

Cathkin High school – Positive Inspection

“I am delighted that the Inspectors identified significant strengths in areas which are of greatest importance to pupils, parents, staff and the community including; a culture of high expectations, respect for all, positive partnerships with parents including a high level of support from the Parent Council, commitment of staff to improve young peoples’ life chances (positive destinations), the sense of community and belonging across the school which has resulted in Cathkin pupils being confident young people who are motivated to achieve well.

Reassuringly our areas for improvement in the main have been captured in this year’s improvement plan and any other areas for improvement will be included in our Improvement plan for session 2015- 2016. As always we will continue to work hard on our successful journey to excellence and with confident young people who are motivated to achieve, dedicated staff and positive parental support I am sure we will get there.” Mrs. McNair HT

In order for young people to attain and achieve to the best of their ability the learning environment has to be right. Here is what the inspectors said;

Positive Ethos and dedicated staff

There is a “caring ethos and positive relationships which young people have with staff who support their learning and build confidence.” It was reported that “The school is a nurturing environment where most young people feel safe and well-cared for” and as a result “almost all young people enjoy school.” Young people told inspectors that they value the targeted one to one time with their Pupil Support teachers in order to agree their personal learning plans. Many young people benefit greatly and appreciate the dedication of staff running the school’s supported study programme which includes lunchtime, after school, Saturday morning and learning weekend sessions of support for learners at all stages

Hand in hand with this nurturing environment is “high expectations consistently set by staff regarding behaviour, uniform and respect.” Inspectors commented upon the fact that pupils were “polite and articulate when sharing their views and are increasingly taking on responsibility for their own learning and success. “ “Pupils are motivated by the ‘can do’ culture of the school and as a result many young people achieve well and respond well to challenges”

Young people with additional support needs (ASN) are motivated by their learning and enjoy being at school. All young people attending the ASN/ASD unit are in mainstream classes for the majority of the week and as a result are developing increased confidence in being part of the school community.”



Dedicated Cathkin staff know how to have a laugh and collect money for charity and school funds

And there’s more!

Young People have a say.

“Young people have been involved in the development of the school’s curriculum and give feedback on teaching and learning. Staff then make adjustments to courses and programmes as a result of young people’s feedback.”

“A significant number of young people proudly represent their school in local and national competitions which contributes to aspects of health and wellbeing such as increased self-esteem, resilience and physical health. Through their learning in curriculum areas, young people at all stages, engage in out-of-school learning experiences which deepen their understanding of coursework and often allow them to apply their learning in challenging and unfamiliar contexts such as; S2 Book Festival, S5 Burns museum trip, S5 geography field trip, S4-6 Spanish/French restaurant and cinema trips, S1 Bannockburn and Stirling Castle visit and visits to the Scottish Parliament by S2 and S4.”



Christopher McLew S2 Pupil at Cathkin High School

Achieving 4 top 10 places in the Anglo Scots Championships One top 5 and 4th place medal British Ski Academy Slalom Championships , Les Houches World Cup downhill piste in France.

Pupil Leadership and citizenship

Young people at all stages engage in residential experiences which deepen their learning, broaden their knowledge of Scotland and other countries and cultures and increase their independence and social skills. These include the annual band camp to Netherurd House, the Football Development tours to different European clubs including Villarreal in Spain and Feyenoord in Holland, Ski trips to Italy and Austria and creative and aesthetic trips to London and New York. The school adds value to the achievements of a minority of young people through accreditation by the SQA, ASDAN and Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM).

Cathkin high S6 pupils are leaders who demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility for others in their school community. Over 70 young people at S6 took part in an accredited buddy initiative undertaking a rigorous training programme. All of S4 pupils have also taken part in the Youth Philanthropy Initiative supporting a variety of local charities. The successful charity will receive £3,000. Young people in all year groups benefit from the school's strong partnership with St Andrew's Hospice. Commendably, over a three year period, the school has raised around £9000 for the hospice.



Rugby has always taken pride of place at Cathkin High. Former pupil and Scottish international Duncan Weir is one example of our commitment to the sport. Following in Duncan's footsteps three talented and committed S5 pupils gave up their free time to coach younger pupils at training and games weekdays after school and on Saturday mornings



Youth Philanthropy Award –Cathkin pupils attended a celebration at Perth Concert Hall in order to hand over the £3,000 cheque to PETAL a local charity supporting victims of trauma and loss.

Skills for Learning Life and work and Positive destinations

Through the “skills for learning life and work programme young people are increasing their understanding of the world of work and developing a range of important transferable skills including working with others, organisational skills and communication.

In addition effective partnership working has ensured that identified young people are progressing to positive destinations.” Since the inspection Cathkins' positive destinations have improved again this year up 7% and Cathkin are now above the National average and fifth out of seventeen SLC secondary schools at 94%. The improvements in Cathkins’ positive destinations have been as a result of an increase in the number of young people gaining places at University and securing Employment.

Attainment

Inspectors noted the “positive trend and pace of improvement in attainment which is higher than the national trend over the past 5 years for all levels of S4 qualifications (National 3, 4 and 5). There has been a notable improvement in the number of young people achieving at least five awards at National 5 level or equivalent at S4.

In S5 the level of improvement at one Higher is better than the national trend over the past 5 years and by the end of S6 there is an improving trend in the proportion of pupils achieving three and five higher by the end of S6. Overall, across S4 to S6, young people’s performance in National Qualifications is improving”

Links with our Primary schools, Cathkin Nursery and Rutherglen High School

“There are strong pastoral transition arrangements in place, including enhanced transition, for young people with additional support needs moving from primary to secondary school, including the summer programme.

Cathkin HS enjoys positive working partnership with Cathkin Nursery and Rutherglen HS. The co-location has the potential to offer young people flexibility and choice making use of the facilities and staff resource across all 3 establishments.”

School Improvement Planning

“Young people, parents, staff and partners are given opportunities to express their views of areas for school improvement which are taken into account during the planning for improvement process. The Parent Council is consulted on the school priorities and also contributes to identification of these targets.” In this area of self-evaluation for improvement Cathkin is at the forefront of developments and are involved in a SLC and government initiative called “Raising Attainment for All” Project.

School Leadership

“The headteacher is respected by parents, staff and pupils. She is recognised for leading the school forward and improving ethos, culture and aspects of attainment which have improved the schools standing within the Local community. Staff and parents feel that she is approachable and that they are listened to if they express concern. The headteacher has managed the school through some significant periods of change and is recognised by staff as going the extra mile for staffing.”

“The headteacher and depute heads are recognised by staff as being loyal and committed to the school and each bring individual strengths. Their support is much valued by staff in link departments. Staff describe feeling supported and empowered under the leadership of the senior management team. “

The HMle letter for parents can now be found on the Education Scotland website www.educationscotland.gov.uk.

Comment from the Chair of the Parent Council

“As chair of the Parent council I am delighted that strong positive parental relationships have been recognised as strength of Cathkin High School. The Parent council have worked closely with Mrs McNair, staff and pupils on their journey of school improvement. I am also delighted that the dedication of staff and the attainment and achievements of pupils have also been highlighted as a strength of the school. Finally, I feel it is essential that recognition is given to the headteacher who has led by example and as inspectors highlighted she had led “the school forward in improving ethos, culture, attainment and the standing of the school in the community.”

