

# BUCKSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Follow through report on the HMIE inspection

DECEMBER 2010

## 1 THE INSPECTION

HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) published a report on Buckstone Primary School on the quality of education in February 2009.

Subsequently the school, with support from the education authority, amended the school improvement plan to take account of the findings of the inspection.

Education officers from the 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 for improvement, and produced a progress report for parents.

This report comments on the quality of education provided by the school since the original inspection. It also describes 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

Across the school pupils were making very good progress. Pupils' levels of

attainment in reading, writing and mathematics had been exceeded over the last year, with a significant increase in mathematics and writing. Opportunities for writing in the nursery class had been introduced. Staff and pupils had high expectations of pupils' attainment across the school.

Wider achievement was well recognised, celebrated and promoted within the school. The school was recording wider achievement of pupils. All pupils had more opportunities to exercise choice, show independence and take responsibility through the development of active literacy, personal learning planning and active mathematics.

Pupils were motivated, enthusiastic and actively involved in contributing to their learning. The use of Graffiti Walls increased teachers' confidence in delivering active learning. Innovative approaches in creating 'maths bags', Literature Circles and a communications policy had encouraged independent and collaborative opportunities with pupils, parents and staff.

Pupils were very proud of their school and they had high expectations of themselves in both their learning and behaviour. They could talk confidently about their learning and ways in which to assist each other to improve.

A clear focus on new learning and teaching approaches through external and internal continuing professional development had resulted in more systematic implementation of collaborative and active learning to develop higher order reading and thinking skills.

The school was committed to the principles of *Curriculum for Excellence*. Staff had made a very positive start on including these in their planning. The school had developed robust systems of internal self-evaluation which included pupils and parents, leading to significant improvement in active learning opportunities with support for all pupils.

## 2.2 Meeting pupils' learning needs

Relationships between staff and pupils were very good. All staff had very effective approaches to involving pupils as fully as possible in their learning. Pupils enjoyed the opportunities they had to work as a class, in groups, in pairs and independently and were developing skills in assessing and collecting evidence of their own learning through dialogue with their teachers.

Teachers shared the purposes of lessons with pupils and questioning was used to further involve pupils in what they were learning and to check understanding. In the nursery class staff had begun to take account of children's prior knowledge and use this to plan differentiated activities. Pupils evaluated their own work and gave feedback to their peers. They enthusiastically engaged in discussion.

The improvement in feedback to pupils and the development of personal learning planning had resulted in pupils having a clear understanding of next steps in learning.

Effective learning and teaching strategies included increased use of information and communications technology (ICT) across the curriculum and use of prior learning to enhance the pupils' learning experiences.

## 2.3 Leadership and direction

The newly appointed headteacher had a clear strategic vision and direction for the school which focused appropriately on inclusion, pupils' achievement, attainment and meeting the needs of all learners. All staff worked very effectively as a team to motivate and engage pupils in their learning.

Participation in the Edinburgh Nursery Early Years pilot had involved self-evaluation of current practice and was impacting very positively on the children's experiences.

Department and monitoring meetings encouraged discussion, sharing and self-evaluation, which impacted positively on the pupils' learning experiences. Good practice in learning and teaching was shared. This had improved staff practice and was also used to inform the school improvement plan.

Parental involvement in their child's learning and teaching had been further developed and enhanced through a fortnightly home-link newsletter for parents, which had impacted very constructively on pupil progress in the new curriculum.

### 3 CONCLUSION

With support from the education authority, Buckstone Primary School continues to provide a very good standard of education for its pupils. The school had progressed very well since the inspection and had made the improvements in light of the inspection findings. The current improvement plan had made a very positive impact on the work of the school. The very effective teamwork in the school provided a very strong basis for continued improvement. The education authority will not publish further reports in connection with the 2009 HMIE report.

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