

Aberdeenshire

COUNCIL



Education, Learning & Leisure

HMIe SCHOOL INSPECTION

16 JANUARY 2007

FOLLOW-THROUGH REPORT

6 MARCH 2009

MIDMAR SCHOOL

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1. The school

Midmar School serves the village of Midmar and the surrounding rural area. At the time of writing this report the roll was 53. Pupils' attendance was above the national average. Since the original inspection in January 2007 a follow through report was produced in June 2008. This brief follow-through report gauges the progress made since then.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Focused monitoring and target setting which had increased pace and challenge in learning for all pupils
- The establishment of learning logs with targets for reading, writing and mathematics.
- Links with parents and the wider community which had enriched pupils' learning experiences
- Overall pupils' attainment in English language

3. How well do young people learn and achieve?

A reading programme, Accelerated Reader, had been implemented and the benefits of this were visible from the pupils' enthusiasm when talking about reading. This had helped to ensure that the pace of lessons was more brisk and challenged all pupils. The school had now identified that listening and talking should become more structured across the curriculum in response to Curriculum for Excellence.

In mathematics, a profile had been created for each child to identify individual targets. A resource bank ensured that resources were optimised, ensuring the best quality in learning and teaching experiences for all pupils.

Children at Midmar School spoke very positively about their learning experiences. They felt that their views and opinions were taken into account fairly.

4. How well do staff work with others to support young people's learning?

The school was working well with multi-agency partners to effectively support children. These included developing strong relationships with the Family Support Worker, School Liaison Worker and with Social Work. Plans were in place to make Individualised Educational Programmes (IEPs) pictorial so that they were more pupil friendly.

Staff had linked the latest guidance on numeracy with investigative approaches to develop mathematics. The staff had identified the schools intranet GLOW as a useful tool to develop this good practice by posting templates. This demonstrated commitment to progressing mathematics and to encouraging professionals to talk about this subject area.

Staff used praise appropriately and set high standards for pupils' behaviour and work. Links with neighbouring schools enabled pupils to share experiences in preparation for transitions most notably at P7 to S1.

5. Are staff and young people actively involved in improving their school community?

The school had further embedded into their curriculum a philosophy programme involving the development of strategies such as thinking skills. Staff and pupils reported that children were more respectful of one another as a result. Senior pupils took their responsibilities seriously as playground leaders and helped and supported younger pupils.

The school had effective communication with parents through regular newsletters, parents' evenings and informative reports on pupils' progress. A parent workshop, The Curriculum Group, as a sub group of the Parent Council, continued to provide an active arena for discussion and development of the curriculum. The already strong links between the school and community had been enhanced through these sessions.

Pupils were actively engaged in the school community as reflected in the annual pupil evaluation made up by the Pupil Council. Nominations for pupil of the week were entered fairly and this along with other opportunities such as taking forward Health Promotion using the health box combined to make pupils more responsible. Pupils and staff were engaged in working groups and this active citizenship had started to develop more confident individuals.

6. Does the school have high expectations of all children?

The school had very high expectations of all pupils and this had been further established through the use of learning logs. There were clear plans for these to be sent home on a regular basis along with a monthly update summary. This approach encouraged frequent communication and support between home and school. Teachers used homework to support and consolidate class work.

Staff now looked at improvement and forward plans collectively to ensure more consistent learning experiences for pupils. The school also utilised authority initiatives such as the Sustaining Teacher Learning Communities aimed at enhancing learning and teaching. Staff worked well together as a team and had accessed these opportunities to be actively involved in leading learning and developing whole-school initiatives.

7. Does the school have a clear sense of direction?

The school knew its strengths and development needs well and was continually striving to improve. Midmar School had engaged fully in developing the principles of *Curriculum for Excellence* and was in a strong position to continue to take this forward. The head teacher, staff and pupils had a clear vision for their school.

8. What happens next?

Midmar School continued to provide high quality learning experiences for its pupils and was actively building on its successes. As a result of the very good progress made, the education authority will not publish further reports in relation to the HMIE report of January 2007.

Quality Indicators

| QI | | Level |
|--------|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| QI 1.1 | Improvements in performance | Very Good |
| QI 2.1 | Learners'/children's experiences | Good |
| QI 5.1 | The curriculum | Good |
| QI 5.3 | Meeting learning needs | Very Good |
| QI 5.9 | Improvements through self-evaluation | Good |