



# Follow-through Inspection Report

## St. George's Primary School

OCTOBER 2010

### **1. The Inspection**

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on standards and quality in St. George's Primary School in November 2008 following an inspection in September 2008. Working with the education authority, the school prepared an action plan indicating how they would address the main points for action identified in the original report.

This follow-through report details the progress that the school and education authority have made in addressing the main points for action in the original report.

### **2. Continuous Improvement**

The school continued to be committed to continuous improvement. All staff had demonstrated a willingness to address the areas identified for improvement from the inspection report. The staff had received training through visits to other schools to see good practice and had been supported by the Education Improvement Service with the implementation of the action plan.

The headteacher had continued to provide strong leadership and a clear vision. The senior management team and all staff had worked together and reviewed and revised aspects of the curriculum. The staff had continued to develop aspects of the Curriculum for Excellence through visiting educational websites. All staff had worked together as a strong team to develop and share their good practices with each other and had improved the quality of learning and teaching in classrooms.

Since the original inspection the headteacher had been seconded to a post in Education Improvement Service. The depute headteacher had taken up post as acting headteacher and had provided continuity in addressing the action plan.

The school had continued to raise attainment in reading but there was a drop in attainment in writing and mathematics last year. The school was aware of the reasons for this and was addressing them through the sharing of good practice and ensuring appropriate additional support for those children who required it. They also reviewed support for learning strategies to improve children's experiences and this had helped to ensure that the needs of all children had been met. The school had also reviewed the support for those children who were high achievers to provide a greater level of challenge. A significant number of children had achieved appropriate national levels earlier than would normally be expected and the school is confident that they will be able to redress the drop in attainment levels in writing and mathematics.

The school continued to provide a wide range of opportunities for children to achieve success through enterprise education, ECO School activities, football, basketball, netball and a range of charity events. Children had continued to increase their knowledge and understanding of diversity and had learned to recognise and tackle discrimination very effectively. The school had continued to play an active role in the Sense Over Sectarianism project with a local primary school. The school had an active Pupil Council who met with the headteacher every month to discuss a variety of issues. The Eco committee had helped the school in its work towards a Green Flag award and they have since applied for a Bronze Award. The school had been awarded the status of a Health Promoting School.

Children now had two hours of physical activity a week. The children's involvement in activities and enthusiasm had been greatly enhanced by Cybercoach, an electronic system which gives the children many opportunities to learn a variety of dance moves through an on-screen teacher. This system had cost £10,000 which had been raised by the Parent Council.

Some children benefited from time in the nurture class which had continued to be effective with the result that they had become more confident and able to develop their social skills.

### **3. Progress Towards the Main Points for Action**

The initial inspection report identified two main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made with each of the action points and the resulting improvements for children.

#### **Main point for action 1**

*To continue to develop approaches to setting learning targets for all children.*

*The school with the support of the education authority had made good progress towards meeting this main point for action.*

The school had worked well to provide the children with opportunities to become actively involved in their own learning. Children were able to take more responsibility for their learning. Children had become more adept at making decisions about their learning and had clearer ideas of how to improve them. Lessons had become more interesting and children had been more actively engaged in cross curricular experiences. The whole school themes had been very popular and had increased parental involvement in supporting their own children's learning. Children had opportunities to assess themselves and each other in a variety of activities. They worked collaboratively and provided evaluative comments including feedback on talks presented by their peers. The use of ICT had been developed to provide enhanced opportunities to carry out personal research and deliver presentations to various audiences. Children in the upper school had been trained to use Powerpoint to create these presentations.

The school had moved forward in developing personal learning plans with the children. Staff had reviewed their practice to allow the children to become more involved in setting their own targets. Teachers had shared learning targets and success criteria with the children. This had helped the children to become more aware of what they were learning and what they needed to do to improve their work. Children had been more motivated and had been enthusiastically involved in the increasing opportunities to make decisions about their own learning. Teachers had become more skilful in providing quality feedback to children. The feedback had helped children to become more knowledgeable about their learning and their next steps. The personal learning plans had become more focussed and teachers and children had more confidence in setting personal targets which built on prior learning and ensured systematic progression. The school is now reviewing the personal plans to ensure that they continue to be helpful to teaching and learning.

**Main point for action 2**

*To continue to develop the school's self-evaluation procedures to improve the quality of learning and teaching.*

*The school with the support of the education authority had made good progress towards meeting this main point for action.*

The teachers had become more reflective practitioners and had made adaptations and improvements to their teaching. The senior management team had monitored and evaluated the curriculum by visiting classes and evaluating children's work. The senior management team had continued to make termly formal visits to each class and staff had been provided with helpful written feedback of strengths and areas for development which had been followed up at the next visit. Staff had participated in regular peer evaluations through discussion where they had reflected on teaching and learning and had planned their next steps. This had led to a more appropriate pace of learning for all children with some moving at a faster pace. Collaborative staff planning had led to more reflective questioning of activities and strategies.

The school had worked as a community with partner agencies to evaluate provision to ensure continuous improvement. Effective systems had been put in place to gather the views of all stakeholders about the work of the school.

Teachers had been encouraged to be reflective through their own professional review and development and this had allowed them to discuss and plan how to improve their teaching and learning.

The policy for self-evaluation is now being reviewed and updated to reflect the improvements in practice in monitoring and evaluation. These improvements now need to be further embedded and the school should continue to monitor progress to ensure a consistent approach.

**3. Conclusion and Next Steps**

Overall the school had made good progress in addressing the recommendations of the HMIE report of November 2008. Over the two years since the original inspection report strong leadership by the headteacher, the acting headteacher and the management team had led to improvements in children's involvement in their learning and in self evaluation. Staff commitment to continuing professional development and sharing good practice had led to improvements in aspects of learning and teaching.

The headteacher and the staff had worked well together as a team to progress all aspects of the action plan effectively. Senior managers had provided effective support and direction to the teachers and support staff who had actively participated in working groups and training sessions to progress the initiatives. The school had used the inspection process and the recommendations within the whole report as a focus for whole school improvement to enable them to move forward effectively and to build on their existing good practice, high standards and high expectations for their children. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

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