



## Our journey as an SCQF Ambassador School – Denny High School



Denny High School serves a diverse rural and urban catchment area with a growing school population of 1400 students and over 100 teachers. As a school, 29% of our pupils have Additional Support Needs, 20% of our pupils are in SIMD 1-3 and just over 20% of our pupils are in receipt of Free School Meals. The curriculum ensures pupils can progress within and across subject areas. It is based on pupils sitting 7 National/SCQF level 4/5 courses in S4, 5 National/SCQF level 4/5 or Higher/SCQF level 6 courses in S5 and 4 National/SCQF level 4/5, Higher/SCQF level 6 or Advanced Higher/HNC courses at SCQF level 7 in S6 with 1 short course.

Our attainment journey has resulted in a 3 year positive trend, thanks in part to our curriculum and the courses we provide to help maximise pupil ability.

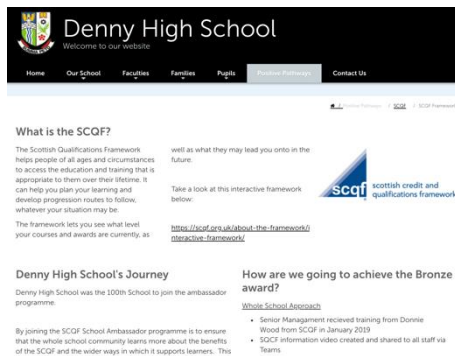
Our engagement with wider opportunities for attainment and achievement started with an SCQF Presentation from Donnie Wood to our Extended Leadership Team in January of 2020 following on from an agreed action point from a visit from the National Insight Advisor in October 2019. We recognised at that point that our curriculum offering was too narrow and that we needed to interrogate the SCQF Catalogue in more detail. At that point we became the 100th SCQF Ambassador School.



In order to support this process we created a PEF Role in late 2020 to coordinate the SCQF Ambassador programme and help organise and support the pupil group. This was to complement the work being led by Curricular PTs to ensure that the course provision within their faculties was as inclusive and aspirational as possible.

Two Senior S6 pupils were nominated to lead the SCQF Ambassador programme. As well as doing this they will work through the SQA level 5 Leadership award, using the opportunity as

an SCQF Ambassador to put their skills into practice. Pupil volunteers will support the SCQF Leaders in their activities with the intention being that some of these pupils go on to be the Senior Pupil leaders and achieve their Level 5 Leadership award.



In order to promote the range of new courses available to all learners, subject teams have promoted these courses through a range of ways including via the school media channels, in class discussions at parent/carer evenings and at course choice time. The updated school website has a section dedicated to our journey and outlines our actions and planned next steps.

As with many things, as a school we have had additional challenges presented to us relating to implementing new courses due to the impact of Covid-19.

However, we have successfully brought in a number of new courses including:

SCQF Level 4	SCQF Level 5	SCQF Level 6
Young STEM Leader	Young STEM Leader	Photography
Computer Games Development	Computer Games Development	SQA Leadership
Practical Electronics	Lab Skills	Young STEM Leader
Personal Development – with Princes Trust	Practical Electronics	Musical Theatre
Bicycle Maintenance	Personal development – with Princes Trust	Sports Ambassador
	Sport and Recreation	Literacy and Communication

Our aim is to broaden this range as well as integrate these further into the curriculum to ensure that our learners are provided with courses to help them achieve their very best. Alongside the courses that the school provides we have close partnership working with Forth Valley College and through our School/College partnership we offer:

- HNC Applied Biological Sciences
- HNC Computing
- HNC Police Studies
- HNC Sports Coaching & Developing
- NPA Cyber Security
- NPA Exercise and Fitness Leadership
- NPA Social Services, Children & Young People
- NPA Sport and Fitness: Team Sports (Football)
- Higher Psychology
- Scottish Science Baccalaureate
- Skills for Work - Creative Industries
- Skills for Work - Early Education and Childcare
- Skills for Work- Engineering
- City & Guilds Introduction to Hair and Beauty
- SCOTS



We also partner with external bodies to deliver courses such as:

- Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award
- Princes' Trust Achieve Award at SCQF levels 4 and 5

This flexible approach via these new courses has helped to improve pupil destinations as illustrated by a former pupil:

*"I didn't think I had any skills when I first started trying to create a personal statement and a CV. I don't have lots of qualifications and I wanted to go to college so I was a bit down. Mrs Lee and Mr Vaughn-Sharp reminded me about all the things we had done with the Bike Group and I was able to see that these are the skills employers are looking for. I have now got a place at Forth Valley College. I would not be going there if it wasn't for the Bike Group experiences."*

The impact of Covid 19 has resulted in us having to delay or re-evaluate the introduction of new courses due to the challenges that we, like all Scottish schools, have faced. However, as a school we recognise we still have more work to undertake regarding our SCQF journey.

Curricular PTs recognise the need to evaluate their existing courses and explore opportunity for new courses or accrediting work which has already been completed. Furthermore, the language of levels has yet to fully supplant the language of Nationals within our entire pupil body as well as our families.

As we plan for next session our intention is to continue developing our curriculum. We are exploring a range of options for courses at SCQF levels 4, 5, 6 and 7 to potentially replace or complement our existing curricular offerings for our pupils so as to greater cater for the needs of our pupils as well as broadening our pathways. One of the steps that we will look at undertaking next session is the SCQF Ambassador recognition programme at Bronze Level to recognise the hard work of our staff, pupils and partners in developing our curriculum for the good of the school community.