

GORGIE MILLS SCHOOL

Follow through report on the HMIE inspection

FEBRUARY 2011

1 THE INSPECTION

HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) published a report on the quality of education in Gorgie Mills 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 enjoyed being at school, were friendly and behaved well in the majority of lessons. They felt

safe and cared for and were treated with equality, fairness and respect. There was a very positive relationship between staff and pupils. Young people enjoyed learning and were proud of their school.

The school had ensured there were increased opportunities for young people to gain certificates for their work and were successful in a wider range of national qualifications across all subjects. The school had developed their approach to individual planning for young people to ensure more appropriate long and short term targets. Young people were successful in achieving their targets and the school had identified how to further develop target setting in literacy and numeracy.

The school offered a wide range of after-school clubs and activities including football, rugby, arts and crafts and street dancing. A significant number of young people attended these clubs which enabled them to develop important skills, gain confidence and achieve success. In addition the school had offered a wide range of activities on identified days during the summer holiday.

Young people's success and achievements continued to be celebrated in a number of ways including assemblies, certificates and

rewards. The certificates and rewards were well received by young people and by their parents and motivated the young people to set their own goals and to achieve them. Staff now have higher expectations of what young people can achieve and of the quality of young people's work.

The school had restructured the timetable so that young people had a wider choice of subjects to study and moved around the school less frequently. All young people's learning benefited from projects involving different subjects. They were involved in the planning of these projects and their views were sought on how they might learn better. The school now made effective use of the well-equipped learning spaces.

The school had taken a number of positive steps towards implementing the national curriculum, *Curriculum for Excellence* and most teachers were now beginning to plan learning linked to the new experiences and outcomes. The school had introduced courses to better prepare young people with the skills needed for life and work. These included certificated courses in Skills for Life, Social and Vocational Skills and Princes Trust XL. The school is now well placed to further develop and streamline teachers' planning for learning linked to *Curriculum for Excellence*.

2.2 Meeting pupils' learning needs

All staff were trained in approaches to managing young people's behaviour to help them resolve their difficulties. Staff

and young people continued to use these approaches effectively and this was a positive feature of the school.

All young people now benefited from a range of opportunities to work together on tasks and activities. They were more actively involved in their learning and most engaged enthusiastically with their work in classes. Young people were developing skills to enable them to plan their work together and to work cooperatively with each other. Almost all teachers shared the purposes of the lessons and provided useful feedback to young people on how to improve their work.

Young people were confident that they could ask for help when they required it. They felt that the support they received helped them to make appropriate choices and to become more independent in their learning. The school had continued to work effectively with partner services and agencies to further develop approaches to support learning. Attendance had increased and a range of approaches was in place, and had been identified, to further support learners coming regularly to school.

Learning assistants made a very positive contribution to young people's learning. Working closely with teachers they helped them to remain on task and stay in class. Behaviour assistants worked very effectively with class teams and senior managers to support young people to manage their behaviour. Young people who were not in class were supported using a range of effective approaches to enable them to get

ready for learning. The family support team had continued to provide very effective direct support for young people and their families.

2.3 Leadership and direction

The headteacher had provided outstanding leadership for the school and had been very successful at sharing her vision for the school and engaging staff, pupils and parents in delivering it. She is committed to the young people, the staff and parents.

The deputy headteacher had built positive working relationships with staff, pupils and parents and provided the headteacher with very good support. The strong leadership and teamwork of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher had helped to improve the way staff met the learning needs and learning experiences of young people. They had continued to develop the positive working atmosphere in the school.

The senior managers had worked with all groups of staff to review their roles and responsibilities. Staff were now clearer about their roles and this had further improved the good teamwork and communication across the school.

Young people were given opportunities to contribute to the life of the school, including an active pupil council, and felt they were consulted on decisions

that affected them. They demonstrated loyalty to their school.

Partnerships with parents had continued to develop and communication between the school and home was very good. Parents were very well supported to work with the school and their child to improve behaviour and learning.

3 CONCLUSION

With support from the education authority, Gorgie Mills School provided a 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

