

1 THE INSPECTION

HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) published a report on the quality of education in Craigmount High School in March 2009. Subsequently the school with support from the education authority amended the school improvement plan to take 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

Young people were well behaved, enthusiastic and ready to learn. Relationships between staff and learners were positive and in almost all lessons

young people engaged well in their learning. Young people felt safe, and believed that they were treated with equality, fairness and respect.

Learners were very positive about the range of opportunities available which allowed them to take part in activities which promoted wider achievement. These included an extensive range of sporting and cultural teams and clubs, music and drama activities, school trips and residential experiences. The school actively encouraged participation in these opportunities and continued to extend the scope of these activities to develop the skills and confidence of their young people. Learners described clearly how the school celebrated their achievement and the school is further developing systems to track this.

By the end of S2 most pupils were continuing to attain or exceed appropriate levels in reading, writing and mathematics. At S4 to S6, results in national examinations have been consistently above or well above national averages. The school had recognised the need to sustain, and where appropriate improve the school's overall attainment and had put in place a number of strategies including focused, supported target setting for all S4 to S6 students. Almost all young people leave school to continue their education or to go into training or employment.

The senior management team (SMT) had

successfully involved all staff, young people and parents in planning a wide range of positive steps to developing the curriculum in line with Curriculum for Excellence. All S1 courses have undergone changes designed to reflect national guidance and make the S1 experience more stimulating, challenging, relevant and enjoyable. Teachers were also engaged in planning and delivering a number of interdisciplinary learning opportunities including the Scotland Project which provided a relevant context for learning. Plans were in place to ensure all young people received two hours per week of good quality physical education (PE).

2.2 Meeting pupils' learning needs

In almost all lessons, learning tasks and activities are well matched to the needs of young people and the pace of learning was appropriate. Young people worked confidently both individually and in groups and were increasingly involved in discussions about the purpose of their learning and what they needed to do to improve.

Teachers knew the barriers to learning faced by young people and took appropriate steps to address these. Pupil support and support for learning staff made a valued and effective contribution to supporting young people.

Young people with additional support needs were involved in developing and reviewing their educational plans and were clear about their learning targets. More effective sharing of the needs of young people including information and strategies on individualised education plans (IEPs) and additional support

plans (ASPs) ensured all staff were able to meet the individual learning needs of young people.

The SMT had ensured that staff had had a number of opportunities to attend courses linked to improving learning and teaching. Sharing classroom experience and the introduction of learning rounds allowed teachers increased opportunities to work together and share best classroom practice. Staff spoke positively of the usefulness of these activities.

The school had developed improved approaches to monitoring learning and teaching across the school. For example, staff were getting helpful feedback from young people about their learning and acting on it. Almost all staff take on responsibility for evaluating aspects of their own work, their department and the school using a wide range of approaches. These approaches have informed and led to important improvements in learning and teaching.

The school had increased the range of courses and opportunities to ensure that the needs and aspirations of all young people were addressed. The introduction of further national qualifications at Access 3 level and Intermediate 1 level, the provision of curricular programmes such as the Jobs, Education and Training (JET) initiative, a number of vocational college courses and the introduction of programmes delivered in conjunction with the Royal Zoological Society and the National Trust had increased the choices available to students.

2.3 Leadership and direction

The headteacher (HT) and SMT had successfully involved all staff, young people and parents in developing, sharing and implementing a clear sense of direction for the school. This had included a vision statement as well as an updated set of values and aims for the school which focused on improving learning opportunities.

The strong leadership and teamwork of the SMT had helped to improve the way staff met the learning needs and learning experiences of young people. They had continued to develop the very positive working atmosphere in the school.

There was a growing culture of developing leadership capacity at all levels. The school's senior managers had successfully engaged with the principal teachers to increase their ownership of the school improvement priorities and the self-evaluation of the work of the school. This had had a significantly positive impact on the consistency of the learners' experiences across the school.

A range of opportunities was provided for young people to take on leadership responsibilities at different stages in their school life and some of these, for example the sports leadership award, led to opportunities for accreditation. Commendably, senior students organised a very successful range of

school activities and provided a very good role model for younger students, including the work of Greenmount, the school eco group, which was very effectively led by an S5 student.

The SMT had introduced a range of approaches to gather the views of young people, staff and parents to inform improvements. The staff's commitment to improving the school and their positive contribution to leading developments in many areas, including learning and teaching and the new curriculum, continued to be a particular strength of the school.

3 CONCLUSION

With support from the education authority, Craigmount High School provided a very good standard of education for its pupils. The school had progressed very well since the inspection and had made the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. The current improvement plan had had a positive impact on the work of the school. 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 2009 HMIE report.

David Leslie
Quality Improvement Officer
February 2011

CRAIGMOUNT HIGH SCHOOL

Follow through report on the HMIE inspection

FEBRUARY 2011