



# **COLTNESS HIGH SCHOOL**



**School**

**Improvement Report  
September 2016**

***“Believe to achieve”***

## 1. Introduction

Coltness High School is a non-denominational secondary. The current roll is 867 pupils serving Coltness, Cambusnethan and Cleland although pupils do attend the school from the wider Wishaw area including Newmains, Morningside and Craignuek.

### Our aims are as follows:

“Coltness High School Staff working in partnership with pupils, parents and the local community to:

- deliver a curriculum which, by having a range of appropriate courses, teaching methods and well - resourced learning experiences, ensures that all pupils realize their full potential.
- promote a caring environment in which our pupils are actively encouraged to take responsibility for themselves as members of our community.
- communicate effectively with all partners in the learning process: pupils, parents, staff and the community.”

*(Vision, Aims and Values currently under review)*

We have established strong links and effective joint working with our associated primary schools and partner agencies.

## 2. How well do our young people learn and achieve?

The school's main priority is the health and wellbeing of its pupils. For pupils to learn and achieve they need to be physically, mentally and emotionally well. Learner's attainment at the end of S4 has been improving over the course of the last three years and in May 2016 43% of the S4 cohort achieved 5+ National 5 Awards. 9.8% of S5 pupils achieved 5 Higher Grade passes and 23.9% of pupils achieved 5+ passes cumulatively by the end of S6. Although as a school we performed well across a range of curricular areas, of particular interest were Music, PE and Human Biology at Higher Level. At National 5 Level English, Biology, Geography, Practical Woodwork and PE have shown significant attainment. As a school with ambition we still feel there is room for improvement.

Excellent learning and teaching and in particular “The Coltness Lesson” is the cornerstone of our business on a day to day basis in every classroom. As a school we make sure we are equitable towards our young people in terms of their educational provision. Being an ambitious school we ask pupils to foster an attitude of endeavour and ambition themselves.

A Broad General Education is provided for all our young people from S1-3. This is planned with the seven principles of curricular design as its template, with pupils working on Experiences and Outcomes mostly at Levels 3 & 4. Skills for life, learning and work are evident across all curricular areas as are literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing outcomes. Political Literacy is in its infancy but is also starting to permeate curricular areas.

Interdisciplinary approaches are evident within classes and through whole school events. Interdisciplinary Learning is evident in many curricular programmes through natural links between Es & Os, themes and through skills development. A well developed programme of personalisation and choice provides learners with breadth, challenge, enjoyment and a smooth pathway into the Senior Phase.

We encourage learners to self-evaluate in classes, a process which includes identifying next steps through learner conversations. Learners from S4, S5 and S6 receive a Senior Phase Tracking and Monitoring Report four times over the academic year, discuss targets, and ways to progress with their class teacher. Together with the regular verbal and written feedback given to learners from their class teachers, a strong level of feedback on progress, strengths and next steps is provided. Over the course of this year and next the school will be developing a similar tracking strategy within the Broad General Education.

Learners' views are taken into account through the pupil council and various online surveys that they are asked to participate in. Their views are also sought during the planning and implementation of new initiatives such as our current review of the school's Vision, Aims and Values. Pupils will also very shortly take part in an online survey on how safe they feel in school. Pupils in S2, S3, and S4/5/6 were also asked last year for their subject choices by way of a “free choice”, where curricular restraints allowed. Within

departments pupils also evaluate courses and units of work. Feedback of these views are in general shared with pupils through assemblies.

The school provides learners with the opportunity for wider achievement working with a range of partners such as New College Lanarkshire and the Prince's Trust. This allows appropriate pathways for all learners and is supported greatly by various members of staff and departments. Wider achievement awards are also obtained in a number of curricular areas. This year the school has strengthened its partnership with New College Lanarkshire and local secondary schools through our consortia arrangements. Through our consortia arrangements pupils are able to access courses that are not available on our campus. This along with the REACH and other such programmes will help raise the aspirations of our young people. The school is also working in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council on taking forward the recommendations of the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce (DYW).

Learners are achieving success and most are leaving school to enter employment, training, further or higher education. The post-16 transition arrangements are exceptionally strong with 94.26% of leavers going on to a positive destination in 2014/15. The school is currently out performing North Lanarkshire Council and the national averages in this area. Pupils are very well supported in making applications to both further and higher education institutions through PSHE, assemblies and one-to-one support from their PT Pupil Support. Our Home School Partnership Officer and Skills Development Scotland play a vital role in supporting pupils who are approaching school leaving age.

### **3. How well does the school support young people develop and learn?**

The positive relationships between staff and learners have created an environment where our learners feel supported and "believe to achieve". The school is fully inclusive and believes strongly in equality. Curriculum planning between leaders within the school supports progression across curricular areas and meets the needs of learners. Staff are confident in courses currently being offered at each stage and are aware of ongoing national curricular changes. Learning experiences in S1 to S3 are appropriate and enjoyable however, although evident in most departments, as a school we wish to further enhance opportunities for learners to experience depth, challenge, pace and choice within every curricular area and level. This will ensure a seamless transition into the Senior Phase for all learners.

The school has an evolving transition programme delivered in collaboration with the cluster primary schools. We have continued to strengthen our links through meaningful subject specific visits to collaborate on content and progression. Successful steps have been taken this year to implement pupil e-profiling at the end of S3 with this culminating in a BGE Graduation.

Principal Teachers are very effective in their role. They have an overview, along with Depute Heads of House, of the educational and pastoral needs of pupils in their caseloads. This year we have also included in the pastoral team some aspiring PTs Pupil Support who have taken on a small caseload of pupils. Through raising the profile of "Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)" our staff have a deeper understanding of the structures and strategies to support learners. The enhancement of the Health and Wellbeing Resource Team (HART) and multi-agency meetings ensure that pupils benefit from targeted support from internal and external agencies to support their wellbeing.

A wide range of partner agencies provide targeted support to learners within the school. These include; the Home School Partnership Officer, the Attendance Officer, Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, various members of the NHS and Social Work staff to name but a few. In addition to these strong links we have engaged in activity agreements in the local learning hub, Community Alternatives and SALE, securing places for vulnerable pupils.

All young people are given the opportunity to develop confidence and skills for life, learning and work through a wide range of sporting, cultural and community based activities offered by the school. The school believes in leadership at all levels. A large number of leadership opportunities are available to pupils in the senior school currently but we are looking to develop over the coming year this opportunity in the BGE. We extensively work closely with partners outside the school community to maximise opportunities for all. The school show "Little Shop of Horrors" highlighted our dramatic and musical talents, whilst the "Dress in a Day" competition winners showed artistic talent in fashion and textiles. This session a number of school trips were arranged including New York, Alton Towers, Belfast and Outward Bound. Coltness High School is extremely proud of the pupils, their achievements and talents.

The Parent Council, the Parent Teachers Association and parental evaluations at Parents' Nights allows appropriate opportunities for discussing important curricular and pastoral priorities.

#### 4. How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

Overall the quality of the self-evaluation is good. Examination results are analysed carefully through INSIGHT at a whole school and departmental level to identify opportunities for further improvement. The Head Teacher has great ambition for all young people, staff and others who work in the school. There is a culture of self-evaluation which aids school improvement. Departmental/SLT link meetings supports self-evaluation, whilst challenging and supporting departmental development. Appropriate procedures to monitor and track attainment ensures senior managers and pastoral staff can support individual pupils. Departments take part in moderation exercises which ensures sharing of standards across all departments. Moderation exercises across departments enhances staff understanding of assessment standards and ultimately staff capability and confidence in the delivery of new qualifications has grown. This supports learning and teaching and ensures inclusion and that equality of opportunity and standards are offered to all pupils.

We have a genuine collegiate approach to school improvement through the established Extended Leadership Team and trios. The school's improvement process is now completely transparent encouraging staff to take ownership of the improvement plan and to increase the capacity for change within the school. Staff are involved in evaluating and auditing their work against key HGIOS 4 quality indicators through Departmental Improvement reports. Staff have developed the use of evaluative language and departments engage in meaningful dialogue which focuses on the impact which their practices have on learners. This collaborative approach ensures that all staff have a shared understanding of their contribution to taking forward the agreed areas for improvement. Collegiate time is being used to good effect to respond to educational issues and to refine learning experiences. This work has resulted in a variety of successful small tests of change which have further enhanced our use of data to improve our self-evaluation.

Leadership continues to be encouraged in all staff and pupils. Teachers at all levels are engaged in regular professional development activities both as trainers and being trained. In order to develop leadership across the school promoted and unpromoted members of staff are involved in leading trios and working groups. Regular pupil and parent surveys feature as part of our self-evaluation strategies. Views expressed are taken into account when drawing up the school improvement plan and when refining practice. Parental support and satisfaction are evident in the parental responses over the course of the year.

#### 5. Assigning Levels using Quality Indicators:

Quality Indicator HGIOS 4	Level
1.1 Self Evaluation for self-improvement	4
2.2 Curriculum	4
2.3 Learning, Teaching and assessment	4
2.4 Personalised Support	4
2.6 Transitions	4
3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement	4

#### 6. Areas for Continued Improvement:

**Target 1: LEADERSHIP:** To improve leadership – vision, values and aims / developing people and partnerships / developing capacity for improvement. (HGIOS 4: 1.2, 1.3, 1.4)

**Target 2: SELF-EVALUATION:** To continue to develop our school improvement model. Looking inwards, outwards and forwards. (HGIOS 4: 1.1, 1.3)

**Target 3: CURRICULUM:** Further development of Broad General Education (HGIOS 4: 2.2, 2.3, 3.2)

**Target 4: LIFE AND ETHOS:** To achieve a strong ethos of inclusion and achievement. (HGIOS 4: 2.1, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2)