

Excellence in Pupil Development Award

Verification Report

School name:	Horizon Community College
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Principal:	Claire Huddart
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Award verifier:	Andy Taylor
Award adviser (if applicable):	School Led
Date of verification:	17 June 2025

Commentary on the evidence provided:

- The action plan is based on robust self-evaluation, supported by findings from a firm evidence base. Leaders within the school are very reflective and any areas identified as a need of development are addressed comprehensively.
- Across the various objectives a comprehensive range of documentation evidences the impact of this aspect of the school's provision.
- At all levels, there is a commitment to strengthening the school's provision to support students' personal development.
- The school's work is clearly underpinned and supported by a wide range of school policies.
- Personal Development, and how the EPDA award complements this, is promoted across all year group. An extensive range of enrichment opportunities are well planned and have been intricately woven into the school's curriculum and its wider offer.
- As a result of coherent planning, real and relevant links are made to life skills and opportunities beyond the school gates.
- Staff have forged links with various organisations to support students' personal development. One example of this is the partnership which has been developed with local charities, e.g. The LimbBo Foundation.

- Staff are provided with a broad spectrum of professional development opportunities which help them to develop the necessary skills to implement the curriculum.

Strengths identified during verification:

Leadership and Management

- The determination of school leaders and governors is rooted in a strong moral purpose, which is evident throughout all levels of the organisation. There is a clear and sustained commitment to enhancing the school's provision to support students' personal development.
- In terms of wellbeing of the whole school community, leaders and staff at Horizon Community College provide exemplary support. Working with extremely motivated and committed staff, leaders provide wide-ranging support for all.
- School leaders have a clear vision how this award will be used to support the journey of school improvement. Leaders continue to develop the curriculum and extra-curricular experiences to work towards this vision.
- Effective leadership has ensured there is a clear distribution of tasks across a wide range of departments. Because of this, staff feel fully involved in developments towards the award.
- Professional development is a key strength of the school. Leaders ensure that staff expertise is closely aligned with the ambitions of the carefully constructed curriculum and wider enrichment opportunities.

Staff

- Through both the curriculum and a range of enrichment opportunities, staff create the conditions for students to thrive. Where needed, additional bespoke support is provided, ensuring the school's provision remains inclusive and responsive to individual needs.
- Recognising and celebrating the successes of students across all areas of the academic and wider curriculum is of great importance to staff. There are numerous events throughout the year to ensure this priority is realised.
- Staff play an active role in the wider life of the school and are dedicated to equipping students with the skills needed for their next stage of education. The carefully designed curriculum enables meaningful and relevant connections to be made with essential life skills
- Staff recognise the importance of developing an effective working relationship with parents so both home and school can support.

Parents

- Parents were really appreciative of staff who support their children in a sensitive and caring way. This approach is very much the embodiment of the school's overarching values.
- Parents value the school's strong commitment to recognising and celebrating students' achievements across both the academic and wider curriculum. The school actively contacts families to identify and acknowledge successes beyond the classroom, ensuring all accomplishments are recognised and celebrated
- Parents recognise that, as their children progress through the school, they are well supported in developing skills and wider interests that will prepare them effectively for life beyond school.

- Parents appreciate the focus on the personal development of their children, as well as being kept fully informed about their child's academic achievement. The work of the school to support their children was highlighted as a real strength by parents. In their words, "...staff are committed to supporting our children. The school's work is outstanding."
- The school provides care for all the students and parents felt there is 'a real community feel' which they value. Strong relationships exist between staff and students. Moreover, there was recognition that staff will do all they can to help and are tenacious in their efforts.

Students

- Students are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills. They also feel that their voices are heard and that they play a meaningful role in the school's ongoing improvement
- Students are encouraged to flourish and develop their own interests. To this end, the school provides additional clubs across a range of activities. Students are developing a real social conscience and know they can make a difference both locally and beyond.
- Students enjoy the chance to work with, and provide a positive role model for, younger children.
- Students feel the school helps them develop skills and character traits which will help them in their next educational step and life after school.

Impact:

- The EPDA working group has carried out its role with a high level of efficiency and professionalism. The quality of the portfolio produced is a testament to their dedication, clearly evidencing the significant work undertaken. It also reflects the collective commitment of staff across the school.
- In terms of its development, the leadership and management of the EPDA has been excellent. Due to a shared vision of continued improvement, leaders are determined to build on the many strengths the school has with regard to personal development.
- The school has cultivated a broad and diverse range of partnerships with local organisations, community groups, and external providers. These strong links significantly enrich students' educational experiences by providing valuable opportunities beyond the classroom. As a result, students benefit from real-world learning, exposure to different cultures and professions, and enhanced personal development. This collaborative approach helps to deepen students' understanding, broaden their horizons, and supports the development of important life skills.
- Leaders have placed a strong emphasis on supporting students to develop key character traits and learning dispositions that underpin successful lifelong learning. Through carefully planned curriculum experiences and wider personal development opportunities, students are encouraged to build resilience, independence, confidence, and a positive attitude towards challenge. These traits are explicitly taught, modelled, and reinforced across the school, enabling students to take greater ownership of their learning and engage meaningfully with their education
- The exemplary work of the school was recognised in its most recent Ofsted inspection.
- The EPDA framework has been used as a diagnostic tool to reflect and develop current practices.

Areas for development:

- It is important to note that none of the activities within the final verification identified any areas within the EPDA framework which needed further development. Within the portfolio, the school highlighted the following area on which to focus: ensure the careers programme reflects the changes made to the Gatsby benchmarks.

Verifier recommendation:

- Horizon Community College to be awarded the EPDA for a period of three years.

Principal comments:

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