

Follow-through Inspection Report

Whiteinch Primary School

June 2006

The Inspection

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on standards and quality at Whiteinch Primary School in June 2004 following their inspection of the school in March of the same year.

Working with the school, the education authority prepared an action plan indicating how the main points for action, identified in the report, would be achieved.

This current report contains details of the progress the school has made towards achieving these targets and also outlines some significant developments undertaken since the original inspection.

Continuous Improvement

The school has continued to focus on improving the opportunities for all children at Whiteinch. A major project has been developed to radically renovate the school playground. The children in the school have devised large murals and a substantial amount of new equipment has been purchased following sponsorship from the commercial sector. Pupils, teachers and parents working together, secured additional funding from sources such as the Gwen Mayor Trust. Anniesland College (Balshagray Campus) students and staff have participated in the project and aspects of the process have been recorded on video to ensure children can appreciate and evaluate their own efforts. Children at the school have been at the centre of the design process for the project and parents have been closely involved in support.

The school has successfully integrated the new Nurture Group provision into the life of the school. This facility was set up in October 2004. As well as providing focussed support for identified children each morning, the facility is used by all children who are timetabled during afternoons to work with the nurture class teacher on personal and social development themes.

The school has also recently participated in a number of musical projects including the Hold Your Breath Project, which is focussed on the Clyde Tunnel, and the Burns and Rivers Project, which resulted in children performing at the City Chambers. The pupils' original composition was also recorded and featured in a CD created to celebrate contemporary song writing in Scotland.

Participation in projects such as these highlights the commitment of pupils, parents and teachers at Whiteinch to extend the opportunities available to children in the school and ensure the school plays a key role in the local community.

Progress Towards the Main Points For Action

The initial report identified three main points for action. This section evaluates the progress the school has made in each of these key areas and outlines the consequent improvements which have benefited pupils within the school.

Main point for action 1

Continue to raise attainment in Language and Maths

The school has made very good progress towards meeting this Main Point for Action

The school has recorded increases in attainment in national assessments in Writing, Reading and Mathematics between sessions 2003-04 and 2004-05. In each of the national assessment categories attainment increased by approximately 2%. Attainment remains well above the average in Glasgow. In 2005, across all stages, most pupils had attained expected levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.

The school embarked on a review of the teaching of Writing as a consequence of the inspection. Planning formats were revised, new resources acquired and new teaching methodologies were adopted following additional training.

Systematic record keeping and assessment practices have been developed across all stages.

The school reviewed the school's writing curriculum to ensure there was an opportunity for children to learn about different types of writing at each stage. An annual calendar has been produced detailing which aspects of pupils' writing would be assessed each term. Senior staff monitored progress made by pupils using this assessment information.

Teaching staff met each term with the head teacher to review the progress made by pupils in mathematics, reading and writing. Teachers predicted when pupils would meet national attainment levels and the progress made by the pupils was monitored carefully by the senior management team.

In addition, new planning materials are in place for Talking and Listening, Reading, Grammar and Punctuation and for the teaching of Phonics. This all contributes to the establishment of a comprehensive new system for the teaching of Language in the school.

New planning materials have been adopted to support the teaching of Mathematics as a whole. New resources have been acquired and teachers benefited from training led by the education authority. A new programme for teaching pupils skills in problem solving has been put in place.

The school enrolls a significant number of occupational travellers and has instituted specific after school support for such children with a focus on language and mathematics. Two children have recently been selected to participate in a laptop scheme which supports travelling children.

Main point for action 2

Provide greater challenge for pupils and develop their skills in independent learning

The school has made very good progress towards meeting this Main Point for Action

The school provided a range of stimulating, motivating and challenging contexts in which pupils were able to learn. Projects such as the “Clyde in the Classroom”, where pupils were involved in rearing trout, offered an interesting stimulus for pupils. As part of their writing work, pupils in P6 and P7 wrote letters to their pen pals abroad. Teachers planned more regular opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and review their own work and the work of others.

As previously noted the school has adopted a new problem solving programme which encourages independent learning. In addition the school has adopted a comprehensive programme for the teaching of Technology. New resources were acquired and a training package delivered to teachers by the Educational Improvement Service. Creativity and independent learning feature as key components in the programme. A measure of the initial success of the programme has been the progress of two pupils in the school into the second round of the Junior Engineer for Britain KNEX Challenge 2005.

Further developments have taken place in integrating ICT into the learning taking place in the school. Staff have undergone training and pupils have become more involved in using Internet research and smart boards.

Thinking skills are also being developed in the school. In Primary 1 and 2 the “Let’s Think” programme has been introduced and a training programme has been developed for staff. The school now plans to introduce thinking skills across all stages. A member of staff has recently attended training run by the Scottish Network for Able Pupils on developing philosophical thinking and this will feature as a future development.

Main point for action 3

Make more effective use of assessment information, particularly in English Language

The school has made very good progress towards meeting this Main Point for Action

The school has reviewed processes around the national assessment system. There has been specific training regarding writing assessments. The school has adopted a revised tracking procedure for all three national assessments which ensures teachers predict pupil readiness with greater accuracy. Through regular meetings between teachers and the head teacher, the school has ensured that assessment information was used well to monitor pupils’ progress.

The senior management team monitors and supports this process in reviewing planning and providing feedback. The programme of classroom visits by senior staff also enables teachers to receive feedback on how assessment information should impact on teaching.

Teaching staff have participated in training about how different pupils learn. New approaches to teaching had been discussed by staff. Teachers

experienced in these methods had worked in classes alongside teachers in the upper stages to demonstrate good practice and share new ideas.

All teachers have participated in formative assessment training and a new policy is currently in draft form in the school.

Pupils have been engaged in evaluating teaching and learning across a sample of classes and the information is being reviewed this term by the whole staff team.

The school has participated in the pilot of using NFER Nelson standardised tests to acquire a detailed picture of children's capabilities. Progress has been tracked and staff have been able to identify areas where pupils would benefit from additional intervention. Network Support teachers have been included in this process and their expertise is used to support children whose needs have been identified.

The school needs to introduce procedures to assess pupils' progress in listening and talking.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The Head Teacher, prior to her current maternity leave, the Acting Head Teacher and all the staff have worked hard in taking forward a range of important developments in the school.

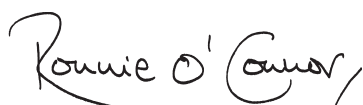
The Principal Teacher has been in post as the acting Head Teacher since June 2005. She has successfully led the school team in developing strategies to meet the recommendations in the HMIE report.

The school has maintained a continuous focus on the themes identified by the inspection report as areas for growth during the period since its publication.

Furthermore the school team has enabled children to increase their attainment in national assessments and developed a programme of opportunities for children to achieve in other areas of the curriculum.

Children are benefiting from a diverse range of stimulating learning opportunities at Whiteinch Primary including projects organised in the school and those originating in the local community.

The action plan has provided a focus for the staff team to reinvigorate teaching and learning in the school and consequently there is a renewed focus on providing quality educational experiences for all the children in Whiteinch Primary School.



Ronnie O'Connor
Executive Director (Education, Training & Young People)
Glasgow City Council