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13 December 2011

Dear Parent/Carer

**Lenzie Academy  
East Dunbartonshire Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I visited and inspected your child's school. Throughout our visit, we talked to many parents and young people and we worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well young people were learning and achieving and how well the school supported young people to do their best. The headteacher shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including how the school is taking forward Curriculum for Excellence and its approaches to improving learning and teaching. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school was at improving young people's education. I would now like to tell you what we found.

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

Young people are learning and achieving very well. They are highly motivated and enjoy very positive relationships with their teachers. They work well independently and collaboratively and in most lessons are challenged to think and work out things for themselves. Most young people are developing their understanding of their strengths as learners and of what they need to do to improve further. They are setting targets to improve. Young people would benefit from a more consistent approach to this across the school. The school should continue to develop more opportunities for young people to influence the way they learn.

Young people are achieving very well in a wide range of enterprise, cultural, musical, sporting, volunteering and leadership activities and events. They also benefit from links with Malawi and from foreign trips and exchanges, including work experience in Germany. Through all these experiences, young people are gaining valuable skills for learning, life and work as well as a sense of personal achievement. The confident, articulate and caring young people in S6 demonstrate these skills particularly well. The many achievements across the school are recognised through school, local and national awards and trophies, including The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

At S1 and S2 young people are progressing well within a broad general education. The school was able to provide strong evidence to support this, particularly in relation to progress in English and mathematics. Young people are increasingly using their literacy and numeracy skills well across their subjects, with particularly good examples observed in science classes. From S3 to S6, overall levels of attainment are very high. They are well above national averages and that of schools serving young people with similar needs and backgrounds.

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<sup>1</sup> This is a service for deaf users. Please do not use this number for voice calls as this will not connect.

The high levels of achievement and attainment are helping young people move very successfully on to higher and further education, training or employment.

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

Overall, we think that young people are very well supported by the school. Staff know young people well, and in most lessons, plan very effectively to meet the range of learning needs. In a number of curriculum areas, the school uses ability groupings and 'fast track' classes to ensure young people are supported and challenged appropriately in their learning. Staff, working with partners, identify and plan very effectively to meet the needs of young people who require additional support. The impact of this joint working is evident in the very good progress and positive destinations of these young people. Support for learning and guidance staff make a very strong contribution in this area and are highly regarded by staff and the young people they work with.

The school provides a broad curriculum from S1 to S6 which meets different needs well, encourages high aspirations and helps to develop well-rounded young people. Productive links with associated primaries, colleges, local employers and partner agencies help the school achieve this. For example, a local business provided invaluable support for a recent S1 Food and Drink Challenge. The school is making good progress in improving its work in line with Curriculum for Excellence. Staff have introduced new courses and programmes at S1 and S2 in all subject areas with a strong focus on active, enjoyable learning. They are planning many more opportunities for young people to develop and use their literacy and numeracy skills across more areas of their learning. Building on these and other improvements in the curriculum, teachers should continue to develop links across subjects and make more connections with activities outwith the classroom. This would help young people better understand how all of their experiences help them develop their knowledge and skills.

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

We are confident that that this school will continue to improve the quality of its work.

Staff across the school are strongly committed to ensuring young people learn and achieve very well. Most willingly engage in work to review and improve practice in their classrooms, across their department and at whole school level. They readily take part in activities and further training to help improve their own knowledge and skills. Staff draw on a range of evidence to help inform their judgements about areas of strength and aspects for improvement. This includes, feedback from classroom observations by colleagues and evidence from young people's performance in class work and in national examinations. Staff are beginning to ask for and take more account of feedback from learners. These approaches are ensuring the school continues to move forward and improve the quality of its work. There is scope to further develop approaches and increase the pace of change required to meet the challenges of Curriculum for Excellence. The role of senior managers could be further developed in evaluating the impact of these changes on learning and teaching in classrooms. Young people, parents and partners could also be more effectively involved in evaluating and improving the work of the school. They could add value and contribute positively to how the school moves forward in the future. The new headteacher, working closely with his strong senior management team, has already very effectively identified areas for further improvement. He will be very well supported by high-quality staff at all levels across the school and young people eager to have a stronger voice. This school is very well placed on its journey to excellence.

This inspection of your school found the following key strengths.

- Highly motivated, polite young people who engage very well in their learning.
- The range and quality of young people's achievements.
- The quality of relationships across the school, which promote respect and a strong sense of community.
- The range and quality of support provided by specialist staff and community partners to help all young people to learn and achieve.
- The impact of the commitment shown by staff on the quality and extent of young people's learning and achievement in and beyond the classroom.

We discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the school. This is what we agreed with them.

- To move forward with Curriculum for Excellence based on improved approaches to self-evaluation involving young people, parents and partners more effectively.

### **What happens at the end of the inspection?**

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The local authority will inform parents about the school's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its schools.

Mairi Timmons  
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/ViewEstablishment.aspx?id=7806&type=3..>

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation. You can contact us at [enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk) or write to us at BMCT, Education Scotland, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

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