

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
27 FEBRUARY 2013**

**SUBJECT: HMIE SCHOOL INSPECTIONS – MORAY COUNCIL FOLLOW-
THROUGH REPORTS AUGUST 2012 – JANUARY 2013**

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's Education and Social Care department following earlier school inspections by HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE). These are:

- i) Aberlour Primary School - (**APPENDIX 1**)
- ii) Elgin High School – (**APPENDIX 2**)

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 Committee scrutinises and notes the contents of this report.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 When a school is inspected by HMIE a report is published (by Education Scotland) which gives a 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 Where, following the original inspection, HMIE decide to revisit and reinspect the school then they themselves will publish a short follow-through report. These are reported to this Committee following publication.

3.3 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 inform parents about the school's progress as part of their arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of their establishments.

3.4 The Moray Council 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 areas for improvement in the initial report. Follow-through reports are usually published within two years of the initial report.

- 3.5 Copies of all Moray Council reports are available in the Members' Library, from the school and all HMIE reports are available online at www.educationscotland.gov.uk. The Moray Council follow-through reports on Aberlour Primary and Elgin High School are attached as appendices.

4 SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Council / Community Planning Priorities

The contents of this report relate to National Outcomes 5 of the Single Outcome Agreement (2009-12).

(a) Policy and Legal

This report relates to Section 66 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, which concerns the inspection of educational establishments.

(b) Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

(c) Risk implications

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

(d) Staffing implications

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(e) Property

None.

(f) Equalities

An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the report is to inform the Committee on performance.

(g) Consultations

The Corporate Director (Education and Social Care); members of the Education and Social Care Senior Management Team; Donnie Macdonald, Quality Improvement Officer; Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant; Margaret Forrest, Legal Services Manager; Katrina McGillivray, Senior Human Resources Adviser; and the head teachers of Aberlour Primary and Elgin High School have been consulted on this report and agree with the sections of the report relating to their areas of responsibility.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 That the Committee scrutinises and notes the contents of this report.

Author of Report: Paul Watson, Continuous Improvement Team Manager

Background Papers: Held by Donnie Macdonald, QIO

Ref:

Moray Council follow-through report on **Aberlour Primary School – November 2012**

1. Introduction

Aberlour Primary School was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in June 2010 and the resulting report was published in August 2010. The report can be accessed either from the school or on the HMIE website (www.hmie.gov.uk).

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.

This report tells you about the progress made by the school in addressing each of the areas for improvement identified in the HMIE report.

2. Continuous Improvement

Since the inspection staff at the school have continued to develop their practice in learning and teaching by attending training events and also reflecting on their practice and its impact on children's learning. The school is one of a number of schools involved in an authority initiative focused on further improving learning and teaching. The school has improved resources for supporting children's learning. All classrooms including the nursery have interactive whiteboards with new projectors. Training has been provided in the use of these and their use in learning and teaching is very good, providing children with stimulating and motivating experiences. Outdoor education has been developed with the creation of a 'wild garden' for children in the nursery who enjoy activities there on a weekly basis.

Children's wider achievements are valued and celebrated across the school. Since the inspection, there has been a focus on improving children's writing. Consistent approaches to the teaching of writing and ensuring that children understood what success looks like has brought about an improvement in performance in writing across all stages. Children have been given opportunities to exercise responsibility both in the school and across the community and have been particularly successful in raising funds for a series of charities and also contributing to community initiatives like the Christmas Lights.

Children's experience of global citizenship has also been strengthened. In partnership with Education Scotland, children in nursery have been making use of 'persona dolls' in order to identify aspects of Chinese culture. A teacher from China visited the school and worked with children in developing their understanding of Chinese culture.

3. Progress with the Areas for Improvement

3.1 Continue to develop the curriculum using *Curriculum for Excellence*.

There have been major developments in the curriculum in keeping with the requirements of *Curriculum for Excellence*. The curriculum and children's learning experiences are based on the school's values. There is a clear, flexible curricular plan which addresses all areas of the curriculum. Outdoor learning has been very well developed. Children in P3 and P4 take part in work leading to the John Muir Award. Orienteering has been introduced for children in the school and all older children take part in swimming. Children enjoy their learning which is motivating with interesting contexts and topics which capture their imaginations. Children are given regular opportunities to apply their learning and skills in different contexts. The school has continued to develop active learning enabling children to be more involved and take responsibility for their own learning. Planning and teaching approaches are ensuring that children are exposed to breadth, depth and challenge in their learning. The school is continuing with developments in Health and Wellbeing as well as in Numeracy. All primary 7 children recorded their best pieces of work in an e-Portfolio and this approach is being progressed to other year groups. In order to improve planning and tracking of coverage and children's progress a new planning, reporting and assessment tool is being introduced as part of an authority initiative.

Overall the school has made very good progress with this main point for action.

3.2 Improve monitoring and evaluating in the nursery class and resourced location to increase their impact on learning.

The headteacher has introduced more regular opportunities for monitoring and evaluating in the nursery class and resourced location. These include planned observations with verbal and written feedback. The headteacher is having more regular meetings and discussions with staff in these areas in order to improve learning. Through these regular formal meetings and discussions along with many informal visits and discussions, the headteacher knows how children are progressing in both areas very well. There is a clear focus on meeting the needs of all children. There is multi-agency involvement in the monitoring and evaluating process across the school including the nursery and resourced location. Staff from the nursery and resourced location are included in whole school meetings, discussions and staff development.

The school has made good progress with this main point for action.

4. Conclusion

The school made good progress in addressing the areas for improvement identified in the original HMIE report. The education authority is very satisfied with the school's on-going commitment to improvement. Parents and carers will be informed of further progress through the school's annual standards and quality report.

Moray Council follow-through report on **Elgin High School – January 2013**

1. Introduction

An Inspection team from Education Scotland visited Elgin High School in September 2011. Subsequently a report was issued to parents in November 2011.

The Inspectors were confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements and as a result decided to make no further visits in connection with the inspection. However, the local authority were asked to inform parents about the school's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its schools.

2. Continuous Improvement

Moray Council have announced that the Elgin High School building will be replaced as part of plans by the Government in partnership with Scottish Future's Trust and Hubco. It is anticipated that the new school will open in 2015. This announcement has had a positive impact on morale across the wider school community.

Attainment has been a focus for improvement in recent years and the improvement trend continued in 2012. Published figures across all measures saw an increase on the previous year and particularly by the end of S4. These figures were the highest for a significant number of years. Pupils with English as a second language were again successful in achieving GSCE Polish awards for the second year in succession. For the first time, young people in Kestrel house accessed the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. Others who had previously gained bronze and silver awards progressed to the next stage. All young people leaving the school went on to known destinations. Whilst applications to University is below the national average, the numbers going to Further Education or employment are well above the national average.

Young people are increasingly encouraged to participate in initiatives both locally and nationally. Two senior pupils, along with peers from across Scotland, visited Auschwitz as part of the work of the Holocaust Educational Trust with schools. As a result they became ambassadors and delivered awareness raising sessions about the Holocaust with younger children at the school. In partnership with a neighbouring school they presented to parents and invited guests at a local venue. Opportunities are wide and varied with representation at events including the Olympic Torch Relay, the National Space School as well as the Diamond Jubilee pageant. The school annually nominates young people for the Moray Young Citizens Award with all entrants gaining success.

The school continues to develop global citizenship with links in Zambia and China.

3. Progress with the Areas for Improvement

3.1 Discuss young people's progress with them and what they need to do to improve.

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

Staff made contact with schools across Scotland resulting in visits being made to a comparator school in order to identify good practice. Visits were also made to associated primary schools to observe the profiling process and the use of e-portfolios in order to improve curricular progression at transition.

An in-service day was dedicated to work on coaching conversations in order to develop staff confidence and skills in encouraging pupils to reflect on their learning and next steps. Education Scotland colleagues visited to train S2 pupils and staff on the use of e-portfolios. This has been followed up by central officers providing additional support.

All departments have developed strategies and increased opportunities for learning conversations so that young people regularly reflect on their progress and discuss what they need to do to improve.

In the senior school guidance and senior staff meet with individual and groups of pupils to reflect on their progress in courses and set targets for improvement. This was supplemented with improved communication with parents through letters and interviews. These actions were a factor in the improvement in attainment in examination results.

3.2 Ensure all learning is sufficiently challenging, stimulating and enjoyable.

The school has taken useful steps to begin to address this point for improvement.

All teaching staff have taken part in teaching visits to help them reflect on classroom practice. A number have met regularly to discuss teaching and learning and this has led to an increase in active learning in the classroom with young people engaged in a wider range of appropriate learning experiences. The significant majority of pupils reported that they enjoy learning and school and feel that staff encourage them to achieve and do well.

Classroom observation by senior staff had identified good practice across the school and continue to develop ways of sharing this in order to improve consistency of experience for young people. Pupils are regularly asked to evaluate and comment on their learning experiences. Departmental meetings are used to discuss the findings and look at ways of improving learning and teaching. All departments identified strategies, within their improvement plans, to meet the needs of the more able.

A revised homework policy is currently being developed by a working group and several departments have already made changes to practice.

3.3 Develop a culture of high expectations across the school and community.

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

It was acknowledged at the time of the inspection that guidance staff were providing individual support for pupils. This has continued with increased targeted support for young people in order to assist them in defining and achieving their goals. Examples include relevant work experience and opportunities to job shadow. Partnership working with local businesses and agencies has allowed this to happen. Attainment has risen with pupils much more aware of the benefits of success and being more motivated to strive for further academic achievement.

The school has developed wider links with the higher education sector. Through attendance at University road shows, former pupils speaking to young people and taking advantage of opportunities to attend events, senior pupils are more aware of the increased opportunities that further education establishments can offer them.

Staff across the school have increasingly encouraged young people to participate in a wide range of activities. These include a research project with the Nuffield Fellowship, attendance at University summer school and one pupil achieved a top ten place in the Pushkin Prize for creative writing.

Regional and national competitions or award schemes are an additional means of demonstrating that Elgin High pupils can be successful. Achievements by pupils include regional finalist of the Young Chef competition, silver and bronze awards in the Inspire-Aspire Competition as well as one pupil reaching the European stages of the UK Mathematics Trust Challenge.

Pupils have been increasingly provided with opportunities to use their skills and abilities in real life situations. They designed an application (app) for the National Libraries of Scotland, a poster for Asda's fashion show and entered the STEM Go4Set competition. Young people were fortunate to work with the BBC on a schools' news report as well as working with Deloitte to make a film for a local film producer.

3.4 Have a consistent approach to discussing, planning and tracking achievement.

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

The school has plans in place to recognise pupil progress and achievement through the use of profiling and e-portfolios in S1-S3. In addition a variety of approaches have been put in place in order to identify and track the attainment and achievement of pupils across the school. These include the use of achievement postcards, regular feedback to guidance staff during personal and social education and through registration teachers gathering information from pupils. Achievements are celebrated in a number of ways including displays, notice boards, assemblies, the school website and the local press.

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APPENDIX 2 (CONT)

Electronic means of tracking achievement are being investigated and this area for improvement remains a priority for the school.

4. Conclusion

The school has taken a number of important and helpful steps to address the areas for improvement identified in the original HMIE report. The education authority is satisfied with the school's on-going commitment to improvement, however continued work is required to embed *Curriculum for Excellence* and also ensure that all children receive consistently high quality learning experiences. Authority staff will continue to work with the school in order to support further improvements in the overall quality of learning and teaching. Parents and carers will be informed of further progress through the school's standards and quality report.