

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Lifelong Learning Executive Sub-Committee – 5 September 2012

SUMMARY REPORTS ON STANDARDS AND QUALITY IN SCHOOLS, PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES AND COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Report by Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)

ABSTRACT

This report sets out the key findings and areas for improvement following the inspections of Little Steps Nursery, Rosemount Nursery, The Community School of Auchterarder and Nursery Class and Longforgan Primary School and Nursery Class by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI).

Further to inspections by HMI in 2011, the report also provides progress updates for: Logierait Primary School, Blair Atholl Primary School and Nursery Class and Murthly Primary School and Nursery Class.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee scrutinises and comments upon the following reports:

- 1.1 Summary and Education Scotland inspection report of Little Steps Nursery (Appendix 1a);
- 1.2 Summary and Education Scotland inspection report of Rosemount Nursery (Appendix 2a);
- 1.3 Summary and Education Scotland inspection report of The Community School of Auchterarder and Nursery Class (Appendix 3a);
- 1.4 Summary and Education Scotland inspection report of Longforgan Primary School and Nursery Class (Appendix 4a);
- 1.5 Perth and Kinross Council Education Services progress report on Logierait Primary School (Appendix 5);
- 1.6 Perth and Kinross Council Education Services progress report on Blair Atholl Primary School and Nursery Class (Appendix 6); and
- 1.7 Perth and Kinross Council Education Services progress report on Murthly Primary School and Nursery Class (Appendix 7).

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Each year Education Scotland's scrutiny body (Her Majesty's Inspectorate, HMI) inspects and reports on the quality of education in pre-school centres, primary schools, secondary schools, special schools, community learning and development services, colleges, and residential educational provision. HMI also inspects the education functions of local authorities and carries out joint inspections of services for children.
- 2.2 This report sets out the key findings and areas for improvement following inspections of Perth and Kinross Council schools, pre-school centres (including partner providers) and learning communities by Education

Scotland. This includes the findings of follow-through inspections where appropriate.

- 2.3 Specifically the report sets out the findings of the following inspections which have been published by Education Scotland since the Lifelong Learning Executive Sub Committee on 30 March 2012:
- Inspection of Little Steps Nursery;
 - Inspection of Rosemount Nursery;
 - Inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder and Nursery Class; and
 - Inspection of Longforgan Primary School and Nursery Class.
- 2.4 HMI changed the format of reporting about schools in August 2011 and inspection reports provide an overall evaluation of the quality of the school's provision. In coming to a judgement, HMI will aim to answer three key questions which are:
- How well do children/young people learn and achieve?
 - How well does the school support children/young people to develop and learn?
 - How does the school improve the quality of its work?
- 2.5 To help answer the first two questions, the report provides a summary sentence followed by text which explains the answers. For the third question, HMI provide text and express their confidence in the school's ability to continue to improve the quality of its work. Finally, they sum up the overall quality of education provided by the school.
- 2.6 There are four broad continuing engagement activities that HMI may select following an inspection, not all of which are mutually exclusive. They are:
- 1 No further inspection activity
 - 2 Additional support for improvement
 - 3 Continued inspection
 - 4 Innovative Practice
- 2.7 In the case of initial HMI reports relating to schools, a public meeting is held after the publication of the report with invitations going to parents, the local elected members and members of the Lifelong Learning Committee. These meetings give parents, carers and other members of the community the opportunity to discuss the findings of the report and to be consulted on the areas for improvement to be taken forward.
- 2.8 Where further inspection activity is carried out HMI will report publicly to parents and stakeholders. Other continuing engagement activities undertaken by Perth and Kinross Council will also be reported to parents and stakeholders. This includes the publication of reports to parents on Extended Learning and Achievement Visits and follow-up reports on the school's website and on each school's page on www.pkc.gov.uk
- 2.9 In addition to HMI inspections, a range of school specific information is submitted by all schools to Education Services in relation to performance

management, planning for improvement and self evaluation leading to improvements. Education Services staff use this information to work with headteachers to determine the nature and frequency of support/challenge visits that will be appropriate for each school over the course of any session. The school visits form the core of the school improvement framework and will take the form of one or more of the following over planned four year programme:

- School Improvement Visit
- Learning and Achievement Visit
- Extended Learning and Achievement Visit and follow up activity and visit

- 2.10 During such visits the School Improvement Plan, the Standards and Quality Report and the Self Evaluation Pro forma are scrutinised and challenged to ensure appropriate account has been taken of any identified improvement actions and that work in these areas is having a positive impact on the quality of educational provision provided by the school. In almost all cases, an HMI inspection has confirmed the view of the school improvement team. Schools are also required to have robust processes of self evaluation embedded in their quality assurance approaches. They are required to submit an annual summary of this work which is also subject to scrutiny by Education Services.

3 EDUCATION SCOTLAND - RECENTLY PUBLISHED REPORTS

- 3.1 Since the Lifelong Learning Executive Sub Committee on 30 March 2012 the following reports have been published by Education Scotland:

- **Inspection of Little Steps Nursery.** HMI will make no further visits in connection with the inspection report of March 2012. A summary of the key strengths, areas for improvement and evaluations against the quality indicators is shown in Appendix 1a together with a copy of the full inspection report and a copy of the Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, May 2011, Appendix 1b.
- **Inspection of Rosemount Nursery.** HMI will make no further visits in connection with the inspection report of May 2012. A summary of the key strengths, areas for improvement and evaluations against the quality indicators is shown in Appendix 2a together with a copy of the full inspection report and a copy of the Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, December 2011, Appendix 2b.
- **Inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder and Nursery Class.** Whilst HMI are satisfied with the overall quality of provision, additional support for improvement will be provided by HMI and Education and Children's Services in connection with the inspection report of May 2012. A summary of the key strengths, areas for improvement and evaluations against the quality indicators is shown in Appendix 3a together with a copy of the full inspection report and a copy of the Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, September 2011, Appendix 3b.

- **Inspection of Longforgan Primary School and Nursery Class.** HMI will make no further visits in connection with the inspection report of June 2012. A summary of the key strengths, areas for improvement and evaluations against the quality indicators is shown in Appendix 4a together with a copy of the full inspection report and a copy of the Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, June 2011, Appendix 4b.

4 EDUCATION SERVICES PROGRESS REPORTS

- 4.1 Following an inspection by Education Scotland, Perth and Kinross Council Education Services produce a progress report on the key areas for improvement identified at the time of the inspection. This is provided to the District Inspector and parents.
- 4.2 Further to a request by Lifelong Learning Executive Sub Committee (Committee of 21 September 2011 and 9 November 2011), progress reports for the following schools are attached for consideration. A summary of the Education Scotland inspection report for each school is also attached. None of these schools were required by the HMI to have a follow-through inspection.
 - **Logierait Primary School.** The progress report of Logierait Primary School is shown in Appendix 5. Logierait Primary School was inspected in March 2011.
 - **Blair Atholl Primary School and Nursery Class.** The progress report of Blair Atholl Primary School and Nursery Class is shown in Appendix 6. Blair Atholl Primary School and Nursery Class was inspected in March 2011.
 - **Murthly Primary School and Nursery Class.** The progress report of Murthly Primary School and Nursery Class is shown in Appendix 7. Murthly Primary School and Nursery Class was inspected in April 2011.

5 PERFORMANCE SUMMARY 2008/09-2011/12

- 5.1 Evaluation of each school's performance is assessed across five quality indicators, including three core quality indicators:
 - Core quality indicator Improvements in performance
 - Core quality indicator Learners' experiences/children's experiences
 - Core quality indicator Meeting learning needs
 - Quality indicator The curriculum
 - Quality indicator Improvement through self-evaluation
- 5.2 Prior to August 2011, these were published as part of the inspection report. Although post August 2011 these evaluations no longer feature in the reports published by HMI, they are published on Education Scotland's website and will continue to be reported to the Executive Sub-Committee of the Lifelong Learning Committee. Follow-through inspections do not include an evaluation against quality indicators.

- 5.3 Tables 1 – 6b present a summary of achievement against the quality indicators for inspections of Perth and Kinross Council's pre-school centres (including partner providers) and schools undertaken since August 2008. All tables show the quality indicators by date of inspection¹. At present no schools are required by the HMI to have a follow-through inspection.

5.4 Pre-School Centres

- 5.4.1 In nursery and pre-school centres, including partner providers, a total of 165 quality indicators have been evaluated. Of these, 92% (almost all) were satisfactory or better.
- 5.4.2 Table 1 shows that, since 2008/09 there has been an improvement in the proportion of schools being evaluated as good or better in relation to improvements in performance, children's experiences and meeting learning needs. Following a slight fall last session (2010/11), all four pre school centres inspected this session (2011/12) have been evaluated as good or better in relation to these quality indicators.
- 5.4.3 100% pre-school centres inspected over the past two sessions have achieved a positive evaluations in all quality indicators with the exception of improvement through self-evaluation. Three out of the four pre-schools inspected this session (2011/12) have achieved a positive evaluation in relation to this quality indicator.

Table 1: Overview by Performance Indicator

Pre School	% of Quality Indicators Good or Better				% of Quality Indicators Satisfactory or Better			
	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12
Improvements in performance	86	83	90	100	86	92	100	100
Children's experiences	86	92	90	100	86	92	100	100
Meeting learning needs	71	83	80	100	86	92	100	100
The curriculum	71	83	70	75*	71	92	100	100
Improvement through self evaluation	43	75	50	75*	86	83	90	75
Total Number of Quality Indicators	35	60	50	20	35	60	50	20
Total Number of Inspections	7	12	10	4	7	12	10	4

*This includes the evaluations from the inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder which are repeated in Tables 3 and 5 and are the result of a single inspection of an all through school.

Table 2a: Summary of Quality Indicators 2008/09 – 2011/12

Pre School	% (number) of Quality Indicators				Total	
	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	Number	%
Excellent	0	0	10	5 (1)	6	4
Very good	26	38	20	60 (12)	54	33
Good	46	45	46	25 (5)	71	43
Satisfactory	11	7	22	5 (1)*	20	12
Weak	3	2	2	5 (1)*	4	2
Unsatisfactory	14	8	0	0	10	6
Total Satisfactory or Better	83	90	98	95 (19)	151	92
Total Number of Quality Indicators	35	60	50	20	165	-
Total Number of Inspections	7	12	10	4	33	-

*This includes the evaluations from the inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder which are repeated in Tables 4a and 6a and are the result of a single inspection of an all through school.

¹ This analysis is by date of inspection as published by 27 June 2012

Table 2b: Summary of Core Quality Indicators 2008/09 – 2011/12

Pre School	% (number) of Core Quality Indicators				Total	
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	Number	%
Excellent	0	0	10	8 (1)	4	4
Very good	33	47	23	67 (8)	39	39
Good	48	39	53	25 (3)	43	43
Satisfactory	5	6	13	0	7	7
Weak	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unsatisfactory	14	8	0	0	6	6
Total Core Quality Indicators Satisfactory or Better	86*	92*	100	100	93	94
Schools/centres with positive evaluations**	86*	92*	100	100	31	94
Total Number of Core Quality Indicators	21	36	30	12	99	-
Total Number of Inspections	7	12	10	4	33	-

* This analysis includes 2 pre-school centres no longer partner providers. Excluding these centres would give 100% of centres with positive evaluations and 100% of core QIs positive.

** Positive evaluation - all three core QI's are satisfactory or better.

5.5 Primary Schools

5.5.1 In primary schools, a total of 170 quality indicators have been evaluated. Of these, 95% (almost all) were satisfactory or better.

5.5.2 Table 3 shows that, following a dip in the proportion of inspected schools achieving an evaluation as good or better last session (2010/11), there has been an improvement this session (2011/12). All the schools inspected this session were evaluated as good or better in relation to the core quality indicators and three out of four in relation to the curriculum and improvement through self evaluation.

Table 3: Overview by Performance Indicator

Primary	% of Quality Indicators Good or Better				% of Quality Indicators Satisfactory or Better			
	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12
Improvements in performance	73	82	50	100	91	91	100	100
Learners' experiences	73	91	75	100	100	100	100	100
Meeting learning needs	64	82	50	100	82	100	100	100
The curriculum	73	82	38	75	91	100	100	100
Improvement through self evaluation	54	82	38	75	82	91	100	75
Total Number of Quality Indicators	55	55	40	20	55	55	40	20
Total Number of Inspections	11	11	8	4	11	11	8	4

2011/12 figures include the evaluations from the inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder.

These are repeated in Tables 1 and 5 and are the result of a single inspection of an all through school.

Table 4a: Summary of Quality Indicators 2008/09 – 2011/12

Primary	% (number) of Quality Indicators				Total	
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	Number	%
Excellent	0	0	3	5 (1)	2	1
Very good	27	25	18	50 (10)	46	27
Good	40	58	30	35 (7)	73	43
Satisfactory	22	13	50	5 (1)*	40	24
Weak	11	4	0	5 (1)*	9	5
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Satisfactory or Better	89	96	100	95 (19)	161	95
Total Number of Quality Indicators	55	55	40	20	170	-
Total Number of Inspections	11	11	8	4	34	-

*2011/12 figures include the evaluations from the inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder.

These are repeated in Tables 2a and 6a and are the result of a single inspection of an all through school.

Table 4b: Summary of Core Quality Indicators 2008/09 – 2011/12

Primary	% (number) of Core Quality Indicators				Total	
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	Number	%
Excellent	0	0	4	8 (1)	2	2
Very good	27	24	17	58 (7)	28	27
Good	42	61	38	33 (4)	47	46
Satisfactory	21	12	42	0	21	21
Weak	9	3	0	0	4	4
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Core Quality Indicators Satisfactory or Better	91	97	100	100	98	96
Schools/centres with positive evaluations**	82	91	100	100	31	91
Total Number of Core Quality Indicators	33	33	24	12	102	-
Total Number of Inspections	11	11	8	4	34	-

** Positive evaluation - all three core QI's are satisfactory or better.

2011/12 figures include the evaluations from the inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder. These are repeated in Table 6b and are the result of a single inspection of an all through school.

5.6 Secondary Schools

- 5.6.1 This session (2011/12), two secondary schools have been inspected. Of the ten quality indicators evaluated, 90% (almost all) were satisfactory/good or better. 100% of secondary schools inspected since 2008/09 have received positive evaluations (satisfactory or better in all core quality indicators).

Table 5: Overview by Performance Indicator

Secondary	% of Quality Indicators Good or Better				% of Quality Indicators Satisfactory or Better			
	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12
Improvements in performance	100	0	0	100	100	100	0	100
Learners' experiences	100	100	0	100	100	100	0	100
Meeting learning needs	100	100	0	100	100	100	0	100
The curriculum	100	100	0	50	100	100	0	100
Improvement through self evaluation	100	0	0	50	100	100	0	50
Total Number of Quality Indicators	10	5	0	10	10	5	0	10
Total Number of Inspections	2	1	0	2	2	1	0	2

2011/12 figures include the evaluations from the inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder.

These are repeated in Tables 1 and 3 and are the result of a single inspection of an all through school.

Table 6a: Summary of Quality Indicators 2008/09 – 2011/12

Secondary	% (number) of Quality Indicators				Total	
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	Number	%
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very good	20	0	0	10 (1)	3	12
Good	80	60	0	70 (7)	18	72
Satisfactory	0	40	0	10 (1)*	3	12
Weak	0	0	0	10 (1)*	1	4
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Satisfactory or Better	100	100	0	90	24	96
Total Number of Quality Indicators	10	5	0	10	25	
Total Number of Inspections	2	1	0	2	5	

*2011/12 figures include the evaluations from the inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder.

These are repeated in Tables 2a and 4a and are the result of a single inspection of an all through school.

Table 6b: Summary of Core Quality Indicators 2008/09 – 2011/12

Secondary	% of Core Quality Indicators				Total	
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	Number	%
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very good	17	0	0	17	2	13
Good	83	67	0	83	12	80
Satisfactory	0	33	0	0	1	7
Weak	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Core Quality Indicators Satisfactory or Better	100	100	0	100	15	100
Schools/centres with positive evaluations**	100	100	0	100	5	100
Total Number of Core Quality Indicators	6	3	0	6	15	
Total Number of Inspections	2	1	0	2	5	

** Positive evaluation - all three core QI's are satisfactory or better.

2011/12 figures include the evaluations from the inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder. These are repeated in Table 4b and are the result of a single inspection of an all through school.

6 CONSULTATION

The Head of Democratic Services and Head of Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no resource implications arising from this report.

8 COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES 2009-2012

- 8.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2009-2012 lays out five objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. They are as follows:-

- (i) A Safe, Secure and Welcoming Environment
- (ii) Healthy, Caring Communities
- (iii) A Prosperous, Sustainable and Inclusive Economy
- (iv) Educated, Responsible and Informed Citizens
- (v) Confident, Active and Inclusive Communities

This report relates to objective (iv) Educated, Responsible and Informed Citizens.

- 8.2 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Policy Framework in respect of the following key policy area:
- Change and Improvement.

9 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

An equality impact assessment needs to be carried out for functions, policies, procedures or strategies in relation to race, gender and disability and other relevant protected characteristics. This supports the Council's legal requirement to comply with the duty to assess and consult on relevant new and existing policies.

The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (Eq1A) with the following outcome: assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of Eq1A.

10 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a legal requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that applies to all qualifying plans, programmes and strategies, including policies (PPS).

The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

11 CONCLUSION

The reports by HMI across schools, pre-school centres and learning communities provide further information on the standards and quality in our establishments. The report sets out a clear agenda for continuous improvement in the standards and quality of services provided in Perth and Kinross.

JOHN FYFFE
Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)

Note: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

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Date: 17 July 2012

Appendices:

Appendix 1a	Summary and Education Scotland inspection report of Little Steps Nursery, Bankfoot.
Appendix 1b	Little Steps Nursery Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, May 2011.
Appendix 2a	Summary and Education Scotland inspection report of Rosemount Nursery.
Appendix 2b	Rosemount Nursery Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, December 2011.
Appendix 3a	Summary and Education Scotland inspection report of Community School of Auchterarder and Nursery Class.

Appendix 3b	Community School of Auchterarder Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, September 2011.
Appendix 4a	Summary and Education Scotland inspection report of Longforgan Primary School and Nursery Class.
Appendix 4b	Longforgan Primary School and Nursery Class Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, June 2011.
Appendix 5	Education Services progress report, Logierait Primary School, June 2012.
Appendix 6	Education Services progress report, Blair Atholl Primary School and Nursery Class, June 2012.
Appendix 7	Education Services progress report, Murthly Primary School and Nursery Class, June 2012.

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PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Lifelong Learning Executive Sub-Committee – 5 September 2012

SUMMARY OF THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION REPORT LITTLE STEPS NURSERY

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper provides a summary of the key strengths, areas for improvement and evaluations against the quality indicators following the inspection of Little Steps Nursery by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) in January 2012.

2 PARTICULAR STRENGTHS OF THE PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE

HMI identified the following particular strengths of the pre-school centre:

- Dedicated staff who know the children well and provide a welcoming and nurturing ethos.
- Friendly, confident children who enjoy their learning.
- Supportive and productive partnerships with parents.
- Effective leadership which has developed a strong culture of continuous improvement.
- The high standard of accommodation.

3 AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The school, Education and Children's Services and HMI have agreed action in the following key areas to ensure continued improvement in the work of the pre-school centre:

- Ensure learning is purposeful and provides the correct level of depth and challenge for all children.
- Continue to share effective practice within the staff team and with other early years establishments to build on the strengths of the centre.

4 QUALITY INDICATORS

Evaluations for Little Steps Nursery:

Children's experiences	Very Good
Improvements in performance	Very Good
Meeting learning needs	Very Good

Evaluations for work of the pre school centre:

The curriculum	Very Good
Improvement through self-evaluation	Very Good

5 CONCLUSION

HMI will make no further visits in connection with this inspection.

For further information contact:

Kathleen Robertson, Quality Improvement Officer, Education Services (ext 76342).

7 March 2012

Dear Parent/Carer

Little Steps Nursery
Perth

Recently, as you may know, I visited and inspected your child's pre-school centre. Throughout my visit, I talked to parents and children and worked closely with the head of centre and staff. I wanted to find out how well children were learning and achieving and how well the pre-school centre supported children to do their best. The head of centre shared with me the pre-school centre's successes and priorities for improvement. I looked at some particular aspects of the pre-school centre's recent work, including partnerships with parents and the centre's relationships with local schools. As a result, I was able to find out how good the pre-school centre was at improving children's education. I would now like to tell you what I found.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Little Steps Nursery provides a happy and nurturing environment in which your children can learn and develop. On arrival, children settle quickly and choose independently from a wide range of stimulating activities. They share their learning with each other and adults with increasing confidence. All children spend valuable time in the fresh air, playing and exploring in the nursery garden or going for walks around the village. By investigating outdoors, children are developing their understanding of nature, seasonal changes and early science concepts such as freezing and melting. In the baby room, key workers work closely with parents to provide continuity of care so that very young children feel secure. Staff interact well with children, playing and talking to them. They provide them with comfort when needed. In the toddler room, children are happy, and are forming friendships. They are learning to become independent by getting changed for outdoor play and helping to tidy up. Children enjoy expressing themselves through music and painting. Most enjoy listening to stories and rhymes and join in enthusiastically with singing and counting games. Children aged three to five talk enthusiastically to each other about what they are learning. They love to take photographs of their friends playing. Almost all children concentrate well and persevere with tasks, supporting each other and discussing their play. They help staff to plan their learning activities using floor books, confidently offering suggestions and ideas about what and how they would like to learn. Staff have begun to help children reflect on their learning and this practice should be extended so that children can help to set the next steps in their learning. At snack time, children learn about healthy eating and good manners. They help staff to choose and buy foods for snack and particularly enjoy using fruit and vegetables they have grown themselves. Children are learning about roles and responsibilities by becoming helpers in different areas of the playroom and by acting as buddies to younger children.

¹ This is a service for deaf users. Please do not use this number for voice calls as this will not connect.

Children's achievements from nursery and home are celebrated in all the playrooms. Art work and early writing is valued and attractively displayed around the nursery.

Children aged three to five are making very good progress with their early literacy and numeracy. Almost all listen carefully to each other and adults. They are becoming confident when speaking in front of each other by sharing their toys at 'show and tell' sessions and by taking part in performances such as the nativity play. Most children aged four are able to read and write their names and enjoy making labels for use around the room. Sharing books and stories is a regular feature of the playroom and older children can talk about authors and illustrators. A few children have had their poetry published. Children regularly count to ten and beyond in the course of their play and have a good understanding of early mathematical concepts such as measure and shape.

How well does the pre-school centre support children to develop and learn?

The nursery provides strong support for children's development and learning. Staff know your children very well and respond professionally and sensitively to their learning and emotional needs. You, as parents, have very good opportunities to be involved in your child's learning by contributing to 'I Can' books and profiles and by visiting the nursery to 'stay and play'. All staff interact positively with children, praising and encouraging their efforts. Overall, key workers make sound judgments based on their knowledge of individual children. In a few instances, children's learning could be extended further. Staff now need to make better use of the information they get from observing children's learning to ensure tasks and activities provide the right level of challenge for all children. Staff respond very well to children's interests whilst ensuring all children receive a broad and relevant range of experiences. They are taking good account of Curriculum for Excellence guidelines to improve the way they plan learning for pre-school children. Staff use the local community, visitors and parents well to support and enrich children's learning. They take children to local garden centres and places of interest in the nursery mini-bus. Children have very good opportunities to use technology, for example computers, digital microscopes and programmable toys. Staff support your children very well when they move to a new room in the centre. The centre has developed strong and mutually supportive links with local primary schools and nursery classes to support children when they move to P1. Staff work very closely and effectively with colleagues in other nurseries to provide continuity for children on shared placements.

How well does the pre-school centre improve the quality of its work?

Little Steps Nursery has highly effective arrangements to monitor the quality of its work and bring about improvements. All staff are committed to providing the best possible experiences for your children. They willingly undertake training to keep abreast of new developments. They spend valuable time sharing practice with each other and discussing ways to improve the quality of care and education they provide. Staff have begun to share ideas and practice with other centres and should continue to develop this. Managers welcome and value the views of parents and children and provide many worthwhile opportunities for parents to influence decisions which affect you and your children. For example, the Parents Matter forum meets with managers, and the 'question of the month' allows all parents and visitors to comment quickly and easily on a variety of matters. Staff frequently seek children's views on learning and activities in the playrooms. Older children can be members of the children's council who meet with the manager to share their ideas for improvement. They had many opportunities to influence the recent improvement to the nursery accommodation. All staff take on additional leadership roles to help improve aspects of the nursery such as developing the grounds, improving displays, organising story sacks and helping the centre achieve a bronze award from Eco-Schools Scotland. The owner, manager and deputy manager work very closely together to provide very strong and effective leadership. They are very highly

committed to providing the best possible service for children and their families. I am confident that Little Steps Nursery will continue to provide high-quality care and learning for your children.

Our inspection of your pre-school centre found the following key strengths.

- Dedicated staff who know the children well and provide a welcoming and nurturing ethos.
- Friendly, confident children who enjoy their learning.
- Supportive and productive partnerships with parents.
- Effective leadership which has developed a strong culture of continuous improvement.
- The high standard of accommodation.

I discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the pre-school centre. This is what I agreed with them.

- Ensure learning is purposeful and provides the correct level of depth and challenge for all children.
- Continue to share effective practice within the staff team and with other early years establishments to build on the strengths of the centre.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE INSPECTION?

We are very satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the pre-school centre's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The head of centre and local authority will inform parents about the pre-school centre's progress as part of the arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of the pre-school centre.

Elaine Merrilees
HM Inspector
7 March 2012

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/ViewEstablishment.aspx?id=12270&type=1>.

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation. You can contact us at enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us at BMCT, Education Scotland, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact 01506 600200, or write to us at the above address or e-mail: feedback@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk.



**Perth and Kinross Council
Education and Children's Services**

**Extended Learning and Achievement Visit
Little Steps Nursery Bankfoot
11 & 12 May 2011**



BACKGROUND

To support the centre in the process of self-evaluation, a team of one Quality Improvement Officer and one Headteacher (HMIe Associate Assessor) visited Little Steps Nursery in Bankfoot on the 11 and 12 May 2011. The themes for the review were Leadership, Learning and Achievement. These themes were subject to scrutiny through core Quality Indicators from the *Child at the Centre 2*. During the visit the manager presented the self-evaluation findings undertaken by the centre. This, together with the Centre Report for 2009-10 and the Centre Improvement Plan 2010-11 formed the core documentation for the visit.

The centre opened in a purpose built nursery over four years ago. Over the years the number of children attending the centre has increased from 35 to 55. This has necessitated the building of an upper floor to create a further playroom to accommodate the children aged 3-5. This group is capped at 20 at any one time. The class had been in their accommodation only a few weeks when the visit took place.

During the Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, the team carried out discussions with the management team, discussions with staff, playroom observations, reviewed documentation and spoke with children and parents.

The strengths and areas for development identified as a result of the visit and the centre's own evaluations are recorded below under the three main themes of Achievement, Learning and Leadership.

ACHIEVEMENT

Strengths

- Most children are confident in their learning and are developing skills appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Most children are making good progress in developing early mathematical skills. They make good use of positional language e.g. when they talk about forwards and backwards. They can sort, sequence and make comparisons.
- The majority of children are counting to ten and can recognise numbers. They are developing an understanding of the value of numbers to ten.
- Most children listen well and are attentive during storytelling sessions. Most talk confidently to adults and their peers.
- Almost all children are making very good progress in developing skills in early writing. They make marks, write their names and many are copying words

confidently. Much of the print on the signs around the nursery is produced by children.

- All children enjoy listening to stories and most have an understanding of the language and layout of books. They can talk about authors and illustrators and answer questions relating to the story.
- Children play together well and are making positive friendships.
- Children's achievements are promoted very well. They are displayed in the nursery and appear in portfolios which are shared with home.
- Children are developing very good life skills. They make decisions on healthy snacks and help to prepare and set the table. They enjoy fresh air and exercise and they are learning the rules of good hygiene.
- Staff are caring and knowledgeable about the children in their care.
- All children have the opportunity to sit on the Children's Council and express their views about matters that are important to them.
- Pre school children talk confidently about a buddying system to support younger children's transition to the play room.
- The centre is working towards its first ECO accreditation.
- The centre improvement plan is impacting positively on the service.

Areas for development

- Continue to develop practice to ensure appropriate challenge for children particularly for those about to move to P1
- **Ensure the soon to be Acting Manager accesses appropriate child protection officer training as soon as possible.**

LEARNING

Strengths

- The learning environment is bright, attractive and arranged to provide learning experiences across all areas of the curriculum.
- Staff plan and provide a very good variety of learning opportunities for children, taking account of all appropriate guidance.
- Staff regularly talk to children about all aspects of nursery life including arrangements for their new learning environment.
- Staff involve children in planning their learning taking account of their needs and interests.
- Staff talk to children about what they might learn during their play.
- Most children are motivated and make choices confidently.
- Most children are engaged in their learning and sustain interest when playing together and during adult supported activities.
- Staff use the local environment to further enhance learning opportunities. They regularly go out for walks and have been investigating wild flowers as part of their interest in spring.
- Good use is made of the newly extended garden where staff plan a variety of activities to encourage creative and physical play.
- Interactions between staff and children are positive. Staff work closely with children to support their learning through play.

- Staff record children's learning and progress in portfolios which are regularly shared with children and parents.
- There are very good arrangements to ensure smooth transitions for children as they move through the nursery and on to school. Staff have strong links with local schools where children also attend. They transport children to and from school and share information as appropriate.

Areas for development

- Review the learning environment both inside and out with a view to extending learning opportunities to ensure further depth through richer learning opportunities for children.
- Further develop planning to provide more scope for children to express their thoughts and ideas and plan specific activities to develop their knowledge and skills.
- Build on relationships with schools to share practice with a view to support reaching a shared understanding of learning across the Early Level Experiences and Outcomes.
- Continue to build on the very good transition arrangements to accommodate the increasing number of schools children will be moving on to.

LEADERSHIP

Positive Practice

- The owner and manager provide strong leadership for the centre. They are committed to providing a high quality service for children and their families.
- The manager and staff work very well together and make an effective staff team.
- The manager knows the centre very well. She involves all staff, children and parents in evaluating the centre and uses outcomes to secure improvements.
- The centre works very closely with parents. They plan 'Parents Matter' meetings twice yearly which are well attended and provide a forum for parents to be proactive in taking the nursery forward.
- The manager and staff have a good working relationship with the visiting support teacher and this is impacting positively on their practice.

Areas for development

- Ensure an effective induction period and provide ongoing support for the Acting Manager when the substantive postholder commences maternity leave.
- Provide further leadership opportunities for staff.
- Ensure appropriate ongoing training for staff to include visiting other nurseries to observe and share practice.
- Continue to develop the service as planned taking account of the advice given in this report.

CONCLUSION

Little Steps Nursery is a centre where children are happy, very well cared for and are enjoying a positive pre school experience. The owner, manager and staff are fully focused on providing a high quality service for children and their families. The extended accommodation, garden and transport facilities are testimony to that commitment to ongoing improvement. The view of the parents sampled indicated that parents were very happy with the provision

The manager, staff and parents should continue to work together with a view to securing continuous improvement for the service.

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Lifelong Learning Executive Sub-Committee – 5 September 2012

SUMMARY OF THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION REPORT ROSEMOUNT NURSERY

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper provides a summary of the key strengths, areas for improvement and evaluations against the quality indicators following the inspection of Rosemount Nursery by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) in April 2012.

2 PARTICULAR STRENGTHS OF THE PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE

HMI identified the following particular strengths of the pre-school centre:

- Happy, friendly children who are involved in making decisions about their nursery.
- The wide range of enriching experiences for children, including links with the local community.
- The warm, welcoming ethos and quality of care shown by staff.
- Strong sense of teamwork and the commitment of the manager and all staff to the continued improvement of the nursery.

3 AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The school, Education and Children's Services and HMI have agreed action in the following key areas to ensure continued improvement in the work of the pre-school centre:

- Develop ways for children to take more responsibility for planning and reviewing their own learning.
- Further develop systems to track children's progress using Curriculum for Excellence.
- Continue to secure improvements by using self-evaluation in a more focused way.

4 QUALITY INDICATORS

Evaluations for Rosemount Nursery:

Improvements in performance	Good
Children's experiences	Good
Meeting learning needs	Good

Evaluations for work of the pre school centre:

The curriculum	Good
Improvement through self-evaluation	Good

5 CONCLUSION

HMI will make no further visits in connection with this inspection.

For further information contact:

Kathleen Robertson, Quality Improvement Officer, Education Services (ext 76342).

23 May 2012

Dear Parent/Carer

**Rosemount Nursery
Kinross**

Recently, as you may know, my colleague and I visited and inspected your child's pre-school centre. Throughout our visit, we talked to parents and children and we worked closely with the head of centre and staff. We wanted to find out how well children were learning and achieving and how well the pre-school centre supported children to do their best. The head of centre shared with us the pre-school centre's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the pre-school centre's recent work, including the range of enriching experiences for children, links with the community and local primary schools, the roles of children and parents in the life of the nursery and the development of the staff team. As a result, we were able to find out how good the pre-school centre was at improving children's education.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Babies and children are achieving well. In all playrooms, children are happy and settled. They benefit from close and positive relationships with the adults who care for them. Babies are cared for sensitively by staff who respect their individual likes and dislikes. Babies enjoy exploring natural materials such as sand and pebbles. Toddlers enjoy sponge-painting and playing with foam. They are developing their listening and talking skills as they sing along to familiar songs and rhymes, and are interested in story books. A few toddlers pick out their favourite story books from their book area to share with staff. Children aged three to five years come to nursery keen to learn and play with their friends. They are motivated and most can concentrate for long periods of time on their chosen activities. They move confidently between playrooms and are happy to play on their own at some activities. They share resources and take turns to chop vegetables to make soup. They cooperate well when following a recipe to make play dough. Staff have made a positive start in allowing children to lead their own learning. They have organised a bright and interesting nursery environment which encourages children to make their own choices about where they want to play and what they want to play with. Staff should now provide opportunities for children to take responsibility for planning and reviewing aspects of their own learning. Staff celebrate and value children's achievements at home. These are displayed attractively on 'Sid the Snake' for all to see and appreciate. Children are well known in their local community through

regular walks and visits to shops and the church centre. Staff's use of local amenities and resources enriches children's learning experiences very well.

Children aged three to five years are making good progress in their learning overall. They are making very good progress in developing early language skills. They talk with confidence about their own experiences and interests. During group time, they learn to take turns to talk and listen to each other and to adults. Almost all children are interested in books and use them to extend their learning in different contexts, such as learning about birds and frogs. Almost all children recognise their own name in print as they self-register as they arrive at nursery. The majority of children make good use of the writing area. They also benefit from opportunities to develop their writing skills across different areas of the nursery. For example, snack helpers enjoy using notepads to record children's choices for snack time. A few children are able to read and write their own stories. Staff now need to encourage those children to write captions and signs across the playroom. Children are making good progress developing their early mathematical skills. Children use their counting skills well in their play. They are developing their understanding of early mathematics as they compare different construction models they make and by measuring ingredients during baking activities. Children now need to extend their skills across their activities in nursery.

How well does the pre-school centre support children to develop and learn?

Children receive high quality care from a dedicated staff team. They know children very well and a key worker system supports this effectively. Staff use national guidance well to help plan learning experiences for children aged three and under. Staff working with children aged three to five are developing their curriculum using the principles of Curriculum for Excellence. They provide a broad curriculum which takes account of children's interests and ideas. There is an appropriate balance between activities children choose for themselves and those directed by staff. Staff have made a good start to developing individual progress folders to help track children's achievements across their learning and development. Children benefit from music, drama and physical activity specialists who visit the nursery each week. Children also enjoy learning to speak and sing in French. As a result of this specialist input, children's skills in communication and creativity are progressing well. Staff should continue with their plans to improve further children's opportunities to develop early numeracy and mathematical skills across their play activities, including outdoors. Visitors to the nursery, such as staff from the local garden centre, and visits to farms and an RSPB reserve help children learn about the natural world in an interesting and relevant way. Staff should continue with plans to develop the nursery garden further to provide more opportunities for learning outdoors.

Children with additional support needs are supported well. Staff identify children who may need additional help and write support plans for them. These plans should now be shared more effectively with parents. Staff are aware of a few children who are making strong progress in their learning and development. They should ensure that planning systems take full account of the needs of these children. The arrangements for children to make a smooth transition through the different stages of

the nursery are well-planned and effective. Staff work hard to build good links with other nursery providers and local primary schools to help children make successful transitions to P1.

How well does the pre-school centre improve the quality of its work?

Staff work well together as a team and they are keen to provide the highest quality of provision. The manager provides effective leadership and has a clear vision for the future development of the nursery. This has been shared effectively with staff and parents. The manager is supporting staff to become more reflective practitioners. This is helping staff to improve their practice and make improvements in the nursery. Overall, parents are very satisfied with the work of the centre. They are consulted about different aspects of the service and involved in their children's learning through open days and 'stay and play' sessions. Parents and carers are pleased with recent improvements in how the nursery communicates information to them. A few parents would like more information about what children are learning on a day-to-day basis. There is scope to explore other, more creative ways of seeking parents' views. Children's views about their nursery experience are sought very well. For example, they make suggestions about how to improve their playrooms and are involved in recruitment processes by giving their views about potential new members of staff. The manager and staff carry out a full programme of activities to monitor the work of the nursery. These monitoring activities now need to be more focused and rigorous. The centre receives excellent support from the local authority which helps them make improvements. Close partnership with other local nurseries help the centre to share good practice. With the high level of commitment from the manager and staff and the valuable support from the local authority, the nursery is well placed to continue to improve.

Our inspection of your pre-school centre found the following key strengths.

- Happy, friendly children who are involved in making decisions about their nursery.
- The wide range of enriching experiences for children, including links with the local community.
- The warm, welcoming ethos and quality of care shown by staff.
- Strong sense of teamwork and the commitment of the manager and all staff to the continued improvement of the nursery.

We discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the pre-school centre. This is what we agreed with them.

- Develop ways for children to take more responsibility for planning and reviewing their own learning.
- Further develop systems to track children's progress using Curriculum for Excellence.
- Continue to secure improvements by using self-evaluation in a more focused way.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the pre-school centre's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The head of centre and local authority will inform parents about the pre-school centre's progress as part of the arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of the pre-school centre.

Lesley A Johnstone
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/eyc/RosemountNurseryKinross.asp>.

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation. You can contact us at enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us at BMCT, Education Scotland, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

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**Perth and Kinross Council
Education and Children's Services**

**Extended Learning and Achievement Visit
Rosemount Nursery
13/14 December 2011**



BACKGROUND

To support the centre in the process of self-evaluation, a team of one Quality Improvement Officer and one Education Support Officer (School Improvement) visited Rosemount Nursery Kinross on 13 and 14 December 2011. The themes for the review were Leadership, Learning and Achievement. These themes were subject to scrutiny through core Quality Indicators from the *Child at the Centre 2*. During the visit the owner/manager presented the self-evaluation findings undertaken by the centre. This, together with the Centre Report for 2010-11 and the Centre Improvement Plan 2011-12 formed the core documentation for the visit.

The centre has been in partnership for one year. During this time there have been several changes to staffing however the team now appears settled and the owner/manager is using the improvement plan to take the centre forward. The owner/manager acknowledges the very good support provided by Perth and Kinross Council and the emphasis placed on centre improvement.

During the Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, the team had discussions with management and staff. They carried out observations in the playrooms, reviewed documentation and spoke with children and parents.

The strengths and areas for development identified as a result of the visit and the centre's own evaluations are recorded below under the three main themes of Achievement, Learning and Leadership.

ACHIEVEMENT Strengths

- Most children enjoy learning through play and are developing skills appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Most children are making good progress in developing early mathematical skills. They are beginning to make comparisons and are developing mathematical language. They can talk about shapes and colours and can count in real life situations
- Most children enjoy taking part in group times and older children contribute confidently during story telling sessions.
- Most children are developing skills in early writing and a few are beginning to write their names.
- Most children play together well and most show consideration for others.

- Children's achievements at home and in nursery are celebrated and displayed on a caterpillar wall display.
- Children enjoy healthy snacks, and they are learning the rules of good hygiene.

Areas for development

- Continue to develop practice to ensure appropriate support and challenge for all children. For example, activities relating to literacy and numeracy need to be more challenging for some children.
- Review progress with the centre improvement plan with a view to consolidating the new staff team's awareness and understanding of the priorities.
- Develop strategies to evidence children's progress in learning for example on displays, in Talking and Thinking Books and by creating Learning Walls.
- Extend opportunities for children to take responsibility within the learning environment and create opportunities for them to be consulted about their experiences at nursery.

LEARNING

Strengths

- Staff plan a variety of activities across three rooms to support children's learning across the curriculum.
- Children are motivated and confidently move between the rooms making choices from the variety of activities available.
- Most children are engaged in their learning and sustain interest when playing together and during adult supported activities.
- Staff are beginning to involve children in planning their learning taking account of their needs and interests.
- Interactions between staff and children are positive and praise is used effectively to support learning.
- Additional staff provide a very good range of experiences to support children's learning across the curriculum. Children engage enthusiastically during music, drama, dance, French and P.E.

Areas for development

- Continue to involve children in planning their learning and further develop methods for children to evaluate success.
- Ensure that tasks and activities provide sufficient support and challenge to meet the needs of all children.
- Continue to develop staff knowledge and understanding of Curriculum for Excellence to enhance learning experiences and extend positive outcomes for children.
- Continue to develop staff's questioning skills to ensure depth of learning.
- Continue to develop children's profiles and review assessment procedures to identify each child's progress and next steps in learning.
- Review resources and incorporate natural and everyday materials to create opportunities for discovery and challenge by enhancing for example, the home corner, the book area, and the writing corner.

- Develop displays to create opportunities for children to encourage curiosity, investigation and problem solving.
- Continue as planned to ensure planning is designed to provide depth and breadth of learning across the curriculum.
- Working with staff and parents, create a policy and procedures for supporting children with Additional Support Needs to include working with agencies as required and based on current legislation.

LEADERSHIP

Strengths

- The management and staff have developed positive relationships with children and their families. Monthly meetings with the parent forum and opportunities to stay and play are welcomed by parents.
- The owner/ manager knows the centre well and through centre evaluation has identified areas for improvement.
- The owner/ manager involves the staff team in developing and evaluating the work of the nursery.
- Staff have opportunities to discuss their work and plan children's learning through regular planned meetings.
- Additional staffing beyond required ratios is enhancing experiences for children and is impacting positively on the day to day running of the centre.
- Individual members of staff take responsibility for planning and developing learning opportunities in specific areas of the nursery.
- The centre has made important community links and makes good use of local facilities.

Areas for development

- Continue to develop the monitoring system to ensure focused support for staff as they plan and develop the curriculum.
- Using outcomes of self evaluation continue to progress centre improvements to increase the quality of provision overall.
- Ensure children and parents are as fully involved as possible in evaluating and improving the centre.
- Continue to extend and provide further opportunities for parents to be involved in the day to day life of the centre including at points of transition when children are moving between rooms.
- The owner/manager should now take the lead role in supporting staff to develop the curriculum and to continue to improve approaches to learning and teaching to ensure continuous improvement impacts positively on the service they provide for children and their families.

CONCLUSION

Rosemount Nursery serves children and their families in the Kinross area of Perth and Kinross. Since the service opened the owner/manager has worked hard to establish a stable staff team and to provide a quality service. After a hesitant start

the staff team are now established and together with the owner/manager they are beginning to work well together.

Children at Rosemount are happy and secure in the nursery environment. Staff are caring and kind and look after their social and emotional needs well.

The view of parents sampled is that they are happy with the provision because their children are happy and they find the staff very approachable.

Overall the centre provides a positive learning experience for children and with strong leadership from the owner/manager there is much capacity for improvement.

The management and staff should now, with appropriate support from the local authority, refocus the Centre Improvement Plan by prioritising and grouping the recommendations in this report. Our advice is to start with the areas for development noted under the Learning section, planning improvements within realistic timescales.

Our expectation is that significant progress will have been made by April 2012. Ongoing monitoring by the management and the local authority will take place to ensure continuous and sustainable progress is evident.

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Report compiled by
Kathleen Robertson QIO

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Lifelong Learning Executive Sub-Committee – 5 September 2012

SUMMARY OF THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION REPORT THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL OF AUCHTERARDER AND NURSERY CLASS

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper provides a summary of the key strengths, areas for improvement and evaluations against the quality indicators following the inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder and Nursery Class by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) in March 2012.

2 PARTICULAR STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

HMI identified the following particular strengths of the school:

- The quality of children's learning experiences in the nursery class.
- The behaviour and positive attitudes of children and young people in all classes.
- The support given to young people by guidance staff and school learning assistants.
- The contribution of secondary subject specialists to learning in the primary classes.
- Effective partnerships which enhance learning and achievement.

3 AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The school, Education and Children's Services and HMI have agreed action in the following key areas to ensure continued improvement in the work of the school:

- Increase staff's understanding of Curriculum for Excellence to ensure consistently high quality teaching, learning and assessment.
- Ensure self-evaluation and improvement planning lead to improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Improve leadership of teamwork and school improvement within and across the nursery, primary and secondary stages.

4 QUALITY INDICATORS

Evaluations for The Community School of Auchterarder and Nursery Class:

Nursery class:

Improvements in performance	Very Good
Children's experiences	Very Good
Meeting learning needs	Very Good

The Community School of Auchterarder (Primary & Secondary):

Improvements in performance	Good
Learners' experiences	Good
Meeting learning needs	Good

Evaluations of the following aspects of the work of the school and nursery class:

The curriculum	Satisfactory
Improvement through self-evaluation	Weak

5 CONCLUSION

Whilst HMI are satisfied with the overall quality of provision they will engage with Education Officers in their ongoing support for the school by joining them in a follow through Extended Learning and Achievement visit that will focus on the identified areas for improvement in the report.

For further information contact:

Kathleen Robertson, Quality Improvement Officer, Education Services (ext 76342).

29 May 2012

Dear Parent/Carer

**The Community School of Auchterarder and Nursery Class
Perth and Kinross Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I visited and inspected your child's school. During our visit, we talked to parents, children and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children and young people are learning and achieving and how well the school supports them to do their best. The headteacher shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including the new approaches to personal support, the nurture programmes, communication with parents and leadership of the all-through school. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school is at improving children's education.

How well do children and young people learn and achieve?

Across all stages, children and young people get on well with their teachers. They learn in a safe and caring environment. Almost all children and young people are well behaved and show interest in their learning. In the nursery, children's learning is very enjoyable and motivating. There is an appropriate balance between free play and more structured adult-led learning activities. Children are increasing in confidence through talking about their interests, helping to plan activities and recording aspects of their own learning in a wide range of ways. For example, using digital cameras and talking and thinking books. In most primary and secondary classes, children and young people engage well in their learning, often working in pairs or teams. Increasingly, they work towards targets they set for themselves. In a few lessons, learning is too teacher directed. In the secondary, young people are beginning to see the connections across their learning in different subjects. In almost all primary classes, children use their 'I can' books and learning logs effectively to record what they have been doing and to share their learning with others, including their parents. Most young people at the secondary stages can use success criteria to evaluate their own learning and set next steps. These approaches are working well to help children and young people be more aware of how well they are learning. The new pupil councils are helping children and young people to contribute more to improving their school.

Most children in the nursery are making very good progress in their development and learning. They demonstrate caring attitudes to others for example, by entertaining residents of a local care home or as buddies through the effective Play-pal scheme.

Children readily take responsibility for example for collecting snacks and taking care of their own personal hygiene. They use computers and programmable robots confidently. At the primary and secondary stages, a significant number of pupils take on responsibilities and develop leadership skills as buddies at P1, P7 and S6. Large numbers of children and young people increase their creativity and self-esteem through involvement in sport, music and drama. They perform well in local and national events and in successful school concerts and productions. The international success of the girls' rugby team and the young people's contributions to the local *Lang Toon* event are noteworthy examples. Most young people in the secondary stages improve their achievements through the extensive range of out-of-class activities and excursions. Many young people benefit from challenging team-building experiences such as the very popular Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and programmes which lead to leadership and coaching awards. Staff are developing plans to broaden the range of achievement opportunities for children in the primary stages and to ensure all children and young people benefit from what is on offer.

Children in the nursery have made a strong start to developing literacy and numeracy skills. They listen attentively and talk confidently during small group discussions. Most are developing their early skills in reading and writing well. Most primary children are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and across other areas of the curriculum. Increasingly, they make effective use of literacy and numeracy skills in real situations including writing letters and reports, planning budgets and conducting surveys. In most subjects in S1 and S2, young people achieve well. However there is a need to ensure all staff plan learning which consistently enables young people to build on their attainment in primary. Overall, in S4 to S6, the school performs well in national examinations. Attainment at S5 has remained high and improved in recent years. An increasing proportion of young people are progressing to higher education. However, there remains scope for improvement in a few subjects.

How well does the school support children and young people to develop and learn?

Staff in the nursery know children very well as individuals. They use a range of approaches which ensure children's social, emotional and learning needs are well met. They interact skilfully to support children to develop their communication skills and take good account of children's interests when planning experiences. Across the primary and secondary stages, teachers plan tasks and activities which meet the needs of most children and young people well. Staff demonstrate high levels of commitment to supporting young people with additional support needs. Guidance and support for learning staff work very well with other agencies to make sure children and young people with particular needs can access appropriate learning. Young people speak very highly of the support they receive. The school has recently introduced a specialist nurture provision that is already providing invaluable support for children and young people who find a normal classroom environment difficult to cope with. There is a need to ensure all staff feel confident in working with the few children who display challenging behaviour. The school provides a range of enjoyable activities which very effectively support children to be confident in moving on from nursery to P1 and also from P7 to S1.

From nursery to S3, staff are developing more relevant, challenging and enjoyable learning. Primary children have started to benefit from lessons taught by secondary staff in art, science, physical education, music and modern languages. As a result, children's attainment and motivation in these subjects is increasing. The school should consider how this work could be extended to other areas and ensure that this high quality learning is consistently built on in S1 and S2. Children and young people have increasing opportunities to link learning across two or more subjects. Where this approach is embedded, children and young people deepen their understanding. The school has a number of effective partnerships which enhance the curriculum and support the development of skills for learning, work and life. For example, the school's very strong links with a prestigious local hotel enable young people to develop a range of hospitality skills and increase their knowledge of healthy eating. A few parents contribute their own skills and business interests to broaden the curriculum. In readiness for extending Curriculum for Excellence to S4 to S6, staff should ensure a consistent approach to planning for teaching, learning and assessment. Some important aspects of Curriculum for Excellence such as literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across learning, are not yet being planned in enough detail.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

Across the school, most staff are reflective and keen to improve their own teaching. Most principal teachers lead improvements within their departments well. However, nursery, primary and secondary staff need to work together more often, as appropriate, and contribute jointly to improvement across the school. The current school improvement plan does not give enough emphasis to improving children and young people's learning and achievements. Staff use a range of approaches to evaluate their work. They now need to ensure this consistently leads to improvement. There is scope for deputy headteachers and principal teachers to take a stronger role in developing staff's understanding of self-evaluation. During a period of significant change, the school has maintained high standards of attainment in the senior school. However, secondary staff are not yet fully confident in new approaches to assessment within S1 to S3.

Since taking up her post four years ago, the headteacher has faced the significant challenge of bringing staff from different stages of the school together with a common vision and purpose. There is further work to do to ensure that staff across the school work together to bring about improvement. There is a need to deploy the skills and experience of all staff in a more strategic way to benefit from the all-through nature of the school. Stronger teamwork, including with parents and learners and improved leadership across the school are required if the school is to continue building on its current strengths.

This inspection of your school and nursery class found the following key strengths.

- The quality of children's learning experiences in the nursery class.
- The behaviour and positive attitudes of children and young people in all classes.
- The support given to young people by guidance staff and school learning assistants.
- The contribution of secondary subject specialists to learning in the primary classes.
- Effective partnerships which enhance learning and achievement.

We discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the school and nursery class. This is what we agreed with them.

- Increase staff's understanding of Curriculum for Excellence to ensure consistently high quality teaching, learning and assessment.
- Ensure self-evaluation and improvement planning lead to improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Improve leadership of teamwork and school improvement within and across the nursery, primary and secondary stages.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

Whilst we are satisfied with the overall quality of provision, we are not confident that the school's leadership and self-evaluation are sufficiently leading to improvements. With support from the local authority and Education Scotland the school will be able to make the necessary improvements. Our District Inspector along with the local authority will discuss the most appropriate support in order to build capacity for improvement and will maintain contact to monitor progress. Parents will be informed of the extent to which the school has improved.

Patricia Watson
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/TheCommunitySchoolOfAuchterarderPerthandKinross.asp>.

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation. You can contact us at enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us at BMCT, Education Scotland, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

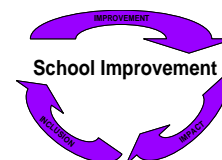
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**Perth and Kinross Council
Education and Children's Services**

**Community School of Auchterarder
Extended Learning and Achievement Visit Report**

20 – 23 September 2011



BACKGROUND

To support the school in the process of self –evaluation, an extended team of Service Managers, Quality Improvement Officers, Education Support Officers, Education Development Officers, and Peer Assessors visited the Community School of Auchterarder between 20 and 23 September 2011. The themes for the review were Achievement, Learning and Leadership. These themes were subject to scrutiny through core Quality Indicators from *How good is our school? The Child at the Centre* and *How well are children and young people protected and their needs met?*

To take account of the all-through school it was decided to focus on aspects of the curriculum with a view to providing a clear picture of continuity and quality of the experience from nursery to S6. The curriculum areas under scrutiny were English and Literacy, Mathematics and Numeracy, Modern Languages, Science, Social Studies and. Support for Pupils throughout the school was also a focus for attention.

The school Standards and Quality Report 2010-11, the School Improvement Plan 2011-12, school and departmental self-evaluations and attainment data formed the core documentation for scrutiny and discussion during the visit.

During the Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, the team had discussions with the Headteacher, the Senior Management Team (SMT), Principal Teachers (PTs) and other staff, made classroom observations, reviewed documentation including learners' work and met with groups of learners and parents.

The strengths and areas for improvement identified as a result of this visit and the school's self-evaluation process are recorded below under the three main themes of Achievement, Learning and Leadership.

This report provides a high level summary of the overall strengths and areas for development for the school.

Whole School

ACHIEVEMENT

Strengths

There is a positive, caring ethos throughout the school. Staff and learners work together well and feel proud of their school.

Standards of learner behaviour are consistently high.

Attainment in S5/6 has been well above the national average over an extended period of time.

Achievement in its broadest terms is clearly valued and celebrated at regular school assemblies.

The school offers an extensive range of opportunities for young people to develop their talents and achievements in sports and the arts. In addition, many participate in residential experiences and other events. This is much appreciated by parents and learners.

Pupils show confidence and good presentation skills when sharing their achievements within school and to visitors.

The house system is used effectively to motivate learners and encourage participation and wider achievement e.g. through the Focus Weeks initiative.

Attendance levels are high and the number of pupil exclusions is low.

Areas for Improvement

The school should:

- ensure it is setting realistically high expectations for all learners in order to improve attainment overall
- ensure the priorities in the School Improvement Plan focus on improving the quality of learning and teaching across the school
- take steps to address the gender imbalance in attainment particularly in S4 to better meet the needs of individual learners
- continue to develop consistent and effective use of tracking and assessment information to improve attainment and achievement for all.

LEARNING

Strengths

Staff know their learners well; learners feel well supported and know how to access help with academic or personal issues.

There is a positive, constructive and responsive approach to meeting learners' additional support needs.

The school uses a wide range of assessment tools and makes effective use of information gathered to inform decision making and plan support to meet learner's needs.

Across the school there are some very good examples of direct teaching.

There are high levels of learner engagement in most lessons observed and overall learners feel secure in their learning.

The school continues to successfully develop its partnership with Scottish and Southern Energy and Gleneagles Hotel. These partnerships enhance the learning opportunities and experiences for learners.

Areas for Improvement

Finalise and implement the strategic curriculum plan, ensuring that staff are fully involved in the process by December 2011.

The SMT should take steps to realise the potential of the all through school to provide enriched opportunities for learners, drawing on the wide and varied expertise of all staff.

Ensure high quality learning and teaching by:

- developing consistent use of learning intentions and success criteria throughout the school
- improving differentiation in planned learning activities in order to meet the needs of all learners
- continuing to develop a range of assessment and moderation strategies
- continuing to extend opportunities for active and experiential learning from early years, through primary and beyond
- supporting learning effectively through pupil use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to support learning.

Identify, develop and plan opportunities across all curriculum areas to improve literacy and numeracy skills in a progressive, coherent way.

Through self-evaluation, monitor the impact of support provided to learners with additional support needs.

LEADERSHIP

Strengths

The SMT are focused on planning and implementing strategies for improvement.

The SMT give high priority to pupil support and there is a coherent approach across the school.

There are clear remits for support staff and a collaborative approach to meeting needs across the pupil support faculty.

There are positive, supportive working relationships in teams of staff across the school.

Parents/carers interviewed report that the school is very responsive to concerns and needs as they arise.

Learners are offered a wide range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills such as the John Muir Trust in P7 and the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

There are opportunities for staff and pupils to extend their leadership roles through the development of the house structure and pupil council.

Many staff are developing their leadership skills through their involvement in secondments to the Education Authority, Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and as Peer Assessors in the School Improvement Team.

Areas for Improvement

The headteacher needs to strengthen the overall leadership of the school by:

- continuing to articulate a clear vision for the all-through school
- reviewing the remits of the SMT and aligning them to planned priorities for school improvement
- ensuring timeous delivery of school improvement priorities which impact positively on learners.

The SMT need to improve processes for monitoring learning and teaching, providing robust evaluation so that all staff are both challenged and supported and have clear indicators that lead to improvement.

To ensure evidence based evaluations lead to improvement, the SMT need to ensure that all staff:

- further develop their understanding of, and are included in, improvement through self evaluation
- revisit Journey to Excellence including the quality indicators in *How Good is our School?*
- engage in professional dialogue and moderation.

The school should further develop the use of all available guidance to evaluate the effectiveness of pupil support across the school.

The SMT should ensure all PTs understand their role as key leaders in school improvement.

The SMT should ensure that all staff engage in the Employee Review and Development process by having an annual review with their line manager.

The bell system is distracting for learners and staff and needs to be modified to improve the overall environment for learning.

Conclusion

The Community School of Auchterarder is a school with a caring positive ethos where staff know learners very well. Learners are proud of their school and are given many opportunities for achievement and to represent their school in a variety of sporting and cultural activities.

Management and staff are focused on taking forward planned improvements. They now need to work together to learn from each other and ensure consistently high quality learning experiences for all learners. Self evaluation needs to be more robust with a focus on improvement in learning and teaching to improve opportunities for all learners to be the best they can be.

There is considerable capacity to continue to provide enriched opportunities for learners by realising the potential of the all-through school.

We are confident that in taking forward the advice in this report the school will continue on its journey of improvement.

[HMI Report](#)

Responsible Officer: Kathleen Robertson, Quality Improvement Officer
Email: krobertson@pkc.gov.uk
Telephone no: 01738 476342

Primary Department

ACHIEVEMENT

Strengths

The *Playpals* development supports transition for children from Nursery to P1 and includes partner provider nurseries.

The nursery class has recently received *I CAN Early Talk* accreditation at the enhanced level. This enhances staff knowledge and understanding to support young children's early communication skills.

Learners in P7 have had the opportunity to participate in an outdoor education residential week resulting in all achieving the John Muir award.

There are various opportunities for learners to represent the school and be successful in a range of sporting activities including primary rugby and tennis.

Learners' wider achievements are celebrated in a variety of ways including in class and at whole school assemblies.

Areas for Improvement

In order to improve attainment the school should:

- review the School Improvement Plan to ensure priorities have a clear focus on raising attainment across the department
- have higher expectations to ensure all learners work towards achieving their full potential
- continue to develop tracking procedures to ensure appropriate pace and challenge in planned learning

LEARNING

Strengths

In the nursery class learners are confident in their learning and are developing skills appropriate to their age and stage of development.

The nursery Hub provision is well established and recent developments are impacting positively on young learners and their families.

At the early level, staff work well together to plan learning, share resources and demonstrate a good understanding of required standards within Curriculum for Excellence.

Lessons were observed in a range of subjects that were identified for focused attention namely English and Literacy, Mathematics and Numeracy, Modern Languages, Science and Social Studies. Positive observations included:

- staff taking account of learner's interests and involving in them planning their learning
- good questioning that encouraged learners to use their thinking skills and explain their decisions
- supportive, interactions between teachers and learners in all classes
- learners who are well behaved and are keen to learn.
- good opportunities for learners to use their literacy and numeracy skills

Areas for Improvement

By February 2012, the department should have developed a more planned and structured approach to curriculum development as part of the whole school strategic curriculum plan.

The department should ensure consistently high quality learning and teaching to meet the needs of all by:

- continuing to review and develop the learning environment in all classes, to further enhance opportunities for experiential learning and planned, purposeful play
- developing a more consistent use of learning intentions and success criteria to ensure staff and learners are focused on learning
- improving planning and teaching approaches to ensure tasks and activities meet the needs of all learners and consistently provide appropriate pace and challenge, taking account of the seven principles of curriculum design
- continuing to develop arrangements for tracking progress, planning and assessment
- continuing to develop assessment and moderation approaches in order to build robust measures to improve teacher confidence in assessing progress
- ensuring that the monitoring of learning and teaching already in place consistently results in improved outcomes for learners
- further developing the use of ICT to support learning across the curriculum

The DHTs primary should liaise with the PT Support for Learning to evaluate the impact of in-class support on learning, based on the Additional Support Needs (ASN) Manual.

LEADERSHIP

Strengths

Across the department, staff work well together and are supportive of each other.

Nursery staff have established themselves as an effective, cohesive team and are successfully taking forward a range of early years initiatives which are benefiting all learners.

Children in the upper stages have opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning, through the Literature Circles programme.

Membership of the Pupil Council provides learners with the opportunity to reflect, discuss and debate issues that important to the them and to feedback to their peers.

Areas for Improvement

In order to improve self-evaluation at all levels, processes should focus on key aspects of learners' achievements and involve staff, pupils and parents.

Continue to create regular opportunities for staff to engage in professional dialogue and reflection.

As part of the whole-school SMT review, the remits of the primary DHTs should be revisited by December 2011 to take full advantage of the skills and strengths of the new team.

Secondary Department

English

ACHIEVEMENT

Strengths

Overall attainment in S4 to S6 external examinations is very good for those learners who are presented.

There is an established programme of department visits to all associated primaries to gain an understanding of learners' needs and abilities. Good use is made of this information to plan learning in S1.

Very good Personal Learning Profiles (PLPs) have been developed and are being used to enable target setting and to review progress from S3 upwards.

Moderation of report writing established across the Local Management Group (LMG) has led to greater accuracy when assessing levels and understanding standards.

Learners are encouraged to enter a range of competitions which has led to increased confidence and allowed them to extend their learning and achievement beyond the school community.

Areas for Improvement

Review Standard Grade course content, resources and approaches to learning and teaching in order improve the attainment of boys.

Review the presentation policy to ensure that all learners are being presented at the most appropriate level.

LEARNING

Strengths

In most lessons observed, learners were 'on-task' and engaged in their learning.

Almost all lessons were well organised, resourced and prepared.

In the best lessons observed, staff demonstrated an enthusiasm for their subject which created a stimulating environment for learning.

Opportunities are given for learners to work in pairs, groups and independently.

Learners feel that staff respond well to their needs.

The PLPs include an opportunity for effective self reflection, which allows learners to use formative feedback to evaluate their progress and inform future learning.

Areas for Improvement

Use the information gained from classroom observations and tracking to ensure that teacher expectations are consistently high and tasks are sufficiently challenging.

More effective use should be made of ICT to support learning.

Care should be taken when proof reading learner materials to ensure accuracy.

The existing good practice, e.g. learner profiles and vocabulary jotters, should be shared across the department to ensure consistency of approach.

LEADERSHIP

Strengths

The newly appointed PT is enthusiastic and is developing a vision for the faculty.

There is evidence of effective teamwork in the department.

Areas for Improvement

The Departmental Improvement Plan should clarify the specific involvement of staff members in developments.

Departmental self evaluation and improvement planning need to be more robust and clear, involving all staff.

Mathematics

ACHIEVEMENT

Strengths

Overall attainment in external examinations in mathematics is very good for those learners who are presented.

The department runs very effective study clubs that are well utilised and appreciated by learners.

Effective use is made of mathematics competitions to promote learning.

All staff within the department have appropriately high expectations of learners.

Areas for Improvement

The department should review their presentation policy to ensure all learners are being presented at the most appropriate level.

LEARNING

Strengths

Lessons are well-structured with clear explanations.

In almost all lessons observed, there was a high level of learner engagement.

In all classes, there are supportive positive interactions and learners contribute with confidence.

Creative, innovative and relevant activities ensure brisk pace and challenge in all lessons.

There is imaginative and effective use of ICT to support learning and teaching.

Areas for improvement

Review practice and advice on the use of learning intentions and success criteria as a means to further improve learning experiences and ensure consistency.

Make more effective use of the data provided on learners' support needs.

Take opportunities to work with colleagues from the primary department in order to improve curricular transition.

The department, in conjunction with the SMT, should plan how it can share its best practice with the rest of the school.

LEADERSHIP

Strengths

The department is very ably led by the PT who has a good knowledge of staff strengths and potential and makes effective use of this for the benefit of the learners.

Staff have clearly devolved responsibilities and work effectively as a team.

Staff value and understand the importance of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and make effective use of the opportunities offered.

Good use is made of the regular departmental meetings to discuss learning and teaching and learner progress resulting in a positive impact on learning and teaching.

Staff identify strongly with the department and share a sense of pride in its achievements.

Areas for improvement

Continue to develop leadership opportunities for staff for example sharing practice throughout the school.

Modern Languages

ACHIEVEMENT

Strengths

In 2011 the percentage of students gaining credit grades in French was above the national average; all students achieved at least a general award.

In two of the last four years, all candidates have achieved a pass in Higher German.

Opportunities for wider achievement in Modern Languages have been offered through E-PAL links with Germany and a focus on the European Day of Languages.

Good use is made of displays of best work to motivate learners.

Areas for improvement

There is limited evidence of the improvement plan impacting positively on attainment; evaluation of attainment needs to be more evidence based and clear statement of areas of improvement agreed.

Improve attainment in reading at credit level in both languages.

Staff should review course content, resources and approaches to learning and teaching to:

- improve the attainment of boys at Standard Grade German
- improve attainment at Higher French
- ensure that learners perform as well in Higher German as they do in their other subjects

There is a need to improve attainment in Higher French which has been below or well below the national average.

Take steps to improve the writing component in Higher French and Listening/Writing in Higher German.

LEARNING

Strengths

In most lessons observed learners were actively engaged in their learning.

Learners are keen to learn and say they enjoy learning the foreign language.

Opportunities are given for learners to take responsibility for their own learning.

Learners feel well supported and know how to access help.

Areas for improvement

Primary and secondary colleagues should work collaboratively to plan progression.

Approaches to planning in S1 should be reviewed to take account of the needs of the learners who transfer from other associated primary schools.

The department should ensure consistently high quality learning and teaching to meet the needs of all by:

- making more consistent use of a range of questioning techniques to ensure that all learners contribute, not just those who are keen
- making more use of co-operative/paired work to allow for greater differentiation and more active pupil participation
- making more effective use of ICT to support learning
- consistently using learning intentions and success criteria to frame lessons
- spending time discussing different teaching approaches and considering which are most effective for which classes
- agreeing plans for appropriate use of the target language in class

The department should plan interdisciplinary learning opportunities for learners in S1-3.

More effective use should be made of the recently introduced progress monitoring sheets so that they focus on next steps in learning.

LEADERSHIP

Strengths

The principal teacher has led some positive developments within the German curriculum which has led to a small revival of German in S5/6.

Areas for improvement

The department need to work more effectively and supportively as a team to ensure more consistent approaches to learning and teaching.

Departmental self evaluation and improvement planning need to be more robust, based on discussion with and evidence from the whole department.

Areas for improvement identified through self-evaluation need to be clearly articulated in the Department Improvement Plan.

More consistency is needed in the leadership of developments across both languages.

A robust quality assurance calendar should be produced which will effectively guide the department's work in evaluation and planning improvement.

Science

ACHIEVEMENT

Strengths

Overall SQA results are very good in Biology and Physics with a positive trend over the past five years.

Managing Environmental Resources (MER) results were very good in 2011.

PLPs provide good and clear support to learners in S5/6 and their use is being expanded to S3/4.

A good start has been made to develop science in P5-7 by the introduction of extensive practical work and assessment logs.

Areas for improvement

The dept should explore opportunities for learners to demonstrate achievement in areas outwith SQA courses e.g. Science clubs, CREST awards etc.

The good practice and approaches taken in Biology and Physics should be shared across the department in order to improve achievement in Standard Grade and Higher Chemistry.

LEARNING

Strengths

In Biology and Physics certificate classes, learners know what they need to do to achieve and are confident that they can access help when required.

Lessons are well-planned and courses are well-structured.

Very good relationships exist between staff and learners.

Behaviour was very good in all classes observed.

Learners make good use of the Scholar on-line resource for independent learning and revision.

Areas for improvement

The department should ensure consistently high quality learning and teaching to meet the needs of all by:

- increasing the use of higher order thinking skills e.g. through the use of more open and challenging questions
- employing a greater variety of teaching approaches in order to ensure that learner engagement remains high and that all learning styles are catered for
- reviewing courses to ensure an appropriate balance between practical and non-practical work
- making more effective use of learning intentions, success criteria and plenary sessions to shape and scaffold learning and identify next steps
- ensuring appropriate pace and challenge to meet the needs of all learners
- providing more opportunities for pupils to use ICT to extend and support their learning
- planning S1 courses which take account of and build on prior learning in P7

The department should consider how to make effective and imaginative use of the existing small class sizes.

LEADERSHIP

Strengths

There is a good sense of teamwork within the faculty.

Staff have effectively taken leadership responsibility in the development of the SQA courses in Chemistry and Physics.

Areas for improvement

The faculty timetable should be reviewed to ensure a more equitable distribution of non-contact time and the allocation on 0.2FTE in primary should not have a detrimental impact on the secondary timetable.

Review use of 0.2 FTE in the primary department and adjust S1 lessons to take account of prior learning.

Resolve the current position regarding General Teaching Council registration for teachers teaching Chemistry and S4 Biology.

Address imbalances in the numbers taking each science.

The development of Curriculum for Excellence needs to be a priority and address the following:

- course structure
- assessment, moderation and reporting
- skills development
- interdisciplinary learning
- opportunities for achievement

The department should work with the Curriculum for Excellence Science Curriculum Improvement Network to share resources and best practice.

Social Studies

ACHIEVEMENT

Strengths

In 2011, in Higher Geography, History, Modern Studies and MER, almost all candidates presented achieved grades A-C.

Opportunities are given for pupils to participate in outdoor learning activities, such as field trips.

The department offers a range of activities which give opportunities for personal and wider achievement.

Areas for improvement

Initial scrutiny of component marks suggests that learners need more practice and/technique for Paper 1 in Higher Modern Studies, therefore the department should take steps to address this.

LEARNING

Strengths

Learners feel well supported by teachers in all classes. All staff know their learners well and positive relationships exist.

In most lessons, learning intentions and success criteria are explicitly stated and most staff give clear explanations and instructions.

As part of their implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, the department has made a good start to planning an integrated Social Studies course for S1.

Praise was used effectively in all observed lessons.

Areas for Improvement

The department should ensure consistently high quality learning and teaching to meet the needs of all by:

- giving learners more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning
- employing a greater variety of teaching approaches in order to ensure that learner engagement remains high and that all learning styles are catered for
- incorporating more challenge into lessons to improve the attainment of more able learners
- planning more opportunities for interdisciplinary learning

Staff should be given opportunities to work with colleagues from the primary department in order to improve curricular transition.

There is a need to address the lack of consistency in transferring information between the various blocks of S2 Social Studies courses.

LEADERSHIP

Strengths

All staff are conversant with and contribute to faculty plans for the new S1 integrated course.

Areas for Improvement

Monitoring and tracking of S1/2 needs to be more focused and detailed helping to improve learner progress.

Departmental self evaluation and improvement planning need to be more robust and collegiate.

The PT should ensure that the Department Improvement Plan identifies appropriate distributed leadership opportunities across the department.

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Lifelong Learning Executive Sub-Committee – 5 September 2012

SUMMARY OF THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION REPORT LONGFORGAN PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper provides a summary of the key strengths, areas for improvement and evaluations against the quality indicators following the inspection of Longforgan Primary School and Nursery Class by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) in May 2012.

2 PARTICULAR STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

HMI identified the following particular strengths of the school:

- High-achieving and articulate children who play a key role in improving their school and community
- The excellent learning experiences for children in the nursery and primary classes.
- The highly-effective whole-school approach to health and wellbeing, including learning outdoors.
- Partnerships with parents, agencies and the community to enhance children's learning.
- Staff teamwork and the headteacher's leadership of improvement.

3 AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The school, Education and Children's Services and HMI have agreed action in the following key areas to ensure continued improvement in the work of the school:

- Continue to use self-evaluation to embed further Curriculum for Excellence.
- Continue to ensure that tasks and activities meet the wide range of children's needs.

4 QUALITY INDICATORS

Evaluations for Longforgan Primary School and Nursery Class:

Nursery class:

Improvements in performance	Very Good
Children's experiences	Excellent
Meeting learning needs	Very Good

Longforgan Primary School:

Improvements in performance	Very Good
Learners' experiences	Excellent
Meeting learning needs	Very Good

Evaluations of the following aspects of the work of the school and nursery class:

The curriculum	Very Good
Improvement through self-evaluation	Very Good

5 CONCLUSION

HMI will make no further visits in connection with this inspection.

For further information contact:

Alison Drever, Quality Improvement Officer, Education Services (ext 76203).

26 June 2012

Dear Parent/Carer

**Longforgan Primary School and Nursery Class
Perth and Kinross Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I visited and inspected your child's school. During our visit, we talked to parents and children and we worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children are learning and achieving and how well the school supports children to do their best. The headteacher shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including how the school meets the needs of all children and the development of children's skills for learning, life and work. We also looked at the tracking of children's personal achievements and progress across their learning and the development of self-evaluation across the staff team. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school is at improving children's education.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Across the school, children are highly motivated, confident and engaged in their learning. Children respond very well to the high expectations staff have of them. In the nursery children are learning exceptionally well. They enjoy making their own choices about where they want to play and choose confidently from a wide range of activities and resources. At the primary stages, children are engaged in active and purposeful learning. They make effective and regular use of information and communications technology to support and extend their learning across the curriculum. At all stages, children are developing important skills for learning and for life. They set targets for their class work and out-of-school activities, and know what they need to do to achieve these.

Across the nursery and primary stages, children achieve very well in a variety of ways. In the nursery, children listen very well to adults and to one another. They talk happily about what they are doing while they play. Almost all children recognise their name and a few can write their own names and stories. Almost all children enjoy learning about numbers. They use mathematical language confidently when comparing sizes of objects they find in the playroom and outdoors in their garden. At the primary stages, children's attainment in English language and mathematics has remained high in recent years and children are continuing to make very good progress in their learning. At all stages, children listen and talk with great confidence. They are articulate and keen to offer opinions about their learning, the school and their ambitions. Across the school, children show a keen interest in

reading and talk enthusiastically about novels they have read. They write very well for a wide variety of purposes, often linked to other areas of their class work. Children are developing an astute awareness of how their numeracy skills are used across their learning and in real life situations. The pupil-run school bank allows all children to develop their knowledge about finance in a personalised and highly relevant way. Children develop their personal and social skills very effectively through participating in the school's wide range of charity and enterprise activities. The involvement of all children in the school's committees enables them to develop their leadership and citizenship skills, and contribute to improving their school. The important skills and talents that children develop outwith school are also encouraged and celebrated by all.

How well does the school support children to develop and learn?

The school has used Curriculum for Excellence really well to improve learning, teaching and achievement. Children in the nursery and primary stages benefit from a rich and relevant curriculum that is based on active and investigative approaches to learning. As a result, children are learning to apply a range of high-order skills, such as problem-solving, organisation and leadership across their learning. An innovative way of organising the early years' curriculum ensures children in the nursery make a very smooth transition into P1. Through committees and topic work, children have very good opportunities to learn together in mixed-age groups. Staff make extremely good use of the school grounds to make children's learning experiences active and interesting. The outstanding approaches to promoting health and wellbeing help children to develop informed attitudes about their own lifestyles. Across the school, staff know children very well and use a range of methods to meet the varied needs of children very effectively. Teachers and nursery staff set tasks and activities at the right level of difficulty for almost all children. Staff are skilful in their use of questioning and encourage children to think for themselves. Careful tracking of children's progress helps staff identify children who need additional support or extra challenge. Children receive very well-judged support from nursery staff, teachers, support assistants and visiting professionals.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

The ethos in the school is excellent. All staff and many parents give willingly of their own time to maintain the stimulating and caring environment for learning. The highly-skilled staff reflect continuously on the quality of learning and teaching in the nursery and classrooms. Commendably, they discuss and share best practice regularly with each other and with colleagues in other schools. Effective approaches to self-evaluation have led to innovative approaches to developing the curriculum and in achieving high-quality learning and teaching across the school. The headteacher and principal teacher provide highly-effective leadership for learning and are clear about their vision to ensure that every child develops as a vibrant and successful learner.

This inspection of your school and nursery class found the following key strengths.

- High-achieving and articulate children who play a key role in improving their school and community.

- The excellent learning experiences for children in the nursery and primary classes.
- The highly-effective whole-school approach to health and wellbeing, including learning outdoors.
- Partnerships with parents, agencies and the community to enhance children's learning.
- Staff teamwork and the headteacher's leadership of improvement.

We discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the school and nursery class. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue to use self-evaluation to embed further Curriculum for Excellence.
- Continue to ensure that tasks and activities meet the wide range of children's needs.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further evaluative visits in connection with this inspection. During the inspection, we identified aspects of innovative practice which we would like to explore further in order to share the practice with others. As a result we will work with the school and local authority in order to record and share more widely the innovative practice. We will ask the school, in discussion with the local authority, to let parents know the outcome of the innovative practice visit(s).

Lesley A Johnstone
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/LongforganPrimarySchoolPerthandKinross.asp>.

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation. You can contact us at enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us at BMCT, Education Scotland, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact 01506 600200, or write to us at the above address or e-mail: feedback@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk.



**Perth and Kinross Council
Education and Children's Services**

**Extended Learning and Achievement Visit
Longforgan Primary School
1 - 3 June 2011**



BACKGROUND

To support the school in the process of self-evaluation, a team of four Quality Improvement Officers visited Longforgan Primary School on 1, 2, 3 June 2011. The themes for the review were Achievement, Learning and Leadership. These themes were subject to scrutiny through core Quality Indicators from *How good is our school?*

The school's Standards and Quality Report 2009-2010, the School Improvement Plan 2010-2011 and the school's own self evaluation proforma formed the core documentation for scrutiny and discussion during the visit.

During the Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, the team carried out discussions with the management team and other staff, observed learning and teaching in classes, reviewed documentation including children's work and met with groups of children and parents/carers.

The strengths and areas for improvement identified as a result of the self evaluation process are recorded below under the three main themes of Achievement, Learning and Leadership.

ACHIEVEMENT

Strengths

- Overall levels of attainment have remained consistently high in reading, writing and maths over the past three years, with almost all children attaining or exceeding expected levels of attainment. Almost all children continue to make very good progress with their learning.
- There are very good examples of writing for a range of purposes across the school.
- Children are given many opportunities to achieve at school and within their local communities. Achievements are celebrated through the Achievement Boards, assemblies, certificates, newsletters, Personal Learning Plans (PLPs), the school's website, end of year reports, Standards and Quality reports and a diploma award ceremony which also includes parents.
- There are very good opportunities for children to engage in a range of group activities and to take responsibility within the school, for example Children Council, Unicef, Health, Fundraising, Eco, Newsletter, ICT/Website and Fair

Trade. These groups have a significant impact on children's learning and achievement.

- Children have valuable opportunities to represent the school in a wide variety of sporting and cultural events which build confidence and give the children enjoyment and the opportunity for success.
- The School Improvement Plan sets out clear priorities for development and these have had a positive impact on taking forward the work of the school, for example the Rights Respecting School Award, I Can Early Talk and the annual school-wide Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) conference.
- There is very effective joint working with other schools in the Local Management Group resulting in important curriculum development for example in note taking.
- Effective transition arrangements from P7 to a range of secondary schools are in place. These include transition projects chosen by children that are designed to enhance life skills. Children recognise how these projects develop their self-confidence.
- Transitions for children entering nursery are well developed. Children moving from nursery to P1 are already familiar with the setting due to the successful arrangements where nursery and P1 children work together in the '1nery'.
- Enhanced transitions are planned in term 4 for those children who do not attend Longforgan nursery class.
- Children feel safe, protected and highly valued at school and are confident that they are listened to.
- At all stages within the school, children are polite, demonstrate respect for others and interact very well with adults and each other.
- The school has embedded positive approaches to behaviour and inclusion. The Bounce Back programme is well established for both children and staff. The school has taken forward Restorative Approaches and this has had a positive impact on children's behaviour and sense of inclusion.

Areas for improvement

- Continue to develop and implement effective arrangements for assessing and tracking progress to ensure pace and challenge across the school.
- Continue to develop strategies to record and evidence children's wider achievement and skills development to ensure coherence and progression.

LEARNING

Strengths

- Teachers are working with increasing confidence with CfE experiences and outcomes which they use to plan a broad range of learning opportunities for children.
- The highly effective interdisciplinary approach to planning whole school contexts for learning has had a positive impact, giving children the opportunity to be more involved in planning their own learning.

- Vertical groupings are used for a wide range of learning and social experiences and these have strengthened the feeling of community and the supportive ethos within the school.
- The learning climate and teaching approaches strongly support the development of children's skills and attributes encouraging them to be confident, successful and responsible.
- In almost all lessons observed most children listened attentively to explanations and instructions and responded well to each other in co-operative learning situations. Most were actively engaged in their learning.
- In all classes observed the learning intentions were shared effectively with the children.
- Relationships and interactions between children and staff are highly respectful.
- Across the school the active learning approach, including cooperative learning, impacts positively on the quality of the learners' experiences and all children are supported well in their learning within a variety of activities.
- In the nursery class children enjoy learning through play both indoors and outside.
- The Pupil Support Teacher has a clear remit and is secure in terms of her own roles and responsibilities and this is impacting positively on learners.
- Vulnerable pupils with complex needs are supported in a sympathetic and positive manner.

Areas for improvement

- In all learning situations ensure that tasks and activities meet the needs of all children and provide appropriate challenge consistently across the school.
- Ensure appropriate success criteria are identified to enhance children's understanding and evaluation of learning.
- Revisit principles of CfE when planning learning including a focus on pace and challenge.
- In the nursery ensure 'activities at home' are relevant and based on individual children's needs.
- Review the arrangements for topic groups to ensure learning opportunities are appropriate to the age and stage of all children.
- Expand the scope of the CfE conference to include learning that comes from school committees.

LEADERSHIP

Strengths

- Capably led by the headteacher the entire school has developed a very clear vision for the school and this is shared with all stakeholders.
- The Senior Management Team (SMT) and all staff work very well together to drive forward the improvement agenda.
- The SMT demonstrate a very comprehensive knowledge of staff and children, their strengths and areas for development.
- A strong team ethos means staff embrace opportunities for leadership and take responsibility for aspects of the School Improvement Plan thus strengthening the capacity of the school to take forward improvement and change.

- Support for children is taken very seriously and is at the heart of all strategic decision-making, with clear evidence of a strong, collaborative approach between HT, PT and Pupil Support Teacher.
- Staff take responsibility for new developments and the sharing of good practice.
- Collegiate time is utilised very effectively to support the School Improvement Plan and a well planned range of opportunities is provided for staff to engage in high level debate and discussion.
- The views of staff, parents and children are regularly sought about the quality of the work of the school with areas for further development identified.
- There are many opportunities for parents to become engaged in their children's learning
- The management of change is very effective, and focuses on priorities identified through self-evaluation. The pace of change is brisk however it is well judged and managed to ensure positive impact.

Areas for development

- Ensure that the monitoring of learning and teaching already in place consistently results in improved outcomes for children.

Conclusion

Longforgan Primary is a successful, well-led school where staff work as an effective team and children are confident and respectful. The school has high expectations and a determination to support every pupil to reach his/her potential including those with additional support needs.

Parents feel positive about their children's educational experience. They have confidence in the school, its leadership and its staff and they appreciate the supportive ethos of the school and the approachability of the staff. Parents recognise the limitations of the school building and would welcome physical improvements that would further enhance the high quality of education already provided by Longforgan Primary.

Children feel happy, safe and secure at Longforgan and have a high level of involvement in deciding on the direction of their learning and in the life of the school. They are very able to reflect on their learning and identify the learning situations which work best for them.

The headteacher, staff, children and parents should continue to work together to further develop the very good work already started and to support future improvements in order to enable all children to develop and achieve their full potential.

The school should now use the information from this report to develop the School Improvement Plan for next session.



Education & Children's Services
HMI - Follow Through Procedures
Progress Report to Parents: June 2012

Logierait Primary School

1 Introduction

Logierait Primary School was inspected in **March 2011**. The report on the inspection by her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMI) was published in **May 2011**.

The school, with support from Education and Children's Services (ECS) officers, prepared a full plan for improvement which has had a positive impact on a wide range of aspects within the school.

Both headteacher and staff have worked co-operatively with authority staff to take forward the areas identified in the original HMI report as requiring development and the authority endorses the information within this report. The school's performance in each of the core quality indicators has been evaluated as good or better by both school and ECS staff.

Further information about the broader achievements of the school is contained in the school's annual Standards & Quality report published in September.

2 Areas for Improvement – Evaluation of Progress

The initial inspection report published in **May 2011** identified three main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made to date in addressing each of the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and other stakeholders.

Area for improvement 1: Improve further children's achievement

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- Classroom monitoring and collegiate activities focussed on improving specific aspects of learning and teaching, such as cooperative learning, resulting in high quality learning experiences for children.
- Children are part of the democratic decision making process through their involvement in planning aspects of learning and some school events.
- Children have continued to develop their literacy and communication skills through presenting to a range of audiences for a variety of purposes, examples being a presentation to the Eco Schools Assessor and presentations to parents at school Get Together

- Children explored the use of technology and further developed their presentation skills through planning, creating and presenting short films on their local environment in the context of the Living Communities project.
- Children are making good progress with developing their reading skills following the implementation of the literacy programme and this has impacted positively on their ability to access the wider curriculum.
- Regular school Get Togethers, attended by parents, recognise and celebrate children's achievements both in and out of school.

Area for improvement 2: Continue to develop the curriculum taking account of the principles of Curriculum for Excellence

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- A planned programme for literacy has been introduced which provides more focused learning experiences for children. The increased pace of learning and challenge for the young people has resulted in children engaging more independently with texts and reading more confidently.
- Staff knowledge and understanding about the craft of teaching reading has been enhanced through the delivery of refresher training resulting in more structure and differentiation in children's learning.
- Annual plans have been reviewed and amended ensuring more flexibility to allow for children to experience more breadth and depth in their learning rather than be restricted to what had originally been outlined in the plan.
- Cross curricular planning is developing in line with Curriculum for Excellence to enable children to consolidate and transfer their skills through new and challenging contexts.
- There is more personalisation and choice in children's learning through increased opportunities to contribute to the planning of their learning within a structured framework.
- Enhanced use of the community and the local environment through participation in the Living Communities project has led to children having an increased awareness of the community in which they live, ensured relevance in their learning and has also further developed partnership with local businesses and brought a wide range of people into the school.
- A system has been developed to track children's progress with learning to ensure appropriate pace and challenge for all.

Area for improvement 3: Build on approaches to self-evaluation to ensure high-quality learning experiences for children

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- Children and staff have evaluated and improved the work of the school through the development of a variety of initiatives and have gained a second Green Flag for their Eco work.
- The views and ideas of the pupils, which contribute to the school self-evaluation, are collected through regular feedback sessions and Pupil Focus Groups.
- Staff have continued to develop their skills in self-evaluation through planned opportunities for sharing good practice, team-teaching sessions and observation of colleagues.
- Ongoing evaluation of the literacy programme has led to effective changes and an increase in staff confidence of its delivery.
- Monitoring of learning and teaching through classroom observations and teachers' self-evaluations identifies next steps for individual teachers resulting in improvements in children's learning experiences.
- Children take responsibility for developing their school through planning and implementing improvements, which they have identified, during Taskforce time.
- All staff have contributed to evaluating aspects of the school and have taken on areas of responsibility to facilitate improvements.

Headteacher: Frances Dean (Interim)



Education & Children's Services
HMI - Follow Through Procedures
Progress Report to Parents: June 2012

Blair Atholl Primary School

1 Introduction

Blair Atholl Primary School was inspected in **March 2011**. The report on the inspection by her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMI) was published in **June 2011**.

The school, with support from the Education and Children's Services (ECS) officers, prepared a full plan for improvement which has had a positive impact on a wide range of aspects within the school.

Both headteacher and staff have worked co-operatively with authority staff to take forward the areas identified in the original HMI report as requiring development and the authority endorses the information within this report. During this period there has been a period of significant unrest and disquiet expressed by a number of parents. A number of senior ECS officers have listened to all parents, staff and pupils and have taken steps to clarify any areas of misconception held about the educational provision at the school. At the same time work has also focussed on improving the overall quality of educational provision at the school.

During this same period the substantive headteacher has had an extended period of sick leave and the school is currently managed, on a shared headship basis, by an experienced interim headteacher.

The school has made very good progress across a range of areas and as such we are confident in saying that its educational provision across the 5 core quality indicators is good or better.

Further information about the broader achievements of the school is contained in the school's annual Standards & Quality report published in September.

2 Areas for Improvement – Evaluation of Progress

The initial inspection report published in **June 2011** identified four main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made to date in addressing each of the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and other stakeholders.

Area for improvement 1: Develop roles and partnership with parents, children and staff to ensure continuous improvement in the work of the school

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- All staff are involved in auditing/evaluating the work of the school to identify strengths and improvements as part of the self-evaluation process.
- All children have been involved in evaluating the work of the school through participation in Pupil Focus Groups which enable them to express their opinions and ideas regarding improvements in learning, teaching and the school environment.
- The school has increased opportunities for children to take part in a range of after school clubs which extended their learning and were facilitated by staff, parents and other community agencies.
- The school newsletter which goes out fortnightly shares successes, achievements and future dates for events with the parents and the community.
- Class information sheets have been introduced which share the key areas of learning for the term with the families and provide information to parents as to how they can support their child's learning at home.
- A variety of processes are used to gather the views of parents. There are regular opportunities for parents to share in their children's learning, examples being the Easter Church Service and the performance by the pupils of music they have composed, accompanied by members of the Scottish National Orchestra.
- Parents and members of the local community have been invited to share knowledge, skills and expertise with children in school activities and excursions.

Area for improvement 2: Continue to develop the curriculum taking account of Curriculum for Excellence

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- A planned programme for literacy has been introduced which provides more focused learning experiences for children with increased pace and challenge resulting in children engaging more independently with texts and reading more confidently.
- Assessment has evidenced the very good performance and attainment of children in reading and spelling and as part of this process children were confirmed as achieving in line with or above the national standards.
- Staff knowledge and understanding about the craft of teaching reading has been enhanced through the delivery of refresher training resulting in more structure and differentiation in children's learning.

- Annual plans have been reviewed and amended ensuring more flexibility to allow for children to experience more breadth and depth in their learning.
- Cross curricular planning is developing in line with Curriculum for Excellence to enable children to consolidate and transfer their skills through new and challenging contexts.
- There is more personalisation and choice in children's learning through increased opportunities to contribute to the planning of their learning within a structured framework.
- Enhanced use of the community and the local environment through participation in the Living Communities project has led to children having an increased awareness of the community in which they live, ensured relevance in their learning and has also further developed partnership with local businesses and brought a wide range of people into the school.
- A system has been developed to track children's progress with learning to ensure appropriate pace and challenge for all.

Area for improvement 3: Further improve approaches to meeting children's needs

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- Joint planning across the Early Years classes has focussed on high level learning experiences for specific areas of the curriculum leading to more pace and challenge for able children and increased engagement of all children.
- School staff liaise closely with the visiting Pupil Support Teacher to identify additional support needs ensuring that support is targeted and the needs of children requiring additional support are met.
- Long term targets are set and shared with parents enabling them to support their children's learning in literacy and maths more fully at home.
- A system is in place to track individual pupil progress allowing teachers to identify children's needs more effectively and plan learning appropriately.
- Teachers are using co-operative learning approaches effectively across curricular areas enabling children to develop a wide range of skills.
- Assessments carried out using standardised tests for maths; reading and spelling confirm that children's learning needs are being met through a variety of planned learning experiences.
- A range of staff development activities focussed on assessment have led to more varied, meaningful and challenging learning experiences.

Area for improvement 4: Build on arrangements for self-evaluation to ensure high-quality learning experiences for children

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- Parents have been consulted on a range of matters and have had opportunities to express their views.
- Pupils and staff have evaluated and improved the work of the school through the development of a variety of initiatives and have gained accreditation for the Health Promoting Schools and ICAN talk initiatives.
- The views and ideas of the pupils, which contribute to the school self-evaluation, are collected through regular feedback sessions and Pupil Focus Groups.
- Staff have continued to develop their skills in self-evaluation through planned opportunities for sharing good practice, team-teaching sessions and observation of colleagues.
- Ongoing evaluation of the literacy programme has led to effective changes and an increase in staff confidence.
- Monitoring of learning and teaching through classroom observations and teachers' self-evaluations identifies next steps for individual teachers resulting in improvements in children's learning experiences.

Headteacher: Frances Dean (Interim Headteacher)



Education & Children's Services
HMI - Follow Through Procedures
Progress Report to Parents: June 2012

Murthly Primary School

1 Introduction

Murthly Primary School was inspected in **April 2011**. The report on the inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMI) was published in **June 2011**.

The school, with support from Education and Children's Services (ECS) officers, prepared a full plan for improvement which has had a very positive impact on a wide range of aspects of the school.

A new headteacher was appointed in November 2011. She and staff have worked co-operatively with authority staff to take forward the areas for improvement identified in the original HMle report and the authority endorses the information within this report. All staff are confident that the school's education provision is now good or better when evaluated against the core quality indicators.

Further information about the broader achievements of the school is contained in the school's annual Standards & Quality report published in September.

2 Areas for Improvement – Evaluation of Progress

The initial inspection report published in June 2011 identified four main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made to date in addressing each of the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and other stakeholders.

Area for improvement : Improve leadership for learning

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- The children have been increasingly involved in planning what and how they will learn, through:
 - participating in a Curriculum for Excellence workshop,
 - their input into planning aspects of their learning e.g. in social studies,
 - reviewing their learning intentions and success criteria appropriately to check on how well they are progressing with their learning, and
 - developing their understanding of self and peer evaluation.

All pupils in p1-7 have been involved in school committees, including Pupil Council, Eco, Fundraising, Library, Playground and Health. Through these they have developed their understanding of the democratic process and their roles and responsibilities within the school.

- Staff have been sharing planning with children, parents and colleagues from other schools. They have shared this work with parents through planning walls, homework opportunities, parents' meetings and at parent curriculum evenings. This has impacted very positively on the quality of learning. All staff have supported each other in this period of change by working collegiately to plan and teach. They have been observing and encouraging each other as well as visiting other schools to observe best practice. Teachers have led the evolving planning process and the development of new programmes across the school. They have worked with the new headteacher to implement a programme for personal and social development (Bounce Back). This team working has led to ongoing good morale with a feeling of ownership and of valuing each other.
- Parents have been kept informed of progress through monthly newsletters, the website, notice board and parents' meetings and through the Parent Council. Parents through fundraising initiatives and by helping in school have supported learning opportunities for pupils by working in positive partnership with the school.
- All stakeholders have been involved in the audit process. All staff have fully participated in relevant continuous professional development and have shared what they have learned with colleagues. All have participated positively in staff review.

Area for improvement 2: Increase further the pace of children's progress in learning

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- Curriculum for Excellence has been developed in line with national and authority guidelines with the focus being on developing improved planning approaches and devising systems for better assessing and then maintaining evidence of children's progress. There is now a focus on pupils' involvement in the planning process, the use of learning intentions and success criteria and on active and cooperative learning. This has had a positive impact on the way children learn and on the quality of learning and teaching.
- The principles of Curriculum for Excellence are evident in the collaborative planning process used for whole school areas of study. This approach has had a very positive impact on the quality of the learning and teaching, meeting children's needs and in assisting young people develop the skills and attributes of being successful, responsible, confident and effective in all they do. This approach will continue to be embedded next year ensuring we meet the needs of all children.

- There has been a whole school focus on the development of reading. This has resulted in a more coherent and progressively planned approach to the teaching of reading skills. This has helped improve enjoyment of reading and has led to improved attainment at all stages.
- The children and staff are developing personal learning logs to track achievements and evidence progress. This will develop children's understanding of the learning process and provide parents with opportunities to engage with their children's learning experiences.
- Homework is still being reviewed in consultation between staff, children and parents to ensure a consistent approach across the school and a shared expectation between home and school.
- All pupils have achieved in a variety of ways through involvement in school initiatives, for example committees, activity sessions, topic related presentations. They have also achieved through the wide range of activities they have undertaken outwith school, for example in sports, music, drama. All of these have been celebrated through assemblies, the wall of success, newsletters and the newspaper.

Area for improvement 3: Improve the curriculum, based on a shared understanding of Curriculum for Excellence.

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- All staff worked together to evaluate current practice against authority and national guidance and drew up a strategic plan for taking forward Curriculum for Excellence in the school. This has been reviewed regularly to track progress and identify areas which need to be developed further.
- Developing closer links with the Local Management Group has allowed staff to visit other schools, work on inter-school projects and has increased the capacity of the school and deepened the staff understanding of Curriculum for Excellence.
- The introduction of whole school areas of study and the development of collaborative planning between and across stages has increased teaching skills and staff confidence.
- The children's Curriculum for Excellence workshop developed both staff and children's understanding of CfE experiences outcomes and how they link to the learning intentions and success criteria. Sharing this with parents on a curriculum evening developed parental understanding of the learning process. Through committees, staff and children planned and implemented a variety of focus weeks identifying key learning and recognising their successes.
- Staff have become more familiar with all aspects of CfE and are therefore better placed to evaluate progress and identify improvement priorities for the future.

Area for improvement 4: Increase the involvement of staff in improving the school through self-evaluation

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- Staff are now fully involved in self evaluation and have participated in a range of activities throughout the last session which helped secure their understanding of the potential of this way of working.
- The management team has worked with staff to develop a monitoring system which includes opportunities for peer observation and professional dialogue. There is now a calendar in place for the monitoring and moderating the learning across the school from nursery to p7.
- Staff have used a range of tools to review current practice and identify areas for future development.
- Staff have fully engaged in the Perth and Kinross employee review and development process, identifying their strengths and areas for personal development.
- The school's Curriculum for Excellence strategic plan has been updated with input from all staff, children and parents.
- The remit of support staff has been reviewed to enhance the learning experiences of all children.

Headteacher:

Victoria McCarthy