



# Follow-through Inspection Report

## St. Bride's Primary School

OCTOBER 2010

### **1. The Inspection**

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education published a report on standards and quality in St. Bride's Primary School in October 2008 following their inspection of the school in June 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.

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 visited the school in October 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 and staff work well to bring about continuous improvement. They received a broad range of training and advice from the authority's Education Improvement Service to support the implementation of the action plan. The impact of the school action plan has been very positive, allowing the school to take forward the action points described in the original HMIE report in October 2008. All staff have worked hard to improve performance across the school

Children are making very good progress in all aspects of their development and learning. Over the last two years, an increasing number of children from Eastern Europe have been enrolled in the school. Linguistic diversity is a feature of the school with nine different home languages recorded. Most children speak English as an additional language. The authority provided additional staffing to support children with English as an additional language. This has had measurable success with children attaining appropriate national attainment levels for the first time and more fluent English speakers attaining national levels in line with their peers.

Staff and children have high expectations of learning, achievement and behaviour. Significant numbers of children across the school achieve national levels earlier than might be expected. For example, the majority of children achieved level A in reading in P2 and a third of children achieved level E by the end of P7. In writing, 44% of P3 achieved level B or better. In mathematics most children in P2 achieved level A and a third of children in P7 achieved level E. Children's progress is tracked systematically by the headteacher who discusses and agrees challenging but achievable targets and timescales with teachers at the start of the session.

The school continues to build on the strengths of its partnerships with parents and carers. There are many opportunities to inform them about and involve them in the work and decision-making of the school. For example, translators are present at key meetings with parents. The school has very strong community links and has established very good transition programmes with local nursery classes and early years' establishments.

The wide range of opportunities for personal and social development and achievement continues to be a strength of the school. The achievements of the children are commendable at all stages. They have shown that they are confident individuals

through their ongoing participation in out-of-school activities. The school has received its Diamond 4 award for its work in enterprise education and has received an Eco-Schools Scotland silver award. The school has worked hard to promote health and well-being and has achieved Health Promoting School status.

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

The initial inspection report identified three 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.

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

*Continue to improve aspects of the curriculum to provide more relevant programmes and to enable pupils to improve their skills across different areas of learning.*

*The school had made very good progress towards meeting this recommendation.*

The school established a strategic curriculum working party. Other staff groups focused on particular curriculum areas. Staff are now engaging well with Curriculum for Excellence and have had significant training opportunities to allow them to provide programmes of study that are more relevant to children. Planning has evolved to further reflect the principles of a curriculum for excellence and includes the development of interdisciplinary skills and implementation of the storyline approach. Teachers are much more confident in planning using the experiences and outcomes in almost all subject areas.

Staff have improved their approaches to learning and teaching and give more detailed information to children on what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers share learning targets with children. In this way, children are clear about what they are learning and why they are learning it. Children work more together in pairs or groups and assessment strategies are used to highlight their achievements and next steps in learning. Active learning strategies have been further developed in all stages of the school and there is very good use of ICT to support learning and teaching. This has been enhanced by the increased use of smart boards in almost all classes.

Global citizenship, enterprise education, sustainability and the promotion of personal and social education all feature strongly in the school. The religious and moral education programme has been reviewed to allow children to be more actively engaged in this aspect of the curriculum. Children have access to good quality physical education for two hours a week. They also have a good knowledge of healthy living and healthy lifestyle choices.

The school provides excellent out of school experiences to support learning through visits to various local places of interest. Children enjoy a wide range of after school activities including dance, chess, athletics, ICT and fitness classes. The curriculum is now more relevant for children and provides more opportunities for challenge, personalisation and choice.

The school has improved its links with nursery classes and early years' establishments and there are very good programmes in place to support children at key points of transition.

**Main point for action 2**

*Further develop self-evaluation to bring about continued improvement*

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

This has been a key area of improvement in the school over the past two years. The school recently reviewed its vision, values and aims in consultation with staff, children and parents. Parents receive an annual summary of the school's standard and quality report and the school improvement plan. Commendably the headteacher shares parts of the school improvement plan with children. Increasingly children's views are taken into account in evaluating the life and work of the school.

There is an annual quality assurance calendar and senior leaders agree the evaluation of learning and teaching following planned visits to classes. Self-evaluation is part of the planning process and effective two way dialogue is evidenced during regular monitoring feedback meetings between senior leaders and class teachers.

There is ongoing self-evaluation at staff meetings where working groups share good practice and identify strengths and areas for development in order to inform next steps for the new improvement plan. Across the school there is informal and formal sharing of good practice and evidence of teachers exchanging classes and shadowing each other. All teachers in the school were actively engaged in a local schools' learning conference in June to share good practice. Depute headteachers in the learning community meet regularly to share good practice with each other and various members of staff have visited other establishments to improve their practice. The school also works closely with partner agencies to bring about improvements for example, the Slovakian home link worker, health, social work and police.

The school consults well with parents, children and staff. It has recently updated its health audit and been verified as a health promoting school. Staff are becoming increasingly confident in using self-evaluation tools including How Good is our School? and authority self-evaluation materials. It has recently carried out a triennial audit using these tools and questionnaires to all stakeholders; the responses from these were issued to staff, parents and children and are being used to inform the three year strategic school improvement plan. The school action plan, following the inspection by HMIE, has had a major impact on bring about school improvement, particularly in developing the curriculum, leadership and self evaluation.

**Main point for action 3**

*Continue to build the capacity of leadership for learning at all levels*

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

The headteacher has made many positive changes to build the capacity of leadership across the school. For example, there is now a more collegiate approach to planning and implementing the school improvement agenda. The further devolvement of leadership has enabled the depute headteacher and principal teachers to take greater responsibility, be more informed and grow professionally. All staff continue to be instrumental in leading learning in their classes. Children are encouraged to be lead learners in their though setting targets, leading group activities, enterprise and personal research. Children take more responsibility by participating in decision making through various school committees and teams.

Staff are encouraged to take a leading role in improving learning and teaching and sharing good practice. They are focused on leading improvement and innovation and have a clear understanding of their part in this process. All staff are members of working groups which have clear action plans and tasks to take forward development work within an agreed timescale. These groups support their colleagues in taking

forward innovation and change.

The headteacher has been proactive in providing high quality professional development events for staff. This has resulted in staff being more knowledgeable, better trained and more motivated. Staff take responsibility for their own continuous professional development record keeping and all participate in various staff development activities. Professional reviews for all staff are carried out and records are well maintained. The school identifies the strengths and talents of individual members of staff. For example, staff take responsibility for leading working parties, libraries, paired reading and playground games. There are regular meetings with support staff and enable them to share their ideas and improve their involvement in the life of the school.

### **3. Conclusion**

The school had made very good progress in overtaking the main points for action in the inspection report. The headteacher and staff worked very effectively as a team and in partnership with parents, children and the wider community to address the main points for action highlighted within the report. Through their teamwork and commitment to continuous improvement they ensured that the quality of education provided was of a high standard and delivered by a well trained and motivated staff.

Under the guidance and leadership of the headteacher and senior management team, the school has very good capacity to continue to improve.

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