

**REPORT TO: EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
13 FEBRUARY 2008**

SUBJECT: GLENLIVET/TOMINTOUL – PAIRED HEADTEACHER MODEL

BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 Committee is invited to note the contents of this report which provides feedback on the second evaluation of the paired Headteacher model involving Glenlivet and Tomintoul 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 **The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report on the second of three evaluations of the paired Headteacher model involving Glenlivet and Tomintoul Primary Schools.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Tomintoul Primary was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in June 2006 as part of their national sample of school inspections. Following the inspection the Headteacher left her post and, from 21 August 2006 was replaced in an acting capacity by Nancy Fraser, the substantive post holder at Glenlivet Primary School.
- 3.2 Following publication of the HMIE report on Tomintoul Primary School on 14 November, a senior officer of Educational Services met, on three occasions, with a number of parents from that school and also met with the School Board of Glenlivet Primary School.
- 3.3 The initial discussions in Tomintoul pointed up a strong desire for stability in the staffing and leadership of that school. Subsequent discussion with parents from both schools led to the proposal to move towards piloting a paired Headteacher model with Nancy Fraser assuming responsibility for both schools.
- 3.4 **Committee Decisions – December 2006**
 - 3.4.1 The piloting of a paired Headteacher model involving Glenlivet and Tomintoul Primary Schools;

3.4.2 The pilot begin at a suitable operational date on or before 8 January 2007 and last until the day prior to the Christmas holidays in December 2008;

3.4.3 The pilot be evaluated on, at least, three occasions over the two year period; involve input from parents of children in both schools and be the subject of reports to Committee.

3.5 Evaluation Process

3.5.1. The first evaluation of the pilot took place in June 2007 and was undertaken by the Head of Educational Development Services and the Quality Improvement Officer for Speyside Associated School Group.

3.5.2 The evaluation consisted of:

- Interview with the Glenlivet School Board
- Interview with a sample of parents of pupils from Tomintoul Primary School
- Interview with the teaching staff of both schools
- Interview with the support staff from both schools
- Interview with the Headteacher
- Questionnaire to all parents
- Questionnaire to the P5-7 pupils in both schools

3.5.3 The evaluations were positive and were noted by Committee at the meeting on 3 October 2007 (paragraph 18 of the minute refers).

3.5.4 The second evaluation took place in December 2007 and January 2008 and consisted of:-

- Interview with the teaching staff of both schools
- Interviews with support staff from both schools
- Questionnaire to all parents
- Interview with the Headteacher

3.6 Results of the December/January Evaluations

3.6.1 The support staff in Glenlivet felt that the Headteacher was contactable even when not in the school. Routines had been adapted to deal with occasions when the Head Teacher was not in school. Links between the two schools were stronger under this model, yet both retained clear and separate identities. The support staff were of the opinion that the paired model gave greater continuity than with a class-committed Headteacher.

3.6.2 The support staff in Tomintoul also commented positively on the stronger links between the school and clear systems and routines. They considered that the school had a positive atmosphere with settled

pupils. They considered a full-time shared headteacher preferable to having a headteacher with a half-time teaching commitment.

- 3.6.3 Overall, both groups of support staff were very positive about the pilot. The only concerns raised were minor. In Tomintoul there was a feeling by some that pupil behaviour might not be quite so good in the school when the headteacher was at Glenlivet. However, they felt behaviour was improving. The Glenlivet staff raised the issue of the length of time the headteacher could be away from school if she attended a meeting on a day when due to be in the school. However this had not posed difficulties.
- 3.6.4 Teaching staff knew their roles and felt it was 'business as usual' when the headteacher was at the other school. They did not discern any difference in the pupils in the absence of the headteacher. They appreciated the closer links between the schools and used this to share ideas on learning and teaching. They were positive about the fact that the headteacher was available to them when in school as she did not have a teaching commitment. They also felt that her full-time headteacher commitment allowed her to focus on thinking about leadership and that the paired model gave her an insight into two schools, which headteachers of a single school would not have. Their only concern was over headteacher workload.
- 3.6.5 The feedback from parents was overwhelmingly positive. In Glenlivet 12 parents responded from the twenty-three questionnaires circulated and in Tomintoul the figure was nineteen from thirty-two questionnaires. From Glenlivet the replies to the four leadership / paired headteacher statements were all positive apart from those from one parent (96% of responses to the statement were positive). From Tomintoul one parent disagreed with one of the statements. Otherwise all responses were positive (99% positive). Overall, the responses were in line with those obtained in the evaluations undertaken in June 2006.
- 3.6.6 The headteacher considered that it is possible for the work required of a paired headteacher to be undertaken. She was also positive about the joint working. She felt that, especially at certain times, workload was heavy but that routines were in place and there was now a greater need to focus on development and continuing to move the schools forward.
- 3.6.7 The feedback from those surveyed has been positive and all associated with the two schools should be congratulated on the progress achieved so far.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

This report meets specific aims of the Educational Services, Service Improvement Plan.

(b) Policy and Legal

This pilot was agreed by Educational Services Committee on 6 December 2006.

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

None arising directly from this report.

(d) Consultations

Members of the Senior Management Team within Educational Services and Alan Dunsire, Quality Improvement Officer, have been consulted and agree with the contents of this report.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 That the Committee notes the contents of this report.

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Background Papers:
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Model