

9th January 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

In October 2017 a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited McLaren High School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- Caring and supportive relationships across the school support a climate of mutual respect and a purposeful learning environment. This is underpinned by the school's values of 'order, respect, care, achievement'. The revised house structure is enhancing young people's sense of belonging and improving communication and involvement with families.
- Teachers work well with their colleagues to develop their practices and improve outcomes for young people. As a result, young people's learning experiences are enhanced by an improving range of approaches to learning and teaching.
- Young people are attaining well in National Qualifications. There are a commendable number of courses leading to Advanced Higher. Collaborative working with parents and partners is resulting in achievement of a range of National Qualifications for young people requiring additional support with their learning.
- The school is developing an innovative approach to raising attainment in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Young people are enthusiastically undertaking STEM projects in their own time. They are developing key skills and enhancing their knowledge of potential future careers in STEM industries.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Stirling Council.

- A stronger strategic approach to leading and managing change is needed. Planning for improvement requires better use of the wide range of available evidence to inform the changes needed to improve the achievements of all young people.
- The school should continue to develop approaches to assessment, tracking and monitoring across the stages. This should support young people to understand their strengths, identify next steps in learning and enable staff to provide appropriate and timely interventions.
- Staff should continue to work with colleagues from across the learning community to further improve their shared understanding of assessment of Curriculum for Excellence levels.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate some quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of quality indicators to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for McLaren High School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	satisfactory
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Raising attainment and achievement	good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from How good is our school? (4th edition) , Appendix 3: The six-point scale .	

A more detailed document called summarised inspection findings will be available on the Education Scotland website at <https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/stirling/5722330>.

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Stirling Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Carol McDonald
HM Inspector