



**Education Resources**

## **Follow-Through Report**

Strathaven Academy

***10 February 2005***

## Background

Strathaven Academy was inspected by HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in October 2002. Following the publication of the inspection report in February 2003 the Head Teacher and staff prepared an action plan to address its main recommendations. During the next eighteen months the Challenge and Support Team (CAST) officer linked to the school reviewed the progress on the action plan, and submitted an evaluation of the school's response to HMIE in September 2004.

New arrangements, in consultation with HMIE, require that a follow-through report is completed within two years of the initial report and, in the case of Strathaven Academy, this is the responsibility of the education authority. The following offers a brief account of the progress made by the school and the authority in addressing the main action points of the report.

## Continuous Improvement

The head teacher has demonstrated excellent leadership in responding to the action points included in the inspection report. She has ensured a rigorous, planned and systematic approach by the management team and in departments in responding to specific action points. All members of the senior management team have had responsibility for key areas highlighted in the report. Overall there has been a commendable focus by the management team on the impact and benefit of developments on pupils' experience attainment and achievements. The head teacher has skilfully managed the school and individual department responses to issues raised by the inspection. Her insightful and comprehensive understanding of the challenges arising from the report together with her outstanding interpersonal skills have ensured very good progress overall on the main points for action.

## Main points for action

- *The education authority should work with the school to ensure that accommodation provides a healthy and safe environment for pupils and staff.*

**The school and the authority have made some progress towards meeting this recommendation.**

Resources have been made available to tackle leaks and extensive refurbishment has been carried out to the top floor of the building. Some improvements to B Block have taken place including new window mechanisms, new floor coverings and measures to prevent water ingress.

As a result of the improvements which have been made pupils and staff experience and benefit from working and learning in a safer, more pleasing and comfortable physical environment.

South Lanarkshire Council has approved a major refurbishment of Strathaven Academy as part of its Schools Modernisation Programme. The refurbishment of the school building will address any remaining concerns about the current school accommodation.

- *The school should continue to support staff in raising standards of attainment.*

**The school has made good progress on this recommendation.**

- The school has now put in place arrangements to ensure more accurate assessments of pupil readiness to progress to the next level in their learning. Pupils experience improved courses and resources which reflect national advice on teaching and learning in specific subjects. As a result increased support for more able pupils is now available including more opportunities for pupils to use ICT resources. Pupils' performance in national assessments at S1 and S2 in mathematics and reading have improved. Results in these areas in 2004 were the highest in the past 5 years.
- *The school should build on its current practice to further develop aspects of learning and teaching.*

**The school has made very good progress on this recommendation.**

Overall pupils play a more active role in their learning through increased opportunities for independent working and to take responsibility for aspects of their work. Many learning experiences now also provide pupils with increased challenge and a faster pace of learning. Teachers now give fuller feedback to pupils on their learning and this is making an important contribution to planning pupils' next steps in their learning.

- In mathematics more frequent assessments provide better information on pupils' progress. Pupils' motivation has also improved through the use of a wider range of computer-based learning resources.
- In modern languages pupils are more actively involved in their learning while teaching approaches reflect a greater variety of learning styles. A more systematic approach to monitoring pupil progress enables more effective support to be given to individual pupils.
- In Home Economics pupils experience a wider variety of teaching approaches which more effectively supports their learning. More rigorous approaches to recording pupils' progress are also in place. The information which these approaches provide is used to improve the support for individual pupils' learning.
- In technical education pupils experience an updated S1/S2 programme with a range of specific improvements to both the content and to teaching approaches. Pupils also benefit from increased opportunities to undertake more challenging work in S1 and S2.
- *The school should build on its current practice to develop further the evaluation of the effectiveness of learning and teaching.*

**The school has made very good progress in this recommendation.**

The head teacher, supported by staff, has introduced improved ways of managing the quality of learning and teaching throughout the school. These include more effective feedback for pupils on their progress, performance and achievements. Staff have made improvements in learning and teaching and, with the support of senior managers, ensure that school priorities on raising attainment are taken forward consistently across departments.

- *The school should build on its current practice to encourage pupils to have higher expectations of themselves.*

### **The school has made good progress in this recommendation.**

Pupils have reacted positively to a range of actions to improve the environment of the school. Increased pupil expectations and motivation has also been achieved through more effective direct support for individual needs as a result of improved department learning and teaching strategies and improved resources within departments.

- *The school should build on its current practice to develop further the monitoring of pupils progress at all stages.*

### **The school has made very good progress in this recommendation.**

Pupils' now experience increased levels of individual support provided by the Pupil Support Team. Within departments and as part of the Personal and Social Education (PSE) programme, pupils carry out self-evaluation activities and negotiate short-term learning targets and a range of personal targets. This helps motivate pupils and enables staff and pupils to monitor closely the progress being made.

- *The school should review its PSE programme to ensure it offers an appropriate range of topics and suitable progress across the stages.*

### **The school has made good progress in this point for action.**

Staff have improved the PSE programme. New teaching approaches and resources have been introduced in the S3 to S5 programme. The PSE programme in the senior school is now based on a range of 'conference style' activities and includes a focus on religious and moral education topics.

## **Conclusion**

The school and the education authority have made very good progress overall towards meeting the main points for action. Education Resources will not provide any further report in connection with the original HMIE report of 2003 but will continue to monitor and support progress within the school.

This information can be made available on request, in other languages such as Chinese, Urdu, Punjabi or Hindi, please phone Personnel Services on 01698 455626.

For a copy in large print, braille, or on tape please phone 01698 455626.