



## Education & Children's Services

### HMle – Follow Through Procedures Progress Report to Parents June 2011

#### 1 Introduction:

**Guildtown Primary School** was inspected in **March 2010**. The report on the inspection by her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMle) was published in **May 2010**.

The school, with support from the Local Authority, prepared a full plan for improvement which has had a positive impact on a wide range of aspects within the school.

Both headteacher and staff have worked co-operatively with authority staff to take forward the areas identified in the original HMle report as requiring development and the authority endorses the information within this report.

Further information about the broader achievements of the school is contained in the school's annual Standards & Quality report published in September.

#### 2 Areas for Improvement – Evaluation of Progress:

The initial inspection report published in **May 2010** identified 4 main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made to date in addressing each of the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and other stakeholders. The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the main points for action.

##### **Area for improvement 1**

##### **Further develop the curriculum, taking account of Curriculum for Excellence**

HMle identified a need for the school to further develop areas of the curriculum. Prior to the inspection, writing had already been identified as an area for improvement and this area has been the focus for development this year.

##### **Evaluation of progress and impact:**

- The quality of writing across the school was audited with strengths and areas for improvement identified. This gave staff a focus for the steps required to take forward writing development.
- A writing programme which is based on the Curriculum for Excellence outcomes and experiences has been developed and is currently being implemented. It shows a clear progression from Early Level to Second Level. There is early evidence that the quality of writing is beginning to improve and it is expected that the writing programme will impact more fully on pupil attainment next session. Writing resources have been purchased which support the implementation of identified areas of the writing programme.

- Children now have the opportunity to write in a range of forms for different purposes. This has ensured that within teaching blocks there is a planned approach which allows for progression, balance and breadth across the school year. Most children are becoming more confident and able to discuss the content and purpose of their writing.
- Opportunities for children to write in different contexts have impacted positively on the quality of writing. Children are becoming more confident and more able to write detailed pieces of extended writing. Skills in punctuation and grammar are being applied more consistently within different writing contexts.
- Staff now use a variety of ways in which to motivate children to write. Most children have responded positively to these approaches. Observations from class visits and feedback from staff have indicated that children are more engaged in their writing activities than before.
- Each class has a writing wall and there are examples of writing across the school on display in order for children, staff and parents to share and celebrate achievements in writing. Each term the children have the opportunity to share and evaluate their writing with a “buddy” from another class. Examples of writing are now being sent home four times a year and parents have the opportunity to be involved in their children’s learning. This is a new development and early feedback from parents indicates that they welcome the opportunity.
- Writing targets shared with children are specific and relate more accurately to the type of writing being taught. Targets are now better differentiated to meet the varying needs of children. Work will continue on this to ensure that levels of support and challenge are securely in place.
- Children are able to talk more readily about their strengths and next steps in writing. They have been given opportunities to assess both their own and others’ work against their writing targets and this has encouraged a greater sense of ownership in the process.
- Opportunities within the collegiate calendar are planned for teachers to share and moderate pieces of writing across the school. This is leading to a shared understanding of expectations and standards. Staff have shared practice through observing each other in the classroom and giving constructive feedback.
- Tracking meetings are held throughout the session where the headteacher and teaching staff discuss the progress of individuals in writing and literacy.

Further actions are identified in the School Improvement Plan for 2011/2012 to continue to take forward curriculum development in line with Curriculum for Excellence. .

## **Area for improvement 2**

### **Ensure that all children are fully supported and challenged in their learning**

Whilst HMle acknowledged that teachers planned to meet the differing needs of children, they felt that teaching approaches did not sufficiently challenge all the children in their learning.

#### **Evaluation of progress and impact:**

- Weekly teaching plans are monitored to ensure that tasks are differentiated appropriately to meet learning needs. Teachers are given feedback which they act upon for future planning. Classroom observations show that children are being given tasks which are appropriate to their stage of learning.
- There are planned opportunities for children to develop their numeracy & literacy skills in a range of contexts. Through planning, links are being made with other curricular areas which are helping pupils to be able to discuss the relevance of aspects of their learning.
- Children are now more involved and engaged in their learning. All children are given the opportunity to evaluate the quality and level of challenge in numeracy and literacy activities. This has recently been extended to homework tasks which will prompt further discussion with parents. On a weekly basis the children review an aspect of their learning which is kept in a class achievement book. As a result children are becoming more aware of their strengths and what they have to do in order to improve.
- Children have continued to be involved in the planning of interdisciplinary topics with elements of personalisation and choice being introduced. Children are becoming more skilled in research activities and are learning about areas in which they have a specific interest.
- Teachers are using co-operative learning approaches to engage the children more in their learning. This has also had a positive effective on motivation levels and behaviour as everyone works together to achieve the agreed or given goal.
- Children are now asked to assess their own work against set targets in literacy and numeracy which has encouraged them to reflect on their progress as learners. This approach is now being introduced across other curricular areas where both self and peer assessment techniques are being used e.g. children give feedback to others on drama work, creative music presentations etc.
- Learning logs have recently been put in place for maths and writing. These are being used by staff and children to track individual progress and to keep supporting pieces of evidence. These will be further developed next session and will give children more opportunities to take responsibility for their learning by identifying strengths and reflect on their next steps in learning.
- There is now a better balance between spontaneous play and planned, purposeful play in the early years' class. Opportunities for learning through play are relevant and linked as appropriate to planned learning outcomes and experiences. Children are involved in planning the contexts for learning through play. Observations have shown that they are more engaged in these activities and as a result are having more opportunities to develop skills in a wider range of contexts.

- Teaching staff have all received training on identifying appropriate targets for children with Individual Education Plans. (IEPs) The current process for developing IEPs has been reviewed and future IEPs will be monitored to ensure that targets are challenging, achievable and show progress over the school session.
- Children, currently with IEPs, are involved in the planning and assessment of their own targets. This encourages a greater understanding and ownership of the process.

The school will continue to develop approaches to learning and teaching which will ensure that the needs of all children are met effectively across all areas of the curriculum, leading to improved attainment.

### **Area for improvement 3**

#### **Improve approaches to positive behaviour**

At the time of inspection HMIE felt that expectations of behaviour were not consistent across the school. In order to address this area, the following steps were implemented.

#### **Evaluation of progress and impact:**

- A set of whole school rules were created by the children and these have been implemented across the school by both staff and children. The children were involved in many different activities and whole school discussions which have led to a shared understanding of the school rules and what they look like in practice. By being involved in this process children have a greater sense of ownership.
- A positive behaviour group was set up and this parent/teacher group supported the school to develop a reward & sanction system which now gives more recognition to good behaviour. Green slips are given weekly to those who behave well and Golden Time is used as both a reward and sanction system. Certificates are presented at assemblies allowing the whole school to celebrate each others' achievements. This approach has had a positive impact across the school with staff and children more focused on recognising and highlighting appropriate behaviour.
- The school has registered and has started its journey towards becoming a Rights Respecting School (RRS). Parental involvement is encouraged and a steering group, consisting of staff, children and parents has been formed to support the school in its work. An audit was carried out by a RRS Officer who identified the starting point for the school. As it is developed, this work will encourage respect between children and staff and between children themselves, leading to further improved behaviour and relationships across the school.
- All staff and children have had training in restorative approaches. The children are beginning to use these principles to resolve differences particularly in the playground. Increasingly they are now more able to engage in discussions about their behaviour and find solutions. This has been successful in that staff seldom have to deal with recurring negative behaviour.

The school will now evaluate the systems in place and work with children and parents to develop a whole school Positive Behaviour Policy

#### **Area for improvement 4**

##### **Use self-evaluation effectively to improve the school**

The report identified the need for a more systematic approach to self evaluation in order to accurately identify areas in the school improvement plan for further development.

##### **Evaluation of progress and impact:**

- Staff have been involved in the development of the school improvement plan through collegiate meetings, in-service training days and external training courses. This has given them the opportunity to engage fully in the process, have ownership in the development of identified actions and encouraged shared decision making.
- There is a more planned and focused approach to monitoring through classroom observations and scrutiny of the children's work, discussion of forward plans with teachers and discussion with the children about their learning. Monitoring activities are now linked to areas identified in the school improvement plan. These are evaluated using quality indicators from How good is our school? (HMIe) and the next steps for development are identified.
- Teachers evaluate success and identify next steps in learning through the weekly planning process. Children have the opportunity each week to reflect with the teacher on an aspect of their learning which is linked clearly to the teacher's learning plan.
- The tracking process, which focuses on numeracy and literacy, informs progress, next steps and identifies targeted support needs. This is closely linked to the planning process.
- Teachers are given opportunities to discuss and evaluate each others' practice leading to a shared understanding of effective approaches to learning and teaching.
- All key stakeholders have been involved in the process of self-evaluation. Information has been gathered through discussions with children, pupil and parent questionnaires and feedback from staff. This information has been used to identify strengths and plan next steps.
- This year's Standards and Quality Report for parents will be based on more accurate information and teachers will be more involved in the creation of the report.

The school will continue to further develop effective approaches to self evaluation. This will include involving the children more in the process.

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