



**Tulloch Primary School and
Nursery Class
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.

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

Tulloch Primary School is a non-denominational school with a nursery class. It serves the Tulloch and Hillyland areas of Perth. The roll was 359, including 40 in the nursery, when the inspection was carried out in May 2010. Children's attendance was in line with the national average in 2008/2009. The school includes a specialist unit for children encountering difficulties in their learning.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Confident children who are eager to achieve success and who plan aspects of their own learning.
- Partnership working with a range of agencies.
- High-quality active learning in the early years.
- The commitment of all staff to improvement through teamwork.
- The high-quality leadership of the headteacher and depute headteacher.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

In the nursery, all children interact well with staff and engage fully in learning experiences. They strive to be successful as they work towards their targets. They are cooperative and take turns during physical games, and when borrowing resources to enjoy at home. Older children organise their own team games independently. Across the school, relationships are positive and children feel valued. Children's experiences at the early stages are particularly effective and they are encouraged to be active in their learning. As a result, they are confident, enthusiastic and well motivated. In a number of lessons, learning is stimulating, challenging and engaging. In these instances, staff interact skilfully to support and extend children's learning. The quality of learners' experiences overall, however, is still too variable. All classes make frequent and effective use of the school grounds and the surrounding environment to enhance learning. Almost all children feel safe and well cared for and enjoy being at

school. As they move up the stages, children from the additional support needs unit spend more of their time learning appropriately alongside their peers in mainstream classes.

Children are achieving broadly through the many different opportunities they are given. Children in the nursery enjoy being successful and are proud of their 'Star Wall'. Across the school, children are actively involved in a variety of activities which are developing their confidence. The range of after-school clubs includes football, cricket, basketball, dancing and drama. These are well attended and children have enjoyed success in many sports. Large numbers of children take part in musical and cultural events and school trips. Some children are developing responsibility as citizens by taking on roles on the pupil council and the eco group, and as buddies and mentors. The eco group has been successful in supporting the school in working towards its third Eco-Schools Scotland green flag award.

In the nursery, almost all children are making very good progress in their development and learning. They listen very well and talk confidently with friends and adults. They are very attentive when listening to stories. Almost all are becoming aware of print and can identify their own names. They are practising early writing as they play. Almost all children are becoming increasingly familiar with numbers and can count confidently. At the primary stages, most children achieve appropriate national levels in reading and mathematics, and the majority do so in writing. Strong early achievement in writing is not being built on sufficiently at later stages. Children from the additional support needs unit are making good progress in English language, mathematics and personal development. Across the school, children listen well, follow instructions appropriately and know when to talk during group discussions. Almost all children enjoy reading and can identify their favourite author and other features of books. They write well for different purposes and in different styles across most curricular areas. The school has identified the need to raise children's attainment in writing, especially amongst boys. In mathematics, most children are

secure in key number processes. They are learning to use fractions from the early stages and, by P7, they work confidently with time, money and rounding. They are developing their skills in measuring and estimating length and height in practical contexts. Most children understand the properties of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. Almost all have a good understanding of angles and direction. Most children have a good understanding of problem solving strategies and approach challenges enthusiastically.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Staff have made considerable improvements to the curriculum using *Curriculum for Excellence*. The nursery curriculum is based on play and active learning. Staff are responsive to the developing interests of children. Early literacy and numeracy skills are well planned for and are embedded in play. Children from the nursery and P1 regularly work very closely together on shared learning activities. At the primary stages, teachers are using new approaches successfully to develop literacy and numeracy skills in suitable contexts. They encourage children to take responsibility for planning aspects of topic work. Visiting specialists in music and drama provide good quality learning experiences. The school does not yet provide the full two hours of quality physical education each week. Programmes for religious and moral education, social studies and personal and social education cover equality and diversity issues well. Staff are beginning to develop links with a school in Nigeria to develop and promote children's awareness of global issues. Children are supported very well in making the transitions from the nursery to P1 and from P7 to Perth Grammar School.

In the nursery, activities and resources meet the learning needs of children very well. Staff have created stimulating environments which address children's different learning needs. At the primary stages, staff know children very well. They use an appropriate range of tasks, approaches and resources to meet the needs of almost all children. In primary classes, teachers plan specific challenges to deepen children's understanding of key ideas. Staff's good understanding of

children's pastoral needs helps them to remove any barriers to learning. In the additional support needs unit, staff know children well and provide appropriate tasks which lead to high-quality learning. The skilled additional support needs assistants provide very good support for children in the unit. Teachers and classroom assistants have good knowledge of individual children's learning difficulties. They refer them to specialists when necessary. A number of children have individualised educational programmes which are very well planned and updated through regular reviews. Children are aware of their targets in these plans. The school does not have a clear approach to identifying children's learning needs. Some are identified by the depute headteacher with responsibility for additional support needs, others are identified by the support for learning teacher. A single, unified approach to identifying learning needs is required to enable the school to target support more accurately.

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

The school has been successful in developing effective links and relationships with parents, support agencies and local businesses. The recent 'Lade' project involved a wide range of participants from the school and community in a range of activities to promote awareness and use of a local environmental resource. The Parent Council is active and very supportive of the work of the school. Parents are encouraged to support school trips, attend school shows and support fundraising activities. A group of trained parent helper volunteers provides effective support for active learning in some classes. The school communicates effectively with parents through regular newsletters, text messages, reports on progress and the school's website. Staff deal effectively with any complaints and consult parents appropriately about aspects of health education. The school has developed strong partnerships with Sustrans to promote cycling, and has achieved an award for being a cycle-friendly school.

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

All staff are committed to improving the quality of learning experiences for children. They review the school's work effectively and undertake appropriate staff development activities. Teachers are becoming increasingly successful at evaluating the impact of their own new approaches. They also receive detailed feedback from senior managers following classroom observations and respond positively to the helpful advice offered. They are working with senior staff to identify more opportunities to learn from each other by sharing best practice in lessons. The school uses effective systems to gather the views of parents and staff. Children enjoy opportunities for taking responsibility across the school. The pupil council representatives take their responsibilities seriously. For example, they visit the nursery and P1/P2 classes to ensure that younger children's views are taken into account.

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

Across the school, all children are treated equally and with respect. Staff set high expectations for learning, achievement and behaviour. Almost all children are polite and well behaved. They have positive relationships with staff and each other. Children have high expectations of themselves and respond well to challenges and responsibilities. They are proud of their school and of their own achievements. The school celebrates achievements at regular assemblies, on attractive wall displays and in newsletters. The school has appropriate systems and policies in place for the care and welfare of children, including child protection, safe Internet use, and anti-bullying. The school works well with children to develop their understanding of healthy lifestyles. Supported by the school chaplain, the school provides appropriate religious observance.

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

The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership for the school. She has a clear view of the challenges facing the school and has shared her vision for future improvements. She has managed change well and has used good interpersonal skills to build strong staff teamwork. She has encouraged many teachers successfully to take on leadership roles which enhance children's learning. Staff have a strong sense of common purpose and commitment to improvement. The headteacher is supported by the depute headteacher very effectively. Together they have developed a very positive and inclusive ethos and have led important improvements to the curriculum. The school is well placed to improve further.

8. What happens next?

As a result of the good quality of education provided by the school, 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 schools.

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

- Review the management of additional support needs throughout the school.
- Ensure high-quality learners' experiences across the primary stages.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the nursery class there was one requirement and one recommendation, both of which had been addressed.

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 Tulloch Primary School and Nursery Class.

Primary school

Improvements in performance	good
Learners' experiences	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	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

HM Inspector: Jim Bruce
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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