



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



**Extended Learning and Achievement Visit
Murthly Primary School
19, 20 May 2010**

BACKGROUND

To support the school in the process of self-evaluation, a team of two Service Managers (School Improvement) and an Early Years Officer visited Murthly Primary School on 19 and 20 May 2010. 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? Child at the Centre* and *How well are children and young people protected and their needs met?*

The school Standards and Quality Report 2008-2009, the School Improvement Plan 2009-2010 and the school's own self-evaluation pro forma 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 headteacher and other staff, made classroom observations, reviewed documentation including childrens' work and met with groups of children and parents.

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

ACHIEVEMENT

Strengths

- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has remained steady with almost all children in reading and mathematics reaching nationally expected levels and most in writing.
- In the nursery and early years setting, children successfully develop skills across the curriculum.
- Close links to support effective transition have been established within nursery – P1, the local pre-school group and the secondary school.
- Pupils' wider achievements are recognised in a variety of ways, for example notice boards, certificates and home / school communication slips.
- The behaviour of almost all pupils is very good.
- Pupils are happy in school and have a positive educational experience.
- Pupils are involved in a wide range of cultural and sporting activities both within the school and as part of authority events.

- Significant work has been undertaken in the school environment to develop the school grounds to provide opportunities for outdoor learning, for example the nursery garden.

Areas for improvement

- Implement rigorous tracking procedures to accurately identify the progress of each learner, predict future attainment and target support to groups and individuals, to ensure that early gains are sustained across the school.
- Plan for detailed regular discussion to take place between the headteacher and staff with a clear focus on pace and challenge to enable each learner to reach their full potential.
- Review and monitor the implementation of the school improvement plan to ensure a positive impact on attainment for all learners.
- Further develop opportunities for pupils to carry out their role as responsible citizens through leadership opportunities.

LEARNING

Strengths

- In nursery and early years children are becoming actively involved in their own learning and development.
- Pupils are treated fairly and with respect and the recently introduced Bounce Back programme is beginning to improve pupils' self-esteem, particularly at the middle stages.
- ICT is well used to support learning and this was observed as a strength in nursery and early years.
- Interactions between staff and children are positive and almost all pupils are motivated to learn.
- The staff are committed to taking forward Curriculum for Excellence and appropriate links between curriculum areas are beginning to be developed.
- Existing programmes of work provide breadth and progression, and are beginning to be updated in light of CfE.
- Children are becoming more involved in planning their class theme and identifying areas for exploration.
- The school makes use of a wide variety of opportunities to develop children's experiences in a range of contexts including outdoors and links with other schools.
- Pupils feel their views are sought and taken into account.
- All school staff know their children well and support the emotional physical and social needs of the children at all stages by involving outside agencies as appropriate.

Areas for improvement

- Build on the good practice in the nursery and early years in active learning and implement across the school to further enhance learners' experiences through:

- co-operative learning;
- ensuring that tasks and activities are sufficiently challenging to meet the needs of all learners.
- Develop assessment in line with Building the Curriculum 5 including:
 - revisiting the principles of Assessment is for Learning and ensuring that they are fully embedded across the school;
 - undertaking formal assessment of pupils' progress when pupils are ready and have demonstrated sufficient progress.
- Involve children in setting their own targets and taking more responsibility for their own learning. This would include reviewing the use of profiles.
- Continue to develop approaches to planning the curriculum in line with CfE.
- Implement the current ASN legislation and EA policies and procedures.
- Review the process for writing and reviewing IEPs, taking account of the ASL guidance.
- Review the role of the SL teacher and support staff to ensure that there is effective targeted support within classes.

LEADERSHIP

Strengths

- The headteacher and staff are very committed to the school and are keen for pupils to do well.
- Staff are encouraged to take lead roles outside the classroom, for example Health Promotion, Eco development.
- Led by the headteacher, all staff work well as a team. Their approach is collegiate and this ensures a shared commitment.
- There is systematic consultation with parents and pupils through questionnaires.
- The parents sampled during the visit thought highly of the school and felt that the school was held in high regard by the wider community.
- There is a range of opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning, for example
 - active encouragement of parents to be involved in the educational experience of their children through class visits;
 - useful information leaflets.

Areas for improvement

- Develop the role and remit of the new PT as part of an effective senior management team with support from the education authority.
- Ensure that self-evaluation systems and processes are rigorous, based on evidence and lead to the desired change and improvement.

- Ensure that monitoring activities are rigorous and lead to improvements in learning and teaching.
- Continue to develop opportunities to share information with parents with regard to the progress of children and the role they can play in their children's learning.

Conclusion

Murthly Primary is a school where staff are committed to the pupils and work well together. The group of parents sampled during the visit were very supportive of the school and are happy with their children's educational experience.

The headteacher, staff and parents should continue to work together to further develop the good work already established and support future improvements in order to enable every child to develop and achieve their full potential.

The school should now use the information from this report to develop the school improvement plan for next session.