**Standards and Quality Report 2018-2019**

**Improvement Plan 2019-2020**

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| School: Aberdeen Grammar School |
| Head Teacher: Alison Murison |
| **Website:****<http://grammar.org.uk/>**      **Our Vision:**    **Working together, learning together, achieving together** |

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| **Context of the school:** |
| Aberdeen Grammar School is one of the oldest schools in Scotland. The first documented reference to the school is from 1256. Today Aberdeen Grammar School is a non-denominational six year comprehensive school serving parts of Aberdeen’s city centre and west end. The school’s associated primary schools are Ashley Road, Gilcomstoun, Mile End, Skene Square and St Joseph’s. In addition, we receive a significant number of placing requests.    Our pupils come from a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds; 20% of our young people have English as an Additional Language (EAL).    The school roll for 2018/19 was 1100. The S1 intake was 180 with the roll being capped by the Local Authority.    We have an inclusive approach where all pupils are valued and supported in their learning by all class teachers. They are proud to belong to one of three houses: Byron, Keith and Dun and Melvin. Pupils are known well by their Principal Teacher of Pupil Support and the Depute Head Teacher attached to their House group.    The school is well supported by an active Parent Council, Parent Teacher Association and Former Pupils (FPs) Club. |

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| **Aberdeen City vision statement:** |
| Strong partnerships will ensure that Aberdeen is a high achieving City of Learning which:   * Offers nurturing, relevant learning opportunities for all * Strengthens the resilience of all * Celebrates aspiration, ambition and innovation with all |

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| **School vision statement:** |
| Motto  “Bon Record”  **Our Vision:**  Working together, learning together, achieving together |

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| **School values and aims:** |
| Our Values:    Ambition, Growth, Success (AGS)  The whole school community worked together to draft our vision and values. They are being embedded in all aspects of school life, including key policy documents. Our aims are summarised in our values. Essentially we aim to support our young people to achieve their ambitions and grow as individuals by being provided with a wealth of opportunities. As a result everyone can achieve and experience success.    The school vision and values were reviewed during session: 2017/18.    The school aims will be reviewed during session: 2020/21. |

**Review of School Improvement Plan Progress 2018-2019**

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| **Improvement Priority 1: Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy** | |
| **NIF Priority**   * Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy * Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children * Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing * Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people | **NIF Driver**   * School leadership * Teacher professionalism * Parental engagement * Assessment of children’s progress * School Improvement * Performance Information |
| **HGIOS?4 QIs** | |
| 1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement  1.2 Leadership of learning 1.3 Leadership of change 1.4 Leadership of management and staff 1.5 Management of resources to promote equity 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection 2.2 Curriculum 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment | 2.4 Personalised support 2.5 Family learning 2.6 Transitions 2.7 Partnerships 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement 3.2 Securing children’s progress (ELC) 3.3 Increasing creativity and employability |
| Impact and Evidence:  There is a very positive and improving picture of attainment in literacy and numeracy in the Broad General Education (BGE). By the end of S3, almost all young people achieved Curriculum for Excellence third level in reading, writing and listening and talking. Almost all young people achieved third level in numeracy. A majority of young people achieved fourth level in literacy and numeracy by the end of S3.  Teachers use professional judgement, Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSAs) and a range of assessments using the National Benchmarks as part of their approaches to demonstrating progress over time and improved attainment. Young people are now starting to use the National Benchmarks to evaluate their success in achieving a level. A promising start has been made to moderating the level achieved in literacy and numeracy with staff using their training as QAMSOs to lead sessions on approaches to moderation. This work has been done in partnership with our primary colleagues with each school having a literacy and numeracy lead. A new tracking system has been developed with primary colleagues to capture attainment over time with the use of milestones.  Careful faculty tracking within the BGE for literacy and numeracy ensures young people move to the right pathway in the senior phase. All young people achieve a literacy and numeracy qualification by the time they leave school as evidenced in our senior phase attainment data.  A research toolkit has been developed by the literacy working group. This provides a scaffold for young people and teachers to use when working on a research task. The impact cannot yet be measured as the toolkit has only just been created. The literacy transition project continues to work well and provides our staff with an understanding of where our young people are in their learning.  Teachers across the ASG have been trained in the use of “Number Talks.” This initiative has been positively received by staff who see the potential for its use in reinforcing pupil understanding of key mathematical concepts. | |
| Next Steps   * Launch the Research Toolkit with staff, pupils and parents. Build in an approach to evaluating its effectiveness in developing and supporting research skills. * Track the attainment of young people at SCQF level 6 in literacy. Encourage them to complete SCQF level 6 literacy if they are not opting for Higher English.   .   * Track the attainment of young people at SCQF level 5 in numeracy. Explore a wider range of methodologies and test out our approach to setting. Review current research and debate this issue. Present young people as appropriate for a level 5 numeracy award. * Use Number Talks with children and young people from P1 to S1 to progress their understanding of place, value and fluency in progressing numbers. | |

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| **Improvement Priority 2: Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children** | |
| **NIF Priority**   1. Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy 2. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children 3. Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing 4. Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people | **NIF Driver**   * School leadership * Teacher professionalism * Parental engagement * Assessment of children’s progress * School Improvement * Performance Information |
| **HGIOS?4 QIs** | |
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| **Pupil Equity Fund 2018-2019 Budget £ 25,200** | |
| Impact and Evidence (including use of Interventions linked to Pupil Equity Funding):  An assertive mentoring programme has been established where young people at risk of not achieving due to socio-economic disadvantage work with a mentor. The twice termly meetings have allowed staff to put in place interventions based on conversations with young people. As a result, the curriculum is now cost neutral and young people can specialise in areas of relevance and interest to them.  Pupil Support Boxes are now in every classroom and these contain materials to support learning. The contents range from stationary through to more specialist equipment. Again, this means that young people are not facing a barrier in terms of equipment when in classes. A similar approach has been taken to supporting families with uniform and PE kit.  Our Pupil Equity Funding has also in part supported our funding of a school counsellor (1 of the three days) and a programme of twilight revision classes. Study kits including revision materials and published books have also been provided based on requests from young people when in conversation with their mentor.  A weights room has also been developed, again based on pupil feedback. This is leading to increased physical activity for identified groups of young people.  The impact of the above interventions has been tracked. There is an improving trend in terms of increased attendance and very few exclusions. The support provided is allowing learners to achieve well. This is reflected in the senior phase results for those in SIMD 2 to 4 where leavers performed significantly much higher than the National Establishment. Moreover there has been an increase in the number of young people moving onto a positive and sustained destination, the figure now sits at 97.6%. Young people from the most challenging socio-economic backgrounds have been well supported in moving into employment, higher education or further education. | |
| Next Steps  As the above interventions are working, we are going to maintain and continue these. Therefore young people facing socio-economic barriers will benefit from the Pupil Support Boxes and kits, Assertive Mentoring, a school counsellor and a cost neutral school day and other interventions as appropriate. Our Opportunities Fund will address issues/barriers which arise throughout the session for our young people. | |

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| **Improvement Priority 3: Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing** | |
| **NIF Priority**   1. Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy 2. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children 3. Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing 4. Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people | **NIF Driver**   * School leadership * Teacher professionalism * Parental engagement * Assessment of children’s progress * School Improvement * Performance Information |
| **HGIOS?4 QIs** | |
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| Impact and Evidence:  There is an increasing and shared staff understanding of wellbeing. Training has taken place on the wellbeing indicators and staff are now using these to assess the progress of young people and plan next steps. This has led to the development of a Wellbeing Form where staff use the indicators and wellbeing statements when asking for input from the Pupil Support staff. The innovative pilot on the use of “Adaptive Processing Personality Assessment” has the potential to support the wellbeing web in assessing need and informing planning. This in turn will ensure young people are familiar with the wellbeing indicators. This will support all learners to reflect on their progress in being safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.  Our young people appreciate and value the individual support and pastoral care they receive from their Principal Teacher of Pupil Support (PTPS). There is an effective House Team structure in place where wellbeing is at the heart of the work of the house teams. Young people’s wellbeing in terms of attendance, attainment and participation is closely tracked and appropriate interventions made.  School inspectors identified positive relationships across the school community as a key strength which underpins our approach to wellbeing. More work is required on taking forward the delivery of universal support entitlements. The use of tutor time will be evaluated and improved as part of our provision of universal support. The full implementation of the Mentoring Violence Protection (MVP) scheme is proving to be an effective universal support. Senior pupils lead sessions in S1 Personal and Social Education (PSE). Their work is contributing to our work as a school in celebrating diversity and challenging discrimination. Our young people feel increasingly safe and respected and know the importance of the “Do not be a bystander” campaign.  Our young people value the range of experiences and opportunities they have to be physically active. We have very high levels of participation as evidenced in the achievement of the Gold Sports award. Staff and young people lead clubs and inter house events and this allows us to further extend pupil participation and skill development.  We are improving outcomes for our young people by extending our pupil support team with our Multi- Agency Referral Group (MARG). This supports universal and more targeted support. As such we now have in place a school counsellor, an Education Social Worker (ESW) and we can access advice from colleagues in police, social work and health. The MARG has made a difference in providing support for children and young people across our ASG on an individual basis. We can evidence gains in attendance and participation, reduced exclusion rates and attainment gains.  Our senior prefects reviewed our approach to ensuring young people have a voice in school improvement by using HGIOURs and as a result redesigning the Pupil Council system. The year group pupil councils have been effective this session. They have taken forward improvements in the school canteen and introduced a new system to recognise achievements throughout the year.  Inspectors highlighted our understanding of the Equality Act. Teachers have embedded discussions of all relevant protected characteristics and the prevention of prejudice based bullying into the delivery of Personal and Social Education (PSE). As a result, young people are developing the language, understanding and confidence to discuss prejudice and report prejudice-based bullying.  Our Pupil Support staff report an increasing number of young people asking for support with anxiety related issues. The Parent Council are keen to support the 2019/20 improvement plan in this area. | |
| **N**ext Steps   * An acting DHT has been appointed for 23 months. The focus of this remit centres on ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion. See the very detailed action plan in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) * Explore a strategy within the wellbeing aspect of the SIP in relation to anxiety and emotional wellbeing. | |

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| **Improvement Priority 4: Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people** | |
| **NIF Priority**   1. Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy 2. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children 3. Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing 4. Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people | **NIF Driver**   * School leadership * Teacher professionalism * Parental engagement * Assessment of children’s progress * School Improvement * Performance Information |
| **HGIOS?4 QIs** | |
| 1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement  1.2 Leadership of learning 1.3 Leadership of change 1.4 Leadership of management and staff 1.5 Management of resources to promote equity 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection 2.2 Curriculum 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment | 2.4 Personalised support 2.5 Family learning 2.6 Transitions 2.7 Partnerships 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement 3.2 Securing children’s progress (ELC) 3.3 Increasing creativity and employability |
| Impact and Evidence:  Almost all young people (97.6%) reach a positive destination when they leave school. This is an improving picture and can be attributed to our young people leaving school with a very good set of qualifications and a wider skill set.  Young people are introduced to the Career Management Standard (CMS) from S1 and are provided with a range of opportunities to learn about the different employment sectors. This is built into Our PSE programme and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) deliver lessons using “My World of Work.”  We have just developed a new S3 Skills for Life and Work week. This took place in May 2019 and our young people experienced accredited outdoor learning, bespoke work experience and much more. The end product is a detailed S3 profile/CV. By experiencing these activities, our young people will be able to talk about the skills they are developing and do this as part of building their career management skills.  We have embedded our “Learner Pathways” events into the school calendar. They support our advice to pupils regarding option choices (curriculum) and future careers. Pupil, parental and employer evaluations of these events have been very positive. An extensive range of providers attend these events and offer advice to young people and their parents. We have also developed a Learner Pathways website and a DyW newsletter. These provide detailed and specialist information to support our young people in making balanced and informed decisions regarding their future pathways. Progress has been made and most of our young people are making more informed choices. However, when analysing attainment data and young people being withdrawn or opting to “drop” courses, more work is required on decision-making and tracking of young people sustaining the choices made. This is particularly the case in S6.  By May 2019 we will have completed our curriculum review. A rationale and new curriculum model has been developed. After full consultation and approval from the whole school community, this will be launched with the new S1 cohort in August 2019. | |
| Next Steps   * Audit progress against the Career Management Standard (CMS) and the Work Placement Standard (WPS) * Implement a system to track course choice, check young people are in the right courses for them and check they are remaining in these courses and gaining accreditation. * Implement the new curriculum model starting with the S1 2019 intake. * Faculty Improvement Plans (FIPs) to include changes associated with the new curriculum model and changes to Advanced Higher based on SQA documentation. | |

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| **Improvement Priority 5: Pace and challenge in learning, teaching and assessment** | |
| **NIF Priority**   1. Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy 2. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children. 3. Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing 4. Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people | **NIF Driver**   * School leadership * Teacher professionalism * Parental engagement * Assessment of children’s progress * School Improvement * Performance Information |
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| Impact and Evidence:  Class visits evidence greater consistency in the quality of learning, teaching and assessment across the school. In most lessons staff share the purpose of learning and build on young people’s prior knowledge. Learning intentions and success criteria are evident in most lessons and linked to CfE Benchmarks or SQA assessment criteria. There is evidence of young people using these to identify their strengths and to evaluate their progress.  Effective use is made of the learning, teaching and assessment policy. Staff share a clear understanding of the structure of a very good lesson. Almost all teachers make effective use of starter and learning activities. Most lessons include a plenary which checks understanding against clear success criteria, particularly in the senior phase.  In most lessons, teachers are quick to respond to young people’s learning needs and are adept at ensuring they remain on task. By “working the room”, teachers provide instant verbal feedback and are able to evaluate learning, thus allowing adaptations to the lesson. Most teachers use a variety of materials and supports, including our Pupil Support Box, to meet the needs of their pupils and ensure they make progress. There is evidence of pupils accessing our Pupil Support Boxes independently and taking more responsibility for their learning. There is also evidence of strong liaison between class teachers and support staff/S6 in-class support to ensure young people’s needs are met within lessons.  There are examples of outstanding teaching evident. In almost all lessons teachers give clear explanations and instructions. Classroom dialogue promotes learning. In most curriculum areas, young people are challenged to demonstrate higher order thinking skills.  Google classroom is used to provide access to support and consolidation materials which young people can access in and out of school. There is highly effective practice where Google Classroom is being used to provide tailored support and specific feedback on pieces of work.  Teachers provide support and challenge through a range of feedback strategies, both verbal and written. Learning conversations are valued by young people. This is very evident in the senior phase and increasingly in evidence in the BGE.  A Staff Hive is now in place and contains professional learning materials. This demonstrates our collegiate approach to designing learning experiences and constantly seeking to improve our practice. The Teacher Learning Community (TLC) is a highly effective and enthusiastic group. As a result of their work we have a coherent understanding of standards using the National Benchmarks.  We have developed effective systems to monitor young people’s progress and make appropriate interventions as required. We have included a covering sheet on the reports providing a fuller explanation of CfE levels. As a result, parents have spoken positively about these changes, saying that they feel better informed about young people’s progress and their next steps in learning. | |
| Next Steps   * Continue to ensure that high quality learning and teaching is consistent across the school. * Consistent approach on home learning and advice for parents. * Introduction of the Progress and Achievement Module for tracking, monitoring and reporting in the Broad General Education. | |

**Core Quality Indicator Evaluations based on Audit / Self-Evaluation Activity**

**School**

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| **Quality Indicator** | **School Self-Evaluation** |
| **1.3 Leadership of change** | **Very good** |
| **2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment** | **Very good** |
| **3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion** | **Good** |
| **3.2 Raising attainment and achievement** | **Very good** |

**ELCC (where appropriate)**

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| **Quality Indicator** | **ELCC Self-Evaluation** |
| **1.3 Leadership of change** |  |
| **2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment** |  |
| **3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion** |  |
| **3.2 Raising attainment and achievement** |  |

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| **6** | **Excellent** | **outstanding sector leading** |
| **5** | **Very Good** | **major strengths** |
| **4** | **Good** | **important strengths with some aspects for improvement** |
| **3** | **Satisfactory** | **strengths just outweigh weaknesses** |
| **2** | **Weak** | **important weaknesses** |
| **1** | **Unsatisfactory** | **major weaknesses** |

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| **Capacity for continuous improvement statement** | |
| Our overall evaluation of the school’s capacity for continuous improvement: | |
| * We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement: * We have a few concerns about our capacity for continuous improvement:   Comment:  School inspectors highlighted highly effective leadership and staff being committed, enthusiastic and highly motivated to lead change and improvement. |  |