

REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 20 SEPTEMBER 2004

REPORT ON: EDUCATION DEPARTMENT REVISED QUALITY IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 648-2004

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The Education Department Quality Improvement Strategy sets out the key processes which the Department employs to evaluate and develop the learning and teaching in schools. The current Quality Improvement Strategy has been in place for over 6 years and has been periodically updated. This report describes a Revised Quality Improvement Strategy which, over the last year, has been updated to take account of developments in quality improvement in schools at local and national level.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Education Committee is recommended to:

- i) Approve the Revised Quality Improvement Strategy;
- ii) require the Director of Education to continue to consult with Head Teachers and teacher trades unions to develop and refine individual quality improvement processes,
and
- iii) instruct the Director of Education to implement the Quality Improvement Strategy in Dundee schools and to provide updates to the Education Committee as appropriate.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no additional financial implications relating to this report.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Nil

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 A key aim of the Quality Improvement Strategy is to ensure that all pupils can develop to their highest potential. As part of the strategy the Education Department will also take specific steps to monitor the attainment and achievement of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds.

6.0 REPORT

6.1 The Quality Improvement Strategy for the Education Department is based on the following key quality improvement processes;

1. School Self Evaluation
2. School Development Planning
3. Annual School Standards and Quality Reports
4. Annual School Review
5. Review of Head Teachers
6. Follow through on HMIE Inspections of Schools

6.2 If schools are to improve it is essential that they know themselves well. Teachers and schools evaluate their work on a regular basis with a view to planning for improvement for their pupils. The quality improvement processes listed above are designed to ensure that self evaluation carried out by schools is robust, challenging and provides good evidence from a range of sources about their progress. Self evaluation should also take into account the views of stakeholders in the education process, including staff, pupils and parents. The Revised Quality Improvement Strategy updates each of these key processes and sets out to further improve the quality of self evaluation in schools.

6.3 Schools need to know themselves well and be self critical. It is equally important that the Education Department is well aware of the progress made by schools on quality improvement and what support is required by specific schools to ensure that progress is continued. The Revised Strategy develops the role of the Education Department in confirming that school self evaluations are well founded, based on evidence and are accurate. This will be done through a more in depth process of School Review which will ensure that each school (with the support of Quality Improvement staff) takes an in depth look at its progress on a regular basis.

6.4 The Education Department now has a greater role in preparing for school inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and in following up on any recommendations made by inspectors. In a number of instances the responsibility for drafting and publishing follow-through reports after an HMIE Inspection will now lie with the Education Department. The revised Quality Improvement Strategy will ensure that schools and Quality Improvement Officers will have good information on which to base these reports.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The Revised Quality Improvement Strategy provides a firm basis take forward the good work on self evaluation which has been developed in Dundee schools over a number of years. It provides a clear structure of evaluation which schools and the Education Department can use to ensure that the quality of learning and teaching in Dundee schools is of the highest quality.

8.0 CONSULTATION

8.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Head Teachers of city schools and teacher trade unions have been consulted in the preparation of this report. The detailed implementation of the various elements of the Revised Quality Improvement Strategy will be the subject of further consultation with Head Teachers and teacher trade unions.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None

Anne Wilson
Director of Education

AW/CDGT

7 September 2004

Dundee City Council
Education Department

**A Revised Quality Improvement Strategy
for Schools**

August 2004

1. Background

The current Quality Improvement Strategy for the Education Department has now been in place for over 6 years with updates and modifications during that time (most recently in 2001). The strategy in schools is based on the following key quality improvement processes;

1. School Self Evaluation
2. School Development Planning
3. Annual School Standards and Quality Reports
4. Annual School Review
5. Review of Head Teachers
6. Follow through on HMIE Inspections of Schools

This strategy updates each of these processes to take account of developments in quality improvement in schools at local and national level.

2. Key Quality Improvement Processes

2.1 School Self Evaluation

School self evaluation is carried out against the Quality Indicators from How Good is Our School. Information collected from a number of sources is summarised in the school's annual Standards and Quality Report and is used to inform the three year School Development Plan.

- a. All schools will be required to have in place a Self Evaluation Strategy. This strategy should include the following processes to inform self evaluation;
 - Parent Survey (carried out by the Education Department)
 - Staff Survey (including management and leadership)
 - Pupil Survey
 - Self Assessment against HMIE Inspection Quality Indicators (14 Primary and 17 Secondary)
 - Self Assessment against the National Priorities
 - An agreed programme of Classroom Observation / Professional Support
- b. All schools will be required to have in place a Management Diary which outlines when information on school progress derived from the above processes will be analysed and evaluated by the school Senior Management Team.

2.2 School Development Planning

School Development Planning has been updated to take account of the National Priorities in Education. An electronic planning system (ELVIS) has been introduced to help schools relate plans to evidence and to the Quality Indicators from How Good Is Our School.

Further work will be undertaken to make the process of School. Development Planning simpler, more effective and better able to respond to changing needs.

2.3 School Review

The School Review process has been updated and amended over a number of years. It is currently based on the National Priorities in Education.

Supported self evaluation rather than inspection of schools remains the key Quality Improvement strategy of the Education Department. The revised School Review process has three objectives.

- To support schools by confirming to them that their self evaluation systems and evidence is robust and accurate.
- To confirm that the Education Department had good evidence as part of its Quality Improvement process and understands its schools well.
- To clearly identify areas where schools require further support to improve achievement.

The revised School Review process will be carried out in two stages;

a. Annual Progress Meeting

Each school will have an annual meeting of Head Teacher, Education Services Manager and / or Quality Improvement Officer.

The focus of the meeting will be on attainment and progress on the key indicators from National Priorities. This discussion will be linked to the Revised Standards and Quality Report.

Duration of meeting	1 - 2 hrs.
Location	Tayside House / School

b. Evaluation and Review Visit

Periodically all schools will receive an in depth Evaluation and Review Visit conducted by a team of Quality Improvement Officers led by an Education Services Manager. The team will carry out the following tasks;

- Confirm sample of evidence from Self Evaluation Schedule eg
- Interviews with staff,
- Interview with pupils
- Feedback from parents
- Class observation visits
- Focus on key Departments / Stages (to be agreed with school)
- Interview with SMT
- Feedback to SMT – Report and / or verbal debrief

Duration	4 days (this is the duration of the Review. Not all team members would attend for 4 days)
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Frequency	1 visit per 3 years (secondary) / per 4 years (primary)
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Team	Education Services Manager, Education Officer
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Quality Improvement Officer x 3 (secondary) / x 2 (primary)
Peer Reviewer (s)

Fuller details of the activities to be carried out during an Evaluation and Review Visit are given in Appendix 1.

2.4 Standards and Quality Reports

A revised and simplified format has been developed for School Standards and Quality Reports. The report will include details of progress on School Improvement Objectives and on National Priorities. This will meet the requirements for annual public performance reporting on the National Priorities. The report has been substantially reduced in size and complexity and is targeted at parents as the principal audience.

2.5 Head Teacher Review

The process has been revised and is now based on competences included in the revised Standards for Headship / Leadership. This will also include evidence from 360 Degree feedback from staff and colleagues.

2.6 School Inspections by HMIE

School Inspections by HMIE provide valuable information to schools and the Education Department on progress on quality improvement.

The introduction of proportional inspection by HMIE and recent inspection reports have confirmed the need to further improve the reliability of school self evaluation evidence. This Revised Quality Improvement Strategy will ensure that Education Department pre-inspection reports to HMIE are robust, impartial and based on well founded and validated evidence across the spectrum of Quality Indicators.

Similarly proportional follow-through following inspections requires that the EA have well founded evaluations of school progress and capacity to improve based on sound evidence. This will enable the Education Authority to produce accurate follow-through reports for HMIE or to produce their own follow-through reports for direct publication. The production of such reports is likely to be carried out by two or more Quality Improvement Officers to allow cross validation of evaluations.

2.7 Proportional Follow-through by the Education Department

The move to proportional inspections by HMIE has clearly pointed to the need to have proportional follow-through for schools which identifies key issues and moves quickly to provide an appropriate range of support to the school in order to ensure that issues are addressed.

A key element of the Revised Quality Improvement Policy is the concept of Proportional Follow-through. Should any of the above processes (School Self Evaluation, School Review, HMIE Inspection) identify particular issues or areas of concern then the school and Education Services Manager will consider strategies to address these issues. They will identify how the Education Department will engage with the school and how appropriate and proportionate support can be provided to the school to ensure that identified issues are overtaken. This

Revised Quality Improvement Strategy 2004

may require a specific action plan to address an issue and may result in an alteration or addition to the school development plan.

Revised QI Strategy

School Review

Draft Schedule Secondary

1. Evidence

The team would require to consider a range of evidence before the visit and to use this to identify potential issues and items for the agenda of the visit. Time is set aside in advance of the visit to allow a team meeting for this purpose.

Schools might be asked to submit evidence in advance and / or prepare a school profile similar to that for HMIE visits.

Note the larger the range of evidence required the more time will be needed to evaluate that evidence.

1.1 Evidence to be provided in advance of the review might include;

- a. Progress on NPs
- b. Development Plan update
- c. Sample Dept Plans (Depts identified by school)
- d. Sample Action plans
- e. School Self Evaluation (against key Quality Indicators)
- f. Self Evaluation Schedule
- g. Management Diary
- h. Communication Strategy
- i. Staff Development and Review data
- j. Staff / Pupil Survey
- k. Details of Professional Support arrangements
- l. List of Working Groups (with membership)
- m. Details of Cluster initiatives

1.2 Other evidence which the team would consider in advance might include;

- a. Attainment data
- b. Attainment of Looked After Children and lowest attaining 20%
- c. Attendance and exclusions
- d. Child protection issues
- e. Parent Survey
- f. Complaints / issues
- g. Staffing (absence, violent incidents, other issues)

2. Self Evaluation

The school self evaluation should be completed in advance against the key Quality Indicators used by HMIE (17 Secondary).

The main purpose of the review would be to confirm this evaluation and identify any issues.

3. Key elements of the Review Schedule

- a. Meeting with Head Teacher to identify issues and agree visit programme (SQIO, QIO)
- b. Team Meeting to review evidence agree tasks
- c. School Visits (team members attend only as required to carry out tasks on agreed schedule)
- d. Team meeting to consider evidence confirm feedback comments
- e. Draft Report
- f. Feedback to school SMT (Education Services Manager, SQIO, QIO)
- g. Written report (produced on d/base to allow collation of issues/ evaluations)

4. Key Tasks during visit

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| a. SMT interview | ESM, SQIO, Lead QIO, Peer |
| b. Class visits / pupil shadowing | SQIO, QIO, Peer |
| c. Dept Visits (2) | SQIO, QIO |
| d. Support for Pupils | EO, QIO |
| e. PT focus group | QIO |
| f. Staff focus group | ESM |
| g. Parent focus group | EO |
| h. Pupil focus group | EO |

5. Report

The final report would be produced by the Lead Quality Improvement Officer following team debriefing. It would be confirmed and signed by Education Services Manager. The report would be produced and held in database format (Access) to allow reference, interrogation and collation of information. Reports would have the following components;

- a. Report to confirm (amend) school self evaluation against key Quality Indicators.
- b. Brief indication of strengths / issues in each area.
- c. Summary of progress against NPs
- d. Identification of any other issues not included in above.
- e. Identification of need for follow-through.

Reports would be shared with staff but would not be published. They would however inform the school Standards and Quality Report or its replacement.

6. Follow-through

Where significant issues emerge from a review the school would be asked to produce an action plan to address these issues. Education Services Manager / Quality Improvement Officers would continue to engage with the school until this action plan was overtaken. This action plan may be added to the School Development Plan or may require the Development Plan to be amended.

Revised QI Strategy

School Review

Draft Schedule Primary

1. Evidence

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- Sample Action plans
- School Self Evaluation (against key Quality Indicators)
- Self Evaluation Schedule
- Management Diary
- Communication Strategy
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- Details of Professional Support arrangements
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- g. Written report (produced on d/base to allow collation of issues/ evaluations)

4. Key Tasks during visit

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| h. SMT interview | ESM + Lead QIO, Peer |
| i. Class visits / pupil shadowing | QIO, Peer |
| j. Support for Pupils | SfL QIO / SfL EO |
| k. Staff focus group | QIO /EO |
| l. Parent focus group | ESM/ EO |
| m. Pupil focus group | QIO / EO |

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ABBREVIATIONS

SMT	Senior Management Team
ESM	Education Services Manager
SQIO	Senior Quality Improvement Officer
QIO	Quality Improvement Officer
SfL	Support for Learning
EO	Education Officer
NPs	National Priorities
HMIe	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education
ELVIS	Electronic School Development Programme