



Balfron High School

Standards & Quality Report

2005-2006



In Balfron High School we are committed to improvement. Our vision is to improve the life chances of all our young people, working in partnership with parents and the wider community, with the support of Children's Services. The vision and values of Stirling Council and our school aims focus firmly on putting young people first. All are included and are supported by a high quality service to raise achievement. All of this takes place in a climate where positive attitudes, strong values and relationships underpin the work we do.

Our School Aims

To provide a learning environment that gives young people the opportunity to become:

- **successful learners**
- **confident individuals**
- **responsible citizens and**
- **effective contributors to society**

The School Development Plan (renamed the School Improvement Plan from 2006/2007), which includes the Children's Community Partnership (formerly Integrated Community Schools) Plan, outlines the way we plan to achieve targets for improvement. These plans for 2005-2006 took account of:

- The five National Priorities identified by the Scottish Executive for education (see www.nationalpriorities.org.uk for more information on National Priorities)
- Stirling Council's Service Improvement Plan
- Review of progress of the 2004/2005 plans – whole-school and team plans
- A whole school in-depth review, with its focus on Teaching and Learning (meeting pupils' needs) Ethos (expectations and promoting achievement and equality and fairness)
- The views of staff, pupils (through the Pupil Councils) and the School Board.
- The HMIe recommendations in their report of the inspection of the school in March 2005.

This Standards and Quality Report is a summary of the performance of Balfron High School during session 2005 – 2006.

How do we know how well Balfron High School is doing?

The evidence for this Standards and Quality Report has come from:

- self-evaluation audits (based on 'How Good is our School' (see www.hmie.gov.uk for more information)
- the progress report of the School Development Plan (05/06)
- the views of young people and their parents
 - The Report by HM Inspectorate for Education published on 15 March 2005. (see www.hmie.gov.uk)
- analysis of attainment statistics
- analysis of attendance statistics
- Children's Community Partnership progress reports.

The school's performance is reported under the five National Priorities.

National Priority 1 – Attainment and Achievement.

To raise standards of educational attainment for all in schools especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results.

Performance for S1 and S2

The tables below show the percentage of pupils achieving or exceeding level E by the end of S2 in literacy (reading and writing), and numeracy (mathematics).

% S2 roll attaining level E in	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
READING	83%	80%	87%	85%	86%
WRITING	72%	78%	74%	74%	78%
MATHS	70%	79%	84%	80%	84%

The figures show that Balfron High School is performing well.

Attainment in National Qualifications

<i>By end of S4 as % of S4 roll</i>	<i>2003/2004</i>	<i>2004/2005</i>	<i>2005/2006</i>
Attaining 5+ @ level 3 or better	98%	97%	*98%
Attaining 5+ @ level 4 or better	93%	91%	*91%
Attaining 5+ @ level 5 or better	56%	58%	*60%
<i>By end of S5 as % of S4 roll</i>	<i>2003/2004</i>	<i>2004/2005</i>	<i>2005/2006</i>
Attaining 1+ Highers at A - C	62%	63%	*63%
Attaining 3+ Highers at A - C	44%	41%	*41%
Attaining 5+ Highers at A - C	20%	23%	*21%
<i>By end of S6 as % of S4 roll</i>	<i>2003/2004</i>	<i>2004/2005</i>	<i>2005/2006</i>
Attaining 3+ Highers at A - C	55%	57%	*53%
Attaining 5+ Highers at A - C	37%	39%	*37%
Attaining 1+ Advanced Highers at A - C	29%	29%	*25%

Level 3: Access 3; Standard Grade: Grades 5 – 6

Level 4: Intermediate 1 at A–C; Standard Grade 3 – 4

Level 5: Intermediate 2 at A–C; Standard Grade 1 – 2

* This data does not include the successful appeals.

As well as continuing to perform well above the national average (in the top 10% of all schools in Scotland in almost all whole school measures) in National Qualifications, the school has an very good record of achievement in other areas where high levels of personal and team commitment and motivation has led to achievement e.g. in sport, music, competitions, Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Achievement is regularly celebrated through inclusion in parents' newsletters, website, Children's Services Newsletter, school assemblies, the local press, personal contact and on an annual basis, through Awards and Celebrating Success Ceremonies.

The school continues to have a very high percentage of young people going on to Higher Education.

Key Strengths

- Overall quality of attainment is very good at all stages
- A significant number of pupils achieve Standard Grade English at the end of S3 and Intermediate 2 French at the end of S4
- A wide choice of courses, particularly at S5/S6
- Extensive use of ICT across all subjects
- Excellent use made of the Library
- Learning seminars for all S5 and S6 and Business Dynamics for all S4
- Provision of extra staffing in several subject areas to improve learning and attainment
- Many activities available to foster achievement

Priorities for Action

- Continue to improve the use of assessment data to further improve learning and levels of attainment and to direct pupils to the appropriate levels within courses in Fifth and Sixth Year
- Continue to reduce the number of 'No Awards'
- Continue to develop and implement numeracy and literacy across the curriculum
- Continue to improve and develop flexibility in the curriculum to better meet the needs of individual pupils
- Continue to focus on pace of learning and challenge at all levels

National Priority 2 – Framework for Learning

To support and develop the skills of teachers, the self-discipline of pupils and to enhance school environments so that they are conducive to teaching and learning.

a) Professional development

A large number of staff took part in a wide variety of staff development courses, conferences and meetings over the year. Key areas for whole school staff development were Child Protection, the Form Class Leader role, Staged Intervention, Quality Assurance, Probationer Teachers, ECDL, the use of interactive white boards, the continued development of co-operative learning and Assessment is For Learning (more information on this important methodology is posted on our website) and 'A Curriculum for Excellence'.

In addition, there is a strong emphasis in the school of staff continually sharing ideas and good practice.

b) Self Discipline of Pupils

Discipline within our school continues to be very good within a framework of fair and clear standards. This is underpinned by the positive ethos which exists in the school; the recognition and reward of positive behaviour; and the support systems that exist. The small minority of pupils whose behaviour is a barrier to learning are supported well through the staged intervention process. Close working with parents continues to be a significant factor in maintaining this positive climate, and is valued.

Attendance in Balfour High School remains above the national average and continues to compare favourably with the other Secondary Schools in Stirling Council.

	2003/2004 %	2004/2005 %	2005/2006 %
Attendance	94.9	92.3	93.0
Authorised Absence	3.8	5.0	5.5
Unauthorised Absence	1.3	2.7	1.5

c) School environment

Our enviable state-of-the-art facilities continue to attract attention with its design to meet the demands of teaching and learning in the 21st Century.

Devolved management of resources, has allowed us flexibility in further improving our learning spaces, expanding ICT (Information and Communication Technology) provision. This has enhanced teaching, and provides improved learning opportunities for all pupils. (The school has a ratio of 1 computer to every 3 pupils.)

We continue to work towards being a Health Promoting School. The school has received the Bronze Award for SHAW (Scotland's Health at Work).

Key Strengths

- A quiet, orderly and purposeful ethos underpinned by key values
- A clear set of classroom expectations established
- Very effective contribution made by Principal Teachers and Form Class Leaders (Teachers) in establishing high expectations for attendance, achievement and conduct
- Excellent response of all staff to staff development opportunities
- Excellent probationer teachers' programme provided in the school and in the authority
- Effective use of Quality Assurance procedures
- Very good attendance figures
- Close working relationships with parents; very good relationships with School Board.
- The quality of the learning environment provided by the excellent accommodation, facilities and resources
- Very effective use of devolved resources
- Very good progress in developing ICT resources
- Continued development of co-operative learning and 'Assessment is For Learning' throughout the school

Priorities for Action

- Continue to support the management structure (implemented in August 2004), building strong relationships within each teaching and learning staff team, and improved pastoral care for young people.
- Continue to review and develop a support staff structure to support teachers with administrative tasks to allow more time for teaching.
- Continue to improve communication to meet management, pastoral care, and learning and teaching needs, particularly through the continued improvement of the website and the Management Information system
- Review and further develop the Positive Behaviour Policy
- Continue to work with parents to improve attendance

National Priority 3 – Inclusion and Equality

To promote and help every pupil benefit from education with particular regard paid to pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, and to Gaelic and other lesser used languages.

a) Staged Intervention Framework

This has been implemented in the school to ensure that all learners' needs are identified and met at an appropriate level. This may range from the need for support to access the curriculum or to provide further challenge.

b) Children's Community Partnerships (formerly called Integrated Community Schools)

This has been successfully implemented in the Balforn area and has promoted the partnership working of schools, other services and the community to maximise the support and opportunities for children, young people and families. One of the main priorities has been to continue to offer a residential experience for the new first year pupils entering Balforn in August 2005 to improve their transition from primary to secondary school.

c) Employers and Colleges

We continue to develop partnership links with local employers and businesses Forth Valley College (formerly Falkirk and Clackmannan Colleges) to provide opportunities for our young people.

Key Strengths

- High level of care and support for our most vulnerable young people through staged intervention to ensure their inclusion
- A significant number of opportunities provided to enhance pupils' personal and social development.
- Very good working relationships developed between our associated primary schools, partner agencies and local organisations.

Priorities for Action

- Continue to improve support for vulnerable young people
- Continue to develop systems to meet the requirements of the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004

National Priority 4 – Values and Citizenship

To work with parents to teach pupils respect for self and one another and the interdependence with other members of their neighbourhoods and society.

a) Young people's participation

There is much good practice in consulting and involving young people in decisions, which affect them in the school, and developing active citizenship in Balforn High School. There are five pupil councils one for each year group and an active prefect system in Sixth Year. The Sixth Year take on many whole school responsibilities. Two senior prefects chair each of the Pupil Councils. Young people from Balforn High School attend the Stirling Council Student Forum. A group of Sixth Year run a drop-in facility in the school: 'The Living Room' which was recognised as best practice by HMIE. Balforn High School registered as an Eco school at the beginning of session 2002 which is being taken forward by young people. We have achieved the Silver Award and are working towards 'The Green Flag': the highest award. There is a very active Charities Committee. The other important groups are the Citizenship Group and the Health Promotion Group. News from these groups is regularly featured in our Newsletters and on the website.

b) Formal Links with Parents

The school continues to have a very strong School Board which met regularly during the session supporting the work of the school and being a voice for parents.

Key Strengths

- Ensuring young people have opportunities to experience decision making, responsibility and contribution, e.g. 'buddying', peer support, charity work, Eco School and citizenship activities
- Strong House identity with participation of young people in House activities
- Representation of young people on Student Forum
- Recognising and sharing the non academic successes of our young people – positive rewards through house points, positive referrals, class of the month, award and celebrating success ceremonies
- Continued invaluable support from Strathendrick Rugby Club
- Effective links with School Board
- Strong communication with parents
- Joint working with the School Board on Parents' Forums

Priorities for Action

- Continue to improve communication with parents – increase the use of e-mail (currently 70% of parents are accessible by e-mail)
- Continue to work towards 'Green Flag' status through the Eco School Initiative
- Develop citizenship through the work of the Citizenship Group
- Develop more opportunities to showcase and publicise the work of young people
- Continue joint working with the School Board on further Parents' Forum and on the Parent Involvement Bill to establish a Parent Council

National Priority 5 – Learning for Life

To equip pupils with the foundation skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society and to encourage creativity and ambition.

Equipping young people with the essential skills, knowledge and attitude for life is firmly embedded in the work we do and within the ethos we strive to foster. Developing positive relationships and respect for others are the foundation skills we believe young people should have to play an active part in life. Form Class Leaders (Teachers) have a key role in developing these values.

The Work Experience programme continues to provide opportunities for all of Fourth Year pupils to experience the world of work. We continue to develop links with local employers, Strathendrick Rotary Club and Forth Valley College. We have continued support from Careers Scotland and our Careers Adviser.

There were several weeklong excursions at the end of May. At the end of May we had three very successful 'creativity' days in the school for all First to Third Year pupils.

The sports co-ordinator and the PE staff, continue to expand the number of activities that pupils can do.

The school continues to have a thriving orchestra and school choirs supported by the Music staff. The orchestra and choirs were involved in the Childline Concert in Stirling.

Key Strengths

- Form Class Leaders (Teachers)
- Extensive opportunities for sport: after school and at lunchtime
- Expert visitors to enhance learning
- Many opportunities to experience arts and cultural activities, for example, Concert/Theatre visits, art club, visiting specialists, drama productions, residential excursions, participation in musical events, overseas visits.
- Strong support of Strathendrick Rotary Club
- Careers advice

Priorities for Action

- Develop further joint working with Further Education Colleges
- Continue to improve uptake of sports, art and cultural activities

Key Priorities for 2006-2007 (including action identified by HMle):

- Continue to develop teaching and learning taking account of 'The Curriculum for Excellence' (www.scotland.gov.uk)
- Continue to promote consistently high standards of learning and teaching through the sharing of existing best practice (HMle)
- Continue to work with all staff to implement successfully the new management structure to ensure that it achieves its aims of improving support for pupils and raising achievement (HMle)
- Continue to review, revise and implement the support for learning policy including addressing the requirements of the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004 (www.scotland.gov.uk/publications) (includes HMle action point)

A copy of the School Development Plan 2005/2006 is available on request. A summary of priorities for 2006/2007 is on the website. Any further information, queries or comments will be welcome on this Standards and Quality Report. Please write to: Balforn High School, Roman Road, Balforn, Glasgow, G63 0PW or telephone the school office on 01360 440469 or email balfronhs@stirling.gov.uk
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