



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



**Extended Learning and Achievement Visit
Abernethy Primary School
15, 17 June 2011**

BACKGROUND

To support the school in the process of self-evaluation, a team of one Service Manager, two Quality Improvement Officers and an Education Additional Support Officer visited Abernethy Primary School on 15 and 17 June 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 2009-2010, the School Improvement Plan 2010-2011 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

- The school is continuing to maintain high standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics with most children making good progress in their learning.
- Attainment in writing was recognised as an area for improvement and good progress has been made with this, with all classes using agreed strategies as part of teaching writing and also using a range of contexts for writing.
- Children's wider achievements are celebrated in a variety of ways, including within classes and at weekly whole school assemblies.
- There are good opportunities for children in P1-7 to engage in a range of group activities which develop the life and ethos of the school and to take responsibility within the school, for example pupil council, eco committee, health committee, P6 playground leaders and Junior Road Safety Officers.
- Children have valuable opportunities to represent the school in a variety of sporting and cultural events which build confidence and give the children enjoyment and the opportunity for success.

- There is good joint working with other schools in the Local Management Group resulting in effective curriculum developments.
- Very effective transition arrangements from pre-school to P1 are in place. These include joint learning opportunities for pre-school and P1 children which are collaboratively planned by staff from both settings. Pre-school children who do not attend the nursery class are also included in this initiative.
- The well established transition procedures from P7 to S1 include a joint primary/secondary curriculum project in French and additional arrangements for children who require an enhanced transition programme.
- Positive inter-agency working effectively supports children and their families.
- Children feel safe, protected and valued at school and are confident that they are listened to.

Areas for improvement

- Further develop children's group activities to link with planned learning.
- Continue to develop the 'Bounce Back' programme to enhance children's health and wellbeing and ensure that this is fully embedded by June 2012.

LEARNING

Strengths

- All lessons were well planned and well structured.
- Most children responded well to each other in co-operative learning situations.
- In all lessons observed the learning intentions were shared with the children. In the best lessons observed, children were involved in determining what the success criteria should be, leading to increased involvement in their learning.
- Across the school cooperative learning impacts positively on the quality of the learners' experiences and all children are well supported in their learning within a variety of activities.

Areas for improvement

- Develop a strategic plan for Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) by December 2011.
- Ensure consistently high quality learning and teaching by:
 - developing effective arrangements for tracking progress, planning and assessment;
 - ensuring that tasks and activities meet the needs of all children and provide appropriate challenge consistently across the school taking account of the seven principles for curriculum design;
 - developing the consistent use of appropriate learning intentions and success criteria;

- continuing to develop moderation approaches using a range of evidence across learning;
- ensuring that the monitoring of learning and teaching already in place consistently results in improved outcomes for children.

LEADERSHIP

Strengths

- The headteacher is developing a very clear vision for the school and this is shared with all stakeholders.
- The Senior Management Team (SMT) work well together to drive forward the improvement agenda.
- The SMT demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of staff and pupils, their strengths and areas for development.
- Collegiate time is utilised effectively to support the School Improvement Plan and a well planned range of opportunities is provided for staff to engage in debate and discussion.
- The views of staff, parents and children are regularly sought about the quality of the work of the school and areas for further development identified.
- Parents have confidence in the school, its leadership and its staff and they appreciate the approachability of the staff.

Areas for development

- Ensure that priorities for improvement identified through self-evaluation impact effectively on all stages consistently across the school.
- All staff now need to respond to a brisk paced, well planned programme of change to bring about demonstrable improvements.
- Continue to develop team working and leadership opportunities for all staff and children.
- Continue to look for ways to promote the involvement of support staff and ensure they have a clear understanding of their role.

Conclusion

Abernethy Primary School is a well-led school where children are successful in their learning. Parents feel positive about their children's educational experience and welcome the planned physical improvements that will further enhance the quality of education already provided by Abernethy Primary School.

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

This should include ensuring that developments impact consistently across all stages of the school to ensure a positive outcome for all learners.

The school should now use the information from this report to develop the School Improvement Plan for session 2011-2012.

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