

Summarised inspection findings

Eyemouth High School

Scottish Borders Council

12 March 2019

Key contextual information

The senior management team consists of the headteacher, two deputy headteachers and a Business Manager. The school is associated with five primary schools.

The school receives regular placing requests for young people from Berwick-upon-Tweed, in the north of England. Currently a significant percentage of young people on the school roll reside in Berwick.

Attendance is generally in line with the national average (91.8% in the school in 2016/17 compared with 91.2% nationally).

Exclusions are lower than the national average (19.5 exclusions per 1000 pupils per year in 2016/17 compared with 47.7 exclusions per 1000 pupils per year nationally).

In February 2018 12.4% of pupils were registered for free school meals which is in line with the national average.

In September 2017, no pupils lived in the 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland. In September 2017 the school reported that 38% of pupils had additional support needs compared with 29% nationally.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- There is a very positive climate for learning in all curriculum areas and almost all young people are motivated and work successfully with their teachers. In almost all classes, young people are well-mannered and behave very well. The purpose of learning is made clear in most lessons. Young people, encouraged by all staff, are starting to take more responsibility for their learning. There is scope for them to lead their learning more regularly. The use of a 'Lesson Evaluation Toolkit' is helping all staff to focus increasingly on providing high-quality teaching and learning more consistently.
- Almost all young people know how to access additional support. This includes learning support offered by their teachers in the study zone and useful online resources. Young people are benefitting considerably from learning outwith the classroom. In particular, they value the school enrichment programme which enables learners to develop the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence and enhance further their practical skills. Moving forward, staff recognise that young people's learning in these activities should be linked more closely to the standards which are outlined in the National Benchmarks. Commendably, staff work well across subjects and with outside partners, including business partners, to further enhance these experiences for young people.

- Most young people's learning is benefitting further from their participation in a variety of school clubs, as well as their participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. They contribute well to the life of the school through taking part in valuable volunteering activities or adopting leadership roles, such as becoming school prefects. A small group of young people are benefiting greatly from opportunities which are provided for them to work in practical situations, such as planning, preparing and running the 'Chill 'n' Chat café'. They are developing skills for learning, life and work, which includes them learning about good teamwork and improving their understanding of health and wellbeing.
- The learning needs of young people are being supported well. In part, this is through good relationships and effective communication between teachers and support staff in classes. The recently established Learning Zone is also providing a nurturing environment for young people who face barriers to learning. They are provided with personalised support to help them reach their potential. Individualised programmes of study are well-designed and a number of young people are undertaking national courses. The Learning Zone has had a positive impact on the young people's esteem, and improved attendance.
- Most teachers provide well-structured lessons, helpful explanations and clear instructions for young people. They use various learning activities to encourage young people to engage actively in their learning, including group and pair work. They use questioning skilfully to enhance young people's understanding. Teachers should continue to develop the quality of differentiation in their classrooms. This will help them to ensure that learning is paced more appropriately, with challenge for all. Teachers are developing their use of digital technologies well to enhance learning. This includes them using online video clips, social media, a variety of software, and the school website to enhance the pace and challenge of learning. There is scope for them to develop this further.
- Teachers used verbal feedback very well in most lessons. The quality of written feedback is more variable. Written feedback needs to be improved consistently to provide clearer advice on young people's next steps in learning. Further work is also needed to ensure that high quality plenary sessions are used across all classes. These will help young people to reflect on and understand their learning more effectively, maximising their success.
- Almost all staff engage well with national and international research to support school improvements in learning and teaching. As a result, they have a good understanding of what comprises high quality learning and teaching. Senior leaders and teachers meet regularly to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement in learning and teaching. This is helping them to work collegially to improve the consistency of their practice. Staff value the views of young people on the quality of learning and teaching and seek their views regularly. These are used to inform ongoing practice.
- Most teachers have benefited from professional learning related to formative assessment. They demonstrate a wide range of assessment strategies in their lessons. The majority of teachers use information from their assessments well to provide young people with appropriate support. They are also increasing their use of peer and self-assessment to help young people reflect on and analyse their learning further. There is scope for emerging good practice in this area to be shared more effectively. A range of assessments are used to underpin 'Progress Point' reports. These are produced twice a year for the broad general education (BGE) and three times a year for the senior phase. These reports are informative and provide valuable information to help parents understand their children's progress. At each of these reporting points young people prepare a personal learning plan to record their next steps in learning. These are agreed with their guidance teachers. This is helpful in establishing a shared understanding of what young people need to do next.

- Across the school, young people use planners regularly to record their targets and progress in learning. The majority of young people use these well to help identify and record their next steps. Consideration should be given to whether young people's use of them is sufficiently detailed to make a positive impact on raising attainment.
- Moderation activities take place in all subject areas, with staff using the National Benchmarks increasingly to help them develop a more consistent understanding of assessment standards. In a few subject areas moderation has taken place with cluster colleagues and subject colleagues across the authority. Staff find it beneficial to engage in these activities.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Broad general education (BGE)

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy has been collated by the school over the past two years. Data for 2016/17 shows almost all young people attaining third curriculum level in reading, writing, and listening and talking by the end of S3 and most young people attaining third curriculum level in numeracy. The majority of young people in 2017/18 have attained fourth curriculum level in reading, writing, and listening and talking by the end of S3. Less than half have attained fourth curriculum level in numeracy by the end of S3.
- Teachers are using a range of formative and summative assessment evidence to support them in making professional judgements about young people's progress in learning and attainment. They are also engaging in moderation activities, in school and with primary colleagues, to discuss these judgements and how assessment evidence is being collected and moderated across a few curricular areas, including literacy and numeracy. This is helping them to understand and apply national standards more consistently. The school reports increasing confidence in the reliability of its BGE data.

Senior phase: Leavers

Literacy

- Generally, leavers attain well in literacy by the time of leaving school. Young people's attainment in literacy has been broadly in line with the virtual comparator (VC) over the five-year period. Almost all young people leave school with SCQF level 4 or better through a course award. The percentage of young people leaving school attaining SCQF level 5 or better has improved over the last three years. It is significantly much higher than the VC in the latest year. The percentage of young people attaining SCQF level 6 has been variable over the five-year period although it is broadly in line with the VC. It reached its highest level in the most recent year. All leavers attained SCQF level 4 or better in the most recent year.

Numeracy

- By the time of leaving school, attainment in numeracy has been broadly in line with the VC for the five-year period. Most young people leave school with SCQF level 4 or better through a course award. The percentage of young people attaining SCQF level 5 or better, including through a course award, has been variable over the five-year period.

As young people move through the senior phase

Literacy

- In S4, almost all young people attained SCQF level 4 or better through a course award in four of the last five years. The school has performed significantly higher and much higher than the VC at SCQF level 4 or better in two of the last five years and is broadly in line with the VC. The percentage of young people attaining SCQF level 5 or better is broadly in line with the VC,

although the school has performed significantly higher than the VC at SCQF level 5 or better in 2016/17. By S5, all young people (of the S5 roll) have attained SCQF level 4 or better including through a course award in the last two years, with almost all young people attaining this level from 2013/14 to 2015/16. The school's performance at SCQF level 5 or better also shows signs of improvement over the five-year period. By S6, the percentage of young people (of the S6 roll) attaining SCQF level 5 or better is broadly in line with the VC.

Numeracy

- In S4, most young people have attained numeracy at SCQF level 4 or better in three of the last five years, and almost all have attained this level in two of the last five years, including the most recent year. Most young people have attained SCQF level 4 or better through a course award. Less than half of young people have attained SCQF level 5 or better in four of the last five years. This is reflected at course level for each of the last five years. The school has performed significantly lower than the VC at SCQF level 5 or better in two of the last five years, including the latest year. By S5, almost all young people (of the S5 roll) have attained SCQF level 4 or better in two of the last five years and most young people (of the S5 roll) have attained the same level in three of the last five years. The school has performed significantly lower than the VC in the last two years. There is an improving trend over the past five years in the percentage of young people (of the S5 roll) attaining SCQF level 5 or better. The school's performance at SCQF level 5 or better through a course also shows signs of improvement over the five-year period. By S6, the percentage of young people (of the S6 roll) attaining SCQF level 5 or better has been significantly lower or much lower than the VC in three of the last five years, including the latest year. The percentage of young people attaining SCQF level 5 or better through a course and SCQF level 6 is broadly in line with the VC.

Attainment over time

Broad general education (BGE)

- The school has an extensive tracking and monitoring system in the BGE. They are tracking young people's progress in curricular areas, including literacy and numeracy, as well as their effort, behaviour and homework. Staff collate, monitor, and track information on young people's progress regularly. They have a good understanding of young people's progress over time and provide appropriate and timely interventions to ensure young people's success. Senior leaders use data comprehensively and well to monitor the progress over time of individuals, groups and cohorts.

Senior phase

- The school is monitoring and tracking young people's progress in the senior phase well. Senior leaders and staff use a wide range of data to identify young people's needs and support their learning in classes. However, there is scope for them to use it more effectively to ensure that all young people are placed on an appropriate level of course which takes account of their prior levels of attainment.
- The average total tariff scores for the lowest attaining 20% of leavers are broadly in line with the VC for the most recent five-year period. They show an improvement from 2013/14 to 2016/17. The average total tariff scores for the middle attaining 60% are very variable. They are below the VC for the last three years and significantly much lower in 2012/13 and 2013/14. The average total tariff points for the highest attaining 20% of leavers are also variable. They are below the VC in four of the last five years and significantly much lower in 2013/14. Recently, the school has revised its curriculum framework to try to address this. The new framework will provide increased opportunities for young people to broaden their curriculum.

- The average complementary tariff scores for the lowest attaining 20% of leavers are broadly in line with the VC over the five-year period. The average complementary tariff scores for the middle attaining 60% and highest attaining 20% are broadly in line with the VC over the last three years.

Breadth and depth

- The school is continuing to develop the range of pathways which it is able to offer young people. It provides enrichment activities in the BGE curriculum to develop young people's skills and increase their enjoyment in learning. It is also developing a wider range of pathways for young people in the senior phase to enable them to undertake increasingly bespoke learning. Good use is being made of partners to enhance the senior phase curriculum. This includes them delivering input for young people, ensuring appropriate accreditation linked to young people's achievement (for example, through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme), and providing work experience opportunities. There are further positive examples of work taking place linked to fashion and technologies.
- In S4, the percentages of young people attaining one or more to five or more courses at SCQF level 4 or better shows some variability over the past five years, although they are broadly in line with the VC. The percentage of young people attaining five or more courses at SCQF level 4 or better is significantly lower than the VC in the latest year. The percentages of young people attaining six or more courses have been significantly lower or much lower than the VC in three out of the last five years and there has been a significant decline in the latest year. The percentages of young people attaining one or more to six or more courses at SCQF level 5C or better have also been variable. The percentages of young people attaining two or more to three or more courses have been significantly lower than the VC in three of the last five years, and there has been a decline in the percentages of young people attaining two or more to six or more courses at SCQF level 5C or better in the latest year. These are significantly lower or much lower than the VC. There has also been a decline in the percentages of young people attaining two or more to three or more courses at SCQF level 5A or better in the latest year. These are significantly much lower and lower than the VC. The percentage of young people attaining five or more courses is in line with the VC in the latest year, having been significantly much lower than the VC in 2016/17.
- By S5, the percentages of young people attaining one or more to five or more courses at SCQF level 5C or better have been variable. The percentages of young people attaining one or more to three or more courses have been in line with the VC in four of the last five years, including the latest year. The percentages of young people attaining four or more to five or more courses have been in line with the VC in three of the last five years, including the latest year. At other times, the school has performed significantly much lower or lower than the VC. The percentages of young people attaining one or more to five or more courses at SCQF level 5A or better are broadly in line with the VC. There has been an improvement in the percentages attaining one or more to five or more in the latest year. The percentages of young people attaining one or more courses at SCQF level 6C or better have been significantly lower than the VC in three of the last five years, including the latest year. The percentages attaining one or more to five or more at SCQF level 6A or better are broadly in line with the VC. There has been a decline in the latest year in the percentage of young people attaining two or more courses.
- By S6, the percentages of young people attaining one or more to four or more courses at SCQF level 5C or better have been significantly much lower or lower than the VC in two of the last five years. There has been an improvement in the latest year. The percentage of young people attaining five or more courses at SCQF level 5C or better has been significantly much lower than the VC in one of the last five years and significantly lower in three of the last five

years, including the latest year. The percentages of young people attaining SCQF level 5A or better have been broadly in line with the VC over the last three years. The percentages of young people attaining one or more to five or more courses at SCQF level 6C or better have been broadly in line with the VC over the last three years. There is steady improvement in the percentages of young people attaining one or more courses at this level. The percentages of young people attaining one or more to five or more courses at SCQF level 6A or better have been in line with the VC over the last three years.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Senior leaders have developed a strategic plan linked to achievement, to help them ensure that all young people are provided with opportunities to achieve beyond the classroom. This includes through whole school events, technology pathways, expressive art pathways, sporting activities and celebrating achievement events. Positively, young people have been given the opportunity to comment on their involvement in the wider achievement programme.
- Senior leaders estimate that a majority of young people take part in achievement opportunities. They plan to analyse patterns of participation and achievement more effectively to build a more comprehensive and quantifiable overview of young people's achievement over time. This has the potential to demonstrate the scale of young people's involvement more effectively and ensure that all young people can participate and achieve equitably. Next steps for the school will be to consider an approach to tracking young people's achievement and to explore wider achievement accreditation more fully.
- Young people speak very positively about the opportunities they are given to gain relevant 'achievement awards' provided by the school and partners. Currently 64 young people participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme. Most young people who participate gain their awards and talk of the many skills they achieve through their participation. These include team working, resilience and problem-solving.
- Young people are enthusiastic about the ways in which activities such as the 'Chill 'n Chat Café', 'Young Singing Leaders' and My World of Work increase their confidence and skills for life and work. Around 50 young people, in partnership with The Salvation Army and North Star, an adult disability group, upcycle clothing to use in a fashion show. Young people speak enthusiastically about this initiative, in particular the opportunities they have to develop their skills in art and design, music, makeup and stage lighting. They also say it helps them to gain confidence when performing in front of others and working effectively as part of a team. The school should engage in further discussion with partners to identify skills development opportunities to strengthen the impact of this initiative.
- Young people are given many opportunities to achieve through leadership opportunities. Senior pupils are developing skills through, for examples, their work as school captains and ambassadors and junior pupils succeeding in a range of school activities, for example linked to music and sports.

Equity for all learners

Attainment versus deprivation

- Twenty-nine per cent of young people live in decile four. Young people living in this decile are not performing as well as young people living in similar backgrounds across Scotland.
- A range of stakeholders, including staff, parents and young people, were consulted in developing the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) plan. This seeks to identify and address possible barriers to learning for specific young people. A few successful initiatives have taken place as a result of the plan. These include the Shared Reading Intervention Scheme, in partnership

with the school library and local volunteers. The school report that reading ages have improved significantly for young people involved in this initiative. Additionally, the Learning Zone initiative has supported pupils to engage more fully in classes. A numeracy software package is also being used well to help them improve their levels of engagement and confidence.

Destinations

- In the four-year period from 2013/14 to 2016/17, almost all young people moved to a positive destination on leaving school. The school has been in line with the VC for this measure for the last four years. It was significantly lower than the VC in 2012/13. There has been an increase in the latest year in the percentage of young people going to higher education and a decrease going to further education. The percentage of young people leaving school and moving on to employment has been above the VC in each of the last five years.

Practice worth sharing more widely

- The rich, stimulating and effective learning which is provided through the 'Chill 'n' Chat café'. Through this environment, learners are building their life skills, confidence and self-worth. A group of young people plan, prepare and run a café one morning per week for staff and school volunteers. They work well as a team; planning and making recipes, considering business costs, dealing with money, and taking responsibility for food hygiene and cleanliness. They also store food safely and provide a very good service to customers. The young people demonstrate very good communication skills and have a strong sense of pride in their work. Their attendance at school shows signs of improvement. Staff leading the initiative work with staff from other subject departments, such as home economics, to ensure that young people are beginning to get accreditation for their work.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.