



**Stanley Primary School and
Nursery Class
Perth and Kinross Council
9 March 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

Stanley Primary School is a non-denominational school with a nursery class. It serves the village of Stanley and the surrounding rural area of Perthshire. The roll was 122, including 21 in the nursery, when the inspection was carried out in January 2010. Children's attendance was in line with the national average in 2007/2008.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- The high quality of children's experiences in the nursery.
- Highly motivated, polite and well-behaved children.
- The willingness of all staff to take forward planned initiatives and developments to improve learning experiences.
- Effective use of teamwork and self-evaluation by staff to identify appropriate priorities to improve the school, led by the headteacher.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Children in the nursery class enjoy choosing their own play activities. They are developing friendships and are learning to share and take turns. They interact very well during play and are becoming more independent. At the primary stages, almost all children are enthusiastic, keen to learn and have positive attitudes to their work. They are very well behaved, listen attentively to adults and remain on task throughout lessons. When given the opportunity, they can work well together in group activities. They respond enthusiastically when given opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning, for example in research in topics lessons. In most classes, teachers are beginning to plan more frequent opportunities for activities which help children to think for themselves. Overall, children enjoy being at school and feel very safe and well cared for.

Across the school, children have many opportunities to be successful in their learning and other achievements. They are actively involved in a wide range of activities outwith the classroom which are developing their confidence. They have gained an Eco-Schools Scotland Green

Flag award and a national award for work on sustainability. They are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles and are working towards gaining the school recognition as a Health Promoting School. Children enjoy success in a range of sporting activities including football, rugby and netball. They are developing skills as responsible citizens by taking on roles on the pupil council, citizenship groups and as house captains and prefects. The citizenship groups have been successful in organising fundraising events for a range of charities.

In the nursery, children are making very good progress in their development and learning. They listen very well, follow instructions and talk confidently with friends and adults. Most children can read their names. They can count confidently and are interested in using numbers in the classroom. In the primary classes, most children are achieving appropriate national levels of attainment in listening, talking, reading and mathematics. The majority are achieving these levels in writing. Many achieve these levels earlier than would normally be expected. Almost all children listen well to each other and to the teacher. Children are increasing their skills at working cooperatively in groups and most are confident in giving feedback and talking to the whole class. At all stages, they write in a variety of genres but the length and quality of their writing could be improved. Across the school, children are making good progress in reading out loud and talking about texts. Children at all stages have a good understanding of two- and three-dimensional shapes and objects appropriate to their age. Most are confident with calculations involving number, money and measurement. Most children at the upper stages are confident at solving problems and can describe the strategies they use. Their skills in using information and communications technology are developing well.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

The nursery curriculum is firmly based on learning through play and the interests of the children. Children experience a wide range of activities, including opportunities for outdoor play. Across the school, the curriculum is being developed well in line with the principles of

Curriculum for Excellence. It covers appropriate areas and provides suitable challenge. Teachers are at the early stages of increasing choice for children. The citizenship programme provides good opportunities for learning across the curriculum. Staff provide a wide range of learning activities outwith the classroom, including the school grounds and the local area. These include the citizenship programme, enterprise and eco activities. Visiting specialists in music, drama and physical education provide high-quality learning experiences for children, of suitable duration. The school's programme for religious and moral education covers Christianity and other world religions. The school uses its links with an orphanage in India to promote global awareness and aspects of equality and diversity.

In the nursery, staff know children very well and are sensitive to their individual needs. They plan daily routines successfully to meet children's individual targets. At the primary stages, most of the tasks, activities and resources provided by teachers are appropriate and meet the needs of almost all children. Staff are aware of children's pastoral support needs and how these impact on their learning. Learning assistants provide well-judged support to individuals and groups. The school has effective procedures for supporting children with additional learning needs. Individualised educational programmes are well focused on learning and set out clearly. Regular meetings are held to discuss progress and next steps. The support for learning teacher works well with groups and individuals but needs more time with them in classrooms. Educational support agencies are involved effectively when necessary. Staff need to provide more variety, challenge and enjoyment in the range of classroom and homework activities.

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

The school consults parents regularly and keeps them informed about new developments. The active Parent Council is very supportive of the school. It has been involved in innovations such as the successful

Gala Day last session. Parents and members of the wider community attend school events and contribute well to fundraising activities. The school is well supported by the education authority and a number of agencies and has productive relationships with local businesses. These links have provided valuable help in organising activities such as sports and school trips. The school has productive links with other schools in the cluster and with Perth Grammar School. Children are well supported in making the transition from primary to secondary school.

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

Staff in the nursery and primary classes work well with parents and others to improve children's learning. Staff are committed to improvement and are becoming more involved in reflecting on their own practice to improve the work of the school. Nursery staff review their plans regularly. Staff in the primary classes are increasingly using opportunities to observe each other's work and share examples of good classroom practice. Together with senior staff, they regularly evaluate learning and teaching, monitor children's progress and identify priorities for improvement. The school uses effective systems to gather the views of parents and staff. Children's views are regularly sought on a range of issues using surveys and the citizenship groups. Children's involvement in these groups encourages them to contribute to a wide range of developments and initiatives. Those children taking on responsibilities fulfil their roles conscientiously. Staff should now involve children more in taking responsibility for aspects of their own learning within the classroom.

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

All children in the nursery and primary classes are learning in a happy and safe environment and are treated fairly and with respect. Praise, assemblies and displays are used well to celebrate children's

successes. All staff have high expectations for children's learning, achievements and behaviour. Children are proud of the school and their achievements. They have high expectations of themselves and respond well to challenges and responsibilities. Staff understand their responsibility to keep children safe. The school has appropriate systems and policies for children's care and welfare, including child protection, safe Internet use, and anti bullying. Children are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles. The school follows local authority policies on race and equality. It has appropriate arrangements for religious observance, supported by regular visits from the local minister.

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

The headteacher provides strong leadership and is highly committed to the wellbeing of children and staff. She enjoys their confidence and respect and has a clear vision for the future development of the school. Support from the school service manager has helped shape this vision. The headteacher is well supported by the effective work of the principal teacher. The sense of teamwork amongst staff is strong. As staff take forward the school's plans for improvement, they should continue to monitor and evaluate the impact on all learners. Staff should continue to identify and share examples of good practice and increase the focus on involving children in planning aspects of their own learning.

8. What happens next?

The inspection team was able to rely on the school's robust self-evaluation. As a result, it was able to change its focus during the inspection to support further improvements within the school.

The school provides a very good quality of education. Therefore, 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.

- Further improve feedback to children to help them to take more responsibility for their own learning.
- Review the delivery of support for learning across the school.
- Continue to develop the curriculum in line with *Curriculum for Excellence* and raise attainment in writing.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the nursery class no requirements or recommendations were made.

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 Stanley Primary School and Nursery Class.

Primary school

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

Nursery class

Improvements in performance	very good
Children's experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	very good

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

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

HM Inspector: Jim Bruce
9 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 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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