



Follow-through Inspection Report

Bankhead Primary School

October 2007

The Inspection

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education HMIE published a report on standards and quality in Bankhead Primary School in May 2006 following an inspection of the school in January 2006. Working with the school, the education authority prepared an action plan indicating how they would address the main points for action identified in the original report.

Continuous Improvement

The school had made very good progress in overtaking the main points for action in the report. The head teacher and staff moved quickly to establish an action plan to take forward the main points for action from the HMIE inspection report on the school. The plan identified tasks and timescales as well as the criteria for monitoring and evaluating progress. Teaching staff had received a broad range of training and advice from the authority's Education Improvement Service to support the implementation of the action plan.

The school had continued to grow in expertise and achievements. At all stages of the school pupils' achievements were commendable. They demonstrated their confidence, sense of responsibility and successful learning through participation in a wide range of activities. A platinum award had been received for Enterprise Education; the school had received a silver Eco-school award and a film of the school's very good practice in PE had been posted on a national learning and teaching website. There had been a large investment in information and communication technology. The new computer suite and equipment such as electronic whiteboards had impacted on the quality of the learning experiences of the children.

Good links had been maintained with parents and the community and there was great support for pupil performances, such as the nativity play and other school shows. Staff, children and parents had also worked to benefit a number of charities and had raised over £2000 for The Malawi Challenge.

Importantly the standards of attainment had continued to rise and a significant number of pupils were achieving their next level of attainment at an earlier stage than expected. Better tracking of the progress of individual pupils through the various levels of work and teachers' involvement in an extensive range of development work to improve the learning and teaching in classrooms had resulted in a challenging pace of learning at all stages in the school.

The excellent leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and the very good efforts of staff, demonstrated a clear ability and commitment to continue to improve the quality of the work of the school.

Progress Towards the Main Points for Action

The initial inspection report identified 3 main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made with each of the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and other stakeholders.

Main point for action 1

The school and authority should address the accommodation issues identified in this report and improve the facilities for information and communication technology (ICT)

The school and authority had made very good progress towards meeting this main point for action.

A general purposes room had been converted into a very attractive media suite to allow children individual access to computers to support their learning. This facility had allowed more pupils to develop their ICT skills in a highly structured and enjoyable way and had raised the profile of ICT across the school. In classrooms, teachers used electronic interactive whiteboards, digital cameras and a visualiser to deliver stimulating and motivating lessons. Teachers and children were becoming increasingly confident and competent in the use of information technology. A group of pupils had taken part in The National Geographic Challenge and produced and sold a CD of their work as part of their enterprise project. Some teachers and pupils were making use of video cameras in the gymnasium to give immediate feedback on performances.

The fabric and décor of toilets was much improved and the pupil council had been involved in decisions relating to their refurbishment. The council had led the way in encouraging peers to care for the improved facilities. A fan and ionizer had been fitted to help eliminate smells in the boys' toilets but these had not dealt completely with the problem.

Main point for action 2

Main point for action 2: The school should develop pupils' independent learning skills and promote challenge for higher attaining pupils in the upper school.

The school had made very good progress towards meeting this action point

Teaching staff had worked very well as a team to develop more active and collaborative approaches to learning. They shared ideas and expertise at regular learning and teaching forum and observed practice in each other's classrooms.

Teachers in the early stages worked with a new learning community coach to develop play and the use of games to help children learn in a more active manner. In the middle and upper school a teacher worked with colleagues to demonstrate and promote strategies that encouraged pupils to take more responsibility for their learning. For example, there were regular opportunities for pupils to work in teams on shared tasks and to evaluate each other's work. Good use was made of ICT to allow pupils to work independently of the teacher to research information and prepare presentations of their work. Pupils at all stages were involved in presenting their ideas to an audience and there were greater opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning across all areas of the curriculum.

Teachers shared with pupils what they were expected to learn and gave good oral and written feedback to help pupils identify what they had done well and the steps they should take to improve their work. This practice was particularly strong in writing.

Promoted staff had carefully monitored and supported the learning experiences of pupils. They had worked with teachers to agree the high standard of teaching that was implemented within classrooms. As a result of these developments a greater number of children were working on tasks that they found challenging and enjoyable and there was a significant increase in the number of pupils achieving Level E in the upper school.

Main point for action 3**Main point for action 3: The school should improve further the effectiveness of tracking individual pupils' attainment.**

The school had made excellent progress towards meeting this main point for action.

Senior managers and staff had worked closely together to review and improve the already strong procedures for tracking pupil progress. Teachers' plans were amended to focus more closely on the development of key skills in mathematics and language. Teachers used assessment information effectively to identify and plan the next steps in pupils' learning. The deputy headteacher and a principal teacher met each term with class teachers to review the progress made by pupils and agree targets for individuals and groups. They fed this information back to the headteacher who evaluated the pace of learning across the whole school. Through this process she was able to allocate additional support from pupil support assistants and other sources to meet pupils' needs. These developments had impacted on pupils' performance and a significant number were learning above their expected levels of attainment.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The school continued to be a vibrant and welcoming school. Staff and pupil morale was high. Parents were very supportive of the school and it continued to be well regarded by the local community. The school had made very good progress towards meeting the main points for action in the inspection report and examples of outstanding practice were emerging.

The headteacher and all staff had worked effectively as a team to take forward a range of important developments in the school. With the support provided by the education authority the school had been successful in developing approaches to teaching and learning that were helping to improve the pace of learning for all pupils. Through an improved approach to assessing pupils' progress the school had ensured that all pupils were making good progress in key areas of the curriculum.

The education authority will continue to monitor and support the raising of attainment in the school.

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