
HM Inspectors of Schools

Follow-up to the Inspection of

Head of Muir Primary School

Falkirk Council

Main points for action

1. *The pace of learning for pupils from P4 to P7, particularly the more able, should be increased.*

The school had made very good progress with this recommendation.

The use of new planning formats now made it clearer what was to be taught and assessed. This had led to better continuity and progress in pupils' learning and to an improvement in the pace of learning across the school. Teaching was better focused. The classroom assistant had provided good support for older, less able readers. The school had worked hard to develop pupils' strategies in mental maths and other aspects of mathematics. All pupils at P3 had achieved level A in mathematics and were making good progress towards level B. Most at P7 were making very good progress at level D.

In addition to these improvements, the school had taken steps to increase the pace of learning at P1 to P3. The introduction of early intervention and teaching of phonics at P1 had made a considerable impact on progress with literacy at the early stages. A number of pupils at P3 were working at level B in reading.

2. *Further steps should be taken to use assessment information more consistently to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.*

Very good progress had been made with this recommendation.

The school had made very effective use of money from the Excellence Fund to set up a working party to review and develop the arrangements for planning and assessment. This group had produced very good planning formats which spelt out clearly what pupils were expected to learn for each aspect and level of English language, mathematics and expressive arts. The same structure was to be adapted for all other areas of the curriculum. These very good planning arrangements together with improvements in the use of national tests enabled staff to plan suitably challenging activities for pupils. The use of clear statements about planned learning ensured consistency in planning, assessment and reporting across the school. The formats were to be reviewed at suitable times during this session.

3. *Within the nursery, procedures for planning, assessment, recording and reporting should be reviewed and developed to ensure appropriate progress for all children.*

The school has made fair progress with this recommendation.

The nursery staff and management team had designed various planning and assessment formats which were now undergoing further development in the light of experience. During the recent absence of the nursery teacher the nursery nurses had worked well alongside managers and supply teachers with the provisional documents and tried hard to ensure a consistent approach to learning within the playroom. Good progress had been made in recording observations of children's progress.

Planning, assessment, recording and reporting formats for the nursery should now be revised and developed in line with the school's very effective approach to planning for learning. Advice should be sought from education authority staff to ensure that planning is closely related to assessment.

4. *Procedures for monitoring pupils' classroom experiences should be reviewed and more systematic and effective approaches developed.*

The school had made good progress with this recommendation.

The management team employed a range of very sound strategies to monitor the work of the school. An increase in staffing had enabled the acting depute headteacher to be relieved of class commitment and he was now monitoring the work of pupils from P4 to P7, through working collaboratively with teachers, groups of pupils and individual children. The recently-appointed acting assistant headteacher carried out monitoring duties at P1 to P3. Senior staff should extend this good practice to include systematic and focused monitoring of children's classroom experiences and provide teachers with feedback about the organisation of teaching and learning in their classrooms.

Overall, very good progress has been made towards overtaking the main points for action, and no further visits will be made by HM Inspectors in connection with the report of May 1998.