



# Follow-through Inspection Report

## Bannerman High School

March 2008

### **The Inspection**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on the inspection of Bannerman High School in May 2006. Working with the school, the education authority prepared an action plan indicating how they would address the main points for action identified in the original HMIE inspection report.

### **Continuous Improvement**

At the time of the original inspection, the headteacher had been in post for just over a year. Since then, the acting depute headteacher had taken up post permanently. The former principal teacher of English had also joined the senior management team as depute headteacher.

The headteacher knew the school very well and had developed an ethos of achievement through carefully judged initiatives focused on success for pupils. These initiatives included a new dress code (Dress for Success), revised homework arrangements (Prepare for Success) and an awards ceremony which celebrated pupils' achievements. The headteacher had led the development of a climate of trust in which pupils and staff identified strongly with the school and felt empowered to lead initiatives. Morale amongst staff and pupils was high. The senior management team worked very well together and had successfully implemented a number of strategies to improve pupils' attainment and self-esteem. Teachers were engaging pupils successfully in their learning.

Standards of attainment were improving overall. This was particularly evident at S2 and S4. The attainment of boys had shown significant improvement. The proportion of pupils who had left school with a positive destination was increasing. All pupils had had the opportunity to develop leadership skills through involvement in the many trips and activities organised by staff.

## **Progress Towards the Main Points for Action**

### **Main point for action 1**

The initial inspection report published in May 2006 identified four main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made with each of the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and other stakeholders.

#### **Improve attainment at all stages.**

*The school had made good progress towards meeting this point for action.*

Attainment at S1/S2 had improved significantly from 2005 to 2006, and these gains had been consolidated in 2007 across reading, writing and mathematics. Improvement in mathematics was impressive. At S3/S4, pupils' attainment had also improved across the school. The percentage of pupils gaining five or more awards at level 5 by the end of S4 had risen significantly in 2006 and by 2007 was in line with the national average. At this level, the school had performed better than schools with similar characteristics. The percentage gaining five or more awards at level 4 had also risen significantly and was now in line with the national average. The percentage gaining five or more awards at level 3 had risen sharply in 2006 and in 2007 was in line with the national average. At these levels, the school had performed better than schools with similar characteristics. The performance of boys at all levels at S4 had improved significantly over the last two years.

Despite a dip in 2006, there had been an overall improvement in attainment at S5/S6. The percentage of candidates gaining three or more awards at level 6 by the end of S5 had dropped in 2006 but had risen again in 2007 and was now above the national average. The school had performed much better than schools with similar characteristics at this level. The percentage of candidates gaining five or more awards at level 6 had also risen overall but was still below the national average. This performance was in line with schools of similar characteristics. The performance of boys had also improved significantly at this level. The staying-on rates into S5 and S6 had also increased, leading to higher numbers of entries for many subjects. The school now needed to consolidate the advances that had been made, to ensure that the improved performances at S2 and S4 translated into better performances at Higher and Intermediate. In particular, given the improved performance at Credit level, there was headroom for further improvement in the numbers achieving five or more awards at Higher.

### **Main point for action 2**

#### **Continue to improve the consistency and quality of pupils' learning experiences.**

*The school had made very good progress towards meeting this main point of action*

The school had introduced a more flexible approach to the curriculum, with both Standard Grade and National Qualification courses available to meet pupils' varied learning needs. Alternative provision, including workplace visits and lessons in employability skills, had provided a more relevant learning experience for some pupils. The school had developed effective pastoral links with its associated primary schools. Some subject departments had also developed curricular links with the primary schools and this was enabling these departments to build more effectively on pupils' prior learning. There was scope to extend this approach. Involvement in a wide range of activities beyond the normal school day had broadened pupils' learning experiences.

The school had focused its staff development programme on the introduction of more active learning and formative assessment strategies. The senior management team and principal

teachers continued to undertake classroom visits to monitor consistency of practice, and were developing a programme of peer monitoring. Teachers had also volunteered to share strategies with their colleagues during lunchtime and twilight sessions.

Teachers were making greater use of information and communications technology (ICT) to engage pupils in their learning. Overall, teachers now shared the aims of lessons with pupils and used questioning techniques well to develop pupils' thinking skills. Pupils were enthusiastic and engaged in their learning. They had started to develop good skills in working with others and in peer evaluation. Teachers in the inspected departments had also developed more interactive learning techniques to motivate pupils. Some teachers were encouraging pupils to evaluate their own learning experiences, to inform future planning. This process was still being developed across the school.

**Main point for  
action 3**

**Continue to increase the involvement of pupils, parents and staff in raising levels of expectations.**

*The school had made very good progress towards meeting this main point of action*

Under the leadership of the headteacher, the school had consulted with pupils, parents and staff to review the aims of the school. Assemblies and tutor groups reinforced the school's message that all pupils could achieve by taking responsibility for their learning. Photographs and displays of pupils' achievements had helped pupils identify with the school's aims. Pupils and parents were positive about the revised dress code. Updated behaviour management procedures had improved pupils' behaviour across the school and this had impacted positively on learning. Use of improved new procedures had successfully reduced the number of latecomers.

Staff had shared the expectations of the revised homework policy with parents. P7 pupils had participated in a transition programme to prepare them for starting S1. Staff had also provided a well attended study support programme to help pupils prepare for national examinations. The school had consistently shared its expectations with parents. Parents were well informed about course requirements through parents' evenings, transition evenings and a helpful calendar of internal assessments.

Staff were using the updated tracking system to set pupil targets, and ensure pupils were achieving appropriately. Parents were kept informed of their child's progress towards subject targets. Effective liaison with associated primary schools had helped staff identify and support effectively pupils with additional support needs. The Passport for Success initiative for S1 pupils had ensured that pupils' prior learning was taken into account. Use of alternative curricular arrangements, including workplace visits, encouraged all pupils to achieve success. Implementation of the senior pupils' learning agreement and student planner had encouraged these pupils to take more ownership of their learning.

All pupils had access to a wide range of activities beyond the normal school day where they had the opportunity to develop self-confidence and achieve success in different situations. Pupils appreciated the many opportunities available for developing new skills. Success was celebrated through assemblies, displays, praise certificates and postcards home. A new awards ceremony had celebrated pupils' broader achievements as well as pupils' success in subject areas.

**Main point for  
action 4**

**Improve aspects of accommodation as described in this report.**

*The education authority had made adequate progress towards meeting this point for action.*

Substantial refurbishment of the canteen (Fuel Zone) had been completed. Significant additional investment had been made in ICT provision across the school, and most staff now had access to interactive whiteboards or data projectors. The ICT network had been improved, enabling faster access to the internet. The amount and quality of displays around the school had increased substantially. There was now a janitor present at all times at the main entrance to meet visitors and help improve security. Groups of external users had access to the school over the course of the day. The implications of this meant that security issues remained. Plans were in place aimed at overcoming this issue and ensuring security for pupils.

**Conclusion  
and Next  
Steps**

Overall, the school had made very good progress in addressing the recommendations of the HMIE report of May 2006. Aspects of improvement were very good. Over the two years since the original inspection report, strong leadership by the headteacher and the senior management team had led to improvements in the quality of learning, teaching and achievements. Staff and pupil morale had risen and relationships had improved. Staff commitment to continuing professional development and sharing of good practice had ensured improvements in aspects of learning and teaching. Taken together, these developments and successes had significantly enhanced the school's capacity for further improvement. In the light of the progress made and the momentum for change which has been established, HM Inspectors will make no further visits in connection with the report of May 2006.

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