

**Our Lady of Loretto
Primary School
Clydebank
West Dunbartonshire Council
3 October 2006**

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1. The inspection

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on the inspection of Our Lady of Loretto Primary School in October 2004. 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 June 2006 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

A new headteacher had been appointed in June 2004. The education authority had worked closely with him and the staff to prepare a comprehensive action plan for improving the school. Teachers' participation in staff development had increased their confidence and prepared them well for implementing changes. The new headteacher had been very effective in establishing strong working relationships among all staff. He had made a significant impact on the work of the school and on staff morale. Staff felt that their views were valued and they had very good opportunities to develop and apply their professional skills. There was now a clearer focus on standards of attainment across the school and on ensuring appropriate levels of pace and challenge in pupils' learning. Improvements in planning and programmes of study, together with increased use of direct, interactive teaching, had resulted in better learning experiences for pupils.

The school continued to provide a very welcoming and inclusive environment for pupils, who were responding very well to teachers' higher expectations. There had been notable improvements in standards of attainment, and pupils continued to achieve success in a range of activities. They had participated enthusiastically in the creation of the school garden. This very successful project was involving productive partnerships with the community.

3. Progress towards meeting the main points for action

The initial inspection report published in October 2004 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.

Staff had made very good progress with this main point for action.

The headteacher had established a rigorous approach to tracking pupils' progress through national levels of attainment appropriate to their stage. His regular meetings with individual teachers had a clear focus on raising attainment and ensuring that appropriate support and challenge for pupils was in place. Staff were now making more effective use of information on pupils' progress and attainment to ensure an appropriate pace of learning. They had extended and improved their approaches to teaching aspects of English language and

mathematics. Teachers' involvement in staff development and increased sharing of good practice had resulted in better learning experiences for pupils.

Pupils were making very good progress overall with their classwork. Most pupils were achieving national levels of attainment appropriate to their stage in reading, writing and mathematics. Significant numbers of pupils had attained these levels earlier than might normally be expected. There had been notable improvement in standards of pupils' attainment by the end of P7.

3.2 Improve approaches to monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

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

He had introduced a number of improvements to monitoring and evaluating the school's work. The quality calendar outlined a schedule of activities undertaken by the headteacher and his deputies. These activities included visiting classrooms, scrutinising and discussing pupils' work and progress, as well as monitoring teachers' plans. There was a stronger emphasis on self-evaluation among staff. Regular meetings for both teachers and support staff were well linked to aspects of self-evaluation. Teachers used their evaluations of how successful they had been in implementing their plans to prepare for the next steps in pupils' learning. All staff worked very well together to identify priorities for further improvement in the school's work. The school consulted with pupils and parents and took account of their views in planning for improvement.

3.3 Ensure improvement in the use of assessment information to track pupils' progress and to plan next steps in their learning.

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

A working group of staff, with support from education authority officers, had reviewed school procedures and examined good practice. Teachers' planning now included a clearer focus on assessing and tracking pupils' progress. Staff had extended their skills in assessing pupils' progress and development needs. They were making more effective use of assessment information to plan next steps in pupils' learning, particularly in aspects of English language. Teachers gave pupils more feedback on what they needed to do to improve their performance and pupils were now involved in setting targets for their learning. Senior pupils had taken part in a successful personal learning planning development, organised by the cluster of associated primary and secondary schools.

3.4 Improve curricular programmes, so as to offer greater challenge.

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

Teachers and senior managers had worked very well together to improve curricular programmes. Developments had focused on ensuring that pupils would be actively involved in their learning and would be set appropriately challenging tasks. More effective use of existing resources, as well as new resources, had enhanced learning and teaching across a range of areas, including reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils were now more

involved in investigations and problem solving activities. Very effective staff development, as well as significant improvements in the programme and resources, had contributed to better learning experiences for pupils. Teachers made good use of ICT to organise suitably challenging activities. They had improved their approaches to assessing pupils' progress and attainment in science. Teachers had successfully introduced a new programme for developing pupils' skills in information and communications technology (ICT). They made very effective use of ICT to enhance pupils' learning across the curriculum, and pupils showed good levels of confidence in using a range of applications.

3.5 Ensure improvements in aspects of accommodation to provide a better environment for learning.

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

It had refurbished the boys' toilets in the infant and senior areas of the school. It had replaced the treads on stairways and installed a new perimeter fence. In addition, the education authority had installed new windows at the front of the school. New blinds and carpets had improved the appearance of some parts of the area for P1 to P3. Teaching staff had benefited from a new resource base, learning assistants had a new work area, and the kitchen area in the staffroom had been improved. The council had announced recently that the school was to be replaced by a new building.

4. Conclusion

The headteacher and all staff had shown strong commitment and had made very good progress in addressing the main points for action in the initial inspection report of October 2004. They had worked very well together to improve the overall quality of education for pupils and standards of pupils' attainment. With a stronger focus on self-evaluation, the school was well placed to ensure continuous improvement.

In view of the very good progress made in addressing the main points for action, HM Inspectors will not carry out any further inspection visits in connection with the report of October 2004.

Marjory Robertson, HMI
District Inspector

3 October 2006

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