



**Lhanbryde Primary School
and Nursery Class
The Moray Council
10 March 2009**

This report tells you about the quality of education at the school¹. We describe how children benefit from learning there. We explain how well they are doing and how good the school is at helping them to learn. Then we look at the ways in which the school does this. We describe how well the school works with other groups in the community, including parents² and services which support children. We also comment on how well staff and children work together and how they go about improving the school.

Our report describes the ‘ethos’ of the school. By ‘ethos’ we mean the relationships in the school, how well children are cared for and treated and how much is expected of them in all aspects of school life. Finally, we comment on the school’s aims. In particular, we focus on how well the aims help staff to deliver high quality learning, and the impact of leadership on the school’s success in achieving these 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. Where applicable, you will also be able to find descriptions of good practice in the school.

¹ The term ‘school’ is used to include the work of the nursery class, where relevant.

² 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

Lhanbryde Primary School is a non-denominational school with a nursery class. An enhanced learning facility to support children with a range of additional support needs forms part of the provision. The school serves the village of Lhanbryde and the surrounding area. The inspection was carried out in January 2009. At that time, the roll was 199, including 38 children in the nursery and four in the enhanced learning facility. Pupils' attendance was below the national average in 2006/2007. (Statistics for 2007/2008 were not available at the time of the inspection.)

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Enthusiastic, well-behaved and well motivated learners.
- The quality of children's learning experiences in the nursery.
- The celebration of pupils' personal and wider achievements across the school.
- The commitment of staff to take additional responsibilities to improve the school.

3. Example of good practice

- Lunchtime technology club for children in the infant classes led by P6 and P7 children.

4. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

In the nursery class, children are making very good progress. They enjoy their learning and experience success in a variety of activities. Most are confident in speaking to adults and each other. They show interest in early writing and drawing activities. Most children count well and can recognise and match simple shapes and colours. They are learning effectively about the world around them and use binoculars well to investigate birds. Children are proud of their achievements. For example, they made attractive kilts from their own designs to celebrate Burns Night. Children play well together and take part enthusiastically in outdoor activities. They are developing confidence

in jumping, climbing, sliding and balancing. Staff work very well with children and make good use of questions to extend children's learning.

Across the primary stages, children are not making sufficient progress from their prior levels of attainment in listening, talking, reading, writing and mathematics. There are encouraging signs that the literacy and numeracy skills of children in P1 and P2 are improving. This is as a result of staff involving them actively in learning through play. Almost all children listen attentively in class discussions and most talk confidently about their interests. Children are more eager to read using the new materials and teaching approaches staff have developed recently. It is too early to see improvement in reading standards. The standard of children's writing is not high enough. Children do not write enough in other areas of the curriculum and at length. Activities in English language and mathematics are not sufficiently focused on what children need to learn in order to improve. In mathematics, a majority of children are accurate in written number and measurement activities. They are less confident in using strategies to carry out mental calculations. Across the school, most children are accurate in collecting, displaying and interpreting information. Those at P6 and P7 are not skilled enough in using computers to create graphs, charts and spreadsheets.

Children are keen to take part in their learning. They feel safe, nurtured, included and respected. Many are experiencing success, demonstrating responsible citizenship skills and contributing effectively to the school and the community. For example, they respond very positively to their Eco-Schools Scotland work and health promotion activities. Children achieve well in a variety of sporting and cultural activities within the school day and through after-school activities. Children at the upper stages of the school work very well together in helping younger pupils to feel confident, safe and successful at school. They produced a stimulating CD Rom about school activities for new P1 children and their parents which helped them settle quickly into school life. Children in P7 develop their self-confidence through taking part in popular residential trips. To help their transition to secondary school, they are organising enterprising activities to finance an activity

day and social evening at Milne's High School. They are working together very well to solve any problems and achieve success. Children are proud of their personal and wider achievements and are eager to celebrate these at the popular assemblies.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Staff provide children with a satisfactory curriculum overall. Children in the nursery experience a broad and stimulating range of tasks and activities. Staff give children a very good choice of activities. Children learn well through play activities which are very well supported by staff. They look forward to regular visits from the community policeman and dental hygienist, who help them to keep safe and healthy. In the primary classes, staff are at the very early stages of developing the curriculum in line with the national initiative, *Curriculum for Excellence*. Children do not always have enough well-planned opportunities to make progress in their learning. Staff are beginning to make more use of active learning to enhance children's experiences. Visiting teachers in music and physical education provide very good learning experiences for children. Staff need to improve children's classroom experiences, particularly in information and communications technology, mathematics, reading and writing. They need to help children to understand more clearly the links in their learning across different aspects of the curriculum.

The school does not meet children's learning needs well overall. Staff in the nursery know children well and plan a very good range of learning opportunities for them. They take good account of children's interests when planning activities to ensure the learning needs of all children are met fully. In the primary classes, tasks and activities are not sufficiently well matched to learners' needs. Teachers' planning does not take full account of what children already know. The pace of learning is not consistently good enough for all children to make enough progress. Most teachers give clear explanations and use appropriate questions to check children's understanding. In a few examples of best practice, teachers encourage children to express their views and ask them questions which challenge their thinking.

This practice now needs to become consistent across all stages. Staff in the enhanced learning facility give good support to children who require considerable additional help with their learning. The education authority and school meet with parents to consider the progress of their children but do not review and prepare subsequent support plans in accordance with the necessary timescales. Staff are not always used effectively to best support learning to ensure that the needs of all children are met. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the support given are not working well. At all stages, children are not always clear about what they need to do to improve. Teachers give children homework which helps them to learn. They are at the early stages of developing children's skills in making decisions about their own learning.

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

Parents contribute to learning in a number of ways, often related to their experiences of work, and they are very supportive of the school. The Parent Council and staff organised a successful parents' skills week to encourage parents to use their own talents to support their children's learning. Parents help children at P1 and P2 in learning through play activities. They support children in P7 in their environmental activities. The work of staff, children, parents and the local community is celebrated well at the popular school hobbies fair. Staff have effective partnerships with a wide range of external organisations. These include the education authority's community and learning development, psychological and social work services. These partnerships have been successful in supporting children. A few parents feel that the school does not communicate consistently well with them or deal with complaints quickly enough. The school recognises that it needs to take steps to improve these aspects of its work. Staff prepare children well for their transfer from nursery to primary and from P7 to Milne's High School.

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

In the nursery, children discuss with staff what they enjoy. Staff use this information well when planning activities for the children. Across the school, children are good at taking responsibilities. Children in P6 and P7 are eager and successful leaders of a lunchtime technology club. They use computerised toys very well to help children from P1 to P3 with their mathematical learning. Children at P4 to P7 are involved in the pupil parliament. They need more support and guidance from staff in order to achieve greater success as a group. Staff are keen to improve the school. Teachers and support staff have taken on key areas of responsibility, for example in learning and teaching and in health and wellbeing. Their work is leading to improvements in children's learning experiences. Staff are not sufficiently involved in improving their planning, and monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. They are not yet using information about children's learning to track children's progress effectively.

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

Children are proud of their school and, together with staff, welcome visitors. They are well motivated to learn. Children behave very well in classes and around the school. They are confident that the school will deal effectively with any incidents of bullying. Children feel safe and valued in school and know what to do if they have any concerns. Staff have very positive relationships with children. They are committed to the wellbeing and support of all children and have an appropriate awareness of child protection procedures. Staff do not have high enough expectations of what children can attain in their learning. Staff promote successfully equality and fairness through including all children in all school activities. Children's achievements are celebrated widely around the school in displays and at assemblies. Children talk about these achievements with pride. The school has

gained Silver Award status for Eco-Schools Scotland and health promotion activities. Children have regular opportunities for religious observance.

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

The school's recently reviewed aims and values are clear and have been shared and agreed with staff, parents and children. The headteacher, with the support of the education authority, has clearly identified areas for school improvement but progress in making improvements has been too slow. The headteacher has not given staff enough guidance on how to improve their planning and ensure a good pace to children's learning and progress. Staff do not use self-evaluation well enough to make improvements. The acting deputy headteacher, principal teacher and staff are committed to improving the work of the school. They are keen to lead new developments and contribute actively to the life of the school. Staff lack direction on how to improve children's attainment and achievements. The school needs the help of the education authority to improve further.

9. What happens next?

We will carry out a follow-through inspection visit within one year of publication of this report and will report to parents on the extent to which the school has improved. Following that visit, we may continue to check the improvements the school has made. We may also carry out a second follow-through inspection within two years of the original inspection report. If a second follow-through inspection visit is necessary then it will result in another report to parents on the extent of improvement that the school has made.

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

- Raise children's attainment in English language and mathematics.
- Develop the curriculum further to ensure that children in the primary classes make appropriate progress in their learning.
- To meet the needs of all learners fully, ensure continuity in learning and a consistent and challenging pace of progress in the primary classes.
- Use self-evaluation effectively within the primary classes to improve children's attainment and achievements.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the nursery class there were no requirements. Two recommendations were made. These have 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 Lhanbryde Primary School and Nursery Class.

Primary school

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

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	satisfactory
Improvement through self-evaluation	weak

HM Inspector: June Graham
10 March 2009

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This report uses the following word scale to make clear judgements made by inspectors.

excellent	outstanding, sector leading
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses