

**Park Place Primary School  
Interim follow-through  
Dundee City Council  
5 June 2007**

## **Contents**

## **Page**

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

## **1. The inspection**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on the inspection of Park Place Primary School in March 2006. The report indicated that HM Inspectors would engage with the school and the education authority in monitoring progress and would publish an interim report within one year of the publication of the original report.

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 carried out an interim follow-through visit to the school in February 2007. The team assessed the extent to which the school was continuing to improve the quality of its work, and evaluated progress made in responding to the main points for action in the initial report.

## **2. Continuous improvement**

Since the original inspection, there had been some changes in teaching staff, and several staff had moved across the school to teach different stages. Supported by the education authority, the headteacher and staff had taken some positive steps to increase the focus on raising attainment and improving learning and teaching. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics had improved and there were signs of possible further improvement. Staff were committed to improving the school and had recognised the need to raise their expectations of pupil achievement. They realised that much work needed to be done to ensure a consistently high quality experience for all pupils. Further work to improve relationships with parents was also needed.

## **3. Progress towards meeting the main points for action**

The initial inspection report published in March 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 Improve attainment in English language and mathematics.**

The school had begun to make progress with this main point for action.

Following the original inspection the school had reviewed aspects of learning, teaching and assessment in English language and mathematics. This review included raising staff awareness of expected standards and improving whole school approaches to lesson planning. Improved programmes of study for reading, writing and aspects of mathematics were beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Attainment in English language and mathematics showed steady improvement. An increasing number of pupils at P2 and P3 were reaching appropriate national levels of attainment earlier than expected. In English language, pupils were enthusiastic about their tasks and expressed their views and ideas with confidence. New materials to support learning and teaching in reading in the early years had been introduced to increase pace and challenge in reading. Across the school pupils were writing regularly for a range of purposes and had produced writing of appropriate quality and

length. Moderation of pupils' work by the education authority quality improvement officer had supported staff in their assessments. There remained work to be done to improve pupils' experience and skills in listening and talking. In mathematics, pupils now had regular opportunities to engage in mental calculation and these were beginning to have a positive impact on attainment in this aspect across the school. However, at P7, pupils were not yet sufficiently confident in using number bonds and multiplication table facts in calculations.

### **3.2 Improve the quality of learning and teaching.**

Some positive steps were being taken to address this main point for action.

Most staff had embraced the need for change and were now committed to using a wider range of approaches to learning and teaching. Most teachers explained clearly to pupils the aims of lessons and provided clear instructions. Some also gave pupils useful verbal and written feedback on how to improve their work. There was some evidence of an increased range of differentiated tasks to better meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils had increased opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups and were motivated to learn together. The school needed to ensure that these approaches were used consistently and effectively across all stages to ensure a high quality experience for all pupils. Early years staff were making good use of diaries to communicate homework activities with parents. The policy for homework had been reviewed. The school now needed to monitor this carefully to ensure a consistent approach to homework across all classes.

### **3.3 Improve arrangements for monitoring and self-evaluation to ensure a positive impact on pupils' experiences.**

The school had begun to make progress in addressing this main point for action.

The school had developed a calendar of self-evaluation and quality assurance activities. It was now becoming a feature of school life and was being systematically implemented. The headteacher and depute headteacher had put in place a timetable of classroom observations with a focus on learning and teaching. They now regularly observed lessons and gave helpful feedback to staff. Teachers' self-evaluation was also used to agree improvement agendas. Regular meetings between the headteacher and staff to track pupil progress had increased the school's focus on monitoring and raising attainment. Information gathered was also used to inform the deployment of support for learning staff to meet the needs of higher and lower attaining pupils. These processes were beginning to have an impact, for example in recognising the achievement of pupils in the early stages. However, these quality assurance processes were at an introductory stage of development and were not as yet having a significant impact on pupils' learning experiences.

### **3.4 Engage pupils more in their own learning, setting higher expectations and increasing pace and challenge.**

The school had made some progress in this main point for action but was aware that more needed to be done.

All staff were involved in the 'Learning Together in Dundee' (LTiD) initiative. They had undergone supportive staff development activities to assist them in this development,

including regular demonstrations of effective teaching by the LTiD support teacher. Most staff were increasingly able to use a wider range of teaching strategies. Most teachers explained clearly to pupils what they were to learn and offered helpful feedback on their progress. Pupils were developing a clearer understanding of the purpose of lessons and what was expected of them. A whole school approach to marking pupils' work had been developed and was being piloted across the school. The school had plans to share its developing approaches with parents. The use of the LTiD diaries to communicate with parents was not yet consistent or regular across all stages. The school was in the early stages of ensuring that learning activities were suitably challenging for all pupils, and the pace of learning was not consistently brisk in all classes.

### **3.5 Establish a positive climate for independent learning.**

The school was in the early stages of progressing this main point for action.

All staff had been involved in reviewing the school's approach to behaviour management. There was a realisation that the previous system was too complex, and that it had not been consistently applied by all staff for all pupils. As a result, expectations for pupil behaviour had not been sufficiently high at all stages. Staff had highlighted the need to give a greater focus to recognising and celebrating pupils' success in learning and behaviour. They had engaged in staff development activities to consider strategies to deal with low level classroom disruption and were trialling a range of approaches. Teachers were beginning to encourage pupils to work collaboratively and to give them more opportunities for independent learning. However, a few pupils had not yet acquired appropriate listening and talking skills to enable independence, and their behaviour continued to have an impact on their classmates. The school was aware that more needed to be done in this area. The headteacher and depute headteacher had recognised that their observations during classroom visits could have a clearer focus on this aspect to ensure continuous improvement.

## **4. Conclusion**

The school and the education authority were taking positive steps to bring about improvement. With support and guidance from the education authority the headteacher and staff were working purposefully to improve the school and address the main points for action in the inspection report of March 2006. There were signs of a developing capacity for improvement, although much remained to be done. HM Inspectors will undertake a further follow-through visit. Within two years of the publication of the original report, parents will receive a further report from HM Inspectors on the progress made by the school.

Susan Duff  
HM Inspector

5 June 2007

## **How can you contact us?**

### **If you would like an additional copy of this report**

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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 e-mail [HMIEcomplaints@hmie.gsi.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://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@spsso.org.uk](mailto:ask@spsso.org.uk). More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk).

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