



**Howdenburn Schoolhouse
Jedburgh
Scottish Borders Council
24 May 2011**

We published a report on Howdenburn Schoolhouse in May 2010. That report set out key strengths of the school and areas for improvement.

This follow-through report is based on an inspection visit which was carried out in March 2011. It tells you about improvements since the original inspection in the quality of education which the school provides. It also comments on how the school is getting on with the main points for action. First we focus on changes in the core work of the school. We explain how the school has got better at helping children to learn and benefit from being at the school. Next we look at the key processes which enable this to happen, including the involvement of parents¹. Our report also describes developments in the 'ethos' of the school, by which we mean how well young people are cared for and how much is expected of them in all aspects of school life. Finally we comment on improvements in leadership to help the school achieve its aims.

A copy of this report has been placed on the HMIE website www.hmie.gov.uk. Where applicable, you will also find analyses of questionnaire returns.

¹ Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers, residential care staff and carers who are relatives or friends.

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1. The school

Howdenburn Schoolhouse is a local authority support centre based in Jedburgh. The centre supports young people with complex additional support needs aged 16-19 across Scottish Borders. At the time of the follow through inspection there were five young people on the school roll.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- More active engagement of young people in their learning.
- Effective teamwork and improved planning for learning with secondary schools and colleges.
- The interaction and respect between staff and young people
- The vision and drive of the principal teacher in taking the school forward.

3. How well do young people learn and achieve?

Staff have greatly improved the quality of young people's learning. Young people are enjoying a wider variety of direct experiences and hands-on activities, including learning through the community. Most activities are well-planned and enable young people to be fully involved and to progress at a good pace. Young people are using information and communications technology much more to support their learning. For example, young people used the interactive whiteboard very effectively to put together a bid for funding to support a residential experience. Young people benefit from increased opportunities to make decisions, to work together and to talk about how to improve their work. All young people are taking greater responsibility for learning by reviewing their own progress and setting personal targets. The curriculum is now more relevant and focuses well on developing young people's skills. All young people are working well across a wider range of Scottish Qualification Authority Access units. Overall, young people are successfully achieving their learning targets, are more confident and are enjoying their learning.

4. How well do staff work with others to support young people's learning?

Teamwork among all staff continues to be very good. Staff now work more closely with staff in secondary schools and colleges. They regularly share and develop ideas to ensure young people are making the best possible progress. Overall staff are now more skilled in identifying what children need to learn. Staff have introduced a range of successful approaches to inform parents more effectively about young people's learning experiences, progress and personal targets. There are good links with staff across the authority in developing approaches to implementing units of work. Young people's learning is now much better coordinated between mainstream schools and Howdenburn School. There are now regular planned meetings where the focus is on the progress of individual pupils. Joint targets across schools and colleges are now set within revised individualised educational programmes.

5. Are staff and young people actively involved in improving their centre community?

Staff are an enthusiastic team, keen to improve the school. They have reflected on their classroom practice and worked very effectively to improve the school's provision. The school now has a much more structured approach to self-evaluation, including acting on the views of staff, parents and young people. Recent improvements have helped to ensure successes in young people's learning and progress. Staff should build on their achievements by continuing to reflect carefully on the quality of their work particularly when developing approaches to Curriculum for Excellence.

6. Does the school have high expectations of all young people?

Staff know young people well and have high expectations of their behaviour and learning. Relationships between staff and young people are very strong. Young people behave well and respond positively to almost all of the tasks that staff set for them. They are very proud of all their success and achievements which they hold in their evidence folders.

7. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?

The principal teacher provides very strong leadership for the school. She is guiding staff well as they develop Curriculum for Excellence. She works well in ensuring relationships with schools and colleges are effective and learning and teaching are more relevant and meaningful for young people. The principal teacher has a very clear sense of direction and staff are well involved in planning further improvements.

8. What happens next?

Staff have worked very well together and achieved much success in improving the school. There are notable improvements in the quality of young people's learning experiences and their achievements. Improvements in performance, the curriculum and the arrangements for self-evaluation are now at a satisfactory or better level. The school is now well placed to go on improving. We will make no further visits to the school in connection with the inspection report of May 2010.

HM Inspector: Jane Lopez
24 May 2011

When we write reports, we use the following word scale so that our readers can see clearly what our judgments mean.

excellent	means	outstanding, sector leading
very good	means	major strengths
good	means	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	means	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	means	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	means	major weaknesses

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