

**Dalreoch Primary School
Interim follow-through
West Dunbartonshire Council
13 May 2008**

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1. The inspection

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on the inspection of Dalreoch Primary School in May 2007. 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 March 2008. 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

Staff, with significant support from the education authority, had worked effectively towards addressing all of the main points for action. The school was now in a stronger position to ensure sustained and effective improvement. An acting leadership team had been seconded to lead the school between the inspection and July 2007. This team worked with the education authority and school staff to prepare a thorough action plan. An acting headteacher who was appointed in August 2007 had continued to work well with staff to make the improvements identified in the report and action plan. Overall, Dalreoch Primary School provided pupils with an improving quality of education.

3. Progress towards meeting the main points for action

The initial inspection report published in May 2007 identified four 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 teaching approaches, including the use of assessment information to plan next steps in pupils' learning and track their progress.

The school had made a very appropriate start to addressing this main point for action.

Staff now worked more closely together and were more clearly focused on improving learning and teaching. They had improved the pace of pupils' learning by developing a consistent structure to lessons. Teachers introduced the learning activity clearly, developed pupils' skills with practical tasks and reviewed their learning at the end of lessons. They gave pupils regular opportunities to use information and communications technology (ICT) in their learning. Teachers encouraged pupils to learn both independently and from one another in groups. Pupils understood clearly what the aims of the lesson were and what standard of work was expected. Teachers took better account of pupils' prior learning and attainment when planning lessons. They used ongoing assessment well to ensure that pupils understood what they could do to improve their work. A few teachers had begun to involve pupils in

assessing their own progress. As a result of the improvements made, pupils were more engaged in, and motivated by, their learning experiences. More remained to be done to consolidate and develop these improvements across all stages.

3.2 Ensure improvement in meeting the learning needs of pupils through more rigorous support and challenge.

The school and education authority had made a good start to addressing this main point for action.

Teachers now took better account of pupils' prior learning and attainment when planning lessons. The skills of the visiting teacher for learning support were being used more effectively to support pupils' learning and to develop class teachers' skills. She now had regular planned consultation time with class teachers and learning assistants. Pupils who would benefit from additional support were identified more effectively. The needs of higher attaining pupils were being addressed by the grouping of pupils in mathematics. Staff had introduced classroom folders which provided class teachers and learning assistants with detailed information on meeting pupils' pastoral and learning needs. There were more focused programmes for individual pupils to ensure that their needs were met effectively. As a result of the improvements made, pupils were more engaged in, and motivated by, their learning experiences. These improvements now needed to be consolidated and developed further to include the provision to staff of advice and support on meeting the needs of pupils experiencing specific learning difficulties.

3.3 Improve leadership of the school.

The acting headteacher and staff with support from the education authority were making progress towards meeting this main point for action.

The education authority had taken effective action to improve the leadership of the school, improve relationships and build teamwork following the inspection. Staff found the acting headteacher dynamic, knowledgeable and approachable. In partnership with the local authority she had involved all staff in addressing the improvement plan. She had clearly communicated her vision to staff and made very good arrangements for them to receive the training and development time required to bring about sustained improvement. Parents had responded very positively to recent questionnaires, and their written comments demonstrated increased satisfaction with the school's provision. The depute headteacher had a clear remit to manage the school's revised arrangements for meeting pupils' needs. She had demonstrated good practice in teaching. She now needed to be more critically involved in monitoring the effectiveness of her areas of responsibility.

3.4 Improve the effectiveness of the school's processes of self-evaluation, including procedures to monitor the quality of learning and teaching.

The acting headteacher and staff were working well to address this main point for action.

School staff now made effective use of a range of helpful resources to track pupils' progress. Teachers used materials which set out clearly what pupils would learn next and had begun to involve pupils in assessing their own progress. The headteacher had visited classes informally to observe and evaluate the quality of learning and teaching. These classroom visits and evaluations were not yet sufficiently systematic. All staff had responded very positively when given clear guidance on the features of effective practice. A few staff had begun to develop approaches to evaluating their own lessons. There was now increased scope to share more widely the best practice demonstrated by teachers in the school. The headteacher provided appropriate feedback on teachers' forward plans and scrutinised pupils' work as part of a well structured programme. As a result of the improvements made, pupils' progress was now monitored more effectively.

4. Conclusion

Staff in Dalreoch Primary School had worked hard with strong support from the education authority to address the main points for action identified in the inspection report of May 2007. Staff had implemented a number of approaches which were now beginning to enable them to monitor pupils' progress in learning more effectively. The role of the support for learning teacher had been substantially amended to enable her to take more responsibility for helping teachers to meet pupils' learning needs well. Aspects of the school's accommodation had been upgraded and classroom accommodation had been re-allocated to make more effective use of the resources for learning. The acting headteacher had implemented wide ranging mechanisms for monitoring the work of the school, and was providing very strong visionary leadership during this period of improvement and change. Working with the continuing support of the education authority, the acting headteacher and staff had the capacity to improve the school further.

HM Inspectors will continue to engage with the school and the education authority. As set out in the original inspection report, they will carry out a second follow-through visit to the school within one year of the publication of this interim report. They will report to parents and carers on the progress made.

Jacqueline Sinclair
Managing Inspector

13 May 2008

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 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.

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