



# **STANDARDS & QUALITY**

## **PARENT REPORT**

**SESSION 2007 - 2008**

## **Armadale Academy**

<b>Standards and Quality Report</b>	<b>2007 – 2008</b>
<b>HMIe Inspection</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Improvement Plan</b>	<b>2008 – 2009</b>

### **Summary for Parents**

#### **Standards and Quality Report**

In session 2007 – 2008 our School Improvement Plan achieved the following:

##### **Curriculum**

- ◆ We continued to develop our S3 – S6 curriculum to allow SQA Exam presentation in English, Maths, French and P.E. in Third Year.
- ◆ Presentation in Third Year enabled us to start 2 year Higher courses in Fourth Year in English, Maths and French.
- ◆ Additional Intermediate 1 courses were developed to meet the needs of some Fifth Year pupils.
- ◆ We improved our coursing of pupils to appropriate courses in S 5 / 6.
- ◆ The curriculum now consists of a mix of Standard Grade and National Qualification courses in S3 – S6. This flexibility allows us to better meet the needs of all of our pupils.
- ◆ Many staff attended national courses relating to “A Curriculum for Excellence” and further consideration was given to the implications of this major curricular development.
- ◆ We continued to work with our associated Primaries on a number of curricular and transition initiatives. This included work on Child Protection, A Curriculum for Excellence and Anti-Sectarianism
- ◆ We improved the quantity and quality of our ICT hardware and its effective use in Teaching and Learning in daily classroom practice. The school’s web site was also greatly improved.
- ◆ We took forward numerous activities to progress Health Education, Enterprise and Citizenship.

##### **Attainment**

- ◆ Our attainment in 5 - 14 Reading was maintained whilst that in Writing improved. Both are in line with national levels of attainment.
- ◆ Our attainment in 5 - 14 Maths was above national levels of attainment.
- ◆ Our standard Grade results in 2007 and 2008 were above or in line with the targets set by West Lothian and with similar schools nationally. At Standard Grade the school is seen by the Authority as “punching above its weight”! In the SQA exams of 2007 these results placed us third equal in West Lothian in terms of pupils gaining 5 + Credit awards.
- ◆ We continued work to improve the attainment of pupils in the lowest 20% ability range with early presentation of such pupils at Access level in Third Year in English, Maths and French and by targeted support.
- ◆ Our Higher Grade results in 2007 were in line with both the targets set by West Lothian and with similar schools nationally. In 2008, Higher Grade results improved considerably and were above the targets set by West Lothian.
- ◆ For the third year running, two of our pupils gained Stellar Awards as the top attaining Fourth Year pupils in West Lothian.
- ◆ We continued to work with departments to analyse SQA results and to develop strategies to raise the attainment of all pupils.

## **Learning and Teaching**

- ◆ The main focus of development was in the implementation of Assessment for Learning techniques in the classroom. This involved discussion and development of improved learning and teaching strategies. Staff development and sharing of good practice in this area featured prominently in the course of the session.
- ◆ School policies on Learning and Teaching as well as Assessment and Reporting were reviewed and revised.
- ◆ We maintained a significant Out of Hours Learning programme through Homework Club (S1 / 2), Learning Club (S3 – 6) and departmental Study Support (S3 – 6). An Easter Revision school also took place.
- ◆ Student Support and Departmental Tracking, Monitoring and Reporting procedures in respect of pupils were improved.

## **Student Support**

- ◆ Our Student Support Team continued to work effectively with the local authority, the Children and Young People's Team and external agencies to support our pupils with additional learning needs.
- ◆ Strategies continued to be implemented, in and out of class, to address the needs of the lowest 20% ability group. There is an emphasis locally and nationally on the attainment of this group in all schools.
- ◆ The pastoral support available to pupils has been enhanced by individual and group work in relation to mental health, stress and anger management and counselling. Transition work has also been undertaken in this area with Primary 6 / 7 pupils.
- ◆ Flexible curricular packages were developed to meet the needs of specific pupils.

## **School Ethos**

- ◆ We have continued a high level of consultation with pupils in respect of school, authority and community issues.
- ◆ A new and more rigorous dress code was introduced.
- ◆ A Parent Council was established.
- ◆ Citizenship activities have, again, expanded beyond the normal House and Charity activities to include Environmental issues, Global Citizenship and links with the local community.
- ◆ The school gained accreditation as a Stage 2 Health Promoting School. We also gained an Eco Green Flag and a second Gold Enterprise Award. These are the highest levels in nationally and locally accredited awards.
- ◆ The school gained Charter Mark Status, a prestigious national award. The summary report noted that "Compliance levels with the Charter Mark Standard are outstanding for a first application" and noted that four areas were judged to "demonstrate best practice in public service delivery". For two of these areas it noted that this was "An impressive demonstration of what this principle of good public service is actually about".

## **Management Leadership and Quality Assurance**

- ◆ We maintained a high level of monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school with classroom observation and review procedures undertaken by Line Managers. We also encouraged staff to self evaluate and undertake peer observation.
- ◆ A new school policy on Customer Care was produced and placed on the school website.

## **HMIe Inspection      Areas of Strength**

An Inspection of the school was undertaken by HMIe in September 2007. The inspection team found that the school had several key strengths, ensuring that pupils were well supported both academically and pastorally. These included:

- ◆ The strong commitment of staff to work together to support all pupils, to improve their experiences and to recognise their achievements.
- ◆ Innovative developments in the curriculum such as successful cross curricular approaches to enterprise and citizenship.
- ◆ Pupils' personal development as increasingly confident individuals and effective citizens.
- ◆ Strengths in partnership working, particularly with the school's community and a range of external agencies.
- ◆ Very effective leadership of the Headteacher in setting a clear direction for the school and establishing an ethos of high expectations and continuous improvement.
- ◆ Strengths in leadership across the school.

Schools are graded in 17 areas as either Excellent (Sector leading), Very Good (Major strengths), Good (Important strengths with some areas for improvement) Adequate (strengths just outweigh weaknesses), Weak (Important weaknesses) and Unsatisfactory (Major weaknesses).

**Armada Academy gained 1 Excellent, 10 Very Goods, 4 Goods and 2 Adequates.**

**Of 100 schools inspected nationally in this way in the past two years the school was placed 10<sup>th</sup> equal.**

**This was an outstanding result for the school and a reflection of the hard work put in by staff, pupils and parents over the last few years.**

The full inspection report can be found on the school website.

## **Looking Forward – Our Improvement Plan**

In our **School Improvement Plan** for **2008 – 2009** we intend to focus on 3 key areas.

### **Attainment**

#### **We intend to:**

- ◆ Further development of Two Year Higher courses in English, Maths and French building on Third Year SQA presentation in these subject areas
- ◆ Expand the variety of courses in S5 / 6 and improve coursing at appropriate levels.
- ◆ Optimise attainment in Fourth Year in English, Maths and French for those not proceeding to the two year Higher.
- ◆ Further improve attainment in the lowest 20% ability group
- ◆ Further develop the Tracking, Monitoring and Reporting system.

### **Learning and Teaching**

#### **We intend to:**

- ◆ Develop and implement new teaching and learning approaches to improve pupils' learning and their involvement and engagement in learning.
- ◆ Undertake further staff development and sharing of good practice in these areas.

### **Meeting Pupils' Needs**

#### **We intend to:**

- ◆ Improve effective differentiation of classroom materials
- ◆ Develop strategies for learning and teaching which will take into account different learning styles.
- ◆ Raise staff awareness of pupils with additional support needs,
- ◆ Improve departmental liaison with Support for Learning to develop new materials and teaching approaches

Some of the activities noted above may take longer than one session to achieve.

---

We hope that you have found this summary helpful. A full copy of the HMIe Report and School Improvement Plan for 2008 – 2009 is available from the school and can also be found on our web site.

Graham Johnstone  
Head Teacher  
August 2008