

**Banchory Academy
Aberdeenshire Council
23 May 2006**

Contents	Page
1. Background	1
2. Key strengths	2
3. What are the views of parents, pupils and staff?	2
4. How good are learning, teaching and achievement?	3
5. How well are pupils supported?	8
6. How good is the environment for learning?	9
7. Improving the school	10
Appendix 1 Indicators of quality	12
Appendix 2 Summary of questionnaire responses	13
Appendix 3 Attainment in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) National Qualifications	14
How can you contact us?	16

1. Background

Banchory Academy was inspected in February 2006 as part of a national sample of secondary education. The inspection covered key aspects of the school's work at all stages. It evaluated the quality of the curriculum, analysed pupils' performance in examinations (see Appendix 3) and assessed the quality of pupils' broader achievement. It also evaluated the quality of learning and teaching and pupil support, the environment for learning, the school's processes for self-evaluation, and its overall effectiveness and capacity for improvement. There was a particular focus on the work of the English, mathematics, business education and music departments.

HM Inspectors observed learning and teaching and examined pupils' work. They analysed responses to questionnaires issued to a sample of parents¹ and pupils and to all staff. They interviewed groups of pupils, including the pupil council, and staff. Members of the inspection team also met the chairperson of the School Board and a group of parents.

Banchory Academy is a non-denominational school serving the town of Banchory and surrounding rural area. At the time of the inspection, the roll was 953. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals was well below the national average. Pupils' attendance was well above the national average.

¹ Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers, residential care staff and carers who are relatives or friends.

2. Key strengths

HM Inspectors identified the following key strengths.

- Pupils' overall attainment in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations, their broader achievements in developing skills of citizenship and enterprise and their courtesy and good behaviour.
- The school's reputation in, and links with, the community.
- The range of extra-curricular activities, positive ethos and good relationships between teachers and pupils.
- The commitment of staff to the school and the pupils.
- The overall ethos, including the strong sense of pride in and identity with the school shown by all involved in its work.
- The overall quality of pastoral care and the effectiveness of the school's approaches to supporting pupils.
- The wide ranging and imaginative support for the school provided by the librarian.
- The early impact of the headteacher through building teamwork and identifying appropriate priorities for improvement.

3. What are the views of parents, pupils and staff?

Almost all of the parents who completed the questionnaire were very pleased with the school. They felt welcome and found parents' evenings helpful. Almost all felt that the school was well led, had a good reputation in the local community and that their child enjoyed being at school. Around one third felt that the school was not good at telling them about its priorities for improving the education of pupils, while a few felt that the school did not make it clear the standard of work expected from pupils. Almost all pupils who responded said they enjoyed being at school and that teachers explained work clearly. Almost all teachers and auxiliary staff who responded were very pleased with most aspects of the school. They particularly felt there was effective communication between senior managers and staff and that the school was well led. Around one third of auxiliary staff felt that their training time was not used effectively.

Further details about what most pleased parents, staff and pupils, and what they would most like to see improved, can be found in Appendix 2 of this report.

4. How good are learning, teaching and achievement?

The curriculum, learning and teaching

The overall quality of the curriculum was very good. Courses were well structured so that almost all pupils could progress from year to year in each subject. At all stages, pupils benefited from the close attention given to the development of their skills in citizenship and enterprise education. At S1/S2, the curriculum was broad and balanced. Pupils successfully developed their skills in using information and communications technology (ICT), with SQA certification in S3. While some departments had built up close curricular links with the associated primary schools, others had not been so successful. At S3/S4, pupils followed a well-balanced programme with almost all pupils studying eight Standard Grade courses or equivalent National Qualifications (NQs). In addition, almost all pupils achieved NQ units or an A-C grade at Intermediate 2 in religious, moral and philosophical studies. The home economics department used NQ courses effectively in place of Standard Grade. Pupils who wished to pursue a scientific career were able to study all three sciences, whilst those who wished to acquire a second modern language were able to do so. In S4, the school successfully offered a Stepping Stones course in Child Care and Parenting. At S5/S6, pupils had access to a broad range of courses at Intermediate 1 and 2, Higher and Advanced Higher levels. Enrichment courses were offered in physical education, French cinema, PC passport, home economics, geology and art. A small group of pupils were undertaking a Community Sports Leaders' course supported by funding from Aberdeenshire Council. An effective partnership with Aberdeen College enabled the school to offer an additional Higher course in psychology, as well as certification for all in S6 in the core skill of Working with Others at Intermediate 2.

There were many examples of effective direct teaching. Teachers planned their lessons well and, in most lessons, learning intentions were shared with the pupils. At all stages, instructions and explanations were clearly expressed and questioning was used skilfully to check understanding. Most teachers had created a positive learning culture. They knew pupils well and had developed a range of high quality materials, including well-designed homework tasks, to support pupils in their learning. They set high expectations of the amount and quality of work that pupils should produce. Many teachers used ICT well to promote effective learning. Overall the pace of most lessons was well judged. Tasks and activities were generally well matched to pupils' needs and enabled pupils to make good progress. In some courses, however, there was too much reliance on the use of textbooks and worksheets. A majority of teachers provided pupils with helpful feedback and indicated how they might improve their performance. Pupils were very well behaved, worked hard and cooperated with staff in all aspects of classwork. There were too few opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers and support staff provided good support to pupils experiencing difficulties and involved them in a range of tasks to meet their learning needs. In some departments, teachers needed to take greater account of pupils' prior learning.

Achievement

The overall quality of attainment at S1/S2 was very good. Pupils progressed well across a wide range of subjects. In English and mathematics, most pupils attained appropriate levels in reading, writing and mathematics, and a substantial minority exceeded them. These high standards had been sustained over several years. The school did not have appropriate

arrangements for gauging pupils' progress or trends in attainment across the rest of the curriculum, including in listening and talking.

The following comments are based on SQA data, using the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)² for the three year period (2003-2005) and also draw on the overall evaluations of the quality of learning, teaching and meeting pupils' needs.

The overall quality of attainment at S3/S4 was very good. The proportions of pupils attaining five or more awards at SCQF levels 3, 4 or 5 or better were well above national averages and well above performance in similar schools. These very high levels had been sustained over a number of years, although there was a slightly declining trend at level 5. Girls performed better than boys, although the gap was closing.

The overall quality of attainment at S5/S6 was excellent. The proportions of S5/S6 pupils attaining at least one, three or five awards at SCQF level 6, or one or more at level 7, were well above national averages and well above performance in similar schools. These very high standards had been sustained over several years.

Information on the subjects inspected is given later in the report. Significant features of attainment in the subjects not inspected were as follows.

- At Standard Grade, the proportion of pupils attaining Credit awards was well above the national average in almost all subjects. Pupils performed notably better in biology, chemistry and graphic communication than in their other subjects.
- At Higher, the proportions of pupils attaining A-C awards were above or well above national averages in around two thirds of subjects. The proportion of awards at grade A was well above the national average in biology, chemistry, graphic communication, history, physics, and in religious, moral and philosophical studies. Pupils performed notably better in graphic communication than in their other subjects.
- At Intermediate 2, all pupils entered for an award in Spanish gained an award at A-C.
- At Advanced Higher, all pupils entered in geography and physics gained A-C awards.

Pupils' achievements outwith the formal curriculum were considerable. Pupils were actively learning about citizenship and enterprise, both within the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities. All year groups were involved in at least one structured enterprise activity. Individual groups within the school and the school itself had received local and national awards for the quality of the pupils' success in enterprise projects. Pupils at all stages were developing their understanding of the needs of others through significant fundraising for a wide variety of charities throughout the school year. Pupils in S6 collected food at Christmas and made up hampers which were delivered to local senior citizens. There was an active Amnesty International group in the school. Many pupils were involved in a wide

² Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels:

7: Advanced Higher at A-C/CSYS at A-C

6: Higher at A-C

5: Intermediate 2 at A-C; Standard Grade at 1-2

4: Intermediate 1 at A-C; Standard Grade at 3-4

3: Access 3 cluster; Standard Grade at 5-6

variety of sports clubs and teams, which included basketball, boys' and girls' football, equestrian teams, badminton, rugby, rock climbing and sailing. Some of these teams had achieved good success in local or national competitions. Almost all pupils extended their fitness and raised money for school funds by participating in a ten mile sponsored walk. The debating society provided teams who had won awards in local competitions. Many pupils learned to play instruments, to sing or were involved in drama. Many pupils developed skills in public performance by taking part in music or drama groups which performed to audiences in school or in the community. School visits to places such as Iceland and Kenya had given groups of pupils valuable experiences of residential living as well as a greater understanding of life overseas.

English

Learning and teaching

Teachers provided clear explanations and varied their approaches very well to engage pupils in their learning. They questioned pupils very skilfully to check and enhance their understanding. Homework was appropriate. Almost all pupils were well motivated and focused closely on their learning tasks. The pace of learning was good. Pupils took very good responsibility for their learning. They used ICT regularly to locate and use information, often as part of imaginative group projects. They collaborated very well with each other. Pupils' needs were met very well. Teachers provided appropriate support and challenge to pupils of different abilities.

Achievement

At S1/S2, most pupils attained appropriate levels in reading and writing and one third exceeded them. Whilst the school indicated that it assessed listening and talking it could not provide reliable evidence of pupils' attainment and progress. At Standard Grade, the proportion of pupils attaining Credit awards and General awards or better was consistently well above the national average. Pupils performed better in English than in their other subjects. At S5/S6, the proportions of pupils at Higher attaining grade A and grades A-C were well above national averages. At Intermediate 2, the proportion achieving grades A-C was in line with the national average. Most of the small numbers presented for Intermediate 1 and for Advanced Higher attained A-C awards.

Other features of pupils' achievement included the following.

- Junior and senior teams of pupils achieved considerable success in regional and national debating competitions.
- Many pupils had their writing published, including three pupils who won national prizes.
- Many S1/S2 pupils enhanced their appreciation of literature by participating in a reading group.

Mathematics

Learning and teaching

Teachers explained ideas and concepts very well to pupils. Where available, ICT was used very effectively to enhance teaching. Teachers used questioning well to keep pupils involved in lessons and to check their understanding. Not all teachers shared the objectives of lessons with pupils, or summarised what had been learned. Almost all pupils worked hard in class and were very well behaved. They had too few opportunities to work together on tasks or to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers matched tasks and activities well to pupils' prior learning and abilities, and had high expectations of their attainment.

Achievement

At S1/S2, most pupils were attaining appropriate national levels. One third were now exceeding these levels. At Standard Grade, the proportions of pupils attaining grades 1-2 and grades 1-4 were consistently well above the national average. They performed significantly better in mathematics than in their other subjects. At S5/S6 in Intermediate 2, pupils' performance was above or well above national averages. At Higher, the proportion of pupils being presented was well above the national average. Their performance was also well above national averages in most years. Pupils performed better in Higher mathematics than in their other subjects, and better than would be expected. The proportion of pupils being presented for Advanced Higher was well above the national average. Performance was above or well above national averages, with the proportion of pupils gaining a grade A award consistently well above the national average.

Other features of pupils' achievement included the following.

- The level of entry and success in mathematical competitions including the UK Mathematical Challenge and the Enterprising Mathematics team competitions.
- The involvement of S2 pupils in Masterclass and problem-solving events.
- The work done by senior pupils in supporting the learning of pupils in S1.

Business education

Learning and teaching

Teaching had many strengths. Teachers made effective use of a range of teaching approaches. They set high expectations for the amount and quality of work produced by pupils. They planned their lessons effectively and shared the purposes of lessons with pupils. Well directed questioning was used effectively to guide pupils' learning and to check on understanding. The quality of pupils' learning was frequently enhanced by the use of ICT and by being set challenging and motivating tasks. Pupils worked conscientiously and responded positively to a brisk pace of learning. Pupils received detailed feedback on what they needed to do to improve in classwork or homework.

Achievement

Almost all pupils were performing very well in classwork which was appropriately challenging. S1 pupils were making very good progress in their ICT course and were developing transferable skills for use across the curriculum. While the proportion of pupils being presented for Standard Grade accounting and finance and administration were below the national average, the proportion of those presented obtaining Credit awards was above and well above the national average respectively. The proportion of pupils presented for Higher accounting was above the national average, but only just over half gained A-C grades. Almost all of the small proportion of pupils presented for Higher administration gained A-C grades. All pupils presented for Higher business management attained A-B grades and the percentage of A grades was well above the national average in 2005. All pupils presented for Intermediate 2 in administration over the last five years had gained A-C grades.

Other features of pupils' achievement included the following.

- Pupils were skilled in the use of software packages and used the Internet safely to research and gather information related to their course.
- From S1 to S6, pupils displayed thorough knowledge and understanding of topics covered within the subjects studied.

Music

Learning and teaching

Interactions between teachers, visiting instructors and pupils were very positive in almost all lessons. Teachers gave clear instructions and explanations, but in a few lessons at S1/S2 did not explore pupils' understanding in sufficient depth. They used praise effectively to encourage pupils, but pace, challenge and expectations of pupils' achievement at S1/S2 needed to be increased. Pupils were very well engaged in learning at S3 to S6. At these stages, pupils' needs were very well met in performing. At all stages, links between performing, inventing and listening activities needed to be improved to develop pupils' depth of learning more strongly.

Achievement

At S1/S2, most pupils coped well with classwork, but many needed to be challenged to perform, create and understand music to a higher level. Pupils who received additional instrumental tuition progressed well, but, for most pupils, weaknesses in course design limited the progress they could make in performing at these stages. At S4, presentations for Standard Grade had fallen to below the national average. The proportion of Credit awards was consistently well above the national average. At S5/S6, at Higher level, presentations were below the national average. The proportion of awards at grade A was above the national average, and all pupils presented had gained an award at grades A-C. Almost all pupils presented at Advanced Higher level had gained an award at grades A-C.

Other features of pupils' achievement included the following.

- A large number of pupils achieved high standards of performing in the school's broad programme of extra-curricular musical ensembles.
- Pupils at S3 to S6 made effective use of ICT to notate their compositions to a high standard.

5. How well are pupils supported?

The school's arrangements for child protection and pupils' care and welfare were very efficient and effective. Almost all felt happy and safe in the school. A lunch time club provided a safe haven for those who felt vulnerable. Policies and procedures to counteract bullying and promote safe use of the Internet were implemented effectively. An efficient system enabled staff to raise concerns about individual pupils. Pupils knew how to make personal concerns known to staff and how to make a complaint. The school provided strong support to the families of pupils with additional support needs. All support staff, including staff from external agencies, collaborated well. There were very good systems in the school to alert staff to pupils' circumstances, including medical conditions. For pupils in S1 to S5, programmes promoting healthy lifestyles included appropriate consideration of personal health and hygiene.

The programme in personal, social and health education (PSHE) was very effectively delivered. It included a wide range of activities which impacted on pupils' thinking, particularly at S1 to S5. Very good attention was paid to issues of health and safety. However, insufficient attention was paid in S6 to the consideration of major topical issues. Staff regularly reviewed the content and delivery of the PSHE programme and pupils were making very good progress. An innovative programme enabled pupils with additional support needs to improve their interpersonal skills and relate more effectively to their peers. Almost all pupils had developed high levels of self-esteem. Reports to parents by guidance staff provided clear details about pupils' personal and social development and growing maturity in school.

The overall quality of curricular and vocational guidance was very good. Arrangements to prepare pupils for making appropriate choices at key transition stages were very good. They included the provision of a wide range of support materials in the very good careers library and one-to-one interviews with guidance staff and a careers specialist. Pupils used careers websites confidently to support their decision making. Guidance staff provided sound advice on the links between curricular choices and careers pathways. S5 and S6 pupils were introduced to the responsibilities of senior school through a very good induction programme. Overall, opportunities for work experience were too limited. The PSHE programme included appropriate opportunities for pupils to prepare personal statements and develop good presentational and interview techniques. Guidance staff had recently begun to set targets for those pupils experiencing difficulty in S4 and S5. Commendably, in some subjects from S3 onwards, pupils developed their own learning plans based on clear advice from subject teachers on how to improve.

The quality of support for learning was very good. Learning support teachers and auxiliaries were effectively deployed. High quality individualised educational programmes were used

to help pupils with additional support needs make very good progress in their learning. Almost all were achieving their individual targets. Looked after and vulnerable children were effectively helped to make good progress and achieve well in external examinations. Pupils with English as an additional language received very effective support and made very good progress. Links to a wide variety of partner agencies and to subject departments were appropriately focused on meeting pupils' needs. Support for learning staff and behaviour support staff had developed a range of innovative approaches to supporting pupils with additional support needs. These included behaviour management techniques, study skills, tutorial and cooperative teaching and one-to-one support. Records of Needs were well maintained and regularly reviewed. There was an effective mechanism for informing staff of pupils' additional needs and for suggesting appropriate strategies to help meet these needs. Not all subject departments drew fully on this information or made appropriate use of it to adapt teaching materials and approaches to meet pupils' needs.

The depute headteacher with overall responsibility for pupil support worked closely with a range of partner agencies. She was highly regarded by school staff and partner agencies and had very effectively created strong teamwork and very good partnership working in the support for pupils team. Well-focused pupil support meetings directed staff and pupils to the various in-house support strategies available. Further support as required was available from the termly meetings of key partner agencies.

6. How good is the environment for learning?

Aspect	Comment
Quality of accommodation and facilities	School buildings were generally very well maintained. Throughout the school, displays of pupils' work were used very well to enhance the learning environment and to celebrate pupils' achievement. Provision for ICT was very good. The well-resourced and very well-organised library provided outstanding service to the school. There was good disabled access to all areas of the school. The education authority had made some improvements to help the school cope with its rising roll. However, there were some important weaknesses in the overall quality of accommodation. There were too few dedicated interview rooms where parents and pupils could meet staff to discuss confidential issues. Pupils' social areas were too small and the dining hall struggled to cope with the number of pupils. Changing and showering facilities for staff and pupils in physical education were inadequate. Storage facilities were inadequate in the science department, which also suffered from water ingress. Aspects of security required urgent review.

Aspect	Comment
Climate and relationships, expectations and promoting achievement and equality	Pupils and staff identified closely with the school and were very proud to be associated with it. Relationships between almost all staff and pupils were very good. Staff particularly valued the way that the headteacher had worked to build teamwork and to listen to their concerns. Almost all pupils were friendly, polite and interacted very well with visitors. Senior pupils provided very good support to younger pupils. Almost all staff set appropriate expectations of pupils' behaviour, work rate and attainment. Most staff used praise in class to motivate pupils. The school promoted the achievement of pupils through regular assemblies, information on notice-boards, newsletters and articles in the local newspaper. Many staff and pupils took part in an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. The school very successfully promoted an atmosphere of equality and fairness. Attitudes of tolerance and empathy, including racial equality, were strongly encouraged. Arrangements for religious observance were appropriate.
Partnership with parents and the community	The school had established very productive links with the School Board and a range of local businesses. Staff dealt promptly and effectively with parents' enquiries and consulted them appropriately on important developments affecting the school. Parents received helpful information about their children's progress through regular reports and parents' evenings. However, departments reported on 5-14 attainment in different ways with the result that there was not a coherent picture of pupils' progress in S1 and S2. Regular newsletters, the school website, a comprehensive and very well presented handbook and course choice booklets provided further helpful information about the school. The chaplains, education support agencies and the police school liaison officer made valued contributions to the work of the school. The chaplains led religious observance at key festivals and assemblies. Induction arrangements for P7 pupils transferring into S1 were very well planned. The school's links with its cluster primary schools and the local further education college were effective.

7. Improving the school

Banchory Academy was a very successful school which demonstrated some key features of excellent provision. Pupils were exceptionally well behaved, keen to learn and achieving high standards. The school had achieved Investors in People status and was preparing pupils well to become responsible citizens and effective contributors to society. Aspects of pupils' attainment were of the highest quality, comparing very favourably with similar schools. Staff showed a consistently high level of concern for pupils' welfare and achievement. While the overall quality of learning and teaching was good, there was still scope to

encourage pupils to become more independent learners and to achieve even higher standards. Teachers' notable levels of commitment were evident through their formal and informal support for pupils' learning and their involvement in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Since taking up post just over a year ago, the headteacher had accurately evaluated the school's needs. She had worked hard to build teamwork and give staff a clear lead in identifying the future direction of the school. She had demonstrated extensive leadership qualities, including skill in developing teamwork and knowledge of current educational initiatives. The deputy headteachers were committed and industrious. They worked well as a team and were highly regarded by staff. Some heads of department were very effective managers, but the quality of middle management varied across the school. Not all deputy headteachers and heads of departments were sufficiently rigorous in ensuring consistency in learning and teaching, assessment, tracking and quality assurance. Development projects had been appropriately chosen and were being implemented at the time of the inspection, but had not yet come to fruition. Nevertheless, the strength of the leadership of the management team, coupled with the commitment of staff, meant that the school was well placed to move forward and to build on the already high levels of attainment and achievement.

Main points for action

The school should continue to provide high quality and improving education. In doing so it should take account of the need to:

- address the security and accommodation issues identified in this report and take immediate action to improve the changing and showering arrangements within the physical education department;
- continue to seek improvements in the quality of learning, teaching and meeting pupils' needs; and
- improve the rigour and impact of quality assurance procedures through senior managers working more closely with departments.

What happens next?

As a result of the high performance, the strong record of improvement and the very effective leadership of this school, HM Inspectors will make no further reports in connection with this inspection. Within two years of the publication of this report the education authority, working with the school, will provide a progress report to parents and carers. Through District Inspector contacts with the education authority, HM Inspectors will monitor progress being made in addressing weaknesses in accommodation.

David M Martin
HM Inspector

23 May 2006

Appendix 1 Indicators of quality

The sections in the table below follow the order of this report. You can find the main comments made about each of the quality indicators in those sections. However, aspects of some quality indicators are relevant to other sections of the report and may also be mentioned in those other sections.

How good are learning, teaching and achievement?	
Structure of the curriculum	Very good
The teaching process	Good
Pupils' learning experiences	Good
Meeting pupils' needs	Good
Overall quality of attainment: S1/S2	Very good
Overall quality of attainment: S3/S4	Very good
Overall quality of attainment: S5/S6	Excellent

How well are pupils supported?	
Pastoral care	Very good
Personal and social development	Very good
Curricular and vocational guidance	Very good
Learning support	Very good

How good is the environment for learning?	
Accommodation and facilities	Weak
Climate and relationships	Excellent
Expectations and promoting achievement	Very good
Equality and fairness	Very good
Partnership with parents, the School Board and the community	Very good

Improving the school	
Leadership	Good
Effectiveness and deployment of staff with additional responsibilities	Good
Self-evaluation	Good

This report uses the following word scale to make clear the judgements made by inspectors:

excellent	excellent
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths with areas for improvement
adequate	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

Appendix 2 Summary of questionnaire responses

What parents thought the school did well	What parents think the school could do better
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school had a good reputation in the community. • Teachers set high standards of attainment for pupils and treated them fairly. • Staff made them feel welcome in the school and provided helpful reports on their children's progress. • The school was well led. 	<p>Around about one third wanted more information about the school's priorities for improving pupils' education.</p> <p>A few parents felt that the school was not good at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • letting them know about their children's strengths and weaknesses; and • letting them know the standard of work that was expected from their children.
What pupils thought the school did well	What pupils think the school could do better
<p>Almost all felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they enjoyed being at school; • teachers helped them when they had difficulties; • they knew what to do if something worried them; and • the school helped them to keep themselves safe and healthy. 	<p>A minority of pupils felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teachers did not deal effectively with bullying; and • not all pupils were treated fairly.
What staff thought the school did well	What staff think the school could do better
<p>All, or almost all, teaching and support staff felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff worked hard to promote and maintain good relations with the local community; • teachers ensured that pupils received constructive feedback about their work; • teachers set high standards for pupils' attainment; • staff showed concern for the care and welfare of pupils; and • they were aware of the school's procedures relating to child protection. 	<p>A small number of teachers and support staff felt that improvement was needed in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the way in which pupil indiscipline was dealt with. <p>Around one third of support staff felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the time set aside for training purposes was not used effectively.

Appendix 3 Attainment in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) National Qualifications

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels:

7: Advanced Higher at A-C/CSYS at A-C

6: Higher at A-C

5: Intermediate 2 at A-C; Standard Grade at 1-2

4: Intermediate 1 at A-C; Standard Grade at 3-4

3: Access 3 Cluster; Standard Grade at 5-6

Percentage of relevant S4 roll attaining by end of S4

		2003	2004	2005
<i>English and Mathematics @ Level 3</i>	Banchory Academy	99	99	100
	Comparator Schools³	96	97	96
	National	91	91	90
<i>5+ @ Level 3 or Better</i>	Banchory Academy	99	99	98
	Comparator Schools	96	96	96
	National	91	91	90
<i>5+ @ Level 4 or Better</i>	Banchory Academy	96	97	95
	Comparator Schools	89	91	91
	National	76	77	76
<i>5+ @ Level 5 or Better</i>	Banchory Academy	68	65	64
	Comparator Schools	52	52	52
	National	34	35	34

Percentage of relevant S4 roll attaining by end of S5

		2003	2004	2005
<i>5+ @ Level 4 or better</i>	Banchory Academy	96	97	98
	Comparator schools³	93	91	92
	National	78	78	78
<i>5+ @ Level 5 or better</i>	Banchory Academy	76	77	78
	Comparator schools	64	65	65
	National	45	45	45
<i>1+ @ Level 6 or better</i>	Banchory Academy	72	70	73
	Comparator schools	56	60	57
	National	39	39	39
<i>3+ @ Level 6 or better</i>	Banchory Academy	57	56	54
	Comparator schools	36	39	40
	National	23	23	23
<i>5+ @ Level 6 or better</i>	Banchory Academy	31	30	36
	Comparator schools	14	15	17
	National	10	9	10

Percentage of relevant S4 roll attaining by end of S6

		2003	2004	2005
5+ @ Level 5 or better	Banchory Academy	77	78	78
	Comparator schools³	71	66	68
	National	47	47	47
1+ @ Level 6 or better	Banchory Academy	69	77	73
	Comparator schools	63	61	64
	National	44	44	43
3+ @ Level 6 or better	Banchory Academy	60	65	62
	Comparator schools	51	48	50
	National	31	31	30
5+ @ Level 6 or better	Banchory Academy	52	51	48
	Comparator schools	35	32	36
	National	20	20	19
1+ @ Level 7 or better	Banchory Academy	34	35	36
	Comparator schools	21	20	24
	National	12	12	12

³ Comparator schools are the ten schools immediately above and the ten schools immediately below the school being inspected in terms of the percentage of pupils entitled to free meals (FME).

How can you contact us?

If you would like an additional copy of this report

Copies of this report have been sent to the headteacher and school staff, the Director of Education & Recreation, local councillors and appropriate Members of the Scottish Parliament. Subject to availability, further copies may be obtained free of charge from HM Inspectorate of Education, 1st Floor, Endeavour House, 1 Greenmarket, Dundee DD1 4QB or by telephoning 01382 576700. Copies are also available on our website at www.hmie.gov.uk.

If you wish to comment about secondary inspections

Should you wish to comment on any aspect of secondary inspections, you should write in the first instance to Frank Crawford, HMCI, at HM Inspectorate of Education, Europa Building, 450 Argyle Street, Glasgow G2 8LG.

Our complaints procedure

If you have a concern about this report, you should write in the first instance to Hazel Dewart, Business Management Unit, HM Inspectorate of Education, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA. A copy of our complaints procedure is available from this office or by telephoning 01506 600258 or from our website at www.hmie.gov.uk.

If you are not satisfied with the action we have taken at the end of our complaints procedure, you can raise your complaint with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and agencies. You should write to The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, 4-6 Melville Street, Edinburgh EH3 7NS. You can also telephone 0870 011 5378 or e-mail enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.scottishombudsman.org.uk.

Crown Copyright 2006

HM Inspectorate of Education

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.