



## Our journey as an SCQF Ambassador School continued... 2021 update Bearsden Academy



### Background to the school

Bearsden Academy is a vibrant learning community that strives to respect the rights of our young people to fulfil their potential. To this end, we are committed to supporting and challenging all members of our school community to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. We are committed to excellence by working together to be all we can be and we have found that by embracing the SCQF Ambassador Programme we are creating opportunities for our young people to develop skills for learning, life and work.

Bearsden Academy joined the SCQF School Ambassador programme in 2017 and we have worked collaboratively within our school community to actively promote the many benefits of being part of the programme. Our recently appointed Principal Teachers of Wider Achievement and Developing the Young Workforce are enhancing and developing our

school's work in terms of ensuring more of our young people benefit from a curriculum that will permeate elements of our SCQF programme.

**We heard all about the work you were doing to raise awareness of the SCQF amongst pupils & parents in 2017/18. Can you tell us what progress you've made since then with staff/pupil/parent awareness of the SCQF?**

In order to raise awareness about the SCQF initiative to our school community and beyond we worked with the SCQF team to develop a video resource. This can be accessed by clicking here - <https://scqf.org.uk/case-studies/school-ambassador-videos-and-case-studies/school-ambassador-programme/>.

We have participated in CLPL with our staff and have a number of SCQF Ambassadors who are leading this within our school. Our young people have also taken on Ambassador roles. Our ambassadors support Curricular Evenings related to subject choice and actively promote the SCQF. We are also actively participating in training events led by the SCQF Partnership as part of refreshing our initiative.

**Can you tell us about the innovative ways you have continued to promote the principles & benefits of the SCQF?**

Due to the continued impact of Covid-19, as a school community, we have had to reflect on how we continue to support our young people. Developing innovative and creative ways to improve the life chances of our young people is key to meet the needs of all learners.

Our website is often the first port of call for our school community and partners. It is important that we continue to share information using this platform about the opportunities that we have within Bearsden Academy. Our website contains access to presentations and information related to our SCQF journey and how we embed the principles of this within our school.

Twitter is an exciting platform to share updates, information and success instantly with our school community and beyond. We have had to adopt a creative and innovative take on communication with our young people and parents in light of the continued impact of Covid-19. Not being able to meet in person during the pandemic resulted in the creation of a live, digital platform and we have continued our SCQF journey with parent and pupil information sessions via Microsoft Teams related to progression within our curriculum. In order to reach all parents and carers, our presentations are recorded so that parents and pupils can access them at a time that suits themselves.

**Has the school made any changes to its curriculum?**

Our staff are empowered to reflect on our curriculum and we are currently developing our curriculum rationale to embed the principles of the SCQF. Within our Senior Phase our young people are developing skills for learning, life and work through a range of SCQF credit rated programmes. These courses aim to offer breadth within our curriculum and provide opportunities for our young people to engage in a number of programmes. Examples of the courses that we have implemented as a result of our commitment to the SCQF Ambassador Programme include a range of National Progression Awards (NPAs), Level 5 Early Learning and Childcare and the Level 5 SQA Leadership Award. We also deliver a number of units to enrich curricular areas including the Internet Safety Award and Wellbeing units.

Recently, our Creative Collaborative programme was launched where many of our departments either created or strengthened our school/employer partnerships. Through this, there is genuine collaboration on curriculum delivery between school and industry. For example, our Design and Technology department has partnerships with BAE Systems as well as awarding for the Industrial Cadet Award.

Our links with tertiary education are also enhancing our curriculum design and delivery. Departments across the school have active links with institutions: for example, the Drama Department delivers the NPA in Technical Theatre in conjunction with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Through Wider Achievement, we also feel strongly that our young people should gain accreditation in areas that they are involved in outwith our classrooms. We offer young people opportunities to gain units within Level 5 SQA Volunteering and SQA Personal Development Awards.

**“For me, the NPA in Technical Theatre (SCQF Level 6) gave me a unique experience to get more hands on skills. This course gave me the opportunity to gain valuable skills, which I know I’ll be able to use later on in a real life context. This course gives young people an opportunity to be hands on with our work, from sitting and making model boxes or working on sound mixing desks, to helping teach a production. These skills give us an insight into the necessary skills we’ll need when working in the industry, and these put us at an advantage over other learners who may not have had the opportunity to do so. Again, our whole class loved how the curriculum is set up where the emphasis was on transferable skills that could be applied to the workplace – in fact many of the students put in place what they had learned to gain employment while still doing the course! Win-win!”**

**Sam Albrow, S6 pupil**

### **Do you have any plans to engage with the tiered recognition element of the School Ambassador programme?**

We are now at the stages of developing and renewing our Curriculum Rationale. Part of this work will be reviewing our status as an Ambassador School and we are excited to continue our journey towards the tiered recognition of the school ambassador programme. Celebrating the success of our school community promotes a positive school ethos and empowers our community and we look forward to gaining recognition through the tiered approach.

For more information on Bearsden Academy visit the website at <http://www.bearsdenacademy.e-dunbarton.sch.uk/>.