

Bunscoill Ghaelgagh

Schools on the Isle of Man are required to continually review and evaluate their performance in all aspects of their work. Bunscoill Ghaelgagh's self review was externally validated on 4th March 2015. The validation covered the full range of the school's judgments but focused on three specific areas:

- Achievement against prior attainment
- Learning and teaching
- Curriculum

Achievement against prior attainment

The school judged itself as 'satisfactory'. The team decided that in fact achievement against prior attainment was 'good' and that some aspects should be regarded as a 'significant strength'. Progress in mathematics was regarded as remarkable, particularly as it is taught through the medium of Manx. The reason for the change in judgment was due to the fact that the school had set especially high standards for itself.

Learning and teaching

This was judged to be 'good' by the school and the validation team upheld this judgment. Medium-term planning is clearly based on a skills-based curriculum. Teaching strategies are matched to the pupils' needs and teachers have high expectations. Through their teaching, teachers encourage, engage, motivate and challenge pupils, resulting in high attainment and good progress.

Curriculum

The school's curriculum meets statutory requirements and mirrors the Isle of Man's 'Essentials for Learning' framework by providing a range of well-balanced opportunities that engage the pupils and are fully inclusive. The curriculum takes into account and reflects an understanding of how children learn. It promotes independent and collaborative learning, motivates and challenges pupils to achieve high standards and meets the needs of individuals as well as collective needs. The school judged this as 'satisfactory' as it is currently refining the skills identified in some other aspects of the curriculum. Although the validation team upheld this decision, it was noted that the Manx language curriculum developed by the school is unique and a 'significant strength'. It contributes positively to pupils' learning in other subjects. When this exercise is complete, curriculum is likely to be at least 'good' overall.

Other areas

In addition to these areas of specific focus, the team looked at the other judgments the school and made about itself. The team concurred with the school's judgments, including:

- Attainment is 'good' overall.
- Classrooms are well planned and attractive places of learning.
- Creative use is made of available space.
- Teachers often change the layout of classrooms to allow for different learning and teaching styles.
- Displays in classrooms and around the school assist the pupils in their learning as well as celebrate their achievement.

- Pupils are aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and the impact this has on their bodies.
- Pupils are happy to come to school.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well and treat teachers and others with respect.
- Teachers feel the headteacher trusts and encourages them to develop their own personal teaching styles.
- Communication is good within the school and with parents.
- Teachers send home information about the learning happening in the classrooms.

Conclusion

The school knows itself well. The school's approach to self-evaluation would do fuller justice to its unique status and many considerable achievements if it were more systematic.

Bnr Julie Matthews
Ard Ynsee
Mayrnt 2015

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March 2015