# Ready for Life

Education for personal and social development in primary schools

HM Inspectorate of Education

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improving Scottish education

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## Foreword

Personal and social development is at the heart of *A Curriculum for Excellence*. The development of successful relationships and social experience provides the foundation for children to become confident individuals, a key part of their personal and social development.

In this report HM Inspectorate of Education sets out to present an evaluation of how well primary schools promote education for pupils' personal and social development (PSD). As indicated in *Improving Scottish Education* (ISE) (HMIE 2006), primary schools deliver well overall and there is much to be said that is very positive about PSD. Almost all schools recognise the importance of PSD in the education of the whole child, and give it good attention. ISE reported that pupils' broader achievements included the development of good skills in working well with others, healthy and safe living, and a growing understanding of citizenship, rights and responsibilities. However, ISE also stated 'there is still substantial room for further improvement'. This report on PSD picks up on these themes by identifying good practice and encouraging others to reflect on this for their own work with pupils. The report also raises many important recommendations for improvement in PSD and I commend these to education authorities and to all staff in schools for serious consideration.

This report is based on evidence arising from the national inspection programme of primary schools over the period 2002 to 2006. In addition, following focused discussions with many education authorities, primary schools were identified and inspected to provide detailed evidence of current practice across Scotland in PSD.

I am confident that this report will assist staff in our primary schools and education authorities to build on current best practice in PSD and to reflect on aspects identified for improvement. In doing so they will equip pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. Primary pupils in Scotland deserve nothing less.

**Graham HC Donaldson**
**HM Senior Chief Inspector**

# 1.    Introduction

As Graham Donaldson's foreword highlights, "Personal and social development is at the heart of *A Curriculum for Excellence*. The development of successful relationships and social experience provides the foundation for children to become confident individuals, a key part of their personal and social development." Through social interactions children learn to give and take, to consider and respect others, to develop values and a sense of responsibility. This combined with opportunities and encouragement to participate and achieve, develops children as responsible citizens and effective contributors. Effective personal and social development is the decisive factor in a school's success in promoting equality and fairness, inclusion and citizenship.

Personal and social development (PSD) also lays an important foundation for successful learning. Pupils with positive self esteem are likely to be positive and resilient learners. Conversely, success in learning builds confidence and self-esteem and lays the foundations for further learning. The inter-relationships between personal and social development and successful learning are well established, and are reflected in the interdependence of the four capacities set out in *A Curriculum for Excellence*. The inspection visits for this report reaffirmed the close link between effective education for personal and social development and high standards of pupil achievement in its widest sense.

In 2000 HMIE published *Educating the Whole Child,* a report on personal and social development in primary schools. It painted a positive picture of the work of most Scottish schools in effectively promoting the personal and social development of their pupils. It identified improvements needed in the design of programmes towards a coherent blend of whole school, special focus and cross-curricular approaches, for better match of programmes to pupils' needs and for better monitoring of programmes by promoted staff.

This report reflects on the progress since 2000 and takes account of some of the developments since that time with an increasing emphasis on aspects such as citizenship and enterprise and on the wider achievements of young people. The importance of personal and social development to children's lives was highlighted in the 2000 report in the statement below. It remains valid today as the social environment of Scotland continues to change and family and social support mechanisms function in increasingly diverse ways.

*All pupils need to learn how to build relationships, to give and take, to become responsible, to enjoy and share success and face setbacks. All will have to deal with the challenges of adolescence as they move towards adulthood in an increasingly complex and sometimes uncertain world. Some children may experience problems within their own families associated with poverty, ill health, violence, unemployment, racism, divorce or bereavement and need particular support. By the end of primary school, many pupils will have developed a clear understanding of their own identity and worth, sophisticated interpersonal skills and a well-developed sense of personal and social responsibility. Some may be at risk of offending or experimenting with drugs. The quality of a school's personal and social development provision is crucial in extending each pupil's personal and social skills and supporting them through times of difficulty.*

To bring the 2000 report up to date we posed the following questions:

- How have recent changes in the context for PSD influenced the work of schools in this area?
- How effectively do schools blend together their special focus programmes for personal and social development with activities which promote the overall ethos of the school and with learning across the curriculum?
- How well do schools build on the personal and social skills that pupils bring to the classroom and extend their personal and social development beyond the classroom?
- What progress has been made in improving evaluation of PSD programmes?

**Context**:

In recent years, development in education for personal and social development in primary schools has been promoted through a range of circulars, reports and guidance relating to pupils' overall learning, development, care and welfare. *The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000* recognises the right of every child to an education that aims to develop his/her personality, talents, mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. This highlights the importance of schools working in partnership and in full consultation with pupils and parents on matters affecting their daily lives, and the presumption that the education of all pupils will normally be provided in a mainstream school. These principles place at the forefront of education the all-round development of each child as a high achieving, socially competent individual. *The National Priorities for Education* highlighted the importance of promoting equal opportunities, learning for life and citizenship. *The Human Rights Act (2000)* brought the Convention of Human Rights within the legislative framework of Scotland bringing implications for the knowledge which children need to understand their rights and responsibilities in society.

Pupils' experiences in schools have been affected by more diverse staffing structures in primary schools resulting from *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century*. Although a number of teachers may contribute to an individual pupil's education in any week, the class teacher's role remains vital as the teacher who knows each pupil well and the teacher that children can relate to on personal matters.

The National review of guidance in secondary schools, *Happy, safe and achieving their potential, 2005* highlighted aspects of good practice in supporting pupils and exemplified different approaches emerging to provide personal support in school.

The HMIE report on *Personal Support for Pupils in Scottish Schools,* published in 2004 stressed the responsibility of all teachers to identify pupils likely to be 'at risk' and to ensure appropriate support.

In partnership with other inspectorates, HMIE will introduce an integrated programme of inspection of children's services by 2008. It will evaluate the quality of outcomes for children and families and the effectiveness of joint working across services.

The review of the Scottish curriculum taking place following the publication of *A Curriculum for Excellence* puts the child and his/her needs at the centre of the school's work. The aim of

enabling children to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to Scottish and wider society, means that education for PSD must now permeate fully the Scottish curriculum.

## 2.     Support for pupils: pastoral care

Pastoral Care was a continuing area of strength in primary schools.  Overall, schools were very good at caring for pupils, looking after their welfare and developing pupils' abilities to keep themselves safe.  Almost all schools had policies to support pupils' personal safety. Pupils were confident that adults in schools would help them if they were upset.  Key staff members in primary schools knew pupils very well and could identify pupils who might be 'at risk' or potentially vulnerable in some way.  Pupils and teachers described many instances of creative support to assist pupils in overcoming barriers to their learning and social development.

Headteachers and promoted staff in primary and special schools had formed close working relationships with a wide range of external agencies to assist pupils to get the best out of their school experiences.  Other professionals played a key role in raising the awareness of school staff about specific difficulties experienced by an increasing number of pupils.  For example, the challenges presented by pupils with communication disorders such as those arising from autistic spectrum disorder require a level of understanding by all adults in a school.  Often, teachers and support staff commented on the positive impact of staff development by educational psychologists or speech and language therapists, enabling staff to make the adjustments necessary to daily school life to develop the social skills of vulnerable pupils. The use of individualised educational programmes (IEPs), particularly in special schools, classes and units to set out clear learning targets for PSD were proving important in improving pupils' experiences and focusing teaching approaches.  The sharing of IEP targets with parents[1] helped foster meaningful working home-school partnerships related to children's PSD.

A significant number of headteachers reported insufficient external support for the school in supporting pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.  Although there were sometimes effective identification and support systems, many headteachers felt that the lengthy process of referral and access to additional support and limited time available from psychological services meant that intervention by specialists was often too late or too limited to offer maximum benefit to children.

There were strengths in the following aspects of pastoral care.

1.  Most schools had effective arrangements for the care and welfare of pupils, including child protection, the prevention of bullying, personal safety at school and the promotion of self-esteem.  There was increasing attention to health and fitness, including pupils' awareness of the benefits of a healthy diet and regular exercise.

2.  Teachers knew pupils well, were able to identify strengths to be built upon, and were skilled at targeting personal, social and emotional support to individuals and groups.

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

In most schools, teachers worked closely with promoted and other staff to provide intensive support when required.

3. Staff understood the need to gain a thorough knowledge of the 'whole child', their families and the rhythms of their daily lives in order to support children's development and learning. Class teachers used their knowledge of the strengths and challenges of daily life in the local community well in planning to meet pupils' needs. The availability and accessibility of local facilities such as libraries and leisure facilities and the range of local organisations, all influenced the ways that staff were able to enrich the personal and social experiences of children.

Areas for further development included the following.

1. Ensuring continuity of support to pupils at points of transfer.

By the end of a session, teachers usually had a deep knowledge of individual children, their background, interests, progress and achievements beyond the classroom. This information was sometimes lost as pupils moved to another school. Better use of personal learning planning, focusing on dialogue between teachers and involving pupils would allow secondary teachers to take better account of pupils' stages of social development and maturity and wider talents and experiences, as well as their progress and attainments. Most primary schools worked closely with secondary colleagues to ensure smooth continuity of support for vulnerable pupils at transition from P7 to S1.

2. Ensuring effective partnership working between home and school.

Frequently, the class teacher was the initial point of contact with parents, but changes in staffing structures in primary schools[2] meant that a growing numbers of schools had designated a promoted member of staff to liaise with parents or work with parents and carers specifically. The effectiveness of this approach depended on the approachability and effectiveness of the promoted staff member. Some parents regretted being unable to speak to the class teacher directly when they wished to.

3. Ensuring the voices of pupils are heard.

Staff needed to take greater account of the 'voice of pupils' to ensure that learning and teaching addresses pupils' specific needs. Pupils were seldom given opportunities to discuss in a meaningful way with their teachers their views on the selection of topics studied and the teaching and learning approaches used as part of their programme for PSD. Pupils need to be able to influence change in what really matters to them, and takes good account of the context they experience in their local community whilst preparing them well for a global community. Too often pupil councils had yet to provide pupils with good opportunities to consider such matters. Instead, pupils regularly only had opportunities, through a pupil council, to comment on what they regarded as more superficial issues and ones which did not impact well on ensuring progression in their learning.

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[2] *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century: Agreement reached following recommendations made in the McCrone Report*, Scottish Executive (2001)

## 3. Programmes for personal and social development and related initiatives

During the period 2000-2006 a number of initiatives were introduced to schools to improve provision for PSD. These often overlapped strongly with the development of citizenship to the point where it makes sense to think of these two deeply interrelated aspects together. Figure 1 illustrates development in PSD in a sample of 21 schools identified by their education authorities as examples of good practice.

**Comparison of school priorities for improvements in 21 schools**
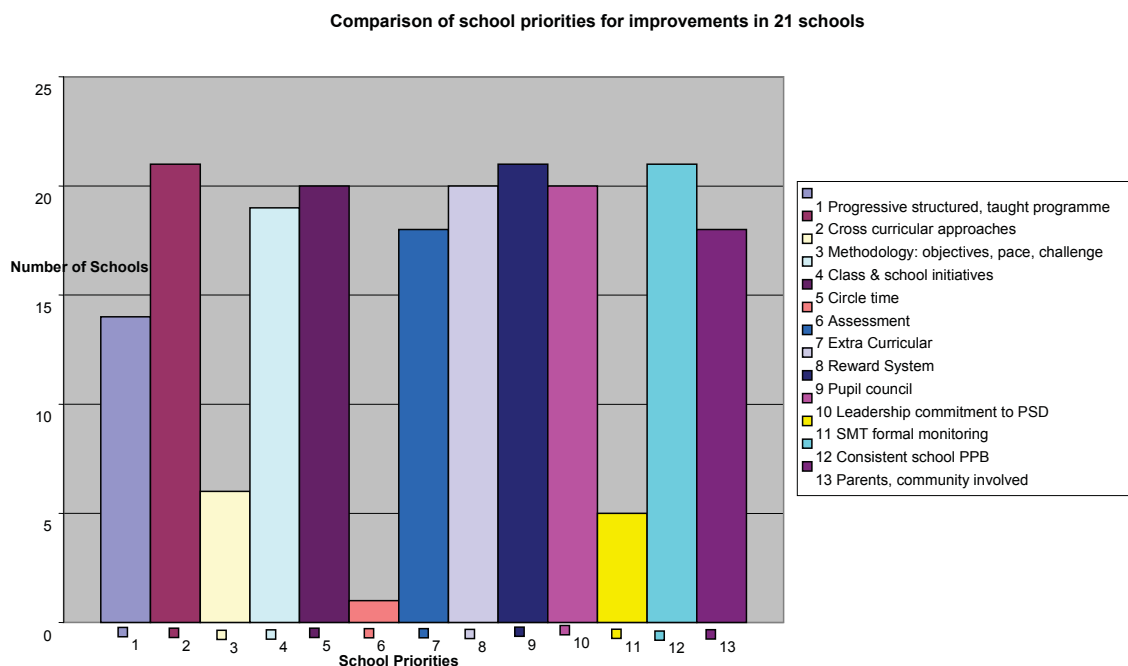


The graph reflects recent priorities in schools and authorities. Almost all schools are now using some cross-curricular approaches, have formed a pupil council, and have developed a consistent approach to promoting positive behaviour. Most organise school and class initiatives such as eco-school projects, run a range of clubs and activities beyond the school day, operate rewards systems and involve parents and the community in the school's work.

Aspects of PSD practice which were receiving less attention included learning and teaching, assessment, recording and reporting on progress (rather than only on programme coverage and behaviour) and the evaluation by school managers of pupils' experience in personal and social development. Weaknesses in the latter mean that headteachers had not evaluated the effectiveness of recent developments such as pupil councils.

Many primary schools addressed pupils' education for PSD in a variety of ways. Some used a progressive, taught programme integrating the teaching of PSD with health education and sometimes with philosophy or study skills. Others depended heavily on responsive approaches such as Circle Time as their taught programme but this almost always failed to develop progressive understanding of personal and social issues. Many recent developments in citizenship, enterprise education and health promotion made important contributions to

programmes for PSD but schools needed to identify how these contributions achieve a coherent overall learning programme.

## 3.1  Progressive, structured programmes

**(a) Fostering personal and social development through the ethos of the school**

In almost all schools, the positive ethos, the quality of staff-pupil relationships and involvement in activities within and beyond the school promoted pupils' personal and social development very well.  In the most effective schools, the 'formal' programme was developed in close harmony with more responsive elements, and the values taught in class echoed pupils' experiences in school and in the community.

A range of school activities promoted very effectively a sense of belonging, self esteem and responsibility, care and consideration for others.  Most schools recognised attainment and wider achievements well at assemblies, increased pupils' responsibility as they moved through the school and engaged them well in supporting charities and taking part in practical caring activities.  Widening participation in activities beyond the school day would further extend opportunities for pupils to develop talents and to learn to cooperate and compete in team games.

Many schools made good use of external agencies to enrich their programme through, for example, visits by health and emergency service personnel, environmental rangers or community workers.  Where such visits took place they frequently offered high quality experiences to pupils.

Staff were very positive about the effects of residential outdoor experiences on pupils' independence, skills in cooperation and understanding of relationships.  Pupils appreciated getting to know their teachers and classmates in a more informal setting and were positive about the enjoyment and benefits of working together to achieve a goal, such as a tidy bedroom, or developing skills in solving a practical problem.  There was often scope for greater clarity about the desired outcomes of such visits and to build on the prior learning of particular group of pupils.

Sometimes pupils' learning in class did not mirror what they saw around them.  For example, pupils learned about the importance of healthy eating, but were unable to find a range of healthy options in the school cafeteria or they participated in lessons on anti-racism, yet did not see a reflection of the diversity of Scottish culture in the books used in class.  Pupils sometimes raised funds for charity without having a clear idea about the needs of those that they were helping or why the funds were needed.  A closer match of formal and informal learning was needed to improve pupils' overall understanding of key issues.

**(b) Special focus approaches**

Whereas almost all schools argued that their approach to personal and social education permeated all aspects of school life, fewer ensured that their special focus programme promoted progression in a wide range of knowledge and skills.  Many used *Circle Time,* where pupils addressed issues through class discussions, and *Golden Time*, when pupils were able to choose their own activities as a reward for working and behaving well.  Where schools did not plan a clear programme for PSD, there was often repetition or omission of

topics covered as pupils moved through the stages P1 to P7 and pupils' experiences tended to be patchy.

Very few schools had integrated education for citizenship with their programme for PSD. Where pupils had opportunities to develop citizenship skills, this was frequently restricted to individual projects such as enterprise or Eco-school activities or learning about the Scottish Parliament. Few schools developed pupils' awareness of their rights and responsibilities as a common strand of citizenship and PSD.

Many programmes included a range of topics relevant to PSD. Some of these were well planned, including a recurring focus on anti-bullying strategies and making sensible life choices. Others were carried out in response to a local issue such as road safety or vandalism on buses. Projects and initiatives in, for example, health education, enterprise education, road safety, and drugs education were often carried out in partnership with outside agencies such as community police or health workers. These approaches had an important part to play in motivating pupils to learn, and in relating their developing knowledge and skills to relevant current issues. The most effective programmes were flexible enough to allow such topics to respond to emerging issues and take advantage of one-off opportunities for learning.

There was considerable variation between schools in their organisation of pupils' learning and skill building. Some schools used commercial programmes covering aspects such as relationships, personal safety, substance abuse and healthy life choices. Others had created their own programmes intended to address more flexibly the needs of their pupils and communities.

Planning for PSD rarely took sufficient account of the range of achievements within classes., Some pupils showed a high degree of confidence and the ability to defend a point of view. Many expressed opinions and described their attitudes to school life with enthusiasm and appropriate expertise and demonstrated a good level of knowledge and understanding of key issues. Others within the same class needed better planned support with their emotional development or lacked knowledge and understanding. This diversity presented a real challenge to teachers faced with supporting pupils in lessons in PSD which will motivate all pupils to make good progress in their learning.

Few schools carried out regular assessment of pupils' learning in PSD beyond general comments on topics studied. Formative assessment techniques were used well in a growing number of schools but few pupils could describe their next steps in learning in PSD.

**Cross-curricular approaches**

*Case study: cross –curricular approaches.*

The school was developing its programme for pupils' personal and social development, and was incorporating aspects of health education. There was a strong emphasis on the permeation of PSD across all aspects of the life of the school and building a positive school ethos. The school focused strongly on the rights and responsibilities of pupils.

Pupils developed their knowledge, skills and attitudes through a wide range of curricular areas. At various times in the year, the school's programme allowed pupils to focus on Circle Time discussions, philosophy, RME, environmental studies, enterprise and citizenship. Pupils further developed their confidence through a wide range of clubs and activities beyond the school day. Pupils were developing confidence in defending a moral stance in their lessons on listening and talking. RME topics included exploration of such subjects as rules, rights and responsibilities, living and growing, and making informed choices. Teachers used the school's philosophy programme effectively to develop pupils' confidence in their thinking and their enquiry skills. Pupils were encouraged to look on different views as opportunities for learning. Pupils collaborating with others to consider moral issues demonstrated a good understanding of a 'majority decision.'

Schools were making increasing use of cross-curricular approaches to link learning and teaching in personal and social development, formally and informally with learning in other curriculum areas. This commonly included aspects of English language, religious and moral education, social subjects and health education. Many teachers used drama effectively to explore issues and develop pupils' confidence and to involve lower-achieving pupils in developing important social skills through drama. In social subjects, work on mock elections, rights and responsibilities, learning about the developing world and sustainability, all offered valuable contexts for learning about personal and social development and citizenship. In studying Japanese culture, pupils in one school developed an appreciation of cultural and social diversity. In another, a topic contrasting life in hot and cold lands developed pupils' understanding of the challenges facing emerging countries. Enterprise projects were frequently very effective in developing pupils' awareness of the world of work and honing their skills in negotiation, organisation and presentation. Few schools had evaluated the contributions of all curriculum areas to personal and social development.

*Signpost to improvement in programmes for PSD*

- The school organises a progressive 'special focus' programme on aspects of PSD for example, bullying or working together.
- Staff are alert to how the ethos and wider aspects of school life impact on the planned programme, including opportunities to develop and exercise independence, responsibility and active citizenship.
- Pupils develop skills and values in all areas of the curriculum and have opportunities for learning and achievement beyond the school day.
- The programme is enriched by strong partnerships with parents and the community.
- Pupils' views are sought about the programme.
- The programme is flexible enough to respond to current and emerging issues and to local events and circumstances.
- Pupils learn to evaluate their progress in PSD and set their own learning goals.
- Staff carefully evaluate pupils' experience and progress in PSD.

## 3.2. Pupils' experiences in education for personal and social development

**Learning and teaching approaches, including pace of learning and level of challenge**

The quality of learning and teaching in personal and social development continued, as in the 2000 report, to be good or very good in almost all schools. Teachers prepared and structured lessons well. They made effective use of a variety of resources and approaches including group and class discussion, drama, role-play, games, songs, visiting speakers, art work and personal writing. Teachers interacted positively with pupils and used praise effectively to boost pupils' self-esteem. Praise was most effective when pupils knew it was well earned.

There had been areas of progress since 2000. Many schools' priorities for developing PSD included improving learning and teaching approaches. Increasingly, schools were beginning to involve pupils in reviewing their own progress and setting targets for improvement. However, as at the time of the 2000 report, there remained too much whole-class teaching and discussion and the differing needs of pupils were not always well met. Frequently, teachers did not offer enough challenge to higher-achieving pupils, while occasionally leaving some struggling to understand important issues. Occasionally, pupils had passed the stage of maturity at which a lesson was targeted. For example, by P6 in one school, a few pupils already had a considerable knowledge about the drugs culture before being educated about the dangers of drug abuse.

> ### *Signpost to improvement in pupils' learning in PSD*
>
> **By P7, learning and teaching in PSD, should help pupils to:**
>
> - understand what they are aiming to learn and why it is important to them;
> - link their current learning to their previous knowledge and skills, and to their social context;
> - learn at an appropriate pace and experience a stimulating level of challenge to their thinking;
> - confidently provide their teachers with feedback on the effectiveness of lessons and suggest topics for study relevant to their lives; and
> - contribute to the assessment of their own learning and understand what they need to do next to improve their learning.

In some schools, lessons relied heavily on commercially produced materials which sometimes led to the over-use of worksheets, too much low-level written work, and learning experiences which were not stimulating. There were also occasions when Circle Time activities resulted in individual pupils, particularly higher achieving pupils, remaining largely unchallenged and passive with minimal expectation that they contribute actively. In many lessons little new learning had actually taken place, even when pupils and staff felt that the lesson had been enjoyable and purposeful.

Almost all schools assessed pupils' progress in PSD either by assessing knowledge about a topic studied e.g. drugs awareness, or by the teacher's judgement of the development of pupils' attitudes based on classroom observation. Too little recognition was taken of pupils' prior knowledge in determining what pupils needed to learn.

A notable change in assessment since 2000 was the growing numbers of pupils who were taking a more active role in assessing their own progress in PSD using formative assessment techniques, often including approaches developed through the Scottish Executive's *Assessment is for Learning* initiative. The development of personal learning planning was beginning to involve pupils in setting and evaluating their own learning targets. Where it was effective, this approach allowed pupils a better understanding of their progress and how to proceed towards the next learning target. This in turn was leading to better engagement of many pupils in their learning.

> ### Case study: learning, teaching and assessment in PSD in a large primary school
>
> The school had incorporated the principles of formative assessment into all its curricular programmes, including education for PSD. Personal learning planning was a feature of all classes, and pupils were used to discussing, with their teacher and with each other, their progress towards their learning goals. In discussions with their teachers, pupils had identified a number of learning targets in PSD. These were expressed as 'can do' statements which formed a basis for pupil discussion. For example, 'I realise that I have choices and can say why I make the choices I do.' Pupils gave themselves a score on a scale of one to ten, to reflect their progress over the term. They then set themselves the next target.
>
> Staff used formative assessment approaches very effectively in all areas, including PSD. The headteacher and staff ensured that education for PSD had high status and the headteacher monitored teaching in PSD as part of her monitoring of learning and teaching across the curriculum. The outcomes for pupils were very good. Pupils were very polite, confident and well behaved. They showed a high level of knowledge and understanding of a range of issues such as drugs awareness and personal safety. In assessing their progress in PSD, pupils made reference to other curricular areas such as topics in RME which had helped to develop their understanding and tolerance of diversity. Pupil representatives on the pupil council, a school nutrition action group and a road safety group had contributed useful ideas to support the school's focus on health promotion. PSD was viewed as having an essential role in promoting responsible citizenship and successful learners.

**Class and school initiatives**

Many schools had developed a wide range of activities aimed at involving pupils actively in the wider life of the school Pupils developed their self-esteem by taking on 'official' roles as pupil councillors, members of a School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG) or as buddies or house captains. Examples of active involvement included a café run in partnership with another local school, a fund-raising week for charity, coupled with dissemination by pupils of information about the challenges facing people in the developing world, and cross-sectoral football matches.

In several schools, pupils responded very well during Eco School Scotland projects and enterprise education to very good opportunities for them to work together towards a tangible goal. Pupils developed qualities such as independence, co-operation, self-discipline, tolerance of difference and consideration for others in these motivating contexts. The insight gained by pupils into issues such as sustainability and the world of work was a positive

outcome of many such projects. However, many schools did not plan or assess clearly enough what pupils were expected to learn during these activities.

**Circle time**

Almost all schools used *Circle Time* approaches as part of their programme for education for PSD. This provided time for unhurried, supportive discussion of issues of interest or concern to pupils. It helped pupils to clarify their opinions and contribute to debates about current issues. As in the 2000 report, inspectors found that the quality and effectiveness of such discussions depended greatly on the skill of the teacher. At its best, pupils and teacher were able to build a real sense of community and security within their class. Pupils developed the confidence to discuss their reactions to school life and their feelings openly. A strength of the approach was that teachers could use Circle Time to react swiftly to emerging issues of concern and to foster a supportive climate in which almost all pupils felt able to contribute. The main issue remained that there was often a lack of progression over the primary stages in the depth of discussion and the range of issues covered. A few pupils did not feel that they could discuss personal issues in public. Whereas *Circle Time* was often a valuable component of a school programme, other strands of personal and social development were also needed to address the learning needs of all pupils.

**Learning beyond the school day**

Almost all schools emphasised the importance of lunch-time and after-school clubs and activities in extending pupils' learning and developing teamwork, self confidence and a sense of wider achievement. The quality and range of lunch-time and after-school clubs and activities varied considerably, but inspectors' observation of and interviews with those pupils who participated frequently indicated that they gained confidence, expertise and enjoyment in the process. Many pupils, including those who did not learn most effectively in the classroom, were able to extend their learning informally in a less structured setting of team games, choir, chess club or fencing. One school reported high levels of participation and positive responses from pupils to the 'Level B Maths Club' where pupils developed their understanding of mathematics in a very informal setting.

However, many pupils did not have the opportunity to take part in clubs and after-school activities. Pupils in rural schools who relied on bus transport home often had difficulties in taking part. Most schools offered such activities to senior pupils only and some clubs were over-subscribed. School staff seldom monitored who attended these activities or targeted participation to particular pupils. There was no doubting that a rich and varied programme of outwith normal class activities had the potential to impact very positively on a school's ethos and pupils wider achievements. Schools should consider how they can involve all of their pupils in opportunities of this kind.

**Creating an ethos of achievement**

A continued area of strength in many primary schools was the commitment of teachers and support staff to creating a supportive climate in which most children felt valued. Pupils were frequently enabled to experience success, and feel that their individual and collective contributions were valued. Many teachers were skilled in making sure that pupils experiencing social difficulties were respected and fully included in school life. Almost all schools had systems for celebrating a wide range of pupils' successes. Pupils collected class and school points, earned stickers and certificates, and took letters of congratulation home to

parents. The celebration of achievement in its widest sense, including achievements outwith school, was considered to be important. However, pupils commented that teachers did not always know their personal interests and talents being developed outwith school. Some did not wish their teachers to know about their pursuits outside school and some felt that the school lacked the resources or staff expertise to help them develop their outside school interests. Others felt that the school missed opportunities to help them to develop their skills.

Most staff regarded the development of pupils' self-esteem as at the heart of the school's work. The importance of positive staff-pupil relationships and interactions, the valuing of pupils' contributions and the development of a positive learning culture was effective in most schools. Most teachers and support staff interacted positively with pupils and promoted dignity and respect.

**Consistent promotion of positive behaviour**

Most schools had effective procedures for actively promoting positive behaviour including the use of initiatives such as rewards systems, 'catching pupils being good' and *Golden Time.* A consistently used school framework of intervention gave pupils clear, consistent messages about the reasons for, and the consequences of, appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

Overall, primary schools showed creativity and persistence in developing positive behaviour. Many operated integrated systems of class and school rewards and sanctions, school and playground rules and celebrations of pupils' achievements. Where pupils' behaviour was poor, staff worked hard to ensure that the concern focused on the poor behaviour and demonstrated care and commitment to the individual pupils.

In schools with positive relationships and discipline, all staff showed respect and concern for pupils as individuals, and promoted high expectations of good relationships. This was almost always reciprocated by pupils who demonstrated a clear understanding of the behaviour expected of them. There was an increased emphasis since the 2000 report on tackling the unacceptable behaviour of a small number of pupils at the primary stages by helping pupils to learn about approaches to conflict resolution, anger management, and the building of self-esteem. Initiatives such as assertive discipline, peer mediation, playground counsellors, buddying systems, and clubs and groups aimed at developing social skills emphasised the success of positive interaction between pupils and with adults.

Trained support staff and visiting specialists took on a key role in developing positive behaviour and were frequently able to engage pupils in discussions about relationships, actions and consequences in response to pupils' behaviour. The immediacy and relevance of this personalised approach assisted pupils' understanding of their behaviour. A few schools and education authorities were developing 'nurture groups' for children at the early stages for pupils who faced emotional or developmental issues which impacted on their adjustment to learning and behaviour at school.

Good modelling of positive social interaction was particularly evident in special schools, where much of the pupils' social experience was built around the promotion of self-esteem and the development of their life skills.

**Case study: Nurture class for pupils entering an inner city primary school**

**The focus for learning was pupils' emotional, personal and social development with the aim of fully integrating pupils into a mainstream class at P1 or P2. As emotional and behaviour issues became less prominent, increasing emphasis was placed on progress in pupils' cognitive development. Close partnership working with parents/carers was a key feature of success so that pupils' behaviour was managed consistently and positively.**

**A comfortable, low-stimulation room was set aside for the nurture group. Staff were very skilled at presenting a consistent, calm and non-threatening approach. They were able to give the small number of pupils in-depth, individual attention. Much learning took place in a social setting. For example, snack times were used to develop turn taking, sharing, the language of social interaction and an appreciation of the needs of others. Activities were interesting, of short duration and often focused on social outcomes and establishing a climate of mutual trust. All staff in the school, as well as parents of pupils concerned, shared in the aims and operation of the group. Children received a clear, consistent message that standards of behaviour in the nurture group also applied across the school and at home. Children made very good progress in developing positive behaviour and working with their classmates in mainstream classes. Staff also reported added benefit to the relationships across the school.**

**Pupil councils**

Pupil councils provide a clear example of the overlap between personal and social development and citizenship. Most schools now had pupil councils, a significant increase since the 2000 report. However, the level to which these councils engaged pupils in decision making on significant aspects of their lives at school varied considerably.

In some schools pupils were gaining a very good understanding of democracy and their role as active citizens. Pupils' opinions were sought on a range of issues, including aspects of their learning and good account was taken of their views to make improvements. However, involvement was generally limited to a few pupils. Younger pupils were often under-represented and ill-informed about the work of their council. The aspects of school life discussed were frequently confined to the physical environment of the school and health issues such as the school tuck shop.

In a few schools, pupils took considerable responsibility for major school initiatives, for example organising fundraising activities for a natural disaster, or running a school magazine. In one school, the pupil council had prepared a pupils' version of the school development plan and involved the pupil body more effectively in the core work of the school.

The focus of discussions by pupil councils rarely included pupils' learning experiences. Staff should consider why the core business of learning is so seldom discussed openly and meaningfully by and with pupils. Where pupils were given opportunities to influence a wide range of school activities and exercise responsibility, there were gains in their confidence, presentation skills, and wider achievements.

## 3.3 Partnership with parents and the community

Almost all schools took a variety of steps to develop good partnerships with parents and the wider community. Most primary schools were evaluated as having good or very good partnerships with parents but there was not always sufficient focus on partnership for learning.

*Signposts to improved partnerships for personal and social development*

- The school provides clear, attractively presented information about its PSD programme in a reader friendly handbook, newsletters, and information leaflets.
- Class teachers inform parents what their children will be learning in PSD in the next term/session.
- The school includes the child's progress and next steps in learning in PSD in written reports and discussions at reporting meetings with parents.
- Teachers communicate news about pupils' successes in PSD and share concerns promptly. Parents are comfortable in approaching staff to discuss their child's progress.

Annual and sometimes mid-year written reports and regular parents' meetings remained the main method of keeping parents informed about their child's progress. Many reports about PSD consisted of general comments on pupils' behaviour and attitude to schoolwork. Few commented on how pupils had progressed in the areas of study covered in PSD over the term or session. Teachers did not often identify the next steps in pupils' learning in PSD.

While community learning and development partnerships brought together voluntary and public agencies to improve provision for young people in the community, there was scope for more productive links between schools and other services in taking forward PSD initiatives.

*Case study: project on anti-sectarianism*

**One Council appointed a coordinator for anti-sectarianism in 2001 with the aim of breaking down sectarian barriers in schools and communities. Her post was supported by both Celtic and Rangers Football Clubs. Most of the activities were aimed at upper primary and early secondary stages. A growing number of enterprise projects involving partnerships between S5 and S6 students and P6 pupils were successful in opening up debates about anti-sectarian attitudes among young people and their parents. Some ten secondary schools became involved. Strong partnerships developed between denominational and non-denominational schools in several communities. The two clubs enriched pupils' learning about healthy lifestyles, capitalising on the motivation offered by the teams.**

**Pupils from a denominational and non-denominational primary school worked together to make a short video about anti-sectarianism which is currently used to promote the city at council events. Pupils took part in sports coaching run by the football clubs. Some schools enabled pupils to play in mixed teams, and participated in mixed football, martial arts and basketball festivals. Parental involvement was strongly encouraged and enthusiastically embraced. Parents were invited to a 'graduation ceremony' at Ibrox Park confirming their child's commitment to participating in a range of workshops focusing on tolerance. Two teachers were seconded to work on behalf of Rangers FC. Celtic FC has also taken forward aspects of this partnership by producing materials for use in schools, holding mixed training sessions in Parkhead Stadium and working with pupils, parents and staff from denominational and non-denominational schools. Headteachers reported considerable improvements in parents' and pupils' attitudes.**

## 3.4    Strategic leadership

The strengths in leadership and management of PSD identified in the 2000 report continued to ensure effective provision for pupils. The role of headteachers in establishing a clear vision for PSD within their schools, in creating positive whole school support for that vision, in developing strong partnerships with parents, and linking well with other schools, agencies and community groups headteachers continued to benefit pupils' PSD.

Since the 2000 report, the context for the leadership and management of PSD had changed considerably. An increased emphasis on citizenship, education for sustainable development, health and wellbeing, and creativity and enterprise made it more important and more challenging to establish coherence between PSD and these developments or risk gaps, unhelpful overlaps or curriculum fragmentation. The development of *Assessment is for Learning* brought an increased emphasis on formative assessments based on teachers' professional judgements and on personal learning planning. Both fitted well with the grain of

education for PSD but also provided challenges in their application. The increasing emphasis on leadership for learning at all levels encouraged a climate of staff involvement in leading aspects of the programme, working to evaluate the work of their peers in other classes and working in a collegiate way in designing and improving provision. Towards the end of the period, *A Curriculum for Excellence* placed PSD outcomes centre-stage in developing the capacities of confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens, as well as successful learners.

Leaders varied considerably in how well they responded to this context to improve their provision. Many schools had not yet established coherence across initiatives. *Assessment is for Learning* techniques had led to notable improvements in personal learning planning for PSD. Leadership for learning in PSD still often resided mainly with the headteacher or other member of the senior management team. *A Curriculum for Excellence* was motivating many teachers to introduce changes in emphasis within their practice and to place more emphasis on pupils' wider achievements but it was still too early to see the impact of these changes.

In schools with effective outcomes for pupils' personal and social development, the headteacher and management team were successful in ensuring:

- clear vision and values relating to PSD shared throughout the school community;
- strong professional teamwork with a consistent approach to PSD;
- positive ethos and relationships;
- an effective whole-school programme which linked coherently related areas such as citizenship, environmental education and enterprise;
- consistent high quality learning and teaching which took good account of pupils' varied needs and interests;
- a broad and varied programme of opportunities for wider achievement in and beyond the school day with high levels of participation; and
- a strong emphasis on quality assurance and quality improvement.

A key area for development was the lack of appropriate staff development in PSD. In particular, many support staff who were carrying out personal support roles for pupils lacked the training to allow them to develop pupils' self-esteem, independence skills and confidence appropriately. Where this was carried out, the benefits were apparent to all staff who spoke enthusiastically about how training had helped them to deliver a better experience to pupils

In some cases, the leadership of the education authority was evident in empowering schools to try out creative approaches to education for PSD. In some instances, this focused on addressing local issues of social inclusion and combating the effects of multiple deprivation. In others, however, visionary approaches to development of global citizenship or independent thinking, at both authority and school level, gave pupils a deeper understanding of their own development and their place in the world.

**Evaluating outcomes**

Recognising that personal rates of development are not linear, national guidelines for 5-14 do not set out levels of progression for PSD. The influences of life experiences, parents and family circumstances are often highly significant in a pupil's rate of development. A further challenge to assessing pupils' progress in PSD is to get close to what they are thinking.

This poses challenges to schools in evaluating their provision but it does not make evaluation impossible. Where schools evaluated PSD effectively they:
- included PSD lessons in programmes for monitoring to evaluate aspects such as consistency of approach, progression in ideas and the quality of learning and teaching;
- set out clearly what pupils were intended to learn in PSD and assessed their progress using professional judgements and self-evaluation from pupils;
- knew pupils well as individuals, observed evidence of their behaviour and interacted regularly with them to be aware of signs of development in values and attitudinal change; and
- reached professional judgments about pupils' progress in personal skills and social skills.

Where evaluation was very effective it also led to improvements in meeting the needs of vulnerable pupils. Frequently, pupils described instances of individual assistance given to them by members of staff in response to particular or temporary needs. Yet weaknesses in the evaluation of PSD had persisted since the 2000 report. In other schools the needs of vulnerable pupils sometimes passed unnoticed or unaddressed, particularly at points of transition. The difficulty of keeping track of the individual needs of pupils, particularly those with long-term absences, in care, and those who changed school frequently was a matter of concern. Occasionally, such children lacked co-ordinated support to assist them in settling back into their class, moving to a new teacher at the start of a session or joining a new school.

## 4. Conclusion: progress and the way forward

**The 2000 report identified improvements needed in:**
- the design of programmes towards a coherent blend of whole school, special focus and cross-curricular approaches;
- matching of programmes to pupils' needs; and
- the monitoring of programmes by promoted staff

Good progress had been made since that time towards the first of these recommendations as a variety of initiatives in citizenship, enterprise and education for sustainable development had enriched PSD programmes, cross-curricular approaches strengthened and the ethos of primary schools remained a consistent strength. In almost all primary schools, provision for PSD was evaluated as good or very good. In most schools, pupils received a wide range of experiences which enabled them to develop an appropriate set of skills to face the challenges of life beyond the primary school. The approach to improving through initiatives, however, brought an increased need to ensure coherence in designing programmes.

The second recommendation highlighted the wide range of achievements within classes in PSD and the need to take account of that in providing learning and teaching and support. Again there has been good progress in this area, mainly resulting from the *Assessment is for Learning* initiative, including personal learning planning. In schools where this has been effective, teachers have a much better awareness of the needs of individual pupils and use this in providing support within and beyond lessons on PSD, and pupils are more aware of what they need to do to develop further. This has yet to resolve the issues of much whole-class teaching and discussion, and a lack of progression in a significant proportion of PSD lessons.

The third recommendation was to improve the quality of monitoring and evaluating school provision for PSD. The inspections for this report found no evidence of improvement in this area.

Summary of positive features of PSD provision:
- The commitment of staff to the care and welfare of pupils;
- positive staff/ pupil relationships;
- the increasing number of cross-curricular areas which emphasised aspects of pupils' PSD, such as enterprise education, Eco Schools projects, and citizenship;
- the quality of partnerships with parents and the wider community in an increasing proportion of schools; and
- examples of innovative approaches to developing aspects of pupils' PSD.

### Signposts 'from good to great'

- There are coherent links between programmes of education for personal and social development, other areas of the curriculum and aspects such as citizenship or environmental education.
- Formative assessment and personal learning planning ensure that pupils have a better understanding of what they are trying to achieve and need to do next to improve their PSD skills.
- There is a high level of engagement of parents and carers, including those who may be anxious or reluctant to attend school events in the school's PSD programme and their child's progress.
- Pupils' wider achievements, their out-of-school achievements and their interests, skills and aptitudes are used effectively to promote relevance in learning in PSD and in the wider curriculum, and in exchange of information at transitions.
- Effective evaluation of provision for PSD is used as a basis for improvement.

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## Appendix

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|---|---|
| Anderston PS | Glasgow |
| Auchinleck PS | East Ayrshire |
| Balgownie PS | Aberdeen |
| Carmondean PS | West Lothian |
| Cleish PS | Perth & Kinross |
| Comely Park PS | Falkirk |
| Craigiebarns PS | Dundee |
| Craigielea PS | Renfrewshire |
| Craigton PS | Glasgow |
| Fossoway PS | Perth and Kinross |
| Galston PS | East Ayrshire |
| Garnetbank PS | Glasgow |
| Hobkirk PS | Scottish Borders |
| Holytown PS | North Lanarkshire |
| Kincaidston PS | South Ayrshire |
| Kirkhope PS | Scottish Borders |
| Lady Alice PS | Inverclyde |
| Langcraigs PS | Renfrewshire |
| Linlithgow Bridge PS | West Lothian |
| Lochwinnoch PS | Renfrewshire |
| New Farm PS | East Ayrshire |
| Oakbank PS | Perth & Kinross |
| Pinwherry PS | South Ayrshire |
| Powrie PS | Dundee |
| Ravenscraig PS | Inverclyde |
| St Angela's    PS | Glasgow |
| St Anthony's   PS | Renfrewshire |
| St Brigid's PS | North Lanarkshire |
| St Clement's   PS | Dundee |
| St Gabriel's    PS | Inverclyde |
| St Kessog's PS | West Dunbartonshire |
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