

Larbert High School



Standards & Quality Report

Session 2009 - 2010



A Word from the Rector



It is with great pleasure that I present this year's Standards & Quality Report to you – highlighting the academic attainment from the past year and the wider achievements of our pupils and school. Last year's examination results were some of the best that the school has ever seen and is testament to the hard work, effort and commitment of everyone at Larbert. However, the true success of a school comes not only from examination results, but also from the wider achievements of its pupils. I am sure you will agree that these are equally as impressive and stand the school in a very healthy position on which to move forward.

As always, we are constantly evaluating our work and focusing on areas where we know we need to further improve. We have worked hard over the last year to ensure that our approach is focused on improving the experience for our pupils and this document also sets out our improvement priorities over the course of the coming year – a full copy of our improvement plan can be downloaded from our website (www.larberthigh.com).

I look forward to receiving your feedback and comments on this report and would like to take this opportunity to congratulate everyone on their achievements to date.

Best Wishes

Jon Reid
Rector.



Our School

Larbert High School has been on its present site since 2000, but can trace its origins as far back as 1631.

The school roll has increased significantly in recent years, reflecting the growing numbers of those who choose to live in the Falkirk council area plus a demand for places from outwith our catchment area.

In August 2009 we had 1732 pupils, 143 teachers and 46 support staff. Our school works in close partnership with the head teachers and pupils of our seven associated primary schools within the Larbert cluster and with Falkirk Council's Education Services.

In addition to being encouraged to achieve the highest standards in academic studies Larbert High School pupils have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities encompassing sports, clubs and recreational activities. At Larbert, we believe that these leisure and school experiences make a very valuable contribution to a young person's education.



Improvement Plan Priorities 2009-10

In session 2009-10 we carried out a number of improvements in the following five areas (full details of which are available to view on our website):

- Curriculum
- Learning & Teaching
- Ethos
- Holistic Support
- Leadership



Successes and Achievements

How are we doing?/How do we know?

In this section we report on our improvements in performance, our expectations and promoting wider achievement.

Examination results are only one indicator of the school's effectiveness and should be considered within the context of each pupil's individual progress.

For a school that consistently outperforms the Falkirk average, and, indeed, the national average in most measures, the results obtained in SQA exams in 2010 were some of the best Larbert has achieved in over 10 years, surpassing on 2009 levels.



Headlines from our 2010 Exams

From S3

- 14 pupils obtained all 8 of their subjects at either Standard Grade Credit grade '1' or Intermediate 2 grade 'A'.
- 63 pupils obtained all 8 of their subjects at either Credit level (grade '1' or '2') or Intermediate 2 (grade 'A', 'B' or 'C').

From S4

- The results have improved every year for the last three years. It is evidence that 'early presentation' of pupils in S3 pays off as more pupils are 'topping up' and achieving more than ever before.
- The 2010 results in S4 are the best the school has ever achieved.
- In 2010, for Foundation and General levels, these results place Larbert High School in the top 40 performing schools in Scotland. We are in the top 80 performing schools for results in Credit level.

From S5

- Larbert High School pupils, in S5, have secured the best set of Higher results ever and these results place the school in the top 80 performing schools in Scotland.
- The quality of the passes also improved – i.e. there are more pupils gaining grade 'A'.
- 55 pupils passed 5 or more Highers (there were 32 last year!) and 9 pupils achieved 5 Highers at grade 'A'.



Achievements and Developments

- Our commitment to health and well-being is strengthening further with the successful Community Sports Leader Award which allows senior pupils to deliver classes such as Rock-It-Ball and water polo, and to lead events for primary pupils.
- We have embarked on an innovative partnership with Stenhousemuir Football Club: the creation of a full-time Sports Programme Co-ordinator is jointly funded by the school and the club.
- Over one hundred pupils performed in our sell-out show 'Disco Inferno' which was a huge success.
- Our pupils continue to experience success in a variety of musical competitions and activities with Rebecca Orr winning 'Larbert's Got Talent' and Robert Rendell scooping the St Cecilia Cup. There have been many other musical 'headlines' – including voice coaching workshops with West End Stars.
- Our 28 year partnership with Michelstadt Gymnasium in Germany was reinvigorated when 37 pupils travelled there in June and gave an awe-inspiring performance, some of it in Gaelic, which saw the German crowd give a standing ovation.
- Musical activities have continued to flourish, touring theatre companies, participation in the Falkirk Council Choir; National Girls Choir; a host of achievements in Associated Board Music Exams and our annual Carol concert at Stenhouse & Carron Church. Our enviable partnership with Carrongrange School - including our Samba drumming workshop as part of their Mardi Gras and our hugely successful joint Creative Arts Day – remains an important feature of our curricular programme.



- As always, our pupils have been heavily involved in Charity work raising thousands of pounds for Children In Need, Yorkhill Children's Hospital and Wish Upon A Star. One of our pupils, Molly Hunter, and her sister Daisy, moved by the plight of the people and the devastation in Haiti, wrote to Julia Swan, our Director of Education. Their action sparked a Council-wide initiative and raised more than £13,000. Our senior pupils donated 61 pints of blood and our Christmas Church collection allowed us to buy 2 goats, chickens and a coop, 3 sheep and 1 llama from World Vision.
- Our international visits continue to flourish during activities week with nearly 200 pupils participating in trips to Barcelona, Lido in Italy, Paris, Germany, The Swiss Alps and the battlefields of France and Belgium. This programme will be expanded next year.

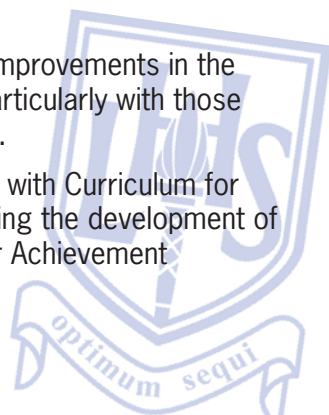
There have been many other achievements this year, helping to develop the confidence and aspirations of our young people.

- Our amazing Eco Schools Group achieved our second green flag.
- Young Enterprise achieved success in the area finals in various categories.
- S4 Product Design pupils were the only Scottish entrants in a Ribena Bottle Design competition and win a Bronze Award.
- From over 300 entrants, Lea Armstrong was chosen as one of only ten pupils to go to NASA from a competition run by Skills Development Scotland.

What are we going to do next?

In session 2010-2011, it is our intention to secure improvements in the attainment and wider achievements of our pupils, particularly with those predicted to achieve 3 or more Higher passes in S5.

We also intend to make further improvements in line with Curriculum for Excellence, to the structure of our curriculum including the development of *Skills for Learning, Life and Work* element and Wider Achievement opportunities for all pupils.



Work and Life of the School

How are we doing?/How do we know?

During session 2009-2010 the school made very good progress with improvements in the following areas:



- All our faculties began to plan and develop strategies for the introduction of *Curriculum for Excellence* including the promotion, implementation and understanding of outcomes and experiences across all levels and subjects.
- Staff were involved in planning for the introduction of Wider Achievement Opportunities within the new curriculum design.
- All faculties looked at the Skills for Learning, Life and Work element of CfE to see what they could offer to suit pupils wishing to follow a vocational programme.
- All staff were involved in the planning and delivery of a common theme during the S1 Deep Learning Week in May.
- We spent time within all subject areas developing strategies for embedding rich learning experiences and interdisciplinary learning where appropriate.
- We continued to develop established links with our associated primary schools in order to maintain a strong focus of Primary/Secondary transition.
- We redeveloped our mentoring system with a team of 40 Mentors tracking the progress of targeted S4, S5 & S6 pupils.
- We provided a CPD programme to meet the needs of the staff and school. Key elements were the training and introduction of Teacher Learning Communities, Cooperative Learning and the opportunity to spend a day shadowing and working with one of our colleagues in Primary School.
- We supported the learning environment by entering into a partnership with “Tree of Knowledge” to provide motivational workshops for key year groups following NQ & SQA courses.

- We strengthened our Senior School Experience by the introduction of leadership opportunities through our Wider Sixth Year Experience Programme and an Induction Day for S5 and S6, to prepare them for this stage in school.
- As part of our Health and Well Being agenda we organised a whole school Sponsored Walk for all staff and pupils, the proceeds of which augmented the fund for pupil activities.

What are we going to do next?

We will:

- Provide on-going training to promote active learning.
- Revise our Learning and Teaching Policy.
- Set and continuously review pupil targets through our mentoring programme.
- Continue to ensure multi-agency information is effectively shared with all staff to ensure identified pupils get the appropriate support.
- Strengthen our work in the Locality Model through joint working with all parties.
- Develop an S1 Wider Experience Programme.
- Further develop our partnership with Tree of Knowledge, to enhance skills for life, learning and work.
- Encourage pupils to join extra curricular activities to help them become healthier citizens.



Vision and Leadership

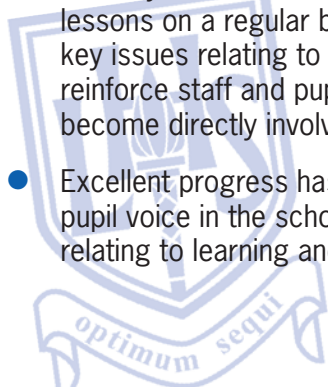
How are we doing?/How do we know?

We work with teachers, parents and other parties to develop and shape a common vision for our school. Our vision is firmly based on outcomes for our learners and is clearly linked to national and local priorities.

Continuous improvement, achievement and success for our learners are central to our school's strategic direction and in this respect, one of our key priorities is to continue with our positive partnership working and to develop and distribute leadership at all levels.

We have made very good progress in the following areas:

- We have developed the Quality Assurance role of Principal Teachers by tightening and streamlining procedures for improvement planning within faculties.
- We have developed a peer mentoring system for teachers using the expertise of our Leading Teacher and Accelerated Learning team to work with the majority of teaching staff on CPD linked to effective learning and teaching. An additional support level to this has been the involvement of our BeCo Team, working with staff and pupils on low level disruption. Several departments have also introduced peer buddying to share good practice.
- We have improved the quality of self-evaluation at departmental level with individual leaders, using the HGIOS 3 six point scale.
- We have increased the frequency of departmental reviews and classroom visits by the Senior Leadership Team, observing and evaluating many lessons on a regular basis. Not only has this practice helped to identify key issues relating to learning and teaching, but it has also served to reinforce staff and pupil morale, as the Senior Leadership Team members become directly involved in class lessons.
- Excellent progress has been made in relation to improving the role of the pupil voice in the school's self evaluation and quality assurance systems relating to learning and teaching.



What are we going to do next?

The priorities for our Improvement Plan for session 2010-2011 have been identified through consultation with groups of pupils, staff and parents.

In particular we will:

- We will continue to improve the leadership capacity of our staff and pupils.
- Develop School Improvement Groups (SIGs) linked to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) on S1 Wider Experience, Universal Support, Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Well Being and Pupil and Parent Voice.
- Create Short Life Working Groups to take forward specific priorities such as Enhanced Transition; 16+ Learning Choices, S4 Transitions, Interdisciplinary Learning and GLOW.
- Continue to support staff and developments by focusing CPD on areas linked to CfE and School Improvement Groups and Priorities.
- Develop key staffing opportunities and positions in Pupil Support; Target Setting; Tracking and Monitoring; OTB; Sports; and New Staff and Probationers Programmes.



Conclusion

Our school has made very good progress in the last year and is in a strong position to secure further improvements. We have placed great emphasis on the importance of all members of staff being actively involved in the opportunities available within the school to play an active part in leading and moving things forward.



Appendix 1

S3 Achievement

Level 3+ in English & Maths (% of pupils achieving a foundation level, or better, in both English and Maths)			
	2008	2009	2010
by the end of S3	96%	96%	96%



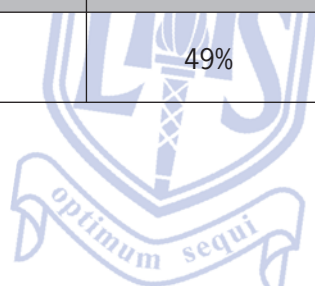
S4 Achievement

Level 3+ in English & Maths			
(% of pupils achieving a foundation level, or better, in both English and Maths)			
	2008	2009	2010
by the end of S4	93%	99%	100%

5 or more Awards at SQF Level 3			
(% of pupils achieving a Foundation level grade, or better, in 5+ subjects)			
	2008	2009	2010
by the end of S4	91%	98%	100%

5 or more Awards at SQF Level 4			
(% of pupils achieving a General level grade, or better, in 5+ subjects)			
	2008	2009	2010
by the end of S4	77%	87%	93%

5 or more Awards at SQF Level 5			
(% of pupils achieving a Credit level grade, or better, in 5+ subjects)			
	2008	2009	2010
by the end of S4	34%	40%	49%



Achievement by end of S5

1 or more awards at SQF Level 6 (% of pupils achieving 1 pass, or better, at Higher Level)		
2008	2009	2010
49%	47%	54%

3 or more awards at SQF Level 6 (% of pupils achieving 3 passes, or better, at Higher Level)		
2008	2009	2010
25%	25%	34%

5 or more Awards at SQF Level 6 (% of pupils achieving 5 passes or better at Higher Level)		
2008	2009	2010
10%	9%	17%

Achievement by end of S6

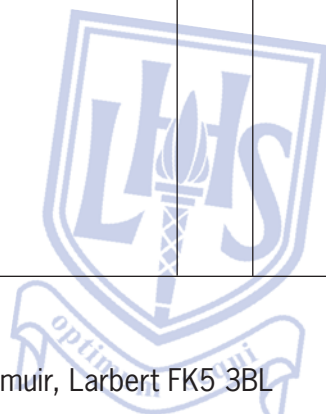
1 or more awards at SQF Level 7 (% of pupils achieving 1 pass or better at Advanced Higher Level)		
2008	2009	2010
18%	16%	15%

Feedback of our Standards and Quality

We are very keen to receive your comments and feedback to help us to improve our report for next year. If you could take a few minutes to complete the questions below we would be most grateful.

		Yes	No
1.	Did this report have information that was useful to you about Larbert High School?		
2.	Was the report written in way that was easy to read and understand?		
3.	Was the examination information easy to understand?		
4.	Please give any comments that you feel would be useful for us to consider when designing next years report.		

Please return: Rector
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