

# Follow-through report

Duncanrig Secondary School

26 February 2009

# **Background**

Duncanrig Secondary School was inspected by HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in November 2006. Following the publication of the report in March 2007, the Head Teacher and staff prepared an action plan to address its main recommendations.

The school is part of the Duncanrig Learning Community within East Kilbride. The Quality Link Officer for the school reviewed progress in the action plan and submitted an evaluation of the school's response to the HMIE inspection report.

HMIE require that a follow-through report is completed within two years of the initial report and, in the case of Duncanrig Secondary School, this is the responsibility of South Lanarkshire Council, Education Resources. The following provides a summary of the progress made by the school in addressing the main points of action included within the inspection report.

# **Continuous improvement**

Since the initial inspection, the school has continued to improve its effectiveness in a number of ways. These include:

- The involvement of teachers in continuing professional development has led to the consistent application of effective learning and teaching approaches across the school. This has ensured that pupils have increased opportunities to work independently and where appropriate, in co-operation with other pupils. Across the school, staff have made excellent progress in addressing the development of pupils' skills in innovative cross-curricular contexts. These imaginative approaches are offering increased challenge to pupils. As a result staff are well placed to respond to the challenges of implementing Curriculum for Excellence.
- The school has achieved a silver award as a health promoting school and good progress is being made in working towards a gold award. As a result of this improvement, there is now an increased understanding of healthy lifestyles across the school community.
- The establishment of the parent council has been very successful and has improved links between school and parents/carers. Significantly more parents are contributing to the biannual survey that seeks their views on priorities for improvement. Similarly, pupil and staff survey responses are also very high and the feedback from all consultations has resulted in the identification of a comprehensive school improvement plan.
- The school continues to sustain improvement in national examinations from an already high base. There is a sustained trend of high performance across departments at standard grade, intermediate and higher levels, with the school exceeding local authority and national averages and comparing favourably with similar schools.

# Main points for action

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.

Improve the quality of attainment at S1/S2

## The school has made very good progress in addressing this main point for action.

Improvements across all subject departments have resulted in the development of new programmes of study in S1 and S2 courses. The new programmes of study give good attention to assessment including assessment of talking and listening.

The results of national assessments have further improved over the last two sessions from the already very good levels achieved at the time of the inspection. Between 2006 and 2008 attainment in reading has risen from 69% to 72%, in writing from 62% to 66% and in mathematics from 69% to 74%. These results are above the South Lanarkshire averages and above those for similar schools.

 Improve the overall quality of pupils' learning, including increased opportunities for independent learning and greater pace and challenge

# The school has made very good progress in addressing this main point for action.

The school has made a significant investment in the introduction of innovative teaching and learning strategies. All staff are effectively engaged in a comprehensive continuing professional development programme, led by classroom practitioners.

As a result, pupils benefit from a wider variety of learning and teaching approaches including the use of active learning approaches, collaborative activities and independent work. These ensure that pupils of all abilities are appropriately challenged, and individual needs are better met. Systematic monitoring by members of the school senior management team, including principal teachers has led to improvements in the pace of learning and teaching. Principal teachers have also led this initiative through departmental monitoring, discussions and planning.

 Raise pupils' expectations of themselves for punctuality, readiness to work, achievement and encourage them to take greater responsibility for their own learning

# The school has made excellent progress in addressing this main point for action.

The school makes very effective use of assemblies, personal and social education classes and through daily contact with registration teachers to set out clear standards for all pupils. Effective, frequent communications with parents reinforce these messages. Pupils now experience clear and consistent standards from all staff in key aspects of school life. This is evident in improved attitudes, punctuality, readiness for work and brisk purposeful starts to lessons for all pupils.

Pupils now experience a consistently high quality of learning and teaching across the school. They are clear about what they are expected to learn and are actively involved in setting targets for their learning. Access to a wider variety of learning experiences and teaching and learning approaches ensures pupils of all abilities are appropriately challenged.

 Address the health and safety recommendations brought to the attention of the local authority in relation to the current building

The school and the local authority have met this main point for action.

A new purpose built school, which provides excellent accommodation for learning, opened in August 2007. All health and safety issues relevant to the new school building have been discussed, agreed and addressed as part of the process of occupying the new accommodation. The enhanced facilities of the new campus have allowed the school to extend its range of extra-curricular activities.

• Continue to develop and further embed approaches to self-evaluation to bring about improvements in teaching and learning

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

There is a strong commitment to creating and maintaining an ethos which supports learning and teaching of the highest quality. This is evident in the extensive use of planned classroom visits, focusing on learning and teaching, and the sharing of good practice across subject areas.

As a result of rigorous annual discussions of examination results, the head teacher and subject leaders identify the extent to which results could improve in the future and set development targets for all departments. Whole school approaches to self-evaluation have been further strengthened through a programme of professional development activities, supported by the authority. Very good progress has been made in undertaking self-evaluation using national quality indicators.

Senior managers provide clear and helpful advice to departmental staff to support improvements in learning and teaching. School and departmental plans consistently focus on strategies to raise pupils' attainment. These ensure that pupils of all abilities are appropriately challenged and pupils' needs are better met. Such changes have improved the overall quality of learning and teaching and assisted in raising attainment.

### Conclusion

Overall, the school and the education authority have made very good progress in meeting the main points for action.

Education Resources will not provide any further report in connection with the original HMIE report of March 2007, but will continue to monitor and support procedures within the school as part of its commitment to ensuring the highest quality of education for all.

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