

PAIBLE SCHOOL



STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT



MAY 2009

The School

Paible School is a 5 – 14 school which serves the community of North Uist, Berneray and Grimsay. The primary department serves the village of Paible and the surrounding rural area in North Uist. Its secondary department provides education from S1 to S2 for all pupils living on the island and for those living in Berneray and Grimsay. During session 2008/2009 the school roll comprised 73 pupils and the teaching complement was 10 full-time equivalent including those designated to support pupils with additional needs. There are three associated primary schools, including Paible Primary. The others are Lochmaddy and Carinish. Paible School is an integral part of the community both educationally and socially.

School Aims

The aims of the school are to:

- ensure a broad and balanced curriculum that provides young people with the best possible learning opportunities and experiences.
- ensure that all pupils are able to realise their potential through the promotion and recognition of achievement and excellence.
- provide the highest quality of learning and teaching experiences that enable pupils to enjoy their education and develop positive attitudes towards learning.
- provide effective support systems for all pupils which promote personal and social development and underpin academic achievement.
- provide a welcoming, safe and caring environment in which each pupil is valued and supported.
- ensure that the school's promoted staff provide high quality leadership, management and support.
- improve the quality of educational experiences for pupils through a programme of continuing professional development for all staff.
- build and maintain effective partnerships between the school and its parental body, external support agencies and its wider community.
- equip pupils with the foundation skills, attitudes and expectations required to prosper in a changing society and to encourage citizenship, enterprise, creativity and sustainability.

How Evidence Was Gathered

The main ways we have gathered evidence for this report are:

- regular visits to classes by management
- analysis of pupils attainment in coursework and National Assessments
- use of quality indicators in HGIOS part 3
- annual departmental reviews and reports
- management links with departments and staff
- pupil council meetings and discussions
- development plan progress meetings
- professional review and development
- parent and pupil questionnaires
- reviewing school policies
- evaluation of termly plans by promoted staff
- feedback from Parent Council



Improvements In Performance

Overall attainment at Paible School is good with pupils making very good progress from their prior levels of attainment. The quality of attainment in English language and Mathematics is good. The three year averages (2006 – 2008) for primary pupils attaining the appropriate levels in reading, writing and mathematics were above the authority averages. Baseline data correlate very well with the attainment levels of individual pupils. The three year averages (2006 – 2008) for S2 in reading, writing and mathematics were above the authority averages and again baseline data correlate very well with the attainment of individual pupils. There are no significant gender issues. The overall quality of attainment in Gaidhlig is good. The small numbers attending the Gaelic medium class make it difficult to identify trends but results in National Tests, NFER and CAT data indicate that pupils are achieving their potential. Support for learning is provided mainly within class therefore ensuring that pupils with additional needs are included and are exposed to similar learning experiences. Ongoing evaluation shows that priorities in the School Improvement Plan, which take cognisance of local and national initiatives, have led to an improvement in pupils' achievements, well being and self esteem. Pupils contribute enthusiastically to the life of the school and the wider community. They participate in many extra-curricular activities and the school has a very good record in athletics. The limited financial resources are carefully directed to priorities which aim to improve attainment for all our learners. The school is dutiful towards the implementation of statutory requirements, legislation and codes of practice.

Please note that attainment statistics for June 2009 will be available as an appendix to this report by September 30th 2009.

NEXT STEPS

- ensure that robust procedures are in place for monitoring and supporting the attainment of Reading, Writing and Maths.
- continue to closely monitor the progress of all pupils.
- ensure continuation of effective use of CAT scores in target setting process.
- improve consistency in the teaching of numeracy and literacy across learning.

Impact on learners, parents, carers and families

Classroom observation shows that pupils are well motivated and keen participants in their own learning. Young learners take responsibility for their own learning and have the confidence to seek out appropriate resources and ask for assistance as required. Feedback is positive and constructive, highlighting to pupils progress made, strengths and next steps in learning. The Pupil Council and Schools Nutrition Action Group meet regularly to discuss the views of its peers and to take part in the school's decision making process. All pupils feel safe, respected, included and valued. The recently formed Parent Council has been very active in the life of the school and parents are very satisfied with the quality of education their children receive. Our open door policy makes parents very welcome and they are satisfied that all their concerns are listened to and effectively dealt with. Parents meetings are very well supported and recent open afternoons and evenings were very well attended. Parents appreciated the opportunity of observing their children at work in the classroom. Support is given to parents of Gaelic medium pupils through regular after school meetings.

NEXT STEPS

- develop strategies for the involvement of parents in their children's classroom learning.
- further develop independent learning
- further develop the role of the Pupil Council and Parent Council.
- redesign reporting format to Parents.

Impact on staff

Staff have a clear and shared understanding of the school's vision, values and aims and are committed to the delivery of a high quality educational experience to each individual pupil. Our staff development record clearly shows that all staff readily engage in continuing professional development to enhance pupils learning and attainment. Staff are fully consulted and involved in decision making. Staff work effectively as individuals or in teams and make excellent contributions to the life of the school. All staff engage annually with PRD to improve their skills and thereby provide better education for pupils.

NEXT STEPS

- Encourage all staff to take on further leadership roles in a variety of areas of school life.

Delivery of education

The overall structure of the curriculum is very good, with breadth and balance and delivered in both the medium of Gaidhlig and English in the case of the Primary Department.

In the Secondary Department flexibility is used to increase curricular provision in Gaelic and to provide additional time in Mathematics and Literacy. The primary reading programme has been reviewed and revised to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' reading skills from P1 to P7 and a new spelling programme has been introduced in the GM classes.

The ICT programme in S1-2 is well established and there is good use of ICT across the curricular areas in Primary. Good use of smartboards across the school has led to significant improvements in the range and quality of interactive teaching from P1 to S2 and active learning opportunities have further enriched pupils' experiences. Pupils and staff have recently been introduced to Glow technology to enhance their learning and teaching.

Enterprise and Citizenship are well integrated and the school has won gold awards in both primary and secondary for enterprise activities. The school has also recently achieved Bronze Award in the Eco-schools initiative.

Pupils' curricular experiences have been further enhanced through cross-curricular learning and teaching and by linking the outcomes and experiences to the four capacities in Curriculum for Excellence e.g. whole school project on "The Sea" which enabled the children to learn together using the local environment and community.

The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and use a variety of approaches to engage them in learning. The school has been actively involved in Assessment is for Learning and in the best examples, teachers share learning intentions very clearly with pupils and summarise with them what they have learned. Questioning is used well to extend pupils' thinking and assess their understanding. In some cases re-inforcement of purposes of lessons and instructions could be helped by supplementing oral explanations and instructions with written versions. Teachers are well-organised and resources required for lessons are, for the most part, readily available. Newly acquired resources for French have made pupils learning more relevant and enjoyable. Teachers are actively engaged with pupils for the duration of lessons, and most lessons are appropriately challenging with evidence of the matching of tasks to pupils learning needs. A range of strategies are in place to meet the differing needs of learners with differing abilities and aptitudes. This includes differentiation of classwork, assistance in class from the support for learning teacher and input from classroom auxiliaries. Where necessary IEP's and CSPs are carefully prepared and pupils are achieving the targets through joint working between support for learning teacher, class teacher and auxiliary staff. Parents, pupils and partner agencies are actively involved in review meetings and all pupils with ASN are recorded on a database which is weekly updated.

The quality of pupils' learning is good overall. Pupils generally respond well to their teachers and work well with each other. Pupils are able to work on set tasks together and with minimum supervision. Pupils are confident in their use of ICT. The overall pace of learning is good. Overall, pupils show that they are capable of taking on increased responsibility for their learning. The use of learning logs in the primary department and some secondary departments has encouraged children to reflect on and evaluate their own learning. This process highlights weaknesses, strengths, successes and action points and enables us to visually reflect and collectively discuss ways forward.

The quality of pastoral care in the school is very good. Staff work well as a team to provide appropriate support for pupils. The school has used the authority guidelines on care and welfare to draw up helpful school policies. Anti-bullying procedures include good advice for parents in the form of a leaflet.

The school's health education programme promotes the development of a healthy lifestyle and gives due attention to issues relating to substance misuse and personal relationships. Health & Fitness |Personal Learning Planning is now in place within the primary department. The school recently achieved a health promoting schools gold award.

Pupils in both Primary and Secondary have won awards for enterprise. Their awareness of issues relating to conservation and the environment have been raised through engaging in the Eco-schools initiative. All staff and pupils are now actively involved in both whole school and sub group activity.

Pupils' personal and social development is supported by a good range of extra curricular activities, during the school day and after school.

The PSE programme in S1/S2 is good. The overall quality of guidance, including curricular and vocational guidance, is good with input from Careers Scotland. There are very good arrangements in place for supporting pupils at key transition stages ensuring that receiving schools are aware of the strengths and development needs of transferring pupils. There are also good curricular links with associated schools. At S1/S2 level, there is a regular programme of interviews which allow senior management and the guidance teacher to monitor the overall progress of all pupils.

The school has effective systems for tracking pupils' progress. Termly meetings are held by senior management to monitor the progress of individual pupils.

Cognitive Abilities Test results, attainment data and pupil needs analysis are used to determine resource allocation. The Support for Learning teacher provides helpful assistance to staff and to pupils at all stages.

Support Staff working in the Primary Department have good liaison arrangements with the depute head primary. Staff prepare individualised education programmes for pupils requiring additional support.

The atmosphere in the school is happy and welcoming. Staff – pupil relationships are very good. Pupils are consulted through the pupil council. Ancillary staff make a valuable contribution and feel valued as part of the team. A number of itinerant staff are actively involved in the wider life of the school. Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and their attitudes to learning are positive. Pupils' sense of identity with the school is seen in their pride in wearing the school uniform. Pupils with a wide range of needs are respected and are well included in the life of the school. Pupils awareness of issues relating to equality, race and discrimination as well as gender issues are addressed through a variety of curricular contexts. Pupils have regular opportunities for religious observance. The school sets high expectations for wider achievement in all areas and these achievements are celebrated regularly through the local press, school website and assemblies.

The school aims are concise and have an appropriate focus on improving the quality of pupils' learning experiences. Staff participate in the drawing up and review of policies and guidelines.

Staff are encouraged to be fully involved in reflective and systematic self – evaluation with the purpose of improving the quality of pupils' learning experiences and standards of attainment. The views of pupils, parents and staff are ascertained through the pupil council, parent council and questionnaires. A programme for classroom peer observation is now in place and has been well received by teachers, testifying to the positive benefits of peer observation. A helpful and easy to use evaluation sheet has been devised.

The remits of senior promoted staff indicate clearly their areas of responsibility in terms of monitoring teachers' plans, evaluating pupils' classroom experiences and tracking pupils' attainment. A calendar of routine monitoring is now in place. The improvement plan has been written in accordance with guidelines issued by the Authority. Very good progress has been made towards meeting the current objectives.

NEXT STEPS

- further develop Glow resources.
- revise PHSE course in line with Health & Wellbeing experiences and outcomes.
- progress Eco-schools initiative.
- meet the needs of the most able as per school policy.
- continue to provide opportunities for collaborative/planning/working/learning in line with CfE.
- further develop curricular links with associated schools.
- develop numeracy/ literacy across learning.
- promote active learning throughout the school.

Management and Use of Resources and Space

Most classrooms provide attractive well organised learning environments. Some classrooms require refurbishment and there is a lack of storage facilities within the building. All toilets have been refurbished to a very high standard. There are very good displays of pupil work in most areas, particularly the display relating to the Curriculum for Excellence and associated interdisciplinary projects. The School Website is regularly updated with a wide range of information and photographs. Overall the school has a good supply of resources including ICT equipment to which pupils have timetabled access. Resources are well organised and used effectively and learning and teaching is now enriched through the use of smart board technology.

NEXT STEPS

- address certain health and safety aspects- technical room, bin storage.
- refurbish the foyer area and install a plasma screen.
- equip all classrooms with interactive whiteboards

Leadership

The management structure at Paible School operates through teamwork with our emphasis on joint staff decision making. Members of the management team give advice and are always available to support the staff of the school. Good use is made of the experience and interests of staff in leading initiatives and driving action forward. Quality assurance with focus on learning and teaching is always a key feature and management are aware of the need to maintain and enhance staff motivation, professional performance, job satisfaction and confidence.

NEXT STEPS

- familiarisation with and use of The Journey to Excellence Part 5.

Improvement Priorities 2009 - 2010

The following priorities were identified this session and incorporated within the school's improvement plan for session 2009 – 2010.

LITERACY ACROSS LEARNING

NUMERACY ACROSS LEARNING

EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP (ECO-SCHOOLS)

GLOW TECHNOLOGIES

