



Education & Children's Services

HMI – Follow Through Procedures Progress Report to Parents

1 Introduction:

The Community School of Auchterarder was inspected in April 2012. The report on the inspection by her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMI) was published in May 2012.

In May 2013, a team of officers from Education Scotland and Perth and Kinross Council's Education Services visited the school to ascertain progress made in each of the areas. The visit involved staff, pupil and parent focus group meetings and classroom observations as well as the review of various documentation provided by the senior leadership team.

The school, with support from the Local Authority, prepared a full plan for improvement which has had a positive impact on a wide range of aspects within the school.

Both headteacher and staff have worked co-operatively with authority staff to take forward the areas identified in the original HMIe report as requiring development and the authority endorses the information within this report.

Further information about the broader achievements of the school is contained in the school's annual Standards & Quality report published in September.

2 Areas for Improvement – Evaluation of Progress:

The initial inspection report published in May 2012 identified 3 main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made to date in addressing each of the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and other stakeholders.

Area for improvement 1

Increase staff's understanding of Curriculum for Excellence to ensure consistently high quality teaching, learning and assessment.

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- Staff have significantly increased their knowledge of Curriculum for Excellence and plan learning that encourages pupils to use their skills and knowledge in a range of different contexts including outdoor learning, wider achievement and interdisciplinary approaches.

- Teachers have worked together to identify and produce resources for Literacy, Numeracy and Health & Wellbeing which will be used by all staff to ensure consistent approaches across the school.
- Primary and Secondary staff have developed effective links across levels and learning to enhance transition e.g. Social Subjects in Primary and CDT in Nursery.
- Secondary school staff provide specialist input to music, science and modern languages in the Primary department which are having a positive impact on pupil interest and understanding.
- Through learning logs, Glow blogs, e-portfolios and profiles, learners are increasingly aware of the key skills and are actively engaging with staff and parents to discuss next steps in learning and setting future targets.
- Information evenings have been organised to keep parents/carers better informed of the latest developments and innovations in the curriculum. There has been a good reception towards the Headteacher's presentations and greater confidence about the direction of travel.

Continued progress required

- The school needs to continue to embed the development work undertaken in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing throughout the next session.
- Staff need to continue to develop approaches to assessment and tracking to ensure continuity, progression and challenge for all pupils.

Area for improvement 2

Ensure self-evaluation and improvement planning lead to improved outcomes for children and young people.

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- Staff are now more fully involved in evaluating their work and identifying areas for improvement. This is impacting positively on pupils as evidenced by the improving approaches to learning and teaching.
- A cross-sector group of teachers have taken part in "Learning Rounds" and have reported a positive experience that has led to improvements in classroom practice because it has enabled staff to gain an insight into the work of colleagues across the sectors and their approaches to and expectations of learners.
- All members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have been actively involved in on going school self-evaluation including class visits, staff discussions,

surveys, consultation with parents & pupils, and as a result have a very strong awareness of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

- 92% of staff responded positively when asked if they were involved in whole-school self-evaluation & improvement planning.
- Feedback from the pupil survey undertaken in April 2013 shows that, many are commenting positively about the improvements made during the current session.

Continued progress required

- Whilst progress has been made by the SLT in conducting termly improvement meetings with staff to discuss progress, it has yet to be undertaken in a consistent manner across the whole team.
- Further work is required to monitor the impact of working groups with a view to having fewer groups with a strong improvement focus based on self-evaluation.

Area for improvement 3

Improve leadership of teamwork and school improvement within and across the nursery, primary and secondary stages.

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- The recently appointed Headteacher has made a significant impact on the ethos of the school overall and staff are committed to planning and implementing strategies for improvement under his leadership.
- The SLT work together well to provide improved leadership across the school with a strong focus on improving relationships, curriculum, learning and teaching and opportunities for achievement.
- All staff have been involved in taking forward the Improvement Plan and evaluating its impact. The increased ownership of school improvement has enhanced the positive sense of teamwork across the school.
- The involvement of partners, parents and pupils in evaluating the work of the school has improved significantly and the results of this are being used to inform both short and long term improvement planning.
- Communication is greatly improved with the introduction of new technologies and the use of social networking which is appreciated by most staff and parents.

Continued progress required

- Continue to improve the day to day communication with pupils and staff to ensure the smooth running of the school.
- All staff and pupils should work together to improve behaviour across the school.

Conclusion

There has been very good progress made in each of the main areas identified for improvement. The Headteacher has made a significant difference to ethos and relationships within the school and staff are more confident about their involvement in the school improvement process. The school has greatly advanced its awareness of Curriculum for Excellence and continues to develop the curriculum both in terms of structure and approaches to learning and teaching and pupils are benefiting as a result. The SLT needs to ensure that it continues to effectively communicate and openly engage with all stakeholders to encourage their involvement in self-evaluation and improvement.

P McAvoy
June 2013

Headteacher: Stuart Clyde