

**Keith Primary School
The Moray Council**

15 June 2004

Contents

	Page
1. The inspection	1
2. Continuous improvement	1
3. Progress towards the main points for action	1
4. Conclusion	5
How can you contact us?	6

Keith Primary School

Follow-through Inspection Report

1. The inspection

HMIE published a report on Standards and Quality in Keith Primary School in March 2002. Working with the school, the education authority prepared and made public an action plan in March 2004, indicating how they would address the main points for action identified in the original HMIE inspection report published in March 2002.

An inspection team revisited the school in March 2004 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

Since the original inspection the school had made good progress in a number of areas. The overall quality of attainment in mathematics and writing had improved and steps had been taken to help improvement in reading. The school was participating in a *Better Behaviour-Better Learning* initiative and a new system had been introduced to support pupils experiencing behavioural difficulties. Overall, pupils' behaviour had improved. Pupils had also experienced success at the local Moray Music Festival and Burns Federation competition and were proud of their achievements. The school had also begun working towards becoming a health promoting school and had identified a number of important priorities for action.

3. Progress towards meeting the main points for action

The initial inspection report published in March 2002 identified seven 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 The education authority should address the health and safety issues identified in this report.

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

Secure entry systems had been established for both areas of the school and temporary classrooms had been made wind and watertight. A new gate had been installed preventing easy access from the play area by younger pupils. Fewer pupils from the adjacent secondary school now used the primary play area as a thoroughfare. All of these measures, plus the provision of organised games at playtimes, had helped ensure a safer environment for pupils.

3.2 The school should seek to improve attainment.

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

Attainment had improved in mathematics and writing and remained steady in reading. In mathematics, pupils benefited from the very good beginning they had at the early stages which helped develop their understanding of number. At all stages, some pupils were expressing themselves well in their writing and were making good progress. Some writing was of very high quality. The school had put in place a number of strategies to improve reading further. They need to ensure that pupils at the middle and upper stages develop all relevant literacy skills. They should link some of the activities in reading to their strategies for the improvement of listening and talking.

3.3 The programmes in English language, mathematics and environmental studies should be further improved.

The school, with support from the education authority, had made good progress towards meeting this main point for action.

In English language the school had been well supported by the education authority's literacy and numeracy

development officer. The school's focus on improving the quality of the teaching of writing had been successful. However, teachers need to ensure that pupils achieve high standards of literacy across the curriculum. At the early stages, pupils had benefited from the introduction of a new phonics scheme. The school still requires to improve its programme of study to ensure progression in listening and talking.

A new programme in mathematics was having a positive impact on pupils. The school had improved its programme for environmental studies. The education authority's development officer for science had given very good support to the school which was now implementing a better science programme. Some of the science taught at the upper stages was challenging pupils in a very positive way and helped them to develop their knowledge and understanding.

3.4 The school should improve procedures for planning, assessment and recording of pupil progress.

The school had made fair progress towards meeting this main point for action.

Teachers had examined the purpose of planning, assessment and recording and, as a result, had drawn up a draft policy. Plans identified what pupils were expected to learn and what would be assessed. However, improvements to assessment and recording procedures were still at an early stage of development. Procedures did not focus well enough on improving pupils' progress. Senior managers should make much greater use of planning, assessing and attainment records in their discussions with each teacher to help them to ensure that individual pupils were making appropriate progress.

3.5 Teachers should raise their expectations of pupils' attainment and ensure that the pace and challenge of work is appropriate for all pupils.

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

Staff had discussed the need for setting high expectations. Throughout the school there was evidence of high standards being achieved. A number of pupils were achieving beyond national expectations of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Some of the science undertaken was also challenging. The school had recognised that a few able pupils were not being sufficiently challenged in mathematics and had taken action to remedy the situation. However, on occasions, pupils spent too much time on the completion of unproductive worksheets. All staff need to review the activities they set to ensure that tasks set will help develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.

3.6 The senior management team should rigorously monitor and evaluate the quality of learning and teaching.

The senior management team had made good progress towards meeting this main point for action.

The system of quality assurance now established in the school included scrutiny of forward plans, tracking of attainment, sampling of pupils' work and formal visits to classes by members of the senior management team. The results of formal visits were recorded and discussed with staff. These procedures had resulted in some improvements to behaviour management and classroom organisation. However, the relationships in the school between the senior management team and some members of staff meant that these arrangements were not as effective as they might be. Members of the senior management team need to prioritise their work to ensure that they visit classes on a more frequent basis to support pupils and staff and improve relationships.

3.7 With support from the authority, staff should develop more effective working relationships, thus ensuring a constructive contribution from all.

Fair progress had been made towards meeting this main point for action.

Many staff confirmed that the headteacher had made efforts to improve working relationships within the school. Staff from the education authority had spent a considerable time within the school trying to effect improvements. Tensions remained, however, within the school and too many staff lacked confidence in the headteacher. Senior managers, with further support from the education authority, needed to continue their attempts at improving relationships.

4. Conclusion

Good progress had been made towards meeting most of the main points for action identified in the original inspection report. In light of the more limited progress made in improving planning and assessment and working relationships within the school, HM Inspectors will return to the school in twelve months time to review progress and write a further report for parents. In the meantime the situation in the school will be discussed with the Director of Educational Services and his senior staff.

Dr R Duncan
District Inspector

15 June 2004

How can you contact us?

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.

Should you wish to comment on or make a complaint about any aspect of the inspection or about this report, you should write in the first instance to Ian Gamble, HMCI at:

HM Inspectorate of Education
1-B95
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

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