

FOLLOW-THROUGH REPORT: PILMUIR PRIMARY SCHOOL

HMIe Inspection Progress Report on Pilmuir Primary School June 2005

Progress made in response to the main points for action in the HMIE report published on 24 June 2003.

EVIDENCE

The evidence upon which this progress report is based comes from four monitoring visits by the Quality Improvement Officer (September 2003, March 2004, June 2004 and December 2004). These visits have involved interviewing the headteacher and meeting with teaching staff, reviewing assessment and target setting records. 5-14 attainment records and other assessment data have been examined.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Since the inspection, the school has made some good progress in a number of key areas. However progress in raising attainment has not been consistent across all stages and subject areas. In reading attainment has fallen slightly over the period from 2002 to 2004 and is equal to the national average at present. Writing has shown steady improvement over the same period, whereas in mathematics there has been a downward trend. Both writing and mathematics are below national standards at some stages. (See Appendix 1 - table A).

Raising attainment has been a focus of attention for school and authority staff throughout the period 2002-2004. Improvements in the programmes of work have been introduced in writing and mathematics. Teachers, especially at early and middle stages, have reviewed their approaches to the teaching of reading and the use of phonics programmes. At all stages very good use is made of a range of assessment information to identify underachievement and to set challenging targets for pupils.

The school has recognised the need to continue to raise levels of attainment and has identified a range of steps to secure improvement. The authority will continue to be involved in supporting and challenging the school in its efforts to improve levels of pupil attainment.

Pupil absences are just above Moray and national averages. This reflects the high percentage of families of Her Majesty's Forces associated with the school, many of whom are required to commit to annual leave arrangements which are not consistent with school holiday patterns. There have been no exclusions from the school in recent sessions. The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities. There is significant community involvement in all school events. During the last session staff have attended professional development events on aspects of English language and

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mathematics, health and safety, modern languages, science, dealing with pupil behaviour and Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Feedback from staff has allowed information and skills gained at these events to be cascaded more widely. In addition the authority's Learning and Teaching Officer has worked with staff in classrooms to review approaches to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. These developments have helped staff provide improved programmes of work and a broad range of teaching approaches aimed at improving pupil attainment. A very effective Health Promoting School committee has been established, including pupils and parents, and priority areas for development have been agreed. The school has developed a good range of enterprise activities across all stages. These developments have been undertaken to address the broader National Priorities aim of raising achievement across the school.

The school is well placed to take forward improvements. The headteacher continues to provide very good leadership and is well supported by her staff. The school's already effective self-evaluation approaches have been improved with more evaluative feedback from the headteacher to staff on the quality of learning and teaching. The headteacher, teaching and support staff continue to demonstrate commitment to improving pupils' experiences in the school. Current developments include further activities to raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics; a health promotion roadshow; extending the role of the pupil council to improve induction for new pupils; and improving ICT skills of staff and pupils at early stages.

ACTION POINT 1 - "*improve the programme in writing*"

The school has made very good progress in addressing this main point for action.

Staff reviewed use of writing resources at each level A-E. They confirmed the use of North Lanarkshire's writing programme for imaginative and personal writing at level A. A review of functional writing resulted in a revised programme at levels A-E. Personal and imaginative writing programmes for levels B-E were agreed using new materials. Course programmes are now fully developed and available to all staff. These improvements are now fully embedded at all stages and have been enhanced by:

- the introduction of an overall year planner giving guidance to staff on the balance between forms of writing at each stage across the year;
- the use of an additional teacher employed specially to concentrate on the teaching of writing;
- timetabled support for learning staff who are now more effectively used to support the teaching of writing;
- strategies to deploy classroom assistants to support activity aimed at raising standards of writing across the school.

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Overall attainment in writing has risen steadily from 2002-2004 but is currently below national and authority averages.

Further planned improvements:

Further adaptations to the programme in writing at certain stages may be required as a result of future reviews of attainment.

Staff will share in developments with schools in the Associated Schools Group (ASG) regarding moderation of writing levels A-F.

ACTION POINT 2– ensure that parents are fully aware of their children’s progress and attainment in all aspects of the curriculum;

The school has made very good progress in addressing this main point for action.

A revised reporting system was introduced from the spring of 2003 in line with authority policy. The school continues to provide comprehensive reports to parents on their children’s progress and attainment in all key areas of the curriculum. Details are also provided where appropriate on the next steps in the child's learning. Over 75% of parents have indicated in a recent survey that they are satisfied with the quality of information from school regarding their child’s progress. Parent appointment interviews with teachers to review children’s progress are now offered in October and March each year.

Arrangements are available for parents to discuss their child’s progress at any time by appointment.

Further planned improvements:

The school will seek to confirm parents’ awareness of progress information as part of a school improvement planning audit process.

ACTION POINT 3 – continue to improve procedures to monitor pupils’ progress and attainment;

Progress towards meeting this recommendation is rated as very good. Key features of the school's approach to monitoring pupils' progress now include:

- a termly review of assessment data by the headteacher and staff in the context of teachers’ planning for pupils’ learning;
- regular reviews by the headteacher of 5-14 attainment information including samples

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- of pupils' work and classroom visits;
- discussions of teacher's plans with the headteacher to ensure pupils' needs are met and regular monitoring of learning and teaching to ensure new programmes are implemented;
- more effective use of an electronic information system to monitor and track pupils' progress against targets. The data from this is reviewed at least twice annually with an authority officer;
- the annual collation and analysis of whole school attainment data;
- a timetable agreed by teachers at the start of each year for the monitoring of children's work and attainment by the headteacher;
- reporting to parents on each occasion when their child progresses from one attainment level to another;
- the headteacher regularly teaching classes and knowing the pupils and their work well.

As a result of these measures children are now attaining levels earlier than previously. More children are now progressing to working towards level E. There is good practice in recognising progress and achievement through praise and reward systems.

Further planned improvements:

The school is now committed to this model of monitoring and challenging pupil progress. The headteacher is committed to monitoring each individual pupil's attainment against actual and predicted 5-14 levels and other assessment information. Any authority developments around improved use of assessment information and individual pupil target setting will be incorporated into practice.

ACTION POINT 4 – produce a whole-school programme for personal and social development;

Progress towards meeting this recommendation is rated as very good.

Following a period of review and consultation a revised programme has been prepared which reflected the existing good practice. The revised programme now includes:

- a whole-school framework from nursery to P7;
- teachers planners available for each stage;
- recording sheets;
- specific learning and teaching resources;
- learning outcomes for each stage;
- a progression of social skills from nursery to S6 developed in conjunction with other ASG schools.

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This work was completed during session 2003/04 and has been shared with staff and implemented since August 2004. The programme now delivers a comprehensive, coherent programme of personal and social development activities to all stages. Pupils now benefit from having access to a discrete written programme. Teachers' planning and delivery of the programme has been improved.

Further planned improvements:

Review the impact of the plan during the School Improvement Planning cycle in 2005.

ACTION POINT 5 – *ensure secure access to the school at all times.*

This recommendation has been fully met.

New secure door entry arrangements are in place. An electronic door controlled from the school office now limits access to the foyer/waiting area. There is no longer free access to teaching areas, including the nursery annexe which has had a doorbell installed. The school has continued with visitor controls which include signing-in, identity badge arrangements and CCTV door entry systems.

Access to school buildings and specifically all teaching areas is now secure.

Further planned improvements:

None planned.

Conclusion:

Overall the school has made very good progress in responding to the main points for action in the original report. In addition the school has continued to demonstrate commitment to conscientious self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. Staff, in consultation with pupils and their parents, are taking forward developments which are intended to improve the quality of learning and teaching and to raise attainment. The school has been open to advice and challenge from the authority and will continue to work with authority staff to maintain the impetus on raising standards. The education authority has confidence in the school's on-going commitment to continuous improvement.

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Appendix 1.

Table A.

5-14 Attainment 2002-2004 (% of pupils at P3, P4, P6 & P7 achieving appropriate minimum standards or better at June each year)

	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
	<i>Reading</i>			<i>Writing</i>			<i>Mathematics</i>		
<i>School</i>	83	76	81	63	65	73	77	76	75
<i>Authority</i>	79	78	84	70	69	78	78	77	84
<i>Scotland</i>	81	81	81	73	74	74	80	80	82

Table B.

5-14 Attainment 2004 and Baseline Assessment (PIPS) Predictions (% of pupils achieving appropriate minimum standards or better at June)

	<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>		<i>Mathematics</i>	
	<i>PIPS prediction</i>	<i>Actual Attainment</i>	<i>PIPS prediction</i>	<i>Actual Attainment</i>	<i>PIPS prediction</i>	<i>Actual Attainment</i>
<i>P3</i>	90	96	90	96	90	96
<i>P4</i>	82	81	86	73	86	85
<i>P6</i>	84	91	64	91	64	78
<i>P7</i>	59	59	37	37	56	44
<i>Overall</i>	79	81	69	73	74	75