Welcome to the latest edition of our Standards & Quality Report which highlights some of the key achievements of our school over the course of the last year. It showcases the importance that we attach to both academic attainment and wider achievement, ensuring that our young people are able to develop the appropriate Skills for Learning, Life and Work as they take their own journey through the wide range of opportunities which we provide in school and with a wide range of partners.

Over the course of the last 5 years we have seen improving trends in the range and number of qualifications which our young people are achieving and, coupled with a whole host of wider achievements, this stands them in good stead for moving on to a positive destination when they leave school. Indeed, last session 94.9% of our young people moved on to a positive destination when they left school, which is above the Falkirk, national and our comparator school figures. Last year we featured, for the first time, in the Sunday Times list of the top 50 performing state secondary schools in Scotland (for S6 attainment).

Our work at Larbert High has once again gained national recognition. For the second time in three years we won the School Sport Award at the Scottish Sports Award and we were the first school in Scotland to achieve the GOLD School Sport Award from sportscotland. We also won the first ever STEM Award at the Scottish Education Awards due to our outstanding work, in collaboration with our partners, across our Science, Technologies and Mathematics faculties.

However, we are not complacent and over the course of the next year we will aim higher and reach further to ensure that all of our young people – irrespective of their background – taste the success enjoyed at Larbert High School. Our collective ambition and attitude, and the belief that we can all succeed, will ensure further success.

Jon Reid
Rector.
Larbert High School is situated in Stenhousemuir, within one of the fastest growing areas in Scotland. The school roll is currently 1,689. There are 258 identified individuals (15.3%) with Additional Support Needs.

The school is led by a Senior Leadership Team comprising of the Rector, a Resource Manager and a team of Depute Rectors who focus on the attainment, behaviour and curriculum associated with their year group responsibilities. Exclusions have decreased over a 5-year period from 45 per 1,000 pupils to current levels of 10 per 1,000 pupils. This is well below the Falkirk average of 34 per 1,000 pupils.

Our middle leadership team, organised within CfE curricular areas, are complemented by three Heads of House and six Guidance Teachers who support the health & wellbeing and pastoral needs of our young people. A large number of staff lead whole school improvement priorities through our School Improvement Groups (SIGs), which can be viewed within our School Improvement Plan on our website.

In 2013, following an extensive consultation, our Cluster adopted a common vision and set of aims. Simply, we are ‘United in Purpose, to enhance: our lives, our community, our world’. Our graphic display represents a commitment to our 3-18 curriculum within all curricular areas, a range of flexible pathways for our learners and development of the four capacities.

We have a committed and highly-skilled teaching and support staff, with a wide range of experience. This creates a perfect mix for all staff to work with and learn from each other and improve the overall quality of learning and teaching for our pupils. We are also fortunate to have a School Based Police Officer, Youth Worker and we work in partnership with Tryst Community Sports Club Ltd which is led by a Head of Sport.
Larbert High School has made excellent progress in improving the attainment of our pupils. In 2014/15, our School Improvement Plan committed to improve attainment for all learners. Below are some of the details of how we achieved this.

**S4 Headlines:**

Our S4 have made an excellent start to the Senior Phase. 58% of our cohort (177 pupils) achieved 5 or more awards at National 5, an increase of 16% over the past decade. In addition, 95% of our pupils achieved 5 or more awards at National 4 and 26 pupils achieved a Higher one year earlier than the rest of Scotland. Through our enhanced tracking and monitoring systems and earlier interventions, 100% achieved National 4 Literacy and 91.75% achieved National 4 Numeracy – both results outperforming our comparator schools.

**S5/6 Headlines:**

At the exit point of school, pupils in S6 have also achieved an excellent set of results with 60.31% achieving 3 or more awards at Higher (compared to 43% in 2011) and 48.13% achieving 5 or more Highers (compared to 31% in 2011). These results are significantly above our comparator schools (56.56% and 40.63% respectively). In session 2014/15, 72% of Larbert High School’s S6 pupils left school with at least one Higher qualification. In addition, 23% of our S6 cohort achieved a pass in at least one Advanced Higher (increasing from 21% in 2011).

These excellent results reveal an increase in the number of pupils, over the last 5 years, gaining SQA qualifications at Larbert High School.
Highlights of our Achievements and Developments

Session 2014/15 was another outstanding year for wider opportunities and achievements at Larbert High School. Below are some of the highlights and developments that showcase some of our most significant successes and achievements.

National Recognition:

Whilst the numerous awards that Larbert High School has won over the past five years do not define the school, they do exhibit our commitment to improving our practice and the opportunities for our young people. In session 2014/15, we were the winners of the ‘School Sport Award’ at the Sunday Mail sportscotland Scottish Sports Awards and the first school to win twice in three years. Furthermore, in June 2015 we were the winners of the first ‘STEM Award’ at the Scottish Education Awards recognising excellence across the Science, Technologies and Mathematics faculties. Lastly, our Amnesty group was awarded the Most Committed Group award at the Amnesty International Youth Awards in London.

Community Partnerships:

Building links by volunteering in our local community remains a key priority at Larbert High and is exemplified by our work in the Carron Dams local nature reserve. This year all S1 pupils participated in a recent Conservation Day as they worked towards their Discovery level of the John Muir Award. In December, we linked with Forth Valley Royal Hospital, sending a team of 37 senior students to create some marvellous glass illustrations in the foyer, atrium as well as the children’s ward and dementia unit.

In session 2014/15, the school raised nearly £10,000 for our chosen charities through a variety of activities. Our ‘Food Bank Fridays’ donate over 100 kg of produce each month to help support local families.

Global Citizenship:

Three of our pupils worked with the Confucius Hub in Bo’ness and were successful in securing scholarships to China. Furthermore, our links with Woodlands School in Cape Town continued with our fundraising paying for the irrigation system in their new garden. We also continued to sponsor three pupils at Woodlands and will be welcoming them to Scotland in October 2015. Operation Wallacea saw our first visit to Kruger National Park, South Africa, where pupils worked with university students and Professors to gather data on rare and endangered species.
Highlights from our Achievements and Developments

Transitions:

Our School Improvement Plan in session 2014/15 made clear our intentions to enhance our transitions from Primary into Secondary and Secondary into a positive destination. Across the cluster our primary pupils successfully received their PE and Music curriculum from Larbert High’s Health and Wellbeing and Expressive Arts faculties for the first time whilst all of our cluster primary teachers took part in a series of interactive workshops led by our Languages teachers to develop their capacity to deliver on 1+2 Languages. The positive relationships built over first year have been further enhanced by our S1 residential trip to Lendrick Muir which involved over 200 S1s. We remain committed to ensuring that all of our young people make a successful transition into and from school.

Developing the Young Workforce:

Creating links and opportunities with businesses such as Webhelp UK who work with senior pupils on their customer service and employability skills demonstrates our real commitment to developing the next generation of workers. This was further solidified by our World of Work Day and our STEM careers fair which ensure our young people are learning from and working with potential employers. We strengthened our partnership with Forth Valley College through pupil participation on a number of HNCs, Foundation Apprenticeships and on the SCOTS programme.

Sporting Success:

At local level, our Junior and Senior pupils were ‘overall school winners’ in the Forth Valley School Dance Competition and we had winners in golf, swimming, gymnastics, athletics and cross-country at the Active Schools Sports Awards. For the second year running we were named Active Schools’ ‘School of the Year’. Nationally, our Mountain Bikers were named ‘Club of the Year’ by the Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland organisation. Internationally, we had pupils representing Larbert in Rugby, Football, Taekwondo, Karate, Athletics, Sailing, Judo and Tetrathlon.

The £280,000 development of the Larbert Legacy Cycle Track – all financed with external grants – transformed a derelict piece of land on our doorstep into a school and community cycling facility.
Work and Life of the School

During session 2014/15, we made very good progress in embedding the following school improvement plan priorities -

**Curriculum Pathways:**

One of our aims in session 2014/15 was to extend wider opportunities in the Broad General Education. In this area, we have made excellent progress. Within S1-3, a “School of...” programme is available in Rugby, Dance, Football and Basketball. The “School of...” programme provides our young people with the opportunity to gain wider achievement in their chosen area through a more in-depth experience. In addition, S2 and S3 pupils have the opportunity to personalise and choose an area of wider achievement through the Broad General Education (BGE) elective programme. 28 elective choices are available. These electives personalise the experiences and outcomes in a specific context, consolidate learning, develop specific skills for life and work and ensure all pupils have a full BGE experience.

**Partnership with Parents:**

We made clear that we wanted to increase parent voice during session 2014/15 and followed through with some innovative new ideas. Our Meet the Year Head workshops and Curricular Information Evening gave us the chance to strengthen our partnership with parents and afforded our parents the chance to find out more about the work and life of the school. We increased opportunities for parent feedback throughout the school year and used it to inform all of our future improvement planning. In addition, Larbert High’s Parent Council continued to be crucial forum for pupil and parent voice. Made up of parent members, staff and pupil representatives, the Parent Council gives parents the opportunity to contribute to the school’s continuing success.

**Improvements in Performance:**

We have increased the levels of support offered to pupils taking exams during session 2014/15 through supported study, master-classes, University workshops and by assigning teacher mentors. These additional services are designed to provide support and challenge leading to excellent increases in attainment for our young people. Tracking and monitoring procedures within departments have been enhanced to ensure that all members of staff and principal teachers are focusing on improvements in performance and identifying and acting upon any barriers to pupil learning at an early stage.
Vision and Leadership

United in Purpose, we work with our pupils, staff, parents and other partners to develop and shape our school. Continuous improvement planned as a result of rigorous self-evaluation ensures that the success of our school community is central to all that we do. One of our key priorities is to develop and distribute leadership at all levels.

In 2014/15, we have made very good progress in driving the following priorities from the school improvement plan -

**Year Head:**

Adopting a Year Head structure, assigning a Depute Rector to each year group in the school which has improved attendance, behaviour and curricular issues.

**Leadership Academy:**

Embedding the Leadership Academy programme giving S1-6 pupils the opportunity to be involved in the life of the school and develop their leadership skills essential for life in work, training or further education. The Leadership Academy consists of 12 Leadership Teams, each with a particular school improvement focus such as Charities, Learning, and Community Outreach.

**School and Faculty Improvement:**

Our School Improvement Groups (SIGs) are directly linked to our School Improvement Plan (SIP) and all members of staff are part of a SIG. Our SIGs ensure all staff play a part in shaping Larbert’s future plans and have the dual purpose of developing leadership capacity by encouraging each member to take ownership of SIG tasks. Furthermore, all staff take on an additional leadership role at faculty level at Larbert – large or small - evidenced through our Faculty Improvement Plans.

**Working with the Scottish Qualifications Agency (SQA):**

Every faculty in the school has close links to the SQA with 16% of our teaching staff employed in SQA leadership roles as Team Leaders, Verifiers and Item Writers. Furthermore, 32% of our staff were employed as SQA markers during the 2014/15 examination diet. In total 42% held a position within the SQA last year. This experience ensures that our staff are able to confidently lead the implementation of the new qualifications within the school, across the authority and nationally.
Successes and Achievements

- Strive to close the attainment gap by improving levels of attainment for all learners.
- Introduce a revised reporting model in the BGE using the significant aspects of learning to track pupil progress.
- Strive to achieve 100% positive destinations.

Work and Life of the School

- Extend the range of subjects in the Senior Phase through partnership working and by increasing the number of young people achieving industry recognised vocational qualifications.
- Develop Digital Learning as part of teaching and learning in the school and cluster, especially through the use of GLOW and class blogs.
- Develop a clear strategy for raising attainment in literacy and numeracy across learning.

Vision and Leadership

- Embed the development of skills across learning through the Leadership Academy and the Optimum Award.
- Embed Developing the Young Workforce by extending the number of opportunities as well as broadening the range of achievement pathways.
- Increase opportunities for pupil and parent voice.