



## Quality Assurance Consultant Visit

### Autumn Term 2016

**School:** Melland High School

**Tel No:** 0161 223 9915

**Principal:** Mrs Sue Warner

**URN:** 138532

**Chair of Governors:** Mr Peter Tite

**QA Consultant:** Judith Jones

**Personnel Involved:** Sue Warner (Principal); Julie Barnett (Vice Principal); Peter Tite (Chair of Governors); Chris Beswick (Vice Chair of Governors); Heather Jones (Data Manager); Rob Stephens (English Lead); George Roberts (Science Lead); Nicola Hammond (Head of KS5); Rob Barlow (Head of KS4) Kate Milburn (Head of KS3); Hannah Harrison (PE and Sports Lead); Student Leaders  
Judith Jones (QA Consultant)

**Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016

**Copies to:**  
The Executive Principal  
The Principal  
The Governing Body

## AGREED FOCUS

1. Governor Development
2. School Improvement Priorities 2016/2017
3. Assessment and Whole School Target Setting update
4. APPRE Meetings
5. MHS Basket of Indicators

## OUTCOMES

1. **Governor Development** – School Improvement Priority 1 (2016-2017) *Formalise the review and evaluation process to ensure continued effectiveness of the governing body.*
  - One of the vice principals (JB) is working closely with the vice chair of governors (CB) to address this priority. Together they adapted the National Governors' Association proforma and customised to the school's context. The audit has been undertaken and outcomes summarised in a RAG rated table that provides a clear overview of the skills, experience, and knowledge of governors in areas relevant to their role and responsibilities. Analysis of results has identified strengths and areas for development. They have also researched and developed a questionnaire for senior and middle leaders in order to gain their views of their engagement with the governing body or with individual governors with particular roles. Additionally, a governor self-evaluation framework has been developed that governors will complete as a whole in the autumn and spring term. Outcomes of the three evaluation documents will be used to inform future planning, feedback to governors and governor training. Already some of the presentations made to governors constitute training whilst the audit demonstrates training some of the governors have completed; they are mindful of the need to ensure that all training is documented.
  - In the interest of efficiency, the IMPACT group has combined with the curriculum, quality, and standards committee, as it was recognised that there was a duplication of presentations and evidence given previously to both. Three members of the IMPACT group with complementary skills and experience (ie business, education and community) have been co-opted to the sub-committee.
  - Discussion with the chair and vice chair of governors, provided examples of actions governors have undertaken that have directly impacted on school improvement. For example, in the last academic year when undertaking a writing focused learning walk, governors noted that there was a limited amount of pupils' own handwriting displayed. This was immediately addressed by leaders. The two governors were able to give examples of how the governing body offers equal measures of challenge and support to school leaders. The finance sub-committee challenged certain elements of teachers' performance management procedures requesting a greater clarity of links to pay progression; this has been actioned and practice amended appropriately. In terms of support, governors have given middle leaders positive feedback following their presentations to sub-committees, commenting on their increased confidence and professionalism. When staff raised concerns regarding the IT infrastructure, governors took the matter to the Trust IT team; as a result, the issues have been resolved. Governors have also challenged the Trust on the school's financial allocation requesting fairness and transparency.
  - Governors are confident in having healthy debates between each other, expressing differing points of view that ultimately lead to a consensus. Governors bring a wide range of knowledge and experiences from their different backgrounds that are detailed on the governor section of the school website. Governors are well informed and knowledgeable because they are given high-quality, accurate information that is concise, and where appropriate, focused on pupils' achievement. Governors are acutely aware of the standards of teaching and learning, they know that leaders have given considerable thought into the evaluation of this area that has refined over time. This information is made accessible by being presented in a wide variety of formats, including charts, graphs and on one occasion an ipad video presentation, highlighting the outstanding achievement of one pupil in the development of his writing skills. Pupils and staff make presentations to the curriculum quality and standards sub-committee.

- The governing body hold meetings during the school day enabling governors to gain first-hand experience of the quality of education at Melland High School. When their commitments allow, governors attend social occasions such as the parent/carer day, the Christmas fair and celebration assemblies enabling them to meet parents and gain their views. During discussions, it was agreed that governors could do more to improve their communication with parents/carers, for example, to raise awareness of the contribution governors make to the school.
- Scrutiny of the governing body minutes evidence that governors ask searching questions that are minuted and that actions agreed are minuted and followed through. They frequently ask for more information, explanation, or clarification that makes a strong contribution to robust planning for improvement. Governors and school leaders agree that their positive relationship is based on trust, openness, and transparency; they behave with integrity and are mutually supportive.
- Governors will devote a full day in the spring term 2017 to work alongside SLT using the Ofsted criteria to evaluate effectiveness of governance and refine the school's self-evaluation summary. This will provide a further opportunity for governors to assess the rigour and accuracy of the school's self-evaluation and how well it leads to planning to secure continued improvement.

*Discussion and scrutiny of documents during the visit undoubtedly evidence the important role the governing body plays in the development of the school's vision and strategic planning. They are highly analytical. Through their robust challenge and considered support, they hold leaders robustly to account. They are proactive in seeking to evaluate their own effectiveness and in seeking training to develop their skills further to ensure they keep their knowledge up to date.*

## **2. School Improvement Priorities 2016/2017**

The new strategic plan (2016-2019) and the school improvement priorities for the current academic year are informed by the self-evaluation summary (SEF), an audit undertaken by all stakeholders, governors and senior leaders' knowledge, staff appraisal, and national developments. Key priorities identified are reflected in appropriate action plans for improvement and success criteria by which the impact of the school's work can be measured. A new initiative this year is to add a section related to parents/carers and the community. Each area is monitored and evaluated by named governors, whilst named senior and middle leaders take the lead for specific areas.

*Leaders and governors know their school extremely well. They make accurate evaluations of the school's effectiveness and so the plans for improvement are very well conceived and effective.*

## **3. Assessment and Whole School Target Setting update**

- The Melland High School (MHS), Assessment and Whole School Target Setting summary has been amended to reflect the changes the school has made to its assessment systems. Its definition of good/outstanding progress has been revised and will be reviewed following the 2017 achievement data analysis. Definitions of progress have been divided into key stages and have been set taking into consideration other special schools definitions to ensure appropriate levels of challenge. All Year 9 and Year 11 targets have been similarly revised to reflect B-Squared assessment criteria.
- All pupils have been assessed using B-Squared Connecting Steps or Autism Progress across all subjects with the exception of humanities, which currently has its own bespoke assessment system.
- Assessment, progress, planning, recording and evaluation (APPRE) meetings are held each term with every teacher. Outcomes of meetings are recorded in a consistent format; feedback is moderated, recorded and provided to teachers. The school will refine the process based on ongoing evaluation. Outcomes of the meetings inform decisions regarding intervention strategies. Intervention records evidence entry and exit data with specific details of issues, interventions and vitally the intended impact, they evidence well targeted teaching that is challenging and demands a high standard.

- Teachers and TLA's have extended their ownership, not only of the tracking, monitoring and evaluation of progress but also by their involvement in analysis using the CSAMS element of B Squared software.
- Individual case studies have been used increasingly to demonstrate highly effectively more holistic progress and achievement and are an exemplar of outstanding practice.
- A MHS assessment focus group has been successfully established involving senior and middle leaders teachers and teaching assistants, further extending ownership of processes.
- **The summary of achievement 2015-2016** is based on the previous assessment system using sub-level assessment in the old curriculum strands. By 2018, the school will have three years longitudinal data from the new assessment systems for Year 9 students, enabling a more secure analysis of progress and achievements.
- **The analysis for 2015-2016** demonstrates the impact of the cross curricular focus on writing evidenced by an increase in the percentage of pupils achieving their writing target at EKS4 2016 (95%) in comparison to the same cohort at EKS3 in 2014 (89%).
- Following a detailed comparison, there is currently no difference in pupil's overall achievement in the subject strands of either English or maths.
- The average number of sub-levels achieved by the EKS4 2016 cohort from the Year 7 to Year 11 ie across Key Stages 3 and 4 is slightly higher in maths than in English. Further analysis remains inconclusive however owing to the only marginal difference.
- The average sub-level progress in science across Key Stages 3 and 4 is 4.2 compared to 4.8 in ICT/computing. This outcome can be attributed to the impact of increasing use of media including Ipad and App technology and the overall ability of this specific cohort of pupils.
- Year 11 pupils achieving outstanding progress (MHS definition) include for example:

Pupil / Groups	Subject	Year 7	Year 11
DH / LAC	Maths	P7	L2A
	Science	P7	L3
AWy / SLD / ASD	Spoken Language	P5.6	L2C

- End of Key Stage 5/6 (6<sup>th</sup> Form) 2016 (17 pupils):
  - 88% (15) of students achieved their predicted outcomes via a personalised learning pathway linked to national accreditation.
  - 1 (6%) student received home tuition as a result of ongoing health issues and accessed a personalised learning pathway resulting in an accredited unit in OCR.
  - 1 (6%) student followed a personalised learning pathway achieving national accreditation until the end of Year 13 when he made an end of phase return to a "transition into work" course at Manchester College and is now in employment at Manchester Airport.
- The school has concerns about the effectiveness of B Squared Connecting Steps assessment for pupils working at P1-3 and also the ability to show progress within levels. However it does enable accountability to demonstrate progress over time. Effective assessment for pupils working below P3 is currently being addressed through the use of the "Autism Progress" assessment Leaders are also cognisant that they need to develop a means of providing quantifiable data for the outcomes of sixth form students. There is secure evidence that provision is outstanding; all students are involved in meaningful work related learning at an appropriate level and the most meaningful way of capturing achievement continues to be developed.

*The school has responded positively to the transitory period of 'life without levels' and lack of national guidance. It continues to retain accurate and validated systems for recording the small steps of achievement that pupils make. Data is used effectively to inform challenging targets for future learning and to plan exciting and challenging learning activities.*

#### 4. APPRE Meetings – Core Subjects Feedback

- Both the English and science lead teachers spoke highly of the value of APPRE meetings in that they provide an opportunity for staff to meet together with a shared focus on students. Staff learn more about individual pupils and are able to share good practice and discuss the strategies they

have found to be successful. The meetings facilitate discussion beyond the evidence that B Squared provides enabling staff to highlight students' wider achievements.

- The science lead spoke of the challenge the new science curriculum presents in evidencing science skills over time as there are 16 strands to be covered, over a five-year period. The English lead provided an example of the way he has addressed individual progress by developing target sheets for each student that include B Squared targets but also a student's communication target and personal target (taken from the EHCP). The sheets will enable a quick reference to termly B Squared updates whilst providing evidence for APPRE meetings.

*The APPRE meetings have further extended the rigour of accountability in the school, strengthening communication and empowering staff at all levels to work together to raise achievement and enhance teaching and learning through shared, focused discussion.*

## **5. MHS Basket of Indicators**

### **i) Student questionnaire**

- Student leaders, with some support, developed a questionnaire that was distributed to each tutor group. The three main areas currently being explored are:
  - Using the merit system
  - Gaining ideas and suggestions from pupils
  - Feedback from teachers
- Outcomes informed action plans and were followed up in some cases with mini questionnaires.
- Student leaders confidently described how they had followed up one of the suggestions from their peers related to improving the "the street" (a corridor shared with the mainstream school). They met with students from Cedar Mount and put their ideas together and discussed ways in which they would gain funding.
- All student leaders wear a lanyard in order for other pupils to recognise them and they are presented to Year 7 students at their first assembly.
- Some of the students spoke proudly of taking part in a production of Macbeth at the Contact Theatre in Manchester.

### **ii) Flexible Friday**

- The head of Key Stage 4 (RB) outlined the rationale behind "Flexible Friday" in that it aims to extend students learning beyond the national curriculum by offering a range of activities either in school or using the local community. It aims to develop the "whole child" by teaching life skills preparing them for adult life. The sessions are offered every Friday afternoon, pupils sign up for a course that runs for half a term, then the next half term they will choose another. Sessions are delivered by teachers, support staff and outside providers.
- Flexible Friday is underpinned by "the 5 r's for lifelong learning":
  - Readiness
  - Resourcefulness
  - Resilience
  - Responsibility
  - Reflectiveness
- Teachers and students will be encouraged to refer to the skills and attributes throughout the year during each activity. Staff are required to evaluate the sessions and will assess each student using the agreed proforma. Teachers will provide a current and predicted level of attainment prior to the sessions and then an achieved level at the end of the half term.
- The range of courses is impressive appealing to a wide range of interests and abilities that includes aqua aerobics, Lego club, health care, gardening, the history of Manchester and board games. Feedback from students highlight their enjoyment using words such as "creative", "awesome", "I go home smiling". One of the students spoke to the consultant saying how much he enjoyed learning about the history of Manchester learning new things about the City.
- Staff feedback has been similarly positive stating that the sessions have provided an excellent opportunity to observe and guide pupils to grow outside the classroom. The

sessions have had a great impact on social interaction and communication with everyone enjoying themselves.

### iii) Sixth Form Study Periods

- Independent study time provides an opportunity for students to complete their work outside the timetabled curriculum. Students are able to access resources that for some may not be available at home. The study periods are run by two teaching assistants overseen by the teachers who work with the group.
- Students identify what they want to work on and are able to seek the advice of teaching assistants if required; the sessions encourage students to take ownership of their learning. Independent study time enhances students' study skills, developing their work ethic, for example, time management and self-discipline and skills that they will need for lifelong learning. The sessions enable students to review any work experience they have attended, update their CV, look up jobs in the area and research future college courses.
- Students increased confidence in lessons has been noted as an outcome of the study time. Students themselves commented that they value learning how to organise themselves and taking control of their work, another said that the study time had helped with reading and that they appreciate being trusted to get on with their work study. The head of the sixth form is very proud of the mature, reflective, comments students have made.

### iv) Key Stage 3 Celebration

- KS3 tutor groups spend each morning registration and Thursday afternoons following the KS3 curriculum and backing up the humanities department. Subjects include modern language, RE, current events, healthy minds and bodies and PSHE. The termly Thursday afternoon session is set by the humanities department and in 2016-2017 covers the Tudors and the Renaissance, Great Britain, then France and the French culture.
- Each lesson includes a strong focus on communication skills and personal development. SMSC and British Values are embedded throughout and students are encouraged to develop self-knowledge and a growing awareness of the world around them to become citizens for life in modern Britain.
- In this current year class assemblies have been introduced to promote pupils' wellbeing and skills for lifelong learning in the following areas:
  - Team work and working collaboratively
  - Organisation and planning
  - Communication and expression
  - Developing confidence and self-esteem
  - Taking responsibilities
  - Learning, applying and sharing knowledge
- One of the Key Stage 3 teachers commented that: "Creating this assembly really galvanised our tutor group, a combination of wanting to show the other groups what they had learnt and healthy competition meant that every member of the tutor group was motivated to learn their parts. Leading up to the performance our tutor group loved practicing every day, giving each other encouragement and reminders on their lines. Our students were more than happy to devote their lunchtimes to practicing. A project such as this gave all students an opportunity to develop social and personal skills. Some students were challenged to be narrators and direct the whole performance. It was a lot of hard work but I was really proud and pleased at how my tutor group worked together and handled the performance."
- Equally pupils commented very positively. When asked about how he felt about presenting to the whole of Key Stage 3 one student said "I was really excited about it, when we were getting ready, I was really scared. We were all really good at performing". Another student, when asked about the idea of inviting parents said "I really liked showing my mum what we were doing; she said we were really good at presenting". Comments regarding the best bits included: "Showing other groups what we have learnt; I think our assembly will be the best". A TLA commented, following the assembly about Leonardo da Vinci, that "it was interactive, fun and enjoyable. The students were so confident".

- Assessment and evidence (to tie in with humanities/Thursday afternoon sessions) will be through humanities poster assessments, allowing for the different dynamic that exists in tutor group sessions. It will also enable the creativity and experience of form tutors to be expressed, as well as encompassing all elements of SMSC and British values. The learning and progress of pupil wellbeing and lifelong living skills through KS3 assemblies will be evidenced by videos, photographs and pupil voice feedback given by each group as they host, attend, and participate in each one.

#### v) PE

- The PE team are aiming to extend the breadth of experience for students. Planned activities include:
  - A year long project with the Diane Modahl Foundation to challenge more able PE students in KS4 and 5, sessions to be delivered in school and at Sports City.
  - A six-week hockey programme delivered by Access Sport for KS3 students to commence in January.
  - A “Young Leaders Award Training” for a six-week block for 6<sup>th</sup> Form volunteers delivered by Mike Power from Access Sports. Students will participate in team building games; have coaching with a baseball coach, and deliver a mini Olympics to a local primary school. Students will also have the opportunity to take part in boxing at Moss Side Fire Station and skate boarding at Projekts Skatepark.
  - The PE lead recently met with Double Paralympian Rik Wadden to explore the possibility of developing a project with Sky Sports, Living for Sport.
  - Students will be entering a variety of competitions during the year as part of the Manchester PE Association in addition to participating in the girls and boys football league ran by MCFC City in the Community.
  - The PE team are hoping to introduce gymnastics into the PE curriculum and the PE lead is to meet the PE coordinator at Piper Hill to observe lessons and to seek guidance and support.
  - Students are to be given fitness tests during their first lessons in the spring term and will be re-tested at the end of year to assess their progress in health and fitness following a year of PE lessons.
  - B Squared will be introduced as an assessment tool in the spring term.

*Leaders were highly creative in planning a variety of presentations to evidence pupils wider achievements ie “MHS Basket of Indicators”. The wider curriculum opportunities offered to pupils broaden and enthuse pupils in their learning; these directly support their levels of development, needs and interests. This impacts on the gains they make socially and emotionally in their time in the school, preparing them exceptionally well for their future lives in modern Britain.*

## SUMMARY

Senior and middle leaders are empowered, so that they become significant and crucial forces for development and improvement within the school. They are provided a range of opportunities, such as their contributions to the current visit, to develop their leadership skills, strengthening the leadership and management capacity in the school. This results in a highly effective motivated team of leaders who work tenaciously to ensure that the school maintains its outstanding status.