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HM Inspectors of Schools Follow-up to the Inspection of James McFarlane School North Ayrshire Council

Main Points for Action

1. *The school should make more regular use of assemblies to enhance its sense of community.*

The school had met this main point for action.

The school had introduced weekly assemblies for primary pupils and monthly assemblies for secondary pupils. Staff had developed appropriate themes for these assemblies which were well used to celebrate success and to enhance the school's sense of community.

2. *The school should implement further improvements in relation to progression and the appropriateness of curricular activities for pupils in the upper secondary stages.*

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

The headteacher and staff had reviewed learning targets for secondary pupils to ensure that they were appropriate to their ages and needs. The school had organised extensive staff development on Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) certification and had taken steps to develop a number of units at Access level. It had acquired more appropriate resources for senior pupils, suited to their ages and stages of development. The headteacher planned to develop provision for pupils over the age of 16 to ensure further opportunities to enhance students' skills in independent living.

3. *Senior management and staff should undertake a review of the general use of accommodation and facilities, particularly for secondary pupils.*

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

The headteacher and staff, with support from the education authority, had reviewed and reorganised accommodation in the light of changes in the school roll. In the secondary department, the school had developed an area for home economics. It had converted a classroom into a library which also was used as a suitable meeting room for parents. A therapy room was used for medical examinations. Although the school had purchased picnic benches for the playground, it still did not have a well-equipped area for external play.

4. *The education authority should open a Record of Needs for all children and young persons in the school. Education authority personnel should ensure that documentation relating to Records of Needs is kept up-to-date.*

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

All pupils had a Record of Needs or were in the process of having one opened. The school ensured that all pupils had individualised educational programmes and that pupils' progress was reviewed on at least an annual basis. The education authority should ensure that the school receives all relevant documentation relating to Records of Needs.

5. *Building on current practices, staff should develop a more systematic approach to self-evaluation and quality assurance.*

The school had met this main point for action.

Senior managers had sought the opinions of staff and members of the School Board on important areas of the school's activities. Following on from this survey, they had taken a closer look at learning, teaching and general management. As a result, the remits of senior managers had been revised. All teachers and instructors were involved in the education authority's procedures for staff development and review. As part of staff development, the headteacher encouraged staff to use performance indicators to evaluate the work of the school and their own practices. The school had produced a report on the standards and quality of its work and shared it with the School Board and the education authority.

In the light of the overall very good progress made in meeting the main points for action, HM Inspectors will make no further visits to the school in connection with the inspection report of May 1999.