

## **Consultation on proposed change to the pupil S3 experience and transition from the Broad General Education to the Senior Phase**

### Timeframe:

Consultation will take place until 15 November 2019. This will provide sufficient time to enable all partners to consider and respond to the proposal and for any modifications to be made enabling change to be affected in-line with the timeline for course choice procedures and timetabling in preparation for session 2020-21.

Proposal: To pull the S4 learning experience forward from S4 into S3 to enhance pace, challenge, enjoyment and depth of learning. S3 pupils will complete seven subjects (English, Maths and five further choices all four periods per week) and in almost all cases they will progress with these into S4. Pupils will also have four ppw Health & Wellbeing (2 x Physical Education and 2 x Personal and Social Education).

Almost all pupils will continue to sit seven National Qualifications in S4 and up to seven in S5 & S6 (the numbers of courses completed depends on the course level). There is no change to the numbers of qualifications pupils will sit in the Senior Phase.

### Context for change:

We believe that this will:

- Better support achievement and attainment by providing more robust assessment information in S3 to inform the most appropriate progression pathway into S4 for each pupil. The removal of Recognising Positive Achievement (RPA) by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) has further focussed attention on ensuring pupils are being presented at the right course level. Previously a National 4 'back-up' could easily be put in place for borderline National 5 pupils providing these pupils with the chance of success at the higher course level while ensuring they would be protected through the prior completion of relevant National 4 units. The removal of RPA this session is of concern. The opportunity to complete National 3 and National 4 units in S3 will ensure pupil's attainment is protected while still affording borderline pupils the chance of success at the higher course level.
- Increasing the time to complete National 3, 4 and 5 units beyond one academic session (June – March) we hope will facilitate a more enjoyable learning experience for pupils and staff. It will provide pupils and staff with increased time to support an increased depth of learning better preparing pupils for examinations but will also support better progression into the next course level.
- QAHS pupil attainment at the point of exit is good. In session 2018-19 35% of S6 pupils (from the S4 pupil roll) achieved five or more Higher Awards which is an improving trend. Total tariff points for leavers in the lowest attaining 20% and middle 60% for last session is higher than the Virtual Comparator, Fife average, South East of Scotland average and the National average. However for the highest attaining 20% although better than the Fife average and in-line with the national average is just dipping below the Virtual Comparator and the South East of Scotland average.
- Although overall the total tariff points at the point of exit from QAHS are good we have been exploring ways to improve achievement and attainment in S4 and S5. We believe that a change to the curriculum structure in S3 will make a difference.

We welcome feedback on this proposal. Should you wish to submit a comment then please do so by e-mail before 15 November 2019.