



Follow-through Inspection Report

John Paul II Primary School

April 2010

1. The Inspection

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on standards and quality in John Paul II Primary School in May 2008 following an inspection of the school in January 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.

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.

2. Continuous Improvement

Under the leadership of the headteacher the school had demonstrated a clear commitment to continuous improvement. The headteacher had taken a strong lead on driving the action plan forward, and was well supported by the deputy headteacher. The principal teachers had also made a positive contribution to the improvement agenda. Staff had demonstrated their commitment to improvement with each being involved in a working party linked to progressing the action plan. They had received a range of advice and training from the authority's Education Improvement Service to support implementing improvements.

The school had continued to place a strong emphasis on children's achievements, and had won a number of important awards. One example was the school's innovative DVD titled 'Zimbabwe Wean.' It won best presenter, supporting presenter, and overall documentary for Determined to Make Movies. Such was the project's success that the children involved in the project had showcased their achievements at a city wide conference. The school's Junior Choir came first in a Glasgow schools competition. The school won a number of awards at the recent Bridgeton Burns Festival. For the third year running they achieved the Diamond Award for Enterprise. The school had recently achieved a Silver Eco Award. There were zero exclusions from 2007-8 to present.

The school had continued to provide a wide variety of opportunities for children to participate in educational visits, and the children participated in a wide range of community activities. To improve the playground the school had implemented a number of positive initiatives. This included a willow gardening project, with clear future plans to develop this further, e.g. vegetable plot, mini-beast area. This project stemmed from joint schools work to create a sculpture for the Commonwealth Games. The children had worked in partnership with children from a local ASL school on a successful football project. The school had continued its focus on health promotion with a variety of activities available to children at lunchtimes, e.g. cycling, playground buddy supported activities. Children continued to have an active voice in the life of the school through the Pupil Council and Health Hawks.

**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 children and other stakeholders.

**Main point for
Action 1**

Improve the quality of pupils' learning experiences, including a focus on the effectiveness of play in early years.

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

The school had taken positive steps to provide children with more active and collaborative learning experiences. Children showed enthusiasm for these new approaches, and were engaged well in their learning. Children had opportunities to work in a variety of groupings as part of regular classroom practice, e.g. to develop reading skills, and to conduct research. P4-7 had worked together using the authority's challenge materials. Children spoke positively about continued opportunities for using ICT in a variety of contexts, e.g. to create presentations, to research topics. A staff working group was currently developing new cross-curricular topics for use next term, with a key focus on further improving pupil choice.

The deputy headteacher had taken a strong lead on developing play within the infant department. One of the teachers had become an authority 'coach in play' for the school's learning community. Commendably, teachers had attended a variety of training, and then shared their experiences to the benefit of the children in the school. Children were able to pose questions of their peers during play activities, and clearly enjoyed the wide range of activities made available. The opportunity for children to choose a whole topic to work on was recently introduced at P1 level. Primary 1 and 2 children were developing their skills in mathematical language through baking in class.

Last session the headteacher had led a maths initiative to support higher attaining children at the upper stages to take responsibility for their own learning, to support them in assessing their own progress, and to set targets for improvement. The initiative had involved weekly setting and review of key maths targets. Due to its success, the school adapted and extended the initiative across all P4-7, and included language targets. The school had plans to adapt this for P1-3. Children enjoyed the responsibility provided by this approach.

**Main point for
Action 2**

To improve approaches to monitoring and evaluating the work of the school to ensure further improvements in pupils' attainment, particularly in writing.

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

Overall writing results had shown an upward trend over the last four sessions. Over the last three sessions the school had performed well overall in reading, writing, and slightly less so in maths against comparator schools.

To improve writing attainment the school had implemented a number of initiatives. The school had initiated a weekly whole school focus on writing. Planned events through the session had focused on promoting writing, e.g. Halloween writing, Christmas poetry week. Some of the children's poetry had appeared in a published

poetry book. Writing opportunities linked to cross curricular topics had been provided, e.g. infants had written to local fire officers, they had written pirate stories linked to the school's pirate focus on World Book Day, and P7 had written newspaper reports linked to the Burns poetry competition. The impact of these initiatives was evident in improved writing attainment. In 2008-9 a significant percentage of P2 children and a small percentage of P4 had attained appropriate levels earlier than might normally be expected. In the previous session none had attained this. There was also an overall rise in attainment on the previous session at P3, P4, and P7.

The implementation of more active approaches to maths had begun to impact on attainment, with 2008-9 results showing a rise in attainment on the previous session at P2 and P3, and for the first time some P7 children had attained appropriate levels earlier than might normally be expected. Overall reading results were positive. However, in 2008-9 the school performed below comparator schools in the number of children at P3 and P6 who attained maths levels, and at P2, P3, P6, and P7 who attained reading levels earlier than might normally be expected. Significantly, a sizeable number of these children had additional support needs. The school continued to work to provide additional support to these children.

The headteacher had taken a strong lead on improving monitoring and evaluating approaches within the school. He had visited another establishment to see best practice, and had participated in the authority's training sessions. A comprehensive monitoring programme was in place. Class visits involving all of the senior management team were well established and implemented regularly across the session. The senior management team provided written and oral feedback. The written feedback focused on supporting improvements. Teachers had started to observe classes to share good practice. They also made effective use of planned meetings to share good practice. This sharing of approaches had helped to develop classroom practice to the benefit of the children.

The headteacher had created a useful electronic system for teachers' forward planning, and tracking of attainment. It enabled immediate viewing of individual pupil progress. Staff had regular discussions with senior managers regarding pupil's attainment. Senior managers held regular forward planning and evaluation meetings with staff to support effective monitoring of pace and challenge. The headteacher also monitored teachers' weekly plans to check pace of learning. To improve pace, the school implemented a school homework class to support children. Scheduled jotter monitoring by senior managers provided children and staff with useful feedback regarding areas for improvement. The headteacher had continued with the weekly support staff meetings to best support staff and pupils. The teachers had opportunities to engage in self-evaluation using nationally produced quality indicators.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Overall the school had made very good progress in addressing the recommendations of the HMIE report of May 2008. The school had taken positive steps to improve children's learning experiences. Clear systems had been put in place to support effective monitoring and evaluation including a useful tracking system to monitor attainment. The headteacher intended to build on opportunities for children to take responsibility for their own learning, and to involve the wider parent body. 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.