



**Craigie Primary School and  
Nursery Class  
Perth and Kinross Council  
16 March 2010**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects schools in order to let parents<sup>1</sup>, children and the local community know whether their school<sup>2</sup> provides a good education. Inspectors also discuss with school staff how they can improve the quality of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the headteacher and staff about the strengths of the school, what needs to improve, and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan what we are going to look at. During the inspection, we go into classes and join other activities in which children are involved. We also gather the views of children, parents, staff and members of the local community. We find their views very helpful and use them together with the other information we have collected to arrive at our view of the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the school. We describe how well children are doing, how good the school is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the school. We also comment on how well the school works with other groups in the community, including services which support children. Finally, we focus on how well the school is led and how staff help the school achieve its aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the school, please visit [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk). Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns from children, parents and staff. We will not provide questionnaire analyses where the numbers of returns are so small that they could identify individuals.

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

<sup>2</sup> The term 'school' includes the nursery class or classes where appropriate.

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### **1. The school**

Craigie Primary School is a non-denominational school with a nursery class. It serves the Craigie area of Perth. The roll was 215, including 31 in the nursery, when the inspection was carried out in January 2010. Children's attendance was above the national average in 2007/2008.

## **2. Particular strengths of the school**

- Children's confidence and readiness for learning.
- Children's learning experiences in the nursery class.
- The level of support for children who need extra help with classwork.
- The positive, caring and supportive ethos, led by the senior management team.

## **3. How well do children learn and achieve?**

### **Learning and achievement**

In the nursery class, children are very motivated and engaged in their learning. They approach their chosen activities and new challenges enthusiastically and confidently. Children are very good at taking their turn and sharing. At the primary stages, children are motivated and keen to learn, particularly when they find tasks interesting. They are beginning to take more responsibility for their own learning. Children are developing good skills at working with others through group work. They do not always know what steps to take to improve their learning. Children need to make more use of information and communications technology to help them to learn.

Nursery children are achieving very well. They express themselves successfully through play, art and music. Children enjoy learning outdoors and play very well on wheeled toys. In the primary classes, children achieve well through serving on the pupil council, eco committee or 'Craigie Crew'. Across the school, children express themselves well through dance. They understand the importance of eating healthily and improving the environment. The school has

recently achieved its first green flag award from Eco-Schools Scotland. Children are confident and have good skills at presenting and performing to an audience through class assemblies. They contribute well to the community through a range of events. Overall, children in the primary classes are achieving well.

Children in the nursery class are making very good progress in all aspects of their learning and development. They listen very well and can carry out simple instructions well. Children talk very well with each other and adults about their learning and what happens in their nursery. Children have a very good understanding of early rhyming. Almost all children can identify their name and a few sounds within it. Children have a very good awareness and understanding of early number. They use early mathematical language very well in play situations. In the primary classes, the school has maintained high standards in English language and mathematics over the last three years. The majority of children achieve national levels earlier than expected. They do not always maintain this high rate of progress as they move through the school. Children with additional support needs are making good progress in meeting appropriate learning targets set for them. Overall, most children are making very good progress in writing, listening and talking and good progress in mathematics and reading. In English language, most children listen attentively and speak confidently. They can read a range of different texts well. Children write well and they are working on specific areas to improve further. They do not always apply their good knowledge of spelling and grammar when writing at length. In mathematics, children carry out mental calculations well. Written calculations are not always presented clearly enough. Most children can confidently describe how to solve a range of problems.

## **Curriculum and meeting learning needs**

Staff are at the early stages of improving the curriculum taking into account *Curriculum for Excellence*. In the nursery class, the curriculum is firmly based on play, active learning and enjoyment. Children develop their early literacy and numeracy skills during very

good play and real life situations. They have good opportunities to develop their investigative skills in early science and problem solving activities. They also have very good opportunities for energetic play and explore the natural world through well-planned activities. In the primary classes, children benefit from a broad, progressive curriculum. Children's health and wellbeing is promoted well through a range of activities. The curriculum is enhanced by visitors to school, trips to places of interest and input from visiting specialist teachers. Children have a say in the content of class projects. Staff are not yet developing children's literacy and numeracy skills sufficiently across the curriculum, although plans are in place to improve this. Children need better opportunities to learn through play across the early stages, building on their high-quality experiences in P1. The school is providing all children with two hours of high-quality physical education per week.

In the nursery class, children's learning needs are very well met. Staff support children in all areas of their learning and development. They observe children during play and use the information collected to plan for what children will learn next. Staff provide children with challenging and appropriate learning experiences which are supported by very high-quality interaction. Across the primary classes, children's needs are well met. Most tasks and activities are meaningful but at times are too routine in nature. Children do not have enough opportunities to make choices and decisions in their learning. Across the school, staff use very effective approaches for identifying children who require significant extra help with classwork. Staff work with other professionals to help plan very well-targeted support. Individualised educational programmes and coordinated support plans help children to achieve success and make good progress overall. Targets within individual plans should now be updated more frequently. Children benefit from regular, varied and challenging homework tasks.

#### **4. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?**

The school has developed strong partnerships with a range of agencies to support children's learning. The support for learning team provides very effective help for children who need it. The headteacher works closely with the supportive Parent Council. The Parent Association organises opportunities for families to socialise and raise funds. Staff share learning outcomes with parents through personal learning planning, which helps to support children's learning. Progress reports give helpful information about children's strengths and next steps in learning across the curriculum. The school worked very effectively with the community to celebrate the school's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary recently. This provided an interesting and exciting context for celebrating the school's achievements with the whole community. The school has very good arrangements to support children who need extra help with classwork. Children are well supported when they move from nursery to P1 and from P7 to S1 at Perth High School. Staff should ensure that information about children's progress is used to meet their learning needs fully.

#### **5. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their school community?**

Children take on a range of roles which help to improve the school. The Craigie Crew helps children to play together and the 'green team' has led a range of environmental improvements. Junior Road Safety Officers have made valuable contributions to the cycling proficiency programme. Members of the pupil council have made decisions about playground improvements. Staff have taken part in training to improve aspects of learning, for example to develop children's group work skills, to good effect in most classes. Staff take responsibility for leading different areas of school life. These roles do not yet focus clearly enough on improving learners' experiences or developing the curriculum. The school needs to track children's progress more effectively. Teachers have begun to gather information on children's

wider achievements. Senior managers visit classes to evaluate learning and they give helpful feedback to staff. Teachers now need to reflect more on their own practice to further improve learning experiences for children.

## **6. Does the school have high expectations of all children?**

The school has a positive and caring ethos. Staff have high expectations of children's conduct and behaviour. Expectations of children's progress are not yet consistently high across the school. Staff celebrate children's achievements very well in class and at assemblies. Children benefit from a good range of out-of-class activities. Children take part in regular religious observance with support from the local chaplain. Equality and diversity are well developed and children have a good understanding of a range of cultures and beliefs. Staff provide a very high level of care and support to children. Almost all staff have a clear understanding of approaches to protecting children. Catering staff and temporary staff need training on this. The school deals promptly and effectively with complaints or concerns.

## **7. Does the school have a clear sense of direction?**

The headteacher provides a very high level of support and encouragement to staff, children and parents. She has a clear vision for the further improvement of the school. The depute headteacher provides a very high level of support to the headteacher and staff. Together, senior managers evaluate effectively the quality of the school's provision, and plan areas for improvement. This approach now needs to focus more clearly on improving outcomes for children in all classes. The school's aims, vision and values give a clear sense of direction and are based on extensive consultation with children, parents and staff. Further sharing of good practice to embed improvement will help to ensure high-quality learning experiences for all children across the school. With strong leadership of improvement



and the increasing contribution of all staff to the development of the curriculum, the school is very well placed to improve further.

## **8. What happens next?**

As a result of the good quality of education provided by the school, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The education authority will inform parents about the school's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its school.

We have agreed the following areas for improvement with the school and education authority.

- Improve leadership for learning, involving staff more in developing the curriculum.
- Make better use of information about children's progress and the outcomes of self-evaluation to further improve the school.
- Further improve learning experiences across the primary classes, to provide all children with consistently high-quality education.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the nursery class there were no requirements. Two recommendations were made, both of which have now been addressed.

Quality indicators help schools and nursery classes, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of a school and a nursery class. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publications *How good is our school?* and *The Child at the Centre*. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish schools and nursery classes are doing.

Here are the evaluations for Craigie Primary School and Nursery Class.

#### Primary school

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Learners' experiences</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Meeting learning needs</b>	<b>good</b>

#### Nursery class

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Children's experiences</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Meeting learning needs</b>	<b>very good</b>

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school and nursery class.

<b>The curriculum</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Improvement through self-evaluation</b>	<b>good</b>

**HM Inspector:** Graeme Logan  
16 March 2010

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

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

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Text phone users can contact us on 01506 600 236. This is a service for deaf users. Please do not use this number for voice calls as the line will not connect you to a member of staff.

You can find our complaints procedure on our website [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk) or alternatively you can contact our Complaints Manager, at the address above or by telephoning 01506 600259.

Where the school has a nursery class, you can contact the Complaints Coordinator, Headquarters, Care Commission, Compass House, Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY, telephone 0845 603 0890.

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