



Follow-through Inspection Report

Blackfriars Primary School

June 2006

The Inspection

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education published a report on standards and quality at Blackfriars Primary School in June 2004 following their inspection of the school in March 2004.

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 report contains details of the progress made by the school in pursuit of these goals as well as noting other significant accomplishments.

Continuous Improvement

The roll for the school increased considerably over session 2004-05 and has remained largely static since then. Blackfriars is currently involved in consultations regarding the Pre-12 strategy of the authority. These will be concluded this session and the school may consequently evolve new ways of delivering opportunities to the local community as part of this process.

The school has been awarded a Platinum award for Enterprise Education development following consistent development across all stages.

The school has recently applied for substantial funding from the Leadership in Learning Programme in a consortium bid with other local schools to improve the transition between pre-5 and primary and primary and secondary. A further joint bid for funding has been submitted to Sense over Sectarianism in partnership with St. Francis' Primary School to enable joint events to take place in the local community.

The school football club has also achieved success in winning the local Community Police Inter-school competition in 2005.

New resources have been acquired to support the teaching of Art and Design and a new course has been adopted. Pupils from the school have won a Gold and a Bronze Medal for submissions they made to the 2005 Annual Glasgow Museum's Art Competition.

The staff have also introduced a new programme to support the teaching of listening and talking and look forward to this impacting in this curricular area.

Resources to support citizenship have been acquired to ensure the programme is delivering quality input in this area.

The recently appointed head teacher has made a clear impact on the school and the pace of progress towards meeting the main points for action has been strong.

Progress Towards the Main Points For Action

The initial inspection identified six main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made by the school in each of these key areas and outlines the resulting improvements which are benefiting the pupils of Blackfriars.

Main point for action 1

The school should continue to raise pupils' attainment.

Overall the school has made good progress towards meeting this Main

Attainment at the end of 2005 across all three national assessment areas has increased from the levels recorded at the end of session 2002-03.

A fundamental feature of the improvement of mathematics in the school has been the development of new planning processes, undertaken by teachers, with a greater degree of focus on the national Maths 5-14 programme. New problem solving resources and methods have been introduced and teachers have benefited from coaching in context support with a focus on teaching problem solving.

Teachers now predict systematically when children should sit National Assessments in Reading, Mathematics and Writing and the Senior Management Team monitors progress with each teacher.

New resources have been acquired to support the teaching of Talking and Listening and Writing. New policies in Mathematics and Language have been developed and the Educational Improvement Service has provided training in the teaching of writing.

The overall balance of the curriculum has been revised following the team's review of provision.

As the impact of the developments contained in this report impact more fully on the school, the Head Teacher is confident that the indications that attainment is increasing will be manifest across the curriculum.

Main point for action 2

The school should review activities sessions to ensure the best use of available time.

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

The team reviewed the activity session provision in P4-7 as part of the curriculum balance review and decided that pupils would enjoy greater benefits from the allocation of this time to defined curricular areas. As a consequence of this the activity sessions have been discontinued in upper primary.

In the infant stages (across P1-P3), learning through play has been introduced to replace activity time. Staff plan opportunities through play, which are directly linked to the 5-14 curriculum. The team will now focus on learning outcomes and review planning procedures to take account of this. Senior staff have supported the development of new skills in the teaching team and monitored the planning of play in the school.

Main point for action 3

The school should develop approaches to assessment and use the information to inform the next steps in pupils' learning.

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

The school has set up processes to ensure assessment is regular, planned, covers all curricular areas and includes information on the next steps in learning.

Teaching staff have participated in training about how different pupils learn. As a result teachers have increased the opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning. For example, teachers were regularly sharing with pupils what they were expected to learn. The Head Teacher is monitoring the success of these developments through the programme of class room visits.

Teachers have adopted new formats to easily identify areas where children need additional support.

Main point for action 4

The school should improve the teaching of reading from P1- P3.

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

The staff have reviewed the teaching of reading to ensure that the requirements of the 5-14 programme are delivered by the school. New planning formats are in place and the balance of the curriculum has been reviewed to ensure appropriate time is spent in this key area. The school has developed a bank of strategies and ideas for the teaching of reading in infants.

The school has adopted new resources to improve the teaching of phonics and these are now being integrated into the curriculum.

The school is currently planning the introduction of a home reading system in the remaining part of the session and has workshops and materials planned to support this development. Pupils in the early stages have all become members of Gorbals Library, following a school visit, and are regularly borrowing books. Reading books are also now being sent home, providing parents with an opportunity to support their children in reading.

Main point for action 5

The school should improve the provision for pupils with additional support needs.

The school has made good progress in meeting this Main Point for Action.

The school has embarked on a whole scale review of provision. Procedures for creating and delivering Individual Education Plans (IEP's) have been put into place. Referral processes for pupils who may require additional support have been reviewed and new procedures agreed.

Senior staff in the school have recently undertaken specific training with a focus on the new Additional Support for Learning Act and the Disability Discrimination Act. Joint Assessment Teams are about to be set up in the Shawlands New Learning Community and the DHT at Blackfriars will participate in this development in the final term of the session 2005-06.

The school has also introduced measures to keep parents informed about the support their children are receiving from various members of staff. Furthermore termly letters give parents broad information about the work pupils are undertaking. Improved liaison procedures are also now in place enabling teachers and other staff to meet and agree strategies more regularly.

The school recognises that there is scope for other pupils in the school to benefit from the support offered by individual education plans.

Main point for action 6

The school should develop better teamwork and involve staff more actively in reviewing the work of the school and identifying priorities for development and improvement.

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

Teachers are now engaged in self evaluation processes which are impacting on school life. Staff reflect on their practice and request support and resources in a structured way. Staff have taken part in an annual self-evaluation of classroom practice and they now evaluate and record in forward plans as a matter of course. Teachers receive a written response from the Head Teacher regarding forward planning evaluations.

All teaching staff are now involved in working groups, overseeing the implementation of the action plan.

A system of monitoring visits has been set up to support this process where the Head Teacher and each class teacher work cooperatively to raise standards.

Teaching for Effective Learning strategies have been introduced into the school in the session 2005-06.

Communication has been consistently developed. Significant events are communicated to the team using the newly created staff pigeon holes, diary board and day sheet systems and internal email and a shared area further support this.

The staff handbook and the school handbook have been revised to provide relevant information.

In addition the Head Teacher now meets each term with support staff to review aspects of the work of the school and thus develop greater cohesion across all parts of the school team.

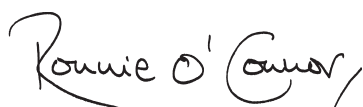
The school intends to complete an audit using the document "*How Good is Our School*" as part of the process of creating a new school development plan for the session 2006-07.

Conclusion and Next Steps

A new head teacher was appointed in May 2005. The new leadership in the school has sharpened the focus on the areas requiring improvement and ensured the staff team has focus and direction as it continues to improve the educational opportunities available at the school. The head teacher and all the staff have worked hard in taking forward a broad range of important developments in the school and pupils are benefiting from the improved arrangements.

Clearly attainment remains an area where consistent progress is required. The school team is receiving support from the authority to realise this potential and this will continue.

Communication systems, monitoring processes and curricular delivery have all been renewed in the school and there is a reinvigorated sense of purpose. This provides a solid, sustainable framework for delivery of high quality education at Blackfriars Primary School.



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