



## **Community Services: Education**



# **Follow-through Inspection of Small Isles Primary School Argyll and Bute**

Published June 2007



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### **1. The Inspection**

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on Standards and Quality in Small Isles Primary School in June 2005. Working with the school, the education authority prepared and made public an action plan in August 2005 indicating how they would address the main points for action identified in the original HMIE inspection report.

Arrangements in consultation with HMIE require that a follow-through report is completed within two years of the initial report and, in the case of Small Isles Primary School, this is the responsibility of the education authority. Members of the education authority's Quality Improvement Team visited the school prior to the publication of this report to carry out a follow-through inspection. This visit assessed the extent to which the school was continuing to improve the quality of its work, and evaluated progress made in responding to the main points for action in the initial report.

### **2. Continuous Improvement**

Under the effective leadership of the recently retired head teacher and the hard work and commitment of all staff, the school had improved key areas of its work. Following the retrial of the head teacher and assistant teacher in April 2007, a new head teacher and assistant teacher had been appointed. Building on the good work undertaken by the previous staff team, the school had continued this improvement.

Continuing good practice was evident in the introduction of whole school cross-curricular afternoons. Staff and pupils worked together on specific projects which enhanced both academic and social learning. A 3D wall display had been developed to show the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the life of the island of Jura.

Pupils had also taken part in an information and communications technology (ICT) afternoon, identifying the next steps in their learning. Pupils' ICT skills and responsibility for learning had been further enhanced by the increased use of digital photography by pupils. Displays include a monthly "What's happening?" feature, with information and photographs produced by the pupils. Pupils had also taken responsibility for the preparation and mounting of displays, using various technologies to achieve a professional finish.

Increased responsibility for pupils in the life of the school had also been further enhanced. Senior pupils acted as buddies to the younger members of the school family. Pupils had taken additional responsibility for aspects of the lunchtime system. This had had a positive impact in terms of healthy eating.

### **3. Progress Towards the Main Points for Action**

The initial inspection report published in June 2005 identified four main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made with each of the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and other stakeholders.

#### **3.1 Improve pupils' attainment in aspects of English language, particularly at P1 to P3 stages.**

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

The teaching of reading and writing across the school had been reviewed. Staff had undertaken additional training in this area to ensure a more interactive and direct approach to teaching. At the early stages this had resulted in pupils being more actively involved in their learning. All pupils had more opportunities to practice their reading and writing skills across the curriculum. Pupils' ideas were used to develop motivating research topics. New ICT resources had been purchased to introduce and develop pupils' reading skills. Pupils demonstrated an increased enjoyment in reading for pleasure and now performed well in a greater variety of writing tasks.

#### **3.2 Ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning within environmental studies.**

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

Staff had reviewed the environmental studies programme and had implemented a revised rolling programme of well-structured learning experiences. The programme placed particular emphasis on the use of the local environment. Additional resources had been purchased to support this new programme. This programme had an increased focus on the development of pupils' enquiry and investigation skills.

The school had begun to develop increased opportunities for learning through active play at the early stages, in line with Curriculum for Excellence developments. The school plans to work closely with the pre-five unit to improve pupils' experiences at the early stage. Learning opportunities in environmental studies now offered pupils, at the early stage, an increased level of challenge and a more effective progression in their environmental education.

#### **3.3 Promote more opportunities for pupils to develop responsibility for their own learning.**

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

Personal learning planning was now well established, enabling pupils to have a shared ownership of their learning target. Target setting for individuals and groups had been incorporated into the weekly assemblies and future objectives and targets were regularly discussed. Pupils at all stages demonstrated an increased independence in their learning and assumed greater responsibility for organising their own tasks. This was being developed further by the introduction of learning logs for individual pupils.

### **3.4 Develop more rigorous approaches to monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching, including making better use of assessment information to plan tasks and activities appropriate to pupils' learning needs.**

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

The head teacher had adopted a systematic and rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching. Staff had a clear overview of the progress of individual pupils and used this information to plan appropriate tasks and activities which met pupils' needs. They worked closely together to support the development of self-evaluation skills. Staff made effective use of opportunities to discuss pupils' progress, share good practice and identify further experiences to enhance pupils' learning.

Through the development of personal learning planning, pupils were now confident in assessing their own progress on a regular basis, particularly in language, mathematics and personal and social development. These assessments were an integral part of planning to meet pupils' learning needs.

## **4. Conclusion**

The school, with the support of the education authority had made good progress overall in meeting the main points for action contained in the report of June 2005.

Community Services: Education will continue to monitor the work of the school as part of its procedures for ensuring quality.

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Argyll and Bute Council  
June 2007**