher. Assemblies, staff meetings and parents’ events were used to consult and support discussion on our direction. All young people voted on their preferred option through RMPS classes and staff voted individually. Parents’ feedback came through the parent council. After the consultation process our aims and values were decided upon and agreed. In session 2012–13 considerable work was undertaken to ensure that our aims and in particular our values have been promoted with all young people, staff and parents.

Almost all teaching staff returned a questionnaire designed to seek teachers’ views on how well we are doing and most agree that they have been actively involved in setting the priorities to improve the school and the majority that they have been involved in setting the school’s vision and values. The results from our non-teaching questionnaire were much less positive – the majority did not agree that they were involved in discussions about how to achieve school priorities or that they had good opportunities to be involved in decision making. Work will be done in session 2013-14 with the team leaders for non-teaching staff to ensure they know that their views are valued and that they are more aware of the ways that they can contribute to making decisions.

The majority of young people in response to a questionnaire report that they have a say in making the way we learn better but we would aim to have almost all of our young people reporting this. Added to our concerns about the profile of the student council this is further evidence of the need for a pupil voice working group.

Young people were involved in focus groups which will continue but as previously discussed be built on by the work of the working group on pupil voice and the HTs own plans to meet more regularly with pupils.

The parent council provides very well informed and measured feedback to the staff and is of great support to the school. The focus on homework came from a discussion which arose from a question posed by a member of the parent council. Parents’ views were gathered this session but due to the timing of the appointment of the new Head Teacher only those on the Parent Council and parents of young people in senior school; S4–6 and those in S2 were surveyed – the surveys were issued at parents’ evenings. Next year we will look at the feasibility and practicalities of doing our surveys on survey monkey to make returns easier for parents, staff and young people and to make collation easier. We will also continue to use appropriate staff meetings, young people’ focus groups, parent council meetings and parents’ evenings for such activities.

**Staff commitment to continuing professional development**

All staff are involved in self-evaluation through the PRD process and one DHT has volunteered to be part of a pilot project within the city to develop our approaches to professional review and development and will pilot the new process which links to the new standard and the professional update with her link PTs who have agreed to volunteer for this.

Most teachers agree that they have good opportunities to take part in continuing professional development and our staff in feedback on previous in-service days and staff meetings have expressed their enthusiasm for meetings which involve sharing of resources, ideas and pedagogy.

Two Principal Teachers are involved in the leadership development programme within Aberdeen City Council. There is also agreement that four of the eight Principal Teacher Forums for session 2013–14 will be one item meetings with a focus on leadership and learning and teaching – the suggestions for topics coming from Principal Teachers themselves. Other ways will be found to disseminate information and discuss business –for example at link meetings between link DHT and PTs. We will do the same for the four whole staff meetings in the calendar for 2013‑14.

We have a number of teachers who have taken on or are pursuing leadership opportunities opened up to them by the local authority such as the leadership of subject networks or secondments to work on assessment and reporting. In addition we have course writers in HE and in social studies and a verifier in PE.

Staff reports on the usefulness of subject networks and meetings vary. Some are seen by staff as very supportive and have successfully developed resources for the new national courses. This is something the local authority will address in 2013–14.

The Head Teacher is participating in a pilot mentoring project organised by the local authority and in turn has been joint lead for session 2012–13 for a city wide DHT network focussing on a needs led approach to CPD and leadership development of DHTs. This has been well attended by our own DHTs and those of the other twelve secondary schools in the city.

There are robust systems in place to support self-evaluation which include the improvement planning cycle which begins in February each year with an evaluation by all teachers in their faculties of the previous year’s improvement plan and an assessment of “How Good is our Department” using the core QIs. There are twice yearly meetings between Head Teacher and Principal Teachers which include the link DHT. In the autumn term discussions focus on attainment and in the spring the focus is the improvement plan and its major themes. These meetings are supportive but challenging. Action plans have been drawn up for three areas where attainment is of concern.

Information from pupil focus group activities were feedback to all staff and thus helped departments and faculty leaders make their own plans for developments in the two areas of homework and feedback that will provide the focus of improving our links with parents and improving pupil skills in reflecting on their learning using the feedback from their teachers.

**Improvement Plan**

The school’s improvement plan is a direct result of audit activities which involve all staff, young people and parents. The focus is on the core QIs and the emphasis is on securing improvement which impacts on outcomes for young people. All teaching staff are involved in the discussions for the improvement plan at whole school level and all are given access to the feedback from staff, parents and young people to inform their decisions and plans at faculty level. Processes and procedures designed to secure improvements in attainment have had some success and the potential for further improvements can be seen.

Changes to the curriculum have been planned and consulted on and their implementation carefully managed.

There has been good progress on our improvement plan priorities for this session. The focus for future work will be the robust evaluation of the systems we are planning to put in place for 2013-14.

Most Teachers agree that leadership is effective at all levels and most parents agree that the school is well led. A new Head Teacher was appointed in October and took up post in January 2013. She is leading a relatively new team made up of two acting DHTs and a newly appointed DHT. Our team of Faculty PTs have varying degrees of experience in relation to leadership in their current role although a significant core are highly experienced leaders who not only take on this role but leadership throughout the school and in the city. All PTs at this year’s review meetings in spring produced plans for the forthcoming year which were considered and struck a balance between the need for maintenance and innovation and change. As one would expect all of them are undertaking work to develop courses for the new qualifications. One concern to note is the variability across the subjects in terms of support from the city largely due to difficulties in recruiting course writers. We welcome the continuation by the local authority of subject networks. All PTs have been issued with materials produced by Angus Council to support course development. All will be reviewing and refreshing their courses using the design principles and appropriate SQA/Education Scotland resources. Each DHT has clear links with faculty leaders and regular link meetings are timetabled to support the faculties. Further support and challenge is provided through the two annual review meetings focussing on attainment and the improvement planning process.

The annual review cycle provides the structure which supports a consistent approach to improvement planning in all areas and all plans and the supporting self-evaluation documentation are prepared in advance of meetings with the Head Teacher by the Principal Teacher with the support of the link DHT.

Principal Teachers have demonstrated considerable creativity in their implementation of courses and programmes to provide young people with a broad general education however they are not complacent and all departments intend to review and evaluate their provision further during the course of 2013-14. They have been at the forefront, with the senior management team, of discussions and changes for young people in S3 as a result young people will have the opportunity to specialise and still experience a broad general education which prepares them for the senior phase. Changes have been implemented with care and thought without undue delay to maximise the benefit to young people. For example changes to the S3 curriculum were not anticipated until the autumn of 2012 but implemented in time for August 2013.

A good example of our carefully planned approach to innovation and change is the way we will be implementing improvements to our system to provide the entitlement of all leaners to personal support which enables them to gain as much as possible from our new curriculum. Initial plans presented for discussion by staff were rejected at the November in-service day and the detailed feedback from staff used to formulate a new plan. This was then discussed further at faculty and link meetings. Part of the February in-service day was used to ensure staff were confident about their role in terms of providing feedback in lessons. Young people in focus groups told us about their experiences of feedback which was then shared with teaching staff at the May in-service day. Further work has been done with young people at assemblies to ensure they understand what we are doing and why. Heads of House are central to the process and so have been leads in planning and preparing resources to support reflection time. The Learning and Teaching Group have taken on the practical tasks of supporting and adapting resources provided by the Heads of House and organising the pupil planners which will be used to support this. The Head Teacher will be writing an article for the school magazine explaining the process to parents. During the course of the year we will gather views on the impact this is having on young people’ learning and progress. The process of implementation has been planned carefully to keep staff, young people and parents fully informed. It will require a change to our routines and to be successful will need young people, with the support of teachers to fully engage with the process. It is in this way that we will maximise the impact on the attainment and achievement of learners.

Further work will be done in session 2013–14 to streamline the process of attainment review meetings to support Principal Teachers of faculties so that the time in meetings is spent discussing ways to improve attainment and achievement.

We want our young people to be leaders of their own learning and to develop the skills for life learning and work that will support their learning beyond school. Much work has gone into developing their leadership skills and into ensuring that they can contribute to improvements through the student council. There is more work to be done as most young people either do not know or do not agree that the student council is good at getting improvements made in the school.

**Leadership Opportunities for young people**

The school has developed a number of opportunities for young people to develop the skills associated with leadership outside the traditional opportunities provided in the senior phase. We expect a lot of our young people in senior school. In particular our Head team – head girl, head boy, depute head girl and deputy head boy run parents’ evening after the initial organisation is completed by the year head. They recruit prefects and other senior pupils to support them with this work. They also organise, with the support of the senior management team, the yearbook, the school ball, winter formal, Christmas assemblies and the prefect rota. A number of senior pupils take on regular weekly duties to ensure good order and discipline in the school corridors, canteen and at the local shops. When they are on study leave fourth year pupils are given the opportunity to cover these duties. Other seniors volunteer to be trained as buddies, peer supporters in our bases and in classes. Seniors show visitors and candidates for senior posts around the school when requested by the Head Teacher. These activities all require teacher support and leadership provided by members of the senior management team. House captains undertake leaders hip of their house and provide a range of activities and events to raise money for charity as well as house funds. There has been a concerted effort in the last two years to raise the profile of the leadership opportunities as well as the skills that activities such as these help to develop. Young people in senior school are encouraged to use these experiences to make more well-rounded UCAS applications.

In the past three years the school has developed a leadership programme to support the development of these skills lower down the school in recognition of the amount we expect of our seniors and of the need to provide earlier opportunities for all young people to develop these key skills. An S1 leadership event to design a programme for the school show is now in its second year. A programme for S2 pupils to compete to design, make and market a box of chocolates is also in its second year and key experiences and outcomes to develop transferable skills are developed in each of these events when the timetable is suspended and pupils work in teams within their house supported by Heads of House and other staff. . Feedback from staff and young people is very positive. Next session for the first time our Sports Ambassadors and a specially selected group of S3 pupils will take the lead on organising two sporting events for primary pupils one for P4 and one for P7. The P7 event will use the Commonwealth games for inspiration and will involve all S3 pupils.

The work of the student council has been well supported by one of our Principal Teachers. From next session a Pupil Voice group will be formed to further support all of this this work as previously described. In addition a Sports Council will be formed by the Sports Ambassadors. All of these opportunities are publicised and celebrated using the school magazine, published three times a year and wall displays in school. Pupils are encouraged at assemblies to recognise the skills they will develop and to participate in these and other extra-curricular activities on offer in the school. Slide shows of photographs – Reviews of the Year are shown at the annual Awards Ceremony and Christmas Assemblies.

**Bridge of Don Academy Curriculum Map (ratified February2013) Appendix A**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| S1and S2 | **English****5 Periods in S1****4 Periods in S2**Inter-disciplinary work, including the development of core skills, will take place within curriculum areas, across curriculum areas and by suspension of the timetable – e.g. for leadership days, excursions, activities week, work experience etc. | **Mathematics****4 Periods in S1****5 Periods in S2** | **Modern Languages****3 Periods** | **Social****Studies****3 Periods** | **Science****3 Periods** | **Techn-****ologies****2 periods** | **Express-ive** **Arts****2 Periods** | **PSE** **and RMPS****inc HWB****2 Periods** | **PE and** **HE****inc HWB****3 Periods** |
| S3 | **English****4 Periods**Inter-disciplinary work, including the development of core skills, will take place within curriculum areas, across curriculum areas and by suspension of the timetable – e.g. for leadership days, excursions, activities week, work experience etc. | **Mathematics****4 Periods**  | **Modern Languages****3 Periods** | **Social****Studies****3 Periods** | **Science****3 Periods** | **Techn-****ologies****3 periods** | **Express-ive** **Arts****2 Periods** | **PSE** **and RMPS****inc HWB****2 Periods** | **PE and** **HE****inc HWB****3 Periods** |
| S4 to S6 | Choice 14 Periods In S6 one column can be used for developing leadership capacity, giving service, work shadowing, interdisciplinary projects, Baccalaureate etc. Values and beliefs and entitlements to religious experiences to be integrated into areas beyond RMPS e.g. through planned assemblies throughout the year.  | Choice 24 Periods | Choice 34 Periods | Choice 44 Periods | Choice 54 Periods | Choice 64 Periods | Learning for Life PEPSE |
| Across all Year GroupsProgressive development of Core SkillsPersonal, social and Learning Development (Personal Learning Planning/Personal Achievement/Ethos/Values/Skills for Life Learning and Work |
| Literacy – Numeracy – Health & Wellbeing |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |

**Appendix B**

**Curriculum for Excellence at Bridge of Don Academy**

**Rationale**

**We want young people to become successful learners, confident in themselves and their abilities as well as responsible citizens and able to contribute to their community – locally, nationally and globally.**

**Opportunities for young people to develop and show that they can be caring, honest, respectful and be their best are built into our curriculum at class and departmental level as well as on a whole school basis.**

**Core skills are vital to success. Young people have to be able to communicate well, and to interact with others in a positive and productive way. They also have to be able to think things out – to solve problems and apply their knowledge in new and unfamiliar situations. Our coreskills framework which is at the heart of learning and teaching and which teachers use to plan lessons is our way of ensuring that young people can make progress in these essential life skills and at the same time develop the subject knowledge and skills which, as they gradually specialise more, will give them a love of learning firmly located in academic disciplines and practical skills.**

**Young people will maintain their breadth of learning by continuing with all subjects until the end of S3 with opportunities to specialise as follows:**

* **All young people will study all three sciences in a rota to ensure that their exposure to these distinct academic disciplines is suffiecient for the senior phase to allow attainment commensurate with ability.**
* **All young people will study both business (enterprise) and computing – allowing specialisation and more informed choice and progression into the senior phase.**
* **Young people will choose the modern language they continue with into S3 – French or Spanish allowing for a considerable degree of personalisation and choice whilst maintaining the pathways for those who wish to continue with modern languages in the senior phase.**
* **Timetabling in PE will allow young people to choose either dance or sport.**
* **Within curriculum areas teachers are planning for choice and specialisation**
* **In Design and Technology young people will have the opportunity to experience each of the specialisms that the department offers in the senior phase allowing for more informed choice.**
* **Within expressive arts the faculty PT is looking at the possibility of a creative industries course which would be delivered within the faculty and provide coherence as well as the opportunity for personalisation and choice.**

**Consultation on the design of the curriculum took place over an extended period of time and continues within departments as they undertake review and refresh activities supported by the smt and link meetings. Session 2013 – 14 will allow for further consultation on the**

**Curriculum for Excellence Measures Appendix C**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1st Developing | **1** | 2nd Developing | **4** | 3rd Developing | **7** | 4th Developing | **10** |
| 1st Consolidating | **2** | 2nd Consolidating | **5** | 3rd Consolidating | **8** | 4th Consolidating | **11** |
| 1st Secure | **3** | 2nd  Secure | **6** | 3rd Secure | **9** | 4th Secure | **12** |

**Progress in Literacy 2011 – 13 - % of young people at levels indicated**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year young people entered S1 | Results by 2012 | Results by 2013 |
| **2011** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **4** | **5** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** |
| 3.6 | 7.1 | 9.8 | 33.9 | 37.5 | 8 | 1.8 | 3.6 | 22.3 | 54.5 | 14.3 | 3.6 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **2012** |  | **1** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9\*** |
| 1.8 | 9.9 | 9.9 | 41.4 | 26.1 | 7.2 |

\*NB 4 young people @ 4th Developing

**Progress in Numeracy 2011 – 13 - % of young people at levels indicated**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year young people entered S1 | Results by 2012 | Results by 2013 |
| **2011** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** |
| 4.6 | 7.3 | 34.9 | 3.7 | 4.6 | 32.1 | 12.8 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 10.7 | 16.1 | 21.4 | 23.2 | 26.8 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **2012** |  | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
| 0.9 | 0.9 | 16.2 | 82 |

**Appendix D**

**Attainment at the end of S4 – based on post appeal data up to 2012**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **% 5+ SCQF 5** | **Midyis Prediction** | **% 5+ SCQF 4** | **Midyis Prediction** | **GIRLS % 5+ SCQF 5** | **BOYS % 5+ SCQF 5** | **GIRLS % 5+ SCQF 4** | **BOYS % 5+ SCQF 4** |
| 2013 | 27 | 26 | 81 | 69 | 32 | 24 | 80 | 81 |
| 2012 | 33 | 29 | 85 | 71 | 34 | 32 | 85 | 85 |
| 2011 | 33 | 32 | 85 | 75 | 42 | 25 | 91 | 81 |
| 2010 | 35 | 35 | 81 | 76 | 34 | 36 | 79 | 83 |
| 2009 | 27 | 45 | 85 | 84 | 27 | 27 | 85 | 85 |
| 2008 | 32 | 38 | 78 | 78 | 26 | 38 | 75 | 81 |

**Attainment at the end of S5 and S6 – based on post appeal data up to 2012**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **S5** | **S6** |
|  | **% 1 + @ SCQF 6**  |  **% 3 + @ SCQF 6**  | **% 5 + @ SCQF 6**  | **% 3 + @ SCQF 6**  | **% 5 + @ SCQF 6**  | **% 1 + @ SCQF 7**  |
| 2013 | 44 | 26 | 12 | 34 | 19 | 16 |
| 2012 | 39 | 21 | 10 | 39 | 21 | 15 |
| 2011 | 42 | 23 | 8 | 29 | 19 | 14 |
| 2010 | 39 | 20 | 8 | 35 | 22 | 12 |
| 2009 | 39 | 23 | 8 | 30 | 18 | 14 |
| 2008 | 40 | 19 | 9 | 38 | 28 | 13 |