



Follow-through Inspection Report

St. Aidan's School

NOVEMBER 2010

1. The Inspection

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education HMIE published a report on standards and quality in St. Aidan's School in November 2008 following their inspection of the school in September 2008. 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.

After consultation with HMIE, it was agreed that this follow-through report would be the responsibility of the education authority. Members of the Education Improvement Service made several visits to the school in 2008–2010 to assess the extent to which the school was continuing to improve the quality of its work and to evaluate progress made in responding to the main points for action in the initial report.

2. Continuous Improvement

The Headteacher continued to provide very strong leadership with clear strategic direction and focus on learning. The school had continued to recognise and celebrate the achievements of all young people. The Headteacher working with his senior and middle leaders had created a climate of collective responsibility, mutual support and effective teamwork which had enabled the school to continuously improve the quality of its provision for young people.

The curriculum had been developed in line with the curriculum for excellence and was founded on the development of transferable, independent, vocational and life skills to prepare young people for the world of work. The school had begun the implementation in August 2010.

The work of teachers and specialist staff was continuously monitored to ensure that learners' needs were met. The school was working closely with parents and partner services to identify and meet young people's additional support needs.

Collectively, the school community had further developed its capacity to improve the quality of its provision for young people.

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 pupils and other stakeholders.

Main point for action 1

*Continue to plan and build on good practice by focusing on key areas for school improvement.
The school has made very good progress towards meeting this recommendation.*

The school had refined its quality improvement procedures by referencing its strengths and areas for development to the Quality Framework model published in the HMIE 'Journey to Excellence'. As a result, the school's published improvement plan for 2010–2011 had identified key areas in its successes and achievements, the work and life of the school and the vision and leadership of the whole school community. In its successes and achievements, the school's identified strengths had built on those highlighted in the HMIE report to extend to include the experiences of all learners, the high achievement in vocational and national certificate courses and the range of external partnerships developed. It had also focused its development on the introduction of National Progression Awards in employability and on the development of core modules in literacy and numeracy.

In the work and life of the school, the engagement of staff and their commitment to meeting the needs of all learners had been identified. To progress, the school had identified the development of the Curriculum for Excellence in the areas interdisciplinary learning, active learning and the structure of the curriculum.

The strength of leadership and vision identified in the HMIE report had been acknowledged as a key strength by the school along with its instances of teamwork, partnerships, strategic planning and communication. The school had begun the development to extend and promote leadership skills in every classroom and to all members of staff.

Both staff and young people had taken lead roles within the school. Young people had made presentations at assemblies and had been active in leading developments through the Eco Committee. The post-16 group had provided valuable support to S1 as buddies. They had also been empowered to plan for their futures at an early stage and take control of decisions affecting their futures. A number of staff had taken lead roles across the school, for example The Call to Love initiative, staff development, ICT, Health promotion, Eco Schools, ASD, complex learners, residential trips and extra-curricular activities. Many subject areas were led by unpromoted staff. Some improvement teams had been led by unpromoted staff. All improvement teams were led by unpromoted members of staff.

Overall, the school had demonstrated its commitment to improvement through self evaluation and had developed effective systems to gather and analyse relevant information to inform improvement planning. It had used self evaluation effectively to bring about improvements with a clear focus on learners' successes, achievements and future destinations.

**Main point for
action 2**

Extend the school week so that it is the same length as in other secondary schools.

The school has fully met this recommendation.

Following consultation and communication with parents, partners and other stakeholders, the school had increased the length of the school week in accordance with local authority guidelines.

**4.
Conclusion and
Next Steps**

The school had continued to build on its strengths and had effectively addressed the main points for action identified in the initial report. The headteacher, supported by his staff, had succeeded in bringing about continued improvement in planning and the extension of the school day. There had been a strong and effective focus on attainment and achievement and on development to support the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence. The school had further improved the attainment and achievement of young people. It had identified the development of more active and cross-curricular approaches to learning. Together staff had developed more effective approaches towards evaluating their work and planning for improvement. The school is well placed to sustain and build on the improvements.

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