

16 June 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

In March 2020, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Larkhall Academy. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The headteacher's leadership has brought much needed stability. He has successfully built trust in the school community. Young people, staff, parents and partners recognise and welcome the improved ethos, relationships and stronger teamwork.
- Young people who are increasingly proud of their school and the recent improvements. They value the support which teachers and support staff provide for them. They are well supported into positive destinations. Almost all young people leave school to go to higher education, further education or employment.
- The whole school focus on improving learning and teaching experiences. Increasingly, engaging approaches to digital learning are contributing well to these. This is making learning more accessible and motivating.
- The school's approaches to promoting mental health for all young people. Young people are leading on this valuable work and this is resulting in greater awareness of positive mental health, including through the "wall of support".

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and representatives from South Lanarkshire Council.

- Senior leaders should continue to develop approaches to improving the work of the school. This includes continuing, as planned, to develop the curriculum and a whole school approach to meeting the needs of all learners.
- Continue to develop approaches to learning, teaching and pupil participation which involve young people more meaningfully. Young people are now ready to take on more responsibility for their learning and leading aspects of school life.
- As part of its strategy to raise attainment, the school should continue with its drive to reduce exclusions and increase attendance. Staff should also develop further their approaches to support young people to identify the skills they are developing to prepare for their next steps in learning, life and work.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Larkhall Academy

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	good
Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	satisfactory
Raising attainment and achievement	satisfactory
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/inspection-reports/reports-page/?id=3362>

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. South Lanarkshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Gary Johnstone
HM Inspector