

# Bushes Primary School

March 2007

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a learning   
renfrewshire 





# Follow-through report to the HMIE inspection of Bushes Primary School, Paisley

## A Report by Renfrewshire Council: Education and Leisure Services

### March 2007

## 1 The inspection

In June 2005, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on standards and quality in Bushes Primary School following their earlier inspection in March 2005. Working with the education authority the school prepared and made public an action plan in November 2005 indicating how it would address the main points for action identified in the original HMIE inspection

report. The education authority supported the school in addressing the points for action and monitoring the progress made. HMIE asked the education authority to provide a progress report for parents and carers on the progress identified. This report, prepared by the education authority, evaluates the progress made in relation to the action plan.

## 2 Continuous improvement

In the period since the publication of the report there had been changes in the school's senior management team. An acting deputy head teacher had been appointed on a long-term basis and an acting principal teacher had also been appointed. Consequently, remits of senior managers had been reviewed and reallocated. The head teacher, with good support from her senior management team, had demonstrated continuing commitment to improvement and had engaged effectively with the staff in addressing the key points for action.

The staff's expectation of pupil attainment had been raised and this had resulted in an overall improvement in pupils' attainment in reading, writing and maths. Staff had worked together to further enhance aspects of the school's work and this had resulted in the adoption of the Council's language and maths planners. Approaches to learning had been improved through the development of Assessment is for Learning (AifL), Critical Skills and Motivated Schools programmes. The review and revision of key policies and the purchase and implementation of new language and maths resources for P1 to P7 had also made a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Effective steps had been taken to further develop the tracking of pupil progress in attainment and a more rigorous approach to monitoring the timing of national assessments had been implemented.

A schedule of meetings had been established to give class teachers and deputy head teachers the opportunity to discuss forward plans and pupil progress. Feedback from staff had indicated that all had found these meetings to be effective and beneficial. These measures had resulted in a more challenging and appropriate pace of work for all pupils.

Across the school, pupils' attainment levels in maths, reading and writing had improved. In particular, very good progress had been made in writing with the percentage of pupils achieving Level A by the end of P2, and Level C by the end of P5 improving significantly.

The school had successfully reviewed its curriculum provision. More effective progression and continuity in English language and maths as well as a more appropriate balance of time in drama, physical education and modern languages was now evident in teachers' forward plans.

Staff had continued to demonstrate commitment to implementing AifL strategies throughout the school. In addition, the management team had engaged the services of an educational consultant to work with staff, parents and pupils on the theme of motivation. This initiative had been well received by staff and had impacted positively upon their day-to-day work in the school. The management team had also successfully bid for additional

finances to support their work in assisting parents to support their children in reading and writing. Staff had agreed to work together in their collegiate time to develop topics in environmental studies and personal and social development in line with guidance from a Curriculum for Excellence.

These newly developed units will be ready for use from August 2007.

The measures undertaken by the school have all contributed to its capacity for promoting a culture of continuous improvement.

### 3 Progress towards the main points for action

The initial inspection report published in June 2005 identified three main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made in addressing each of the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and others associated with the school.

#### 3.1 The school should take account of the need to continue to raise attainment.

The school had made very good progress in this main point of action.

The senior management team had taken a number of steps to ensure that staff's expectation of pupil attainment in maths, reading and writing were raised. In reviewing its assessment policy the school had included more effective use of national assessment data and gender performance information. In addition, the school had begun to make use of local authority performance data and, in terms of benchmarking, was now looking at the performance of schools with similar characteristics. The national testing programme had been reviewed with increased scrutiny of the length of time taken between national assessments. This had impacted positively on learning and teaching and had resulted in a more appropriate pace of learning for all pupils.

More rigorous tracking and targeting of pupils for additional support from staff had impacted positively on pupil's attainment. This had included an after school parents' workshop on writing and a follow-up series of writing workshops for selected pupils at P5.

Attainment levels had risen overall in writing, reading and maths. Specifically, the percentage of pupils attaining level A in writing at P2

had improved noticeably. At P5, all targeted pupils achieved level C in writing. At P7, pupils' performance in reading, writing and maths had shown improvement. The improvement in maths had been particularly notable.

The school had introduced further measures to improve pupil attainment and these included the purchase and implementation of a new phonics programme, spelling, comprehension, grammar and writing resources. In addition, staff had received appropriate training in the use and delivery of both the new phonics programme and writing materials.

Additional pupil resources had also been purchased to support differentiation in reading and maths. Setting for maths had been reviewed and extended to include P3 and P4 pupils. Staff had made increased use of group work in both language and maths.

The school's approach to problem solving had been reviewed with strategies identified for each stage. A member of staff was now responsible for developing and delivering problem solving activities from P3 to P7.

The school had successfully reviewed its policies on forward planning, differentiation, mathematics, writing, monitoring of pupils' learning experiences and learning and teaching. These revised policies had provided staff with increased support and guidance and had resulted in a more consistent approach to practice across the school.

Work had also been undertaken in reviewing pupil's individual educational plans. A revised planner had been produced which included both long and short-term targets. Staff had

set appropriate and measurable targets for children. In addition, the school had created, in line with current legislation, pupil support plans for a significant number of children.

### **3.2 Review the breadth and balance of the curriculum and ensure appropriate continuity and progression in pupils learning.**

The head teacher and staff had made good progress in this main point for action.

The head teacher and her senior management team had reviewed the provision of modern languages in the upper school with particular regard to the overall time allocated to the delivery of German. Evidence from teachers' forward plans indicated that the recommended teaching time was now given to teaching modern languages at the P5 – P7 stages. In addition, alterations to the timing of the school day ensured that pupils now received a minimum of two hours of physical education each week. A member of staff was responsible for delivering and developing the physical education programme for P2 to P7.

A review of planning had been undertaken to ensure that there was appropriate breadth and balance, continuity and progression in the maths and language curriculum. This had resulted in Renfrewshire council's planners being used in P1 – P7 for language and maths. Feedback from staff had indicated satisfaction with the maths planner. Staff had successfully matched the recently purchased language resources to Renfrewshire Council's language planner.

The head teacher and senior managers had implemented more rigorous procedures for monitoring the breadth and balance of the curriculum. These measures had included discussion at progress meetings between the deputy head teacher and class teachers, the continuation of class visits, appropriate timetabling and revised forward planning. This had led to the allocation of more appropriate time allocations in physical education, drama and modern languages.

### **3.3 Improve the school's planning and assessment procedures to ensure that tasks and activities offer appropriate challenge to all pupils.**

Very good progress had been made in this point for action. A more rigorous process for monitoring the quality of learning and teaching had been established. This had been achieved by the revision of the monitoring policy and the continued use of the annual monitoring calendar.

The introduction of regular progress meetings between SMT and staff had made a positive impact. These meetings were established to provide class teachers and senior managers with the opportunity to reflect on the progress made by pupils. Feedback from staff indicated that these meetings had been welcomed.

The school was committed to further developing the AifL programme. Further investment had been made in staff development and additional resources. AifL strategies had been identified, agreed and implemented. The school's learning and teaching policy had been revised to include Assessment for Learning, Critical Skills and guidance from A Curriculum for Excellence. These measures had provided staff with clearer guidance thus ensuring a more consistent approach to learning and teaching across the school.

A number of staff had undertaken training in both Critical Skills and Joining the Learning. In addition, staff had worked together developing the theme of the Motivated School. Staff were currently reviewing school topics in relationship to the four capacities identified in A Curriculum for Excellence.

Very good progress had been made in meeting the needs of pupils. More use of appropriate and challenging tasks and materials had enabled better differentiation in the teaching of maths and language. Approaches to class organisation, such as the use of setting in maths at P3 and P4 and, the implementation of improved planning formats had also contributed to ensuring that needs were met and that pupils were suitably challenged.



## 4 Conclusion

The school had made good and in some cases very good progress in responding to the main points for action contained in the original HMIe report. The head teacher and her staff had responded positively to the main points for action contained in the original inspection report and in so doing had made considerable improvements in key areas of the school's work.

A more systematic approach had been established to monitor learning and teaching. Overall, performance in attainment had improved in

reading, writing and maths. Teamwork among staff continued to be a strength and contributed to successful progress being made in taking the school forward. The school had made very good progress in addressing the points for action and was well placed to continue to improve standards even further.

Gordon Morton  
Senior Adviser (Performance Management)  
March 2007



## How can you contact us?

Copies of this report have been sent to the head teacher and school staff, the school board, the Director of Education and Leisure Services, and local councillors. Subject to availability, further copies may be obtained free of charge from the address below or by telephoning **0141 842 5882**. Copies are also available on our web site: [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk).

Should you wish to comment on or make a complaint about any aspect of this report, you should write in the first instance to John Rooney, Director of Education and Leisure Services at:

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