



**Guildtown Primary School
Perth and Kinross Council
25 May 2010**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects schools in order to let parents¹, children and the local community know whether their school² 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. 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.

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

² The term 'school' includes the nursery class or classes where appropriate.

Contents

1. The school
2. Particular strengths of the school
3. How well do children learn and achieve?
4. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?
5. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their school community?
6. Does the school have high expectations of all children?
7. Does the school have a clear sense of direction?
8. What happens next?

1. The school

Guildtown Primary School is a non-denominational, rural school. It serves the Guildtown and Wolfhill areas of Perth and Kinross. The roll was 38 when the inspection was carried out in March 2010. Children's attendance was well above the national average in 2008/2009.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- The school's involvement with the local community.
- Children who are friendly, confident and open to learning.
- The supportive teamwork led by the headteacher.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Almost all children are motivated and keen to learn. They are happy in school and enjoy attending. Children work well both independently and with others. They encourage and support each other. A few children can talk about their strengths and the next steps for their learning. Children in the early years participate in a range of play activities. Staff need to develop these more fully. They are well placed to do so. All children enjoy using the extensive outdoor play area which is accessible from the school garden. Children are beginning to be given more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.

Children achieve success in their classwork and in their learning beyond the classroom. They experience a broad range of engaging activities which enable them to achieve widely. Older children develop skills for life through attending a residential stay at Dalguise activity centre. Most learn new skills in out-of-hours activities such as golf and netball. Children are very proud of their achievements and staff effectively celebrate children's personal achievements from school and home. The school has achieved a silver award from Eco-Schools Scotland in recognition of children's work for the environment. It is now working to gain the education authority's health promoting school's status. A number of children have enjoyed success in

swimming, football, cross-country and chess. The school has identified the need to track these achievements more effectively and now needs to implement plans to do so.

Most children are making good progress from prior levels of attainment in reading and mathematics. Almost all children achieve appropriate national levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Children who require additional support in their learning are making progress but would benefit from more suitably adapted work to improve their achievements. In English language, children are developing effective skills in listening and talking. Most children listen well to each other and to their teacher. They contribute confidently to group and class discussions. Children are becoming more interested in reading for pleasure through the recently developed school library. Across the school, children are capable of writing to a higher quality. The school has started to take steps to improve writing. Children are making good progress in early number skills. Most children can accurately perform a range of written and mental calculations and use problem-solving strategies.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Staff are at the early stages of improving the curriculum taking account of *Curriculum for Excellence*. They are beginning to plan learning using the experiences and outcomes from the national guidelines. Staff need greater clarity about how the curriculum is to be developed and its intended impact on children's learning. The curriculum is broad and covers all curricular areas. All children benefit from two hours of high-quality physical education each week. Staff make good use of the outdoor environment, local community and visitors to the school to enhance the curriculum. Staff have introduced a number of projects which link learning across different subjects. These projects now need to be carefully evaluated to ensure they are leading to improved achievement and progression for learners. Children are very well supported when moving into P1 from pre-school establishments. They are also well supported as they move into secondary school.

In most lessons, teachers ensure activities meet the different learning needs of children. They now need to ensure that teaching approaches challenge sufficiently and support all children in their learning. A small number of children need more consistent and carefully planned approaches to help them participate fully in learning. Staff know the children very well and are quick to identify areas of need. They have developed very supportive relationships with children and their families. The headteacher and staff monitor the progress of all children and use assessment to identify children's next steps. Learning targets in individualised educational programmes need to be more specific and show progress for children. Children have regular, appropriate homework.

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

The school works very successfully with the local community to enhance aspects of learning. Staff link history projects to work with the local guild and eco work is developed alongside the local energy group. The headteacher and staff involve parents in children's learning through regular parents' evenings, information sessions and events. The school communicates well with parents through, for example, regular newsletters, notice boards and information about health issues. The headteacher has sought the views of parents on a number of important issues, for example, in reviewing the school's aims. The Parent Council is active in supporting the school and raising funds. A number of parents help with visits, clubs and a range of activities. Staff have promoted links with charitable organisations encouraging children to care about others.

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

Children in all classes are keen to improve their school. They make suggestions for improvement through a range of groups which meet on a weekly basis. Children work with others actively to improve the outdoor area and care for the environment. Staff work well together but need to be more fully involved in taking forward aspects for improvement. Approaches to evaluating the work of the school are not sufficiently focused on learning to be effective. Staff reflect informally on the quality of their work both as individuals and together through staff meetings. Teaching staff need to review more thoroughly the impact their planning and teaching approaches have on the quality of children's learning. The Parent Council is keen to be more actively involved in the school's plans for improvement.

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

Staff have created a warm, caring and supportive ethos across the school. Children are friendly, confident and open to learning. Staff share children's achievements regularly through assemblies and displays around the school. Most children are respectful of others but the school needs to develop further its approaches to promoting positive behaviour. All staff know what to do to keep children safe and well. Staff treat children fairly and encourage them to think of others. Children need to be given a broader range of experiences to help them understand equalities and diversity. The school has appropriate arrangements for religious observance.

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

The headteacher is very approachable and supportive of staff, parents and children. She is committed to the school and to promoting its role in the wider community. Staff are supportive of the headteacher and are keen to be fully involved in improving the school. They are ready

to take on leadership roles. The school has started to improve a number of different aspects of its work. This has involved implementing a range of recent initiatives. Staff now need clearer direction to maximise the impact of these initiatives on children's learning and achievement. The education authority needs to continue to be closely involved with the school to support this work.

8. What happens next?

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

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

- Further develop the curriculum, taking account of *Curriculum for Excellence*.
- Ensure that all children are fully supported and challenged in their learning.
- Improve approaches to promoting positive behaviour.
- Use self-evaluation effectively to improve the school.

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 Guildtown Primary School.

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

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school.

The curriculum	satisfactory
Improvement through self-evaluation	satisfactory

HM Inspector: Angela Edwards
25 May 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

If you would like to find out more about our inspections or get an electronic copy of this report, please go to www.hmie.gov.uk.

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation, or if you wish to comment about any aspect of our inspections. You can contact us at HMIEenquiries@hmie.gsi.gov.uk or write to us at BMCT, HM Inspectorate of Education, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

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 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.

Crown Copyright 2010
HM Inspectorate of Education