

FERRYHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

FOLLOW THROUGH REPORT

1. The inspection

HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) published a report on the quality of education in Ferryhill Primary School in January 2011. 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.

2. Improvements in the quality of education provided

2.1 *Learning and achievement*

The nursery environment was bright, stimulating and engaging and children were making very good progress developing their literacy and numeracy skills in a wide range of planned, purposeful play experiences. Nursery staff have developed effective "Learning Trees and Targets" for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. These targets are helping staff, pupils and parents become aware of pupil progress and strength as learners. Children in the nursery spoke knowledgeably about authors and illustrators and were very proud of their "purple planet books" and spoke confidently about the changes they would like to make the next time they wrote a book.

At the primary stages, almost all learners were making good progress from their prior levels of attainment in English/literacy and mathematics/numeracy. Improved tracking and deep analysis of results has shown where pupils have made progress and has highlighted pupils who need extra support. Performance analysis discussions with the senior management team (SMT) and staff have ensured strategies have been put in place to improve attainment for all.

In most classes the introduction of Big Writing and recent Creation of pupils Own Books where they were the authors has improved motivation and confidence in writing skills. This was evidenced by analysis of a piece of Cold writing before the Book project began and analysis of another piece of Cold Writing at the end of it.

The Edinburgh Literacy Rich programme and approaches to teaching literacy now implemented at the P1-P3 stages has resulted in a more consistent approach to the teaching of literacy and this is also having a positive impact on reading at the early stages.

The recently introduced cluster Problem Solving pack is already showing signs of improved skills and confidence in this area. This is being monitored through shared classroom practice, forward plan feedback and pupils' ability to tackle mathematics.

Across the school the atmosphere was calm and purposeful. Pupils were well mannered, they felt they were valued and talked enthusiastically about their learning and their school.

Pupils from P4-P7 are developing their leadership skills by taking on roles such as playground buddies, prefects, litter pickers, packed lunch box organisers, Pupil Council, Eco Group and Junior Road Safety Officers.

The school achieved its Third Green Eco Flag and has achieved the second stage of Healthy Schools.

Pupils spoke highly of the schools' merit system which they felt had improved the behaviour of the pupils in and out of school.

2.2 Meeting pupils' learning needs

Most pupils were engaged and motivated in their learning. They were enthusiastic learners who worked well independently, in pairs and in groups.

Learning Intentions were displayed and discussed in all classrooms. Success criteria were visible and in the best practice, Success Criteria were decided by the pupils. Pupils were brought together at end of lessons to share what they had learned and what they would need to do next.

There was a wide variety of resources and tasks and good use was made of information communication technology (ICT) by the teachers. All activities were very well organised and there was a good pace moving round them. Differentiation was evident in some classes, but not all which may have been because classes are set for literacy and numeracy.

Formative assessment strategies were evident in all classes although there was a tendency to use hands up too often.

There was a positive use of praise to motivate and encourage children and pupils were given many opportunities to engage in teacher/pupil dialogue.

Learning Assistants were deployed effectively to support the learning.

2.3 Leadership and direction

The SMT and staff now have a clearer vision of what is working well in the school and what needs to be developed. There is now a clearer system for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

All staff attended weekly staff meetings which now have a focus on self-evaluation and school improvement. This has led to increased professional dialogue amongst staff and increased confidence in sharing practice. Staff spoke positively about the impact of self-evaluation. The headteacher had taken account of authority priorities and shared them with staff.

Staff were confident that if any issues were raised the SMT would deal with them.

Staff had undertaken an individual evaluation highlighting where they had particular strengths and an area they could develop or help others. Staff were very positive about the impact of this approach which had raised confidence and improved sharing of information.

Recent parental responses show that an increased number of parents feel that their views are taken into account and their child is working to the best of their ability.

Pupil discussion groups were informing the SMT of pupils' views on their learning and teaching.

Completing a communication audit has ensured there has been measurable improvements in communication throughout the school and school community. Involving Learning Assistants in Friday staff meetings and producing weekly information sheets for staff was having a positive impact on morale of staff. The school website and newsletters have been improved and text messages to parents were working well.

Leadership remits have been made clearer and shared with staff.

3 Conclusion

With support from the education authority, Ferryhill Primary School provided a good standard of education for its pupils. The school had made good progress 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 January 2011 HMIE report.

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