

School Inspections – Moray Council Follow-through Reports

The Moray Council Educational Services published 3 reports following earlier school inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) at East End Primary School, Mortlach Primary School and Portknockie Primary School.

Moray Council follow-through report on **East End Primary School** – published March 2007

HMIE published a report on the inspection of East End Primary School on 4 October 2005. At that time as a result of the high performance, the strong record of improvement and the very effective leadership of the school, HM Inspectors indicated that they would make no further reports in connection with the 2005 inspection. They requested that within two years the education authority, working with the school, provide a progress report to parents and carers.

Progress towards meeting the Main Points for Action identified by HMIE:

1. Continue to refine the use of information from national assessments to help plan pupils' next steps in learning more effectively.

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

A number of initiatives had been undertaken to meet this main point for action. The school was using an ICT based system of assessment information to monitor pupil progress more effectively. This was being used in conjunction with teachers' professional judgement. This information had been provided to all teaching staff and included on the shared area of the school's intranet. Teachers' records contained all National Assessment results and proposed dates for future assessments.

The head teacher had met regularly with individual class teachers and additional support for learning teachers to discuss targets for individual pupils, to identify pupils who were underachieving, and to prioritise pupils requiring additional support. A range of strategies had been identified to support underachieving pupils. These included enhanced support from additional support needs staff, contact with parents to enlist their support, and the deployment of school volunteers.

This development had been successfully linked to personal learning planning, where individual pupil interviews formed part of the process of identifying targets and next steps. The very good attainment level in mathematics had been sustained from the 2005 level. Attainment in reading had risen from the 2005 level and the attainment level in writing had been sustained. The school had clear expectations about the rate of pupils' progress and significant numbers of pupils were continuing to achieve national attainment levels earlier than predicted.

2. Continue to broaden approaches to developing writing to improve attainment in line with the school's improvement plan.

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

The school had undertaken a comprehensive review of its writing policy and programme using formative assessment strategies. Clear guidance had been provided for staff in terms of the range of writing genres to be covered at each class stage. Guidance to staff also included advice on the structure and sequencing of writing lessons. Helpful exemplar formats and checklists had been developed to support this work, and success criteria had been clearly identified for each genre, including poetry, across the 5-14 levels. A range of formative assessment strategies for writing had been implemented at all class stages which included the sharing of success criteria with pupils and focusing on these criteria when providing feedback to pupils on what they needed to do to be successful. Classroom observation showed that pupils were clear about what was expected of them during writing lessons.

As a result of these developments there was evidence of a more consistent approach being adopted across the school. Overall, levels of attainment at middle and upper stages had shown improvement.

In conclusion, the school has made very good progress in addressing the main points of action. Consequently, the authority will not publish any further reports in connection with the 2005 HMIE report. Authority staff, however, will continue to be involved with the school on an ongoing basis to support further improvements.

Moray Council follow-through report on **Mortlach Primary School** – published November 2007

HMIE published a report on the inspection of Mortlach Primary School on February 2006. At that time HM Inspectors required the authority to prepare an action plan indicating how they would address the main points for action identified in the original inspection report. They requested that within two years the education authority, working with the school, provide a progress report to parents and carers.

Progress towards meeting the Main Points for Action identified by HMIE:

1. Improve the system of assessing, planning, tracking and predicting pupils progress.

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

Better use of programmes of study to track progress had been made. Regular attainment meetings between management and all teaching staff had been introduced. These included discussions on target dates for next level and strategies to ensure individual pupil progress, including additional support arrangements where required. This had resulted in more accurate assessments, with outcomes of the meetings being recorded by class teachers.

Information transfer systems had been reviewed to ensure that at the end of each session receiving teachers were fully aware of each individual pupil's needs and progress to date. This had been viewed positively by the staff, smoothing the transition period and allowing appropriate teaching and learning to be implemented quicker than in the past.

2. Improve the pace of pupils' work and ensure that tasks set for pupils are sufficiently challenging.

There had been good progress with this main point for action.

All staff were made fully aware of the whole school attainment position to ensure that a whole school approach to pace and challenge was adopted. Teachers were required to identify the more able pupils, as well as those needing support, to ensure that all were having their individual needs met. To assist with this process, the staff worked to ensure that appropriate programmes and pace of learning were in place for all pupils. Despite this, it was recognised that one or two more able pupils could be stretched further and this was addressed through appropriately rigorous learning plans involving the use of next stage material and additional resources to stimulate and challenge these youngsters. Where appropriate, pupils in this category were encouraged to do research work in the computer suite and library, thereby taking responsibility for their own learning. This had proved to be successful.

Class teacher plans were carefully monitored by promoted staff and written feedback was provided. The headteacher regularly monitored learning and teaching throughout each term.

3. Review the system of support for pupils.

There had been good progress in addressing this main point for action.

The deployment of Support for Learning staff had been reviewed and support to individual pupils allocated according to need. Formal liaison between support staff and class teachers had been established to ensure effective evaluation of the intervention. Resources had been purchased to enhance the range of appropriate materials available. A number of parents had been offered the opportunity to discuss programmes with the two Learning Support teachers and the class teachers. Most had taken up this offer and were positive about it. Evidence showed that the lowest performing 20% of pupils had improved in terms of their attainment and/or achievement.

4. Improve communication with parents and involve them more with their children's learning.

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

Parents had been asked to become involved through a range of questionnaires such as feedback on the Behaviour Policy and information leaflets on areas such as Environmental Studies projects and P7 transition.

Parent volunteers had come forward to assist with projects such as Cycling Proficiency training, the school's residential trip and Stay and Play activities and all parents had been invited to events such as Scottish Opera, PTA organised functions and class assemblies as appropriate.

Improved annual reports, the annual Standards & Quality report, newsletters and distribution of School Board minutes had increased the level of communication between the school and home.

A series of curricular evenings had been organised to assist parents in becoming more involved in their children's learning. A significant increase in attendance had been recorded, although it is acknowledged that further work in this area was required.

It was intended that a School Newspaper be produced in the near future to further develop the flow of information. This was supported with a successful bid for funding from the authority through the "Determined to Succeed" initiative.

5. Increase the frequency of visits to classes by the headteacher to support pupils and staff more effectively.

The headteacher had made good progress towards meeting this main point for action.

Regular observation of classroom practice by promoted staff had become an established feature in the school. Outcomes of formal classroom observation were discussed with staff and recorded. A greater consistency in delivery of lessons was noted, resulting in a slow, but steady, improvement in attainment figures, especially in writing.

The headteacher had also introduced a programme of informal visits to all classes on a weekly basis. This has further reinforced consistency in learning and teaching and had enabled the headteacher to provide more direct and ongoing support to the staff.

In conclusion, the education authority commends the school for the considerable work undertaken by the head teacher, her staff and the pupils themselves towards addressing the main points for action. Overall the school has made good progress in addressing the main points for identified in the original HMIe report. The education authority is confident the school will continue to provide high quality and improving education and will continue to be involved with the school on an on-going basis.

Moray Council follow-through report on **Portknockie Primary School** – published January 2008

HMIE published a report on the inspection of Portknockie Primary School in October 2004. At that time HM Inspectors required the authority to prepare an action plan indicating how they would address the main points for action identified in the original inspection report. HM Inspectors revisited the school in June 2006 to assess 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 the ignition report.

Progress towards meeting the Main Points for Action identified by HMIE:

1. Improve aspects of teaching.

The school had made good progress towards meeting this main point for action.

Teachers now shared the purposes of lessons more effectively with pupils and gave them more feedback on what they wanted them to learn. Homework tasks had improved and were now matched more appropriately to pupils' needs. Teachers had used new resources well to improve the range and challenge of tasks set for pupils in English language and mathematics. The school had undergone a period of disruption to staffing which had resulted in a number of short term changes in teaching staff. This had hindered the school's efforts to ensure greater consistency in pupils' learning experiences. For a few pupils the pace of learning had been too slow. While some useful progress had been made there was still a need for greater consistency in pupils' learning experiences.

2. Establish appropriate arrangements for monitoring and self-evaluation.

The school had made adequate progress towards meeting this main point for action.

The headteacher now monitored teachers' plans more effectively and commented in writing upon the quality of planning. She had successfully sought pupils' views on the work of the school through the Pupil Council. Teaching staff were now more involved in evaluating their work and the quality of the school's provision. The headteacher had visited classes to evaluate the quality of learning and teaching and had shared her written comments with teaching staff. These visits were not yet sufficiently systematic and rigorous and did not result in agreed action points which were then evaluated. The headteacher had begun to track pupils' attainment more effectively, but the progress of most pupils was not yet sufficiently well monitored. There had been some improvements in the arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the school's provision. These arrangements were not yet sufficiently well developed to ensure that all pupils were making appropriate progress.

In conclusion, the school and education authority had made good progress in addressing one of the main points for action and adequate progress in meeting the other. The education authority will further engage with the school and produce, in October 2008, a report about the arrangements for monitoring and self-evaluation. Parents will be informed of the progress made by the school.