



**St Ninian's Episcopal
Primary School
Perth and Kinross Council
5 October 2010**

We published a report on St Ninian's Episcopal Primary School in June 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 June 2010. It tells you about improvements since the original inspection in the quality of education which the school 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 parents¹. 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 Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers, residential care staff and carers who are relatives or friends.

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

St Ninian's Episcopal Primary School is in Perth. Almost all children attend as a result of placing requests. There have been considerable staffing changes since the previous inspection. At the time of the follow-through inspection the acting headteacher had been appointed as headteacher.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Enthusiastic children who are keen to learn.
- A positive ethos with supportive relationships.
- Staff teamwork in bringing about improvements for children.
- The headteacher and principal teacher's leadership for learning.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

At all stages, children are now more actively involved and engaged in their learning. Children have more opportunities to learn from each other and work together in groups. Across the school, staff are now clearer about what they expect children to learn. Staff share the purpose of lessons more effectively with children and provide better feedback about their progress in learning. Teachers now involve children in planning aspects of their own learning. As a result, children are increasingly aware of their strengths, progress and next steps in learning. At all stages, staff are providing a broader range of experiences to help children achieve more widely.

Teachers are now successfully using the experiences and outcomes from *Curriculum for Excellence* in their planning. Staff now make meaningful links in learning across curricular areas. They are developing ways for children to learn in real-life contexts. Children's attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has improved. Most children are now attaining appropriate national levels. Staff now provide children with increased opportunities to write at length. As a result, the quality of children's writing has improved significantly.

Staff now ensure that activities are better matched to the needs of children. The headteacher works more closely with teachers to

monitor children's progress and this is improving the pace of learning. The school now has better approaches for identifying and supporting the needs of all children. Staff are more aware of their responsibilities for children who need additional help with their learning. Targets within individualised educational programmes show progression over the year and are reviewed well. Staff have now developed effective personal work files for children who need additional support.

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

The school has a very positive partnership with parents. Staff communicate with parents through regular and informative newsletters. The Parent Council is highly supportive of the work of the school and is consulted about the school improvement plan. Parents are well-informed about *Curriculum for Excellence*. Staff have effective arrangements to work with other professionals such as speech and language and occupational therapy staff. The school has positive links with the local church.

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

Children now have much more of a say in changes to improve the school. For example, the pupil council has helped to organise areas for children to play in the playground. All children are involved in a range of committees such as the international committee. Children now believe their views are valued. Children now have access to an extensive range of out-of-class learning activities including netball, chess and yoga. All staff now work very well together to take forward aspects of school improvement. At all levels, staff are now much better at reviewing and monitoring school improvements. The senior management team discuss progress made in learning and attainment with class teachers to ensure there is appropriate pace and progression in children's learning. Improved procedures are in place

to monitor learning and teaching and to provide teachers with feedback to help improve classroom practice.

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

Staff have created a positive ethos for learning. They encourage children to achieve their best at all times and reward them for their efforts. Children are responding well to the school's new approaches to promoting positive behaviour. Almost all children are well behaved. Children are becoming increasingly confident and achieve through involvement in a range of cultural and sporting activities.

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

Building on the good start made by the previous headteacher, the current headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has had success in bringing about improvements. Support from the service manager has helped to shape this success. The headteacher is well regarded by staff, children and parents. She works well with the acting principal teacher, and together they form a very effective senior management team. The school is now better organised for effective learning. Good working practices with authority staff have enabled the school to successfully raise attainment and meet the needs of learners. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating improvements are now clear and robust and involve all staff.

8. What happens next?

There is evidence of significant improvement since the original inspection. The school now performs much better overall. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is now better. The arrangements to meet learning needs, for leadership and evaluating the work of the school are now at a satisfactory or better level. The school, with support from the education authority, has the capacity for further

improvement. We will make no further visits in connection with the inspection report of June 2009.

HM Inspector: Alan Urquhart
5 October 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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