

**Curriculum for Excellence leadership events
February/March 2014
Secondary school inspection findings September - December 2013**

1. Overview of evaluations

16 secondary school inspections carried out. One not published at the time of writing. This table will be updated in early March.

	unsat.	weak	satis.	good	vg	exc.
1.1	0	4	0	5	6	0
2.1	0	2	1	5	7	0
5.3	0	2	3	5	5	0
5.1	0	2	5	2	5	1
5.9	0	3	3	4	5	0

2. Summary of key strengths

- In every school inspected, some aspect of ethos or positive staff/pupil relationships was identified as a key strength. Areas highlighted included: young people who want to learn, achieve and succeed; the positive & supportive learning environment; the sense of pride in the school; and young people's behaviour and confidence.
- In eight schools, the leadership of the headteacher. In one case, specifically leadership of learning, and in four leadership of improvement.
- In six schools, aspects of young people's personal achievements, or opportunities for young people to achieve across a range of areas.
- In four schools, pastoral support, including in two the contribution of partners.
- In four schools, aspects of the curriculum. In two of these, the curriculum from S4 to S6, and in one the curriculum S1 to S3. Curriculum development was highlighted in the fourth. In two schools, teachers' commitment to professional learning.
- In four schools, the positive impact of partnerships, including one school where vulnerable groups were well supported into positive destinations.
- In two schools, improved attainment.
- Other key strengths highlighted in individual schools included: improved transitions; engaging parents; and a support base for young parents.

3. Summary of main points for action

- In ten schools, aspects of meeting needs which included providing activities which are suitably challenging in lessons across the school; and provision for young people with additional needs.

- In seven schools, continue to improve the curriculum (in line with the national implementation plan). In three further schools, more urgent improvements to the curriculum were required.
- In five schools, improve approaches to tracking and monitoring young people's progress.
- In five schools, continue to improve approaches to improvement through self-evaluation. In a further four schools, more urgent improvement to self-evaluation were required to ensure positive impact on young people's experiences and achievements.
- In two schools, attainment needed to be improved.
- In two schools, partnership working needed improvement.

4. Features of highly effective practice

Where the curriculum was very good:

SECONDARY SCHOOL 1

In S1-S3, the curriculum was designed across the 4 "aspects" with young people learning in all 8 curriculum areas through to the end of S3 together with a range of opportunities for personal achievement and an increasing variety of interdisciplinary learning (IDL) experiences. Learning through the life and ethos of the school is an important feature of the curriculum, with high emphasis on developing global citizenship skills. Partnerships with organisations and services delivering within the school curriculum are very positive and effective.

SECONDARY SCHOOL 2

The curriculum is kept under constant review. For example, the IDL projects are monitored carefully to ensure they maintain their relevance in a changing economic climate. In the senior phase, there are good examples of developing the curriculum offered in school to take account of courses offered beyond school. For example, the school introduced a specific mathematics course to support those young people who are studying engineering at college. Staff are working very hard to develop the new qualifications. A number of subjects have been moderated successfully and staff are ensuring that assessment is developed carefully and systems put in place to gather evidence for any exceptional circumstances consideration that may be required.

SECONDARY SCHOOL 3

Commendably, staff are continuing to develop the BGE, alongside work to develop the new senior phase. Staff are very clear about the need to continue to improve the BGE to ensure appropriate challenge so that young people can progress in their learning as best they can. For example, in the sciences the S3 provision has been improved in order to ensure appropriate challenge and to better prepare for Nat 5 work in S4.