



ABBEYHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

FOLLOW THROUGH REPORT

1. The inspection

HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) published a report on the quality of education in Abbeyhill Primary School in November 2013. Subsequently the school with support from the education authority ensured the school improvement plan took account of the findings of the inspection.

The education authority recently visited the school to assess the extent to which the school was continuing to develop the quality of its education including the areas identified for improvement and produced a progress report for parents.

This report tells you about the quality of education provided by the school since the original inspection. It also comments on the progress made in the agreed areas for improvement.

The main areas of focus are on learning and achievement, meeting the learning needs of the pupils and leadership to help the school achieve its aims.

Significantly, the headteacher has been in post since August 2014 and two newly appointed principal teachers have subsequently been appointed.

2. Improvements in the quality of education provided

2.1 Learning and achievement

The children in Abbeyhill Primary School and Nursery Class continued to make progress in their learning. Most pupils were well behaved, polite and engaged in their learning with some creative opportunities for learning across the school eg. Collective Gallery and the Colony of Artists` Festival. In most classes learners were provided with tasks and activities which actively engaged them in independent, paired or group work and on a variety of appropriate tasks and challenges.

The newly appointed acting principal teacher was leading literacy development across the school with targeted intervention strategies such as "Fresh Start" at P5, P6 and P7, with pupils who are benefitting from enhanced support for learning. Developments in reading for enjoyment were planned through improvements in the school library and children`s access to a wide range of reading materials.

There was also a focus on mathematics and numeracy, with the appointment of a principal teacher who leads on this area of the curriculum. The principal teacher was developing numeracy through a robust and progressive programme of study in Stages of Early Arithmetic Learning (SEAL). A whole school learner`s journey was under review incorporating real contexts for learning and an assessment framework to support progress.

A programme for progression in technologies, involving e-journals was currently in early stages of

implementation throughout the school. This was supporting the tracking and monitoring of progress through the Broad General Education.

The senior leadership team was currently creating a system for tracking and monitoring the school and individual pupils' progress.

Attendance was identified as a target for improvement in promoting attainment throughout the school. As a result of regular meetings and intervention by headteacher and education welfare officer, attendance had improved, with improved time-keeping monitored through a "lateness register".

The school was currently implementing systems to encourage pupil voice through a range of strategies such as weekly reflection of their progress in learning; decisions about their learning through Big Floor Planning, and the new action groups eg Junior Road Safety Officers, Pupil Council, Eco Warriors etc. The pupil house system has recently been reinstated with the election of pupil house captains and vice captains.

Most children had engaged in the whole school positive strategies for celebrating success including eg. Friday headteacher awards, Magic Balls, stickers and weekly achievement time.

The school made use of their central location to access some free activities eg. galleries and Salisbury Crags. There are some after-school clubs for the senior pupils to attend eg. computer, football and art, with many children engaging in clubs in the wider community eg. gymnastics, Scouts, judo etc.

The school had surveyed parents in exploring ways to maximise use of their local environment as well as outdoor residential experiences.

Residential experiences were planned for children in alternate P6/P7 classes visiting Lagganlia. The school should further explore routes to support families with the financial impact of this trip.

In the nursery, staff were using authority audit tools to identify ways to develop literacy and numeracy environmental print. The education authority support staff to take forward their action plan and to develop more response-shared planning with children and parents.

During reading sessions, with P4 and P7 children read with fluency, but showed a need for fuller appreciation of the range of vocabulary and comprehension of texts read.

In the nursery class, staff provided information to parents through more responsive planning. The learning environment continued to be developed to provide a more active learning experience for all the children. Some evidence of Environmental Print was evident in the internal space.

2.2 *Meeting pupils' learning needs*

Development of a forward planning consultation process between teachers and members of the senior leadership team was helping to identify and meet learners' needs more effectively. Discussion was more firmly based on pupil progress, challenge and support.

Through the Scottish Indicator of Multiple Deprivation Index (SIMD), 30% of Abbeyhill Primary School children live within the bottom three deciles. Interventions were identified to support pupils who were not attaining according to the national average ie. Fresh Start and SEAL. Attainment for literacy and mathematics had yet to show expected improvements through the school improvement plan. With new principal teachers appointed, the focus for the school was on raising attainment. Support from the education authority will continue to enhance progress in attainment.

Some staff were implementing identified Assessment is for Learning (AifL) strategies for meeting learners needs in the classroom setting. There was a willingness from all staff to improve, but strategies, differentiation, pace and challenge of pupils needs to be more consistently applied across the school. The school, however, was making progress with this and has planned to make continued improvement.

The school was developing practices in supporting children with a range of additional needs through the Getting It Right For Every Child agenda. The headteacher and principal teacher provided clearer direction and focused on supporting pupils throughout the school.

There was now a focus on support for pupils through a range of intervention strategies and a presumption to class-based support and further development of the five roles of support for learning.

Despite a focus on home-learning and engagement with parents, an initiative such as homework club had not been well-supported by parents and children. The school amended their practice to enable learners to be supported at home by revised practices such as e-journals and “Book at Bedtime” initiatives. Further opportunities for parents to engage with the school were planned throughout the session in cultural events and through shared learning opportunities.

In the nursery, children were engaged with their planned context ie. friendship, and making good use of information communications technology (ICT) through interactive whiteboard and electronic profiling.

2.3 Leadership and direction

The headteacher and the leadership team were highly committed to the school. The headteacher has recently established an effective leadership team with clear remits for taking the school forward. The improvement action plan involved all staff with key roles and responsibilities, a clear professional learning programme and performance review and development (PRD) system. The school has engaged staff and parents in the review process, auditing their progress through the school improvement plan.

The senior leadership team were committed to the process of self-evaluation to enhance their practice and enable them to meet the needs of all their children. They have planned to work alongside a range of partners to ensure that children`s needs and experiences are of the highest quality. They recognise the challenges and barriers of engaging with parents but plan to creatively overcome this.

The headteacher was a positive and proactive early adopter of guidance from the authority and this alongside an improving approach to monitoring and tracking was helping staff become more reflective on their practice.

The leadership team had created improved collegiality across the school which has enabled a period of focused improvement: there was now a focus on more sustainable development and in the quality of direct learning and teaching practices.

3 Conclusion

With support from the education authority, Abbeyhill Primary School provided a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. The school had made progress in a number of areas identified since the inspection and had made improvements in light of the inspection findings. The leadership and teamwork in the school provided a good basis for continued improvement.

The education authority will not publish further reports in connection with the 2013 HMIE report but will continue to work with the headteacher to ensure priorities identified during inspection and other quality improvement visits are taken forward.

The school and early years quality improvement officers will continue to work with the school on their nursery improvement plans.

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November 2015