**Harlaw Academy: School Improvement Planning (April 2017)**

This document serves three purposes:

1. To gather information on the current school improvement plan
2. To identify priorities for the new school improvement plan
3. To consult on our approach for ‘closing the gap’ through the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF)

There are separate papers for each of the 3 areas and I would welcome feedback to allow me to produce a draft standard and quality report and a draft school improvement plan for staff, pupils and parents to consider by late May.

The following notes set a context for each of the three areas.

1. Current school improvement plan:

Paper 1 sets out the 3 heading and the 9 themes on the current school improvement plan. In any return please highlight work or activities you feel we have progressed and areas where we require further work. It is really important to have actual examples of good work to include in my annual standards and quality report. It is equally important to be made aware of things we need to prioritise either in the remainder of this school session or within the next school improvement plan.

1. New school improvement plan:

It is crucial that the school improvement plan sets out clearly the focus for staff, pupils, parents and other partners. It needs to be clear, concise, ambitious and achievable. It needs to state our priorities and set out explicitly; where we want to be, how we hope to get there and who needs to be involved. Paper 2 sets out a possible set of headings but I am really keen to hear from various groups what they think needs to be improved. Please suggest changes to the draft ideas and/or highlight other areas which need to be included in our next improvement plan.

1. Closing the gap/Pupil Equity Fund:

The Scottish Government have allocated additional funding directly to schools to help children who are living in poverty and who, as a result, may be experiencing educational disadvantage. We are required to consult with staff, children and families on how we use this additional funding. Paper 3 sets out some of my initial thoughts on what this could look like at Harlaw Academy and how this would be included within our planning. I am interested in feedback on what is being proposed.

I trust the above notes and the following pages are clear and allow you to contribute to these important pieces of work. I am committed to developing opportunities for you to actively participate in improving our school. It is not only a something I am required to do but it is also essential in further developing our ambitious and successful school community.

David Innes

Head Teacher

18th April 2017

**Paper 1 - Harlaw Academy: Comments on the current School Improvement Plan**

The priorities in the current school improvement plan are shown below. Use the final column to identify any examples of good work or areas which still require to be addressed.

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| **Plan 1: People** | **Specifics of plan** |
| **Relationships:**  We will promote safe, purposeful and respectful relationships | * review our anti-bullying and behaviour policies * support staff in restorative and rights respecting approaches * promote mental health, resilience and growth mind set |
| **Inclusion:**  We will know, include and support all of our learners | * use wellbeing indicators to support learning/learners * provide targeted support to help overcome disadvantage * set targets and track/monitor learner progress * involve all learners in discussions about their progress and learning |
| **Participation:**  We will involve children and families in learning | * use on-line learning to help families to support learners * create opportunities for more pupils to lead activities * provide opportunities for families and partners to work with school * develop structures to promote participation in improvement |

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| **Plan 2: Learning** | **Specifics of plan** |
| **Opportunities:**  We will offer opportunities which meet needs and develop skills | * ensure our curriculum has a focus on raising attainment and leads to positive destinations * offer progression P7 to post school and coherence across experiences for all our learners * provide opportunities for qualifications, IDL and recognition of wider achievements |
| **Learning:**  We will learn in a safe, active, purposeful and co-operative environment | * discuss skills, targets and progress with all learners * promote literacy, numeracy and H&WB in all curricular areas * use Es/Os and course descriptors to create active, relevant, differentiated learning experiences for all pupils * promote professional enquiry groups to support/develop staff |
| **Attainment:**  We will encourage high levels of attainment for all pupils | * set ambitious targets for individuals to ‘raise attainment’ * use performance information to target support and ‘close gaps’ * monitor progress and involve pupils in improvements * provide support to families to help address disadvantage * seek to reduce the burden of assessment on staff and pupils |

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| **Plan 3: Community** | **Specifics of plan** |
| **Citizenship**:  We will promote and develop positive links with our local/wider community | * recognise and realise rights for children locally and globally * care for our environment and promote sustainability * consider the impact of our actions on others * promote equality/diversity and make a positive impact locally and internationally |
| **Achievement**:  We will increase opportunities for participation and wider achievement | * create more opportunities for pupil participation/representation * continue to develop opportunities for pupil leadership/involvement * promote volunteering and active citizenship opportunities * give recognition to the wider achievements of our pupils |
| **Involvement:**  We will involve parents and other partners in supporting learning and learners | * involve parents in the learning and wider life of the school * welcome the views/support of pupils parents and wider community * work to overcome barriers to involving parents and others * form purposeful links with the local and wider community |

**Paper 2 - Harlaw Academy: Views on possible themes for our next School Improvement Plan**

The suggestion is to use the same 3 headings but reduce the number of sub-headings and themes). I have also tried to write it in a way which is more precise and succinct.

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| **Plan 1: People** | **we will ….** |
| **Attending and contributing:**  To help pupils to attend school and achieve their potential …. | * improve attendance and review the impact of policies/practices relating to pupil safety/wellbeing including; child protection, attendance, drugs, knife crime, anti-bullying * further develop our work on ‘bounce back’, resilience, restorative approaches, rights respecting schools and growth mind set * encourage staff, pupils, parents etc to contribute to initiatives/improvements |
| **Better behaviour, better learning:**  To help all our pupils feel safe and valued in their school … | * use de-escalation, restorative and rights respecting approaches to set the climate for learning, behaviour and relationships. * develop consistent approaches to managing/recording incidents and introduce a range of alternatives to exclusion both at a class and whole school level * develop approaches to praise, celebrating achievement and recognising positive behaviour * reduce excessive workload burdens on staff and pupils |

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| **Plan 2: Learning** | **we will ….** |
| **Learning and teaching:**  To help pupils develop skills for learning, life and work … | * adapt our courses and assessments to meet new requirements of SQA (S4-S6) and the national draft benchmarks (S1-S3) * work with Primary colleagues to develop the pace and challenge of pupil experiences (P7 to post school) * make our learning approaches and intentions more ‘visible’ and use google classroom to make learning more accessible from home * ensure learning is adapted to meets the needs of our learners and helps them towards their future intentions at each stage |
| **Attainment and achievement:**  To help pupils to gain qualifications and have their achievements recognised ….. | * sustain a strong focus on raising attainment in all curricular areas, in particular in relation to literacy, numeracy and H&WB * use performance data to inform improvement at class/faculty/school levels * set targets with pupils and ensure they know; the level they are working at, the skills they are developing, their targets and how to raise their attainment * simplify assessment/recording and review our approach to reporting * guide pupils into aspirational pathways which will lead to high attainment and provide opportunities for wider achievement. |

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| **Plan 3: Community** | **we will ….** |
| **Citizenship and participation**:  To ensure our pupils have a positive impact on their community ….. | * promote higher levels of participation from all pupils in class activities and across all aspects of the school * replace activity week with a range of curriculum enrichment opportunities * emphasise sustainability, equality/diversity and the rights of children locally/globally * promote awareness of the local area and of other countries/cultures eg through excursions, visits and links with partner schools/organisations |
| **Partnership and opportunity:**  To ensure the community supports our pupils and their learning ….. | * seeking to support and involve parents more directly in the work of their children and to seek their support in for the wider life of the school * develop purposeful links within our learning partnership to support the curriculum and to increase opportunities for pupils/families outwith school * work closely with our partner secondary schools and our associated primaries plan for a coherent and enriched set of learning experiences for our pupils * strengthen our partnership with Aberdeen City Council and other local businesses and organisations to help develop the relevance of our curriculum, opportunities for active learning and employability of our pupils. |

**Paper 3 - Harlaw Academy: Closing the gap and the pupil equity fund (PEF)**

Over the new session, and probably through to 2020, additional funding aimed at ‘closing the poverty related gap’ has been made available to schools. The figure schools receive is based on the numbers of families who claim ‘free school meals’. Harlaw will receive just over £50,000 and it has to be used to support those who face barriers due to poverty. This paper sets out some initial thinking on what we are proposing and what this would look like in the context of our 3 school improvement plan headings.

**The first part of my proposal** is to identify someone to get to know the families better because that is the only way we will really know what the barriers are from their point of view.

From this I think we might get a variety of issues and to tackle these I anticipate that come August we will need:

* someone to keep an eye on how the 90 youngsters are doing, to initiate further support when needed and to monitor if the extra resource is having the desired impact (see paragraph below)
* someone else to be supporting the most vulnerable of the youngsters and their families
* some things to allow us to solve some basic barriers (spare books, a bus pass, a spare PE kit …)
* some contacts to help (eg to run a particular programme for a group of youngsters or their families, a crèche and/or transport to get a parent to a parents night)

Alongside this we need to have an idea of what ‘closing the gap’ would actually mean. Attendance, referrals, participation (in classes and in the wider school), achievement, attainment ….. It could be quite a long list. **The second part of my proposal** is to identify a second person to gather together the data for the individuals and to begin to identify what our targets might be for them. Both people would need to liaise closely with the PTG, Year Head and class teachers for each pupil involved.

**The third part of my proposal** is to review this in late May at the time of the school improvement plan and confirm our plans for the PEF which is likely to include the elements below;

Phase 1 (May-June): Indicative cost £3K-£6K

* one person to engage with pupils and families (0.4FTE) and one person gathering data and setting targets (0.2 FTE) to identify overall priorities and individual plans/targets

Phase 2 (August-December): Indicative cost £10K-£20K

* continued engagement and support for pupils and their families(0.4 FTE)
* on-going monitoring progress and gathering evidence of impact (0.2 FTE)
* input from other providers to support individuals/small groups
* support such as equipment, fees, resources to encourage attendance and participation
* Other support from existing resources and opportunities within the learning partnership, community and/or school

Phase 3 (January- March): Indicative cost £7K-£15K

As above but also evaluate, report and re-focus prior to the announcement of any new funding.

The above proposal does not allocate all of the money as it can be carried forward and in this first year we are needing to lay the groundwork for the future so it would be helpful not to over commit and retain some unallocated funds to use for an unforeseen need which arises.

I am required to seek the views of staff, parents and pupils on my proposals and also submit a plan – the notes over show specific work which would enhance the proposed school plans.

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| **Plan 1: People** | * closely monitor attendance/progress and work closely with the teachers and the pupil/family to overcome barriers to attendance/progress * seek additional ways to promote participation and involvement of these children and families in classwork and in the wider life of the school * support interventions when negative behaviour/feedback is escalating |
| **Plan 2: Learning** | * provide specific support in respect of barriers including those related to; literacy, numeracy, H&WB, access to ICT * closely monitor progress in relation to targets, provide regular feedback on progress to families and offer support where concerns are identified * offer additional support at the time of subject choice to ensure individuals can access courses and be supported through a positive transition |
| **Plan 3: Community** | * support enhanced opportunities for individuals to develop their talents and to increase their awareness of opportunities in their local area and beyond * monitor levels of participation in class and beyond and intervening to overcome barriers when concerns are raised * reach out to families in order to better understand the barriers and establish the nature of support, who is best placed to provide it and where * establish links with individuals/organisations (including employers) who can support vulnerable children/families at key times (trauma, transition etc) |