

# Follow-through Inspection Report

## Caldercuil Primary School

October 2009

### **The Inspection**

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education HMIE published a report on standards and quality in Caldercuil Primary School in February 2008 following their inspection of the school in October 2007. 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. The education authority will publish a report to parents within two years of the original report, on the extent of improvement that has been achieved.

### **Continuous Improvement**

The commitment of the staff to taking forward the plan had continued and many had sought ways to develop their leadership roles within the school.

Children continued to benefit from a variety of opportunities for out of school learning such as residential visits and participation in competitions. The school continued with its good work in Eco Schools and has now achieved two Green Flags. The school had just achieved Health Promoting status.

Parents continued to be fully involved in the school. Teachers provided regular workshops and frequently met with focus groups to ensure everyone worked together to secure the best possible outcomes for children. The work done across the whole school community on shared values impacted positively on the work of the school.

Children continued to be fully engaged in their learning and were particularly motivated by their work on enterprise. They were able to develop their enterprise skills very effectively across the curriculum. The school had once again achieved a diamond award for enterprise. Teachers had developed further programmes in social studies and science and technology to promote learning in a context. Increasingly, children's learning experiences were in line with the national developments of Curriculum for Excellence.

Children were able to be active citizens through taking responsibility and actively engaging with their local community on projects to improve the environment. The school grounds had been improved and a successful event, promoting local services and facilities, was held for parents and children during the school's Health Week.

Children at all stages participated in children's committees and in curriculum focus groups. This allowed children to understand what was being planned for improvement and allowed their views to be taken into account. International education was a developing theme in the school and the principal teacher was beginning to embed this across the school.

The school had developed further its approaches to promoting positive behaviour. The work on values had raised awareness and helped provide a structure to support

children with their roles and responsibilities in ensuring a good learning environment for all. Children, once again, had been fully consulted and engaged in shaping this policy devising their own mascot displaying the positive behaviours to be promoted in the school. Target and success books for use by the children are now used at all stages to reinforce this approach.

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

The initial inspection report identified four 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 school should improve attainment in writing and aspects of mathematics by developing pupils' skills progressively**

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

Children's attainment in writing had improved. There was an increased level of challenge and children had more opportunities to develop their writing skills across the curriculum. More children at the early stages were achieving appropriate national levels earlier than might normally be expected. Children in primary 7 were now beginning to attain beyond expected national levels.

Teachers had been trained in 'Big Writing' methodology to improve writing skills. They had adopted these approaches in their classrooms where children had regular lessons that focused on editing and 'up levelling' their original pieces of writing to produce enhanced pieces of work. Children had regular opportunities, incorporating a variety of curricular contexts, to write at length. During 'Book Writing Week' children wrote their own books and invited parents to class to share these books with them. Children were also more engaged in assessing their own work and the work of their peers.

Attainment in mathematics remained high but an increasing number of children were achieving levels of attainment earlier than might normally be expected. Teachers had improved the mathematics programme to provide a more consistent and coherent approach to developing children's ability to calculate mentally. Teachers' confidence had increased and they were now using more interactive approaches to teaching mental mathematics. Children now had more opportunities to solve problems. Teachers provided opportunities within other areas of the curriculum such as science to incorporate the use of computers for children to develop their skills in handling and interpreting data.

### **Main point for action 2**

#### **The school should increase the pace of learning for some pupils and ensure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged in their learning**

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

The headteacher had continued to develop the quality assurance procedures employed in the school. There were increased and more focused opportunities for teachers and members of the senior management team to meet together and agree attainment targets

for the children in each class. Targets for learning were set, discussed and reviewed each term. These changes had raised expectations and ensured a brisker pace of learning. In the last two years attainment in reading and writing had increased with attainment in mathematics remaining steady.

The pace of learning had increased with more children now making progress beyond their expected levels. Over half were now achieving their expected national assessment level over a year early in reading, around a third in writing and around half in mathematics. Previous early gains by children in the early stages were now being maintained and increased at the middle stages. This was having a positive impact on overall attainment and further increasing the school's ability to raise attainment in all areas.

The use of information and communications technology (ICT) had been increased. Smartboards were available and well used in all areas of the school to stimulate children's learning. Children's access to the use of ICT to support their learning had also increased and computers were regularly used. Children were also more skilled in using other digital means to record and share their work with other classes and with their parents.

Teachers had further developed their approaches to assessing children's work. They were now consistently informing children of their next steps in learning and ensuring an appropriate and brisk pace of learning that challenged and motivated the children. Children were also more regularly and progressively involved in assessing their learning and that of their peers. They were increasing their confidence in this approach and beginning to apply it successfully to a variety of curricular areas and use the information for their personal target record.

**Main point for  
action 3**

**The school should address accommodation issues identified in this report**

*The school has made good progress in meeting this point for action.*

The school had acted quickly to put in place protocols to ensure consistent and well publicised approaches to movement of classes and individuals around the school particularly in the shared open areas. These protocols addressed levels of noise and movement within an open plan environment. Fencing had not yet been erected between the car park and one of the playgrounds.

**Main point for  
action 4**

**The school should ensure the pace of change in the school allows all staff to embed and consolidate improvements**

*The school has made very good progress with features of excellent practice in meeting this point for action.*

The headteacher had worked with all staff to review the pace of change and identify methods and communication to ensure everyone was confident, empowered and able to contribute to improvements. All staff continued to have the opportunity to be involved in working parties to take forward school improvement priorities. Flexible approaches allowed pupil support assistants to participate in training as appropriate. There were

robust methods in place for staff to share information, evaluations and opinions across the school. These revised approaches had helped staff be more involved and confident in evaluating their own work and that of the school as a whole. More staff were now taking on roles of responsibility in the school and volunteering for, and leading on, initiatives within the school.

## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

### **The school had made very good progress towards meeting the recommendations contained in the HMIE report.**

The headteacher continued to provide strong leadership, clear direction and ambition for the school. She remained committed to improvement and to ensuring that children had the best possible learning experiences and outcomes. All staff were engaged and committed to the improvement of the school and more confident in taking on leadership roles and whole school responsibilities. New members of the school leadership team worked very well together and complemented each other's abilities. They provide strong support and had formed good working relationships with staff. This good teamwork had helped to raise expectations. Partnership working with parents remained very strong while children were actively engaged in their learning and in the work of the school. Their views were valued and fully incorporated into school improvements. The shared commitment, drive and energy of the stakeholders of the school ensure that it is well placed to continue to improve and provide high quality education to its community.

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