



Standards and Quality 2016 Improvement Plan 2017



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The school and its context

Kincorth Academy is a six-year comprehensive school serving a catchment area in the south of Aberdeen which includes Kincorth, Redmoss, Altens and Cove. The Kincorth suburb was almost wholly developed as a local authority housing estate from the late 1940s, however, today a larger than average number of houses has become owner-occupied. Redmoss, Altens and Cove have developed significantly from the 1970s with properties which are predominantly owner-occupied.

Children mainly transfer to Kincorth Academy from Abbotswell, Charleston, Kirkhill and Loirston primary schools, with only 6% of pupils in the school belonging to households which are in the lowest two deciles of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (S.I.M.D.) 10.79% of pupils are entitled to free school meals.

The school is inclusive and plans and reviews its targeted support well particularly in relation to those at most risk of missing out and those who are vulnerable. The school supported 12 looked after children and 19 learners for whom English is an additional language. Our ASN provision supports a variety of learners, who mainly access the curriculum in mainstream classes but who can benefit from long-term and short-term interventions by the Supporting Learners team and the work undertaken in our Support Centre.

The school roll was 584 in September 2015. Kincorth Academy will close in 2018 and pupils will transfer to a new-build school currently under construction to serve a larger zone covering the entire area of the city which lies to the south of the River Dee.

Staffing in the past year has been 49.0 full time equivalent teachers with around a further 15 support staff. There has been a significant turnover of staff during session 2015-2016 and a number of long-term vacancies, mainly in Mathematics, Science and Modern Languages.

Within the framework of the Parental Involvement Act, Kincorth Academy benefits from an active and supportive Parent Council. Our School Captains also attend and contribute to their meetings.

School aims and vision statement

The process of developing our current School Aims started in August 2008 and involved all teaching and support staff, learners and parents. The ideas generated by all parties led to School Leadership Team discussions and four draft aims being proposed. These were discussed further with staff, learners, parents and the wider community, then amended and adopted as our new aims for Kincorth Academy early in 2009. The aims were reviewed in 2013.

Kincorth Academy always aims for excellence by

- **challenging and motivating ourselves to develop the knowledge and skills we need to achieve our full potential as successful learners.**
- **developing confident individuals in a safe, caring and healthy environment.**
- **meeting the challenges of today and the future with a positive attitude as responsible citizens in any community.**
- **valuing, respecting and empowering all of us to contribute effectively.**

The School Leadership Team comprises a Head Teacher and three Depute Head Teachers who have remits which link to the school aims and are constructed to be aligned with the broad areas contained within *The Journey to Excellence*.

Acting Head Teacher (Michael Paul)

Aim – meeting the challenges of today and the future with a positive attitude as responsible citizens in any community

Journey to Excellence Broad Area - Vision & Leadership

Acting Depute Head Teacher (Iona Reid)

Aim – challenging and motivating us to develop the knowledge and skills we need to achieve our full potential as successful learners

Journey to Excellence Broad Area – Learning & Teaching

Acting Depute Head Teacher (Laura Thomson)

Aim – developing confident individuals in a safe, caring and healthy environment

Journey to Excellence Broad Area – Culture & Ethos

Depute Head Teacher (Susanne Henderson)

Aim – valuing, respecting and empowering all of us to contribute effectively

Journey to Excellence Broad Areas – Partnership and People.

Standards and Quality Report and Improvement Plan

School Leadership

QI 1.3 Leadership of change

Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community

We are committed to ensuring that we achieve the highest possible standards and success for all learners. All of our permanent staff show commitment to shared educational values and professional standards. The School Leadership Team provides strong leadership which has enabled our school to make some improvements. Our vision evolves through ongoing reflection and debate across the school and community. These are shaped by our clear understanding of the social, economic and cultural context in which children, young people and their families live alongside our awareness of current policy and practice. Through effective leadership at all levels, our school community works together and strives to turn the shared vision into a reality.

Strategic planning for continuous improvement

The School Leadership Team creates conditions where staff feel confident to initiate well-informed change and are committed to collective responsibility in the process of change. The Senior Leadership Team guides and manages the strategic direction and pace of change. They take good account of assessment of risk to ensure we follow through on strategies for achieving change. We strive to protect time for professional dialogue, collegiate learning and self-evaluation, so that all members of our school community can contribute to our plans for continuous improvement.

Implementing improvement and change

Staff at all levels take responsibility for implementing change and promoting equality and social justice across all their work. The School Leadership Team in our school community promotes and supports innovation, creativity and practitioner enquiry which lead to positive change. They work collaboratively to develop a clear rationale and choose appropriate approaches to effectively facilitate change leading to greater equity for all learners. We continually reflect on and develop our practice taking account of our self-evaluation and vision for continuous improvement. Creative approaches are integral to the thinking and practice of staff, pupils and partners. We have effective strategies in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of changes on outcomes for learners and the work of our school.

Next Steps for 16/17

- Support the induction and development of a new Head Teacher and two new Depute Head Teachers.
- Work with colleagues and Torry Academy and the Head Teacher appointed to the new school to help establish the new school.

Teacher Professionalism

QI 2.3 Learning teaching and assessment

Learning and engagement

The ethos and culture of our school reflects a commitment to children's rights and positive relationships as demonstrated through our Restorative practices work. Most of our children and young people are eager and active participants who are fully engaged, resilient, highly-motivated and interact well during activities. Learners' experiences are appropriately challenging and enjoyable and well matched to their needs and interests. Learners exercise choice, including the appropriate use of digital technology, and take increasing responsibility as they become more independent in their learning. They understand the purpose of their learning and have some opportunities to lead the learning. Our learners are successful, confident and responsible. They contribute effectively to the life of the school and wider community in a range of well-planned activities. Through assemblies we let young people know that views are sought, valued and acted upon.

Quality of teaching

Our teaching is underpinned by our shared school vision and values. We use a wide range of learning approaches. Learning is enriched and supported by our effective use of digital technologies. Our explanations and instructions are clear. We use skilled questioning and engagement to promote curiosity, independence and confidence. We observe learners closely to inform appropriate and well-timed interventions and future learning. We use feedback effectively, partly through regular Learning Conversations, to inform and support progress in learning.

Effective use of assessment

Assessment is integral to our planning of learning and teaching. We are increasingly using a variety of assessment approaches to allow learners to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, skills, attributes and capabilities in different contexts across the curriculum.

Our assessment evidence is becoming valid and reliable. At key milestones, our assessments provide reliable evidence which we use to report on the progress of all children and young people. Across our learning community we are working on shared expectations for standards to be achieved, and are establishing arrangements for moderation across the curriculum.

We plan appropriately over different timescales to meet the needs of learners across all areas of the curriculum. As a result of our manageable processes to monitor and evaluate learners' progress we have clear information on their attainment across all curriculum areas. We use this data to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions designed to improve outcomes for all learners.

Next Steps for 16/17

- Review of curriculum and assessment in the BGE
- Improve High Order Reading skills in the BGE
- Increase the use of Google Classroom
- Complete the DYW toolkit
- Provide Prevent Training

QI 2.7 Partnerships

The development and promotion of partnerships

Our partnerships have developed in line with our school's vision. Most partners understand and appreciate the different contexts in which we work and value the range of expertise our learners can benefit from. Partners such as Petrofac, SHMU, SDS, Career Ready and Aspire invest significant time and energy to establish and build positive sustainable relationships. Engagement and communication between partners and the school is largely structured, regular and supportive. All partners are becoming clearer about their roles, responsibilities and contributions and demonstrate high levels of commitment to improving outcomes for all learners.

Collaborative learning and improvement

We work relatively effectively to plan, deliver and evaluate joint projects. Our partnership working is strengthening leadership at all levels within our school and for our partners

Impact on learners

Through effective partnership, we have improved our learning provision and secured positive impacts for some young people. Our partnerships have had limited success in increasing parental engagement in their children's learning. Partners' involvement has had a positive impact on raising attainment and our learners have access to an extended range of learning pathways through which they are developing skills for learning, life and work and securing positive destinations.

Next steps for 16/17

- Formalise partnership agreements with our partners

Assessment of children's progress

QI 2.3 Learning teaching and assessment

See above

Next Steps for 16/17

- Review of curriculum and assessment in the BGE
- Improve High Order Reading skills in the BGE
- Increase the use of Google Classroom

School Improvement

QI 2.3 Learning teaching and assessment

See above

Next Steps for 16/17

- Review of curriculum and assessment in the BGE
- Improve High Order Reading skills in the BGE
- Increase the use of Google Classroom

QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

Learners make progress from their prior levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy. We have raised attainment in literacy and numeracy for all learners.

Attainment over time

Across most curriculum areas we have raised attainment continuously over time and/or maintained consistently high standards of attainment for all learners. Learners make good progress from their prior levels of attainment. Our staff make effective use of assessments and their shared understanding of standards to make professional judgements about how well children and young people are learning and progressing. Our tracking system, together with effective interventions, leads to progress for learners across the curriculum and at all phases in their education, including points of transition. The attainment of individuals and groups has improved over time but still does not compare well in some aspects to young people of similar backgrounds.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

Overall, our learners are successful, confident, exercise responsibility and contribute to the life of the school, the wider community and as global citizens. They are personally and socially adept and have achieved a range of skills and attributes through a wide range of activities. As they move through their learning pathways they take some responsibility for ensuring they continue to add value to their achievements.

Equity for all learners

We have effective systems in place, such as our Recognising Achievement Meetings and Hall of Fame, to promote equity of success and achievement for all our children and young people. Almost all of our learners consistently move into sustained positive destinations when they leave school.

Next steps for 16/17

- Use SEEMiS for Monitoring and Tracking across S1 – S6
- Use a range of data to help identify groups who are under-attaining

2.4 Personalised support

Universal support

All children and young people are benefitting from high-quality universal support. We have used Restorative Practices for securing positive relationships and behaviour which all staff and partners take responsibility for implementing. Children and young people are at the centre of all planning, as active participants in their learning and development. Our children and young people have opportunities to discuss their learning with key adults who know them well, helping them to set appropriate next steps. This enables them to review their own learning and plan for next steps, gain access to learning activities which will meet their needs and prepares and supports them through changes and choices. Learning targets are in place specific to individual learners, built on prior learning and reviewed and evaluated systematically with next steps based on their progress. Most staff know and respond very well to the individual needs of children and young people and promote and support their wellbeing. Tasks, activities and resources are somewhat differentiated to ensure appropriate pace and challenge for all learners. Our staff and partners work effectively together to increase their ability to meet the needs of our diverse learners through effective use of professional learning, support and specialist resources.

Targeted support

Our targeted support builds on robust, embedded universal support. Learners' needs are identified early through reliable and valid assessment information and ensure appropriate, proportionate and timely support including specialist input where required. We fully adhere to legislative requirements and provide all children with additional support needs with high-quality targeted support. We recognise the important role of parents and partners with specific expertise in supporting children and young people. Children, parents and partners are fully involved in decisions about learning and support. Well-planned interventions are leading to positive outcomes for children with additional support needs.

Removal of barriers to learning

Staff and partners take positive and proactive steps to ensure that barriers to learning are minimised. Staff are highly-responsive to the circumstances of at risk children, including young carers, looked after children and children living in poverty. All children with a disability, health issue or social and emotional needs benefit from high-quality targeted support. The school works with key partners to remove barriers to learning and provide an inclusive learning environment.

Next Steps for 16/17

- Complete the DYW toolkit
- Engage with the Rights Respecting Schools initiative

2.6 Transitions

Arrangements to support learners and their families

Young people and their parents/carers are engaged in transitions at all stages in learning. Children's social, emotional and physical needs are taken very good account of when planning transitions and shared activities. There are effective arrangements in place to involve families and relevant agencies in understanding transitions especially for those requiring additional support. We take account of what makes an effective transition including for young people on shared placements. Children and young people demonstrate high levels of resilience and confidence during transitions and continue to make progress. They are supported to make informed choices about next phases in learning including preparation for further and higher education and the world of work.

Collaborative planning and delivery

There is a programme of transition arrangements in place. From P7 to S1, there is a very good pastoral transition but improvement could be made to the curricular transition. Our previous staffing levels used to enable a better curricular transition. At other stages we have good curricular transition arrangements, supported by partners such as SDS. We have arrangements for transferring information from one named person to another to ensure continuity of plans such as a Child's Plan.

Continuity and progression in learning

There is some progression in learning across curricular areas at the primary/secondary transition. At other stages the continuity and progression of learning is more effective. We make effective use of tracking and monitoring to help young people identify strengths and next steps in learning. We support almost all young people into sustained and positive post-school destinations.

Next Steps for 16/17

- Share an understanding of assessment standards (particularly at BGE Levels 2 and 3) with our colleagues from Torry Academy and all associated primary schools within the new school catchment area.

Our key strategic priorities for improvement for next session

School Priority	Link to NIF Key Driver	Link to NIF priority
Working towards the establishment of the new school	School leadership	Improvement in attainment
Review the curriculum and assessment within the BGE	Teacher Professionalism/ Assessment of Children's Progress/ School Improvement	Improvement in attainment Closing the Gap
Improve High Order Reading Skills in the BGE	Teacher Professionalism/ Assessment of Children's Progress/ School Improvement	Improvement in attainment Closing the Gap
Increase the use of Google Classroom to enhance learning and teaching	Teacher Professionalism/ Assessment of Children's Progress/ School Improvement	Closing the Gap
Complete the DYW Toolkit	Teacher Professionalism/ School Improvement	Improvement in attainment Closing the Gap Employability
Provide Prevent Training	Teacher Professionalism	Health & Wellbeing
Use SEEMiS for Tracking and monitoring across S1 – S6	School Improvement	Improvement in attainment Closing the Gap
Use a range of data to help identify groups which are under-attaining	School improvement	Improvement in attainment Closing the Gap
Engage with the Rights respecting schools initiative	School Improvement	Health & Wellbeing
Share assessment standards	School improvement	Improvement in attainment Closing the Gap