

Standards and Quality Report

School(s): Grantown Grammar School

Head Teacher: Claire McGonigal

Date submitted: 19.9.22



Context of the school:

Grantown Grammar is a largely rural school with a catchment area covering a large part of Strathspey. The catchment area contains pupils from a wide background and levels of rural poverty are not generally reflected within the SIMD categories for the area. There are four Primary Schools within the ASG.

Grantown Grammar is a Centre of Excellence for Outdoor Learning and has recently been recognised by Sport Scotland and the Highland Council as having the best Outdoor Education Provision in Scotland for a state school. Our ethos of challenge, resilience and teamwork is at the centre of all we do.

Grantown Grammar has seen a large amount of staffing and curriculum change over the past year. In addition to the complications caused by the Covid Pandemic, last session we appointed a new PT English, created a Social Subjects Faculty, PE/HWB Faculty and Technical/Outdoor Learning Faculty. However, the staffing is now much more settled, especially for middle leadership, which has provided an excellent opportunity to review our curriculum in particular the qualifications we offer in the Senior Phase.

School Vision, Values and Aims:

The school's vision is on one of 'work hard and play hard', which reflects our ambitious attainment and achievement targets both inside, and outside of the classroom. Our values are Ambition, Creativity, Determination, Respect and Responsibility which permeate all we do.

Summary of Standards and Quality Report/School Improvement Plan engagement process:

The process of engaging with the whole school community when we are developing our Standards and Quality Report and School Improvement Plan involves seeking the views of a wide range of people. Usually, we would discuss these documents with, for example:

- Teachers and other school staff
- Parents
- Pupils
- Partners that work with and support the school
- Other schools with which we link.

Session 21/22, like session 20/21, has been extremely unusual, with the Covid pandemic and associated absences of pupils, staff and partners having a major impact on the school. This has affected the way we would be normally engage with our school community about our Standards and Quality Report and School Improvement Plan, however, we have still managed to consult with partners to the plan albeit it either online or via surveys rather than face to face as would usually be the case.

Our overall evaluation of the school's capacity for continuous improvement:

Our capacity for continuous improvement, like that of every school in the country, has been affected by the periods of remote learning and other disruption caused by the Covid-19 situation. This has restricted our ability to complete planned improvements and to evaluate the effectiveness of changes we have made. Much of our work in session 22/23 will be to rebuild our capacity for improvement and to make sure that we recover fully from the disruption caused by Covid-19.

Review of School Improvement Work against the National Improvement Framework Priorities

What we have done to close the attainment gap, to raise attainment, to improve health and wellbeing and to improve employability skills:

In the past year we have mainly worked on improvement projects designed to help us to sustain learning in the context of the pandemic. Our School Improvement Plan for session 2021/22 contains details of what we planned to do. We used various resources such as the Pupil Equity Fund to support attainment, health and wellbeing and to try to ensure the highest quality of learning and teaching, although at times that had to happen remotely. Continued periods of remote learning during session 20/21 in response to Covid-19 mean that these projects are still very much our highest priorities, and our work to evaluate their effectiveness in terms of outcomes for our school community will continue. In session 22/22, our main focus will therefore continue to be on three key areas:

- 1) Health and wellbeing
- 2) Recovery of learning, teaching and assessment
- 3) Attainment in session 22/23 (focusing on identifying new or widened gaps caused by the Covid-19 situation)

We have carried forward aspects of our 2021/22 Improvement Plan into our 2022/23 Improvement Plan but expended on these to ensure that they have the planned impact on learners and the school community.

Q1 1.3

Leadership of change

Themes

- Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- Strategic planning for continuous improvement
- Implementing improvement and change

Question 1

How are we doing? What's working well for our learners? What are the features of effective practice in our school?

- The Senior management team is respected by all. They are seen as approachable and provide strong, supportive voice.
- The Senior Management Team are acknowledged as hard working and solution focussed in supporting pupils and parents with concerns raised.
- Pupil, staff and partners share the Head Teacher's view of the positive ethos and uniqueness of Grantown Grammar School, a school at the heart of its community.
- The school is very much part of an ethos of volunteering which is becoming stronger across the community eg
- The school is committed to the concept of change and improvement.
- After introducing and embedding our school values all staff show commitment to shared educational values and professional standards.
- Our vision evolves through ongoing reflection and debate across the school and community. All stakeholders have their say and has a direct impact on the school and how it functions.
- Senior leaders create conditions where staff feel confident to initiate well-informed change and are committed to collective responsibility in the process of change. We empower staff to be sector leading in their field and influence and support staff in school.
- We continually reflect on and develop our practice taking account of our self-evaluation and vision for continuous improvement.

Question 2

How do we know? What evidence do we have of positive impact on our learners?

- HMIE Recovery Visit May 2022 praised leadership within the school
- Feedback from stakeholders and the community including Parent Council meetings, emails, thank you cards, invitations to community events show the respect the school is held in. This results in offers of opportunities to pupils which further their educational experiences for example, work experience which frequently leads to apprenticeships, members of the local business community supporting enterprise classes, donations to the school and support for school shows and sponsorship of events.
- Feedback from the Parent Council, Pupil Council and partners recorded in minutes
- Feedback from Pupils via a whole school survey and follow up tutor time focus questions led by Pupil Council representatives supported by tutor teachers.
- Exit Google questionnaire completed by leavers

- Former pupils visiting the school to let us know how they are getting on and continuing to ask for advice on applications etc show the trust and appreciation they have for the school

Question 3

What could we do now? What actions would move us forward?

- This year we are going to focus on recovery from the periods of remote learning (see above) and will carry forward incomplete projects from our 2019/20 Improvement Plan if we have capacity to do so.
- Re-build a strong pupil voice across the school to ensure pupils can feed into the school improvement process
- Establish working groups with distributed leadership to continue to build leadership capacity in the school. Working groups will focus on SHANARRI, Literacy and Numeracy, Wider Achievement, Promoting Diversity and Inclusion and DYW. These were agreed following feedback from staff, pupils, partners and the Recovery visit.
- Continue to work closely with parents, departments and pupils to ensure SLT accessibility and approachability.
- Development of GGS Mission Statement around the core Values and re-visit to ensure that they are fully embedded within the school
- Planned Tutor time and Assembly programme around our shared values and Rights Respecting Schools
- Commitment to shared vision of work hard, play hard and resilience .
- Academic pupil success to be celebrated and promoted within the school.
- School Improvement process simplified.
- Reflection/Review at relevant time
- Simple review of results/Insight
- More rigorous but simplified PRD process linked to school calendar.
- School Improvement calendar set out at the start of the year and linked to wide improvement, tracking, monitoring and reporting activities within the school to ensure a joined up and holistic approach to self evaluation.

Our current evaluation of this QI using the *How good is our school?* (4th edition) six-point scale – based on an incomplete analysis of our progress (because of the periods of remote learning).

good

Q1 2.3

Learning, teaching and assessment

Themes

- Learning and engagement
- Quality of teaching
- Effective use of assessment
- Planning, tracking and monitoring

Question 1

How are we doing? What's working well for our learners? What are the features of effective practice in our school?

There are very positive, respectful and supportive relationships between staff and young people across the school.

- There is effective use of Google Gradebook across the school as the primary tracking, monitoring and reporting system. This has resulted in more regular reports to parents keeping them up to date with their children's progress towards targets from S1 – S6.
- The introduction of an integrated easy to use text/intervention system has led to regular update messages to parents where appropriate regarding behaviour, assessments and progress.
- Regular reviews of Gradebook levels following calendared updates with discussion at departmental meetings with SLT has resulted in greater accuracy and impact of pupil targets.
- Teachers care for the pupils and have a good knowledge of the young people in their classes.
- Teachers are aware of potential barriers to learning and there were examples of differentiation of work to meet learners' needs.
- Learners are enthusiastic, polite and well-mannered. They are caring and supportive of their peers.
- The behaviour of young people is good and staff effectively manage any issues in a positive way.
- Almost all young people are engaged in their learning and were presented with interesting, enjoyable and challenging learning experiences.
- Almost all teachers are organised and deliver well prepared, well resourced lessons.
- In almost all classes, teachers give clear explanations of the purpose of the lesson and how to participate in a range of tasks and activities.
- In almost all classes the lessons are engaging and active. There was a shared understanding of expectations and standards.
- In the majority of classes there are opportunities for learners to take responsibility for learning.
- There are examples of skilled questioning and effective feedback and interventions in the majority of lessons.
- Young people have opportunities to explore their learning in different contexts through interdisciplinary learning projects.
- Teachers use a wide range of learning environments and creative teaching approaches which took advantage of Grantown's unique environment.
- G Suite is used effectively to support learning. Examples include developing pupils' understanding of their BGE levels, giving feedback on what learners need to improve and how to improve, study support materials and homework. There is widespread effective use of Google Classroom with associated parental links.
- Parents feel they receive a good range of information on how their child is progressing throughout the year.

Question 2

How do we know? What evidence do we have of positive impact on our learners?

- Feedback from parents and pupils in the Senior Phase in eg reports returns, show a positive understanding of learning and next steps.
- Pupil surveys and learning dialogues in the Senior Phase clearly show that pupils know where they are, where they are going and how they are going to get there.
- Pupil surveys show that the majority of pupils regularly check their individual gradebook to assess their progress towards targets
- Feedback from parents following text/intervention messages show that the contact is appreciated.
- Analysis of initial target grades and levels/estimated grades achieved is ongoing but after year 1, indicates that pupils are more aware of their targets and what they need to do to obtain them.
- Feedback from staff shows that they too have a greater awareness and focus on individual pupil targets and the importance of regular reviews and interventions in order to ensure that pupils attain them.

Question 3

What could we do now? What actions would move us forward?

- Use of PEF funding to fund additional staff to target pupils who have not yet met the appropriate BGE levels for their age/stage.
- Regular inhouse CPD opportunities linked to the improvement calendar to improve staff knowledge and understanding of processes
- Whole school focus on consistency in daily actions
- Departmental Audit on how we set challenging contexts for our top and bottom 20%.
- Review of Gradebook in relation to tracking, monitoring and reporting.

Our current evaluation of this QI using the *How good is our school?* (4th edition) six-point scale – based on an incomplete analysis of our progress (because of the periods of remote learning).

good

Q1 3.1

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

Themes

- Wellbeing
- Fulfilment of statutory duties
- Inclusion and equality

Question 1

How are we doing? What's working well for our learners? What are the features of effective practice in our school?

Relationships across the school are very positive and supportive with a strong sense of community.

- Adults working in the school are good role models for the pupils, for example in terms of their inclusive and respectful approaches.
- Learners are included, engaged and involved in the life of the school.
- Pupils feel they are treated fairly and with respect and feel happy and safe in school.
- Parents feel that there is a positive and inclusive ethos in the school and that this reflects the values of the Head Teacher.
- Young people knew who they could go to for advice and if they had a problem.
- The Head Teacher and her deputies are seen as approachable and the staff work well as a team.
- The school has an extensive extra-curricular programme which is re-starting post covid, offered mainly by staff but with increasing use of partners
- Parents expressed how inclusive the school was and parents felt the individual needs of their young people were being met.
- The school is improving outcomes for pupils, including through the use of Pupil Equity Funding.
- Information, including pastoral, is shared with staff at the weekly Head Teacher briefing.
- Updated transition programme to provide in depth information including examples of pupil work for new S1 pupils
- Staff strategy sharing meetings for individual pupils where and when appropriate

Question 2

How do we know? What evidence do we have of positive impact on our learners?

- HMIE Recovery visit confirmed the inclusive nature of the school and highlighted the strong sense of community and team working
- GGS Child Plans have been used as examples of good practice at ASN CPD sessions
- Feedback from partners continues to confirm good working relationships.
- Parent comments on Child Plans confirms satisfaction with support for their children.
- Pupils are tolerant and inclusive which feeds into the community feel of the school.
- Any bullying incidents are dealt with swiftly. Pupils are listened to and in surveys report feeling safe in school.

Question 3

What could we do now? What actions would move us forward?

- There is a need to introduce more coherent planning and evaluation of young people's progress in wellbeing particularly in relation to the SHANARRI indicators. This is the focus of development in this area: whole school survey, PSE lessons, visible display in all classrooms, use of SHANARRI language in all classrooms, PSG to introduce and use a

SHANARRI questionnaire when interviewing pupils, pupils rating of themselves in relation to SHANARRI to be incorporated into Gradebook.

- Following feedback from pupils, a focus on the inappropriateness of the casual use of racist and sexual language in conversation and the negative impact this can have on individual's wellbeing involving partners, staff and parents.

Our current evaluation of this QI using the *How good is our school?* (4th edition) six-point scale – based on an incomplete analysis of our progress (because of the periods of remote learning).

good

QI 3.2

Raising attainment and achievement

Themes

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy
- Attainment over time
- Overall quality of learners' achievement
- Equity for all learners

Question 1

How are we doing? What's working well for our learners? What are the features of effective practice in our school?

- An improvement in our National Benchmarking Measure: Improving Attainment for All which was lower than our virtual comparator. The highest 20% of pupils in S6 and lowest and highest 20% in S5 are now above comparator.
- The school is committed to achieving the best outcomes for their pupils.
- Literacy and Numeracy across learning continues to be the focus of 2 working groups this session.
- Departments analyse Insight information and identify areas for improvement.
- Staff have engaged with the new Scottish National School Assessment (SNSA) data to help inform assessment judgements in the BGE.
- The Parent Council appreciate the Head Teacher's report on pupil attainment and her honesty on strengths and areas for improvement.
- Pupils get ongoing feedback about how to improve in some subjects.
- Pupils were positive about the use of Google classrooms to support their learning.
- Attendance and late-coming are monitored and young people are supported by key adults to address barriers.
- Achievements and successes are celebrated in a number of ways – through assemblies, tannoy announcements, the school website and Facebook page, noticeboards, etc.
- Pupils enjoy the very wide range of opportunities open to them such as the annual school play, a wide range of foreign trips, sports teams, flexible Tuesday afternoon program, etc.
- pupils have a clear understanding of Levels
- pupils will be able to clearly articulate where they are, where they are going and how they are going to get there in their learning
- Pupils now benefit from increased attainment opportunities in the Senior Phase
- Virtual School/Distance learning/Leadership/Elite/Vocational/OE Quals

Question 2

How do we know? What evidence do we have of positive impact on our learners?

- Overall attainment is above national and virtual comparators
- All pupils in S1 and S2 achieve John Muir Awards through the Outdoor Education programme. The only exceptions are pupils who join the school part way through the academic year.
- Pupils regularly feedback that they enjoy assemblies and appreciate their achievements being celebrated.
- Insight Data is used extensively through Departmental Reviews.
- More pupils involved with - Virtual School/Distance learning/Leadership/Elite/Vocational/OE Quals.
- Pupils now benefit from increased attainment opportunities in the Senior Phase.

- The increased use of Gradebook across the Senior Phase and BGE has led to more impactful target setting and pupil progress updates.

Question 3

What could we do now? What actions would move us forward?

- Following analysis of attainment data and the decrease in pupils attaining 5+ National 5 and 3 + Higher qualifications, we have undertaken a curriculum restructure to increase the qualification attainment opportunities for pupils. The curriculum has also been extended to include additional qualifications for the lowest 20% including General Science and additional National 3 and 4 courses.
- Literacy and numeracy attainment is below our virtual comparators and the CFE levels which pupils are transitioning with from Primary are also exceptionally low. We are therefore developing a skills progression framework across the ASG to enable shared understanding of standards and expectations, moderation opportunities and sharing of good practice between Primary and Secondary.

Our current evaluation of this QI using the *How good is our school?* (4th edition) six-point scale – based on an incomplete analysis of our progress (because of the periods of remote learning).

satisfactory

KEY THEME

from QI 2.2

Curriculum

Theme 3

- Learning pathways

Question 1

How are we doing? What's working well for our learners? What are the features of effective practice in our school?

- The curriculum takes account of the uniqueness of the setting of Grantown Grammar with many opportunities for outdoor learning and other wider aspects of learning.
- There is continuous development of the curriculum with the aim of maximising pupil choice and leading to appropriate learning pathways.
- The Senior Phase Curriculum is adapted each year to ensure that the courses offered to pupils suit their academic levels and desired pathways. This means that some courses are offered on rotation as appropriate to pupil options.
- The Senior Phase is undergoing a re-structure for 2022-23 which involved maximising pupil choice and attainment opportunities via a 2/2/2 structure.
- The new structure enables pupils to carry more subjects from National to Higher qualifications and beyond as pupils can now take 8 subjects in S3 and S4 rather than 6.
- The Broad General Education, S1 - S3, continues to provide young people with learning planned around the experiences and outcomes and across all curriculum areas. For S3 this is via a carefully planned flexible Tuesday afternoon programme.
- Staff are increasingly taking responsibility for developing literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and digital literacy across the curriculum.
- The Tuesday afternoon program provides very good examples of outdoor learning being a curriculum led experience for learners which is linked back to curriculum areas through the involvement of staff across the curriculum in it's delivery.

Question 2

How do we know? What evidence do we have of positive impact on our learners?

- Full consultation with pupils, staff, parents and partners prior to the curriculum restructure showed almost universal support for the restructure and subsequent feedback as the year progresses is also positive.
- Feedback from parents and pupils in the Senior Phase in eg reports returns, show a positive understanding of learning, next steps and progressional pathways
- Pupil surveys and learning dialogues in the Senior Phase clearly show that pupils know where they are, where they are going and how they are going to get there.
- BGE Gradebook embedded in e-portfolio for access at all times. This is a live document that updates when staff enter data.
- S3 gradebook presents progression pathway based on current level.
- Pupil survey carried out by L&T working group highlighted impact on pupils learning environment

Question 3

What could we do now? What actions would move us forward?

- Closely monitor the impact of the curriculum restructure to ensure that the benefits of widening pupil qualification options in S3/4 still enable pupils to have the skills basis necessary to take new subjects in S5/6.
- Continue to develop approaches to profiling to develop pupils' awareness of themselves as learner and support them to recognise the skills for learning, life and work they are developing, particularly through the flexible Tuesday afternoon program.
- The school should plan to meet its statutory requirement for RME in the senior phase.
- Continue to review qualification pathways through the Senior Phase to ensure all pupils can leave school with the maximum number of qualifications.

KEY THEME

from QI 2.7

Partnerships

Theme 3

- Impact on learners (focus on parental engagement)

Question 1

How are we doing? What's working well for our learners? What are the features of effective practice in our school?

- Parents feel that communication with the school is very good, and that their needs are met quickly and effectively.
- Parents feel the Head Teacher is very approachable and appreciate the drop in sessions where they can raise concerns about any issues and have them dealt with at an early stage.
- Despite the pandemic we maintained close contact with parents via online parent nights, more frequent reporting and increased use of intervention texts home.
- Increased use of partnership working through expanding the Tuesday afternoon programme, working closely with the new DYW coordinator and the introduction of counsellors into the school.
- The Parent Council is active and engaged in constructive work with the school.
- Due to close partnership working, Grantown Grammar was able to organise the first covid vaccination clinic in school, a programme which was necessary due to the difficulties of pupils travelling to clinics in Inverness.

Question 2

How do we know? What evidence do we have of positive impact on our learners?

- Feedback from parents and pupils in the Senior Phase in eg reports returns, show a positive understanding of learning and next steps.
- Pupil surveys and learning dialogues in the school show that pupils know where they are, where they are going and how they are going to get there.
- Partners frequently report via email and verbal feedback that they always feel welcome in the school and enjoy working at Grantown Grammar.

Question 3

What could we do now? What actions would move us forward?

Common approach and language used across the school for skills development. Recording and Tracking progress.

- Further development of partnerships to enhance curriculum and provide more motivating contexts for subject learning.
- Further development of DYW partnerships within the community to facilitate work experience opportunities for pupils.
- Return to Parents Evenings, Information evenings and community events in school following the end of the pandemic.
