



Queen Anne High School

Recognition and Celebration of Achievement

QAHS RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION OF ACHIEVEMENT

It is our aim to recognise and value the personal achievements of all learners across all 4 of the capacities within Curriculum for Excellence: successful learners, effective contributors, responsible citizens and confident individuals.

Queen Anne High School aspires to have a consistent personalised approach ensuring that praise is sincere, recognises effort above and beyond the minimum standards expected of the learner and is recognised quickly and as close to source as is possible.

QAHS learners expressed that genuine praise which recognised their efforts at the time made them feel happy, valued and appreciated. They also noted that this motivated them to repeat/continue with the behaviour.

LEVEL 1: RECOGNITION AT SOURCE

1. **PERSONAL AND POSITIVE PRAISE.** Capitalise on every opportunity to recognise effort, positive behaviour and achievement.
 - *Thank you for holding the door open. That's very kind of you and much appreciated.*
 - *Your answer demonstrates a high level of understanding and it was a very confident delivery. Well done.*
 - *Thank you for putting your litter in the bin. That's really responsible and much appreciated.*
 - *Thank you for making the right choice today. Your learning has been much better as a result.*
 - *Your last three pieces of written work clearly show improvement. You've really taken on board what we were discussing and I think you're making excellent progress.*

2. **POSITIVE NOTES.** A personalised comment on a post-it note/ department designed slip recognising effort, behaviour or achievement at the time has high impact can be delivered discretely avoiding public, overt praise.
 - *You've worked really hard today and I just wanted you to know I noticed. Well done!*
 - *Really good recollection of vocabulary. I can see that you've put in a lot of effort at home. Well done!*
 - *I thought the way you helped Pam with that equation was very thoughtful and it also showed me that you really understand this work. Good effort!*

3. **POSITIVE PHONE CALLS/ E-MAILS HOME.** Calls/communication with parents and carers has high impact. Learners who have consistently gone above and beyond for the last few lessons should be targeted.

These are opportunities to build positive relationships with learners and their family. It also helps to promote self-efficacy. This approach runs parallel to the QAHS Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour Guidelines. Point 3 enables the parent or carer to celebrate their child's success at school (if every member of staff made one positive phone call/ sent one positive e-mail home at the end of the week this would positively impact 10% of learners each week).

LEVEL 2: WHOLE SCHOOL RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION OF ACHIEVEMENT

1. **Annual Achievement Award Ceremony:** In September we recognise and celebrate a wide range of learner achievement:

Achievement category	Examples
Academic	Senior Phase (S4-S6) Attainment. QAHS Dux.
Active	Duke of Edinburgh Award. Sports Colours. Sports Leaders.
Altruism	Volunteering. Saltire Award. Activities in support of others.
Ambassador	Expressive Arts Colours. Representation of QAHS at competitions & events.

Consultation with learners resulted in the design of a range of school ties awarded to learners in recognition of their achievement at the Annual Achievement Awards.

2. **Personal Best Achievement Letters:** In March all teachers are asked to identify learners who have consistently given of their 'Personal Best' in almost all lessons throughout the session. Personalised letters are posted home to each learner in recognition of this effort and achievement.

Learner feedback prompted a move away from celebrating achievement of a Personal Best Award within a public forum. Learners welcomed the recognition of effort but noted a preference for a more personalised approach. There was appreciation that some young people felt uncomfortable accepting public praise. Issues of self-worth and self-esteem were noted. The negative impact on those learners not achieving an award was also noted. An increasing number of parents and carers expressed similar views.

3. **Opportunities to demonstrate leadership, talent and skill:** Throughout the session we have a huge range of events which provide a platform for learners to develop and demonstrate their leadership abilities, talents and skills enabling us to share in their achievements. Learners adopt lead roles in events such as the QAHS Community Remembrance Service, Primary 7 Information Evenings and Primary 7 Induction Days. Learners take full operational responsibility for registration of parents and carers and reallocation of appointments at Parents and Carers Evenings. The Spring Concert, School Show and Winter Seasonal Celebration Concert and Market are all excellent opportunities for pupil leadership, team working, enterprise and creativity. Whole school events are well attended demonstrating a strong commitment from families to support QAHS and celebrate learner achievement.
4. **Learning Tracker:** Our system for reporting constructive feedback regarding learning notes whether learners are on-track or off-track.
5. **Weekly E-Bulletin:** Learner achievements are regularly reported in this weekly communication with the wider community.
6. **Twitter:** Learners achievement e.g. sports success is regularly communicated via twitter feeds.

Appendix 1: Background and context

As a school we have been moving away from systems often referred to as 'token economies' which lead to the celebration of achievement e.g. points systems, merits/demerits.

Research would suggest that 'token economies' take responsibility away from teachers. In such a system the learner is also denied the personal and positive praise via an interaction with their teacher. These systems often contribute to labelling of young people: those achieving at both the highest and lowest levels, which isn't helpful in supporting pupils to strive for their 'personal best' and to continuously improve irrespective of where they started with their learning.

Carol Dweck, Daniel Goleman and Paul Dix are established writers and researchers on this theme.

Appendix 2: Quality of feedback and praise

John Hattie cites the most powerful single influence enhancing achievement is feedback.

Effective feedback tends to:

- **Be specific, accurate and clear** e.g. *It was good because you...* rather than just *correct*
- **Compare what a learner is doing right now with what they have done wrong before** e.g. *I can see you were focused on improving X as it is much better than last time's Y...*
- **Encourage and support further effort**
- **Be given sparingly so that it is meaningful;**
- **Provide specific guidance on how to improve** and not just tell learners when they are wrong;
- **Be supported with effective professional development**