



Follow-through Inspection Report

Notre Dame Primary School

March 2008

The Inspection

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education HMIE published a report on standards and quality in Notre Dame Primary School in October 2006 following an inspection of the school in May 2006. 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.

Continuous Improvement

Despite a number of challenging issues that affected the school, very good progress was made in overtaking the main points for action in the report. The head teacher and staff moved quickly to establish an action plan to take forward the main points for action from the HMIE inspection report on the school. All members of staff had been actively involved in taking forward aspects of the action plan through their involvement in working parties and participation in training and staff development activities. Teaching staff had received a broad range of training and advice from the authority's Education Improvement Service to support the implementation of the action plan. Under the effective guidance of senior managers, they had clearly demonstrated their ability, commitment and capacity for improvement.

At all stages of the school children's achievements were commendable. They demonstrated their confidence, sense of responsibility and successful learning through participation in a wide range of activities. The school had gained a diamond award for enterprise education and classes at all stages had planned and implemented their own enterprise projects. Children in senior classes accepted a range of responsibilities such as acting as 'buddies' for new children joining the school; members of the Eco committee led the way with environmental issues in the school and the Pupil Council contributed to decision-making. The school provided many opportunities for children to take part in expressive arts activities. A group had performed at a dance festival in the Theatre Royal and an annual talent show, planned and run by children, had become a showcase to demonstrate their many talents.

There had been a significant investment in information and communication technology and new electronic whiteboards, laptops and digital and video cameras had impacted positively on the quality of the learning experiences of the children.

Good links had been maintained with parents and the community. A number helped out in the school and there was great support for children's performances, such as the nativity play and other school shows. Staff, children and parents had also worked to benefit a number of charities including one, dedicated to the memory of a parent.

Importantly the standards of attainment had continued to rise and a significant number of children were achieving national level of attainment at an earlier stage than expected. Better tracking of the progress of individual children through the various levels of work and teachers' involvement in an extensive range of development work to improve the learning and teaching in classrooms had resulted in a challenging pace of learning at all stages in the school.

Arrangements had been put in place to use the gymnasium of a nearby school due to the lack of facilities in Notre Dame Primary School.

The very effective leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the two deputy headteachers and the very good efforts of staff, demonstrated a clear ability and commitment to continue to improve the quality of the work of the school.

Progress Towards the Main Points for Action

The initial inspection report identified 2 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

The school should involve teachers further in evaluating the learning experiences of pupils.

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

Staff had worked together to review and improve the procedures for tracking children's progress. Senior managers met each term with class teachers to review the progress made and agree targets for individuals and groups. The headteacher used this information to evaluate the pace of learning across the whole school.

Senior managers visited classrooms to evaluate the impact of developments in learning and teaching. After each visit, the individual manager and teacher jointly evaluated the lesson to agree good practice and areas for improvement. Senior managers also looked at teachers' planning and samples of children's work to ensure a consistently high standard across the school. The information gained from monitoring activities was collated by the headteacher and used with the staff team to identify whole school strengths and areas for improvement. Questionnaires were used to elicit the views of parents, children and staff on the effectiveness of the school. These showed a high level of satisfaction. Along with information from an annual auditing process, using national indicators of quality, all of this data contributed to identifying priorities for development work.

Teachers were active in leading curricular developments and there were increased opportunities for them to share and evaluate emerging good practice. For example, a teacher with particular expertise in teaching writing worked alongside colleagues in classrooms, whilst another led developments in the use of ICT. Teachers across the school worked in pairs or small groups to embed new literacy and mathematics resources and some visited other classrooms to learn from each other's practice. These developments had made a positive difference to children's learning throughout the school

Main point for action 2

The school should improve the pace of learning and ensure that all pupils are suitably challenged

The school had made very good progress towards meeting this action point

The school had adopted a more rigorous approach to tracking the progress of individual children. This had resulted in a brisker pace of learning and the majority, including the higher achieving children, were working at an appropriate pace and level of challenge. Children's motivation at all stages was very good and they were fully engaged in their

class work. Teachers had become better at matching teaching approaches and resources to children's learning needs to ensure that they were not over-practising skills they had already overtaken. This was ensuring a very good pace of learning with significant numbers of children achieving national levels of attainment earlier than expected.

The school's participation in the authority's staff development programme to promote active learning had significantly changed the practice at the early stages. Children in P1 were learning through a variety of active approaches, including the use of play. They used significantly different resources such as games, imaginative role-play areas and practical activities to develop understanding in money, measure and shape. The school had plans to extend this approach into P2.

Children found the new language and mathematics resources more demanding and many enjoyed the challenge of more opportunities to work collaboratively on joint tasks. For example, children in P3/4 had created a 'museum' in their classroom as part of their Greek topic work and were using the imaginary contexts to make their maths lessons more stimulating, P5 had made group presentations on their research on the Solar System and P6 had produced a Child's Handbook for children enrolling in the school. The increased pace of learning and the more challenging activities carried out in classes had improved children's motivation and confidence as learners.

All teachers shared with children what they were expected to learn and gave good oral and written feedback to help them identify what they had done well and the steps they should take to improve their work. This practice was particularly evident in writing.

Promoted staff had carefully monitored and supported the learning experiences of children. They had worked with teachers to agree the high standard of teaching that was implemented within most classrooms. As a result of these developments a greater number of children were working on tasks that they found challenging and enjoyable.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Notre Dame Primary continued to be a vibrant and welcoming school. Parents were very supportive of the school and it continued to be well regarded by the local community. The headteacher and the school team had continued to build a positive climate for learning. Teachers set high expectations for children within the school. Children were given good opportunities to achieve in a number of areas. Staff had fully implemented the advice and training they had experienced and good quality interactive teaching was becoming consistently evident in the majority of classroom practice. Across the school, most children were becoming more engaged and challenged in their own learning and more were achieving national levels of attainment earlier than expected.

The commitment of leadership and all staff to improvement within the school ensured that Notre Dame Primary School remained well placed to continue to provide an appropriate educational provision within the community. With continued support from the education authority, the school had the capacity to build on its strengths and identify and respond to any areas for development.



Margaret Doran
Executive Director: Education and Social Work Services
Glasgow City Council



Glasgow City Council
Education and Social Work Services
Wheatley House
25 Cochrane Street
Glasgow G1 1HL

0141 287 2000
www.glasgow.gov.uk