



# Speyside High School

*respect, responsibility, resilience*



## Standards and Quality Report 2015

### Introduction

Speyside High School is a special community where learners are happy, healthy and high achieving. It is a place where pupils, staff, parents and the wider community work together to make learning and teaching excellent. Where everyone involved is respected, responsible and resilient, ambitious and motivated and where we celebrate success.

### The Context of Our School

Speyside High School is unique in that it serves the largest catchment area of any school in Scotland and in Great Britain. We are privileged to sit in some of the most beautiful landscapes in this country - including the Cairngorms National Park – and to be able to take advantage of all the opportunities that this offers.

Our catchment area includes the large settlements of Aberlour, Dufftown, Rothes and Tomintoul. We also serve the rural areas around Archiestown, Ballindalloch, Cabrach, Carron, Craigellachie, Edinville, the Glens of Livet and Rinnes, Inveravon, and Knockando.

Service and personal responsibility is expected of all our young people and our aim is to build on our achievements and enhance the learning of all students through collaboration with a range of learning partners. We have a strong desire to build firm, open and honest relationships with parents and carers with a view to ensuring the success of our young people. We believe that teachers, other staff and parents have a vital role to play in our young people's progress.



Pupils taking part in the Junior Ranger Programme canoe down the Spey

The success of any school is measured by the achievements of its students. At Speyside High School we believe every student can be happy, healthy and high achieving. Our approach is to offer a wide variety of learning opportunities with the aim of engaging every child so that they are excited by learning and enjoy their time at school. Learning is at the centre of all we do and we aim to encourage all our young people to become independent and confident learners.

One of our primary aims is to encourage each pupil to be a self-confident, inquiring, tolerant, positive young person. We hope to help develop each young person into a well-rounded character with an independent mind who respects the differences of others. By the time they leave school, we want all of our young people to have that true sense of self-worth which will enable them to make their mark and make a difference; and, in doing so, to be of value to society.

We believe that school should be an enjoyable experience for pupils, staff and parents. We can only achieve that enjoyment through setting and maintaining high standards, allowing us to prepare our youngsters for the lives and the world that lies ahead of them.

The work of Speyside High School is built upon our shared vision that all young people can be 'Happy, Healthy & High Achieving'. Our vision focuses upon ensuring young people's health and wellbeing and their ambition to be as high achieving as possible, in whatever they set out to do.

### **How well do young people learn and achieve?**

Speyside High works hard to ensure that our learners all have opportunities to succeed. Our senior phase increases flexibility. This makes it more possible for our young people to work at the appropriate level, irrespective of their age and stage. This has allowed several students to gain Highers in S4 and it means that more vocational options are open to a wider range of pupils. As well as National and Higher courses, our pupils have had opportunities to do Skills for Work courses at Moray College, the Duke of Edinburgh Award and a variety of qualifications through our partnership with Skillforce. All of our S2 pupils now participate in the John Muir Award, working towards Discovery level and several pupils took part in the Europarc Junior Ranger programme in partnership with the Cairngorms National Park. Students have opportunities to achieve through extracurricular groups, interhouse competition and through service to the school. These are recognised through house assemblies and the annual school prizegiving. S5 and S6 pupils are invited to become prefects and the head boy and girl as well as house captain and vice captain are awarded following a competitive interview process. Pupils take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award, Career Ready and the Johnstons of Elgin School Interaction Programme. S4 pupils do a Personal Development Award through our Leadership course.



The Guitar Group perform at the Christmas Concert

### **Attainment**

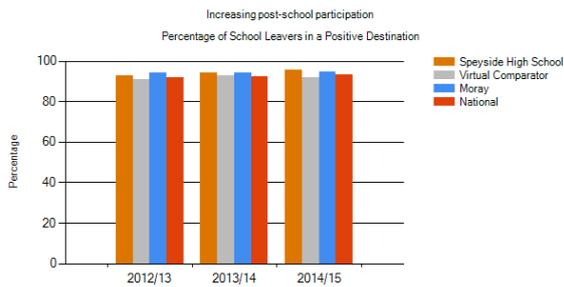


S4 Pupil Leithan Vallance achieved two A grades at Highers

In terms of attainment pupils in S4 last year did very well with 88% of pupils achieving a SCQF level 5 award (A to C). Several pupils achieved awards at Higher level. In S5 there was a marked improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving at Higher level and pupils in S6 also improved compared with the previous year though the number of pupils achieving one or more Advanced Highers dropped.

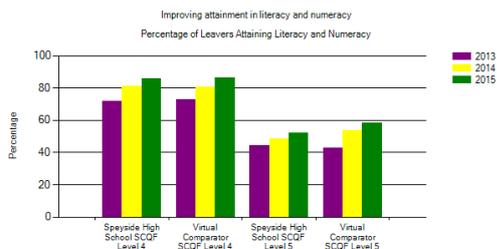
S4 Attainment		
%	2014	2015
1+ N5	83	88
3+ N5	48	64
5+ N5	31	40
S5 Attainment		
%	2014	2015
1+ H	42	49
3+ H	17	29
5+ H	9	14
S6 Attainment		
%	2014	2015
1+ H	49	50
3+ H	28	32
5+ H	19	20
1+ AH	14	10

## Leavers Destinations



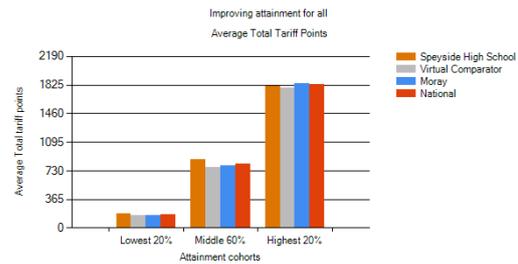
Over the last three years, one great improvement has been the number of our pupils leaving to go to positive destinations. In 2015 this figure was 95.56% which compares positively against our virtual comparator (91.89%), Moray (94.41%) and national (93.02%) figures. One factor that has supported this improvement is our engagement with local employers through the Career Ready programme and Johnston's School Engagement Programme. Two pupils have directly gained employment through these schemes and all involved have greatly improved the employability skills of others.

## Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy



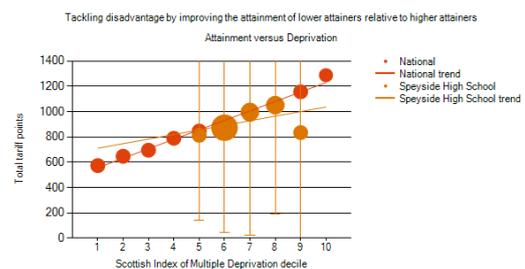
Over the last three years there has been an increase in the number of leavers leaving with either SCQF level 5 or level 4 in both literacy and numeracy. Despite this increase there is still room for improvement, particularly at level 5 when compared with our virtual comparator and authority and national averages.

## Attainment for All



In terms of our virtual comparator, the average total tariff points for all of our pupils across the three sections; lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% compare very favourably with our virtual comparator. Compared with national and the authority, our lowest 20% and middle 60% do better but we are aware that work needs to be done with our most able students when compared with the pupils across the country and within Moray. Work has been done to support our most able learners in terms of an S5 parents evening based on supporting their children to study and a mentoring programme is in place where colleagues work with small groups of young people expected to achieve five Highers.

## Attainment vs. Deprivation



Speyside High does not have students from the lowest four deciles of deprivation or the highest decile. Attainment for our pupils is in line with the national average for all pupils except for those in our most affluent areas who do significantly less well than pupils from similar backgrounds in other schools.

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

At Speyside High we make it a priority to ensure that pupils are given opportunities to take on responsibilities and gain confidence. Pupils are given opportunities at a variety of levels to become responsible citizens and effective contributors to the school community.

This year we have consulted with colleagues, pupils, parents, and partners on our curriculum rationale and come up with the following statement:

***At Speyside High School our curriculum is designed to equip our young people with skills for life, provide valuable and inspiring experiences and work towards a set of qualifications pupils can be proud of. In doing this we are ensuring that our pupils leave school to positive and appropriate destinations and successful futures.***

Processes in place for transition from primary to secondary ensure that all pupils are appropriately supported and all pupils take part in an outdoor Health and Wellbeing day supported by our partner agencies along with two days in school where pupils follow a timetable of classes.



S3 Pupil Kyran Dyer leads football coaching for primary pupils

Throughout the Broad General Education pupils experience from S1 to S3 pupils are supported to reflect on their learning and the skills they are gaining thus keeping their pupil profile up to date through PSE. Pupils reflect on the skills they are gaining as well as knowledge and experience. Helping them to recognise these as well as their strengths and qualities support them to make the transition into the Senior Phase where we work hard to ensure each pupil is able to access an appropriate curriculum for them.

In S2 some choice is added to the curriculum. Departments offer a number of options including Computer Games Design, Chemical Detection, Artdoors, Creative Writing and a Magazine project. In S3 Breadth is ensured with pupils having to choose an option from each curricular area but pupils are also able to choose multiple options within a single area.

In the senior phase we aim to create the flexibility required to ensure that all learners can access courses and experiences that they will be able to achieve and move on to a positive and sustainable destination after school. We try to offer work experience opportunities to all of our learners that is timely and appropriate for them. Some have a day or afternoon a week built into their timetable while others go out for a block of time.



Head Boy Jack Mitchell on the Sailing Expedition

In S4 all pupils have the opportunity to complete a personal development award built around a group project and pupils have to option to take this further and complete the Higher Leadership course in S5 or S6. Senior prefects have the opportunity to further develop their team working and leadership skills on a sailing expedition on board the Gordonstoun School's 'Ocean Sprit of Moray'.

The school Sponsored Walk, a challenging route over the hill to Dufftown and back along the Speyside Way, again raised significant sponsorship which supports pupils' experiences.

This year, a major focus of staff in-service is to ensure that all colleagues are aware of the requirements of GIRFEC and their responsibility to be able to support all pupils. Staged intervention has been a focus to ensure that the needs of learners are highlighted and appropriate steps taken. Pupil Support Meetings provide an opportunity to ensure that interventions are highlighted, well planned and appropriate and facilitate targeted support for youngsters facing difficulties at school and out with school. Teachers have good partnership arrangements with other professionals to support young people with more complex needs.

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

Recently the school has embarked on a review of its self-evaluation policy in light of the introduction of HGIOS 4. There is a staff working group focused on this development and work has been done during staff and Principal Teacher meetings. Staff are fully aware of their responsibility for ongoing self-evaluation and the need to look inwards, outwards and forwards during this process. A large amount of work has been done to establish the views of pupils, parents, and colleagues to support our evaluation of the school's current position. This will have a major impact in informing school priorities for next session.

The School Improvement Planning process is one that takes accounts of the views of all stakeholders as well and authority and national priorities and is reviewed periodically throughout the year.

Department Standards and Quality Reports are produced annually, taking account of department attainment and self-evaluation processes that take place in the department. These are reviewed in meetings with the principal teacher, the head teacher and a depute. At these meetings department priorities are discussed and department improvement plans are formulated. These should take account of areas within the department that have been identified as well as the School Improvement Plan.

Annual PR&D meetings are informed by department review meetings to ensure that professional learning reflects school and department priorities as well as the individual development needs of colleagues.

### **Priorities for Improvement**

- Plan for the introduction of Universal Pupil Support
- Review of the curriculum in the Broad General Education and planning for the implementation of an asymmetric week.
- Review of how we support positive behaviour
- Raising Attainment and Achievement
- Learning and Teaching – implementation of the Moray Learning and Teaching strategy.
- Meeting all learners needs



S6 Pupil Thomas Wright took primary pupils on a nature walk as part of his work towards gaining the Higher Leadership award.