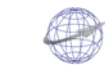




States of Guernsey
Education Services



Terry Carr
Consultancy Ltd | Improving Outcomes
for
Learners

Summarised inspection findings

Grammar School and Sixth Form Centre

18 February 2019

Key contextual information

The school comprises the Grammar School and the Sixth Form Centre. The Grammar School serves young people from Year 7 to Year 11. In the current session, the young people in the school from Years 7 to 11 had been selected at the end of their Year 6 to attend the school. The school will move to a non-selective intake to Year 7 from 2019 onwards. The Sixth Form Centre serves young people who have achieved five or more A* to C grades, including English, at GCSE level in Year 11. In the current session, around 60 per cent of students at the Sixth Form Centre had attended other secondary schools across the Bailiwick of Guernsey in Year 11.

1.3 Leadership of change

very good

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- *Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community*
- *Strategic planning for continuous improvement*
- *Implementing improvement and change*

Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community

- The school¹ has an inclusive vision. It is shared and well understood by staff, students, parents and partners. The school's vision focuses on meeting the needs of all students who attend the school and enabling them to attain and achieve to high standards. It achieves this vision very effectively. The school enables students and staff to be confident and actively engaged in their own learning and personal development. It sets high standards and has high expectations for the care and welfare of students and levels of attainment and achievement. It provides very effective support to enable students to achieve these standards. The acting headteacher, the senior leadership team and other staff provide very effective leadership to the school. Staff work very effectively as a team and are committed to the continuous improvement of the school and to achieving success for all students.
- The school has very effective arrangements for managing students' transition

¹ Unless otherwise stated, throughout this report the word school refers to both the Grammar School and the Sixth Form Centre.

from their previous schools into both the Grammar School and the Sixth Form Centre. It has very successfully established a single whole school identity and has a very caring ethos.

- Under the very effective leadership of the acting headteacher, the school engages very well with students, parents, its partners and the local community. The school is taking steps to extend these approaches to take greater account of the views of students, parents and its partners in agreeing the school's priorities for improvement. Maintaining and extending these approaches will become increasingly important as the school moves to a non-selective intake to Year 7 from 2019 onwards.

Strategic planning for continuous improvement

- The school has a very effective range of approaches to planning for continuous improvement. The school's priorities for improvement are organised under four strategic headings. These are leadership and management, learning and teaching, student support and attainment and achievement. These provide a very clear and well-judged strategic direction for the school. The school reviews its priorities within each of these strategic areas regularly at all levels.
- Planning for continuous improvement is well-embedded at whole school, faculty, subject and individual teacher level. Priorities within improvement plans are informed by the school's well-established processes and procedures for evaluating the quality of its work at all levels. In most areas of the school, these approaches are robust and very effective. As a result, priorities within improvement plans are appropriate and well-judged. The school seeks and acts effectively upon the views of students. It gives a high priority to ensuring students have an in-depth understanding of their strengths and the areas where they need to improve. It is currently enhancing its approaches for consulting with and seeking the views of parents and its partners in improving the school.

Implementing improvement and change

- The school has a monitoring and evaluation programme that works very effectively at whole school, faculty and department level. Improvement plans identify clearly the staff members who are responsible for leading priorities. Members of the senior leadership team and faculty heads review progress against priorities in improvement plans regularly. These reviews identify outcomes that have been achieved and areas where further work is required. As a result of these very systematic approaches, the school has made very good progress in implementing its priorities for improvement.
- The school has a range of data on the progress students make across the school. The progress of groups of students and individual learners is monitored and reviewed very effectively at whole school, faculty, subject and class level. By the end of Year 11 and in the Sixth Form Centre, students have predicted and target grades. Teachers and students review progress towards these targets regularly. The Education Officer for the school also undertakes targeted visits to review the outcomes students achieve in the school. In these visits, the school identifies its

strengths and areas for improvement. As a result of these approaches, the school has made very good progress in raising levels of attainment and achievement in both the Grammar School and the Sixth Form Centre.

- The school has detailed assessment information on all students. This information is designed to help students and their teachers understand how they learn and what their academic potential might be. Some teachers make very effective use of this information. There is the potential for more teachers to make greater use of this information in planning learning.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Learning and engagement*
- *Quality of teaching*
- *Effective use of assessment*
- *Planning, tracking and monitoring*

Learning and engagement

- Classroom environments in the school are attractive, of a good size and well resourced. The corridors and hallways feature high quality student artworks, photographs and other student produced artefacts which enhance the school experience. Students are very proud of their school and talk enthusiastically about the wide range of subjects offered and the very wide variety of out of school activities the school makes available to them. The school is aware that recent staffing challenges have led to some gaps in the quality of students' learning experiences. It has taken a number of positive steps to try and address this issue.
- In almost all lessons, coursework is challenging and stimulating and tasks are very well matched to students' needs. Students are given very good opportunities to be active in their learning. In almost all lessons, students collaborate very well on group tasks. In a wide range of subjects across the school, students engage in a high level of analysis and discussion of their areas of study. This is particularly notable in the Sixth Form Centre where students' ability to listen to the ideas of others, explore their understanding of complex issues and explain their ideas is outstanding. At all stages, students are able to research, share their thinking and support their arguments both orally and in writing very effectively.
- The development of critical thinking and enquiry skills is firmly embedded in most subjects. Students respond positively to the many opportunities presented to them. They are given many opportunities to personalise and make choices in their learning. There are some very good examples of this across the school. An example of exemplary practice is in photography where students choose a photographic genre to research and write about. They then produce very high-quality portfolios in that genre.

Quality of teaching

- Overall, the ethos in lessons is very positive and teachers engage students in their learning very well. Almost all teachers have a good or very good subject knowledge. Their instructions and explanations are clear. In the best lessons, teachers work hard to encourage independent thinking and provide well-judged and well-planned opportunities for individual, paired, group and collaborative work.
- Almost all teachers provide very effective support to individuals when they

experience difficulty in understanding or completing tasks. Most teachers are skilled in explaining and creating imaginative opportunities for students to understand and answer more complex questions. Lesson planning is thorough. In most lessons, learning outcomes are shared with students so that they are aware of the expectations for their learning. In some lessons, teachers do not always refer back to these outcomes at the end of the lesson so that students are able to measure or evaluate their progress.

- Across the school, there are some very good examples of problem-solving activities. In many subjects, staff make very effective use of digital technologies as both a tool for teaching and as an aid to enhance students' learning. The quality and variety of homework teachers provide is of a high standard. It is set in such a way that it motivates, extends and, in the best examples, enables to students to prepare very well for their individual and group learning in the classroom.

Effective use of assessment

- Teachers use a wide range of assessment information very successfully to make judgements about the progress and attainment of both individual students and groups of students. Across the school, there are some very good examples of the effective use of assessment. This includes work that engages students in peer and self-review against clear assessment standards. Students find the approaches the teachers use very helpful. They feel it gives them a very good understanding of their next steps in learning and what they need to do to improve. Students have an in-depth understanding of their target and predicted grades.
- The school uses a wide range of approaches to review each student's progress. Teachers compare student results with school predictions against a range of performance predictors. Subject leaders and teachers work closely with heads of faculty to review the performance of individual students where there are causes for concern. Personalised plans are developed for students. Those who are underachieving have individualised plans. These approaches enable students, parents and tutors to understand, set and meet the next steps in learning of individual students very well.

Planning, tracking and monitoring

- Under the very effective leadership of the senior management team, staff have established an extensive and very effective range of systems to assess, monitor and track students' progress and learning. Monitoring approaches are well matched to the learning needs of students and are used very effectively to support them to demonstrate what they are learning. Taken together, these approaches enable all students to make excellent progress from their prior levels of attainment and achievement in both the Grammar School and the Sixth Form Centre.

School choice of Quality Indicator: 2.2 Curriculum

While this indicator is not evaluated, it highlights the importance of placing the needs of learners at the centre of curriculum design and development. The structure and delivery of the curriculum should take good account of local and national circumstances. The curriculum is the totality of learning experiences as delivered by the school and its partners. An effective curriculum results in strong outcomes for all learners. The themes are:

- *Rationale and design*
- *Development of the curriculum*
- *Learning Pathways*
- *Skills for learning, life and work*

Rationale and design

- The curriculum takes very good account of the Big Picture Curriculum established across the Bailiwick of Guernsey. The curriculum sets clear entitlements to ensure children become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. Within that context, the curriculum also has the objective to ensure all students are healthy, active, safe, nurtured, included, respected and are enabled to reach their individual potential. The curriculum aims to ensure that all students develop the skills they will require for the world of life, work and learning. The school achieves these outcomes very successfully and prepares students very well for the complexities of the world outside and beyond that of the classroom and school.
- The curriculum provides students with access to a very rich and varied range of opportunities through both school-based and out of school activities. This is particularly the case in the Sixth Form Centre. Access to this outstanding range of experiences inspires students to be enterprising and innovative. The curriculum enables students to develop and build upon their existing interests or learn new ones very well.

Development of the Curriculum

- The curriculum in the Grammar School is designed to meet the needs of students who are selected to attend the school from Year 7 to Year 11. The curriculum in the Sixth Form Centre is designed to meet the needs of students from schools across the Bailiwick of Guernsey who have achieved five or more A* to C grades including English at GCSE level. In both the Grammar School and the Sixth Form Centre, the curriculum meets the diverse needs and aspirations of the students very effectively. It provides very good continuity and progression in students' learning and skills development.
- Courses across the school are well-designed and structured. Learning outcomes are very clear and teachers share them very effectively with students. As a result of this clarity and teachers' very effective use of a range of assessment strategies, students demonstrate a very good understanding of their learning targets and the steps they need to take to achieve their targets.

Learning Pathways

- In the Grammar School, from Years 7 to 9, students follow a broad and balanced curriculum and study a wide range of subjects.
- During Year 9, students are given helpful advice and support to choose their subjects through meetings and individual discussions with school staff and in partnership with parents.
- In Years 10 and 11, the curriculum is developed very well around the needs of the students. This ensures that they choose the appropriate pathway that matches their abilities, interests, needs and future careers. Students study seven compulsory subjects that include a choice of a modern foreign language and the opportunity to gain either double or triple GCSE science certification. In addition, students can choose three optional subjects from a comprehensive list. By choosing in this way, students follow a programme of study consisting of up to 10, 11 or 12 GCSE courses. This approach has enabled the school to develop a curriculum that is relevant, appropriately challenging, progressive and personalised.
- In the Sixth Form Centre, the curriculum offers a rich and very broad range of subjects, experiences and opportunities through the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP), A Level programmes and other courses such as the Personal Enrichment Programme.
- The IBDP is well balanced and coherent with students studying six courses with three at Higher level and three at Standard level. Students following the A Level pathway will study at least three full A Levels plus one other subject.
- A commendable and worthwhile element of the Sixth Form curriculum is the numerous enrichment opportunities on offer for students, ranging from sport, drama and music to trips and expeditions, the Young Enterprise Scheme and the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Skills for learning, life and work

- All staff and the extensive range of partners provide high quality opportunities for students to develop their skills for learning, life and work in a stimulating and invigorating environment. Students have access to frequent and well-designed programmes which challenge and prepare them very well for life beyond school and into the world of work. Enterprise and creative opportunities are embedded in many of the curricular, out of school and other activities that are built into the high-quality curriculum offered by the school.
- In the future, it will be important to sustain and maintain access for all students to the current rich and varied opportunities available through the curriculum and other out of school activities, particularly in the Sixth Form.

2.7 Partnerships: theme 1 – The development and promotion of partnerships

- The school has an effective range of approaches to working with parents. Overall, parents are very positive about the school. Almost all parents feel their child likes school and is treated fairly and with respect. They also feel the school helps students to treat each other with respect. A group of parents who met with inspectors felt the school's arrangements for pastoral care and supporting students were very effective. Recently, the school has taken a number of positive steps to seek the views of parents. An initial focus has been on seeking parents' views on the effectiveness of parents' evenings and the quality of information provided to parents on their child's progress. Parents welcome this approach and feel it is beginning to give them a voice in helping the school to improve.
- The school has established a range of ways of giving students a voice in the school. The school has a student representative council, the student voice team, with members from all school houses. Staff consult regularly with students at all stages. For example, the school has consulted recently with them about the timing of tutor time. As a result, the school has responded positively to the views expressed by young people and plans to make changes to the timing of tutor time.
- The school has very positive links with a range of partners, including local businesses, sports and arts groups, and other agencies. Almost all partners feel they work regularly with the school and that the school values the contribution they make to the school's work. Almost all feel that their partnership with the school works well. The school has taken recent steps to engage with partners in evaluating and improving its work with them. For example, the school has initiated plans to improve links with and make greater use of the library service. These steps are welcomed by the school's partners.

2.1: Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, students. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

excellent

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Wellbeing*
- *Fulfilment of statutory duties*
- *Inclusion and equality*

Wellbeing

- There is a very strong sense of community across the school. This is particularly commendable because of the significant number of new students who join the Sixth Form Centre from a wide range of other secondary schools at the beginning of Year 12. The school's very thorough 'Team Around the Child' approach to supporting students' wellbeing and progress is outstanding. Students benefit from the very effective partnership working of staff, parents and specialist agencies. These approaches support students in their learning and help them with any challenges they face such as with their mental health.
- Students demonstrate very high levels of respect in the relationships they have with one another and with staff. The school's progress towards official recognition as a Rights Respecting School is a very good example of how it is making one of its core values a strong part of everyday school life.
- From a range of surveys of students' views, it is clear that students feel safe and valued in school. Students speak positively about how helpful the Personal, Social, Citizenship/Careers and Health Education Programme (PSCHE) is in making them aware of personal safety. This includes safety online while using mobile phones, tablets, personal computers and other digital technologies. Improvements in the cafeteria menus, clear guidance about healthy packed lunches and the promotion of physical activities help to keep students aware of the need to follow healthy lifestyles. Students, particularly in the Sixth Form Centre, speak very positively about teachers' approaches to assessment and feedback. They feel these approaches help them monitor and plan their own progress and manage their workload.
- The wide range of challenging learning experiences and activities both in and out of the classroom helps students to be confident, resilient and ambitious. Students have an important and growing role in school decision making. Teachers ask for students' views regularly to help plan improvements in learning and teaching. Students from all stages lead assemblies on a wide range of issues and projects. Sixth Form students act as buddies and mentors to support mental health and help build self-esteem and confidence.

Fulfilment of statutory duties

- The school has very effective arrangements for keeping staff aware of Bailiwick policies and procedures for child protection and how to apply them.
- The school complies fully with its statutory duties. Its very effective and wide-ranging partnership working ensures there is a coordinated approach to planning and monitoring support for young people who experience barriers to their learning and development. Young people and their parents have a very clear role in the student support process. All staff have a very good understanding of their responsibilities for providing effective support for all students.
- Across the school, staff use the Information Management System very effectively to keep records up-to-date and provide continuous support for teachers.
- Staff involved in the school's student support meetings are highly skilled and very knowledgeable. They use their knowledge and understanding of students and their families very effectively to maintain purposeful and productive relationships. They have very effective approaches to assess the nature and extent of the needs of individual students. The school provides a very good range of interventions that ensure sensitive and appropriate support to young people. Taken together, these mean that the school has very strong arrangements for supporting and monitoring the progress of all learners, including those who have determinations and those who are looked after.

Inclusion and equality

- The school supports students arriving into the Grammar School in Year 7 and into the Sixth Form Centre in Year 12 with well-planned transition programmes. The school takes very good account of students' views of their experiences to check on how well they are settling in and where there may be a need for additional support. Students in the Sixth Form Centre are very positive about their experiences. They feel they quickly become part of the very inclusive school community. All students identify very strongly with the school and think it has a welcoming and caring ethos.
- Safe places in the school give students the time and space they need to manage and reflect on their behaviour and what is troubling them. These resources also respect young people's dignity. Sixth Form student mentors and trained prefects provide very effective peer support.
- Through the PSHCE programme, the school helps students to understand and value diversity. They also explore complex issues around discrimination and how to challenge different forms of discrimination. Students have regular opportunities within other areas of their curriculum to reflect on their own attitudes and the attitudes of others and society more widely.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

excellent

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- *Attainment in literacy and numeracy*
- *Attainment over time*
- *Overall quality of learners' achievement*
- *Equity for all learners*

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Students join the Grammar School in Year 7 with strong literacy and numeracy skills. They continue to develop these skills throughout their school career. Across the Grammar School and Sixth Form Centre, students have very well-developed listening and talking skills. They are very articulate and can discuss challenging topics confidently and thoughtfully. They listen carefully to each other and to their teachers during these discussions. Across the school, students make very good use of their reading skills when conducting research and extracting information from texts and online resources. They are able to broaden their thinking, structure their written work and support effective discussion. Very high standards of writing are evident in extended essays across a range of subjects at all stages of the school.
- In Year 7 mathematics, students learn how to find common factors and multiples of numbers. In Year 8, they can use their knowledge of ratios to solve problems. In Year 9, they can work out how to calculate percentage changes. Students can apply these skills well in other subjects and contexts. In physics, chemistry and biology, students can readily solve problems by drawing on their scientific knowledge and applying their well-developed numeracy skills. Year 10 students can draw valid conclusions from the graphs produced by plotting experimental data. In Year 13, students can use spreadsheets to solve financial problems such as calculating income tax when there are complex income dependent rules.

Attainment over time

- In the Grammar School, students make very good progress from the beginning of Year 7 to the end of Year 11. Data on students' progress over this period show that approximately 95% of students make at least the expected three levels of progress in core subjects. 68% of students make four or more levels of progress over this period. Girls make better progress than boys. These results are much better than the average for all English state schools. Furthermore, there is an improving trend and each Year 7 cohort has made better progress than the previous cohort over the last three years. Outstanding results were achieved in almost all subjects at this stage. The GCSE examination data shows that in 2018 all students gained five or more A* to C awards and a large majority achieved A* to B awards.
- Approximately 60% of students join the Sixth Form Centre each year from other secondary schools across the Bailiwick of Guernsey. These students achieve

outstanding results in examinations in the Sixth Form. The A level results at the end of Year 13 are much higher than the predicted values, based upon students' GCSE results in Year 11. Over the last three years there has been an improving trend. A level results are very strong and examination data show that most students achieve A* to C awards. The percentage of students achieving A* to B awards has increased each year for the last three years and is now significantly higher than the equivalent statistic for England.

- Almost all students entered for the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) in 2018 gained an award. Almost all students who studied individual IBDP subjects achieved a level 4 award and the large majority of students achieved a level 5 award.
- Very high standards of work are evident in lessons and in students' written work. This evidence endorses the very high examination results. Very high standards of teaching and learning are evident throughout the Grammar School and Sixth Form Centre. Examples of exemplary and innovative practice are evident at each stage of the school. In some subjects, for example in photography, there is a very strong correlation between the very innovative approaches to learning and teaching and the very high levels of students' attainment.
- The school has been successful in maintaining high levels of attendance over the last three years. It monitors and takes very effective action to address the impact of absence from school on students' attainment and progress.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- The rich and varied opportunities the school provides for students across the school, particularly in the Sixth Form Centre, enables them to develop a wide range of skills, competences and capacities. By the time young people leave the school, they are confident, successful and responsible. They are able to make very effective contributions to the life and work of the school. Students are equipped with a wide range of skills and attributes that prepare them very well for the world of life, work and learning. Their personal and social skills are very well developed and they are well-rounded and courteous individuals. Students demonstrate very effective communication, teamwork, problem solving, organisational and leadership skills. Their learning skills are very well developed. They have the ability to research and learn from a variety of sources both independently and as a member of a team. The students are imaginative and creative. They are able to apply their knowledge and understanding very well in a range of contexts. These skills, competences and capacities have the potential to enrich the students' experiences throughout their lives and enhance their opportunities to achieve success in their continuing education and in their future careers. Students show strong awareness of, and the ability to take action on, global and sustainable issues. Many have had their impressive skills accredited through Bronze, Silver and Gold awards in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

Equity for all learners

- The school is inclusive and provides high quality opportunities and support for all students. Staff take very good account of students' skills and carefully tailor support to meet their needs and optimise their progress. The result is that students with special educational needs make very good progress at each stage. Through the staff's work with business partners and the students' participation in work experience, the school is very successful in helping students gain employment when they leave school. Similarly, the very good support provided for students wishing to attend higher education also achieves high levels of success in securing places at university.

Particular strengths of the school

- The very high levels of progress and standards of attainment in both the Grammar School and Sixth Form Centre.
- The outstanding range of skills, competences and capacities students achieve by the time they leave school.
- The quality of the classroom experiences created by teachers and the rich and varied range of opportunities provided to all students through the curriculum and out of school activities.
- The very high quality of support for students to achieve their full potential.
- The very effective leadership of the acting headteacher, the senior leadership team and other staff with leadership responsibilities.
- The rigorous, systematic and very effective approaches to improving the school.

Agreed areas for improvement

- Extend the school's approaches for engaging with students, parents and the wider community in improving its work.
- Share and build on existing outstanding practice in learning, teaching and assessment in the school.
- Maintain and sustain the school's very high levels of performance along with continuing access to the rich and varied opportunities available to students through the curriculum and out of school activities.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are very satisfied with the overall quality of provision in the school. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvement. As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, the school and Education Services will inform parents about the school's future progress.

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