

Wallace Primary School

November 2007

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Follow-through report to the HMIE inspection of Wallace Primary School, Elderslie

A Report by Renfrewshire Council: Education and Leisure Services

November 2007

1 The inspection

In February 2006, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on standards and quality in Wallace Primary School, following their earlier inspection in November 2005. Working with the education authority, the school prepared, and made public an action plan in September 2006, 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 main 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 February 2006, the school had demonstrated its capacity to make further improvements in key aspects of its provision. In the period following the publication of the original report, a new head teacher was appointed and took up post in April 2006. Further changes to the management team included the appointment of a deputy head teacher with responsibility for early years. The new head and deputy head teacher had worked closely with existing senior staff to establish an effective senior management team (SMT).

The SMT had demonstrated a high degree of commitment and professionalism in addressing the main points for action. All staff had participated in professional development opportunities, to develop a wide range of skills and knowledge. All staff had the opportunity to share good practice such as cross curricular approaches with colleagues at stage meetings or collegiate time. Many staff benefited from visits to other establishments and authorities, and others from specific training events such as critical skills training. All staff ensured that learning outcomes and criteria for success were used regularly in lessons.

At all stages homework had been reviewed and changes implemented from P1 to P7. This ensured that pupils were set appropriate tasks for their stage of development. These included the promotion of active learning methods in the early years and the use of personal logs at P6 and P7.

Developments had been successfully supported by the effective deployment of staff and the purchase of resources to meet the needs of pupils.

The head teacher and senior managers had worked hard to ensure that all staff were included in decision-making activities. All staff were encouraged to become reflective practitioners and take part in a range of self-evaluation procedures. The head teacher had worked closely with relevant personnel to address the accommodation issues identified in the report.

3 Progress towards the main points for action

The initial inspection report published in February 2006 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 build on recent improvements and existing good practice in learning and teaching to ensure consistently high quality learning experiences at all stages of the school.

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

The head teacher had successfully ensured that appropriate staff development opportunities had been provided for staff, to equip them with knowledge and skills to improve learning and teaching further. Critical skills training had been undertaken and key information cascaded to all staff. Critical skills strategies had been widely implemented across the school. This had resulted in benefits to both learning and teaching, and staff awareness of the importance of collaborative working.

Personal learning planning (PLP) had been developed at P6 and P7 following a staff visit to another authority, to gain knowledge about developing assessment for learning (AfL) strategies in the upper school. The introduction of PLP had impacted positively on pupil motivation and attitude to work.

Cross curricular approaches to topic work at P3, P5 and P7 benefited from time which had been allocated to allow staff to discuss, plan and prepare work together. Evidence from feedback from pupils, staff and parents indicated a very high level of satisfaction with this work. During session 2007/2008 all stages, from P1 to P7, will undertake a cross curricular topic.

At the early stages, staff had been given the opportunity to gain knowledge about active learning and purposeful play activities. P1 staff had observed practice in other establishments and had participated in staff development sessions provided by the authority. This was

to be extended to allow P2 staff to have the opportunity to take part in similar activities. Effective deployment of staff by senior managers ensured that extra teaching time was provided to promote and develop active learning across P1, P2 and P3.

New resources had been purchased for P1 and P2, enhancing the existing provision. Wallace Primary had become part of an associated schools group, working together to develop further active learning strategies.

Positive feedback from staff indicated that children experienced a high level of enjoyment in their activities and that there had been an improvement in the pace of work, particularly in reading.

The forward planning process was reviewed to ensure that developments were planned and recorded appropriately. A new simplified style of planner was produced and adopted. It required staff to focus more on evaluating pupil progress. Teaching staff also recognised the need to address cross curricular aspects of a curriculum for excellence and devised and implemented a basic cross curricular planner. The ongoing monitoring and evaluation of cross curricular work, by the SMT, benefited from the evidence provided in these records.

A consistent approach to sharing learning intentions was promoted throughout the school. All staff effectively shared learning intentions and success criteria with their pupils. Overall, pupils were encouraged to take more responsibility for their learning.

School staff and pupil council members had successfully worked together and consulted with parents, to reach agreement about the content of homework leaflets for each stage, to ensure a more consistent approach to the provision of homework activities. Leaflets were distributed to parents at the start of the current session and a successful parents' meeting took place. Senior managers now propose to review the homework policy and monitor and evaluate the impact of the homework leaflet on pupils' learning.

The school had successfully improved its approach to the organisation and delivery of national assessments. All staff participated in target setting meetings with senior managers and were provided with relevant national assessment information about pupils' attainment. As a result, staff were able to determine more accurately the timing of tests for their pupils.

Clear procedures, for the administration of tests, had been developed to support staff. Cross marking of writing, undertaken with senior staff, ensured further consistency in the overall assessment process. The school ensured that probationer teachers benefited from observation of their mentors in the delivery of national assessments. On-going monitoring provided senior managers and staff with evidence that the pace of testing was appropriate and effective.

3.2 The school should ensure tasks are sufficiently challenging to meet the needs of all pupils

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

The development of regular target setting meetings had provided the opportunity, for the senior managers and teaching staff, to discuss and review the progress of pupils. As a result, staff set realistic targets for all pupils. Through regular review meetings with the deputy head teacher, staff were now confidently identifying pupils who required more challenging activities and a more appropriate pace of learning. Teaching approaches such as the use of personal learning logs and critical skills had contributed to challenging children further in their learning.

To provide greater challenge throughout the school, particularly in language, resources which encouraged all pupils to realise their potential, had been purchased. Pupils in P5, P6 and P7 were encouraged to work more independently and interactively, using smartboard technology during mathematics lessons.

3.3 The school should continue to develop rigorous approaches to evaluating and improving the work of the school.

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

Senior managers regularly evaluated teachers' plans to ensure there was a consistent approach to learning and teaching across the school. Random sampling of pupils' work by senior staff also took place. Staff were required to record evaluations of curricular areas and pupil progress in their plans each term. As a result, progress had been made, by staff, in evaluating and identifying pupils' needs more accurately. All staff took part in termly target setting, forward planning and feedback meetings.

In the nursery and at P2, P5 and P7, staff members were involved in peer evaluations. Feedback to other staff about this project was very positive. All staff will be involved in this by the end of session 2007/2008.

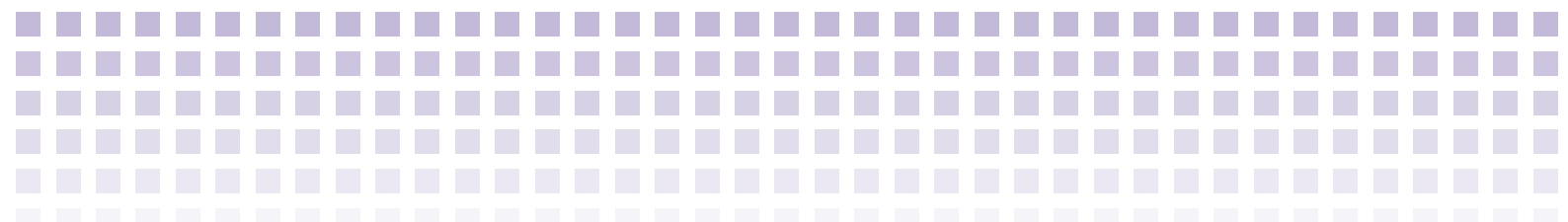
The views of parents, pupils and staff, were sought, about a range of issues, such as homework, cross curricular topics and discipline.

Evaluation of learning had been extended to pupils. Pupils were very realistic about evaluating their work and were confident in using a range of Assessment is for Learning (AifL) strategies. Pupils were invited to contribute to discussions along with their parents at parents' nights.

Opportunities for staff to be involved in the decision-making processes of the school had increased. Staff were encouraged to participate in working parties to develop aspects of the curriculum. Staff were consulted at regular monthly staff meetings held for teaching, support and clerical staff. All staff were invited to propose agenda items.

Additional meetings for clerical and support staff were also held when required.

Opportunities were given to all staff to participate in the school's residential trip and other excursions.



After consultation with parents, staff and pupils, a revised discipline system had been introduced to promote positive behaviour among pupils and to provide greater recognition of pupils' achievements. The new system was firmly based on promoting positive behaviour and presented a variety of opportunities, for both individual pupils and house groups, to earn points which could be

translated into rewards. House captains and class representatives were given responsibility for choosing the rewards. Evidence from school discipline records showed that fewer children had been referred to the head teacher. During session 2007-2008 the school planned to provide further staff development on strategies in restorative practice.

Other points for action:

4 The school and education authority should address the need for changing facilities for physical education.

The school had made very good progress in addressing this issue. A programme of refurbishment that addressed the need for changing facilities had been undertaken. Suitable space was identified for the construction of two

new changing rooms. Effective timetabling had ensured full use of this very good facility. Further improvements were made with the provision of lockers for P7 pupils.

5 The school planned to develop further a programme of school assemblies

The school had made very good progress in addressing this issue. A review of the existing religious education programme had been undertaken. This had resulted in an improved programme providing larger blocks of work on world religions. The school chaplain and head teacher attended a conference on religious observance. As a result, the format of school assemblies was changed to include opportunities

for religious observance, as well as the celebration of pupils' achievements. It was planned to include a programme of visits from people representing other faiths, organised by the chaplain. All senior staff led good work assemblies. Overall, the review had provided a more appropriate, balanced programme, that assisted pupils' understanding of religious matters.

6 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 her staff had worked very well together to improve

further the quality of the educational experience for pupils. The school was well placed to build upon these improvements and was in a strong position to continue to raise standards even further.

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Acting Senior Adviser (Performance Management)
November 2007



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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