



QUALITY DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL REVIEW

STENHOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL

AUGUST 2007

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THE SCHOOL IN CONTEXT

Stenhouse Primary School is a non-denominational primary school built in 1930 which serves the area of west Edinburgh. The catchment area comprises of mainly local authority housing. A number of families are supported by social services.

Stenhouse Primary School has 15 classrooms. The school building also includes a physical education (PE) hall, an information communications technology (ICT) room, a resource room, a dining hall/PE hall, a support for learning room, a speech and language therapy room and a music room. The school grounds have two outside store rooms, four playgrounds and a storage shed.

The current school roll is 345. There are 15 classes in the school.

Twenty five district pupils enrolled in P1 in August 2006 and 29 district pupils enrolled elsewhere. There were also 15 non-district pupils enrolled in P1.

The absence rate for 2005 -2006 was 22 half days per pupil. This compares with authority and national averages of 20 and 19 respectively. There were 10 formal exclusions during the period.

The headteacher (HT) is supported by two deputy headteachers (DHTs). There are visiting teachers for French, cello and Visiting Teaching and Support Services.

The pupil teacher ratio is 14:1. In addition, 18 support staff are allocated to a range of whole-school responsibilities.

The HT and all members of the teaching and support staff have entered the professional review and development and performance review and development schemes.

The pupil unit cost for 2005 -2006 is £3104, compared to authority and national averages of £3077 and £3241 respectively. There is a parent teacher association (PTA).

PUPIL ATTAINMENT

National assessment in reading, writing and mathematics is fully established at all stages. The school's current performance in relation to national 5 -14 attainment is:

	2004	2005	2006
Reading	55%	68%	61%
Writing	48%	61%	58%
Mathematics	55%	65%	63%

Nine pupils, six of whom have provision within a Record of Needs, have been referred to psychological services.

REVIEW PROCEDURES

Stenhouse Primary School was reviewed by a team from the Quality Development and Neighbourhood Management Groups of the Children and Families Department during April 2007. The review was based on the school's own standards and quality (S&Q) report for session 2006 -2007. This was considered by the team to form an acceptable basis for review.

The review programme based on the S&Q report comprised two key areas:

- ✿ learning and teaching;
- ✿ ethos;

plus the authority theme:

- ✿ continuity and progression in learning including transitions.

The review team considered statements made by the school about two key areas in the S&Q report, along with the authority theme, and made their evaluation on the basis of evidence provided by the school and their own

observations. The results of their findings are given below as a commentary on the school's report.

In order to make their evaluation, the team consulted a number of school documents, including the school improvement plan, interviewed samples of pupils, staff and parents, and observed learning and teaching. In total, 17 lessons were observed. A questionnaire was issued to a sample of parents.

Sixty questionnaires were sent to parents of school pupils and 20 were returned.

Fifty questionnaires were sent to nursery class parents and 12 were returned.

PARENTS'/CARERS' VIEWS

All parents considered the school to be well led and were confident that if their child was having difficulty he/she would be helped.

Almost all parents felt their child was treated fairly, that they were encouraged to work to the best of his/her ability and were satisfied with the homework they received. Teachers dealt effectively with bad behaviour and pupils were generally well behaved.

Most parents felt the teacher really knew their child as an individual and that the school was good at explaining its work.

The majority of parents said that they got regular, accurate and helpful information about their child's progress in school work.

All parents of pupils in the nursery class considered the school to be well led, felt their child was encouraged to work to the best of his/her ability and would be helped if he/she was having difficulty.

FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW

1 LEARNING AND TEACHING

The review team agreed with the following statements from the school's S&Q report:

- ❖ Teachers in every class use a wide range of formative assessment strategies to very good effect.
- ❖ Classrooms provide a very attractive and motivating learning environment.
- ❖ Teachers consistently share learning intentions and success criteria with pupils.
- ❖ There are regular opportunities for pupils to think and talk about learning.
- ❖ There is effective planning and delivery of carefully differentiated work to suit the wide ability range in each class.

Overall learning and teaching was very good with some excellent aspects.

Strengths in learning and teaching

Learning and teaching in the nursery class was of a very high standard. The children had very good opportunities for choice and staff planning ensured a good balance between chosen play and adult led activities.

Nursery staff demonstrated skilled interaction with the children and used effective questioning and appropriate intervention to support children's learning.

Teaching approaches were well matched to pupils' learning needs. A range of formative assessment strategies, including peer and self-assessment were evident at all stages enabling pupils to talk about and evaluate their learning.

Tasks and activities were well matched to the needs of individual pupils with appropriate resources and learning and teaching approaches to support the learning of pupils.

Teacher pupil interaction was of a very high standard and pupils' contributions were

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encouraged and valued. Praise permeated the work of the school.

Support for learning was making a very positive impact on children's development. Learning assistants, nursery nurses and support for learning teachers made significant contributions in supporting the individual needs of a number of pupils ensuring they achieved their next steps in learning.

Commendably, nursery evaluation of long term planning and next steps focused on the process of teaching and the activities provided.

An appropriate range of formal and informal assessment procedures were employed in making judgements about pupils' progress.

Areas for development in learning and teaching

The school should further develop the personal learning planning process to include the identification of next steps in learning in English language and mathematics.

The school should continue to share good practice across the school.

2 ETHOS

The review team agreed with the following statements from the school's S&Q report:

- ✿ Staff and pupil morale is high.
- ✿ The standard of pupil behaviour is very high.
- ✿ Staff expectations are suitably demanding and pupils are well motivated in class.
- ✿ Many opportunities are used to celebrate success and this is evident in all areas of the school.
- ✿ A sense of equality and fairness permeates the daily life of the school.
- ✿ There is a strong pupil council and PTA which make an effective contribution to the life of the school.

Overall ethos was very good with excellent aspects.

Strengths in ethos

The atmosphere in the school was welcoming, calm and very positive. Pupils, staff and parents identified strongly with and had a sense of pride in the school. The quality of relationships between pupils, staff and parents was excellent.

The morale of staff and pupils and level of commitment to the school was very high.

There was a large number of opportunities for pupils to be involved in decision-making and take an active role in the life of the school including playground activity leaders, buddies, school shop staff and Junior Road Safety Officers. Pupils willingly assumed positions of responsibility. There was a very effective pupil council which made a valuable contribution to the work of the school. Commendably staff gave generously of their time to support these opportunities.

Appropriate use of praise permeated all aspects of school life and all staff successfully promoted a strong ethos of achievement throughout the school.

The school had appropriate policies in place to promote equality and fairness. These were understood by all and had helped create an environment in which pupils, staff and visitors felt valued, safe and secure.

There were regular opportunities to celebrate success. Rewards for learning and social and behavioural achievements were attainable by all pupils.

The quality of display around the school was excellent. The development of the garden was a commendable feature.

The school has made positive contributions to supporting a range of local, national and

international charities. There were strong international links from which the whole school community benefited.

The HT and DHT provided excellent support for the positive behaviour programme. Behaviour throughout the school was excellent. Pupils were polite and respectful to adults and cared for each other. This provided strong support for learning and the building of pupil confidence.

The HT and DHT maintained a high profile within the school and with parents and contributed significantly to engendering a warm and positive school environment. The business manager, service support officer, clerical staff, learning assistants and nursery nurses all made a valuable contribution to the welcoming ethos of the school.

Parents were confident that the school was well led and that the school had an excellent reputation in the community.

Areas for development in ethos

The school should further develop a wider range of effective methods of informing parents on the curriculum and how to support their child in his/her learning.

The school should further develop opportunities for the pupil council and other pupil forums to communicate their work through parent newsletters and the school website.

3 CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION IN LEARNING INCLUDING TRANSITIONS

The review team agreed with the following statements from the school's S&Q report:

- ✿ Overall the breadth and balance of the curriculum is very good.
- ✿ There are very good systems in place to improve attainment, in part these are in the areas of support for learning and individualised educational programmes (IEPs).

- ✿ There is effective planning and delivery of carefully differentiated work to suit the wide ability range in each class.
- ✿ Very good arrangements are in place to support transition at all stages.

Overall continuity and progression was good with some very good aspects.

Strengths in continuity and progression in learning including transitions

Home to nursery transition was well structured and planned to ensure a smooth induction experience for the children. Commendably good partnership arrangements had been developed with Stenhouse Children and Family Centre and the local playgroups.

The nursery to P1 transition programme was very well organised and supportive to both children and parents. There were a number of carefully planned and innovative activities in place to prepare the children for the primary department.

Very good use was made of baseline assessment testing in mathematics and language to provide the most appropriate learning opportunities for each pupil.

Courses and programmes had breadth and balance across the various elements giving full consideration to local and national guidelines and were fully in keeping with school aims.

An appropriate range of approaches to assessment was employed to make judgements about progress.

There were strong links and targeted use of a range of external services to meet pupil needs.

Regular meetings took place between the HT, DHT and class teachers to review the content of forward plans and monitor pupils' progress and attainment.

Transition arrangements for pupils in the speech and language classes were very well structured.

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There were excellent arrangements in place to support the integration of pupils in the speech and language classes into appropriate curricular areas in mainstream.

Pupils benefited greatly from an excellent P7 -S1 transition programme. This provided structured opportunities for the sharing of key information with staff across sectors and included a number of planned programmes which took place throughout the year. There were strong pastoral and curricular links with Tynecastle High School. The cluster Assessment is for Learning programme had developed shared learning and teaching approaches across primary and secondary sectors. These have had a positive impact on pupils' learning and supported the transition between P7 and S1.

The school has linked with other schools in the cluster and had made a very positive contribution to the cluster improvement plan.

Areas for development in continuity and progression in learning including transitions

The school should formalise arrangements for joint planning to ensure continuity and progression in learning at all stages.

The school should streamline the processes within forward planning, assessment and recording of pupil learning to ensure pupils make good progress towards identified next steps.

SUMMARY

Commendable features

- ❖ The commitment to the school of the headteacher and depute headteacher.
- ❖ The quality of relationships between staff, pupils and parents.
- ❖ The very high standards of behaviour demonstrated by pupils throughout the school.

- ❖ The purposeful and positive learning environment to which all staff contribute.
- ❖ The transition arrangements between the nursery class and P1, from P7 -S1 and for pupils in the speech and language classes.
- ❖ The valuable contribution of all support staff to all aspects of school life.

Areas for development by the school

- ❖ The school should further develop the personal learning planning process to include the identification of next steps in learning in English language and mathematics.
- ❖ The school should further develop a wider range of effective methods of informing parents on the curriculum and how to support their child in his/her learning.
- ❖ The school should formalise arrangements for joint planning to ensure continuity and progression in learning at all stages.
- ❖ The school should streamline the processes within forward planning, assessment and recording of pupil learning to ensure pupils make good progress towards identified next steps.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the school's S&Q report is a very good reflection of the current development position.

The school will be supported to produce an action plan to meet the main recommendations in this report.

Examples of good practice identified in the commendable features will be recorded to enable their wider dissemination across the authority.

