



# Follow-through Inspection Report

## Cardonald Primary School

November 2009

### **The Inspection**

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on standards and quality in Cardonald Primary School in March 2008 following an inspection of the school in November 2007. 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.

### **Continuous Improvement**

The school continued to be committed to continuous improvement. Staff had received a variety of training and advice from the authority's Education Improvement Service to support the implementation of the action plan. All teachers had demonstrated their commitment to the action plan with each being involved in a working party linked to driving the action plan forward.

Cardonald Primary School had continued to provide a welcoming environment. During the last session an acting depute headteacher and two acting principal teachers had been appointed as a result of staff absence. Two of these postholders had returned to their substantive posts at the start of the 2009-10 session. However, importantly each of them continued to have lead roles for certain priorities within the school's action plan.

Over the last three sessions overall attendance figures had remained consistent at around 94%, with the school having continued to operate systems to encourage improved attendance.

The school had continued to place a strong emphasis on children's achievements, and had won a number of important awards. These included the education authority's Diamond Award for Enterprise and previously the Platinum Award. The school's Junior Choir had come first in the Glasgow Music Festival and the Senior Choir had come second in their category. The school had continued to provide a variety of opportunities for children to participate in educational visits within the wider community.

Importantly, the school had continued to ensure that children have an active voice in the life of the school through the Pupil Council, and had extended this in 2008-09 to include an Eco Committee. The school had achieved a bronze award for its Eco efforts, with plans in place to further develop Eco work. The school had recently been awarded two sizeable grants from business to develop the school grounds. Children and parents had been actively involved in decision making around these initiatives.

It was positive that the school had recently consulted with key stakeholders to create a shared vision and values for the school.

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

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

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

#### **Improve the pace of learning, and challenge more able pupils to reach their full potential**

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

A variety of initiatives had been put in place to improve the pace of learning and to appropriately challenge more able children. Attainment results showed some significant improvements, but also some areas for development. Overall attainment levels in reading had shown an upward trend over the last three years, whilst overall writing and maths results remained fairly consistent over the last two years at approximately 84% and 94% respectively.

Across the school teachers had provided the children with increased opportunities for active learning in a variety of curricular areas, and children were well motivated by this approach, and developing the effectiveness of their contributions. Teachers made positive use of ICT equipment to engage children in their learning including use of ICT for personal research. Opportunities had been provided for children to self and peer-assess work, although this was an area for further development.

A new approach to writing had been adopted by the school including the provision of additional teacher input to each class to support improved pace and challenge in writing. Significantly the 2009 P2 writing results showed Level A being attained for the first time in four years, and by a considerable number of children. There had been an increase on the previous session at P6 in the number of children who had attained appropriate levels in writing and reading earlier than might normally be expected. In addition, the P2 reading results were up slightly on the previous session. There had been some falls against the previous session at P3 and P7 in the number of children who had attained appropriate levels in reading earlier than might normally be expected.

A more active approach to maths had been implemented at the early to middle stages. Significantly, there had been a sizeable rise on the previous session in the number of children at P2 who had attained Level A in maths. There had been some falls on the previous session in the numbers at P6 and P7 who had attained appropriate national levels in maths earlier than might be expected.

The school now had taken some positive actions to identify and appropriately challenge more able children. This included relevant links with appropriate specialist staff and with the link secondary school. A short programme of 'Thinking Skills' had been put in place for identified children, and plans were in place for this work to be taken forward. The school had plans to record and track the progress of more able children, and take account of the views of these children and their parents.

### **Main point for action 2**

#### **Engage pupils more in active learning**

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

The school had worked well to provide the children with enhanced opportunities to engage in active learning across the school. A DVD of the children engaged in active learning had been created, and this had formed part of a successful event for parents on the school's approach to active learning. This event had then been tailored for teachers, and the good practice very successfully shared with other teachers from across the authority. Children from almost all stages of the school were directly

involved in demonstrating snapshots of their classroom active learning activities. When demonstrating, and talking to the visiting teachers children had shown much enthusiasm for this approach to learning. They had displayed confidence when working with others, and were able to clearly articulate the processes and thinking involved in their particular activities. The variety of activities included children working in pairs/groups on a mixture of maths based games, including the use of ICT equipment, practical language comprehension activities, experimenting and hypothesising about colour dyes linked to environmental studies topic work etc.

The school had created useful resources to support active learning in early to middle stages maths, and this work was to be further developed over the current session. Children had been provided with opportunities to explain their maths thinking, and to learn from each other. They had opportunities to work in a variety of groupings.

At least one environmental studies topic for each stage had been reviewed to include active approaches to learning. This work included cross curricular approaches to talking and listening. Some classes had already piloted these updated environmental studies topics, and displayed some of their work at the aforementioned event for teachers. The school recognised that this was a work in progress, and had plans in place to develop it further over the current session. Overall children spoke positively of the approaches used, and were well engaged with their learning.

### **Main point for action 3**

### **Develop pupils' independent learning skills to enable them to take more responsibility for their own learning**

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

Teachers used a range of approaches to support children in assessing their own progress, and to set targets for improvement. The children had opportunities to self/peer-assess in a variety of activities including writing, homework, talking and listening. They had opportunities to work in pairs to improve pieces of writing. They also had opportunities to provide evaluative comments as part of talking and listening activities, including feedback on talks presented by their peers.

The use of ICT had been developed to provide enhanced opportunities, particularly for older children, to carry out personal research and deliver presentations to various audiences including parents, peers, senior managers etc. Opportunities had been provided for children to use ICT to investigate key questions then present their findings to peers. Teachers had received training to support the provision of cross curricular learning experiences for the children. This in turn had helped improve the opportunities made available to children to learn independently, including opportunities for children to decide how they are going to learn, who will help them learn etc. Children demonstrated enthusiasm when given opportunities to take on different positions of responsibility when working in groups.

The school had taken initial steps towards creating and using personal learning plans with the children. The focus had been on language and maths. Parents were not yet involved in this, but it was intended to develop this later in the session. Children spoke positively of their usage of these plans. More recently learning logs had been implemented as another way of supporting children to reflect on their learning. Parents now had the opportunity to comment on the learning logs on a regular basis. However, the full impact of both these initiatives had yet to be seen.

The Pupil Council and Eco Committee provided positive opportunities for children to take responsibility for their learning. Pupil Councillors had various responsibilities including interviewing children for Junior Road Safety posts, addressing the school's parent council, a school newsletter, and involvement in future decisions about

how to use the sizeable grants from business to develop the school grounds. They also had control of a small budget, and were involved in surveying children's views before deciding how best to spend the budget. The school had identified the further development of Eco work as a priority for the current session to build on its bronze Eco award. Eco Committee members spoke positively of their various committee responsibilities including their involvement in appointing 'Litter Busters', explaining and demonstrating to peers about good recycling procedures etc.

**Main point for action 4**

**Improve approaches to self-evaluation, monitoring and tracking attainment to ensure a clear and sustained impact on pupils' learning and attainment**

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

Teachers had been provided with a useful opportunity to observe their colleagues teaching. This sharing of approaches had helped to develop classroom practice to the benefit of the children, as had increased opportunities to work together. The senior management team (SMT) had implemented a formal class visit for each teacher at the end of last session. Some helpful written feedback had been provided, and teachers had taken positive steps to reflect on their practice to improve children's learning experiences. The headteacher recognised the need for the SMT to build on this approach to ensure a more informed picture of children's learning experiences including appropriate pace and challenge.

Teachers had been given opportunities to engage in self-evaluation using nationally produced quality indicators. They were not yet fully involved in evaluating the quality of provision in the school. The headteacher had recognised that teachers should increasingly have involvement in the use of quality indicators to reflect on, and to improve practice both individually and across the school.

The headteacher had continued to monitor and track children's attainment through each session, and importantly staff had continued to be actively involved in this. However, there was scope to improve the link between tracking attainment and impact on pupil performance. The headteacher had recently taken positive steps to further develop her knowledge of analysing attainment data.

**Conclusion and Next Steps**

Overall the school had made good progress in addressing the recommendations of the HMIE report of March 2008.

Importantly, teachers had shown commitment to the school's improvement agenda through their membership of various working parties, and it was positive that the headteacher had encouraged staff to participate in sharing their practice on active learning. However, further work was needed in terms of embedding effective self-evaluation across the school. Actions were being taken to improve this. With continued support from the education authority, the headteacher and staff team had demonstrated the capacity to improve and to take the school forward to the benefit of the children at the school.

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