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THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

SOUTH MORNINGSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL and NURSERY CLASS

FOLLOW THROUGH REPORT

1. The inspection

HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) published a report on the quality of education in South Morningside Primary School in December 2009. Subsequently the school with support from the education authority ensured the school improvement plan took 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 nursery children were well settled and played cooperatively. Very good use was made of the outdoor learning environment. A whole school focus on literacy development had seen improved practice in the nursery and opportunities were evident of emergent writing and drawing across learning. Children were actively involved in planning learning through the use of floorbooks, talking mats and a storyline project. Improvements to personal learning planning have resulted in children being able to evaluate what they are doing well and to see links with the evidence gathered.

The atmosphere around the school was calm and purposeful. Pupils were confident, polite and talked positively about their experiences at school. They were particularly enthusiastic about the house system and the different approaches to learning that had been introduced. The school should continue to involve pupils in discussing their learning.

Pupils' achievements were recorded and celebrated in a variety of ways e.g. assemblies, newsletters. Star Awards have been introduced and the Junior Award Scheme Scotland, Enterprise Finance focus, ECO and Health groups and whole school house events will provide further opportunities for pupils to achieve.

Opportunities for staff to lead curriculum development have increased. This is evident in the variety of in house led continuous professional development (CPD) sessions. Staff have taken a leading role in moving forward active learning, a smart start for P1 and P2, the use of cooperative learning approaches, active spelling, Higher Order Thinking Skills and a storyline approach. These developments have impacted positively on pupils' learning and motivation. Information booklets, workshops and an improved school website have increased parental involvement. There is scope to develop pupil involvement in the school website.

Pupil attainment was carefully monitored and pace and challenge discussed. The moderation of writing across the cluster had been a focus last session and staff were currently moderating standards of reading. Most learners were making very good progress in their learning. There is scope to provide more challenge for more able pupils. This will be taken forward across all developments in the school improvement plan.

Improvements have been made in delivering two hours of quality physical education (PE) for all pupils each week. The creative use of funding has had a very positive impact, particularly on P1 and P2 pupils.

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) as an integral part of learning and teaching was evident in most classes. Support from the Parent Council has allowed the purchase of 20 ipads. The school is well placed to take forward ICT in line with the authority refresh programme.

2.2 *Meeting pupils' learning needs*

The support for learning teachers had undertaken a comprehensive audit of pupils' learning needs and shared results with all staff. The use of pathways to identify support required and by whom has provided a clear framework for staff and parents. Children identified as having additional support needs experienced more targeted support eg fine and gross motor programmes.

The support for learning teachers played a key role in ensuring that learning assistants focused on meeting pupils' learning needs. Learning assistants were effectively deployed and made a very positive contribution.

Review meetings were held regularly and both short and long term targets clearly identified and evaluated.

Personal learning planning approaches and formats have been evaluated by staff, parents and pupils. The setting of appropriate, meaningful and challenging targets continues to be a priority.

In the nursery the introduction of a focus child system and weekly team meetings to discuss concerns, support or challenge required has impacted positively on ensuring pupils' learning needs were met. Staff were more confident in gathering appropriate evidence and identifying next steps.

There was evidence of the effective use of formative assessment approaches. Pupils were able to discuss what they were learning and in most classes could identify the steps required for success.

2.3 *Leadership and direction*

The headteacher, depute headteachers and all staff were highly committed to the school.

A systematic approach to self evaluation including a review of curriculum design, use of standardised assessment results, parental responses, sharing classroom experience, monitoring of pupil work, had identified areas for improvement.

Leadership roles had been created at all levels and the positive impact on pupils' learning was evident.

3 Conclusion

South Morningside Primary School and Nursery Class provided a very good standard of education for its pupils. The school had made very good progress since the inspection and had made significant improvements in light of the inspection findings. The teamwork in the school provided a very good basis for continued improvement. It is not necessary for the education authority to make further visits or provide further reports.

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Quality Improvement Officer
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