

**Back School
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar**

25 February 2003

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Inspection of Standards and Quality in Back School Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

1. Introduction

Back School was inspected in November 2002 as part of a national sample of primary and secondary education.

The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school at all stages. HM Inspectors evaluated learning, teaching and attainment, examined pupils' work and interviewed staff and pupils. In the primary department English language, Gàidhlig language, mathematics and social subjects were inspected. The subjects included in the inspection of the secondary department were English, mathematics, Gàidhlig and Gaelic (Learners), S1/S2 science and geography. HM Inspectors also evaluated the quality of support for pupils, including arrangements for the care and welfare of pupils and child protection, and aspects of guidance and support for learning. In evaluating how well the school and departments were managed, HM Inspectors assessed the school's processes for self-evaluation and development planning.

Members of the inspection team analysed responses to questionnaires issued to all parents. Members of the inspection team also met the chairperson of the School Board, local councillors and groups of parents.

Except where otherwise stated evaluations apply equally to the primary and secondary departments and to the Gaelic and English-medium classes.

2. The school

The school serves the village of Back and the surrounding rural area. At the time of the inspection the roll of the primary department was 123 including 54 in the Gaelic-medium classes. The roll of the secondary department was 59. At the end of S2, pupils transfer to the Nicolson Institute to continue their education.

Parents' views

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire or who met members of the inspection team were very positive about almost all aspects of the school.

Almost all thought that:

- staff made them feel welcome in the school;
- their children enjoyed being at the school and teachers set high standards for pupils' attainment;
- staff showed concern for the care and welfare of children and treated them fairly;
- parents' evenings were helpful and informative;
- school buildings were kept in good order; and
- the school was well led and had a good reputation in the community.

A small minority of parents felt they did not have a clear idea of the school's priorities for improving the education of pupils. A few parents thought that the school had not explained how they could support their children with their homework.

Ethos

Staff and pupils were very proud of their school and welcomed visitors warmly. Almost all pupils were well behaved, polite and friendly, and had very good relationships with staff. Teachers supported pupils very well.

Teachers were committed to improving pupils' attainment and in promoting an ethos of achievement. However, in some classes, particularly in the primary department, expectations of pupils' achievements were too low. Most teachers used praise effectively to motivate pupils.

Most pupils contributed to the work of the school through supporting other pupils, serving on a range of committees and fund-raising for charities. Pupils were fully involved in making decisions about improving the school through the recently appointed pupil council. They were treated fairly and had access to all of the school's activities.

Well-organised trips and an impressive range of lunchtime and after-school activities added considerably to pupils' experiences. Assemblies gave very good opportunities for religious observance. Attendance was in line with national levels.

School and community

The school had very good links with parents, carers and the wider community. Notable features included:

- a very supportive School Board;
- well established links between the school and the Nicolson Institute;
- regular meetings with parents to discuss their children's progress and development;
- regular, informative newsletters for parents and carers;
- a very good school website; and
- well-attended curricular information evenings for parents.

A notable feature was the Loch a Tuath News (LATN), a monthly community publication, which was sold at home and abroad. This contained information about current events in the school and updates on former pupils.

Extra-curricular sports events included badminton, dance, cross country running and a well-planned programme of football development activities for all pupils from all schools within the catchment area from P2 to S2. These events were very well supported and valued by the community.

Accommodation

Overall the quality of accommodation was good. A partially completed refurbishment programme had significantly improved the environment for learning and teaching. There were good social areas for all pupils. Throughout the school, impressive displays of pupils' work celebrated their creativity. Funds had been used very effectively to provide a very attractive and very well equipped information and communications technology (ICT) suite for the school. With help from the School Board, the school had introduced an effective traffic management system for the dropping off and picking up of pupils at the beginning and end of the school day. The school did not have an effective security system.

Staffing and resources

The school was very well staffed. There was a good balance of experience and expertise among staff, including music instructors. Non-teaching staff made highly valued contributions to the work of the school. In particular, the school secretary and the janitor provided exemplary support to staff and pupils. Canteen staff made an effective contribution by encouraging pupils to eat a healthy lunch and this was complimented by the 'healthy eating' school tuck shop. The supply of resources for learning and teaching was very good. They were effectively organised to ensure easy access by staff and pupils. The school library was undergoing extensive refurbishment and was soon to be re-opened as a multi-medium learning centre catering for the needs of

pupils from nursery to S2. Devolved finances were very effectively managed to provide additional resources, staff development opportunities and to improve aspects of the fabric of the building.

3. How well are pupils performing in the primary department?

English language

Overall, the quality of attainment in English language was good. Since 1999, the overall standards achieved by pupils in both reading and writing had risen significantly. At the early and middle stages almost all pupils had achieved appropriate national levels of attainment in *listening, talking, reading* and *writing*. The majority of pupils at the upper stages had achieved these levels. Pupils were making generally good progress in their coursework. Most pupils could write well, at appropriate length and for a variety of purposes. However, across the school, pupils' skills in group discussion were not sufficiently well developed. Pupils did not have a sound understanding of how writers achieved their effects.

Gàidhlig language

The overall quality of attainment in Gàidhlig language was good. Classwork was appropriately challenging and most pupils were making good progress. Most pupils were achieving appropriate national levels of attainment in *listening, talking, reading* and *writing*. Some were exceeding these levels in writing. At the early stages, Early Intervention strategies were used effectively to develop writing skills. At the middle stages effective use was made of ICT to develop story writing. Most pupils at the upper stages produced good pieces of extended writing.

Mathematics

The overall quality of attainment in mathematics was good. Almost all pupils at the early stages, and most at the middle and upper stages, were achieving appropriate national levels in *information handling, shape, position*

and movement, and number, money and measurement. Most pupils were making very good progress with their coursework. They had good skills in mental mathematics, and a good knowledge of shapes. They could use spreadsheets and other software packages to organise and display information. While they could solve a variety of mathematical problems, they were not sufficiently aware of the range of strategies that they could use.

Social subjects

The overall quality of attainment in social subjects was good. Most pupils at all stages had developed a good knowledge and understanding of the historical periods they had studied. By P7 they had developed a good understanding of historical sequence and the importance of historical evidence. Most pupils had a good knowledge of physical and human environments and understood how they changed over time. At all stages they showed a firm understanding of mapwork. Pupils at all stages used research skills effectively to obtain information in historical and geographical studies. At all stages they were developing an awareness of their role in caring for the environment. However, their overall awareness of issues concerning people in society was limited.

4. How well are pupils performing in the secondary department?

Overall quality of attainment

The overall quality of attainment was good at S1 and S2. Teachers worked hard to support pupils' learning and most had high expectations of what pupils could achieve. However, in a few classes some tasks were not sufficiently challenging for some pupils.

5. How well are the inspected secondary departments performing?

English

Attainment

The overall quality of attainment was very good. Pupils were making very good progress with appropriately challenging coursework. In recent years attainment in reading and writing had risen. Most S1 and S2 pupils were achieving appropriate national levels.

Courses

The quality of the S1/S2 course was very good. It gave very good opportunities to develop pupils' skills and confidence in listening, talking, reading and writing. Pupils were given appropriate opportunities to apply their learning in challenging and realistic contexts.

Learning and teaching

The quality of learning, teaching, meeting pupils' needs and assessment was very good. Teachers used a very good range of approaches such as teaching alongside colleagues, skilful questioning, demonstration and well-focused homework. Effective use of models of reading, writing and talk showed pupils what was expected and assisted them in improving their performance. They received clear and appropriate feedback, which enabled them to be fully involved in planning their own next steps in learning. Pupils were appropriately encouraged to word process their writing to assist them in redrafting. Pupils were attentive and interested in their work.

Management and quality assurance

The depute headteacher and acting principal teacher formed a very effective team. Together they had successfully reviewed provision and had put in place a series of planned improvements to strengthen pupils' experience further. However, priorities for improvement were not set out with sufficient clarity to ensure their effective implementation.

Priorities for action The development plan should set out more clearly how projects will be implemented and evaluated.

Gàidhlig and Gaelic (Learners)

Attainment The quality of attainment in Gàidhlig was generally very good. Coursework was challenging and pupils were performing well. They listened attentively and spoke with confidence. They read widely for enjoyment and produced reflective book reviews. Their writing was generally accurate and of a good length. Some imaginative writing was very effective. Almost all had a very good command of Gaelic grammar for their stage. Almost all pupils were achieving or exceeding appropriate national levels of attainment in listening, talking and reading and most were achieving them in writing. The overall quality of attainment in Gaelic learners was good. Pupils listened carefully and spoke, wrote and read well. Most were making good progress in their coursework although some tasks lacked sufficient challenge.

Courses The Gàidhlig course was very good. Whilst most aspects of the course for learners was very good, it did always fully meet the needs of some of the more able pupils.

Learning and teaching The quality of lessons was generally very good. Pupils were highly motivated and responded very well to imaginative teaching. Relationships in class were very positive. The department had established an effective assessment and reporting system. Pupils received detailed and helpful feedback on how to improve their work.

Management and quality assurance The depute headteacher and the acting principal teacher had jointly provided very good leadership in developing the curriculum in the Gaelic department. They effectively reviewed the progress of individual pupils and made good use of the information gained to improve

learning and teaching. They had identified a number of necessary improvements including a review of some aspects within the Gaelic learners' course. The department planned well for improvement but, it did not indicate clearly enough how projects would be carried out and evaluated.

Priorities for action The course for Gaelic learners should be revised to ensure appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils. The development plan should provide detailed information on how projects will be implemented and evaluated.

Mathematics

Attainment The overall quality of attainment was good and was improving. The majority of pupils at S1/S2 were achieving appropriate national levels of attainment. Almost all pupils were making very good progress with their appropriately demanding coursework. They were developing strategies to solve mathematical problems, and had used computers to organise and display information. However, the skills of some S2 pupils in mental mathematics had not been well developed, and this slowed their progress.

Courses The S1/S2 course was good. Useful links between mathematics and geography had been identified, particularly in the application of information handling. The course was being further improved through the identification of more resources for mental mathematics, problem-solving and enquiry, and ICT. There were plans to document the course more fully.

Learning and teaching The sole teacher managed her lessons very well. She explained clearly what pupils were required to do and questioned them effectively to test their understanding. Pupils responded well to some challenging tasks which required them to think independently. Their needs were generally well met. Tasks were varied and the teacher supported pupils well. Assessment information was

generally very well used to guide pupils' learning. Pupils had begun to record their own progress and to reflect on their strengths and development needs.

Management and quality assurance

During her short time in post, the sole teacher had managed the department well. She carefully evaluated her work and the experiences of pupils. She was making very good progress with a number of well-chosen developments. She now needed to audit the department's work more systematically to ensure that the improvement plan set out developments more clearly. There was also a need to clarify how developments would improve pupils' attainment.

Priorities for action

The department should continue to develop the S1/S2 course, and improve the development planning process in order to raise attainment further.

S1/S2 science

Attainment

The overall quality of attainment was good in science. Most pupils were making good progress in their coursework. Some were making very good progress. Pupils' skills in practical investigations were developing well.

Courses

The science teacher had produced a good science course with an appropriate focus on developing investigative skills. She had begun to include new areas of content in line with national advice to provide appropriate challenge for the more able pupils. There had been good use of the local environment. The teacher had worked with primary colleagues to ensure pupils' science experiences developed well from P1 to S2. This included a six week timetabled block for all P7 pupils from schools within the local cluster.

Learning and teaching

The quality of teaching was good. The science teacher used a wide range of teaching strategies. Effective use was made of direct, interactive teaching to introduce or

consolidate key points. Pupils' understanding was effectively developed through clear explanations and skilful questioning. Pupils were well motivated and worked safely when undertaking practical activities. However, tasks did not always provide sufficient challenge for the abler pupils. Homework was set regularly and carefully marked. Assessment was good and included a good start to the systematic assessment of investigative skills. It did not yet relate to a clear scale of attainment levels.

Management and quality assurance

The sole class teacher was very hard working and managed the science department very effectively. In evaluating her work in science, she had begun to make use of quality indicators to plan for improvement. The science development plan contained an appropriate range of priorities but it did not specify clearly enough how these would be implemented or their success evaluated.

Priorities for action

The science teacher should continue to develop the course to ensure that it contains appropriately challenging tasks for more able pupils. She should continue to develop assessment in science and ensure that it was based on appropriate levels of attainment. The department development plan should specify more clearly how targets would be implemented and how their success would be evaluated.

Geography

Attainment

The overall quality of attainment in S1/S2 was good. Most pupils performed well in their coursework. Pupils were developing very good mapwork and enquiry skills. In some topics there was insufficient challenge for abler pupils.

Courses

The S1/S2 course was well designed and offered pupils a good balance of physical and human geography. The course had a strong emphasis on Scottish geography and on the development of enquiry, fieldwork and mapwork

skills. Good links were made to other areas of the curriculum. The course needed more focus on the study of global and environmental issues. Very good use was made of ICT to support pupils' learning.

Learning and teaching

Lessons were very well planned. High quality explanation and questioning by the teacher set appropriately high expectations for the quality of pupils' work. Pupils responded enthusiastically to the brisk pace of learning and were well motivated by stimulating lessons. The teacher set appropriate homework regularly and used praise effectively to encourage pupils in their work. Assessment and reporting procedures were generally good but needed to focus more on assessing pupils' skills. Pupils were provided with regular helpful feedback on their progress.

Management and quality assurance

The sole teacher of geography had a lively enthusiasm for the subject and had successfully communicated this to her pupils. She managed the department very effectively and had identified appropriate priorities for improving the department and was making good progress in implementing them.

Priorities for action

The department should continue to develop the S1/S2 course, particularly to ensure that able pupils have a wider range of challenging activities. Greater emphasis should be placed on the systematic assessment of pupils' skills.

6. How good is the curriculum?

Primary department

Overall, the quality of the curriculum was generally good. Although it was designed to take account of local and national guidelines, there were one or two weaknesses in some areas of learning. The school recognised that it did not yet have fully effective systems to ensure appropriate time allocations for all curriculum areas. Pupils at P6 and P7 studied French.

English language	The programme for English language was fair overall. There were clear strengths such as the consistent attention given to developing basic language skills. However, further guidance was required to ensure appropriate emphasis on developing skills of discussion, reading for information and structuring pieces of writing.
Gàidhlig language	The programme for Gàidhlig language was good overall. Appropriate attention was given to most aspects of listening, talking, reading and writing. There was a good emphasis on developing fluency and skills in grammar, and pupils were encouraged to produce some pieces of extended writing. However, pupils had insufficient opportunities to discuss texts that they had read.
Mathematics	The programme for mathematics was fair overall. While it gave generally good coverage to most aspects of mathematics, there was an over reliance on published resources. Staff needed clearer guidance on what pupils were expected to learn, and when. The programme did not include a consistent approach to teaching strategies for solving mathematical problems.
Social subjects	Overall, the social subjects programme was fair. It gave good attention to aspects of history and geography and to the study of Scotland and the local area. Good attention had been given to the systematic development of pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, insufficient emphasis was given to people in society. Greater attention was needed to develop pupils' skills more systematically from P1 to P7.
Environmental studies	A useful start had been made to revising the environmental studies programme. This included the introduction of a new science programme and a clearer focus on aspects of history and geography in some topics. Good use was made of visitors and visits to places of interest to enhance pupils' learning. Overall, the programme was good. It provided pupils with a

sufficiently broad and balanced experience in science and technology, and in most aspects of social subjects.

Secondary department

The overall quality of the curriculum in the secondary department was good. The S1/S2 curriculum was broad and offered pupils a good balance of subjects. Most subjects had taken account of 5-14 guidelines to ensure that pupils could reach appropriate levels of attainment.

7. How good is learning and teaching?

Most of the teaching observed in the primary department was good or very good. However, the overall impact of teaching on pupils' attainment was limited by the lack of clear programmes and coherent approaches to planning and assessment.

Teachers had not yet developed a common approach to planning across the school. Forward plans did not always show clearly what pupils would learn or how their progress would be assessed. Teachers used praise well to reward and encourage pupils. They employed direct teaching methods effectively, explaining new work carefully and taking care to involve all pupils. Homework was regularly set but was not always sufficiently challenging. Almost all pupils were well motivated and worked well in class. Pupils' needs were generally well met but some activities did not provide enough challenge for some pupils. Whilst the school had made a good start to reviewing its approaches to assessment and to monitoring pupils' attainment they were not yet sufficiently systematic in all classes.

Parents were encouraged to approach the primary department to discuss their children's progress and there was a good flow of informal communication between home and school. While written reports to parents provided generally clear and helpful information, some comments did not focus enough on the progress pupils

had made. The senior teacher of support for learning provided helpful twice-yearly reports for pupils receiving additional help.

In the secondary department most teachers used a good blend of teaching approaches, gave clear explanations, questioned pupils carefully and set regular homework. Some very good direct teaching included effective dialogue between teachers and pupils. Most pupils were well motivated and worked hard on the tasks given. However, in some classes, a few tasks were not always sufficiently challenging and the pace of learning was sometimes too slow. Some departments used very effective approaches in assessing pupils' progress and attainment and this should be extended to all departments. Reports to parents were generally informative but the use of different attainment scales across subjects could be confusing.

8. How well are pupils supported?

Care and welfare

The school had very good arrangements for promoting the care and welfare of pupils. The commitment of staff ensured that pupils' personal, social and emotional needs were well met. There were effective arrangements for child protection and for dealing with bullying and situations where pupils' health might be at risk. Very good attention was given to health promotion throughout the school.

Personal and social development in the primary department

Arrangements for developing pupils' personal and social skills were good. Pupils' confidence and independence were effectively developed through a range of school and extra-curricular activities. There were regular opportunities for pupils to show care and consideration for people in the local community. The school was in the process of creating a coherent programme for personal and social development and had recognised the need to assess pupils' progress. The health education programme

paid good attention to aspects of personal safety, healthy eating and drugs education. However, it did not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about responsible personal relationships. Staff now needed to consult parents more effectively about planned topics and key classroom resources.

Support for learning

Arrangements for support for learning in the primary and secondary departments were very good. In consultation with class teachers, the support for learning teachers provided effective support for groups and individuals. Effective procedures were in place to identify pupils in need of support and to review their progress. Individual and group plans contained clear learning targets, which allowed pupils' progress to be monitored effectively. A range of external agencies provided very helpful advice to staff on aspects of meeting pupils' needs. The school provided effective support for pupils with special educational needs including well-structured individualised educational programmes (IEPs) for some pupils. The school and the education authority managed Records of Needs very effectively.

The headteacher had overall responsibility for support for learning. He provided helpful advice and support. The senior teacher for support for learning carried out the day-to-day management and delivery of support for learning. She was a very effective practitioner who provided high quality support to pupils. The development plan was good. It contained an appropriate set of targets but needed clearer criterion for success. Very good progress had been made in implementing previous plans.

Guidance in the secondary department

The very good quality of pastoral care included effective arrangements for supporting pupils' transfer from primary to secondary school. Guidance teachers knew their pupils well as individuals from teaching them in personal and social education (PSE) lessons and through individual interviews. Pupils responded positively to the

support they received. Good procedures were in place for alerting staff and parents when individual pupils' progress was causing concern.

Pupils received very good curricular and vocational advice. There were well-established links with the Nicolson Institute in Stornoway to support pupils' curricular choices at the transition from S2 to S3. A specialist careers adviser provided good support and pupils had ready access to ICT to research information about careers and post-school educational opportunities.

Staff had successfully reviewed their strategies for monitoring pupils' progress and attainment. They acted promptly when they received 'early warning' reports from subject departments on the progress of individual pupils. They now planned to set measurable targets for individual pupils and to monitor more rigorously the progress towards these targets.

The PSE programme was generally well designed and relevant to the needs of pupils. It covered a range of issues, including education about drugs and aspects of personal relationships. A recent audit had evaluated how other aspects of PSE were addressed in different departments, with a view to implementing a more coherent programme. Steps should be taken to ensure that parents are fully consulted on all aspects of the revised programme. The school recognised that it needed to adopt a more systematic approach to evaluating the success of the programme. Whilst reports to parents contained an overview comment from guidance staff, there was no reference to pupils' progress or attainment in PSE.

The very effective guidance team comprised the headteacher and the depute headteacher. They had begun to evaluate some aspects of their work and had taken part in a good range of relevant staff development activities. The development plan for guidance contained appropriate priorities, but it did not specify in sufficient detail how

targets would be achieved and success judged. Good progress had been made in implementing previous plans. Approaches to self-evaluation were generally good.

Priorities for action The school should now further develop its programmes of health education and PSE from P1 to S2 and monitor their implementation. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' progress and attainment in PSE should be improved. Guidance staff should report to parents on pupils' progress in PSE.

9. How well is the school managed?

Overall management and leadership

The headteacher had been in post for less than two years and had introduced a number of useful initiatives. These included the refurbishment of the school and a restructuring of the school day. He provided effective leadership for the school and was very highly regarded by staff, parents, pupils and the wider community. He knew his school well, had an inclusive style of management and had a clear vision for the school's future. He had developed a number of approaches for ensuring quality, which were beginning to prove effective in the secondary department. He now needed to develop similar approaches within the primary department. The recently appointed deputy headteacher provided very good assistance to the headteacher and staff. He had worked closely with the headteacher to further improve quality through classroom visits and team teaching. Together they had put in place a suitable range of policies on the curriculum and on care and welfare. There were arrangements to ensure all staff were fully involved in the systematic review of these policies.

The assistant headteacher was hard working and strongly committed to the primary department. However, she needed to make more effective use of her time to give a clear direction to the department. In particular she should focus on improving key programmes of study. Her

regular visits to classes gave her a good knowledge of the work of the department. With support from the rest of the management team she should now develop more systematic approaches to monitoring, evaluating and improving the overall quality of provision.

The acting principal teacher (curriculum) made a significant contribution to many aspects of the life of the school. She worked closely and very effectively with the depute headteacher. Together they were making good progress in improving pupils' learning in English language and Gaelic in the secondary department.

The senior teachers fulfilled their remits effectively and gave valuable support to their colleagues.

Staff review and development

All staff were very positive about the wide ranging and innovative staff development opportunities which had been arranged and provided by the school. These activities were linked effectively to development plan priorities. There had been few training opportunities for subject specialist staff provided by the education authority. The headteacher and depute had, between them, interviewed all teaching and non-teaching members of the staff individually to discuss their development needs, and all members of staff had had their work formally reviewed. Very good arrangements were in place to record and evaluate staff development opportunities. The overall quality of staff review and development was very good.

Planning for improvement

The school's aims were appropriate and clearly stated. The school development plan contained well-judged priorities for improvement, which were reflected in departmental plans. It included an evaluation of the progress of the previous plan and was produced in consultation with staff and the School Board. However, links to local and national priorities, success criteria and implementation strategies needed to be stated more clearly. Good progress had been made in implementing

projects in previous school and departmental development plans. There were clear signs of improvements in pupil attainment. The overall quality of planning for improvement was good.

Approaches to improving quality

The school's arrangements for evaluating the quality of its work were generally good. Following extensive consultation with pupils, parents and the wider community, the headteacher had identified the need to re-model the school day. This would make more effective use of time for teaching, and for sporting and other extra-curricular activities. Formative assessment techniques were being introduced throughout the school as part of a plan to improve attainment at all stages. Members of the senior management team had made a start to monitoring learning and teaching. However, the evaluation of provision in some key areas, such as the quality of programmes in the primary department, and the criteria for successful improvement, had not been sufficiently rigorous.

10. How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, the school had many strengths and catered well for the pupils within a caring and supportive atmosphere. Under the clear direction of the headteacher, staff worked effectively as a team and all had a clear commitment to further improving the work of the school. Very strong partnerships had been developed with parents, and the school played an important role at the heart of the local community. Although most pupils reached good standards of attainment, some were making slower progress because of weaknesses in programmes. The senior management team recognised that there was a need to further improve the system of quality assurance and to focus more on managing aspects of the school's work. The school should build on its strong foundations through improving programmes of work and by monitoring pupils' progress more closely.

Key strengths

- The hard work and commitment of all staff, and the quality of pastoral care.
- Good and sometimes very good teaching.
- The provision of resources, particularly with regard to ICT.
- The wide range of extra-curricular activities including music, sport, dance and educational visits.
- The school's very good reputation and its commitment to maintaining strong links with the community.
- Management of devolved finances.

Main points for action

In addition to addressing the priorities for action identified in this report, the school and education authority should act on the following recommendations.

- The education authority should ensure controlled access to the buildings.
- The school should address the weaknesses in the primary curriculum and programmes of work identified in this report.
- The school should improve procedures for planning, use of assessment information and monitoring of pupils' progress.
- The school should continue to develop more rigorous and systematic procedures for quality assurance.

HM Inspectors have asked the school and education authority to prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents and carers. In liaison with the education authority, HM Inspectors will monitor progress to ensure improvement in line with the main findings of the report. They will arrange for further progress reports and visits to the school if necessary and will inform parents and carers of the outcomes of these when they occur.

D M Martin
HM Inspector
on behalf of HM Chief Inspector
Northern Division

25 February 2003

See Quality Indicator data overleaf.

Appendix

Except where otherwise stated evaluations apply equally to the primary and secondary departments and to the Gaelic and English-medium classes.

Indicators of quality

We judged the following to be *very good*

- Climate and relationships
- Equality and fairness
- Partnership with parents, the School Board and the community
- School management of finances
- Links with others
- Staffing
- The teaching process in the secondary department
- Pupils learning experiences in the secondary department
- Provision of resources
- Pastoral care
- Learning support
- Implementation of legislation relating to SEN and disabilities
- Curriculum and vocational guidance
- Staff review and development

We judged the following to be *good*

- Expectations and promoting achievement
 - Accommodation and facilities
 - Organisation and use of resources and space
 - The teaching process in the primary department
 - Pupils learning experiences in the primary department
 - Structure of the curriculum
 - Monitoring progress and achievement in the secondary department
 - Meeting pupils' needs
 - Assessment as part of teaching in the secondary department
 - Reporting pupils' progress
 - Leadership of the school
 - Effectiveness and deployment of staff with additional responsibilities
 - Self-evaluation
-
- Planning for improvement

- Aims and policy making

We judged the following to be *fair*

- Courses and programmes in the primary department
- Quality of teachers' planning in the primary department
- Assessment as part of teaching in the primary department
- Monitoring progress and achievement in the primary department

We judged the following to be *unsatisfactory*

- No aspects were found to be in this category

Quality of lessons observed

HMI also evaluated the quality of the lessons observed. The overall quality of lessons in the primary department was very good in 37% of cases, good in 41% and fair in 13%. There were no unsatisfactory lessons.

The overall quality of lessons in the secondary department was very good in 42% of cases and good in 58%. There were no fair or unsatisfactory lessons.

How can you contact us?

Copies of this report have been sent to the headteacher and school staff, the Director of Education, local councillors and appropriate Members of the Scottish Parliament. Subject to availability, further copies may be obtained free of charge from HM Inspectorate of Education, Longman House, 28 Longman Road, Inverness IV1 1SF, or by telephoning 01463 253115. Copies are also available on our web site: www.hmie.gov.uk

Should you wish to comment on or make a complaint about any aspect of the inspection or about this report, you should write in the first instance to Bill Maxwell, HMCI at HM Inspectorate of Education, Wellgate House (Level 5), The Wellgate, Dundee, DD1 2DB. A copy of our complaints procedure is available from that office and on our website.

If you are still dissatisfied, you can contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman directly or through your member of the Scottish Parliament. The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government Departments and Agencies. She will not normally consider your complaint before the HMIE complaints procedure has been used. Instead, she will usually ask you to give us the chance to put matters right if we can.

Complaints to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman must be submitted within 12 months of the date of publication of this report.

The Ombudsman can be contacted at:

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