



**Crieff Primary School and
Nursery Class
Perth and Kinross Council
29 June 2010**

We published a report on Crieff Primary School and Nursery Class in May 2009. That report set out key strengths of the school and main points for action.

This follow-through report is based on an inspection visit which was carried out in April 2010. It tells you about improvements since the original inspection in the quality of education which the school¹ provides. It also comments on how the school is getting on with the main points for action. First we focus on changes in the core work of the school. We explain how the school has got better at helping children to learn and benefit from being at the school. Next we look at the key processes which enable this to happen, including the involvement of parents². Our report also describes developments in the 'ethos' of the school, by which we mean how well children are cared for and how much is expected of them in all aspects of school life. Finally we comment on improvements in leadership to help the school achieve its aims.

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

¹ The term 'school' is used to include the work of the nursery class, where relevant.

² Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers, residential care staff and carers who are relatives or friends.

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1. The school

Crieff Primary School and Nursery Class serves the town of Crieff.

There have been significant staffing changes since the original inspection.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Leadership of the senior management team to support staff and improve the school.
- Staff leadership of, and involvement in groups to improve provision.
- Improvements in children's experiences in the specialist base.
- Improvements in aspects of children's attainment and achievement.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Children are more active in their learning. Teachers continue to use information and communications technology well to enhance children's learning. They are now helping children more effectively to know their strengths and what they need to do to make progress. Children in the specialist base are benefiting from significantly better learning experiences. Staff in the nursery class are taking more account of children's views when they plan activities. They are recording children's learning and progress more effectively. Behaviour in the primary stages has improved, and children are now given more responsibility in their learning. Children are making better progression from the nursery class into and through the early stages in the primary school. Across the primary classes the children are now benefiting from lessons which are better planned to help them develop their learning and tackle challenging tasks. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has improved. Staff are aware of the need to continue to improve children's skills in listening and talking and to track children's progress in these aspects more effectively.

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

Almost all staff are now working better together. Communication has been improved, and roles and responsibilities are now set out more clearly. Specialist staff, other school staff and the headteacher have worked well together to improve support for children, particularly those in the specialist base. Education authority outreach teachers have assisted in improving provision for children in the base. Staff in the specialist base are planning lessons in the same format as their colleagues, taking into account the outcomes set out in *Curriculum for Excellence*. They have prepared individual educational programmes for children who need them. They have benefited from training on specialist aspects and visits to other schools to see good practice. They have also helped their colleagues to promote positive behaviour among children from P1-P7. Overall, children's experiences in the base have improved significantly. Staff should continue to seek opportunities for children in the base to be involved in activities in P1-P7 classes as appropriate.

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

All staff have been involved in focus groups to improve the school's work. New teachers have integrated well into the school and are part of a team which is increasingly sharing good practice. Teachers have taken part in helpful staff development activities which have enabled them to improve children's learning. The senior management team is monitoring the school's work more closely. Staff are becoming more reflective about the quality of their teaching. All teachers now have a review meeting with a senior member of staff to identify their strengths and development needs. Children are encouraged to reflect on their learning in some classes and have opportunities to serve on school groups. Staff should continue to work to ensure consistent best practice across all classes, with involvement of parents and children in appropriate activities to evaluate and improve the school's work.

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

Staff have raised their expectations of what each child can achieve. On the whole, there is now more suitable pace and challenge in children's learning. Attainment has risen, and key aspects of the school's ethos, including staff teamwork and children's positive behaviour, have improved.

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

The headteacher, who had only been in post a short time when the original inspection was carried out, has provided staff with a clear sense of direction and effective leadership. The depute headteachers work well with her to implement their remits and improve the school. They provide very helpful support to staff. Overall, the senior management team are having more impact on the way in which children's learning needs are met across the school.

8. What happens next?

Working together, and with the support of the education authority, staff have progressed well in improving the school. The curriculum, the way in which children's learning needs are met, and children's attainment and achievement have improved to a satisfactory or better level. The school has a well-developed capacity for further improvement. We will make no further visits to the school in connection with the inspection report of May 2009.

HM Inspector: Douglas Cairns
29 June 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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