



**Meigle Primary School
Blairgowrie
Perth and Kinross Council
29 June 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.

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1. The school

Meigle Primary School is a non-denominational school. It serves the villages of Meigle and Ardler and the surrounding rural area. The roll was 60 when the inspection was carried out in May 2010. Children's attendance was above the national average in 2008/2009. The number of children registered for free school meals was below the national average.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Polite, highly-motivated children who engage actively in their learning.
- Children's wider achievements and their experiences within art and design, health and science.
- The school's teamwork and inclusive approach.
- Partnerships with parents and the wider community which enhance children's learning.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Almost all children are motivated and enjoy their learning. They like taking on responsibility and respond well to many active learning experiences. Almost all children work well without close supervision. They lead aspects of their own work well. Children focus very well on their learning and confidently share what they are learning with others. Children engage particularly well in art and design, health, science and topic work and when involved in class challenges about their English language coursework. Children are content that they can ask for help when they need it. They are learning to be resilient. A few need to continue to develop their personal and social skills. Throughout the school, children need to know more about their strengths and areas for development and be more involved in planning their own learning.

Children achieve well across a wide range of situations including sport, outdoor learning, health and eco activities. A significant number take on posts of responsibility as road safety officers, eco committee or pupil council members. A small number of children enhance their

skills by participating in the Ukulele, 'Chatterbooks' and dance clubs after school. The majority of children have improved their sporting skills through orienteering, netball, football and cricket competitions. The school arranges an impressive number of offsite trips and visiting speakers such as from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, to extend children's learning. Children have appreciated Cycle Training, the staff and parent led walk-wise police initiative and visits to Dalguise Outdoor Centre. Children's environmental awareness has been developed in their drive for a third Eco-Schools Scotland green flag.

Overall, children's attainment has remained high in recent years. Over the last three years, most children have attained appropriate national levels in reading, writing and mathematics, with many achieving these levels early. In English language children make good progress in listening and talking. Children use information and communications technology skills very well to support their learning in English language. They can apply their skills effectively to other aspects of their coursework. A few children need to continue to improve their skills in listening and talking. In mathematics, children are skilful in most aspects of number work. They have a good understanding of measure, shape and how to apply problem-solving strategies. Almost all are accurate in their written calculations. Most children answer accurately in oral number work but they are not quick enough in finding the answer. Mental mathematics is not yet a regular enough experience for children in all classes. Children need more opportunities to develop their skills in information handling.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

The curriculum provides children with a broad range of appropriate experiences. It has been developed to include a focus on improving children's resilience and their understanding of environmental issues. Links between different areas of the curriculum have been enhanced through a new approach to planning. The school needs to monitor this approach carefully to ensure children continue to progress well in each curriculum area. Art, music and drama visiting specialists provide enrichment for children on a rotational basis throughout the year.

Experiences in art and design are particularly strong. All children benefit from two hours of good-quality physical education each week, supported effectively by a visiting teacher. Children have well-planned opportunities to develop their health which commendably includes regular opportunities to cook. Children's skills in science and technology are being developed well. Children's opportunities to develop their skills in modern languages need to be extended. The curricular links between nursery and primary are not yet strong enough. Staff have begun working with aspects of *Curriculum for Excellence* but the school's plans need to be taken forward much more quickly.

Staff work well with children in calm and purposeful learning environments. They work hard to support children. Overall, children's needs are well met. Staff ensure that children's experiences are active and, in most lessons although not all, the pace of their learning is appropriate. Where it is too slow, children's progress needs to be tracked more effectively to inform planning. Children's homework supports their learning. Children who need additional support are making appropriate progress. Support for learning staff work very well with groups and individuals. The school has effective contacts with parents and partner agencies to help meet the needs of children who require extra support.

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

The school engages very well with individuals and community organisations to support children's learning. Positive partnerships exist with parents and the Parent Council. Parents are supportive of the school and provide practical help in activities and fundraising. Parents are informed about different school matters through newsletters, the website, and progress reports. Their children's successes are shared effectively through very attractive and informative 'Sharing Success' books. Members of the pupil council ensure that children have a strong voice in the school. Partner

agencies, including home link staff, social workers and psychologists, provide staff with helpful information. Links with nearby pre-school centres need to be developed.

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

Children have taken on successfully a number of responsibilities for school life. Increasingly they are involved in identifying what they want to learn within their topic work. Their views have been sought on different aspects of school life such as the health week. They are not yet sufficiently involved in identifying what they need to do to improve their work. The principal teacher leads the school's health and eco work very effectively. She planned the successful culture week and updates the school website to keep parents and children informed about school life. All staff have been involved recently in re-writing the school's aims and vision statement. Several staff have undertaken additional training in improving aspects of learning and teaching. Promoted staff visit classes to evaluate and discuss learning. They evaluate the school's work jointly with all staff and identify agreed priorities for improvement. Parents and children are not yet involved regularly enough in this work. The school recognises the need to have clear plans for sharing good practice amongst staff.

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

Classes have a positive atmosphere in which children work well with staff and each other. Almost all children are very well behaved. Relationships between staff and children are very positive. All children are treated fairly and with respect. The school has a well-developed approach to including all children in school activities. Children's work is displayed attractively and their successes and achievements are recognised and well celebrated. All staff are aware of their responsibilities for child protection and keeping children safe. Children have appropriate opportunities for religious observance. The

expectations of achievement for a few children need to be raised. The school records and responds effectively to any complaints.

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

The teaching headteacher is held in high regard by staff and parents. She has been successful in developing positive relationships and supportive partnerships with parents and the wider community. The headteacher is supported by a highly-effective principal teacher who has led aspects of school improvement very well. A good example is the development of booklets which share learning successes. The school has yet to involve children and parents regularly enough in evaluating its work. The headteacher now needs to give the school clearer direction through a more ambitious plan which outlines the steps staff need to take to implement *Curriculum for Excellence* fully.

8. What happens next?

We 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, 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.

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

- Involve children fully in identifying their strengths and areas for development.
- Improve approaches to self-evaluation and tracking children's progress.
- Increase the pace of implementation of *Curriculum for Excellence*.

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 Meigle Primary School.

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

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

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	good

HM Inspector: Donald Macleod
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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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.

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