



**St Crispin's School
The City of Edinburgh
Council
24 August 2010**

We published a report on St Crispin's School in August 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 and young people 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.

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1. The school

St Crispin's School provides education for primary- and secondary-aged children and young people who have additional support needs arising from severe and complex learning difficulties including autism spectrum disorder. It serves the city of Edinburgh.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- The use of symbols to meet children and young people's communication needs and increase their independence.
- Effective partnership working including working with parents.
- Confident children and young people.
- Strong and effective teamwork.

3. How well do children and young people learn and achieve?

Children and young people are more confident and interact well with staff and each other. They enjoy their learning which is now delivered in more real life contexts. Children and young people are now using more symbols to support their communication. This is helping them to share their views with others, particularly their likes and dislikes. They also use 'chat folders' very successfully to interact with staff and their parents. Most children and young people are working well on a range of activities to support independence. A few staff are still over-supportive in their approaches to learning. Pupil learning plans set out young learners' targets in a very appropriate way. Young people particularly, at the secondary stages, know their learning targets and are clearer in what they need to do to achieve them. Children and young people are now making better progress in their learning. Most achieve their learning targets in their individualised educational programmes. At the secondary stages, young people are now working on Scottish Qualification Authority access units across a few subject areas. This could be extended further. Young people are working well on their Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network award in a number of areas. Staff are beginning to develop aspects of the school's work in line with *Curriculum for Excellence*. For example, they are developing numeracy across the school in a

more active way. This now needs to be extended to literacy, health, and wellbeing.

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

Staff are working well with other schools in their area to share and improve their practice. Parents continue to be very supportive of the work of the school. They are pleased with the use of symbols to support their children's communication needs. A few parents would like more information to fully support their children at home. Links with colleges remain strong with a few new courses being introduced including yoga and art activities.

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

Staff are strongly committed to improving the work of the school. They are now involved in working groups to drive forward improvements and initiatives. Staff including support staff now share good practice and ideas at stage group meetings and 'learning rounds'. For example, approaches to linking subject areas together are being developed. A good start has been made to the introduction of a pupil council. Senior managers now monitor learning and teaching in a more formal way and give staff guidance on how to improve their practice. Senior managers recognise they still need to track children and young people's attainment more effectively.

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

Teamwork among all staff remains strong. Staff now have a more positive approach to developing children's learning. Staff have very good relationships with children and young people. There has been a

noticeable improvement in the expectations most staff have of children's achievements. This still needs to be improved further. Tasks and activities are relevant and enjoyable. Staff use praise very effectively to let children and young people know when they are doing well and to move them onto the next activity. They recognise and celebrate learners' achievements very well.

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

The headteacher is held in high regard and valued by staff, parents and pupils. She has ensured continued and effective teamwork through her positive approach to improving the school. Senior managers and staff have set out a clear and appropriate improvement plan and are working well to improve the school in many important areas. A growing number of staff are taking a leading role in improving the school. Senior managers and staff still need to monitor children and young people's progress in their learning more effectively.

8. What happens next?

The school has improved some key areas of its work since the original inspection. More remains to be done to ensure consistency in children and young people's learning and to track their progress. We will continue to engage with the school and the education authority in monitoring progress. We will carry out a further follow-through visit to the school within one year of the publication of this report and will report to parents on the extent of the improvement that has been achieved.

HM Inspector: Jane Lopez
24 August 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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