

# St Anthony's Primary School

November 2008

building   
a learning   
renfrewshire 





# Follow-through report to the HMIe inspection of St Anthony's Primary School, Johnstone.

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

November 2008

### 1 The inspection

In September 2006, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) published a report on standards and quality in St. Anthony's Primary School, following its earlier inspection in May 2006. Working with the education authority, the school prepared and made public an action plan in November 2006, indicating how it would address the main points for action identified in the original HMIe inspection report. The local authority supported the school in addressing the points for action and in monitoring the progress made. This report, prepared by the authority, evaluates the progress made in relation to the action plan.

### 2 Continuous improvement

Since the inspection report was published in September 2006, the school had demonstrated its capacity to make further improvements in key aspects of its provision.

In the period since the publication of the original report, the head teacher and her staff had demonstrated a high degree of professionalism and commitment in addressing the main points for action.

With effective support from the head teacher, all staff had participated in professional development opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge in the teaching of reading. As a result, overall attainment in reading had improved.

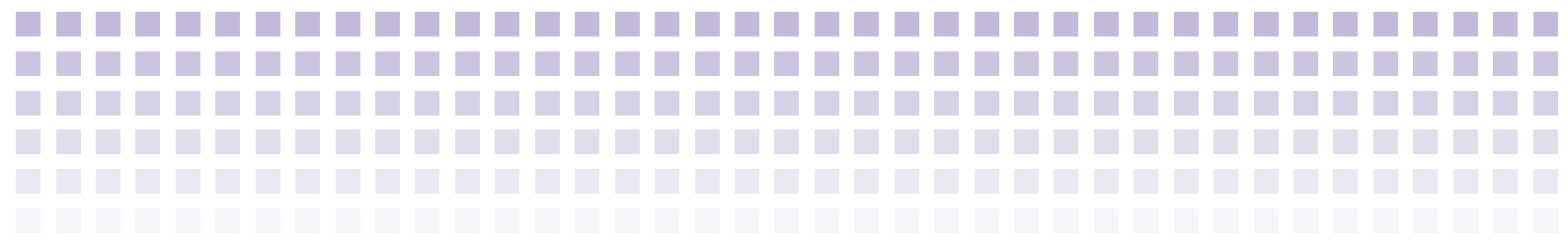
All staff had participated in a programme of observation of learning and teaching with colleagues. This had allowed staff opportunities to share good practice, and to reflect on the effectiveness of their own learning and teaching strategies.

Pupils' learning experiences had been further enhanced by the provision of additional information and communications technology (ICT) resources. This development had been supported by appropriate and effective staff training.

Homework activities and resources had been reviewed throughout the school, and all staff had participated in developing a programme of more challenging tasks. The senior management team (SMT) had introduced and developed a successful programme of 'active learning' activities at P1 – P3. This development had been supported by the provision of additional resources and effective timetabling of the common play area.

The head teacher had led training sessions for parents, to encourage them to become more actively involved in their children's learning. The school now had a managed programme of parental support for classroom activities.

The school had developed an effective partnership project with Reid Kerr College to develop pupils' entrepreneurial skills. School and college staff had designed an innovative



music challenge project which developed pupils' skills in sound production, recording, and management and actively involved them in the promotion of the composed song.

The head teacher and her staff had succeeded in developing further, a culture of continuous school improvement. As a result, the school had significantly improved its overall effectiveness.

### 3 Progress towards the main points for action

The initial inspection report published in September 2006 identified four main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made in addressing the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and others associated with the school.

#### 3.1. Improve approaches to teaching writing and provide pupils with regular opportunities to use information and communications technology to support their learning across the curriculum.

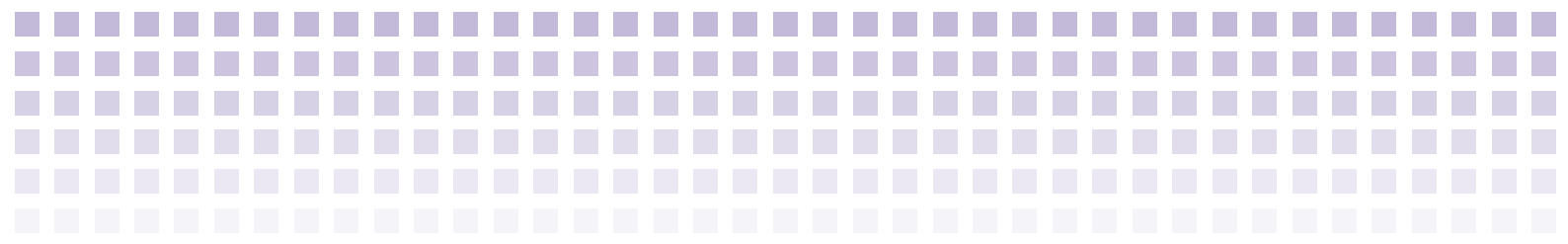
The school had made very good progress in addressing this main point for action.

By focusing attention on sharing improved approaches to the teaching of writing skills, staff had achieved greater consistency of practice across the whole school. Teachers had participated in a staff development programme on 'Writers Craft', which had impacted positively on their knowledge and understanding of the variety of skills pupils required to become successful writers. This training had improved teachers' skills and confidence in teaching writing.

Staff had established a working group to produce a planning framework across the curriculum, focusing on a skills-based approach to writing. Consistency across the whole school was assured by the development of clear success criteria and marking guidance. An effective system had been developed to monitor and track pupil progress. These new approaches had resulted in improved opportunities for pupils to practice and develop their writing skills.

Pupils had produced much fuller and more extended pieces of writing. The quality of the writing had improved, and many pieces demonstrated much more use of imagination. Pupils had been given more opportunities to practice both functional and creative writing styles. They now understood the importance of re-drafting text as well as evaluating their own work using the success criteria. Overall, the school had exceeded the targets set for attainment in writing by 8.7%. A significant proportion of pupils had achieved level E in writing by the end of primary 7.

Pupils with additional support needs had used alternative approaches to the recording of their work, to develop further their story-telling skills. These alternative techniques included visual support, story starts and endings, draw and talk, and photographs. Further planned developments included video recording of pupils' work.



Effective staff training and in-school support by the ICT coordinator, had led to an improvement in staff confidence and much more positive attitudes to the use of ICT across the school. The use of ICT had been embedded in classroom practice, creating a more motivating and stimulating learning environment. The school had purchased six inter-active white boards which had been installed in classrooms at the upper stages. This additional resource had increased access to ICT in learning and teaching. Pupils at all stages were using ICT very well, including the new inter-active white boards, to support their learning. All pupils now had greater opportunities to use ICT in handling and sorting data and, in presenting their work to class groups. As a result, there had been an improvement in pupils' confidence in using ICT, and in the quality of many learning experiences for pupils.

### **3.2 Provide pupils with regular opportunities to work collaboratively.**

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

There were greater and more varied opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively on a daily basis.

The head teacher had led in-service training to review existing good practice, and identify strategies to increase opportunities for collaborative working in classes. As a result, teachers had increasingly employed a variety of strategies highlighted in a national assessment initiative. Strategies, such as peer assessment had proved to be very effective in developing collaborative working.

Staff had placed particular emphasis on taking learning beyond the classroom for topic work on science, health and environmental studies, with a particular focus on the upper stages. In these lessons, pupils worked in teams to complete specific tasks. Tasks were designed to ensure that pupils worked collaboratively by sharing information, to ensure successful completion. As a result, pupils had developed further, their ICT and data-handling skills in the context of team working. The impact of this approach, included increased pupil confidence in independent learning.

At P1-P3, the development of active learning had increased opportunities for collaborative working, and encouraged a more consistent approach to learning and teaching across the early stages. Pupils were active in their learning through structured, well-organised play activities, developing interpersonal skills and motivation to improve their listening and talking skills.

The development of collaborative working had increased the awareness of all staff of the benefits to be gained from this approach. As a result, some teachers had applied to undertake further training in 'Joining the Learning', which focuses on a themed approach to learning and teaching, and the promotion of imaginative thinking.

The SMT had monitored, closely, the development and impact of collaborative working, through teachers' forward plans, during classroom observations and in discussions with individual staff. In particular, this learning and teaching strategy had resulted in increased motivation of boys.

### **3.3 Ensure that all pupils have suitably challenging learning targets.**

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

The school had put into place a number of effective procedures to ensure that all pupils had suitably challenging learning targets.

Following a review of current practice, staff had focussed on more appropriate use of challenging tasks in learning and teaching. The improved approaches to classroom management had, for example, ensured that the needs of every pupil were consistently met and, that pupils were being appropriately challenged. These approaches included setting in mathematics at primary 5, the implementation of systematic tracking in mathematics, reading and writing and the use of revised teacher's plans linking homework more closely to class work,

The head teacher used scheduled monthly meetings with class teachers, to monitor individual pupil progress. Appropriate attainment targets had been set for pupils' attainment, and timings for assessment tests agreed. This proved to be effective in raising teachers' expectations of pupils' achievements, and had helped to ensure consistency in the pace of pupil's learning.

The principal teacher for support for learning worked with class teachers to develop appropriate learning programmes for identified pupils. This practice had ensured, that more pupils met their learning targets and contributed to the improved attainment levels across the school. The monitoring and tracking procedures used by the head teacher ensured that appropriate support was provided.

Staff had identified appropriate strategies from a national assessment initiative to engage pupils in discussing their agreed learning targets. At P7, every pupil had a 'passport of learning' comprising their personal targets which could be reviewed to monitor their individual progress. Through the process of routinely sharing the intended learning outcomes of lessons with pupils, teachers had become more successful in challenging and motivating pupils.

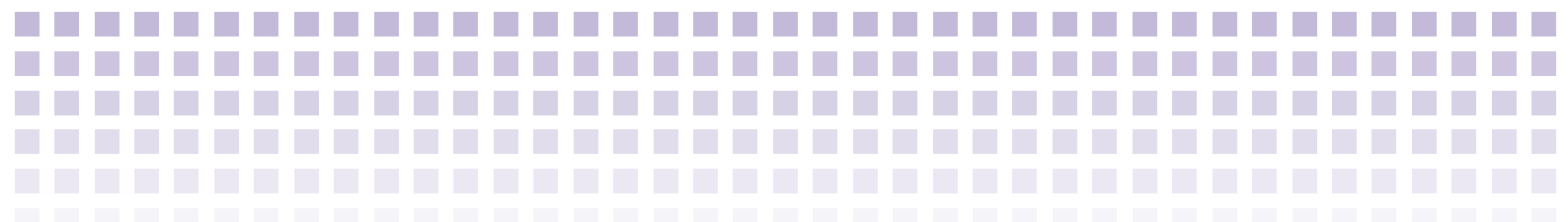
### **3.4 Develop rigorous and systematic approaches to monitoring and self-evaluating the quality of learning and teaching.**

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

Staff had agreed suitable strategies to develop further, more effective procedures for monitoring and self-evaluation. These included a review of the time agreed for pupil progression, the setting of more ambitious attainment targets, and the increased engagement of staff in self-evaluation.

Teachers had paired with colleagues to share knowledge, discuss and observe each other's practice. These observations from classroom visits were recorded in an agreed format, used to provide feedback and encourage further discussion on effective learning and teaching. The outcomes were then used to plan improvements in future provision.

The SMT had produced an ambitious calendar of monitoring activities, which had been revised in the light of experience. They used appropriate



procedures to moderate and validate teacher's judgements of pupils' progress and attainment. They had increased the frequency of planned classroom observations and sampling of pupils' work, to ensure consistency in practice across all stages.

Good practice and areas for improvement were identified through classroom observations by SMT. Staff reported the classroom observations to be both positive and supportive, and they welcomed the opportunity to reflect on and discuss with senior managers the quality of learning and teaching.

The head teacher had revised the remits of promoted staff, to improve their effectiveness and to enhance their role in quality assurance. The school now embraced a much more rigorous and systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation of the quality of learning and teaching. This resulted in a positive impact on the overall quality of the school's work, and on the quality of the learning experiences of pupils.

## 4 Conclusion

The school had made very good progress in responding to the main points for action contained in the original HMIE report. The head teacher and staff had worked very well together to improve further the quality of educational experiences for pupils. The school was well placed to build upon these improvements and in a strong position to continue to raise standards even further.

Bill Fleming  
Acting Education Manager (Planning and Performance)

## 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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