

STENHOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL

FOLLOW THROUGH REPORT

1. The inspection

HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) published a report on the quality of education in Stenhouse 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.

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

There was a calm, purposeful and supportive atmosphere within the school. In almost all classes there was a strong focus on skills for learning as well as appropriate focus on developing pupil knowledge and understanding. Staff were supported very effectively in this through the range of planning documentation. These plans reflected the Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes. Topics have been updated in light of reviewing these with respect to the principles of curriculum design. There are opportunities for the development of health and wellbeing, numeracy and literacy across learning within Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL) and contextual projects. These plans provide a secure framework for learning with opportunity to adapt these plans to meet the needs and interests of learners.

Successful learning is given a high profile through attractive and informative displays in corridors and classrooms. Each class produces a Big Book to display the wide variety of learning undertaken. Children talked confidently about their targets. They were aware of the need for targets to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed (SMART). They described different strategies that were used for self and peer assessment and how these had to be linked to the success criteria for their learning.

The pupils were confident and participated energetically in the life of the school and the wider community. Pupils spoke positively about the range of opportunities that were available to them. For example clubs for brass, choir, photography, cycling and gymnastics. The school tracked pupil involvement in activities which supported their wider development

with positive intervention taking place to seek out appropriate opportunities within the school or wider community.

2.2 *Meeting pupils' learning needs*

In most classes tasks and activities provide appropriate challenge and pace in learning for pupils. In all classes visited, teachers shared learning intentions. Lessons were structured to allow a balance of teacher input with time for pupil discussion and independent learning. This should build on current practice in differentiating learning to provide further challenge for the most able learners.

Stenhouse places a high priority on support for learning with investment of significant additional funding. Some of this is targeted to reading tuition approaches and to children with identified areas of development in mathematics. Early indications were that an individualised mathematics programme, currently being piloted in P5, was motivating learners both in school and at home. The Additional Support for Learning (ASL) policy clearly defines roles and responsibilities, partnership arrangements and provides guidance on procedures for supporting pupils with specific needs. Pupils from the language and communication class are effectively included in mainstream classes where appropriate. There were effective transition arrangements in place for children from the language and communication class. This was also the case for transition from Nursery to P1. Learning assistants were highly successful in supporting the learning of individuals and groups.

The school works very well in partnership with parents / carers and agencies to ensure appropriate support is in place for individual learners. Staff knew pupils extremely well and were aware of the needs of individual learners with pathways of support identified for individual pupils.

Children used a 'special jotter' three times a year in which all learning for a week was recorded. Staff had regular discussion time with children to identify strengths and next steps in learning. These discussions, and the sharing of the learning jotters with parents, provided a very strong focus on strategies for increasing attainment. Parents / carers talked positively about the range of opportunities they had to be involved in their children's learning and the life of the school. For example open days where parents / carers could join in the classroom learning and assemblies where children were being recognised for their successes. The school had made significant efforts to engage further with the parent community in the last two years. Parents and carers found staff approachable and responsive. They appreciated the involvement and efforts of staff and the wider contributions they made to the life of the school.

The school was delivering two hours of physical education (PE). Staff had focused on PE moderation and were developing their confidence and expertise through observation of the PE specialist. This supported the tracking of individual learners in PE. Individual learners are also tracked through the music outcomes and experiences.

2.3 *Leadership and direction*

The headteacher provided strong effective leadership for the school. There were highly effective systems for supporting new members of staff. An acting depute headteacher and the headteacher supported staff in outlining the curriculum planning and key school policies as part of the induction process. New members of staff particularly appreciated the levels of support provided and spoke positively of the approachability and responsiveness of the senior management team. This approach developed a whole school culture of aiming to achieve the best for all learners. Self evaluation was embedded as part of the school, through the quality assurance calendar. This was leading to improvements in learner's experiences.

All staff were highly committed to the school. They provided an extensive range of opportunities for pupils to have enrichment in learning. For example pupils from P7 are Gaelic Tour Guides at Edinburgh Castle. Staff had many opportunities to develop their own leadership skills through collaborative work and the leading of school initiatives. For example a working group had made a very good start in updating the assessment approaches within the school. This should continue with consideration of how the assessment and reporting should develop in light of National and local authority advice.

The school was effectively developing leadership opportunities for pupils. The pupil council was active and they were clear about their role as class representative. They talked enthusiastically about their involvement in global citizenship through the links with Malawi and how the eco group were working closely with outdoor learning group.

3 Conclusion

With support from the education authority, Stenhouse Primary School provided a very 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 teamwork in the school provided a very 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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