



DUNBAR GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Dunbar Grammar is a caring community where you can RISE to be your best
RESPECT INCLUSION SUPPORT EFFORT



Dunbar Grammar School Standards and Quality Report

2020-21



East Lothian
Council





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Context of the school

Dunbar Grammar School is a co-educational, non-denominational school situated in rural East Lothian approximately 25 miles from the centre of Edinburgh. The school has an increasing roll, currently at 1080. The school has excellent facilities for students and the local community.

We pride ourselves on being a caring community where all young people can RISE to be their best and our core values of Respect, Inclusion, Support and Effort permeate our school community.

Session 2020/21 has brought unprecedented challenges to all schools. The whole DGS community have endeavoured to provide continuous care, support, challenge, opportunities and experiences within the mitigations and restrictions.



How good is our leadership and our approach to improvement?

1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement

- *Collaborative approaches to self-evaluation*
- *Analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data*
- *Ensuring impact on learners' successes and achievements*

How are we doing?

- We have designed our School Improvement Plan (SIP) to have three clear priority areas which are easily understood by all stakeholders;
Priority 1 - Excellence and equity in teaching and learning, to raise attainment and achievement for all.
Priority 2 - Develop our positive and inclusive learning community
Priority 3 - Increased future opportunities for all
- The typical self-evaluation activities which we would usually employ have been limited this year (for example classroom observations)
- We have a small but highly committed Parent Council (DGSC) they have been actively involved in the review and development of the School Improvement Plan and also the Parental Engagement Survey. This group continued to meet via Google Meet during lockdown and played a supportive role in recovery planning.
- Students are also involved in recruitment of all permanent members of staff.
- Our staff understand the need to be outward and forward-looking in their evaluation and improvement activities. Many staff work collaboratively with teachers in other schools and authorities to expand their experience and expertise.
- We have an established methodology for collating data from classroom observations. However, this has not been utilised in the past year due to covid mitigations and restrictions.
- We are highly consultative – lots of opportunities for staff, parents/carers and students to share views (predominately short term goals based on the circumstances of this year)

How do we know?

- Extensive feedback from students, staff and parents/carers from regular questionnaires (Strong response rates)
- Subject/Faculty approaches to self-evaluation and quality assurance have been important. PTCs working in trios have facilitated this.
- Staff collaboration between schools during the ACM was extensive.
- Strong approaches to assessment moderation in the Senior Phase.
- Student leadership team have been highly effective and have worked well with the parent council (strong feedback)
- Our Student Council meet Monthly (and continued to do so during lockdown) and regularly discuss and evaluate SIP progress and have a direct impact on planning.

What are we going to do next?

- Reintroduce the self-evaluation calendar which will allow a more comprehensive approach and a clear purpose for every self-evaluation activity undertaken. This will include increased **data analysis, shared classroom experiences and validated self-evaluation**.
- Develop a new approach to classroom observations/shared classroom experience that is focussed on sharing of good practice and supporting teachers to identify and address their own professional learning needs. (Importance of august In-service for engagement) All staff involved in observation model across the Faculty (training at DGS 1 then follow up towards the end of term 1
- Recruit Student Leaders of Learning. They will carry out a piece of work which will involve the creation a model lesson - this used as the criteria for a DGS RISE lesson
- Term 1 –Use VSE model to allow student leaders of learning and staff to observe BGE lessons with the purpose of understanding what makes a good lesson and potentially link in with curriculum group.
- Term 2 – Trial roll out involving staff, student leaders of learning and trio work. Faculties reviewing feedback.
- Term 3 – Further observations and evaluation
- Enhance our capacity to utilise data to understand the impact of our interventions and inform future self-evaluation and on-going improvement

From the evaluation of our evidence we feel that the quality of Leadership of Change is - *Good*

1.3 Leadership of Change

- *Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community*
- *Strategic planning for continuous improvement*
- *Implementing improvement and change*

How are we doing?

- Mission statement and values agreed through full stakeholder consultation and permeate the life and work of the school.
- Staff within our school have high expectations of students.
- Leadership actions and practices very much are based around the values – showing care, creating the correct conditions to allow each student and member of staff to succeed.
- Strong community spirit –Christmas meal deliveries, dinners at DGS continued, Easter treats, intergenerational pen pals, snow days kept hub open
- Middle leadership trio working has been successful. The team have not been able to work as closely as a collective group but have instead had to focus on being a buffer and bridge for their faculties.
- SLT have worked as a coordinated and cohesive team to lead the SQA ACM and remote learning.
- Leaders at all levels have worked hard to support staff through a year with considerable change. Parents, carers and students have been kept up to date in an ever - evolving year.
- Considerable planning (logistics, safety, and curriculum) has been important to facilitate return to school. A rapid pace of change throughout the year has meant that we have required ongoing and dynamic planning. Communication with staff and students parents and carers has been critically important.
- Approach to ACM with social justice and equalities at the heart. Flexible and understanding approach
- Leadership team are critically reflective – open door policy and responsive to feedback. Extensive consultation processes.
- There is a strong sense of community and have great pride in the achievements of our school community.

How do we know?

- Mission and values evident in displays, communication, assemblies, social media, used extensively in all school documentation and emails.
- 89% of parents and carers and 90% of staff who responded to our questionnaire agree that the school vision and values underpin the work and life of our community
- Community spirit and care has been maintained through a range of adapted initiatives. For example – online music performances daily throughout December, distanced charity events such as Christmas gunging, adaptations to allow sports day events to take place over a longer time frame, S6 Christmas video rather than live panto, Dinners at DGS deliveries and deliveries of treat hampers at Christmas and Easter to families.
- The leadership team have worked hard to ensure that staff morale has been maintained despite the challenges. This has included online meetings, staff breakfasts, and physically distanced opportunities to socialise. Clear and regular communication has been recognised as a strength by staff
- Regular communication with students via assemblies and emails.
- The WTA was reviewed and consulted upon throughout the year.
- The Critical Childcare provision was extremely well staff by volunteers. Staff from all Faculties volunteered to support this facility.
- Online learning survey has over 200 responses. Feedback from parents and carers was used to inform our approaches.
- Parent and carer information evenings and consultation evenings have taken place online. Attendance rates and feedback has been positive.
- We have continued to celebrate success – Online Awards events and STARs of week (in place of Hot Chocolate Friday)
- Our students and parents have continued to be involved in recruitment and have participated in online interviews.

What are we going to do next?

After a year of dynamically planning and staff working predominately within their own faculties, it will be important to refocus on strategic whole school improvements.

SLT planning/professional learning day in September (reconnecting and refocusing)

Opportunities for staff development to be shared and supported.

Improving self-evaluation processes (detailed in 1.1)

Nurturing sense of community and return of important events. Focus on BGE students who have not yet had a 'typical DGS' experience.

If circumstances permit, focus on staff reconnecting and building relationships across the school.

Focus on staff wellbeing, Staff working group to lead.

From the evaluation of our evidence we feel that the quality of Leadership of Change is - *Good*

How good is the quality of care and education we offer?

2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

- *Learning and engagement*
- *Quality of teaching*
- *Effective use of assessment*
- *Planning, tracking and monitoring*

How are we doing?

- The learning environment in our school is built on positive, nurturing and appropriately challenging relationships which lead to high-quality learning outcomes.
- Remote learning approaches improved significantly. Staff moved to develop both asynchronous and synchronous. Staff confidence increased quickly. Staff agreed on a policy in terms of blended learning immediately (guarantee of one live interaction per week). We acted upon parental feedback on an ongoing basis.
- Innovative and engaging practice – Pre-recorded lessons, HWB Scavenger Hunts, PE challenges, Home Ec video lessons
- Challenges and events to involve parents and carers and the wider community
- Google classroom is widely used, and staff expertise increased in this area during lockdown. Google Classroom was an essential platform and the whole G-suite range was used to support teaching and learning.
- Engagement in online learning was monitored closely and Pupil support led a range of supports.
- Many practices established in remote learning will continue – For example, audio recorded feedback for students was hugely successful and is being maintained.
- Health and safety mitigations have had an impact on pedagogical approaches in school. This has meant that active learning approaches have not always been possible.
- Senior phase assessment developments have been considerable
- Online parents evenings were successful. A full evaluation and consultation will determine the future format.
- Progress and achievement module introduced

How do we know?

- Faculty lesson observations demonstrate that almost all students are positively engaged with their learning in class and there is a positive classroom ethos in almost all classes
- Feedback from parents and carers during remote learning revealed that students were well supported. Almost all parents and carers responded that their young person knew how to access work online and were able to receive support from their teachers.
- Staff have a very good understanding of learner needs. Our Pupil Support Team share extensive information on the learning needs of young people and work hard to support teachers in meeting those needs.
- Our links with ASG Primaries are extremely strong and we share extensive transition attainment, learning and pastoral information to ensure young people are well supported as they move into S1.
- Our Pupil Support faculty has three support bases which support students in their learning in different ways. The introduction of a bespoke and supported S1 class has received positive feedback from parents/carers and students.

What are we going to do next?

Teaching and learn working group to continue to work towards the long term goal of developing a teaching and learning policy which is aligned with school values.

- Teaching and learning focus in August in-service and collegiate time.
- Develop a new approach to VSE and classroom observations/shared classroom experience which is focussed on sharing of good practice and supporting teachers to identify and address their own professional learning needs.
- All staff involved in observation model across the Faculty

From the evaluation of our evidence we feel that the quality of Learning, Teaching and Assessment is - Good

How good are we at improving outcomes for all our learners?

3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement

- *Attainment in literacy and numeracy*
- *Attainment over time*
- *Overall quality of learners' achievement*
- *Equity for all learners*

How are we doing?

- We pride ourselves of having a robust understanding of senior phase attainment data and analyse this throughout the year.
- Transition into S4/S5/S6 through the coursing process is robust with almost all students being coursed at appropriate levels. Strong attainment data is evident in the senior phase. It is clear that staff know their students well and there is a strong culture of ambition
- Our initial destination data shows a positive trend and our 16+ Hub team work collaboratively with SDS and other agencies to ensure any students who are at risk of not entering appropriate destination are supported at as early a stage as possible.

How do we know?

- Data around Literacy and Numeracy indicates that the percentage of young people achieving their expected CfE level is increasing year on year.
- The data for expected levels of Literacy demonstrates an improving landscape across the BGE for all students.
- Online coursing interviews took place to ensure that students and their families were supported through this process.

What are we going to do next?

Interventions targeted at the lower end of the Middle 60% attainment cohort – skills for study. Potential to develop skills for learning in a targeted way.

Continue to develop attainment interventions for the lowest 20% attainment cohort.

Recovery planning – Specific recovery plan has been created.

Continue with the long term review of BGE Curriculum to ensure our learning pathways provide appropriate skills and progression for all.

Focus on numeracy strategies across the school. Specific plan for raising attainment in maths

From the evaluation of our evidence we feel that the quality of Raising Attainment and Achievement is - Good

Overall Grading for Quality Indicators

Quality Indicator	1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement	1.3 Leadership of change	2.3 Learning teaching and assessment	3.2 Raising attainment and achievement
Grading	Good	Good	Good	Good

