



# Balftron High School

Standards and Quality Report 2013 - 2014



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Balfron High School is a six year non-denominational comprehensive school serving rural West Stirlingshire. Our associate primaries include Balfron, Buchlyvie, Drymen, Fintry, Killearn, Kippen, Milton of Buchanan and Strathblane. At Balfron High we work closely with primary colleagues to maintain effective and productive links. The school has significant numbers of placing requests (approximately 14%) from outwith our catchment area and 66 pupils with an FME. We have a strong, positive partnership with Care Visions and 9 Looked After and Accommodated young people. The school roll at September 2013 was 922 with 66.8 FTE.

Our school aims focus firmly on putting young people first. Positive attitudes, strong values and relationships underpin the work we do. With the support of Stirling Council, our goal is to improve the life chances of all of our young people, working in partnership with parents, carers and the wider community. We have a supportive Parent Council who provide a vehicle for strong and effective partnership with our parents.

The school is fully committed to meeting the needs of all young people and to providing a wide range of opportunities for all members of our school community. Supporting learning is the responsibility of all members of staff. Pupils and staff have a strong affiliation to our House system. There are three Houses – Campsie, Endrick and Lomond. Within the House system, Form Class Leaders ensure that young people are known very well. To support the transition to high school, all S1 pupils participate in a residential experience with their Form Class, Form Class Leader, House Principal Teacher Pupil Support and Head of House. Form Class Leaders provide effective, targeted support and guidance to young people throughout their time at Balfron High School.

The school has a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils in S1-3 follow a Broad General Education programme of study that reflects the principles and practices of Curriculum for Excellence. In S3, Masterclasses provide additional opportunities for depth and challenge, personalisation and choice. Option choices are now taken at the end of S3, S4 and S5. S4-6 pupils embark on National Qualification courses. Pupils in S4 study 6 subjects leading to National Qualifications. Young people may then reduce to five subjects as they enter S5.

All pupils in S1-S6 follow a planned programme of Personal Social and Health Education.

The Senior Management Team consists of the Head Teacher and three Depute Head Teachers. The Management Team includes nine Principal Teachers of Learning and Teaching/Pastoral Care, five Principal Teachers of Pupil Support (3FTE) and one Principal Teacher Staged Intervention. The school has nine Chartered Teachers. The Support for Learning Team is supported by 2.5 FTE of teaching staff and 7 Support for Learning Assistants.

We are very proud of the wide range of opportunities for personal achievement in the school. More than 20 co-curricular activities are available throughout the year. We have a number of successful sports teams, dance groups, creative writing, debating, an orchestra, choir and a range of bands. We provide many opportunities for our young people to go on a variety of trips and expeditions locally and abroad.

Feedback, comments or suggestions on this report are most welcome.

Elaine Bannatyne,  
Head Teacher





### Our Priorities 2013-16

- Continued improvement of Learning and Teaching
- Further develop the curriculum in line with Curriculum for Excellence
- To promote an Ethos of Attainment, Achievement and Inclusion
- Improve the Leadership of Staff and Pupils
- Develop effective Partnerships and Involve Parents



## *Balfron High School Standards and Quality Report 2014*

### *What is a Standards and Quality Report?*

This report provides an evaluation of the overall quality of educational provision within our school. It shows the positive aspects of our provision and highlights the areas which the school is planning to improve.

Each evaluation is supported by evidence from the past school session. This is generated in a planned and systematic way throughout the year. This session we have used a wide range of approaches including:-

- Classroom observations, formal, informal and our tri-learning programme
- Sampling of pupil work & jotter snap shot (S1)
- Pupil, staff (teaching and support) and parental questionnaires
- Pupil focus groups
- Staff focus groups
- Parent focus groups
- Data analysis
- SQA results
- Discussions between Senior Management Team and Principal Teachers
- Review and improvements led by working groups of staff and pupils



**2013-14 Head Prefects**

The school was inspected by HMIE in September 2014. We were pleased at the outcome of the inspection. The school was judged 'very good' in every category. The report can be found on our school website or by following the link below:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/BalfronHighSchoolStirling.asp>

Information is shared regularly with parents. The school publishes Balfron Highlights regularly, where key aspects of the work of the school and pupils' experience and achievements are celebrated. These are available on our website along with other important information. The school also now posts updates daily on Twitter and is regularly featured in The Stirling Observer and the Milngavie and Bearsden Herald.

## How well do our children Learn and Achieve?



### Attainment

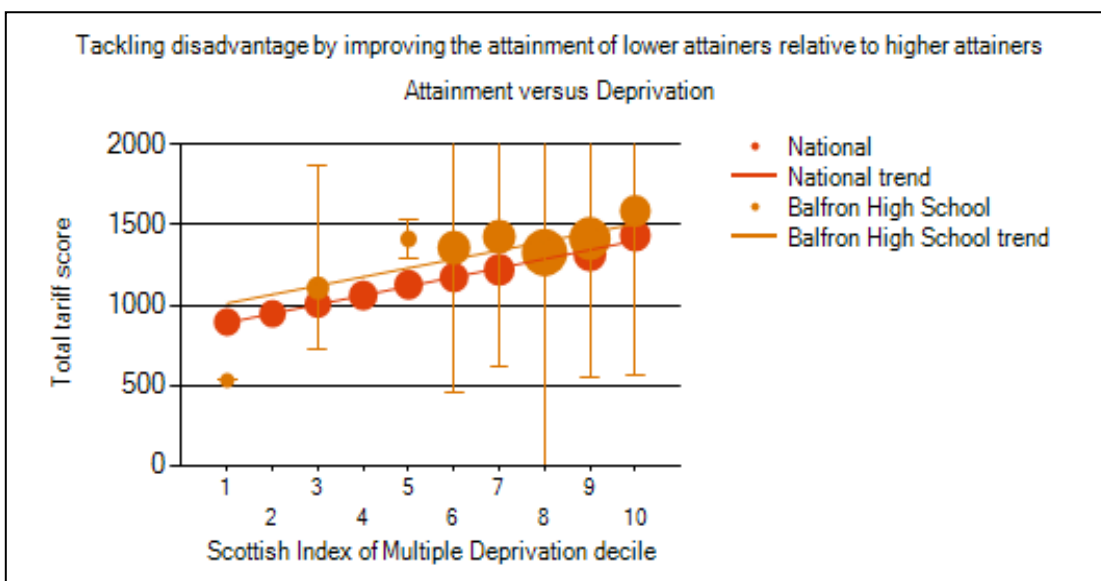
We are committed to raising attainment and achievement. We strive to provide high quality learning experiences at all times and in all contexts that reflect and support this. The school continues to perform well above the national average in every indicator.

As there is no longer an appeal system, data is unlikely to change significantly. However, of 23 re-marks, 22% were successful.

### S6 Pupils

By end of S6 as % of S4 roll	2014 (no appeals)	2013 (post- appeal)	2012 (post appeal)	2011 (post appeal)
1 + Advanced Higher	31%	31%	23%	31%
5 + Higher	49%	50%	42%	47%
3 + Higher	66%	66%	55%	60%
1 + Higher	82%	82%	68%	73%

Attainment by the end of **S6** is strong relative to the national average as highlighted below. Seven S6 pupils gained three or more Advanced Highers. The number of pupils who attained at least one Advanced Higher remains high. S6 pupils at Balfour High School performed better than the national average relative to SIMD with the exception of one pupil in SIMD 1.



This may be attributed to increased stay on rates and a strong ethos in the senior school that encourages young people to be hardworking and ambitious. Some S6 pupils undertook a

flexible timetable where they worked towards National Qualifications while undertaking work experience to prepare them for transition from school.

Not captured in our statistics are pupils who attained awards in Higher Psychology. The pupils travelled to Forth Valley College one day per week for classes.

Notable achievements include one S6 pupil, Callum Watson securing four Advanced Highers at A band 1. In recognition of this exceptional achievement, Callum was named winner of the SQA Academic Excellence Award. This is presented to the school candidate with the highest average mark across their SQA assessments.

Other notable achievements include the Modern Studies Associated prize being awarded to Alice Copland as she achieved the highest mark nationally in Advanced Higher Modern Studies. Erin Hamilton's Advanced Higher Art portfolio was selected for exhibition at the Glasgow Tron Theatre with other outstanding work.

### S5 Pupils

By end of S5 as % of S4 roll	2014 (no appeals)	2013 (pre-appeal)	2012 (post appeal)	2011 (post appeal)
5 + Higher	31%	33%	33%	30%
3 + Higher	52%	54%	55%	47%
1 + Higher	70%	81%	77%	65%

Attainment by the end of **S5** continues to show strength and is well above the national average. Transition from S4 was a particular focus. Pupils were given a 'free choice' of subjects for S5 in order to maximise the opportunity to study in areas of strength. Supported by Form Class Leaders, pupils were encouraged to consider UPS scores in addition to aspiration.

Two S5 pupils, Julia Bandel and Lucy Howie, achieved six Highers in S5, one with all band ones. Fifteen S5 pupils achieved five grade A Higher awards (nine in 2013). Nine S5 pupils achieved five Highers with four at grade A (ten in 2013).



**Eilidh Green, School Dux 2014**



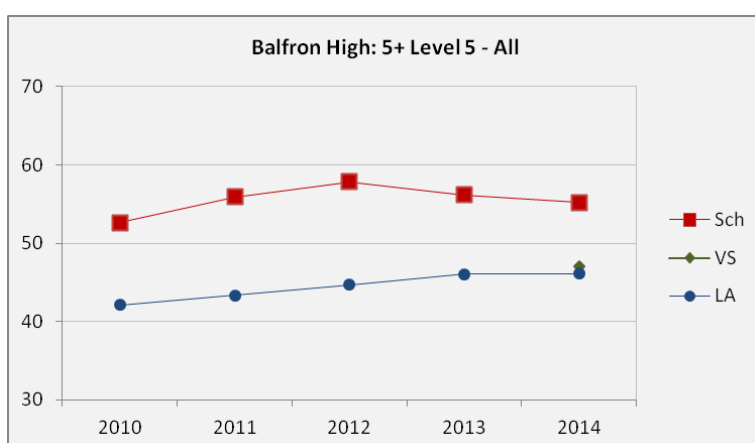
**Rowan Price, Proxime Accessit 2014**

## S4 Pupils

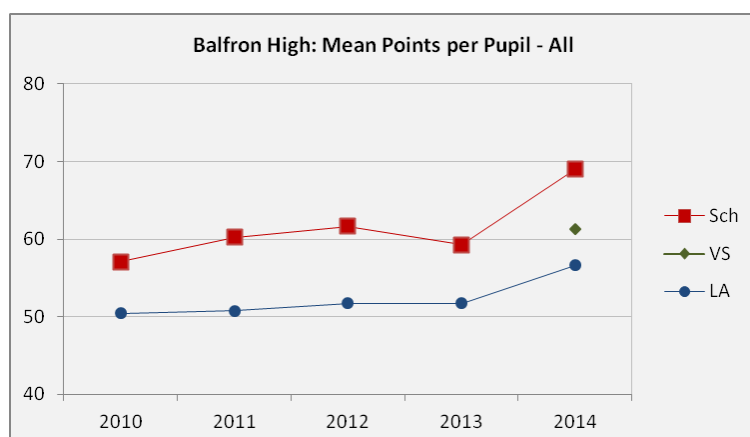
This was the first presentation of the new National 5 qualifications. 24 pupils achieved As in all six National 5 Qualifications. Last session 17 achieved As in the comparable level (SCQF level 5).

By end of S4 as % of S4 roll	2014 (no appeal)	2013 (pre-appeal)	2012 (post appeal)	2011 (post appeal)
5 + level 5 (N5/ credit/Int 2)	56%	56%	61%	59%
3 + level 4 (N4/ general/ Int 1)	84%	90%	95%	93%
1 + level 3 (N3/ access 3)	84%	96%	98%	99%

A particular focus will be on increasing the percentage of pupils in the level 4 and 5 categories next session.



Although still well above the national average (last three years), data shows that attainment has dipped (total tariff points) at S4 as predicted through our tracking and monitoring and move to 6 Nationals. However there were significant improvements between prelim and final exam.



It is important to note that the mean points per pupil has significantly increased and is significantly higher than the local authority and national average.

Boys are outperforming girls in S4. A group of 28 S4 girls have been identified as having performed less well than their SIMD

equivalent nationally. These young people will be tracked and supported through S5.

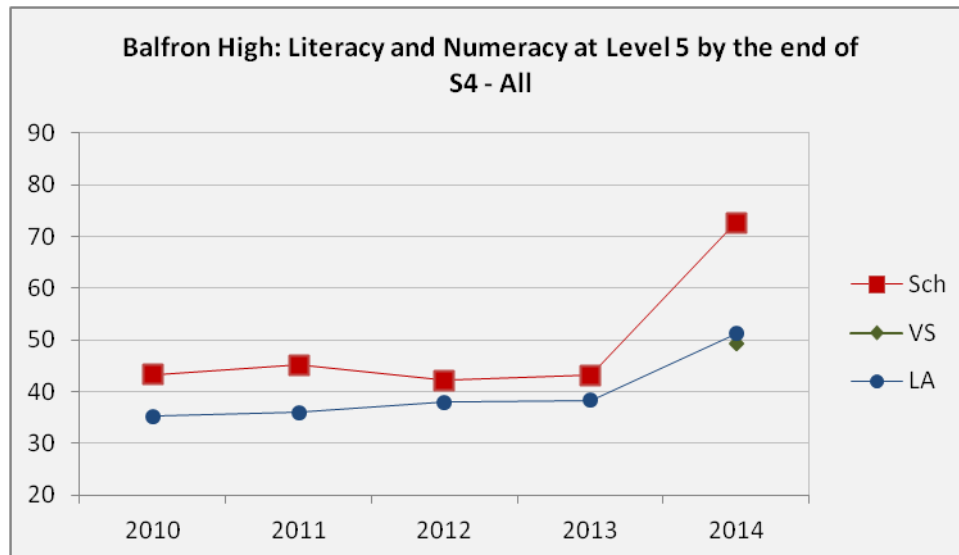
## Early Presentations

Two S4 pupils achieved higher German at A, presented early. One S3 pupil achieved national 5 As in French and German, while one S2 pupil achieved an A in National 5 Spanish.



### Literacy & Numeracy levels (S4)

There has been a significant increase in the number of S4 pupils achieving both literacy and numeracy qualifications at SCQF level 5 (national 5) in 2014. This is significantly higher than the national and local authority data. There has been significant work led by Lead Learners Literacy and Numeracy over the last three years.



During the session 2013-14, a formal award for Junior Dux and Proxime Accessit was introduced. The award is calculated on S4 prelim results.



**Connor Rowan, Junior Dux 2014**



**Erin Sanderson, Junior Proxime Accessit 2014**

### SQA Exam Follow-up

A team of Principal Teachers and senior staff made a phone call to every returning pupil after the exam results were published (August). This allowed changes to be made to the curriculum quickly, support to be given to individuals and congratulations to be extended.



## Opportunities for Personal Achievement

*The Barber Shop Quartet (right) was established in 2013-14 and delighted our learning community with performances throughout the year.*



The high number of out of school hours activities is a huge strength of the school. There is a wide variety of opportunities for young people S1-6. This includes, Creating Writing, Chess, Astronomy, Science club, Debating, Orchestra, Ceilidh Band and many more.

Last session, twenty sports co-curricular activities were offered to pupils. Encouraging young people to participate, an annual Freshers' Week showcased the activities. Senior pupils and staff encouraged all young people, particularly S1 and S2, to participate. Partners from community clubs also attended the Freshers' Fayre. These included Tae kwon do, Active Stirling, Buchanan Castle Golf Club, Balfron Barracudas (swimming club), Balfron Wolverines (hockey) and Strathendrick rugby club.

Our link with Active Stirling affords the opportunity to offer after school clubs and coaching options. Active Stirling also provided work experience for some of our young people and a wide range of volunteering experiences. Working with active Stirling, S6 pupils completed a variety of National Governing Body courses.

In partnership with Active Stirling, two S4 pupils were chosen to take on the role of Young Ambassadors for Balfron High School. They worked hard to encourage and increase participation, were sports leaders and promoted the positive values of school sport.

We are committed to capturing the exceptional achievements of pupils. Our Internationalist Board highlights the large number of pupils, current and former, who have competed for their country. Last session four additional pupils were identified and their names and activities added to the board.

In 2013-14 our Junior Girls and Senior Boys (below) were both Scottish Schools Athletics Relay Champions.





We recognise out of school achievements of pupils. Rory Logan, left, was awarded the James Fleming Piping Cup in June 2014.

There is a wide range of activities that promote personal achievement and many opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles. Supported by teaching staff, every S6 pupil opts into at least one Leadership Team in addition to the formal curriculum. These included Comenius, Events Management, Malawi Partnership, Water Aid, Fair Trade, Paired Reading, Charities Group, Eco Schools and School Dance Committee. Many S6 pupils became prefects, supporting the school during the school day and outwith in a variety of events. Prefects are identifiable by braided blazers and tartan house ties. Most S6 pupils provided general support to junior classes throughout the year in their non-contact time.

### **Residential Learning Experiences**



A key feature of our transition process and commitment to developing positive relationships between S1 pupils in their form class and Form Class Leaders is the S1 residential. Almost all S1 pupils attended residential in Ardentinny, Ardmay House and Lochgoilhead.

A leadership focused residential in Ardeonaig, Perthshire was organised to build capacity and teamwork skills in Head Prefects and House Captains. 16 young people worked together to plan inter-house and pupil voice activities for session 13-14.

S6 Advanced Higher geography pupils travelled to Lochranza in Arran for four days to undertake and complete field work for their course.



Last session saw two boats filled with senior Balfron High pupils work together to crew a challenging route from Greenock to the Western Isles with the Ocean Youth Trust.

Ten S4 pupils who did not have study leave participated in the John Muir Award and a Peer Educator residential in Aberfoyle. In addition to securing the John Muir Award, pupils were trained to support younger pupils with issues related to health and wellbeing.



### International Residential Learning Experiences



Our most recent two year Comenius project concluded last session. Cultural identity was the theme that young people worked on together. Pupils created a board game with partners from Italy, Germany and France. Pupils frequently used video conferencing to communicate regularly with young people in European partner schools. A Balfron group of S6 pupils travelled to Diez in Germany in 2013-14 to finalise the project work.

The school was awarded a European Quality Label in October 2013 for the project tourism and trade in Europe: let's go sustainable.



Our partnership with Robert Laws School in Malawi is in its seventh year. Fundraising is ongoing to help provide money to bring The Headteacher, 2 further staff member and 6 pupils to Balfron High early in session 2014-15.

S6 pupils travelled to Krakow and made the moving trip to Aushwitz. Puils delivered assemblies to year groups on what they had learned during the excursion when they returned.

Other international trips have supported and enhanced the curriculum. More than 40, S3 pupils travelled to Switzerland for a geography field trip. In May, 30 S2 and S3 pupils travelled to our partner school in Villeneuve d'Ascq, France to hone their linguistic skills and experience and learn first hand about the local culture. The first part of the exchange saw Balfron pupils and their families host young people from our partner school in September before making the visit to France.

A group of forty pupils travelled to Valencia to take part in football training and matches against the Spanish junior teams.

Plans are in the early stages for a group of up to fifty pupils to go on an expedition to Peru in June 2015.

## Citizenship



Charity work was a key feature of every Home Area and a strength of the school. Every Home Area identified a nominated charity. A wide range of activities led by pupils raised funds for charities including Robin House, Children In Need, Scheihallion Ward Yorkhill, The Dogs Trust, Guide Dogs, Young Minds, Amnesty International, Mary's Meals and Strathendrick Hospice.

The charities were often selected in response to issues and insight into personal experiences of young people in our school community.





Christmas saw the annual donation of presents for disadvantaged children in Glasgow. Almost all pupils donated a wrapped gift. These were distributed through Glasgow City Council Social Work Department. Balfron High pupils also contributed more than 100 shoeboxes for disadvantaged children in Eastern Europe.



### **Promoting Achievement in music and performance**

Supported by our nine instrumental teachers, we delivered weekly orchestra rehearsals, a string group, fiddle group, jazz band, wind band and choir. Musical events where our young people performed last session included Christmas and summer concerts, ceilidhs, the Strathendrick Music and Piping Festivals, Celebrating Success Ceremonies, our Outstanding Achievement Award Ceremony in addition to many assemblies. Many of our young people are members of the Stirling Council Orchestra.

### **Recognising and celebrating achievements**



We formally celebrated achievements and success at our Celebrating Success Award Ceremonies, the Outstanding Achievement Ceremony and the Sports Award Ceremony. Lesson by lesson pupils' achievements are recognised and recorded in our merit system. All pupils were encouraged to participate in inter-house activities and competitions. The achievements of pupils in the classroom, co-curricular and personal achievements were recognised and celebrated through our tannoy system, our website, newsletters and through our Twitter account.

More than 60 young people were recognised for their commitment to school sport and personal achievements in sport beyond school at our second Sports Award Ceremony in June. We were delighted that David Grevemberg, CEO of the Commonwealth Games, was

able to attend, giving an inspirational keynote speech. Balfron High was runner up to Wallace High School in the Sunday Mail SportScotland School of the Year awards.



### Stay on rates

Most young people stay on beyond school leaving age. There has been a trend of higher stay on rates relative to the local authority and national average at Balfron High.

	2012	2013	2014
S5 Jan	92%	93%	92%
LA	83%	84%	83%

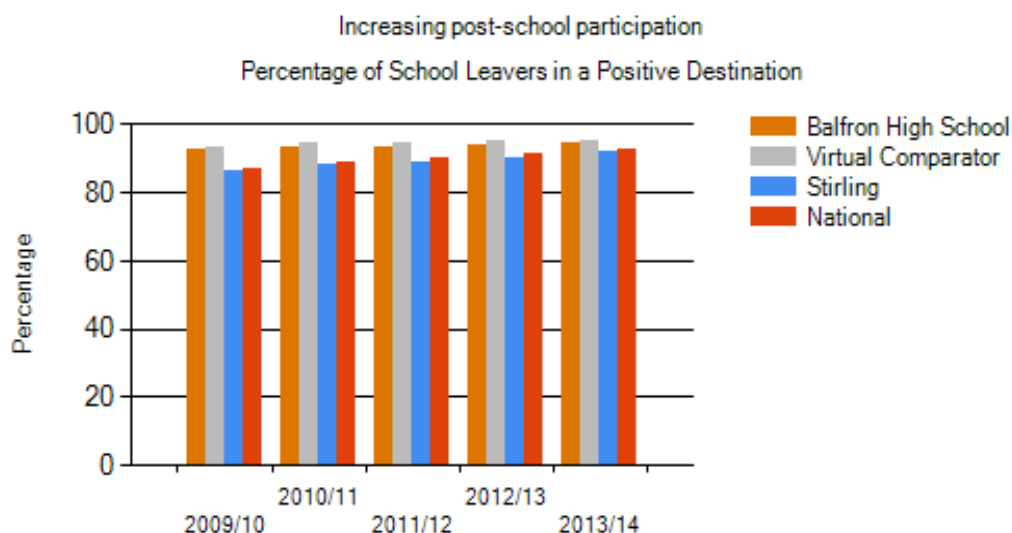
### Leavers Destinations

There is strong support for young people as they approach the point of leaving Balfron High School. Key elements of this were:

- Early identification of young people in danger of leaving school and not going to further education, employment or training. These pupils were identified early in S4/5 and discussed regularly at the School Liaison group (SLG)
- Key planning meetings to support these young people took place and included representatives from the school and Skills Development Scotland (SDS).
- Strong support for young people preparing job applications, UCAS forms and college applications by Form Class Leaders, PTs L&T/Pastoral Care, the Pupil Support Team and our SDS advisor.
- A commitment by our SDS advisor to individually support young people at their point of need from the beginning of S4.
- Key enhancement projects, including ACE and Positive Changes, were utilised to ensure that young people are given intensive support where required.
- The successful use of established partnerships with social work colleagues and Youth Services for those young people with Additional Support Needs leaving school.

- Tracking and monitoring by Form Class Leaders and PTs Pupil Support of individual young people to their point of leaving, ensured that whatever support or onward referral was made.

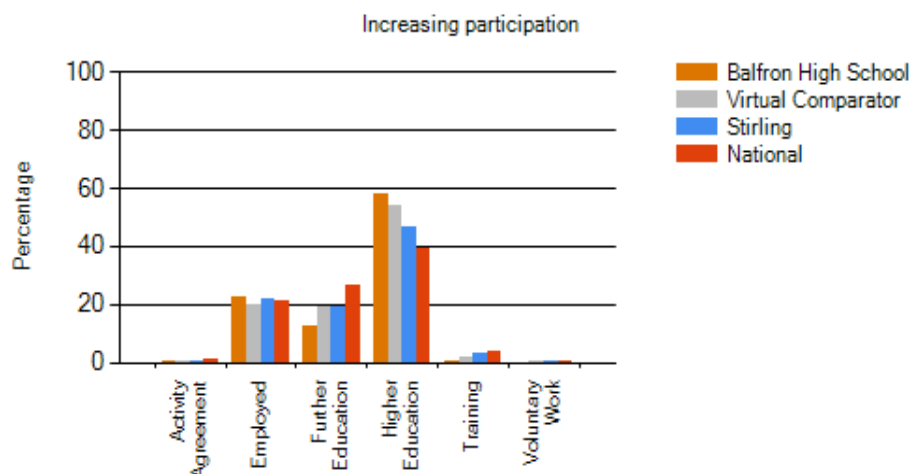
Last session (2013-2014), destination figures of all pupils (S3-4) who left school in June 2014 published on INSIGHT is as follows:



Leavers Dest	ALL S4-6			
	Balforn HS %	VC %	Stirling %	National%
2009/10	92.64	93.31	86	87.18
2010/11	93.17	94.84	88.27	89.12
2011/12	93.57	94.79	88.64	90.12
2012/13	94.22	94.97	89.89	91.7
2013/14	94.38	95.5	92.06	92.57

While the percentage of pupils with positive destinations is higher than the Local Authority and National figures, a focus for next session is to improve in line with our virtual comparator.

Fewer young people transition from Balforn HS to FE than Stirling and National comparisons. Further links with Forth Valley College will be forged in the new session.



## **Attendance**

Attendance at Balfron High remains well above the national average. We have a strong commitment to ensuring maximum attendance of pupils in all classes and to supporting those young people and families where there are difficulties. Key elements of this provision were:

- The successful employment of a text alert system to ensure that parents were aware of absences
- Quick response by the Form Class Leaders and teaching staff to suspected truancy or when pupils are off for a longer period of time without explanation
- Weekly House meetings, led by DHT, with PTs Home Area, Pupil Support and Staged Intervention. Patterns or concerns were quickly picked up and intervention agreed, minuted and implemented.
- Where genuine illnesses provided a barrier to attendance, flexible arrangements were made and agreed with parents that met the needs of the young person. These were reviewed on a regular basis. The school worked in partnership with health professionals to support individual pupils.

### **Attendance Rates**

Session 2010/11	92.1 %
Session 2011/12	94.3%
Session 2012/13	93.3%
Session 2013-14	92.66%

In 2013-14, some absences can be attributed as follows:

- Some flexible arrangements due to illness
- Family holidays taken in terms time
- Commonwealth Games (some parents took holidays early to accommodate work)
- S6 attendance dropped slightly

## **Exclusions**

Balfron High School is an inclusive and supportive environment. We believe in working with pupils and parents in order to ensure that exclusions from school are a last resort. Our focus is on early intervention, promoting positive behaviour and restorative practices. We pride ourselves in positive, healthy professional relationships between all pupils and staff. Key elements of our work in this area are:

- A focus on the individual needs of our young people
- A commitment to resolving conflict, solution focused approaches, restoring relationships and building resilience
- Strong partnership working
- Use of Additional Support Needs planning to support young people and parents and to provide classroom teachers with strategies to assist in dealing with the most challenging behaviour
- The use of a merit system to help us to celebrate the success of the those young people (the majority) who consistently cooperate with the school and work hard every day



## Exclusion Incidents

Session 2010/11	0.94%
Session 2011/12	1.06%
Session 2012/13	1.79%
Session 2013/14	0.53%

There were 30 incidents resulting exclusion from the school in 2013-14, representing a total of 78 days lost. 24 young people account for this figure. 5 of these were excluded more than once.

Our policy on promoting positive behaviour has been updated in session 2012-13 and was re-launched in August 2013. Data is regularly reviewed and analysed. Young people are identified every 4-6 weeks for intervention following the analysis.

Strengths	Areas for Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Attainment of S5 &amp; S6 pupils in terms of key performance indicators</b></li> <li>• <b>All key indicators are significantly higher than the national average</b></li> <li>• <b>Almost all leavers destinations are positive</b></li> <li>• <b>Free choice element to options helps place pupils effectively</b></li> <li>• <b>Wide range of activities that promote wider achievements</b></li> <li>• <b>International links and activities</b></li> <li>• <b>Increasing links with partners in supporting the curriculum</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify early intervention strategies to support girls' attainment</li> <li>• Systematically identify and intervene (tracking data) with target groups of young people in the senior phase offering direct and specific support via form class leaders (overview &amp; pastoral support) and class teachers (curricular support)</li> <li>• Continue to target learning and teaching approaches to meet the needs of all pupils.</li> <li>• Seek to identify a wider range of additional accreditation for pupils throughout the school.</li> </ul>

## How well does the school support young people to develop and learn?



### Transition

In partnership with Active Stirling, we offered 13 sporting Co-Curricular transition activities, where P7 pupils joined Balfron High pupils and staff. More than 80 young people from primary 7 took part in activities with S1 pupils in our Physical Education department after school between March and May 2013. The activities were supported by our S3 Masterclass Sports Leaders and Senior Sports Leaders.

Supporting the transition process, a successful programme in Literacy, Numeracy and Modern Languages has been developed by our Lead Learners, and put in place across the cluster. With a focus on research skills, numeracy targets and individual talk, positive evaluations have been fed back by primary and secondary colleagues. Close links with Killearn Primary were established to support reading strategies for P6/7. With Kippen Primary a group resourced new texts and materials. As a Learning Community we focused on group talk to contribute to the improvement of Literacy. Every English teacher has visited at least one of our associated primary schools to support Literacy across learning and the Literacy Transition Project. New S1 pupils will give a presentation to peers in their class when they arrive in August.

Through our Numeracy Lead Learner we have built strong links with all primary colleagues to develop and share practice in the delivery of Numeracy. Our Maths team have linked closely with primary colleagues at Balfron Primary School. Frequent visits to Drymen Primary have promoted a strong partnership (see Numeracy). Every Maths teacher visited at least one of our associated primary schools. Resources were created to facilitate moderation. They have been shared across the cluster.

Our Modern Languages Team liaise regularly with our primary colleagues and have worked on a plan for delivering French in the primary schools that provides a coherent and progressive pathway to S1 French experiences. An S3 masterclass saw S3 pupils lead and support primary teachers in the delivery of French.

A bespoke programme of enhanced transition was planned and delivered to young people with Additional Support Needs.

Having implemented the GLOW e-portfolio for S3 pupils, our Lead Learner ICT will link with primary colleagues to progress the work done with S3 profiling with a view to rolling out Profiles from S1.

Over the year approximately fifteen S6 pupils give up their study time to provide help and support in our associated primary schools.

## Curriculum

The school operates on 30 periods per week plus 20 minutes form class time every morning. There are no more than twenty pupils in a form class. The relationship between Form Class Leaders and their pupils is central to the success of our pupil support system. Staff are committed to fulfilling this role. The same Form Class Leader stays with pupils throughout their time at Balfron High where possible. To build positive relationships and maximise opportunities for contact, pupils in S1 have their form class leader for PSE and the subject that teacher delivers. Form Class Leaders are the first point of contact between home and school. They track and monitor pupils and link with colleagues to support pupils on stage 0 and stage 1 of the staged intervention framework.

All pupils in S1-3 follow a Broad General Education covering 8 curricular areas. These include Expressive Arts, Health and Wellbeing, Languages, Mathematics, Religious and Moral Education, Sciences, Social Subjects, Technologies.

In Social Subjects S1 pupils follow a common course with a single teacher delivery. In S2 there is personalisation and choice in terms of topics within a progressive skills (Enquiry Skills) based course. All S3 pupils completed a taster course in German and Spanish.

Subjects were allocated periods and delivered as follows:

Subject	S1	S2	S3
English	4	4	4
Maths	4	4	4
French	3	3	3
Social Subjects	3	5	4
Sciences	3	4	5
Physical Education	3	2	2
Religious Education	1	1	1
Music	2	1	1
Technology	2	2	2
Art	2	2 *	2 *
Health and Wellbeing	2	2 **	2 **
PSE	1 *	1	1
Business Enterprise/ Technical	1 **	1	1

\* for 26 weeks

\*\* for 13 weeks



The Broad General curriculum is enhanced with opportunities for excursions and competitions to motivate and challenge young people. Left is a group of S1 pupils at the annual Salters' Festival of Chemistry.

### **Masterclasses**

S3 Masterclasses contributed to the development of skills for learning, life and work and provided challenge and depth to young people in a real life context. The aim of each masterclass was to further develop each of the four capacities in our young people through innovative and challenging learning experiences that added depth and challenge to learning.

Masterclasses were delivered to S3 pupils between January and June. Pupils chose four from the options below. Two classes are delivered for two periods each per week for 11 weeks. Masterclasses offered in 13-14 ranged from Computer Games Design to Animal Behaviour.

Pupils were given a free choice and asked to choose in order of preference. 100% of pupils were successful in getting all 4 of the 6 Masterclasses that they requested.

Teacher questionnaires showed a high degree of agreement, demonstrating that in the majority of Masterclasses the aims had been achieved. Examples of very high concordance include Financing your Future and Early Years Childcare, while the Debating and Sports Science Masterclasses exceeded expectations.

The National Parks Masterclass provided the opportunity for some young people to gain accreditation for their learning. 35 pupils achieved the John Muir Award.

Pupils made choices for national qualifications towards the end of S3. In addition to English and Maths, pupils were given a 'free choice' of subjects to study in S4. This meant that there were more opportunities to meet course requests. 97% pupils were given their first choice.

### **Vocational opportunities**

23 pupils attended Forth Valley College in 2013-14 one day per week. There had been 9 the previous session. Courses included Creative Industries, Beauty, Construction, Hospitality, Sound Production, Early Education and Higher Psychology.





Course	Number of pupils	Outcomes
SfW Hospitality Int 1	3	3 passes
Create and Image (Beauty)	2	2 passed all units
SfW Construction Int 1	3	3 passes
SfW Early Ed Int 1	3	3 passes
NPA Sound Production	1	1 pass
SfW Creative Industries Int 2	7	7 passes
Higher Psychology	3	1A, 1B, 1 fail

### Wider achievements

All S4 pupils have the opportunity to take part in Work Experience. Last session almost all successfully completed the experience. Plans to identify accreditation for work experience will be instigated in 2014-15.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme is run in partnership with a group of current and former parents who link regularly with our teacher representative. This session 70 S3 pupils embarked on the Bronze Award and 14 pupils, the Silver Award. It was recognised that the completion rate was fewer than hoped due to skills not being completed and entered on My DofE. Plans are in place change the order of the programme to increase the number of overall awards.

### Interdisciplinary Learning



All S2 pupils took part in a week of activities related to the Commonwealth Games. Each Form Class was allocated a Commonwealth Country and had to research cultural and sporting facts about their Country. A presentation was made to the yeargroup where work was displayed and performances were showcased.

Our S1-3 curricular Learning Wall has allowed all teachers to know what and when young people are learning elsewhere in the curriculum. This has helped teachers with planning and supported pupils in making connections between subjects. With whole school responsibility for IDL, a Principal Teacher met with all other Principal teachers to discuss and plan IDL.

Focus groups were held with S1-3 pupils to review activities delivered. Strengths and areas for improvement were identified. Activities included Remembrance Day, Commonwealth Games and Health.

All of S1 took part in the values education competition Inspire/Aspire, run by Character Scotland. The competition ran through Form Class time and PSE, had the focus on Olympian and Paralympians and their characteristics and values. For the third year, a Balfron High pupil achieved a national award. Kim Denton pictured right with Miss Miller having received her award at Glasgow University.



### **Literacy**

At the beginning of the session, our Lead Learner Literacy led 'Literacy Lunches' where strengths and next steps were identified by all teams. Every team has a representative on the Literacy group. New staff underwent literacy training in November and all teaching staff participated in literacy workshops during the February in-service day. To promote consistency across the school, marking codes were agreed, and made into resources used across the school.

Our Lead Learner has contributed and coordinated moderation activities in our cluster primary schools and early years establishments. A survey conducted last session showed that many subject areas (English, Modern Languages, Science, Social Subjects and Maths) assess talk presentations. This session a small working group will develop shared criteria for individual talk based on the SSLN criteria from the SQA, with solo talk workshop materials produced by pupils.

Run by four S6 Literacy Champions, a positively evaluated literacy week took place last session. Activities included a Spelling Bee, Balloon Debate and an Extreme Reading competition.

### **Numeracy**

Our Lead Learner Numeracy led an implemento with non-maths teachers to plan for future needs. A traffic light system that highlighted S1 numeracy levels was shared among all staff. Numeracy was audited across the Broad General Education to ensure pupils entitlement was met from planning stages. Workshops for parents of S1 and S2 pupils ran in the first term. Level 3/4 Numeracy experiences and outcomes were produced in an A3 poster and displayed in each classroom throughout the school.

A partnership was established between Balfron Primary and ourselves where members of staff from each sector paired and observed a lesson out with their Establishment and professional discussion took place. Our Lead Learner Numeracy visited each Cluster Primary School P7 class and the Nursery Schools within Balfron Cluster. Regular visits took place between Drymen and Balfron Primary P7 classes where our Lead Learner taught different groups of pupils. This provided an increased awareness of pupils' mathematical ability and

led to continuous professional dialogue between Primary and Secondary sectors. Our Lead Learner was a member of a short life working group focusing on cluster moderation of Numeracy and also attended the Local Authority Moderation Event.

## Health and Wellbeing

The Health team planned and delivered a Health and Wellbeing course to all S1 pupils. The course consists of four blocks – Olympics Uncovered; Sky Sports Living for Sport; Sport and the Media; Commonwealth Games, Glasgow 2014. To enhance pupils' learning experience Sky Sports Ambassador and Scottish Paralympian Emma Wiggs visited the S1 pupils. To support the Sport in the Media course, Ian Morrison, Chief Rugby journalist for the Herald and former rugby internationalist, visited all S1 classes.



Home Economics was delivered to all S2 and S3 pupils. PE was delivered in the core up to and including S4. There was high uptake of S5 and 6 pupils into certificated PE in the senior school.

PSE was managed by our 5 PTs Pupil Support. In S1-4 pupils had a planned period of PSE delivered by their Form Class Leader (S1-3) with sexual health supported by PTs PS. Training was provided for Form Class Leaders through meeting. S5/6 PSE was delivered through inserts and ran in partnership with outside agencies including Rape Crisis, Youth Services and the Police. A health day was run for S6 pupils with partners as part of their entitlement. Activities were selected in response to pupil feedback and key community priorities included yoga, pilates, healthy eating, suicide prevention, drug and alcohol awareness and input from LGBT.

## ICT

We have two Lead Learners in ICT. Lead Learners drove an audit of ICT to support learning. An ICT outcomes document was created to share practice. ICT Es and Os are delivered to S1 through Training sessions. Lead Learners supported the PSE provision with input on e-safety, digital exam papers, software and ICT tools. Work was done in Art, English, Modern languages, Music PE and Physics to develop and pilot use of iPads to support learning.

## Enterprise & Employability

In addition to a block of Business Enterprise and promoting global citizenship, all S1 pupils took part in Microtyco in Form Class time last session. Coordinated by Lead Learner Enterprise, this was well supported by S1 Form Class Leaders.

Almost all S4 pupils took part in a successful work experience. An S2 Future Pathways event and S5/6 Careers event was delivered. Partners from the world of work, universities and colleges attended offering information, advice and support to young people. There was a discrete Enterprise and Employability class in S5/6. These pupils set up and took part in a work experience in January/ February 2014.



## Personal Support

Personal support at Balfron High is a strength of the school. It is founded on positive relationships and a commitment by staff to deliver the Form Class Leader role to a high standard. All young people are known well by their form class leader who delivers universal and targeted support to those at stage 0 and stage 1 of staged intervention. Our five PTs Pupil Support and PT Staged intervention had responsibility for pupils on stage 2 and stage 3/ 4 respectively. They met regularly with pupils in their caseloads and coordinated annual reviews with parents and outside agencies where targets were set and reviewed. S6 pupils contributed in each House to S1 activities in Form Class time.

Through House meetings and staged intervention, PTs Pupil Support identified and provided targeted support to young people on Stage 2 in partnership with colleagues, parents and partner agencies. PT Staged intervention provided targeted support for young people on stage 3 and 4. SQA exam analysis shows that the interventions and support put in place for many of these pupils contributed to a significant increase in grade from prelim to final exam.



## Additional Support Needs

### Pupils on staged intervention 2013-14

	1	2	3	4	Total
No. S4 pupils	24	12	2	2	40
% of S4 roll	16%	8%	1%	1%	26%
LA%	6%	15%	5%	2%	28%
No of S5 Pupils	29	19	7	2	57
No of S6 Pupils	26	7	2	0	35

The school is well supported by our Support for Learning Team of 2.5 classroom teachers and 7 Support for Learning Assistants. In 2013-14 approximately 269 young people had a recorded additional support need covering all aspects of potential barriers to learning. Of this group, 34 required additional support planning to detail and coordinate the support required.

Within that total of 269 young people with Additional Support Needs on staged intervention, in 2013-14 there were 10 pupils who are currently Looked After and Accommodated.

There are currently no pupils in the school requiring a Coordinated Support Plan (CSP).

14 young people have English as an Additional Language and there are 8 young people who have an Autistic Spectrum Disorder. There are also 55 young people who have dyslexia.

As well as supporting all young people with an Additional Support Needs the team also:

- Coordinated a multi-sensory phonics-based ready programme for pupils mainly in S1 and S2, and in S3 in exceptional circumstances
- Provided the 'Staged Intervention File' with individual pupil detail and strategies for staff to support those young people
- Provided intensive class based support for 112 young people: 27 in S1, 32 in S2, 37 in S3, 14 in S4, 2 in S5 and 0 in S6
- Provided and coordinated readers and scribes for all prelims and SQA exams for pupils who have this entitlement. In 13-14, 87 pupils benefited from arrangements
- Provided lunchtime and interval support for vulnerable pupils, also offering the opportunity to join a lunchtime film club
- Offered extensive support, advice and consultation for all teaching staff on supporting pupils with Additional Support Needs
- Delivered CPL to staff on a range of barriers to learning/ASN
- Ran Dyslexia awareness assemblies, CPL and parent workshops

- Provided current research findings on ASN topics to all staff as and when they became available
- Carried out extensive and thorough assessment for dyslexia and dyscalculia, as per Stirling Council policy
- Provided one-to-one support from support for learning teachers for 13 pupils.

The number of pupils entitled to additional support arrangements saw a significant increase from previous years, with 83 in 2010-11, 91 in 2011-12, 87 in 2012-13 and 134 in 2013-14. Most pupils on stage 2, 3 and 4 with special arrangements exceeded estimates in most subjects.

## **Partnership Working**

In addition to extensive links through curricular areas, the school works in partnership with a team of extended professionals:

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| • Psychological services      | • Care Visions   |
| • Social Care                 | • SEBN Inclusion Support   |
| • CAMHS                       | • Skills Development Scotland  |
| • Speech & Language Therapist | • Allied Health Professionals eg occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, dietetics |
| • School Nurse                | • ASN Outreach   |
| • Youth Services              | • Robin House  |
| • Inclusion Support Worker    | • Children's Reporter  |
| • Community Police Officer    | • Freagarroch (Drug & alcohol support)   |
| • Young Carers                | • Action in Mind (Mental Health)   |
| • Positive Changes            | • Music therapy  |
| • Bernardo's                  | • Central Scotland Rape Crisis   |
| • Fire and Rescue             |  |
| • Art Link                    |  |

Reflecting our strong partnership, Stirling Council Psychological Services provided our young people and staff high quality support, responding quickly on three separate occasions when the school community was dealing with difficult news that an S3, S5 and S6 pupils were seriously ill.

A confidential health drop, called the Health Hub, was launched in October 2013. Run by health partners. A full review will take place in 2014-15.

## **Links with Chaplaincy Team**

Balfron High has a very positive relationship with its Chaplaincy Team. There were 2 members in the team during session 2013-14. Each played an active part in the school life. Rev Iain Goring and Father Liam Hattie contributed to end of term assemblies. Two youth workers visited weekly at lunchtimes and ran our Scripture Union. The ministers met on a

regular basis with the Depute Head Teacher, Mrs Short, who is responsible for religious observance. Rev Goring joined staff most Fridays at interval. S1 pupils attended a presentation from the Gideons. As part of RMPS, all S1 pupils visit the local parish church.

## Monitoring and Tracking

### Attainment Data

- We have devised a robust system for collected attainment data on S4 – S6 to allow us to monitor and track progress across all subjects. We have been able to identify our key groups and plan interventions at weekly house meetings.
- In Literacy and Numeracy we received standardised benchmarking data INCAS. A DHT has interpreted data and shared with maths colleagues.
- All teaching staff were trained in tracking and monitoring, including the use of target grades at the end of last session.

### Interventions

- **Curricular Support** - Increased programme of support not just with a focus on those under performing but for those who could improve grades/levels. Increased participation by pupils and staff (Class teachers and Form Class Leaders)
- **Live N Learn** – Study skills workshops were delivered to all S4 and 5 pupils in February. Evaluations showed that pupils felt that the sessions were useful practically and motivational.
- **Supported Study** – There is no budget to fund Supported Study. However staff continue to regularly give up lunchtimes and after school sessions to provide supported study sessions to group and individuals.
- **Contact with Parents** – Attainment Alert Letters were sent to parents of all pupils in danger of underachieving.

Strengths	Areas for Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Integrated Personal Support Structure</b></li> <li>• <b>Planning and provision for young people with ASNs</b></li> <li>• <b>Curriculum - Broad General Education including innovative Masterclasses</b></li> <li>• <b>On-going development of Monitoring and Tracking information to support planned interventions</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to develop the curriculum in line with CfE (National Qualifications – New Higher)</li> <li>• Continue to develop &amp; track Responsibilities of All (Lit, Num, HWB, ICT)</li> <li>• Continued development of the Pupil Profile (S1-3)</li> </ul>

- **Partnership working within the school**
- Structured programme of curricular tracking and intervention

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



### Continuous Professional Learning

All teaching staff are involved in Continuing Professional Learning throughout their teaching career and all staff also have an entitlement to a Professional Review and Development interview every year at which plans are drawn up to help ensure that every teacher is supported in their professional development. Balfron High staff have been involved in running in-school CPD opportunities for their fellow teachers. Feedback from staff highlights that they appreciate opportunities to share practice and ideas.

6 staff completed a bespoke Post Graduate Certificate course run in partnership with Glasgow University at Balfron High School.

A member from every curricular area in each team, attends regular network meetings coordinated by Stirling Council.

4 members of the Science Team attended SSERC courses. The team benefited from resources and additional funding given on completion. These were used to support new experiments in the Broad General Education courses.

Bringing an expertise in understanding standards, many teaching staff are SQA markers, verifiers and assessors including recently appointed nominees

In house Assessment CPL ran for probationers, new staff and as a refresher for experienced teachers. Two sessions ran and between sessions, staff undertook opportunities to integrate AifL strategies.

Many staff have also attended a variety of in-service courses run by Stirling Council and other outside bodies. As a school we see the impact that these learning opportunities are giving to our staff and in turn our pupils.

Around 30 teaching and support staff attended CPL twilights delivered by Psychological Services on dealing with challenging behaviour.

A programme of twilights and lunchtime workshops are run for probationers and new staff throughout the year.

## **Learning and Teaching**

Teachers and support staff in the school view learning and teaching as critical, core business and are striving to deliver the highest standards.

There has been a focus on consistency across the school in terms of learning and teaching. Evidence from observed lessons, Team open doors observations, teacher questionnaires and parental feedback highlighted that a focus on meeting learning needs would lead to further improvement.



The Assessment working group completed action research on assessment for learning strategies. More recently, the group created an audit tool and with returns from almost all teaching staff, compiled data on assessment for learning and active learning strategies that will form the basis of CPL in Learning and Teaching provided in-house this session.

## **Quality Assurance**

### **Classroom Observations**

Following our HMIE inspection, it was agreed that classroom observations focused on QI 5.3 Meeting Learning Needs All staff took part in these visits. SMT and PTs Learning and Teaching/Pastoral Care visit teachers in their Home Area. All visits are written up and followed up with a professional dialogue. Where concerns arose, support was put in place and further visits took place. Each Principal Teacher saw every member of their team at least once, wrote up the lesson and fed back. Informal peer visits take place in every team.

### **Open Doors Visits**

From February, the Head Teacher embarked on open doors observations in English, Maths, Modern Languages, Physical Education, Science and Social Subjects home areas. 53 episodes of learning were observed with a focus on the core quality indicators. Evidence from lessons was recorded and feedback given to each team.



## Questionnaires

In May 2013 all pupils, all parents, teaching staff and support staff were invited to give feedback to the Head Teacher through questionnaires on Survey Monkey. There were 451 responses from pupils, 178 responses from parents/carers, 54 from teachers, and 15 from support staff. This was significantly less of a return compared to last session. However, it should be noted that the HMIE questionnaire sample also went out during this session.

Pupil questionnaires were analysed by the Head Teacher and Head Prefects. Key themes were identified and fed back to pupils at year group assemblies. The action points identified by the pupils were shared with staff (and pupils at subsequent assemblies) and influenced the improvement plan for 2014-15.

The Head Teacher fed back on parental responses to the parent council. Themes were identified and strategies for improvement discussed. Priorities have been shared in the Highlights newsletter.

Data from **all** questionnaires, and subsequent areas for improvement were shared with the Management Team. Data was compared with comparator schools. An afternoon was protected for the Management Team to work in small groups to discuss the issues raised and identify strategies and tasks that would support improvement. These have been included in the School Improvement Plan 2014-15.

Support Staff responses were shared and discussed with the School Resources Officer.

All data from questionnaires and subsequent action is accessible on the school website.

All teams completed a consultation task on priorities for school improvement based on questionnaires, focus groups, observations and curricular priorities. Feedback shaped the overall plan and tasks to support priorities.

Pupils are regularly asked for views on their experience in all subjects and other aspects of school life.



## Pupil Voice & Focus Groups

Pupil council was run by Head Prefects, supported by the Senior Management Team. The focus was identified from the responses to the pupil questionnaire in May 2013.

Each Team is using 'You said, We Did' posters to display updated feedback to pupils.

In partnership with Bellrock, a pupil focus group worked with the design team to choose colours and design of the swimming pool changing area. This was upgraded for pupils returning for session 2014-15.

## Parental Focus Groups

A group of parents were took part in focus groups to review mycareerprofile.com. Feedback helped shape the level of parental engagement and support.

### **Tracking Performance**

Ongoing data is collected on attainment including target grades and prelim results for S4,5 and 6. PTs, class teachers and Form Class Leaders monitor, track and discuss strategies and interventions with pupils.

Monitoring and Tracking of pupils effort/ behaviour/ homework was completed for all pupils on a monthly basis last session.

### **Sampling Parental Views**

In addition to the questionnaire on Survey Monkey, all parents were given surveys at Parents Meetings last session to sample the quality of their experience. Form Class leaders followed up any issues raised about the progress of individual pupils and fed back to parents.

Parents were invited to attend S1, 2 and S3 Form Class interviews. Feedback from evaluations showed that all parents found the meeting very useful and supportive.

A large sample of parental views helped shape Positive Behaviour Policy.

### **Behaviour & Discipline Data**

Patterns in behaviour and discipline data are highlighted and interventions agreed at House meetings on a weekly basis. Follow up is reviewed. More rigorous and systematic sharing of merit and demerit data is planned for next session in line with the updated promoting positive behaviour policy. Communication with parents on merit data is a priority for this session. Rewards for positive behaviour are highlighted and celebrated at termly assemblies.

## **Ethos**

### **Values**

The school's values of fairness, honesty, respect, responsibility and trust are becoming more embedded and regularly referred to by staff. The school badge was amended to include the values. Bins with the updated badge are in the school campus and in the local community. To promote high expectations and ambition in young people, all S1-3 form classes were invited to research and put forward inspirational quotes. Each home area identified a number of popular quotes. A group of 9 S1-3 pupils (three from each house) chose a quote to represent their house. The quotes, along with our values have been made into large graphics displayed in the atrium.

### **Uniform**

Most young people wear full uniform every day. Where this is not the case, Form Class Leaders, PTs and DHTs are intervening early with parents to resolve this. There was focus on improving uniform by encouraging shirts, ties, tailored skirts and trousers. The instances of pupils wearing non-uniform items like hoodies, jeans and trainers has decreased. Following a full consultation and opportunities for pupils to comment on styles, blazers were successfully introduced for all pupils in August 2013.

## Supervision

Interval and lunchtime supervision by SMT in addition to SLAs has proved to be highly effective. Prefects from each Home Area help supervise at interval and lunchtimes. Bellrock and SLAs report that litter and instances of poor behaviour have reduced.



## Partnership with Bellrock

The school has a strong and positive partnership with the facilities management team at Bellrock. They provide high quality services to the school. Many employees are members of the community and invest positively in the school. Bellrock financially supported the inspirational quote competition and took care of the signage in the atrium in the summer holidays 2013 (picture taken in August 2013 on return to school).

Strengths	Areas for Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All staff included in Tri-Learning</li><li>• All staff committed to formal classroom observations focused on learning and teaching</li><li>• Commitment by SMT and PTs to engage in QA activities</li><li>• Effective use of Monitoring and Tracking data to highlight areas for improvement.</li><li>• Improved standard of uniform</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consistency in QA activities across the school</li><li>• Parental involvement in planning for improvement</li><li>• Continued development of the Pupil Council/ learner voice in influencing the work of the school</li></ul>

## How do we ensure equality and inclusion and promote diversity across the establishment?



Balfon High has a positive ethos and community spirit built on strong relationships and focussed on individual needs. The pastoral care and restorative approaches used in the school promote a climate where all are valued. All staff strive to treat pupils fairly and recognise that individual needs differ.

Balfon High is a very inclusive school with a strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and celebrating diversity. Led by Principal Teachers and senior pupils, each home area carried out charity work relevant to the young people in the house.

A regular programme of assemblies took place in 2013-14. These are led by the Head Teacher, Depute Head Teachers, Head Prefects and House Captains.

At the beginning of each session, all staff have training/updates on equality and inclusion on the first in-service day.

Strong links with the local church and parents in the community have meant that Balfon High is regularly approached to provide a short experience of the curriculum to international pupils from other countries at the school.



Pupils at risk of missing out are identified early through transition information or partnership working. Their progress tracked and monitored through House meetings and staged intervention. High quality information is shared and interventions planned and reviewed.

The school promotes an understanding of equality issues through our ethos, assemblies, PSE, RMPS and Modern Studies.

