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Head Teacher: Mr D Hawkins

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Standards and Quality Report  
Orkney Islands Council  
Kirkwall Grammar School

**August 2017**



## **Introduction**

The purpose of this Standards and Quality Report is to inform of the work of the school in the context of the national agenda for continuous improvement and, through the process of self-evaluation, identify goals and targets for the future.

## **The School and the Community**

Kirkwall Grammar School is a six-year comprehensive school serving the town of Kirkwall, the East Mainland of Orkney and all of the North and South isles excluding the island of Graemsay. The school is an ancient one, first mentioned in a royal charter in 1486 but possibly considerably older.

The school population reflects the increasing diversity of local society, economy and industry. Agriculture and fishing have been traditional industries for many years, but these have been supplemented by a growth in tourism, the oil terminal at Flotta and a growing 'renewables' sector.

The school enjoys excellent relations with local businesses and industry with many senior pupils taking advantage of the opportunity to take part in work experience programmes forming part of their individualised curriculum.

The catchment area of the school comprises 11 associate primary schools and 3 Junior High Schools. This poses particular challenges in maintaining close relationships, in setting up curricular links, managing pupil transfer and also in maintaining good contact with parents. This session, 54 pupils are currently resident in the Papdale Halls of Residence and the school needs to be particularly sensitive to the needs of pupils who are separated from their families and from their island communities.

From the mainland primary schools and from the smaller islands, pupils transfer from P7 into S1. The larger islands - Westray, Sanday and Stronsay- have Junior High Schools from which pupils can transfer usually at the end of S2 or S4.

In Kirkwall Grammar School, we are very proud of the wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs which are organised for pupils. These include supported study as well as sporting activities such as rugby, football, hockey, volleyball and climbing. The carol service in St Magnus Cathedral is always a highlight of the school year. Traditional music, Hadhirgaan and the school orchestra are among the activities offered by the Music Department and as is usual, 2017 saw another successful Musical/Dramatic production which ran in the schools theatre.

KGS is not just a school, it is a learning community. A community that recognises teaching and learning does not start and stop at the school gates. Through development of partnerships in and out of school, we will work as a team to provide outstanding learning and leadership experiences and opportunities to support and furnish each individual youngster with the knowledge, skills, experiences and insight that will set them on their path to a prosperous future, effectively contributing to life and work in Orkney, Scotland and world wide.

## **Our school vision, values and aims**

### **Vision**

A school with a sense of community where every pupil is given every opportunity to achieve and attain their potential whatever positive pathway or destination they decide to take. A school that sets high expectations and whose focus is on learning and improving so that both teachers and pupils can achieve the remarkable.

### **Values**

Wisdom  
Compassion  
Integrity  
Justice

### **Aims**

The aims of the school are to provide all pupils with the opportunities and experiences that will allow them to fulfil their potential as individuals, lifelong learners and contributors to society. A school that promotes respect for others and self within the school and the wider community.

### **The Core Areas of our Practice**

This report summarises the strengths of our school, our recent improvements and what needs to improve. This information has been gathered throughout the year in a variety of ways in order to ensure our report is as accurate as possible.

We take time to compare what we do with local and national examples of best practice. We visit each other's classes to share good practice and standards in learning and teaching. We look at all pupils work to see how they are progressing. We cross mark and moderate work and make use of factual data and information including attainment results responding and adapting our teaching in line with pupils needs. We assess using our professional judgement and results tracking. Pupils peer and self-assess. We gather the views of pupils, parents, staff and members of the local community and use all of this information to arrive at our view of the quality of education we provide.

In order to track progress and monitor the impact of this upon learners, and to evaluate our capacity for improvement, we have drawn upon a variety of evidence. This has involved gathering the views of pupils, parents, staff and the work from our whole school working and development groups. Our evidence is drawn from data as well as direct observations. This gathering of evidence is on-going task and shows our commitment in taking forward our self-evaluation agenda.

## **Our Key Strengths**

Positive relationships between staff, pupils and parents.  
Continued staff engagement with the new qualifications.  
Quality and range of pupil experiences.  
Pupil behaviour  
Excellent achievement and attainment results

## **Our Improvements Last Session**

Improved use of Data analysis.  
Improved Tracking and Monitoring  
Promoting and celebrating pupil achievements.  
Pupils taking increased responsibility for learning.  
Introduction of Study periods for those doing four or more Higher subjects in S5  
Parental involvement in whole school working groups.

## **Our Priorities For Improvement for Next Session**

Self-Evaluation for Self-Improvement  
Learning, Teaching and Assessment  
Tracking and Monitoring to Raise Attainment, Achievement and Aspiration  
Improved Literacy and Numeracy provision  
Further developing the pupil voice in leading learning.  
Parental engagement – with a focus on supporting the life and work of the school.  
Developing Scotland's Young Workforce targets.  
Continued development of our strategic whole school working and development groups to take forward strategic planning and school improvement.

School priority 1: Raising Attainment and Achievement

<p><u>NIF Priority:</u> Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy</p> <p><u>NIF Driver:</u> Assessment of children's progress</p>	<p><u>HGIO Quality Indicators</u> 2.3 Learning, teaching &amp; assessment 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement</p>
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### 2.3 Learning, teaching & assessment

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

### 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

- Attainment over time
- Attainment in literacy and numeracy

### Highlights

Another year with excellent results at Advanced Higher and Higher in most subjects. For Higher, 100% pass rate in Music, Art and Design, Administration and IT, German, History, Drama and PE.

The number of pupils achieving three or more higher passes is up 1.2% on last year and the highest since 2013.

The number of pupils achieving five or more National 5 passes is up 7% on last year and the highest since 2013.

Our S4 cohort achieved some excellent results in Art and Design, Drama, Design and Manufacture, Graphic Communication, English, Music, PE, Metalwork and Woodwork.

All Principal Teachers continue to received training in the use of the exam analysis programme 'Insight' and CfE Machine and are steadily growing in confidence in using the data to evaluate and inform improvements.

An increased number of Senior Phase pupils opted to take part in college based courses.

1200 presentations in total across Senior school in 2017 (1177 in 2016, 1410 in 2015, 1516 in 2014)

1035 passes (1039 in 2016, 1209 in 2015, 1296 in 2014)

165 No Awards (138 in 2016, 201 in 2015, 220 in 2014)

<p><b>National 5 A - D</b> 86.6 % pass rate (88.3% in 2016, 84.1% in 2015, 83.8% in 2014)</p> <p><b>Higher A - D</b> 87.4% pass rate (87.7% in 2016, 88.6% in 2015, 88.4% in 2014)</p> <p><b>Adv Higher A - D</b> 91.7% pass rate (92.9% in 2016, 89.8% in 2015, 85.1% in 2014)</p>	<p><b>National 5 A - C</b> 81.6 % pass rate (82.4% in 2016, 75.8% in 2015, 76.1% in 2014)</p> <p><b>Higher A - C</b> 78.9% pass rate (80% in 2016, 80.5% in 2015, 79.4% in 2014)</p> <p><b>Adv Higher A - C</b> 85% pass rate (84% in 2016, 81.4% in 2015, 74.3% in 2014)</p>
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		5+ SCQF Level 5 or Better		3+ SCQF Level 6 or Better		5+ SCQF Level 6 or Better		1+ SCQF Level 7 or Better		S4 Cohort Roll
2017	S4	63	49.61%							127
	S5			45	38.79%	15	12.93%			116
	S6			18				26	19.12%	136

2016	S4	49	42.24%	1						116
	S5			51	37.50%	15	11.03%			136
	S6							26	16.88%	154

2015	S4	53	38.97%							136
	S5			50	32.47%	25	16.23%			154
	S6							29	20.42%	142

2014	S4	41	28.87%							154
	S5			47	33.10%	27	19.01%			142
	S6							36	23.38%	154

More staff are now using an evidence base for their analysis and evaluation of both attainment and improvement planning and this is an area that we will continue to monitor and improve on.

## Strengths

Pupils at KGS are fortunate to be given the opportunity to take part in a wide range of learning experiences. This range of experiences is delivered by staff who are prepared to give so much of their time. At KGS we recognise and value all the different types of learning that takes place. For example:

- A number of pupils were involved in the Orkney Heritage Society
- Young Enterprise team “Drekka” who produced beautiful drinking glasses and did well in the local competition.
- Pupil involvement in the concert held in St Magnus Cathedral to celebrate the life of Sir Peter Maxwell Davis.

**working together to raise aspirations and attainment by achieving excellence and equity**

- Film Club – Film Festival trip in Shetland.
- Orkney Youth Awards where a large number of pupils received awards for first aid and food hygiene, the Dynamic Youth Award, Saltire Award and being recognised for outstanding voluntary and community work.
- To mark Holocaust Memorial Day all of S2 took part in a live webcast featuring Holocaust survivor Mala Tribich.
- KGS hosted the Scottish Youth Parliament Hustings which ended with Jack Norquoy and Calum McArthur being elected.
- Fairtrade Fortnight, various stalls throughout the year to raise awareness at break and lunch times, tuck shop.
- A number of S2 pupils travelled to Stromness Academy for the Fereday prize giving. A KGS pupil won the overall prize for their project
- As part of the Scotland WW100 commemorations, two pupils joined students from all over Scotland to attend a ceremony in memory of those who fell at the Battle of Arras in 1917. The trip also involved visits to the sites of the Somme, Loos and Passchendaele..
- The first KGS sponsored walk. Which raised over £3000.
- Science Festival
- Drama Productions and the school show



### **Areas for further development**

Curriculum development with regard to changes in National, Higher and Adv Higher courses by the SQA.  
 Increase the number of students achieving 5 or more higher passes.  
 Continue to make more effective use of tracking data to monitor progress and set aspirational targets.  
 Increase pupil and parental engagement with the learning and teaching.  
 Continue to develop study skills and revision techniques with our students.  
 Continue to develop pupil profiling by the recording skills learned in extra-curricular activities.  
 Development of Strategic working and development groups with a focus on raising attainment and effective Learning and Teaching.

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<p><u>NIF Priority:</u> Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.</p> <p><u>NIF Driver:</u> School leadership Parental engagement</p>	<p><u>HGIO Quality Indicators</u> 1.3 Leadership of change 2.2 Curriculum 2.6 Transitions</p>
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## 1. How well does the school support young people to develop and learn?

### 1.3 Leadership of change

- Strategic planning for continuous improvement
- Implementing improvement and change

### 2.2 The Curriculum

- Rationale and design of the curriculum
- Development of the curriculum
- Skills for learning life and work

### 2.6 Transitions

- Arrangements to support learners and their families
- Continuity and progression in learning

## Highlights

All staff are committed to ensuring that pupils receive the best possible learning and teaching experience in their curricular area and have worked extremely hard to produce materials for the new national qualifications.

In S3, pupils continue to follow a Broad General Education and make 8 subject choices based on curriculum areas. Pupils in S1 and S2 experience up to 3 different languages before making their language choice for S3. The amount of time given to languages in S1 and S2 was increased to allow pupils a choice in S3 and we will continue to monitor subject choice and language uptake from these year groups.

The S4 and S5,6 option choice form continues to develop and, despite significant staff shortages last session, we have been able to maintain a full range of curricular provision. Almost all pupils were able to get their first choice of options. The Curriculum Support department work hard to accommodate pupil needs and a number of alternative curriculum packages have been put in place for senior pupils.

Pupils in S4, S5 and S6 are able to choose work experience as part of their curriculum and pupils can also opt to attend college courses to broaden their curricular choice.

2016-17 saw parental engagement in an Orkney wide move to implement a senior phase. This was to provide all senior phase students the option of attending college courses to broaden their curriculum without disrupting their learning in their other SQA courses. A number of parents evening and video conferencing events were held to inform parents and students of the Orkney Offer and the advantages this change to the curriculum would offer the young people of Orkney.

KGS are extremely proud of our inclusive approach and partnership work with external agencies as well as our successful transition programme . A major change to the transition of isle pupils took place during 2016-17. Students moving from Junior High schools were able to experience an enhanced transition which allowed them to spend time in the Papdale Halls of Residence as well as shadowing new classmates during their transition visit. Feedback from pupils and parents on their transition experience has been extremely positive.

We have developed valuable partnerships with a number of external agencies including Social Work, Health, Educational Psychologists, Mental Health workers, CAMHS and Skills Development Scotland.

SfL staff (PSAs) continue to enhance our support provision and we very much value their input. During the lead up to primary transition a number of PSAs spend time working with P7s in our associated primaries. Pupils with particular needs are also invited in for some additional support regarding transition. The information evenings for P7 parents were very positive.



### **Areas for further development**

The S1 – S3 curriculum is under review and we need to ensure that all the Health & Wellbeing outcomes are delivered.

We will continue to monitor and develop the senior phase of S4, 5 and 6 to ensure we offer relevant progression pathways for all pupils. This will include appropriate checks to ensure pupils are following the courses most appropriate to their needs.

Senior Phase provision will allow S4, 5 and 6 pupils to access work experience and college courses as part of their course options.

Development of new and existing partnerships with external organisations and businesses to enhance curriculum provision.

Continue to support staff in the delivery of new Nationals, Highers and Advanced Highers.

Improve whole school approach and understanding of numeracy through the maths attainment project.

The system for communicating and sharing information across the school on SEEMiS needs to be refined

Ensure staff are aware of the Career Education Standard and this is embedded into faculty and department improvement plans.

School priority 3: Developing school leadership

<p><u>NIF Priority:</u> Improvement in attainment</p> <p><u>NIF Driver:</u> School leadership Teacher professionalism School improvement and performance information Parental engagement</p>	<p><u>HGIO Quality Indicators</u> 1.3 Leadership of change 2.3 Learning, teaching &amp; assessment 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</p>
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### 1.3 Leadership of change

- Strategic planning for continuous improvement
- Implementing improvement and change

### 2.3 Learning, teaching & assessment

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

### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

- Inclusion and equality

### Strengths

All departments are producing development plans based on HGIOS 4 with a focus on raising attainment. Staff are volunteering to participate in whole school strategic working groups in a bid to improve engagement with collegiate working and bring a transparency to whole school improvement.

These groups are generally chaired by non promoted staff to provide leadership opportunities. Parents and carers are also given the opportunity to participate in the groups and this has proved to a very positive move with uptake increasing from last year.

Weekly strategic meetings with PTs and link DHTs focused on strategic improvement are now embedded.

Professional Update has been introduced for all staff and all staff engage in professional learning discussions with their line manager. It is hoped that as staff become more familiar with the process there will be more focus on individual reflection and professional learning.

Pupils and parents are routinely asked for feedback which is shared with staff to develop whole school impact and action points.

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### **Areas for further development**

Opportunities for learning walks and class room observations.

More opportunities need to be provided for the pupil voice and opportunities for pupils to lead their learning

Provide more support and feedback to PTs on Departmental Improvement Plans, and in particular how to gather evidence and lead improvement.

Develop staff confidence in the Professional Update process.

Provide more opportunities for staff to share practice and to take leadership responsibilities.

Develop staff confidence in the reporting on a level in the BGE.



***Don Hawkins***

Head Teacher