

**New Elgin Primary School
The Moray Council
1 May 2007**

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1. The inspection

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on the inspection of New Elgin Primary School in June 2005. Working with the school, the education authority prepared an action plan indicating how they would address the main points for action identified in the original HMIE inspection report.

HM Inspectors revisited the school in March 2007 to assess the extent to which the school was continuing to improve the quality of its work, and to evaluate progress made in responding to the main points for action in the initial report.

2. Continuous improvement

The education authority had improved aspects of the accommodation and staffing. The former library and a classroom area had been extensively refurbished to create an attractive performing arts room. New carpets had been fitted within social areas, and parts of the school, including pupils' toilets, had been redecorated. Following the promotion of the deputy headteacher, a new deputy was appointed in October 2006. An additional part time deputy headteacher had been provided by the education authority from October 2006 until April 2007 to offer further support to the headteacher. Two new principal teachers and a Home-School link worker now offered additional support and advice to staff and pupils.

Pupils in the middle and upper stages had further developed their skills in enterprise education through a range of activities. These included selling Christmas gifts in support of a local charity for adults with learning disabilities, designing a New Elgin tartan and making jewellery. A few pupils, for whom English was an additional language, were well supported by staff and were making effective progress. The school had installed three new interactive whiteboards and teachers were beginning to use these effectively to enhance their teaching and promote pupils' learning. The headteacher, with the support of staff, had improved key areas of the school's work. She had effectively developed the school's arrangements for celebrating pupils' success and achievements. She had given helpful support and guidance to staff, and had been successful in ensuring greater consistency in pupils' teaching and learning experiences.

3. Progress towards meeting the main points for action

The initial inspection report published in June 2005 identified three main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made with each of the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and other stakeholders.

3.1 Raise attainment in writing and mathematics.

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

School staff, working with education authority staff, had improved attainment in writing. At all stages pupils had responded well to opportunities to write at greater length and for a wider variety of purposes. Across the school most pupils were now achieving appropriate national

levels of attainment in writing. Attainment in mathematics had improved. Most pupils across the school were now achieving appropriate national levels of attainment. School staff now provided pupils with more frequent and systematic opportunities to practise their skills in mental calculation and pupils had responded well. Staff had not yet ensured that all pupils were aware of strategies to solve mathematical problems and how to apply these strategies effectively. Overall, as a result of the improvements made, pupils were now achieving higher standards of attainment in writing and mathematics.

3.2 Continue to improve learning and teaching consistently across classes.

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

All teaching staff had benefited from useful training provided by the education authority on aspects of learning and teaching. Teachers now shared learning targets more effectively with pupils, and pupils were responding well. Most pupils collaborated effectively in groups and worked well without supervision. Teachers did not consistently use questioning effectively to challenge pupils appropriately and check their understanding. Staff made effective use of an agreed marking code when assessing pupils' written work, to indicate strengths and areas for improvement. As a result of the improvements made, most pupils now had better learning experiences while in school.

3.3 Make better use of assessment information to track pupils' progress and meet the needs of all.

The school had made adequate progress in meeting this main point for action.

The headteacher, with the support of staff, had further improved the procedures for recording assessment information, including the results of standardised tests. She had offered helpful advice to teaching staff on how to use this assessment information to plan an appropriate pace of progress for pupils. Promoted staff met regularly to evaluate pupils' progress and plan further action. The school did not yet have an effective system to predict and monitor pupils' progress in English language and mathematics. School staff were beginning to use helpful materials provided by the education authority to predict and monitor pupils' progress. The use of these materials had not yet had significant impact. For a few pupils the pace of progress was too slow. As a result of the overall improvements made, staff used assessment information more effectively. More remained to be done to predict pupils' progress accurately, and ensure that their pace of progress was appropriate.

4. Conclusion

The school and education authority had made good progress in addressing two of the main points for action. They had made adequate progress in addressing one point for action. Pupils' learning experiences and attainment in writing and mathematics had improved. More remained to be done to ensure that pupils' progress was predicted and monitored effectively. Working with the continuing support of the education authority, the headteacher and staff had the capacity to improve the school further. HMI have asked the education authority to provide, in June 2008, a report on progress in improving the use of assessment information to ensure that all pupils' needs are met effectively. Parents will be informed of the progress made.

Robert D Barfoot
District Inspector

1 May 2007

How can you contact us?

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If you have a concern about this report, you should write in the first instance to our Complaints Manager, HMIE Business Management Unit, Second Floor, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA. You can also email HMIEcomplaints@hmie.gsi.gov.uk. A copy of our complaints procedure is available from this office, by telephoning 01506 600200 or from our website at www.hmie.gov.uk.

If you are not satisfied with the action we have taken at the end of our complaints procedure, you can raise your complaint with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The SPSO is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and agencies. You should write to the SPSO, Freepost EH641, Edinburgh EH3 0BR. You can also telephone 0800 377 7330 (fax 0800 377 7331) or e-mail: ask@spso.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.spso.org.uk.

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