

St John Bosco Primary School

August 2008

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Follow-through report to the HMIE inspection of St John Bosco Primary School, Erskine.

A Report by Renfrewshire Council: Education and Leisure Services

August 2008

1 The inspection

In January 2007, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on standards and quality in St. John Bosco Primary School, following their earlier inspection in October 2006. Working with the education authority, the school prepared and made public an action plan in January 2007, 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 in 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

Since the inspection report was published in January 2007, 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 headteacher and her staff had demonstrated a high degree of professionalism and commitment to addressing the main points for action. They had succeeded in further developing a culture of continuous improvement in the school.

With the very effective support of the senior management team, all teaching staff had participated in professional development opportunities by sharing good practice in teaching. Further opportunities had been made available to staff through planned collegiate time, discussion and joint in-service with staff from the schools in the Trinity High School cluster. These developments had contributed to the school's capacity for continuous improvement and had resulted in a positive impact on learning. In particular, pupils now had more opportunities for active learning at all stages.

3 Progress towards the main points for action

The initial inspection report, published in January 2007, identified two 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 The school and education authority should take account of the need to ensure consistently high quality learning experiences for pupils.

The headteacher and her staff had made very good progress in addressing this main point for action.

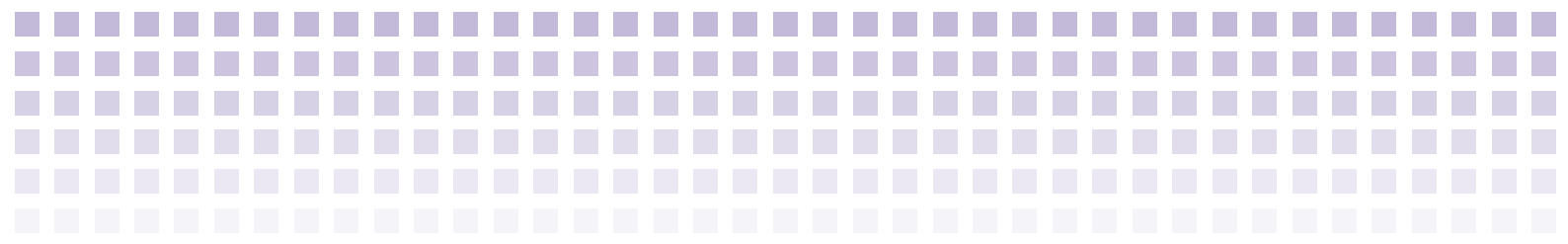
The headteacher and her staff had adopted a “critical skills” approach to the delivery of curriculum development evenings and in-service days. These sessions were based on collaborative learning, problem-based learning, experiential learning and results-driven learning.

Within the school, the critical skills approach had been used to review the use of materials and resources, to focus on how to ask questions more effectively, and to ensure consistently high standards of work. Staff had gained in confidence in using the critical skills approach and this had resulted in more challenging activities for all pupils. Staff had made very good progress in ensuring that they used questioning more consistently, to extend pupils’ responses. Pupils were encouraged to ask questions and to share what they had learned through the effective use of the “pair and share” technique.

Staff had been involved in cluster working parties looking at the development of early stage topics to incorporate a “Joining the Learning” approach. The primary 2 topic, “When Gran Was A Girl”, had been developed using this approach and had been presented successfully to parents. Pupils’ understanding of the topic had increased and their confidence had been improved. The school planned to develop two further topics in a similar way.

The school had recently begun the process of accreditation for “Rights Respecting Schools” and for “Fair Trade” status. This had allowed staff to provide learning opportunities which matched learning styles to learners’ needs, more effectively. These learning opportunities had encouraged staff to use a more participatory teaching approach, which had enhanced pupil achievement and well-being.

Active learning had been a major development in the school. A variety of opportunities for staff, to develop their understanding and practice of active learning, had been provided. This included sharing good practice, time for professional dialogue, the use of progress and planning meetings to focus on active learning, and the use of revised national quality indicators. These opportunities had enabled staff to focus more clearly on providing active learning and collaborative learning opportunities in their lessons. Teachers had gained a better understanding of how to improve teaching for effective



learning. They were now using more challenging and stimulating activities and encouraging pupils to work in pairs and small groups, more frequently. As a result, learning experiences were now better matched to the needs of all pupils. The very good practice developed in this area had been shared with members of staff from the associated secondary school.

The network support co-ordinator had given a presentation to staff which highlighted the importance of pace and challenge in meeting learners' needs. A workshop for parents had raised their awareness of active learning and informed them of the changes made to the curriculum, to incorporate active learning approaches. The workshop had led to greater involvement of parents in their children's learning.

A cluster event, which focused on sharing good practice, in relation to helping learners to learn, had been organised. This event had enabled teachers to reflect on, and evaluate their own practice, and had informed progress and planning meetings. Staff were now more aware of strategies to encourage and support all pupils to work to their highest standards.

3.2 The school and the education authority should take account of the need to continue to improve the monitoring and evaluating of classroom practice.

The headteacher and her staff had made very good progress in addressing this main point for action.

Staff had been consulted in preparing new guidelines for the monitoring of learning and teaching. It had been agreed that the focus for the monitoring of classroom practice would include the pace of learning, choices of tasks and activities, and the use of questioning.

Participation in self-evaluation had encouraged staff to recognise the need for regular reflection and review, in order to continually improve. Staff were more aware of the need for self-evaluation as part of normal classroom practice.

The headteacher and her senior management team had used a variety of methods for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. The evidence gathered from classroom observations, evaluations of forward plans and stage meetings clearly indicated that:

- there had been an increase in participatory and active learning throughout the school;
- the rigorous system of monitoring and evaluating had been effective in improving pace and challenge for all pupils; and
- staff regularly shared good practice and engaged in professional dialogue on learning and teaching.



4 Conclusion

The school had made very good progress in responding to the main points for action contained in the original HMIE inspection. The headteacher and her staff had responded positively to the main points for action contained in this inspection report. Through greater and more rigorous monitoring and evaluating of classroom practice, they had ensured that pupils received more consistently high quality learning experiences. The school is well placed to build upon these improvements and to continue to raise standards of attainment.



How can you contact us?

Copies of this report have been sent to the head teacher and school staff, the parent council, 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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