

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON  
27 APRIL 2011**

**SUBJECT: HMIE SCHOOL INSPECTIONS – MORAY COUNCIL FOLLOW-  
THROUGH REPORTS MARCH - APRIL 2011**

**BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE)**

**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:

- i) Buckie High School - (**Appendix 1**)
- ii) Greenwards Primary School – (**Appendix 2**)
- iii) Rothes Primary School – (**Appendix 3**)

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 The Committee is invited to scrutinise and note the contents of this report.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 When a school is inspected by HMIE a report is published (by HMIE) which gives commentary on the school's performance. These reports are presented regularly to this Committee, where possible at the first available opportunity after publication.

3.2 The HMIE reports provide a summary of the "particular strengths" of the school and "areas for improvement". These reports also provide a summary of the school's performance against five of the quality indicators from "How Good Is Our School", the self-evaluation toolkit used by all schools.

3.3 The follow-through approaches after inspection by HMIE are outlined in paragraphs 3.4 – 3.7 below.

- 3.4 Each report gives an indication of how and when HMIE intend to follow-through the inspection process. This can include:
- making no further visits following the inspection and relying upon the education authority to follow-through on improvement actions with the school and informing parents;
  - 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.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 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 reports are also usually published within two years of the initial report.
- 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](http://www.hmie.gov.uk)

#### **4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

##### **(a) Single Outcome Agreement/Service Improvement Plan**

- (i) The report provides Committee with information relevant to Local Priority 5 within the Single Outcome Agreement – Attainment and Achievement (Children and Young People), and
- (ii) Within the Service Improvement Plan, Key Priority Area – Attainment & Achievement.

**(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 and nursery classes are performing against the National Performance Framework.

**(c) Financial implications**

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

**(d) Risk implications**

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

**(e) Staffing implications**

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

**(f) Property**

None.

**(g) Equalities**

There are no issues in this case.

**(h) Consultations**

Senior Officers within Education and Social Care, Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant, Rhona Gunn, Principal Solicitor (Litigation and Licensing), David Barnett, Headteacher, Buckie High School; Sarah Grant, Headteacher, Greenwards Primary and Rosemary Garrity, Headteacher, Rothes Primary have been consulted and are in agreement with the relevant sections of the report.

**5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 That the Committee scrutinises the contents of this report on the progress made by Buckie High, Greenwards and Rothes Primary Schools since inspection.**

ITEM:

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Author of Report: Jim Gibson, Quality Improvement Officer

Background Papers:

Ref: DMD/JR/Reports/Children and Young People's Services  
Committee/27 April 2011/HMIE School Inspections – Moray  
Council Follow-Through Reports March - April 2011

## APPENDIX 1

Moray Council follow-through report on **Buckie High School** – published March 2011

### **The original inspection**

HMIE published a report on the inspection of Buckie High School in January 2009. The report can be accessed either from the school or on the HMIE website ([www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk)). This was reported to Children and Young People's Services Committee on 29 January 2009.

HMIE requested that the education authority provide a report of progress and as a result no further visits were planned.

The education authority has monitored progress and visited the school to assess the extent to which the school is continuing to improve the quality of its work, and also to evaluate progress made in responding to the areas for improvement identified in the original HMIE report.

### **Continuous Improvement**

The following paragraphs provide a summary of the range of improvements made since the HMIE inspection:

- The school has continued to build on the particular strengths identified in the original HMIE report.
- The focus on Leadership for Learning has further developed leadership capacity in the school amongst staff and pupils.
- The very successful approaches to developing global citizenship have been further enhanced with emerging links with China and France.
- Since the inspection, the configuration of the school week has changed to thirty periods in order to deliver A Curriculum for Excellence.
- There has been very good progress with the design of an S1 and S2 curriculum and planning for S3 – S6 is under way.
- The current theme of the school improvement plan is “Excellent Learning and Teaching” and, through staff development in teaching methodologies and monitoring, and the development of a Learning and Teaching Policy the learners’ experience at the school is more consistent.
- There have been improvements to the school with the provision of a building for performing arts and also the building of a multi-agency base. Improvements have been made to the school’s Information and Communications Technology infrastructure which have enabled the school develop its use of the Management Information System for pupil attendance and also to develop the use of Glow, Scotland’s online education community.

**APPENDIX 1 (CONT)**

- Since the inspection there has been a clear improvement in pupil attendance and a reduction in exclusions.
- The school was first recognised as an Investor in People in 2004. The school was recently reviewed against Investors in People's national standard and received a very positive report which identified a number of strengths and areas of good practice.

**Progress with the areas for improvement agreed with HMIE:****1. Continue to improve young people's attainment.**

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

At S1/2, standards in writing have remained steady with a majority achieving appropriate standards. In reading, standards have continued to improve. Standards in mathematics have remained steady. At S4 in 2009, the number of young people gaining five or more credits was the best performance achieved by the school, and compared very favourably with those achieved by schools with young people with similar needs and backgrounds. In 2010, the numbers achieving five or more credits fell, although slightly exceeding predictions through baseline assessment. At S5, the numbers of pupils gaining one or more and three or more passes at higher both improved in 2010 to the highest levels achieved at the school. At S6, there were improvements in the numbers of pupils achieving one or more and three or more passes at higher. This performance is now in line with the top half of schools which serve young people with similar needs and backgrounds.

**2. Provide religious and moral education and high quality physical education for young people at all stages.**

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

At the time of the inspection there was no religious and moral education provided for young people in S2. The school has now introduced one period per week of religious and moral education for young people in S1 through to S4. Two periods of high quality physical education is provided for young people in stages 1 to 5. In addition significant numbers of young people choose certificated physical education in S3 to S6. Young people in S6 have the option of choosing to attend the two periods of core physical education.

**Conclusion**

Buckie High School has made very good progress in addressing the points for improvement identified in the original report. Consequently the education authority will not publish any further reports in connection with the 2009 HMIE report. The education authority is satisfied with the school's on-going commitment to evaluation and continuous improvement. Authority staff will continue to be involved in supporting and challenging the school to improve the provision for the children.

## APPENDIX 2

Moray Council follow-through report on **Greenwards Primary School** – published March 2011

### **The original inspection**

Greenwards Primary School was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in September 2008 and the resulting report was published in December 2008. The report can be accessed either from the school or on the HMIE website ([www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk)). This was reported to Educational Services Committee on 29 January 2009.

HMIE was confident that the school would be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings and as a result made no further visits following the inspection.

The education authority has monitored progress and visited the school to assess the extent to which the school is continuing to improve the quality of its work, and to evaluate progress made in responding to the areas for improvement in the original HMIE report.

The following paragraphs provide a summary of progress.

### **Continuous Improvement**

Since the original inspection the head teacher and principal teacher of additional support needs have left the school and new appointments have been made. One deputy head teacher has retired and this post was filled for one year on a temporary acting basis until September 2010.

There have been a number of developments in the last two years which have resulted in improvements in the children's learning experiences.

- The 'Green and Gold' awards are encouraging the children to be more responsible, respectful and to demonstrate good manners.
- The children have good opportunities to develop their sense of responsibility and team-working skills through undertaking a range of stimulating enterprise activities, including an entrepreneurial initiative, the school calendar and the Christmas fete. A class is involved in planning playground improvements and this is providing a meaningful context to consolidate their understanding of money. Upper stages children participate in a KNex engineering club which provides them with opportunities to extend their team-working and problem solving skills.
- The school offers good health promoting opportunities including the school canteen making healthier tuck shop options available for the children.
- The school now provides two hours of quality physical education per week with class teachers taking more responsibility for delivering outdoor curricular activities.

**APPENDIX 2 (CONT)**

- Children have undertaken a range of meaningful charity activities of which they are rightly proud. This included a back-pack project for the 'Mary's Meals' charity.
- Through the Associated Schools Group the school has established links with schools in Zambia and Tanzania. As part of this initiative staff and children from the African schools have visited the school and this is resulting in enhanced cultural and educational experiences for the children from all of the countries involved.
- The school continues to have a positive engagement with parents.

**Progress with the Main Points for Action:****1. Children need more opportunities for active learning in class and to be more involved in their own individual progress.**

The school has made very sound progress in addressing this area for improvement.

Teachers have reviewed their topic planning in order to introduce more opportunities for active learning. More learning is now set in contexts or situations which help children understand the relevance of their learning. As a result of this work children are now engaged in active learning across curricular areas. Opportunities are available for children to work collaboratively and individually with less reliance on worksheets and textbooks. Children have more opportunities to undertake meaningful group work and challenges where groups have a choice about what they are researching and how they share findings with a wider audience. Children have opportunities for pair work in order to share ideas, generate discussion and build on each others thinking. In classes they co-operate well in groups, for example in producing a rainforest poster. Children say that learning through discussing work with partners or a peer group helps them to learn more effectively. Teachers' questioning of children has improved and helps ensure that children are more actively involved. Teachers make use of a number of useful strategies, to engage all children, including randomly questioning them by drawing out names on 'lollipop sticks' and 'phone a friend'. Children have good opportunities to evaluate their work against success criteria for tasks. They regularly use strategies such as 'traffic lights' to assess how they feel their work is progressing. This is done with peers and as individuals. Activities give children opportunities to be creative in the use of newly gained knowledge and to reflect on the quality of their work. Early work, being trialled by classes, on the development of personal learning planning to involve parents, should be continued. Overall children are taking more responsibility for their own learning and have a more thorough understanding of their work.

**APPENDIX 2 (CONT)****2. Teachers need to provide more choice and challenge for children in their learning.**

The school has taken a number of important and helpful actions to address this area for improvement.

Children are encountering a wider range of learning experiences. There are now better arrangements for ensuring appropriately differentiated activities for the children as pupil ability groupings are varied according to the curricular area being studied. The school places a strong emphasis on high quality presentation of children's work, both written and oral. The children feel that this will be helpful to them in later life. Opportunities for choice are evident within activities, for example choosing materials for posters and choosing activities to consolidate learning. By working in groups children can choose roles and activities. Children are progressing at a suitable rate in most lessons, however at times some of the children feel that the pace of working in mathematics lessons is too brisk and they need time to consolidate. Children in upper stages classes have carried out valuable focused research to support their investigations. Information technology is used effectively to enhance learning and present information in almost all classes. The use of 'Netbooks' with P7 children is particularly helpful and motivational in providing an alternative medium for developing children's writing, mathematics skills and enabling internet research. Children are now reading texts more deeply and are better able to make inferences. This is evidenced, for example, by some excellent note taking in an upper stages class. Younger children are talking about comprehension skills (summarising) during soft start activities. In other lessons the success criteria for discursive writing are teased out until all children have an understanding of them and can explain what they mean. Children's thinking is being further developed, for example by passing a question around the class in order to elicit deeper thoughts or through a 'compare and contrast' activity. The school should continue to develop opportunities for challenge by building 'headroom' into tasks which allow the development of higher order thinking skills. Simple options such as effective questioning, justifying ideas, reflecting on big questions and summarising will support this.

**3. The school should regularly review support for learning across stages to make sure the needs of all children are met.**

The school has made very effective progress in addressing this area for improvement.

The whole school policy for support for learning has been revised. It provides clear guidance on the roles and remits of all staff and a very helpful staged model of support and action to meet children's needs, including those with severe and complex needs requiring extended support. There is a high level of integration into mainstream schooling for these children and learning support staff and partner agencies provide valuable support and advice which enables individual learners to meet their learning targets. Parents are appropriately involved in reviewing learning needs and they view the integration of children with additional support needs as a key strength of the school. Individualised educational programmes and coordinated

**APPENDIX 2 (CONT)**

support plans are regularly reviewed and contain appropriate learning targets for those children requiring them. There is good liaison between support for learning staff and class teachers. Support is deployed flexibly, subject to regular review and evaluation and targeted towards groups and individual children as appropriate. The school is providing a suitable range of learning tasks and activities to support, challenge and enable almost all children to maximise their progress.

**4. With staff, the head teacher needs to develop arrangements for reviewing and improving the school's work.**

The school has taken a number of suitable steps to extend arrangements for reviewing and improving its work.

Teaching staff are very involved in planning for improvement. The head teacher operates a consultative and collegiate approach to improvement planning, however she needs to ensure that support staff are also fully engaged in this process. The development of all teaching staff through the Tapestry project, a forum where teachers work together to improve their practice, is very positive. The staff are using this opportunity to evaluate their own individual work. Teachers visiting each other's classrooms to observe practice has encouraged supportive discussions on learning and teaching. The head teacher and depute monitor teachers' plans, sample children's work and track children's progress. This supports school self-evaluation and contributes to the allocation of support for children. The school is beginning to engage children more in the evaluation of their learning experiences in the classroom. The depute head teacher visits classes in order to monitor learning. After each of these visits she engages in an informal discussion with the teachers to support improvements in practice. The head teacher visits classes informally but now needs to adopt a more rigorous approach to observing learning and teaching in order to better evaluate and improve the school's work.

**Conclusion**

Greenwards Primary School has taken effective steps to address the areas for improvement identified in the original HMIE report. Consequently the education authority will not publish any further reports in connection with the 2008 HMIE report. The education authority is satisfied with the school's on-going commitment to evaluation and continuous improvement. Education authority staff will continue to be involved in supporting and challenging the school to improve the provision for the children.

### APPENDIX 3

Moray Council follow-through report on **Roths Primary School** – published March 2011

#### **The original inspection**

Roths Primary School was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in November 2008 and the resulting report was published in February 2009. The report can be accessed either from the school or on the HMIE website ([www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk)). This was reported to Educational Services Committee on 25 March 2009.

HMIE was confident that the school would be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings and as a result made no further visits following the inspection.

The education authority has monitored progress and visited the school to assess the extent to which the school is continuing to improve the quality of its work, and to evaluate progress made in responding to the areas for improvement in the original HMIE report.

The following paragraphs provide a summary of progress.

#### **Continuous Improvement**

Since the original inspection there have been a number of developments which have resulted in improvements in children's learning experiences.

- The nursery is now based in a recently renovated and well resourced annexe adjacent to the main school building.
- The school was chosen as the good practice case study for a *Curriculum for Excellence* leaflet produced by the Scottish Government to support parental involvement in the early years. *Learning and Teaching Scotland* has also made a film about the nursery to P1 transition process at Roths, a further example of good practice.
- Much work has been done to develop outdoor learning for nursery pupils at the school. Activities include growing fruit and vegetables in the school garden and the outdoor environment is being used as a context for learning in a broad range of activities including, literacy, numeracy, technology, music and science. This work will be extended to include P1 next session.
- The school has improved play facilities for all pupils with the provision of a climbing wall and the playground has been re-surfaced with the support of the Roths School Association and the local business community.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities is offered to pupils and parents are supportive of all activities.

**APPENDIX 3 (CONT)**

- There are many opportunities for pupils to develop enterprising skills and attitudes, for example, a KNex Club is organised for upper stages pupils to extend team working and problem solving skills.
- The school enjoys good links with organisations and businesses in the local community, for example the Glen Grant Distillery and the Linburn Centre. Pupils participate in a broad range of community events such as raising funds for UNICEF, the TESCO Fun Run and the Gordonstoun Challenge. Every pupil in school participates in a School Community Group, facilitated by a member of the teaching staff. These groups focus on global citizenship, school and community improvement, health and wellbeing and the environment and outdoor learning.
- The school has established productive links with Bangladesh and Malawi and two visitors from schools in Bangladesh have been welcomed to Rothes Primary School.

**Progress with the Main Points for Action:****1. Continue to raise attainment in mathematics and writing.**

The school has implemented a number of actions to address this area for improvement and it is clear that attainment in writing and mathematics continues to improve. Pupils at early stages are writing for a range of purposes and are using appropriate formats to support this. A “writer’s notebook” has been introduced for all pupils from P4 to P7 as part of a Speyside Associated School Group initiative. These notebooks are being used effectively by staff to assess pupils` progress and to moderate pupils` work against their writing targets. Pupils are writing for a variety of purposes and are clear about how their writing skills can be used in everyday contexts. They are now able to measure their progress in writing and are aware of their strengths and areas which they need to improve. Almost all pupils at upper stages are working within the second level of Curriculum for Excellence. Procedures for correcting spelling are in place and almost all pupils are writing at considerable length. In terms of structure and content, most pupils` writing is well constructed and coherent.

In mathematics, much development work has been undertaken and the school continues to work to improve its mathematics programme. Pupils are now more actively involved in mathematics lessons through group work, discussion and practical activities such as measurement in length, weight and time. At middle and upper stages pupils have good opportunities to interpret information from graphs and charts. Mathematics lessons now have an improved structure which includes mental calculations and a plenary session to clarify key concepts learned. Staff have undertaken training to enable them to gain additional insights into pupils` number skills and strategies for mental calculation. At the early stages, all pupils sampled are achieving appropriate standards in mathematics. The pupils demonstrated a depth and breadth of understanding as well as the ability to apply mathematical skills in context. Pupils at upper stages are demonstrating improvement in their mental

### **APPENDIX 3 (CONT)**

number skills. The school should continue to work to improve other aspects of mathematics such as estimation, fractions and percentages.

#### **2. Increase pace and challenge in children's learning.**

The school has taken a number of important steps towards addressing this area for improvement.

In the nursery pupils are engaged in numeracy and literacy tasks within the context of their daily activities. The development of target setting in the nursery is giving pupils good opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and recent work which allows pupils to think about their learning is supporting this. At all stages teachers are planning more active learning opportunities linked to contexts with which pupils can readily engage. Consideration should be given to ensuring that all pupils are gainfully employed during start up routines at the beginnings of lessons with a focus on learning. All teachers should continue to ensure that learning outcomes and success criteria are clarified at the start of lessons. At early stages almost all pupils are engaged and motivated by tasks and activities which are well paced. At middle and upper stages pupils are positive about the use of success criteria for self and peer assessment in writing. At all stages pupils are given the opportunity to work in a variety of ways including individually and collaboratively and teachers are helping them to make connections between current and prior learning. The school should continue to ensure that pupils are challenged within the curriculum by providing activities which develop their thinking skills and creativity.

#### **3 Further develop the school's approach to self-evaluation**

The school has made good progress in addressing this area for improvement.

The head teacher involves staff, pupils and parents appropriately in planning for school improvement and a calendar of self-evaluation activities is in place to ensure a systematic approach. The head teacher formally observes lessons in each class twice annually and class teachers are provided with constructive feedback through discussion and written reports. The head teacher monitors pupils' written work and meets with teachers to discuss attainment targets and forward plans. Teachers are also involved in observing each other teach and all teaching staff participate in the Tapestry Project which provides a focus for discussing and sharing practice in teaching methodology. This is proving to be an effective means of improving teaching and learning across the school. Teachers regularly ask for feedback from pupils on their learning and this information is used to inform lesson planning and to provide some personalisation and choice for pupils.

Pupils have good opportunities to be involved in improving the school through their participation in School Community Group meetings. The views of pupils and parents are sought through biennial questionnaires and the head teacher also takes advantage of informal opportunities to seek views on aspects of the school's provision. The school should continue to work to ensure that self-evaluation focuses on key aspects of pupils' successes and achievements. In doing this it is important

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for all staff to recognise evidence of improvement based on clear actions as a result of information gathered through self- evaluation.

**Conclusion**

Roths Primary School and Nursery Class has made good progress in addressing the areas for improvement identified in the original report. Consequently the education authority will not publish any further reports in connection with the 2009 HMIE report. The education authority is satisfied with the school's on-going commitment to evaluation and continuous improvement. Authority staff will continue to be involved in supporting and challenging the school to improve the provision for the children.