

## **Ballaugh School**

Ballaugh School recently received an external validation visit, which involved confirming the judgments the school has made about itself across certain areas. For the purpose of this validation process, three aspects were looked at in detail:

- Teaching and learning
- Achievement against prior attainment
- Partnerships

### **Teaching and learning**

*The validation team agreed with the school's judgment that teaching and learning is 'good'.*

They concurred that the school enables pupils to develop the skills and capacity to learn both independently and collaboratively. During the visit they saw examples of planning that addressed the needs of pupils through work that was differentiated and agreed that the school devises strategies for pupils with specific learning needs, enabling the children to move their learning on. The team also agreed that pupils take opportunities to direct their own learning which is extended beyond the classroom through off-site visits and the invitation of visitors into school. They felt that the programme of visits has a very good impact on learning.

### **Achievement against prior attainment (progress)**

*The validation team agreed with the school's judgment that achievement against prior attainment is 'good'.*

The school's performance data confirmed that the majority of Foundation Stage pupils made better than expected progress in almost all areas of learning and expected progress in the remaining areas. The validation team also agreed that during Key Stage 1 it is likely that most children made better than expected progress in English, mathematics and science. They also concurred that by the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils had made better than expected progress in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics and science. While all pupils had made at least expected progress in writing, 43% had made better than expected progress.

### **Partnerships**

*The validation team concurs with the school's judgment that partnerships are 'good'.*

The validation team found that the school is actively developing parental communication in relation to learning through, for example, curriculum newsletters, booklets, the school wiki and meetings. They also agreed that the school is positively engaged in a range of community events which foster positive relationships with stakeholders in the wider community. The validation team noted that the school is held in very high regard by parents.

### **Other areas considered**

As well as the three specific aspects on which it focused, the validation team also considered other judgments. During their visit they saw examples of good practice in the area of assessment but such practice was not consistently implemented across the school. Additionally, the validation team agreed with many other statements about the school. In particular it confirmed that:

- Summative assessment data is used effectively to make evaluative judgments about pupil progress.
- Pupils understand what to do to enjoy physical health.
- Pupils learn how to stay safe online.
- Pupils are happy, keen and enthusiastic.
- All pupils are offered extra-curricular activities.
- Behaviour is good.
- The curriculum meets statutory requirements, referencing the Manx context.
- Pupils are provided with a range of learning opportunities.
- Communal resources are freely available to pupils to support their own learning.
- Classroom displays reflect learning outcomes.
- The school accommodation is well used to support learning.
- The lack of a dedicated headteacher's room means that confidential meetings occasionally displace small group learning activities.
- The headteacher promotes a vision where high aspirations are valued.
- The school uses effective methods to gather information from parents and pupils.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are good, based on mutual respect.
- There are good communication systems in school, keeping all stakeholders well informed.
- Effective pupil tracking systems are in place.
- Teachers analyse the achievement and attainment made by each child in their class.
- Staff attending courses subsequently provide feedback to colleagues.

### **Conclusion**

The school knows itself quite well and produced a comprehensive SSRE document. Greater attention to ensuring that all judgments are based on, and supported by, sound evidence will ensure that the school is in a good position to plan for further development and improvement.

Dr G Cushnie  
Headteacher  
March 2015