



Improving the odds Improving life chances

Summary of HMIE report key findings

Perth and Kinross Education Services

July 2008



**PERTH &
KINROSS
COUNCIL**

Securing the future... • *Improving services* • *Enhancing quality of life* • *Making the best use of public resources*



Key questions



- Why is it that some schools are more successful than others in improving achievement in literacy and numeracy for those pupils who have barriers to their learning?
- What is it that makes the difference for the lowest achieving 20% of pupils?

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What aspects of teaching make a difference for pupils?



- The quality of relationships between teachers and pupils, in particular the mutual respect and trust fostered in schools.
- Consistently high expectations, encouraging pupils to "*be all they can be*".
- Well managed opportunities for pupils to work and learn collaboratively.



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How do teachers engage pupils effectively in their learning?

- By providing them with a variety of stimulating activities relevant to real life.
- Through actively involving them in learning.
- By giving them personal responsibility for thinking things through and by taking part.
- By giving pupils opportunities to make and act on personal choices.





How does the school develop pupils' positive attitudes to learning and motivate them?



- Through practices which support and promote the belief that people and education matter.
- By creating a climate of ambition and high aspirations for all.
- In their commitment to boosting self-esteem and developing a 'can do' attitude in all pupils.
- By praising and celebrating achievement across a wide range of activities.

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How does leadership for learning impact on achievement?



Effective leaders:

- Develop and share a clear vision of how to improve the quality of pupils' learning experiences and the teaching process.
- Strengthen teamwork by building on effective practice and successful collaborations, including partnerships across the curriculum, with other schools and agencies and with parents.
- Show commitment to lifelong learning and professional development.
- Use self-evaluation for improvement judiciously to confirm strengths and identify and prioritise areas for development.



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How does valuing and empowering staff, pupils and parents improve literacy and numeracy?



- Schools share information and expertise across the sectors to support continuity in learning.
- Teachers help pupils to see the links between application, commitment and success.
- Senior managers trust teachers' individual and collective professionalism and develop a sense of accountability.
- Schools inform parents about their children's education and involve them directly wherever possible.
- Staff maintain strong links with relevant external agencies to develop and coordinate appropriate support to meet pupils' needs.



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What matters most?



- Of the features identified by pupils, teachers and senior managers as the key to improving the odds and improving life chances, the most important was the quality of the relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school or department. The characteristics of high quality relationships were:
 - *mutual respect and trust*
 - *high expectations and aspirations*
 - *self-belief*
 - *a shared 'can do' attitude.*

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