



PROGRESS ON THE MAIN POINTS FOR ACTION

Drumbowie Primary School was inspected in June 2009 as part of a national sample of primary education. The school received a very positive report with a number of particular strengths identified.

These were:

- Confident children who are keen to learn
- Children's wide range of personal achievements
- Children's skills in improving the environment
- Active learning experiences, particularly in the early years
- Partnerships with parents and the community
- Leadership of the headteacher and the high quality teamwork to improve the school

Her Majesty's Inspectors identified two areas for improvement which the school and the authority have addressed jointly. Falkirk Council Education Services were asked to evaluate the progress made by the school in taking forward the recommendations and inform parents about the school's progress in improving the quality of education.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Since the publication of the report in August 2009 Drumbowie Primary School has made very good progress with all recommendations in the HMIe report. The acting headteacher, Lyndsay Westwood, and her staff are firmly committed to an agenda of continuous improvement and have established a culture of self-evaluation and reflection.

Progress has been verified through classroom observations, meetings with the acting headteacher, staff, pupils, parents and through scrutiny of the school's documentation.

Progress in meeting the recommendations has been monitored and supported by the Quality Improvement and Curriculum Support Teams.

Progress against the two areas for improvement is detailed below.

AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT 1

Continue to implement Curriculum for Excellence and build on children's prior learning

The school devised and implemented new curriculum planning formats to involve pupils more actively. Their ideas on what and how they want to learn are now incorporated into the planning process. The planners allow teaching staff to focus on specific learning and choose the outcomes and experiences to suit the pupils' needs. It also allows provision for depth, enjoyment, choice and progression through the

experiences and outcomes. Pupils have responded very enthusiastically to having their ideas recorded and displayed in class.

The methodologies surrounding the "Big Writing" initiative have been fully implemented in the upper school from August 2010 and have raised attainment in pupils' writing. In the early years class, writing skills were developed using the Active Literacy and Story line approaches. "Big writing" is now being implemented to develop writing skills in the early years class. Increased attainment in writing is evident.

Pupils are much more enthusiastic about their writing and can talk confidently about up levelling their work, use a wider vocabulary and more ambitious punctuation. Most children are transferring their writing skills to other areas of the curriculum.

A coherent programme of study in problem solving has been developed providing more opportunities for pupils to gain confidence in selecting strategies to solve problems.

The school has introduced 'focus weeks' throughout the session covering Finance, Scottish, International and World of Work themes. This provides many opportunities to raise the pupils' awareness of citizenship and allows the children to explore elements of personalization and choice. Pupils are given opportunities to learn about cultural diversity and develop real life skills. Pupils were involved in a wide range of activities including: a ceilidh, highland games; trip to shops, online shopping, a passport day, sampling Scottish and International foods. Evaluations from staff,

pupils and parents indicated that learning outcomes had been successfully achieved. Parents commented on the confident and knowledgeable way pupils conducted themselves during parental events.

All pupils receive two hours of high quality PE per week developing their skills in a variety of sports and through interdisciplinary studies. Activities are, whenever possible, undertaken outside in the Multi Utility Games Arena. Personalisation and choice is arranged by pupils through the 'Golden Time Committee' who chose which sporting activity will be on offer during 'golden time.' As well as participating in sporting after school clubs, pupils have also had opportunities to use their skills in a competitive setting such as 'Rock-it ball', football festivals, orienteering and athletics events. Pupils enjoyed an aerobic active start session which has now developed into a circuit training session in response to pupils' evaluations. Pupils respond very positively to their PE activities and view it as an important part of their curriculum and in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

'Learning Walls' and 'Learning Journals' have been introduced into the school to allow children to become more involved in their learning. Some of these strategies include 'Link Lizard' where pupils talk about how their skills can be transferred, 'Tips for the Teacher' encourages pupils to think about how the teacher's lesson could be improved to help them learn better and 'Memorable Moments' asks pupils to think about which part of their lesson was their favourite. Pupils are also asked to think about and comment on their learning throughout the week.



FURTHER INFORMATION

In consultation with pupils and parents, homework has been revised. Pupils are now given more choice in how they present their homework with a variety of tasks to be undertaken incorporating all curricular areas. Pupils' responded enthusiastically and a high standard of models, research, diagrams/plans, posters, leaflets, poems and reports have been completed. In response to parental evaluations, the school introduced new reading resources to help motivate and enthuse pupils in their reading. Parents commented positively on the related reading workshop and noted how keen their children were to read. Pupils' attainment increased and staff observed pupils were much more confident and independent in their reading skills. Home/school links continue to be strengthened with the introduction of new ideas such as 'Tiny Achievable Targets' (TATS) and 'Personal Learning Activities for You' (PLAY) which have been met with positive parental and pupil feedback.

Very good progress has been made towards meeting this area for improvement.

AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT 2

Help individual children to achieve their best by meeting learning needs fully

All pupils receive a high level of support and challenge as appropriate to their individual needs. Staff meet regularly to discuss pupil progress and target support where and when necessary. The acting head teacher and support for learning teacher are carefully timetabled to allow individuals and small groups to receive a high level of support focusing on literacy and numeracy. In consultation with staff and parents, the school's main focus was on literacy. Support is given to developing early reading and writing skills where pupils' progress is carefully monitored. The support for learning teacher works with individual pupils and evaluations from assessments evidence that good progress is being made. The head teacher holds termly tracking meetings with teaching staff and has ensured continuity of learning during transition times. The school consults with parents throughout the year and concerns are promptly acted upon. Informal and formal assessments highlight that all pupils have benefited from the extra support given to them.

Pupils' wider achievements are recognised at assemblies where they share their success and achievements outwith the school community. Pupils' wider achievements are displayed on the 'Curriculum for Excellence' wall.

Very good progress has been made towards meeting this area for improvement.

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For further information on this report or the Council's strategy for Raising Achievement please contact the Headteacher or

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Further copies of this report and the original HMIE report are available from the school or on the HMIE website at www.hmie.gov.uk

Falkirk Council Education Services are committed to open communication that achieves shared understanding and helps overcome barriers. This leaflet can be made available in other languages, in Braille, large print or on audio tape. Please contact 01324 506600 for further information.



LEARNING TO ACHIEVE
A Strategy for Raising Achievement

Follow Through Report on the Inspection of



Drumbowie Primary School
August 2011



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