

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Lifelong Learning Executive Sub-Committee – 5 December 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 inspection of Comrie Primary School and Nursery Class by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI).

Further to inspection by HMI in 2011, the report also provides a progress update for: Blackford Primary School.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 1.1 Summary and Education Scotland inspection letter for Comrie Primary School and Nursery Class (Appendix 1a); and
- 1.2 Perth and Kinross Council Education Services progress report on Blackford Primary School (Appendix 2a).

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 5 September 2012:
 - Inspection of Comrie Primary School.

- 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:
- Innovative Practice
 - Continued inspection
 - Additional support for improvement
 - No further inspection activity
- 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 5 September 2012 the following reports have been published by Education Scotland:
- **Inspection of Comrie Primary School.** HMI will make no further visits in connection with the inspection report of August 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 letter and a copy of the Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, January 2011, Appendix 1b.

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 9 November 2011), a progress report for the following school is attached for consideration. A summary of the Education Scotland inspection report for this school is also attached. This school was not required by the HMI to have a follow-through inspection.
- **Blackford Primary School.** The progress report of Blackford Primary School is shown in Appendix 2a. Blackford Primary School was inspected in June 2011. The summary inspection report is shown in Appendix 2b.

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 170 quality indicators have been evaluated. Of these, 92% (almost all) were satisfactory or better.

5.4.2 Table 1 shows that there has been an improvement in the proportion of pre-school centres being evaluated as good or better in relation to improvements in performance, children's experiences and meeting learning needs (core quality indicators). Following a fall in 2010/11, all five pre school centres inspected last session (2011/12) were evaluated as good or better in relation to these core quality indicators.

5.4.3 Four out of the five pre-school centres inspected last session (2011/12) were evaluated as good or better in relation to the curriculum and improvement through self evaluation.

Table 1: Overview by Performance Indicator

Performance Indicator	Satisfactory or Better								Good or Better								
	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Pre-School																	
Improvements in performance	6	86	11	92	10	100	5	100	6	86	10	83	9	90	5	100	
Children's experiences	6	86	11	92	10	100	5	100	6	86	11	92	9	90	5	100	
Meeting learning needs	6	86	11	92	10	100	5	100	5	71	11	92 [#]	8	80	5	100	
The curriculum	5	71	11	92	10	100	5	100	5	71	10	83	7	70	4*	80*	
Improvement through self evaluation	6	86	10	83	9	90	4*	80*	3	43	9	75	5	50	4*	80*	
Total Number of Quality Indicators	35	-	60	-	50	-	25	-	35	-	60	-	50	-	25	-	
Total Number of Inspections	7	-	12	-	10	-	5	-	7	-	12	-	10	-	5	-	

*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.

Note one indicator previously reported as satisfactory instead of good.

¹ This analysis is by date of inspection as published by 28 September 2012

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

Quality Indicators Pre-School	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Excellent	0	0	0	0	5	10	2	8	7	4
Very good	9	26	23	38	10	20	15	60	57	34
Good	16	46	28	47 [#]	23	46	6	24	73	43
Satisfactory	4	11	3	5 [#]	11	22	1	4*	19	11
Weak	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	4*	4	2
Unsatisfactory	5	14	5	8	0	0	0	0	10	6
Total QI's Satisfactory or Better	29	83	54	90	49	98	24	96	156	92
Total QI's Good or Better	25	71	51	85	38	76	23	92	137	81
Total Number of Quality Indicators	35	-	60	-	50	-	25	-	170	-
Total Number of Inspections	7	-	12	-	10	-	5	-	34	-

*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.

Note one indicator previously reported as satisfactory instead of good.

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

Core Quality Indicators Pre-School	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Excellent	0	0	0	0	3	10	2	13	5	5
Very good	7	33	17	47	7	23	10	67	41	40
Good	10	48	15	42 [#]	16	53	3	20	44	43
Satisfactory	1	5	1	3 [#]	4	13	0	0	6	6
Weak	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unsatisfactory	3	14	3	8	0	0	0	0	6	6
Total Core QI's Satisfactory or Better	18	86*	33	92*	30	100	15	100	96	94
Centres - all three core QIs satisfactory or better	6	86*	11	92*	10	100	5	100	32	94
Total Core QI's Good or Better	17	81	32	89	26	87	15	100	90	88
Centres - all three core QIs good or better	5	63	10	77	8	80	5	100	28	82
Total Number of Core Quality Indicators	21	-	36	-	30	-	15	-	102	-
Total Number of Inspections	7	-	12	-	10	-	5	-	34	-

*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.

Note one indicator previously reported as satisfactory instead of good.

5.5 Primary Schools

5.5.1 In primary schools, a total of 175 quality indicators have been evaluated. Of these, 72% (the majority) were good 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 in 2010/11, there was an improvement last session (2011/12). All the schools inspected last session were evaluated as good or better in relation to the core quality indicators and four out of five in relation to the curriculum and improvement through self evaluation.

Table 3: Overview by Performance Indicator

Performance Indicator Primary	Satisfactory or Better								Good or Better							
	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Improvements in performance	10	91	10	91	8	100	5	100	8	73	9	82	4	50	5	100
Learners' experiences	11	100	11	100	8	100	5	100	8	73	10	91	6	75	5	100
Meeting learning needs	9	82	11	100	8	100	5	100	7	64	9	82	4	50	5	100
The curriculum	10	91	11	100	8	100	5	100	8	73	9	82	3	38	4	80*
Improvement through self evaluation	9	82	10	91	8	100	4	80*	6	55	9	82	3	38	4	80*
Total Number of Quality Indicators	55	-	55	-	40	-	25	-	55	-	55	-	40	-	25	-
Total Number of Inspections	11	-	11	-	8	-	5	-	11	-	11	-	8	-	5	-

*This includes the evaluations from the inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder which 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

Quality Indicators Primary	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Excellent	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	4	2	1
Very good	15	27	14	25	7	18	12	48	48	27
Good	22	40	32	58	12	30	10	40	76	43
Satisfactory	12	22	7	13	20	50	1	4*	40	23
Weak	6	11	2	4	0	0	1	4*	9	5
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total QI's Satisfactory or Better	49	89	53	96	40	100	24	96	166	95
Total QI's Good or Better	37	67	46	84	20	50	23	92	126	72
Total Number of Quality Indicators	55	-	55	-	40	-	25	-	175	-
Total Number of Inspections	11	-	11	-	8	-	5	-	35	-

*This includes the evaluations from the inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder which 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

Core Quality Indicators Primary	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Excellent	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	7	2	2
Very good	9	27	8	24	4	17	8	53	29	28
Good	14	42	20	61	9	38	6	40	49	47
Satisfactory	7	21	4	12	10	42	0	0	21	20
Weak	3	9	1	3	0	0	0	0	4	4
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Core QI's Satisfactory or Better	30	91	32	97	24	100	15	100	101	96
Schools - all three core QIs satisfactory/better	9	82	10	91	8	100	5	100	32	91
Total Core QI's Good or Better	23	70	28	85	14	58	15	100	80	76
Schools – all three core QIs good/better	7	64	9	82	3	38	5	100	24	69
Total Number of Core Quality Indicators	33	-	33	-	24	-	15	-	105	-
Total Number of Inspections	11	-	11	-	8	-	5	-	35	-

5.6 Secondary Schools

5.6.1 Last session (2011/12), two secondary schools were inspected. Of the ten quality indicators evaluated, 80% (most) were good or better. Both inspections last session received good or better evaluations for the core quality indicators.

Table 5: Overview by Performance Indicator

Performance Indicator Secondary	Satisfactory or Better								Good or Better							
	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Improvements in performance	2	100	1	100	0	0	2	100	2	100	0	0	0	0	2	100
Learners' experiences	2	100	1	100	0	0	2	100	2	100	1	100	0	0	2	100
Meeting learning needs	2	100	1	100	0	0	2	100	2	100	1	100	0	0	2	100
The curriculum	2	100	1	100	0	0	2	100	2	100	1	100	0	0	1	50*
Improvement through self evaluation	2	100	1	100	0	0	1	50*	2	100	0	0	0	0	1	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	-

*This includes the evaluations from the inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder which 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

Quality Indicators Secondary	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very good	2	20	0	0	0	0	1	10	1	4
Good	8	80	3	60	0	0	7	70	10	40
Satisfactory	0	0	2	40	0	0	1	10*	3	12
Weak	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	10*	1	4
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total QI's Satisfactory or Better	10	100	5	100	0	0	9	90	24	96
Total QI's Good or Better	10	100	3	60	0	0	8	80	21	84
Total Number of Quality Indicators	10	-	5	-	0	-	10	-	25	-
Total Number of Inspections	2	-	1	-	0	-	2	-	5	-

*This includes the evaluations from the inspection of The Community School of Auchterarder which 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

Core Quality Indicators Secondary	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very good	1	17	0	0	0	0	1	17	2	13
Good	5	83	2	67	0	0	5	83	12	80
Satisfactory	0	0	1	33	0	0	0	0	1	7
Weak	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Core QI's Satisfactory or Better	6	100	3	100	0	0	6	100	15	100
Schools - all three core QIs satisfactory/better	2	100	1	100	0	0	2	100	5	100
Total Core QI's Good or Better	6	100	2	67	0	0	6	100	14	93
Schools – all three core QIs good/better	2	100	0	0	0	0	2	100	4	80
Total Number of Core Quality Indicators	6	-	3	-	0	-	6	-	15	-
Total Number of Inspections	2	-	1	-	0	-	2	-	5	-

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: 28 September 2012

Appendices:

- Appendix 1a Summary and Education Scotland inspection letter of Comrie Primary School and Nursery Class.
- Appendix 1b Comrie Primary School and Nursery Class Extended Learning and Achievement Visit, January 2011.
- Appendix 2a Education Services progress report, Blackford Primary School, October 2012.
- Appendix 2b Summary of the HMIE inspection report on Blackford Primary School.

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E-mail: ecsgeneralenquiries@pkc.gov.uk



Council Text Phone Number 01738 442573

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Lifelong Learning Executive Sub-Committee – 5 December 2012

**SUMMARY OF THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION REPORT
COMRIE 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 Comrie 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:

- A positive, caring and inclusive environment for learning.
- Partnerships with parents and the wider community which enhance learning.
- A rich variety of learning opportunities which focuses on developing skills.
- Highly skilled nursery staff who very effectively meet children's learning needs.
- Effective targeted support to ensure children with specific learning needs make very good progress.

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 strengthen approaches to assessment, tracking and monitoring.
- Ensure consistently high quality learning experiences which build appropriately on children's prior achievements.

4 QUALITY INDICATORS

Evaluations for Comrie Primary School and Nursery Class:

Nursery class:

Improvements in performance	very good
Children's experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	excellent

Comrie Primary School:

Improvements in performance	very good
Learners' experiences	good
Meeting learning needs	good

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

The curriculum	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	good

5 CONCLUSION

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

For further information contact:

Anne Dalziel, Quality Improvement Officer, Education Services (ext 76376).

21 August 2012

Dear Parent/Carer

**Comrie 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 headteachers 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 headteachers shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including staff's approaches to planning learning, developing skills, assessing children's progress and working in partnership with parents and the wider community. 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?

Children learn in a very welcoming and nurturing environment. Children enjoy nursery and school. They feel safe, respected and listened to. Children in the nursery classes benefit from consistently high quality learning experiences. They achieve very well. Almost all confidently take part in discussions to plan their learning. They often choose activities which develop their independence and deepen their understanding. They could have more planned opportunities to learn beyond the immediate nursery environment. All children in nursery are learning well how to show respect to others and develop friendships. They have made a strong start in their early literacy and numeracy skills. They listen attentively to stories, enjoy making their own books and are confidently able to count and use money in the nursery garden shop.

Children's achievements in the primary classes are strong. All children demonstrate a range of communication, teamwork and leadership skills through the school committees and initiatives such as Comrie in Colour and the regeneration of Cultybraggan. Children make a positive difference to their school and the community. Many children achieve success in sporting and cultural activities. As individuals and in teams they often gain awards for their efforts. Almost all children participate in clubs and activities that enable them to develop new skills, extend their interests and which contribute positively to their health and wellbeing. The school choir, for example, is a very popular activity which increases children's self-esteem. From P1 to P7, children increasingly take responsibility for planning and assessing their own learning during lessons. However, staff have work to do to ensure this

happens effectively in all classes. Across the primary stages, most children are achieving appropriate levels of literacy and numeracy and can apply these in a range of contexts. By P7, many children demonstrate strong writing skills and depth in understanding of mathematics.

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

Staff are sensitive to children's social and emotional needs. They are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding children and promote equality and fairness across the whole school. Nursery staff skilfully reflect on their conversations with children to gauge children's understanding. They adapt tasks and activities well to ensure all children are actively engaged and make appropriate progress in their learning. In most primary lessons, most tasks and activities are well matched to build on children's previous achievements. A few staff need more support to plan learning which more effectively takes account of children's varying needs and abilities. The team of specialist support staff use a range of approaches very well to ensure vulnerable children enjoy school and achieve success in the targets set for them. As a result of this highly effective support, children with specific learning needs are making very good progress.

Children in the nursery and primary classes benefit from a very well planned curriculum. In the nursery classes, children talk about what they already know and often decide what they would like to know next. Staff effectively help children to see links between different aspects of their learning, for example, children plant and grow vegetables which they prepare and eat at snack time. From nursery to P7, many parents and members of the wider community share their skills and talents with children. Staff plan opportunities for skills development well through interesting and relevant social studies, and science contexts that deepen children's understanding of the world. From P1 to P7, staff have successfully improved learning in mathematics by introducing active learning approaches which challenge children to think more deeply. Staff would benefit from increased opportunities with schools across the cluster, to plan and further improve continuity in children's learning from nursery to P1 and from P7 to secondary school.

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

The headteachers manage the school very well. They have established a job-share arrangement which puts the needs of the school and the community first. Through effective communication and a flexible approach to their shared responsibilities they have secured the confidence and respect of staff, pupils and parents. They value the views of staff, pupils, parents and others who link with the school. The school is highly valued as an integral part of the wider local community. Many children demonstrate leadership attributes. All staff contribute to discussions about school improvement priorities. A few take more significant leadership roles which enhance the curriculum and enliven children's learning. Increasingly, staff work together to evaluate and improve their own teaching skills. They need to continue sharing the good practice which exists across the school to ensure children's learning experiences are consistently strong at all stages.

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

- A positive, caring and inclusive environment for learning.
- Partnerships with parents and the wider community which enhance learning.
- A rich variety of learning opportunities which focuses on developing skills.
- Highly skilled nursery staff who very effectively meet children's learning needs.
- Effective targeted support to ensure children with specific learning needs make very good progress.

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 strengthen approaches to assessment, tracking and monitoring.
- Ensure consistently high quality learning experiences which build appropriately on children's prior achievements.

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).

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/ComriePrimarySchoolPerthandKinross.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
Comrie Primary School
18/19 January 2011**



BACKGROUND

To support the school in the process of self-evaluation, a team of two quality improvement officers (school improvement) and a service manager (early years) visited Comrie Primary School in January 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? (3).

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

During the extended learning and achievement visit, the team carried out discussions with the headteacher and other staff, observed learning and teaching in classrooms, reviewed documentation, and met with groups of children and parents.

The strengths and areas for development 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.

ACHIEVEMENT

Strengths

- The school committees system, enhanced by the regular involvement of community members, provides children with opportunity to develop as effective contributors and responsible citizens and promotes the development of skills for learning, for life and for work.
- Children benefit from a range of activities for personal and wider achievement through the link with Comrie in Colour at the Cultybraggan allotments, in using the school's 18 acre woodland site, and in attending authority events.
- Across the school, children are polite and well behaved. They demonstrate respect for others, interact with adults and can articulate their thinking and their learning.

Areas for development

- With support from the centre, examine attainment statistics over the recent past in order to, where possible, identify and address the factors influencing the downward attainment trend evident in June 2010.
- With the support of centrally produced resources, teaching staff in the school should engage in moderation activities and agree standards which will inform planned progress in learning within and between levels and improve attainment.

- Ensure that priorities in the school improvement plan deliver a measurable impact on improving attainment.
- Review arrangements for meeting the emotional and social needs of learners and consider developing a structured approach to promoting resilience and well-being.

LEARNING

Strengths

- In most classes almost all children were motivated and actively involved in their own learning. Tasks are well explained and instructions given with clarity.
- Children consulted report that their concerns are addressed and their views are valued.
- Whole school topics and focus days provide interesting opportunities for shared experiences across the stages; parents and pupils particularly appreciate these activities.
- Across the school, learning logs are used to good effect in supporting children's self evaluation and in sharing with parents the current focus of their child's learning.
- Nursery children enjoy innovative and creative experiences, often involving parents, and pre-school children benefit from a well-developed transition programme.
- Transition from P7 to S1 is very good with enhanced arrangements for pupils with additional support needs.
- Pupils with additional support needs are included in school activities and share experiences.
- The very high quality of Additional Support for Learning paperwork is in line with Perth & Kinross guidance; it promotes the strong collaborative ethic within the support team.

Areas for development

- In planning for learning, take account of the four contexts of the curriculum and maximise the opportunities for planned learning already present in the range of outdoor experiences in which children participate.
- Revisit Assessment is for Learning (AifL) principles to ensure that AifL practices are selected to impact positively on learning and, in due course, attainment.
- Ensure that lesson structures focus on outcomes for learners and promote appropriate pace.
- Continue to develop 'The Big Write', and build on the success of the approach, by involving a range of teaching staff to share good practice, engage in interdisciplinary topics and further develop literacy across the curriculum.
- Sharpen further the measurability of targets in individual education plans, and develop further the arrangements for measuring the impact of support on pupil progress.
- Identify and celebrate successes so that good practice can be positively enforced.

LEADERSHIP

Strengths

- The school's headteachers work well together.
- The principal teacher plays a strong middle management role in leading on the Additional Support Needs agenda in the school.
- The large number of parents involved as 'helpers' in school, and their substantial weekly time commitment, complement the work of the Parent Council and the Parent Teacher Association in effectively supporting the work of the school.
- Parents consulted report that they are very involved in the life of the school and in their own children's learning, particularly where a child is identified as having additional support needs. They find the school management team and all teachers to be very approachable.
- Communications within the staff team are strong and support the ethos of teamwork.

Areas for development

- The senior management team should build on the well-established organisation of the school and now focus on the leadership of learning.
- Continue with current plans to engage in the self-evaluation process throughout the school year and to extend engagement with the range of stakeholders, in particular in gathering the views of children.
- Ensure that the close monitoring already in place now focuses on developing consistency of learning and teaching across all stages.
- Further develop the skills of staff to include undertaking lead roles in a variety of contexts, thus developing leadership at all levels.

CONCLUSION

Comrie Primary School is set in an enviable location in a strong and supportive local community. Children in the school are well cared for and those children who have additional support needs are particularly well served. The school's 18 acre woodland site and the opportunities at Cultybraggan offer significant potential for developing motivating and highly effective learning experiences. In taking full advantage of these opportunities, the strong staff team are well placed to promote appropriate pace in learning and develop a rich curriculum for their learners.

[HMI Report](#)

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Education & Children's Services

HMle – Follow Through Procedures Progress Report

1 Introduction:

Blackford PS was inspected in May 2011. The report on the inspection by her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMle) was published in August 2011.

The school, with support from the Local Authority, 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 with authority staff to take forward the areas identified in the original HMle report as requiring development and the authority endorses the information within this report. The quality of the educational provision at the school is now good overall.

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 three identified 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

Put in place a clear plan for improving children's skills at all stages and taking forward Curriculum for Excellence.

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- Staff have worked to develop a more strategically planned approach to the design of the curriculum for the whole school. This has made it easier for teachers to plan learning that is progressive for all children and which covers an appropriately broad range of learning experiences.
- Further, teachers are ensuring their planning for learning is more focussed on the development of key skills at all stages. This means that children have the opportunity to learn then apply these skills in a range of different contexts.
- Leadership skills are able to be enhanced through the further development of the School Action Groups, School Council and Buddy Programme. Such groups allow more children frequent opportunities to take on key roles and exercise the associated responsibilities.

- The curriculum has been further enhanced by providing a range of extra curricular activities supported by parent volunteers e.g. cycling, chess, orienteering, football and art and craft, This has widened the opportunities for children to develop their skills in these areas.

Next steps

- To continue to review and monitor the benefits of the revised curriculum developments; ensuring that teachers' confidence in making judgements about progress in learning are consistent across the school.
- To further develop the approach to planning for skills by using the recently published P & K Skills Framework. The on-going development of this work links with the on-going work on moderation of standards of learning across the school, the Local Management Group and across P & K.

Area for improvement 2

Further promote children's skills in discussing, in collaborating and in taking responsibility for their learning.

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- Through discussion between staff and pupils, using Learning Logs as the context, there are more structured opportunities for discussions about learning to take place. These discussions have clarity and focus; strengths and areas for development are identified and followed up on.
- Staff have now have a shared understanding of what constitutes active, cooperative and interdisciplinary learning. They are clear about the purpose of each in terms of providing high quality, memorable learning experiences for all children. This is having a positive impact on the quality and consistency of learning and teaching across the school; encouraging children to collaborate and take responsibility for their learning within carefully planned contexts for learning.
- All children have engaged in 'Big Talk' activities within vertical groups (groups of children from across different age ranges in the school). These opportunities have helped develop children's skills in discussing and offering their opinions both in and out with the classroom.

Next step

- To extend the range of opportunities provided for all children whereby they can learn new literacy skills and apply them in a range of contexts. The expected outcome of this work would be confident and articulate young people who are comfortable when talking about what they are learning and what they need to do to improve and develop further.

Area for improvement 3

Provide a greater level of challenge in planned tasks to meet better the range of learners' needs.

Evaluation of progress and impact:

- There has been a clear focus for in-service training for all teaching staff on the development of their skills when teaching all aspects of writing. We are beginning to see the impact of this in the style and quality of writing of almost all pupils across the school.
- Monitoring of progress with learning has focussed on ensuring appropriate pace and challenge in lessons throughout the school. This means that the most able are provided with suitably demanding tasks to undertake; whilst those requiring more support receive it and their tasks are suitably differentiated according to their needs. Good progress has been made in most classes.
- Teachers have engaged in identifying and learning from good practice in other schools. This has encouraged professional dialogue among staff relating to how to best meet learners' needs in their own school.
- A more consistent approach in the use of assessment strategies is now evident in all classes; this is particularly evident in the use of learning intentions (sharing what the planned learning is) and also with success criteria (children being able to articulate what success will look like).

Next steps

- We will continue to develop our approaches to literacy skills development generally, and the teaching of writing skills particularly.
- We will monitor and track pupil progress in writing closely over the next two years, ensuring that any potential issues are identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity.
- We will continue to monitor the range and type of tasks and activities that are planned for all children; ensuring that appropriate differentiation and high levels of demand are appropriate at all times.

Headteacher: M McMillan

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Lifelong Learning Executive Sub-Committee – 9 November 2011

**SUMMARY OF THE HMIE INSPECTION REPORT ON
BLACKFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL, BLACKFORD**

1 INTRODUCTION

Blackford Primary School was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in June 2011 as part of a national sample of primary education. The report by HMIE was published in August 2011.

The indicators of quality used for the inspection are attached.

2 PARTICULAR STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

HMIE identified the following particular strengths of the school:

- Confident children with a pride in their school and community.
- The headteacher's and acting headteacher's clear leadership and direction.
- Children's achievements in and beyond the classroom including through outdoor learning and links with the local community.
- Staff willingness and contribution to improving children's learning.

3 AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

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

- Put in place a clear plan for improving children's skills at all stages and taking forward Curriculum for Excellence.
- Further promote children's skills in discussing, in collaborating and in taking responsibility for their learning.
- Provide a greater level of challenge in planned tasks to meet better the range of learners' needs.

4 CONCLUSION

HMIE are confident that, with support from the education authority, the school will be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. As a result, HMIE will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. The Council will inform parents about the school's progress in improving the quality of education. The HMIE District Inspector will maintain contact with the education authority to monitor improvements in learners' achievement.

For further information contact:

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

Quality Indicators

Blackford Primary School

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

Blackford Primary School

The curriculum	Satisfactory
Improvement through self-evaluation	Satisfactory