

Trinity High School

18 May 2006

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renfrewshire





Follow-through report to the HMIe inspection of Trinity High School, Renfrew

A Report by Renfrewshire Council: Education and Leisure Services

18 May 2006

1 The inspection

In May 2004 HMIe published a report on standards and quality in Trinity High School following its inspection in February 2004. Working with the school, the education authority prepared and made public an action plan in October 2004, indicating how it would address the main points for action identified in the original HMIe report. The local authority supported the school in addressing the points for action and in monitoring the progress made. HMIe asked the authority to provide a progress report for parents and carers on the progress in implementing the action plan. This report, prepared by the authority, reflects its evaluation of the progress made in relation to the action plan.

2 Continuous improvement

Since the inspection report published in May 2004, the school has demonstrated its capacity to make improvements in key aspects of its provision. During this period the head teacher and his staff had demonstrated a high degree of professionalism and commitment in addressing the main points for action. They had succeeded in further embedding a culture of continuous improvement in the school.

With the very effective support of the senior management team, all staff had taken on responsibility for developing and implementing new initiatives. As a result, the school had taken significant steps to improve its overall effectiveness. Whole school approaches to these developments had led to a common understanding of meeting children's needs, improvements in the quality of self-evaluation and the use of assessment to ensure that pupils make better progress in their learning. The education authority had provided good support in assisting the school to take forward the planned improvements to the school's accommodation.

Performance at S1/S2

By the end of S2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics had shown a significant improvement during the period 2003-2004. However, these improvements had not been sustained in 2005.

Performance at S3/S4

By the end of S4, the percentage of pupils gaining five or more Standard Grade awards at levels 3, 4 and 5 had dropped overall between 2003 and 2005, although there had been a recovery in the percentage of pupils gaining five or more Standard Grade awards at level 4 in 2005.

Performance at S5/S6

By the end of S5, the percentage of pupils gaining three or more and five or more Highers at grades A-C (level 6) had improved over the period 2003 to 2005.

Attainment by the end of S6 was variable over the period 2003 to 2005, particularly for one, three and five or more highers at grades A-C. However the percentage of pupils gaining one or more and five or more highers at grades A-C had shown an improvement from 2004 to 2005.

Although the school's performance compares very favourably to schools with similar characteristics, it needed to continue to work to ensure that the highest possible levels of attainment were achieved.

The initial inspection report published in May 2004 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

3.1 The school and the education authority should take account of the need to take forward the planned improvements to the school's accommodation.

The school and the education authority had made good progress in addressing this main point for action.

The school had undergone a major refurbishment, as part of the authority's school estate strategy, during the school session 2005-06. Through extensive consultation with staff, pupils and parents the proposed changes to the accommodation in Trinity High School were reviewed and agreed. Health and safety, as well as learning and teaching issues had been considered and included in the refurbishment plan. The first relocation of classes had successfully taken place. Ongoing discussions between the head teacher, the authority and the construction company had ensured that improvements to the work programme had been made where appropriate.

Management practices in relation to the supervision of pupil toilet areas had been reviewed. This had involved consultation with the pupil council and with individual year groups. A staff rota had been established and implemented. Senior pupils had been given the opportunity to become more involved in this aspect of school life. This had been successful and had resulted in the toilet areas being used appropriately.

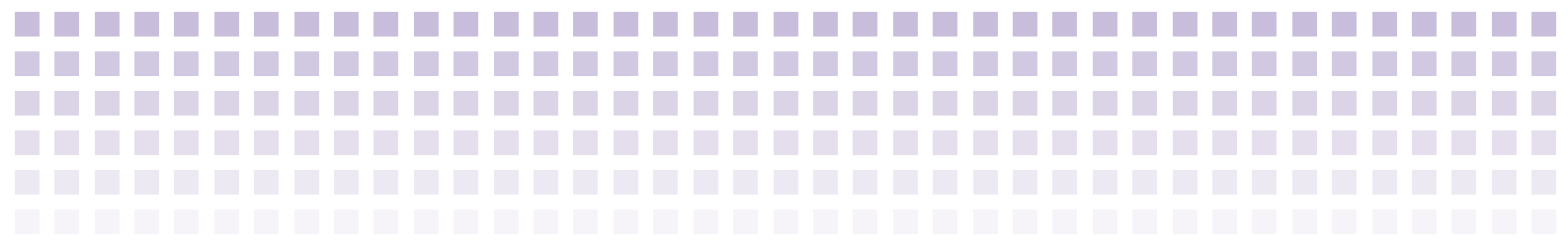
3.2 The school and the education authority should take account of the need to improve attainment further at S5/6, especially through reducing the number of no awards.

The school and the education authority had made some good progress with this recommendation but further work was required to improve attainment at S5/S6 and to further reduce the number of no awards.

Attainment had shown some improving trends by the end of S5. Over the period 2003-2005 the percentage of pupils gaining three or more and five or more Highers at grades A-C had improved. Attainment in one, three and five or more Highers at grades A-C by the end of S6 had varied over the period 2003-2005. Figures for one and five or more Highers at grade A-C had recovered from 2004 to 2005.

As part of its raising achievement strategy all teaching staff had received further training in the use of standards tables and charts (STACS). This had supported staff in identifying strengths and weaknesses within learning and teaching and had allowed them to focus on raising attainment in subject areas. A review of the advice provided to S2 pupils for course options had been undertaken. A number of strategies designed to raise parental awareness about the nature of courses and the progression routes available to pupils had been undertaken. This had been successful and the number of parents taking an active part in their child's learning had increased.

The school had reviewed its targeting of resources within S5/6. This had included an improved 'early warning' system with more effective use made of the school's computer network to assist staff in monitoring pupils' progress. Pupils who were experiencing difficulties had been



identified at an early stage with appropriate support given to them. This had resulted in a greater number of pupils successfully completing courses and a reduction in the number of 'no awards' in some subjects. The school recognised the need to ensure that further work was undertaken in order that this trend was continued across all subjects.

Current approaches to developing 'thinking skills' had been further extended to include S1, S2 and S3 year groups, in addition to S4, S5 and S6. This was achieved by specially arranged seminars organised and led by school staff. The 'Learning to Learn' programme had been positively received by the pupils who now took more responsibility for their learning.

The introduction of Standard Grade English and mathematics into S2 from January 2006 had involved revising the course arrangements within S1 and S2. This had been supported by the allocation of additional resources and funding. The impact of this development will be carefully monitored and reviewed.

3.3 The school and the education authority should take account of the need to ensure greater consistency and rigour in subject departments' approaches to evaluating their work.

The school and the education authority had made very good progress in this main point for action.

Members of the senior management team had supported effectively, their link departments in the use of self-evaluation. The identification of good practice, both at departmental level and through the "Assessment is for Learning" (AifL) programme, had been used to develop a consistent and systematic approach to self-evaluation. Training opportunities had been provided to support staff in gaining more confidence in the use of these approaches to self-evaluation. This had included professional review and development meetings, peer-evaluation of lessons and using How Good is Our School? The school planned to further develop the "Assessment is for Learning" programme.

Raising awareness of the local authority policy on monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching had taken place with all staff participating in a planned consultation exercise to implement the policy. The policy had been used to enhance existing current good practice in this area.

3.4 The school and the education authority should take account of the need to review approaches to assessment to help pupils to make better progress in their learning.

The school and the education authority had made very good progress in this main point for action.

The assessment strategies used within the 5-14 programmes and the National Qualification (NQ) courses had been discussed at annual reviews with principal teachers. The existing assessment strategies had been reviewed and consequently the amount of cross-marking within departments had been increased. An analysis of the P7 to S1 transfer of information had been undertaken and evaluated. The initial positive findings from the evaluation had been issued to staff.

All staff had been issued with the document 'Mark Less to Achieve More' and had taken part in training on this strategy within the AifL programme. This had led to agreement about the formative assessment strategies which would be used within the school. The strategies had been implemented successfully across a number of departments. In addition, to further embed good practice, each associated primary school had been linked to a member of the AifL group within Trinity High School. Overall the implementation of these strategies had resulted in improved pace and challenge of learning for all pupils.

3.5 Inspected departments

Further to the four main points for action, individual/specific issues were raised in the work of the departments inspected. The responses to these issues are detailed below.

All departments inspected had made good or very good progress towards implementing the points for action identified within the HMIe report.

English

Over the period 2003-2005 very good progress had been made to improve pupils' attainment at Higher grade, with the percentage of pupils gaining an award at grades A-C increasing from 55% to 71%. The numbers of no awards had reduced considerably over the same period.

The procedures for communicating with parents had been reviewed. There had been more involvement of parents and pupils in the decision making process. This had allowed pupils to choose an appropriate course that met their individual needs.

In Standard Grade writing, the identification and targeting of boys who would benefit from attending supported study, had resulted in an increase in the percentage of boys gaining an award at grades 1-6.

Most staff had attended training in marking standards, delivered by the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA). The good practice highlighted had been shared throughout the department and had been adopted as standard procedure. A teaching unit designed to promote writer's craft had been produced and implemented by the department and had been used at authority level. The good practice developed in cross-marking had been shared between the secondary and its associated primaries. This had resulted in a more consistent approach to marking being applied.

The department had made good progress in further improving pupil performance in listening within the 5-14 programme. The introduction of listening contexts into the 5-14 course had begun well. The approaches to reading had been reviewed. Additional resources and more appropriate activities had been built into the courses as a result. This will continue to be a focal point for development.

Mathematics

The department had made good progress in further developing the use of information and communications technology (ICT) to support learning and teaching.

The use of ICT in mathematics had been reviewed and opportunities for staff to access appropriate training had been provided. Course plans had been updated to include appropriate and relevant use of ICT. There had been an increase in the number of staff using and embedding ICT into their teaching. This had resulted in improved pupil motivation. Further work is required to ensure that all staff in the mathematics department embedded ICT into their teaching.

The department had made very good progress in reviewing course provision at S3/4. The use of assessments in S3/4 courses in mathematics had been reviewed. The pupil tracking system had been further developed and this had allowed more effective monitoring of individual pupils to take place. Staff had made good use of information on individual pupils as they transferred from stage to stage. Resources designed for level F, which included a number of topics within the S3 standard grade course, had been incorporated into the programmes of study. These strategies had resulted in more account being taken of pupils' prior learning experiences and in an increase in the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils.

Classics

Strategies used to support the achievement of pupils throughout the two years of the

Standard Grade Latin course had been reviewed. There had been an improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving a Credit 1 award in Standard Grade Latin.

The department had benefited from its incorporation into the language department. Through guidance from the principal teacher and the sharing of good practice between the two former departments, very good progress had been made in ensuring that pupils were more actively involved in their own learning. The timetable for the computer room had been reviewed affording pupils more opportunity to access computers.

Religious Education (RE)

The department had made very good progress in ensuring that there was greater challenge and pace in the teaching of religious education across the curriculum.

As part of the raising achievement strategy an audit had been carried out and areas for development identified. This had resulted in syllabus content, assessment and reporting being reviewed and revised. A programme of study for lower, middle and upper school had been introduced to ensure appropriate links between the stages. Support to staff had been provided to ensure that prior learning was recognised. This had resulted in greater challenge and pace in the teaching of RE across the curriculum.

Assessment procedures in RE had been reviewed. The introduction of formative assessment techniques had been investigated. The sharing of good practice between RE and modern studies departments had successfully taken place. Strategies such as sharing of learning intentions had been introduced and had improved the students' understanding of learning outcomes. The use of feedback to pupils, through the monitoring of jotter work, had also improved pupils' progress in their learning. Further work within the area of formative assessment will be continued.

The principal teacher had met on a regular basis with non-specialist staff and a consistent pool of staff who would teach RE in the upper school had been organised. This had ensured consistency and rigour in planning and had led to improved learning.

Personal and Social Education (PSE)

Good progress had been made in the provision of effective procedures for the formal tracking of pupils' progress in social education.

A specific aspect of the PSE programme had been allocated to individual members of the pastoral team. This included areas such as careers education, health education, citizenship and enterprise. Individual members of the team had also been given responsibility for a particular year group. This had allowed effective collegiate teamwork to take place. The arrangements to monitor pupils' progress in social education had been audited and reviewed. This had led to pupil evaluation strategies being introduced. Improved procedures for formal tracking of pupils' progress had been established and were in the process of being implemented. Some development in this area was required to ensure that consistency of approach was further improved.

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. Developments in planning and recording as well as the establishment of more systematic procedures to develop, support and evaluate pupils' learning experiences had helped further enhance the learning and teaching experiences within the school.

The school was well placed to build upon these improvements and to continue to raise standards even further.

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18 May 2006

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.

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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