



Standards and Quality Report June 2020

Context of the school

Knox Academy is a comprehensive secondary school situated in the town of Haddington. It currently has 753 pupils at the school and is set to grow significantly in pupil number over the next five years to embrace those young people moving into the town. Meadowpark, a provision for young people with Additional Support Needs, is an integral part of Knox Academy with many of the young people attending mainstream classes. Knox Academy is the associated secondary of Haddington Primary, St Mary's RC Primary and Yester Primary School, Gifford. It also has a number of out of catchment pupils who elect to come to the school.

Knox Academy's school vision is: *"Always to choose kindness and create a respectful environment where staff and pupils can inspire each other to achieve their goals and become life-long learners."* Our school values are Ambition, Respect and Community and we aim to support all of our young people in developing the skills for life, learning and work through a variety of curricular opportunities throughout S1-S6.

Knox Academy provides an enriching Broad General Education for our S1-S3 pupils, with some personalisation and choice available in S1/S2 and particularly in S3. In Senior Phase, S4-S6, we have a wide ranging curriculum to enable us to provide learner pathways that both interest and stimulate growth in all of our young people, with the intention of meeting all of their needs and them staying on to S6 to maximise their attainment and achievements at our school. Knox Academy has 96.3% of pupils leaving to positive destinations in employment, college and university.

How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?

- New vision established at Knox Academy in November 2019 in consultation with pupils, staff, parents/carers and our community partners.
- Staff have engaged in a focused way in teacher learning communities, which in turn allow them to put research into action to improve their practice and outcomes for learners.
- Many staff have voluntarily taken part in and led aspects of school improvement in the four main Quality Indicators:
 - QI 1.3 – Leadership of Change
 - QI 2.3 – Learning, Teaching and Assessment
 - QI 3.1 – Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion
 - QI 3.2 – Raising Attainment and Achievement

SLT has led CLPL on QI 1.1 – Self Evaluation (for self-improvement) and developed deeper knowledge, amongst our staff, as part of CLPL through reflection on HGIOS?4 Challenge Questions on QI 1.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 3.1. This will continue next year through staff working in faculty teams and as a whole staff debating questions from research to deepen their learning of improving outcomes for young people. These questions, whilst touching on most of the QIs will focus heavily on learning, teaching and assessment.

Future Developments

- Due to Covid-19 leadership of improvement will be based around pupils' and staff health and wellbeing, certainly in the initial stages of our return to school. Building positive peer and teacher/pupil relationships will be a focus in our reconnecting phase and onwards. We will ensure supportive interventions, where required, to help young people and staff re-engage in learning and teaching and in developing their resilience. .
Further to this our focus will then be:
- Training and implementation of the new SEEMIS module to monitor and track BGE and Senior Phase pupils (with a focus on filters)
- Pupils leading learning – linking with (QI 2.3)
- Embedding of new vision, alongside our values, and implementation of our Positive Relationships policy – with more Pivotal Training to support this (restorative practice)



How good is the quality of the care and provision we offer?

Knox Academy offers a broad general education from S1-S3, with some personalisation and choice in S1/2 and a further level of personalisation and choice in S3 as young people select 5 subjects from the curricular areas of Science, Expressive Arts, Technologies, Social Subjects and from a specialisation column. In S4-S6, we offer 'free choice' of subjects and the subjects running at the school in Senior Phase are very much responding to the needs of our young people as well as taking into consideration the employment market in our local and wider community. A number of new subjects have been introduced at senior phase in the last few years to respond to the requests of our young people and also to ensure we offer a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of all our young people: Higher Economics, Nat 5 Psychology, N4/5 Mandarin and Higher Mandarin; National 5 Dance, National Progression Award in Mental Health and Wellbeing, Bike Maintenance.

During this session, 2019-20, we revised our [equalities and diversity policy](#) and created a new inclusion statement through extensive consultation with pupils, staff and parents and this reflects our ambitions as a school to be inclusive and adopt a school wide approach to nurturing principles. In line with inclusion our school's Pupil Support Base was also reviewed and modified to create three separate support areas with a defined focus (1) Learning Zone (2) Outdoor Learning (3) Bespoke individual and group work provision to ensure those requiring support could receive this. We will continue to develop the use of these spaces to further enhance these provisions. Our Pupil Support Team (ASN) also continue to provide pupils with additional support needs with support in and out of class. The ASN team, along with staff in English and Maths, also support extract groups in S1/S2 for literacy and numeracy skills and our school Librarian organises paired reading with senior pupils, adults and reading to dogs as part of supporting literacy at the school.

This session we also revised our Positive Relationships policy in consultation with staff and pupils and now have a one page blueprint that staff and pupils value. The focus is on positive and engaging relationships where the focus is on restorative practices and inclusion in classrooms to maximise learning for all. Our work on ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) has helped develop staff understanding of young people's response to trauma and therefore their response to dealing with challenging situations and they now feel better prepared for this.

Finally in this area, our focus on our school values has helped the school community come together with a common purpose and live out our values of ambition, respect and community. Our distinct focus on respect has improved relationships across the school and this was evidence in our recent visit from [Education Scotland](#). We have continued to develop our 'ambition through termly diligence awards, where the focus and reward is for those who work hard on a day to day basis and therefore is inclusive for all young people working hard and living out the value of ambition. Community is borne out in all the clubs and societies that take place in the school and the work our young people and staff participate in at a local and wider community level.

Future Developments

- To continue to develop our approaches to nurture and support this with whole school training in line with ELC's nurture principles and to support our Covid-19 reopening and reconnecting with our young people
- To continue to embed our [Positive Relationships](#) policy, with a focus on restorative practices
- To continue to develop our Diligence awards and link these with House points
- To continue to develop the Pupil Support Bases to support all pupils who need support – especially as part of the Covid-19 recovery.

How good are we at ensuring the best possible outcomes for all our learners?

Our new tracking and monitoring database, which also tracked health and wellbeing, helped to identify those young people most at risk of not achieving and also those under-achieving so interventions could be put in place at as early as stage as possible to support them. Attainment of those attaining National 5 increased as a result of these interventions.

The 16+ Hub meetings also allow for young people to be tracked to support them into a positive and sustained destination. These meetings ensure that young people have multi-agency support their transition.



Our curriculum continued to offer a wider range of subjects to ensure we could better meet the needs of more learners in the senior phase; these courses include vocational options too such as work experience, bike maintenance and volunteering. Learner pathway reviews encourage high engagement from parents/carers too as they can also attend these meetings and the structure/approach also ensures that young people are accurately coursed in to their chosen options as the levels are aspirational but realistic and the option choice sheet is counter-signed by parents and teacher/Curriculum Leader to show support of the study of that subject and at the correct level. This approach has also seen the reduction of changes in level as courses advance and also has helped single level classes to run (as opposed to multi-level) which also helps raise attainment and achievement.

Young people who require additional support are able to access this support through the Pupil Support Team (House Teams and in Support for Pupils (Support for Learning)). In the senior phase, opportunities for wider achievement periods have supported young people with additional periods for literacy and numeracy to raise attainment in these areas. Post exam results, young people who had not yet attained literacy and numeracy at level 4 were identified and targeted for extra support to help them raise their attainment in these areas.

Individualised timetables are devised for a small number of learners to better support their learning and engagement and these are carefully monitored with the intention of these young people returning to class and full time learning as soon as is possible. This is carefully monitored alongside parents/carers.

In terms of Continuing Professional Learning (CLPL) this session staff have focused on high quality learning and teaching being at the heart of our school, alongside positive and engaging relationships. All staff had in-service training on the four phase lesson (connect, activate, demonstrate phases – with the consolidate phase still to take place due to the Covid-19 closure). This has helped ensure consistency of teaching approaches across the school and improved learners' experiences as they know what to expect in all classrooms. We have also had training from Pivotal on Positive Relationships (which helped us update our policy to one that is making a real difference to our approaches with young people and has led to improved relationships across the school and also a reduction in exclusions). Training on Adverse Childhood Experiences, Attachment and Managing Challenging and Distressed Behaviour have all better prepared our staff for our work with young people and to ensure improved outcomes for them.

Future Developments

- To continue to develop our approaches to digital learning and also to ensure that young people have access to a quality experience through **blended learning** - this will be our focus first and foremost from August 2020
Following this:
- Attainment at N4 level in S4 (those completing the course beyond units) need to be further tracked and young people better supported to improve outcomes in this area
- To improve the attainment of pupils with ASN
- Introduction of more NPA courses
- More opportunities for volunteering in younger year groups and in our local and wider community
- To ensure that young people develop employability skills across their learning and understand how these skills are transferrable between subjects and into life, learning and work.
- CLPL – Consolidate phase of four phase lesson
- A further session from Pivotal on Restorative Practice

What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

We are building capacity across the school for leadership and empowering staff to lead whole school initiatives and learning/teaching in the classroom. We have improved relationships across the school and place a strong emphasis on our school values in all that we do in and out of the classroom. We have high expectations across the school of pupils and staff in relation to all being the best we can be in all that we do, so our young people get the best experience possible in their time at Knox Academy. The school has made good progress across the last three years since our initial inspection by Education Scotland and the staff at Knox Academy have demonstrated, as in the report from [Education Scotland](#), that we have the continued capacity to lead change and improvement at the school in the coming years. This year we worked very closely with



parents/pupils/community partners to create a vision for our school, to revise and update our Diversity and Equalities Policy and also on revising our approaches to Monitoring, Tracking and Reporting. These initiatives show the level of engagement to ensure that we take the school forward in true consultation. We will continue to engage our stakeholders in the forward direction of the school so we are a community who work closely for the greater good of all at our school. We have continued to look outwards by engaging other Head Teachers, Associate Assessors from Education Scotland and QIOs to be part of our faculty reviews, to support our self-evaluation process. Our focus on HGIOS?4 with all staff this year to take our self-evaluation to a deeper level and asses our progress, at faculty level, against the quality indicators and this has helped the school develop a sense of what self-evaluation means and how we can adapt and improve our practices to improve outcomes for all of our learners. Finally, the delivery of high quality, focused CLPL has, and will continue to develop the school's capacity to raise attainment and achievement for all of our young people at Knox Academy.

Level

Q.I. 1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement	Good
Q.I. 1.3 Leadership of change	Good
Q.I. 2.3 Learning teaching and assessment	Good
Q.I. 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Good