

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CUMNOCK AREA LOCAL COMMITTEE - 29 JANUARY 2004

INSPECTION OF STANDARDS AND QUALITY IN ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Members of the outcome from the recent inspection of St Patrick's Primary School, Auchinleck by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 St Patrick's Primary School was inspected in June 2003 as part of a national sample of primary education.

- 2.1.1 The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school at all stages. It evaluated how well pupils were performing, the effectiveness of the school and how well the school was managed.

- 2.1.2 HM Inspectors evaluated learning, teaching and attainment, examined pupils' work and interviewed staff and pupils. They assessed the school's processes for self-evaluation and development planning. There was a particular focus on attainment in English language, mathematics, and science within environmental studies.

- 2.1.3 Members of the inspection team analysed responses to questionnaires issued to all parents and staff and to a sample of pupils. A member of the inspection team also met the Chairperson of the School Board.

- 2.2 A report on the results of inspection was published by HMIE on 21 October 2003.

3. MAIN FINDINGS

- 3.1 The inspectors made a general evaluation of the performance of the school. Their judgement was that overall the school provided a very good experience for its pupils. The positive ethos pervaded all aspects of the life of the school. Pupils with different interests and abilities were encouraged successfully to raise their self-esteem and make progress in their learning. Staff were hard working, worked very well as a team and were very committed to the welfare of pupils. The school welcomed parents as partners in their children's education. Its well-organised approaches to planning for improvements, including curriculum review and assessment, should ensure that pupils' attainments are maintained and enhanced in future years.

- 3.2 In addition, a number of key strengths of the school were identified:-

- The very positive, inclusive ethos of the school and the focus on raising pupils' attainment.
- The head teacher's leadership and the very good teamwork among staff.
- The overall high quality of the teaching and the positive response of pupils to their learning.
- The whole-school approach to encouraging and supporting positive behaviour.
- The active partnerships with parents, the School Board and the wider community.
- The weekly assemblies, which consolidate the community life of the school.
- The school's approaches to quality assurance and planning for improvement.

3.3 In accordance with normal practice, HMIE also identified a number of main points for action:-

The school and education authority should act on the following recommendations:-

- The authority should proceed with planned improvements to the school building, and, working with external agencies, it should improve the school grounds.
- In mathematics, pupils should be given more opportunities to apply their skills in real situations and to record and evaluate how they had solved problems.
- The school should maintain its current high standards in delivering the curriculum and planning for improvements, with an overall focus on raising pupils' attainments.

4. ACTIONS FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT

4.1 The Head of Service: Quality Improvement has visited the school to discuss the report with the head teacher and staff. The purpose of the visit is to ensure that all understand their role in the follow-through to the inspection, and that staff are provided with a senior management view of the report itself. St Patrick's has also been visited by the Director of Educational and Social Services and Chair of the Education Committee in order to record appreciation for the hard work that has gone into producing such a positive evaluation.

4.2 In consultation with the link Quality Improvement Officer (QIO) the head teacher and staff will produce an action plan to overtake the points made in paragraph 3.3 above. The QIO will then work with the school to overtake the

contents of the action plan. In accordance with the procedures approved by the Education Committee, there will, in due course, be a follow through report published on partnerships between the school, Authority and HMIE.

5. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The accommodation issues will require consideration amongst the priorities of the Council's programme of capital expenditure.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that Members:-

- (i) record congratulations to the school in the successful completion of the HMIE inspection process; and
- (ii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

2 December 2003

GRS/GRS

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL

Members requiring further information should contact Graham Short, Head of Service: Quality Improvement, (01563-576089).

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