

Report

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Report to:	Clydesdale Area Committee
Date of Meeting:	26 February 2008
Report by:	Executive Director (Education Resources)

Subject:	HMle Report - Lanark Primary School and Nursery Class
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ advise of the outcome of the inspection of Lanark Primary School and Nursery Class by HM Inspectors.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) to note the HMle Report on Lanark Primary School and Nursery Class.

3. Background

3.1. Lanark Primary School and Nursery Class were inspected in June 2007 as part of a national sample of primary education.

3.2. HM Inspectors evaluated nursery children's progress, pupils' achievements, the effectiveness of the school, the environment for learning, the school's processes for self-evaluation and innovation, and its capacity for improvement. There was a particular focus on attainment in English language and mathematics.

3.3. HM Inspectors examined the quality of children's experiences in the nursery, pupils' work and interviewed groups of pupils, including the pupil council, staff, a group of parents, the chairperson of the School Board and representatives of the Parent Teacher Association. They analysed questionnaires issued to a sample of parents, P4 to P7 pupils, and to all staff.

4. Findings of HM Inspectors

4.1. The Inspectors made comment under the following headings:

- Key strengths
- Views of parents, pupils and staff
- How good are learning, teaching and achievement?
- How well are pupils learning needs met?
- How good is the environment for learning?
- Leading and improving the school

- 4.2. The Inspectors reported that the following were key strengths:
- Links with the local community.
 - The effective contributions made by staff to the care and welfare of pupils.
- 4.3. Overall, parents were satisfied with the school's provision. Almost all felt welcomed into school and found parents' evenings helpful and informative. They were pleased with the high level of care and believed that their children are treated fairly. Some parents felt they could be consulted more on decisions which affected their children and that the school could provide more information on their children's progress and on the work of the school. Nursery parents were satisfied with most aspects of the provision and were happy with the relationships between children and staff.
- 4.4. Almost all pupils thought teachers knew them well, expected them to work hard and felt that the school helped them to be safe and happy. However the staff also felt the school could improve the behaviour of a few pupils whose behaviour was not good.
- 4.5. Staff felt proud of the school's good relationship with the local community and almost all felt they worked well together as a team. They felt communication between senior staff could be improved and expressed a desire to be more involved in developing the work of the school.
- 4.6. The Inspectors found the overall quality of the curriculum to be good, with nursery children engaged in a wide range of activities across the curriculum and the school providing a broad range of learning experience across P1 to P7. Inspectors felt that although nursery staff interacted well to support children in their learning and teachers in primary classes were well organised, gave clear instructions and explanations, questioning could have been used more effectively and teaching approaches more varied.
- 4.7. The quality of teaching was adequate. The overall quality of pupils' learning was weak. Although nursery children were making good progress in some aspects of their learning more opportunities for them to explore and investigate needed to be provided.
- 4.8. From P1 to P7 the level of challenge and choice of activities needed to be better matched to the learning needs of the pupils. More opportunities for active learning needed to be provided and the Inspectors felt pupils' were not sufficiently challenged by the pace of their learning.
- 4.9. In the nursery, children were making good progress in communication and language. Many were able to engage in extended conversations. Some could write their name and were aware of initial letter sounds. In primary classes, there was slow progress in coursework and the Inspectors felt that pupils could be achieving higher standards. Children in the nursery were making good progress in early mathematics and some children were able to count confidently and identify numerals. In primary classes, levels of pupils' attainment had been variable and Inspectors felt although most pupils had attained appropriate national levels, a significant minority of pupils were capable of achieving more.
- 4.10. The Inspectors found that the school had good arrangements for ensuring the care and welfare of pupils in school and children in the nursery. Staff know children and pupils well and supported their social and emotional needs.

Nursery staff had begun to make better use of observation notes and children's ideas to plan for future learning. Teachers were aware of the range of pupils' needs and worked with support staff to provide relevant learning activities.

The visiting learning support teacher provided good support for pupils and liaised effectively with teachers. Together they co-ordinated the use of individualised educational programmes. (IEPs)

- 4.11. The Inspectors found the quality of accommodation to be adequate but that classrooms were bright and examples of pupils' work were effectively displayed. There was limited disabled access to part of the school and some redecoration was required in both the nursery and the school building.

Relationships between nursery staff, children and parents were positive. The school provided a caring environment for pupils. Pupils were proud of their school. The promotion of equality and fairness featured through the curriculum but could be developed further.

The school had established good links with parents, the School Board and PTA, however there was still room to further develop communication links and involvement of parents in the work of the school and the nursery.

The school had very strong links with the community including other local schools and pupils had participated in a range of local events.

- 4.12. The Inspectors reported that the Head Teacher was committed to the care and welfare of pupils and to developing links with the local community. Although she had established positive relationships with some members of staff, pupils and parents, she had not gained the full confidence of all staff and lacked the strategic direction necessary to bring about improvement.

The school did not yet have systematic approaches for monitoring and evaluating its work and staff needed to be supported towards improving self-evaluation practices.

- 4.13. HMI identified the following as the main points for action to ensure improvement in:

- the quality of learning and teaching, and in the nursery in knowledge and understanding of the world and expressive and aesthetic development
- pupils' attainment in English language and mathematics
- assessment procedures and meeting children's learning needs in the nursery
- approaches for monitoring learning and teaching and tracking pupils' progress
- communication with nursery children's parents on progress and the work of the nursery
- involving staff in evaluating the work of the school and contributing to the school improvement plan
- leadership.

- 4.14. An action plan to take forward these points has been prepared to address the main findings of the report and this will be or has been shared with parents.

5. Employee Implications

5.1. None

6. Financial Implications

6.1. None

7. Other Implications

7.1. None

8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

8.1. There is no requirement to carry out an impact assessment in terms of the proposals contained within this report.

Larry Forde

Executive Director (Education Resources)

22 January 2008

Link(s) to Council Objectives

- Raise Educational Attainment for all

Previous References

None

List of Background Papers

- HMle Report of 23 October 2007

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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