

West Dunbartonshire Council

Report by the Director of Education and Cultural Services

Children's Services Committee: 15 March 2006

**Subject: West Dunbartonshire Council Education Authority:
Follow-Through Report on Dumbarton Academy**

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To inform Members of the follow-through inspection of Dumbarton Academy, by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) and the subsequent report, published by HMIe in January 2006.

2. Background

- 2.1** Members will recall from reports to previous meetings of this Committee that West Dunbartonshire Council has been involved with HMIe in relation to the follow-through arrangements following an inspection of a school.
- 2.2** Dumbarton Academy was first inspected in November 2001 as part of a national sample of secondary education. The resulting report was published in March 2002 (Appendix 1). The report evaluated the key strengths of the school and its capacity for further improvement, and also set out 6 main points for action. HMIe indicated that a follow-through inspection would be conducted.
- 2.3** HMIe visited the school in January 2004 to evaluate the progress the school had made in addressing the main points for action. A follow-through inspection report was published in March 2004 (Appendix 2).
- 2.4** Progress in respect of four of the main points for action was evaluated as either "very good" or "good". Good progress had also been made in attainment in S1/S2. However progress in relation to raising attainment at S3-S6 was evaluated as "fair", as was the school's work in relation to the recommendation that the head teacher should establish a more rigorous approach to self-evaluation.
- 2.5** HMIe did not disengage the school and it was agreed that a further visit would take place after a period to allow the school to develop strategies to improve the two points for action indicated in 2.4 relating to attainment at S3-S6 and approaches to self-evaluation.
- #### **3. Main Issues in Follow-Through Report**
- 3.1** An inspection team revisited the school in October 2005 to assess the extent to which the school had continued to improve the quality of its work, and to evaluate progress made in improving attainment and approaches to self-

evaluation. The second follow-through report was published in January 2006 (Appendix 3). (available online at <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/>)

- 3.2** The report stated that there had been improvements in attainment in some subjects. Pupils attendance, punctuality and behaviour and completion of homework had improved. The school's work in combating bullying had achieved national recognition and there had been a number of other successful activities.

4. Main Points for Action:

4.1 The school should improve attainment, particularly at S1/S2 and S5/S6

- 4.1.1** Targets set for attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at S2 had been exceeded. The school had worked effectively with pupils who were under-achieving at S4.

- 4.1.2** While attainment had improved in some subjects at some stages, the school had made limited progress in improving overall attainment at S3 to S6. The overall quality of attainment at these stages was "weak". A "weak" evaluation indicates that there are important weaknesses.

4.2 The headteacher should establish a more rigorous approach to self-evaluation. She should ensure that the senior management team focus more on quality assurance.

- 4.2.1** Overall progress with this main point for action, since the last follow-through inspection, had been "adequate". It should be noted that "adequate" indicates that strengths just outweigh weaknesses, which indicates an improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher had taken steps to improve the school's approach to self-evaluation, and there were examples of strengths in practice. All departments were now undertaking more rigorous review and analysis of pupils' progress and attainment.

5. Personnel Issues

- 5.1** The authority will assess staff development needs to deliver necessary improvements.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1** Further action by the school will be taken within school budget with assistance from centrally held funds.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1** HMle indicated that through ongoing contact with education authority officers, they would continue to monitor progress with the school's current action plan. The education authority should submit a further progress report to HMle by September 2006 with a possible further visit to the school thereafter.

7.2 Further reports will come before the Children's Services Committee at regular intervals until HMle and Members of this Committee are satisfied with the progress made by the school. A report in September 2006 will inform Members' of the school's performance in the 2006 SQA examination diet.

8. Recommendations

8.1 Members are requested :

- (a) to note the contents of this report; and
- (b) to anticipate a further report in September 2006 on the school's progress in the 2006 SQA examination diet.

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