



STANDARDS & QUALITY

PARENT REPORT

SESSION 2008 - 2009

Armadale Academy

Standards and Quality Report	2008 – 2009
HMIe Inspection	2008
Improvement Plan	2009 – 2010

Summary for Parents

Standards and Quality Report

In session 2008 – 2009 our School Improvement Plan achieved the following:

The Curriculum

- ◆ The focus of our curricular development work this session was on the national initiative “A Curriculum for Excellence”.
- ◆ Literacy, Health & Wellbeing and Numeracy Audits have been completed by all departments and working groups have been established in these areas.
- ◆ A timeline has been produced covering the next 5 years with targets and key implementation dates within the school noted.
- ◆ An Interdisciplinary Calendar of events has been created with Departments signed up to one or more of a range of such activities.
- ◆ The outcomes expected in all subject areas have been discussed.
- ◆ Good practice has been shared across departments and staff development has taken place both in school and at Authority level.
- ◆ We continued to work with our associated Primaries on a number of curricular and transition initiatives. This included work on A Curriculum for Excellence and Anti-Sectarianism.
- ◆ We continued to improve the effective use of I.C.T. in Teaching and Learning in daily classroom practice including significant use of the national website, Glow.
- ◆ We took forward numerous activities within the curriculum to progress Health Education, Enterprise and Citizenship.

Attainment The assessment figures noted below relate to 2009 results.

- ◆ Our attainment in 5 - 14 Reading (63% Level E or above) and Writing (51% Level E or above) are both in line with previously published national levels of attainment.
- ◆ Our attainment in 5 - 14 Maths (64% Level E or above) is above previously published national levels of attainment.
- ◆ Our standard Grade results in 2009 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 2009, 35% of pupils gained 5 or more Credit awards, slightly above the national average and this compared favourably with results in other West Lothian schools. 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.
- ◆ In 2009, Higher Grade results matched those of 2008 with a slight improvement in the numbers gaining 5 Highers and were above the targets set by West Lothian.
- ◆ For the fourth year running, one of our pupils gained a Stellar Award 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 the continued implementation of Assessment is for Learning techniques in the classroom. The **teaching** focus this year has been on improving questioning techniques. The **learning** focus has been on further development of pupil target setting / next step procedures to increase pupil involvement in their learning. Staff development and sharing of good practice in this area featured prominently in the course of the session.
- ◆ The School policy on Learning and Teaching has been revised to incorporate Assessment is for Learning approaches.
- ◆ We maintained a significant Out of Hours Learning programme through Homework Club (S1 / 2), Learning Club (S3 – 6), departmental Study Support (S3 – 6), West Lothian Masterclasses and an Easter Revision school.

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. Improved differentiation of materials is seen as a priority. Staff awareness raising concerning pupils with additional support needs has been undertaken.
- ◆ A new attendance policy has been produced in line with Authority Guidelines.
- ◆ The pastoral support available to pupils has been maintained 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.
- ◆ 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 has been awarded Stage 2 as a Health Promoting School. We also gained an Eco Green Flag and a third Gold Enterprise Award. These are the highest levels in nationally and locally accredited awards.
- ◆ The school gained Charter Mark Status, a prestigious national award, in 2008 and was inspected again in 2009 when further improvements were noted. This award is the government's gold standard in customer service awarded to public sector organisations. The summary report noted that "Compliance levels with the Charter Mark Standard are outstanding" and that "the quality of services delivered is very high". It noted that four areas were judged to "demonstrate best practice in public service delivery" and six areas were viewed as sector leading. This is one of the highest ratings ever issued in West Lothian. 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.

HMIe Inspection 2008 Report Areas of Strength

An Inspection of the school was published by HMIe in January 2008. 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).

Armadale Academy gained 1 Excellent, 10 Very Goods, 4 Goods and 2 Adequates

Of 100 schools inspected nationally in this way in the two years previously the school was placed 10th 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 both school and HMIe websites.

Looking Forward – Our Improvement Plan

In our **School Improvement Plan** for **2009 – 2010** we intend to focus on 2 key areas.

Learning and Teaching

We intend to:

- ◆ Further 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.
- ◆ Integrate these approaches into our Learning and Teaching Policy as well as amending our Assessment and Reporting Policy.

Implementation of A Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)

We intend to:

- ◆ Create First Year courses that cover the outcomes and experiences required by CfE.
- ◆ Further develop Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing outcomes and experiences and incorporate these into our First Year courses.
- ◆ Develop inter-disciplinary and cross curricular projects in First and Second Year.
- ◆ Undertake staff development and sharing of good practice at departmental and whole school level.
- ◆ Review our curricular structure in the light of the principles of A Curriculum for Excellence.

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 2009 – 2010 is available from the school and can also be found on our web site.

Graham Johnstone
Head Teacher
August 2009