



Follow-through Inspection Report

Darnley Primary School

November 2005

The Inspection

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education HMIE published a report on standards and quality in Darnley Primary School in December 2003 following their inspection of the school in September 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.

After consultation with HMIE, it was agreed that this follow-through report would be the responsibility of the education authority. Members of the Education Improvement Service visited the school in August 2005 to assess the extent to which the school was continuing to improve the quality of its work and to evaluate progress made in responding to the main points for action in the initial report.

Continuous Improvement

The head teacher and staff had moved quickly to establish an action plan to take forward the main points for action from the HMIE inspection report on the school. The plan had identified tasks and timescales as well as the criteria for monitoring and evaluating progress.

The head teacher and principal teachers had displayed effective leadership in taking forward developments with staff. All staff had responded with purpose and commitment to ensure that the action plan became a focal point for improvements in the quality of learning and teaching in the school. Resources had been reviewed and additional materials purchased. A variety of teaching strategies had been adopted by staff and the learning ethos of the school enhanced through increased interaction between teachers and pupils and a positive climate established for promoting positive behaviour among pupils. Teachers, parents and pupils had all played their part in enriching the educational experience of the pupils and promoting the quality ethos of the school.

Most importantly, attainment levels of pupils had been raised very significantly in Writing and Mathematics and high standards maintained in Reading.

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

Continue to develop aspects of learning and teaching as detailed in this report.

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

To promote recreational reading an audit had been taken of pupils' reading habits and preferences. As a result additional reading materials had been purchased, including books selected by the pupils. A very attractive library area had been created to enable pupils to enjoy reading for pleasure in a colourful and comfortable environment. Pupils' work had been displayed on the walls of the library and pupils had been encouraged to contribute reviews and posters of books they had read. The principal teachers had run library clubs for pupils during lunchtimes and as an after-school club. An 'enterprise activity' by pupils related to the library club had achieved a Silver Enterprise Award.

Teachers had reviewed their practices in mathematics, particularly in relation to measurement, problem solving and the use of computers to promote learning. Through discussions and staff development opportunities, promoted staff had assisted teachers in reviewing their teaching strategies and had introduced more consistency into classroom practice throughout the school.

In response to the HMIE report, teachers had encouraged pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning and had introduced more interactive activities to promote learning. The curriculum had been clearly differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils and teachers had concentrated on ensuring that all pupils understood the learning outcomes of their work. Promoted staff had carefully monitored the progress of all pupils and had supported teachers in developing effective teaching strategies. Attainment levels of pupils in mathematics had clearly risen due to improved classroom practice.

Main point for action 2

Continue to raise attainment

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

A comprehensive system for tracking the progress of pupils had been introduced. The head teacher had consulted regularly with all teachers in determining appropriate targets of attainment for all pupils. The progress of pupils had been carefully monitored at each planning cycle in order to ensure that the expected progress had been maintained. Educational resources had been carefully matched to attainment levels, which had enabled teachers to include appropriate pace and challenge into the planning of the term's work.

At the end of each cycle, teachers had evaluated the progress that had been made and had identified areas for further input in the next cycle of work. This process of evaluation and identifying 'next steps' had been well embedded in the consultation and review meetings between promoted staff and teachers.

Recording sheets had been introduced for maintaining a record of the progress that had been made by pupils.

Main point for action 3

Promote positive behaviour across the school

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

A principal teacher took responsibility for taking forward the training of staff and the development of good practice. A well-structured programme of 'Circle Time' promoted pupils' positive behaviour through a system of rewards and sanctions which encouraged pupils to reflect on their own behaviour and be motivated to respond positively. The practices had been well received by staff and pupils and an information leaflet had been distributed to parents explaining the positive approaches to promoting good behaviour in pupils.

School assemblies had been used to celebrate the good behaviour of pupils and reinforce standards for behaviour. Individual pupils had been recognised for praiseworthy behaviours through receiving certificates and the acclaim of the other pupils.

Main point for action 4

Be more rigorous in evaluating the work of the school

The school had made good progress towards meeting this action point

The action plan following the inspection report had become a focus for school evaluation by the head teacher and staff. Regular progress reports had been presented by the head teacher and discussed with staff. The head teacher had visited classes to support and monitor the progress being made.

'How Good is our School' had been used to audit the strengths and areas for improvement in relation to teaching and learning. The audit results had been used as an agenda for discussion at each teacher's professional review meeting.

The head teachers and principal teachers had been very active in demonstrating and disseminating examples of good practice. They had focused well in recognising the strengths of staff and providing appropriate opportunities for staff development.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The head teacher and staff had worked very hard to implement the action points in the HMIE inspection report. They had participated in a variety of staff development opportunities to enhance their own expertise. New resources had been purchased to improve the curriculum and the guidance and support of the Education Improvement Service had been well received and adopted by staff. The school had made very good progress in meeting the main points for action.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronnie O'Connor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'R'.

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