

**ST JOSEPH'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**FOLLOW THROUGH REPORT**

**1. The inspection**

HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) published a report on the quality of education in St Joseph's Primary School in March 2011. 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 are happy and settled. They had very positive relationships with staff and play and take turns well. Staff were developing opportunities for children to play a more active role in initiating and planning their learning experiences and children were able to routinely choose to learn outdoors.

There was a calm, purposeful and supportive atmosphere within the school. In all classes visited children were focussed on the learning activities that were being undertaken. Pupils were very motivated and enthusiastic learners. In all classes pupils worked well independently, in pairs and in groups. For example pupils in P5 were successfully working in pairs creating book reviews on the computer, some children were locating 'spooky' vocabulary from a text whilst another group were supported by the teacher in engaging with a text. Across stages children listened attentively and contributed well and were able to express views confidently and articulately.

Children had developed skills in working cooperatively, in pairs and in groups. Learning intentions were shared routinely with children. Staff were continuing to develop a range of Assessment is for Learning (AiFL) strategies with confidence though there is scope to develop this further in embracing an approach to personal learning planning.

Class work was planned to develop skills in all types of writing, including functional, imaginative and personal. Children were writing regularly for a range of purposes which linked well to other areas of the curriculum. The introduction of cursive writing across the school was resulting in good standards of presentation.

The senior management team (SMT), in consultation with staff, had developed supportive guidelines for social studies which provided a flexible framework for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding. The revised social studies themes offered scope for personalisation and choice and teachers were encouraged to include learners as part of the planning process.

Parents and carers spoke positively about the range of trips to enhance the learning experience. They also appreciated the opportunities to support the school on these excursions. The educational visits were also a positive feature identified by pupils.

The school had a strong sense of identity and had very close working relationships between the local parish with the parish priest commenting positively on the faith commitment of the headteacher and staff. Very positive links had been established with Broomhouse Primary School through sharing facilities, regular joint assemblies, sharing the breakfast club and shared playtimes twice a week. These developments should continue.

Pupils were given a range of leadership opportunities within the school for example pupil council, house captains and vice captains, photographers and librarians. Pupils took on these roles with great responsibility, they were aware of how these contributed to the development of them and others as responsible citizens.

## 2.2 *Meeting pupils' learning needs*

Staff knew the children and their families very well and provided a high level of pastoral care, support and attention to children's welfare. Support agencies worked with individual learners as necessary to promote achievement and to meet identified needs. Regular dialogue with parents and formal parental consultations ensured all staff and parents/guardians were aware of individual learning and emotional needs. These parent consultations were very well attended and parental feedback indicated approval for the three-way approach involving teacher-child-parent. Parents welcomed information workshops provided when starting in P1 and the opportunities in the early stages to enhance the pupil learning experience.

Teachers spoke positively about extended opportunities for collegiate support in ensuring children's smooth transition from stage to stage and support in tracking children's progress.

The school community had compiled a world recipe book selected by children which celebrated the range of cultures within the school. Parents and pupils talked positively about this.

Learning Assistants were deployed effectively and provided good support in classrooms for children. Teachers across the school used a range of strategies to meet the needs of learners for example through the questions asked and the use of a range of resources. In some classes learning intentions and success criteria were clear and understood by pupils. The school should further develop this and how this links to children routinely setting targets and reflecting on their learning.

The pace of learning and challenge especially in mathematics requires to be a continued focus for the school. In some classes children's learning should have greater differentiation to ensure that able pupils experience appropriate challenge.

The school were delivering two hours of physical education.

## 2.3 *Leadership and direction*

Very strong teamwork across the school was in evidence with all staff committed to collegiality and distributed leadership. Staff readily took on a range of additional roles such as membership of curriculum working parties, running after school clubs or leading initiatives such as the Eco group. These made significant contributions to the ongoing development of the school as well as enriching pupils' learning experiences.

Staff readily and routinely engaged in sharing classroom experiences with one another to share good practice. There is significant scope to build a "critical friend" approach into this to support continued developments in learning and teaching approaches.

The headteacher and depute headteacher provided supportive and effective leadership for the school community. They, in consultation with staff, had identified a number of areas for improvement and had made significant progress with these areas.

### **3 Conclusion**

With support from the education authority, St Joseph's RC Primary School provided a good standard of education for its pupils. The school had made very good progress since the inspection and had made improvements in light of the inspection findings. 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 March 2011 HMIE report.

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