

# St James's Primary School

22 December 2005

building   
a learning   
renfrewshire







# Follow-through report on HMle inspection of St James's Primary School, Paisley

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

22 December 2005

### 1 The inspection

In August 2003 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMle) published a report on standards and quality in St James's Primary School, Paisley following their earlier inspection in May 2003. Working with the school, the education authority prepared and made public an action plan in November 2003, indicating how they would address the main points for action identified in the original HMle inspection report. The local authority had supported the school in addressing the points for action and in monitoring the progress made. HMle asked the authority to provide a progress report for parents and carers on the progress identified. This report, prepared by the authority, reflects our evaluation of the progress made in relation to the action plan.

### 2 Continuous improvement

Since the inspection report was published in August 2003, the school had demonstrated its capacity to make further improvements in key aspects of its provision.

The head teacher had involved staff fully in responding to the recommendations contained within the original inspection report. Officers from the education authority provided valuable support to the school in assisting with planning and implementation of the action plan. The head teacher and her staff had worked hard to develop collaborative approaches to planning and assessment of pupils' progress in writing. They had also successfully identified common strategies to further improve the pace of learning and challenge for more able pupils.

The strong leadership of the head teacher, the commitment of staff with the effective support of the education authority demonstrated that the school was well placed to continue to improve the effectiveness of its work in ensuring that all pupils were experiencing high quality education. The initial inspection report published in August 2002 identified four main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made with each of the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and others involved with the school.

## 3 Progress towards the main points for action

The initial inspection report published in August 2003 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 other stakeholders.

### 3.1 The school should develop further the programme for writing in English language to ensure an appropriate level of challenge for all pupils and to raise attainment.

The school had made very good progress in taking forward this point for action.

Staff had placed an appropriate focus on sharing current good practice in approaches to learning and teaching writing skills. This had helped to ensure greater consistency in practice across the school.

Teachers participated in helpful staff development activities and now had a clearer understanding of the range of skills pupils required to be successful writers.

The school had purchased a variety of new resources. These resources had supported the effective introduction of the improved writing programme. Consequently, pupils had gained confidence in planning their writing. They were able to effectively discuss their ideas with the teacher and with each other. Teachers had successfully improved pupils' skills in writing for a variety of purposes. Pupils were now involved in evaluating their own pieces of writing. They understood the importance of redrafting to further improve the quality of their work. Teachers had improved their approaches to monitoring and were now more confident in setting suitably challenging learning targets for pupils. The quality of writing had improved due to increased challenge and expectation. Staff had also agreed ways of recognising and celebrating pupils' writing achievements.

At almost all stages there were clear signs of improved attainment in writing. At the time of the inspection there had been no steady improvement in writing for several years with almost all pupils not achieving national standards. Due to the improved programme for writing most pupils at all stages were now achieving national standards. At some stages a majority of pupils were exceeding national targets. In primary 3 a number of pupils were achieving level B. In Primary 7 a number of pupils were working towards Level E.



### **3.2 Teachers should improve the pace of learning and challenge for more able pupils.**

The school had made very good progress in taking forward this point for action.

The school had taken a number of effective steps to improve the pace and challenge for more able pupils. Staff had participated in a series of meetings to identify successful teaching approaches. Following consultation with staff it had been decided to organise pupils into working groups in English language and mathematics based on their previous attainment. This had provided a more suitable learning environment with the pace of learning improving for all pupils.

The school had organised a programme of meetings involving the head teacher, network support teacher and class teachers. These teams planned the best strategies to meet the needs of individual pupils, particularly the more able. The principal teacher was deployed to provide additional support in classes as required. A classroom assistant had also been deployed in Primary 1 to support listening and talking activities with more able pupils. The head teacher had further improved approaches to tracking individual pupils' progress. Pupils' learning plans were discussed at planning feedback sessions with the respective class teachers. There was a clear focus on tracking the pace of pupils' progress. More rigorous approaches to independent learning had been introduced in Primary 7. As a result of these arrangements attainment was improving. More able pupils were working on level E mathematics and were being encouraged to take on responsibility for planning the development of their own learning.

### **3.3 The school should improve the quality of written reports to parents as indicated in the report.**

The school had made good progress in taking forward this point for action.

The head teacher and staff had reviewed the content and style of reports to parents. In preparing reports, staff now ensured that comments provided parents with more specific and personalised information on their children's progress in English language and mathematics. Teachers had improved their use of assessment information to identify and report more clearly on pupils' next steps in these curricular areas. Similar reporting procedures will be extended into other areas of the curriculum in session 2005/2006.



## 4 Conclusion

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

The staff, working effectively as a team, had enabled the school to continue to develop and enhance the very positive educational experience for all pupils.

The school has made very good progress and is well placed to build upon these key improvements and to continue to raise standards even further.

Gordon Morton  
Senior Adviser (Performance Management)  
22 December 2005



## 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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