

Follow-through Inspection Report

Hillhead Primary School

October 2005

The Inspection

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education HMIE published a report on standards and quality in Hillhead Primary School in August 2003 following their inspection of the school in April 2003. Working with the school, the education authority prepared an action plan indicating how they would address the main points for action identified in the original report.

HMIE arranged a follow-up visit to the school in May 2005 and reported that the school had "made a lot of progress towards meeting the main points for action." Details of the progress made are outlined below.

Continuous Improvement

The head teacher has now been in post for approximately 3 years and the new leadership is having a positive impact on the school. There is now a sense of direction and purpose about the school.

There has been an increase in attainment in Reading, Writing and Maths in the session ending in June 2005. The level of attainment in reading has increased by 5%. This follows the embedding of a new reading programme in the school.

The level of attainment in writing has improved by a further 1% following a rise last session. The school has continued its focus on pace and presentation. A new programme for mathematics has been introduced and the attainment level in June 2005 recorded a 6% increase. In addition children are achieving national assessment levels earlier than had hitherto been a feature of the school.

The school achieved its target in Mathematics and continues to pursue the goal of raising attainment in the three areas of national assessment.

The school roll, in common with many Glasgow schools, has fallen over the last 2 years. The population profile, therefore, has also had an effect on attainment.

The Education Improvement Service (EdIS) has worked with staff to support language and maths programmes and further work on planning and assessment is timetabled.

The school has developed some good practice in its efforts to deliver key national priorities. It recently organised a sponsored run by staff and pupils to support the Asian Tsunami Appeal. The quality of pupils' achievements in enterprise education has been recognised with the achievement of a Glasgow Silver Award.

The Head Teacher has reintroduced an annual trip to Paris for P7 pupils in conjunction with another local school and the programme of local educational visits has also been extended.

Both girls and boys have benefited from opportunities to join football teams at P6 and P7.

The Pupil Council has given pupils a forum within which they can express their views and request improvements to aspects of the school. The school has developed further its efforts to engage pupils by offering opportunities for some pupils to begin to review their progress with teachers more regularly and agree the steps they could take to improve their work.

Pupils at P7 have been engaged in participating in a buddy scheme. This has entailed submitting formal applications and undergoing some training.

Progress Towards the Main Points For Action

The initial inspection report identified 5 main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made with each of the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and other stakeholders.

Main point for action 1

The education authority and school should carry out a risk assessment to address the accommodation and health and safety issues referred to in the report.

The education authority and school has made good progress towards meeting this recommendation.

The authority carried out a survey of risk assessment and health and safety.

To date the upper school playground has been resurfaced and the radiators in the gym have been fitted with guards.

The stairs have also been resurfaced and work has just been completed on upgrading the security entrance system.

The school campus has been enhanced with the provision of a new ICT suite in the building and a new soft play facility has been provided. The school has made innovative use of Botanic Garden facilities to provide additional experiences for children.

Main point for action 2

The school should continue to improve the levels of pupils' attainment across the curriculum.

The school has made good progress towards meeting this recommendation.

Staff working groups have reviewed and improved the school's programmes in English Language and Mathematics

A new language programme has been introduced which caters for high performing pupils. A new correction code and handwriting programme are also now in place. Senior staff have already noted considerable improvements in the quality and structure of pupils' writing in a wider range of contexts.

The introduction of the new maths programme is now complete and in-service training on problem solving during collegiate time is planned.

The Acting DHT has been developing and delivering a structured programme to develop pupils' skills in ICT. He has furthermore provided training for staff to ensure that pupils had greater access to ICT as part of their classroom activities.

The head teacher and staff have prepared more structured programmes of study in each aspect of the curriculum. As a result, staff now had more

practical advice on the topics and tasks pupils should experience at each stage.

Although the level of attainment has not improved in reading, once the new programme is embedded, it is anticipated that this will rectify the situation.

With an improvement of 5% in writing there is evidence that the new programme is already impacting on standards.

Main point for action 3

Teachers should improve planning and assessment procedures.

The school has made good progress towards meeting this recommendation.

Teachers were making good use of revised mathematics planners throughout the school. New language planners were introduced last year. As a result, teachers' year planning, six-week planning and weekly planning had improved. They are currently being revised to ensure they incorporate the new language development programme.

The head teacher met regularly with individual staff to discuss their planning. He also introduced a programme of class visits by senior staff to observe pupils' learning experiences in the activities planned.

Joint planning between EAL staff, the class teacher and SfL support has been introduced.

Teachers marked pupils' class work carefully and checked progress regularly. The depute head teacher worked closely with teachers in deciding on the best time for pupils to take national tests. Teachers now needed to make more use of their assessment of pupils' work to identify their next steps in learning and inform future planning. The school had rightly prioritised further improvements to assessment procedures, particularly to involve pupils more in assessing their own work and agreeing with teachers what they could do to improve.

The remaining work to be undertaken resulting from this action point formed the main priority of the school for the remainder of the session 2004-2005.

Main point for action 4

The school should continue to improve the structure and balance of the curriculum.

The school has made very good progress towards meeting this recommendation.

With the distribution of programmes of study for all areas of the curriculum and the careful monitoring of forward plans and classroom practice the balance of the curriculum is being addressed.

The head teacher has led staff training on providing a broad and balanced curriculum. The school has allocated additional time to English and Mathematics to support the implementation of the revised programmes of study. Staff had noted that the revised programmes had helped to improve pupils' attainment over the session 2004-2005. Other revised programmes provided teachers with helpful advice on planning for better progression and breadth, for example in pupils' experiences of the expressive arts. The head teacher scrutinised and discussed teachers' planning with them to ensure that pupils at all stages received the broad

and balanced curriculum that the school felt appropriate. He now intended to involve more senior staff in that process to ensure that pupils' skills in each aspect of the curriculum were developed more progressively from stage to stage.

With the purchase of resources this recommendation should be fully met.

Main point for action 5

Staff should develop procedures to evaluate the work of the, monitor the quality of learning and teaching and track the progress of pupils.

The school has made good progress towards meeting this recommendation.

The action plan has been evaluated at regular intervals by staff.

A set of quality assurance papers has been assembled which include procedures, purpose, responsibilities and remits.

Maths and language planners and a format to help teachers to track children's progress have been put in place.

A systematic programme of monitoring planners and classroom practice has been implemented. Senior managers discussed their observations with staff and provided written feedback.

Senior managers scrutinised pupils' progress and attainment closely. They used the information very well in working with teachers to predict when pupils were likely to achieve the next level of attainment.

The head teacher has made some use of national quality indicators to take a broad look at all aspects of the school's work. The school was now well placed to involve staff in more systematic procedures for evaluating the quality of its work. Senior staff will use the evidence gained in planning for future improvements and reporting in more detail on the standards and quality of the school's work.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The head teacher and staff have worked very hard to implement a number of new initiatives and programmes. Some of these will need time to become firmly embedded into the school but there is already evidence of how these are better meeting the needs of the children and allowing them to better reach their true potential.

The school has been well supported by various members of EdIS in the compilation of planners and recommendations on how to improve teaching and learning across the school.

With the school under new management, and the very clear direction being given to the school and staff, there are clear indications that the school is well placed to meet the new targets and continue to improve the consistency of pupil's learning and overall quality of education.



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