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**Dalkeith High School**

**Standards and Quality Report 2021 - 2022**

**What were our achievements in Session 2021-22?**

Our shared vision underpins all that we do in our school community and was developed in consultation with stakeholders.

*Dalkeith High School: Enabling all young people to succeed in an inclusive, respectful and stimulating environment*

The main success of this session was the support for the wellbeing of all in our school community.  The school experienced significant levels of Covid infections in the spring term resulting in year groups needing to work remotely due to unprecedented levels of staff absence.  This was done on a rotation basis for S1, 2 and 3 with senior phase pupils being protected at all times.  The impact on staff working throughout the session under ever-changing Covid mitigations cannot be underestimated, particularly the need for staff to cover classes for absent colleagues.

Senior phase pupils prepared for and sat the first SQA national exams since the summer of 2019.  Efforts were made throughout the session to gather evidence of achievement of progress in learning to ensure that there was a ‘back-up’ that could be drawn on in the event that exams were cancelled.  Formal assessments took place in the exam hall in December to assist with the gathering of evidence and to provide pupils with an experience of sitting exams in this environment. Due to high levels of staff absence at this point in the session, senior pupils were asked to study at home during the period of time that the formal assessments took place.  Additional opportunities for second formal assessments to take place to supplement the gathering of ‘latest and best’ evidence were planned at department level.  A targeted approach to supporting pupils in the senior phase was taken using PEF resources.  This funding was used to provide staffing to support engagement with QMU tutoring programme and the identification and support for pupils at risk of missing out on attaining at least 5 qualifications in S4.

The introduction of the Chromebooks prior to the Christmas break resulted in all pupils having access to online learning through the use of Google workspace.  The school successfully engaged with the rollout of Chromebooks in line with Midlothian timelines and procedures.  The devices are being used extensively across the school and evidence of this will be gathered through Learning Walks before the end of term.  School Digital Leaders continue to lead the ongoing progress being made with the use of digital technology to enhance teaching and learning.

Despite the ongoing response to the global pandemic tremendous progress has been made by the Teaching and Learning Group, led by the Leader of Learning, with a review of current practice underway and plans for future improvements well underway. This work has also had a positive impact on our approaches to professional learning and collaboration.

The introduction of S1-3 Wellbeing and Learning groups was a positive addition to the support for young people in the school community, especially in light of the effects of living through a global pandemic.  A full evaluation of the impact of the groups has taken place with practice being further developed going forward.  Wellbeing supports have been further enhanced by the development of the in-person school counselling service and partnership with CAMHS to deliver anxiety management workshops for pupils and parents.

Outdoor learning to support wellbeing continues to be a strength at the school with the range of activities on offer now expanded to include canoeing.  The newly purchased canoes have been used successfully by the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Group in their expedition.  The number of pupils participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme at Bronze, Silver and Gold continues to be high.  Efforts are being made to support the development of staff who have expressed an interest in being involved in the delivery of the programme to ensure the sustainability of the programme. The programme continues to be a targeted support for identified young people in S3 to support continued engagement with learning.

Partnership working with Newbattle Abbey College to develop Level 5 Forest and Outdoor Leadership Award has added further to the range of outdoor learning courses on offer to young people. A new partnership with Gold and Grey who support engagement with learning through football has been very well received and has shown signs of impact at an early stage in the development of this programme as an integral part of the curriculum.

A coordinated effort by staff and pupils to improve the physical environment around the school grounds has successfully reduced the amount of litter that has built up in some areas over a long period of time.  It should be noted that having a public footpath running through the school campus has contributed to this issue.

Staff have engaged fully with the updated GTCS Professional Standards through the Professional Review and Development process.  Professional learning opportunities continue to be offered from a range of providers, from staff based at the school to an input from Sir John Jones at the Professional Learning Day in January. Some members of staff have been able to develop their professional practice by supporting the work of The Hive.

Despite most events remaining online throughout most of the session, it was a pleasure to welcome families back into the building for the S6 Leavers Ceremony and the BGE Awards Ceremony in June.  Both events were very well attended with excellent feedback being received.

Gathering and listening to pupil voice remains a key aspect of practice at the school.  This session the School Captains led the 5–a-day meetings to discuss agreed pertinent issues, with feedback being provided to the Senior Leadership Team at regular intervals. The School Captains also contributed to the national consultation by Professor Ken Muir when they met with him in November 2021.

The Headteacher was presented with the Headteacher of the Year Award at the recent Scottish education Awards.  The decision by the judges was noted as being ‘unanimous’ and they also reported that they were ‘blown away’ by all that is on offer to pupils at Dalkeith High School. The Headteacher will now go forward as a Silver Winner to the UK Pearson National Awards.  The judges for this competition will visit the school virtually before the end of term with the overall Gold Winner to be announced at a ceremony in London in November.

We have evaluated our practice against the Quality Indicators in ‘How Good is Our School?’ The evaluations are noted below:

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| **Quality Indicator** | **Area of practice** | **Evaluation** |
| 1.3 | Leadership of Change | Very good |
| 2.3 | Learning, Teaching and Assessment | Good |
| 3.1 | Ensuring wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion | Good |
| 3.2 | Raising Attainment and Achievement | Very Good |

**What are our priorities for Session 2022-23?**

Our priorities are based on global, national and local priorities and reflect where we are as a school on our improvement journey.

* Raising attainment
* Equity, Inclusion, including nurture
* Enhancing learning, teaching and assessment using digital technology