

**Keith Grammar School
The Moray Council
29 January 2008**

Contents

Page

1. The inspection	1
2. Continuous improvement	1
3. Progress towards meeting the main points for action	1
4. Conclusion	3
How can you contact us?	4

1. The inspection

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on the inspection of Keith Grammar School in January 2006. 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 November 2006 and in November 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. Ongoing input from the quality improvement officer had helped to support school improvement.

2. Continuous improvement

The education authority had provided useful support to the school. A member of the education authority's quality improvement team had met with principal teachers to clarify their roles and responsibilities. Principal teachers, working closely with link members of the senior management team, were now identifying and spreading good practice within the school.

The education authority had engaged an external provider to work with members of the senior management team to assist them in developing effective teamwork. As a result, the senior management team now communicated with staff and pupils more effectively and involved staff appropriately in decision making. Members of the management team had further developed their role in quality assurance with their link departments.

School staff had improved aspects of the school's timetabling arrangements. Almost all pupils were now able to follow appropriate courses, involving a well judged blend of work in school and out-of-school placements. As a result, pupils could now gain vocational skills whilst achieving academic success. Staff were now more positive about working in the school.

3. Progress towards meeting the main points for action

The initial inspection report published in January 2006 identified five 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 Review the curriculum to ensure choices offered to pupils are appropriate and can be successfully delivered by the school and associated outside organisations.

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

School staff had improved the range of course options available to S4 to S6 pupils. Almost all pupils were now able to opt for their preferred subject choices. The very small number of pupils who did not obtain their first choice were placed on good alternative courses which

met their needs. Staff had improved the range of vocational options and pupils choosing these were now required to undertake a rigorous selection process. As part of this useful process, pupils made formal applications and were interviewed by school and college staff. Staff now monitored pupils' course attendance and performance and took prompt and appropriate action when necessary. College and placement staff had provided the school with helpful termly reports on pupils' performance. Pupils taking vocational courses followed a well designed programme on their two days each week in school, and could gain a range of appropriate qualifications. As a result of the improvements made, the work of the school and outside organisations was coordinated more effectively and pupils had better choices.

3.2 Involve all staff more effectively in delivering initiatives to improve the school, particularly in relation to attainment and new courses.

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

Working closely with staff, the headteacher had improved the structure of working parties to more fully address the needs of the school. The senior management team had appropriately consulted and involved principal teachers in making changes to the school timetable. School staff had taken effective steps to reduce the number of classes in which groups of pupils were studying courses at different National Qualification levels. This allowed teachers to focus more closely on meeting pupils' learning needs. School staff had introduced a number of new courses and had made significant changes to the timetable arrangements for pupils following vocational courses. Members of the senior management team had improved their approach to evaluating the quality of the school's provision. They now attended departmental meetings more regularly, and these meetings were being used to share good practice and discuss learning and teaching. As a result of the improvements made, school staff were now more involved in improving the school, and in ensuring that pupils' needs were met more effectively. Attainment in SQA examinations had improved significantly.

3.3 Ensure that all staff use consistent approaches to promoting positive behaviour.

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

School staff had made a number of helpful improvements to the school's behaviour management policy. They had introduced a successful system of awards which recognised pupils' contribution to the life of the school and acknowledged individual excellence. These awards provided appropriate opportunities for pupils and staff to recognise a wide range of achievements. The number of pupils being sent out of class due to indiscipline had reduced significantly. Behaviour management procedures were being used consistently across the school and senior management and guidance staff monitored their use. Staff and pupils reported significant improvements in behaviour, within classes and around the school. As a result of the improvements made, there was now a more settled learning environment.

3.4 Further develop the quality assurance role of principal teachers in order to improve pupils' classroom experiences.

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

Education authority staff had provided helpful training in quality assurance. Principal teachers had worked effectively with a quality improvement officer to develop their awareness of their roles and responsibilities. Members of the senior management team had agreed a common approach to their dealings with link departments. Link meetings were now well focused on departmental quality assurance measures, raising attainment and improving classroom practice. Teachers used departmental meetings consistently well to allow them to evaluate pupils' performance, review assessment information and share good practice. As a result of the improvements made, pupils now had better learning experiences in school.

3.5 Ensure senior managers work more closely as a team and with other staff to share best practice and improve further the overall quality of learning and teaching across the school.

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

The senior management team now operated as an effective team. The headteacher now shared decision making more effectively and consulted fully with members of his team. All members of the senior management team had clearly agreed remits, which were shared with all staff. Senior management meetings focused more appropriately on strategic issues. The senior management team now communicated decisions clearly and promptly to teaching staff, and gave staff effective opportunities to respond. Promoted staff visited classrooms to observe learning and teaching. This had resulted in an increased sharing of good practice and had improved pupils' experiences. As a result of the improvements made, the school was now better led, and learning and teaching was more effective.

4. Conclusion

The headteacher and staff, with the support of the education authority, had made good or very good progress in meeting all of the main points for action. The headteacher and the senior management team had given a clear lead to staff in planning and implementing improvements in the areas identified in the original report. With the continuing support of the education authority, the headteacher and his staff had the capacity to improve the school further. As a result of the overall good progress made, HM Inspectors will make no further visits to the school in connection with the report of January 2006.

David M Martin
HM Inspector

29 January 2008

How can you contact us?

If you would like an additional copy of this report

Copies of this report have been sent to the headteacher and school staff, the Director of Educational Services, local councillors and appropriate Members of the Scottish Parliament. Subject to availability, further copies may be obtained free of charge from HM Inspectorate of Education, Longman House, 28 Longman Road, Inverness, IV1 1SF or by telephoning 01463 253115. Copies are also available on our website: www.hmie.gov.uk.

HMIE Feedback and Complaints Procedure

Should you wish to comment on any aspect of follow-through inspections, you should write in the first instance to Annette Bruton, HMCI, HM Inspectorate of Education, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

If you have a concern about this report, you should write in the first instance to our Complaints Manager, HMIE Business Management and Communications Team, Second Floor, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston, EH54 6GA. You can also e-mail 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@sps.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.sps.org.uk.

Crown Copyright 2008

HM Inspectorate of Education

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.