

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
20 AUGUST 2008**

**SUBJECT: SCHOOL INSPECTIONS - MORAY COUNCIL FOLLOW-
THROUGH REPORTS JUNE 2008**

BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Children and Young People's Services Committee to scrutinise and note the most recent reports published by Moray Council Educational Services following earlier school inspections by HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) of Dallas, Milne's and New Elgin Primary Schools.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section D (1) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to exercising the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that Children and Young People's Services Committee scrutinises and notes the contents of this report.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 When a school is inspected by HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) a report is published (by HMIE) which gives extended commentary on the school's performance. These reports are presented regularly to this Committee, usually at the first available opportunity after publication.
- 3.2 Such reports provide a summary of the "Key Strengths" of the school and HMIE recommendations for improvement, listed as "Main Points for Action". The reports also provide a summary of the school's performance against a number of the indicators of quality from "How Good Is Our School", the self-evaluation toolkit of quality indicators used by all schools.
- 3.3 Each report gives an indication of how and when HMIE intend to follow-through the inspection process. This can include:
- asking the school and the education authority to prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents and carers;
 - making arrangements for HM Inspectors to monitor progress in liaison with the education authority;
 - arranging further visits to the school to support and monitor improvement.

- 3.4 Where HMIE decide to revisit and reinspect the school then they themselves will publish a short follow-through report, usually within two years. Occasionally interim follow-through reports are published around one year from initial inspection. These are also reported to this Committee following publication.
- 3.5 Where HMIE indicate in their published report, or subsequently decide, that they will not revisit to reinspect the school then they expect Moray Council to prepare and publish an equivalent follow-through report for parents.
- 3.6 These Council published follow-through reports contain an evaluation of the extent to which the school has continued to improve since the original inspection, and evaluations of progress made by the school and the education authority in responding to the main points for action in the initial report. Follow-through inspection reports are also usually published within two years of the initial report.
- 3.7 In June 2008 the Council published three such progress reports on:
Dallas Primary School (**Appendix 1**);
Milne's Primary School (**Appendix 2**);
New Elgin Primary School (**Appendix 3**)
- 3.8 Copies of all Council reports are available in the Members' Library, from the school and all HMIE reports are available online at www.hmie.gov.uk

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan

The report provides Committee with information relating to school performance as measured by HMIE in line with the corporate commitment to public performance reporting.

(b) Policy and Legal

HMIE inspect and report on a sample of Scottish schools every year. Their reports are intended to provide parents, local authorities and Scottish Ministers with information about how well schools are performing.

(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)

There are no immediate Financial, Risk, Staffing, or Property implications arising from this report.

(d) Consultations

Senior Officers within Educational Services have been consulted and support the recommendation.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 That the Committee scrutinises and notes the contents of the progress reports on Dallas, Milne's and New Elgin Primary Schools.

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Background Papers:

Ref: DMD/JR/Reports/Education and Young People's Services
Committee/20 August 2008/School Inspections - Moray
Council Follow-Through Reports June 2008

Moray Council progress report on **Dallas Primary School** – published June 2008

The original inspection

HMIE published a report on the inspection of Dallas Primary School in April 2006. The report can be accessed either from the school or on the HMIE website (www.hmie.gov.uk). This was reported to Educational Services Committee on 31 May 2006. At that time Inspectors required the school and the authority to prepare an action plan indicating how they would address the main points for action identified in the original inspection report. Earlier this year HMIE requested a report from the Director of Educational Services on 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 their 2006 report. HMIE subsequently invited Moray Council to publish their own report for parents and carers.

Continuous Improvement

The headteacher, together with her staff, parents and pupils, had brought about significant further improvements to the school's provision.

- The school had been one of three Moray primary schools involved in piloting leadership coaching. Teaching and support staff had been trained as coaches and worked to further develop Assessment is for Learning (AifL) practices. These, coupled with active learning approaches developed at all stages, had brought about a significant change in emphasis from good teaching to good learning.
- As part of this development a rigorous system for tracking pupil progress had been put in place. Pupils had become more involved in and more responsible for their own learning. Almost all pupils were aware of their 5-14 levels of achievement and their next steps in learning. Value added improvements had been achieved in attainment for almost all pupils.
- Further development of AifL had been achieved with the school's development of a personal learning planning process.
- A new "report for parents" format is currently under development which aims to bring together the school's aims, formative assessment, coaching, personal learning planning and the new Curriculum for Excellence.
- The previously established Pupil Council operation had been improved by introducing 'councillor surgeries' as part of assemblies to provide greater pupil ownership and contribution to the running of the school.
- A Parent Council had replaced the School Board.
- A parent 'Health and Wellbeing' group had been introduced to support the implementation of the New Health and Wellbeing programme being developed in the school. This had contributed positively to the school achieving committed Health Promoting School status.

- A Book Group consisting of members of the local community had been introduced to support and provide challenge in reading and language to the older pupils.
- A new website (www.dallasprimary.co.uk) had been established allowing access to school information for parents, pupils and the wider community.
- Work to improve the school playground by creating a new car park and a garden for the school had been completed and had been enhanced with the installation of new gates. The school had achieved a bronze Eco School award.
- Statistically, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics had remained above the local authority and national average. The use of a wide range of strategies to monitor pupils' progress had ensured that almost all pupils made very good and in some cases excellent progress from prior levels of attainment.

Progress with the Main Point for Action identified by HMIE:

1. **Continue to extend the curriculum and embed approaches to self-evaluation.**

Overall the school had made very good, and in some cases excellent, progress towards achieving this main point for action.

Conclusion

Overall the school had made very good progress in addressing the main points for action. In some aspects the school had made excellent progress in its improvement activities. The education authority will continue to support the school with its work and encourage the sharing of best practices with other schools. The education authority, in consultation with HMIE, will make no further report in connection with the 2006 inspection.

Moray Council progress report on **Milne's Primary School** – published June 2008

The original inspection

HMIE published a report on the inspection of Milne's Primary School in June 2005. The report can be accessed either from the school or on the HMIE website (www.hmie.gov.uk). This was reported to Educational Services Committee on 10 August 2005. HMIE indicated in their 2005 report that as a result of the high performance of the school, the strong record of improvement and the very effective leadership they would make no further visits to reinspect and report on the school. Instead HM Inspectors requested that the education authority publish a follow-through report for parents within two years. That report was published in May 2007 by the Council and reported to Committee on 22 August 2007. That report required the school to take further steps to address the original HMIE recommendations for improvement.

Continuous Improvement

- The school had introduced the Critical Skills programme. This was being well delivered and was helping pupils develop collaborative group working and personal character skills. The staff should continue to share their expertise in this area in order that the school builds capacity to further develop this initiative.
- The school's approach to learning and teaching had resulted in more stimulating and active learning opportunities for pupils. The school had introduced a number of cross-cutting learning themes and pupils were now better able to transfer their skills to other areas of the curriculum.
- The Parent Teacher Association had provided valuable funding for the school to develop the outdoor play area. This was allowing pupils to develop their imaginative play. Pupils' fine and gross motor skills were being enhanced through their use of the equipment. Pupils were enthusiastic about the new play equipment.
- The school had very effective transition arrangements in place for nursery pupils about to join Primary 1 and for the P7 pupils transferring to Milne's High School. The various activities in the programme were resulting in more confident pupils at these key points.
- There were very good opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibilities in the school. Pupils were enthusiastic about their involvement in a range of groups such as Eco Schools, Enterprise, Health, the Pupil Council, Junior Road Safety Officer and Peer Mediation.
- The school had gained the Eco Schools Silver Award. Pupils also had valuable opportunities to extend their experiences through class activities and out of school excursions.

Progress with the Main Points for Action identified by HMIE:

1. Continue to Raise Attainment.

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

2. Continue to develop approaches to supporting pupils with specific behavioural difficulties, including training for staff.

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

Conclusion

The school had now made effective progress in addressing the main points for action identified in the original report. Consequently the education authority will not publish any further reports in connection with the 2005 HMIE report. The education authority is satisfied with the school's on-going commitment to evaluation and continuous improvement. Authority staff will be involved in supporting and challenging the school to continue to improve the provision for pupils.

Moray Council progress report on **New Elgin Primary School** – published June 2008

The original inspection

HMIE published an inspection report on New Elgin Primary School in June 2005, with a follow-through report published in May 2007. These reports can be accessed either from the school or on the HMIE website (www.hmie.gov.uk). These were reported to Educational Services Committee on 10 August 2005 and to Education and Social Services Committee on 22 August 2007 respectively. Following publication of the 2007 follow-through report, the school was required to take further steps to address one of the HMIE recommendations (main points for action).

This latest report is published by the education authority which made follow-through visits to the school to assist improvement and monitor progress. This report tells you about the progress made by the school in addressing the main point for action. It also includes evaluations of other areas where the school is improving or has the capacity to improve. HMIE has considered the report prior to its publication.

Continuous Improvement

- A new head teacher took up post in October 2007. The head teacher had quickly established very good relationships with staff, pupils, parents and external agencies. The senior management team had revised remits which now had a clearer focus on self-evaluation and school improvement. The head teacher and her management team had provided very effective leadership for the school. She had ensured that more regular and rigorous observation of classroom practice was resulting in improvements in learning and teaching.
- A nurture group had been established in the school to support a few vulnerable pupils who experienced some barriers to learning. These pupils were now better able to access the curriculum. The authority had provided a temporary additional deputy head teacher with a specific remit for pupil support. She had undertaken very effective liaison with parents and external agencies and ensured that individual pupil support needs were addressed effectively. This post was soon to be filled on a permanent basis. Improved multi-agency working had ensured earlier responses to meeting individual pupil support needs. The authority had provided an additional teacher to provide early intervention support for some early stages pupils. These pupils had now made significant gains in their learning.
- The school was making more effective use of ICT to support learning and improve pupils' motivation. It now had interactive whiteboards in the majority of classrooms.
- Pupils had participated successfully in a number of community events and pupils' successes were regularly celebrated at assemblies.
- The school, along with others in its associated schools group, was involved in the 'Connecting Classrooms' project. In October 2007 visitors from partner schools in Zambia and Tanzania had worked with classes in the school. This had made topic work more meaningful for pupils and helped develop pupils' understanding of global issues.

- Pupils for whom English was an additional language continued to make good progress in their learning.
- Teaching staff had undertaken a variety of helpful professional development activities resulting in improvements in learning and teaching.
- The introduction of reciprocal teaching in reading had resulted in greater pupil involvement, enjoyment and motivation. Pupils were able to work more effectively in groups and took greater responsibility for their own learning. Pupils read with greater confidence and had a better understanding of texts. There had been an increase in the numbers of pupils exceeding national expectations in reading.

Progress with the Main Point for Action identified by HMIE:

- 1. Make better use of assessment information to track pupils' progress and meet the needs of all.**

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

- 2. Continue to develop approaches to supporting pupils with specific behavioural difficulties, including training for staff.**

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

Conclusion

The school had made good progress in addressing the main point for action identified in the original report. The school had demonstrated a good improvement record over the last year and the new head teacher and her management team had provided very effective leadership for the school. Consequently the education authority will not publish any further reports in connection with the 2005 HMIE report. The education authority has confidence in the school's on-going commitment to evaluation and continuous improvement. Authority staff will be involved in supporting and challenging the school to continue to improve the provision for pupils.