

25 January 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education are currently carrying out visits to some schools and early learning and childcare settings across Scotland. When we wrote to you after the last inspection of Beath High School, we said that we would engage further with the school to report on progress. We recently engaged in discussion with staff and the local authority and carried out a visit to Beath High School. Our engagement helped us learn more about how young people and their families have been supported through the COVID-19 pandemic. We also heard about approaches that have been working well to support young people's health and wellbeing, learning and progress. We discussed with the headteacher and local authority officer the school's progress in taking forward the areas for development from our original inspection.

This letter sets out what we found during our visit.

### **Supporting children, young people and families through COVID-19**

Led very effectively by the headteacher, the staff in Beath High School had already started their improvement journey at the onset of the pandemic. They had made plans to improve many areas of the school and had started to reflect on resourcing and staffing allocations. The pandemic changed the focus for a period of time, but staff remained on a path to improvement.

Staff focus during both periods of school closure was on ensuring that support was available for all young people. Health and wellbeing and mental resilience was a high priority. During the two periods of school closure, young people were well cared for by staff and their learning was supported and resources targeted at those most in need. Where possible, digital devices were issued to young people who needed them. Teachers provided weekly live lessons which young people appreciated. Staff also prepared paper-based learning packs to support families who were experiencing connectivity issues. The school also provided free stationery via local shops and community areas.

Staff prioritised keeping in touch with as many young people as possible through regular daily or weekly contact, based on individual need. Teachers were careful to monitor work being returned by young people to ensure help was provided where issues arose.

### **Progress with areas for development from previous inspection**

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and outlines well his aspiration to move towards excellence. His supportive leadership style is setting high expectations for the whole school. All staff have been involved in planning targets for improvement in areas such as relationships, inclusion and attainment. The headteacher recognises that the next step is to involve parents more fully in supporting school improvement. Relationships across the school, amongst pupils and with staff, have improved significantly. All staff and young people note the positive improvement in how they are treated and in the ethos of the school as a result of the work of the headteacher, the senior leaders and the staff team. This is helping

young people to settle in their learning more effectively. The environment in the school is now calm and purposeful.

Staff have developed a new approach to lessons. 'The Beath Lesson' is a clear and helpful shared approach to high quality lessons and is beginning to be used well by staff across the school. Young people already have an understanding of how this approach is helping them in their learning and they recognise that it is supporting positive attainment. The context of the pandemic and periods of remote learning has impacted progress in embedding this approach and teachers are now beginning to build the Beath Lesson structure into classes across the school. This approach is already helping to better structure lessons, and there are early signs of improvements in attainment.

Staff have also developed a new approach to tracking how well young people are doing in their learning and attainment. This new system is supporting staff to better identify when young people may need help in their learning. It also provides more helpful information to share with parents about how well pupils are doing in class. Alongside the new approaches to teaching, this is building a whole-school approach to increasing attainment for all.

### What happens next?

Understandably, the school has been responding to the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. These have had a significant impact on the work of the school. Staff are implementing plans to support recovery. Staff have addressed the areas for development from the original inspection successfully. As a result, we will make no more visits to the school in connection with the original inspection. Fife Council will continue to inform parents about the school's progress as part of its usual arrangements for reporting on the quality of its education service.

Ann Floyd  
HM Inspector