

## 1 THE INSPECTION

HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) published a report on the quality of education in Balgreen Primary School in April 2009. Subsequently the school with support from the education authority amended the school improvement plan to take account of the findings of the inspection.

An education authority team 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.

## 2 IMPROVEMENTS IN THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

### 2.1 Learning and achievement

In the last three years pupils have made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In particular pupils

performed well in relation to similar schools across reading and writing.

The school offered a very wide range of opportunities for pupils to be involved in a range of activities. This included involvement in achieving the Eco Scotland Green Flag award, taking part in successful choirs, a mathematics whiz lunchtime club, ballroom dancing and a range of sporting activities. The school had piloted the Junior Award Scheme Scotland (JASS) programme from which pupils were able to identify targets for personal achievement. Pupil achievement was shared and led by the senior management team (SMT) and pupils at celebration assemblies and was also recognised in displays around the school.

The atmosphere around the school was calm and purposeful. Pupils were confident, polite and talked positively and enthusiastically about their experiences at school.

Recent successful whole school initiatives in English language had included introducing cursive handwriting across the school and supporting reading at the early stages with an intensive team reading programme. Links between classes were well developed through buddy reading opportunities. Early evidence showed these initiatives had contributed to increased reading

attainment. In mathematics, there was a focus on developing number confidence and capability at the early stages alongside targeted intervention and whole school strategies. This was increasing the pace for learners.

Staff were involved in leading initiatives related to *Curriculum for Excellence* in health and wellbeing, English language, mathematics, information communications technology (ICT) and global citizenship.

## 2.2 Meeting pupils' learning needs

All staff had been trained in cooperative learning. This whole school approach was developing consistency across classrooms. As a result of this pupils experienced an increasingly active and stimulating learning environment in the majority of classrooms. Most children worked well independently, in pairs, trios and cooperative learning teams.

In the area of global citizenship the school had recently held a very successful "One World Day". Pupils talked enthusiastically about the learning experiences that had involved finding out about the culture and customs of different nationalities.

The headteacher had established detailed, responsive termly and weekly planning. This was undertaken by all teaching staff and was helping to ensure that most tasks were stimulating and met the majority of learner's needs.

Learning intentions were shared with pupils in the majority of classes. In a few classes peer and self assessment was used effectively to help children identify next steps in order to improve learning.

A good start had been made in developing the personal learning planning process with teachers and pupils trying different approaches. The school recognised the need to further develop this and to establish a variety of approaches where pupils had increased involvement in talking about the learning process.

The support for learning teacher had termly meetings with staff and provided structured programmes of work for individual pupils with additional needs. Learning assistants were deployed very effectively to support learning and teaching. They were clear about their role in the process. They were well led and supported by the support for learning teacher.

There was a highly positive inclusive ethos in the school. The school provided support for children and families, at times of personal difficulty, through Place to Be. Pupils with additional support needs were effectively integrated into the life of the school. An example of this was where pupils in the school learned a weekly sign to improve inclusion.

## 2.3 Leadership and direction

The headteacher was highly committed to the school. Leadership had continued

to be developed at all levels. Staff leading and involved in working groups spoke positively about their roles. These initiatives were beginning to have positive impact on learners' experiences.

The headteacher had established clear systems and structures for monitoring the work of the school. Sharing classroom experience, by both SMT and class teachers, had a clear focus that was linked to improvement plan initiatives. Further evidence was provided from pupil focus groups and through the weekly review of forward plans. These forward plans were now much more responsive to learners' needs. Staff were using *Curriculum for Excellence* experiences in their planning which was leading to increased active approaches to learning.

### **3 CONCLUSION**

With support from the education authority, Balgreen Primary School provided a good standard of education for its pupils. The school had made very good progress since the inspection and had made the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. The current improvement plan had had a positive impact on the work of the school. The teamwork in the school provided a very good basis for continued improvement.

The education authority will not publish further reports in connection with the 2009 HMIE report.

Peter Gorrie  
Quality Improvement Officer  
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# BALGREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Follow through report on the HMIE inspection

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