



**Craigentenny Primary  
School  
The City of Edinburgh  
Council  
9 June 2009**

We published a report on Craigentenny Primary School in June 2007. 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 March 2009. 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 parents<sup>1</sup>. 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](http://www.hmie.gov.uk). Where applicable, you will also find descriptions of good practice in the school and analyses of questionnaire returns.

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

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### **1. The school**

Craigentenny Primary School serves the Craigentenny and Restalrig areas of Edinburgh. The nursery class was not part of the previous inspection and is not included in this report. The headteacher at the time of the original inspection retired in December 2007. The depute headteacher served as acting headteacher until November 2008, when a new headteacher took up post.

## **2. Particular strengths of the school**

- Polite, well behaved pupils who are proud of their school.
- Strong partnerships with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families.
- The effective links between children in mainstream classes and those in the supported language classes.

## **3. How well do children learn and achieve?**

Overall, children are now more actively involved in their learning. At the early stages, children have better opportunities to learn through play. Across the school, children are now working more independently and in small groups. Teachers effectively share the purpose of lessons with children and check that they understand what has been taught. Children now have better opportunities to achieve success in a wider range of activities. Members of the thriving school choir are developing confidence and skills by performing in community events. Children in the supported language classes successfully worked with art students to design their 'perfect learning environment'. Staff have begun to find ways to extend the range of clubs available to children after school.

Overall, children are attaining better in English language, but less well in mathematics. A more active approach to the teaching of reading is leading to improvements in performance at the upper stages. The school's recent focus on improving writing is having a positive effect on children's writing achievements across the school. Children have more opportunities to write for a variety of purposes and teachers are linking writing to other areas of the curriculum. The school has correctly identified the need to develop a programme to extend children's skills in listening and talking. There has been a decline in

attainment in mathematics in recent years. The majority of children achieve appropriate national levels but the good start made in mathematics in the early years is not sustained as children move through the school. The pace of learning in mathematics is still too slow for a significant number of children. Staff have successfully improved children's skills in using information and communications technology through a range of successful developments. Teachers have yet to make sure children use these skills regularly in all areas of their work. Teachers are more skilled at using information about children's progress to meet the needs of individuals. They give children helpful advice on how they can make their work better and monitor their progress more closely. Children with additional support needs are making appropriate progress. Learning assistants are supporting learners more effectively.

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

Staff now work more effectively as a team and support each other well. They plan children's learning together well and work effectively in teams to develop aspects of the curriculum. Staff work very closely with a wide range of other professionals and parents to support children who need additional help with their learning. The active Parent Council and parent-teacher association support the work of the school well. Parents are very supportive of school events which often involve the wider community.

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

Arrangements for improving the school have been strengthened. Staff now meet regularly with the headteacher to discuss individual children's learning. Together they monitor children's progress more closely. Staff are now correctly identifying aspects of the school which need developed. The headteacher and staff are working together to

bring about improvements to the quality of learning and teaching. The depute headteacher and principal teacher have led developments which have brought about positive changes for children. Almost all teachers are using improved approaches to learning and teaching. Children on the pupil council and eco committee meet regularly and are active in improving their school. Older children act as buddies to younger children and those in the supported language classes.

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

Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and attendance, but expectations of children's attainment need to be higher. In some classes, high achieving children are still not challenged enough. Staff are very committed to the care and welfare of the children. The school has further improved the way it recognises and rewards children's achievements. Children's successes are celebrated at weekly assemblies. The headteacher is using effective arrangements to monitor children's absence more closely and this has improved attendance.

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

The headteacher is providing strong leadership. She has a clear vision for the school and has already made improvements to the quality of learning and teaching. The headteacher and her senior management team are successfully gaining the support of staff in working together to bring about improvements. They have taken some difficult but well-judged decisions. Together they are establishing a clearer direction for the school. Their work is starting to have a positive effect on children's learning experiences. The school should continue to develop effective ways to evaluate its work. Staff should seek the views of children and parents when planning future developments.

## **8. What happens next?**

There is evidence of improvement since the original inspection. The school now performs better overall. Arrangements for evaluating the work of the school are now at a satisfactory or better level. The school shows an effective capacity for improvement. We will make no further visits in connection with the June 2007 inspection. The District Inspector will continue to engage with the education authority to monitor progress in improving attainment in mathematics.

**HM Inspector:** Elaine Merrilees

9 June 2009

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