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25 March 2003

Dear Mr Morton

**FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF COLGRAIN PRIMARY SCHOOL AND
PRE-SCHOOL UNIT, ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**

The report on the above school was published in March 2001. HM Inspectors visited the school in December 2002 to evaluate progress made in responding to the main points for action in the report.

The school and education authority have made good progress towards meeting all the main points for action. As a result, HM Inspectors will make no further visits to the school in connection with the report or March 2001.

I attach an evaluation and brief account of the response made by the school and the education authority to the main points for action in the report.

I am sending a copy of this letter to parents and carers of children currently in the school and the other recipients of the inspection report.

Yours sincerely

Frank Crawford
HM Chief Inspector
Western Division

HM Inspectorate of Education

Follow-up to the Inspection of

Colgrain Primary School and Pre-school Unit

Argyll and Bute Council

Main points for action

1. *The school should review the balance of the curriculum and improve its curricular programmes in line with the recommendations in this report.*

Overall, the school was making good progress towards meeting this main point for action.

Pupils now had a suitably broad range of learning opportunities. Staff had agreed and introduced a new programme for environmental studies. Teachers were providing pupils with more regular activities in technology. The school had purchased new resources to support developments in this aspect and staff were continuing to develop the programme. In English language, staff were still working on improvements to the writing programme. In mathematics, teachers were giving more emphasis to improving pupils' mental calculations. Some progress had been made in providing a wider range of problem-solving activities.

2. *Teachers' plans should show more clearly what skills and knowledge they expect pupils to learn. Teachers should use assessment information to help plan next steps in pupils' learning.*

The school had made good progress towards meeting this main point for action.

Teachers had revised their procedures for planning and assessing pupils' learning. Their plans for English language and mathematics now provided more details of learning and teaching aims. Teachers regularly recorded comments on aspects of pupils' progress in these areas. They had made a good start to using assessment information to monitor pupils' progress and attainment and to identify the skills they expected pupils to learn next.

3. *To help improve pupils' attainment, teachers should increase the pace of learning and level of challenge for pupils and involve them more actively in the learning process.*

The school was making good progress towards meeting this main point for action.

Teachers had participated in a range of staff development covering effective approaches to learning and teaching and to raising attainment. They were beginning to use these approaches to involve pupils more actively in their learning. For example, almost all pupils from P5 to P7 undertook at least one topic-related personal research activity each session. Improvements to some curricular programmes and new resources were also helping teachers to provide a more appropriate level of challenge for pupils.

4. *Arrangements for learning support should be improved to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met effectively.*

The school had made good progress towards meeting this main point for action.

The headteacher had improved the management of learning support. She now provided clearer guidance for staff on approaches to arranging additional support for pupils. The school had included parents in a review of learning support arrangements. It had responded positively to parents' views and now gave them helpful information on how to support their children's learning.

5. *The headteacher should now take a stronger lead in directing curricular developments and in improving the quality of learning and teaching. Working with staff, she should provide clearer guidance on the curriculum including arrangements for planning and assessment.*

Overall, the headteacher had made good progress towards meeting this main point for action.

With clearer direction from the headteacher, staff had worked together to improve aspects of the curriculum in English language, mathematics and environmental studies. The headteacher had planned and matched staff development activities effectively to support teachers in bringing about improvements. She continued to involve staff in developing the school's approaches to planning and assessment.

6. *The headteacher should implement her intention to develop a more focused and formal approach to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school.*

Overall, the headteacher had made good progress towards meeting this main point for action.

Senior managers now looked at teachers' forward plans more closely and provided written comments on them. The headteacher had started to involve teachers in closer monitoring of pupils' progress and attainment. She had produced a clear timetable for monitoring key areas of the school's work and now intended to provide written guidance for staff on the school's new agreed approaches to improving quality.

Overall, the school and education authority had made good progress towards meeting all the main points for action. As a result, HM Inspectors will make no further visits to the school in connection with the report of March 2001.