



## Perth and Kinross Council Education and Children's Services

### Extended Learning and Achievement Visit Dunning Primary School 15 & 16 November 2011



## BACKGROUND

To support the school in the process of self-evaluation, a team of three Quality Improvement Officers visited Dunning Primary School on 15 & 16<sup>th</sup> November 2011. The themes for the review were Achievement, Learning and Leadership. These themes were subject to scrutiny through core Quality Indicators from *How good is our school?*

The school's Standards and Quality Report 2010-2011, the School Improvement Plan 2011-2012 and the school's own self evaluation proforma formed the core documentation for scrutiny and discussion during the visit.

During the Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, the team carried out discussions with the management team and other staff, observed learning and teaching in classes, reviewed documentation including children's work and met with groups of children and parents/carers.

The strengths and areas for improvement identified as a result of the self evaluation process are recorded below under the three main themes of Achievement, Learning and Leadership.

## ACHIEVEMENT

### Strengths

- Children's attainment in English and Mathematics continues to be strong with almost all children making good progress with their learning.
- There are very good examples of writing for a range of purposes across the school. The recent introduction of the writing tool 'Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation' (VCOP) has ensured consistent teaching strategies which are impacting positively on learners achievement in writing.
- Children are given many opportunities to achieve at school and within their local community. Achievements are celebrated through assemblies, newsletters, rainbow books, glow blogs, the school's Glow group, end of year reports, standards and quality reports and an award ceremony.
- There are very good opportunities for children to engage in a range of group activities and to take responsibility within the school, for example Pupil Council, Health Promoting Schools and ECO.
- Children regularly work in vertical groupings during the weekly 'Green time' and this has strengthened the feeling of community and the supportive ethos within the school.

- Children have valuable opportunities to represent the school in a wide variety of sporting and cultural events which build confidence and give the children enjoyment and the opportunity for success.
- The school's participation in global citizenship projects with Bangladesh and Brittany has provided very good opportunities for children to develop their awareness and understanding of different cultures.
- Effective transition arrangements from the village playgroup to P1 ensure children are familiar with the school and staff which helps them to settle very well when they join P1.
- Effective pastoral transition arrangements are in place for children moving from P7 into S1. P7 pupils have the opportunity to build relationships with the future S1s when they meet for an outdoor week at Nethybridge. This is strengthened through various opportunities to meet throughout the year.
- Children feel safe, protected and highly valued at school and are confident that they are listened to.
- At all stages within the school, children are polite, demonstrate respect for others and interact very well with adults and each other.
- The school has embedded positive approaches to behaviour and inclusion. The Bounce Back programme is well established for both children and staff. The school has taken forward Restorative Approaches and this has had a positive impact on children's behaviour.
- Children are supported in developing skills for life and work by taking part in enterprise projects such as designing and ordering their own school tartan. They are becoming increasingly aware of fair trade issues and current affairs.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Continue to develop and implement effective arrangements for assessing and tracking progress to ensure pace and challenge across the school.
- Continue to develop strategies to record and evidence children's wider achievement and skills development to ensure coherence and progression.

## **LEARNING**

### **Strengths**

- The effective approach to planning interdisciplinary contexts gives children the opportunity to be more involved in planning their own learning.
- The learning climate and teaching approaches support the development of children's skills and attributes encouraging them to be confident, successful and responsible.
- Almost all children listen attentively to explanations and instructions and work well with each other. Most are actively engaged in their learning.
- In the best lessons observed children were given the opportunity to develop their creative and critical thinking skills.

- Glow is used very effectively to support learning both at home and at school. An important start has been made in the upper school in the use of Glow blogs for children's self-evaluation and reflection.
- Overall relationships and interactions between children and staff are positive and respectful.
- The school has developed a very good range of strategies to meet the needs of children who require additional support.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Continue to develop consistency in the use of appropriate learning intentions and coherent success criteria which focus on the learning.
- In all learning situations ensure that tasks and activities meet the needs of all children and provide appropriate pace and challenge consistently across the school.
- Continue to explore opportunities for children to work together across year groups.

## **LEADERSHIP**

### **Strengths**

- The headteacher and the principal teacher work very well together to drive forward the improvement agenda.
- The management of change is effective, and focuses on priorities identified through self-evaluation.
- Collegiate time is utilised very effectively to support the School Improvement Plan and a well planned range of opportunities is provided for staff to engage in high level debate and discussion.
- There is a range of opportunities for parents to become involved in the life of the school.
- The school is very well supported by an active Parent Council and Parent Teacher Association.
- The school committee structure and house system provide very good opportunities for children to take an effective leadership role within the school.
- The school has developed very effective partnerships with the local community, which provides a range of rich opportunities for learners.

### **Areas for development**

- Ensure that the monitoring of learning and teaching already in place consistently results in improved outcomes for children.
- Continue to develop approaches to further engage parents in their children's learning and development.

## **Conclusion**

Dunning Primary is a successful, well-led school where staff work as an effective team and children are confident and respectful. Children feel happy, safe and secure at Dunning and have a high level of involvement in the life of the school.

Overall parents feel positive about their children's educational experience. They appreciate the purpose-built, spacious accommodation which is well organised by staff to provide quality learning experiences for children. Almost all parents have confidence in the school, its leadership and its staff and support the school very well.

The headteacher, staff, children and parents should continue to work together to support future improvements in order to enable all children to develop and achieve their full potential.

The school should now use the information from this report to further enhance the quality service to children and families already in place.

### [HMI Report](#)

Responsible Officer: Kathleen Robertson, Quality Improvement Officer

[Email: kr Robertson@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:kr Robertson@pkc.gov.uk)

Telephone no: 01738 476342