

Dear Parents and Carers,

An external validation visit was undertaken at St. Ninian's High School on the 24th and 25th June 2024 as part of a programme of external validation of schools commissioned by The Isle of Man Department of Education, Sport and Culture (DESC). The aim of the external validation visit was to promote continuous improvement and to deliver consistency, share best practice and deliver positive outcomes for children and young people. The visit was undertaken by two independent external validators from Tribal Education.

The external validation team looked at a wide range of evidence presented by school leaders, including the school self-evaluation, and sampled the work of the school during the visit. These activities were focussed on key areas based on the self-evaluation of the school, and included visits to a cross-section of lessons, meetings with staff and pupils, gathering the views of parents and scrutiny of documentation.

During the visit, the external validation team considered key areas of focus which were explored in collaboration with the school leaders to validate school leaders' own evaluations.

The school has an aspirational vision for all of your children, the school has developed a sophisticated range of flexible Learning Pathways which are matched to learner needs, interests and future ambitions, supporting your child's wider personal development within and beyond school.

The learning support, Specialist Provision Centre and Outreach teams work closely together to enhance an individualised offer, and parents greatly appreciate the close partnerships which are established with them to support their children. The nurture and support of the most vulnerable learners is an example of where the school ensures personalisation in its approach.

Assemblies provide opportunities for your children to reflect on the school's values and encourage their active participation. For example, the Year 7 Assembly Volunteers programme enables your children to lead and present with impressive levels of confidence and independence; mutual respect is evident in this context.

Students in the Sixth form are also confident and articulate ambassadors for the school. They are particularly appreciative of the excellent support that they receive in preparation for the next phase of their learning.

Your children also benefit from learning experiences beyond school, where they can see real impact on their lives, such as the vocational experiences developed in partnership with University College Isle of Man in Key Stage 4. Participation in Drama and Business projects, as evidenced through validation activity, are also clear examples of learning experiences that demonstrates enthusiasm in learners to work together in practical and real-life settings.

The school's leadership is focused on what it needs to do to continue to accelerate progress for the benefit of all children's learning, with a focus on engagement and continuing to build positive relationships with all learners in all lessons. This next phase of school improvement planning offers the school the opportunity to work together with you and your children as a community, to collectively shape a shared and commonly understood vision, values and culture for learning across all subjects and phases of the school.

The school is in the process of reviewing the construction and design of the curriculum in Key Stage 3, so that it offers more consistent progression in knowledge, understanding and skills as your children move from Year 7 to Year 9, to lay a strong foundation for their effective learning and progress in Key Stages 4 and 5. This focus will be linked to the development of common approaches to assessment so that your children clearly and consistently understand the next steps in their learning journey based on their starting points.

The areas of growth identified above, as part of the external validation visit, are being reviewed and actioned by the school as part of a continuous cycle of self-evaluation.

Kind regards

Nicola Morris

Lead Validator
External Validation Team